



## Department of Planning and Economic Development

Staff Report to the Planning Commission

March 12, 2025

### PCU2025-0001, PSP2024-0013, and PTP2025-0003

#### Gas Station Renovation

2980 Walton Blvd.

REQUEST	Conditional Use Recommendation, Site Plan Approval, Tree Removal Permit Approval
APPLICANT	Sam Beydoun Safeway Acquisition Co. LLC 19855 Outer Dr. Ste. 207W Dearborn, MI 48124
LOCATION	2980 Walton Blvd., located at the northeast corner of Walton and Adams
FILE NO.	PCU2025-0001, PSP2024-0013, and PTP2025-0003
PARCEL NO.	15-08-351-003
ZONING	NB Neighborhood Business District
STAFF	Chris McLeod, AICP, Planning Manager

## Summary

The applicant is proposing to redevelop the existing gasoline service station with a more modern, expanded station at the subject location. The site itself is slightly less than one (1) acre in size, being 0.83 acres and is zoned NB Neighborhood Business District. Within the NB Neighborhood Business District gasoline service stations are a conditional use, and therefore require site plan approval and tree removal permit from the Planning Commission and conditional use approval from the City Council. Within the NB Neighborhood Business District, the conditional use standards for new gasoline service stations require a minimum of one (1) acre of land. Since the site has been developed as a gasoline service station for some time and the minimum land area requirement is relatively new, the Planning Department has determined the redevelopment of the site can be processed pursuant the remainder of the NB Neighborhood Business District standards.

The applicant is proposing to construct a new, modernized 5,312 square foot gasoline service station convenience store in place of the existing service station that is approximately 1,200 square feet in size. The current building is a simple convenience store. The interior space of the new building will be dedicated solely for retail sales. There will not be any automotive repair or area dedicated for a drive through use. A total of four (4) standalone pumps, providing service to eight (8) vehicles, are also proposed along with new underground storage tanks. The site will also provide two (2) dedicated EV charging stations along the west side of the building.

The vehicle circulation plan has also been modified on the proposed plans to reduce the total number of driveways to and from the site from three (3) driveways to two (2). The site currently has a single driveway access on Walton. That driveway will stay in its current general location. There is proposed to be an easement for future cross connection to the site to the east.

The site currently has two (2) driveways along Adams Road. The first driveway is located very close to the intersection of Adams and Walton. The second driveway is located to the north end of the site along Adams. These two (2) driveways will be consolidated into a singular driveway, towards the northern end of the site in an effort to maximize the separation from the intersection of Walton and Adams and therefore provide greater safety for both drivers turning into and exiting the site. A cross connection is being constructed to the financial institution to the north.

In regard to pedestrian accessibility, the site plans propose two (2) separate pedestrian connections to the pedestrian pathway system along Adams Road and Walton Blvd., both of which currently exist. The site plan also proposes the installation of a new bicycle rack near the southeast corner of the building for bicycle parking consistent with the

City's proposed ordinance amendment currently being considered. The bicycle rack will also be consistent with the City's adopted streetscape plan.

The proposed new building is shown on the plans with a setback of 10 feet from the northern property line when a 50 feet standard setback is typically required. The ordinance does allow the Planning Commission to reduce the required setback to 10 feet when the site adjoins another non-residential district, if the Planning Commission determines that the requested reduction will allow for better development and be compatible with adjoining properties. From the viewpoint of City Staff, there is no objection to the reduction in the required setback.

The building architecture provides for a modern design and the building materials include a mix of masonry brick material and metal paneling along with wood composite siding. The building materials vary from some of the more traditional building materials seen in the City and should be closely reviewed by the Planning Commission. The building design is very similar to the recently approved gas station demolition and remodeling approved by the Planning Commission on Crooks Road. City staff has discussed the overall building design and materials with the applicant and this is the proposal the applicant chose to present. The redevelopment of the site will also include a new gas pump canopy that is supported by masonry brick columns. The building architecture also incorporates a dumpster enclosure that is recessed at the southeast corner of the building. This location requires Planning Commission acceptance for the location in a side yard, which staff agrees is appropriate given that the enclosure is integrated into the building design with matching materials and will be recessed, and it also is a location that will minimize disruption to site operations.

As a part of the proposed redevelopment, the applicant is proposing the removal of the existing sign and the construction of a new sign at the immediate corner of Adams and Walton that complies with City requirements.

