

Agenda

Zoning Board of Appeals



City of Kalamazoo

Thursday, November 13, 2025

7:00 PM

City Commission Chambers – 241 West South Street

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Approval of minutes from the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting on October 9, 2025

C. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

D. PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. ZBA #25-11-18: 850 E. Crosstown Parkway. CMCW Holdings, LLC (Alliance Metal Recycling) is requesting a dimensional variance from Appendix A Chapter 4.2 Y (1), for a ‘Recycling Facilities’, to be located on a parcel totaling .87 acres, where this type of use is required to have a minimum of two (2) acres of land.
2. ZBA #25-11-19: 1015 and 1021 E. Michigan Ave./502 and 524 Riverview Dr./1014, 1018 and 1024 Sherwood Ave. Indian Trails Inc., is requesting the following variances:
 1. A use variance from Chapter 50, 50-4.4(12)(h), to authorize the expansion of the Indian Trails facility and bus storage onto the west half of the property at 524 Riverview Drive, where oversized vehicle related businesses are not permitted.
 2. A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-8.5A (3)(a), to authorize installation of new chain-link fence along the property frontages of Riverview Drive and Sherwood Avenue, where chain-link fence in the front yard is prohibited in all zone districts.
 3. A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-8.5C (1)(a), to authorize installation of ten (10) foot tall chain-link fencing along the property frontages of Riverview Drive and Sherwood Avenue, where only six-foot fencing is permitted in the front yard areas.
3. ZBA #25-11-20: 1327 Sherwood Ave. Isaac Ogola, is requesting a use variance from Chapter 4, Section 4.1, to increase this Adult Foster Care Group Home from six (6) residents to ten (10) residents, where medium group homes (7-12

residents) are not permitted in this residential zone district.

E. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. ZBA #25-11-21: 1421 N Pitcher Street. Graphic Packaging International is requesting a six-month extension for the two building setback variances granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals on December 12, 2024 (this extension will make the variances valid until June 11, 2026).
2. Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 Update

F. REPORTS

G. ADJOURNMENT

**MINUTES
CITY OF KALAMAZOO
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
October 9, 2025 - 7:00 p.m.
CITY COMMISSION CHAMBERS**

Members Present: Allison Haan, Remi Harrington, Tony McReynolds, Beth van den Hombergh, Gary Wark, and Alan Sylvester (Alternate)

Members Absent: Joe Hohler III

City Staff: Pete Eldridge, Zoning Administrator; Charles Bear, Assistant City Attorney; Shelby Donaldson, Recording Secretary

Vice-Chair Wark called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Mr. Eldridge performed a roll call of the board members present for the meeting.

Vice-Chair Wark asked if there were any changes to the agenda and Mr. Eldridge said no but wanted to announce there was feedback from the City Planner on the amendment of the zoning ordinance for the increase in zoning board of appeals membership to seven, which will either be on the December or January Planning Commission agenda which will move Mr. Sylvester to a regular seat.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. McReynolds moved to approve the meeting minutes from September 11, 2025, as submitted, seconded by Mr. Sylvester.

The motion was approved by voice vote unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: Vice-Chair Wark summarized the process and explained the Zoning Board of Appeals public hearing rules of procedures. For each request, the secretary will read the application into the public record. The applicant or their representative will have 10 minutes to present their comments, followed by public comments in favor of the application where they will state their name and address and speak for three minutes. Following that, those in opposition will be invited to speak for three minutes and afterward, those received via phone will be aired for the panelist and audience. The public can call in to 888-382-9556 to leave comments for any of the property on the agenda then the public hearing will be closed on that request. The Board would then conduct the finding of facts. The Board must approve the Finding of Fact. Therefore, the first

vote you hear is not a ruling on the request, but the Finding of Fact, then the Board discusses the request in order to determine a ruling. The Board reserves the privilege to ask questions of people who have already spoken even though the public comment portion is closed. Once discussion has ended the Board moves onto a roll call vote. A full board consists of six members, and four affirmative votes are required to grant a motion for a non-use or use variance.

Ms. Harrington read the application for 209 and 219 West Cedar Street into the record.

ZBA#25-10-16: 209 and 219 West Cedar Street: An application for a use variance for the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance has been filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals by AVB Inc. The applicant is requesting a use variance from Chapter 50-4.4 C(11)(b), to allow a commercial parking lot on a corner lot in the LW-1 District, where a stand-alone parking lot is not permitted on corner lots in the LW-1 District.

Please note that this request will not change the zoning classification of the properties. This is a request for a variance regarding only the item described above.

Curt Aardema from AVB Inc. spoke on behalf of the applicant and explained that this is not necessarily a freestanding parking lot, however it is in context of this application and wanted to give background. He explained that he works for AVB but is working on this project with Hinman Company and sits in meetings with them at least once a week planning projects. He stated Hinman has partnered with AVB for over 50 years and has projects dating back to the 1970s and added that from a community engagement standpoint, he then showed an image on the screen of a tree that was left back in the 1980s and is still there to the day. He said engagement wise, he has served on a number of committees in the community and added that AVB is deeply engaged as well and said he served on the DDA board and has been a city board president. In addition, he served on Metro's board as well as several other boards.

Mr. Aardema state they have worked on many projects around Kalamazoo County and the four that were on the screen included the Trade Center project, a mixed use office, hotel, and restaurants project in Portage, they recently opened a project called Tall Timbers, also in Portage, which is 180 units of multi-family housing, and the Sprin Hill Suites, A Marriott Hotel and retail center, also in Portage. A Kalamazoo project includes the Skyrise, which was developed by Hinman and AVB, is a mix of senior housing and market rate apartments, Trader Joe's, an AVB project in Oshtemo Township, and Nonla Burger as well other local businesses. Mr Aardema said they got involved in downtown via a study done for the city by Zimmerman Volk Associates in 2014, which stated the downtown area needed 1,400 housing units and although they haven't historically done work in the downtown area but if there's a demand for it they would try to fill it. He said they found a site, the old public safety station (shown on the left side of the screen), developed plans, that turned into 400 Rose, which began in 2018. 400 Rose is a mixed-use project that started with 135 apartments, added a second building and another 101 apartments, and the Factory Coffee on the corner of Rose and Lovell, and feels that they added to the vibrancy of that area from an area that once had a lot of surface parking lots on it. He said in the second phase project they reviewed the housing study conducted by Kalamazoo County in 2022 which called for almost 8,000 units of apartments and single-family homes, townhouses, condominiums, a mix of housing types across Kalamazoo County by the year 2030. Mr. Aardema stated now we're in the year 2025 and in the areas highlighted on the screen, there were 300 in the general urban area, 250 in the urban center (downtown), and 400 in the urban core and now want to help fill the void since the housing they

built is already full, so they turned to the corner of Rose and Cedar, the site of a former fire station for the city of Kalamazoo and are working diligently with the city and the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority on a project to add 71 new apartments in a newly constructed building on that corner but to do that (he then showed an aerial view of the site from the city's GIS map from 2018) and before they started work there, there was a church and a handful of homes he said that they, along with some of the neighbors from Cedar Street who were also present, tried to fill in a lot of those surface parking lots. He then showed a GIS image from 2025 showing those surface lots filled in with new buildings. He gave the back story regarding how they got to putting a new parking lot on a lot that has been used for construction staging and showed the two sites on Rose, the proposed 71 units on Cedar, and another site between Burdick and John and said that they are trying to add housing and trying to shuffle around parking in the meantime hoping that as time goes on, the demand for vehicles diminishes as different types of cars and transportation come into play within downtown. He then referenced that screen again and stated the site with the star has two parcels: 209 and 219 West Cedar Street, which has been used for construction staging and they are proposing a move of two corner parking uses, and stated they currently own those surface parking lots at Rose and Cedar and the city also owns one that would be incorporated into the bigger project. He added they would move the parking off of the primary urban street corner into the middle of the block and take the parking they are currently renting, at the southwest corner, and move it to the middle of the block as well, which is unique because the middle of the block has an alleyway that runs through it, which technically makes it a corner. Mr. Aardema stated in most blocks downtown this would be the middle of the block, which meets the objective of the zoning ordinance and what they are doing is pulling parking off of the primary corners, moving it into the middle of the block for now, and building new housing on one of the primary corners and hopefully building on that block as well, but need to shuffle it around based on timing. He then listed a few things related to what they think the variance request will promote: existing housing viability in the Downtown/Vine area, and added that they don't want cars, potentially downtown but right now there is still a demand and they have five plus years of management experience with downtown apartments and a lot of people who don't use their cars every day, and don't want to use their cars every day, but still have one and that car still requires some sort of storage in the area and maintaining that viability for the existing housing is one of the reasons they're going to be taking parking offline, to build new housing they have to accommodate that somewhere. Also, proposed new housing on the Cedar Street corridor that's directly linked to the ability to do this project, removal of surface parking from a primary street corner and moving into the interior of the block, and lastly, opportunities for future housing he added that we've gone from this massive parking field of parking that's been on this block to shrinking it down and trying to move it into smaller areas off the primary blocks.

Ms. Harrington asked about the difference between a commercial parking lot as opposed to residential parking and Mr. Eldridge stated that a commercial parking lot is a stand-alone lot and called that because spaces are leased out, but there wouldn't be any difference between commercial or residential parking, but these properties will be 100% parking lot with no other primary use. Ms. Harrington said parking with a fee...and Mr. Eldridge and Mr. Eldridge said yes, but it's all just parking, as with other developments where the primary use is an apartment building on the property and parking is accessory to that, in this case it is the primary use as surface parking lot.

Mr. Sylvester asked Mr. Aardema about moving the lot from the corner of Cedar and Rose Street to the middle of the block for future development and asked if AVB felt that would not only be housing, but multi-family housing and Mr. Aardema said yes and went back a couple of slides to show what the future plan is and stated that the site plan for the northeast corner of Rose and Cedar,

the old fire station site and the old answering service building, that is there now and vacant, the old fire station has been vacant for about 21 years and has become blighted, so they are working on a Brownfield plan with the Brownfield Authority and are deep into the design phase of the project and in the image on the screen was a rendering of what they intend to build, he stated they still have to work on the details for the final design and finishes, but the movement of parking is the goal to accommodate 71 new housing units in the downtown core.

Ms. Harrington asked if that is by Cedar and Rose parking and Mr. Aardema stated this is at the northeast corner of Cedar and Rose, south of the AT&T building.

Vice-Chair Wark asked for staff comments, and they are as follows: Mr. Eldridge stated the site is completely void of any use right now and it was cleared to be used for construction staging, so this request doesn't involve any demolition of existing buildings. It fronts West Cedar and on a public alley, which technically the way the ordinance is worded, makes it a corner lot, which is why it needs a variance for this standalone parking project. He added the tie-in with redevelopment was well laid out and shifting of parking and, over time, the removal of other surface parking lots that will result in this short-term use of this site, which could become long-term depending on what gets developed next to it. Mr. Eldridge stated staff is asking for two conditions they want to put with their support of this application: one is a sunset provision of five years from the date of this board's approval and the second is the required removal of the parking lot improvements at the end of the five year period unless a project is developed that will no longer make this a standalone parking lot.

Vice-Chair Wark asked if there was anyone who wanted to speak for the request and there was no one.

Vice-Chair Wark asked if there was anyone who wanted to speak against the request and there was Mr. Eric Stuckey owner of 317 West Cedar Street and 313 West Cedar Street stated other than Roger's Place at Douglas and Sons, those are the only single-family dwellings left on Cedar Street and he will be affected by parking lots. He said parking lots are not as aesthetically pleasing, environmentally friendly, multi-use, and not an efficient use of our downtown space and added that he has a good relationship with Mr. Aardema and thinks they have been doing good things with AVB and tonight is the first time he's heard the bigger plan and asked what guarantee is there that they will turn it into housing in five years and not become a permanent parking lot and stated he thinks we need green space and wants spaces that are inviting to the community. Mr. Stuckey stated they're talking about doing housing projects but where these current lots are, there used to be housing units there and said on the corner the house that was there was in no worse shape than the home Mr. Stuckey lives in now which, in his opinion, is turning into a nice place. He pointed out that there are public companies that will charge for the parking spaces where right now we're working on a negative budget, everybody knows this and why don't we as a city do something to generate income and turn the fire station into a parking lot and the city can generate something. He said we need green spaces and as an Airbnb owner, he wants things that are inviting and will keep people in the city, walkable spaces and parking lots don't do that. He asked that the board consider environmental impact when it comes to buildings and parking lots.

Vice-Chair asked where do his short-term tenants park and Mr. Stuckey stated he has private parking and added that AVB has an entire city block of underground parking between Cedar and rose and there's also private parking on the two developments they have, in addition to the on

street parking added on Cedar, which is another reason he wants to know why do they need more parking in front of his home?

Ms. van den Hombergh asked if he's ok with this as long as they build something there after five years and Mr. Stuckey stated he only wants people to think about what guarantee do they have that it isn't a parking lot for the next 25 or 35 years? He said he's seen a lot of things, historically, that is supposed to be done but something else ends up happening and he feels that we need to be environmentally and aesthetically aware because that's what will keep people downtown and local businesses open. Ms. van den Hombergh asked if something can be added to the five-year clause being permanent and Mr. Eldridge stated he can add if the board chooses to utilize the conditions proposed by staff, at the end of the five year period, the parking lot would need to be removed if there is no primary use, whether it's a small business to go along with the parking, a small apartment building, or consolidated in with a larger development, but if something doesn't happen in five years, the parking lot has to be removed that is the condition of the approval of the variance and it has to be followed. Mr. Stuckey asked how do you remove parking lot and Mr. Eldridge stated you dig it up and haul it away and if the property owner doesn't cooperate, the city does it and then liens the property for that amount. Mr. Stuckey said then you're stuck with gravel and Mr. Eldridge said yes but then they will have to work on another redevelopment plan, and the conditions are real and tied with the variance.

Ms. Harrington asked if there was permission from the city to turn this property into a staging site and Mr. Eldridge stated there was permission given and there had to be demolition permits for removal of the structures that were there and he can't speak for the economic development staff involved at the time, but it was part of a bigger picture project to develop the second phase of the 400 Rose apartment complex and the need to have a staging area and to place the construction trailer, and some of the equipment and this was a site that worked. The city issued the demolition permit in addition to obtaining historic approvals.

Vice-Chair Wark asked if there were any phone in comments and there were none.

Ms. Harrington stated she's not clear how we're activating temporary uses for these types of purposes and to Mr. Stuckey's point, how is the issue of environmental degradation addressed, so they are going to take the pavement, remove it, and put it in another part of the city? She asked why only five years for parking lot space, as she knows about all of the development of downtown, but she doesn't understand why we need a parking lot for five years and how we have, historically, dealt with the issue of temporary use for the purposes of construction and the purposes of development and wants to know what is the guidance from city staff on what role temporary parking will play on the future of the city? Mr. Eldridge stated the city would like to see a higher, more intense use on this property other than a parking lot, which is why the five-year condition is being proposed, so that it doesn't become a permanent parking lot going forward and either gets redeveloped or absorbed by a development that occurs adjacent to it, but they don't want it to become just another parking lot that everyone drives by and is there because we have a number of those, such as the Wendy's that used to be downtown. He stated that is why they are trying to bridge the gap and be more flexible with this space over the next five years while this additional development project, that AVB and Hinman are working on comes together but after that, the city would like to see something happen with this surface parking lot, which is where the five years comes from. Ms. Harrington asked if the board has the autonomy to say what type of materials can be used for the parking lot and asked who is accountable for the parking lot. Mr. Eldridge stated the board has the ability to place conditions on a variance, including how a development comes

together however, that needs to be left to the Site Plan Review committee but this lot will not be able to discharge into the city storm sewer and there may be an overflow connection for big rain events, but they'll have a storm system onsite which most likely will be under the parking lot. Ms. Harrington asked who will be accountable for the type of parking lot they install and Mr. Eldridge stated the Site Plan Review committee reviews and approves the site plan and had to include everything from what's being proposed above ground to what's being done underground with stormwater management and then city staff is charged with making sure that as that development occurs, it complies with the approved plan. Ms. Harrington asked if the board has the right to say the material that can be used for the parking lot, then stated she can ask Chat GPT what is an environmentally friendly type of parking lot to construct and Mr. Eldridge stated his hesitation is that Public Services has stormwater performance standards based on the number of parking spaces that are proposed, there are stormwater requirements that come into play because there may be materials the board wants but can't be used because they go against stormwater performance standards and he would rather leave it to the Site Plan Review committee to address the material requirements. Attorney Bear stated there are specific ordinances that govern how this is designed and constructed and being as specific as they are, legally they override the general authority of this board to impose conditions in a variance request as far as zoning and that the board can impose conditions regarding zoning and protection of the zoning but as far as construction, that is to be handled under Site Plan Review, Public Service, and building and code requirements and there are protections built into those how things are constructed such as what is required, drainage, stormwater runoff..

Mr. Sylvester said his understanding is to move the parking lot to reuse this site to facilitate other development on vacant property in order to relocate other surface parking lots, consolidate them, and facilitate new development. He then asked how many units are going to be developed in the proposal and Mr. Eldridge said 71 units. Mr. Sylvester asked if two houses were demolished to create the staging site and was told one house was demolished to which he clarified it was to create the staging site and the parking lot will be moved to reuse this site for a five-year period then when the five years expires, does the conforming use? Mr. Eldridge said that is yes. Mr. Sylvester said he just wanted to remind himself of the issue being that they are facilitating development of housing in the city of Kalamazoo, in a city that needs thousands of units. Ms. Harrington stated they still have to do that within the context of taking care of the environment, to Mr. Stuckey's point, constructing a parking lot for temporary use if there's not an accompanying building that's added to support housing, or whatever else developments are happening downtown, we still have to deal with the issue of a parking lot being constructed in the center of downtown and the environmental degradation, as she had already mentioned, so she feels like in these conversations she's coming against the development, which she isn't, but she feels the approach to these things don't take all of the things into consideration and the constituent voice is regularly silenced in the conversation and she thinks there can be creative brainstorming to honor everyone's desire and she wishes we could think more along the lines of regenerative development. Mr. Sylvester stated that, with all due respect, this is the zoning board and there is an environmental board in the city of Kalamazoo where such matters are reviewed and there's a site review process and Ms. Harrington said that before they can even get to that, they have to come to this board

Ms. Haan asked if it's really likely, and hopeful, that another development happens on this parking lot within five years and Mr. Eldridge said yes. Ms. Haan said let's say all kinds of economic challenges take place in the next five years and they can't develop the property will they be able to come back and ask for a new variance? Mr. Eldridge said he supposes they could come back and ask for the condition of the approval to be modified, and Attorney Bear agreed. Ms. Haan said,

so worst case scenario is they can't develop in the time frame, they come back to the board instead of removing the parking lot and Attorney Bear said if they file a variance request it would suspend any action in enforcing that time frame until that was considered however, whoever the board members are at that time would have the discretion to grant or extend the variance, or not. Ms. Haan stated she just wanted to know what could happen if the new board would find removal of the lot irresponsible and Attorney Bear said it could be, and as with any variance decision, that's dependent on the facts and circumstances at the time and we don't know what those are going to be five years from now.

Vice-Chair Wark closed the public meeting.

FINDING OF FACT

Mr. Sylvester moved the Finding of Fact as follows:

- 1) The Finding of Fact for 209 and 219 West Cedar Street shall include all information included in the notice of public hearing dated September 24, 2025, in the agenda packet staff provided for this request and staff comments.
- 2) 63 notices of public hearing were sent, and one response was received in support of the variance.
- 3) A public hearing was held before the board and public comments were accepted. Mr. Eric Stuckey spoke against the variance, citing this would be better suited as green space. He asked what guarantee is there that these developers will adhere to the five years condition that is imposed?
- 4) The Finding of Fact shall include all facts and comments made during the public hearing which are summarized to include, without limitation, the following:

A public hearing was held before the board and public comments were accepted, additional documents and voice messages were received. The board members received copies of the application together with a sketch of the layout and site aerial photographs of the current parking lot and the proposed parking lot, as well as a diagram of the subject and surrounding properties. Kurt Aardema, with American Village Builders spoke on behalf of the applicant and gave background regarding the applicant companies and the history of developing 400 Rose apartments. He discussed the proposal to use the subject property as a standalone parking lot, which would allow relocation of nearby surface parking lots, including parking on the corner of Cedar and Rose Street, which is considered an urban core street. A special circumstance that caused them to request this use variance is that this parking lot would be directly across the street from the 400 Rose apartments, which would be served by this parking lot. Another special circumstance has to do with this property being bifurcated by an alleyway, which causes it to be considered a corner lot, which triggers the need for this use variance. Relocation of the parking lots off of this corner would make several

building lots available for future multifamily development. The applicant stated this doesn't negatively impact the public and meets the spirit of the ordinance because it would benefit the public by moving this parking lot off an urban center street. Granting this variance would be in support of appropriate downtown developments

Speaking in opposition to the application, Mr. Eric Stuckey who resides at 313 West Cedar Street, who is opposed to this and other surface parking lots and considers them an inefficient use of the space and has concerns this will become permanent parking, rather than a limited term parking lot and feels we need more green space in Kalamazoo, and in downtown Kalamazoo, and has concerns about environmental and drainage. Staff inserted comments regarding a proposed five-year condition for this use as a parking lot and at the conclusion of the five-year term, the parking lot will be removed.

Mr. McReynolds seconded the Finding of Fact.

Motion approved for the Finding of Fact by voice vote unanimously.

Ms. Haan moved to approve the application for a use variance from Chapter 50-4.4 C(11)(b), to allow a commercial parking lot on a corner lot in the LW-1 District, where a stand-alone parking lot is not permitted on corner lots in the LW-1 District, with the conditions provided by staff, seconded by Mr. Sylvester.

Discussion:

Motion was approved five to one by a roll call vote with Ms. Haan, Mr. McReynolds, Vice-Chair Wark, Ms. van den Hombergh and Mr. Sylvester voting in favor and Ms. Harrington voting against.

Ms. Harrington read the application for 411 West Kalamazoo Avenue into the record.

ZBA#25-10-17: 411 West Kalamazoo Avenue: An application for dimensional variances for the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance has been filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals by CD Arena, LLC. The applicant is requesting for the Parking Deck: 1) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.5, to allow the total square footage of wall signs to exceed the maximum allowance of signage on an individual wall or building elevation. This variance is for the electronic message display (EMD), which is a wall sign on the east side of the Parking Deck. 2) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.5, to allow wall signs that exceed the maximum size allowed per wall sign of 200 square feet. This is for the EMD on the east side of the Parking Deck. 3) A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.3G(1)(a), to allow EMD wall signs that exceed 25% maximum allowance of wall sign area that can be comprised of changeable copy or EMD square footage. This is for the EMD on the east side of the Parking Deck, and 4) A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.3G(1)(a) and (b), to allow for full motion video on the east side of the Parking Deck. The applicant also is requesting dimensional variances for the Event Center: 1) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.5, to allow the total square footage of wall signs to exceed the maximum allowance of signage on an individual wall or building elevation. This variance is for the wall signs on the west side of the Event Center, 2) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.5 to allow wall signs that exceed the maximum size allowed per wall sign of 200 square feet.

This includes two electronic message displays (EMD) on the north side of the Event Center along with three large static signs on the Event Center, and 3) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.3G(1)(a). to allow EMD wall signs that exceed the 25% maximum allowance of wall sign area that can be comprised of changeable copy or EMD square footage. This is for the EMDs on the north side of the Event Center.

Please note that this request will not change the zoning classification of the property. This is a request for a variance only regarding the items described above.

Kendra Daniel, of Tower-Pinkster, is representing the applicant and they are requesting several variances across the entire building. She wanted to give a little background and stated that this is a unique building opportunity and thus, the signage strategy for it is unique and falls outside of what the zoning allows. She then pulled up a presentation and stated that this is a multi-use event center, and the sheet ice is a practice and community ice rink, practice courts for the WMU men's and women's basketball teams. She said the arena is a multi-use sport facility where there will be hockey, basketball, and concerts, and a multi-use event hall, a flat floor space which allows for any number of different trade shows or other events to be hosted. At the south end of the event center is a parking deck to support the influx of people coming to use the event center. Next, she showed images of the sign package and wanted to point out the signs in scope of the building since a lot of them, according to zoning, are large but fall within a pleasing arrangement on the building. The first is an EMD LED sign, integrated into a glass wall, and also turns the corner of the building but doesn't face the right of way and doesn't fall within the ZBA, but for this sign they are requesting a size and EMD percentage increase, and added that there has also been a request for full motion video minus sound in addition to movable copy and static imagery. On the north face of the event center, which is the main entry, the large "Event Center" sign also has a variance request for it because it is over the allowable size and even though the content is unknown, they do know the size of the sign they won't deviate from and anything that is proposed in the future will fall within the sign size they have requested. In addition, on the façade outside of the zoning, there is signage for the box office and a digital marquee that will have changeable copy that runs around the corner of the building. On the east facades there is the continuation of the marquee and all signs within that façade fall within zoning. On the north façade are digital signs that fall outside of the size allowed, they are too large, and they have additional EMD displays that fall outside of the 25% allowable however, they are not requesting a video variance, they will only have static imagery and would follow all guidelines laid out in the zoning code. The final façade has one sign outside of the zoning size, and it is the spirit logo mark for WMU and is the only sign on that side of the building and will be a prominent feature coming into town, they feel it will give the event center a true identity once the two-way conversion happens on East Kalamazoo, they can imagine it being a moment of arrival, coming to the event center from West Main.

