



Department of Planning and Economic Development

Staff Report to the Planning Commission

March 12, 2025

PCU2025-0002, PSP2022-0020, and PTP2025-0004

Gas Station Renovation

3420 S. Rochester Rd.

REQUEST	Conditional Use Recommendation, Site Plan Approval, Tree Removal Permit Approval
APPLICANT	Leslie Accardo PEA Group 1849 Pond Run Auburn Hills, MI 48326
LOCATION	3420 S. Rochester Rd., located at the southwest corner of Rochester Rd. and Nawakwa Rd.
FILE NO.	PCU2025-0002, PSP2022-0020, and PTP2025-0004
PARCEL NO.	15-34-277-006
ZONING	NB Neighborhood Business District with the FB Flex Business Overlay
STAFF	Chris McLeod, AICP, Planning Manager

Summary

The applicant is proposing to redevelop the existing gasoline service station with a more modern, expanded station along with an ancillary drive through at the subject location (3420 S. Rochester Road). The site itself is approximately 1.33 acres in size and is zoned NB Neighborhood Business District with the Flex Business Overlay District. The site is being developed pursuant to the NB Neighborhood Business District, and **not** the FB Flex 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.

The applicant is proposing to construct a new, modernized 7,154 square foot gasoline service station convenience store along with an ancillary drive through use in place of the existing service station that is slightly less than 2,000 square feet. The current building is a simple convenience store. The interior space of the new building will be dedicated for retail sales for the gasoline service station and a portion of the building will also be dedicated for a separate user that will include a drive through window. The drive through window will be located on the south side of the building and stacking will occur around the west and north sides of the building and be compliant with the City's regulations pertaining to drive through facilities. There is not be any automotive repair presented as a part of this request. A total of four (4) standalone pumps, providing service to eight (8) vehicles, are also be proposed along with new underground storage tanks. The site will also provide one (1) dedicated EV charging station at the northeast corner 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 Nawakwa. That driveway will generally stay in its current location, being slightly moved to the west and will be reconstructed to comply with current specifications.

The site currently has two (2) driveways along S. Rochester Road. These driveways are angled and are likely intended to be directional driveways onto S. Rochester Road. The first driveway is located very close to the intersection of Nawakwa and S. Rochester Road. The second driveway is located to the south end of the site along S. Rochester Road. These two (2) driveways will be consolidated into a singular driveway for both ingress and egress, towards the central portion of the site in an effort to maximize the separation from the intersection of Nawakwa and S. Rochester Road and the onramp for M-59 to the south and therefore provide greater safety to drivers and pedestrians.

The vehicular circulation onsite will include full maneuvering lanes around the gas pump areas, parking for the

convenience and food user along the front (east) side of the building, and additional overflow parking along the north property line (angled parking configuration) and west property line (parallel parking spaces). The drive through stacking lanes will circle the building, on the south, west, and north sides of the building. The stacking lanes will be separated from the adjacent maneuvering lanes, servicing the parking spaces by landscape islands consistent with the City's Ordinance requirements. The site plan is compliant with the number of stacking spaces required by the City (10). However, since the site is accessed by S. Rochester Road, MDOT review of the driveway/access is also required. MDOT has an additional drive through use standard it applies to uses along S. Rochester Road, requires a more significant stacking lane and number of stacking spaces beyond what is required by the City. These spaces are shown on the site plan but extend much further around the site than those required by the City. The City, in review of the site plan, only applied City requirements, such as the physical separation between stacking lane and maneuvering lanes to those number of spaces specifically required by the City, not the additional spaces required by the State.

