



CITY COUNCIL MEETING

AGENDA SECTION	RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES
MEETING DATE	JULY 13, 2026

ITEM:	Consideration of Resolution 2026-042, a Conditional Use Permit for a Car Wash at 47 th and Central Ave		
Presenting Item: Ursula Brandt, City Planner			
DEPARTMENT: Community Development		BY/DATE: Ursula Brandt, City Planner, 7/8/2026	
CORE CITY STRATEGIES: (please indicate areas that apply by adding an "X" in front of the selected text below)			
☒ Community that Grows with Purpose and Equity		☐ Engaged, Effective and Forward-Thinking	
☐ High Quality Public Spaces		☐ Resilient and Prosperous Economy	
☐ Safe, Accessible and Built for Everyone		☐ Inclusive and Connected Community	

PLANNING CASE NUMBER: 2026-PZ06

APPLICANT: Kimley-Horn & Associates on behalf of Crew Car Wash

DEVELOPMENT: Crew Car Wash

LOCATION: 47th and Central Ave. Anticipated address of 4707 Central Ave. (PID: 25-30-24-32-0182)

REQUEST: Conditional Use Permit for Car Wash

BACKGROUND

In 2003 the subject property along with parcels to the north and east were rezoned to Mixed Use District, with the purpose to promote development and redevelopment by allowing the mix of at least two different uses and providing flexibility on bulk requirements. The site was previously occupied by a Kmart shopping Center. Also in 2003, the first site plan was reviewed and approved for a residential portion of the district resulting in the development of Grand Central Commons which consists of Grand Central Flats, Lofts and Townhomes.

In 2008, the Planning Commission reviewed and approved a commercial development consisting of office and commercial space, along with a parking ramp. In 2018, a Hy-Vee

convenience store/gas station was proposed and approved for the site. However, none of the approved site plans for the commercial portion of the mixed-use district have been developed.

CURRENT STATUS

The applicant met with the City in May of 2026 to review the requirements to locate a Car Wash on the subject property at the corner of 47th Avenue and Central Ave. Staff relayed the requirements, including the Public Hearing and the Sound Study to the applicant who submitted their proposal for the Crew Car Wash in June of 2026.

ZONING ORDINANCE

The Zoning Ordinance requires the Planning Commission to hold a Public Hearing on the application for the Conditional Use Permit and submit its recommendation to the City Council. The subject property is zoned MXD (Mixed-Use District) in a planned development that consisted of Grand Central Flats, Lofts and Townhomes. The subject property and the property to the north are the last undeveloped parcels in the Mixed-Use District. The Zoning Ordinance 9.112 specifies that Mixed-Use developments shall contain at least two of the following three land use categories: Residential Uses, Commercial Uses or Institutional Uses. The district currently only has residential uses in the forms of townhomes, condominiums and apartments. Therefore, the last undeveloped parcels must be either commercial or institutional uses. A car wash is a permitted, with a conditional use permit, commercial use in the Zoning Ordinance and is subject to Specific Development Standards 9.107(10) for a car wash. The proposed site plan, as conditioned, shall meet the following specific development standards:

- (a) Water from the Car Wash shall not drain across any sidewalk or into any public right-of-way;
- (b) Vacuum facilities shall be located in an enclosed structure or located at least 50 feet from any residential property line to avoid noise impacts.
- (c) The premises, all adjacent streets, sidewalks and alleys, and all sidewalks and alleys within 100 feet of the use shall be inspected regularly for the purpose of removing litter found thereon.
- (d) A sound study is required to determine the overall impact upon the surrounding properties and ensure compliance with performance standards and MPCA sound requirements.
- (e) All new car washes must be located on a minimum of one acre of land.

The proposed site plan shows 12 parking spaces and seven (7) stacking spaces in four (4) lanes for a total queue length of twenty-eight (28) total vehicles at the entrance. The proposed plans show all drainage will be handled on site, but it will be conditioned that there shall be no drainage across any sidewalk or into any public right-of-way. The vacuum facilities are located at a distance significantly above the required 50 ft away from residential property. As sound study was submitted and specifies multiple mitigation techniques that will be used to meet the MPCA sound requirements at all sound points (see Performance Standards). The lot is 1.2305 Acres which is above the required 1 acre.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan guides the subject site as "Commercial" as well as the area to the north and Residential (medium and high density respectively) to the east and south. The

City of Hilltop lies to the west. A Conditional Use Permit to allow for a Car Wash is consistent with the goals and intent of the Comprehensive Plan.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REVIEW

