



MEMORANDUM

Date: May 14th, 2025
To: City of Madison Heights Planning Commission
From: Matt Lonnerstater, AICP – City Planner
Subject: Special Approval Request PSP 25-02– 436 E. 14 Mile Rd. – Major Auto Repair and Service

TEMPLATE MOTION AND FINDINGS INCLUDED ON PAGE 8

Introduction

The applicant, Joseph Gorial, requests Special Land Use approval from the Planning Commission and City Council under **Section 15.05** of the Madison Heights Zoning Ordinance to operate a Major Auto Repair and Service use at 436 E. 14 Mile Road, zoned M-1, Light Industrial; tax parcel # 44-25-01-102-024. The property is located on the south side of 14 Mile Road, east of Townley Street.

Project Details

The subject property is 0.5 acres in size in size and is currently improved with a 3,840 square-foot light industrial building, concrete and asphalt parking lot, and an outdoor storage area at the rear of the building enclosed by an eight-foot tall masonry wall and covered with a steel canopy. The building and site most recently operated as a used auto sales business. Per the project narrative and concept plan, the applicant intends to repurpose the building and site into a collision repair shop, which is classified as “Major Auto Repair” in the Zoning Ordinance and requires Special Land Use approval in the M-1 zoning district. The applicant indicates hours of operation between 9 am and 6 pm and 3 to 5 total employees. A new exterior paint booth is depicted at the rear of the building, but no other significant site modifications are proposed.

436 E. 14 Mile Rd. – Aerial Image – Existing Conditions (Red Dashed Line)



Streetview from E. 14 Mile Road



**Note: The asphalt area in front of the building has been recently re-sodded.*

Site and Use History

Historic aerial imagery shows that the principal building was constructed prior to 1963 with a rear addition constructed sometime between 1974 and 1980. City records indicate automotive repair and services uses on the property dating back to at least 1984. Various Special Land Use approvals and site improvements have been made on the property throughout the years, summarized below (not an exhaustive list):

- 1984: Operated as “Oakland Auto Reconditioning” with a quick print and copying shop at the rear.
- 1990: Special Approval granted for an auto brake shop.
- 1999: Special Approval granted for minor auto repair.
- 2011: A steel canopy is approved and constructed over outdoor storage area at rear of site.
- 2015: Special Approval granted for used auto sales in addition to existing auto repair.
- 2017: The property is combined with vacant parcel to the east; parking lot is expanded; new Special Approval granted for used auto sales on expanded parking lot.
- 2020: Per Google Streetview images, the site primarily operates as a used car sales lot.

Use-Specific Standards for Auto Repair and Service Facilities (Minor and Major)

Major Auto Repair and Service Facilities, including those that offer collision and body work and body painting, require Special Land Use approval in the M-1, Light Industrial district. These facilities are also subject to the use-specific zoning standards set forth in **Section 7.03.2**; the full list of standards is attached to this report. The applicant has provided a conceptual site plan and a copy of the existing floor plan. With the exception of a new exterior paint booth at the rear of the site, no site modifications are proposed. Staff finds that the conceptual site plan and floor plan do not contain enough detail to ensure compliance with the use-specific standards. For example:

- **Location Repair and Servicing:** *All repair and servicing operations shall be conducted entirely within an enclosed building. All equipment used in the servicing and repair of vehicles shall be located within an enclosed building.*

Comment: The floor plan does not contain information regarding the number of hoists or service bays within the building. Additionally, a new 350 sq. ft. exterior paint booth is proposed at the rear of the building, but details and specifications of the booth have not been provided.