Vice-Chair Wark asked for staff comments, and they were as follows: Mr. Eldridge said the background was covered well regarding these two prominent structures, the eight-story parking deck and the large four-story event center, but he started with what is permitted, which are wall and freestanding signs and added that freestanding signs are not being utilized at this time because the building is close to the property lines and there is not a lot of room for freestanding signs, but he wanted to point out there are other options that are not being used at this time. He said there are signs that are exempt from the sign regulations that are between the buildings: the ones that face the parking deck and what's on the parking deck that faces directly north toward the event center structure aren't visible or legible and won't be viewed from the city streets. He raised a piece of paper and stated what's in yellow on the diagram he blew up from the plans that were provided is

where marquee is, whether it be scrolling information, is permitted under the ordinance, to have a marquee, and the size of the marquee does fall within the guidelines of the ordinance and added that the color coded diagrams help show where the EMDs are located, where the static wall signs are shown in red, and the marquee in yellow. He stated that the repeated theme of variances read off by Ms. Harrington, are what is because there are similar variances needed for signage on the parking deck as well as the event center and if they focus on the parking deck, there's one sign, which is the EMD that faces North Park Street, that the four variances apply to: the first is the wall sign allowance, which in the ordinance is determined by the overall width of the wall that the signage is attached to or, in the case of a building that's five stories or more, it's 5% of the wall space that determines the square footage of all the wall signs that can go on that wall and this is over the 5% and 495 square feet is the total amount allowed. He stated the EMD is 1,921 square feet, which is the first variance but added it is a multi-use board that will not only advertise the Western sports teams but will be used for concerts and other trade shows that may come to the event center and will also serve as a useful tool for community events being held in the plaza that is directly east of where the screen will be, facing toward Park Street, so the board will be multi-use and has a unique technology where when it's off, you can see the structure of the building behind the panel, so it won't be a big white screen that, when it's not in use, that's what you're looking at. He said the second variance is from the maximum size of a wall sign and in this zone district the maximum size of any one wall sign is 200 square feet and this EMD is beyond that, and the third variance is related to the allowance for a changeable copy board, or EMD as part of a wall sign, which is limited to 25% in normal cases but in this case since the whole sign is EMD it's at 100%, not 25% and the closest thing to that is The Wings Event Center has a large freestanding sign that faces toward I-94 and that overall sign is 1,029 square feet so it's quite large, but not as big as this sign, but neither is that facility, and number four is for the full motion video use of the EMD and as the board read, there was a number of guidelines the development team put in place as far as what would be followed for the use of the full motion video and the planning staff is asking for a condition on the approval of the fourth variance on the guidelines being followed that have been laid out in the agenda packet.

Mr. Eldridge asked if there were any questions before he moved through the event center signage, about the parking deck first and Ms. van den Hombergh said she is doing the finding of fact and for one of the points she has for the electronic message display facing North Park Street, she has the requirements for that, the allowance for changeable copy at 100% from full motion video EMD and the restrictions with that, she asked him to repeat number two. He asked if there were more questions because he didn't want to blend the two and there were none.

He moved on to the event center signage and stated the variances are needed on all four sides of the building and Ms. Daniel stated there is no sign on the east side, so the variances are only for the north, south, and west sides of the building. The first is for the overall sign area exceeding the maximum allowed for a particular wall of the building which is only applicable to the west side of the building where the large Bronco logo will be with the channel letters that say "Western Michigan University" under it and is the only side that exceeds the sign square footage allowance, number two is the same dimensional variance allowing for wall signs that exceed the maximum size of 200 square feet for any individual wall sign for one sign on the west side, three signs on the north side and one sign on the south side and said if they follow the numbers on the layout they can look that up and follow which sign is being referenced. The third variance related specifically to the event center wall signage is the EMD signs going on Kalamazoo Avenue, one facing east, one facing west and the allowance in the ordinance is 25% of the sign area but each of these is 100% EMD. He said he is staff is in support due to the unique, multi-function uses of the building,

as well as the size of the building and said for example from corner to corner on Kalamazoo Avenue, the building is 567 feet in length, on Park Street it's 423 feet in length and the overall site is over eight acres he believes, and scale wise it's large facility with the eight story parking deck and the 426,000 square foot event center. Vice-Chair Wark stated that there were no buildings of this size when the ordinances were made, and Mr. Eldridge agreed but said he did look back at some of the large buildings downtown and the wall sign on the front of the Fifth-Third building downtown is 600 square feet, the Comerica signs on the rooftop of that building are almost 400 square feet, so there are examples around town of larger buildings getting approval for signs over 200 square feet.

Vice-Chair Wark asked if there was anyone who wanted to speak in favor of the applicant and there was no one.

Vice-Chair Wark asked if anyone wanted to speak against the applicant and there was one person. Mr. Matt Conley, the owner of 137 North Park Street just north of the Federal Court building, stated his building is a commercial split level building with law offices on the lower and a residential loft on top with windows that face east and west. He said he has concerns regarding the east facing EMD and wants to advocate for the tenants in his building regarding the lights and noise and wants to understand the parameters and wants to be sure that it's cohesive and inviting for those that may rent his space. He stated he is already battling vacancies in his building because of the noise and disruption the project is creating in that area. He stated he was excited for the event center and is a developer for another company and understands the seat they sit in but wants to advocate for his space and his tenants so they can all be successful. He wanted to ask if there are going to be limits to the brightness and will the sign be turned off at a certain time. He said he understands it's a sign on a parking structure but he would like to understand what that looks like visually and will it have some type of inviting architectural component to it and Ms. Harrington stated she asked Mr. Eldridge that same question and he said the lights will turn off at 11 p.m. and will blend in with the building.

Vice-Chair Wark asked if there were any call-in comments and there were none.

Vice-Chair Wark closed the public hearing.

FINDING OF FACT

Ms. van den Hombergh moved the Finding of Fact as follows:

- 1) The Finding of Fact for 411 West Kalamazoo Avenue shall include all information included in the notice of public hearing dated September 24, 2025, and the agenda packet provided by staff.
- 2) 19 notices of public hearing were sent, and no responses were received for or in opposition of the variances.
- 3) A public hearing was held before the board and public comments were accepted.

- 4) The Finding of Fact shall include those documents just described and also all facts and comments made during the public hearing, which are summarized to include, without limitation, the following:

Kendra Daniel, of Tower-Pinkster, spoke on behalf of the project. A dimensional variance is being requested for the parking deck and the event center. The arena will be a multi-use building, with an ice rink, WMU hockey, basketball courts, events, trade center shows...The parking deck is integrated into all glass will be an eight-story deck with a wraparound on it and they want to have full motion video without sound and the main entry content is unknown at this time and the box office will have a digital marquee as well with static imagery only, spirit horse logo, WMU greeting people as they come into downtown Kalamazoo from West Main. Staff comments are it's an eight-story parking deck with a four-story event center structure with no freestanding signs; all signs will be on the building and any signs that might be exempt might be any signs that possibly come up that the public can't see between the parking structure and the event center. The marquee sign falls within the current zoning guidelines and there's electronic messaging display facing North Park Street and they are looking for 1,921 square feet to display where the current zoning is 492 square feet. Positives are this will be a useful tool for community events, projecting things into the plaza and will be displayed on the building and will shut off at 11 pm and when the sign isn't in use, you will be able to see the architecture of the building, so it won't be a blank screen. Comments about the EMD exceeding 200 square feet for a wall sign, allowance for a changeable copy, 100% and full motion video, for example the Wings Stadium has a 1,029-foot sign outside its building. Mr. Matt Conley of 137 North Park Street spoke in opposition and has a two and a half story commercial building that has a law office and apartment, and while he's positive about the project, he would also like assurance regarding the light and noise pollution in regard to the safety and well being of his tenants.

Ms. Harrington seconded the Finding of Fact.

Motion approved for the Finding of Fact by voice vote unanimously.

Mr. McReynolds made a motion to approve the application for the Parking Deck: 1) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.5, to allow the total square footage of wall signs to exceed the maximum allowance of signage on an individual wall or building elevation. seconded by Ms. Haan.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote unanimously.

Mr. McReynolds made a motion to approve the application for 2) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.5, to allow wall signs that exceed the maximum size allowed per wall sign of 200 square feet, seconded by Mr. Sylvester.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote unanimously.

Mr. McReynolds made a motion to approve the application for 3) A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.3G(1)(a), to allow EMD wall signs that exceed 25% maximum allowance of wall sign area that can be comprised of changeable copy, to 100%, seconded by Ms. Haan.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote unanimously.

Mr. Sylvester made a motion to approve the application for 4) A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.3G(1)(a) and (b), to allow for full motion video and EMD on the east side of the Parking Deck, seconded by Mr. McReynolds. This does not include the conditional approval suggested by staff, but that the guidelines, as laid out in the staff report and suggested by staff, be followed. Mr. Sylvester amended his motion of approval after being reminded by Mr. Eldridge the guidelines, seconded by Mr. McReynolds. Attorney Bear reminded the Board they will have to vote to approve the amendment and then vote to approve the motion as amended.

Motion to approve the amendment was approved by a roll call vote unanimously.

Motion to approve the variance was approved by roll call vote with conditioned the guidelines outlined by the development staff be followed.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote unanimously.

Mr. McReynolds made a motion to approve the application for the Event Center: 1) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.5, to allow the total square footage of wall signs to exceed the maximum allowance of signage on an individual wall or building elevation, seconded by Mr. Sylvester.

Motion approved by roll call vote unanimously.

Mr. McReynolds made a motion to approve the application for 2) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.5 to allow wall signs that exceed the maximum size allowed per wall sign of 200 square feet, seconded by Mr. Sylvester.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote unanimously.

Mr. McReynolds made a motion to approve the application for 3) a dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-9.3G(1)(a). to allow EMD wall signs that exceed the 25% maximum allowance of wall sign area that can be comprised of changeable copy or EMD square footage, seconded by Mr. Sylvester.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote unanimously.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

REPORTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Submitted By _____ **Date** _____
Recording Secretary

Reviewed By _____ **Date** _____
City Staff

Approved By _____ **Date** _____
Chair



Zoning Board of Appeals Staff Report

Date: **11/13/2025**
Item: **D.1.**

City of Kalamazoo

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals

FROM: Reviewed by: Christina Anderson, AICP, City Planner / Deputy Director of CPED
Prepared by: Pete Eldridge, AICP, Zoning Administrator

DATE: November 13, 2025

SUBJECT: ZBA #25-11-18: 850 E. Crosstown Parkway. CMCW Holdings, LLC (Alliance Metal Recycling) is requesting a dimensional variance from Appendix A Chapter 4.2 Y (1), for a ‘Recycling Facilities’, to be located on a parcel totaling .87 acres, where this type of use is required to have a minimum of two (2) acres of land.

BACKGROUND:

Alliance Metal Recycling has been in business in Kalamazoo since 2019. This business is relocating from a leased industrial space in a multi-tenant building on Palmer Avenue to this site on E. Crosstown Parkway, which is zoned M-2. The building on this site is a 10,000 square foot industrial building with a loading dock. The last occupant of his building was Mall City Aluminum, which fabricated aluminum products.

Alliance Metal Recycling has a business model that is quite different from many recycling facilities. The automotive parts are recycled and collected from other vendors after they have been removed from vehicles. The business model does not require any outdoor storage yard. The collection of recyclable metal materials comes from automotive repair facilities and other trades like plumbers and electricians, where waste metals are generated. Some of this material is picked up and, in other cases, dropped off at their location by their clients. The recyclable materials are sorted and stored in totes for transport to buyers.

The Zoning Ordinance combines scrap and salvage operations, storage of inoperable vehicles, wrecking and towing services, and recycling facilities, all under the same development requirements in the Zoning Ordinance. These are all businesses that typically store and/or process wrecked or inoperable vehicles. The Zoning Ordinance requires that these uses be in the M-2 General Manufacturing District, which this site is. Additionally, each site must have a minimum of two acres of land, which this site is .78 acres. This is due in part to the nuisance elements that are commonly associated with these uses, including noise and odor. Lastly, the M-2 District requires larger building setbacks to separate these more intensive uses from surrounding land uses.

The applicant has indicated that, due to their business model, the two-acre minimum for this

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recycling facility is not necessary and impractical, as the operations occur indoors and no outdoor storage of materials is needed.

STRATEGIC VISION ALIGNMENT:

Strategic Goal Impact:

The project does not touch on any neighborhood strategic goals. It does align with the Future Land Use Map as this area is identified as neighborhood edge and there are other industrial uses of similar intensity in the area.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Inform (one-way conversation) – the community will be made aware of the project.

Appropriate Depth of Engagement:

A public hearing notice was placed in the newspaper and notices, dated October 29, 2025, were sent to the property owners and occupants within 300 feet. A copy of the notice was also related to the Edison Neighborhood.

Engagement/Communication Tools:

Newspaper, mailings and applicant outreach

FINDINGS:

Staff has made the following findings regarding this request:

1. That there are special circumstances or conditions (like exceptional topographic conditions, narrowness, shallowness, or the shape of property) that are peculiar to the land or structure for which the variance is sought, that is not applicable to other land or structures in the same zone district.

The special circumstances are related to the business model of this use, which is a fully operational recycling facility that is all contained within the building. This makes the larger lot size unnecessary. Recycling Operations are required to have two acres of land because the typical facility needs space for outdoor storage.

2. That there are special circumstances which are not the result of the actions of the applicant or titleholder of the land.

The applicant's business will result in a lower intensity recycling operation. However, because this recycling business handles recyclable metals, it falls under this broad category and the associated acreage requirement.

3. That the literal interpretation and enforcement of the terms and provisions of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other land in the same zone district, and would cause practical difficulty.

The enforcement of the provisions of the ordinance would not permit this recycling operation to be located on this property, which is zoned for heavy industrial uses because of the two-acre minimum requirement. This land area requirement applies broadly to all uses that fall under these categories, from recycling facilities to wrecking and towing businesses.

4. That the granting of the variance is the minimum action that will make possible the use of the land or structure that is not contrary to the public interest, and that would carry out the spirit of this Ordinance.

The granting of the dimensional variance to allow relief from the two-acre requirement is the minimum action necessary. The applicant has demonstrated with the floor plan and operational details of the business that the .87 acres will easily accommodate business needs.

5. That the granting of the variance will not adversely affect adjacent land in a material way.

The granting of the variance will not impact adjacent land in a material way. The property is located between railroad tracks to the east and a warehousing operation to the west. The properties north of this site are also in the M-2 District.

6. That the granting of the variance will be generally consistent with the purposes and intent of this Ordinance.

The granting of the variance is generally consistent with the ordinance. The .87 acres are sufficient land to accommodate this small recycling operation.

7. Where the requested dimensional variance involves required landscaping, the Zoning Board of Appeals may grant a variance upon the following additional criteria: 1) existing landscaping, screening or wetlands intended to be preserved meets the intent of this section; 2) the landscape design proposed by the applicant meets the intent of this section; 3) there is a steep change in topography that would limit the benefits of required landscaping; 4) the proposed building and parking lot placement is setback well beyond the minimum required; 5) the abutting or adjacent land is developed or will be developed in the near future with a use other than residential; and 6) similar conditions to the above exist such that no good purpose would be served by providing the landscaping or screening required.

This criterion does not apply to the requested variance.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff supports the granting of the variance with the condition that all sorting of recyclable materials occurs within the building.



Community Planning and Economic Development

245 N. Rose Street, Ste. 100

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

October 29, 2025

**RE: ZBA #25-11-18
850 E. Crosstown Pkwy
Parcel #06-23-110-001**

Dear Property Owner:

An application for a variance for provisions of the Zoning Ordinance has been filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals by CMCW Holdings, LLC (Alliance Metal Recycling) for 850 E. Crosstown Parkway in the Manufacturing – General District (M-2).

The applicant is requesting a dimensional variance from Appendix A Chapter 4.2 Y (1), for a ‘Recycling Facilities’, to be located on a parcel totaling .87 acres in area, where this type of use is required to have a minimum of two (2) acres of land.

Please note that this request will not change the zoning classification of the property. This is a request for variance only regarding the item described above.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall, 241 W. South Street. This meeting will also be streamed live on the [City's Facebook page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

To examine documents related to this request or provide written comments, please contact Pete Eldridge at eldridgep@kalamazoocity.org or call (269) 337-8806. The agenda will be posted at <https://www.kalamazoocity.org/boards>

Sincerely,

Peter C. Eldridge, AICP
Zoning Administrator



Community Planning & Economic Development

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ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION		
Name: Cory Madalinski		Mailing Address: 850 E Crosstown Parkway
City: Kalamazoo	State: Michigan	ZIP Code: 49001
Phone: 269-370-2762	Email: chance@alliancemetalrecycling.com	Preferred Contact: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Phone
PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION		
<i>If the applicant is not the property owner, owner must sign application or provide a letter stating that owner gives consent for the application to be filed.</i>		
Name: CMCW Holdings LLC, Cory Madalinski or Chance Woods, Authorized Signers		Mailing Address: 850 E Crosstown Parkway
City: Kalamazoo	State: Michigan	ZIP Code: 49001
Phone: 269-366-4476	Email: cory@alliancemetalrecycling.com	Preferred Contact: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Phone
PROPERTY INFORMATION		
Property Address(s): 850 E Crosstown Parkway, Kalamazoo, MI 49001		
Parcel Identification Number(s): 06-23-110-001	Zone District (kalamazoocity.org/maps): M2	
TYPE OF REQUEST		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dimensional Variance from Chapter(s) App A, 4.2, Section(s) <u>Y</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal of an Administrative Decision	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use Variance to allow _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation of Zoning Ordinance, Chapter(s) _____, Section(s) _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Features Protection Variance	<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Use Approval	
Reason for Request: A dimensional variance from Appendix A, Chapter 4.2 Y, to locate a scrap or salvage operation on a parcel totaling .87 acres where this type of operation is required to have a minimum of two acres of land.		
ATTACHMENTS		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> \$ <u>306</u> Fee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Type Plan detailing variance request, plat, site plan, sketch plan can all be used.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review Sheet for Request Type	Optional: Photos of property, architecture plans, etc.	
<i>Note: 10 days before meeting provide update on outreach to neighbors or provide any letters of support</i>		
SIGNATURE		
Signature of Applicant:		Date: <u>10-7-2023</u>
Signature of Owner (if different than applicant):		Date:

Alliance Metal Recycling has been in business in Kalamazoo since 2019. Our business model is simple. We take in recyclable materials, sort them, package them into salable lots, and ship them out to large-scale buyers.

We acquire materials through two basic mechanisms. First, we service industrial accounts (think auto repair shops, machine shops, electrical contractors, etc) by picking material up from them and bringing it back to our facility. Second, there are accounts who bring their material directly to us. These accounts consist largely of tradespeople like electrical, plumbing and mechanical contractors, but also include everyday community members who may have scrap metal as a result of renovating their homes, working on their own cars, or cleaning out their garages. At every level of client – but especially individual community members – we are helping to divert waste that could otherwise have ended up in a landfill.

All of our business is conducted indoors, which is a big factor in why we chose to relocate to a facility with more square footage. Each specific commodity is stored neatly in its own separate container, which is why it's essential for us to have plenty of room to store bins of sorted material and stage loads for shipment.

Another factor in keeping our business model simple is that, unlike some larger scrap metal companies, we don't do any melting, torching or shredding of materials. We leave that to the companies further up the food chain.

Dimensional Variance Review Sheet

General Information

Specific Project Details:

Alliance Metal Recycling is requesting a dimensional variance to accommodate the use of an existing structure that was formerly an aluminum foundry, and will now be used for the intake, sorting, storage and shipment of recyclable metals. This variance will allow Alliance Metal Recycling to relocate their existing operation (licensed with the city of Kalamazoo since 2019) to a facility with additional storage space that supports the growth of the business and ultimately the creation of several new jobs within the community.

Review Criteria for Dimensional Variances

Are there conditions, like unusual topography, the shape of the lot or structure that are not commonly found on other lots or structures in the same zone district that make this request unique?

Yes, the existing structure and layout allows Alliance Metal Recycling to maintain both their trajectory of growth and their model of conducting all business inside the building. This structure is more than double the size of the previous location from which Alliance Metal Recycling operated, allowing for continued growth of the business while maintaining the neatly controlled indoor operations that have been successful throughout their years of operation.

Are there special circumstances which are not the result of the actions of the applicant or property owner of the land that impact the project?

Yes, the existing structure has a legacy of many decades of use in heavy industrial purposes. The most recent iteration of business was the smelting and casting of aluminum products, which began operations in the building as early as 1991. Alliance Metal Recycling's intended use of the structure will be a cleaner and more environmentally positive adaptation of the structure.

Does the ordinance deprive the applicant of rights enjoyed by other property owners in the same zone district?

Yes. Without the variance, Alliance Metal Recycling would not be able to operate as a recycling dealer at this location. At their previous location, Alliance Metal Recycling operated without issues or disturbances in a leased property with only about 4,000 sf indoors and a parking lot area of approximately 3,750 sf. This move will increase their available indoor space by more than double and increase the available outdoor space by a factor of 10. Even with anticipated growth in business volume, Alliance can easily maintain their successful practices with the increased space offered at 850 E Crosstown Pkwy. All sorting, storing and repackaging of

recyclable materials will take place inside the building, with no outdoor storage of recyclable materials, thus eliminating the need for a 2 acre accommodation for outdoor storage. Additionally, other analogous businesses are currently permitted to operate below the 2 acre threshold - even with outdoor storage. For example, a similar variance was recently granted to Flowers Automotive Recycling.

Is this the minimum action which will make it possible to use the lot or structure in a manner that does not negatively impact the public and meets the spirit of this ordinance?

Yes. This variance allows the continued use of a well-worn industrial property without costly demolition or heavy renovations. It represents an improvement over previous usage of the property in terms of both aesthetics and environmental responsibility. Not only is Alliance Metal Recycling able to run a clean and compliant operation within this space, this property is located in a densely industrial area, and there are no residential neighbors within 300 feet of the property.

Will the granting of the variance negatively affect adjacent land?

No. Alliance Metal Recycling operates indoors and will only improve the appearance and function of the property beyond what currently exists. They will not have a negative impact on this property or those that surround it.

Will the granting of the variance be generally consistent with the purpose and intent of this Ordinance?

Yes. It seems clear that this ordinance is aimed at preventing the type of blight that can accompany a densely packed lot with outdoor storage of unusable vehicles, trash, or other detritus by requiring a minimum lot size. However, while Alliance Metal Recycling fits under the broad umbrella of "scrap and salvage operations," it does not utilize many of the more potentially objectionable practices of other operations within the category. As previously stated, operations are contained inside the building, with no outdoor storage. Additionally, there is no melting, torching, or shredding on site. Alliance's operations are focused on sorting, storing, repackaging and shipping recyclable products – placing them firmly in the low-intensity range of recycling facilities.

Additional Criteria for Variance Requests for Required Landscaping

Does existing Landscaping, screening or wetlands planned to be preserved meet the intent of the Ordinance?

Yes. Existing trees and lawn will meet or exceed the ordinance, and all neighboring properties are either industrial or railroad. Additionally, the use will be contained indoors, providing complete screening.

Are there steep changes in topography that would limit the benefits of landscaping?

No, it is a relatively level site.

Are the proposed building and parking lot locations setback beyond the required setback?

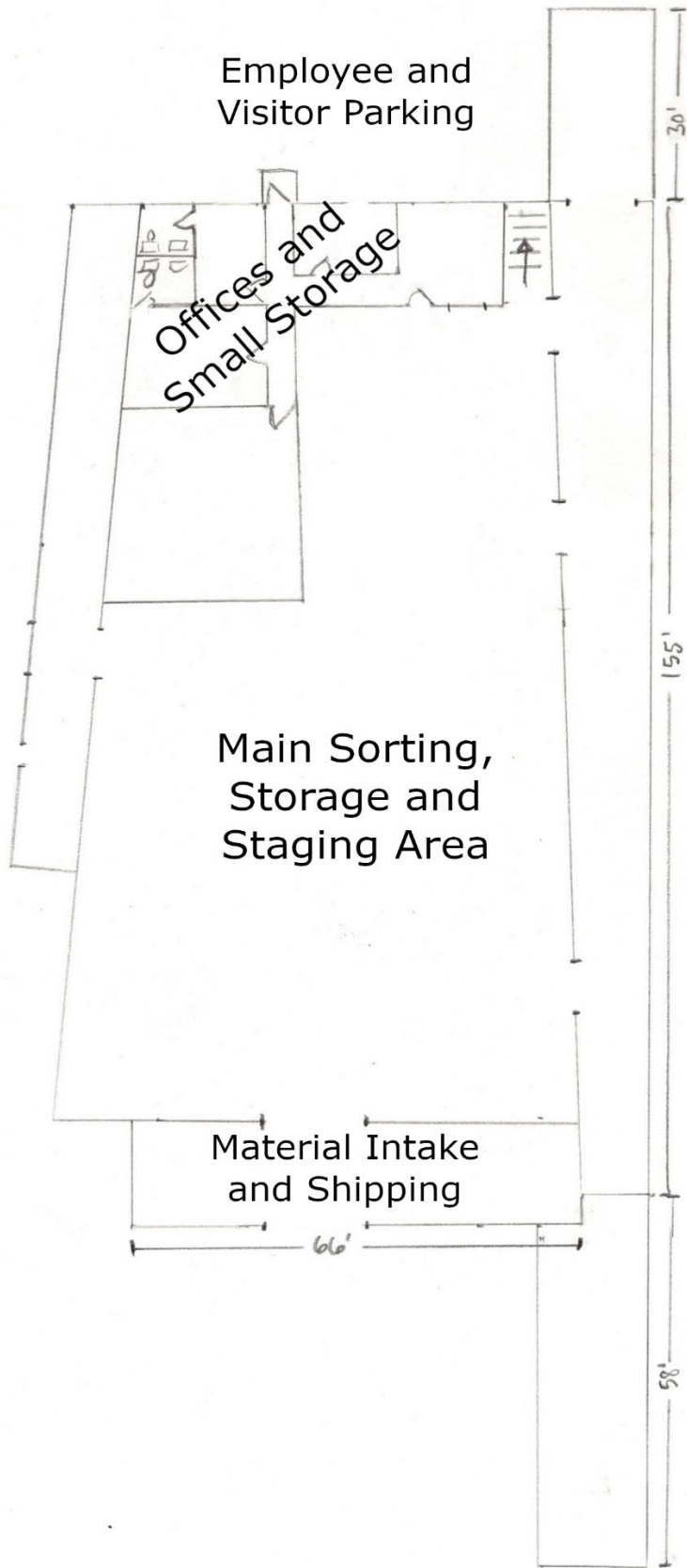
The property meets setback standards.

