



CITY OF URBANA ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS REGULAR MEETING

DATE: Wednesday, April 15, 2026
TIME: 7:00 PM
PLACE: 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

AGENDA

A. Roll Call and Declaration of Quorum

B. Changes to the Agenda

C. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

[Minutes](#) of the May 21, 2025 Regular Meeting

D. Written Communications

E. Continued Public Hearings

F. New Public Hearings

[ZBA-2026-MAJ-01](#) - A request by Jenna Joo, on behalf of the City of Urbana's Public Works Department, for a Major Variance from the requirements in the Urbana Zoning Ordinance to provide shade trees within parking areas at 706 South Glover Avenue in the IN-1 (Light Industrial/Office) Zoning District

G. Old Business

H. New Business

I. Audience Participation

J. Staff Report

[Introduction](#) to New Staff

K. Study Session

L. Adjournment

All City meetings are broadcast on Urbana Public Television and live-streamed on the web. Details on how to watch are found on the UPTV webpage located at <https://www.urbanail.gov/executive-department/page/urbana-public-television>.

PUBLIC INPUT

The City of Urbana welcomes Public Input during open meetings of the City Council, the City Council's Committee of the Whole, City Boards and Commissions and other City-sponsored meetings. Our goal is to foster respect for the meeting process, and respect for all people participating as members of the public body, city staff, and general public. The City is required to conduct all business during public meetings. The presiding officer is responsible for conducting those meetings in an orderly and efficient manner.

Public Input will be taken in the following ways:

Email Input

In order to be incorporated into the record, emailed public comments must be received prior to 5:00 pm on the day preceding the meeting and sent to the following email address: **Planning@urbanail.gov**. The subject line of the email must include the words "ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS - PUBLIC INPUT" and the meeting date. Emailed public comments labeled as such will be incorporated into the public meeting record, with personal identifying information redacted.

Written Input

Any member of the public may submit their comments addressed to the members of the public body in writing. If a person wishes their written comments to be included in the record of Public Input for the meeting, the writing should so state. Written comments must be received prior to the closing of the meeting record (at the time of adjournment unless otherwise noted).

Public Hearing

Any person desiring to appear at the public hearing and present testimony may speak during each public hearing at the time they appear on the agenda. This shall not count towards regular Public Input for the meeting. The Public Hearing is an opportunity for comments and questions to be addressed specific to each case. Board or Commission members are permitted to respond and engage during this time and/or the Chairperson may direct the applicant to respond during rebuttal. Comments unrelated to any of the public hearings listed on an agenda should be shared during the Public Input portion of the meeting where Verbal Input guidelines shall apply.

Verbal Input

Protocol for Public Input is one of respect for the process of addressing the business of the City. Obscene or profane language, or other conduct that threatens to impede the orderly progress of the business conducted at the meeting is unacceptable.

Public comment shall be limited to no more than five (5) minutes per person. The Public Input portion of the meeting shall total no more than one (1) hour, unless otherwise shortened or extended by majority vote of the public body members present. The presiding officer or the city clerk or their designee, shall monitor each speaker's use of time and shall notify the speaker when the allotted time has expired. A person may participate and provide Public Input once during a meeting and may not cede time to another person, or split their time if Public Input is held at two (2) or more different times during a meeting.

The presiding officer or public body members shall not enter into a dialogue with citizens. Questions from the public body members shall be for clarification purposes only. Public Input shall not be used as a time for problem solving or reacting to comments made but, rather, for hearing citizens for informational purposes only.

In order to maintain the efficient and orderly conduct and progress of the public meeting, the presiding officer of the meeting shall have the authority to raise a point of order and provide a verbal warning to a speaker who engages in the conduct or behavior proscribed under “Verbal Input”. Any member of the public body participating in the meeting may also raise a point of order with the presiding officer and request that they provide a verbal warning to a speaker. If the speaker refuses to cease such conduct or behavior after being warned by the presiding officer, the presiding officer shall have the authority to mute the speaker’s microphone and/or video presence at the meeting. The presiding officer will inform the speaker that they may send the remainder of their remarks via e-mail to the public body for inclusion in the meeting record.

Accommodation

If an accommodation is needed to participate in a City meeting, please contact the City at least 48 hours in advance using one of the following methods:

Phone: 217.384.2440

Email: **Planning@urbanail.gov**

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

DRAFT

DATE: May 21, 2025

TIME: 7:00 P.M.

PLACE: Council Chambers, City Building, 400 South Vine Street, Urbana, Illinois

MEMBERS ATTENDING	Joanne Chester, Ashlee McLaughlin, Adam Rusch, Charles Warmbrunn, Harvey Welch
MEMBERS EXCUSED	Nancy Uchtmann
MEMBERS ABSENT	Matthew Cho
STAFF PRESENT	Marcus Ricci, Planner II; Teri Andel, Planning Administrative Assistant II
OTHERS PRESENT	Annie Gregor, David Huber, Dale Huff, Candace Ziegler

A. CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL

Chair Welch called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

B. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

C. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes of January 15, 2025, Regular Meeting

Ms. McLaughlin moved to approve the minutes of January 15, 2025, regular meeting as written. Mr. Warmbrunn seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Minutes of April 9, 2025, Special Meeting

Ms. McLaughlin moved that the Zoning Board of Appeals approve the minutes of April 9, 2025, Special Meeting as written. Mr. Warmbrunn seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

D. WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

- Email from Dallas Jackson Jr. regarding ZBA-2025-C-02
- Spreadsheet of ZBA Case Status from ZBA-2023-C-04 through ZBA-2025-C-02

E. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS

There were none.

NOTE: Chair Welch reviewed the procedure for a public hearing and swore in members of the audience who wished to speak on a case.

F. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

ZBA-2025-C-02 – A request by David Huber, on behalf of Middle Group 2003 E Washington LLC, for a Conditional Use Permit to allow multiple principal structures at 1003 East Washington Street in the R-3 (Single and Two-Family Residential) Zoning District.

Chair Welch opened the public hearing for Case No. ZBA-2025-C-02. Marcus Ricci, Planner II, presented the case to the Zoning Board of Appeals. He began by explaining the reason for the proposed Conditional Use Permit, which is to allow two principal structures, two detached single-family homes, on a single lot at 1003 East Washington Street. He reviewed the site history, noting that the previous two-story home had deteriorated, been registered as vacant and abandoned, and received multiple property maintenance violations and neighbor complaints, before being demolished in 2024. He described the surrounding land uses, zoning classifications, and the mix of single-family homes, duplexes, and parcels with two dwellings in the vicinity. He showed photos of the site and surrounding area.

Ms. Chester asked if the applicant would be allowed to put a duplex on the site. Mr. Ricci replied yes, if he received approval for a minor variance for the lot width. The applicant needs approval of the proposed conditional use permit to construct two single family dwellings on the site.

Mr. Ricci continued with the staff presentation by talking about the development regulations and showed drawings of the two proposed structures. He mentioned another option the applicant would have is to construct the two dwellings with a three-foot wide and ten-foot-long bridge or catwalk on the second level and be built by right as a single-family home. The difference between this and the proposed development is not in the buildings, but in the occupancy of the buildings.

Mr. Rusch asked for clarification in that since each house would be considered a separate unit, it would allow for one family plus three unrelated people to live in each unit despite the fact that the two units would be on one lot. Mr. Ricci said this is correct. The standard Zoning Ordinance regulations for occupancy would apply.

Mr. Ricci reviewed the Conditional Use Permit criteria from Section VII-2 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance and summarized the applicant's statements regarding public convenience, neighborhood compatibility, and compliance with R-3 development standards. He summarized staff findings and read the options of the Zoning Board of Appeals. He presented staff's recommendation for approval with the following condition:

1. Construction shall be in general conformance with the submitted site plan.

He noted that the applicant was present to answer questions. Chair Welch asked if members of the Zoning Board of Appeals had questions for City staff.

