



CITY OF RACINE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 11/18/2020

To: Mayor and Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission Members

From: City Development Department, Division of Planning and Redevelopment

Division Manager: Matt Sadowski – (262) 636-9152 matthew.sadowski@cityofracine.org

Case Manager: Jeff Hintz

Location: 854 Washington Avenue

Applicant: Tim Callaghan of Smith Welding Fabrication Inc.

Property Owner: GEO X LLC

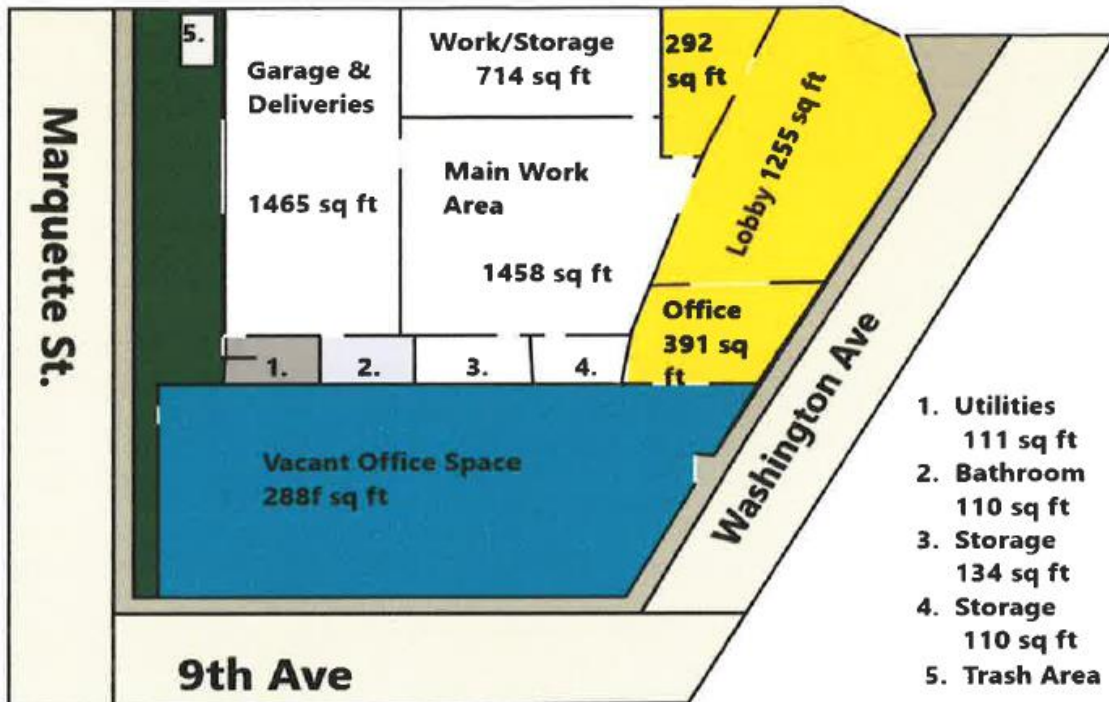
Request: Consideration of a conditional use permit to operate a contractor shop and office for welding and fabrication of metals at 854 Washington Avenue, for property located in a B-3 General Commercial Zone District as required in section 114-488 of the Municipal Code.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY: The office portion of the building, approximately 2,900 square feet, would be available for use by another tenant. The shop portion of the building, approximately 4,600 square feet would be used for the welding and fabricating business. The shop would be open from 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM Monday – Friday; as business needs dictate, the shop could be used longer, but not open for the public. The business provides welding services such as repair, fabrication and manufacturing for its customers and currently has one employee.

The Zoning Ordinance classifies this welding and fabricating operation as permissible in the B-3 General Commercial Zone District upon the issuance of a conditional use permit (114-468).



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



Proposed Site Plan, submitted by applicant (north is up).