Are there abutting lands developed or could be developed in the near future with a use other than residential?

Yes, all adjacent properties are commercial or industrial. There are no direct residential neighbors.

Do similar landscaping conditions exist which would result in no added benefit if additional landscaping or screening was provided?

No additional screening or landscaping is needed at this time.















Parcels within 300' Mailing Radius 850 E Crosstown Pkwy

-  Subject Property
-  Property within 300' Mailing Radius
-  Other Property
-  Zoning District Boundary



0 420 840 1,680 ft

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Kalamazoo County Department of Planning & Community Development



Zoning Board of Appeals Staff Report

Date: **11/13/2025**
Item: **D.2.**

City of Kalamazoo

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals

FROM: Reviewed by: Christina Anderson, AICP, City Planner / Deputy Director of CPED
Prepared by: Pete Eldridge, AICP, Zoning Administrator

DATE: November 13, 2025

SUBJECT: ZBA #25-11-19: 1015 and 1021 E. Michigan Ave./502 and 524 Riverview Dr./1014, 1018 and 1024 Sherwood Ave. Indian Trails Inc., is requesting the following variances:

1. A use variance from Chapter 50, 50-4.4(12)(h), to authorize the expansion of the Indian Trails facility and bus storage onto the west half of the property at 524 Riverview Drive, where oversized vehicle related businesses are not permitted.
2. A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-8.5A (3)(a), to authorize installation of new chain-link fence along the property frontages of Riverview Drive and Sherwood Avenue, where chain-link fence in the front yard is prohibited in all zone districts.
3. A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-8.5C (1)(a), to authorize installation of ten (10) foot tall chain-link fencing along the property frontages of Riverview Drive and Sherwood Avenue, where only six-foot fencing is permitted in the front yard areas.

BACKGROUND:

This group of properties owned by Indian Trails Inc. is home to their bus maintenance facility and provides for fleet parking. In 2014, a use variance was granted to authorize a building addition of 1,500 square feet and expansion of the parking lot and driveways for better traffic circulation and more parking. The site has two driveways, one on E. Michigan Avenue and one on Sherwood Avenue. This expansion in 2014 did not include any alteration to the small retail building that is located at 524 Riverview Drive, at the corner of Riverview Drive and Sherwood Avenue. At that time, the building remained leased to a retailer.

The use variance application submitted seeks approval to remove the retail building and absorb the remainder of the property at 524 Riverview Drive into the Indian Trails Inc. facility. This group of properties, which includes 524 Riverview Drive, spans four zone districts (RD-19, LW-1, LW-2, and CC2). Since none of these zone districts permit vehicle service uses that allow for oversized vehicles, a use variance is necessary to allow for this minor expansion of the facility. Indian Trails Inc. is proposing to demo the existing 1,000 square foot retail building and remove the parking spaces at the corner. The perimeter of this corner and the frontage on

Sherwood will be upgraded with a green strip, along with tree and shrub plantings to meet the Ordinance requirements. In addition to this green space being added along the perimeter, there will be approximately 2,800 square feet of green space added behind the perimeter landscaping at this corner. There will also be an increase of four bus parking spaces with this project. The overall impervious coverage for the facility will be reduced with the addition of green space.

The two-dimensional variances requested are related to the fencing for the site. The first is the allowance to place chain-link fencing in the front yard area of the property. Additionally, for security reasons, a height variance has been requested to install 10-foot fencing in the front yard, where six feet is the maximum height allowed in the front yard for the commercial zone district. The existing facility already has a 10-foot chain-link fence in the front yard setback extending along the perimeter of the site from E. Michigan Avenue, along Riverview Drive, and down Sherwood Avenue to the second driveway. The proposed 10-foot fencing being added will extend along approximately 75 feet of the Sherwood Street frontage and approximately 95 feet of the Riverview Drive frontage.

STRATEGIC VISION ALIGNMENT:

Strategic Goal Impact:

This project does not directly align with a strategic vision goal as this is a bus maintenance facility. However, Indian Trails Inc. does provide an important service to the community by providing commercial bus transportation from Kalamazoo to other cities around the country. This project does align with the Future Land Use Map as the property is identified as commercial.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Inform (one-way conversation) – the community will be made aware of the project.

Appropriate Depth of Engagement:

A public hearing notice was placed in the newspaper and notices, dated October 29, 2025, were sent to the property owners and occupants within 300 feet. A copy of the notice was also related to the Eastside Neighborhood Association.

Engagement/Communication Tools:

Newspaper, mailings and applicant outreach.

FINDINGS:

Staff has made the following findings regarding the use variance request:

1. That the literal interpretation and enforcement of the terms and provisions of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant for all practical purposes from using the property for a permitted use

identified in the Zoning Ordinance, which is a right commonly enjoyed by other land in the same zone district.

The enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance would not allow for expansion of the bus parking onto this corner property, resulting in this corner remaining an under-utilized paved parking lot. Where, the 2014 use variance approval authorized the expansion of bus parking directly adjacent to this site.

2. That there is an unnecessary hardship based on special circumstances or conditions that are peculiar to the land or structure for which the use variance is sought that is not applicable to other land or structures in the same zone district.

The historic use of these properties as a bus repair facility is a special circumstance peculiar to the land. The site includes a 9,500 square foot bus maintenance building with fleet parking.

3. That the special circumstances are not the result of the actions of the applicant.

The bus repair facility has been located on this site for decades.

4. That the granting of the variance is the minimum action that will make possible the use of the land or structure that is not contrary to the public interest, and that would carry out the spirit of this Ordinance.

The requested use variance is the minimum action possible to allow for this expansion of the bus parking by four parking spaces. Additionally, this corner of the site is furthest away from the residential uses on Sherwood Avenue.

5. That the granting of the variance will not adversely affect adjacent land in a material way.

This corner of the site is surrounded by Indian Trails Inc. properties to the south and east. To the north of this site is a commercial strip mall. This project will not have adverse effects on the adjacent properties.

6. That the granting of the variance will be generally consistent with the purposes and intent of this Ordinance.

The granting of the variance will be consistent with the purpose and intent of the Ordinance, as it will allow for a modest increase in the parking of oversized vehicles and also substantially increase the green space on this site. This corner is directly adjacent to the Indian Trails Inc. properties where the prior use variance was granted in 2014.

Staff has made the following findings related to the dimensional variances requested:

1. That there are special circumstances or conditions (like exceptional topographic conditions, narrowness, shallowness, or the shape of property) that are peculiar to the land or structure for which the variance is sought, that is not applicable to other land or structures in the same zone district.

While the structure is out of character for the zone and has a 10-foot security fence around it, this bus facility has a long-term presence and form at this corner on the east side of the city, which also serves as a strategic access point to highways out of the City. The special circumstances are the history of this facility and the unique nature of the use with fleet parking, where the buses are parked / stored outside.

2. That there are special circumstances which are not the result of the actions of the applicant or titleholder of the land.

The special circumstances were not created by the applicant. The existing facility already has frontage fencing in place that is chain-link and 10-feet in height. Further, the site occupies the busy street corner of E. Michigan Avenue and Riverview Drive and is 200 feet from the railroad viaduct over E. Michigan Avenue.

3. That the literal interpretation and enforcement of the terms and provisions of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant of rights commonly enjoyed by other land in the same zone district, and would cause practical difficulty.

The enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinances would not allow for any new chain-link fence to be installed in the front yard and would also not allow for 10-foot fencing in the front yard. In context with the area, there are two other sites with chain-link fence along the frontage near this site. However, both of these locations have a six-foot chain-link. There is no supporting context for 10-foot front yard fencing in the area other than the existing Indian Trails site.

4. That the granting of the variance is the minimum action that will make possible the use of the land or structure that is not contrary to the public interest, and that would carry out the spirit of this Ordinance.

The granting of the variance for the chain-link fencing in the front yard is the minimum action that will allow for Indian Trails Inc. to fence this corner of the site with fencing that matches the rest of the facility. The additional height of the fencing is not supported by the Ordinance and does not align with other developed properties along Riverview Drive.

5. That the granting of the variance will not adversely affect adjacent land in a material way.

This portion of the site affected is surrounded by Indian Trails Inc. properties to the south and east. To the north of this site is a commercial strip mall. This project will not have adverse effects on the adjacent properties.

6. That the granting of the variance will be generally consistent with the purposes and intent of this Ordinance.

The granting of the variance will be generally consistent with the Ordinance as it allows relief for a unique land use at this location that involves oversized vehicles. Further, the site will gain green space where it does not exist currently on the corner, reduce the impervious coverage, and provide additional secure bus parking. The additional green space will improve site stormwater management. While this project involves removing a conforming structure on Riverview, it will direct the surface flows to a modern storm system which can help mitigate impacts on the adjacent floodplain.

7. Where the requested dimensional variance involves required landscaping, the Zoning Board of Appeals may grant a variance upon the following additional criteria: 1) existing landscaping, screening or wetlands intended to be preserved meets the intent of this section; 2) the landscape design proposed by the applicant meets the intent of this section; 3) there is a steep change in topography that would limit the benefits of required landscaping; 4) the proposed building and parking lot placement is setback well beyond the minimum required; 5) the abutting or adjacent land is developed or will be developed in the near future with a use other than residential; and 6) similar conditions to the above exist such that no good purpose would be served by providing the landscaping or screening required.

This criterion is not applicable to the requested variances. The developer will comply with all required landscaping provisions.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the requested use variance and the dimensional variance to allow chain-link fencing in the front yard setbacks, but does not support the dimensional variance for the 10-foot height for the front yard fencing.



Community Planning and Economic Development

245 N. Rose Street, Ste. 100

Kalamazoo, MI 49007

PH: (269) 337-8044

FAX (269) 337-8429

www.kalamazoocity.org

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

October 29, 2025

**RE: ZBA #25-11-19
1015 and 1021 E. Michigan Ave. / 502 and 524 Riverview Dr. /
1014, 1018 and 1024 Sherwood Ave.**

**Parcel #s: 06-14-172-009, 06-14-172-010, 06-14-167-003, 06-14-172-007,
06-14-167-002, 06-14-167-004, and 06-14-167-005**

Dear Property Owner:

An application for a variance for provisions of the Zoning Ordinance has been filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals by Indian Trails Inc., for 1015 and 1021 E. Michigan Ave. / 502 and 524 Riverview Dr. / 1014, 1018 and 1024 Sherwood Ave., which are located in the Residential – Duplex District (RD-19), Live Work -1 District (LW-1), Live Work -2 District (LW-2) and Commercial – Community 2 District (CC2).

The applicant is requesting the following:

1. A use variance from Chapter 50, 50-4.4(12)(h), to authorize the expansion of the Indian Trails facility and bus storage onto the west half of the property at 524 Riverview Drive, where oversized vehicle related businesses are not permitted.
2. A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-8.5A (3)(a), to authorize installation of new chain-link fence along the property frontages of Riverview Drive and Sherwood Avenue, where chain-link fence in the front yard is prohibited in all zone districts.
3. A dimensional variance from Chapter 50, 50-8.5C (1)(a), to authorize installation of ten (10) foot tall chain-link fencing along the property frontages of Riverview Drive and Sherwood Avenue, where only six-foot fencing is permitted in the front yard areas.

Please note that this request will not change the zoning classification of the property. This is a request for variance only regarding the items described above.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall, 241 W. South Street. This meeting will also be streamed live on the [City's Facebook page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

To examine documents related to this request or provide written comments, please contact Pete Eldridge at eldridgep@kalamazoocity.org or call (269) 337-8806. The agenda will be posted at <https://www.kalamazoocity.org/boards>

Sincerely,


Peter C. Eldridge, AICP
Zoning Administrator



Community Planning & Economic Development

245 N. Rose Street, Suite 100 • Kalamazoo, MI 49007
(269) 337-8026 • www.kalamazoo.org

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION		
Name: Chad Cushman, President, Indian Trails Inc.		Mailing Address: 1015 E. Michigan Ave
City: Kalamazoo	State: Michigan	ZIP Code: 49007
Phone: (989)723-9600	Email: ccushman@indiantrails.com	Preferred Contact: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phone
PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION		
<i>If the applicant is not the property owner, owner must sign application or provide a letter stating that owner gives consent for the application to be filed.</i>		
Name: N/A		Mailing Address:
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
Phone:	Email:	Preferred Contact: <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Phone
PROPERTY INFORMATION		
Property Address(s): 524 Riverview (06-14-167-003) (Subject Parcel); 502 Riverview (06-14-172-007); 1014 Sherwood (06-14-167-002) 1018 Sherwood (06-14-167-004); 1024 Sherwood (06-14-167-005) 1015 E. Michigan (06-14-172-009); 1021 E. Michigan (06-14-172-010)		
Parcel Identification Number(s): (See Above)	Zone District (kalamazoo.org/maps): LW2 (Subject Parcel)	
TYPE OF REQUEST		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dimensional Variance from Chapter(s) <u>50</u> , Section(s) <u>50-8.5A (3)(a) and 50-8.5C (1)(a)</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal of an Administrative Decision	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Use Variance to allow <u>oversized vehicles</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation of Zoning Ordinance, Chapter(s) _____, Section(s) _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Features Protection Variance	<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Use Approval	
Reason for Request: Use variance to authorize the expansion of the Indian Trails facility and bus storage onto the property at 524 Riverview Drive. Dimensional variance to authorize installation of new chain-link fence and installation of ten (10) foot tall chain-link fencing along the property frontages of Riverview Dr. and Sherwood Ave.		
ATTACHMENTS		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> \$ <u>383.00</u> Fee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Type Plan detailing variance request, plat, site plan, sketch plan can all be used.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review Sheet for Request Type	Optional: Photos of property, architecture plans, etc.	
<i>Note: 10 days before meeting provide update on outreach to neighbors or provide any letters of support</i>		
SIGNATURE		
Signature of Applicant: 		Date: 10/09/2025
Signature of Owner (if different than applicant):		Date:



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

USE VARIANCE REVIEW SHEET

General Information

Project Description (may also provide on a separate sheet):

Review Criteria for Use Variances

ZBA will review all Dimensional Variance requests using the following criteria. Please reach out to staff if you have questions.

Does the Ordinance deprive the applicant from using the property for a permitted use, which is a right enjoyed by other property owners in the same zone district?

Is there a hardship that is unique to the land or structure that is not applicable to other land or structures in the same zone district?



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Are the special circumstances created by actions of the applicant?

Will the granting of the variance be the minimum action necessary for the use of the land or structure that will meet the spirit of this Ordinance?

Will the granting of the variance negatively affect adjacent land?

Will the granting of the variance be generally consistent with the purpose and intent of this Ordinance?



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE REVIEW SHEET

General Information

Specific Project Details (may also provide on a separate sheet):

The Westerly portion of 524 Riverview has historically been a commercial/retail use, while the Easterly portion has been used for bus parking with uses separated by a 10' fence thereby securing the bus repair facility from public access. The building on the Westerly portion of 524 Riverview has been leased for retail use in the past. It has been subject to vandalism and vagrant activity, with a rise in such activities in the last several years. Indian Trails wishes to remove the building and secure that portion of their property in similar fashion to the rest of the facility.

Review Criteria for Dimensional Variances

ZBA will review all Dimensional Variance requests using the following criteria. Please reach out to staff if you have questions.

Are there conditions, like unusual topography, the shape of the lot or structure that are not commonly found on other lots or structures in the same zone district that make this request unique?

No, there are no features of the lot that make the request unique. The existing perimeter fencing of the facility is 10' chain link. Indian Trails seeks to continue the use of the chain link material and height to address security issues at their site.

Are there special circumstances which are not the result of the actions of the applicant or property owner of the land that impact the project?

No.

Does the Ordinance deprive the applicant of rights enjoyed by other property owners in the same zone district?

We do not believe so. However it could potentially affect the security of the site therefore disrupt operations.



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Is this the minimum action which will make it possible to use the lot or structure in a manner that does not negatively impact the public and meets the spirit of this Ordinance?

Yes. The existing perimeter fencing of the facility is 10' chain link. Indian Trails seeks to install the same fence material and size as the existing perimeter fence to address security issues at their site.

Will the granting of the variance negatively affect adjacent land?

No.

Will the granting of the variance be generally consistent with the purpose and intent of this Ordinance?

Yes.

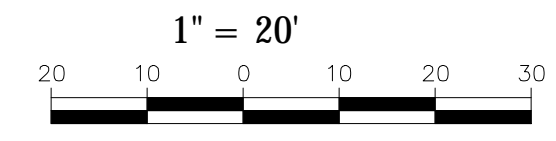
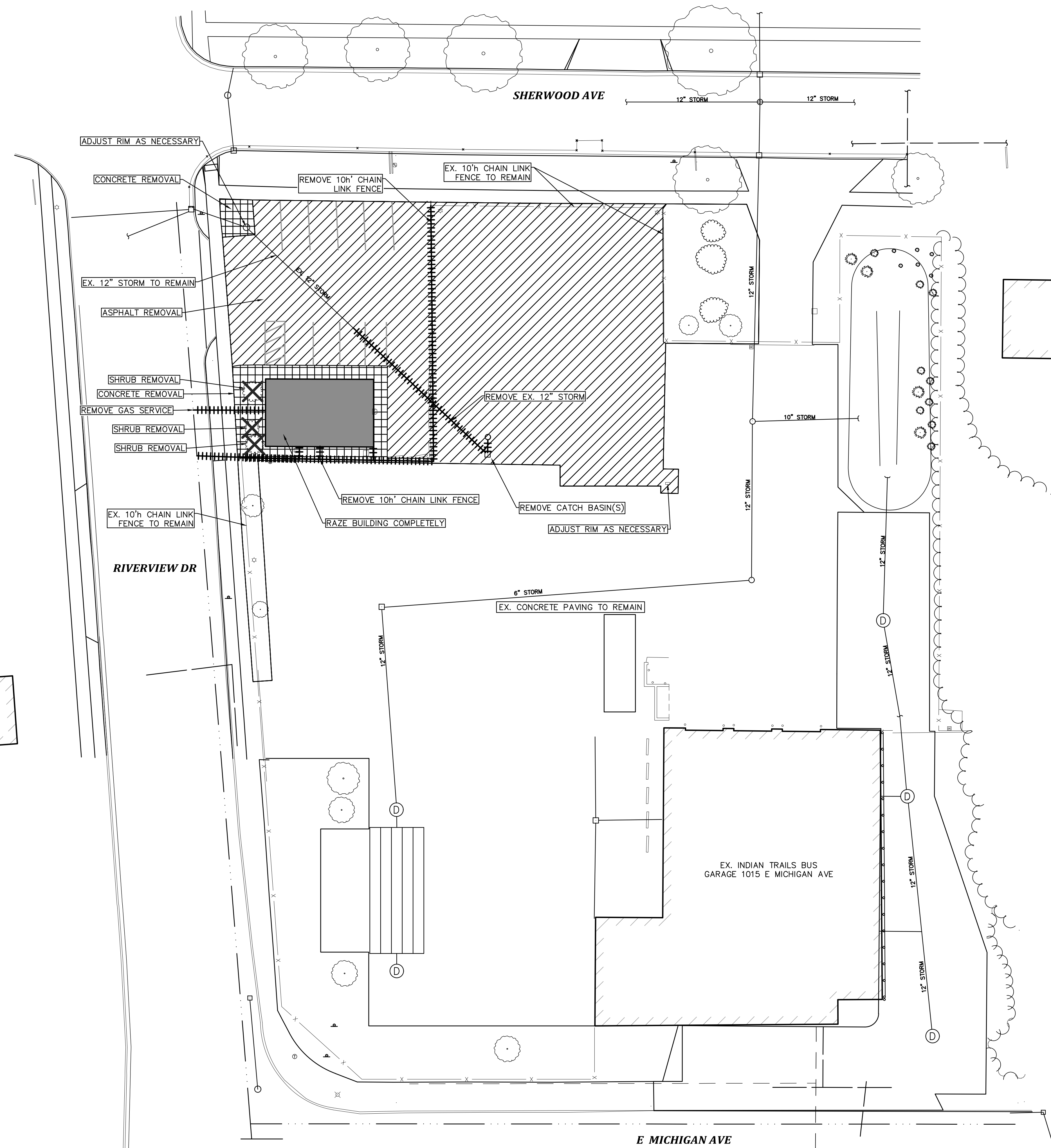
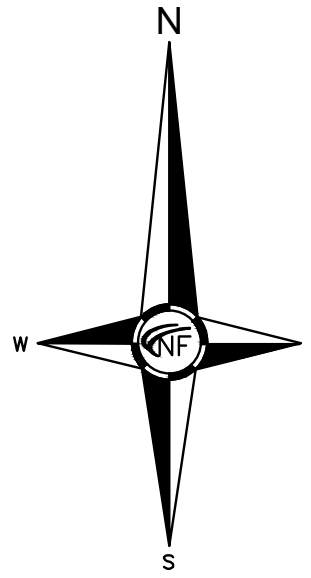
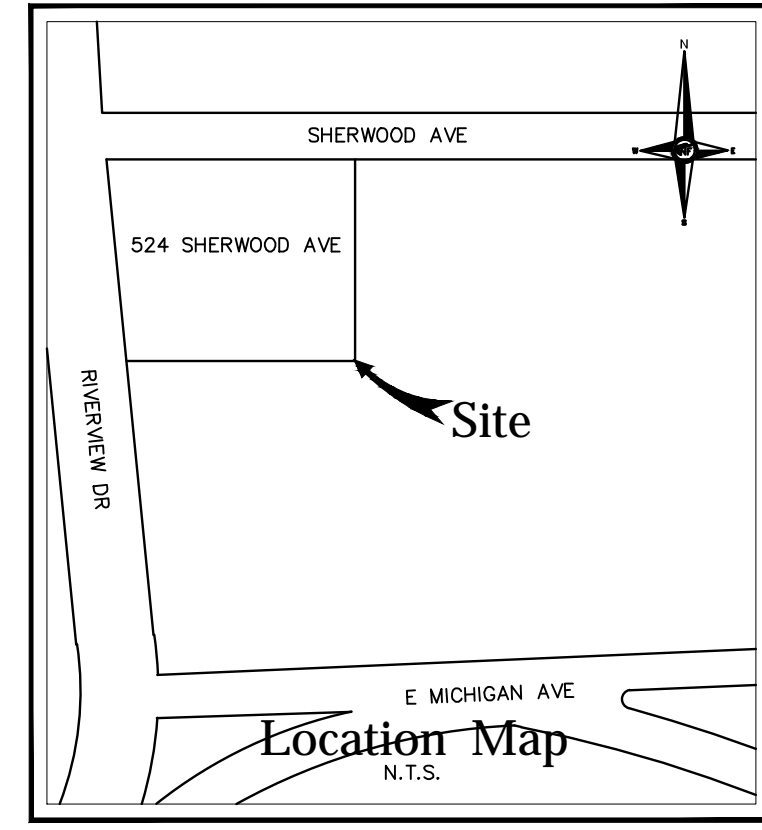
Additional Criteria for Variance Requests for Required Landscaping

Does existing landscaping, screening or wetlands planned to be preserved meet the intent of the Ordinance?

Yes.

Does the landscaping proposed by the applicant meet the intent of this section?

Yes.



