



CITY OF RACINE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 11/3/2025

To: Mayor and Planning, Heritage and Design Commission Members

From: City Development Department, Division of Planning and Redevelopment

Division Manager: Steven Madsen – (262) 636-9151 steven.madsen@cityofracine.org

Case Manager: Michelle Cook

Location: 4800 Graceland Blvd

Applicant: Sean Currie, McKinstry Essention, LLC, o.b.o. Jeffrey Serak Racine Unified School District

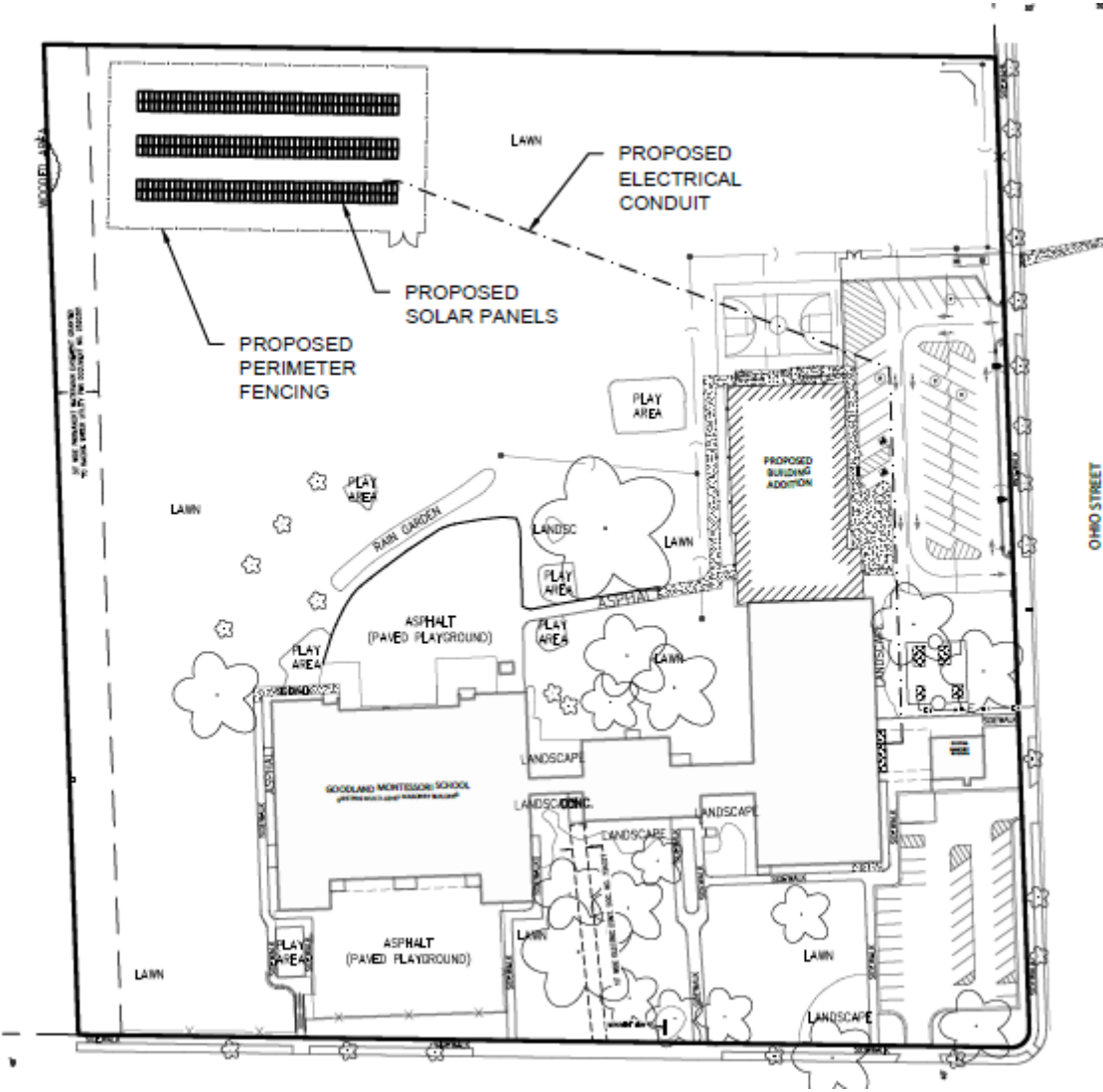
Property Owner: Unified School District 1

Request: Consideration of an amendment to a conditional use permit to allow for the addition of a solar array at 4800 Graceland Blvd., zoned O-I, Office/Institutional District, as allowed Sec. 114-428 of the Municipal Code.

