

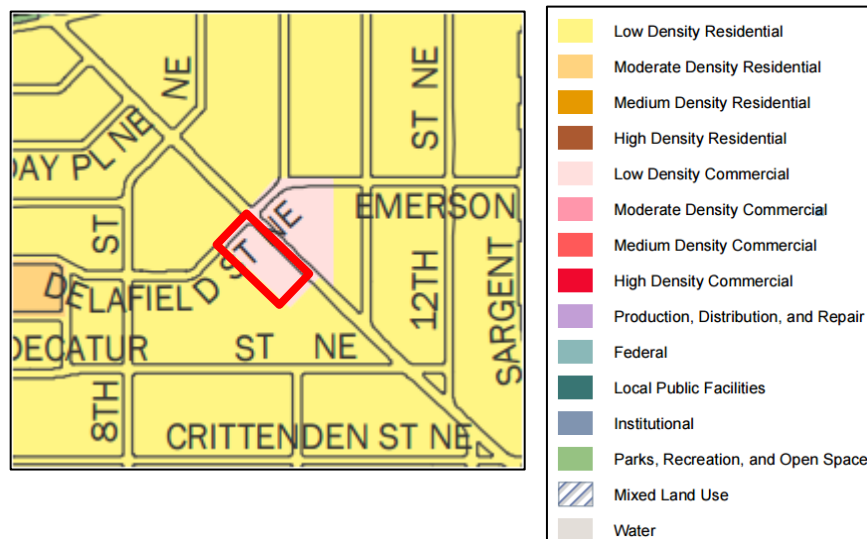
Application for an Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan
4950 South Dakota Avenue, NE
Square 3786 Lots 1 and 801

1. Brief Description of the Proposed Amendment (Section 2 of the Application Form).

This application for an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map is submitted for Square 3786, Lots 1 and 801, which are located at the corner of South Dakota Avenue and Delafield Street, NE (together, the “Site”). Lot 1 has approximately 21,000 square feet of land area and Lot 801 has approximately 9,283 square feet of land area. The Site is bounded by South Dakota Avenue, NE to the northeast, private property to the southeast and southwest, and Delafield Street, NE to the northwest. Lot 1 is presently improved with a McDonald’s restaurant and Lot 801 is improved with a small one-story strip mall. The Site and the properties directly across South Dakota Avenue, NE are zoned MU-3.

As shown on Figure 1, the FLUM currently designates the Site for Low Density Commercial. This application proposes to amend the FLUM so that the Site is designated as Moderate Density Commercial. Doing so will allow for a higher density and a greater variety of commercial land uses at the Site, which will help to provide a greater range of good and services at an appropriate density along this portion of South Dakota Avenue, NE.

Figure 1: Current FLUM Designations for the Site



As described in Section 3 of this Application, the proposal to amend the FLUM is consistent with the following District plans, policies, and orders:

- a. The Comprehensive Plan’s “vision for an inclusive city,” as defined by its Core Themes and Guiding Principles;
- b. The Comprehensive Plan’s Citywide Elements;
- c. The Comprehensive Plan’s Upper Northeast Element; and
- d. The Generalized Policy Map’s designation for the Site.

A. Current FLUM Designation.

As indicated in Figure 1, the Site is currently designated Low Density Commercial on the FLUM. The Low Density Commercial designation is used to define shopping and service areas that are generally low in scale and character. Retail, office, and service businesses are the predominant uses. Areas with this designation range from small business districts that draw primarily from the surrounding neighborhoods to larger business district uses that draw from a broader market area. 10A DCMR § 225.8. Under the 2016 Zoning Regulations, the zone districts listed as being consistent with the Low Density Commercial designation are MU-3 and MU-4.

B. Proposed FLUM Designation.

The Applicant proposes to amend the FLUM so that the Site is designated as Moderate Density Commercial. The is used to define shopping and service areas that are somewhat more intense in scale and character than the low-density commercial areas. Retail, office, and service businesses are the predominant uses. Areas with this designation range from small business districts that draw primarily from the surrounding neighborhoods to larger business districts uses that draw from a broader market area. Buildings are larger and/or taller than those in low density commercial areas but generally do not exceed five stories in height. The corresponding Zone districts are generally C-2-A, C-2-B, and C-3-A, although other districts may apply. 10A DCMR § 225.9. Under the 2016 Zoning Regulations, the zone districts listed as being consistent with the Moderate Density Commercial designation are MU-4, MU-5A, and MU -7.