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parcel Number: [03618000](#)

Property Size: 10,170 square feet

Comprehensive Plan Map Designation: Governmental/Institutional

Consistency with Adopted Plans:

The [Racine Comprehensive Plan](#) states that:

- The plan should encourage the redevelopment of older areas and commercial areas.
- 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.
- Encourage development patterns that promote efficient and sustainable use of land, that can be readily linked by transportation systems and that utilize existing public utilities and services.
- Promote redevelopment and infill in areas with existing infrastructure and services, enhancing existing residential, commercial, and industrial areas.
- Promote the expansion or stabilization of the current economic base and the creation of a range of employment opportunities.

Corridor or Special Design District?: Downtown Area Design Review District

Historic?: N/A

Current Zoning District: B-3 General Commercial

Purpose of Zone District: The B3 general commercial district is intended to accommodate those commercial activities which may be incompatible with the predominantly retail uses permitted in other business districts; and whose service area is not confined to any one neighborhood or community.

Proposed Zoning: No change proposed

Existing Land Use: Former tool supply store with offices.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	I-2 General Industrial	City Public Works garage
East	B-3 General Commercial	Detached single unit dwellings and parking
South	B-3 General Commercial	Auto service shop
West	I-2 General Industrial	City Public Works facilities

Operations: The office portion of the building, approximately 2,900 square feet, would be available for use by another tenant. The shop portion of the building, approximately 4,600 square feet would

be used for the welding and fabricating business. The shop would be open from 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM Monday – Friday; as business needs dictate, the shop could be used longer, but not open for the public. The business provides welding services such as repair, fabrication and manufacturing for its customers and currently has one employee.

ANALYSIS:

Development Standards:

Density ([114-Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 5 [Bulk Regulations](#) & 8 [Lots](#)): There are no changes planned to the exterior of the building as a result of this proposal.

Standard	Required	Provided
Lot Area	No minimum	10,170 square feet
Lot Frontage	30 feet	293 feet
Floor Area Ratio	2.5 maximum	1.0

Setbacks ([114-Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#)):

Yard	Required	Provided
Front	0 Feet	0 feet
Corner Side	0 Feet	0 feet
Corner Side	0 feet	0 feet
Rear	0 Feet	0 feet

Building design standards (114-Secs. [735.5](#) & [736](#)): The building on the parcel complies with the requirements of 114.735.5.b.1, however this request does not include any new buildings or modifications to the exterior of the existing building. There are some areas on the building which require minor maintenance, such as paint and uncovering of windows or a wall section which has been boarded over.

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

Use Type	Required	Provided
Welding Shop	2	0
Total	2	0*

*the building is existing non-conforming and has been used for a similar purpose in the past. There is some availability for parallel parking on the west side of the building and inside the building as part of the garage.

A Building of this size does not require a dedicated loading space. Given the proposed function of the facility, the loading and unloading will occur in the area adjacent to Marquette Street.

Landscaping, screening and yard requirements ([114- Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#) & 7 [Fences and Walls](#)): yards are not required or even realistically possible on this property given how it has been constructed. There is some ability for plantings or a decorative element in an elevated planting bed near the main entrance along Washington Avenue.

Sign Regulations (114-[Article X](#)): Signage is not a part of this request. Any future signage would need to follow the sizing requirements outlined below and be reviewed for design by the PHDC.

Sign Type	Allowable Sq. Ft.	Provided Sq. Ft.
Projecting/Wall/Freestanding	300 square feet	N/A
Window signs	50% of window area^	N/A
Alleyway Signage	N/A	N/A
Total	300 square feet	N/A

^Each building is allowed two (2) window signs under four (4) square feet in total size, which do not count against the total allowable signage.

Outdoor lighting, signs ([114-Sec. 742](#)): The submitted plans do not contemplate any changes to the exterior lighting on the site. The existing lighting appears to conform to development standards.

Rubbish and trash storage ([114-Article V](#) & [114-740](#)): A trash location is depicted on the site plan and enclosure would need to be constructed at the proposed location. As an alternative, the dumpster or containers could be placed outside on collection day and kept inside the other days.

Engineering, Utilities and Access:

Access ([114-1151](#)): Vehicular access to the site is provided from a driveways off Marquette Street. The site plan submitted by the applicant does not contemplate any changes to access.

Surface drainage ([114-739](#) & Consult Engineering Dept.): Change of use within the existing building is not expected to impact the surface drainage of this lot.

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 this area.

