



TO: Baxter Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Joshua Doty, Community Development Director

DATE: June 14, 2022, Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting

REQUEST: **PUBLIC HEARING. Preliminary and Final Plat** to allow “Baxter Medical Park Third Addition” to replat Lot 1 and Outlot A, **Rezoning** from OS, Office Service to PUD, Planned Unit Development, and a **PUD General and Final Plan** for the development of an expansion at Essentia Health located at 13060 Isle Drive (city file 2022-24)

APPLICANT: Widseth

ZONING: OS, Office Service

1. Application Request

The applicant is requesting approval of the following items for the roughly 22-acre site located on the lot north of 7418 Forthun Road:

- **Preliminary and Final Plat** to allow “Baxter Medical Park Third Addition” to replat Lot 1 and Outlot A to enlarge Lot 1 and reduce Outlot A;
- **Rezoning** from OS, Office Service, to PUD, Planned Unit Development; and
- **PUD General and Final Plan** for the development of an expansion at Essentia Health for a Musculoskeletal Center Addition at the Baxter Clinic.

Under the plan, the applicant would enlarge Lot 1 to 14.4 acres create enough buildable lot area for a 44,000-square foot, two-story addition. The expansion would provide a Musculoskeletal Center at the Baxter Clinic. The project includes an expansion of the parking lot and a new access to Isle Drive. The addition would have a continuation of the existing front entrances on the north side of the building to access the lobby. The applicant is also proposing a pharmacy drive through pick up lane on the north side of the existing building.

2. Context

Adjacent Land Use and Zoning

	Adjacent Land Use	Zoning
North	Office and Residential Single Family Property	OS, Office Service R-1, Low Density Residential
East, Across Hwy. 371	Vacant OS Property	OS, Office Service
South	MnDOT ROW Property	N/A
West	Essentia Office Outlot and Residential Single Family Property	OS, Office Service R-1, Low Density Residential

Natural Characteristics of the Site

The site has very minimal topography and is naturally wooded. The property includes numerous wetlands. The applicant is impacting wetlands on the property to allow the expansion. A wetland replacement plan has been approved by Crow Wing County, who is the Local Governing Unit for the city regarding Wetland Conservation Act. The Notice of Decision approved the wetland replacement plan with conditions. Staff has added a condition to the resolution that the applicant comply with all conditions of the wetland replacement plan Notice of Decision with construction of the expansion.

The property is partially located in the shoreland overlay district for Perch Lake and is therefore, subject to the 25-percent impervious surface area coverage requirement. An impervious surface area coverage agreement was established with the original construction of the Essentia Clinic and the applicant has updated the agreement for the proposed expansion. The original agreement established that the entire essential property could be used for the impervious surface area calculation. Impervious Surface Area Coverage is typically established on a “per lot” basis. However, in this instance, Essentia owns a large outlot on the east side of Isle Drive, which is vacant for the purpose of shoreland open space. The preservation of this outlot contributes to the need for an agreement for the Essentia site. The agreement states that 78,824 ft² (1.81 acres) of impervious surface coverage is allowed for future construction within the “Shoreland Management Overlay District”. The current proposed impervious surface within this area, totaling 31,861 ft² (0.73 acres). Additionally, on a per lot basis, the impervious surface area coverage of Lot 1, is also less than the 25-percent impervious surface coverage maximum at 17.86 percent. Staff has added a condition to the approving resolution requiring the applicant to comply with any requirements from the DNR.

The property is partially located in a flood fringe on the FEMA, Floodplain map. The flood fringe designation was added to the property with the most recent updates to the FEMA maps for Crow Wing County. FEMA has previously established approval of the existing Low Floor Elevation for the building and for the addition. Additionally, the Floodplain ordinance establishes regulations for flood fringe areas. Staff has added a condition to the resolution requiring the applicant to comply with any requirements from FEMA.

Utility Commission Review

The Utility Commission reviewed the application on June 8, 2022, and recommend approval subject to the following:

1. Dedicate the standard drainage and utility easement on the final plat lot lines.

2. Enter into a Development Agreement with the City for the proposed municipal improvements and record against the plat prior to issuing a building permit.
3. Enter into a Stormwater Facilities Maintenance Agreement and record against the plat prior to issuing a building permit.
4. Provide a 20' Easement on the plat over all watermain, fire hydrants and valves.
5. Provide a 30' Easement on the plat over all 8" Sanitary Sewer mains and manholes.

Architectural Commission Review

The applicant has submitted an architectural review application. Staff has reviewed the application and finds that the request meets the City's requirements to allow an administrative review of the Architectural Application with the Building Permit.

3. Analysis of Request

Preliminary and Final Plat

Staff has reviewed the application for consistency with City Code requirements, as well as City policies.

The City's discretion in approving or denying a preliminary and final plat is limited to whether or not the proposed plat meets the standards outlined in the City Code. If it meets these standards, the City must approve the plat.

