

Avon Industrial
PSP2025-0016 - Site Plan Approval
PTP2026-0003 - Tree Removal Permit

REQUEST	Site Plan Approval Tree Removal Permit Approval
APPLICANT	Mike Lekocaj 51015 Regency Center Dr. Macomb Twp., MI 48042
LOCATION	1150 E. Avon Rd., Parcel No. 15-24-100-004, located on the south side of Avon Rd., east of John R Rd.
FILE NO.	J2025-0162, PSP2025-0016, and PTP2026-0003
PARCEL NO.	15-24-100-004
ZONING	I Industrial District
STAFF	Chris McLeod, AICP, Planning Manager

Summary

The applicant, Mike Lekocaj, has applied for Site Plan approval and a Tree Removal Permit for the development of a new 32,740 square foot light industrial building. The proposed development is located on the south side of E. Avon Rd., east of John R. Rd.

The subject site is approximately 2.15 acres and previously had a single-family residential home located near the center of the site. The home was permitted to be demolished in 2025.

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The site will be accessed by a singular driveway that is located central to the site's frontage. The driveway will also include a deceleration lane on the west side of the driveway and a small acceleration lane on the east side of the driveway. Access for pedestrians will be provided via a dedicated sidewalk from the pathway extension along Avon to the front of the building. The development incorporates a sidewalk around the entire building with breaks for the overhead doors.

The site plan indicates that a total of 30 parking spaces are required by ordinance utilizing the combination of parking calculations for dedicated office space and warehousing space. The applicant is providing the required 30 parking spaces including three (3) dedicated ADA parking spaces. In addition, the applicant is providing the required bike parking area.

A 7 ft. high retaining wall is proposed on the east side of the site, in order to accommodate the site's topography. The retaining wall detail that is shown and is being required matches the city's specifications for retaining wall as adopted in the City's Streetscape Master Plan for using a rock type appearance for the retaining wall (this is further discussed in the Landscape Buffering Modification section below).

The building is proposed to be essentially 24 feet in height. There are several areas that include extensions to façade and raise the overall façade height to 26 feet, however, those are only along certain portions of the overall façade. The building itself is proposed to be approximately 32,740 square feet and the floor plans depict up to 8 tenant spaces within the building. It is anticipated that the interior space will be customized depending on the final tenants and their specific needs.

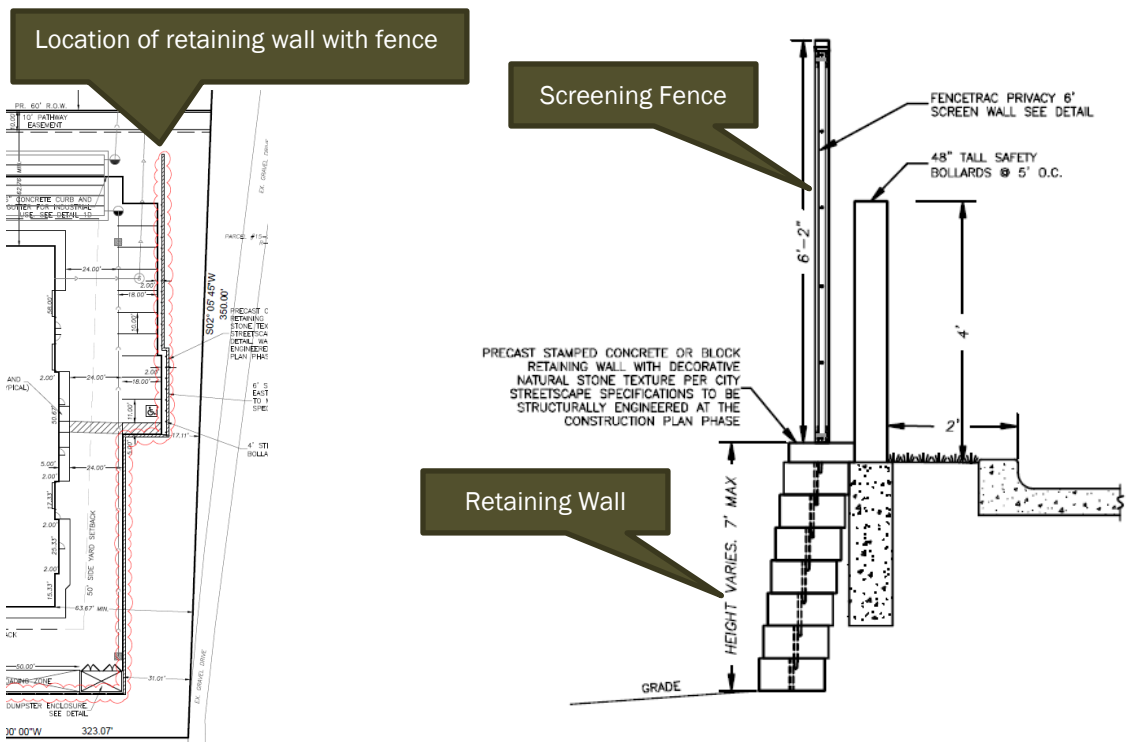
The building façade facing Avon Rd. will be a mixture of smooth faced stone veneer at the base of the façade, with decorative brick veneer for the bulk of the façade. The façade will also include a significant amount of glazing, along with decorative awnings for the windows on the ground floor. The top of the façade will include a decorative cornice. The building façades on the east and west sides of the building will include the same brick veneer but will also include sections of burnished block. These façades will include some glazing for the interior tenant spaces and will also include the entry doors and overhead doors which will provide access to each of the tenant spaces. The south façade will have limited opening and will carry the same decorative brick veneer and burnished block.

