

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

July 28, 2025

PREPARED FOR THE PLAN COMMISSION



Project Address: 1417 Wright Street (District 12, Alder Matthews)
Legistar File ID #: [88774](#)
Prepared By: Lisa McNabola, AICP, Planning Division
Report Includes Comments from other City Agencies, as noted
Reviewed By: Kevin Firchow, AICP, Principal Planner

Summary

Owner: Don Lee; Crescent Realty Corporation; 7750 Dunlieth Drive, East Dubuque, IL 61025

Contact: Bruce Hollar; D'Onofrio Kottke & Associates, Inc.; 7530 Westward Way, Madison, WI 53717

Requested Action: Consideration of a conditional use in the Commercial Corridor-Transitional (CC-T) District for outdoor storage.

Proposal Summary: The property is occupied by a commercial building with an office and warehouse. The applicant proposes to use a portion of the site for outdoor storage of materials.

Applicable Regulations & Standards: MGO Section 28.183(6) lists the standards of approval for conditional uses. MGO Section 28.151 lists the Supplemental Regulations for outdoor storage.

Review Required By: Plan Commission

Summary Recommendation: The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find the approval standards for conditional uses are met and **approve** outdoor storage at 1417 Wright Street. All recommendations are subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the reviewing agencies.

Background Information

Parcel Location: The 66,646 square-foot (1.5-acre) parcel is on the east side of Wright Street between East Washington Avenue and Straubel Street. It is within Alder District 12 (Alder Matthews) and the Madison Metropolitan School District.

Existing Conditions and Land Use: There is a 20,650 square-foot commercial building on the property. The building has office and warehouse space. It was constructed in 1983. An addition was constructed in 2001.

Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:

North: Vacant property, zoned Traditional Residential – Varied 2 (TR-V2) District;

East: Across Reindahl Avenue, single family buildings, zoned Traditional Residential – Varied 1 (TR-V1) District;

South: Health clinic, zoned Commercial Corridor-Transitional (CC-T) District; and

West: Wisconsin Army National Guard buildings, zoned Industrial Limited (IL) District.

Adopted Land Use Plan: The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) and [Northeast Area Plan](#) (2024) recommend Community Mixed-Use (CMU) development for the property. Surrounding properties are recommended for a mix of CMU, Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU), Low-Medium Residential (LMR), Medium Residential (MR) and Institutional (I).

Zoning Summary: The property is in the Commercial Corridor-Transitional (CC-T) District. It is also in the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Overlay District.

Requirements	Required	Proposed
Lot Area (sq. ft.)	None	66,646
Lot Width	None	480 ft
Front Yard Setback	None	Existing, no change
Max. Front Yard Setback	20 ft (TOD)	Existing, no change
Side Yard Setback	None	Existing, no change
Maximum Lot Coverage	85%	70%
Minimum Building Height	2 stories (TOD)	Existing, no change
Maximum Building Height	5 stories/78 ft	Existing, no change

Site Design	Required	Proposed
Number Parking Stalls	No minimum	23
Electric Vehicle Stalls	None	None
Accessible Stalls	1	1
Loading	1	Existing, no change
Number Bike Parking Stalls	4	None See Comment #9
Landscaping and Screening	Yes	Yes
Lighting	No	No See Comment #10
Building Form and Design	Yes	Existing, no change

Table prepared by Assistant Zoning Administrator Jacob Moskowitz

Environmental Corridor Status: The site is not within a mapped environmental corridor.

Public Utilities and Services: This property is served by a full range of urban services.

Project Description, Analysis, and Conclusion

Project Description

The applicant proposes to establish an outdoor storage area on a property with an existing commercial building and parking lot. The applicant runs an electrical supply company and would use the area to store materials. Per the applicant they would not store heavy machinery in the area.

The proposed outdoor storage area is located at the northern end of the property adjacent to the existing parking lot. The area would be accessed by a gate from the parking lot. There would also be a gate at the northern end of the storage area for snow removal purposes.

The 6,280 square-foot area would be paved and enclosed with an 8-foot tall fence. The fence would be made of two materials: a wooden shadow box fence along Reindahl Avenue and a metal chain link fence with plastic slats on the remaining frontages. The landscape plan shows a mix of ornamental grasses along Reindahl Avenue. Along Wright street the plantings include a mix of ornamental grasses, deciduous shrubs, and evergreen shrubs. The shrubs are expected to grow to 4 to 15 feet in height. An overstory tree would be planted at the parking lot entrance.

