



Planning Report

BACKGROUND:

A commercial development anchored by a Buc-ee's Travel Center is proposed for a site in south Denton. The proposal would include an approximately 53,000 square foot retail store, fuel sales, a car wash, and peripheral development along I-35E for future development. The main retail store and the associated fuel sales would be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, but the facility would not cater to semi-trucks.

The subject property was rezoned in 2008 from Regional Center Residential 1 (RCR-1) District to Regional Center Commercial Downtown (RCC-D) District with overlay conditions to provide additional buffering between the commercially zoned property and the adjacent residential neighborhoods. The current zoning designation permits all of the proposed uses.

SITE DATA:

The approximately 38 acre site is generally located on the southwest side of I-35E, 1,200 feet north of Wind River Lane. It is undeveloped and has approximately 2,100 feet of frontage along I-35 E. The triangular-shaped property includes mature trees along the perimeter, a 3-acre pond, and an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) running north from the pond to I-35E.

USE OF PROPERTY UNDER CURRENT ZONING:

The purpose of Regional Center Commercial Downtown (RCC-D) District is to "create high density centers of activity including shopping, services, recreation, employment and institutional facilities supported by and serving an entire region." The RCC-D district is one of the most intense zoning districts in the Regional Mixed Use future land category and the City of Denton as a whole. It is intended to promote mixed use development with an urban character and businesses with a highly regional customer base to attract visitors to the city. Moderate to high density residential uses with a maximum density of 100 units per acre are permitted including townhomes and apartments associated with a mixed-use development. All commercial and institutional uses are permitted with the exception of the sale of products grown on site, motels, equestrian facilities, outdoor recreation, sexually oriented businesses, elementary schools, and cemeteries. Most industrial uses are either limited or not permitted.

The proposed Buc-ee's Travel Center meets the intent of the RCC-D District, and its associated uses of Retail Sales and Service, Quick Vehicle Servicing, and Drive-through Facility are permitted in RCC-D.

SURROUNDING ZONING AND LAND USES:

North: Property to the northwest is zoned as Regional Center Residential 2 (RCR-2) District and Regional Center Commercial Neighborhood (RCC-N) District and is developed with retail and restaurant uses.

- East: Adjacent property to the east is zoned at Regional Center Residential 1 (RCR-1) District and is developed with retail sales and service uses. Property across I-35E is zoned as Regional Center Commercial Neighborhood (RCC-N) District and is developed with restaurants and hotels.
- South: Property to the south is zoned as Neighborhood Residential 3 (NR-3) District and Regional Center Commercial Downtown (RCC-D) District and is developed with single-family dwellings and commercial uses. A multi-family dwelling development is also planned for the property to the south.
- West: Property to the west is zoned as Neighborhood Residential 3 (NR-3) and is developed with single-family dwellings.

COMPATIBILITY OF THE DEVELOPMENT WITH SURROUNDING ZONING AND LAND USES:

The proposed uses are permitted under the existing zoning. The Denton Development Code (DDC) provides for specific screening mechanisms to ensure sufficient buffering between the residential uses and the proposed use.

No access to the adjacent neighborhoods will be provided from the proposed development. Access to the site will be finalized during platting and with the Building Permit; however, the current conceptual site plan shows access from the north near the Goodwill Store and the south from Unicorn Lake Boulevard. Two additional access points will be obtained from the I-35E improvements, one of which will extend Brinker Road under the highway directly to the site.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Per the Denton Plan 2030, the Future Land Use Designation is Regional Mixed Use.

Regional Mixed Use applies to areas that serve as regional destinations within Denton. Development may include moderate and high density residential, commercial, office, entertainment and other uses except industrial, at the highest levels of scale and density within the city. This designation is located predominantly along I-35 interchanges and primary arterials to encourage the greatest regional accessibility. Future development in Regional Mixed Use areas will complement and embrace existing, viable uses, and raise the standard of design to increase their regional draw, accommodate greater connectivity and mobility options, and create a sense of place.

CONSIDERATIONS:

1. The uses associated with the proposed Buc-ee's Travel Center are permitted in the RCC-D District.
2. A conceptual site plan was presented at a neighborhood meeting on November 11, 2015 (attached), but has not been reviewed for compliance with the Denton Development Code (DDC). Development of the site must comply with all standards outlined in the DDC, including platting, lot dimensions and coverage, site design, lighting, landscaping and tree canopy, ESA impacts, tree preservation, and parking. Any deviations from the development standards requested by the developer must be approved in accordance with the procedures outlined in the DDC. An official submittal has not been made to the City to date.

3. Additionally, in 2008, an overlay was placed on the subject property. The conditions of the overlay require the following:
 - a. 50-foot buffer of landscaping is required, including the water features (existing pond), abutting the residential developments to the west (Southridge Estates) and to the south (Wind River Estates) with the right to install a walking trail and other complementary hardscape around the existing pond (including the area within the 50-foot buffer) in connection with a pedestrian easement;
 - b. No building within 100 feet of the residential developments to the west and to the south of the subject Property shall exceed a maximum building height of 40 feet;
 - c. The owner of the subject Property will not remove the existing pond along the western boundary of the subject Property abutting Southridge Estates;
 - d. The owner of the subject Property (or its designee) will erect , at its expense, an 8-foot wrought iron fence with finials for the benefit of the homes to the west of the subject property which are directly across from and adjacent to the aforementioned pond.
4. Due to the development of the site for a Buc-ee's Travel Center, access along I-35 E in south Denton will be improved. Specifically, TxDOT has approved an additional \$28 million in improvements in order to help with traffic and congestion in the area. Three areas along I-35 E are slated for improvements in association with the construction of the Buc-ee's Travel Center:
 - a. **Loop 288/Lillian Miller and I-35E** - Plans for the intersection at Loop 288/Lillian Miller and I-35 E will include four lanes in each direction (two through lanes and two left-turn lanes), U-turns on each side of the intersection, and pedestrian improvements.
 - b. **Brinker Road and I-35E** - Brinker Road will be extended under I-35E and include two lanes in each direction, one turn lane, and U-turns.
 - c. **South Mayhill Road and I-35E** - Mayhill Road and I-35E will be modified to include a U-turn on the western side of Mayhill Road.

These improvements are scheduled to be completed in Spring of 2018.

5. The location of a new detention pond associated with the proposed development will help to mitigate nuisances between the commercial development and the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
6. Access from the subject property to the adjacent neighborhoods would be prohibited.
7. As a commercial development located along the I-35 E corridor, the proposed Buc-ee's Travel Center meets the intent of the Denton Plan 2030's Regional Mixed Use designation, drawing on a customer base beyond Denton's limits. Additionally, proposed improvements to I-35E in association with the development will improve the mobility along I-35E, a goal of the Denton Plan 2030.

8. The developer held two neighborhood meetings on November 11, 2015. Approximately 100 citizens attended the meeting and voiced concerns about the project. Major topics of discussion included the hours of operation, buffer requirements, traffic, visual impacts, lighting, tax incentives, and crime.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Aerial Map
- Zoning Map
- Future Land Use Map
- Conceptual Site Plan
- Elevations

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