

**CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT
Conditional Use Permit CUP.1.26**

DATE: May 5, 2026
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Jacob A. Graichen, AICP, City Planner

APPLICANT: Hunter Christensen
OWNER: same as applicant

ZONING: Houlton Business District, HBD

LOCATION: 184 S. 15th Street

PROPOSAL: Complete building addition started c. 2014 but never completed, establish use as an artisan workshop or trade/skilled services with outdoor storage, and address unapproved site modifications.

PUBLIC HEARING & NOTICE

Public hearing before the Planning Commission: May 12, 2026

Notice of this proposal was sent to surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the subject property(ies) on April 22, 2026 via first class mail. Notice was sent to agencies by mail or e-mail on the same date.

Notice was published on May 1, 2026 in the Columbia County Spotlight newspaper.

APPLICABLE CRITERIA, ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Permitting History: The subject property consists of three city lots, two along S. 15th Street and another along S. 14th Street: Lots 2, 3 and 20, Block 122 St. Helens.

In 2004 a Conditional Use Permit (CUP.2.04) was approved to change the use of the property to vehicle repair and muffler sales. At the time the property was zoned General Commercial, GC.

In 2009 the zoning of the site and much of the Houlton area was changed to Houlton Business District, HBD (Ord. No. 3110).

In 2014 a minor Site Development Review was approved for the site to be used for small scale manufacturing (artisan workshop) and an addition to the building. This was not necessarily a change of land use, rather, a recognition that the business, Columbia River Mandrel Bending, LLC, manufactured specialty items as opposed to vehicle repair. Thus, use on file now aligned with what was actually occurring on the property.

The building addition and related site improvements approved c. 2014 was abandoned before completion and the property has sat idle for years. All previous permits including the minor Site Development Review, have long expired. No permit has been valid for years.

The current property owner purchased the property in October 2024 (deed 2024-5538). Around December 2024 – January 2025 the owner did site work and alleged building work that resulted in citation to municipal court and a stop work order by the Building Official. The owner allegedly removed the stop work order posting on the building several times and the Building Official ordered utilities to be discontinued for a period of time. The owner has been to municipal court several times as the judge has set timelines to help facilitate proper permitting.

The following photos help illustrate this history and some of the related issues:



December 11, 2013 photo of 184 S. 15th Street. This photo taken as part of the review of minor Site Development Review SDRm.3.14 for a 1,500 square foot addition to building that has not been completed to date with all permits expired.

The plans from 2014 show these planters within the public right-of-way and were intended for street trees per the SDRm.3.14 plans. Though there are plan inaccuracies as described in this report, that need to be resolved.

These curbed landscape areas acted as access control (i.e., defining the driveway approach.



May 2023 Google Earth street view of 184 S. 15th Street.

The curbed landscape islands are still intact.

This is prior to the purchase of the property by Hunter Christensen in October 2024 via deed instrument no. 2024-5538.



January 6, 2025 photo of 184 S. 15th Street.

The curbed landscape islands are completely removed.

This is following the purchase of the property by Hunter Christensen in October 2024 via deed instrument no. 2024-5538.

As this landscaping acted as a screen for the parking lot, this removal qualifies as a major modification per 17.96.070(2)(j) and 17.100.050(2)(i).



January 6, 2025 photo of 184 S. 15th Street.

Another angle showing curbed landscape islands completely removed.

This is following the purchase of the property by Hunter Christensen in October 2024 via deed instrument no. 2024-5538.

Also note the broken fence in the foreground. The fence is intact in previous photos and according to the next-door neighbor, the fence damage is the result of actions by the owner.



February 26, 2026 photo of 184 S. 15th Street.

Another angle showing curbed landscape islands completely removed.

Without the curbing and landscaping this semi-truck trailer was able to be backed into this area.

These actions demonstrate a change in the type and location of accessways and parking areas, a major modification per SHMC 17.96.070(2)(f) and 17.100.050(2)(e).



April 21, 2014 photo of 184 S. 15th Street.

Prior to the zone change from GC to HBD and not until the actions of the current owner, the area south of the building was about half paved parking area on the S. 15th Street side with grass on the opposing side. This grass was used to meet the 10% minimum landscaping rule of the GC zone.

In this photo, the grassy area behind the paved parking lot is visible. Though, being tread upon in the photo, this area is intact.



January 6, 2025 photo of 184 S. 15th Street.

The grassy area behind the paved parking lot has been recently completely removed.

Landscaping ripped from along S. 15th Street is visible.

This is following the purchase of the property by Hunter Christensen in October 2024 via deed instrument no. 2024-5538.



January 6, 2025 photo of 184 S. 15th Street.

Another photo showing the grassy area behind the paved parking recently completely removed. Landscaping ripped from along S. 15th Street is front and center.

Though the HBD zone requires open space, 10% landscaping was required as part of the 2004 CUP.

This elimination qualifies as a major modification per SHMC 17.96.070(2)(j) and 17.100.050(2)(i).



Left Photo: February 10, 2014 of 184 S. 15th Street before the proposed building addition. **Right Photo:** Google Earth street view May 2023 long after the building addition project had been abandoned and permits expired, but landscaping was still intact, including the area between the building and sidewalk. This shows a driveway along the north side of the building that was eliminated with the building addition.



January 14, 2019 photo of the lot behind 184 S. 15th Street. This photo taken from S. 14th Street.

This is prior to the purchase of the property by Hunter Christensen in October 2024 via deed instrument no. 2024-5538.

The building addition approved in 2014 (but now with all approvals expired) is easily distinguished.

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Zoning Compliance: The site is zoned Houlton Business District, HBD.

“Artisan workshops” and “trade and skilled services...” are permitted uses. However, “business with outdoor storage” are conditional uses. A permitted use is proposed with outdoor storage, thus this Conditional Use Permit.

Minium open space is 10% and maximum lot coverage including impervious area is 90%.

Open space is defined as: *any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, designated, or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment, or for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or neighboring such open space.*

The plans do not show the open spaces area. Open space does not include areas for parking, walkways, outdoor storage, access, etc. It is not just area that are not impervious. **Revised plans shall define the open space areas.** For example, it does not appear that vehicle access has occurred between the lot abutting S. 14th Street and those abutting S. 15th Street just south of the building (see attached aerial photos). However, after removal of the landscaping east of the paved parking lot, the area has been used for vehicle travel.



