



MEMORANDUM

Date: June 1st, 2026
To: City of Madison Heights City Council (June 8th, 2026 Meeting)
From: Matt Lonnerstater, AICP – City Planner
Subject: Special Land Use Request PSP 26-03– 32525 Stephenson Hwy. – Minor Auto Service (Electronic Equipment Sales and Installation)

TEMPLATE MOTION AND FINDINGS INCLUDED ON PAGE 9

Introduction

The applicant, Jacob Kaufer, 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 Minor Auto Service use at 32525 Stephenson Highway, zoned M-1, Light Industrial; tax parcel # 44-25-02-101-030. The property is located on the west side of Stephenson Highway, south of 14 Mile Road. The applicant proposes to utilize portions of the existing building for vehicle audio and security equipment installation with ancillary office and sales space.

Planning Commission Action and Findings.

Per the Zoning Ordinance adopted in 2024, Special Land Use requests begin at the Planning Commission for a public hearing, with a recommendation made to Cit Council for final action. A public hearing was held at the May 18th, 2026 Planning Commission meeting. No members of the public spoke regarding the application. Following the public hearing, the Planning Commission approved the following motion pertaining to the proposed Special Land Use request:

MOTION BY FOX, SECONDED BY MAYOR HAINES, THAT, FOLLOWING THE REQUIRED PUBLIC HEARING, THE PLANNING COMMISSION **HEREBY RECOMMENDS THAT CITY COUNCIL APPROVE** SPECIAL LAND USE REQUEST NUMBER PSP 26-03 FOR MINOR AUTO SERVICE AT 32525 STEPHENSON HIGHWAY BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS:

1. The applicant requests Special Land Use approval for a Minor Auto Service facility at 32525 Stephenson Highway 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 26-03 at their May 18th, 2026 meeting.
3. The proposed Minor Auto 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.
1. With conditions of approval, the use satisfies the use-specific standards for Minor 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. Special Land Use approval is limited to automobile-related electronic system sales and installation including but not limited to audio, GPS, remote start, and security equipment. Motor vehicle repair such as that related to engines, brakes, wheels, collision-related work, etc., is not permitted through this Special Land Use approval.
2. All trash and discarded equipment shall be disposed of either within the building or in dumpsters fully contained within the freestanding enclosure.
3. A shared dumpster easement agreement shall be recorded for use of the dumpster on the adjacent parcel; if this cannot be obtained, a new dumpster enclosure shall be proposed on site which satisfies Zoning Ordinance standards.
4. The final Certificate of Occupancy shall satisfy the use-specific standards for minor 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.
5. Expansion of the auto service use within the existing building shall require new Special Land Use approval under a new application.

Voting Yea: Mayor Haines, Commissioner Fleming, Commissioner Fox, Commissioner Graettinger, Commissioner Marsh, Commissioner Olson

Motion carried.

Project Details

The subject property is 0.68 acres in size and is currently improved with a 12,507 square-foot light industrial building with associated asphalt parking areas to the east, south, and west of the building. The building contains an 8,272 square foot warehouse space which is currently occupied by a clothing retailer, a 1,014 sq. ft. receiving area, and a 1,500 sq. ft. office and showroom area. Per the project narrative and concept plan, the applicant intends to utilize the office and receiving areas to sell and install automobile security, GPS, and audio systems. The large warehouse space is not included in the scope of work and the existing clothing retailer is proposed to remain. This use is classified as “Minor Auto Repair/Service” in the Zoning Ordinance, which requires Special Land Use approval in the M-1 zoning district.

32525 Stephenson Hwy. – Aerial Image – Existing Conditions (Red Outline)



Streetview from Stephenson Hwy.



