



Plan Commission Staff Report
Department of Planning and Building
Town of McCordsville

October 20, 2020

Project: PC-20-003, Amended Mt. Comfort EDA Plan Commission Order re Aurora Way Allocation Area

Petitioner: Town of McCordsville Redevelopment Commission (RDC)

Request: Petitioner is seeking a determination from the Plan Commission that the Amendment to the Mt. Comfort Economic Development Area (EDA) and the Economic Development Plan (EDP) drafted for Aurora Way Allocation Area conforms to the Plan of Development for the Town of McCordsville.

Staff Review: In 2019 the Town approved the Mt. Comfort EDA. Currently, there is a proposed project, commonly known as Southwarks Metals, that is proposed within the EDA. In addition to the proposed project, the Town seeks to construct a new road, known as Aurora Way, within the EDA in order to increase accessibility within the EDA and in surrounding areas benefiting and serving the EDA. In order to assist in funding this new road construction the Town proposes an amendment to the EDA and the EDP to create the Aurora Way Allocation Area.

Subject Property

The Allocation Area, approximately 32 acres, is shown as Exhibit A of this staff report. In general, it is located along the eastside of Mt. Comfort Road (CR 600W) approximately at the mid-point between CR 500N and CR 600N. The applicable parcel ID number is 30-06-06-200-001.000-021.

Land Use & Zoning

The subject property is zoned I-2 with Commitments. The Zoning map is enclosed as Exhibit B. The property is currently being used as agriculture.

Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan, along with the Zoning Ordinance would form what State Statute considers the *Plan for Development*. The Town of McCordsville's Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2011. The Plan's Vision statement is:

Guided commercial development and unique
Residential opportunities with valued
Open Spaces and
Well-managed community services and amenities

That compliment a
Healthy local economy

Some strong themes within the Comp Plan include *Growing with a Plan* and *Growing Concurrent with Infrastructure Development*. *Growing with a Plan* is described as striving to provide the best to our residents in terms of housing, employment, recreation, and services. The *Growing Concurrent with Infrastructure Development* language notes the importance of our existing major infrastructure network, along with equal importance of that network to the future of McCordsville. It goes on to say the planning and coordination of utility development, as well as roadway enhancements, will be imperative in helping the Town achieve its long-term growth and development goals. The Comprehensive Plan also lays out a series of Goals. A number of these goals are applicable to this proposal. Those Goals are denoted below, along with the objectives of each.

Land Use Goal #2: *Promote a balance of land uses that secures the fiscal well-being of the Town and its tax base*

- Evaluate the economic impact of each development to ensure that current residents and businesses are not overly burdened with the cost of new development.
- Arrange land uses so as to capitalize on existing infrastructure.
- Use the future land use map to identify large, contiguous areas for future commercial and industrial developments.
- Encourage developments that also provide public amenities such as recreational areas and gathering spaces.

Transportation Goal #3: *Achieve and maintain a balanced transportation system that promotes safe and efficient traffic circulation*

- Ensure that the development of large, undeveloped areas of land that would otherwise require the construction of new thoroughfares observe a half-mile gridded street pattern.
- Minimize through trips on arterial roads by connecting collector roads and local streets.
- Ensure connectivity between existing developments and new developments through the use of stub streets.
- Minimize the frequency of curb cuts along arterial streets and other major thoroughfares by maintaining a minimum distance between individual curb cuts along arterial streets and other major thoroughfares.
- Improve traffic circulation by maintaining a minimum distance between a curb cut and the intersection of major thoroughfares.
- Reserve adequate rights-of-way for new and improved roadways.

Transportation Goal #4: *Achieve and maintain a balanced transportation system that promotes accessibility throughout the entire community*

- Establish a new north-south route(s) or upgrade an existing route to ensure ease of movement within and through the Town.
- Enhance east-west connections through the study area (CR 700W to CR 400W).
- Accommodate non-vehicular movements in all new development.

