



CITY OF RACINE DEPARTMENT OF CITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 6/9/2021

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: 2504 Douglas Avenue.

Applicant: AJ Musaitef

Property Owner: ASM GROUP LLC

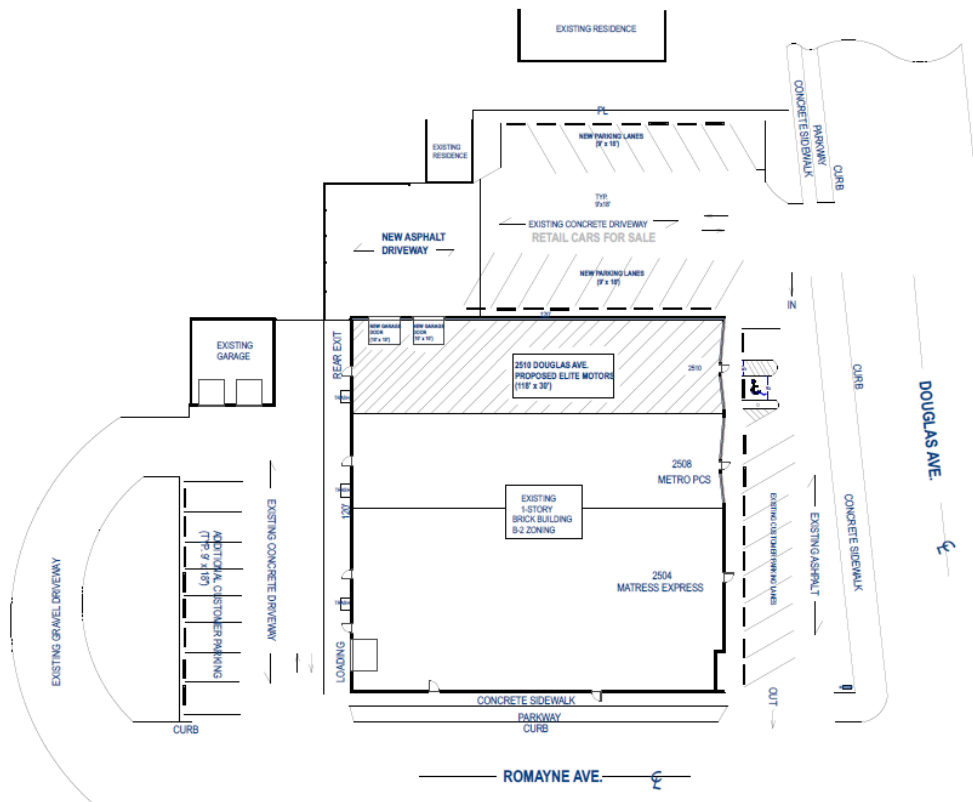
Request: Consideration of a major amendment to an existing conditional use permit which allows for a garage for the storage and sales of motor vehicles and sales by appointment only as allowed by Sec. 114-155 of the Municipal Code. The major amendment contemplates turning the northernmost tenant space into a dealership location, adding up to 15 vehicles for display in the northern lot, and conducting minor repairs on site in the existing garage. The property is located in a B-2 Community Shopping and I-1 Restricted Industrial Zone District.

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY: The hours are proposed to be 10:00 AM – 7:00 PM Monday-Saturday with any deliveries occurring during those hours. A privacy fence is planned for the northern lot line. The operation seeks to employ five (5) people. The major amendment contemplates turning the northernmost tenant space into a dealership location, adding up to 15 vehicles for display in the northern lot, and conducting minor repairs on site in the existing garage

The Zoning Ordinance classifies this major amendment to allow for operations modifications in the B-2 Community Shopping Zone District upon the issuance of a conditional use permit amendment (114-155).



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



Proposed Site Plan of the property, submitted by applicant.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Parcel Number: [20946001](#)

Property Size: 1.623 acres

Comprehensive Plan Map Designation: Commercial

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.

Corridor or Special Design District?: Douglas Avenue Corridor

Historic?: N/A

Current Zoning District: I-1 Restricted Industrial and B-2 Community Shopping

Purpose of Zone District: The B-2 community shopping district is intended to accommodate the needs of a much larger consumer population than is served by the neighborhood convenience district, thus a wider range of uses and structure sizes is permitted for both daily and occasional shopping.

