

REZONING REPORT

▶ **FILE #:** 4-O-26-RZ

AGENDA ITEM #: 13

AGENDA DATE: 4/9/2026

▶ **APPLICANT:** JOHN BRITTON

OWNER(S): Liquid Environmental Solutions

TAX ID NUMBER: 82 G K 01203

[View map on KGIS](#)

JURISDICTION: City Council District 6

STREET ADDRESS: 1307 GALWAY ST

▶ **LOCATION:** South of Mitchell St, west of N Cherry St

▶ **APPX. SIZE OF TRACT:** 1.11 acres

SECTOR PLAN: Central City

GROWTH POLICY PLAN: N/A (Within City Limits)

ACCESSIBILITY: Access is via an access easement through the neighboring parcel connecting to Galway Street, an unstriped local street.

UTILITIES: Water Source: Knoxville Utilities Board

Sewer Source: Knoxville Utilities Board

FIRE DISTRICT: Knoxville Fire Department

WATERSHED: First Creek

▶ **CURRENT ZONING:** I-G (General Industrial)

▶ **REQUESTED ZONING:** I-H (Heavy Industrial)

▶ **EXISTING LAND USE:** Industrial

▶
EXTENSION OF ZONING: No, it is not an extension.

HISTORY OF ZONING: None noted.

SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING: North: Commercial - I-G (General Industrial)

South: Industrial - I-G (General Industrial)

East: Commercial - I-G (General Industrial)

West: Industrial - I-G (General Industrial)

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT: The surrounding area features a mix of commercial, industrial, and wholesale uses adjacent to residential blocks consisting of single-family dwellings on small lots. This area is bounded by I-40 to the south and railroad tracks to the north.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

▶ **Deny the I-H (Heavy Industrial) zoning district because it is inconsistent with the Knoxville-Knox County General Plan.**

COMMENTS:

PURSUANT TO THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE ZONING ORDINANCE, SECTION 16.1.E, ALL OF THE

FOLLOWING CONDITIONS MUST BE MET FOR ALL REZONINGS:

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT IS NECESSARY BECAUSE OF SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGED OR CHANGING CONDITIONS IN THE AREA AND DISTRICTS AFFECTED, OR IN THE CITY GENERALLY.

1. Development trends in the surrounding area have remained stable, consisting of a mix of residential, commercial, wholesaling, and industrial uses.
2. This area between the railroad tracks to the north and I-40 to the south predominantly consists of I-G (General Industrial), RN-4 (General Residential Neighborhood), and INST (Institutional) zoning. Commercial zoning, such as C-H-1 (Highway Commercial) and C-G-1 (General Commercial), is concentrated to the east along N Cherry Street.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE INTENT AND PURPOSES OF THIS CODE.

1. The I-H (Heavy Industrial) zoning district is intended to provide for a wide variety of general manufacturing, fabricating, processing, distributing, and warehousing uses. Industrial uses in the I-H district may result in some moderate external effects such as smoke, noise, glare, or vibration, and typically include outdoor storage and related outdoor activities.
2. Rezoning should be based on the entire range of uses allowed within a zone to ensure that any development brought forth at a future time would be compatible with the surrounding land uses. The subject property is surrounded by I-G zoning and is within 300 ft of a residential block zoned RN-4. The I-H district at this location would permit more intensive and potentially noxious uses than are currently allowed in the surrounding area.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT ANY OTHER PART OF THE CITY, NOR SHALL ANY DIRECT OR INDIRECT ADVERSE EFFECTS RESULT FROM SUCH AMENDMENT.

1. The primary difference between the requested I-H zoning district and the existing I-G zoning is that the I-H district allows heavy industrial activities, whereas the I-G district does not. General industrial activities must be conducted wholly within an enclosed building. Heavy industrial activities, however, are permitted to have outdoor storage areas and include uses that may produce noise, vibrations, illumination, or particulate that is perceptible to adjacent land users.
2. Rezoning should be based on the entire range of uses allowed within a zone to ensure compatibility with development brought forth in the future. The I-H zoning district allows the most intensive uses, and as stated previously, may cause adverse impacts for surrounding properties. In this particular case, the existing use does cause such impacts. The current tenant on this site has been operating a grease processing facility since 2017 with unpermitted outdoor storage. Numerous complaints from surrounding businesses and residences have been received by the Knox County Air Quality Management Division and the City of Knoxville's Plans Review and Inspections Department due to the odor emanating from its operations and general concerns with the outdoor storage of processing materials. This context is relevant to the rezoning request, as it would permit operations to continue as is at this location. It should be noted that a grease processing facility is a permitted use in the current I-G zoning district when conducted within a fully enclosed building.
3. Introducing I-H zoning to this area could serve as a catalyst for future I-H rezonings, which would be inappropriate here due to the close proximity of established residential uses. Though I-G zoning is not ideal in regards to compatibility with residential uses, it would limit uses on the site to primarily indoor industrial activities.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH AND NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY GENERAL PLAN AND ITS COMPONENT PARTS, INCLUDING ADOPTED SECTOR PLANS, CORRIDOR PLANS, AND RELATED DOCUMENTS.

