



PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

To: Planning Commission Members
From: Liz Fields, AICP, Planner
Meeting Date: September 10, 2025

PC 25-17 **Major Site Plan – Interstate Utility Trailer**

Property Information: Location: Parcels 0420101014 and 0420201002 (0 Commerce Center Drive)
Zoning: I-1 “Light Industrial District”
Proposed Use: Large Equipment and Truck Retail, Rental, and Repair
Current Use: Undeveloped
Property Size: 17.68 Acres
Proposed Building Size: 53,241 sq. ft.
Proposed # of Parking Spaces: 61 spaces
Proposed # of Trailer Parking Spaces: 210

Project Overview: The applicant, Cincinnati Commercial Contracting c/o Christian Stone, is requesting approval of a major site plan for the construction of a large equipment and truck retail, rental, and repair facility on an undeveloped property on Commerce Center Drive. The proposed use will include a new 53,241 sq. ft. Interstate Utility Trailer building and 210 trailer parking spaces.

Comments: Site Plan: The proposed development includes the construction of a building that will house 16 service bays, a retail parts showroom, parts storage warehouse, and supporting office spaces, as well as parking spaces for both employees and trailers. The building is proposed to be located in the middle of the property and includes a customer entrance facing Commerce Center Drive and eight service bay doors along the northern and southern elevations. It should be noted that these service bays will not be visible from Commerce

Center Drive. In total, 61 parking spaces, three of which are accessible, are provided and will be predominantly located in front of the building. Outside of the building and employee/customer parking, the majority of the site is dedicated to the 210 trailer parking spaces, which are proposed to be located to the north, east, and south of the building. Access to the development will be provided via two driveways extending along Commerce Center Drive. An eight-foot black vinyl-coated chain-link fence is proposed along the perimeter of the trailer parking area and will extend into the front yard, between Commerce Center Drive and the front of the building. As the maximum height for a fence in the front yard is four feet (Section 1107.11(j)(2)(A)(i)(1)) and the maximum height for a fence in the rear yard is six feet (Section 1107.11(j)(2)(A)(ii)) a variance is required. The applicant has noted that they will seek a variance for the height of the proposed chain-link fence.

Landscape Plan:

Overall: The landscape plan proposes approximately 308 plantings, which include deciduous trees, evergreen trees, shrubs, perennials, and ornamental grasses. The plantings are proposed to be located along the perimeter of the development and along the perimeter of the building and employee/customer parking lot.

Perimeter Lot Landscaping: Based on Table 1111.06-2, the appropriate buffer yard classification for this property would be “A” which requires a buffer yard of 15 feet as well as two deciduous trees and two evergreen trees per every 100 linear feet of buffer yard.

The north property line is 1,150 linear feet, which would require 23 deciduous and 23 evergreen trees. According to the landscaping plan, the wooded area along the north property line is to remain, which would meet this requirement by completely screening the use from the property to the north, but the applicant is also proposing additional screening in the form of 10 deciduous and four evergreen trees.

The east property line is adjacent to I-75 and is not required to include a buffer yard. However, the applicant is proposing to retain some of the existing wooded areas along the northern portion of the east property line and plant seven deciduous trees and five evergreen trees along the southern portion of the east property line.

The south property line is 870 linear feet, which would require 18 deciduous and 18 evergreen trees. According to the landscaping plan, the wooded area along the western portion of the property line is to remain and is proposed to be supplemented through the planting of six deciduous and 14 evergreen trees.

Screening of Trash Container Receptacles: Section 1111.06(i) requires that trash container receptacles are located in the side or rear yard and are enclosed with a fence or wall between six and 10 feet in height. The proposed dumpster enclosure is located in the rear yard and is proposed to be enclosed by an eight-foot black vinyl-coated chain-link fence with vinyl inserts, which meets the requirement.

Interior Parking Area Landscaping: Section 1111.06(j)(2) requires landscaping within parking areas for lots between 16,000 to 29,999 square feet in the form of a landscaped area that is equal to five percent of the parking area. The applicant has provided that for the west parking lot (employee/customer lot) that is 21,004 square feet, which would require a landscaped area of 1,050 square feet. This requirement is met as 1,649 square feet of landscape is proposed.

Section 1111.06(j)(3) additionally requires one deciduous tree for every 3,000 square feet of parking area or for every 10 parking spaces. With a total of 61 parking spaces being proposed, six deciduous trees would be required. This requirement is met with six deciduous trees planted within landscaping islands in the employee/customer parking lot.

While the landscaping requirement for the west parking lot has been met, the applicant is requesting a waiver from Section 1111.06(j)(2) for the parking areas for the trailers. The applicant states that the inclusion of interior landscaping islands within the trailer parking area will add obstacles to the parking and maneuvering of the 53-foot trailers and proposes that landscaping is provided along the edge of the pavement to provide screening.

Lot Interior Landscaping: Section 1111.06(k)(1) requires three deciduous trees for each 100 feet of building perimeter. With a total building perimeter of 1,028 square feet, 31 deciduous trees are required. This requirement is met with 31 deciduous trees proposed along the front of the southern trailer parking area, near the building, and in front of the employee/customer parking lot.