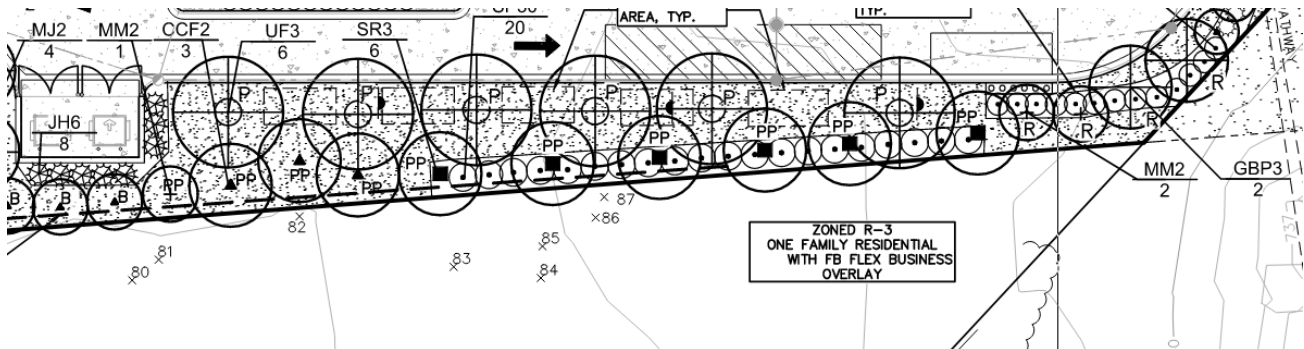
In regard to pedestrian accessibility, the site plans propose two (2) separate pedestrian connections to the pedestrian pathway system along S. Rochester Road and the proposed sidewalk along the south side of Nawakwa. These pathway connections will be ADA compliant, providing full access to and from the site for all users. 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 building architecture provides for a modern design and the building materials include a mix of masonry brick material, 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 remodeled 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 wanted to present. The redevelopment of the site will also include a new gas pump canopy that is supported by masonry brick columns.

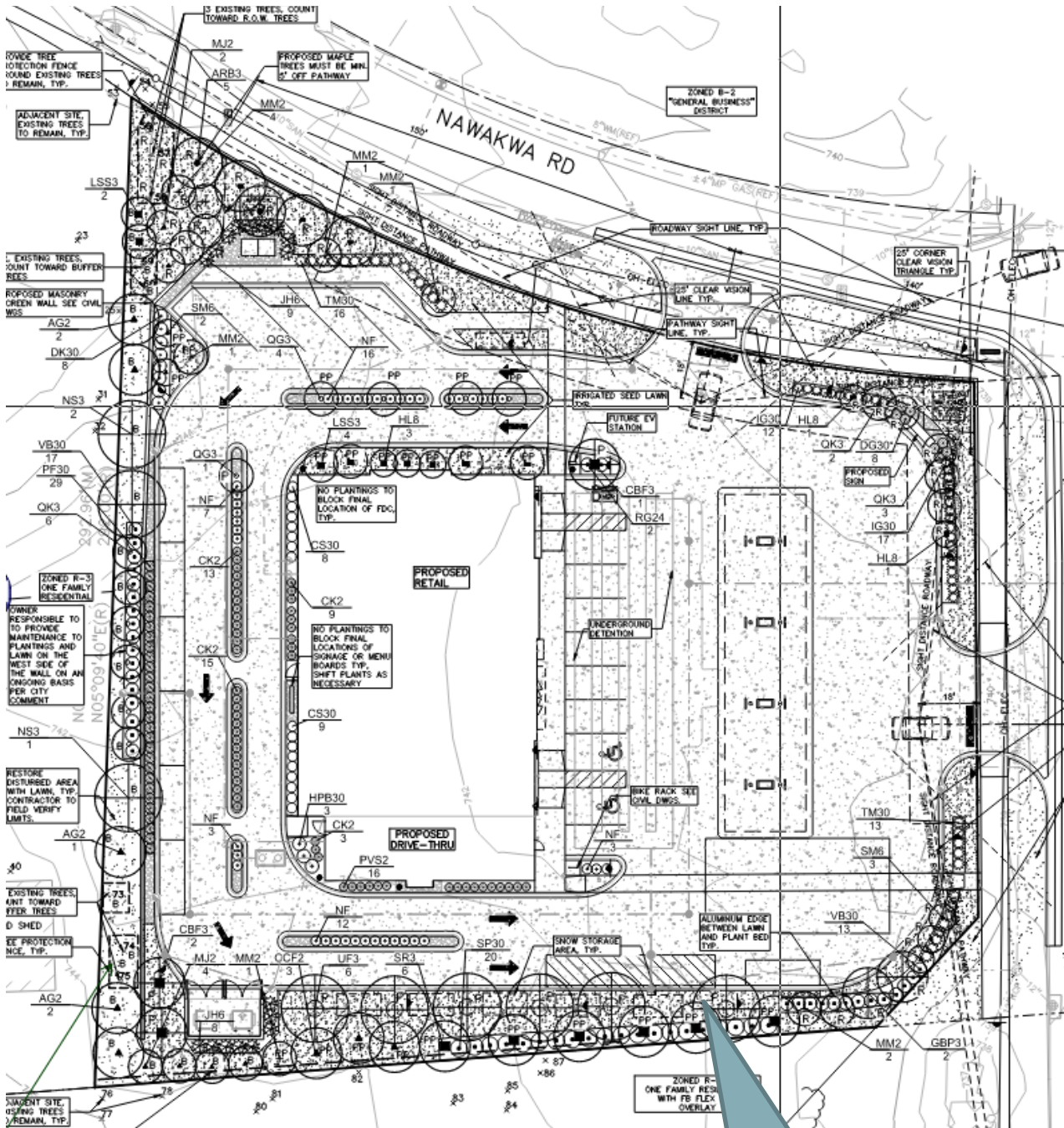
Finally, as a part of the proposed redevelopment, the applicant is proposing the removal of the existing sign and the construction of a new sign at the immediate corner of Nawakwa and S. Rochester Road that complies with City requirements.

