



MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 17, 2023

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
Dave Perrault, City Administrator

FROM: Jessica Jagoe, Community Development Director

SUBJECT: **Planning Case 23-002 – Concept Plan Review**
Global One Commercial - Primer Tracer Property

Budgeted Amount:
N/A

Actual Amount:
N/A

Funding Source:
N/A

Council Should Consider

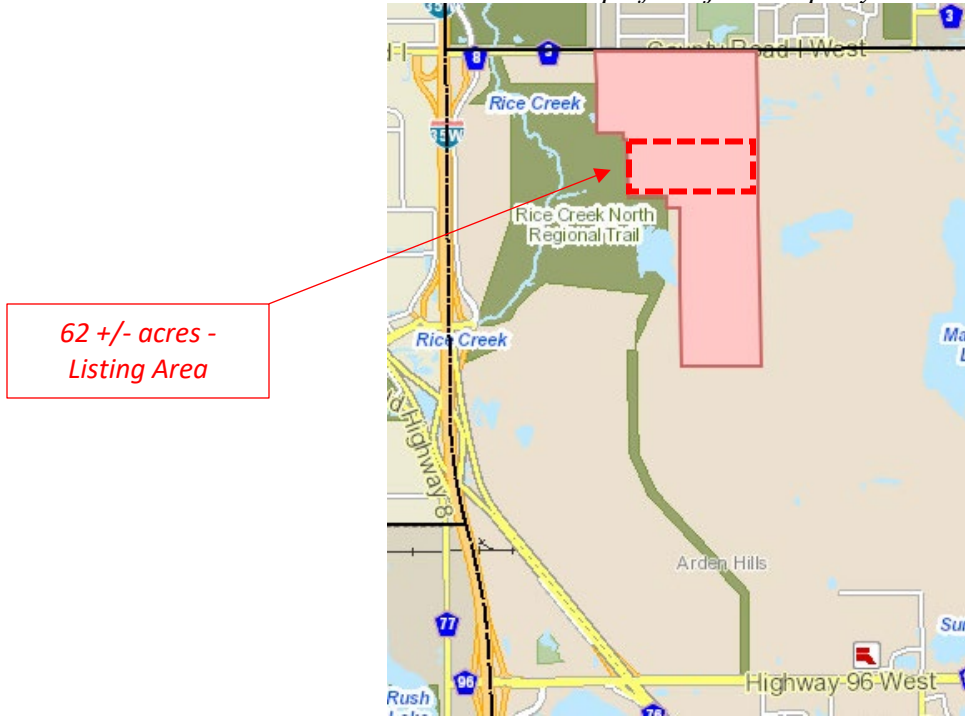
The Council should consider a request for a Concept Plan Review, submitted by Global One Commercial (“Applicant”) for property owned by the Federal Government commonly referred to as the “Primer Tracer” property (“Subject Property”). The Applicant is seeking feedback from the City Council on the concept plan for a potential industrial use in advance of the upcoming auction for 62 +/- acres that the Federal Government intends to sell.

The Concept Plan Review process is an opportunity for the City Council to provide comments and ask questions regarding proposed developments. A concept review is considered advisory and is nonbinding to the City and Applicant (Section 1320.14, Subd 4 of the Zoning Code). No formal action can be taken at a Work Session. A formal application will be subject to the full review process, including a public hearing with Planning Commission and City Council review.

Background

The Subject Property is part of approximately 1,611 acres owned by the Federal Government and used primarily by the Minnesota National Guard as the Arden Hills Army Training Site (AHATS). The Subject Property is approximately 233 acres of which 62 +/- acres is the highlighted “listing area” to be considered for purposes of the concept review discussion.