In regards to landscaping, the site plan indicates that a total of 66 deciduous trees of various types will be provided throughout the site. The applicant is also proposing 9 large evergreen trees along the eastern property line and an additional 47 smaller evergreen trees throughout the site. In addition to those trees proposed, the applicant is utilizing some of the trees being preserved to help satisfy landscaping requirements (see the landscape buffer modification discussion below).

Stormwater collection for the site will be underground, beneath the maneuvering lane along the front of the building.

Landscape Buffering Modification

The zoning ordinance requires a buffer type “E” when an industrial use is proposed against a single-family residential district, as is the case for this site plan, with single family residential zoned properties located to the east. The requirement for a buffer type “E” consists of either a 50-foot-wide greenbelt with a variety of plantings, or a ten (10) foot wide greenbelt with the use of a six (6) foot high (screening) wall along the property line. The ratio and types of plantings required are modified when the reduced greenbelt and masonry wall option is proposed, as it is in this case. The masonry screening wall is required to be located along the mutual property line between the industrial use and the residential use. The applicant is requesting that the Planning Commission grant a modification to allow the installation of a solid fence instead of the required screening wall, and to allow it to be installed inside of the property line instead of on the property line, as described further below.



There is a significant amount of elevation change from the west side of the site to the east side. To adjust for these elevation changes, the applicant is proposing to land balance the site - to raise the east side of the site substantially through the use of a retaining wall. The height of the retaining wall at its highest point is nearly seven (7) feet and it will be facing outward/to the east. The retaining wall is proposed to be located seventeen (17) feet from the eastern property line at its closest point, near the midpoint of the eastern property line. To the north and south of the midpoint of the eastern property line, the retaining wall is located slightly further from the property line than the midpoint measurement. For instance, at the south end of the site, the retaining wall is approximately 31 feet from the eastern property line. This is due to the angle of the property line and the steps that occur in the retaining wall itself.

Given the significant height of the retaining wall, Planning staff directed the applicant to locate the required screening wall (in this case the applicant is requesting a solid fence) atop the retaining wall to provide the required six (6) foot screening from the abutting neighbor, rather than placing the six (6) foot wall (again, a fence in this case) at the property line. This would have

the effect that the new building, parking areas, etc. would sit atop the seven (7) foot retaining wall and effectively above the screening wall (if the wall was located on the property line), so that the screening wall would not provide any effective screening. Staff has no objections to the proposed location of the screening fence atop the retaining wall since it will provide a much more effective means of screening in the proposed location. Additionally, the location of the retaining wall and screening fence, setback from the eastern property line, allows for some landscaping in this location which will soften the view to the residential neighbors.