Public Facilities Goal #1: *Plan for infrastructure and services that support planned future growth*

- Facilitate economic development by providing the infrastructure necessary for business expansion and growth.
- Encourage the installation and maintenance of telecommunications infrastructure, such as fiber optics, or FTTH.
- Seek alternative infrastructure funding sources.

Economic Development Goal #1: *Recruit and retain general business and light industrial development that enhances the business climate established by McCordsville's existing businesses*

- Encourage commercial development in Old Town.
- Increase the tax base by providing a diverse range of commercial choices.
- Encourage commercial development that serves the needs of local residents.
- Explore higher paying employment options that match local education levels and increase per capita income.
- Work to support and retain local businesses as they grow and expand their operations locally.

Economic Development Goal #2: *Create a strong and diverse tax base that provides additional revenue and increases the quality of municipal services provided to residents*

- Increase the tax base by providing a diverse range of commercial choices.
- Centralize larger commercial developments where they can become a stable economic base for the Town and a catalyst for further economic growth.
- Continue to develop and routinely consult a well thought out future land use plan.

Another element of the Comprehensive Plan is the Future Land Use Map. The Future Land Use Map is a critical component of any Comprehensive Plan as it provides direction to staff, residents, business owners, and the appointed and elected officials on all land use issues. The Future Land Use Map is attached as Exhibit C. The Map should be used as the basis for land use discussions and decisions. However, the Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Map should be considered living, breathing documents that need may need to be updated and/or deviated from occasionally. A land use which does not directly correspond to the Future Land Use Map does not necessarily mean it is an inappropriate land use. However, in this case, the Future Land Use Map is in keeping with the existing zoning, and therefore recommends an industrial land use.

Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance acts as an implementation and enforcement arm of the Comprehensive Plan. It includes all the standards and requirements applicable to all types of development in the Town. Those standards and requirements were crafted to regulate development in a manner which would produce subdivisions,

homes, commercial buildings, streetscapes, public spaces, community identity, etc envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan.

Staff Comments:

The Comprehensive Plan's Vision Statement states – “Guided Commercial development”...and... “Healthy local economy”. An Allocation Area (or TIF District) is an economic development tool that can do both. One, it guides commercial development to the TIF District, because it advises interested parties that we are open for business, we have a plan, and we are willing to make a public investment in this area for the right project. Two, a diverse tax base is an important component of a healthy local economy. The anticipated industrial development of this area, which would be served by Aurora Way, will assist in diversifying the Town's tax base.

Furthermore, the Allocation Area and its intended industrial development along with the proposed roadway, Aurora Way specifically speak to and/or address all six of the goals listed above.

Our Comprehensive Plan includes a few main themes which can be found throughout the document. Three of these themes are applicable to this proposal. First, growth is acknowledged and desired, so long as it is planned for and managed. Second, there is clear understanding that there must be a relationship between growth and infrastructure. Third, a strong, sustainable commercial tax base is sought. The proposed Allocation Area is in keeping with all three of these themes, because it promotes growth, provides a funding vehicle for infrastructure and other capital expenses, and will add new assessed value once development occurs.

The Plan Commission is tasked with determining if the Amending Declaratory Resolution and the 2020 Plan conform to the *Plan of Development* of the Town. The packet attached to the agenda includes the Order and the Amending Declaratory Resolution. For reference purposes, below is a brief explanation of each document.

Plan Commission Order: This is the document signed by the Plan Commission stating it has determined the Declaratory Resolution (in this case an Amended Declaratory Resolution) and EDP (in this case an Amended EDP conforms to the *Plan for Development* (Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance) for the Town of McCordsville.

Declaratory Resolution: This is the resolution signed by the RDC stating its intent, listing the basics of the EDA guidelines and regulations. Again, in this particular case it is an Amended Declaratory Resolution, because we are amending the Declaratory Resolution that was adopted last year.

Economic Development Plan (EDP): This document includes a description of the project, the location, project objectives, procedural requirements, and how and the manner in which the Plan may be amended. In this particular case, the only amendment to the EDP is the addition of Aurora Way and therefore the Amendment is addressed within the Amended Declaratory Resolution.

