

BUILDING SAFETY & ZONING DIVISION
PLAN COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

TO: Plan Commission
DATE: December 22nd, 2025
SUBJECT: Initial Review and Schedule Public Hearing – Text Amendment to Chapter 550 Zoning.

A request by Bruce Loeb for a text amendment to the City of Watertown Zoning Code.

BACKGROUND DESCRIPTION:

Proposed Amendment:

‘Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service’ is a ‘Principal Land Uses Permitted as a Conditional Use’ in the Planned Business, General Business, General Industrial, and Heavy Industrial Zoning Districts. Often vehicle repair establishments with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow for ‘Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service’ desire to sell a small number of vehicles to augment their income stream. To sell vehicles in this manner a dealer license from the State of Wisconsin is required. One of the requirements to obtain a dealer license from the State is verification that the zoning district the establishment is located within allows for the selling of vehicles. The current zoning code does not allow for an establishment with a CUP for ‘Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service’ to also sell vehicles. To allow the selling of vehicles (or equipment) the land use category of ‘Outdoor Display’ is the required designation. While ‘Outdoor Display’ is a ‘Principal Land Uses Permitted as a Conditional Use’ in the business zoning districts it is not a permitted land use in the industrial zoning districts. Furthermore, a parcel or lot in any zoning district can have only one principal land use. Therefore, a parcel or lot with a principal land use for ‘Vehicle Repair and Maintenance’ cannot also have a principal land use for ‘Outdoor Display’.

The proposed zoning ordinance text amendment would create ‘Outdoor Display incidental to Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service’ as a permitted by right accessory use in the zoning districts that allow ‘Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service’ as a CUP. This allowance to sell vehicles (or equipment) under ‘Outdoor Display Incidental to Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service’ would only apply to establishments that first have a CUP for ‘Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service’. No other land use categories in the business or industrial zoning districts would be allowed to sell vehicles as an accessory use under this proposed text change.

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT LANGUAGE:

Amendment - §550-32C(1) [Planned Business Zoning District]

C. List of allowable accessory uses (per § 550-45C).

- (1) Accessory land uses permitted by right:
 - (a) Farm residence.
 - (b) Residential accessory structure.
 - (c) Company cafeteria.
 - (d) Company-provided on-site recreation.
 - (e) Home occupation.
 - (f) On-site parking lot.
 - (g) Private residential recreational facility.
 - (h) Drainage structure.
 - (i) Filling.
 - (j) Lawn care.
 - (k) Exterior communication devices.

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- (l) Nonresidential accessory structure.
(m) Outdoor Display incidental to Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service.

Amendments - §550-33C(1), §550-36C(1), & §550-37C(1) [General Business, General Industrial, and Heavy Industrial Zoning Districts]

C. List of allowable accessory uses (per § 550-45C).

- (1) Accessory land uses permitted by right:
- (a) Farm residence.
 - (b) Residential accessory structure.
 - (c) Company cafeteria.
 - (d) Company-provided on-site recreation.
 - (e) Home occupation.
 - (f) On-site parking lot.
 - (g) Private residential recreational facility.
 - (h) Drainage structure.
 - (i) Filling.
 - (j) Lawn care.
 - (k) Exterior communication devices.
 - (l) Tourist rooming house.
 - (m) Nonresidential accessory structure.
 - (n) Outdoor Display incidental to Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service.

Amendment - §550-56

DD. Outdoor Display Incidental to Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service. Description: Outdoor Display Incidental to Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service land uses include land uses which conduct sales, or display sales merchandise or equipment outside of an enclosed building where Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Service (as described under §550- 52Q) is permitted.

- (1) Regulations
- (a) Shall comply with all regulations of §550-52D.
 - (b) Display area shall not exceed 15% of gross lot area.
 - (c) Sales and display merchandise shall be limited to three (3) vehicles or equipment items.

PLAN COMMISSION OPTIONS:

The following are possible options for the Plan Commission:

- Set the public hearing date for January 20th, 2026.
- Postpone public hearing to a later date or indefinitely.

STAFF RECOMENDATION:

- Staff recommends setting the Common Council public hearing date for this item for January 20th, 2026.