As noted, the required screening mechanism is a masonry wall to screen between the residential and industrial districts. Since the screening mechanism is proposed to sit atop a simulated stone retaining wall that is seven (7) feet tall, the applicant is requesting that a fence be permitted in this location due to extensiveness of the retaining wall and the difference in constructing a wall versus a fence on top of the retaining wall. The proposed fence will be a solid, screening fence and the detail shown matches that shown in the City's Streetscape Master Plan. In this instance, due to the overall height of retaining wall and screening mechanism that will reach nearly thirteen (13) feet in combination at its highest point, staff also does not object to the use of a screening fence rather than a wall. The fence will be protected with bollards and curbing along the fence and parking lot respectively, interior to the site.

Modification Language

SECTION 138-12.307 - Modification of Landscape Requirements

Recognizing that a wide variety of land uses and the relationships between them can exist, and that varying circumstances can mitigate the need for landscaping, the Planning Commission may reduce or waive the screening and buffer zone requirements of this [Article 12](#) and approve an alternative screening plan. The Planning Commission shall find that the following standards have been met whenever it modifies any landscaping requirement:

- A. The landscape/screening plan shall protect the character of new and existing residential neighborhoods against negative impacts such as noise, glare, light, air pollution, trash and debris, and hazardous activities.
- B. The alternate width and type of buffer zone and screening provided therein will ensure compatibility with surrounding and nearby land uses because:
 1. The development is compatible with and sensitive to the immediate environment of the site and neighborhood relative to architectural design, scale, bulk, building height, identified historical character, disposition and orientation of buildings on the lot and visual integrity.
 2. The site has natural existing vegetation and/or topography, natural bodies of water or wetland areas or other existing conditions which offer screening consistent with the standards set forth in this [Article 12](#). The Planning Commission shall require the preservation of these natural features as a condition of site plan approval.
 3. The arrangement, design and orientation of buildings on the site maximize privacy and isolate adjacent and nearby land uses from any potential negative impacts of the project.

Renderings



Tree Removal Permit

The tree preservation calculations noted as a part of the site plan submitted indicate that a total of 150 trees are located onsite and thirty-five (35) trees are located inside of the building envelope and are therefore exempt from the preservation percentage requirements and forty-six (46) trees are to be preserved outside of the building footprint. The proposed tree preservation percentage is noted as being 40%. The request is to remove up to 104 (including those in the envelope) total regulated trees (63 regulated trees and 41 specimen trees) with up to 297 replacement trees required. The applicant is proposing to plant 47 replacement trees onsite and to pay the remaining required replacement trees into the City's Tree Fund.

It is noted that the tree removal and replacement numbers of the reviewed site plans were not correct, however they were corrected by the Forestry Department as noted on the plans.

Zoning Map **Master Land Use Plan**



- RE One-Family Residential District
- R-1 One-Family Residential District
- R-2 One-Family Residential District
- R-3 One-Family Residential District
- R-4 One-Family Residential District
- RCD One-Family Residential Cluster District
- RM-1 Multiple-Family Residential District
- RMH Manufactured Housing Park District
- NB Neighborhood Business District
- CB Community Business District
- HS Highway Business District
- BD Brooklands District
- O Office District
- I Industrial District
- SP Special Purpose District
- EC Employment Center District
- FB Flex Business Overlay District
- MR Mixed Residential Overlay District
- PUD Overlay



- Open Space Residential (18.95%)
- Suburban Residential (34.28%)
- Neighborhood Residential (6.72%)
- Multiple Family Residential (6.86%)
- Mixed Use (5.82%)
- Regional Commercial (0.92%)
- Light Industrial/Research & Development (4.99%)
- Hybrid Industrial (1.66%)
- Institutional/Campus (6.43%)
- Parks and Public Open Space (5.55%)
- Conservation Open Space (7.82%)