1. The subject property is designated HI (Heavy Industrial) under the City's One Year Plan and Central City Sector Plan, which allows consideration of the requested I-H zoning district.
2. The proposed rezoning is inconsistent with the General Plan's Development Policy 11.3: Discourage environmental nuisances in the vicinity of residential development, including rundown commercial development, noxious industrial uses, offensive odors, vibrations, dust, or glare from nearby or distant uses. The I-H district at this location would allow uses that could produce negative external impacts to residences in the immediate and broader surrounding area, including the Belle Morris Neighborhood to the north and the Parkridge Neighborhood to the south.

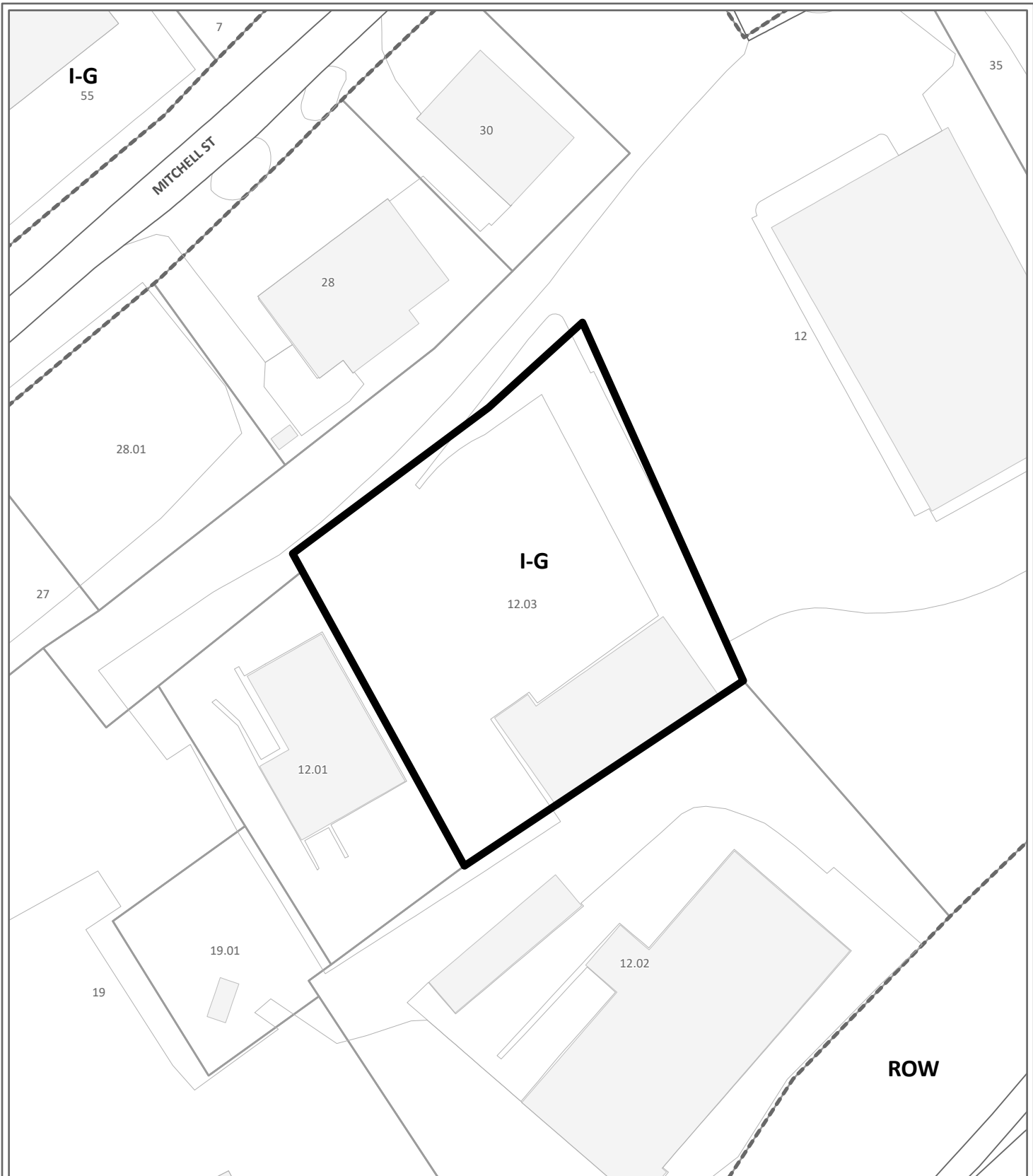
WHETHER ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, SCHOOLS, PARKS, POLICE AND FIRE PROTECTION, ROADS, SANITARY SEWERS, STORM SEWERS, AND WATER LINES, OR ARE REASONABLY CAPABLE OF BEING PROVIDED PRIOR TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IF THE AMENDMENT WERE ADOPTED.

1. This is an urbanized area with ample utility and facility infrastructure to support a rezoning of this site.
2. Access to I-40 is available roughly 0.31 miles to the east.

ESTIMATED TRAFFIC IMPACT: Not required.

ESTIMATED STUDENT YIELD: Not applicable.

If approved, this item will be forwarded to Knoxville City Council for action on 5/12/2026 and 5/26/2026. If denied, Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission's action is final, unless the action to deny is appealed to Knoxville City Council. The date of the appeal hearing will depend on when the appeal application is filed. Appellants have 15 days to appeal a Planning Commission decision in the City.