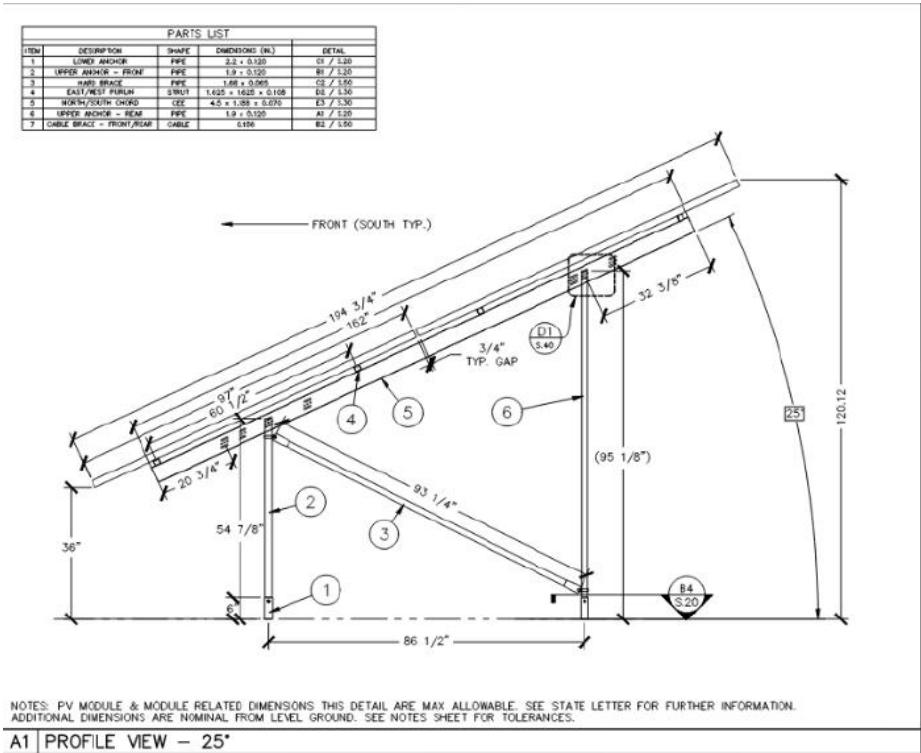
BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY: The applicant seeks approval for the addition of a ground mount solar array that will cover approximately 0.170 acres (7,408 sq. ft.) on the northwest corner of the lot.