Staff believes this Amendment to the Mt. Comfort EDA is in accordance with the Plan for Development of the Town of McCordsville and recommends approval of the Plan Commission Order. Staff will be prepared to answer any questions at the meeting.

Exhibit A – EDA & Allocation Area

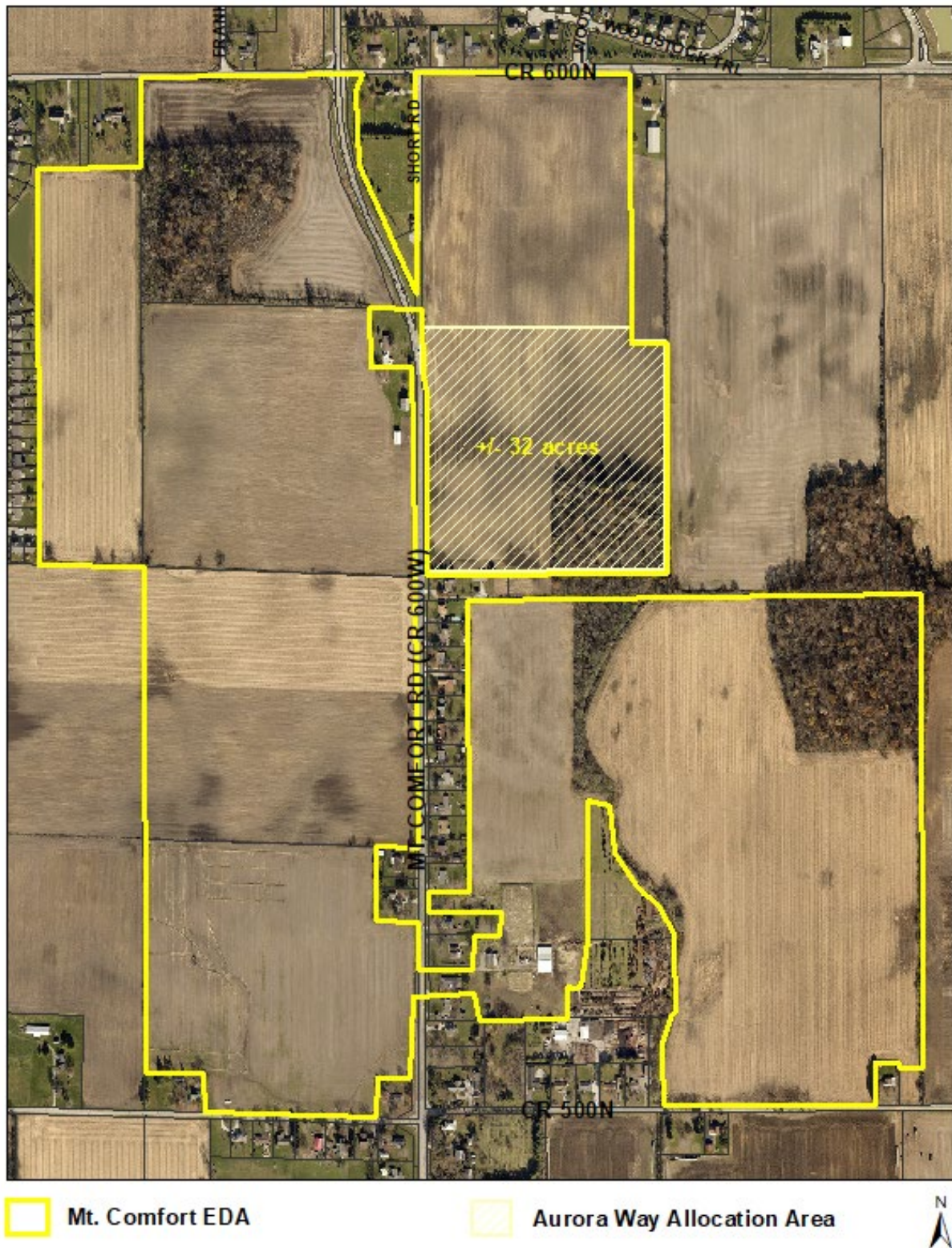


Exhibit B – Zoning Map

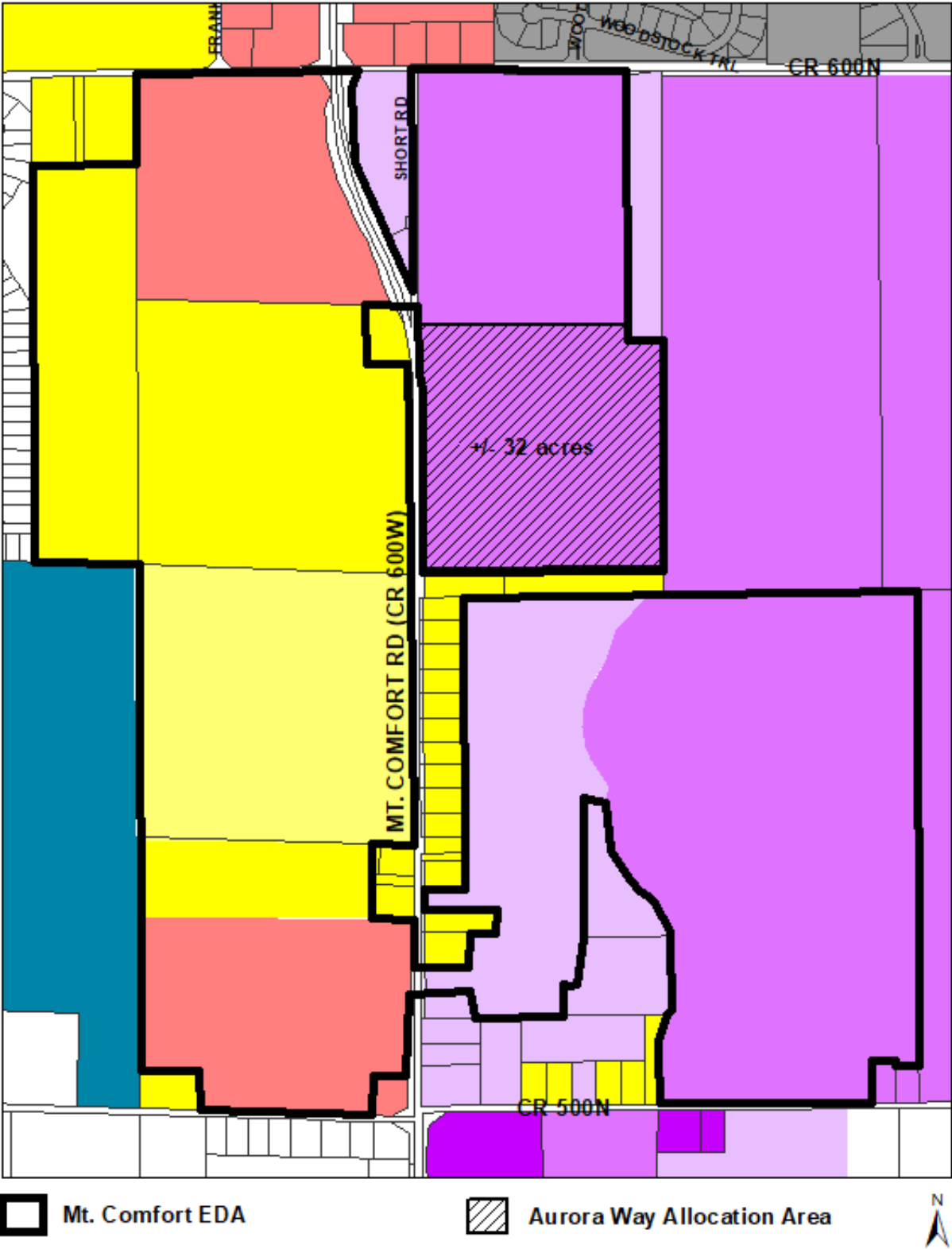


Exhibit C – Future Land Use Map