REZONING

4-O-26-RZ

Petitioner: John Britton

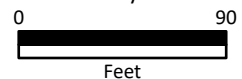


From: I-G (General Industrial)

To: I-H (Heavy Industrial)

Map No: 82

Jurisdiction: City



Original Print Date: 3/2/2026

Knoxville - Knox County Planning Commission * City / County Building * Knoxville, TN 37902

Exhibit A. Contextual Images



AERIAL MAP



Case boundary

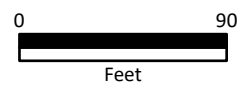
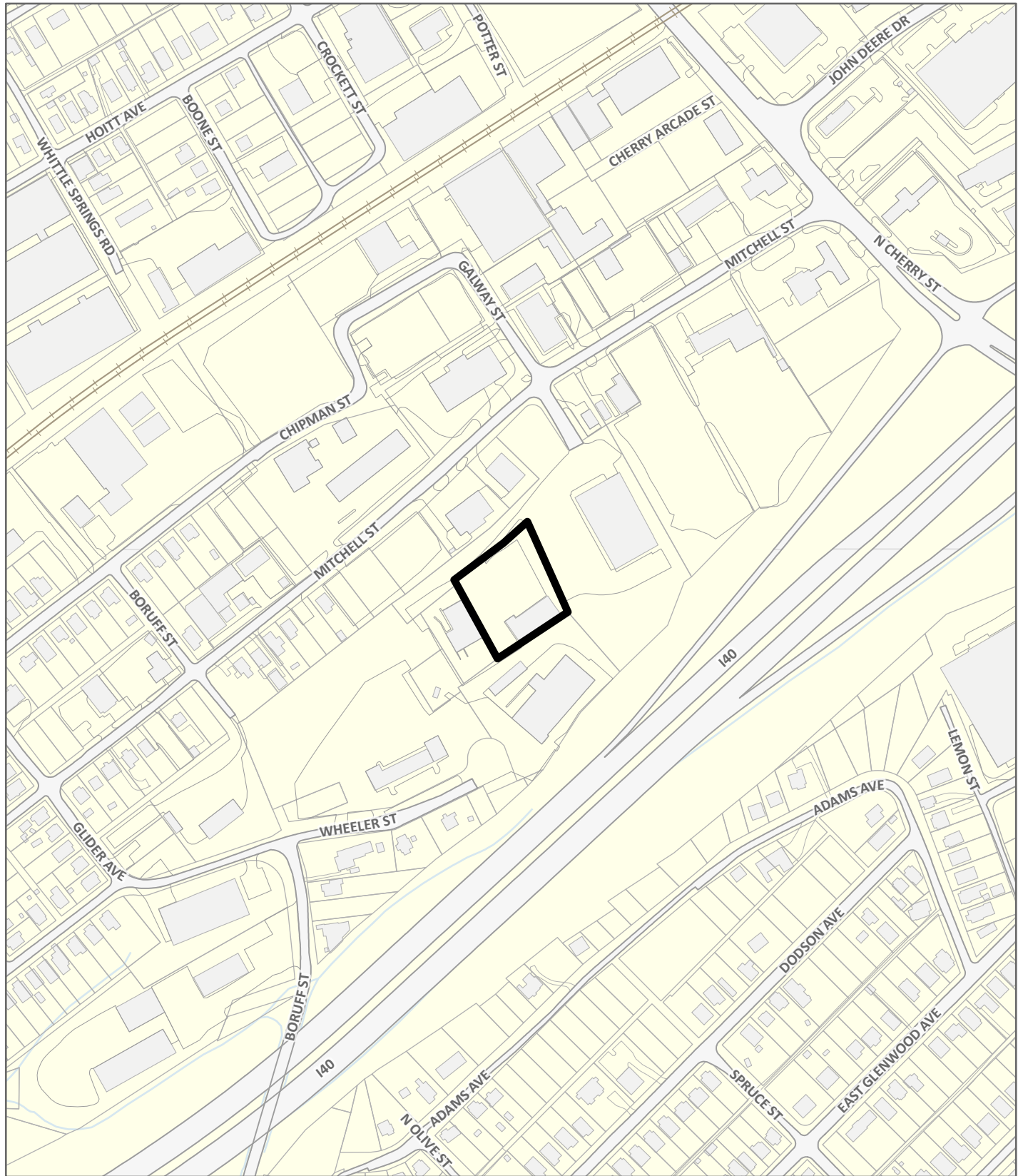