- **Outside Storage Prohibited:** *Outside storage or parking of disabled, wrecked, inoperable, or partially dismantled vehicles shall not be permitted with the exception of those areas specifically designated for said purpose on an approved site plan. Such areas shall be screened in accordance with Section 8.03(6) (Accessory Outdoor Storage). Outdoor storage of materials, such as tires, barrels, or other materials used or sold on the premises, shall not be permitted with the exception of those areas specifically designated for said purpose on an approved site plan. Such areas shall be screened in accordance with Section 8.03(6) (Accessory Outdoor Storage).*

Comment: The conceptual site plan does not differentiate between areas used for customer/employee parking versus those used to park vehicles awaiting repair. Additionally, while it assumed that outdoor equipment/material storage will take place under the canopy area, this is not reflected nor confirmed on the site plan.

Staff recommends that the applicant revise the conceptual site plan and floor plan to address these concerns which will allow Planning Commission and City Council to properly review and take action on the Special Land Use request. Should the Planning Commission move to recommend approval of the Special Land use, staff advises that the use-specific standards of Section 7.03.2 be incorporated as a condition of approval.

Site Analysis

Existing Zoning and Land Use

The table below denotes existing adjacent land uses and zoning designations.

	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning
Site	Vacant (previous auto sales and repair)	M-1, Light Industrial
North (across 14 Mile Rd.)	Commercial Strip Center (Troy)	CB, Community Business (Troy)
South	Industrial/Manufacturing	M-1, Light Industrial
East	Vacant Building	M-1, Light Industrial
West	Industrial/Manufacturing	M-1, Light Industrial

The site is surrounded by light industrial zoning and land uses located on the south side of E. 14 Mile Road. Per the Madison Heights Zoning Ordinance, the M-1 zoning district is “*designed so as to primarily accommodate wholesale activities, warehouses, and industrial operations whose external, physical effects are restricted to the area of the district and in no manner affects in a detrimental way any of the surrounding districts.*”

Uses permitted by right in the M-1 district primarily consist of light industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, wholesale, distribution, and research facilities. However, commercial uses such as auto sales, restaurants, financial institutions, business schools, and tool and equipment sales are also permitted by right. The full list of permitted uses is attached to this report. There are several existing auto repair facilities located within close proximity to the subject site, including Interstate Auto Care and Golling Kia, both located on E. 14 Mile Road.

Future Land Use and Master Plan

The table below denotes adjacent future land use designations as contained within the 2021 Madison Heights Master Plan.

	Future Land Use
Site	Industrial
North (across 14 Mile)	“South John R Road” (Troy) (Mixed-Use Commercial)
South	Industrial
East	Industrial
West	Industrial

The future land use designation of the subject site is *Industrial*. Per the Master Plan, the Industrial designation is intended to accommodate manufacturing, processing, warehousing, storage of raw materials and intermediate and finished products, industrial service providers, industrial parks, and industrial research activities. The Master Plan/Future Land Use Plan does not break down the Industrial designation into different levels or intensities of industrial uses.

The Planning Commission should consider the following Goals & Objectives of the 2021 Madison Heights Master Plan as part of this Special Approval request:

Community Character

- *Enhance the city’s commercial corridors to support walkability and improve community identity.*
- *Promote the city’s positive identity in the region.*
- *Promote the use of quality building design and materials to enhance the appearance and long-term maintenance of new development.*
- *Protect established neighborhoods and business districts from the potentially negative impacts of development, including noise, traffic, waste, odor, and other nuisances through effective and thoughtful site and building design.*

Commercial & Industrial Development

- *Promote incentives and flexible zoning mechanisms for commercial and industrial property owners and tenants to upgrade existing commercial and industrial sites.*
- *Promote the mix of commercial, office, and industrial uses in a way that fosters collaboration and business growth while creating a desirable environment for the local workforce.*
- *Promote walkability by ensuring sufficient local destinations for goods and services.*

Transportation

14 Mile Road is under the jurisdiction of Road Commission of Oakland County (RCOC) and is classified as a principal arterial road, which is intended to carry long-distance, through-travel movements. Per SEMCOG, this portion of 14 Mile Road handles an average volume of approximately 27,000 vehicles per day.

Special Land Use Criteria

Requests for Special Land Use approval are subject to processes and review standards contained in Section 15.05. A public hearing is required in front of the Planning Commission, after which the Planning Commission may make a recommendation to City Council. After receiving a recommendation from the Planning Commission, City Council has the authority to take final action on Special Land Use requests.