Mr. Warmbrunn inquired about the driveway configurations and the middle strip in between the two driveways. He asked what material the middle strip would be. Mr. Ricci replied that it would be grass.

Mr. Warmbrunn asked if there would be a pedestrian door to the garage as shown differently in the written staff report. Mr. Ricci deferred this question to the applicant. He stated that the City's Public Works staff approved of the driveway configuration as being proposed.

Mr. Warmbrunn asked if the main entrance into the house would be in the middle. Mr. Ricci said that is how he understood it.

With no further questions for staff, Chair Welch opened the hearing for public input. He invited the applicant to speak.

Dave Huber, applicant, approached the Zoning Board of Appeals. He explained that he initially intended to retain the original house, but structural deficiencies, including the lack of a proper foundation and extremely narrow setbacks, made rehabilitation infeasible. He stated that the former house was nonconforming and had been a source of neighbor complaints.

Mr. Huber emphasized that the site is zoned R-3 and located near commercial zoning, and Washington Street is a busier corridor than nearby residential streets. He talked about other options and stated that constructing two smaller homes is more economically viable than a single four-bedroom home for him. He described the design rationale, including the side-by-side configuration, the portal feature, and the 10-foot separation between buildings, which could allow future subdivision though he has no plans to pursue it. He talked about the benefits of having a viable housing development versus leaving the site vacant with regards to an increase of property tax and providing more housing for residents to shop Urbana businesses.

Mr. Huber stated that while there could be disagreements over the configuration style of the development, the Zoning Ordinance does not mandate particular styles. He felt that the conditional use permit merely would allow the two structures to be addressed individually and to separate the utilities, which makes it viable for two families.

Chair Welch asked if the Zoning Board of Appeals members had any questions for the applicant.

Mr. Warmbrunn asked if the two driveways would be concrete for both garages with grass in between. Mr. Huber replied yes. The Zoning Ordinance allows two drives on a property in the City regardless of the zoning district; however, there is a regulation on the maximum width combined of the driveways.

Mr. Warmbrunn asked if there would be a pedestrian door on the garage side. Mr. Huber replied that there would be a portal. Mr. Ricci showed an illustration of the "portico".

Ms. Chester asked if there would be a second floor above the portico. Mr. Huber said yes, there would be above the walkway of the portico.

Mr. Warmbrunn asked if the second floor of each dwelling structure would be ten feet apart. Mr. Huber replied no. He showed an illustration and indicated where the second floor of each structure would extend. He went on to say that the City code requires a three-foot path for accessibility reasons.

With no further questions for the applicant, Chair Welch opened the hearing for public input.

Dale Huff approached the Zoning Board of Appeals to speak. He showed photos of a house (nicknamed the Blueberry House because it is blue) where a second structure, which is two stories, was built on a property in his neighborhood. He expressed concern that recent two-story construction in the neighborhood does not fit the existing character of the neighborhood and that multiple properties are being redeveloped as rentals. He stated that he feared the neighborhood was becoming a “cash cow” for developers. The proposed homes might function as apartments, and there currently are not any apartment buildings in the neighborhood.

Candace Ziegler approached the Zoning Board of Appeals to speak in opposition. She stated that she lives next to the “Blueberry House,” which was also renovated by the applicant. The second structure built behind it is out of scale with the neighborhood and is a monstrosity. The character of the neighborhood is one-story owner-occupied homes. She expressed concern that the area is being transformed into a rental district, and that long-term homeowners were not being considered.

She went on to say that it seems that the City does not care about this neighborhood. No one is asking the homeowners in the area what their opinions are. She believes the City should consider who buys up properties in this neighborhood.

Annie Gregor approached the Zoning Board of Appeals to speak in opposition. She cited concerns about neighborhood change, decreasing property values due to more rentals being allowed in the neighborhood, and the cumulative effect of two-story structures being constructed blocking neighbors’ views. She stated that she moved to Urbana for its small-scale residential character and feared that additional rental-oriented development would harm the neighborhood.

With no further public input, Chair Welch invited the applicant to respond.

Mr. Huber re-approached the Zoning Board of Appeals to address concerns regarding rentals, zoning allowances, and building height. He emphasized that two-story homes are permitted by right in the R-3 Zoning District. There are other two-story homes in the neighborhood, and the proposed two-story dwellings would be well below the maximum height allowed.

Mr. Huber stated that he has encountered a lot of fear of rentals despite the City of Urbana being a transient community. Of the properties that he now owns, only one of the properties was not a rental property when he purchased it. There is not a mass of gobbling up of owner-occupied homes and converting them into rentals. He pointed out that he builds new housing rather than converting owner-occupied homes to rentals, and that the project would not reduce the number of owner-occupied homes in Urbana.

Mr. Huber emphasized that this meeting is not the time or place to tackle changing the maximum building height or who can purchase properties or whether properties have to be owner-occupied or can be converted into rentals. He encouraged the City of Urbana to update the Zoning Ordinance and by doing so address some of the issues.

Mr. Rusch asked for clarification on whether the applicant had any plans to construct a catwalk. Mr. Huber stated that it depends on the decision of the Zoning Board of Appeals. He does not currently have any plans submitted to the City for building permits. Mr. Rusch stated that the proposed development is for two two-story housing structures without a catwalk. Mr. Huber said that is correct.

Mr. Rusch asked how many people could live in each unit. Mr. Ricci replied that no more than one family and three unrelated people could live in each unit. He did not recommend placing a condition on fewer people being allowed because there was no way the City could logistically enforce it.

Mr. Rusch asked if the applicant had any plans to subdivide the property. Mr. Huber said no.

Mr. Ricci clarified that the second structure at 907 East Washington (the “Blueberry” house) was approved by conditional use permit in 2023. The dwelling structure was built in conformance with the submitted Site Plan. The Zoning Ordinance does not regulate design. The City does not discriminate or regulate between ownership and rentals. The City acknowledges that not everyone can afford to own their own home, which is why we have a rigorous rental registration program in Urbana. He researched this area and found that 30% of the properties are rental properties.

Mr. Ricci stated that the R-1 (Single-Family Residential), R-2 (Single-Family Residential) and R-3 (Single and Two-Family Residential) Zoning Districts have a maximum height restriction of 35 feet, which allows two-story homes, so the City cannot prohibit them just because a neighborhood is primarily one-story homes. Conversion to an apartment building would require rezoning a R-3 zoned property to R-4 (Medium Density Multiple Family Residential) or higher, so the Zoning Board of Appeals can be assured that the two proposed structures would not be converted into apartment buildings.

Mr. Warmbrunn asked if there was a Site Plan. Mr. Ricci showed the Site Plan.

With no further questions, Chair Welch closed the public input portion of the hearing and opened the floor for discussion and/or motion(s).

Ms. McLaughlin moved that the Zoning Board of Appeals approve the proposed conditional use in Case No. ZBA-2025-C-02, finding that the application meets all three criteria for a conditional use permit with the condition that construction be in general conformance with the submitted site plan. Mr. Rusch seconded the motion. Roll call on the motion was as follows:

Ms. McLaughlin	–	Yes	Mr. Rusch	-	Yes
Mr. Warmbrunn	–	Yes	Mr. Welch	–	Yes
Ms. Chester	–	Yes			

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

G. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

H. NEW BUSINESS

There was none.

I. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

There was none.

J. STAFF REPORT

Mr. Ricci reported on the following:

- **Case Status Spreadsheet** – Mr. Ricci reviewed the status of each case from ZBA-2023-C-04 through ZBA-2025-C-02

Mr. Ricci concluded by noting that, with two exceptions, projects approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals have moved forward successfully and that the Board's work has resulted in meaningful development outcomes.

Mr. Warmbrunn inquired about the status of the bylaws. Mr. Ricci explained that staff are waiting until a new Director for Community Development Services is hired upon which things may change and allow for more staff time to work on updating them.