Exhibit A. Contextual Images



LOCATION MAP

4-O-26-RZ



Case boundary



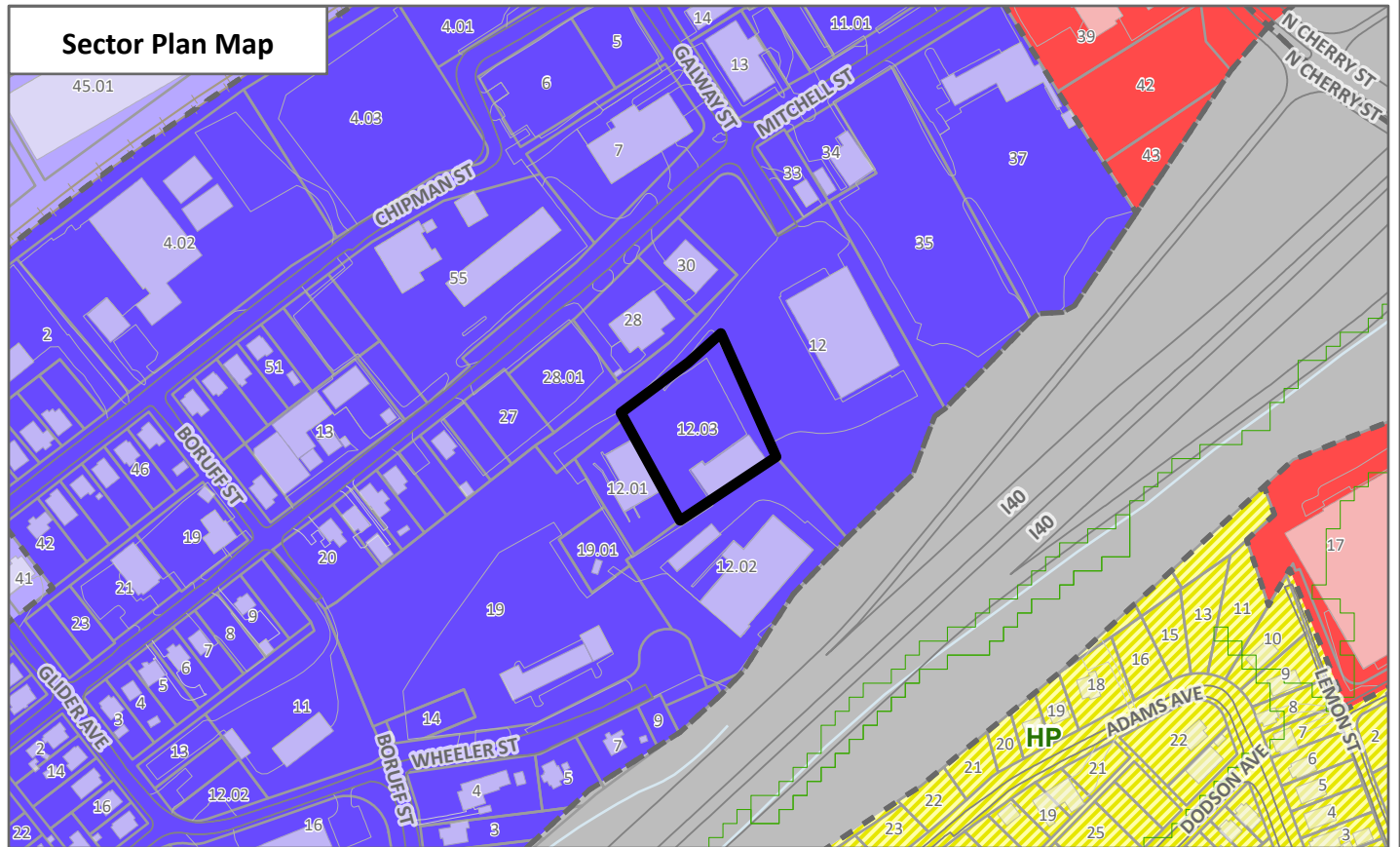
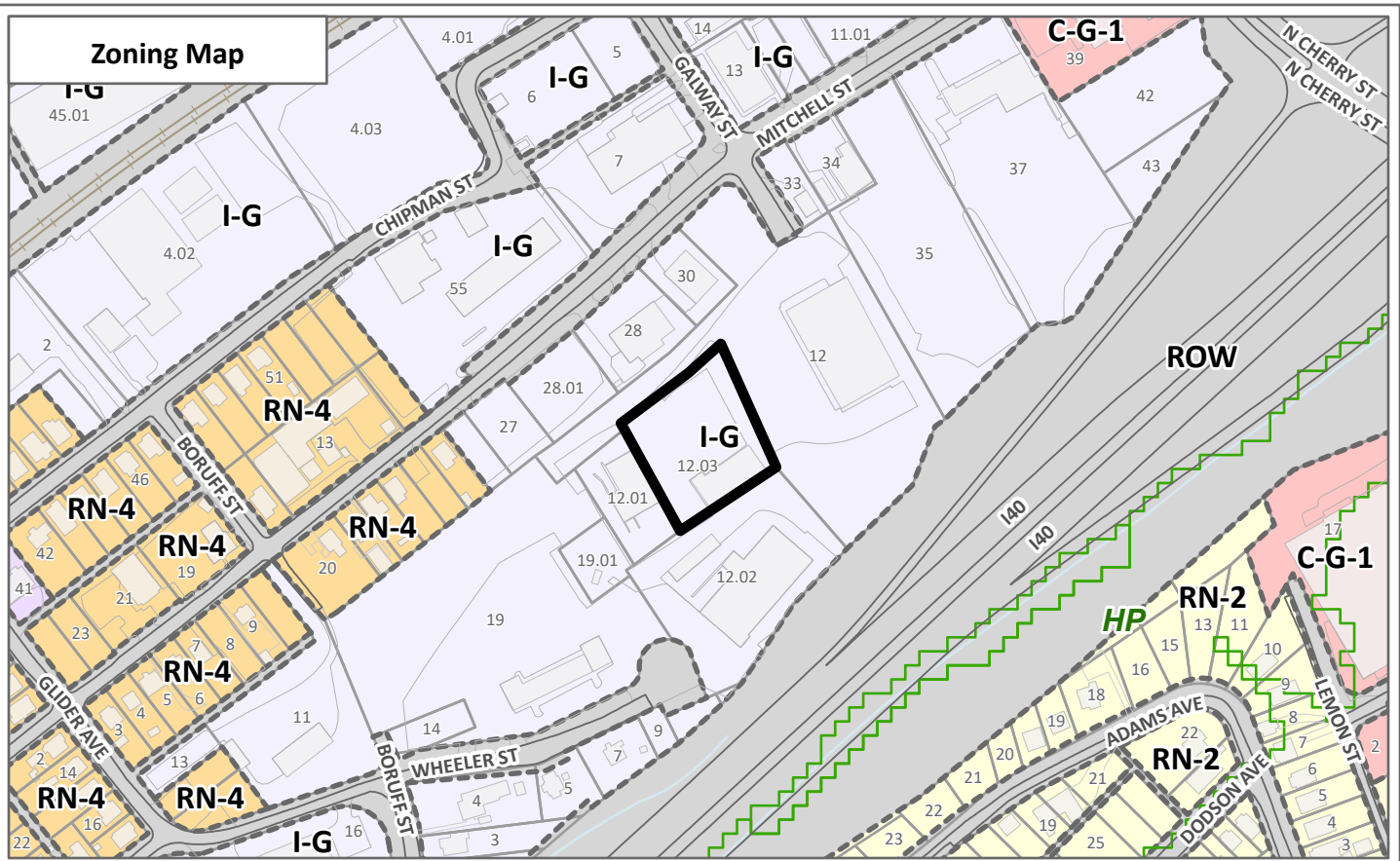