Landscape Buffer D Modification.

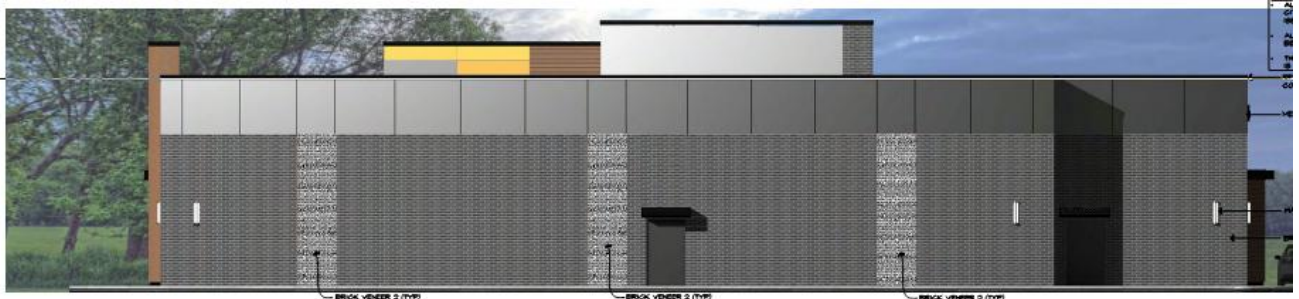
As a part of the overalls site plan and landscape plan proposals, the applicant has indicated that the ability to plant all of the required buffer trees to fulfill the Landscape Buffer D requirement cannot be met along the south side of the development. The property to the south, which is owned by the applicant, is zoned for residential purposes and also includes the FB Overlay District. Since the property to the south is not a part of the development request, it then requires the subject site to provide screening to it. The applicant has indicated that due to the number of trees and plantings required as a result of other City requirements, the full number of plantings along the south property line cannot be met and the applicant has requested a modification to not plant six (6) deciduous trees and twelve (12) evergreen trees. The southern property line will, however, include a number of other plantings (that do not satisfy the buffer requirement since they are being used to satisfy other ordinance requirements). The applicant has indicated they will provide the monetary equivalent to the number of trees being asked a part of the modification into the City's Tree Fund. If accepted, the Planning Commission should modify the motions provided to include an additional \$6,012 which is the cash equivalent to the number of trees being requested as a part of the modification.