2. Impacts of the Amendment (Section 3 of the Application Form).

The proposed FLUM amendment will benefit the South Dakota Avenue, NE corridor and the surrounding neighborhood in general by allowing a modestly higher density and a greater mix of uses at the Site. Moreover, as set forth below, the FLUM amendment is consistent with the following District plans, policies, and orders:

- a. The Comprehensive Plan’s “vision for an inclusive city,” as defined by its Core Themes and Guiding Principles;
- b. The Comprehensive Plan’s Citywide Elements;
- c. The Comprehensive Plan’s Upper Northeast Area Element; and
- d. The Generalized Policy Map’s designation for the Site.

The benefits of the FLUM amendment are set forth below.

A. The FLUM Amendment is Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s Core Themes and Guiding Principles.

The Comprehensive Plan is based on 36 Guiding Principles within five Core Themes that acknowledge that the benefits and opportunities of living in the District are not available to everyone equally and that divisions in the city—physical, social and economic—must be overcome to move from vision to reality. 10A DCMR § 216.3. The Guiding Principles are drawn from the Comprehensive Plan’s “vision for growing an inclusive city,” and express cross-cutting goals for the District’s future. 10A DCMR § 2004.4. The Guiding Principles are grouped into five core themes: Managing Growth and Change, Creating Successful Neighborhoods, Increasing Access

to Education and Employment, Connecting the City, and Building Green and Healthy Communities. 10A DCMR § 216.2. The individual policies and actions within the Comprehensive Plan's City Wide and Area Elements are based upon the city's commitment to following these Core Themes and Guiding Principles. 10A DCMR § 216.1.

The proposed FLUM amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Core Themes and Guiding Principles as follows:

i. Managing Growth and Change

The FLUM amendment acknowledges that change in the District is both inevitable and desirable, and that the key is to manage change in ways that protect the positive aspects of life in the city and reduce negatives, such as poverty, crime and homelessness. 10A DCMR § 217.1. The District needs both residential and non-residential growth to survive. Nonresidential growth benefits residents by creating jobs and opportunities for less affluent households to increase their income. 10A DCMR § 217.4. Redevelopment and infill opportunities along corridors and near transit stations will be an important component of reinvigorating and enhancing our neighborhoods. 10A DCMR § 217.6.

Consistent with these principles, permitting a modestly higher density and a greater mix of commercial uses at the Site through the proposed FLUM amendment will allow for new non-residential growth, thus generating jobs for District residents and creating opportunities for less affluent households to increase their income. Moreover, the FLUM amendment would support infill redevelopment of the Site, which is located along an important District avenue and approximately one half mile from the Fort Totten Metrorail station. This type of redevelopment would allow for additional new neighborhood-serving retail- and service-type uses, helping to reinvigorate and enhance the surrounding communities.

ii. Creating Successful Neighborhoods

Many neighborhoods include commercial and institutional uses that contribute to their character. Neighborhood businesses, retail districts, schools, park and recreational facilities, houses of worship and other public facilities all make our communities more livable. These uses provide strong centers that reinforce neighborhood identity and provide destinations and services for residents. 10A DCMR § 218.2. Consistent with this principle, the proposed FLUM amendment would allow for a greater range of commercial uses at the Site, which would serve local residents, reinforce neighborhood identity, and make the surrounding communities more livable. Moreover, as part of this Comprehensive Plan Amendment process, and for any future development of the Site, the neighborhood will be an integral part of redevelopment decision-making. Public input will be incorporated into land use and development decisions in order to help create and maintain successful and thriving neighborhoods. 10A DCMR § 218.8.

iii. Increasing Access to Education and Employment

Increasing access to jobs and education by District residents is fundamental to improving the lives and economic wellbeing of District residents. 10A DCMR § 219.1. An economically strong and viable District of Columbia is essential to the economic health and wellbeing of the region. Thus, a broad spectrum of private and public growth (with an appropriate level of supporting

infrastructure) should be encouraged. The District's economic development strategies must capitalize on the city's location at the center of the region's transportation and communication systems. 10A DCMR § 219.2. Despite the recent economic resurgence in the city, the District has yet to reach its full economic potential. Expanding the economy means increasing shopping and services for many District neighborhoods, bringing tourists beyond the National Mall and into the city's business districts, and creating more opportunities for local entrepreneurs and small businesses. The District's economic development expenditures should help support local businesses and provide economic benefits to the community. 10A DCMR § 219.9.