Mr. Rusch inquired about the status of the Zoning Board of Appeals vacancies and if there is a plan to refill them, if any. Mr. Ricci said there were no vacancies. Some members are up for re-appointment by June 30, 2025.

K. STUDY SESSION

There was none.

L. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Olivia Jovine, Secretary
Zoning Board of Appeals



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Urbana Zoning Board of Appeals
FROM: Aimirou Sy, Planner II
DATE: April 14, 2026
SUBJECT: **ZBA-2026-MAJ-01:** A request by Jenna Joo, on behalf of the City of Urbana's Public Works Department for a Major Variance from the requirements to provide shade trees within parking areas at 706 South Glover Avenue in the IN-1 (Light Industrial/Office) Zoning District

Introduction

On behalf of the City of Urbana Public Works Department, Jenna Joo, Senior Project Architect at Farnsworth Group, requests a Major Variance to eliminate required shade trees within the surface parking area at 706 South Glover Avenue.

The Urbana Zoning Ordinance requires the Zoning Board of Appeals ("ZBA") to review the variance application and hold a public hearing. The Board may recommend approval to City Council by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, or recommend approval with conditions to City Council by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, or deny the request. The Board should either accept the specific staff findings or articulate their own specific findings based on the variance criteria established in Article XII of the Zoning Ordinance.

Staff recommend that the ZBA forward a recommendation to City Council to approve the requested Major Variance with conditions.

Background

The subject property consists of three contiguous parcels under common ownership by the City of Urbana. Together, the parcels comprise the City of Urbana Public Works facility, which functions as a municipal operations center responsible for maintaining streets, utilities, and other public infrastructure throughout the City.

As described in the 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) the Public Works Campus Improvement projects address essential improvements to major mechanical, electrical, plumbing, structural, and roofing of the existing Public Works facilities to ensure long-term function and accommodate centralizing all Public Works staff (except Landscape Recycling Staff) to the Public Works Campus on Glover Avenue. Beyond addressing the core existing facility components, additional improvements include fleet building expansion, an addition of an on-site salt storage for winter operations, parking lot and traffic flow improvements, incorporating City-wide security improvements, and interior remodeling of common spaces and the front office areas.

The existing Public Works Campus contains administrative space, fleet vehicle storage, equipment storage, outdoor material storage, and associated circulation areas designed to accommodate large

municipal vehicles and service equipment. Surface parking areas are provided for employees and operational use.

The applicant proposes modifications to the parking layout to improve maneuverability and operational efficiency. The proposed parking configuration does not include shade trees required under Article VIII of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance for parking lots containing more than twenty (20) spaces. The applicant therefore seeks a Major Variance to eliminate the required parking lot shade trees.

Description of Site and Area

The subject property is located on the east side of Glover Avenue, north of East Washington street, and south of East Oregon Street.¹ The chart on this page identifies the current zoning, and existing and future land use of the site and surrounding properties (see Exhibits A, B, C, and D).

Table 1. Zoning and Land Use

Direction	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Place Types
Site	IN-1 (Light Industrial/Office District)	Social, Institutional, or Infrastructure-related activities	Nationhood Centers
North	R-4 (Multiple-Family Residential District)	Residential	Neighborhood II
South	IN-1 (Light Industrial/Office District)	Social, Institutional, or Infrastructure-related activities	Nationhood Centers
East	IN-2 (Heavy Industrial District)	Natural resources	Neighborhood II
West	B3 (General Business District)	Commercial	Neighborhood Centers

Discussion

Article VIII of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance requires shade trees to be planted on surface parking lots containing more than twenty (20) parking spaces. These landscaping requirements are intended to reduce urban heat island effects, improve stormwater interception, provide visual relief, and enhance the overall appearance of large paved areas.

The applicant proposes a parking configuration totaling one hundred fifty (150) parking spaces. Based on the ordinance requirement of one (1) shade tree for every nine (9) parking spaces, approximately seventeen (17) shade trees would ordinarily be required. The submitted site plan does not include any shade trees within the proposed parking area.

Staff confirmed that the site currently contains seventy-seven (77) existing parking spaces, meaning the project represents a net increase of seventy-three (73) parking spaces. The number of shade trees required from the net increase in spaces would be eight (8) shade trees. While the Zoning Ordinance calculates shade tree requirements based on the total number of parking spaces, staff evaluated the request in relation to the expansion of the parking area when considering potential mitigation measures.

According to the application, planting shade trees within the parking lot would interfere with the maneuverability of large municipal fleet vehicles and limit operational flexibility. The applicant states that maintaining unobstructed paved areas is necessary to support the operational needs of the Public Works facility.

Variance Criteria

Section XI-3 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance requires the Zoning Board of Appeals to make findings based on variance criteria. The Zoning Board of Appeals must first determine, based on the evidence presented, whether there are special circumstances or special practical difficulties with reference to the parcel concerned, in carrying out the strict application of the ordinance. This criterion is intended to serve as a minimum threshold that must be met before a variance request may be evaluated.

The following is a review of the criteria outlined in the ordinance, followed by staff analysis:

1. *There are special circumstances or special practical difficulties with reference to the parcel concerned in carrying out the strict application of the ordinance.*

The subject property is developed as the City's Public Works facility and functions as a municipal operations yard. The site accommodates large fleet vehicles, maintenance, and equipment, and associated circulation areas necessary for municipal service operations. These operational characteristics require relatively large maneuvering areas and unobstructed circulation space to allow for safe movement of trucks and service vehicles. These vehicles include fleet vehicles, Vactor trucks, snowplows, and fire engines. Also, a substantial portion of the site is allocated for salt storage, materials storage, and a detention basin—which further reduces usable area for service vehicles.

Article VIII of the Zoning Ordinance requires shade trees to be planted within surface parking lots containing more than twenty (20) parking spaces. Based on the proposed parking configuration, approximately seventeen (17) shade trees would typically be required within the parking area. According to the applicant, the placement of trees would reduce maneuvering space and could interfere with the operations needs of public works vehicles.

Staff find this criterion met.

2. *The proposed variance will not serve as a special privilege because the variance requested is necessary due to special circumstances relating to the land or structure involved or to be used for occupancy thereof which is not generally applicable to other lands or structures in the same district.*

Property within the IN-1 (Light Industrial/Office) district that provides surface parking in excess of twenty (20) spaces are generally required to plant shade trees in accordance with Article VII of the Zoning Ordinance. The requested variance would allow the subject property to deviate from this requirement.

However, the requested relief is tied to the operational characteristics of a municipal Public Works facility, which differs from most office or light industrial uses typically located in the IN-1 district. The requested variance would not permit a more intensive use of the property or create additional development rights beyond those otherwise permitted in the district. Rather, the variance would modify a design standard related to the parking lot landscaping to accommodate the operational needs of the existing municipal facility.

Because the request relates specifically to the operational requirements of the Public Works facility and does not allow development that would otherwise be prohibited within the zoning district.

Staff find that the requested variance would not constitute a special privilege inconsistent with limitations placed upon other properties in the same district.

Staff find this criterion met.

3. *The variance requested is not the result of a situation or condition having been knowingly or deliberately created by the Petitioner.*

The subject property is an existing municipal Public Works facility that has long functioned as an operations yard for fleet vehicles equipment, maintenance equipment, and related municipal services. The proposed parking modifications are intended to improve operational efficiency and vehicle maneuverability within the existing facility. At the outset of the project, it was recognized that the site was already constrained for current operations, and as vehicle sizes have increased over time, and staffing levels at the facility have grown, the site has become increasingly constrained.

The need for relief from the shade tree requirement arises from the functional characteristics of the use and the operational requirements of the Public Works facility, which must accommodate large municipal vehicles and equipment. These operational conditions limit the feasibility of interior parking lot landscaping within the maneuvering areas. Although the proposed parking layout influences the need for the variance, the underlying conditions result from the operational needs rather than from a deliberate attempt by the petitioner to avoid compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

Staff finds this criterion met.