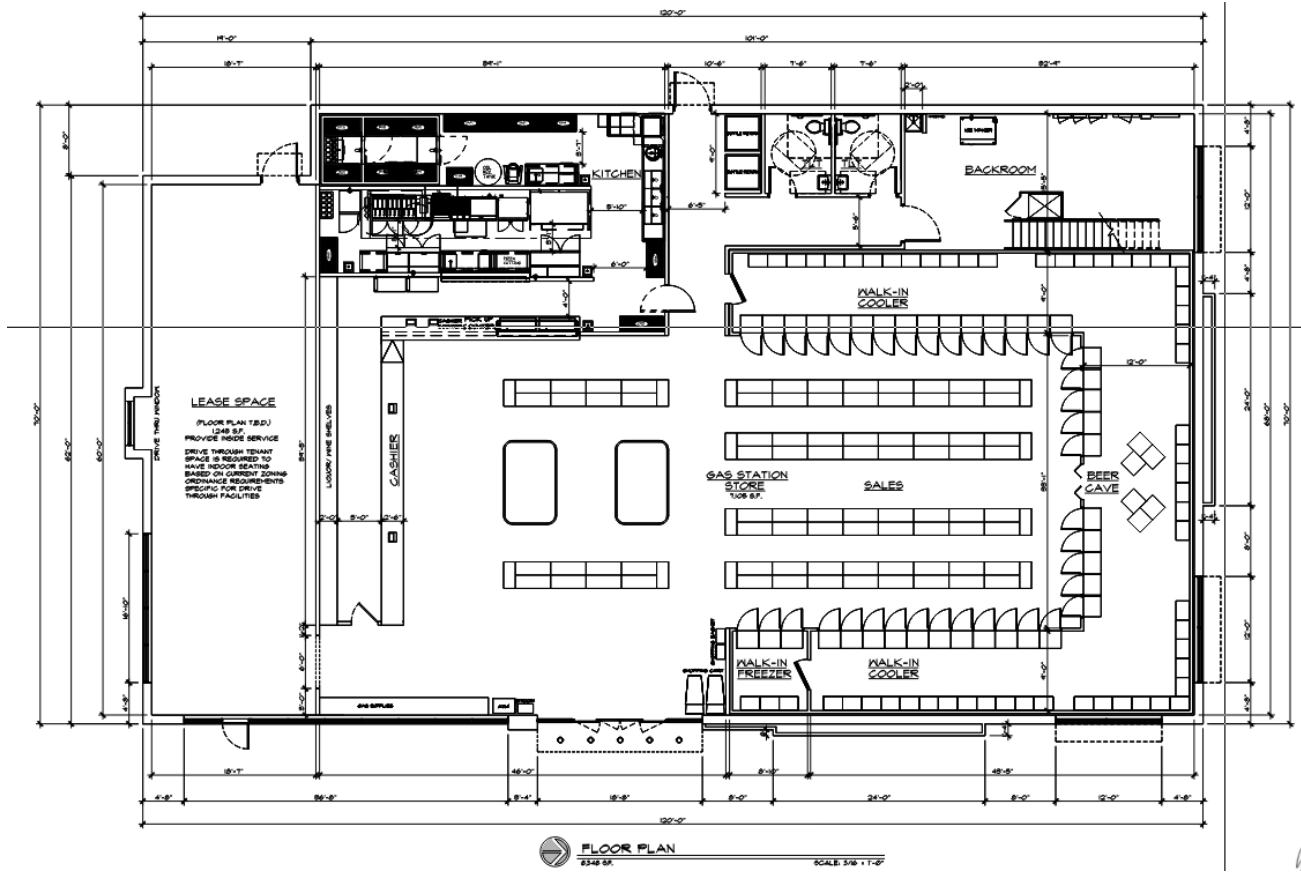
Site Plan



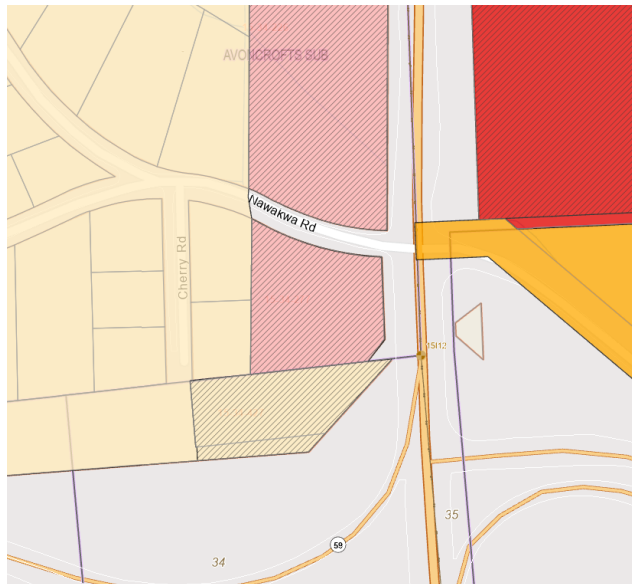
Renderings



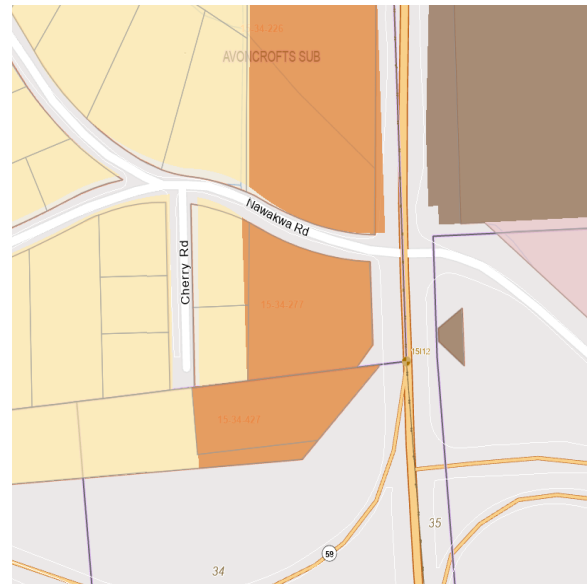
Floor Plan



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
- HB 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



- Estate Residential
- Residential 2
- Residential 2.5
- Residential 3
- Residential 4
- Residential 5
- Mixed Residential Overlay
- Multiple Family
- Residential Office Flex
- Auburn Road Corridor
- Commercial Residential Flex - 2
- Commercial Residential Flex - 3
- Office
- REC Workplace
- REC Technology and Office Image Corridor
- REC Interchange
- Regional Commercial
- Industrial
- Special Purpose
- Park/Public Open Space
- Private Recreation/Open Space

	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use
Site	NB Neighborhood Business District with the FB Flex Business Overlay	Gasoline Service Station	Commercial Residential Flex 2
North (across Nawakwa)	NB Neighborhood Business District with the FB Flex Business Overlay	Oak Ridge Plaza shopping center	Commercial Residential Flex 2
South	R-3 One Family Residential with the FB Flex Business Overlay	Undeveloped land with M-59 beyond	Commercial Residential Flex 2
East (across S. Rochester Rd.)	R-4 One family Residential and M-59	Nawakwa Rd. and M-59 exit, with All Seasons Rochester Hills beyond	Commercial Residential Flex 3
West (across Adams)	R-3 One Family Residential	Single family residences	Residential 3

