



# MEMORANDUM

Date: February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
To: City of Madison Heights Planning Commission  
From: Matt Lonnerstater, AICP – City Planner  
Subject: Special Approval Request PSP 26-01– 32371 Dequindre Road – Minor Auto Repair and Service

## TEMPLATE MOTION AND FINDINGS INCLUDED ON PAGE 8

### Introduction

The applicant, Imad Potres, on behalf of business owner Steve Saka, 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 Repair and Service use at 32371 Dequindre Road, zoned M-1, Light Industrial; tax parcel # 44-25-01-226-021. The property is located on the west side of Dequindre Road, north of Avis Drive.

### Project Details

The subject property is 1.4 acres in size and is currently improved with an 11,844 square-foot light industrial building and asphalt parking area at the rear of the building. The building has been vacant for a few years but was most recently occupied by engineering and industrial offices. Per the project narrative and concept plan, the applicant intends to repurpose the building and site into an automotive repair use with six (6) service bays. Proposed services include oil change, brakes, and engine repair, collectively classified as “Minor Auto Repair” in the Zoning Ordinance; Minor Auto Repair requires Special Land Use approval in the M-1 zoning district. The applicant has not indicated hours of operation or total employees.

### 436 E. 14 Mile Rd. – Aerial Image – Existing Conditions (Red Outline)



**Streetview from Dequindre Road**



**Site and Use History**

Historic aerial imagery and city permitting records indicate that the principal building and parking lot were constructed in the early 1960s as drafting offices for Vertstand Engineering, with a rear building addition constructed in 1969.

It appears that the previous property owner had an unrecorded shared parking agreement with the gun range to the north which allowed gun range customers/employees to park in the rear portion of the parking lot; this is demonstrated by the parking bumper blocks that were installed along the north edge of the drive aisle and within the parking lot sometime between 2006 and 2008. The bumper blocks, which are still in place, restrict access to the rear portion of the parking lot from the subject parcel; access is only available through the drive aisle on the gun range property. The applicant notes that this unrecorded parking agreement will not be carried forward if the proposed auto repair use is approved. The site plan indicates that the rear bumper blocks in the parking lot will be removed.

**Current Location of Parking Bumper Blocks**



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

Minor Auto Repair and Service Facilities, including those that offer engine repair, wheel alignment, brake servicing, tire repair and replacement, and oil change services, 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 preliminary site 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 on the formal site plan application, when submitted:

- **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 the Planning Commission move to recommend approval 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.

### Site Analysis

#### Existing Zoning and Land Use

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

|                                | Existing Land Use                     | Existing Zoning                               |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Site</b>                    | Vacant (previous engineering offices) | M-1, Light Industrial                         |
| <b>North</b>                   | Gun Range                             | M-1, Light Industrial                         |
| <b>South</b>                   | Vacant (former auto sales)            | M-1, Light Industrial                         |
| <b>East (across Dequindre)</b> | Light Industrial                      | M-2, Medium Light Industrial (City of Warren) |
| <b>West</b>                    | Storage/Light Manufacturing           | M-1, Light Industrial                         |

The site is surrounded by light industrial zoning, including across Dequindre in Warren, with land uses typically characterized by industrial elements. 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.

There are several existing auto-related uses along this stretch of Dequindre Road, including Detroit Hot Wheel City in Madison Heights and Tek 2 Auto Repair and Ray's Auto Sales in Warren. The property immediately to the south recently operated as a used auto sales business but has since been vacated.

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.

|                                     | <b>Future Land Use</b>                  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Site</b>                         | Industrial                              |
| <b>North</b>                        | Industrial                              |
| <b>South</b>                        | Industrial                              |
| <b>East (across Dequindre Road)</b> | Industrial Commercial Corridor (Warren) |
| <b>West</b>                         | 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

Dequindre Road is under the jurisdiction of the Macomb County Departments of Roads (MCDR) and is classified as a Principal Arterial Road which is intended to carry long-distance, through-travel movements. Per SEMCOG, this portion of Dequindre Road handles an average volume of approximately 31,000 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 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 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 notes the following pertaining to the proposed conceptual site plan:

#### General Site Layout, Circulation and Parking

Overhead doors and the primary building entrance are proposed at the rear of the building facing the parking lot. Within the building, six (6) service bays are proposed. With the exception of a new overhead door at the rear of the building, no modifications are proposed to the building façade.