Currently, the site does have some landscaping along each road frontage, including some trees and low-level plantings. The landscape plan provides for a total of seventeen (17) shade trees and four (4) ornamental trees. This is in addition to a variety of plants and shrubs that will also be planted throughout the site. However, the applicant is seeking modifications to the right-of-way landscaping requirements along both Walton Blvd. (1) and Adams Road (2); a modification for the parking lot perimeter landscaping (3) as discussed further below.

#### **Landscape Modification 1 – Walton Blvd. right-of-way landscaping**

The Zoning Ordinance requires a total of five (5) shade trees and three (3) ornamental trees along the 190 foot property width along Walton Blvd. The landscape plan shows a total of three (3) trees being planted. Therefore, a modification of five (5) trees is being requested. The applicant has indicated that the City's required clear vision area is the rationale as to why the trees cannot be planted in along the frontage. The clear vision area is a result of the access drive being provided to Walton Blvd as well as the intersection with Walton and Adams.

#### **Landscape Modification 1 – Adams Road right-of-way landscaping**

The Zoning Ordinance requires a total of five (5) shade trees and three (3) ornamental trees along the 190 foot property width along Adams Road. The landscape plan shows no trees being planted along the Adams Road frontage to satisfy the right-of-way landscaping requirements (there are trees proposed to be saved and planted pursuant to the perimeter landscaping requirement, see below). Therefore, a modification of eight (8) trees is being requested. The applicant has indicated that the City's required clear vision area is the rationale as to why the trees cannot be planted in along the frontage. The clear vision area is a result of the access drive being provided to Adams Road as well as the intersection with Walton and Adams.

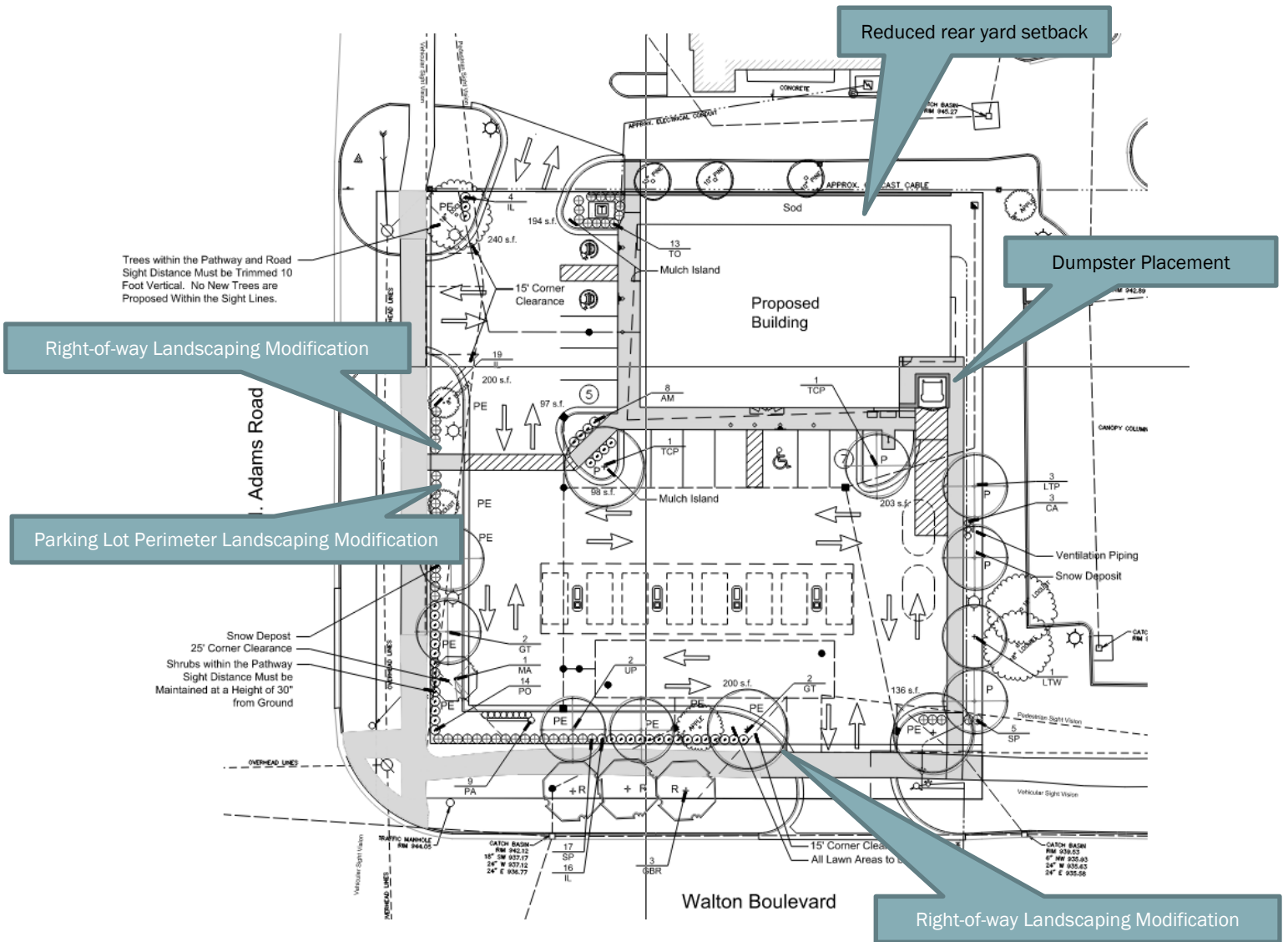
#### **Landscape Modification 2 – Parking lot perimeter landscaping**