March 9, 2026 photo of the unpaved area east of the paved parking area along S. 15th Street. Areas used for vehicle travel are not open space.

The maximum front setback is zero feet, which may be increased if setback is used for pedestrian amenities. Though the building, including the unfinished addition started in 2014, may not abut the property line along S. 15th Street, there *was* landscaping in between the building the sidewalk that tied them together. This landscaping was removed by the current owner and new landscaping will be required.



Above left: May 2023 Google Earth street view showing intact landscaping between the building and sidewalk. **Above right:** January 6, 2025 photo showing the landscaping recently removed.

Outdoor storage of goods and materials is required to be screened.

Outdoor storage is proposed on the lot abutting S. 14th Street and a site obscuring fence is proposed.

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Landscaping/buffering/screening: Street trees will be required. The subject property's street frontage exceeds 100 feet. Street trees are proposed in the planter areas along S. 15th Street.

There is overhead utility lines along the portion of S. 15th Street, thus, street trees need to be "small" per this chapter. Pacific Dogwood trees are proposed, which generally will be a "small" category.

This chapter requires screening. This applies in this case as follows:

Because the parking lot will be greater than three spaces, it is required to be screened. The parking south of the building *was* screened on all four sides:

- **North side:** the building provides the screen
- **East side:** a sight obscuring chain link fence between the subject property and a property occupied by CenturyLink provides the screen.
- **South side:** A wood fence provided screening between the subject property and a detached single-family dwelling property. However, though it was intact, more recently there are several boards missing following purchase by the current property owner. **This fence needs to be made whole, to act as a proper screen.**
- **West side along S. 15th Street:** Landscaping in planters acting as a screen, have been completely removed. Materials are to achieve a balance of low-lying shrubbery and trees. The plans show trees proposed but no other plantings, which shall be required. The plans show symbols that could represent shrubs or other plants, but lack any identification—a shortcoming of the plans.

Ongoing maintenance of screening is required.

Service facilities and equipment (e.g., HVAC and other mechanical unit) visible from a public street, customer or residential parking area, any public facility or residential area are required to be screened whether they are ground, wall or roof mounted. In addition, rooftop facilities and equipment are required to be screened from street and adjacent properties.

This would apply to any such facility as part of the building addition, or any new or enlarged facility as part of the original building.

Refuse container or collection area are required to be screened (e.g., trash enclosure). This is not addressed and shall be.

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Visual Clearance: Chapter 17.76 SHMC requires proper sight distances at intersections to reduce traffic hazard potential. The required area to maintain clear vision is greater for arterial streets.

The HBD zone exempts this Chapter.

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Off-Street Parking/Loading: Off street parking is required. There is a paved parking area, though it is underdeveloped lacking parking space markings.

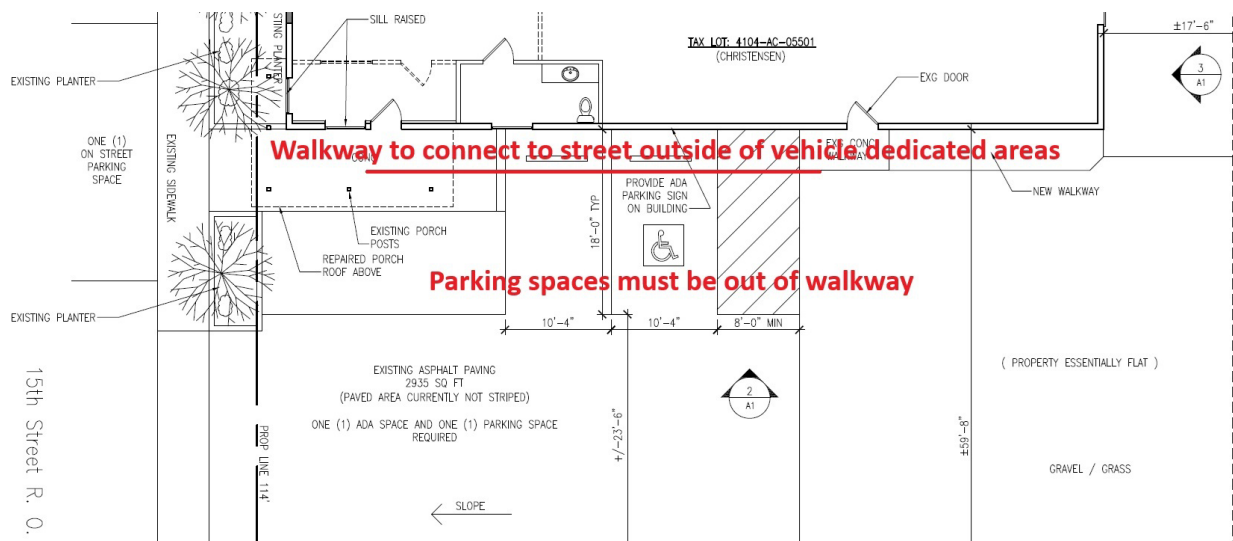
Dimensions. Standard parking spaces are 9' x 18'. For two-way vehicle circulation, 24' width is required. Thus, in order to have a row of standard parking spaces on either side of a 24' two-way aisle, the minimum width dedicated to vehicle use needed is 18+24+18 or 60 feet.

The site plan identifies 59'8". However, upon measurement by staff towards the middle of the paved parking lot area there is about 58 feet between the building and the fence along the south property line.

This raises accuracy concerns of the plans. As another example, measured on the plans, there is about 201' between the back edges of the sidewalks along S. 14th and S. 15th Streets. Measuring from aerial photos there is actually about 208'. It is also possible that the fence along the south property line is within the subject property, which may result in the claimed 59'8" dimension on the site plan (if measured to the property line), though, given the location of the fence, that is not the physically available area.

Moreover, a swath of area adjacent to the south side of the building has to be included as walkway that is either 4' wide or 7' wide (see access section below), which reduced this width further.

Plans revisions are needed for accuracy, better quality control and code compliance.



The walkway along the south side of the building is not a circumstance originating with the building. A second man door along the south elevation did not exist prior to the 2014 uncompleted effort.



This December 11, 2013 photo shows that the second man door on the south side of the building didn't exist yet.

A new man door requires a walkway to the street, which must be considered in the site design of this proposal.

Accessible (disabled person) spaces. Per the Oregon Specialty Code one van-accessible is required. A space is included on the plans.

