



CITY OF RACINE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 11/14/2018

To: Mayor and Plan 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: 2100-2200 Northwestern Avenue

Applicant: J. Jeffers and Co

Property Owner: 2100 and 2200 Northwestern Ave LLC

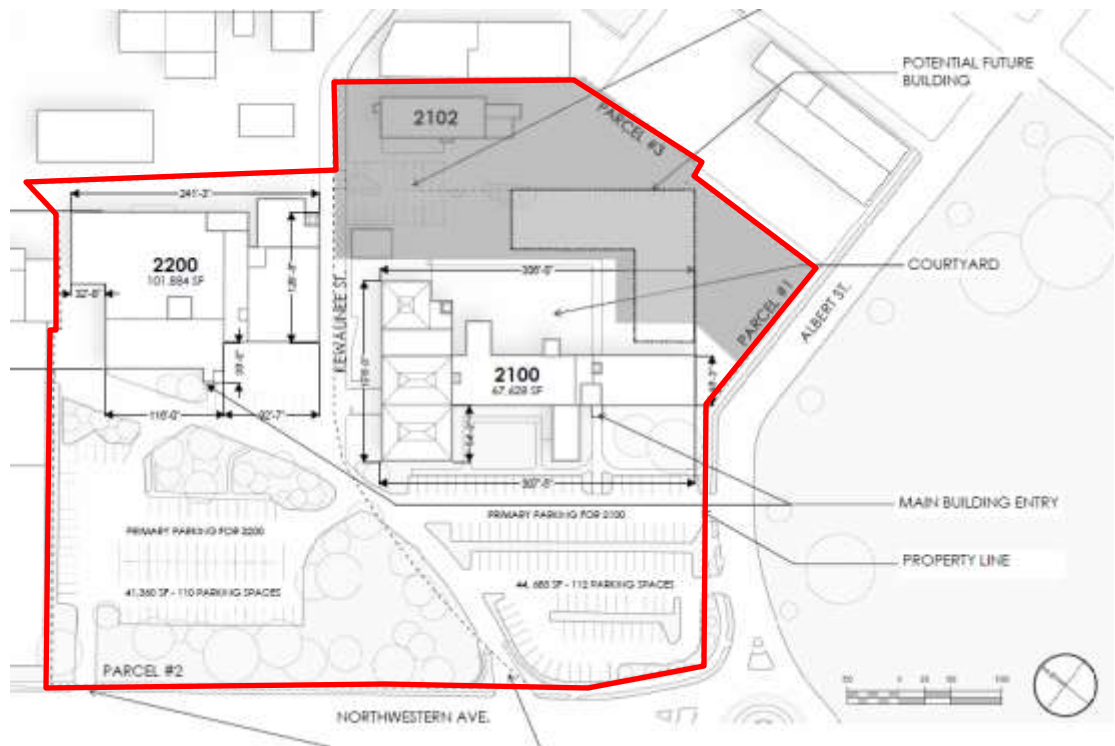
Request: Consideration of a change of zone from I-2 General Industrial District, to R-5 General Residence District with Flex Development Overlay as supported by the document, “A Comprehensive Plan for the City of Racine: 2035, Land Use Plan Map.”.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY: The project calls for rezoning of the properties to facilitate the development of residential dwelling units in the existing buildings. Approximately 40 residential units would be added to the existing building at 2100 Northwestern Avenue and approximately 80 residential units would be added to the existing building at 2200 Northwestern Avenue.

The R5 general residence district is primarily intended to provide medium to high density residential uses and allows for commercial uses such as including restaurants, drugstores, retail food shops, valet shops, beauty shops, and barbershops located in a building containing 50 or more dwelling units and accessible to the public only through the lobby of the building.



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



Proposed site plan for the property (highlighted in red), submitted by applicant.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parcel Number: [08424001](#) & [08422002](#)

Property Size: 3.875 acres and 3.462 acres, totaling 7.3 acres

Comprehensive Plan Map Designation: Mixed Use – Commercial Emphasis

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.
- New development should be designed so it is compatible with established development.
- Protect and enhance cultural structures, activities, historic sites and districts and their infrastructure.
- Preserve and enhance the historic and cultural resources and character of the City.

Corridor or Special Design District?: N/A

Historic?: Site file called [Horlick Industrial Historic District](#) exists with the State Historic Preservation Office.

Current Zoning District: I-2 General Industrial

Purpose of Zone District: The I-2 general industrial district is intended to accommodate those industrial activities which may produce moderate nuisances or hazards in areas that are relatively remote from residential and commercial development.