Exceptions to ordinance: No exception are required for this proposal, the site meets all zoning distance separation requirements

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:

- 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: With the recommended conditions at the end of this report, the establishment of the Conditional Use is not expected to be detrimental public safety and general welfare. The proposed business is generally about the same thing intensity wise as the public works garages to the north, which share a common wall with this property. The activity generated to the site based on the employee load is expected to be minimal from a noise perspective. The building will contain all the noises from the operation and the roadway network in this area is generally busy enough during the proposed operating hours that vehicle noise will also cancel any sound emitted from this building.

- 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: This conditional use is not anticipated to be injurious to other properties in the general area, assuming the recommended conditions are adopted with this request. The recommended conditions ensure this property will not impair property values or the enjoyment of adjacent properties. The nature of the business is nearly identical to that of the city facilities in close proximity. While there are some nonconforming residential uses in the area, all of Washington Avenue is zoned for commercial and industrial type uses and there are higher and better uses intended for this corridor. That does not mean that the people living in this area deserve to have additional noise; this proposed business is expected to follow the noise ordinance at all times and it is expected that all sounds generated by the business will be contained by the building.

- 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: This general block of Washington Avenue is almost exclusively home to City Public Works Facilities. The anticipated usage of this property is essentially the same thing based on the materials submitted by the applicant. The adjacent uses to the north and west are similar and to the east, across Washington Avenue is in somewhat of a transition period. There are some detached single unit dwellings present, but it is not anticipated these will go on forever on this block as they are nonconforming uses. That being said, it would be expected that the conditions recommended with this report will allow the property to function in a manner which does not limit the future

potential of the underutilized properties on this particular block. This activity being kept indoors is paramount to the proposal being considered.

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

Staff Comments: The site plan submitted by the applicant does not propose any changes to the access, utilities or drainage for the site. The use of this site and existing building is not expected to impact the provision of utilities for the property or general area.

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 applicant is not contemplating any changes to the access to this site. The property is built out and is nonconforming as to parking, but has functioned as a similar use to what is proposed since at least the 1980's. given the proposed business use of the property, parking isn't essential or vital to the function of this building for the proposed usage. There is a loading zone off street, which effectively serves as parking for the business usage. There are not any anticipated congestion issues as a result of this building being reused in the manner which is proposed.

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

Staff Comments: The Land Use Plan effectively thought that this property would become part of the Public Works Garage as the whole block is coded for governmental and institutional usage. That being said, the land use is the same classification for the most part, with what occurs on the properties to the north. The plan intention and what is proposed to occur here with this proposed machine shop are in alignment.

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: With the recommended conditions, it is expected that this development will operate in accordance with the applicable regulations for this zone district. No exceptions are required with this proposal as it meets all zoning ordinance requirements.

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 SMITH WELDING FABRICATION INC, SEEKING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO OPERATE A CONTRACTOR SHOP AND OFFICE FOR WELDING AND FABRICATION OF METALS AT 854 WASHINGTON AVENUE BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- a) That the plans presented to the Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission on November 18, 2020 be approved subject to the conditions contained herein.
- b) That all license requirements from the State of Wisconsin and City of Racine be obtained, complied with, and kept current at all times.
- c) That all of the following occur prior to occupancy, unless otherwise noted:
 1. That a plan for the repair, painting and removal of the boarded area, with a timeline, be submitted to and approved by the Department of City Development. All repairs or improvements shall be completed by August 31, 2020 or the CUP shall automatically be revoked along with any occupancy certificate for this use.
 2. That details for the trash handling area be submitted to and approved by the Department of City Development, unless containers are to be kept inside.
- d) That if, prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit, required site improvements listed in “c” above have not been or cannot be completed, a financial surety shall be provided to the City. The surety shall be in a format as approved by the City Attorney’s office, and subject to all stipulations as identified for financial sureties in the City of Racine. The dollar amount shall be determined at the time of application based upon estimates provided by the applicants for any incomplete work, and shall be valid for no less than one (1) year from the date of issuance. The surety format and content is subject to review and approval by the City Attorney.
- e) That hours of operation are 7:00 AM – 3:00 PM Monday – Friday.