Also, accessible parking spaces are required to be located on the shortest route to an accessible pedestrian entrance.

Number of off-street parking spaces required. The applicant notes two-off street parking spaces required.

Staff recommends a design that fully utilizes the paved parking area. Given space constraints, 8' x 22' parallel spaces along the south property line is a suggestion. The applicant's narrative noting an ADA space and six additional spaces doesn't contemplate the space constraints described herein.

Surface area. All areas used for parking, storage or maneuvering of vehicles (including things towed by vehicles) shall be paved.

Wheel stops. Wheel stops are required along the boundaries of a parking lot, adjacent to interior landscape area, and along pedestrian ways.

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Access/egress/circulation:

The site abuts S. 15th Street on the west side, which provides primary access to the site and S. 14th Street. Both are older style improved streets with sidewalks. S. 14th has gravel shoulders.

Importantly, the city’s Transportation Systems Plan identifies S. 15th Street as a Collector Street. There are two important aspects of the collector classification:

1. Access spacing. The minimum spacing between accesses/driveways is 100 feet measured from the centerline of the access. Though this is not met between the parking lot access and the overhead door facing S. 15th Street, the number of accesses has been reduced from the pre-2014 effort circumstances.
2. Backing movements and vehicle maneuvering into a collector street is to be avoided. This is relevant to the design of the parking lot and the owner’s recent use of the parking lot for a semi-truck trailer. The trailer will need to be removed and use of this parking lot for such shall be prohibited.

Pedestrian access (interior walkways). Walkways shall extend from the ground floor entrances or from the ground floor landing of stairs, ramps, or elevators of all commercial, institutional, and industrial uses, to the streets which provide the required access and egress. Walkways shall provide convenient connections between buildings in multibuilding commercial, institutional, and industrial complexes. Walkways also shall provide access to existing and planned transit stops adjacent to the development site. Unless impractical, walkways should be constructed between a new development and neighboring developments.

As noted above, plans show some walkway but not a connection to the street that avoid areas intended for vehicle use. Revised plans necessary. Minimum walkway width area is 4 feet and are required to be paved.

As the walkway exceeds 36’ in length in a parking lot area, the 6” vertical or +3’ horizontal vehicle area separation will apply per SHMC 17.84.050(5) for pedestrian safety.

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Signs: No signs are proposed at this time. The property has no wall signage or freestanding signage.

New signs will require permits per Chapter 17.88 SHMC.

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Solid Waste/Recyclables: Chapter 17.92 SHMC includes provisions for functional and adequate space for on-site storage and efficient collection of mixed solid waste and recyclables subject to pick up and removal by haulers.

This is not address; needs to be a condition of approval.

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Site Development Review: Conditional Use Permits include Site Development Review considerations.

As explained and illustrated above, from a Site Development Review standpoint, this proposal is a major modification based on the actions of the current owner. The applicant’s assertion that it is minor is incorrect.

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Conditional Use: Pursuant to SHMC 17.100.040:

(1) The planning commission shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny an application for a conditional use or to enlarge or alter a conditional use based on findings of fact with respect to each of the following criteria:

- (a) The site size and dimensions provide adequate area for the needs of the proposed use;
- (b) The characteristics of the site are suitable for the proposed use considering size, shape, location, topography, and natural features;
- (c) All required public facilities have adequate capacity to serve the proposal;
- (d) The applicable requirements of the zoning district are met except as modified by this chapter;
- (e) The supplementary requirements set forth in Chapter 17.88 SHMC, Signs; and Chapter 17.96 SHMC, Site Development Review, if applicable, are met; and
- (f) The use will comply with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan.

SHMC 17.100.150 has additional requirements for certain conditional use types.

SHMC 17.100.040(3) provides “condition of approval guidance” as follows:

(3) The planning commission may impose conditions on its approval of a conditional use, which it finds are necessary to ensure the use is compatible with other use in the vicinity. These conditions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Limiting the hours, days, place, and manner of operation;
- (b) Requiring design features which minimize environmental impacts such as noise, vibration, air pollution, glare, odor, and dust;
- (c) Requiring additional setback areas, lot area, or lot depth or width;
- (d) Limiting the building height, size or lot coverage, or location on the site;
- (e) Designating the size, number, location, and design of vehicle access points;
- (f) Requiring street right-of-way to be dedicated and the street to be improved;
- (g) Requiring landscaping, screening, drainage and surfacing of parking and loading areas;
- (h) Limiting the number, size, location, height, and lighting of signs;
- (i) Limiting or setting standards for the location and intensity of outdoor lighting;
- (j) Requiring berming, screening or landscaping and the establishment of standards for their installation and maintenance;
- (k) Requiring and designating the size, height, location, and materials for fences; and
- (l) Requiring the protection and preservation of existing trees, soils, vegetation, watercourses, habitat areas, and drainage areas.

These are for the Commission’s consideration based on this report, presentations and testimony received at the Public hearing.

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Street/Right-of-Way Standards: Any work within the right-of-way requires right-of-way permitting as administered by City Engineering.

Because per the plans, there is about 201' between the back edges of the sidewalks along S. 14th and S. 15th Streets, yet measuring from aerial photos there is about 208', staff is concerned about the accuracy of the plans. Plan quality control needs improvement to better understand what is within the public right-of-way and what is not.

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CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

Based on the facts and findings herein, if the Planning Commission approves this Conditional Use Permit, staff recommends the following conditions:

1. This **Conditional Use Permit** approval is valid for a limited time (to establish the use) pursuant to SHMC 17.100.030. This Conditional Use Permit approval is valid for 1 year. A 1-year extension is possible but requires an application and fee. If the approval is not vested within the initial 1 year period or an extension (if approved), this is no longer valid and a new application would be required if the proposal is still desired. See SHMC 17.100.030.
2. The following shall be required prior to commencement of any use:
 - a. Final plans shall include the following revisions:
 - i. Open space areas shall be specially identified and quantified. Open space cannot be areas used for other things such as storage, access, parking, etc.
 - ii. All walkways, vehicle ways, and off-street parking shall be paved.
 - iii. Landscaping to achieve a balance of low-lying shrubbery and trees in addition to the proposed trees for the landscape areas along S. 15th Street. Methods of irrigation / plant maintenance for plant survival shall be identified.
 - iv. Refuse container/collection area shall be addressed.
 - v. Plans shall be properly calibrated to existing (e.g., CS 5174 from 2004) or new surveys.
 - vi. Parking lot design shall be updated based on actual physical space available, previous or new survey information, not obscuring a walkway path abutting the south side of the building, and ensuring maneuvering and turn-around area within the property, so maneuvering and backing movements will not occur within S. 15th Street.
 - b. Improvements per approved plans to be installed.
 - c. Fence along south property line shall be repaired to provide a continuous screen (e.g., broken boards replaced) or a new sight-obscuring fence installed.