	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use
Site	I Industrial	Vacant – former single family residence	Mixed Use
North	R3 One Family Residential District with the MR Mixed Residential Overlay	Single Family Residential	Neighborhood Residential
South	I Industrial	Rochester Broach	Mixed Use
East	R3 One Family Residential District	Single Family Residential	Neighborhood Residential
West	I Industrial	Small scale industrial users – multi tenant building	Mixed Use

Public Comments

At the time of posting the agenda packet, the Planning and Economic Development Department did not receive any written or otherwise submitted comments. Planning staff did have extensive conversations with the homeowner to the east regarding overall site development and how the screening to the east was being accomplished.

Staff Site Plan Recommendations

Department	Comments & Waivers/Modifications	Recommendation
Planning		Approval
Engineering	Land Improvement Permit is required Structural engineering review of proposed retaining wall	Approval
Fire		Approval
Building		Approval
Forestry	Revised calculations for tree removal, tree replacement and tree fund payment as noted	Approval
Assessing		Approval

Based on the application provided, Planning staff recommends approval of the proposed site plan and tree removal permit. If the Planning Commission agrees that the proposed industrial building and associated site improvements will be harmonious and compatible with the surroundings, below are motions for approval for your consideration.

Motion to Approve Site Plan

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. PSP2025-0016 (Avon Industrial), the Planning Commission **approves** the proposed **Site Plan**, to allow for the construction of an industrial building of approximately 32,740 square feet along with the associated parking, landscaping, and stormwater infrastructure in the I Industrial District, based on plans received by the Planning Department on April 29, 2026, with the following findings and subject to the following conditions:

Findings

1. The site plan and supporting documents demonstrate that all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, as well as other City Ordinances, standards, and requirements, can be met subject to the conditions noted below.
2. The proposed project is being constructed in a manner that provides for dedicated parking areas that provide adequate parking and the site will be accessed via a singular entrance/exit directly to E. Avon Road, which is a major roadway, thereby promoting current and future safety and convenience of vehicular traffic both within the site and the general area.
3. Off-street parking areas are being provided for the park site based on the square footages of the building dedicated to office and warehouse use.
4. The proposed development and associated improvements should have a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with the existing development in the adjacent vicinity.
5. The proposed development will not have an unreasonably detrimental or injurious effect upon the surrounding area. The proposed improvements will bring additional leasable square footage of industrial building to the city and should generate additional jobs.
6. Finally, the Planning Commission finds that a modification to allow the screening wall to not be located along the property line and to be located as shown on the site plan acceptable since the proposed location will more efficiently screen the use at the proposed location due to the elevation changes being proposed onsite. Further that due to the location of the screening mechanism, that a fully opaque fence in lieu of a masonry wall is also acceptable due to the fence being the same height as the required wall, the fence is an opaque screening fence, the fence will be located at least 20 feet from the abutting property line, and the fence is being protected by bollards for long term maintenance and protection.

Conditions

1. The applicant shall address all remaining comments and notations as depicted on the reviewed site plans.
2. The applicant provides a landscape bond, in a form acceptable to the City, in the amount of \$137,767 to the Planning and Economic Development Department prior to the granting of a Land Improvement Permit.

Motion to Approve a Tree Removal Permit

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of File No. PTP2026-0003 (Avon Industrial) the Planning Commission **grants** a **Tree Removal Permit** based on plans received by the Planning Department on April 29, 2026, with the following findings and subject to the following conditions:

Findings

1. The proposed removal of regulated trees is in conformance with the City's Tree Conservation Ordinance.
2. The applicant is proposing to remove a total of one hundred and four (104) regulated trees including a total of forty-one (41) specimen trees as a part of site development, and replant a total of at least forty-seven (47) trees onsite.

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. The applicant pays into the City Tree Fund the equivalent of 226 trees prior to the granting of a Land Improvement Permit.