Proposed Zoning: R-5 General Residence with Flex Development Overlay District

Intent of proposed Zone District: The R5 general residence district is primarily intended to provide medium to high density residential areas adjacent to major shopping areas and convenient to places of employment. This district requires utilities of high capacity and community facilities sufficient to service the population, and a street system capable of accommodating relatively heavy traffic.

Existing Land Use: Vacant space and various commercial tenants.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	I-2 General Industrial	Contractors and warehousing space
East	I-2 General Industrial	Automobile repair and industrial contractors
South	O/I Office/Institutional	Sacred Heart Church
West	I-2 General Industrial	Self-service warehousing and gas station

Operations: The properties will function as a multi-unit residential facility as opposed to the industrial and warehousing nature of the current mix of uses on the property.

ANALYSIS:

Development Standards (proposed zoning requirements):

Density ([114-Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 5 [Bulk Regulations](#) & 8 [Lots](#)):

Standard	Required	Provided
Lot Area	Varies based on unit count and bedroom size*	7.3 acres (317,988 square feet)
Lot Frontage	30 feet	610 feet
Floor Area Ratio	4.8 maximum	.54

*Based on lot size, the parcels together could support 317 three bedroom units, 374 two bedroom units or 454 one bedroom or efficiency units. The preliminary unit count submitted by the applicant calls for approximately 120 units in the existing buildings, which is well within an allowed density. The building and life safety codes will dictate how many units can actually be developed within the existing buildings on the property.

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

Yard	Required	Provided
Front	25 feet	195' (2100 property) and 280' (2200 property)
Side	6 feet	10 feet
Corner Side	12 feet	10 feet
Rear	35 feet	40 feet

As part of the flex development overlay, these yards will be adjusted to accommodate for future development plans and possible subdivision of land to ensure the buildings conform to the zone designation and are not non-conforming later on.

Building design standards (114-Secs. [735.5](#) & [736](#)): The existing buildings on the site are historic and meet the building design and construction requirements required by the development standards. There are no changes planned to the exterior wall materials as a result of this proposed development.

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

Use Type	Required	Provided
Dwelling Unit	1.5 per dwelling unit*	222
Total	Depend upon final mix of bedrooms and units	222 spaces

*As part of the flex development overlay a ratio of 1 space per unit will help to provide density and minimize space on the site devoted to parking.

A Building of this size requires one dedicated loading zone per lot. There is ample space on the lots to designate a loading zone of 12x30 feet with 15 feet of clearance.

Landscaping, screening and yard requirements ([114- Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#) & 7 [Fences and Walls](#)): A landscaping plan with specifications of plantings was not submitted. The site is currently landscaped in a manner which is consistent with what would be required. Some maintenance of the landscaping as required in Sec. 114-743 does need to take place; given the applicant has recently acquired the property, at the time of occupancy for residential uses, it will be expected this maintenance will have occurred.

Sign Regulations (114-[Article X](#)): Signage has not been included with this request; any signage needs to follow the sizing guidelines set forth below.

Sign Type	Allowable Sq. Ft.	Provided Sq. Ft.
Identification sign	16 square feet	0
Parking identification	35 square feet	0
Alleyway Signage	N/A	N/A
Total	51 square feet	0

Requirements for signage can be adjusted as part of the flex development overlay to ensure nonconformities do not exist and the site is conforming.

Outdoor lighting, signs ([114-Sec. 742](#)): Details of the existing light fixtures were not provided. Based off a visit to the site, it appears that the lighting on site complies with development requirements that light be focused on the subject property and not onto adjacent properties.

Rubbish and trash storage ([114-Article V](#) & [114-740](#)): The applicant has not yet proposed a location for the trash handling on the site; there are multiple options to locate trash and rubbish which would be screened from public view and thus, comply with development standards.

Engineering, Utilities and Access:

Access ([114-1151](#)): Vehicular access to the site is proposed to occur from two driveways off of Northwestern Avenue. The proposed driveways are expected to handle all the daily trips generated to and from the site. For the development planned, the lot does exceed the parking minimums for the uses.

Surface drainage ([114-739](#) & Consult Engineering Dept.): The site plan does not contemplate any changes to the impervious cover of the lot.

Sewage disposal and water supply ([114-821](#) & Consult Engineering and S/W Utility): Utilities are existing to the site. Repurposing of this building is likely to generate different

volumes of utility usage. The ability to service this proposed development will be fully reviewed when building plans are submitted.

Exceptions to ordinance: N/A. Development which would not comply with an ordinance requirement will be adjusted as part of the flex development overlay to ensure nonconformities do not exist and the site is conforming.