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:
<p>1</p> <p><i>Will promote the intent and purpose of (the Ordinance).</i></p>	<p>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, since the site has traditionally been utilized as a gasoline service station and there are a number of other drive through uses within the immediate area, either as primary or accessory type uses.</p>
<p>2</p> <p><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>	<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 more economically viable and is generally consistent with the surrounding land uses. In an effort to help protect the neighbors to the west, the proposed site plan provides significant landscaping along the western property line, including a wall.</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 increase their separation from the immediate intersection of Nawakwa and S. Rochester Road along with the onramp to M-59.</p>
<p>3</p> <p><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>	<p>The current building has been utilized for a gasoline service station since the 1970's, therefore the site should be serviced adequately by S. Rochester Road, particularly with the reduction and realignment of driveways.</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 of an issue upon the redevelopment of the site.</p>
<p>4</p> <p><i>Will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare.</i></p>	<p>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. Further, that given the size and configuration of the proposed ancillary drive through facility, that particular use should not be detrimental to existing and future land uses, given the separation between the subject site and</p>
<p>5</p> <p><i>Will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.</i></p>	<p>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.</p>

Specific Requirements for Drive Through Facilities

Any use or building that contains a drive-through facility that is designed to provide service to a patron who remains in their car shall comply with the following requirements:

1. *Drive-through facilities may be conditionally permitted as accessory to a permitted use where the principal use occupies space in a structure larger than 2,000 square feet. Any new structure shall be placed on a permanent foundation and designed to be compatible with neighboring development in terms of material and appearance. The overall building is over 7,000 square feet. The floor plan dedicates slightly over 1,200 square feet to the drive through use. At this time, there is no dedicated user provided for that space.*
2. *Drive-through facilities shall be built as an integral architectural element of the primary structure and use. Building materials shall be the same as those used in the primary structure. Drive-through facilities and structures separate from the primary structure are prohibited. The drive through space and window itself has been fully integrated into the building and overall architecture. The drive through lane and associated stacking will also occur as a part of the overall site layout and parking configuration for the entire site.*
3. *Drive-through uses service windows shall be located to the rear or side of the primary structure, and set back a minimum of ten feet from the front building wall of the primary structure. The drive through window is located on the south side of the building and is located over 10 feet from the front (east) façade of the building.*
4. *Drive-through uses shall be configured such that glare from headlights is obstructed from shining into a public right-of-way or neighboring residential use. The landscape plan proposes a series of plantings along the S. Rochester Road frontage in an effort to help limit headlight glare. It is noted that the drive through window is located more than 180 feet from the edge of S. Rochester Road. The applicant has provided the required wall and landscaping along the western property line to help reduce light glare from the drive through facility and the site overall.*
5. *Unless a more intense buffer is required by Section 138-12.300, a type D landscape buffer shall be provided along rear and side lot lines of a drive-through use located adjacent to a residentially zoned or used property. The landscape plan proposes landscaping consistent with the Type D specifications along the west side of the development/property. The property to the south of the site is also zoned for residential purposes but also includes the FB Overlay District and also abuts the M-59 interchange. The applicant is seeking a partial modification to the landscape buffer D requirements in this location. However, there remains significant - plantings in this location as a result of perimeter landscape requirements, the Buffer D requirements (in part) and tree replacement trees being planted onsite.*
6. *Any use with a drive-through shall also provide customers with a means of accessing services inside the building. Although no specific user and therefore no specific floor plan has been provided for this space, the floor plan does note that the use is required to have indoor seating.*
7. *Drive-through facilities, except those that have no more than two (2) drive-through lanes, each having three (3) or fewer stacking spaces, shall have drive-through lanes that are separated from general maneuvering lanes by way of curbed landscape islands with a planting bed a minimum of three (3) feet wide (measured back of curb to back of curb). The site plan proposes a landscaped curbed area along the majority of the drive through lane for the extent of stacking spaces as required by the City. The site plan does propose occasional breaks in the island for drainage, pedestrian pass through as well as an "escape" point for drive through users. City staff is satisfied that this provision has been adequately met.*
8. *All designated pedestrian areas which pass through any area intended for vehicular circulation shall be clearly marked through pavement striping, alternative paving material, a stamped pattern or texture in the pavement, or a combination thereof. Pedestrian pass throughs and pedestrian connections have been provided with crosswalk markings where necessary.*
9. *Drive-through lanes shall have a minimum width of nine feet and a minimum length of 20 feet per vehicle. Drive-through lanes shall have a minimum centerline turning radius of 25 feet. This requirement has been met for those stacking spaces required by the City.*
10. *Stacking lanes shall not conflict with other vehicle circulation on the site, including maneuvering lanes for parking spaces. This requirement has been met for those stacking spaces required by the City.*