EXHIBIT A, CONTEXTUAL MAPS **4-O-26-RZ**

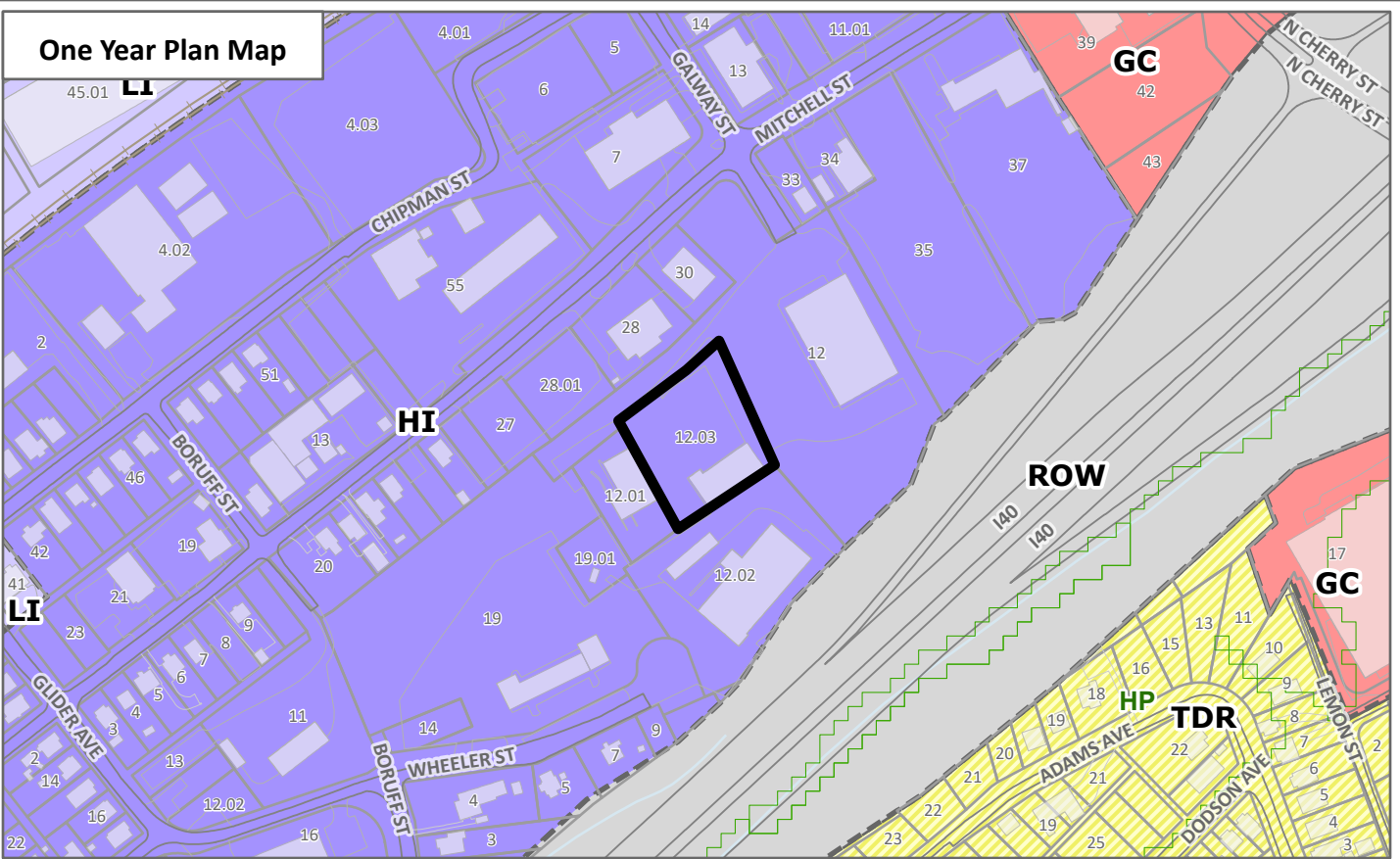
Case boundary

0 360

Feet

N

One Year Plan Map



Existing Land Use Map

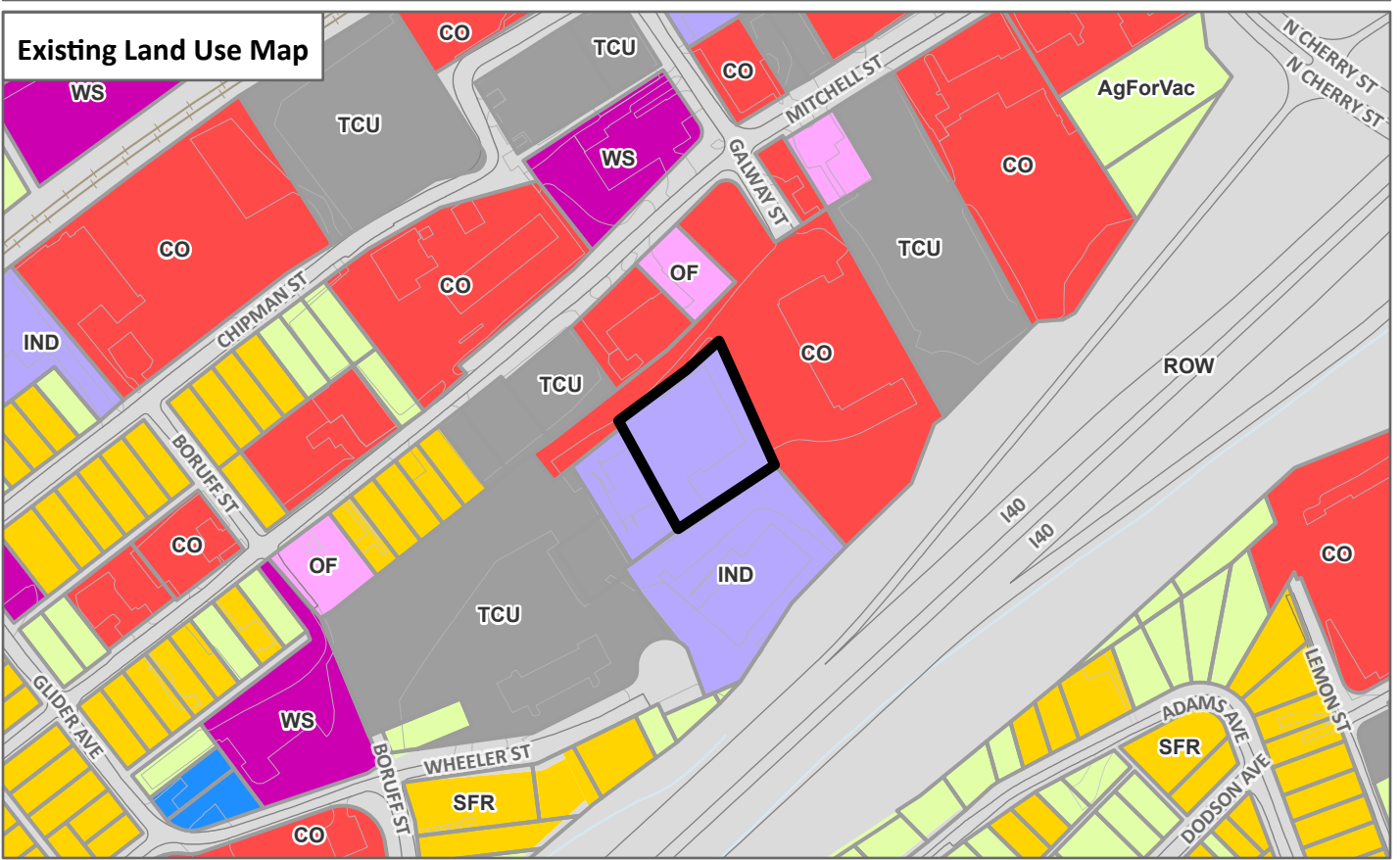
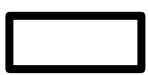
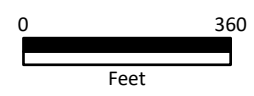


EXHIBIT A, CONTEXTUAL MAPS

4-O-26-RZ



Case boundary





Air Quality Enforcement Information LES

From Rebecca Larocque <Rebecca.Larocque@knoxcounty.org>

Date Thu 4/2/2026 8:44 AM

To Kelsey Bousquet <kelsey.bousquet@knoxplanning.org>

Cc Kevin Clark <Kevin.Clark@knoxcounty.org>; Mike Conger <mike.conger@knoxplanning.org>

You don't often get email from rebecca.larocque@knoxcounty.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Our Department has been dealing with odor issues from this location since its original permitting in 2017. The initial operating permit was issued in September of 2017 and the first record of odor complaints began in October of 2017. This location has been a continuous problem with odor violations. Since 2021, we have issued over 20 Notice of Violations, 12 Administrative Orders with Civil penalties paid exceeding \$130,000.00 and entered into a Consent Decree. We have worked with the source for creating odor mitigation strategies including routing the vapors from the outdoor processing tanks through the scrubber systems and keeping the bay doors closed to maintain negative pressure. The outside processing tanks remain a challenge with leaks, cleaning, and maintenance. And the sizing of the scrubber system is the minimum design flow for volume of air. We have concerns that redesignation of the zoning may allow for additional outside process or that would increase the odor potentials and our response requirements.