Proposed Business Operations

A summary of business operations is provided below (refer to Application and Project Narrative):

- Proposed sale and installation of car audio, alarms, remote start systems, speakers, etc.
- Proposed hours of operation are 10 am to 6 pm, Monday through Saturday.
- Only one employee is anticipated.
- No proposed work involving the repair, rebuilding, replacing, or dismantling of major vehicle components; no hazardous chemicals or fluids.
- Anticipated work load of 2-4 vehicles per day

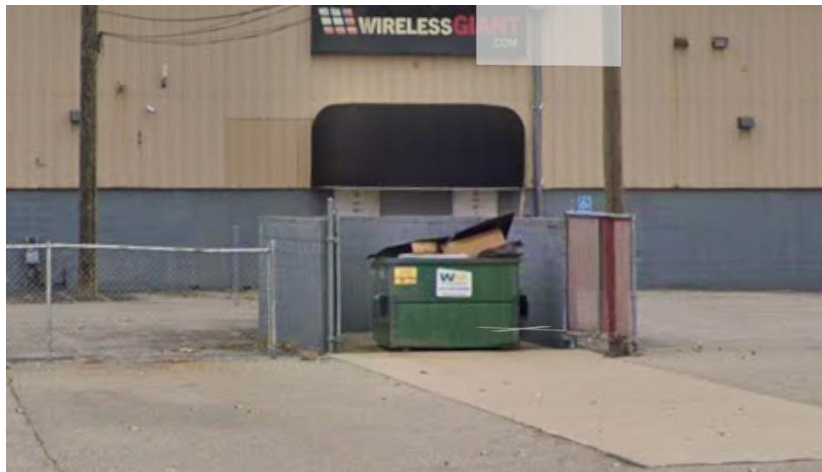
Site and Property Information

Site improvements are not proposed through this Special Land Use request. The subject property is accessed by two (2) curb cuts off Stephenson Highway, which are shared with the property to the south. The driveway on site is also shared with the property/building to the south; shared ingress/egress and driveway easements have been properly recorded at Oakland County.

Twenty-seven (27) parking spaces are provided on-site, including two (2) ADA spaces, which exceed the minimum required for the combination of warehousing (13 spaces) and auto service (8 spaces) uses.

The applicant proposes to utilize the existing dumpster/dumpster enclosure located on the parcel to the west, which is within the City of Royal Oak. Staff could not locate a recorded shared dumpster easement agreement. Staff recommends that a shared dumpster easement be recorded as a condition of Special Land Use approval.

Existing Dumpster Enclosure located on Adjacent Parcel



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

Minor Auto Repair and Service Facilities 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 plot plan and a copy of the proposed floor plan. Staff notes the following use-specific standards which will need to be confirmed by the applicant and confirmed upon the Certificate of Occupancy application.

- ***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.
- ***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).
- ***Hours of Operation:*** No auto repair or maintenance services shall be performed before 7 a.m. or after 9 p.m.

Should City Council move to approve of the Special Land use, staff advises that all of the use-specific standards of Section 7.03.2, including those listed above, be incorporated as a condition of approval.

Analysis of Surrounding Area

Existing Zoning and Land Use

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

	Existing Land Use	Existing Zoning
Site	Light Industrial/Warehousing	M-1, Light Industrial
North	Warehousing/Wholesale	M-1, Light Industrial
South	Light Industrial	M-1, Light Industrial
East (across Stephenson Hwy.)	Light Industrial/Technology	M-2, Heavy Industrial
West (City of Royal Oak)	Industrial/Warehousing	General Industrial (Royal Oak)

The site is surrounded by light industrial zoning, including the property to the west which is in the City of Royal Oak. 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.

This stretch of Stephenson Highway is generally characterized by a mix of light industrial and commercial uses, with retail, restaurant, and lodging businesses prevalent to the north closer to 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.”*

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	Industrial
South	Industrial
East (across Stephenson Highway)	Industrial
West (City of Royal Oak)	Mixed-Use Corridor (Royal Oak)

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.

City Council should consider the following Goals & Objectives of the 2021 Madison Heights Master Plan as part of this Special Land Use 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

Stephenson Highway is under the jurisdiction of Madison Heights and is classified as a Miner Arterial Road. Per SEMCOG, this portion of Stephenson Highway handles an average volume of approximately 14,000 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.

City Council 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 City Council should focus on the compatibility of the proposed auto service use with the use-specific criteria and general site requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, the compatibility of the auto-related use with the uses permitted within the M-1 zoning district and existing adjacent land uses, and the goals and objectives of the Industrial future land use designation. While vehicle service and 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 is generally supportive of the proposed Special Land Use application due to its limited operation (low number of employees, small vehicle intake per day) and minimal site impacts.