DEMO LEGEND	
	ASPHALT REMOVAL
	CONCRETE REMOVAL
	SHRUB REMOVAL
	RAZE BUILDING COMPLETELY
	LINEAR REMOVAL

LEGEND	
	MANHOLE
	HYDRANT
	MANHOLE
	UTILITY POLE
	GUY WIRE
	SIGN
	EXISTING SANITARY SEWER
	EXISTING SAN. CLEAN OUT
	EXISTING WATER MAIN
	EXISTING STORM SEWER
	EX. R.Y. CATCH BASIN
	EXISTING BURIED CABLES
	OVERHEAD LINES
	LIGHT POLE
	EXISTING GAS MAIN

100% BID SET 09/24/2025
 90% REVIEW SET 09/10/2025
 50% REVIEW SET 07/22/2025
 DATE ISSUED
 A. ROWE
 DRAWN BY
 K. RUITTER
 CHECKED BY

HOBBS + BLACK
 ARCHITECTS
 117 E. Allegan Street
 Lansing, MI 48933
 P: 517 484-4670
 www.hobbs-black.com

INDIAN TRAILS
 KALAMAZOO GARAGE
 2015 E. MICHIGAN
 KALAMAZOO, MI 49048

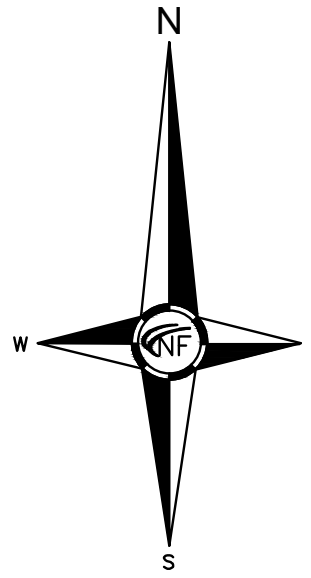
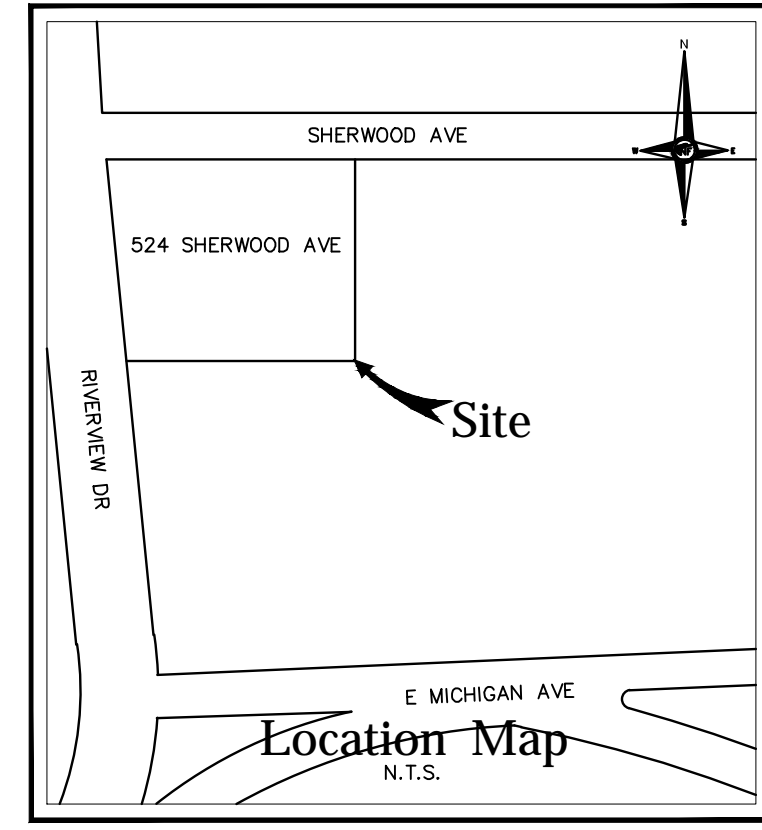
INF
 ENGINEERS
 CONSULTANT

SITE DEMO PLAN

SHEET TITLE

25110
PROJECT NUMBER

C2



**PROJECT AREA CALCULATIONS
524 RIVERVIEW DRIVE**

IMPERVIOUS AREA	AREA (SF)
EXISTING	7,201
PROPOSED	3,052
NET REDUCTION	(4,149)

GREENSPACE	AREA (SF)
EXISTING	-0-
PROPOSED	4,149
NET INCREASE	4,149

100% BID SET 09/24/2025
 90% REVIEW SET 09/10/2025
 50% REVIEW SET 07/22/2025
 DATE ISSUED
 A. ROWE
 DRAWN BY
 K. RUITTER
 CHECKED BY

HOBBS + BLACK
 ARCHITECTS
 117 E. Allegan Street
 Lansing, MI 48933
 P: 517 484-4670
 www.hobbs-black.com

INDIAN TRAILS
 KALAMAZOO GARAGE
 2015 E. MICHIGAN
 KALAMAZOO, MI 49048

PROJECT

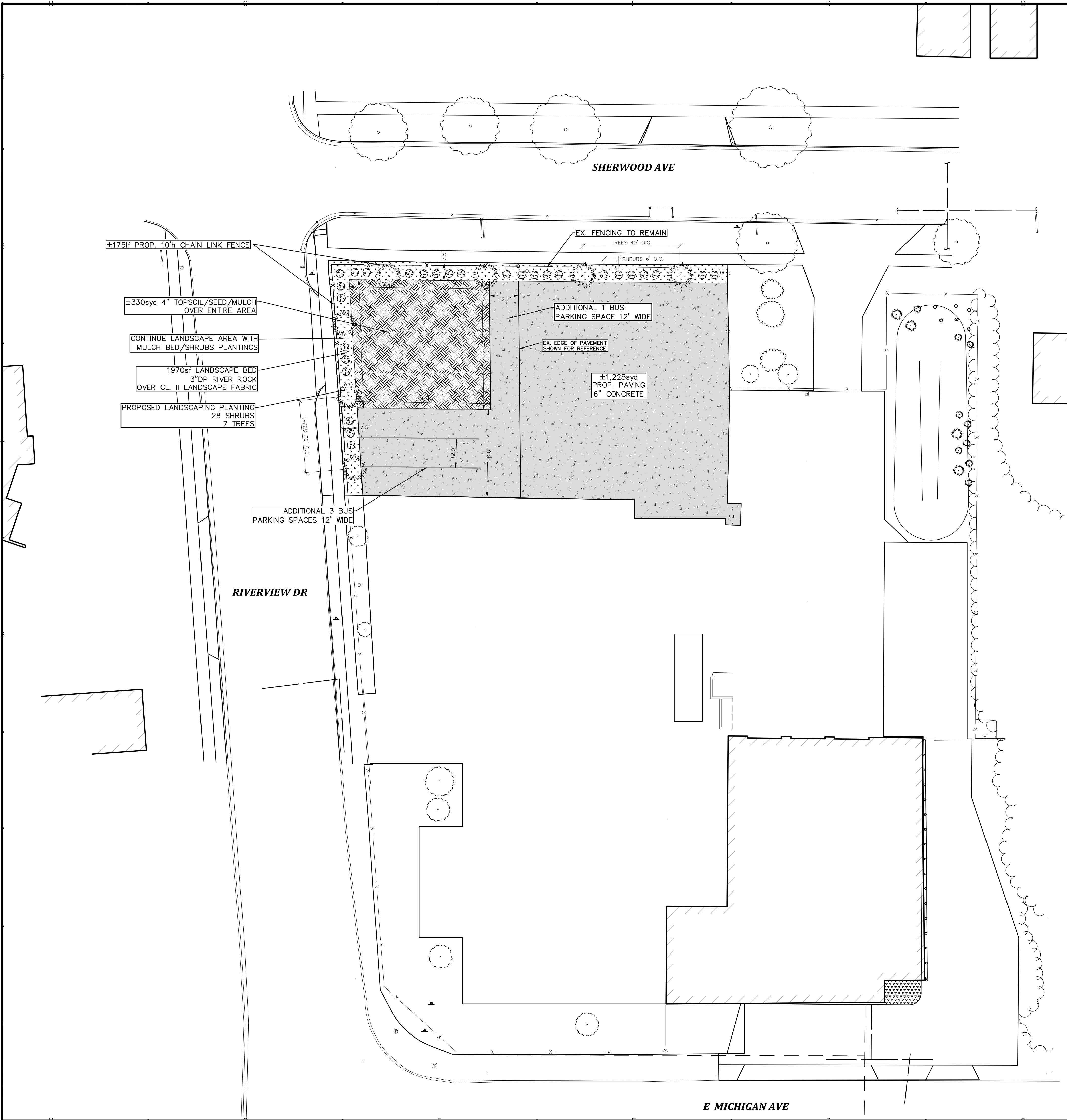
 CONSULTANT

PROPOSED SITE PLAN

SHEET TITLE

25110
PROJECT NUMBER

C3

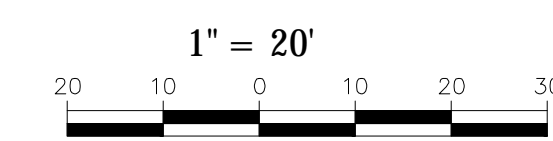


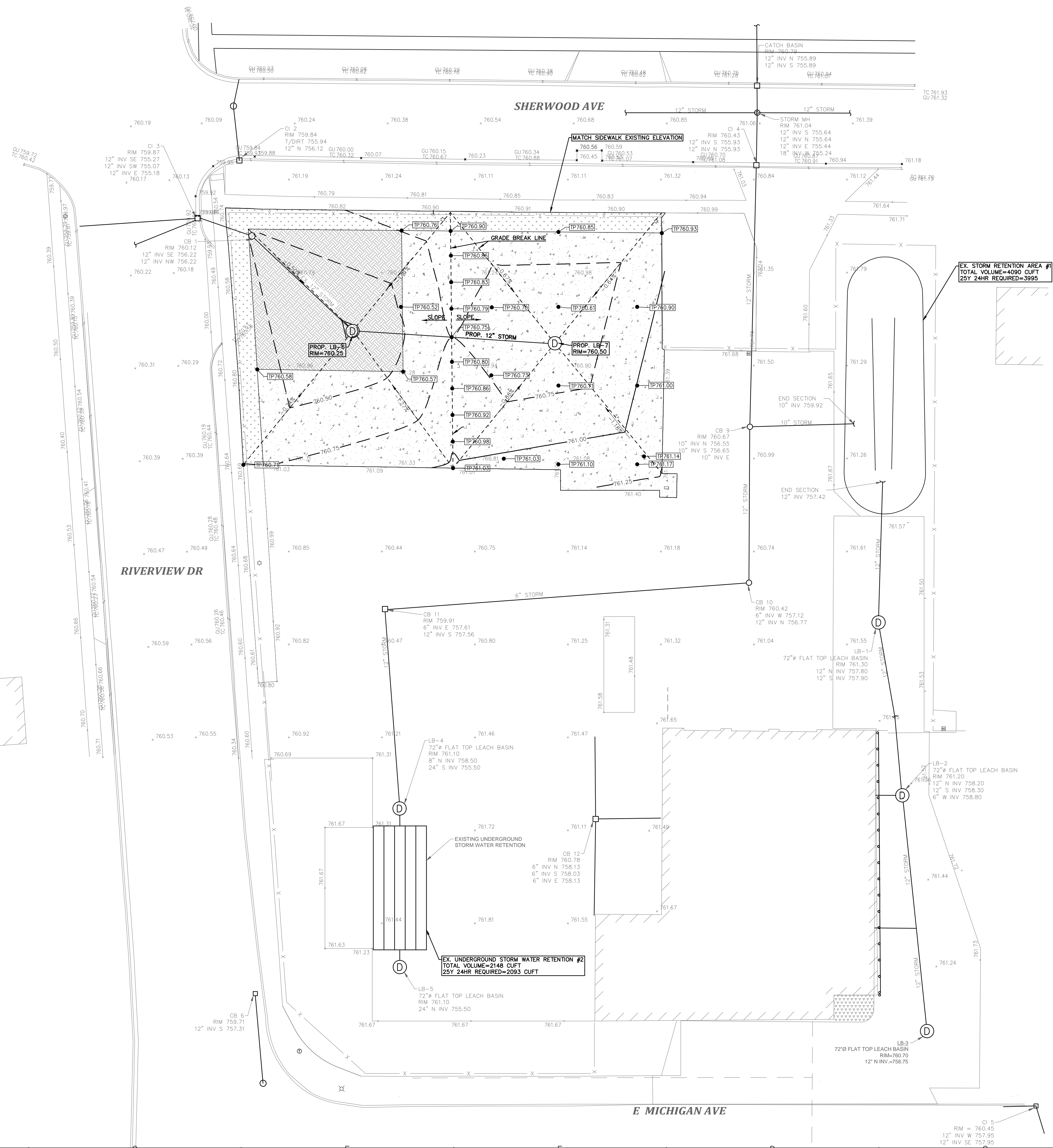
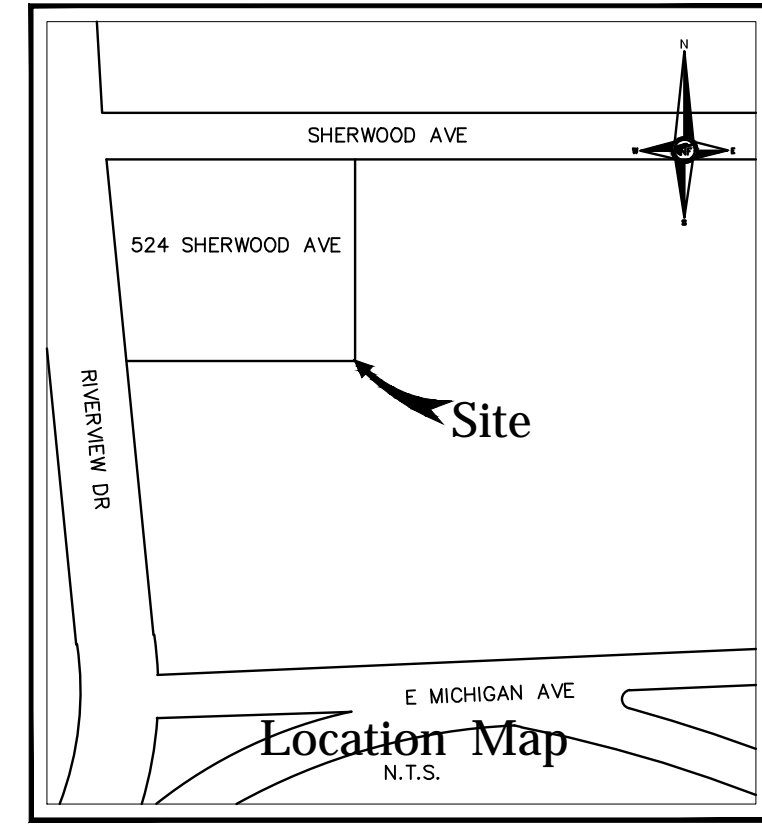
PROPOSED SITE ITEMS LEGEND

	PROPOSED CONCRETE
	PROPOSED LANDSCAPING
	RESTORE TO TOPSOIL/SEED/MULCH

LEGEND

	MANHOLE		EXISTING SANITARY SEWER
	HYDRANT		EXISTING SAN. CLEAN OUT
	MANHOLE CATCH BASIN		EXISTING WATER MAIN
	UTILITY POLE		EXISTING STORM SEWER
	GUY POLE		EX. R.Y. CATCH BASIN
	GUY WIRE		EXISTING BURIED CABLES
	LIGHT POLE		OVERHEAD LINES
	SIGN		EXISTING GAS MAIN





KNOWN STRUCTURE INVENTORY

CB 1 RM 760.12 12" INV SE 756.22 12" INV NW 756.22	CB 2 RM 759.84 1/DIRT 755.94 12" N 756.12	CB 3 RM 759.87 12" INV SE 755.27 12" INV SW 755.07 12" INV E 755.18 12" INV W 760.17	CB 4 RM 760.43 12" INV S 755.93 12" INV N 755.93	CB 5 RM 760.45 12" INV W 757.95 12" INV SE 757.95	CB 6 RM 759.71 12" INV S 757.31	CB 7 RM 760.63 6" INV N 757.58 12" INV NW 756.12	CB 8 RM 760.26 6" INV 757.77	CB 9 RM 760.67 10" INV W 756.55 10" INV S 756.65 10" INV E	CB 10 RM 760.42 6" INV W 757.12 12" INV S 756.77	CB 11 RM 759.91 6" INV E 757.61 12" INV S 757.56	CB 12 RM 760.78 6" INV N 758.13 6" INV S 758.03 6" INV E 758.13
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PROPOSED STRUCTURE INVENTORY

LB-6 60" FLAT TOP LEACH BASIN RM=760.25 NW INV=756.20 (EX PIPE) E INV=755.20 SUMP MIN 24"	LB-7 60" FLAT TOP LEACH BASIN RM=760.50 W INV=755.20 SUMP MIN 24"
--	---

DTE DISCLAIMER NOTE

PLEASE NOTE THAT DTE HAS NEW REGULATIONS THAT MAY IMPACT DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE THEIR EASEMENT OR THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY. CLIENT SHALL CONTACT DTE TO DETERMINE THE "NEW STRUCTURES AND POWER LINE" REQUIREMENTS AS THEY MAY APPLY TO ANY FUTURE BUILDING OR RENOVATION OF A STRUCTURE. DTE ENERGY CAN BE CONTACTED AT 800-477-4747.

BASIS OF BEARING NOTE

THE BASIS OF BEARING FOR THIS SURVEY WAS ESTABLISHED BY THE RECORD DESCRIPTION AS SHOWN IN THE PLAT REFERENCED HEREON.

FLOOD HAZARD NOTE

THIS PROPERTY IS NOT LOCATED WITHIN THE FLOOD HAZARD AREA INDICATED BY FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP (FIRM) COMMUNITY PANEL NO. ?????? DATED: 00-00-00

MISS DIG / UTILITY DISCLAIMER NOTE

A MISS DIG TICKET NUMBER PURSUANT TO MICHIGAN PUBLIC ACT 174 WAS ENTERED FOR THE SURVEYED PROPERTY. DUE TO THE EXTENDED REPORTING PERIOD FOR UNDERGROUND FACILITY OWNERS TO PROVIDE THEIR RECORDS, THE SURVEY MAY NOT REFLECT ALL THE UTILITIES AT THE TIME THE SURVEY WAS ISSUED ON THE SURVEY ONLY REFLECTS THOSE UTILITIES WHICH COULD BE OBSERVED BY THE SURVEYOR IN THE FIELD OR AS DECIDED BY THE UTILITY COMPANY RECORDS FURNISH PRIOR TO THE DATE THIS SURVEY WAS ISSUED. THE CLIENT AND/OR THEIR AUTHORIZED AGENT SHALL VERIFY WITH THE FACILITY OWNERS AND/OR THEIR AUTHORIZED AGENTS, THE COMPLETENESS AND EXACTNESS OF THE UTILITIES LOCATION.

TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY NOTES

ALL ELEVATIONS ARE EXISTING ELEVATIONS, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

UTILITY LOCATIONS WERE OBTAINED FROM MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS AND RECORDS OF UTILITY COMPANIES, AND NO GUARANTEE CAN BE MADE TO THE COMPLETENESS, OR EXACTNESS OF LOCATION.

THIS SURVEY MAY NOT SHOW ALL EASEMENTS OF RECORD UNLESS AN UPDATED TITLE POLICY IS FURNISHED TO THE SURVEYOR BY THE OWNER.

PAVING LEGEND

	EXISTING CONCRETE PAVEMENT
	EXISTING ASPHALT PAVEMENT

LEGEND

	MANHOLE		EXISTING SANITARY SEWER
	HYDRANT		EXISTING SAN. CLEAN OUT
	MANHOLE GATE VALVE		EXISTING WATER MAIN
	MANHOLE CATCH BASIN		EXISTING STORM SEWER
	EX. R.Y. CATCH BASIN		EXISTING BURIED CABLES
	UTILITY POLE		EXISTING OVERHEAD LINES
	GUY POLE		LIGHT POLE
	GUY WIRE		SIGN
	EXISTING GAS MAIN		

100% BID SET	09/24/2025
90% REVIEW SET	09/10/2025
50% REVIEW SET	07/22/2025

DATE ISSUED
A. ROWE
DRAWN BY
K. RUITTER
CHECKED BY

HOBBS + BLACK ARCHITECTS
117 E. Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48203
P: 313 484-4870
www.hobbs-black.com