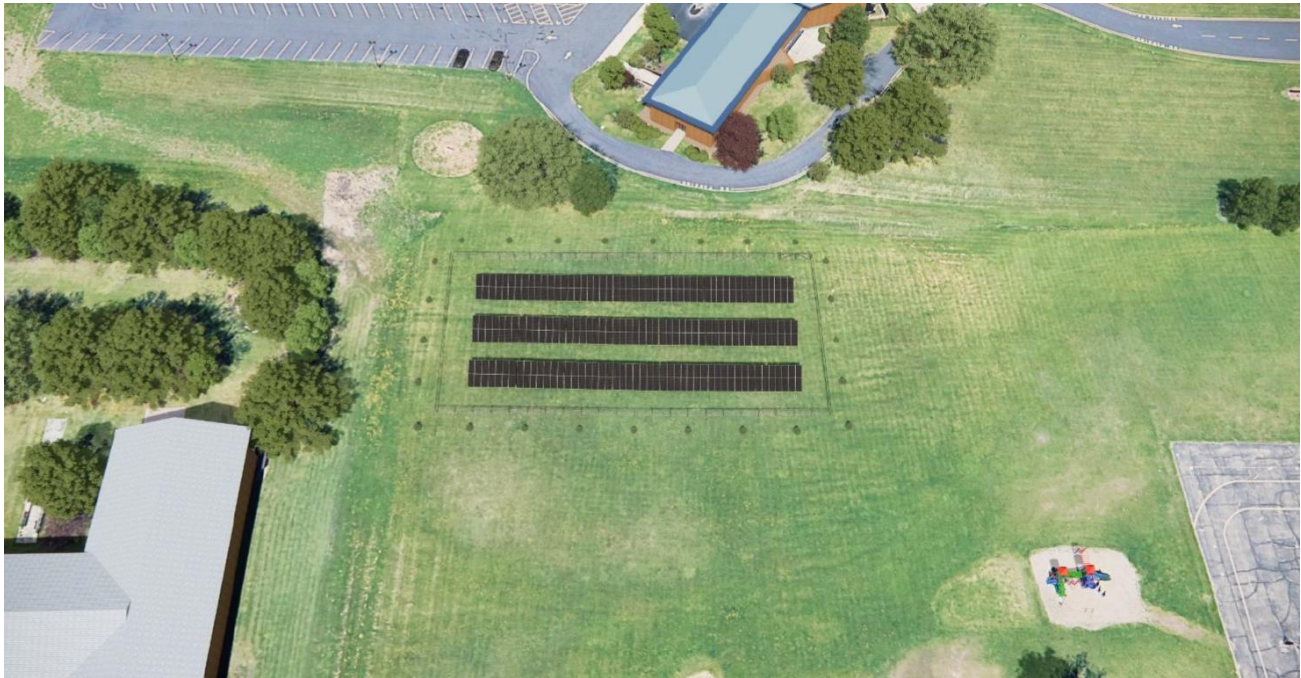
Birdseye view of the property, indicated in blue (image from City Pictometry)



Site plan, submitted by the applicant. North is up.



Solar panel detail, submitted by the applicant.



Rendering of proposed solar array, submitted by the applicant.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parcel Number: [13132017](#)

Property Size: 459,558 Square Feet

Comprehensive Plan Map Designation: O-I Office/Institutional

Consistency with Adopted Plans:

The [Racine Comprehensive Plan](#) states in its land use goals

- Maintain and develop a land use pattern that strengthens the character and livability of the City's downtown core, commercial and industrial areas, and neighborhoods.
- Promote infill development in areas with existing infrastructure and services, protecting natural areas, and provide adequate infrastructure, public services, and land supply to meet existing and future.

Corridor or Special Design District?: N/A

Historic?: N/A

Current Zoning District: O/I Office/Institutional

Purpose of Zone District: The O-I Office/Institutional district is designed primarily to accommodate office buildings, civic and governmental structures, and educational and institutional buildings in a mutually compatible environment. Compatible apartment structures may be allowed by conditional use permit.

Existing Land Use: School

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	O/I Office/Institutional	Church
East	O/I Office/Institutional	Park
South	R-3 Limited General Residence	Residential
West	Village Zoning	Multifamily Apartments

ANALYSIS:

Development Standards:

Density ([114-Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 5 [Bulk Regulations](#) & 8 [Lots](#)): The existing building complies with all bulk and lot standards.

Standard	Required	Provided
Lot Area	12,000 square feet	458,755 square feet

Lot Frontage	100 feet	659 feet
Floor Area Ratio	2.5 maximum	.10

Setbacks ([114-Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#)): Nonresidential uses are not required to provided yards, except as required in 114-470.

Yard	Required	Provided
Side (East)	25 feet	98 feet
Rear (North)	8 feet	57 feet
Front (South)	12 feet	86 feet
Side (West)	30 feet	123 feet

Building design standards (114-Secs. [735.5](#) & [736](#)): The additions to the property conform to the requirements of the code.

Sign Regulations (114-[Article X](#)): Signage is not a part of this request. There is an existing sign on the building that complies with the sign standards listed below:

Sign Type	Allowable Sq. Ft.	Provided Sq. Ft.	Maximum Height	Proposed Height
Freestanding/Wall Sign	60 sq ft		15 ft	
Total				

Off-street parking and loading requirements (114- [Article XI](#)):

Use Type	Required	Provided
School	1/each employee	
Total	N/A	73

Landscaping, screening and yard requirements ([114- Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#) & 7 [Fences and Walls](#)): The current and proposed landscape on the property conforms to the requirements of the ordinance.