Additional Planning and Zoning Comments: The buildings as developed generally conform to the requirements of the R-5 zone district. All density requirements will be met with this rezoning and for yards and other numerical standards, small deviations from what the base zone allows for will occur to ensure the site is not non-conforming. Overall, this development is an innovative way to repurpose what was once a pillar of industry in the community. This reuse will ensure the site remains economically viable into the future, guaranteeing its preservation and ensuring future generations can enjoy the landmark.

REQUIRED FINDINGS OF FACT:

ZONE CHANGE FINDINGS (Sec. 114-82. - Findings of fact and recommendations of plan commission.)

The plan commission shall make findings based upon the evidence presented to it in each specific case with respect to, but not limited to, the following matters:

1) The Existing uses of property within the general area of the property in question.

Staff Comments: The uses in this area are a mix of offices, institutions, residences, neighborhood serving retail/restaurants and general industrial uses. The industrial uses include contractor yards/shops, warehousing, and automobile repair and warehousing; these industrial uses occupy the former plant and are the most intensive of this area. The development patterns lend themselves to a less intensive use on this property long term and this zone change would help to facilitate the long term success of the area.

2) The zoning classification of property within the general area of the property in question.

Staff Comments: Given that the properties are surrounded by office and institutional uses and a neighborhood, the current I-2 General Industrial zoning on the property is a bit intensive for the area. Historically speaking, it makes sense, as in the past this plant likely led to the development of the neighborhoods and other uses in the area. As the plant transitioned and eventually closed, other uses which are not generally complimentary from a land use perspective, with the surrounding area. The proposed zoning designation fits into the development patterns of the area. It is expected that a more

intensive development from a density perspective, would be located closer to a busier street and directly along a commercial corridor.

3) The suitability of the property in question to the uses permitted under the existing zoning classification.

Staff Comments: This property's current tenants will be transitioned to other spaces as leases run out to facilitate the redevelopment to residential living units. The owners of the property are pursuing this zone change with the knowledge that the current uses on the property are not generally uses which will be consistent with R-5 zoning. That being said, the majority of the building space on this property is currently vacant and the uses which are in the buildings now are passive in nature with very little traffic. The proposed uses for this property are allowed by right under the proposed zoning and the flex development overlay district will help to address any non-conformities related to yards and development standards to ensure the existing buildings do not become non-conforming should the zone change be approved.

4) The trend of development, if any, in the general area of the property in question, including changes, if any, which have taken place in its present zoning classification.

Staff Comments: At this time, the property is generally home to a somewhat eclectic mix of uses, some of which are industrial or artisan in nature. These uses will be transitioned out by the new property owner in preparation for conversion of this facility to a residential development. The trend of development across the country and in Racine has been to convert older industrial buildings which would not suit the needs to modern manufacturing, to that of housing or other mixed use developments. The general area is residentially developed and has a commercial corridor running through it (State/Northwestern).

5) The objectives of the current land use plan for the city.

Staff Comments: The Comprehensive Plan calls for this area to be mixed use, commercial emphasis; the plan states that, "Mixed-Used Development: Residential development in mixed use settings can provide a desirable environment for a variety of household types seeking the benefits of proximity to places of employment as well as civic, cultural, commercial, and other urban amenities. Examples of mixed use settings include dwellings above the ground floor of commercial uses and residential structures intermixed with, or located adjacent to, compatible commercial, institutional, or other civic uses.

The nature of this location coupled with the surrounding development makes this a mixed use area. To help support this mix of uses, a customer base is necessary for businesses to develop and expand. Additionally, the R-5 zone district itself allows for a mix of residential and neighborhood/development serving commercial uses on the lot. This zone change will help to implement the land use objectives for the city as identified in the land use plan component of the Comprehensive Plan.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS FOR THE PLANNING COMMISSION

1. Approve the request as submitted; or
2. Recommend the adoption of an amendment changing the zoning classification of the property in question to any higher classification than that requested by the applicant; or
3. Deny the request; or
4. Defer the request to obtain more specific information about the request.

STAFF SUPPORTS THE APPLICATION FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- The proposed usage of the facility will help the commercial corridor with additional households to support commercial growth.
- Redevelopment of this site as residential keeps the historic buildings in use and economically viable, as such they will be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF FACT IN THIS REPORT, THAT THE REQUEST FROM J. JEFFERS & CO. SEEKING A ZONE CHANGE FROM I-2 GENERAL INDUSTRIAL TO R-5 GENERAL RESIDENCE DISTRICT WITH A FLEX DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY DISTRICT, AT 2100 AND 2200 NORTHWESTERN HAVE AN ORDINANCE PREPARED, A PUBLIC HEARING BEFORE THE COMMON COUNCIL SCHEDULED, AND A USE SUPPLEMENT PREPARED.