- d. Semi-truck trailer shall be removed from the parking lot area accessed via S. 15th Street.
 - e. As per condition 4.
 - f. Right-of-way permit(s) shall be obtained for applicable proposed work or previous unapproved work within the right-of-way.
3. No semi-truck trailers allowed in the parking lot area accessed via S. 15th Street.
 4. Any new service facilities such as gas meters and air conditioners which would otherwise be visible from a public street, customer or resident parking area, any public facility or any residential area shall be screened, **regardless if such screening is absent on any plan reviewed by the City. This includes but is not limited to ground mounted, roof mounted or building mounted units.** See SHMC 17.72.110(2).
 5. Ongoing maintenance of screening and preservation of open space shall be required.
 6. No plan submitted to the City for approval shall contradict another.
 7. Owner/applicant and their successors are still responsible to comply with the City Development Code (SHMC Title 17).

Attachment(s): Applicant narrative
Applicant plans
Aerial photos 2005-2024

March 13, 2026

To: St Helens Planning Department

Re: 184 South 15th Street, St Helens OR 97051
Tax lot 4N1W 4AC 5501
With abutting rear lot 4N1W 4AC 5502 fenced for outdoor storage.

Zoning: Houlton Business District

Application for:

- **Minor Modification to Existing Development.** (Minor Site Design Review), **and**
- **Conditional Use Permit for Outdoor Storage, and**
- **Existing non-conforming parking lot**

This application is essentially to reinstate a previous application that was approved by the City in 2014, but never completed by the previous property owner, (Adam Fortier of Columbia River Mandrel Bending).

Background

History: For many years prior to around 2000 the property was owned by Farny Trucking. Farny Trucking used the building as their truck maintenance shop and the rest of the property, including properties to the north (now owned by Dolyniuk) as their truck and trailer storage yard. With the exception of the building and the small paved parking lot south of the building, the entire property was a graveled parking area. At the front of the building there were, and still are, some landscape planter areas between the existing sidewalk and the paved parking area south of the building, and between the sidewalk and the building. North of the building was a graveled drive aisle providing a drive aisle from 15th street back to the rear graveled parking lot and to 14th street.

Subsequent to Farny Trucking the building had been used for various uses, including automotive repair and a muffler shop.

In 2014, Adam Fortier of Columbia River Mandrel Bending owned the property. Mr. Fortier ran a tube-bending business related to the automotive industry. The City allowed the use as an Artisan Workshop because of the small scale of the building and the business.

See SDRm.3.14, Feb 20, 2014

At that time Mr. Fortier applied for site design review to enlarge the building for an additional 1340 sq. ft. from 2589 sq ft to 3931 sq ft, for additional space for a larger bending machine on the north side of the existing building where a driveway was located. With the addition on the north side of the building one (1) drive lane was eliminated, reducing the total drive lanes accessing the property from 15th street from the original five (5) lanes to four (4) lanes.

The above was approved through a minor site design review. (per 17.96.070 (2) (h)).

Mr. Fortier slowly did improvements, he rebuilt the porch roof on the building's south west corner entrance, built the north addition structural shell and re-roofed the entire building. Mr. Fortier used the undeveloped lot, lot 4N1W 4AC 5502, as it had always been used, a graveled, partially paved outdoor storage area.

However, the economy and his business changed, in 2020 he almost died from COVID-19, and shortly thereafter he moved to Mt. Vernon Washington. The project has sat unfinished since Mr. Fortier moved away.

In 2025 Mr. Christensen purchased the property. At the time, unknown to Mr. Christensen, a transient person was living in the building and the city, only a few days to the sale of the building, had posted a notice to abate the property- to clean up and close & secure the property. Mr. Christensen cleaned up the exterior, closed up openings where individuals were getting in, and making repairs to the building that the previous owner had started but never completed.

Current Conditions:

Currently on the property is the original building in disrepair, the north addition has a good roof but is unfinished. The site remains as described above, the existing planters remain between the sidewalk and the parking lot and building, the paved parking area remains, and the rest of the property is gravel and grass. The site has a two-way access driveway at the south for the existing paved parking lot, and access into the existing garage door opening facing 15th street. Tax lot 4N1W 4AC 5502 remains as-is, a half-paved half-gravel empty lot used for vehicle & other storage purposes.

As described above, prior to the addition for which this is a re-do, five (5) drive lanes entered and exited the property from 15th street. With the north addition one drive lane was eliminated. The current owner is proposing closing another garage door reducing the total drive lanes accessing the property from the original five (5) drive lanes down to three (3). Tax lot 4N1W 4AC 5502 will remain as-is, it will be fenced with privacy fencing and will to be used for storage of raw materials and finished product of the business occupying lot 4N1W 4AC 5501.

APPLICATION / REQUEST:

- Minor Modification to Existing Conditions: less than 5000 sq. ft.
 - See zoning narrative below,
- No development on Tax lot 4N1W 4AC 5502 other than the new privacy fence.
 - See zoning narrative below,
- Restripe Existing Parking lot, - existing non-conforming situation per Chapter 17.104.

The property line to the south has been in existence since the City of St Helens was platted in 1845, the property line has not moved. According to Columbia County tax assessor records the building was constructed in 1920, the building has not moved. The parking area takes up the entire distance between the building and the south property line. It is unknown when the parking area was paved. Google Earth images before 2005 are unclear but the 2005 google earth image

clearly shows the parking area in its current size and shape, so it was in existence, as-is, prior to 2005. Columbia County tax assessor records indicate asphalt as far back as 1987, St Helens Zoning Regulations existed long before 1987 so the parking lot was approved at some point under the City zoning ordinance and is an "existing situation" per SHDC 17.104.030.