The perimeter parking lot planting requirements with the Zoning Ordinance require a total of ten (10) shade trees and seven (7) ornamental trees. The landscape plan proposes the planting of a total of nine (9) shade trees and two (2) ornamental trees. Therefore, a modification of a total of six (6) trees (1 shade tree and 5 ornamental trees) is required. The bulk of these trees are being provided along the exterior of the site, along the Adams Road and Walton Blvd frontages, in a location where right-of-way plantings would have normally been planted (see modification request noted above). The required hedgerow plantings along both road frontages have been provided.

In total, the site is deficient eight (8) shade trees and eleven (11) ornamental trees. This includes the right-of-way plantings along with the parking lot perimeter plantings. The site does currently have some landscaping which will be preserved as a part of the redevelopment. The landscape plan proposes the planting of fifteen (15) additional trees in total along with four (4) trees paid into the City's Tree Fund (as required for tree replacement). The proposed

landscape plan including right-of-way, perimeter, and parking lot landscaping and will provide a significant improvement in terms of overall landscaping and landscape aesthetic onsite.

## Site Plan

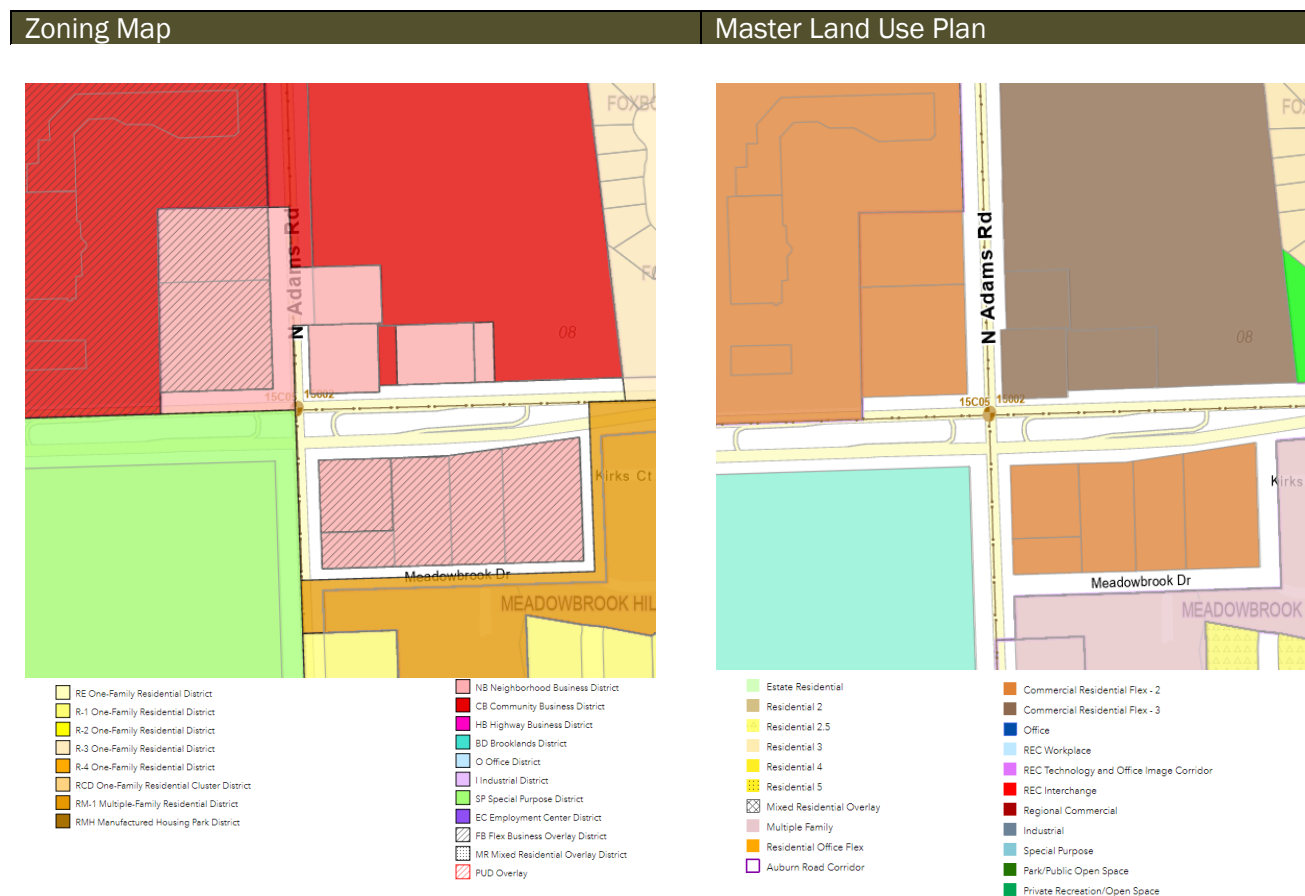




## Renderings

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	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use
<b>Site</b>	NB Neighborhood Business District	<b>Gasoline Service Station</b>	<b>Commercial Residential Flex 3</b>
<b>North</b>	NB Neighborhood Business District	Bank, with the Village at Rochester Hills shopping center beyond	Commercial Residential Flex 3
<b>South (across Walton)</b>	NB Neighborhood Business District with the FB Flex Business Overlay	Gasoline service station and convenience store/Tim Horton's	Commercial Residential Flex 2
<b>East</b>	CB Community Business District	Bank	Commercial Residential Flex 3
<b>West (across Adams)</b>	NB Neighborhood Business District and NB District with the FB Flex Business Overlay	CVS Pharmacy and a bank	Commercial Residential Flex 2

## General Requirements for Conditional Uses

Per Section 138-2.302 of the Zoning Ordinance, there are five areas of consideration for the Planning Commission for the discretionary decision of a conditional use. Each of the criterion are listed below in *italics*, followed by staff comments on the proposed conditional use's compliance with each.

Criterion:		Staff Comment:
1	<i>Will promote the intent and purpose of (the Ordinance).</i>	The NB Neighborhood Business District does support this type of use. The proposed use appears to be generally consistent with the use patterns in the area, specifically, the presence of another gasoline service station to the south and the surrounding Village of Rochester Hills shopping mall. Finally, the site has traditionally been utilized as a gasoline service station.