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 ([click to view](#)).







Zone Change Request - 2100 and 2200 Northwestern Avenue





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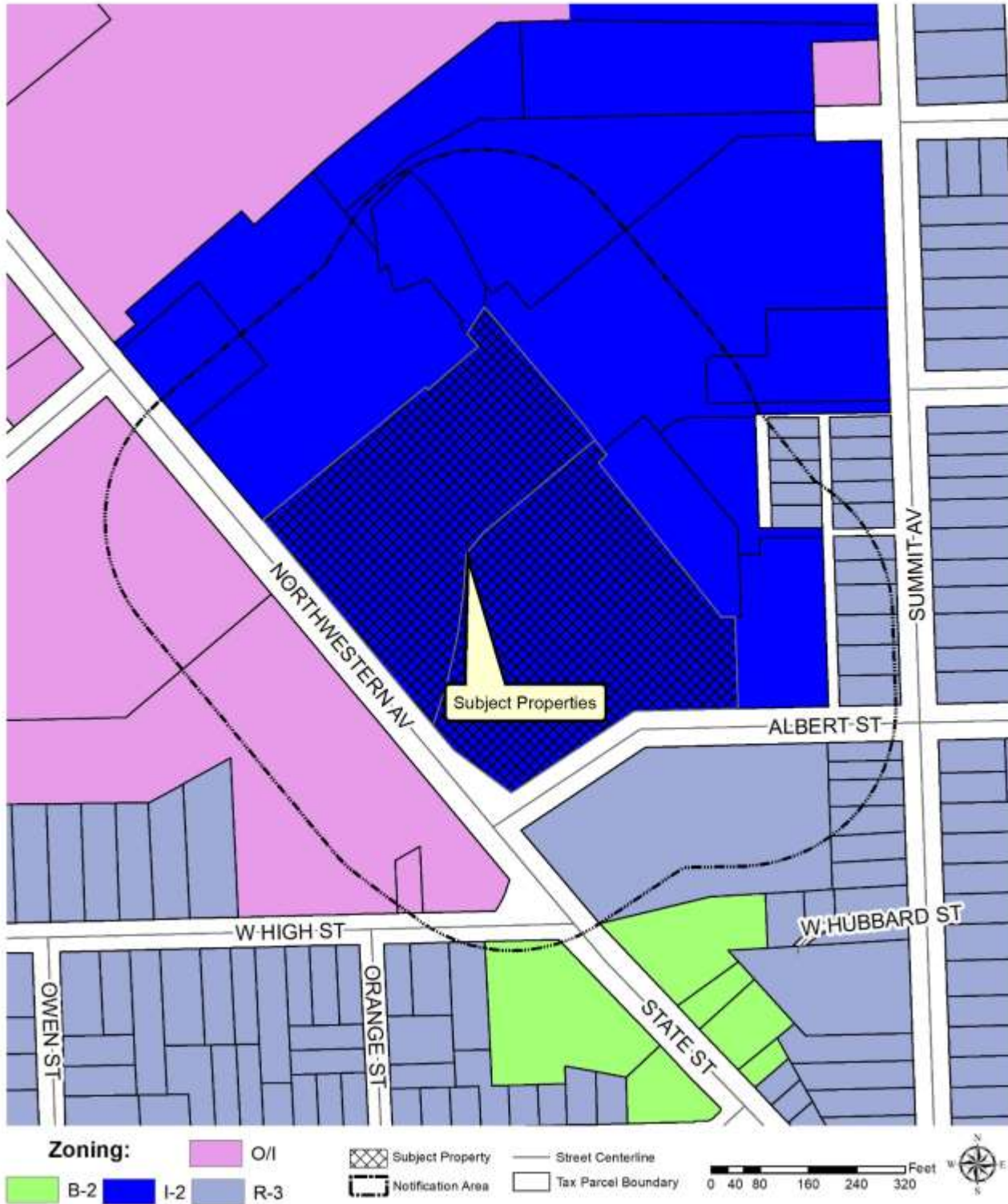


-  Subject Property
-  Notification Area
-  Street Centerline
-  Tax Parcel Boundary