The proposed FLUM amendment will help to advance these goals by allowing for a greater density and mix of commercial uses at the Site. Doing so will create new jobs for District residents, thus helping to strengthen the local economy, increase shopping and services for the surrounding neighborhood, and create more opportunities for businesses to thrive.

iv. Connecting the City

Increased mobility can no longer be achieved simply by building more roads. The priority must be on investment in other forms of transportation, particularly transit. Mobility can be enhanced further by improving the connections between different transportation modes, improving traveler safety and security, and increasing system efficiency. 10A DCMR § 220.1. Washington's wide avenues are a lasting legacy of the 1791 L'Enfant Plan and are still one of the city's most distinctive features. The "great streets" of the city should be reinforced as an element of Washington's design through transportation, streetscape, and economic development programs. 10A DCMR § 220.3.

The Site is located approximately 0.4 miles from the Fort Totten Metrorail station, and along the South Dakota Avenue corridor, which supports multiple Metrobus routes. Providing for modestly higher density redevelopment at this transit-rich, infill location will support the District's goal of investing in and prioritizing public transportation. Moreover, redeveloping the Site will help to revive South Dakota Avenue as a street within the District that needs additional mixed use commercial investment at appropriate locations to reinforce its importance within the community.

v. Building Green and Healthy Communities

Permitting a modestly higher density development and a greater mix of uses in close proximity to the Fort Totten Metrorail station and adjacent to multiple Metrobus routes will improve the health of District residents by establishing land use patterns and land uses that reduce air pollution by encouraging the use of public transportation. 10A DCMR § 221.4. Higher density development at the Site is key to encouraging residents of the surrounding neighborhoods to take public transportation.

B. The FLUM Amendment is Consistent with the Citywide Elements within the Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan includes 13 Citywide Elements, each addressing a topic that is citywide in scope. 10A DCMR § 104.4. The purposes of the Citywide Elements are to define the requirements and aspirations of District residents and influence development, guide executive and legislative decisions; promote economic growth and jobs for District residents; guide private and public development to achieve community goals; maintain and enhance the District's natural and

architectural assets; and assist in the conservation, stabilization and improvement of each neighborhood. 10A DCMR § 102.6. Permitting higher density land uses on South Dakota Avenue and in close proximity to the Fort Totten Metrorail station through the proposed FLUM amendment is consistent with several of the Citywide Elements as follows:

i. Land Use Element

The Land Use Element is the cornerstone of the Comprehensive Plan. It establishes the basic policies guiding the physical form of the city and provides direction on a range of development, conservation, and land use compatibility issues. The Land Use Element describes the balancing of priorities that must take place in order to accommodate a multiplicity of land uses within the boundaries of the District. 10A DCMR § 300.1 These include enhancing neighborhood commercial districts, directing growth and new development to achieve economic vitality, and promoting and maintaining successful neighborhoods. 10A DCMR § 300.2.

The Land Use Element specifically prioritizes transit-oriented development, and notes that some of the existing zoning categories were drafted at a time when peak hour transit volumes were lower and regional congestion was less severe. Thus, the Land Use Element provides that “[c]hanges to the regulations may be needed to recognize the widespread desirability of transit use by those within walking distance.” 10A DCMR § 306.9.

The proposed FLUM amendment for the Site is fully consistent with these transit-oriented development principles, since it would allow for somewhat higher density and a greater mix of commercial uses to be concentrated in close proximity to a Metrorail station and adjacent to multiple Metrobus routes. Doing so will establish an integrated economic development, transportation, and urban design strategy, and will increase transit use to reduce regional congestion and improve environmental health. Due to the Site’s transit-focused location, the FLUM amendment and resultant density would enable infill growth without subjecting surrounding corridors to increased traffic congestion. It could also spur other properties surrounding the Site to be developed as new housing, which is specifically prioritized in the Land Use Element and by the District in general.

As set forth below, the proposed FLUM amendment is consistent with many of the policies within the Land Use Element.