Aerial Map of Subject Property



General Services Administration (GSA) is a Federal Agency that manages real estate, acquisition, technology, and other mission-support services across the government. GSA Auctions facilitates the disposal of property owned by the Federal Government. Last summer, GSA Auctions made the City aware that the Federal Government was considering the sale of approximately 62 acres of an area that is commonly referred to as the “Primer Tracer” property. This portion of the property was previously used as a manufacturing facility for the production of component primers and tracing compounds associated with small caliber ammunition production.

GSA Parcel Listing



The Federal Government intends to sell the property “as is”. The Buyer purchasing the property would be responsible for handling all of the processes associated with the future development of the site (i.e. land use approval, demolition, permitting, etc.). In completing their due diligence prior to the auction, the Applicant has submitted for a high-level concept review in order to present an overview of future development scenarios before making the final decision to bid on this site. For the concept review, the Applicant wishes to engage in a discussion with the Council in order to gauge the City’s perspective of potential future vision(s) for this site.

Discussion

Existing Conditions

The following is the listing description from GSA Auctions:

- The 62-acre sale parcel is bounded by the Arden Hills Army Training Site on the north, east and south and the Rice Creek Corridor on the west. The Property contains buildings, roads and specialized infrastructure that supported ammunition manufacturing and testing. Structures include a primer manufacturing facility and earthen berm storage magazines. The improvements, constructed in the 1940s and 1950s, are in various stages of disrepair. The Property has no public street frontage. County Road I is about one quarter mile north. Access to the Property from County Road I will be in the form of an easement.

City staff is not aware of the analysis, if any, completed for the potential subdivision of land with regard to road access and/or utilities. The GSA listing does include information that environmental remediation has been completed on the approximate 62 acres to an industrial level. Staff’s understanding is that the deed for the sale of the property will include the land use restriction specifying no residential use.

Additionally, for background on this site, Ramsey County in partnership with Xcel Energy in December of 2015 had considered purchasing the Primer Tracer area from the Federal Government. The preliminary concept was for 20+ acres to be developed for an Emergency Management Center and 40+ acres would be a solar array supporting energy initiatives of the Rice Creek Commons site. Due to logistical and economic factors, Xcel Energy informed all parties that they would no longer be considering the Primer Tracer site as a future solar project location. Beyond that, the City has not studied or completed an analysis of potential future uses for this site. In addition, there is no guiding development plan for these 62 +/- acres within the TCAAP area.

The Subject Property is zoned Conservation District (CD). The purpose of the CD District is *“To provide a "holding" zone for federally owned lands on the Arden Hills Army Training Site to ensure that future development is staged, maintains a sustainable level of public expenditures for utilities and services, and protects those areas generally determined to be unsuitable for development due to the presence of wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, certain drainage and soil conditions, and critical wildlife habitat.”* The City’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan has this parcel as well as the areas immediately adjacent to the north, east, and south guided towards PP, Park Preserve. The properties to the west are owned by Ramsey County and are guided towards POS, Park and Open Space as part of the Rice Creek North Regional Trail.

Concept Plan Proposal

The Applicant has prepared two concept layouts both guided towards industrial uses. In both scenarios, the Applicant has identified an intent to seek rezoning of the 62-acres to I-2, General Industrial Zoning District. City Code defines Industry as “*Uses such as the manufacturing, compounding, processing, packaging, treatment, assembling or warehousing of products and materials.*” At this concept review stage, staff does not have the details necessary to complete a preliminary analysis of development scenarios as it pertains to compliance with I-2 District requirements or design standards. Based on an initial review, staff believes a future proposal would require the following land use requests:

- Preliminary Plat and Final Plat for Subdivision
- Comprehensive Plan Amendment to change designation of development site from Park Preserve to Light Industrial & Office
- Rezoning of the development site from CD, Conservation District to I-2, General Industrial District
- Planned Unit Development
- Conditional Use Permit for tenant uses and exterior storage

Budget Impact

N/A

Attachments

- A. Location Map
- B. Applicant Narrative
- C. Concept Site Plans
- D. Listing Photographs
- E. WS Presentation