This application is not proposing any change to the parking lot other than re-striping (one (1) required ADA space, and six (6) other spaces). The applicant is not requesting modifications to the parking lot size or shape. Folks have been able to maneuver in and out of the opposing parking stalls for quite some time, they should certainly continue to be able to do so. In addition, the parking stalls are oversized in width (10' wide as opposed to the standard 9' width) to allow for additional maneuvering space.

Proposed Development: (Same as approved in 2014)

Since the north addition was never completed and the permits expired the assumption is that this is a do-over, so the proposal, like the original, is to allow the north addition and make various repairs to the building. A new tenant that runs a small wood trim manufacturing business will use the building for the production of wood trim. The tenant is a sole operator with one (1) additional employee.

Applicable Criteria:

Minor Site Design Review per 17.96.040 (2) h. :

17.96.040(2) The director shall determine that a major modification(s) will result if one or more of the following changes are proposed. There will be:.....

(h) An increase in the floor area proposed for a nonresidential use by more than 10 percent excluding expansions under 5,000 square feet;

The total building expansion is only 1340 sq. ft., significantly less than 5000 sq. ft. and does not meet the threshold for Major Site Development Review.

17.32.175 Houlton Business District – HBD.

Proposed use: Artisan Workshop

The 2014 approval for the mandrel bending business recognized the small scale of the building and the business, City Planning Staff approved the use as an Artisan Workshop, an allowed use in the Houlton Business District per 17.132.80 (2) (p).

The new tenant intends to use the building as a wood working shop for his trim and molding business. Just like the previous approval, the building is small, and the tenant runs a "one man shop". The proposed use is of the same scale as the previous approved used, Artisan Workshop per 17.132.80 (2) (p) which is an allowed use in the HBD. The rear lot will continue to be used for storage, as has been the case for more than 50 years.

The proposed use could also be construed as Trade and Skilled services per 17.132.80 (2) (k.k.) also allowed in the HBD.

Height: The height of the building will remain the same, +/- 25' high.

Impervious Surfaces:

Same as previous approval: An existing paved driveway (impervious surface) on the north side of the building is replaced with an enclosed addition. No additional impervious surfaces are added (a roof replaced an existing paved driveway). On the rear lot no additional impervious surfaces are proposed.

Minimum Open Space -10% [17.32.180(4)(i)] (Maximum Lot Coverage - 90%)

Same as previous approval: The lot area is 11,400 sq. ft. and the building area after the addition will be 3931 sq. ft. or 35.3% of built area. Including the parking lot there will be a total of 7050 of impervious area, or 61% and open space of 39%. No changes on the rear lot.

Front Yard Setback:

Same as previous approval: The Houlton Business District requires that buildings be built up to the front lot line. The existing building is built approximately 3 feet behind the front property line. The addition aligns with the existing building on the front; structurally it did not make sense to offset the addition so that it can be built on the property line.

No changes proposed for the rear lot, other than the privacy fencing.

Side Yard Setback:

NA - The Side of the property where the addition is to be built does not adjoin a residential property.

Screening:

17.132.80 (2) (e) Business with Outdoor Storage is allowed with a conditional use.
17.32.180 (5) allows outdoor storage of goods with screening.

There is an existing sight obscuring wood fence between the property and the adjacent residence to the south that satisfies screening requirement between abutting conflicting uses. The wood fence has a few boards missing (which are laying in the neighbor's yard).

There are existing privacy fences on the property lines between the subject properties and the Century Link property to the southeast.

A site obscuring fence (chain link fence with vinyl slats) is proposed to be constructed around the property where storage will occur.

Parking:

Existing development in the HBD does not require on-site parking if the existing development is greater than 50% of the site. This development is not greater than 50% of the site so on-site parking is required.

Required Parking: per 17.80.30 (3) (j)

Woodshop is not described in the parking chapter. The closest described use to a woodshop would be manufacturing: - one space per employee on the largest shift. The new tenant is a 'one-man-shop' with one additional employee, two (2) parking spaces are required.

There is an existing paved parking area, not striped but can accommodate approximately seven parking spaces, which will be striped for one (1) ADA parking space and six additional space. See Site Plan.

Parking Dimensional Standards

The planning director has noted that the parking lot does not comply with the dimension standard for parking lots because the distance between the building and the south fence is 59'-8" (see site plan) but the parking standards require 60' for a double loaded - 90 degree parking area. (18' parking stall + 24' drive aisle + 18' parking stall = 60' A deficit of 4 to 6 inches (see site plan).

This is an existing non-conforming situation per SHDC 17.104.030. The property line to the south has been in existence since the City of St Helens was platted in 1845, the property line has not moved. According to Columbia County tax assessor records the building has been in existence since 1920, the building has not moved. It is unknown when the parking area between the building and the south property line was paved. Columbia County tax assessor records shows asphalt as early as 1987, Google Earth images before 2005 are unclear but the 2005 google earth image clearly shows the parking area in its current configuration, so it was in existence, as-is, prior to 2005. St Helens Zoning Regulations existed prior to 2005 so the parking lot was approved at some point under the City zoning ordinance. This proposal is not requesting any change to the parking lot other than re-striping. Folks have been able to maneuver in and out of the parking stalls since before 2005, they should certainly continue to be able to do so.

Street Trees: 17.72.030

There are existing planter areas along the street but there are no street trees along 15th at this property. The Site is 114 feet long. This would require four (4) medium trees or six (6) small trees. As described above, there are existing planter areas where five (5) trees will be planted, based on the existing configuration of the area around the site this is the most practical number that can be planted. (see site plan). The trees specified are Pacific Dogwood, small trees because there are existing power lines above and there is solid basalt about 12 to 16 inches below grade. These are appropriate trees for this location and site/soil condition.

No development on Tax lot 4N1W 4AC 5502 other than the new privacy fence.

Access:

15th street is classified as Collector street and the standard minimum distance between access points is 100'.

The center of the existing parking area drive aisles is approximately 90' away from the corner of 15th and Cowlitz Streets and 130' from the center of Cowlitz Street. The distance from the center of the existing parking lot drive aisles to the center of the existing Overhead Door is 55'. The distance from the existing overhead door to the center of the drive aisle of the neighboring property to the north is approximately 73'.

Although these distances are less than the standard they are all existing conditions and allowed to continue as non-conforming uses.

The existing building has a garage door which theoretically could be used for vehicular traffic. However as pointed out in the introduction, since this is a re-do of an approval that was never completed one has to look at the total number of drive aisles that were in existence prior to the approved (unfinished) development and those that will remain now.