- *Policy LU-1.3.1: Station Areas as Neighborhood Centers - Encourage the development of Metro stations as anchors for economic and civic development in locations that currently lack adequate neighborhood shopping opportunities and employment. The establishment and growth of mixed use centers at Metrorail stations should be supported as a way to reduce automobile congestion, improve air quality, increase jobs, provide a range of retail goods and services, reduce reliance on the automobile, enhance neighborhood stability, create a stronger sense of place, provide civic gathering places, and capitalize on the development and public transportation opportunities which the stations provide. This policy should not be interpreted to outweigh other land use policies which call for neighborhood conservation. Each Metro station area is unique and must be treated as such in planning and development decisions. The Future Land Use Map expresses the desired intensity and mix of uses around each station, and the Area Elements (and in some cases*

Small Area Plans) provide more detailed direction for each station area. 10A DCMR § 306.10.

Consistent with Policy LU-1.3.1, the proposed FLUM will encourage development in close proximity to the Fort Totten Metrorail station, establishing it as an anchor for economic and civic development. Allowing for slightly higher density and a greater range of commercial uses at the Site will encourage mixed-use growth close to the Metrorail station, thus reducing vehicle congestion and reliance on the automobile, improving air quality, increasing jobs and providing a range of retail goods and services adjacent to transit, and enhancing neighborhood stability and creating a stronger sense of place. Moreover, additional private development will be able to capitalize on the higher density at the Site and its transit-oriented location, thus further stabilizing and enhancing the neighborhood.

- *Policy LU-1.3.2: Development Around Metrorail Stations - Concentrate redevelopment efforts on those Metrorail station areas which offer the greatest opportunities for infill development and growth, particularly stations in areas with weak market demand, or with large amounts of vacant or poorly utilized land in the vicinity of the station entrance. Ensure that development above and around such stations emphasizes land uses and building forms which minimize the necessity of automobile use and maximize transit ridership while reflecting the design capacity of each station and respecting the character and needs of the surrounding areas. 10A DCMR § 306.11.*

The proposed FLUM amendment will support redevelopment adjacent to the Fort Totten Metrorail station at an underutilized site that has great infill redevelopment potential. Therefore, new development at the Site will emphasize land uses that help to minimize the necessity of automobile use and maximize transit ridership.

- *Policy LU-1.4.1: Infill Development - Encourage infill development on vacant land within the city, particularly in areas where there are vacant lots that create “gaps” in the urban fabric and detract from the character of a commercial or residential street. Such development should complement the established character of the area and should not create sharp changes in the physical development pattern. 10A DCMR § 307.5*

Consistent with Policy LU-1.4.1, the proposed FLUM amendment will enable infill development on land that is presently underutilized.

- *Policy LU-2.1.3: Conserving, Enhancing, and Revitalizing Neighborhoods - Recognize the importance of balancing goals to increase the housing supply and expand neighborhood commerce with parallel goals to protect neighborhood character, preserve historic resources, and restore the environment. The overarching goal to “create successful neighborhoods” in all parts of the city requires an emphasis on conservation in some neighborhoods and revitalization in others. 10A DCMR § 309.8*

Consistent with LU-2.1.3, the proposed higher density commercial FLUM designation will enable development that expands neighborhood commerce. This type of development will help to revitalize the surrounding neighborhood, improve the quality of life for residents,

and create a vibrant community where surrounding residents can walk to neighborhood-serving commercial uses.

- *Policy LU-2.4.1: Promotion of Commercial Centers - Promote the vitality of the District's commercial centers and provide for the continued growth of commercial land uses to meet the needs of District residents, expand employment opportunities for District residents, and sustain the city's role as the center of the metropolitan area. Commercial centers should be inviting and attractive places, and should support social interaction and ease of access for nearby residents. 10A DCMR § 312.5*

By allowing for a slightly higher-density land use designation, the proposed FLUM amendment will enable development that promotes the vitality of the surrounding neighborhood and provides for the continued growth of commercial land uses. Doing so will help to meet the needs of District residents, expand employment opportunities, and sustain the District's role as the center of the metropolitan area.

- *Policy LU-2.4.6: Scale and Design of New Commercial Uses - Ensure that new uses within commercial districts are developed at a height, mass, scale and design that is appropriate and compatible with surrounding areas. 10A DCMR § 312.10*

The proposed FLUM amendment will allow for a maximum heights and densities at the Site that are appropriate for the transit-rich location and will enable the type of, community-serving commercial development that is prioritized for the neighborhood.

ii. Economic Development Element

The overarching goal of the Economic Development Element is to strengthen the District's economy by sustaining its core industries, attracting new and diverse industries, accommodating future job growth, fostering the success of small businesses, revitalizing neighborhood commercial centers, improving resident job skills, and helping a greater number of District residents find and keep jobs in the Washington regional economy. 10A DCMR § 701.1.