4. *The variance will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood.*

The surrounding area is characterized primarily by light industrial, office, and municipal uses, and includes large paved areas, outdoor storage, and fleet operations typical of an industrial service environment. The requested variance relates specifically to the elimination of the shade trees within the surface parking area and does not involve a change in land use, building height, building footprint, or overall development intensity. The existing use of the property as a municipal operations facility would remain unchanged.

Residentially zoned property R-4 (Multiple-Family Residential) is located to the north of the site. While shade trees are intended in part to soften the visual appearance of large paved areas, the surrounding industrial context and continued compliance with applicable buffering and yard requirements help maintain compatibility between the site and adjacent properties.

Because the requested variance would not introduce a new use or significantly intensify the operations on the site; staff find that the requested variance would not alter the essential character of the surrounding area.

Staff find this criterion met.

5. *The variance will not cause a nuisance to the adjacent property.*

The requested variance relates to the elimination of shade trees within a surface parking area and does not involve a change in land use, or significant change in operational intensity. The property will continue to function as the City of Urbana Public Works facility. The elimination of shade trees would not generate additional noise, traffic, lighting, or operational activity beyond what is already associated with the exiting municipal use of the property. As a result, the requested variance is not expected to create conditions that would constitute a nuisance to adjacent properties. While the absence of shade trees may affect the visual appearance of the parking area and reduce potential

environmental benefits associated with the parking lot landscaping; these effects would not constitute nuisance under the intent of Zoning ordinance.

Staff find this criterion met.

6. *The variance represents generally the minimum deviation from requirements of the Zoning Ordinance necessary to accommodate the request.*

The applicant indicates that planting shade trees within the parking lot would interfere with maneuverability and operational needs of large municipal fleet vehicles and equipment associated with Public Works facility. These operational constraints support the request relief from the interior parking lot landscaping requirement.

However, the request seeks complete elimination of shade trees, rather than a reduction on the number of trees or the use of alternative landscaping options on the site. The record does not fully demonstrate that all landscaping on the site would be infeasible. As a result, staff cannot conclude that complete elimination of the shade tree requirement represents the minimum deviation necessary in all respects.

Staff find this criterion partially met.

Overall, staff finds that five of the six criteria weigh in favor of granting the major variance, and one weighs partially in favor.

Public Notice and Input

Staff published a legal advertisement in The News-Gazette to notify the public of the request and public hearing 15 days prior to the Zoning Board of Appeals meeting. Staff also mailed notification letters to 16 neighboring property owners (within 250 feet of the subject property) notifying them of the request and posted three public hearing signs on the property.

As of the date of this report, staff have not received any public comment regarding this request.

Summary of Findings

The applicant requires a major Variance to eliminate required shade trees within a surface parking area located at 706 South Glover Avenue in IN-1 (Light Industrial/Office) Zoning District. Article VIII of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance requires shade trees to be planted within surface parking areas containing more than twenty (20) parking spaces. Based on the proposed parking configuration of approximately 150 parking spaces, approximately seventeen (17) shade trees would ordinarily be required.

The applicant indicates that planting shade trees within the parking area would interfere with maneuverability for large municipal fleet vehicles associated with the City of Urbana Public Works facility. The requested variance would allow the parking area to remain unobstructed by interior parking lot landscaping in order to accommodate operational needs.

Staff reviewed the request using the variance criteria established in Article XII of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance. Based on evidence presented in the application and staff's evaluation of the criteria, staff find that five of the six variance criteria are satisfied, and one criterion is partially satisfied.

Because the operational characteristics of Public Works require large maneuvering areas for municipal vehicles, Staff finds that the requested relief may be justified. However, in order to maintain the intent of the zoning Ordinance and mitigate visual and environmental impacts associated with large paved

areas, staff recommends approval of the variance with conditions requiring landscaping along the perimeter of parking area where feasible, and to include up to eight (8) shade trees where feasible based on input from the City Arborist and the City Engineer.

Options

The Zoning Board of Appeals may:

1. Forward the case to City Council with a recommendation to **approve** the variance as requested based on the findings outlined in this memo; or
2. Forward the case to City Council with a recommendation to **approve the variance with certain terms and conditions**; or
3. **Deny** the variance request.

If the Urbana Zoning Board of Appeals elects to recommend conditions or recommend approval of the variances on findings other than those articulated herein, they should articulate findings accordingly.

Recommendation

Based on the evidence presented in the discussion above, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that may be presented at the public hearing, staff recommend that the Zoning Board of Appeals recommend **APPROVAL** of the proposed Major Variance in case ZBA-2026-MAJ-01 with the following conditions:

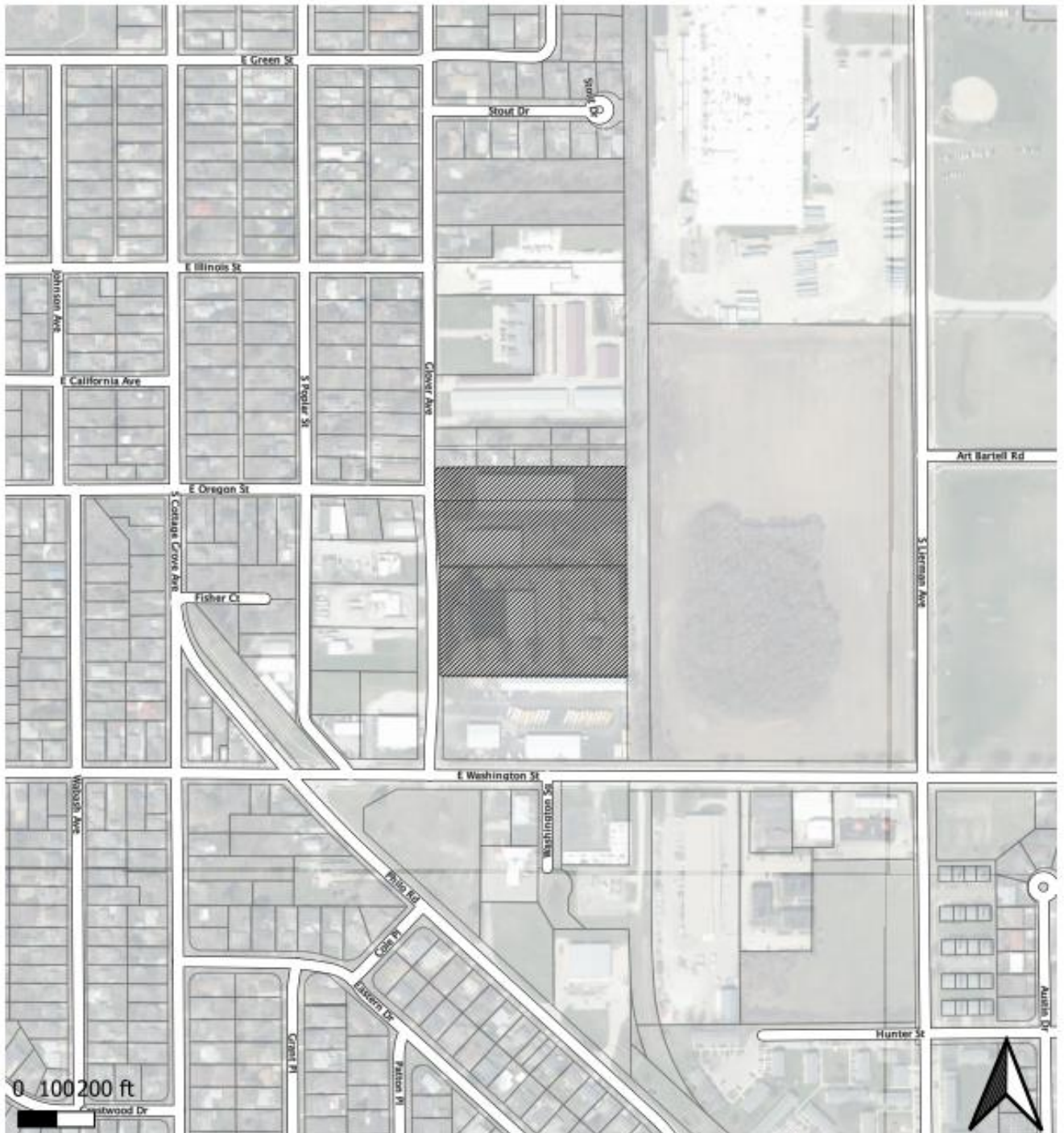
1. Construction must be in general conformance with the attached site plan, entitled “UPW Parking Summary - 706 South Glover Avenue - March 18, 2026” (Exhibit E).
2. Landscaping shall be provided along the perimeter of the expanded parking area where feasible. The number of shade trees shall be generally based on the number of new parking spaces added as part of the project seventy-three (73) spaces, resulting in up to eight (8) shade trees. Final tree placement and feasibility shall be determined by the Zoning Administrator in consultation with the City Arborist and City Engineer.