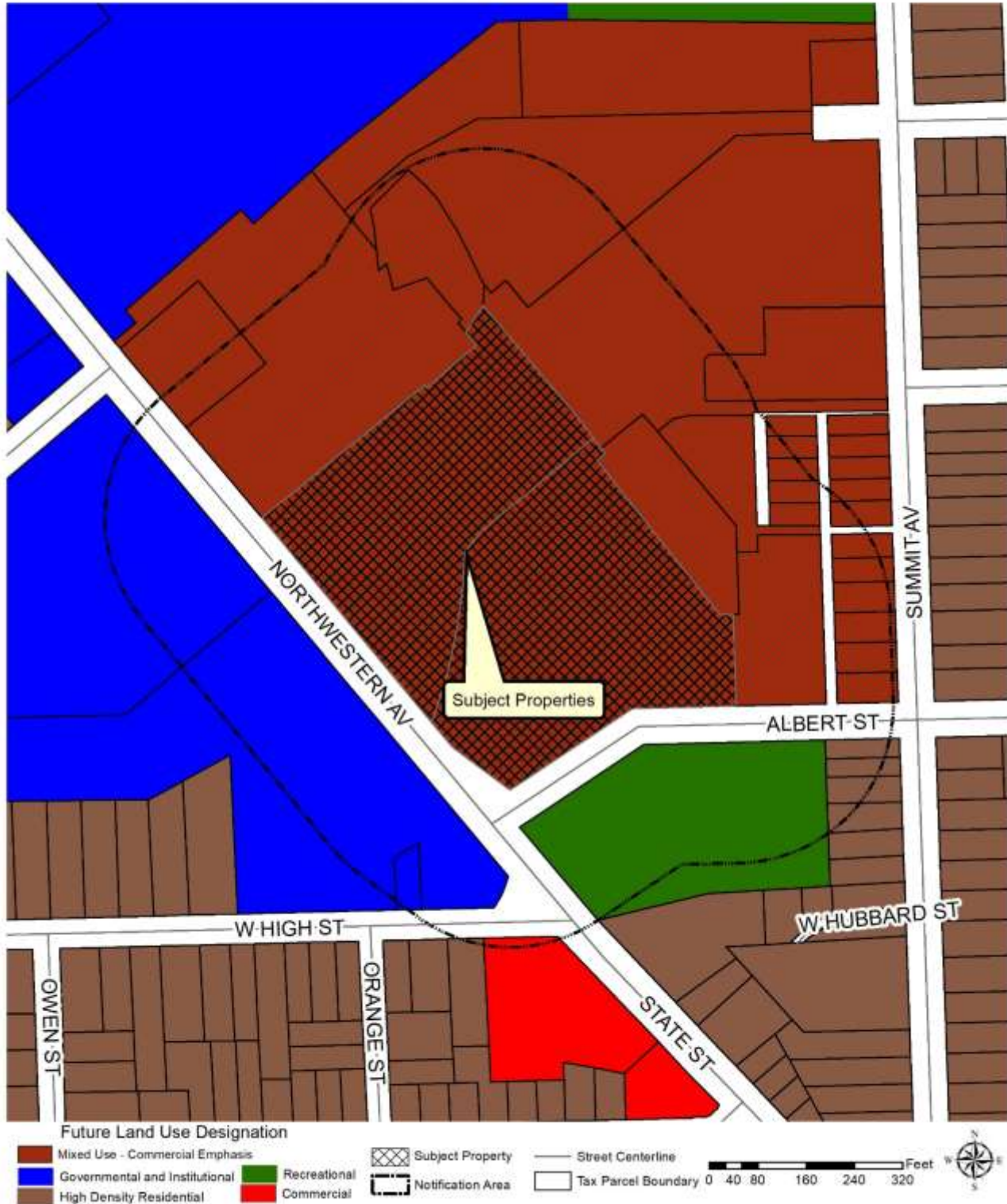


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Site Photos



Looking north at 2200 Northwestern from front parking area



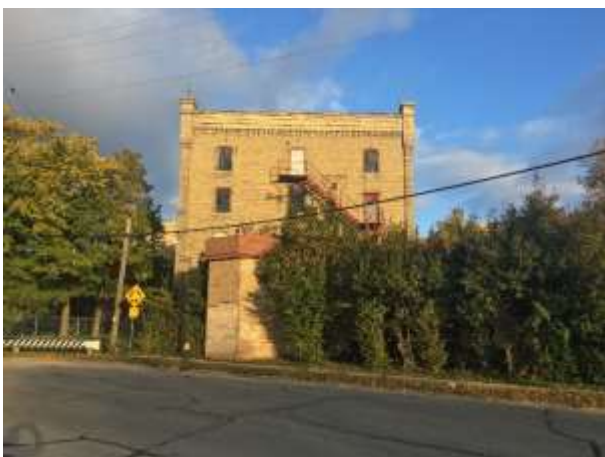
Looking north at 2100 Northwestern from front parking area



Looking west from the site across Northwestern Avenue



Looking east from the site down Albert Street



Looking at the eastern end of the site from Albert Street



Looking at westerly at the rear of the property