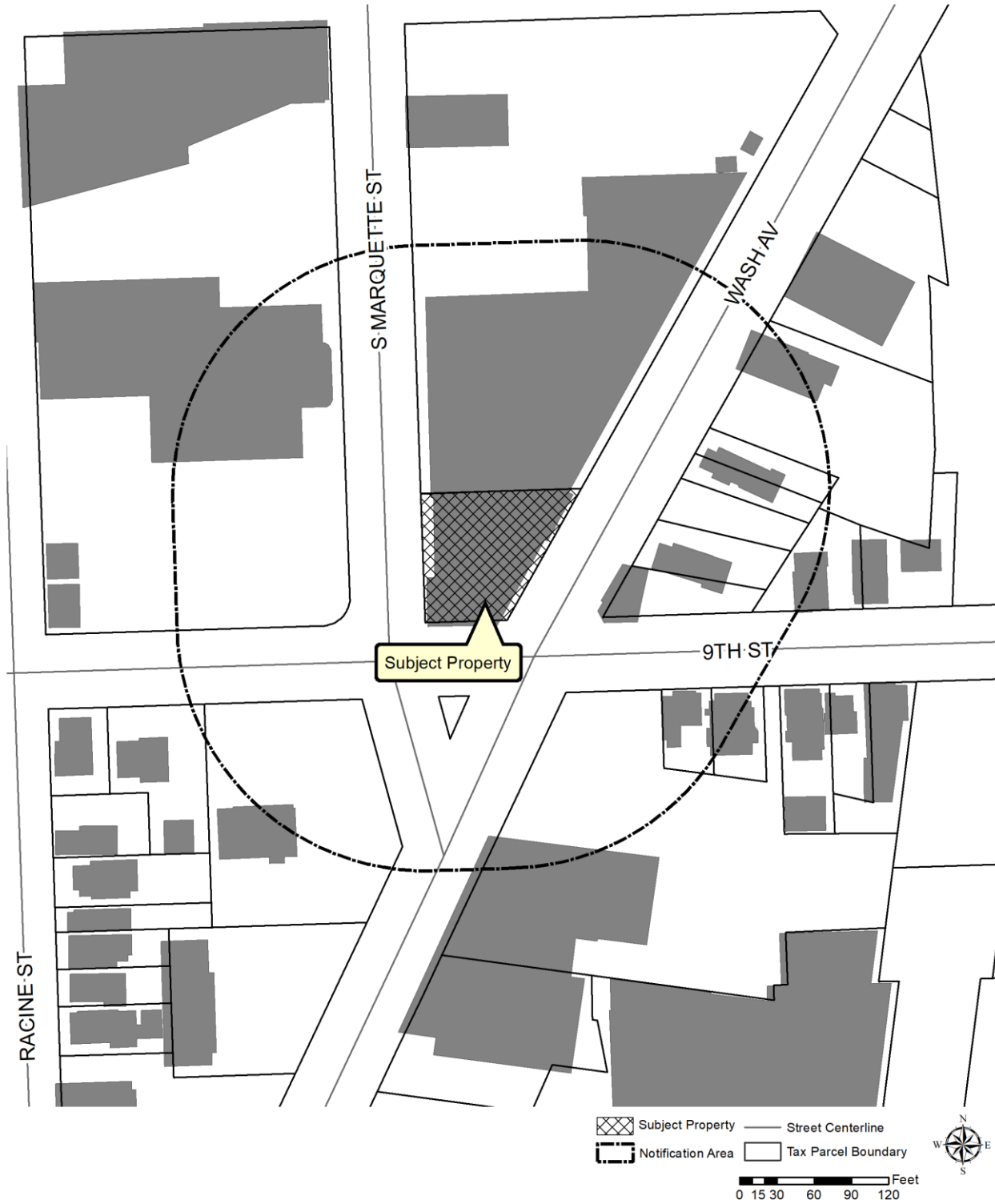
- f) That prior to installation, any proposed signage be submitted for the review and approval of City Development.
- g) That the existing planter on Washington Ave. be planted with annuals or perennials on a seasonal basis and maintained.
- h) That all codes and ordinances are complied with and required permits acquired.
- i) That no minor changes be made from the conditions of this permit without approval of the Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission, and no major changes be made from the conditions of this permit without the approval of the Common council.
- j) 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).