Tree Removal Permit

The applicant has provided a tree survey that indicates a total of 20 trees are currently onsite. The site plan indicates that a total of eight (8) of the trees identified onsite will remain meeting the minimum forty (40%) preservation and that twelve (12) regulated trees are proposed to be removed. The twelve (12) replacement trees required are

proposed to be paid into the City's Tree Fund. Based on a rate of \$334/tree a total of \$4,008 would be required to be paid in to the City Tree Fund.

Staff Recommendations

Department	Comments & Waivers/Modifications	Recommendation
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDOT required stacking may cause a potential conflict, however this is left to MDOT review since city requirement is met Payment into the City Tree Fund of \$4,008 for the Tree Removal Permit. Modification to the Landscape Buffer D requirements along the southern property line. Planning Commission to determine if the building façade materials and design are appropriate 	Approval
Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land Improvement Permit is required Addressing comments for pump manhole and associated area as appropriate Addressing comments regarding the restrictive covenant on the property as a result of a previous underground storage tank leak Addressing REU computations 	Approval
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MDOT permit required, clarify their stacking requirements are met 	Approval
Fire		Approval
Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust dimensions for accessible parking spaces 	Approval
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 the tree removal permit along with being posted on the City's website and information distribution outlets. The Planning Department has not received any correspondence regarding the proposed development.

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. If the proposed Site Plan and Conditional Use approval are granted, appropriate engineering and building submittals will be required along with conditions review through the Planning Department.

Motion to Recommend Approval of a Conditional Use

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. PCU2025-0002 (Gas Station Renovation with ancillary drive through at 3420 S. Rochester), the Planning Commission **recommends** to City Council **Approval** of the **Conditional Use** to operate a gasoline service station with an ancillary drive through within the NB Neighborhood Business District at 3420 S. Rochester, on Parcel No. 70-15-34-277-006, based on plans received by the Planning Department on February 4, 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.
3. The proposal will have a positive impact on the community as a whole and the surrounding area by providing a modernized gasoline service station and convenience store along with a food provider with an ancillary drive through use.
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.
5. The proposed development, with the revised driveway configurations, will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare.
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.
7. That the requested modification to the buffer along the southern property line is appropriate given the number of plantings already proposed, the fact that the site to the south also includes the FB Flex Business Overlay District and finally, that the site to the south directly abuts the M-59 interchange.

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

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. PSP2022-0002 (Gas Station Renovation with ancillary drive through at 3420 S. Rochester), the Planning Commission **approves the Site Plan**, based on plans received by the Planning Department on February 4, 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 be accessed from Nawakwa and S. Rochester Road with revised driveway configurations and consolidation, 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.
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 improvements should have a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with the development onsite as well as existing development in the adjacent vicinity and act as a transitional use from the Rochester Road corridor and the residential development to the west.
7. The proposed modification to the Landscape Buffer D requirement, specifically along the southern property line, has been found to be acceptable given the number of plantings already proposed, the fact that the site to the south also includes the FB Flex Business Overlay District and finally, that the site to the south directly abuts the M-59 interchange..

Conditions

1. Address all applicable comments from other City departments and outside agency review letters.
2. Provide a landscape bond in the amount of \$94,480.00, 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

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 has provided a tree survey that indicates a total of 20 trees are currently onsite, with the site plan indicates that a total of eight (8) of the trees identified onsite will remain and that twelve (12) regulated trees are proposed to be removed. The twelve (12) replacement trees required are 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. 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).
3. A total of \$4,008 is to be paid into the City's Tree Fund for the twelve (12) required replacement trees.