Although the request is to rezone the property to PUD, the OS, Office Service zoning district is the baseline district for the review of this PUD. The OS zoning district requires a minimum lot area of 20,000 square feet and a minimum lot width of 100 feet for interior lots. The plat includes a lot that would be 627,264 square feet and approximately 1,464 feet wide, which meets the minimum requirements.

Park Dedication

Staff notes that park dedication is required with the plat subject to the City's park dedication ordinance and fee schedule in place at the time the plat is recorded. Staff has added a condition requiring park dedication at the time the plat is recorded.

Traffic

A master traffic study was completed for prior to the extension of Isle Drive past the Essentia Property. The traffic system was designed and planned for this lot to be developed with an expanding Essentia Clinic. Staff finds that a traffic study re-evaluation is not required to allow the subject development on the property.

Right-of-Way

No right-of-way dedications are required with the subject plat.

Access

A new access would be from the west using a pre-planned curb cut on Isle Drive. The new westerly access would be located south of the primary access to the clinic. The new westerly access is designed to be a two-way access that complies with city requirements.

Rezoning to PUD and PUD General Plan

The City's PUD Ordinance states the following:

The purpose of the planned unit development district (PUD) is to provide a comprehensive procedure intended to allow greater flexibility in the development of neighborhoods or nonresidential areas than would be possible under a conventional zoning district. The decision to zone property to PUD is a public policy decision for the city council to make in its legislative capacity. The intent of this article is to:

- A. Provide for the establishment of planned unit development (PUD) zoning districts in appropriate settings and situations, to create or maintain a development pattern that complies with the city's comprehensive plan.
- B. Allow for the mixing of land uses within a development when such mixing of land uses could not otherwise be accomplished under this chapter.
- C. Provide for variations to the strict application of the land use regulations in this chapter in order to improve site design and operation, while at the same time incorporating design elements (e.g., construction materials, landscaping, lighting, etc.) that exceed the city's standards to offset the effect of any variations.
- D. Promote a more creative and efficient approach to land use within the city, while at the same time protecting and promoting the health, safety, comfort, aesthetics, economic viability, and general welfare of the city.
- E. Preserve and enhance natural features and open spaces.
- F. Maintain or improve the efficiency of public streets and utilities.
- G. Ensure the establishment of appropriate transitions between differing land uses.

Staff notes that site plan elements relate to the overall PUD proposal to determine if the above intent of the PUD has been achieved. Staff has reviewed the applicants plans related to the above standards and offers the following:

The Essential Health Baxter Clinic was developed under standard OS, Office Service zoning. However, with the continued expansions, the site is developing into facility that warrants evaluation as a PUD. Specifically, the unique size of the facility together with the many medical services provided warrants special consideration for the establishment of master sign plan beyond a typical property. The applicant is also proposing a pharmacy drive through, which is requested with the PUD.

Freestanding Signage

The zoning ordinance states that each property is allowed one free standing sign but that through lots (such as the Essentia lot) may receive approval for one sign along each road frontage. The applicant is requesting PUD flexibility to allow three freestanding signs on the subject site pursuant to the approved PUD plans. While the applicant is requesting the flexibility to allow three free standing signs, it is important to note that the total square footage of the three signs is 200-square feet, which is the square footage allowed in the city per property.

The Essential Health site in Baxter is a Multispecialty Outpatient Clinic Facility. With the addition, the building area will encompass nearly 110,000 square feet on a 22-acre development site. With a wide range of medical services offered including urgent care, the facility will have significant daily traffic activity and there will be people on site who are unfamiliar with the facility, which access to use, and which parking area is best for them to reach their destination. It is therefore, important that this particular facility have signage to direct motorists at the primary access locations. With the proposed expansion, there will be two primary access locations from Isle drive. The applicant is proposing a monument sign at each of the primary access locations. The signs will include directional signs with arrows for the various medical services to direct motorists entering the site for safety and efficiency reasons to reduce confusion and stress to their clients, and to reduce walking to front entrances for those with medical issues impacting their ability to walk long distances.

Under the proposed PUD master sign plan, the facility would have three free standing signs as follows:

- 1) One existing monument sign along the State Highway 371 street frontage. The sign is 140-square feet and 15 feet high.
- 2) One existing monument sign at the north primary access off of Isle Drive. This sign is 30-square feet and 10-foot 4-inches high.
- 3) One proposed new monument at the proposed new southwest access location off of Isle Drive. This sign would be 30-square feet and 10-foot 4-inches high, to match the existing monument sign on Isle Drive.

Staff has made the following findings regarding the requested PUD master sign plan:

- 1) The proposed signage would be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, as well as with the goals and intent of the PUD;
- 2) Essentia Health serves a large population that is typically less familiar with the site. The PUD signage plan would respond to the specific and changing needs of this development;
- 3) The PUD signage plan would assist patients, visitors, and delivery people in finding the most direct route to their destination; and
- 4) The number of signs and square footage of the signs proposed is reasonable due to the larger size of facility and due to the multispecialty outpatient medical services offered, including urgent care.