2	<i>Will be designed, constructed, operated, maintained, and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious, and appropriate in appearance with the existing or planned character of the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land, the natural environment, the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the land use and the community as a whole.</i>	<p>As noted above, the site has been utilized as a gasoline service station for some time. The proposed redevelopment of the site into a more modern gasoline service station will allow the use to become more economically viable and is generally consistent with the surrounding land uses.</p> <p>Through the site plan process, the applicant has agreed to reduce the total number of driveways entering and existing the site from three (3) to two (2) and will also maximize their separation from the immediate intersection of Walton Blvd. and Adams Road, therefore providing a safety benefit to both drivers and pedestrians.</p> <p>The site plan also proposes an immediate cross connection to the financial institution to the north, thereby providing a means for traffic to access the larger commercial area to the north and east of the site, particularly the Village of Rochester Hills, without having to access Walton Blvd. or Adams Road. This will provide additional public benefit by potentially reducing traffic exiting the site at this intersection, by offering another option for drivers to access shopping opportunities.</p>
3	<i>Will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, drainage ways, refuse disposal, or that the persons or agencies responsible for the establishment of the land use or activity shall be able to provide adequately any such service.</i>	<p>The current building has been utilized for a gasoline service station since the 1970's, therefore the site should be serviced adequately by Walton Blvd. and Adams Road, particularly with the reduction and realignment of driveways along both roadways.</p> <p>The site plan has received approvals from all of the reviewing departments in regards to engineering, building, and fire departments, therefore drainage and fire protection should not be an issue upon the redevelopment of the site.</p>
4	<i>Will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare.</i>	In regard to the proposed use, there should be no detrimental, hazardous or disturbing activity to the existing or future neighboring uses, persons, surrounding properties, or to the public welfare based on the redevelopment of the existing gasoline service station into a more modernized, aesthetically appealing station, that is significantly more compliant with current city regulations.
5	<i>Will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic</i>	There will be no additional requirements at a public cost for public facilities and services that would be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.