The Comprehensive Plan forecasts that by 2025 there will be approximately 870,400 jobs in the District, which is a 125,000-job increase over the Comprehensive Plan's 20-year forecast period. 10A DCMR § 215.2. For the Upper Northeast Area, the Comprehensive Plan forecasts that by 2025 there will be 44,500 jobs, which is a 5,500-job increase over the 20-year forecast period. 10A DCMR § 215.21. Therefore, the Economic Development Element places a strong emphasis on the construction of new commercial projects that can accommodate a diverse range of employment types in all areas of the District. The proposed FLUM amendment will allow for a greater mix of commercial uses at the Site, which will help to accommodate anticipated job growth within the Far Northeast and Southeast.

As set forth below, the proposed FLUM amendment is consistent with several of the policies within the Economic Development Element:

- *Policy ED-2.2.3: Neighborhood Shopping - Create additional shopping opportunities in Washington's neighborhood commercial districts to better meet the demand for basic*

goods and services. Reuse of vacant buildings in these districts should be encouraged, along with appropriately-scaled retail infill development on vacant and underutilized sites. Promote the creation of locally-owned, non-chain establishments because of their role in creating unique shopping experiences. 10A DCMR § 708.7

Designating the Site to the Moderate Density Commercial designation will encourage development at the Site that creates additional shopping opportunities in one of the District's most underutilized commercial districts with high potential. Thus, the FLUM amendment will help to better meet the demand for basic goods and services for residents of the surrounding neighborhood.

- *Policy ED-3.1.1: Neighborhood Commercial Vitality - Promote the vitality and diversity of Washington's neighborhood commercial areas by retaining existing businesses, attracting new businesses, and improving the mix of goods and services available to residents. 10A DCMR § 713.5*

The proposed FLUM amendment will allow for a greater variety of commercial uses at the Site. This type of development will attract businesses, encourage business revitalization, improve the mix of goods and services available to residents in the surrounding area, and address the needs of commuters driving on the surrounding corridors and utilizing the nearby public transportation options.

C. The FLUM Amendment is Consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Upper Northeast Area Element.

The Site is located within the Upper Northeast Area Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Upper Northeast is principally known as a residential community, but encompasses a mix of uses that is particularly diverse compared to other parts of the city. 10A DCMR § 2400.1 and 2400.2. As stated above, the Upper Northeast is projected to add approximately 5,000 households by 2025, and its population is projected to increase by approximately 19% to 70,000. 10A DCMR § 2406.1. The number of jobs is also expected to increase by approximately 15% by 2025.

During the previous Comprehensive Plan revision process, residents of the Upper Northeast expressed a concern that they are the location of choice for "unwanted" municipal land uses (e.g. trash transfer stations, vehicle maintenance facilities), and that those types of uses are concentrated in Upper Northeast because the area has a large supply of industrially zoned land. 10A DCMR § 2407.1(c). "Upper Northeast neighborhoods have lived with the heavy truck traffic, noise, and visual blight that comes with industrial land uses for decades." 10A DCMR § 2407.1(d). Residents also expressed a desire to clean up "brownfield" sites in the community and return them to productive use. These sites provide an opportunity to apply "green" development principles, turning environmental liabilities into environmental assets. *Id.*

During the planning process, Upper Northeast residents also asserted that retail choices in Upper Northeast need to be expanded, and that more retail districts are desired to meet the day-to-day needs of residents. 10A DCMR § 2407.1(e). Residents also expressed a general agreement that the Rhode Island Avenue, Brookland/CUA, and **Fort Totten Metrorail stations are logical locations for future development.** 10A DCMR § 2401.2(i) (emphasis added).

Consistent with these goals for the Upper Northeast area, the proposed FLUM amendment to convert the underutilized Site along South Dakota Avenue to a somewhat higher density designation will significantly improve the surrounding communities and create a commercial corridor that District residents can be proud of. Expanding the permitted land use types will allow the projected residential and employment growth to expand naturally. It will also create an opportunity for the underutilized Site to be redeveloped with productive uses in an environmentally-conscience manner. Finally, re-designating the FLUM at the Site will create an unprecedented opportunity to improve the South Dakota thoroughfare and enhance the experience for residents, commuters, and visitors.

