



PLANNING STAFF REPORT

MEMO DATE: February 11, 2022
MTG. DATE: **FEBRUARY 16, 2022**

TO: Village of Cottage Grove Plan Commission

CC: Village of Cottage Grove Board of Trustees
Matt Giese – Village Administrator
Lisa Kalata – Village Clerk
Larry Konopacki – Village Attorney
Rick Manthe – Village Attorney
Josh Straka – Village Engineer

FROM: [Erin Ruth, AICP – Village Planning Director](#)

RE: **Project Silver Eagle Precise Implementation Plan**

BACKGROUND

Applicant: TC Pursuit Services, Inc.

Location: 145 acres at the intersection of County Roads N and TT; parcels #0811-332-9001-1, #0811-332-9501-1, #0811-332-9782-1, #0811-332-9791-1, and #0811-333-8075-1

Area: 145 acres

Agents: Morgan Baer Blaska – TC Pursuit Services
Adam Artz – Pinnacle Engineering

Existing Zoning: Rural Holding

Proposed Zoning: PUD, Planned Unit Development

OVERVIEW

The applicant, TC Pursuit Services, is seeking approval of a General Development Plan for a new, built-to-suit multi-story industrial warehouse and distribution facility (currently referred to as Project Silver Eagle) that has a footprint of 649,653 sq. ft. The proposed building includes the ground floor, a mezzanine, and four upper floors with the building's square footage totaling 3,421,573 sq. ft.

The ground and mezzanine levels will house material handling systems for incoming and outgoing product along with loading docks and office space. The upper floors are utilized for storage of product with conveyance systems connecting all levels.

The building exterior will consist of precast concrete panels with a metal panel system on the upper portions of the warehouse.

LOCATION MAP



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Comprehensive Plan shows this area as Planned Office/Industrial on the Future Land Use map. In the opinion of staff, the proposed project is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Specifically, the project aligns with the following excerpts from the Planned Office/Industrial land use description:

- “This future land use category is intended to attract businesses that provide employment and tax base” including “high quality manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution.” *The proposed project will provide a regional employment center and significant tax base while employing higher quality materials and design. See the ‘Impact Scenario’ document from the Madison Area Regional Economic Partnership (MADREP) for additional information.*
- “New development adjacent to or easily visible from main transportation corridors should implement higher quality materials and design and have generous landscaping, no outdoor storage, and lighting and signage that is compatible with surrounding development.” *The proposed project will be set back from the N and TT frontage but will still be visible due to the scale of the structure. Higher end materials and design are being employed. A high percentage of the site will remain as greenspace. No outdoor material storage is intended, signage is minimal relative to the scale of the building, and lighting must meet Village ordinances for light shed at the property lines. Staff recommends requiring additional tree clusters at various points on the site’s topography to help further screen the built portions of the site from Highways N and TT and from high points in McCarthy Park as shown on Figure 1 below.*
- “The Village’s Planned Office (PO) and Planned Industrial (PI) zoning districts are generally the most appropriate to implement this future land use category. Planned Unit Development (PUD) may be appropriate for larger or more complex projects.” *This is the type of larger project that was envisioned to utilize PUD zoning.*

Furthermore, the project generally complies with the site and building design guidelines on p. 5-30 and 5-31 of the Land Use chapter:

- “In situations where industrial uses abut non-industrial uses, screening should be provided.” *The submitted landscaping plan shows a ‘residential landscaping buffer’ adjacent to residentially zoned properties. Given the relationship of the proposed building relative to the adjacent neighborhood, staff recommends requiring the applicant to extend the buffer north along the west property line to at least the northern end of the fenced loading area. Additional buffer should be provided at the northeast corner of the loading area due to a gap in the existing tree line to the north of that location. See Figure 1 below for locations.*
- “Long, monotonous industrial building facades should be avoided by varying building setbacks and placing vegetation in strategic locations along foundations.” *The proposed building effectively utilizes materials, colors, and form to add complexity and interest to the facades. The landscaping plan shows extensive ‘building foundation landscaping.’*
- “Pedestrian walkways should be separated from vehicular traffic and loading areas.” *The site plan indicates twelve sidewalks and dedicated pedestrian walkways running north south through the parking lot which effectively separate pedestrians from traffic. Staff*

recommends requiring a bike/ped path, separate from the vehicular drives, connecting from the Highway TT frontage to a bike parking area in the vicinity of the entrance. The Village Engineer has additional conditions related to adding paths along the Highway N and TT frontages.