In making a recommendation to City Council, the Planning Commission shall consider the Special Land Use review standards contained in Section 15.05.3 and incorporate them into any motion of approval or denial:

- A. The use is so designed, located and proposed to be operated in a way that protects the public health, safety and welfare.
- B. The use is designed in a way that considers the natural environment and helps conserve natural resources and energy.
- C. The special land use will not involve uses, activities, processes, materials, and equipment or conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any person, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare or odors.
- D. The use shall be designed and located so that it is compatible with the surrounding properties, neighborhood, and vicinity. At a minimum, this shall include:
 - (1) Location of use(s) on site;
 - (2) Height of all improvements and structures;
 - (3) Adjacent conforming land uses;
 - (4) Conformance with the Master Plan and future land use map for the area as adopted by the Planning Commission;
 - (5) Compatibility with the permitted principal uses allowed in the zoning district where the Special Land Use is requested, and consistency with the intent of the zoning district.
- E. Ingress/egress to the use shall be controlled to assure maximum vehicular, pedestrian and non-motorized safety, convenience and minimum traffic impact on adjacent roads, drives and uses including, but not limited to:
 - (1) Reduction in the number of ingress/egress points through elimination, minimization, and/or consolidation of drives and/or curb cuts;
 - (2) Proximity and relation to intersections, specifically with regard to distance from drive(s) to intersection(s);
 - (3) Reduction/elimination of pedestrian/vehicular traffic conflicts;
 - (4) Adequacy of sight distances;
 - (5) Location and access of off-street parking;
 - (6) Location and/or potential use of service drives to access multiple parcels, reducing the number of access points necessary to serve the parcels.
- F. The use is consistent with the intent and purpose of the zoning district in which it is proposed.

In granting Special Land Use approval, City Council may impose conditions that it deems necessary to fulfill the spirit and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance. The conditions may include those necessary to ensure that public services and facilities affected by a proposed land use or activity will be capable of

accommodating increased service and facility loads caused by the land use or activity, to protect the natural environment and conserve natural resources and energy, to ensure compatibility with adjacent uses of land, and to promote the use of land in a socially and economically desirable manner.

Staff Analysis and Concept Plan Review

In deliberating the proposed Special Land Use, staff believes that the Planning Commission should focus on the compatibility of the proposed auto repair use with the use-specific criteria and general site requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, the intent of the M-1, Light Industrial zoning district, the uses permitted within the district, existing adjacent land uses, and the goals and objectives of the Industrial future land use designation. While vehicle repair is sometimes classified as more of a commercial use than industrial for zoning purposes, the external impacts of auto repair (e.g. noise, storage, fumes, etc.) do have similarities to other industrial uses permitted by right.

Staff has the following concerns pertaining to the Special Land Use request:

Building Setbacks

The applicant proposes a new 375 sq. ft. exterior paint booth at the rear of the building. Details and specifications of the paint booth have not been provided. As the paint booth would be attached to the rear of the building, it would be considered an expansion of the principal building and therefore subject to the setback requirements of the M-1 district. Per Section 4.02 of the Zoning Ordinance, the M-1 district requires a minimum side yard setback of 20 feet and a minimum rear yard setback of 25 feet. The site plan depicts the paint booth having a side yard setback of approximately 10 feet and a rear yard setback of approximately 9 feet, failing to meet Zoning Ordinance standards. The applicant will either need to modify the location of the paint booth to meet ordinance standards or seek a dimensional setback variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).

Landscaping

In order to offset some of the external impacts of auto repair use, such as the parking of vehicles in disrepair and the sight of vehicles being repaired within the bay doors, extra consideration should be given to landscaping adjacent to the right of way. As shown in the Streetview image on page 2 of this report, while there are sodded areas on the site directly adjacent to 14 Mile, there is no existing landscape screening along the frontage of the property. The site should be brought into conformance with the Frontage Landscaping requirements contained in Section 11.05. Administrative waivers may be accommodated to comply with DTE pruning requirements for the nearby overhead wires.