INDIAN TRAILS KALAMAZOO GARAGE
2015 E. MICHIGAN
KALAMAZOO, MI 49048

INF ENGINEERS CONSULTANT

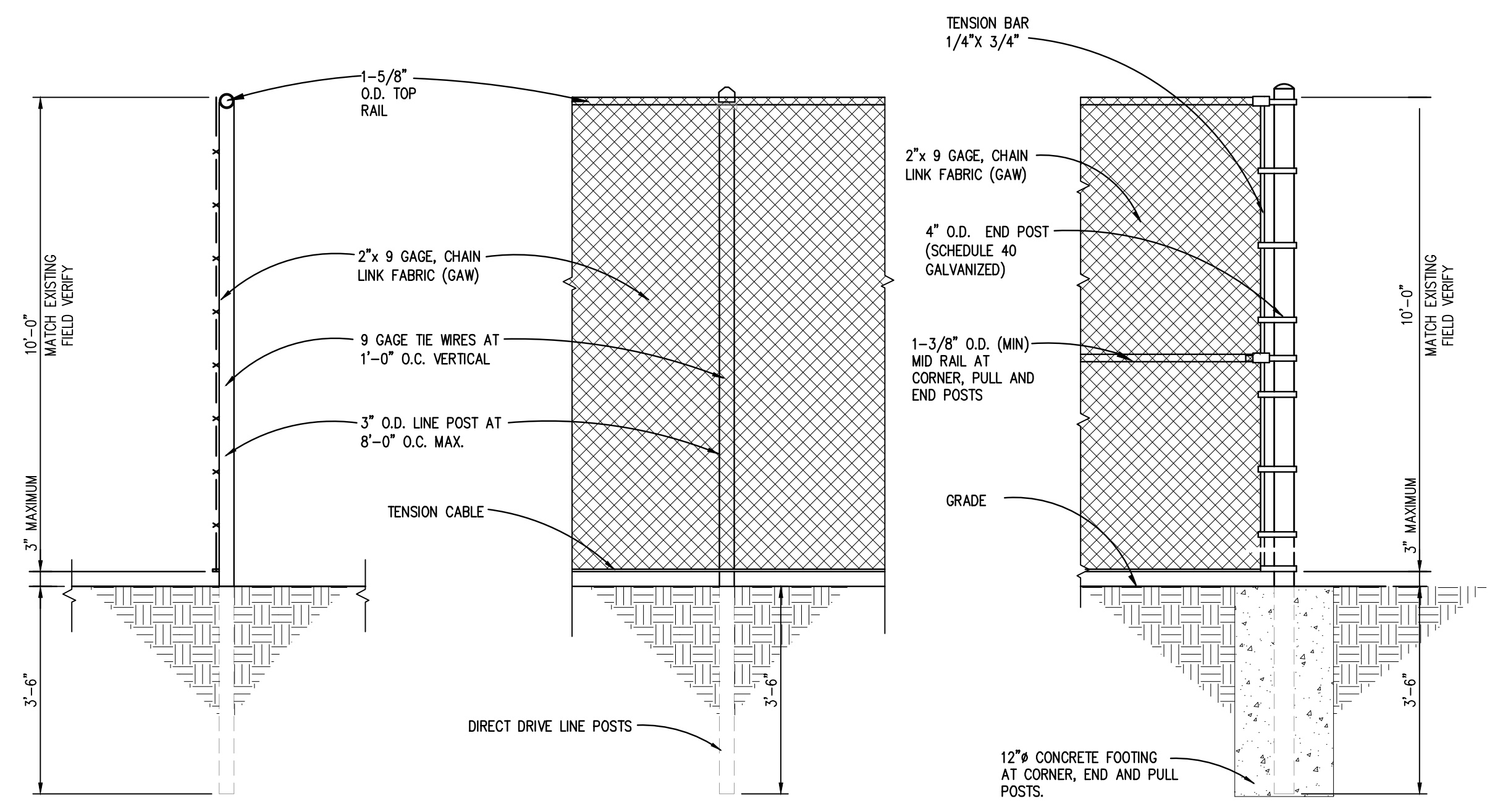
GRADING AND DRAINAGE PLAN

SHEET TITLE

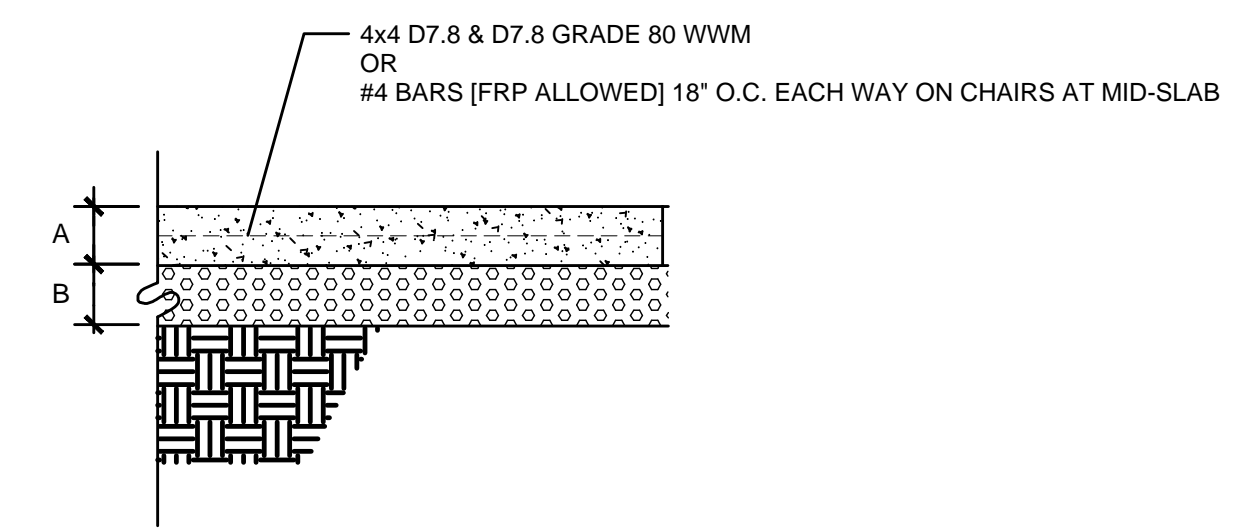
25110

PROJECT NUMBER

C4

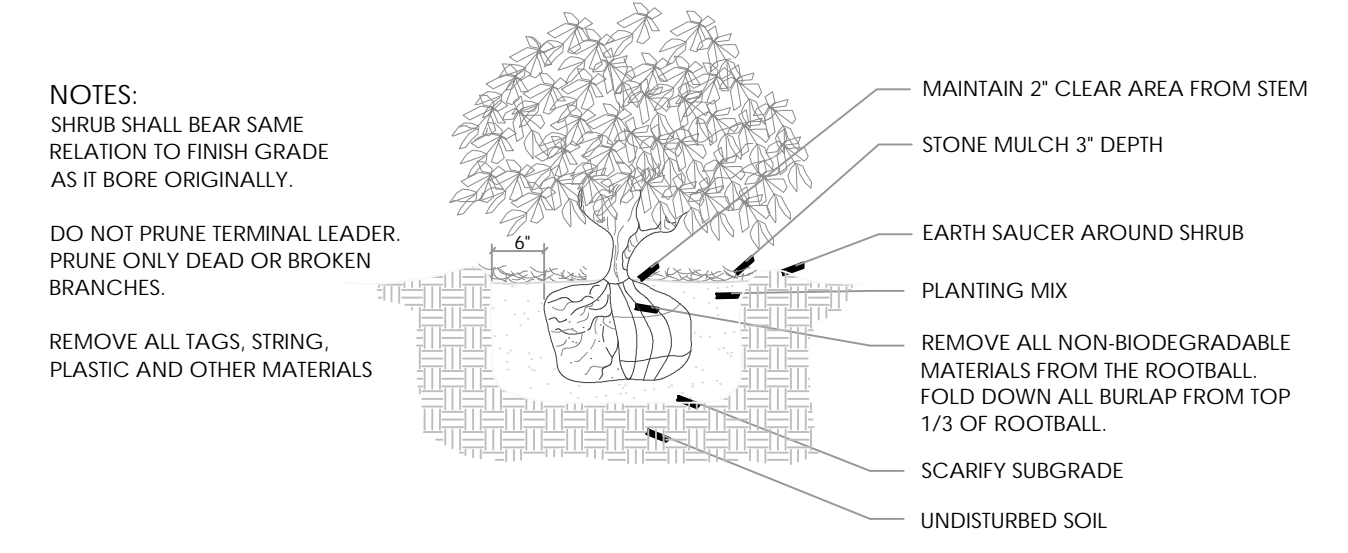


1 FENCE DETAIL C5 N.T.S. 2 FENCE DETAIL C5 N.T.S. 3 END POST DETAIL C5 N.T.S.

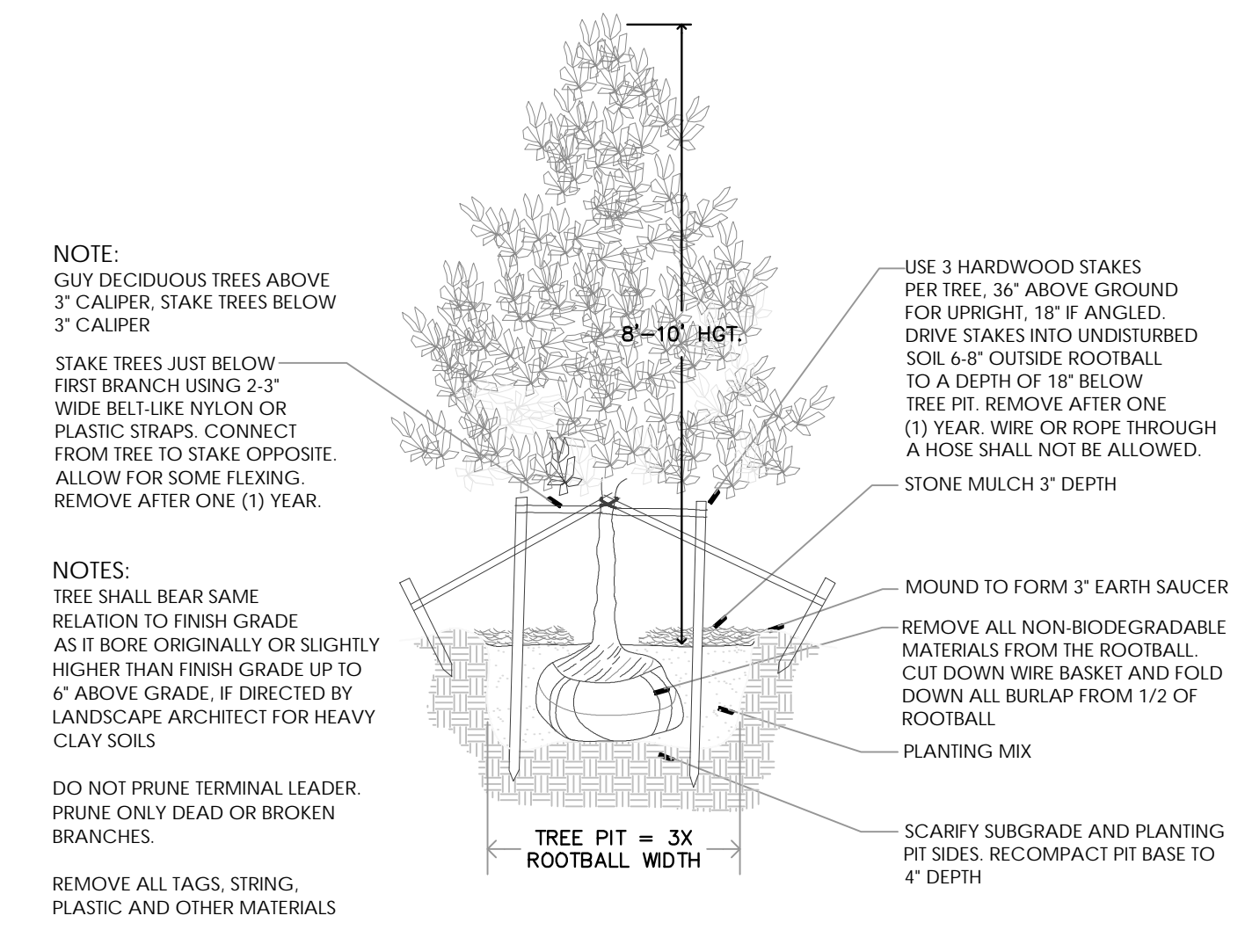


DIM.	DESCRIPTION
A	6" TYPE P1 CONCRETE w/LIGHT BROOM FINISH AIR ENTRANED; 4,000lb MINIMUM 28 DAY STRENGTH
B	6" MDOT CLASS II SAND

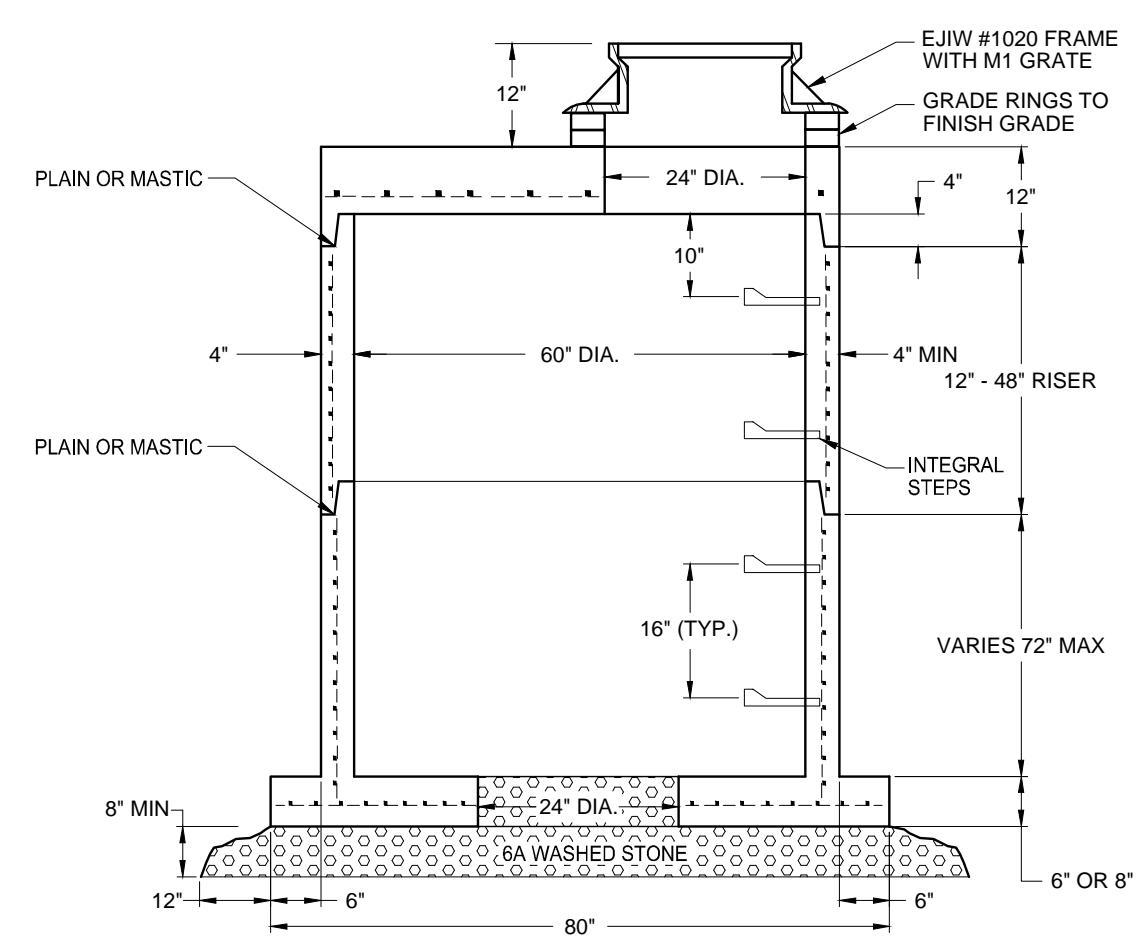
CONCRETE PAVING DETAIL NTS



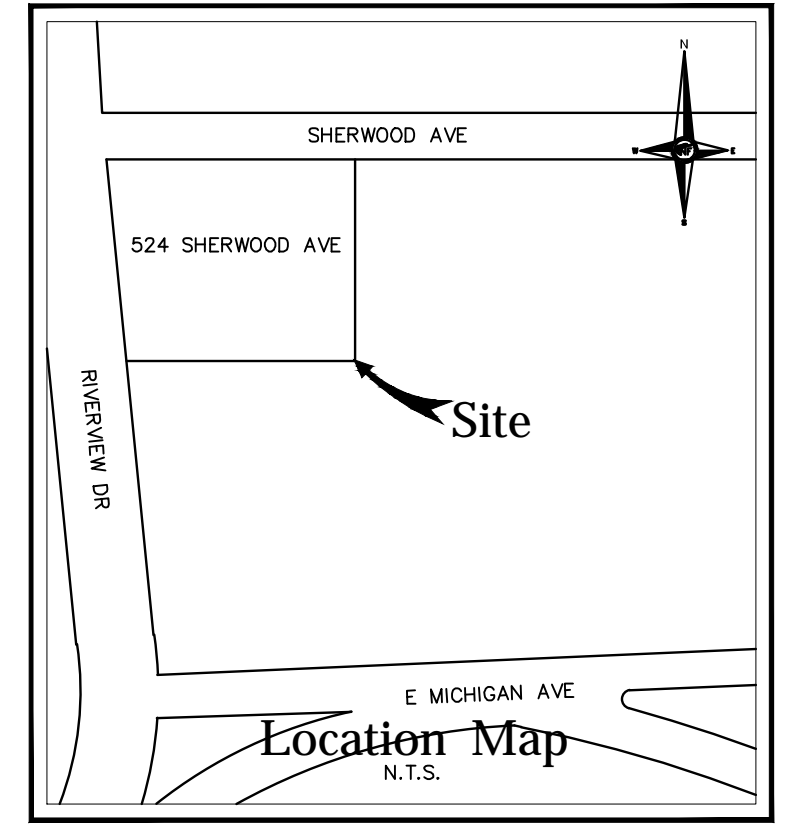
SHRUB PLANTING DETAIL DECIDUOUS SHRUB NTS



DECIDUOUS TREE PLANTING DETAIL NTS



60" FLAT TOP LEACHING BASIN NTS



100% BID SET 09/24/2025
90% REVIEW SET 09/10/2025
50% REVIEW SET 07/22/2025
DATE ISSUED
A. ROWE
DRAWN BY
K. RUITTER
CHECKED BY

HOBBS + BLACK
ARCHITECTS
117 E. Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48203
P: 313 484-4870
www.hobbs-black.com

INDIAN TRAILS
KALAMAZOO GARAGE
2015 E. MICHIGAN
KALAMAZOO, MI 49048

INF
ENGINEERS
CONSULTANT

PROJECT DETAILS

SHEET TITLE
25110
PROJECT NUMBER

C5

Existing Site Photos of the Indian Trails Property – 1015 E. Michigan



Subject Parcel – 524 Riverview



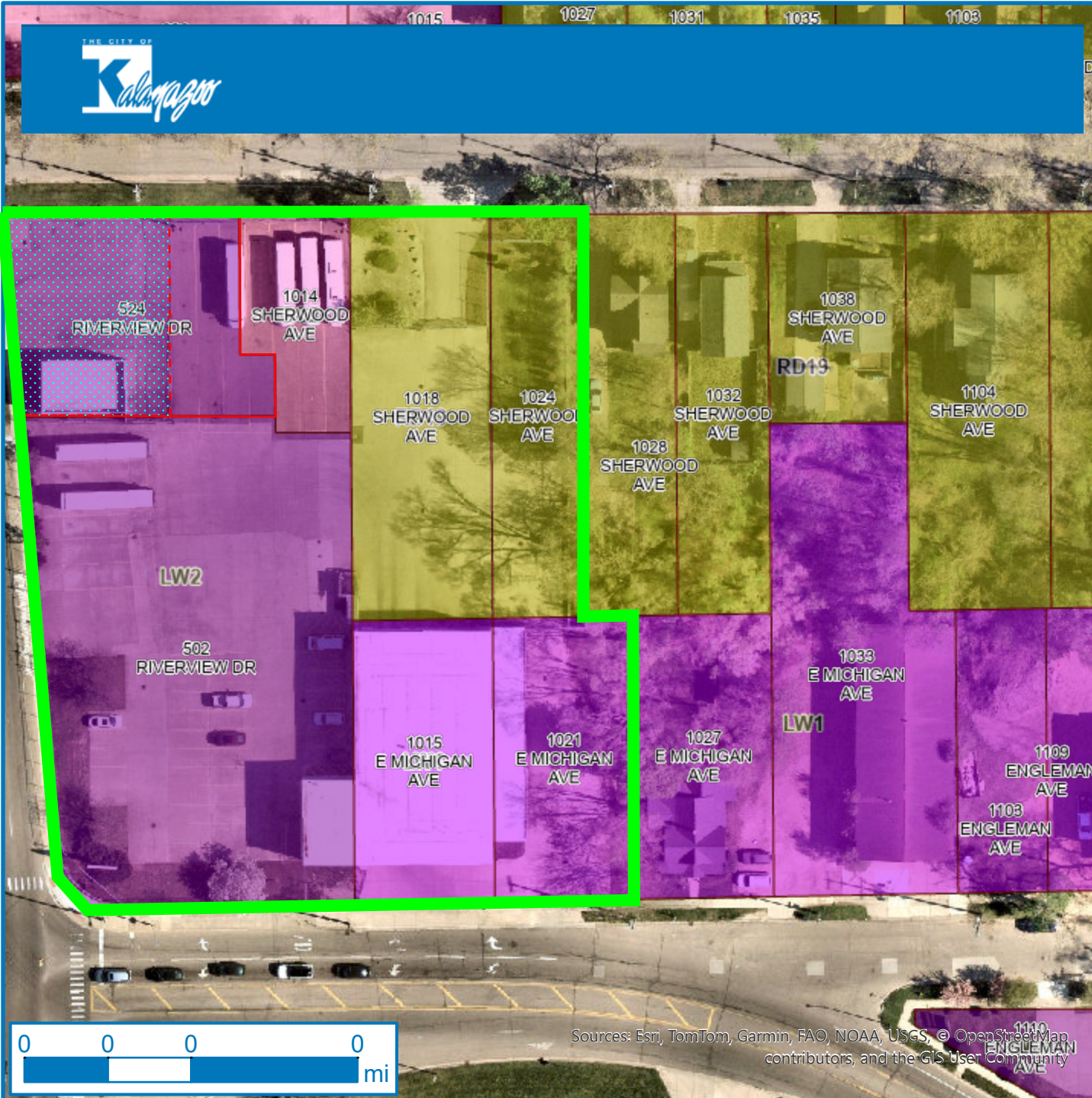
Existing 10' Security Fencing along Riverview Dr.



Existing 10' Security Fencing along Michigan Ave.



Existing 10' Security Fencing along Sherwood Ave.



LEGEND

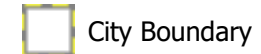
PARCEL MAP



Parcel

Address

GENERAL INFORMATION



City Boundary

PLANNING & ZONING

Zoning

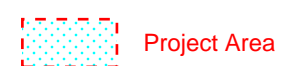
-  CC2
-  LW1
-  LW2
-  RD19



Parcels owned by Indian Trails



Subject Parcel 524 Riverview



Project Area







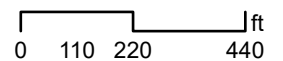
Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



Parcels within 300' Mailing Radius

E Michigan, Riverview, Sherwood Multiple

-  Subject Property
-  Property within 300' Mailing Radius
-  Other Property
-  Zoning District Boundary





Zoning Board of Appeals Staff Report

Date: **11/13/2025**
Item: **D.3.**

City of Kalamazoo

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals

FROM: Reviewed by: Christina Anderson, AICP, City Planner / Deputy Director of CPED
Prepared by: Pete Eldridge, AICP, Zoning Administrator

DATE: November 13, 2025

SUBJECT: ZBA #25-11-20: 1327 Sherwood Ave. Isaac Ogola, is requesting a use variance from Chapter 4, Section 4.1, to increase this Adult Foster Care Group Home from six (6) residents to ten (10) residents, where medium group homes (7-12 residents) are not permitted in this residential zone district.

BACKGROUND:

This corner lot is located at the intersection of Sherwood Avenue and Dwight Street. It is in the RD-19 District and located directly across the street from the Roosevelt Hills Apartment Complex, with homes to the north and east. The two-story, 2,500 square foot residential structure has a wheelchair-accessible ramp from the front porch to the driveway. The driveway is a double-lane driveway with stacking for four vehicles.

According to the records, the house was used as an Adult Foster Care Group Home for 10 residents from 1995 to 2023. Looking back at the Zoning Ordinance in place in the early 1990s, this property was under the Two-Family Residential District (7A). Adult Foster Care Group Homes of all sizes under this former Ordinance were permitted by right. The current zone under RD-19 allows for Adult Foster Care Small Group Homes (6 or fewer residents), but the Adult Foster Care Medium/Large Group Homes (7 to 20 residents) are not permitted by right or allowed as a special use. The former operator, Thomas Ongwela, shut down the operation, and the license expired on October 6, 2023. Since this nonconforming use was shut down for more than 12 months, the Ordinance deems the use abandoned.

In October 2025, Isaac Ogola approached the city to re-license this Adult Foster Care Group Home. After the research was completed, it was explained that a use variance would be required to increase the resident capacity beyond six people. Mr. Ogola applied for the variance and included details in the information provided that the layout is conducive to reopening a facility for 10 residents, as there are four bedrooms on each floor, and two of the bedrooms are designed for double occupancy. There are full bathrooms on each floor, a kitchen for food preparation, a fire alarm system, and safety equipment. A fire extinguisher test report has been submitted as one of the supporting documents. Mr. Ogola has conducted outreach to nearby residents and provided letters of support for his use variance application.

Community Planning and Economic Development Department | 245 N. Rose Street, Ste 100, Kalamazoo, MI 49007
Voice: (269) 337-8744 | Fax: (269) 337-8513 | www.kalamazoocity.org

STRATEGIC VISION ALIGNMENT:

Complete Neighborhoods — residential areas that support the full range of people's daily needs

Strategic Goal Impact:

The use of this property aligns with the strategic goal of complete neighborhoods as Adult Foster Care Homes provide another housing alternative for seniors.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Inform (one-way conversation) – the community will be made aware of the project.

Appropriate Depth of Engagement:

A public hearing notice was placed in the newspaper and notices, dated October 29, 2025, were sent to the property owners and occupants within 300 feet. A copy of the notice was also related to the Eastside Neighborhood Association.

Engagement/Communication Tools:

Newspaper, mailings and applicant outreach.

FINDINGS:

Staff has made the following findings regarding this request:

1. That the literal interpretation and enforcement of the terms and provisions of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant for all practical purposes from using the property for a permitted use identified in the Zoning Ordinance, which is a right commonly enjoyed by other land in the same zone district.

The enforcement of the provisions of the Ordinance would allow for the use of the home as an AFC Group Home for six residents only. However, this underutilizes the existing bedrooms within the home, which allows a capacity of 10 residents. This was a use permitted in the 1990s under the former zoning standards, and it continually operated until 2023.

2. That there is an unnecessary hardship based on special circumstances or conditions that are peculiar to the land or structure for which the use variance is sought that is not applicable to other land or structures in the same zone district.

The special circumstances are that this property operated as an AFC Group Home with a capacity for 10 residents until 2023, which was a permitted use at the time of its opening. The owner closed the residence and let the license lapse; the property is

now subject to current zoning standards, which allow up to 6 residents. Further, the house's floor plan remains the same, with eight bedrooms and a capacity for 10 residents.

3. That the special circumstances are not the result of the actions of the applicant.

The applicant did not create the situation. The layout of the house is pre-existing from the prior AFC Group Home with an approved capacity of 10 residents. If the prior owner had not let the licensing lapse, this AFC Group Home could have continued to operate with a capacity of 10.

4. That the granting of the variance is the minimum action that will make possible the use of the land or structure that is not contrary to the public interest, and that would carry out the spirit of this Ordinance.

The granting of this variance is the minimum action that would allow the property to be put back into active use as AFC Group Home with a capacity of 10 residents. There would be no exterior or interior changes to the structure required to accommodate 10 residents.

5. That the granting of the variance will not adversely affect adjacent land in a material way.

The granting of the variance would not adversely impact adjacent land in a material way. This is located across the street from Roosevelt Hills Apartments, and the neighbors to the north and west of the property have provided letters of support. Lastly, the property is one block from E. Main Street (an Enhanced Neighborhood Street).

6. That the granting of the variance will be generally consistent with the purposes and intent of this Ordinance.

The granting of the variance is generally consistent with the ordinance. The house blends with the neighborhood and has not been a disruption to surrounding residents over the prior decades that it has been in operation.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the use variance as it meets the above criteria.



Community Planning and Economic Development

245 N. Rose Street, Ste. 100

Kalamazoo, MI 49007

PH: (269) 337-8044

FAX (269) 337-8429

www.kalamazoocity.org

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

October 29, 2025

**RE: ZBA #25-11-20
1327 Sherwood Avenue
Parcel #06-14-187-004**

Dear Property Owner:

An application for a variance for provisions of the Zoning Ordinance has been filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals by Isaac Ogola for 1327 Sherwood Avenue Parkway in the Residential – Duplex District (RD-19).

The applicant is requesting a use variance from Chapter 4, Section 4.1, to increase this Adult Foster Care Group Home from six (6) residents to ten (10) residents, where medium group homes (7-12 residents) are not permitted in this residential zone district.

Please note that this request will not change the zoning classification of the property. This is a request for variance only regarding the item described above.

The meeting will be held on Thursday, November 13, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall, 241 W. South Street. This meeting will also be streamed live on the [City's Facebook page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#).

To examine documents related to this request or provide written comments, please contact Pete Eldridge at eldridgep@kalamazoocity.org or call (269) 337-8806. The agenda will be posted at <https://www.kalamazoocity.org/boards>

Sincerely,

Peter C. Eldridge, AICP
Zoning Administrator



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION		
Name: OGOLA, ISAAC		Mailing Address: 2873 NORDIC AVE
City: KALAMAZOO	State: MI	ZIP Code: 49004
Phone: 269 271 8292	Email: ADMIN@ACKSERENITYHOMES.COM	Preferred Contact: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Phone
PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION		
<i>If the applicant is not the property owner, owner must sign application or provide a letter stating that owner gives consent for the application to be filed.</i>		
Name: VICTORIA ONGWELA		Mailing Address: 1327 SHERWOOD AVE
City: KALAMAZOO	State: MI	ZIP Code: 49048
Phone: 269 598 5595	Email:	Preferred Contact: <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Phone
PROPERTY INFORMATION		
Property Address(s): 1327 SHERWOOD AVE, KALAMAZOO MI 49048		
Parcel Identification Number(s): 06-14-187-004		Zone District (kalamazoo.org/maps/):
TYPE OF REQUEST		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dimensional Variance from Chapter(s) _____, Section(s) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal of an Administrative Decision	
<input type="checkbox"/> Use Variance to allow _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation of Zoning Ordinance, Chapter(s) _____, Section(s) _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Features Protection Variance	<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Use Approval	
Reason for Request: This property has been licensed for 10 beds all along. The neighbors are supportive to have it retain its original 10 beds as was the case.		
ATTACHMENTS		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> \$ 306.00 Fee	<input type="checkbox"/> Type Plan detailing variance request, plat, site plan, sketch plan can all be used.	
<input type="checkbox"/> Review Sheet for Request Type	Optional: Photos of property, architecture plans, etc.	
<i>Note: 10 days before meeting provide update on outreach to neighbors or provide any letters of support</i>		
SIGNATURE		
Signature of Applicant:		Date: 10/14/25
Signature of Owner (if different than applicant): Victoria Ongwela		Date: 10/14/25



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

USE VARIANCE REVIEW SHEET

General Information

Project Description (may also provide on a separate sheet):

The project is located in an already existing building at the address: 1327 Sherwood Avenue, Kalamazoo MI 49048. The project is for an Adult foster Care Home in the Eastwood neighborhood. The facility was previously licensed for a capacity of 10 as recent as 2021 prior to its closure in 2023, see attached license.