Conformance with Adopted Plans

The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) and [Northeast Area Plan](#) (2024) recommend Community Mixed-Use (CMU) development for the property. CMU areas include existing and planned areas supporting an intensive mix of

residential, commercial, and civic uses serving residents and visitors from the surrounding area and the community as a whole. Surrounding properties are recommended for a mix of CMU, Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU), Low-Medium Residential (LMR), Medium Residential (MR) and Institutional (I).

Outdoor storage is a conditional use in the CC-T District. The conditional use approval standards state that the Plan Commission shall not approve a conditional use without due consideration of adopted plans. While the proposed use is not a typical CMU use, staff do not believe that establishing an outdoor storage area on a site with an existing commercial building will preclude nearby properties from developing or redeveloping in accordance with adopted plans in the future.

Supplemental Regulations

Supplemental Regulations for Outdoor Storage:

- a) Outdoor storage shall be located outside of the front yard setback and shall not be placed between the principal building and the abutting street.
- b) Except in the IG District, outdoor storage shall be completely screened from any adjacent street, sidewalk, public walkway, public park.
- c) Outdoor storage shall be screened from abutting residential uses with a building wall or solid, commercial-grade fencing, wall, evergreen hedge, or equivalent material. All screening shall be at least six (6) feet in height and no more than eight (8) feet in height. Screening along district boundaries, where present, may provide all or part of the required screening.
- d) In the EC District, all storage except for licensed motor vehicles in operable condition, shall be within completely enclosed buildings or effectively screened with screening not less than six (6) feet nor more than eight (8) feet in height, and no storage shall exceed the height of such screening. All outside storage areas shall be located to the rear of buildings and shall be limited to not more than five (5) percent of the total lot area.

Conditional Use Standards

The conditional use approval standards state that the Plan Commission shall not approve a conditional use without due consideration of the City's adopted plan recommendations, design guidelines, supplemental regulations, and finding that all of the conditional use standards of MGO Section 28.183(6) are met. Please note, recent changes to state law requires that conditional use findings must be based on "substantial evidence" that directly pertains to each standard and not based on personal preference or speculation.

Standard 6 states, "The conditional use conforms to all applicable regulations of the district in which it is located." Per the Supplemental Regulations the outdoor storage shall not be placed between the principal building and the street. On June 12, 2025 the Zoning Board of Appeals approved a variance to allow the outdoor storage to be located between the building and the street (Legistar ID [88548](#)).

Standard 8 states, "When applying the above standards to any new construction of a building or an addition to an existing building the Plan Commission shall find that the project creates an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose for the zoning district." Staff recommend modifications to the proposed fencing and landscaping. The intent is to make the outdoor storage area more compatible with the adjacent residential uses on Reindahl Avenue and the intended character of the mixed-use and residential areas recommended in the adopted plans.

- The landscape plan shall be revised to replace ornamental grasses along Wright Street with shrub plantings that provide year-round screening. Plantings shall be planted at a minimum height of three feet. The updated plans shall be approved by the Planning Division during sign-off.
- At least half (50%) of the fence along Wright Street shall be screened by plantings with a mature height of at least eight feet. The updated plans shall be approved by the Planning Division during sign-off.
- The applicant shall update the plans to replace the chain link fence and gate at the northern end of the outdoor storage area with wooden fencing to match the fencing along Reindahl Avenue. The updated plans shall be approved by the Planning Division during sign-off.

Staff believe the conditional use approval standards can be found met, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Conclusion

While the proposed outdoor storage area does not necessarily implement the Community Mixed-Use (CMU) recommendation, staff do not believe that establishing an outdoor storage area on a site with an existing commercial building will preclude nearby properties from developing or redeveloping in accordance with adopted plans in the future.

In order to meet approval standard 8, Planning staff have recommended conditions of approval that would require additional shrubs to screen the metal fencing along Wright Street and additional wooden fencing, considering the mixed-use land use recommendation and proximity to residential uses. Given due consideration of adopted plans, staff believe the conditional use approval standards can be found met, subject to the recommended conditions of approval.

Recommendation

Planning Division Recommendation (Contact Lisa McNabola, 243-0554)

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find the approval standards for conditional uses are met and **approve** outdoor storage at 1417 Wright Street. All recommendations are subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the reviewing agencies.