Parking

21 parking spaces are provided on site. Per Section 10.03 of the Zoning Ordinance, minimum parking requirements for auto repair uses are based upon usable floor area and the total number of service bays. Because a detailed floor plan has not been provided showing the number of service bays/hoists, staff cannot adequately determine the minimum parking requirement. Additionally, staff notes that the designated ADA parking space does not meet the minimum dimensional requirements for a van-accessible space and appears to be protruding out into the drive aisle; these will need to be addressed on a revised site plan.

Use-Specific Standards

Staff does not believe that the conceptual site plan and floor plan provide enough detail to analyze the proposed use based on the use-specific standards for Major Auto Repair contained in Section 7.03.2. The floor plan does not contain information regarding the number of hoists or service bays within the building. Additionally, details and specifications of the paint booth have not been provided. The conceptual site

plan does not differentiate between areas used for customer/employee parking versus those used to park vehicles awaiting repair. Further, while it assumed that outdoor equipment/material storage will take place under the canopy area, this is not reflected on the site plan.

Per Section 15.05, the Planning Commission may postpone action on a Special Land Use request to allow verification, compilation, or submission of additional or supplemental information or to address other concerns or issues. Based on the issues listed above, staff believes that postponement to the next Planning Commission meeting may be warranted to allow the applicant to revise plans and documents, as needed.

Should the Planning Commission move to recommend approval of the Special Land Use to City Council, staff suggests that the following conditions be incorporated as conditions of approval:

1. A Minor Site Plan shall be submitted to the Community and Economic Development Department in accordance with Section 15.04 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Minor Site Plan, when submitted, shall be designed to satisfy the following:
 - a. The site shall meet the minimum Frontage Landscaping requirements contained in Section 11.05. Administrative waivers may be accommodated to comply with DTE pruning requirements for the nearby overhead wires.
 - b. The location of the proposed exterior paint booth shall satisfy minimum M-1 principal building setback requirements contained in Section 4.02. Alternatively, the applicant shall seek a dimensional setback variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).
 - c. The site plan shall denote locations for customer/employee parking, parking for vehicles awaiting repair, and any outdoor storage, if proposed.
 - d. The designated ADA parking space/aisle shall be increased to a width of 16 feet in accordance with ADA standards and shall be shifted out of the drive aisle.
 - e. A detailed floor plan shall be provided which denotes the number of hoists or service bays within the building.
2. The Minor Site Plan and use shall satisfy the use-specific standards for auto repair and service facilities contained in Section 7.03.2 and attached to the staff report. The use-specific operating conditions shall be listed on the final Certificate of Occupancy.

Next Step

After the public hearing and discussion, the Planning Commission may take action on the requested Special Land Use in the form of a recommendation to City Council. Any motion shall include concise findings based upon the Special Approval review standards and criteria, Section 15.03.3. Per Section 15.05, the Planning Commission alternatively may postpone action on a Special Land Use request to allow verification, compilation, or submission of additional or supplemental information or to address other concerns or issues.

Template motions for postponement and approval is provided on the following page.

Attachments

- **Special Land Use Application - PSP #25-02**
- **Concept Site Plan and Floor Plan– PSP #25-02**
- **Associated Maps**
- **Section 3.17 – M-1, Light Industrial District**
- **Section 7.03.2 – Use-Specific Standards for Auto Repair and Service Facilities**
- **Section 15.05 – Special Land Use Review**

Template Motion, Findings and Conditions

Staff offers the following motions as a suggested template and guide for the Planning Commission's consideration. The Planning Commission may provide additional detailed findings, as needed, to substantiate any motion for approval or denial.