Review Criteria for Use Variances

ZBA will review all Dimensional Variance requests using the following criteria. Please reach out to staff if you have questions.

Does the Ordinance deprive the applicant from using the property for a permitted use, which is a right enjoyed by other property owners in the same zone district?

The property was previously used for the same purpose without adverse impact to the community.

Is there a hardship that is unique to the land or structure that is not applicable to other land or structures in the same zone district?

The Facility is comprised of two levels, with 4 bedrooms on each floor (Total of 8 Bedrooms), a living space on each floor and a full bathroom on each floor, a Kitchen, a fire alarms system that is under the inspection by the Bureau of Fire services (BFS) as reported to IROL and inspected and certified annually. The facility also has a wide driveway and sufficient parking space for at least 8 cars at a time. A wide frontal yard and lawn space, a fenced backyard space, weekly trash service. see attached photo of the facility.

Are the special circumstances created by actions of the applicant?

No, the special circumstance existed even prior to the applicant's occupancy of the facility. No wonder a previous license was issued for 10 residents and the ordinance at the time supported it this use.

Will the granting of the variance be the minimum action necessary for the use of the land or structure that will meet the spirit of this Ordinance?

Considering that the facility is already set up with the necessary equipments required by LARA, the lot is fenced and more private, the facility is under 24/7 supervision by a trained manager and the number of rooms in the house support the requested capacity increase. There has not been a reported case of negative impact to the public as a result of operating an Adult Foster Care home in this facility over all the years of it's previous operations.

Will the granting of the variance negatively affect adjacent land?

No. This property is well situated on a corner lot without sufficient spaces in the back with two frontal spaces plus a drive way that allow for enough room for residents to live here without causing disturbance to the adjacent land.
The neighbors support the intended re-opening of the home for the stated purpose with the proposed capacity

Will the granting of the variance be generally consistent with the purpose and intent of this Ordinance?

Yes, this facility will ordinarily be operated as a home for individuals in our community who need support with activities of daily living. The zoning in this area is primarily residential and this would still fall within the specifications of a large family living in under the same household. I





ne City of Kalan x Public GIS Web Map x Home City of Kalan x New Tab x Government City of x City of Kalamazoo, x 1350 W Michigan A x Statewide Search Fc
tercare.apps.lara.state.mi.us/Home/FacilityProfile/AM390337111

Home LARA Home BCHS Home Complaint Info MI.gov

LARA Adult Foster Care Search

Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs

Navigation

- Back to Search Results
- New Search
- Definitions
- View Audit Reports

Statewide Detail for Adult Foster Care / Homes for the Aged Facilities

Facility Information

Facility Name: JLAFC
Address: 1327 Sherwood Ave
 Kalamazoo , MI 49048
County: KALAMAZOO
Phone: (269) 598-5595
License Number: AM390337111
Facility Status: CLOSED
License Status: CLOSED
Closed Date: 10/6/2023
License Effective Date: 10/6/2021
License Expiration Date: 10/5/2023
License Facility Type: ADULT MEDIUM GROUP HOME (CAPACITY 7-12)
Capacity: 10

Services Provided

Serves: Aged, Developmentally Disabled, Mentally Ill
Special Certification:

Licensee Information

Licensee Information: Thomas Ongwela
 2888 Lyons Ave



2025



ACK Serenity Homes

1327 Sherwood Ave
Kalamazoo, MI 49048
269-598-5595

Building Contact: Isacc Ogla
Title: Owner

Company: CertaSite
Contact: James Mohney
Title: Technician

Inspection Date: Oct 2, 2025

This inspection was performed in accordance with applicable Standards. The subsequent pages of this report provide performance measurements, listed ranges of acceptable results, and complete documentation of the inspection. Whenever discrepancies exist between acceptable performance standards and actual test results, notes and/or recommended solutions have been proposed or provided for immediate review and approval.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Generated by: BuildingReports.com

Building Information

ACK Serenity Homes
1327 Sherwood Ave
Kalamazoo, MI 49048
United States of America

Contact: Isacc Ogla
Phone: 2692718292
Fax:
Mobile:
Email: admin@ackserenityhomes.com

Inspection Performed By

CertaSite
2513 N. Burdick Street
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007
United States of America

Inspector: James Mohney
Phone: 2693422748
Fax:
Mobile:
Email: jmohney@certasitepro.com

Inspection Summary

Category	Qty	Total Items		Serviced		Passed		Failed/Other	
		Qty	%	Qty	%	Qty	%	Qty	%
Fire	3	3	100.00%	3	100.00%	3	100.00%	0	0.00%
Totals	3	3	100%	3	100.00%	3	100.00%	0	0.00%

Certification

Company: CertaSite
Inspector: James Mohney

Building: ACK Serenity Homes
Contact: Isacc Ogla

INSPECTION & TESTING

Generated by: BuildingReports.com

The Inspection & Testing section lists all of the items inspected in your building. Items are grouped by Passed or Failed/Other . Items are listed by Category. Each item includes the services performed, and the time & date at which testing occurred.

Building: ACK Serenity Homes

Device Type	Location	ScanID : S/N	Service	Time	Date
PASSED					
Fire					
Fire Extinguisher, 5 Lbs, A.B.C.	Basement Laundry	12236156 ZX06230	Inspected	2:15:38 PM	10/02/25
Fire Extinguisher, 5 Lbs, A.B.C.	1st Kitchen	56614250 B07608416	Inspected	2:15:28 PM	10/02/25
Fire Extinguisher, 5 Lbs, A.B.C.	2nd West Entrance sitting room	04798394 SX-934341	Inspected	2:15:44 PM	10/02/25

SERVICE SUMMARY

Generated by: BuildingReports.com

The Service Summary section provides an overview of the services performed in this report.

Building: ACK Serenity Homes

Device Type	Service	Quantity
	PASSED	
Fire Extinguisher, A.B.C., 5 Lbs	Inspected	3
Total		3
Grand Total		3

CITY OF KALAMAZOO
Community Planning & Economic Development
Department – Planning Division.
Zoning Board of Appeals
245 N. Rose Street, Ste. 100
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT

My name is Ramone Wojoman resident of the Eastwood neighborhood my address is 620 Dwight. I'm writing this letter of support for ACK Serenity Homes at the address: 1327 Sherwood Avenue, Kalamazoo MI 49048. The current occupant informed me that he intends to open this house to operate an adult foster care home. I have seen this house being used for a similar purpose with multiple residents. I have lived in my address for 50 years, I did not witness or experience any disturbance to my peace during this time. The occupants seemed to have utmost restraint and close supervision by the managers, and I did not feel threatened in any way shape or form.

This house, however, having been vacant for a while now poses a security issue for our neighborhood. When it gets occupied, I feel it will improve the livelihood and wellbeing of this neighborhood in addition to providing the much-needed service to the vulnerable members of our community.

For the reasons above, I fully support the current occupant and the purpose for which it is going to be used. I write this letter today, 10/13/25

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions regarding my letter.

My number is: Ramone Wojoman

Sincerely,

CITY OF KALAMAZOO
Community Planning & Economic Development
Department – Planning Division.
Zoning Board of Appeals
245 N. Rose Street, Ste. 100
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT

My name is Maureen M. Bunniss resident of the Eastwood neighborhood my address is 1319 Sherwood Ave. I'm writing this letter of support for ACK Serenity Homes at the address: 1327 Sherwood Avenue, Kalamazoo MI 49048. The current occupant informed me that he intends to open this house to operate an adult foster care home. I have seen this house being used for a similar purpose with multiple residents. I have lived in my address for 40 years, I did not witness or experience any disturbance to my peace during this time. The occupants seemed to have utmost restraint and close supervision by the managers, and I did not feel threatened in any way shape or form.

This house, however, having been vacant for a while now poses a security issue for our neighborhood. When it gets occupied, I feel it will improve the livelihood and wellbeing of this neighborhood in addition to providing the much-needed service to the vulnerable members of our community.

For the reasons above, I fully support the current occupant and the purpose for which it is going to be used. I write this letter today, 10/13/25

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions regarding my letter.

My number is: 269-569-9680

Sincerely, 

CITY OF KALAMAZOO
Community Planning & Economic Development
Department – Planning Division.
Zoning Board of Appeals
245 N. Rose Street, Ste. 100
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT

My name is Jay Hickenon resident of the Eastwood neighborhood
my address is 613 Dwight Ave Apt 2 I'm writing this letter of support for
ACK Serenity Homes at the address: 1327 Sherwood Avenue, Kalamazoo MI 49048. The
current occupant informed me that he intends to open this house to operate an adult foster
care home. I have seen this house being used for a similar purpose with multiple
residents. I have lived in my address for 3 years, I did not witness or experience any
disturbance to my peace during this time. The occupants seemed to have utmost restraint
and close supervision by the managers, and I did not feel threatened in any way shape
or form.

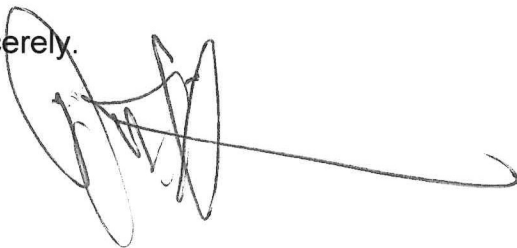
This house, however, having been vacant for a while now poses a security issue for our
neighborhood. When it gets occupied, I feel it will improve the livelihood and wellbeing of
this neighborhood in addition to providing the much-needed service to the vulnerable
members of our community.

For the reasons above, I fully support the current occupant and the purpose for which it
is going to be used. I write this letter today, 10/09/25

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions regarding my letter.

My number is: 269-200-6504

Sincerely,



CITY OF KALAMAZOO
Community Planning & Economic Development
Department – Planning Division.
Zoning Board of Appeals
245 N. Rose Street, Ste. 100
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT

My name is David Kuhl resident of the Eastwood neighborhood
my address is 613 Dwight Ave. I'm writing this letter of support for
ACK Serenity Homes at the address: 1327 Sherwood Avenue, Kalamazoo MI 49048. The
current occupant informed me that he intends to open this house to operate an adult foster
care home. I have seen this house being used for a similar purpose with multiple
residents. I have lived in my address for 15 years, I did not witness or experience any
disturbance to my peace during this time. The occupants seemed to have utmost restraint
and close supervision by the managers, and I did not feel threatened in any way shape
or form.


This house, however, having been vacant for a while now poses a security issue for our
neighborhood. When it gets occupied, I feel it will improve the livelihood and wellbeing of
this neighborhood in addition to providing the much-needed service to the vulnerable
members of our community.

For the reasons above, I fully support the current occupant and the purpose for which it
is going to be used. I write this letter today, 10/13/2025

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions regarding my letter.

My number is: (269) 744-6912

Sincerely.



CITY OF KALAMAZOO
Community Planning & Economic Development
Department – Planning Division.
Zoning Board of Appeals
245 N. Rose Street, Ste. 100
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT

My name is Jack Page resident of the Eastwood neighborhood
my address is 617 Dwight Ave. I'm writing this letter of support for
ACK Serenity Homes at the address: 1327 Sherwood Avenue, Kalamazoo MI 49048. The
current occupant informed me that he intends to open this house to operate an adult foster
care home. I have seen this house being used for a similar purpose with multiple
residents. I have lived in my address for 10 years, I did not witness or experience any
disturbance to my peace during this time. The occupants seemed to have utmost restraint
and close supervision by the managers, and I did not feel threatened in any way shape
or form.

This house, however, having been vacant for a while now poses a security issue for our
neighborhood. When it gets occupied, I feel it will improve the livelihood and wellbeing of
this neighborhood in addition to providing the much-needed service to the vulnerable
members of our community.

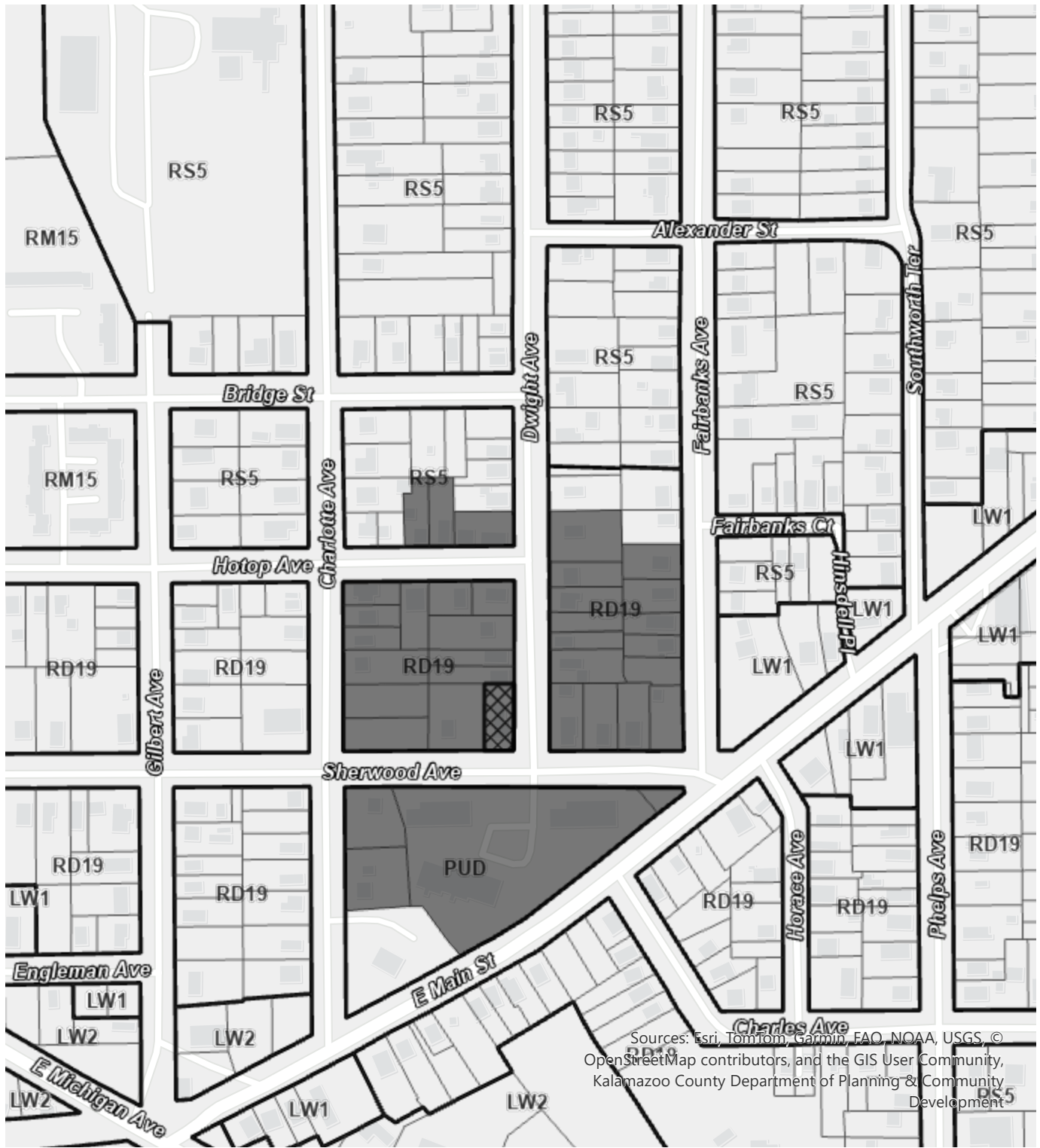
For the reasons above, I fully support the current occupant and the purpose for which it
is going to be used. I write this letter today, 10 / 13 / 2025

Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions regarding my letter.





My number is: (269) 344-9201

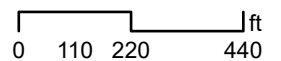
Sincerely,

Jack Page



Parcels within 300' Mailing Radius 1327 Sherwood Ave

-  Subject Property
-  Property within 300' Mailing Radius
-  Other Property
-  Zoning District Boundary





Zoning Board of Appeals Staff Report

Date: **11/13/2025**
Item: **E.1.**

City of Kalamazoo

TO: Zoning Board of Appeals

FROM: Reviewed by: Christina Anderson, AICP, City Planner / Deputy Director of CPED
Prepared by: Pete Eldridge, AICP, Zoning Administrator

DATE: November 13, 2025

SUBJECT: ZBA #25-11-21: 1421 N Pitcher Street. Graphic Packaging International is requesting a six-month extension for the two building setback variances granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals on December 12, 2024 (this extension will make the variances valid until June 11, 2026).

BACKGROUND:

Graphic Packaging International (GPI) continues to make improvements to the Kalamazoo campus. GPI’s campus is currently over 100 acres with multiple buildings, parking lots and storage lots. GPI is planning to build a new automated warehouse on the southwest corner of E. Prouty Street and N. Pitcher Street (1421 N. Pitcher St.). The purpose of this new building is to store large paper rolls produced at the plant. The paper rolls will be moved from the production location to the warehouse by an above-ground conveyor system. By using an overhead conveyor system, truck traffic, emissions, noise, and light pollution would be reduced, as it will take the place of the ground level roll train that stops traffic on N. Pitcher Street 20 times a day to move paper rolls across the street. The proposed automated warehouse will be 140 feet in height (no maximum height noted in the M-2 District) with a building footprint of 68,500 square feet.

GPI's variances, granted in December 2024, involved two building setback variances from the 25-foot perimeter setback that applies in the M-2 District. The warehouse project was intended to commence with site plan approval in the 4th quarter of 2025 and then construction in the spring of 2026. However, due to a required wastewater treatment project here in Kalamazoo, investments being made at other facility locations in Texas, and the current economic climate, the timing of this project has shifted. This time extension of six months will allow GPI to move review and approval of the site design forward in 2026 and plan for construction in 2027.

STRATEGIC VISION ALIGNMENT:

Economic Vitality - A supportive infrastructure for growing businesses and stabilizing the local economy for the benefit of all.

Environmental Responsibility - A green and healthy City.

Community Planning and Economic Development Department | 245 N. Rose Street, Ste 100, Kalamazoo, MI 49007
Voice: (269) 337-8744 | Fax: (269) 337-8513 | www.kalamazoocity.org

Strategic Goal Impact:

The proposed application aligns with the Strategic Plan in regard to the Economic Vitality goal as GPI's continued investment means it will be a viable production facility for years to come. Additionally, the Environmental Responsibility goal is important to mention, as the automated warehouse and conveyor system will reduce truck traffic substantially around the city along with emissions, light and noise pollution.

The Future Land Use Map identifies this parcel within the campus as industrial, which supports the facility expansion underway. The 2018 Northside Neighborhood Plan makes references connecting residents with jobs and this expansion will allow GPI to continue to be the largest manufacturing operation in the city.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Community engagement was not required for the review of this request. The Zoning Ordinance provides the Zoning Board of Appeals with the authority to approve a six (6) month extension if good cause is shown for the delay in the project.

FINDINGS:

The staff reviewed the request and found that the delays were not caused by the applicant. The applicant has been working diligently to make necessary upgrades to multiple facility locations around the country. Given unforeseen expenses on unrelated projects and the current economic climate, implementation of this project has been delayed.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the approval of a six-month time extension for the variances approved on December 12, 2024.

1421 N. Pitcher St. 6 Month Variance Extension Request

Graphic Packaging International (GPI) was granted two dimensional variances at 1421 N Pitcher Street for the Kalamazoo Mill Automated Roll Warehouse project on December 12, 2024. GPI intended to begin construction of this project by Spring of 2026 and submit for Project plan approval in 4th quarter 2025 but the company has been forced to delay this project due to capital cash flow considerations. GPI is currently finishing the construction of a new Paperboard Manufacturing facility in Waco, Texas and is also beginning construction on a similar Automated roll warehouse at the Texarkana, Texas Paperboard Manufacturing facility. The company has also had a regulatory compliance wastewater treatment project come up that was not originally considered when the Kalamazoo ARW project was considered and approved. Tariff pressures, higher project inflation and regulatory demand is putting pressure on Graphic Packaging to execute the projects simultaneously while keeping our Capital spending at target levels for our shareholders. Since these other large projects are already under construction or are regulatory in nature, GPI has been forced to delay the installation of the construction start date of the Kalamazoo Automated warehouse project. Engineering for this project is still underway, and the expected starting construction date is expected to begin in Spring of 2027 with site plan submittal in Spring/Summer of 2026. Graphic Packaging is committed to further investment in the Kalamazoo Paperboard manufacturing facility and requests extension of the already approved variances due to these extenuating financial circumstances.



Greg France
VP & Resident Mill Manager



Community Planning and Economic Development

245 N. Rose Street, Ste. #100

Kalamazoo, MI 49007

PH: (269) 337-8044

FAX (269) 337-8429

www.kalamazoocity.org

Tim Carroll
Graphic Packaging International, LLC
1500 N. Pitcher Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

December 17, 2024

**Re: ZBA #24-12-15/ #24-12-16
1400 & 1401 Harrison St/240,300, 432, 510, 511 & 600 E. Paterson St./
1421, 1500, 1807& 1819 N Pitcher St.**

Dear Mr. Carroll,

At the meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals on Thursday, December 12, 2024, the Board granted the following variances for Graphic Packaging International, LLC:

- 1) A dimensional variance from Chapter 50-7.2, to authorize an additional 82 off-street parking spaces which will allow a total of 805 off-street parking spaces for the campus. This is an increase from the dimensional variance granted on December 9, 2021, which increased the total off-street parking to 723 spaces.
- 2) A dimensional variance for 1421 N. Pitcher Street from Appendix A, Chapter 5, Table 5.2-1, to authorize a front building setback on Prouty Street of zero, where a 25-foot setback is required in the M-2 District for the proposed warehouse.
- 3) A dimensional variance for 1421 N. Pitcher Street from Appendix A, Chapter 5, Table 5.2-1, to authorize a front building setback on N. Pitcher Street of zero, where a 25-foot setback is required in the M-2 District for the proposed warehouse.

Please note that unless specified by the Board, all variances granted shall become null and void if not exercised within one (1) year of the date of granting. Additionally, approval of Site Plan Review will be necessary before Building Permits can be issued for these new parking lot and warehouse.

If you have any questions, please contact me in the Community Planning and Economic Development Department at (269) 337-8806.

Sincerely,

Peter C. Eldridge, AICP
Zoning Administrator

C: Eric Barkovich, Hurley & Stewart, 2800 S. 11th St., Kalamazoo, MI 49009



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS APPLICATION

APPLICANT INFORMATION		
Name: Graphic Packaging International		Mailing Address: 1500 N Pitcher St
City: Kalamazoo	State: MI	ZIP Code: 49007
Phone: 269-383-5000	Email: tim.carroll@graphicpkg.com	Preferred Contact: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Phone
PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION		
<i>If the applicant is not the property owner, owner must sign application or provide a letter stating that owner gives consent for the application to be filed. SAME AS APPLICANT</i>		
Name:		Mailing Address:
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
Phone:	Email:	Preferred Contact: <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Phone
PROPERTY INFORMATION		
Property Address(s): 1421 N Pitcher St & 1500 N Pitcher St, Kalamazoo, MI 49007		
Parcel Identification Number(s): 06-10-455-002 & 06-10-452-002		Zone District (kalamazoocity.org/maps): M-2
TYPE OF REQUEST		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dimensional Variance from Setbacks: Ch 5, Sec 2 Parking: Ch 50, Sec 7.2		<input type="checkbox"/> Appeal of an Administrative Decision
<input type="checkbox"/> Use Variance to allow _____		<input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation of Zoning Ordinance, Chapter(s) _____, Section(s) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Natural Features Protection Variance		<input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Use Approval
Reason for Request: - Setback reduction to construct automated warehouse building at most efficient location on the parcel for efficient operation, safety, and to maximize distance from residential. - Allowable campus maximum parking increase to meet contractor parking needs.		
ATTACHMENTS		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> \$ 300 _____ Fee	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Type Plan detailing variance request, plat, site plan, sketch plan can all be used.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Review Sheet for Request Type	Optional: Photos of property, architecture plans, etc.	
<i>Note: 10 days before meeting provide update on outreach to neighbors or provide any letters of support</i>		
SIGNATURE		
Signature of Applicant:		Date: 10-17-24
Signature of Owner (if different than applicant):		Date:



October 17, 2024

To: Peter C. Eldridge, AICP
Zoning Administrator
City of Kalamazoo CPED Department – Planning Division
245 N. Rose Street, Ste. 100
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

From: Eric Barkovich, P.E.
Hurley & Stewart
2800 South 11th Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Re: Graphic Packaging International Variance Applications

Peter,

Please find the attached letter supplementing Graphic Packaging International’s (GPI) application for two variances. The arguments directly pertaining to the setback reduction and parking increase requests are detailed in the review sheets. This letter is intended as a separate document to describe the various benefits the upcoming projects will have not only for GPI, but for the community as well.