Building Foundation Plantings: Section 1111.06(k)(2) requires building foundation planting in the form of 10 shrubs per every 100 feet of building perimeter. With a total building perimeter of 1,028 linear feet, 103 shrubs are required. The requirement is met with 103 shrubs proposed along the building foundation.

Parking:

Parking Spaces: a total of 61 parking spaces are proposed for the development which meets the requirement of Table 1111.07-5.

Loading Spaces: Table 1111.0-7: Commercial and Industrial Buildings require buildings equal to or greater than 30,000 square feet to include one Type A and Type B loading space. One Type A loading space and one Type B loading space are provided.

Building Elevation and Design:

Overall: The proposed building is a total of 53,241 square feet with a maximum height of approximately 30 feet.

Tripartite Configuration: Both sections of the building meet the tripartite configuration requirement of Section 1115.08(h)(3)(A).

The office portion of the building is proposed to have a 10-foot foundation of cast stone veneer and EIFS above that to the roof line. The front wall of the building is proposed to contain a parapet extending above the roof line with a total height of 21 feet and six inches above the ground. The roof is proposed to be a standing seam, metal panel system with a galvanized finish.

The service portion of the building is proposed to have a 10-foot foundation of split face CMU and prefinished white metal wall panels. The top four feet of the walls will have an opaque, translucent wall panel installed to allow for natural light into the facility. The roof is proposed to be a standing seam, metal panel system with a galvanized finish.

Building Articulation: Section 1115.08(h)(3)(B) requires that all building elevations be articulated in a manner to avoid an uninterrupted appearance through the use of windows, doors, offsets, or a change in materials. Based on the submitted elevations, this requirement is met through the use of color, windows, changes in materials, and doors.

Building Materials: The following materials are utilized throughout the entire building: cast stone, EIFS, pre-finished metal wall panels, split-face CMU, glass in aluminum-framed windows and overhead doors, and a standing seam metal roof. While Section 1115.08(h)(3)(D) limits the use of permitted building materials to no less than three and no more than four, the applicant has indicated that more than four materials are used throughout the entire building. The material breakdown between the office and service portions of the building is as follows:

The office portion of the building consists of cast stone, EIFS, glass, a limited amount of pre-finished metal architectural wall panels at the entry feature, and a standing seam metal roof.

The service portion of the building consist of split face CMU, prefinished metal wall panels (ShadowWall and TextureWall), translucent wall panels, and a standing seam metal roof.

As the development is proposing to utilize materials that are not permitted in Section 1115.08(h)(C) (metal wall panels), the applicant is requesting a waiver from the exterior façade design standards pursuant to Section 1115.08(h)(2)(A) of the UDO. The applicant notes in their waiver request that the metal wall panels that are proposed on building elevations facing Commerce Center Drive and I-75 (TextureWall) are commonly utilized in churches and other corporate facilities. The proposed texture wall does not have the clear appearance of a metal siding. Regarding the elevations on the sides of the service area, the applicant is proposing to use ShadowWall metal panels which are noted to be sturdier. While these panels have the appearance of traditional metal wall panels, these elevations will not be visible from Commerce Center Drive or I-75.

Lighting: The applicant is proposing 37 lighting fixtures ranging in mounting height from 18 feet to 24 feet. Each fixture contains a full cut-off lighting fixture. The submitted photometric plan indicates that the maximum illumination level at the property line is consistent with the requirements of Table 1111.07-4.

Signs: The applicant has not included a sign package, but the architectural drawings indicate that three wall signs, a ground sign, and a pole sign are proposed. These signs will require the submittal and review of a Sign Permit at a later date.

Major Site Plan Standards for Approval

Major Site Plans shall only be approved if Planning Commission finds that all of the following standards are met:

- 1) That it fully complies with all applicable requirements of this UDO;
The proposed major site plan largely conforms with the requirements of the UDO. Waivers and modifications are recommended for those aspects of the development which do not meet the standards of the UDO, and a variance will be applied for.
- 2) That it adequately protects other property or residential uses located on the same property from the potential effects of a non-residential use;
The development adequately protects other property from the potential effects of a non-residential use.

- 3) That it is not detrimental to the use and character of the surrounding properties;
The proposed development is not detrimental to the use and character of the surrounding properties.
- 4) That it provides safe conditions for pedestrians or motorists and prevents the dangerous arrangement of pedestrian and vehicular ways;
and
The proposed development provides safe conditions and prevents the dangerous arrangement of pedestrian and vehicular ways.
- 5) That is provides safe ingress and egress for emergency vehicles.
The proposed development provides safe ingress and egress for emergency vehicles.

Considerations:

Should the Planning Commission approve the proposed Major Site Plan, staff recommends the following conditions be considered:

- 1) The applicant shall comply with the comments from the City of Franklin Engineer.
 - 2) The applicant shall apply for and receive a variance from Sections 1107.11(j)(2)(A)(i)(1) and 1107.11(j)(2)(A)(ii) regarding the height of the proposed chain-link fence.
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