	welfare of the community.	
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## Tree Removal Permit

The site plan includes a request to remove five (5) regulated trees and zero (0) specimen trees, with five (5) replacement trees required. The applicant is proposing to plant of one (1) replacement tree with four (4) trees to be paid into the City's Tree Fund. The trees being removed onsite are trees that were likely required as a part of one of the original approvals for the site and are limited in size and quality given their age, location and tree type.

## Staff Recommendations

Department	Comments & Waivers/Modifications	Recommendation
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modification to the planting requirements along Adams Road – 8 trees total</li> <li>Modification to the planting requirement along Walton Blvd – 5 trees total</li> <li>A modification for the parking lot perimeter landscaping – 6 trees total</li> <li>Planning Commission acceptance of a reduced rear yard setback of 10'.</li> <li>Planning Commission acceptance of dumpster enclosure in side yard.</li> <li>The Planning Commission to determine if the building façade materials and design are appropriate</li> <li>Finalization of easements for cross access during LIP Process.</li> <li>Tree fund monies (as identified on the site plan) being deposited with the City</li> <li>Landscape Bond being deposited with the City.</li> </ul>	Approval
Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land Improvement Permit is required</li> <li>Addressing comments for service line as appropriate</li> <li>Compliance with restrictive covenants regarding site contamination monitoring being adhered to.</li> <li>Revised site grades as noted</li> </ul>	Approval
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Road Commission of Oakland County Permit to be Provided</li> </ul>	Approval
Fire		Approval
Building		Approval



Department	Comments & Waivers/Modifications	Recommendation
Forestry		Approval
Assessing		Approval
Streets review		N/A

The application has been notified to the general public via appropriate mailings for the conditional use and tree removal permit and placement on the City's website and information distribution outlets.

## Review Process

The Conditional Use process requires review and recommendation by the Planning Commission and review and approval by City Council. The site plan review and Tree Removal Permit require Planning Commission action only.

## Motion to Recommend Approval of a Conditional Use

**MOTION** by \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_, in the matter of City File No. PCU2025-0001 (Gas Station Renovation at 2980 Walton), the Planning Commission **recommends** to City Council **Approval** of the **Conditional Use** to operate a gasoline service station within the NB Neighborhood Business District at 2980 Walton, on Parcel No. 70-15-08-351-003, based on plans received by the Planning Department on February 7, 2025, with the following findings:

### Findings

1. The use will promote the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. The site has been designed and is proposed to be operated, maintained, and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious, and appropriate in appearance with the existing and planned character of the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land, and the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the use and does not represent a significant deviation from the existing land use that has been present onsite approximately fifty (50) years.
3. The proposal will have a positive impact on the community as a whole and the surrounding area by renovating and modernizing an existing gasoline service with updated architecture, amenities, landscaping and access driveways (by consolidating two driveways on Adams into one) that should provide a safer, more efficient means of ingress and egress.
4. The proposed development is served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, water and sewer, drainage ways, and refuse disposal and traditionally has been as the current gasoline service station.
5. The proposed development, with the revised driveway and cross connection configurations, will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare and will help further integrate the gasoline service station into the existing land use fabric.
6. The proposal will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.