Prior to this development the property had (3) three access points with a total of 5 drive lanes: an existing two-way 28' wide parking lot entrance at the south, the existing 13' wide garage door, and an existing 21' wide two-way driveway on the north side of the building. The enlargement of the building consolidated the two existing northerly access points into one 30' wide curb cut with one drive lane. Or said another way, one of the existing nonconforming drive-lanes was eliminated in the previous approved proposal. Further, with this proposal, the north garage door is being eliminated leaving only two curb cuts and three (3) drive lanes as opposed to the original five (5) drive lanes.

17.104.40 (3)(a):

(a) No such nonconforming structure may be enlarged or altered in a way which increases its nonconformity, but any structure or portion thereof may be enlarged or altered in a way that satisfies the requirements of this code or will decrease its nonconformity; (emphasis added)

With this addition the existing nonconforming situation is being decreased.

UPS or FedEx deliveries will use the parking area (but usually they simply temporarily park along the street). From a practical standpoint the overhead door on 15th street might be used to deliver items needed at the front of the building however the majority of materials will be delivered to the rear lot.

Access from 14th street: The tenant will use the vacant lot that faces 14th street for storage of raw material (rough sawn lumber) and the storage of finished product (molding and trim) or other items. There is an existing apron (sloped curb cut) in the existing sidewalk along 14th street which will be used for access to the property and most deliveries of materials will occur on the rear lot. So the access points along 15th street (other than the parking area) will have little use.

17.100.040 Approval standards

(1) (a) The site size and dimensions provide adequate area for the needs of the proposed use.

The proposed development is essentially the same as proposed in 2014 which was approved by the planning administrator under a minor site design review. The only difference in this case, unlike in 2014, he is requiring it be processes as a conditional use citing outdoor storage. All dimensions are the same as the approved 2014 proposal.

(b) The characteristics of the site are suitable for the proposed use considering size, shape, location, topography, and natural features.

Same response as "a" above.

(c) All required public facilities have adequate capacity to serve the proposal;

The property is served by city water and sanitary sewer, the property is served by CRPUD with three-phase power, and there is NW Natural gas available in both 15th and 14th streets.

(d) The applicable requirements of the zoning district are met except as modified by this chapter;

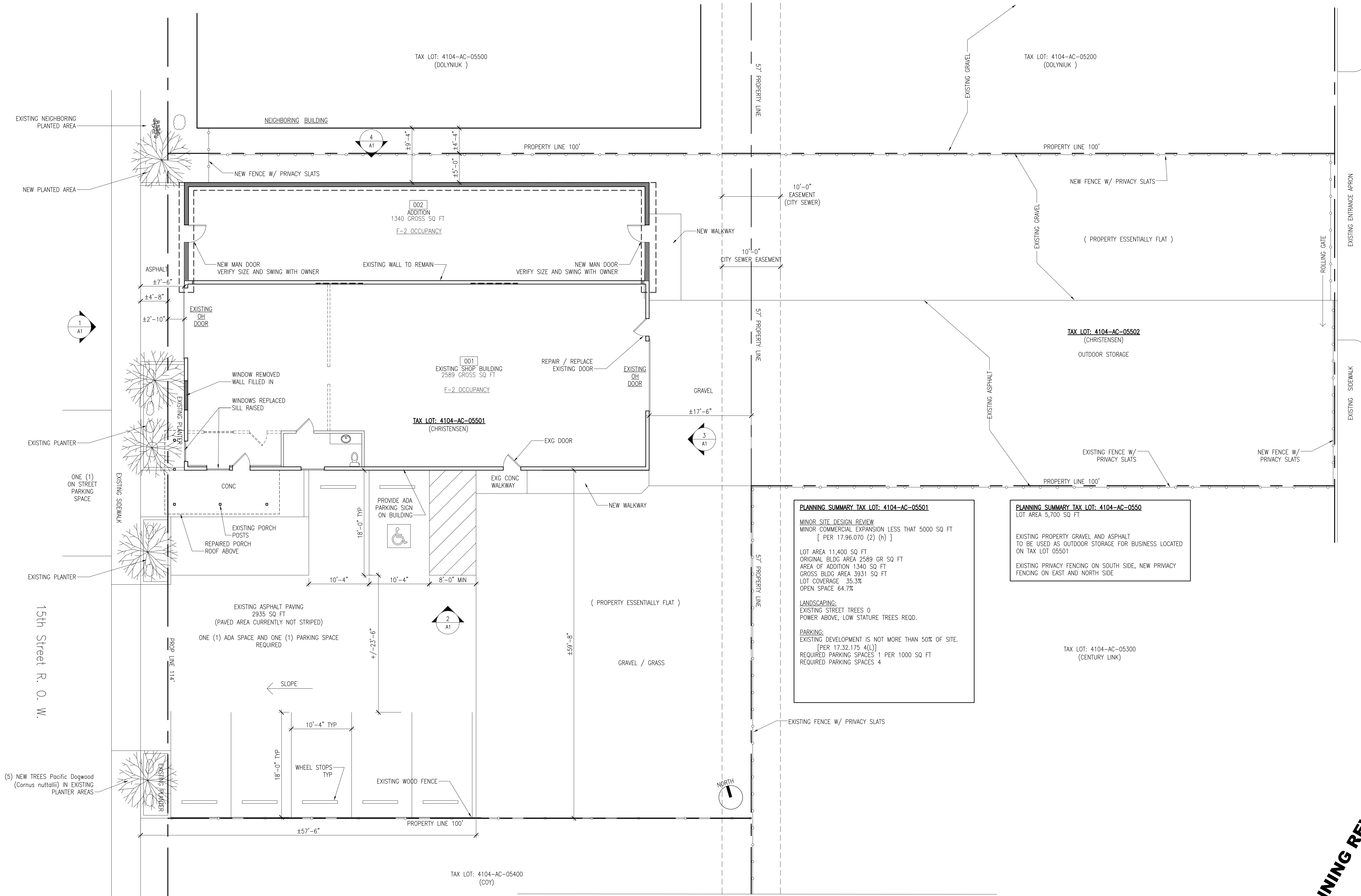
Same response as "a" above.

(e) The supplementary requirements set forth in Chapter 17.88 SHMC, Signs; and Chapter 17.96 SHMC, Site Development Review, if applicable, are met; and

No signs are requested at this time, any signs will be processed under a separate permit, Site design review is not applicable, this proposal qualifies as a minor site development review, same as in 2014.