The location completed the upgrades from the consent decree in 2023. This included modifications to the outdoor tanks. I've included our number of total number of odor complaints responded to and a light estimation on manpower cost for each complaint. The manpower cost increases dramatically with Administrative Orders, Appeals to the Air Pollution Control Board, and Consent Decrees, with significant time spent with the Division Director and Attorney level.

Year	# of Odor Complaints	# LES	% of total
2022	115	105	91%
2023	96	74	77%
2024	86	69	80%
2025	64	48	75%
Total	361	296	82%

Investigation Time	Personel Level	Cost
0.5	Administrative	\$10.50
1.5	Environmental Scientist	\$36.00
0.25	Program Manager	\$8.75
	Total	\$55.25

Violation Additional Time	Personel Level	Cost
0.5	Environmental Scientist	\$12.00

0.25	Program Manager	\$8.75
0.5	Administrative	\$10.50
		\$31.25

Adminstrative Order Time	Personel Level	Cost
0.5	Lawyer	\$50.00
1	Division Director	\$44.00
1	Program Manager	\$36.00
0.5	Administrative	\$10.50
	Total	\$140.50

LES is not the sole provider of grease processing in Knox County at this time, we have two additional grease recycling sources that have been permitted from construction to operating within the last year. Both of these sources are completely contained within a building, and neither have had a complaint to our department to date. Greasezilla located at 2425 Burnside St is the most recent addition receiving its operating permit in January of 2026. All Waste Onsite is located at 922 Delaware Ave and received its operating permit in June of 2025. While both are newer in the area, it seems to demonstrate that adequate odor control is possible with indoor processing and sizing of scrubbing equipment.

Rebecca Larocque

Environmental Program Manager

Environmental Health

Health Department

Office: 865-215-5941

Cell: 865-507-9122

140 Dameron Ave

Knoxville, TN 37917



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF REZONING REQUEST

Liquid Environmental Solutions (LES) is the owner of the property located at 1307 Galway Street, Knoxville, TN 37917, Parcel ID number 082GK01203 (the "Subject Property"). LES purchased the Subject Property by Special Warranty Deed dated December 7, 2016. At the time of purchase, the Subject Property was already being used as a processing facility.

Also at the time of purchase, the Subject Property was within a General Industrial District, zoned I-3, and classified as a "processing" facility.

In 2017, the City of Knoxville granted LES numerous permits to operate its grease recycling operation at this location. These include the following:

- 1) Knoxville Utility Board (KUB) – Industrial Wastewater Discharge Permit # KK013117
- 2) Permit to Operate a Potential Air Contaminant Source Permit # 22-1231
- 3) Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) Permit # TNR059321
- 4) Plans and Review Inspections Department Permitted Use, Permit # R17-0675

LES also had other permits and permissions, including the Department of Environment and Conservation, Division of Solid Waste Management Permit-By-Rule Authorization.

Since May of 2017, up through the present date, LES has operated on this site providing environmental disposal services to businesses within the City of Knoxville.

At the time of purchase, the Subject Property was zoned I-3. Under Section 2.3.2 of the 2017 Zoning Ordinance, I-3 zoning is a general industrial district established to provide areas in which principal use of land is for manufacturing, assembling, fabricating and warehousing, and may involve "some adverse effects on surrounding properties."

The Zoning Code was updated in 2020 as "Recode Knoxville". At that time, the zoning for this property and the surrounding area was changed to I-G, which states:

The I-G General Industrial Zoning District provides for a range of industrial uses that may produce limited outside impacts, rendering them incompatible with retail, service, or residential uses. Such uses include limited manufacturing, fabricating, processing, wholesale distributing, and warehousing facilities that do not require frequent visits from customers or clients.

LES seeks to have the Subject Property rezoned to I-H, which states:

The I-H Heavy Industrial Zoning District is intended to provide for a wide variety of general manufacturing, fabricating, processing, distributing and warehousing uses. Industrial uses

in the I-H District may result in some moderate external effects such as smoke, noise, glare or vibration, and typically include outdoor storage and related outdoor activities.

Given its current use of the Subject Property, LES suggests that the I-H zoning classification would be a better fit for this property and would do away with any disharmony between the current use of the Subject Property and the City's current interpretation of the Zoning Code.

In addition, LES requests that this zoning change be approved because it is consistent with the land use plans and surrounding development.

