

MEETING DATE: March 8, 2022

STAFF: Stuart Borders, Senior Planner

PROJECT NAME: Little Blue Valley/M-78 Hwy Comprehensive Plan amendment

CASE NUMBER / REQUEST: 22-150-01 – Comprehensive Plan amendment – Little Blue Valley

APPLICANT: NorthPoint Development

OWNER: Various owners

PROPERTY LOCATIONS: Multiple locations along the Little Blue Parkway corridor at, or near, the intersections of M-78 Highway, Truman Road and the Little Blue Parkway

PUBLIC NOTICE:

- Public notice published in Independence Examiner – February 19, 2022

FURTHER ACTION:

Following action by the Planning Commission, this Comprehensive Plan amendment request is scheduled for resolution action by the City Council on April 4th.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends **APPROVAL** of this Comprehensive Plan amendment request.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION & BACKGROUND INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION:

NorthPoint Development seeks to amend the City Comprehensive Plan for various properties along the Little Blue Parkway, Truman Road, M-78 Highway, and Necessary Road.

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

This area was part of the Harmony Development that received City approval back in 2007. The project contained two large land areas separated by the Little Blue River. Containing 1,376 acres, Harmony West (West Valley) was larger and extended from Bundschu Road to Necessary Road with much of the land adjacent to the Little Blue Parkway. The West Valley was planned for a mixture of residential, office, commercial, with a 'Town Center' in the triangular tract encircled by Truman Road, M-78 Highway, and the Little Blue Parkway. The economic downturn of the late 2000's stalled the project, and other than the New Town development in the East Valley in 2014, the Harmony project has been inactive.

In April 2018, the City Council approved Imagine Independence Comprehensive Plan 2040. The Future Land Use plan was developed utilizing existing plans and feedback gathered during the extensive public engagement associated with the Comprehensive Plan. As a result, the future land use plan included the uses envisioned from the Harmony Development (i.e., a mixture of residential, office, commercial).

ANALYSIS

NorthPoint Development LLC (NorthPoint) now seeks to develop this area as ‘Eastgate Commerce Center’, containing about 854 acres in the West Valley for commercial and industrial use. This requires rezoning parcels of land to BP/PUD (Business Park/Planned Unit Development) and I-1 (Industrial). In conjunction with this proposed rezoning, all but one of project areas call for an amendment to the City’s recently adopted Comprehensive Plan. The areas being requested for a zone change have individual applications and are being considered concurrently.

The term ‘Business Park’ land use category in the Comprehensive Plan is described as “...includes manufacturing, transportation and wholesale activities, office and research facilities, and limited retail and services. Most activities (except for limited outdoor display) take place within enclosed buildings. This category will apply to industrial parks as proposed in the land use plan.

‘Industrial’ land use category includes manufacturing, limited office, research, retail, and service activities. This category may encompass a broad range of intensities and activities, including uses with outdoor activities and the potential for external impacts such as odors, noise, and vibration during all parts of the day and night. Adequate and often extensive buffering should be provided and maintained from less intense land uses.

The following table corresponds to the attached amendment map with the subject areas to be amended color-coded:

Area	Acreage	Current Designation	Proposed Designation
Blue	487.64	Mixed Use/Residential Neighborhood	Industrial
Pink	81.25	Mixed Use	Business Park
Green	98.64	Mixed Use	Industrial
Red	95.34	Residential Neighborhood	Business Park

Applicant Information

NorthPoint is a privately held company with several offices in the Midwest including one in Riverside, Missouri. The company manages all aspects of multi-family and industrial development including site selection, land acquisition, site engineering, architecture, and brokerage services. One of its projects now under development is the ‘Northland Park’ site just west of M-291 Highway and south of M-210

Highway. An overall concept plan for this Eastgate Commerce Center is also attached for your review.

Consistency with *Independence for All*, Strategic Plan:

This amendment relates to the goal of increasing the economic prosperity of the community and provide additional employment opportunities. It will also support the development of an industrial/office business park and the development of a key City corridor.

Comprehensive Plan Guiding Land Use Principles: One of the Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principles is to “Provide sufficient opportunities for industrial development sites within the community and promote diversification of the City’s commercial/industrial base.” The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment would be a step towards meeting this guiding principle as the EastGate Commerce Center is a 10–15-year development project.

The proposed development site is approximately 1,216 acres in size. The site is undeveloped, and the predominant current use is agricultural in nature. The proposed development is located along Little Blue Parkway north of RD Mize Road, along M-78 east of Little Blue Parkway, and along M-7 south of the round-a-bout.

Little Blue Parkway and M-78 are four-lane roadways with paved shoulders and an open drainage system. Truman Road is a two-lane roadway with an open drainage system. Little Blue Parkway and M-78 are identified on the Thoroughfare Plan as Arterial and Highway, respectively. Truman Road is identified as Arterial – Major on the Thoroughfare Plan. These higher-level roadway classifications would support the Business Park and Industrial land use designations.

EXHIBITS

Comprehensive Plan Amendment Exhibit
Eastgate Overall Master Plan
NorthPoint Company Information
Current Comprehensive Map