



Commerce City

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Council Communication

File Number: CU-130-22

Agenda Date: 5/15/2023

Version: 1

Status: Agenda Ready

In Control: City Council

File Type: Conditional Use
Permit

Waste Connections is requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CU-130-23) to allow recycling facilities in an I-3 zone district.

Summary & Background

Waste Connections is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow recycling facilities in an I-3 zone district. The site, 4150 East 60th Avenue, previously contained extensive heavy industrial uses in the form of a bio-diesel refinery and methanol plant. The property is now vacant and was purchased by Waste Connections in 2022.

The applicant currently operates out of their Denver headquarters at 5500 Franklin Street with 400 employees. They picked the property at 4150 East 60th Avenue to expand their recycling volume and office operations within the Metropolitan area. The former brownfield site's centralized location and proximity to highways, interstates, and freight rail appealed to their goals of further reducing the carbon footprint of their operations.

For the site itself, they will be utilizing and repurposing three existing buildings on the site and demolishing six of the existing structures. A new 71,600 square-foot Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) will be constructed to process the recycling operations in the interior of the building. Waste Connections will be recycling paper, plastic, metal, glass and cardboard at this facility. The MRF is a state-of-the-art enclosed building that mechanically sorts the materials using robotics and A.I. technology to quickly process and ensure quality control with the materials being sorted. The mechanical nature of the technology allows the facility to recycle at a higher volume. The ability to process and recycle materials at a higher volume means less waste diverted to landfills and more materials repurposed for secondary use.

The applicant will also be constructing a scale house to weight incoming and outgoing materials and adaptively reuse the other three existing structures for office and maintenance uses. The overall site is proposed to employ 90 people. Some employees will be contained in the existing, but renovated, buildings on site. Others will work directly in the MRF facility.

Three conditions were initially recommended for approval by Community Development Staff; (A.) A Fire Mitigation and Emergency Preparedness Plan(s) shall be supplied to the South Adams County Fire Department and to the Community Development

Department upon approval by the South Adams County Fire Department. All fires shall immediately be reported to the South Adams County Fire Department. (B.) Copies of any applicable state or federal agency regulatory permits and inspections shall be provided to the Planning Division prior to commencement of operations. (C.) Methane detection and control devices shall be installed in all structures where and when deemed necessary by the Fire Marshal or Adams County Health Department. These three conditions of approval were included in the Planning Commission review and recommendation. During the Planning Commission hearing, the Commission requested three additional conditions of approval be added to this Conditional Use Permit: (D.) No outdoor storage of recyclable materials. (E.) Site shall be cleaned of debris outside of the recycling structure. (F.) All recycling processes shall be conducted indoors.

Staff Responsible (Department Head): Tricia McKinnon, Community Development

Staff Presenting: Libby Tart, City Planner

Financial Impact: N/A

Funding Source: N/A

Planning Commission Recommendation: On April 18, 2023, this case was presented to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission held a public hearing, took testimony, and voted (5 to 0) to forward the Conditional Use Permit request to City Council with a recommendation for approval with six conditions.

(A.) A Fire Mitigation and Emergency Preparedness Plan(s) shall be supplied to the South Adams County Fire Department and to the Community Development Department upon approval by the South Adams County Fire Department. All fires shall immediately be reported to the South Adams County Fire Department.

(B.) Copies of any applicable state or federal agency regulatory permits and inspections shall be provided to the Planning Division prior to commencement of operations.

(C.) Methane detection and control devices shall be installed in all structures where and when deemed necessary by the Fire Marshal or Adams County Health Department.

(D.) No outdoor storage of recyclable materials.

(E.) Site shall be cleaned of debris outside of the recycling structure.

(F.) All recycling processes shall be conducted indoors.

Action Alternatives:

Approve the application in accordance with the PC recommendation (six conditions);

Approve the application with the original proposed conditions (three conditions);

Approve the application with no conditions; or

Deny the application