Drive Through

The Zoning Ordinance typically requires a conditional use permit to allow drive through facilities. In this instance, the applicant is proposing a pharmacy drive through to be approve on the north side of the site with the PUD approval. The zoning ordinance requires a minimum of five stacking spaces for a single-lane pharmacy use. The applicant is proposing a pharmacy lane with space for size stacking spaces. The pharmacy will serve as a pickup lane for prescriptions with a speaker and

delivery system, similar to a bank drive through. Staff finds that the intent of the ordinance has been met with the applicant's design and should not create any traffic issues. PUD flexibility is required to locate the drive through between the building and a public street frontage. Staff supports the granting of this flexibility, as the drive through would be located 255 feet from the front property line along Isle drive. The drive through be noticeable from this distance across an existing parking lot. Additionally, the closest neighboring use to the drive through would be the back of the Surgery Center Building, which is over 160 feet away.

Parking Lot Islands

The developer is proposing PUD flexibility to also some parking lot islands without overstory deciduous trees. Specifically, there are some parking lot islands that are being used as an ADA pedestrian route from the facility to the trail along Isle Drive. Two other islands have fire hydrants, and one island is a linear island with numerous ornamental trees for aesthetic reasons in front of the addition, in place of a typical island with one overstory tree.

Sidewalk and Trail Connectivity

The developer has proposed sidewalks throughout the development that would provide pedestrian connections throughout the parking lot and between the building and the public trail system. Staff finds that the number of sidewalks throughout the parking lot is a sizeable project upgrade to offset PUD flexibility requested.

Sidewalks

Staff notes that there are existing sidewalk and trail improvements in the immediate area surrounding the development. Staff notes that the developer is proposing sidewalk connectivity to the west to connect to the Costco storefront sidewalk, which in turn connects to the larger pedestrian system. Therefore, the development has proposed sidewalk connectivity in a strategic location to provide to provide non-motorized connectivity as part of the PUD design.

Landscaping

The developer is proposing to leave some native tree areas between the facility and Isle Drive. Additionally, the landscaping plan goes significantly beyond ordinance requirements relating to the number of trees and shrubs proposed for the site. Staff notes that these are project upgrades for the PUD.

Ordinance Compliance Table

As part of the PUD review of this application, staff has completed site plan review for the items listed in the table below. The items reviewed are from the zoning ordinance but are part considered part of the PUD review as follows:

	Ordinance Requirement	Proposed	Meets/Exceeds Requirements
Principal Structure Setbacks	35-foot front yard setback 10-foot side yard setback	>35 feet >10 feet	Yes Yes
Parking & Drive Aisle Setbacks	10-foot setback	10 feet	Yes
Parking	150 spaces for the addition	150 net spaces	Yes
Parking Stall Dimensions	10 feet by 20 or 10 feet by 18 feet w/ 2' overhang	10 feet by 20 feet	*Yes
Drive Aisle Dimensions	24 feet 2-way	24 feet	Yes
Parking Lot Sidewalks	Sidewalk Connections	Yes	Yes
Structural Coverage	50 percent	6.5 percent	Yes
Impervious Surface	25 percent (shoreland)	17.1 percent	Yes
Landscaping Number of Trees Size of Trees Priority Placement of Trees Number of Shrubs Size of Shrubs	41 trees 2.5-inch and 6 feet Front Yard Priority 98 shrubs 3 gallon	56 credited trees 2.5-inch and 6 feet front yard trees 422, 3-gallon shrubs and 386 1-gallon shrubs 3 gallon	Yes Yes Yes* Yes Yes
Screening	Screening of drive through headlights	Screening provided	Yes

*Discussed below.

Parking Stall Dimensions

For the parking stalls that face a parking lot sidewalk on both sides, staff has added a condition to the resolution that the applicant reduce the parking stall depth from 20 feet to 18 feet on each side and to add this additional four feet width to the sidewalks. This will allow the four feet to be used as bumper overhang, which will allow a free and clear sidewalk meeting ADA width standards, even with parking lot light poles added to these areas.

Priority Placement of Trees

Staff has added a condition to the approving resolution that some additional trees be planted in the priority placement area of the State Highway 371 frontage. While there will still be some existing mature trees and native trees on this frontage, staff notes that the view corridor to this site will be opened up significantly due to the construction of the expansion. Therefore, staff is requesting that additional trees be planted in this area to be reviewed and approved by City staff prior to the issuance of a building permit.

4. Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the Preliminary and Final plat, Rezoning and PUD General and Final Plan, subject to the Ordinance and conditions and findings in the attached resolutions.

Attachments

1. Draft Ordinance Approving the Rezoning
2. Draft resolution approving preliminary and final plat
3. Draft Resolution Approving the PUD General and Final Plan
4. Applicant's Narrative
5. Site Location Map
6. Site Graphics