The I-1 restricted industrial district is intended to provide an environment suitable for industrial activities that do not create appreciable nuisances or hazards, or that require a pleasant, hazard-free and nuisance-free environment.

Proposed Zoning: No change proposed

Existing Land Use: Communications facility at the rear of the property, furniture store, mobile phone store, warehousing/garage space at the rear and currently vacant tenant space.

Surrounding Zoning and Land Uses:

North	R-3 Limited General Residence	Single unit dwellings
East	R-3 Limited General Residence	Single unit dwellings and tavern
South	B-2 Community Shopping	Gas station and convenience store
West	I-1 Restricted Industrial	Bike trail and utility corridor

ANALYSIS:

Development Standards:

This parcel has split zoning, with the building generally occupying the B-2 portion and the remaining lot area being I-1. Generally, the site development standards (lighting, parking, screening, yards, buffering and building design etc.) are the same in either zone. The bulk, density and signage standards vary by zone district; the analysis below for these development standards is based on the B-2 regulations since the principal building is within the B-2 portion of the lot.

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	70,698 sq. ft.
Lot Frontage	30 feet	192 feet
Floor Area Ratio	4.0 maximum	.26

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

Yard	Required	Provided
Front	0 feet	22 feet
Side (north)	6 feet	35 feet
Side (south)	0 feet	0 feet
Rear (west)	0 feet	181 feet

Building design standards (114-Secs. [735.5](#) & [736](#)): The two easternmost buildings on the parcel comply with the requirements of 114.735.5.b.1, the metal building at the rear (furthest west) does not. However, this request does not include any new buildings or modifications to the existing building. The building which is not conforming, is legally nonconforming and was built prior to the existing requirement of utilizing masonry. Additionally, this building is not generally visible to the public unless traveling down Romaine Avenue, which is not a thru street in this area.

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

Use Type	Required	Provided
Mattress Store	12	12
Phone Store	8	8
Auto Dealer	40	10
Total	60	30*

*The parking on the site is existing non-conforming as the building was built in 1948. Any new construction on the site would need to provide parking at the current rate which it is required, but for the new construction portions only. As such, the site has functioned with the existing parking being

adequate for some time. The lot to the north was added within the past 7-8 years and adequately serves the development on the site. Furthermore, auto dealers by ordinance are required to provide parking based on size of building and size of lot; about 2/3 of this lot's area is greenspace and storage space, completely unutilized by the proposed business.

Buildings of this size require one loading space. The area at the rear of the building complies with this requirement, even when factoring in striping of additional parking.

Landscaping, screening and yard requirements ([114- Article V](#): Article VII, Div. 6 [Development Standards](#) & 7 [Fences and Walls](#)): 114-470 (b) requires screening to the north because this commercial building is within 100 feet of a residence district boundary line. At this time, the area immediately north of the parking lot is utilizing landscaping to meet the intent of this request. As the landscaping grows and matures, the screening will become of the density required by the ordinance. The applicant indicates a fence is planned should the proposal be approved.

Sign Regulations (114-[Article X](#)): Signage is not a part of this request, but signage does currently exist on the property for other tenants; any new signage would be reviewed prior to permitting and installation. Any future signage would need to follow the sizing requirements outlined below.

Sign Type	Allowable Sq. Ft.	Provided Sq. Ft.
Projecting/Wall	240	200
Window signs	50% of window area^	20
Alleyway Signage	N/A	N/A
Total	240 square feet*	220

*Total size determination would be made based on sizes and types of other signage on the lot. Once 4 or more signs are installed, the total is reduced by 20% with each subsequent sign.

^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 plans submitted by the applicant do not include additional lighting fixtures; the lighting appears to focus light onto the property and not adjacent properties.

Rubbish and trash storage ([114-Article V](#) & [114-740](#)): A trash enclosure is not depicted on the site plan, prior to occupying the building one will need to be constructed. Regardless of the action taken by the Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission, the enclosure is required. Alternatively, the applicant may store the dumpster and trash in one of the buildings, placing it out on collection day

Engineering, Utilities and Access:

Access ([114-1151](#)): Vehicular access to the site is provided from a driveway off of Douglas Avenue and two driveways off Romaine Avenue. The site plan submitted by the applicant does not contemplate any changes to access.