Findings of Fact

- a) The use is one of the conditional uses listed for the zoning district in which the property is located, or is a substantially similar use as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
This is correct. A Car Wash is a permitted, with a conditional use permit, commercial use in the Mixed Use District as code states 9.112 (D)(2) "All permitted, conditional, and permitted accessory commercial uses identified in 9.110, Commercial Districts, which are consistent with the comprehensive plan shall be treated as potentially allowable uses withing the Mixed Use District".
- b) The use is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the comprehensive plan.
The City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan guides the subject site as "Commercial" as well as the area to the north and Residential (medium and high density respectively) to the east and south. The City of Hilltop lies to the west. A Conditional Use Permit to allow for a Car Wash is consistent with the goals and intent of the Comprehensive Plan.
- c) The use will not impose hazards or disturbing influences on neighboring properties.
As conditioned, the proposed use will not impose hazards or disturbing influences on neighboring properties as it has addressed sound, stormwater and traffic concerns.
- d) The use will not substantially diminish the use of property in the immediate vicinity.
The site is located on a main throughfare with other commercial uses and multifamily residential. As conditioned, the proposed use is not expected to negatively impact properties in the immediate vicinity.
- e) The use will be designed, constructed, operated and maintained in a manner that is compatible with the appearance of the existing or intended character of the surrounding area.
The proposed car wash is located within the Highway District as designated in the City's Design Guidelines. As conditioned, the proposed use and site plan will be designed, constructed, operated and maintained in compliance with the design guidelines and therefore the intended character of the surrounding area.
- f) The use and property upon which the use is located are adequately served by essential public facilities and services.
The proposed property is surrounded by fully developed parcels allowing for adequate access to public utilities along with police and fire services. As conditioned the site will have adequate grading and stormwater management on-site.
- g) Adequate measures have been or will be taken to minimize traffic congestion on the public streets and to provide for appropriate on-site circulation of traffic.

The proposed site design includes 4 lanes of 7 stacking spaces which holds 28 spaces for vehicles waiting to enter the car wash, while the requirement is only 4 stacking spaces. This is an abundance of off-street stacking spaces that will ease the congestion on the street for those entering the space. There is a two-lane drive aisle that leads to and from the vacuums allowing for adequate flow within the site.

- h) The use will not cause a negative cumulative effect, when considered in conjunction with the cumulative effect of other uses in the immediate vicinity.
As conditioned, the proposed car wash use is not expected to have a negative impact on the immediate vicinity as sound, traffic and stormwater have considered and mitigated where applicable.
- i) The use complies with all other applicable regulations for the district in which it is located.
In review of all the application materials and the proposed use being located within a Mixed Use District, which allows for flexibility, it has been determined the proposed use meets all applicable regulations for the district including the Zoning Ordinance and Design Guidelines.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On July 7, 2026 the Planning Commission held the required Public Hearing. No public comments were received before the public hearing, however three members of the public attended public hearing and expressed concern over the following:

1. Consistent landscape design throughout the residential and commercial development along Grand Ave.
2. Lighting impacts of the new proposed car wash as well as existing lighting in the commercial district.
3. Property Maintenance on the proposed site as well as in the existing commercial district.
4. Traffic impacts along Grand Ave and 47th St due to the extensive use of street parking along the road.

Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Resolution 2026-042 in a 5-1 vote.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the Conditional Use Permit for a Car Wash located at 4707 Central Ave NE.

1. The Conditional Use Permit shall be subject to and comply with all conditions contained within the currently approved site plan and any future site plan approvals or amendments approved by the City.
2. The applicant shall submit a building permit application for review and approval prior to construction.

3. Post-construction sound testing is required to demonstrate compliance with the recommendations made in the Sound Study and ensure that the wall meets the MPCA standards for noise.
4. All other applicable local, state, and federal requirements shall be met at all times.
5. Construction must start within one year or the Conditional Use Permit will be considered null.

RECOMMENDED MOTION(S):

MOTION: Move to waive the readings of Resolution No. 2026-042, there being ample copies available to the public.

MOTION: Move to approve Resolution No. 2026-042, a Conditional Use Permit allowing a Car Wash at the anticipated address of 4707 Central Ave NE, Columbia Heights, MN 55421, subject to the conditions stated in the resolution.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Narrative
2. Resolution 2026-PZ02
3. Civic and Landscape Plans
4. Lighting Plan
5. Elevations
6. Sound Study
7. Public Notice with Mailing List
8. Affidavit of Public Notice in the Paper