Outdoor lighting, signs ([114-Sec. 742](#)): The applicant is not proposing any changes to lighting. The site lighting complies with the development standards and focuses light onto the subject property and not onto adjacent properties.

Rubbish and trash storage ([114-Article V](#) & [114-740](#)): The existing storage for trash and rubbish on the property conforms to the requirements of the ordinance.

Engineering, Utilities and Access:

Access ([114-1151](#)): There are no changes being proposed to the access to the site with this application. The access to the site will remain from Ohio Street and Graceland Blvd.

Surface drainage ([114-739](#) & Consult Engineering Dept.): The installation of an approximately 7,408 sq. ft. solar array is not expected to alter the surface drainage for the site.

Sewage disposal and water supply ([114-821](#) & Consult Engineering and S/W Utility): All utilities are available for this site and the applicant proposal is not expected to impact the ability to serve the area.

Exceptions to ordinance: N/A

Additional Planning and Zoning Comments: N/A

REQUIRED FINDINGS OF FACT:

CONDITIONAL USE FINDINGS (Sec. 114-154. – Standards.)

No Conditional Use shall be recommended by the Plan Commission unless it is found that that:

- 1) The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to, or endanger, the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare.**

Staff Comments: The proposed solar panel installation is not expected to endanger the public health, safety or general welfare in the area. The solar panels will generate a renewable energy source for the school, without generating any noise, traffic, or odors that may otherwise be a detriment to the neighborhood and surrounding uses.

- 2) The conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.**

Staff Comments: The proposed solar array will utilize an area of land that would otherwise not be utilized. The addition will be beneficial to the use and enjoyment of the property by adding a low-level land use to the existing site. The solar panels will be ground mounted and surrounded by fencing and landscaping to minimize visual impacts. The rest of the property will remain unchanged, with no changes planned to the functionality and operations of this property as a result of the solar array.

- 3) The establishment of the conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.**

Staff Comments: The surrounding property is developed as mostly commercial and office uses and the addition of the solar array will not alter the trend of development already permitted in this area. Solar panels are a low-level use that are allowed in a variety of districts, including residential, and its addition to this property will not change its redevelopment or the development of surrounding neighborhood.

- 4) Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and/or necessary facilities have been or are being provided.**

Staff Comments: The addition of a ground mount solar array will not affect utilities, access roads, or drainage for the site.

- 5) Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designated as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.**

Staff Comments: The addition of a solar array will not affect the ingress and egress to the site.

- 6) The proposed conditional use is not contrary to the objectives of the current land use plan for the city.**

Staff Comments: This conditional use will promote the land use plan for the city through its support of office/institutional districts and sustainability goals by promoting renewable energy sources.

- 7) The conditional use shall, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may, in each instance, be modified pursuant to the recommendations of the plan commission.**

Staff Comments: The applicable sections of the zoning ordinance as they relate to this request are being met.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR THE PLANNING HERITAGE AND DESIGN COMMISSION

1. Approve the request as submitted; or
2. Approve the request with conditions deemed necessary to mitigate any adverse impacts that could arise from the project; or
3. Deny the request; or
4. Defer the request to obtain more specific information about the request, subject to the consent of the applicant.
5. Defer with a continuance of the public hearing to a date certain, subject to the consent of the applicant.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT IN THIS REPORT, THAT THE REQUEST FROM SEAN CURRIE FROM MCKINSTRY, REPRESENTING JEFFREY SERAK FROM RACINE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, SEEKING A MAJOR AMENDMENT TO A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, TO ALLOW FOR AN ADDITION OF A SOLAR ARRAY AT 4800 GRACELAND BLVD, BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