Addressing the requirements of Section 16.1.E of the Zoning Code, LES asserts that:

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE NECESSARY BECAUSE OF SUBSTANTIALLY CHANGED OR CHANGING CONDITIONS IN THE AREA AND DISTRICTS AFFECTED, OR IN THE CITY/COUNTY GENERALLY:

1. The Subject Property is located in an area with a number of established and active industrial uses.
2. The Subject Property is surrounded by properties zoned I-G which would help to insulate it from any other non-industrial properties in the area.
3. The legacy industrial uses surrounding the Subject Property support consideration of the I-H zone.
4. The various City plans seem to indicate that the City intends for the general area surrounding the Subject Property to be used as a Heavy Industrial area in the future.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH THE INTENT AND PURPOSE OF THE APPLICABLE ZONING ORDINANCE

1. As shown above, the I-H district provides for a wide range of general manufacturing, fabricating, processing, distributing and warehousing uses but recognizes that those uses may result in some moderate external effects such as smoke, noise, glare or vibration, and typically include outdoor storage and related outdoor activities.
2. LES's current use of the Subject Property is as a processing facility with related outdoor storage.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT ANY OTHER PART OF THE CITY, NOR SHALL ANY DIRECT OR INDIRECT ADVERSE EFFECTS RESULT FROM SUCH AMENDMENT.

1. The proposed amendment does not seek to change the type of business that is being conducted on the Subject Property. It will remain the same.
2. As stated above, the purpose of the request is to more closely align the current use of the Subject Property with the City's current interpretation of the Zoning Code.
3. The proposed I-H zoning recognizes that some "processing" uses "may result in some moderate external effects such as smoke, noise, glare or vibration" and is purposefully created to allow such uses.
4. The Subject Property is located in an industrial area and is surrounded by properties zoned I-G, which will help to insulate the property from non-industrial properties in the area.

THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT SHALL BE CONSISTENT WITH AND NOT IN CONFLICT WITH THE KNOXVILLE-KNOX COUNTY GENERAL PLAN AND ITS COMPONENT PARTS, INCLUDING ADOPTED SECTOR PLANS, CORRIDOR PLANS, AND RELATED DOCUMENTS.

1. The I-H zone is consistent with the One Year Plan which characterizes the Subject Property and surrounding area as Heavy Industrial ,HI, which states that areas designated for Heavy Industrial Use should be zoned I-H or I-G.
2. The I-H zone is consistent with the Central City Sector Plan (adopted 9/30/14), which also states that areas designated for Heavy Industrial Use should be zoned I-H or I-G.
3. The Location Criteria for HI include: existing industrial areas; within one mile of an interstate interchange with access via arterial or major collector streets; sites which are relatively flat and require minimal physical alteration; large enough to accommodate buildings, building setbacks, and parking lots and are regular in shape and sufficiently for the proposed activity; accessible to arterial streets; and developable in a manner compatible with adjacent existing or proposed land uses. LES asserts that that it meets these criteria in that it has been operating its processing facility at this same location in this general industrial area for the last seven years, which is readily accessible to the interstate via Cherry Street.
4. LES asserts that no variances are required regarding building setbacks given that the building located on the Subject Property is in the same location as it was when LES purchased the Subject Property but will agree to apply for such a variance if it is determined that it is needed.

ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, SCHOOLS, PARKS, POLICE AND FIRE PROTECTION, ROADS, SANITARY SEWERS, AND WATER LINES, OR ARE REASONABLY CAPABLE OF BEING PROVIDED PRIOR TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY IF THE AMENDMENT WERE ADOPTED.

1. The proposed change meets this criteria since LES has been in operation at this location since 2017 and has adequate police and fire protection, roads, sanitary sewers, and water lines in place.
2. As such, the Subject Property is located in an urbanized industrial area with ample utility and transportation capacity for the I-H zone.

Public Notice and Community Engagement

Planning strives to provide community members with information about upcoming cases in a variety of ways. In addition to posting public notice signs, our agency encourages applicants to provide information and offer opportunities for dialogue related to their upcoming case(s). The contact information you provide in your application may be used for that purpose. We require applicants to acknowledge their role in this process.

Sign Posting and Removal

The Administrative Rules and Procedures of the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission require a sign to be posted on the property for each application subject to consideration by the Planning Commission.

Planning staff will post the required sign. If a replacement sign(s) is needed, the applicant is responsible for picking up the new sign(s) from Planning and will be charged \$10 for each replacement.

Location and Visibility

The sign must be posted on the nearest adjacent/frontage street and in a location clearly visible to vehicles traveling in either direction. If the property has more than one street frontage, the sign should be placed along the street that carries more traffic. Planning staff may recommend a preferred location for the sign to be posted at the time of application.

Timing

The sign(s) must be posted not less than 12 days prior to the scheduled Planning Commission public hearing and must remain in place until the day after the meeting. In the case of a postponement, the sign can either remain in place or be removed and reposted not less than 12 days prior to the next Planning Commission meeting. The applicant is responsible for removing the sign after the application has been acted upon by the Planning Commission.

Acknowledgement

By signing below, you acknowledge that public notice signs must be posted and visible on the property consistent with the guidelines above and between the dates listed below.

03/28/2026

Date to be Posted

04/10/2026

Date to be Removed

Have you engaged the surrounding property owners to discuss your request?

Yes No

No, but I plan to prior to the Planning Commission meeting

Applicant Signature

Applicant Name

Date



John Britton

2/23/26