The proposed FLUM amendment would also help to foster a number of the policies listed within the Upper Northeast Area Element as follows:

- *Policy UNE-1.1.6: Neighborhood Shopping - Improve neighborhood shopping areas throughout Upper Northeast. Continue to enhance 12th Street NE in Brookland as a walkable neighborhood shopping street and encourage similar pedestrian-oriented retail development along Rhode Island Avenue, Bladensburg Road, South Dakota Avenue, West Virginia Avenue, Florida Avenue, and Benning Road. New pedestrian-oriented retail activity also should be encouraged around the area's Metro stations. 10A DCMR § 2408.7*

The proposed mixed-use FLUM designation will create an opportunity for commercial and retail development at the Site, including space reserved for local retailers. Permitting these types of uses at the Site will enhance South Dakota Avenue as a pedestrian-oriented retail destination.

- *Policy UNE-1.2.5: Increasing Economic Opportunity - Create new opportunities for small, local, and minority businesses within the Planning Area, and additional community equity investment opportunities as development takes place along New York Avenue, Bladensburg Road, Benning Road, and around the Metro stations. 10A DCMR § 2409.5*

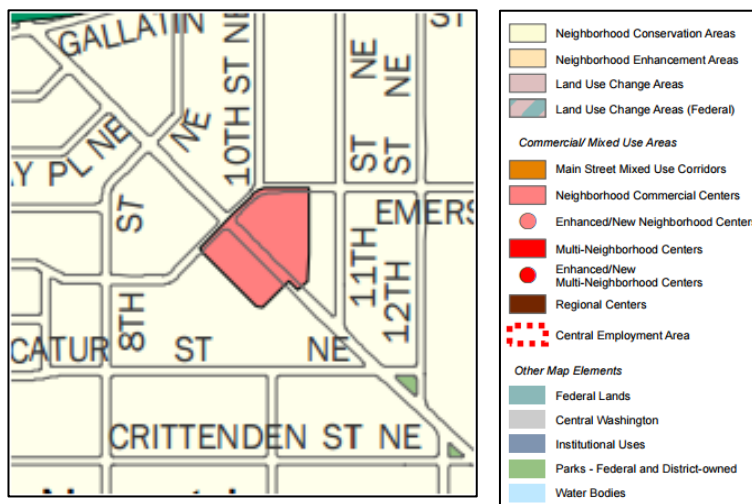
Permitting a wider range of land uses at the Site will allow for the production of retail space to accommodate small, local, and minority businesses within a half mile of the Fort Totten Metrorail station.

D. The FLUM Amendment is Consistent with the Site's Proposed Generalized Policy Map Designation.

As shown on Figure 3, the Site is designated as a Neighborhood Commercial Center on the Generalized Policy Map. Neighborhood Commercial Centers meet the day-to-day needs of residents and workers in the adjacent neighborhoods. Their service area is usually less than one mile. Typical uses include convenience stores, sundries, small food markets, supermarkets, branch banks, restaurants, and basic services such as dry cleaners, hair cutting, and child care. Office space for small businesses, such as local real estate and insurance offices, doctors and dentists, and similar uses, also may be found in such locations. 10A DCMR § 223.15. Neighborhood Commercial Centers include both auto-oriented centers and pedestrian-oriented shopping areas.

New development and redevelopment within Neighborhood Commercial Areas must be managed to conserve the economic viability of these areas while allowing additional development that complements existing uses. 10A DCMR § 223.16.

Figure 3: Current Generalized Policy Map Designation



The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment would allow for development of the Site in a manner that is consistent with the goals for Neighborhood Commercial Centers. Increased commercial density at the Site would allow for future retail development to meet the day-to-day needs of residents and workers in the adjacent neighborhoods. Due to its location along South Dakota Avenue, new commercial development at the Site would be auto-oriented, and would also be attractive as a pedestrian-oriented shopping area. Designating the Site was for Moderate Density Commercial land uses would allow for heights and densities that supports the economic viability of the area and allowing for commercial development that compliments the surrounding uses.

3. Conclusion.

Based on the foregoing, the proposed FLUM amendment to the Moderate Density Commercial designation will allow for development at the Site that is fully consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Generalized Policy Map's designations for the Site.