### Conditions

1. City Council approval of the Conditional Use.
2. The use shall remain consistent with the facts and information presented to the City as a part of the applicant's application and at the public hearing (as may be amended by this motion).
3. If, in the determination of City staff, the intensity of the operation changes or increases, in terms of traffic, queuing, noise, hours, lighting, odor, or other aspects that may cause adverse off-site impact, City staff may



require and order the conditional use approval to be remanded to the Planning Commission and City Council as necessary for re-examination of the conditional use approval and conditions for possible revocation, modification or supplementation.

## Motion for Site Plan Approval

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**MOTION** by \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_, in the matter of City File No. PSP2024-0013 (Gas Station Renovation at 2980 Walton), the Planning Commission **approves the Site Plan**, based on plans received by the Planning Department on February 7, 2025, with the following findings and subject to the following conditions.

### Findings

1. The site plan and supporting documents demonstrate that the proposed development will promote the intent and purpose of the ordinance, as well as other City Ordinances, standards, and requirements; and those requirements can be met with the exception of the acceptable modifications shown below and subject to the conditions listed below.
2. The site plan and supporting documents demonstrate that the proposed development will be designed, constructed, operated, maintained and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or planned character of the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land, the natural environment, the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the land use, and the community as a whole. The proposed project will continue to be accessed from Adams Road and Walton Blvd., although with consolidated driveway locations and alignments, thereby promoting safety and convenience of vehicular traffic both within the site and on adjacent roadways. The preliminary plan represents a reasonable building and lot layout and orientation.
3. The development will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as major roadways, streets, police and fire protection, drainageways, refuse disposal, and utilities.
4. The proposed development will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring uses, persons, property or the public welfare since it represents a modernization and beautification of an already existing gasoline service station.
5. The proposed development will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.
6. The proposed modification to the required right-of-way landscaping requirement, of a total of 8 trees, along Adams Road has been found to be acceptable since the number of trees proposed onsite overall greatly increases the number of plantings onsite, the overall site aesthetic, and potential for tree canopy onsite.
7. The proposed modification to the required right-of-way landscaping requirement, of a total of 5 trees, along Walton Blvd. has been found to be acceptable since the number of trees proposed onsite overall greatly increases the number of plantings onsite, the overall site aesthetic, and potential for tree canopy onsite.
8. The proposed modification to the required parking lot perimeter landscaping requirement, of a total of 6 trees, has been found acceptable since the number of trees proposed onsite overall greatly increases the number of plantings onsite, the overall site aesthetic, and potential for tree canopy onsite.
9. The proposed 10 ft. northerly setback has been found to be acceptable because the subject site abuts another parcel in the NB Neighborhood Business district which is occupied by a bank, and the requested reduction will allow for better development and will be compatible with adjoining properties.
10. The proposed dumpster location in the side yard has been found to be acceptable because the dumpster enclosure has been integrated into the building design and will be constructed of brick to match the building. This design offers an efficient location to allow for appropriate trash removal while minimizing disruptions to site operations.

**Conditions**

1. Address all applicable comments from other City departments and outside agency review letters.
2. Provide a landscape bond in the amount of \$29,185.00, plus the cost of inspection fees, as adjusted by staff as necessary, prior to the preconstruction meeting with Engineering.

## **Motion to Approve a Tree Removal Permit**

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**MOTION** by \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_, in the matter of File No. PTP2025-0003 (Gas Station Renovation at 2980 Walton) the Planning Commission **grants a Tree Removal Permit**, based on plans received by the Planning Department on February 7, 2025, with the following findings and subject to the following conditions:

**Findings**

1. The proposed removal and replacement of regulated trees is in conformance with the City's Tree Conservation Ordinance.
2. The applicant is proposing to remove five (5) regulated trees and zero (0) specimen trees, with five (5) replacement trees required. The applicant is proposing to plant of one (1) replacement tree with four (4) trees to be paid into the City's Tree Fund

**Conditions**

1. Tree protective fencing, as reviewed and approved by the City staff, shall be installed prior to temporary grade being issued by Engineering.
2. Provide the cost of four (4) trees (\$1,336.00) into the City's Tree Fund prior to a Land Improvement Permit being issued.
3. Address all applicable comments from other City departments and outside agency review letters, prior to final approval by staff including all comments noted on the site plans and staff reports contained within the Planning Commission packets (as may be amended by this motion).