Surface drainage ([114-739](#) & Consult Engineering Dept.): utilizing the existing garage for parking of automobiles 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: N/A

Additional Planning and Zoning Comments:

REQUIRED FINDINGS OF FACT:

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

No Conditional Use shall be recommended by the Planning, Heritage, and Design 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: The addition of 15 automobiles for sale at this site, parked on the northern end of the property is not expected to endanger the health, safety or welfare of those in the general vicinity. The proposed conditions of approval seek to ensure the area remains complimentary to the adjacent neighborhood. Additionally, these conditions ensure that the Douglas Avenue corridor remains as a business corridor and not an industrial corridor. The site is currently home to a service garage at the rear of the property and northernmost tenant space of this property has been vacant since a daycare left in 2017. The parking of vehicles will generally resemble that of a parking lot for customers, with the exception that the cars will be for sale. This is expected to generate less traffic and trips than if this were a retail use with customers coming and going from this lot. The required screening and transitional yard will ensure the adjacent dwellings do not see the parking area.

- 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 sales of 15 automobiles is not expected to be injurious to other properties. The site is expected to see less traffic count than if the last tenant space were used for retail; as such, there will be some customers coming and going, but the majority of the time, the cars will be parked and sitting as opposed to coming and going. Noise and aesthetic wise this is less intensive than other

uses which would be permitted in the district. The necessary screening and yard will serve as a buffer from the parking area; appearance wise, there is a parking lot adjacent to a residence district, when the cars are being sold the appearance isn't going to change and this will be a slight adjustment to function on the site.

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 proposed conditions with this request help to ensure that development in the area remains consistent and orderly, while accommodating for new this new component of their business. This property is along a busy commercial corridor with an adjacent residential neighborhood. It is expected that the overall appearance and function of the site will generally remain as it has, the main difference will be that up to 15 passenger vehicles will be for sale on the site, in what is now and underutilized customer lot. The traffic generated to see these vehicles is expected to be somewhat light as purchasing a car is typically a rare occurrence for most shoppers. The trips generated by the new use are not anticipated to alter the general retail traffic patterns of the property.

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 reuse 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 application does not contemplate changing any access to the site. The storage and occasional viewing of vehicles in addition to the existing retail operations on the site are not anticipated to lead to congestion of the streets. The applicant will be limited to the vehicles which can be stored and sold at any one time and there is more parking being added at the rear for employees. Based on traditional and recent usage of this shopping center, the parking area out front will be more than adequate for the anticipated usage of the three businesses at this shopping center.

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 for the City identifies this property as Commercial. This proposed usage is consistent with the objectives of the comprehensive plan. It is important to note that to the north of this location are areas identified for usage as high density residential in the land

use component of the plan. This will essentially function as a parking lot with vehicles which will be sold; it should have less turnover and transition than that of a retail sales establishment.

- 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 needed with the request and the proposed development will function in a manner which is complimentary to the adjacent residential areas.

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 AJ MUSAITEF, SEEKING A MAJOR AMENDMENT TO AN EXISTING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT WHICH ALLOWS FOR THE SALE OF USED AUTOMOBILES AT 2504 DOUGLAS AVENUE BE APPROVED, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

- a) That the plans presented to the Planning, Heritage, and Design Commission on June 9, 2021 be approved subject to the conditions contained herein.
- b) That the following development standards be complied with prior to City sign off on dealer license:
 1. All temporary signage on the property which has been in place over 30 days be removed as required by sec. 114-Article X.

2. Privacy fence be installed along northern lot line and specifications on style and location to be submitted to and approved by the Department of City Development prior to the issuance of a permit.
 3. Spaces indicated on site plan in the rear of the building be striped.
 4. Proposed area to park cars be striped based on site plan and cleaned of debris.
- c) That if, prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit, required development standards listed in “b” 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.
 - d) That vehicles for sale or service be limited to 15 in total at any time and displayed in the northernmost parking area only.
 - e) That any servicing of vehicles be limited to detailing and general repair, such as, tire rotation or changes, battery replacement, oil changes and similar fluid exchanges; all repairs shall be limited to the type of repair a customer could wait on site while the service is performed. Any engine, transmission rebuilding or body work shall be prohibited.
 - f) That any vehicle which is not legally able to be driven on a public road, be kept inside until such a time it can be driven on a public street, or removed from the site.
 - g) That sales of vehicles be limited to passenger vehicles and shall not include commercial trucks, buses, vans or any vehicle with more than two axles.
 - h) That hours are 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM Monday-Saturday and closed Sundays.
 - i) That all codes and ordinances are complied with and required permits/licenses are acquired and kept current at all times.
 - j) 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.
 - k) 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 (click to view).