Attachments: Exhibit A: Location Map
Exhibit B: Land Use Map
Exhibit C: Zoning Map
Exhibit D: Place Types Map
Exhibit E: Variance Application with Site Plan

cc: Jenna Joo, Farnsworth Group, Applicant
City of Urbana Public Works Department, Owner

Exhibit A - Location

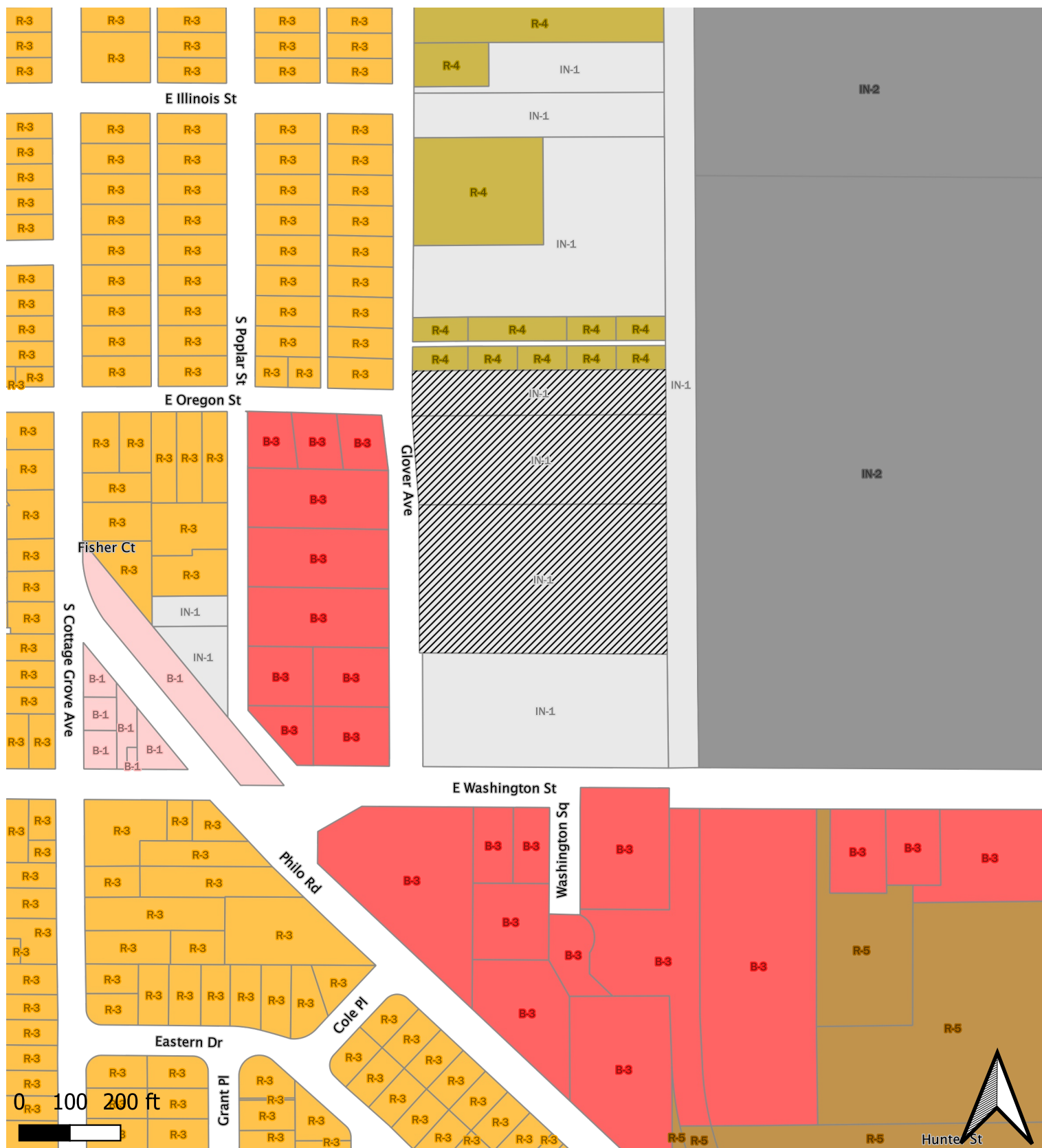
Location Map



Case: ZBA-2026-MAJ-01
Subject: Shade Tree Major Variance
Location: 706 South Glover Avenue
Applicant: Jenna Joo