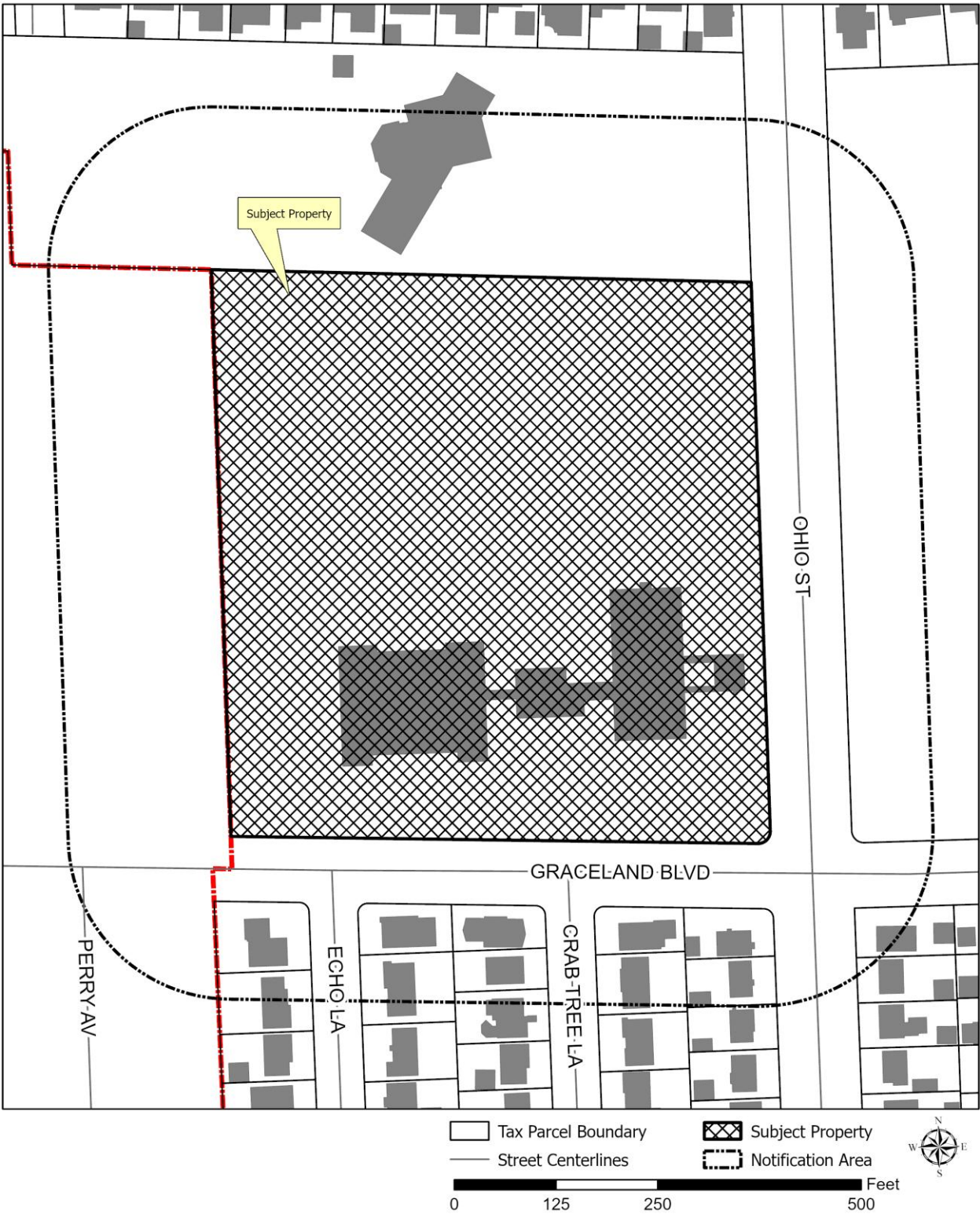
- a) That the plans presented to the Planning, Heritage and Design Commission on November 3, 2025, be approved subject to the conditions contained herein.
- b) That all codes and ordinances are complied with and required permits acquired.
- c) That the final fencing material be submitted for review by the Planning Division prior to obtaining a building permit.
- d) That no minor changes be made from the conditions of this permit without the approval of the Department of City Development and no major changes be made from the conditions of this permit without approval of the Planning, Heritage and Design Commission.
- e) That this conditional use permit is subject to Planning, Heritage and Design Commission review for compliance with the listed conditions.