Project Description

GPI is planning a new automated warehouse building southwest of the Prouty St and Pitcher St intersection. Its purpose will be to store large paper rolls produced at the plant. Paper rolls will be transported to and from the warehouse via overhead conveyors. This warehouse will replace the existing asphalt parking lot on the north end of the 1421 N Pitcher St parcel. A new centralized parking lot will be constructed at the northeast corner of Pitcher and Paterson Street. The proposed parking lot would replace the existing parking in the warehouse lot and the 300 E Paterson lot, while retaining some of the existing spaces at the current location. The 300 E Paterson parking lot would remain, but only for contractor parking during peak events like outages and shutdowns.

Project Benefits

- Reduced Truck Traffic: Currently, GPI stores their produced paper rolls at several third-party warehouses across Kalamazoo. The automated warehouse will allow them to store **41,500** tons on site. This will reduce truck traffic around town significantly:
 - o Trailer reduction off roads throughout City: **98-112 trailers/day**
 - o Annual traffic reduction: **35,000-40,000 trucks**
 - o Truck distance traveled reduction: **115,000 miles**



- Reduced Emissions: Given the reduced truck traffic mentioned above, GPI estimates 14,000 gallon ESG savings of Diesel. This will result in a significant decrease in emissions from GPI truck traffic.
- Elimination of Roll Train Crossing: There's currently a crossing about 900' north of the Pitcher/Paterson street intersection used to transfer product between the mill east of Pitcher St. and Plant 9 west of Pitcher St. There is a traffic light at the crossing, which currently stops traffic for crossings at least 20 times a day. The warehouse will eliminate this crossing.
- Noise/Light Reduction: Employees currently use the existing parking lot at the north end of 1421 N Pitcher during all hours, on multiple work shifts. Taking this parking lot away will reduce noise and lights from vehicles adjacent to the residential neighborhood. The proposed warehouse building will be 140' tall, and the automated machinery will operate quietly. The building will effectively act as both a visual and sound barrier to the industrial activities of the existing campus.
- Centralized Employee Parking: The proposed parking lot at the northeast corner of Pitcher Street and Paterson Street creates a centralized location for employee parking. This simplifies traffic and creates safe employee walking routes to building entrances.
- Reduced Off Campus Parking Spillover During Peak Events: Relocating the existing employee parking at 300 E Paterson to the new lot is beneficial for the reasons mentioned above. The intention is for the 300 E Paterson lot to remain, but specifically for contractor parking. This will provide the added parking needed for contractors during peak events, such as the twice-monthly machine outages and annual shut down. Extra parking will reduce the likelihood of contractors parking in the residential neighborhood to the west.

To help achieve the impactful benefits described above, we are requesting three variances:

- Pitcher Street setback reduction to 0'
- Prouty Street setback reduction to 0'
- Maximum parking count increase of 82 spaces

Should you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to reach out to me directly. Thank you for your time and consideration with this matter.

Sincerely,

Eric Barkovich, P.E.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Eric Barkovich'.



ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

DIMENSIONAL VARIANCE REVIEW SHEET

General Information

Specific Project Details (may also provide on a separate sheet):

Review Criteria for Dimensional Variances

ZBA will review all Dimensional Variance requests using the following criteria. Please reach out to staff if you have questions.

Are there conditions, like unusual topography, the shape of the lot or structure that are not commonly found on other lots or structures in the same zone district that make this request unique?

Are there special circumstances which are not the result of the actions of the applicant or property owner of the land that impact the project?

Does the Ordinance deprive the applicant of rights enjoyed by other property owners in the same zone district?



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Is this the minimum action which will make it possible to use the lot or structure in a manner that does not negatively impact the public and meets the spirit of this Ordinance?

Will the granting of the variance negatively affect adjacent land?

Will the granting of the variance be generally consistent with the purpose and intent of this Ordinance?

Additional Criteria for Variance Requests for Required Landscaping

Does existing landscaping, screening or wetlands planned to be preserved meet the intent of the Ordinance?

Does the landscaping proposed by the applicant meet the intent of this section?



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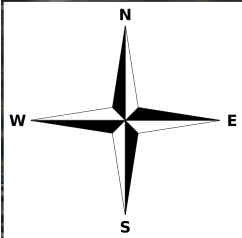
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Are there steep changes in topography that would limit the benefits of landscaping?

Are the proposed building and parking lot locations setback beyond the required setback?

Are there abutting lands developed or could be developed in the near future with a use other than residential?

Do similar landscaping conditions exist which would result in no added benefit if additional landscaping or screening was provided?



Estimated Foundation Construction:
June-December 2025

Estimated Building Erection:
February 2026 - February 2027

Estimated Construction:
March-June 2025

Kalamazoo River

384 PARKING SPACES

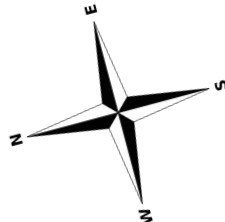
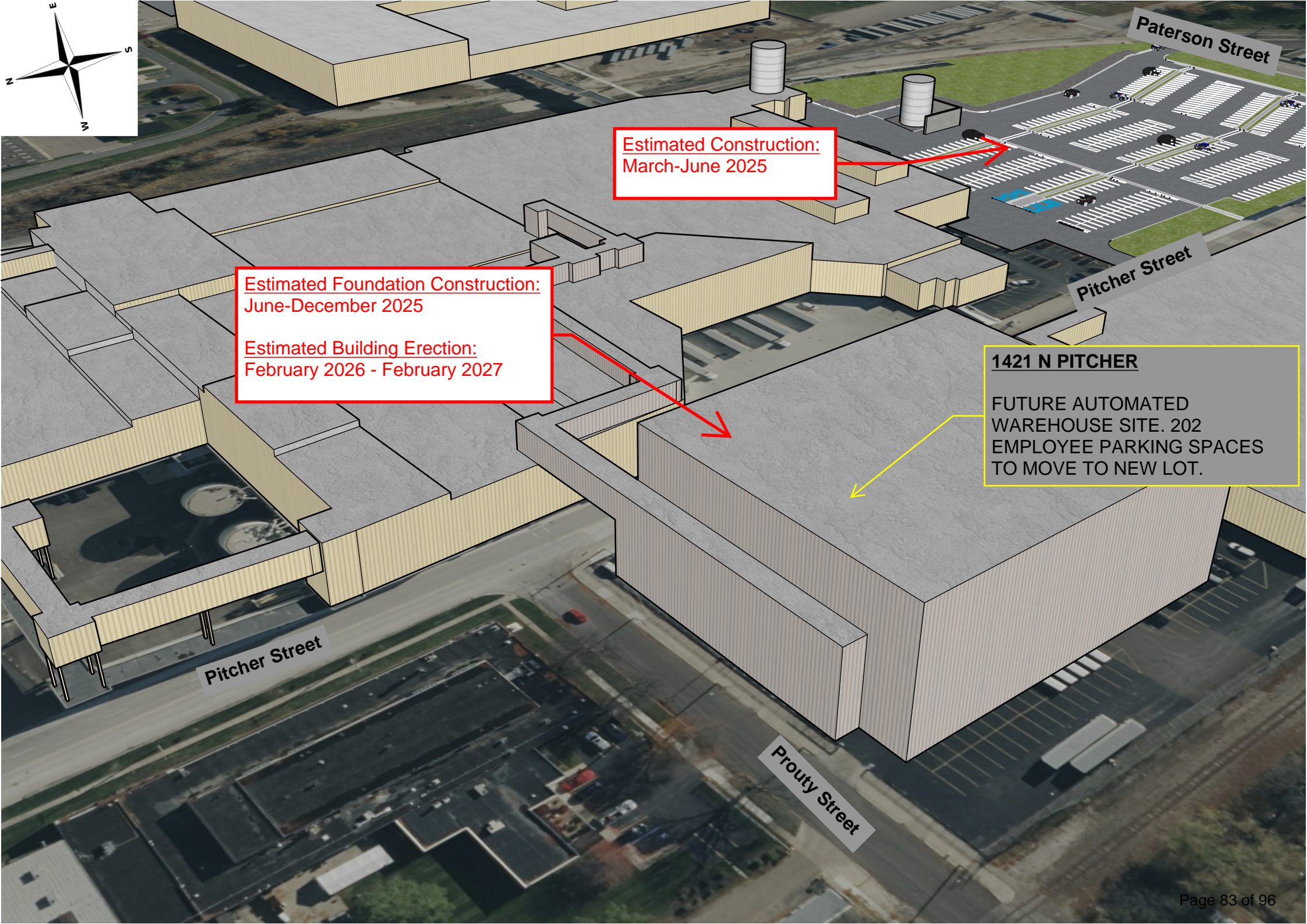
LINED DETENTION AREA
FOR STORM WATER

Pitcher Street

Paterson Street

300 E PATERSON
142 EMPLOYEE PARKING SPACES TO MOVE TO NEW LOT. THIS LOT TO BECOME CONTRACTOR PARKING ONLY.





Estimated Construction:
March-June 2025

Estimated Foundation Construction:
June-December 2025

Estimated Building Erection:
February 2026 - February 2027

1421 N PITCHER

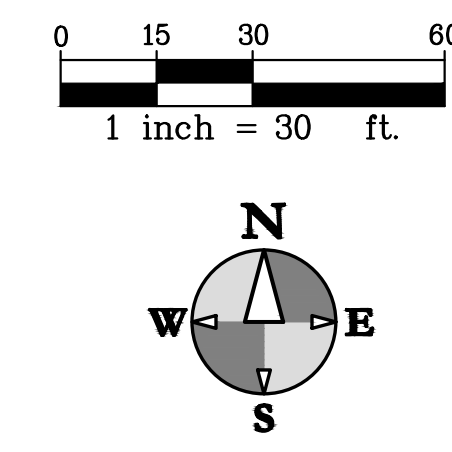
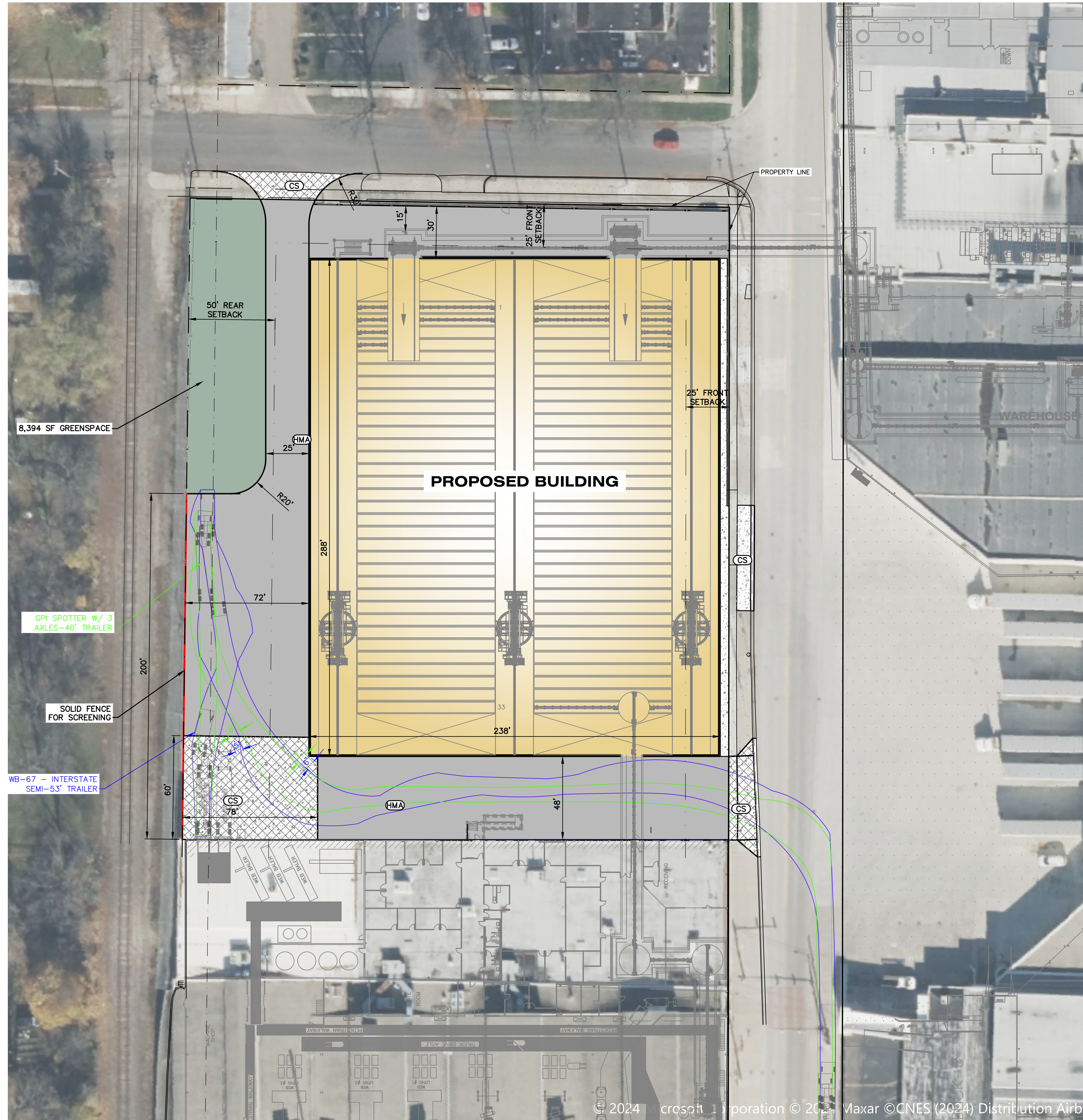
FUTURE AUTOMATED WAREHOUSE SITE. 202 EMPLOYEE PARKING SPACES TO MOVE TO NEW LOT.

Paterson Street

Pitcher Street

Pitcher Street

Prouty Street



SITE LEGEND

- HMA HMA PAVEMENT
- CS CONCRETE SURFACE

LEGEND

- HEAVY-DUTY BITUMINOUS PAVEMENT
- CONCRETE PAVEMENT AND SIDEWALK
- HEAVY-DUTY CONCRETE PAVEMENT
- PROPOSED BUILDING
- CURB AND GUTTER

BENCHMARKS

ELEVATIONS OF THIS SURVEY ARE BASED ON NAVD 88 AS DERIVED FROM GPS

BM 1 EL = 767.74'
SOUTH BOLT OF HYDRANT ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF E PROUTY ST 326'± WEST OF N PITCHER ST CENTERLINE.

BM 2 EL = 766.47'
SPIKE IN WEST SIDE OF UTILITY POLE ON WEST SIDE ON N PITCHER ST 310'± SOUTH OF E PROUTY ST CENTERLINE.



ALL UTILITIES AS SHOWN ARE APPROXIMATE LOCATIONS DERIVED FROM ACTUAL MEASUREMENTS AND AVAILABLE RECORDS. THEY SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED TO BE EXACT LOCATION NOR SHOULD IT BE ASSUMED THAT THEY ARE THE ONLY UTILITIES IN THE AREA.

FIELD WORK PERFORMED BY:
HURLEY & STEWART, LLC

hurley & stewart

hurley & stewart, llc
2800 s. 11th street
kalamazoo, michigan 49009
269.552.4960 fax 269.552.4961
www.hurleystewart.com