Recommended Conditions of Approval Major/Non-Standard Conditions are Shaded

Planning Division (Contact Lisa McNabola, 243-0554)

1. The landscape plan shall be revised to replace ornamental grasses along Wright Street with shrub plantings that provide year-round screening. Plantings shall be planted at a minimum height of three feet. The updated plans shall be approved by the Planning Division during sign-off.
2. At least half (50%) of the fence along Wright Street shall be screened by plantings with a mature height of at least eight feet. The updated plans shall be approved by the Planning Division during sign-off.
3. The applicant shall update the plans to replace the chain link fence and gate at the northern end of the outdoor storage area with wooden fencing to match the fencing along Reindahl Avenue. The updated plans shall be approved by the Planning Division during sign-off.

Engineering Division (Contact Brenda Stanley, 261-9127)

4. An Erosion Control Permit is required for this project. See Storm comments for permit specific details and requirements.
5. This site appears to disturb less than one (1) acre of land. No submittal to the WDNR, CARPC or Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) is required as the City of Madison Building Inspection Department is an approved agent for DSPS.
6. This project will disturb 4,000 sf or more of land area and require an Erosion Control Permit. Submit the Erosion Control Permit Application (with USLE calculations and associated fee) to Tim Troester (east) at ttroester@cityofmadison.com, for approval. The permit application can be found on City Engineering's website at <https://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/permits/erosion-control-permit>.
7. Demonstrate compliance with Section 37.07 and 37.08 of the Madison General Ordinances regarding permissible soil loss rates. Include Universal Soil Loss Equation (USLE) computations for the construction period with the erosion control plan. Measures shall be implemented in order to maintain a soil loss rate below 5.0 tons per acre per year. The WDNR provided workbook to compute USLE rates can be found online at <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/stormwater/publications.html>
8. Submit, prior to plan sign-off but after all revisions have been completed, digital PDF files to the Engineering Division. Email PDF file transmissions are preferred to: bstanley@cityofmadison.com (East) or ttroester@cityofmadison.com (West).

Traffic Engineering (Contact Sean Malloy, 266-5987)

9. All parking facility design shall conform to MGO standards, as set in section 10.08(6).

Zoning (Contact Jacob Moskowitz, 266-4560)

10. Bicycle parking for the project shall comply with the requirements of Sections 28.141(4)(g) and 28.141(11). Provide a minimum of 4 short-term bicycle parking stalls located in a convenient and visible area on a paved or pervious surface. Bicycle parking shall be located at least as close as the closest non-accessible automobile parking and within one hundred (100) feet of a principal entrance. Note: A bicycle stall is a minimum of two (2) feet by six (6) feet with a five (5) foot wide access area. Provide a detail of the proposed bike rack.
11. Exterior lighting is not required. However, if it is provided, it must comply with City of Madison General Ordinances Section 29.36 outdoor lighting standards. If exterior site lighting is provided, submit an exterior lighting plan and fixture cut sheets with the final plan submittal.
12. A zoning variance was approved on 7/12/25 for outdoor storage to be located between the building and street.

Fire Department (Contact Matt Hamilton, 266-4457)

13. Outdoor storage to comply with 2024 IFC section 314. Note that storage shall not be within 10' of a lot line if over 6'0" in height.

Forestry (Contact Jeff Heinecke, Contact 266-4890)

14. On this project, street tree protection zone fencing is required for the trees in the ROW along Wright St. The fencing shall be erected before the demolition, grading or construction begins. The fence shall include the entire width of terrace and, extend at least 5 feet on both sides of the outside edge of the tree trunk. Do not remove the fencing to allow for deliveries or equipment access through the tree protection zone. Add as a note on the site plan.

Metro Transit (Contact Tim Sobota, 261-4289)

15. Metro Transit operates daily all-day rapid transit service along East Washington Avenue near this property - with trips at least every 30 minutes (every 15 minutes or less during the day on weekdays and Saturdays).
16. Metro Transit would initially estimate the following counts of potentially eligible trips towards US Green Building Council/LEED Quality Access to Transit points: 79 Weekday & 59 Weekend. Please contact Metro Transit if additional analysis would be of interest.

Engineering Mapping (Contact Jeff Quamme, 266-4097)

17. To allow for any possible maintenance or repair to the sanitary sewer that serves this parcel, improvements should be moved to be 10 feet from the center of the sanitary sewer pipe that exists to the northeast of this proposed improvement.
18. Mapping information indicates the existing field inlet connecting to a 30" public storm sewer in Reindahl Ave. Show the connection and the public storm sewer that exists in Reindahl Ave.

Parking Utility (Contact Trent Schultz, 246-5806)

19. The agency reviewed this project and determined a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan is not required as part of approving the proposed site changes.

The following agencies reviewed the request and recommended no conditions of approval: Parks Division