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1) Property owner notification map indicating the subject property;
- 2) Aerial Photo indicating the subject property;
- 3) Zoning Map indicating the subject property;
- 4) Land Use Map from Comprehensive Plan, indicating the subject property;
- 5) Site photos of the property and general area; and
- 6) Submittal documents (view in legistar).



Major Amendment - 4800 Graceland Blvd



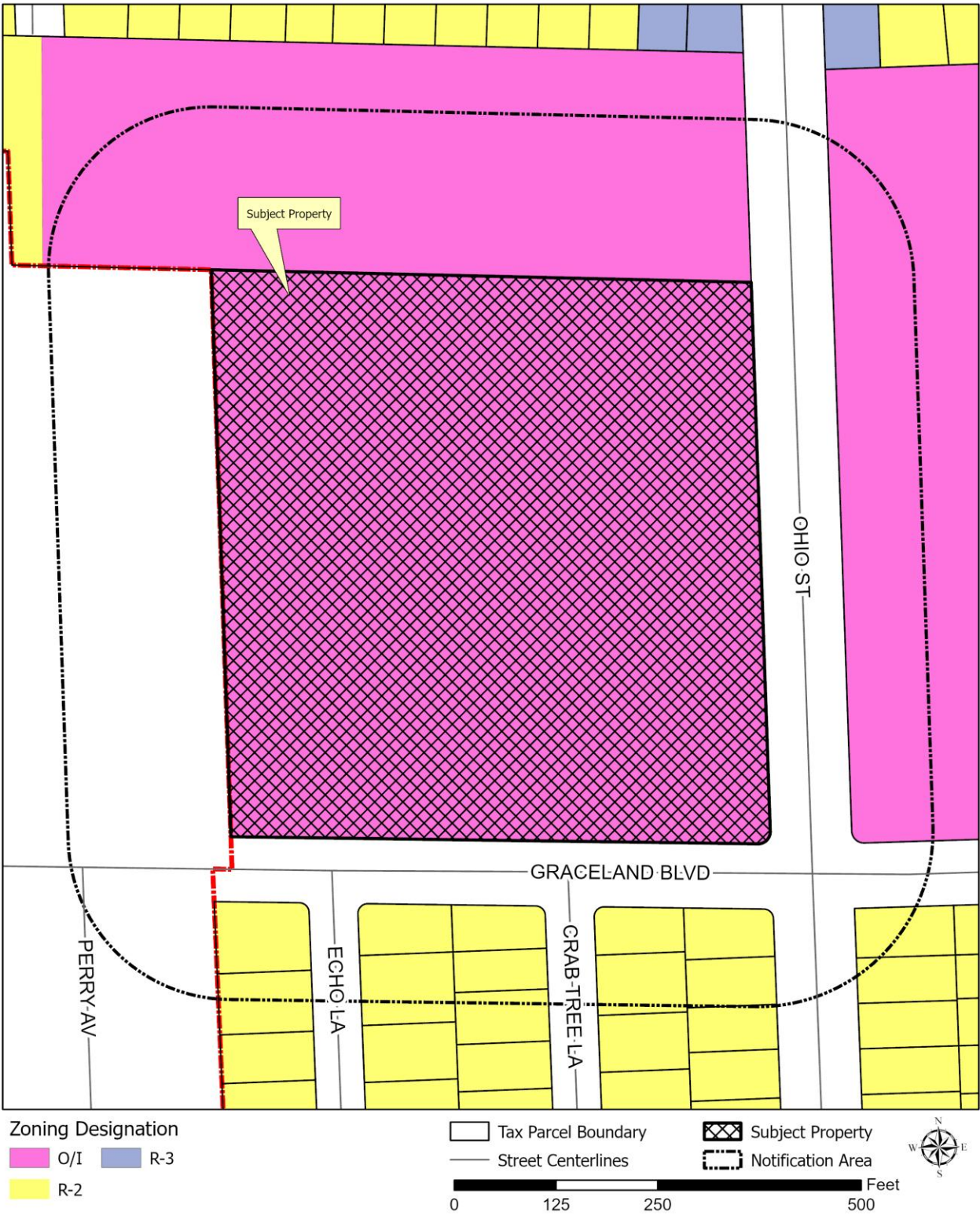


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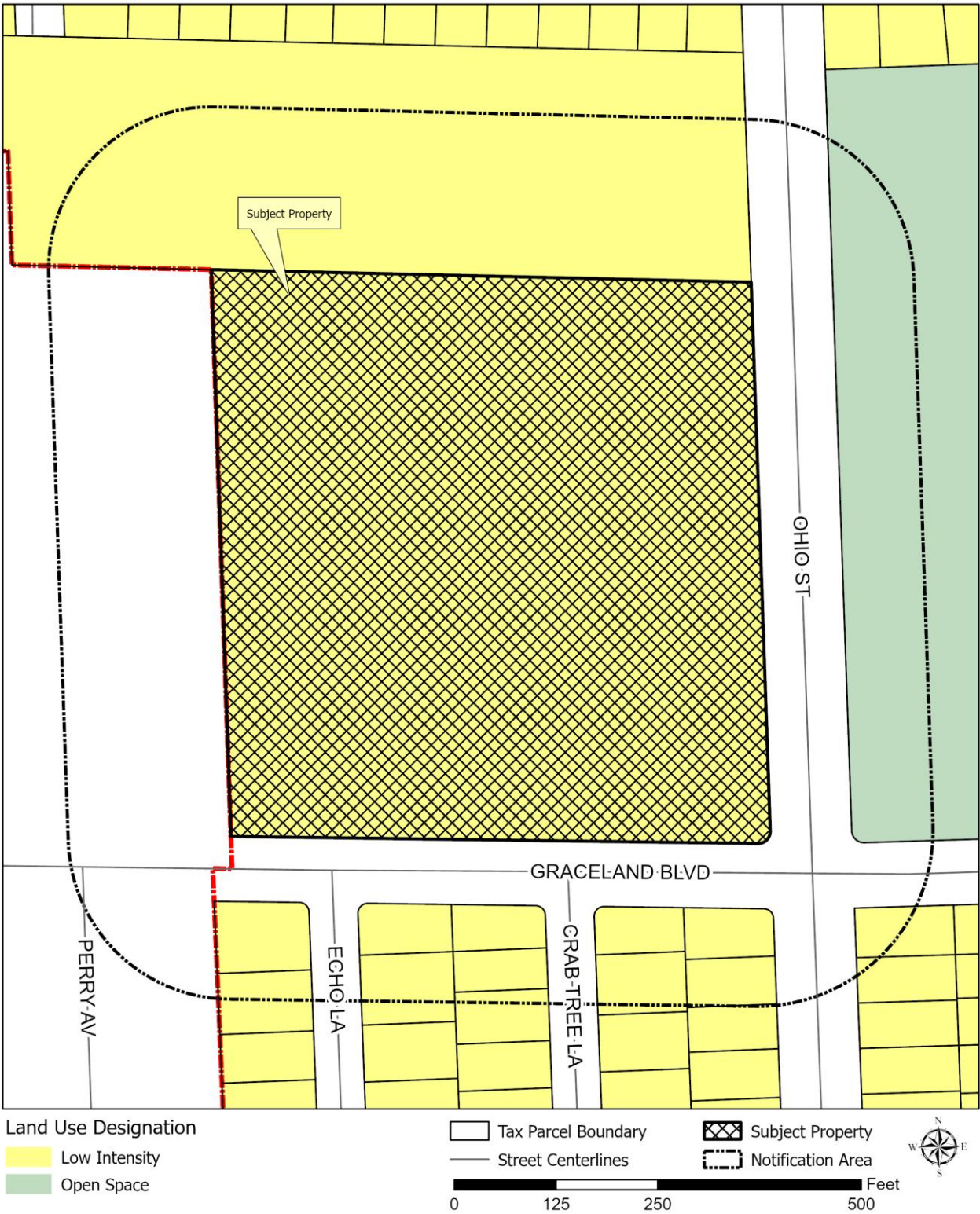


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Site Photos



Looking North at site location



Looking West at site location