Job No.: 24-009D - P.M.-EMB. - DRILL, DSV, QA/QC, 10/24/24
ISSUED FOR/REVISIONS: 10/24/24
OWNER REVIEW

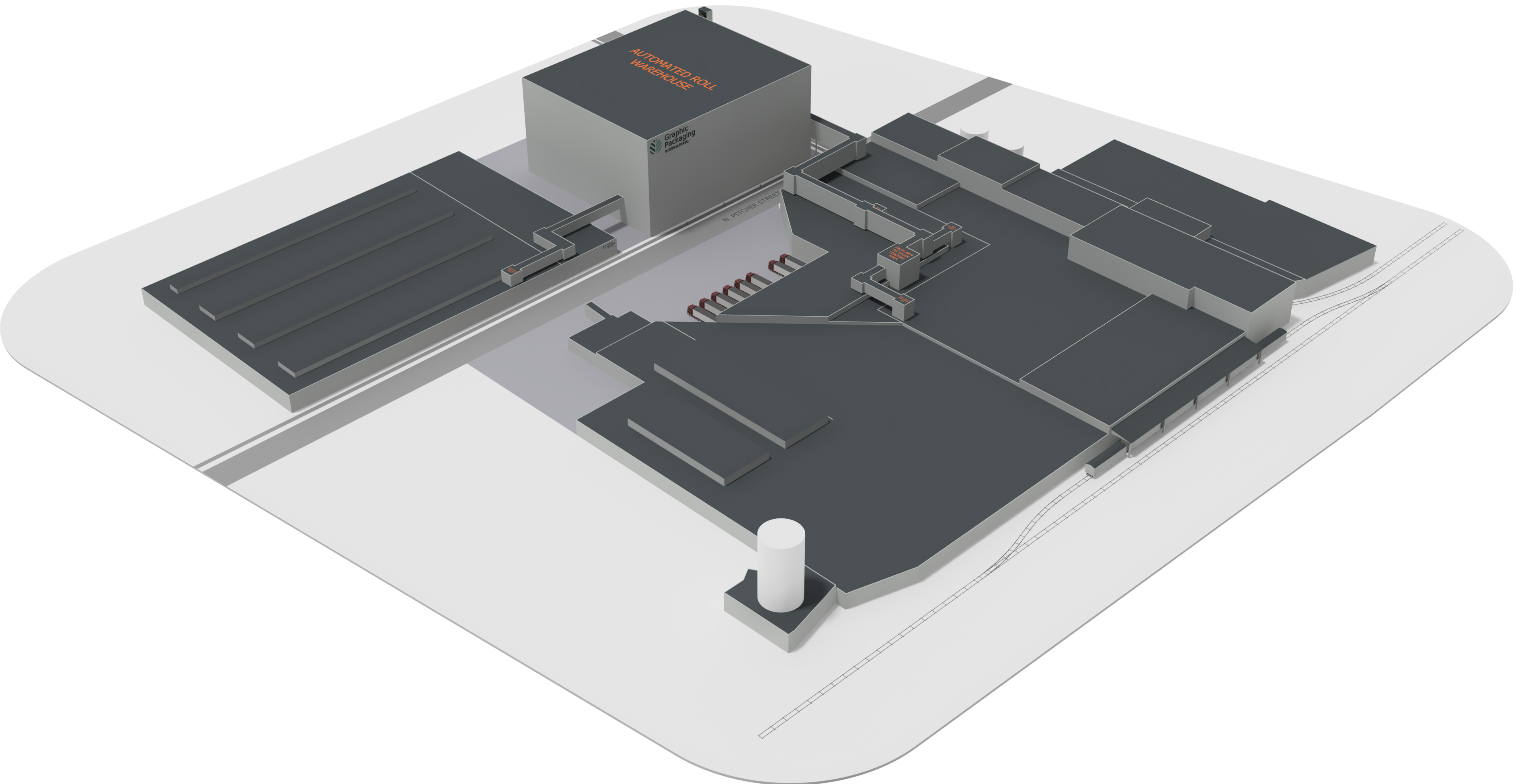
COPYRIGHT © of Hurley & Stewart, LLC

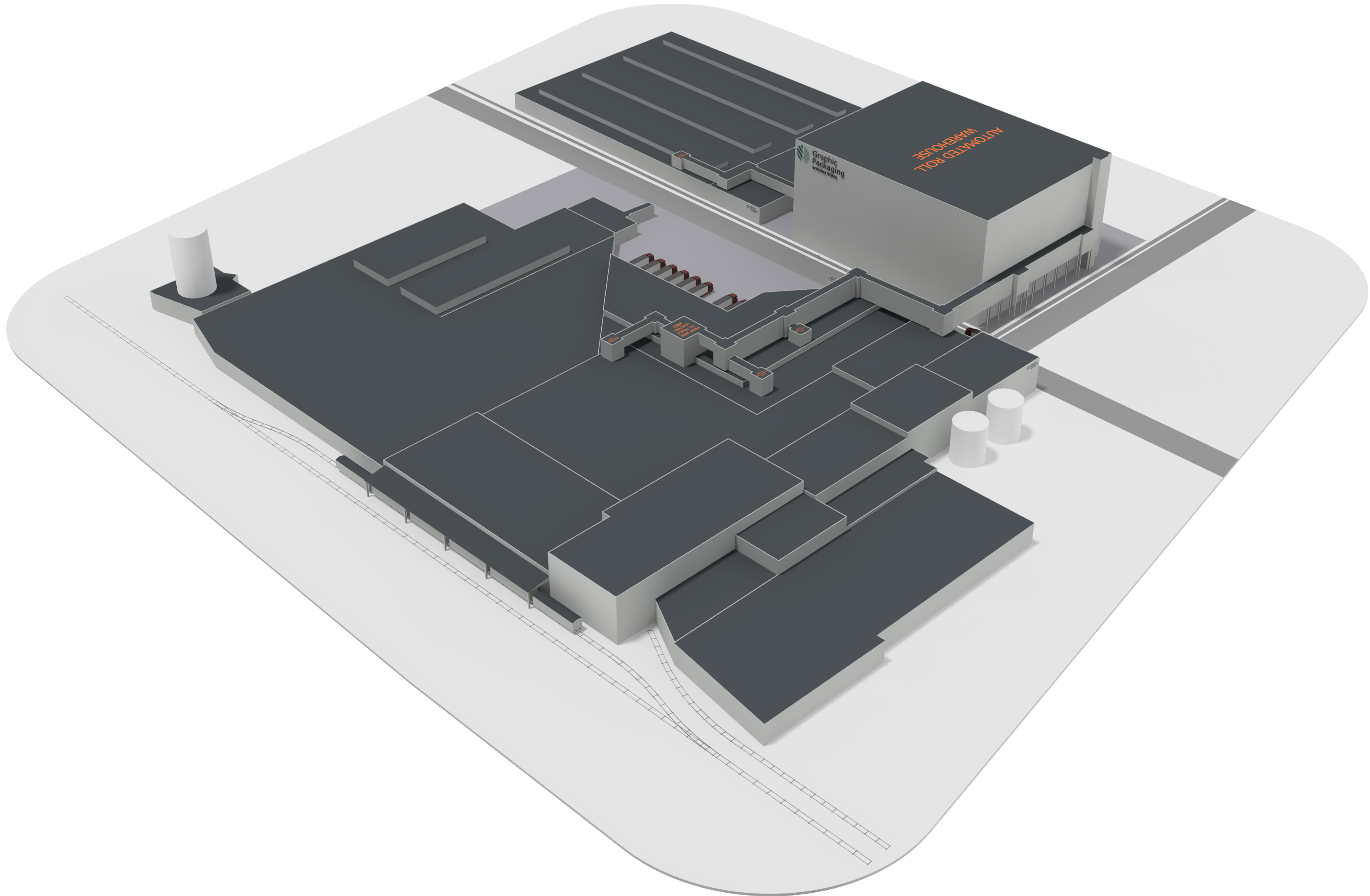
**SITE LAYOUT PLAN
AUTOMATED WAREHOUSE
GRAPHIC PACKAGING**

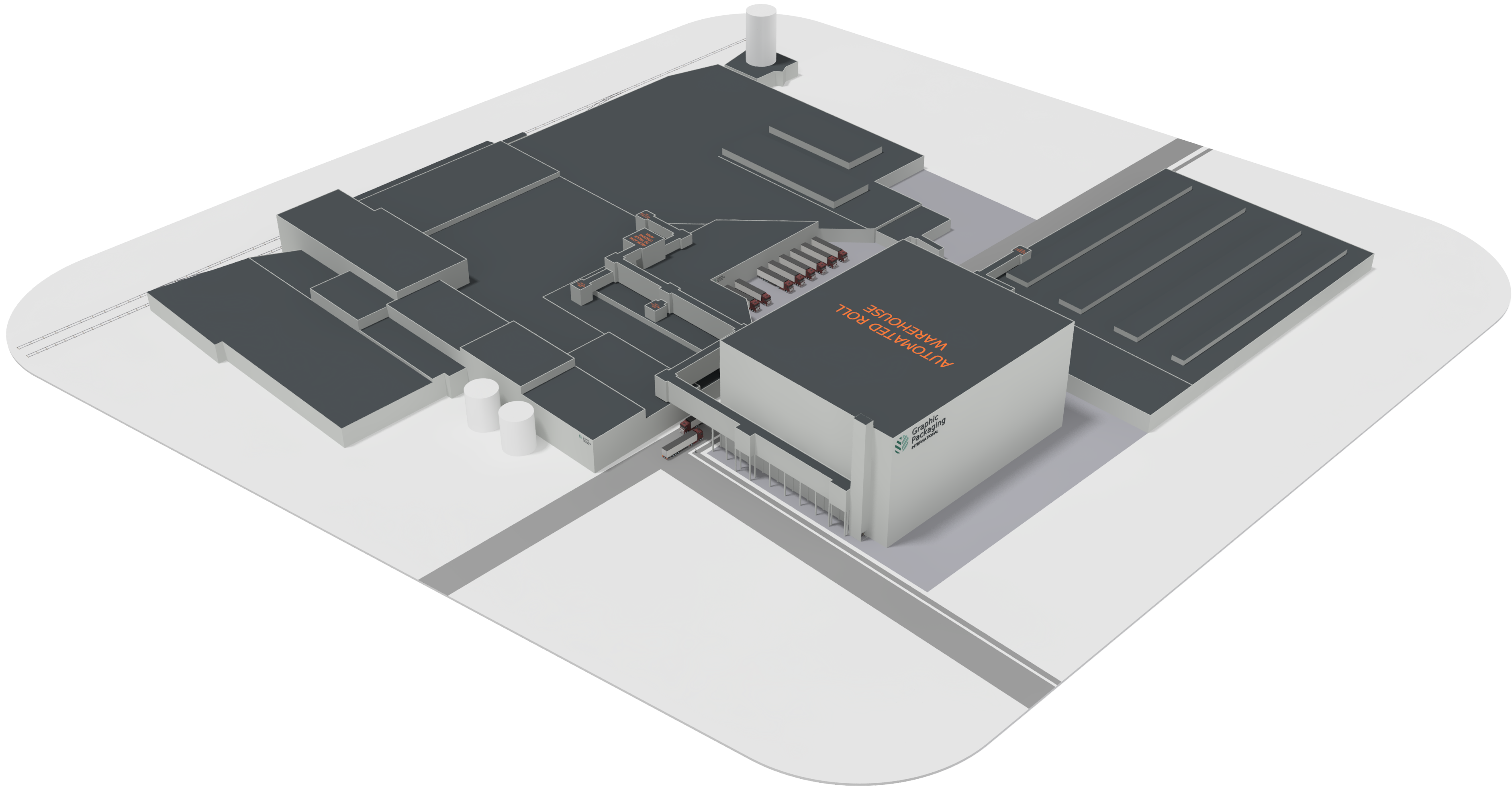
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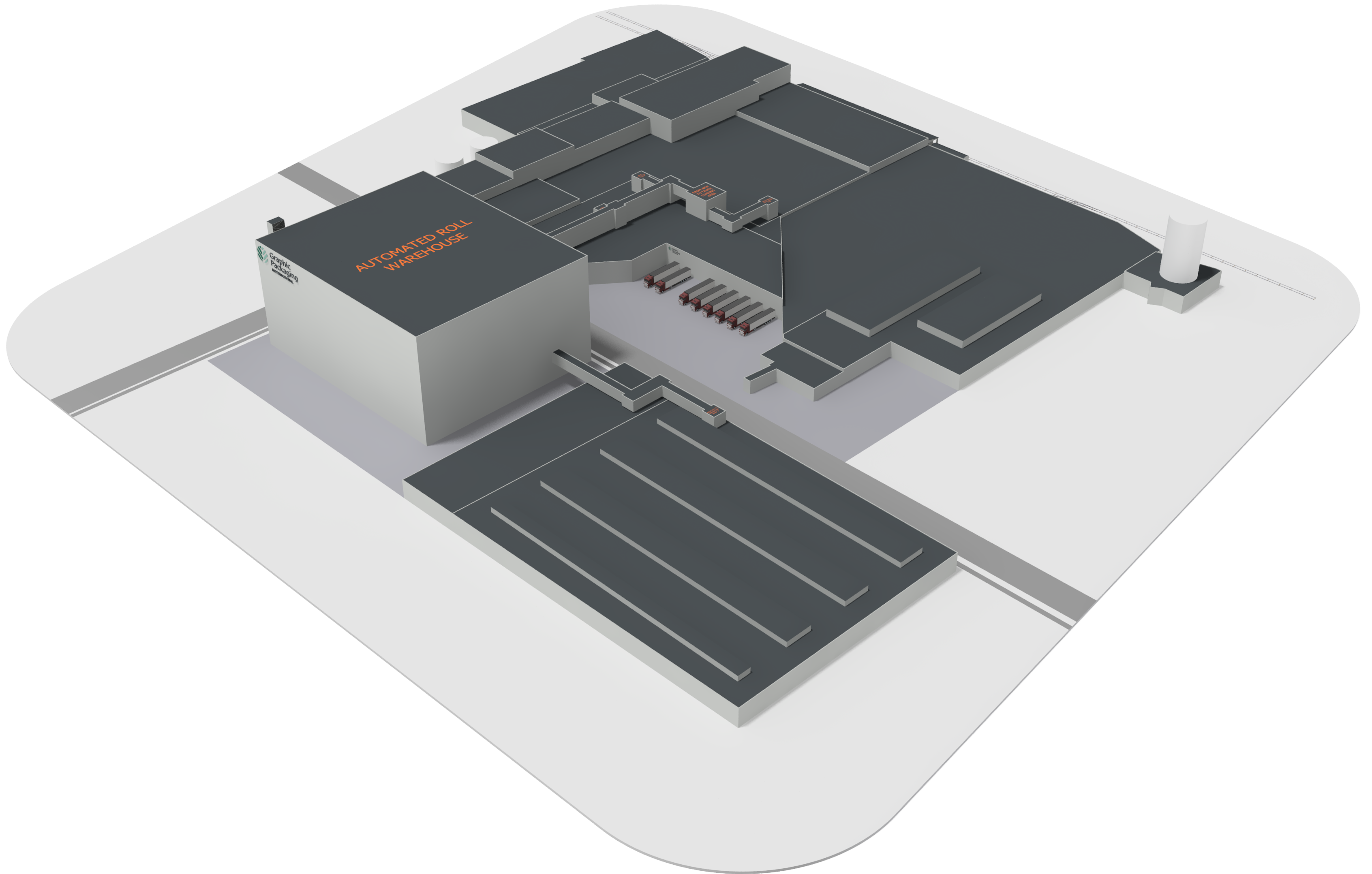
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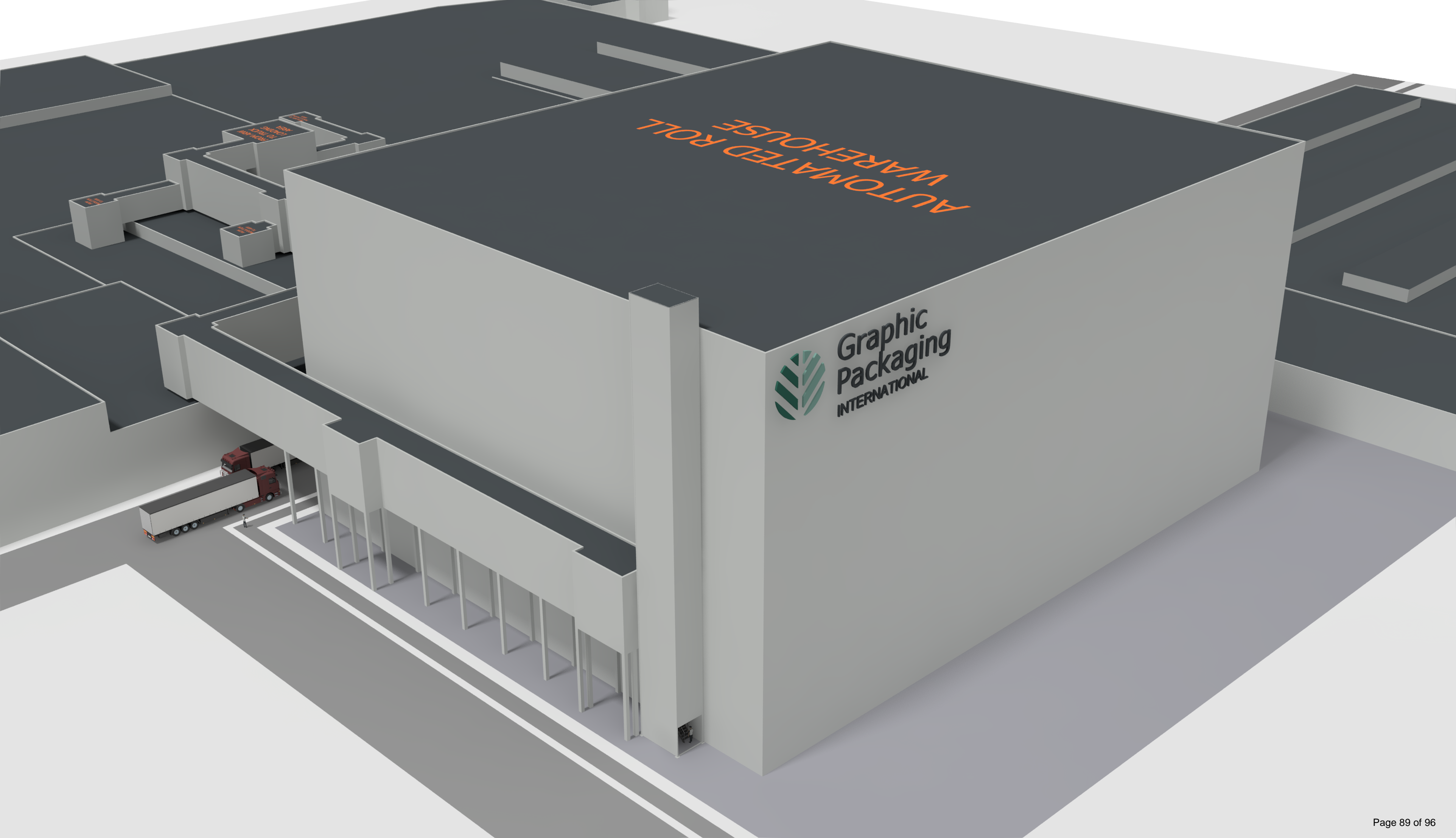
Sheet
C-1







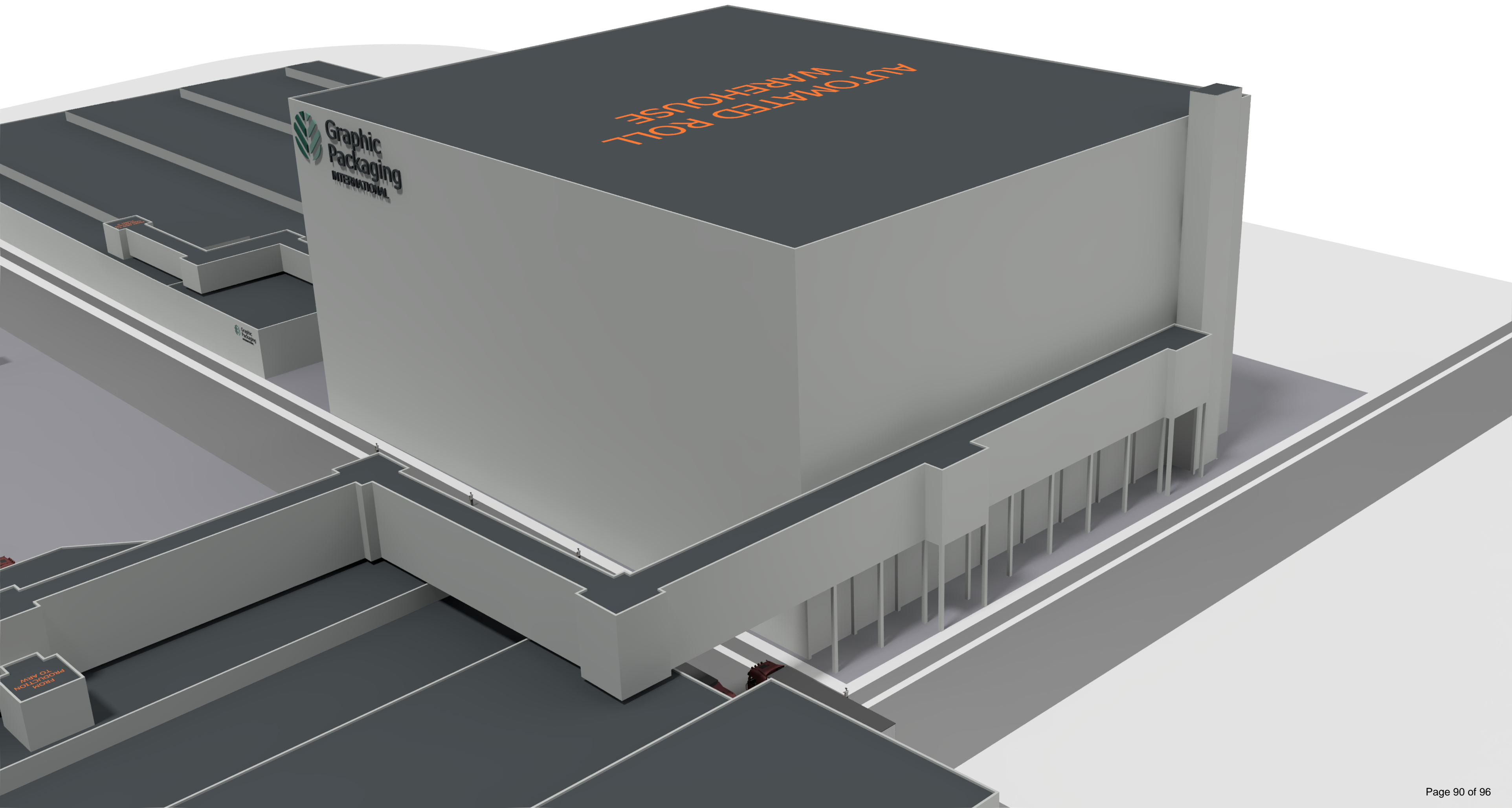




AUTOMATED ROLL
WAREHOUSE

 **Graphic
Packaging**
INTERNATIONAL



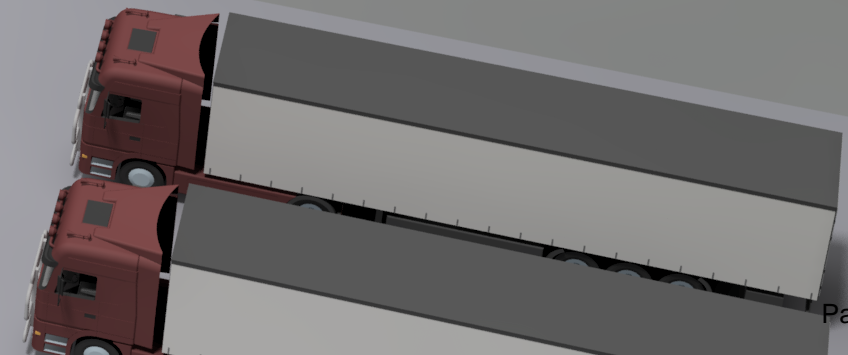


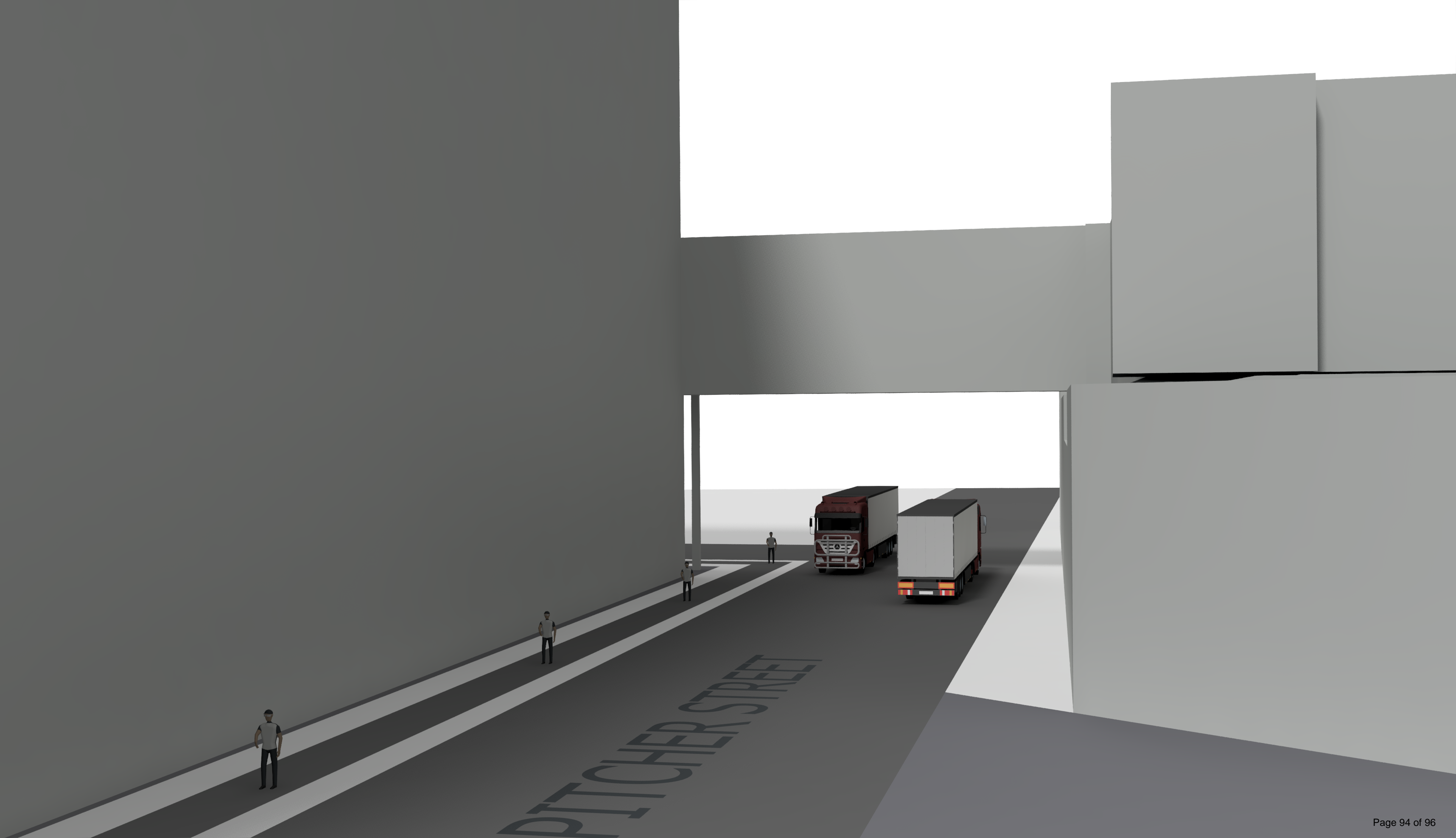




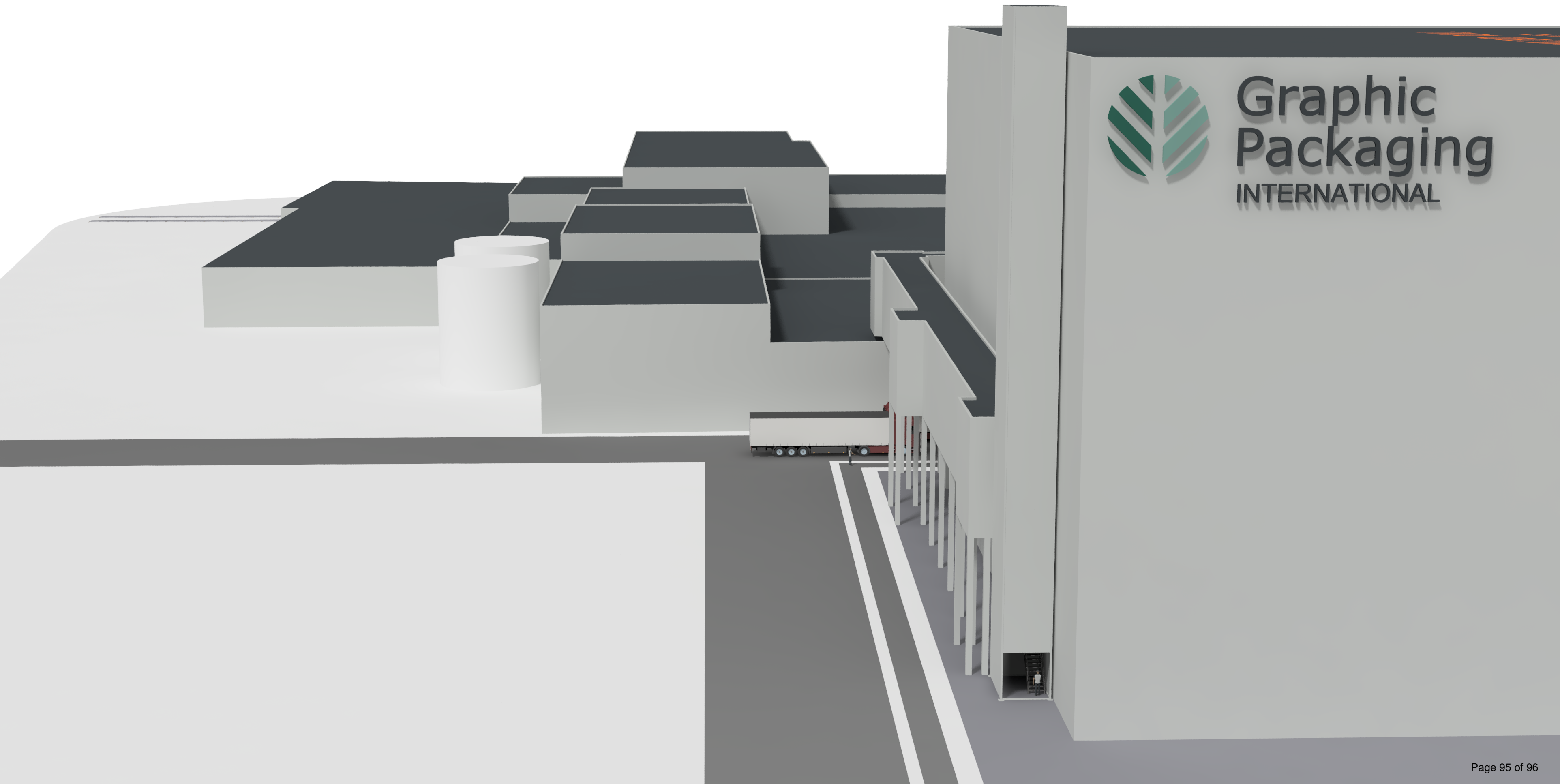


N. PITCHER STREET

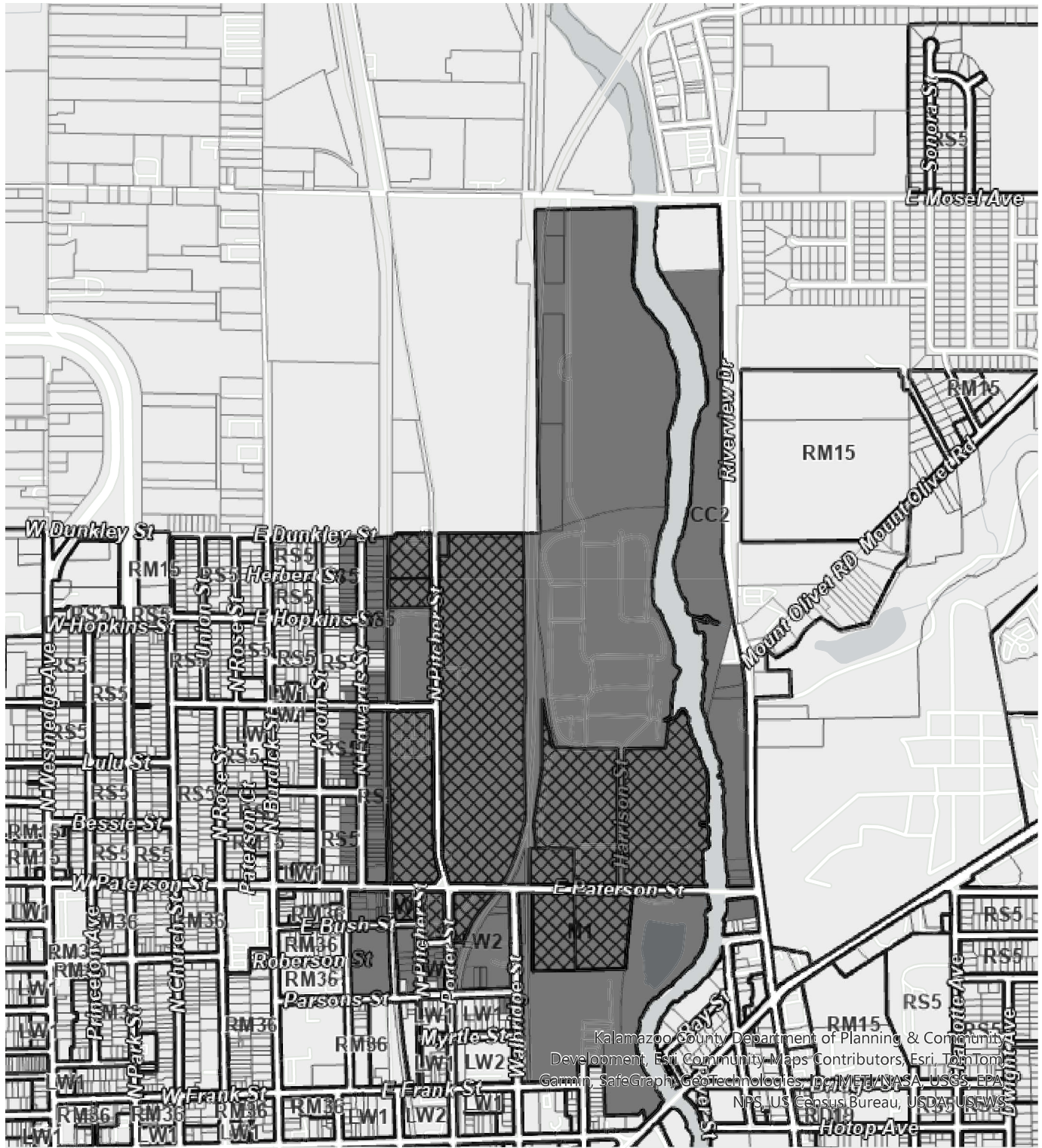




PITCHER STREET







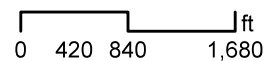
**Graphic
Packaging**
INTERNATIONAL



Parcels within 300' Mailing Radius

Graphic Pkg-various parcels

-  Subject Property
-  Property within 300' Mailing Radius
-  Other Property
-  Zoning District Boundary



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