

**AGENDA REPORT  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING  
April 22, 2021**

**SUMMARY**

A request by the City of Columbia (owner) to apply permanent City O (Open Space) zoning, upon annexation, of approximately 135-acres of land presently zoned Boone County M-L (Light Industrial). The subject property housed the former Boone County Fairgrounds and will be developed as a future City park. The site is located northeast of the interchange of Brown School Road and Highway 63, and includes property addressed 5212 N Oakland Gravel Road. **(Case #114-2021)**

**DISCUSSION**

The City of Columbia (owner) seeks to permanently zoning, upon annexation, the approximately 135 acres former utilized as the Boone County Fairground which it has recently acquired. The City seeks to designate the acreage "O" (Open Space) district such that future improvement of the site for expansion of public park usage can be streamlined. Future development of the site, given its control by the Parks and Recreation Department, will be subject to the Department's established public engagement process and will require City Council approval prior to construction of any future improvements. The site is located northeast of the interchange of Brown School Road and Highway 63 and is currently zoned County M-L (Light Industrial).

In 2020, the Boone County Commission transferred ownership of this 135-acre former portion of the Boone County Fairgrounds to the City of Columbia to be used for recreation and entertainment purposes while under the management of the Parks and Recreation Department. The agreement transferring ownership of the property included a provision that the City would honor existing lease agreements and allow continued use of 23 acres of the property for the Boone County Fair for a period of at least 10 days per year. During the rest of the year, the park would remain closed to the public for the remainder of the lease agreements which are set to expire in 2022. The Parks Department intends to use the timeframe of the existing lease agreements to conduct public input meetings in order to develop a master plan for the property and identify possible funding sources for property improvements.

The site is relatively flat with Bear Creek traversing the western portion of the property and a tributary coming from the eastern portion that flows toward Bear Creek and forms a confluence southwest of this property, across the adjacent Brown School Road and Highway 63 interchange. Both creeks have wooded riparian corridors whose widths are approximately 90'-100' in length; however, some cross sections range from 40' up to 190'. The property has several improvements on site including covered structures, dirt roads, and paved surfaces. A portion of the existing road system, centrally located on this tract, was used as the runway for the former Woods Memorial Airport which ceased operations in 1959. Interspersed between the creeks, roads, and structures are several small hay fields that amount to 49-acres in total.

The property is currently located within unincorporated Boone County and is zoned County M-L. The requested O (Open Space) zoning is a downzoning request with respect to potential private development under the present county zoning. However, O zoning would permit public parks, community gardens, playgrounds, schools, and other community-oriented or public service facilities. The Open Space zoning district is intended to ensure and regulate the use of publicly owned parks, open space, and nature reserves. Open Space zoning for public property managed by the Parks and Recreation department allows the City to streamline the permitting process and ensure the property is used for public service facilities for years to come.

The site is contiguous to the City's existing municipal boundary along its northern, eastern, and southern boundaries. All adjacent properties are unimproved with the exception of Atkins park, zoned R-1 (One-Family Dwelling), to the northeast and a 6.5-acre RV park to the northwest that is in unincorporated Boone

County and zoned C-GP (Planned General Commercial) . Vacant properties to the east and southeast are zoned R-1. Three vacant properties across Stark Avenue to the south were zoned O-P and C-P (Planned Office and Planned Commercial Districts, respectively) between 2005 and 2006. Properties to the west and northwest are in unincorporated Boone County and are zoned county M-L, C-GP, and R-S (Residential Single Family). The M-L property is vacant and remains under Boone County ownership. The R-S property is vacant.

The associated annexation request, to be considered by City Council in conjunction with the requested permanent zoning, will ensure that the property has access to public utility services necessary to support future park development and is consistent with the provisions of Ordinance 115-97A governing the extension or provision of sewer services to contiguous property. The site is located within the City's Urban Services Area (USA) as presented by the Columbia Imagined Comprehensive Plan, and can be served by City utilities; the property is within the City's water service area and electric service area. Three City sanitary lines traverse the property; two generally run parallel on either side of Bear Creek and the third runs parallel to Bear Creek's tributary on the creeks northwestern side. The property takes access from Starke Avenue to the south and North Oakland Gravel to the west – both of which feed into the Highway 63 interchange located on the site's southwest property line.

The site is designated Employment district and Open Space / Greenbelt district on the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The riparian corridor of the stream takes the Open Space / Greenbelt designation while the remainder of the site takes the Employment designation which is reflective of the County's M-L zoning at the time of the Comprehensive Plan's adoption in 2013. The Employment district is broadly defined for commercial and industrial uses, such as offices, manufacturing, and other intensive uses. A 2020 Council Memo (attached), states that the site may house staff offices for the Parks and Recreation Department, a Convention and Visitors Bureau, and/or tourism-related activities. While some of the park-related uses associated with this zoning request may appear inconsistent with the FLUM designation, the impacts associated with a regional park and event center are consistent.

Upon annexation, the FP-O (Floodplain Overlay) district designation will apply to the portion of this property that is located within numbered and unnumbered A and AE zones, on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) for Boone County and any portions of X-zone shaded, other flood areas, which are within the upper square mile of a flood drainage area. No development shall be permitted in this overlay except upon the issuance of a floodplain development permit granted by the Director of Community Development. This overlay will apply to the corridors of Bear Creek and its tributary stream immediately upon annexation.

The proposed permanent zoning has been reviewed by staff and external agencies and has been found to be consistent with the goals and objectives of Columbia Imagined, is compatible with the adjacent zoning and land uses, and is appropriate for the subject property.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Approval of O zoning as permanent City zoning upon annexation.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (ATTACHED)**

- Locator maps
- Ordinance 024234, Council Memo, Exhibit A

**SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

<b>Area (acres)</b>	135.22 acres
<b>Topography</b>	Minimal grade change with the exception of the two stream channels
<b>Vegetation/Landscaping</b>	Hay fields interspersed / Wooded area along stream corridors
<b>Watershed/Drainage</b>	Bear Creek
<b>Existing structures</b>	Several existing covered structures previously used for the old airport and fairgrounds.

**HISTORY**

<b>Annexation date</b>	NA
<b>Zoning District</b>	Boone County M-L
<b>Land Use Plan designation</b>	Open Space / Greenbelt and Employment Districts
<b>Previous Subdivision/Legal Lot Status</b>	Not a Legal Lot

**UTILITIES & SERVICES**

All utilities provided by the City of Columbia n. Fire service will be provided jointly between the City and County fire services.

**ACCESS**

<b>Starke Avenue</b>	
<b>Location</b>	Southern edge of property
<b>Major Roadway Plan</b>	Major Collector
<b>CIP projects</b>	None
<b>Sidewalk</b>	Required

<b>North Oakland Gravel Road</b>	
<b>Location</b>	Western edge of property
<b>Major Roadway Plan</b>	Major Collector
<b>CIP projects</b>	None
<b>Sidewalk</b>	Required

**PARKS & RECREATION**

<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	Atkins Park to the N; Norma Sunderland Smith Park to the NE: Onsite future park development
<b>Trails Plan</b>	Future extension of Bear Creek Trail on site
<b>Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan</b>	Proposed new addition – Bear Creek Trail

**PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

All property owners within 200 feet and City-recognized neighborhood associations within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the subject property were notified of this pending request on April 2, 2020. Ten postcards were distributed.

<b>Public Notification Responses</b>	None
<b>Notified Neighborhood association(s)</b>	None
<b>Correspondence received</b>	None