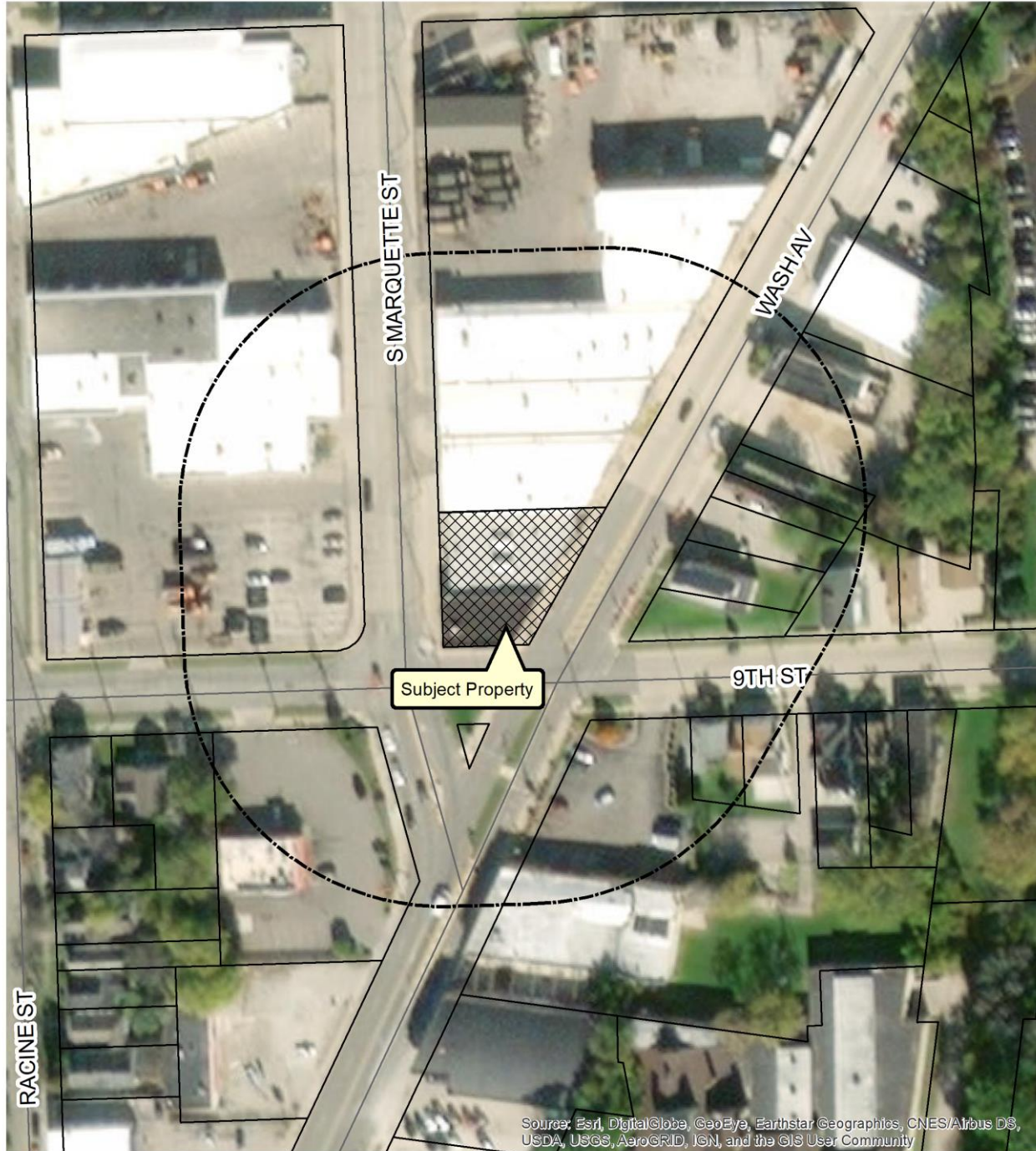


Conditional Use Request - 854 Washington Avenue

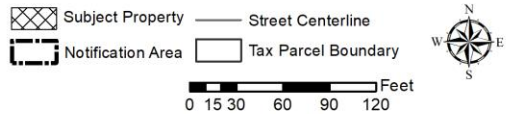




Conditional Use Request - 854 Washington Avenue

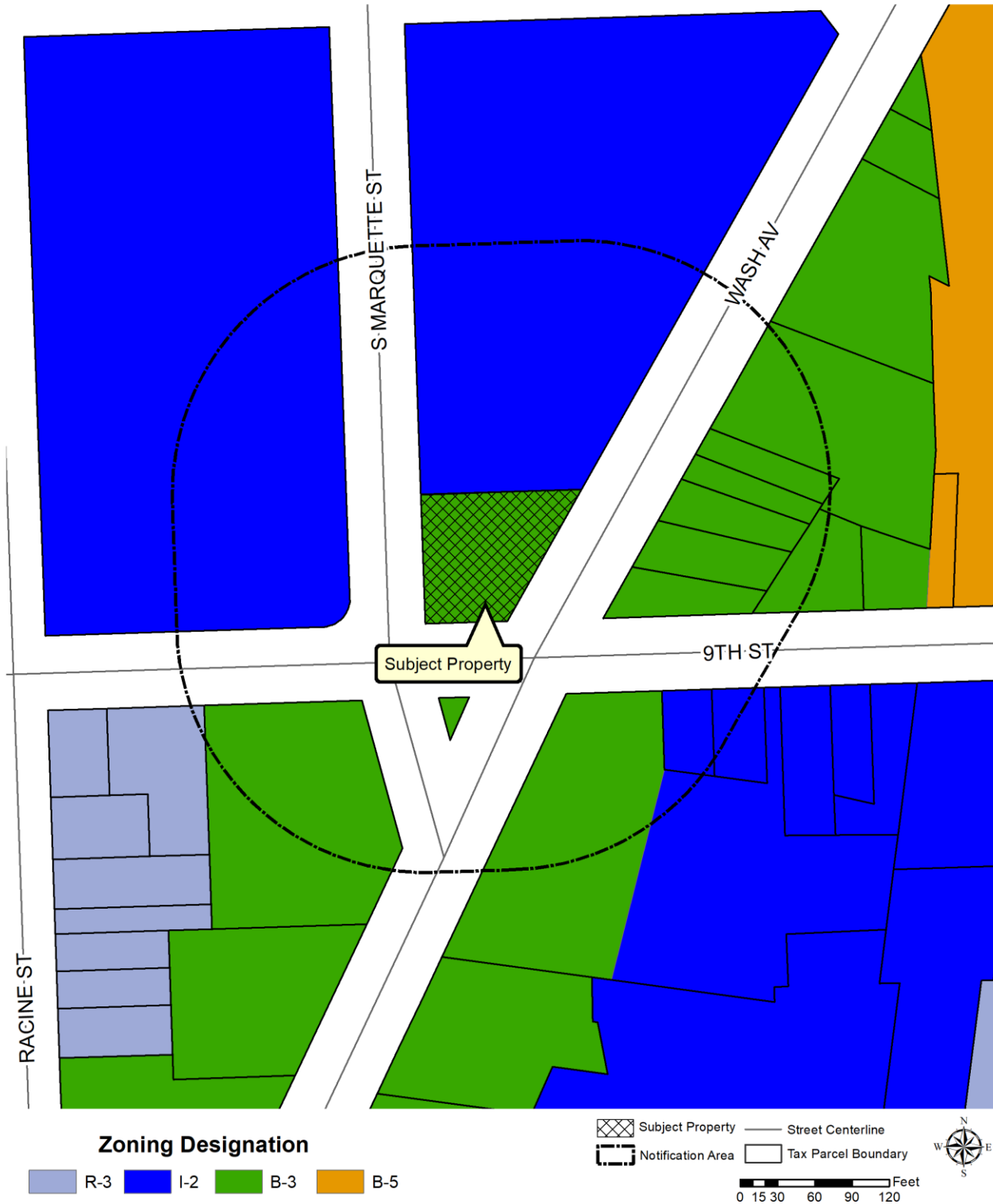


Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