Conditional Use Request - 2504 Douglas Avenue



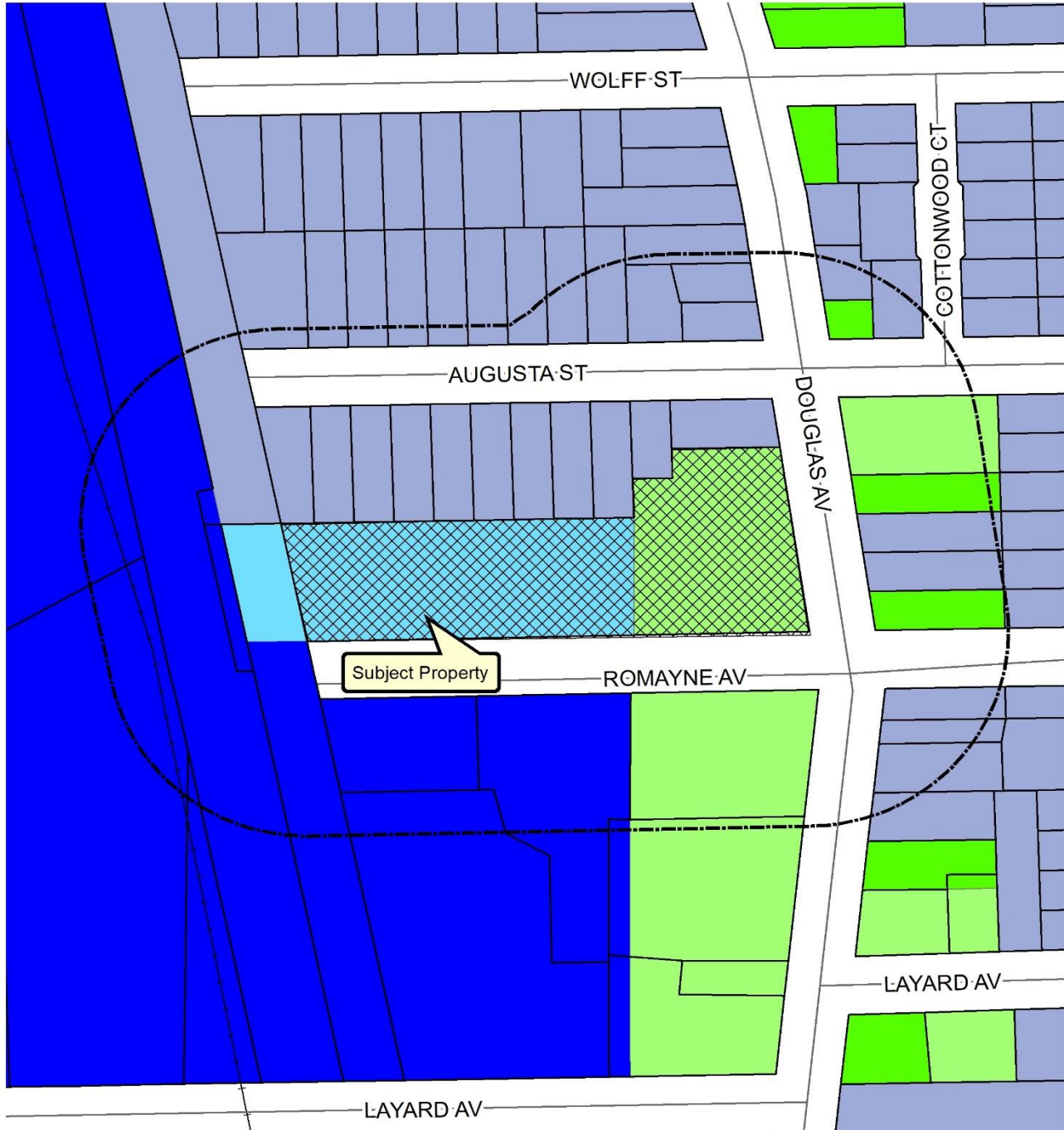


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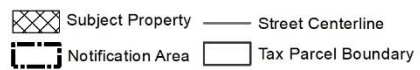
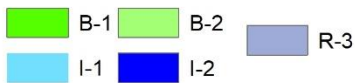