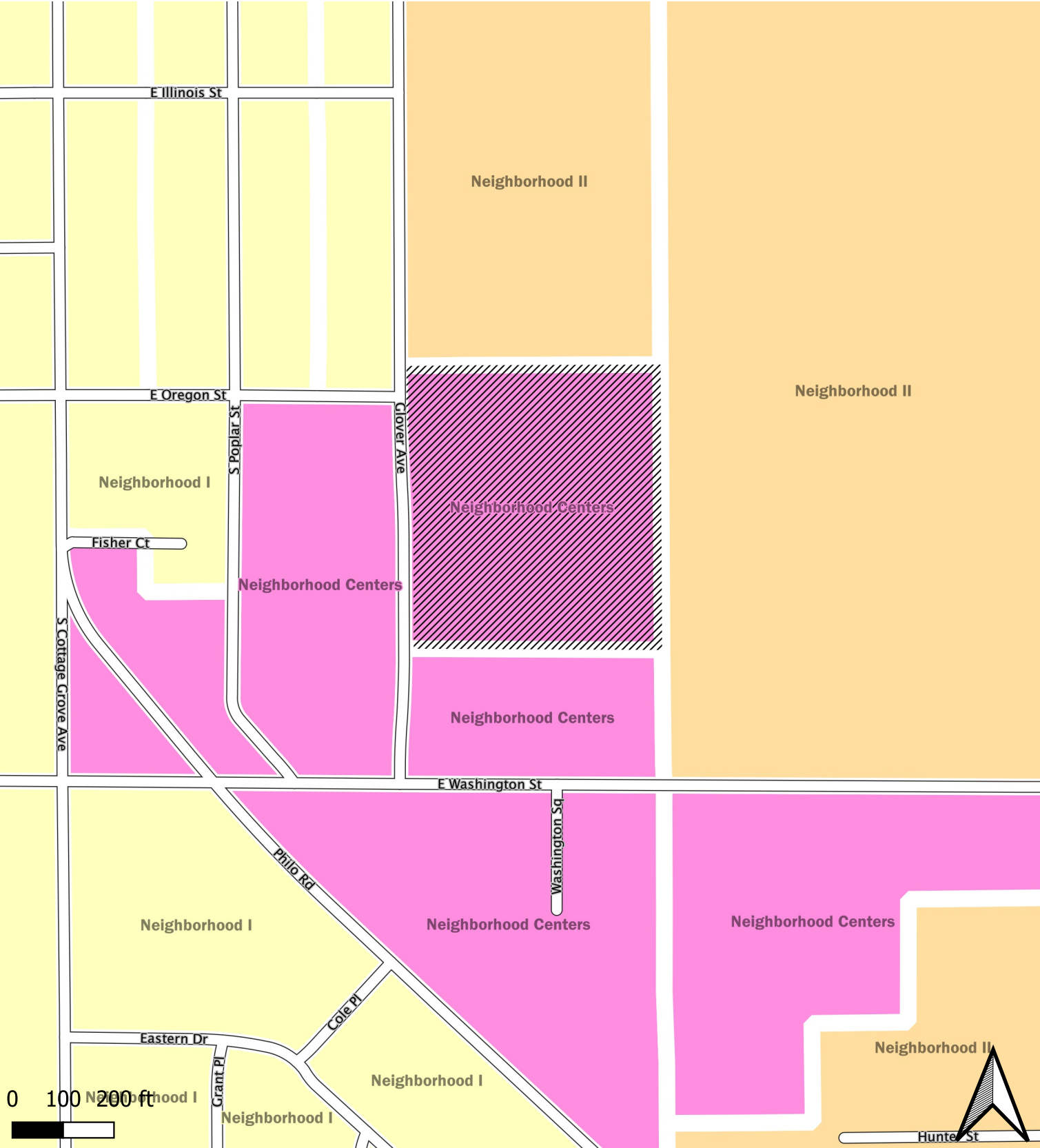
/// Subject Property

Exhibit C - Zoning



Case: ZBA-2026-MAJ-01
 Subject: Shade Tree Major Variance
 Location: 706 South Glover Avenue
 Applicant: Jenna Joo

	Subject Property		B-4		R-2
	B-1		CRE		R-3
	B-2		IN-1		R-4
	B-3		IN-2		R-5
			R-1		



Case: ZBA-2026-MAJ-01
Subject: Shade Tree Major Variance
Location: 706 South Glover Avenue
Applicant: Jenna Joo

- /// Subject Property
- Place Types
- Neighborhood I (N1)
 - Neighborhood II (N2)
 - Neighborhood Center (NC)



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inspection



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documents



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Permit #: VAR26-000001

Project #: 26-000234

Status: Online Application Received

Balance Due: \$220.00

Address: 706 South Glover Avenue 

Description: Urbana Public Works Expansion - Shade Tree
Variance



Permit

Reviews

Documents

Inspections

Permit #:

VAR26-000001

Permit Type:

Variance

Sub Type:

Major Variance

Issue Date:

Expiration Date:

The application fee must be paid when submitting the application. For the current fee amount, please refer to the most recent version of the City's

'Schedule of Fees - Excluding Liquor License Fees', which can be found at <https://www.urbanailinois.us/fees> (<https://www.urbanailinois.us/fees>).

The applicant is also responsible for paying the cost of the legal ad publication fees. The News-Gazette will bill the applicant directly. Legal ad publication fees vary from \$75.00 and up.

If you need assistance completing this form, please contact the Planning Department at Planning@urbanailinois.us (<mailto:planning@urbanailinois.us>) or (217) 384-2440.

Click Here (<https://www.urbanailinois.us/businesses/planning-zoning-forms/variances>) to see the difference between major and minor variances.

PROPOSED USE

Describe the proposed use and its activities. In other words, what do you plan to do? Are there existing buildings you will use, change, or demolish? Will you build new buildings? What activities will take place on site, and where? If you are planning a business, what will your hours of operation be?

Current Zoning District:

IN-1 - Light Industrial/Office

Current Land Use:

Municipal

Proposed Use:

Municipal

PROPERTY LEGAL DESCRIPTION

A legal description is the geographical description of a real estate property for the purpose of identifying the property for legal transactions such as deeds, mortgages and other legal documents. A legal description will refer to the name of the subdivision and the lot number.

If your legal description is long, please type "See Attached Legal Description," in the Legal Description Provided by Applicant field and upload a separate document with legal description.

Legal Description Provided by Applicant:

See attached.

Legal Description attachment:

2005R08184 Deed (704 Glover).pdf

2005R08185 Deed (704 Glover).pdf

2015R20516 Deed (610 Glover).pdf

Book 813 Page 299 Deed (706 and 812 Glover Ave).pdf

Deed (812 Glover Ave).pdf

PERMIT INFORMATION

Purpose for Request:

Shade Tree variance in parking areas

Number of Applicants:

1

Applicant Name:

Jenna Joo

OWNER INFORMATION

If the applicant is not the sole owner, please attach documentation for contact information including **name**, **email** and **phone numbers** of every owner.:

CONSULTANT INFORMATION

If you are working with an architect, engineer, surveyor, site planner, or attorney, please fill in their information below.

Architect Name, Email and Phone:

Jenna Joo (Farnsworth Group) [REDACTED]

Engineer Name, Email and Phone:

Surveyor Name, Email and Phone:

Site Planner Name, Email and Phone:

Attorney Name, Email and Phone:

REASONS FOR VARIANCE

Below are the criteria that the Zoning Board of Appeals will base their decision on. Your answers should be as detailed as possible.

Identify and explain any special circumstances or practical difficulties in carrying out the strict application of the Zoning Ordinance with respect to the subject parcel:

Due to site constraints, required owner parking, and the operational and maintenance needs of City vehicles—including fleet vehicles, Vector trucks, snowplows, and fire engines—available site space is limited. A substantial portion of the site must also be allocated for salt storage, detention basins, and materials storage, further reducing the usable area. In addition, site conditions associated with heavy vehicle circulation and public works operations limit the feasibility of long-term or sustainable landscaping.

Explain how the variance is necessary due to special conditions relating to the land or structure involved which are not generally applicable to other property in the same district:

The size of the public works vehicles and fire engines require larger circulation needs and necessitates additional on-site maneuvering and circulation space, further limiting the amount of available land. Special site circumstances include public works operations involving large vehicles and the need for bulk storage areas to support City maintenance and operations.

Explain how the variance is not the result of a situation or condition that was knowingly or deliberately created by you (the Petitioner):

At the outset of the project, it was recognized that the site was already constrained, as vehicle sizes have increased over time and staffing levels at the facility have grown, resulting in limited parking availability and site maneuverability. Given the constrained site conditions, expanding vehicle dimensions, and increased staffing requirements, available space is at a premium, and eliminating the shade trees requirement provides a functional benefit by supporting efficient public works operations.

Explain why the variance will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood:

The area is zoned for light industrial use, and the facility currently consists of concrete masonry buildings, pre-engineered metal buildings, sheds, and bulk storage areas. The proposed improvements would be consistent with the existing site conditions and would not worsen the current conditions.

There are very little landscaped areas in the region of the proposed development, which includes limited grassy areas. Since there is a lack of existing landscaped areas in the vicinity, adding a small amount of landscaped area would not drastically alter the overall characteristic of the surrounding area.

Explain why the variance will not cause a nuisance to adjacent property:

The area is zoned for light industrial use, and the facility currently consists of concrete masonry buildings, pre-engineered metal buildings, sheds, and bulk storage areas. The proposed improvements would be consistent with the existing site conditions and would not create a nuisance for adjacent properties. The existing parking areas in the adjacent properties do not contain trees or landscaping areas.

Does the variance represent the minimum deviation necessary from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance? Explain:

Due to the operational needs of the facility—including circulation for large vehicles, staff parking, and bulk storage—available space on the site is limited. Planting additional trees would reduce functional space and could impede daily public works operations. The proposed variance allows the site to operate efficiently while ensuring that adjacent properties are not impacted.

ATTACHMENTS

Please include any attachments relevant to your variance permit request: supporting documents, site plans, photos, etc.:

CERTIFICATION

I am:

2. Authorized to make this application on behalf of the owner.

Please attach letter of authorization from owner.:

Authorization_UPW Variance.pdf

I certify all the information contained in this application form or any attachment(s), document(s) or plan(s) submitted herewith are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Agree:

Yes

I acknowledge that my electronic or digital signature on this application has the full legal effect as that of my written signature.