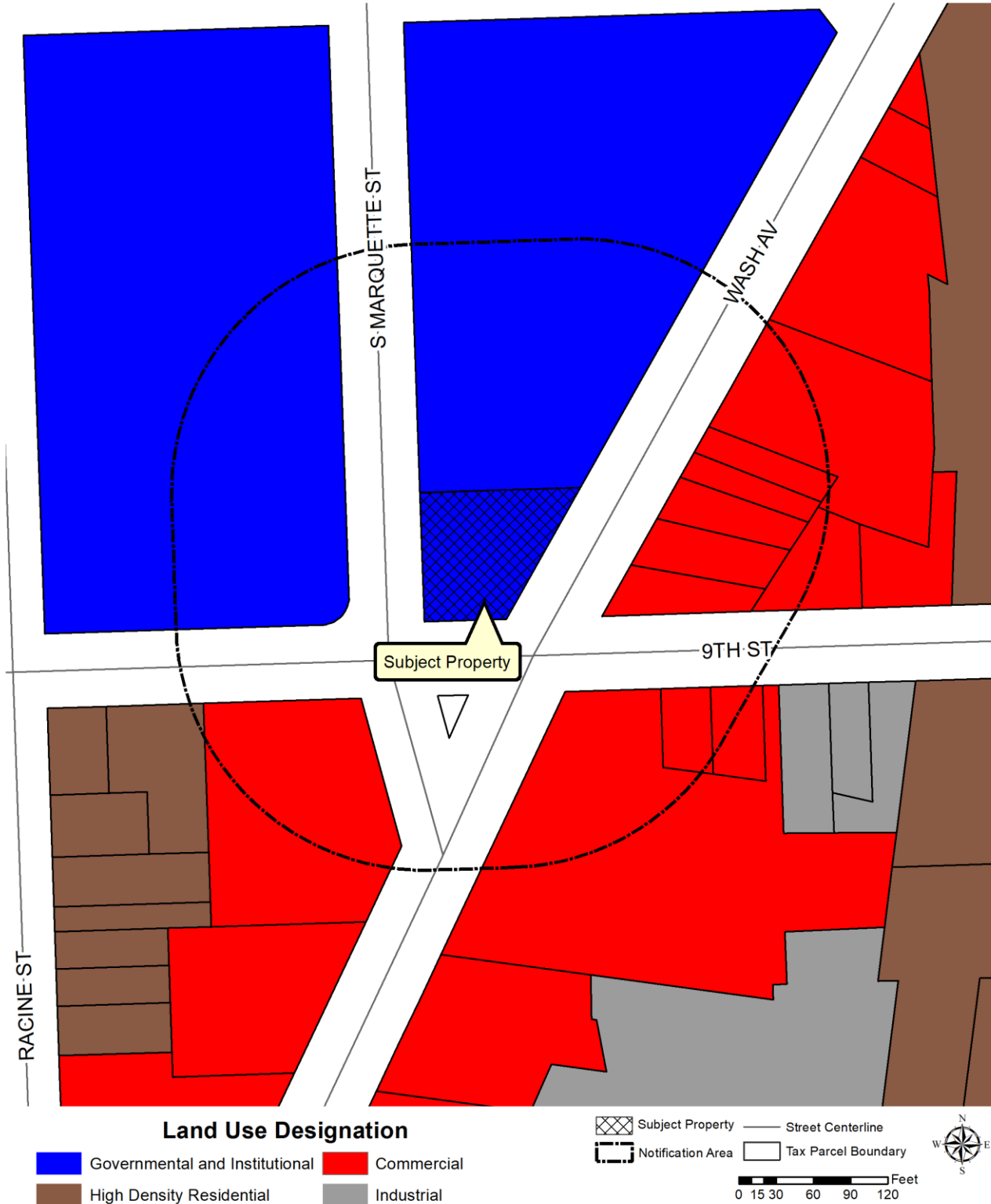


Conditional Use Request - 854 Washington Avenue





Conditional Use Request - 854 Washington Avenue



Site Photos



Looking north at property from 9th Street between Marquette and Washington



Looking north along Marquette Street



Looking at west side of existing building on the property



Looking west at building façade on Washington Avenue



Looking south along Washington Avenue



Looking east from subject property across Washington Avenue