POSTPONEMENT

MOTION BY _____, SECONDED BY _____, THAT, FOLLOWING THE REQUIRED PUBLIC HEARING, THE PLANNING COMMISSION **POSTPONES ACTION** ON SPECIAL LAND USE REQUEST NUMBER PSP 25-02 FOR A MAJOR AUTO REPAIR AND SERVICE FACILITY AT 436 E. 14 MILE ROAD UNTIL THE JUNE 17TH, 2025 MEETING. THIS POSTPONEMENT IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 15.05 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE TO ALLOW THE APPLICANT TO RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AS OUTLINED BY STAFF:

1. The site shall meet the minimum Frontage Landscaping requirements contained in Section 11.05. Administrative waivers may be accommodated to comply with DTE pruning requirements for the nearby overhead wires.
2. The location of the proposed exterior paint booth shall satisfy minimum M-1 principal building setback requirements contained in Section 4.02. Alternatively, the applicant shall seek a dimensional setback variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).
3. The site plan shall denote locations for customer/employee parking, parking for vehicles awaiting repair, and any outdoor storage, if proposed.
4. The designated ADA parking space/aisle shall be increased to a width of 16 feet in accordance with ADA standards and shall be shifted out of the drive aisle.
5. A detailed floor plan shall be provided which denotes the number of hoists or service bays within the building.

APPROVAL

MOTION BY _____, SECONDED BY _____, THAT, FOLLOWING THE REQUIRED PUBLIC HEARING, THE PLANNING COMMISSION HEREBY **RECOMMENDS THAT CITY COUNCIL APPROVE** SPECIAL LAND USE REQUEST NUMBER PSP 25-02 FOR A MAJOR AUTO REPAIR AND SERVICE FACILITY AT 436 E. 14 MILE ROAD BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS:

1. The applicant requests Special Land Use approval for a Major Auto Repair and Service facility at 436 E. 14 Mile Road as permitted by Section 3.17 of the Zoning Ordinance, *M-1 Light Industrial District*
2. The Planning Commission held a public hearing for PSP 25-02 at their May 20th, 2025 meeting.
3. The proposed Major Auto Repair and Service use is consistent with the special land use review standards and criteria set forth in Section 15.05.3. In particular:
 - a. The use is designed, located, and proposed to be operated in a way that protects the public health, safety and welfare.
 - b. The use will not involve activities that will be detrimental to adjacent industrial land uses.

- c. The use is designed and located so that it is compatible with the principal uses permitted in the M-1, Light Industrial district.
 - d. The use is designed and located so that it is compatible with the Madison Heights Master Plan and the Industrial future land use designation.
- 4. With modifications required as conditions of approval, the use satisfies the use-specific standards for Major Auto Repair and Service facilities as contained in 7.03.2 of the Madison Heights Zoning Ordinance and is in general compliance with site design standards contained within the Zoning Ordinance.

APPROVAL IS GRANTED WITH THE **FOLLOWING CONDITIONS**

- 1. A Minor Site Plan shall be submitted to the Community and Economic Development Department in accordance with Section 15.04 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Minor Site Plan, when submitted, shall be designed to satisfy the following:
 - a. The site shall meet the minimum Frontage Landscaping requirements contained in Section 11.05. Administrative waivers may be accommodated to comply with DTE pruning requirements for the nearby overhead wires.
 - b. The location of the proposed exterior paint booth shall satisfy minimum M-1 principal building setback requirements contained in Section 4.02. Alternatively, the applicant shall seek a dimensional setback variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA).
 - c. The site plan shall denote locations for customer/employee parking, parking for vehicles awaiting repair, and any outdoor storage, if proposed.
 - d. The designated ADA parking space/aisle shall be increased to a width of 16 feet in accordance with ADA standards and shall be shifted out of the drive aisle.
 - e. A detailed floor plan shall be provided which denotes the number of hoists or service bays within the building.
- 2. The Minor Site Plan and use shall satisfy the use-specific standards for auto repair and service facilities contained in Section 7.03.2 and attached to the staff report. The use-specific operating conditions shall be listed on the final Certificate of Occupancy.