The applicant proposes to bring the rear parking area into compliance with Zoning Ordinance standards, including the addition of required landscape islands, ADA spaces, and a loading zone. The two (2) parallel parking spaces located in front of the building are proposed to be removed and replaced with a flared curb extension. As previously noted, the parking bumper blocks that run north-south within the parking lot will be removed. New bumper blocks are proposed along the north edge of the drive aisle to separate the subject property from the shooting range to the north.

A note on the site plan states, “*property owner to fix/repair existing asphalt pavement where required.*” Aerial photographs show that portions of the existing parking lot – especially the rear portion – is in disrepair. The site plan, when submitted, will need to include a site demolition plan indicating which portions of the asphalt parking lot will be repaved. It is possible that the entire parking lot will need to be milled and repaved, which will require the addition of stormwater quality control structures (confirmed upon engineering submittal).

#### Landscaping

A conceptual landscape plan has been provided. Curbed landscape islands are proposed within the rear parking lot, as required per the Zoning Ordinance. A rain garden with rain garden plantings, trees and shrubs is proposed within the front yard area in front of the building. Bioswale details, including a cross-section and planting information, shall be provided upon site plan submittal.

While perimeter parking lot landscaping is required per the Zoning Ordinance adjacent to the north, south, and west property lines, Section 11.11 of the Zoning Ordinance allows the approving

body to reduce or waive landscaping requirements where site design minimizes negative impacts of the use on adjacent properties. Given adjacent industrial land uses and the minimal width of the buffer strips, staff believes that a perimeter landscaping waiver or reduction is appropriate along the northern, western and southern property lines in this case.

#### Exterior Lighting

A photometric and lighting plan has been provided. Three (3) new light poles are proposed at a height of twenty feet (20'), meeting the standards of Section 8.04.

#### Dumpster Enclosure

A new dumpster enclosure is proposed at the southwest corner of the building. A concrete pad will need to be provided within and immediately in front of the enclosure; this shall be provided upon site plan submittal.

#### Use-Specific Standards

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

1. The Major Site Plan, when submitted, shall be substantially consistent with the concept plan approved with this Special Land Use submittal. However, the site plan shall be modified, as needed, to denote the following:
  - a. Provide a site demolition plan, including locations of asphalt removal and replacement. Given the state of disrepair, complete milling and repaving and new stormwater quality structures may be required; and
  - b. Include details of new concrete curbs and gutters; and
  - c. Add the required concrete dumpster pad; and
  - d. Provide details, including cross-section and plant/seed listings, of the proposed bioswale/rain garden.
2. Given the adjacent industrial land uses and minimal buffer widths, the minimum perimeter parking lot landscaping requirements of Section 11.06.3 may be reduced along the northern, western and southern property lines as part of Major Site Plan review.
3. The final 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 #26-01**
- **Concept Site Plan and Floor Plan– PSP #26-01**
- **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.

**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 26-01 FOR A MINOR AUTO REPAIR AND SERVICE FACILITY AT 32371 DEQUINDRE ROAD BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS:

1. The applicant requests Special Land Use approval for a Minor Auto Repair and Service facility at 32371 Dequindre 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 26-01 at their February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026 meeting.
3. The proposed Minor 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. The Major Site Plan, when submitted, shall be substantially consistent with the concept plan approved with this Special Land Use submittal. However, the site plan shall be modified, as needed, to denote the following:

- a. Provide a site demolition plan, including locations of asphalt removal and replacement. Given the state of disrepair, complete milling and repaving and new stormwater quality structures may be required; and
  - b. Include details of new concrete curbs and gutters; and
  - c. Add the required concrete dumpster pad; and
  - d. Provide details, including cross-section and plant/seed listings, of the proposed bioswale/rain garden.
2. Given the adjacent industrial land uses and minimal buffer widths, the minimum perimeter parking lot landscaping requirements of Section 11.06.3 may be reduced along the northern, western and southern property lines as part of Major Site Plan review.
3. The final 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.