Agree:

Yes

I grant permission for City staff to post a temporary yard sign on the subject property announcing the public hearing to be held for my request (if required).

Agree:

Yes

Applicant Signature Upload:

Signer Name:

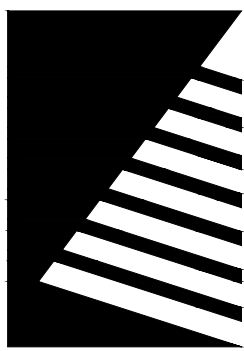
Jenna Joo

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ISSUE:
DATE: DESCRIPTION:
1 01/30/2026 ADD 01

BID/PERMIT SET
01/16/2026



Urbana - Public Works
Remodel

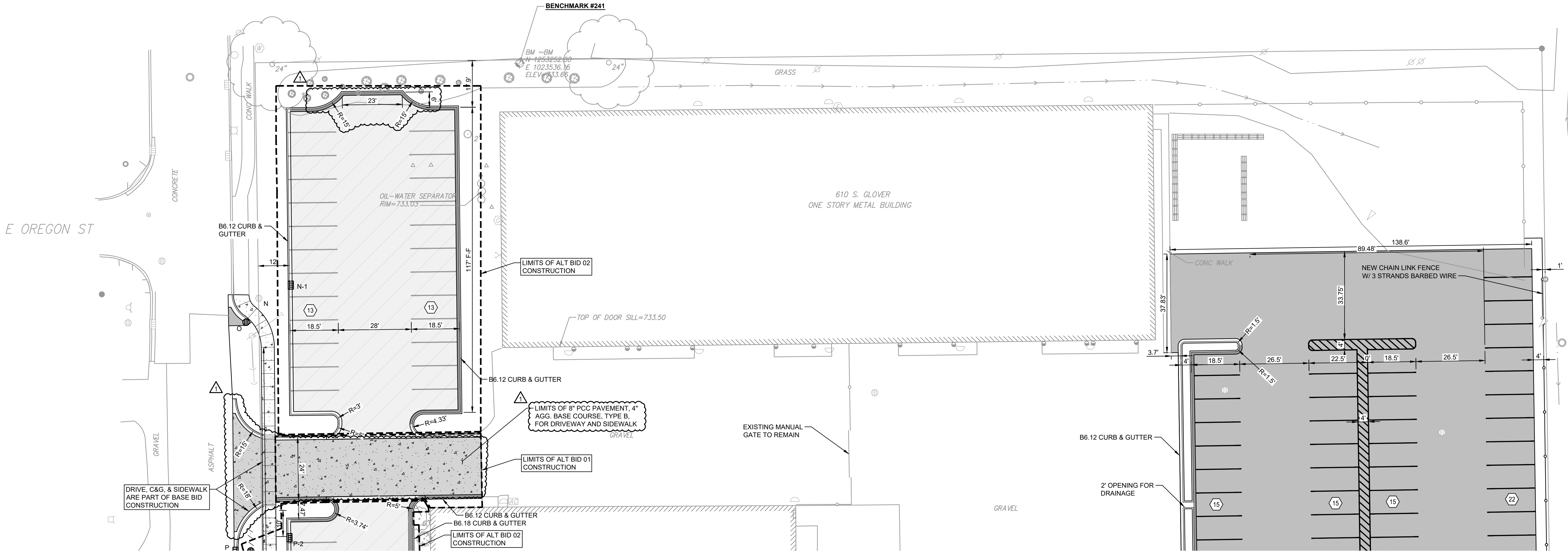
DATE: 01/16/2026
DESIGNED: DSC
DRAWN: EBM
REVIEWED: DSC
FIELD BOOK NO.: BMiCham195A

SHEET TITLE:
SITE PLAN (NORTH)

SHEET NUMBER:

C2.0

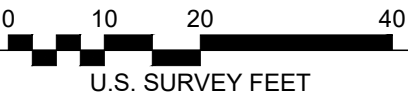
PROJECT NO.: 0231826 27



PARKING SUMMARY

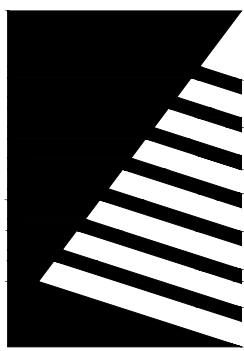
EXISTING			
	REGULAR	ADA	TOTAL
610/704 GLOVER	0	0	0
706 GLOVER			
VISITOR PARKING	10	1	11
2ND BAY PW PARKING	8	1	9
3RD BAY PW PARKING	12	0	12
EAST PARKING (EMPLOYEE)	45	0	45
TOTAL	75	2	77

PROPOSED			
	REGULAR	ADA	TOTAL
610 GLOVER	26	0	26
704 GLOVER			
FRONT PARKING	10	0	10
EV PARKING	11	0	11
EAST PARKING (EMPLOYEE)	67	0	67
706 GLOVER			
NW PARKING	5	0	5
VISITOR PARKING	10	1	11
2ND BAY PW PARKING	6	0	6
ANGLE PW PARKING	14	0	14
TOTAL	149	1	150



I:\admin\1\2\2023\0231826\00 - Urbana - Public Works Remodel\04_Drawing\DWG\C2_Site Plan - 0231826.dwg | 2/1/2026 3:04 PM |

1 SITE PLAN (NORTH)
SCALE: 1"=20'



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GROUP

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Engineers | Architects | Surveyors | Scientists