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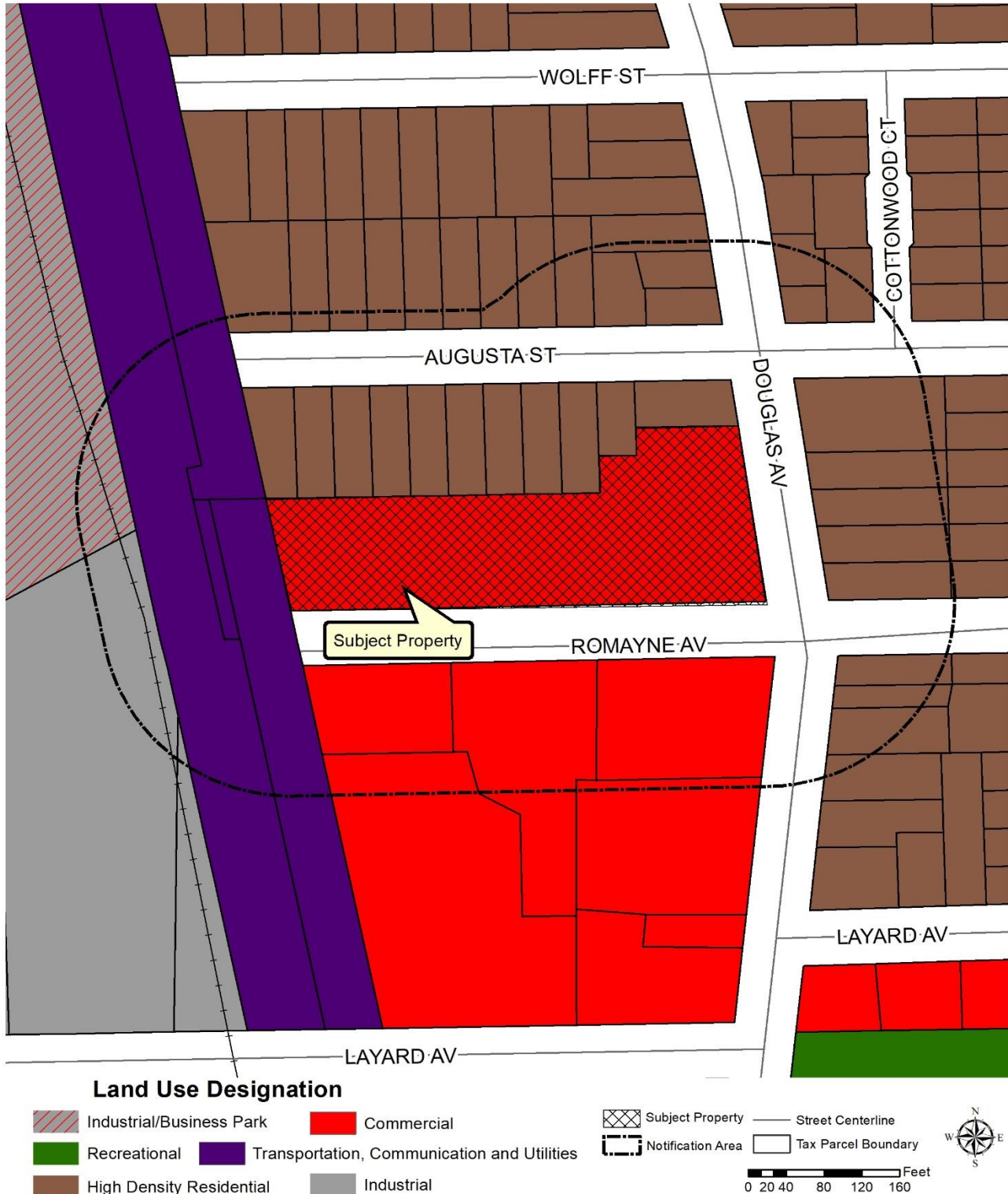


Zoning Designation





Conditional Use Request - 2504 Douglas Avenue



Site Photos



Looking west from Douglas Avenue at lot where cars would be parked



Looking west from Douglas Avenue towards tenant space for proposed dealer



Looking north on site at customer parking area for shopping center



Looking east towards Douglas Avenue from proposed sales lot



Looking west on Romaine Avenue, subject property on right



Looking at rear of subject property