(f) The use will comply with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan.

To our knowledge this proposal complies with the comprehensive plan.



PLANNING SUMMARY TAX LOT: 4104-AC-05501
 MINOR SITE DESIGN REVIEW
 MINOR COMMERCIAL EXPANSION LESS THAN 5000 SQ FT
 [PER 17.96.070 (2) (h)]
 LOT AREA 11,400 SQ FT
 ORIGINAL BLDG AREA 2589 GR SQ FT
 AREA OF ADDITION 1340 SQ FT
 GROSS BLDG AREA 3931 SQ FT
 LOT COVERAGE 35.3%
 OPEN SPACE 64.7%
 LANDSCAPING:
 EXISTING STREET TREES 0
 POWER ABOVE, LOW STATURE TREES RECD.
 PARKING:
 EXISTING DEVELOPMENT IS NOT MORE THAN 50% OF SITE.
 [PER 17.32.175 4(L)]
 REQUIRED PARKING SPACES 1 PER 1000 SQ FT
 REQUIRED PARKING SPACES 4

PLANNING SUMMARY TAX LOT: 4104-AC-0550
 LOT AREA 5,700 SQ FT
 EXISTING PROPERTY GRAVEL AND ASPHALT
 TO BE USED AS OUTDOOR STORAGE FOR BUSINESS LOCATED
 ON TAX LOT 05501
 EXISTING PRIVACY FENCING ON SOUTH SIDE, NEW PRIVACY
 FENCING ON EAST AND NORTH SIDE

FOR PLANNING REVIEW



PROPERTY OWNER:
HUNTER CHRISTIANSEN
 34091 SLAVENS RD
 WARREN, OR 97051
 PHONE: 971-363-9791
 EMAIL: vhunter@gmail.com

184 SOUTH 15TH
 St Helens, OR 97051
 TAX LOT # 4104-AC-05501

SCALE: AS NOTED
 DRAWN BY: AP
 CHECKED BY:
 CAD FILE: 2002_SP-1-SitePlan-2026
 DATE: 04/13/2026

REVISIONS	
△	DESCRIPTION

CONTENTS:
 PLAN & SECTION,
 SHEET NO:

SP-1

1 SITE PLAN
 SP-1 1/8" = 1'-0"



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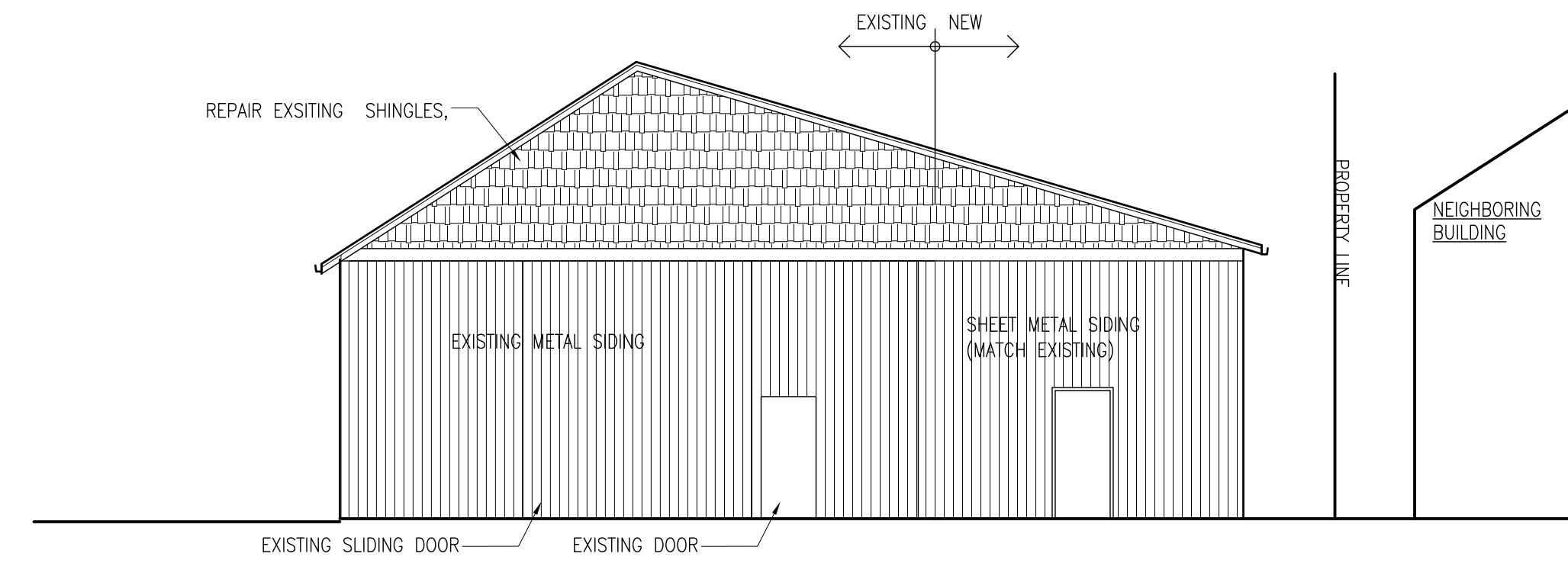
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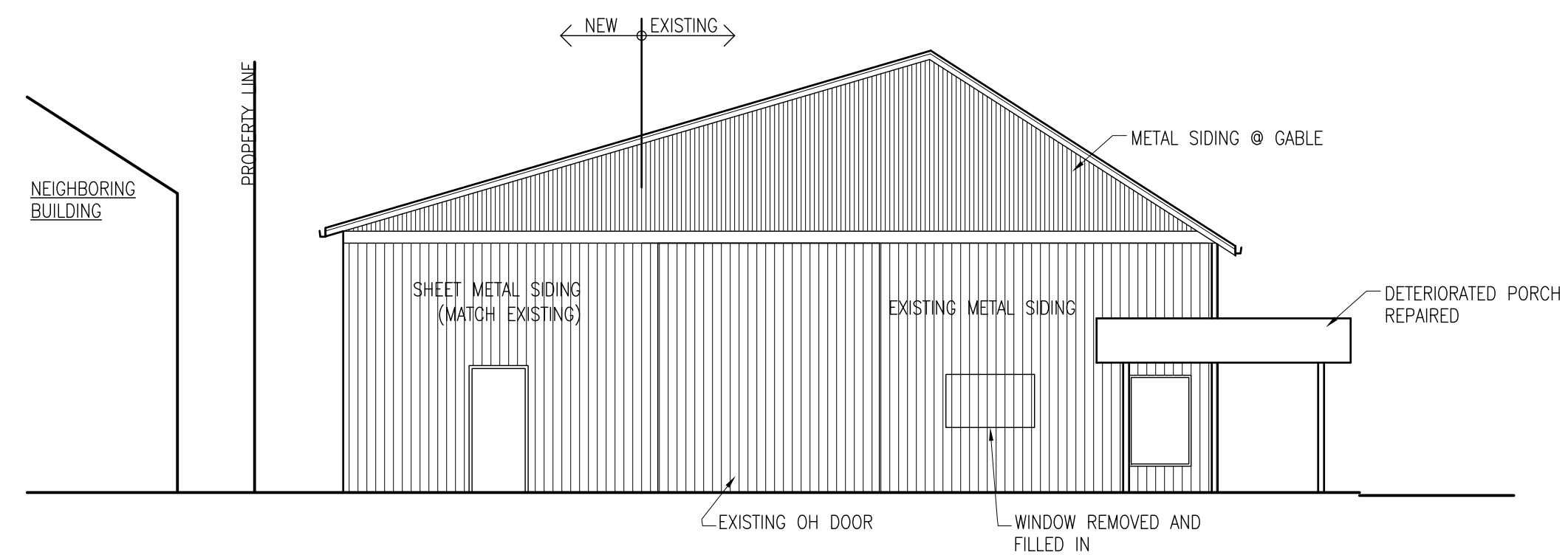
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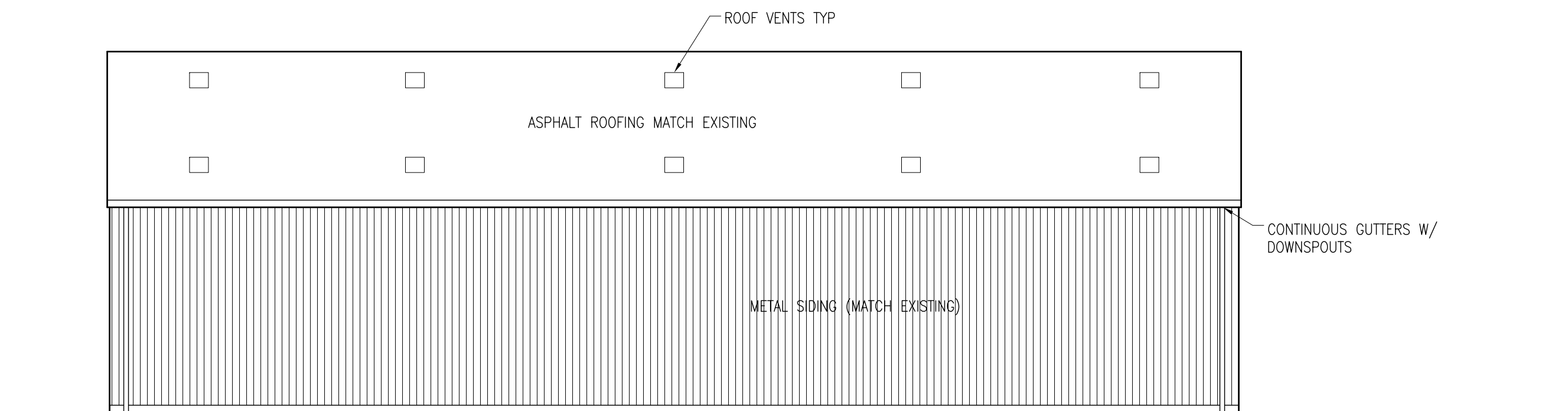
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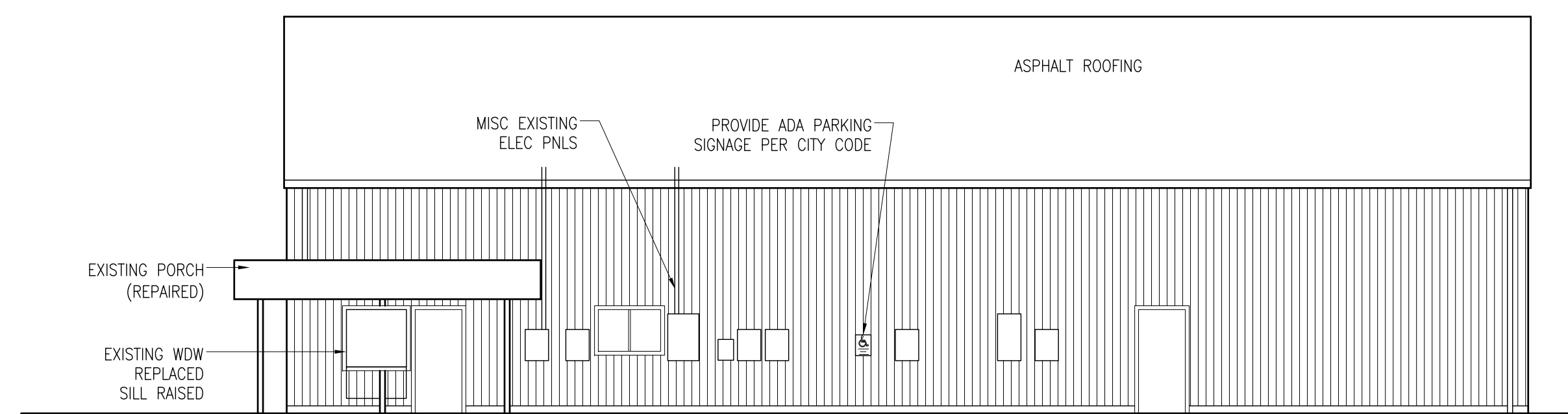
3 REAR ELEVATION
A1 1/8" = 1'-0"



1 FRONT ELEVATION (15th street)
A1 1/8" = 1'-0"



4 NORTH ELEVATION
A1 1/8" = 1'-0"



2 SOUTH ELEVATION
A1 1/8" = 1'-0"

2005



2009



2011



2014



2016



2018



2020



APRIL
2022



2024