ISSUE:		
#	DATE:	DESCRIPTION:
1	01/30/2026	ADD 01
2	02/06/2026	ADD 02

BID/PERMIT SET
01/16/2026



Urbana - Public Works
Remodel

DATE: 2/16/2026

DESIGNED: DSC

DRAWN: EBM

REVIEWED: ACH

FIELD BOOK NO.: BMiCham195A

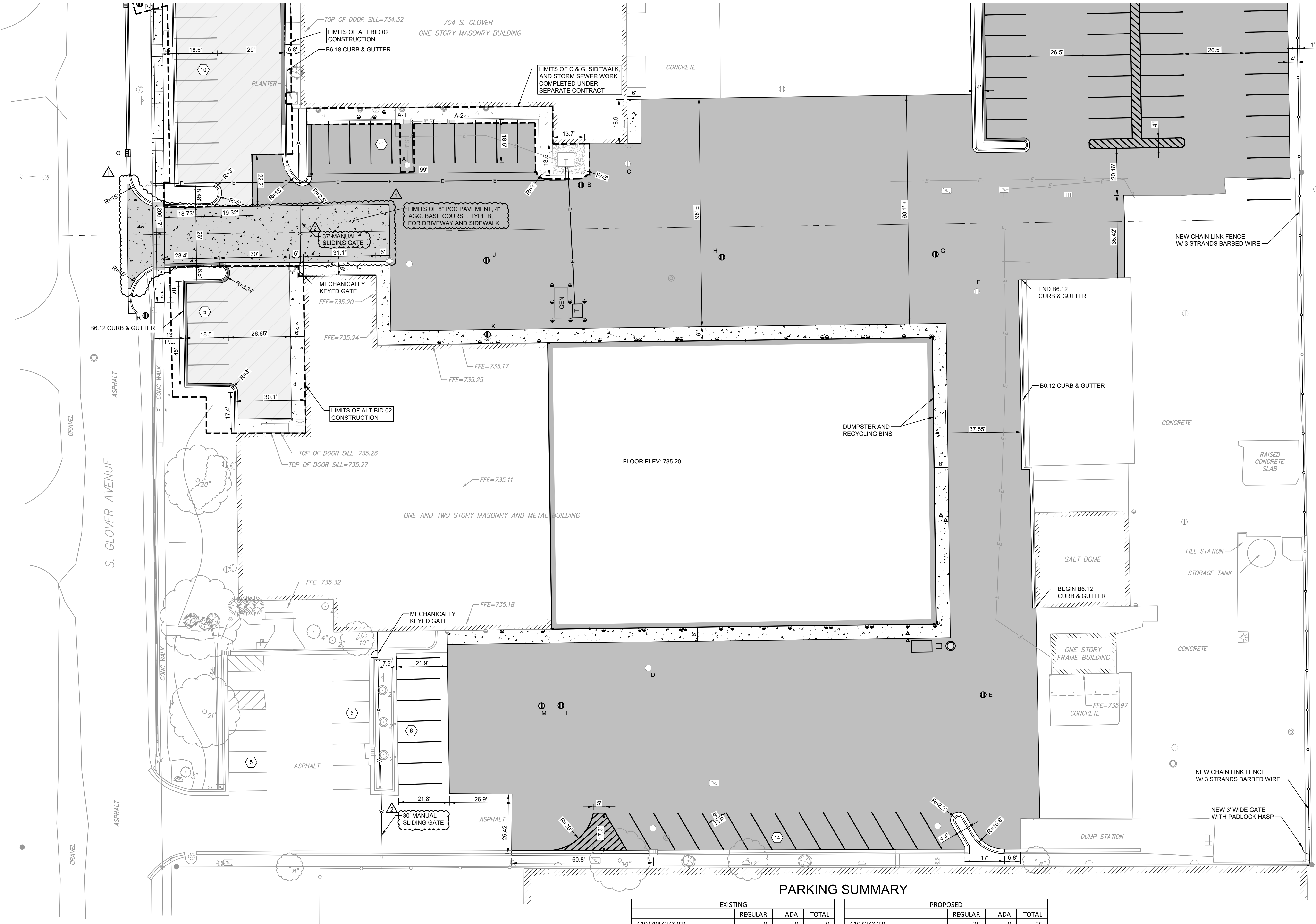
SHEET TITLE:

SITE PLAN (SOUTH)

SHEET NUMBER:

C2.1

PROJECT NO.: 0231826-28



PARKING SUMMARY

EXISTING			
	REGULAR	ADA	TOTAL
610/704 GLOVER	0	0	0
706 GLOVER			
VISITOR PARKING	10	1	11
2ND BAY PW PARKING	8	1	9
3RD BAY PW PARKING	12	0	12
EAST PARKING (EMPLOYEE)	45	0	45
TOTAL	75	2	77

PROPOSED			
	REGULAR	ADA	TOTAL
610 GLOVER	26	0	26
704 GLOVER			
FRONT PARKING	10	0	10
EV PARKING	11	0	11
EAST PARKING (EMPLOYEE)	67	0	67
706 GLOVER			
NW PARKING	5	0	5
VISITOR PARKING	10	1	11
2ND BAY PW PARKING	6	0	6
ANGLE PW PARKING	14	0	14
TOTAL	149	1	150





Olivia Jovine



Director of Community Development Services

Contact

Oivia.Jovine@UrbanaIL.gov
217-328-8262
400 S Vine Street
Urbana, Illinois

Notable Qualifications

I have 10+ years of professional experience with strong subject matter expertise in real estate and urban planning. I hold a Master of Science (MS) in Urban Planning from Columbia University.

My "why"

I'm a people-first planner who champions growth and community. My role is to ensure development reflects the voices, values, and vision of people today—and meets the needs of people in the future.

About my position

The CD Director is responsible for operational and technical work and is responsible for maintaining relationships across City departments, the development community, and the general public. Community Development has overall responsibility for land use planning, zoning, economic development, affordable housing services through various grant programs, compliance with building codes, and arts and culture programs.

My noteworthy work experience

Before joining the public sector, I worked as a Planner for an environmental consulting firm, then in market analytics within real estate. At the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development, I served as Program Manager, supporting the Mayor's post-covid development strategies. As Manager of the Housing in Downtown program, I delivered 1,300 mixed-income units through a pioneering tax incentive that transformed obsolete office buildings into apartments in the city's commercial core. My career spans diverse technical domains, yet a constant has always been my commitment to using data and research as the foundation for informed and impactful decision making.

About me...

I'm a dedicated professional with a deep commitment to place and community. Guided by the values of creativity, empathy, and respect, I strive to bring intentionality and care to every space I engage—personally and professionally.



Aimirou Sy

Planner II



Contact Information

Aimirou.Sy@UrbanaIL.gov
217-384-2439
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

Notable Qualifications

Master of Arts in Urban Planning – Minnesota
State University, Mankato
Master of Science in Project Management –
University of the Cumberland
Bachelor's in Urban Planning – Minnesota
State University, Mankato
Skilled in GIS

My "why"

I pursue planning because I see it as a powerful way to shape communities that are equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. Growing up and working in diverse urban environments has shown me how good planning can transform lives — from improving access to housing and jobs to creating spaces where people feel connected and proud of their neighborhoods. I enjoy the process of bringing data, design, and community voices together to make thoughtful, lasting change that reflects both people's needs and their aspirations.

About my position

This role supports the development and ongoing updates of the City's Comprehensive Plan while leading long-range and area planning studies with staff, partner agencies, and community groups. The position prepares detailed staff reports and presents them to various city boards and commissions, attending meetings as needed. It manages Plan Cases related to land use, zoning, subdivisions, and annexations, guiding them through the approval process. The role also assists with zoning enforcement, responds to public inquiries, and provides clear guidance on zoning regulations. Additionally, it creates maps, reports, and analyses—including GIS products—to support planning decisions and communicate key information.

My noteworthy work experience is...

I have had the opportunity to work on a variety of community and urban development projects that blend planning, design, and implementation. In my role at NEOO Partners, I have worked on projects from early feasibility through construction, including initiatives that support equitable redevelopment and long-term neighborhood revitalization. My work has included coordinating with city staff, architects, and engineers; analyzing property and zoning data; and engaging community members to ensure development reflects local needs. I take pride in working on projects that not only transform physical spaces but also create opportunities for the people who live, work, and play there.

About me...

I am relocating from Saint Paul, Minnesota, and I am passionate about creating equitable and inclusive communities through urban planning and development. I enjoy watching and playing soccer, exploring new cities, and spending time with family and friends. On weekends, I love discovering local coffee shops, visiting parks, or catching a good game. I am also a big believer in lifelong learning and enjoy reading about architecture, culture, and how cities evolve over time.



Katherine Himick

Planner I



Contact Information

Katherine.Himick@UrbanaIL.gov
217-384-2439
400 South Vine Street

Notable Qualifications

- Master's in Historic Preservation - University of York, UK
- Graduate Certificate in GIS - University of Denver, CO
- Bachelor's in History and Anthropology - Centre College, Danville, KY
- Strong background in historic preservation.

My "why"

I'm motivated by work that helps communities function better while honoring their history and character. I enjoy planning because it sits at the intersection of people, place, and policy. At its best, planning supports communities that are economically prosperous, environmentally sustainable, and culturally vibrant.

About my position

As a Planner I, I help prepare, implement, and keep the City's Comprehensive Plan up to date. I also manage long-range and area planning projects, working closely with fellow planners, partner jurisdictions, and neighborhood organizations.

My noteworthy work experience is...

Prior to joining the City of Urbana, I was a member of the Planning Division for the City of South Bend, where I supported short-term and long-range planning functions through a preservation planning lens. I staffed the Historic Preservation Commission and worked closely with other staff members on a wide range of zoning, planning, and development projects. My work included developing enforcement processes, improving permitting systems, coordinating audits of historic landmarks, and leading public outreach initiatives.

About me...

Outside of work, I enjoy creative and hands-on hobbies like metal jewelry making, crocheting, and baking. I'm especially drawn to nature-inspired designs and historic patterns and motifs. I also enjoy learning about local history, spending time outdoors, contra dancing, and working on various artistic and crafty projects.