Staff notes the following pertaining to the site:

Dumpster Enclosure

The existing dumpster and dumpster enclosure proposed to be utilized by the business is located on the parcel to the west, which is within the City of Royal Oak. Staff could not locate a recorded shared dumpster easement. Staff recommends requiring a shared dumpster easement to be

recorded as a condition of Special Land Use approval. All trash and discarded equipment shall be disposed of either within the building or within dumpsters fully contained in the enclosure.

Use-Specific Standards

Should City Council move to approve the Special Land Use, the use-specific standards for auto repair and service facilities (Section 7.03.2), attached to this report, should be incorporated as a condition of approval.

Suggested Conditions

Should City Council approve the Special Land Use, staff suggests that the following be incorporated as conditions of approval:

1. Special Land Use approval is limited to automobile-related electronic system sales and installation including but not limited to audio, GPS, remote start, and security equipment. Motor vehicle repair such as that related to engines, brakes, wheels, collision-related work, etc., is not permitted through this Special Land Use approval.
2. All trash and discarded equipment shall be disposed of either within the building or in dumpsters fully contained within the freestanding enclosure.
3. A shared dumpster easement agreement shall be recorded for use of the dumpster on the adjacent parcel; if this cannot be obtained, a new dumpster enclosure shall be proposed on site which satisfies Zoning Ordinance standards.
4. The final Certificate of Occupancy 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.
5. Expansion of the auto service use within the existing building shall require new Special Land Use approval under a new application.

Next Step

After discussion, City Council may take action on the requested Special Land Use. Any motion shall include concise findings based upon the Special Land Use review standards and criteria, Section 15.03.3. Per Section 15.05, City Council 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 are provided on the following page.

Attachments

- Special Land Use Application - PSP #26-03
- Concept Site Plan and Floor Plan– PSP #26-03
- 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
- Draft Planning Commission minutes – May 18th, 2026

Template Motion, Findings and Conditions

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

APPROVAL

MOTION BY _____, SECONDED BY _____, THAT, BASED UPON THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION CITY COUNCIL HEREBY **APPROVES** SPECIAL LAND USE REQUEST NUMBER PSP 26-03 FOR MINOR AUTO SERVICE AT 32525 STEPHENSON HIGHWAY BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS:

1. The applicant requests Special Land Use approval for a Minor Auto Service facility at 32525 Stephenson Highway 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 26-03 at their May 18th, 2026 meeting.
3. The proposed Minor Auto 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 conditions of approval, the use satisfies the use-specific standards for Minor 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. Special Land Use approval is limited to automobile-related electronic system sales and installation including but not limited to audio, GPS, remote start, and security equipment. Motor vehicle repair such as that related to engines, brakes, wheels, collision-related work, etc., is not permitted through this Special Land Use approval.
2. All trash and discarded equipment shall be disposed of either within the building or in dumpsters fully contained within the freestanding enclosure.
3. A shared dumpster easement agreement shall be recorded for use of the dumpster on the adjacent parcel; if this cannot be obtained, a new dumpster enclosure shall be proposed on site which satisfies Zoning Ordinance standards.
4. The final Certificate of Occupancy shall satisfy the use-specific standards for minor 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.
5. Expansion of the auto service use within the existing building shall require new Special Land Use approval under a new application.

DENIAL

MOTION BY _____, SECONDED BY _____, THAT CITY COUNCIL **DENY** SPECIAL LAND USE REQUEST NUMBER PSP 26-03 FOR MINOR AUTO SERVICE AT 32525 STEPHENSON HIGHWAY BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS:

1. The applicant requests Special Land Use approval for a Minor Auto Service facility at 32525 Stephenson Highway 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 26-03 at their May 18th, 2026 meeting.
3. The proposed Minor Auto Service use fails to satisfy the Special Land Use review standards and criteria set forth in Section 15.05.3. In particular:
 - (1) The use is not designed, located and proposed to be operated in a way that protects the public health, safety and welfare.
 - (2) The Special Land Use will involves 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.
 - (3) The use is not designed and located in a manner that is compatible with the surrounding properties, neighborhood, and vicinity.
 - (4) The use is not in conformance with the Master Plan and future land use map for the area as adopted by the Planning Commission.
 - (5) The use is not compatible with the permitted principal uses allowed in the zoning district where the Special Land Use is requested and is not consistent with the intent and purpose of the M-1 zoning district.