- “Vehicles servicing the site should be able to move from one area of the site to another without re-entering a public street.” The vehicular circulation system shown on the site plan permits internal movement around the site and separates delivery trucks from employee vehicles.
- “Loading areas for industrial uses should be located at the rear of buildings and should be screened from the view of public rights of way and adjacent non-industrial uses.” The larger, primary loading area is located along the north (rear) of the building. A smaller loading area is located along the east side. Staff recommends requiring additional screening at areas shown on Figure 1 below.

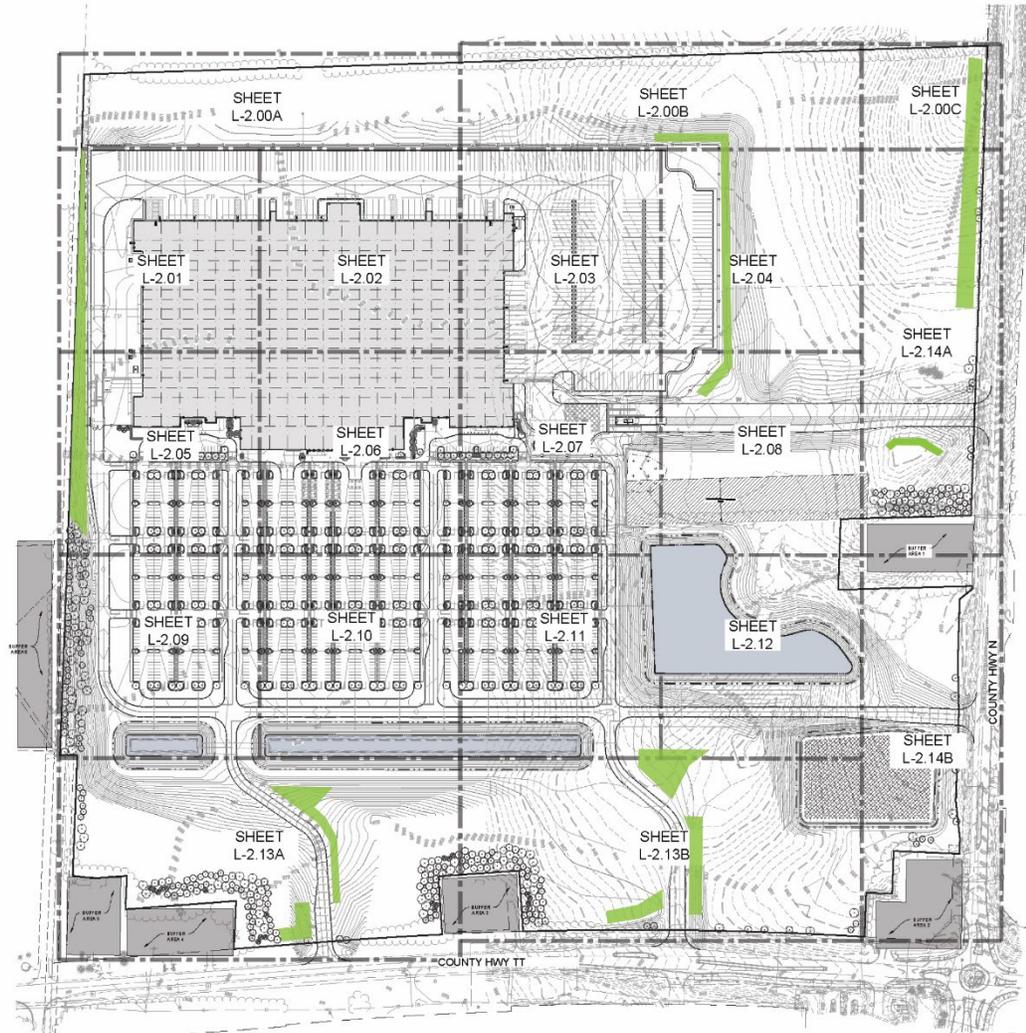


Figure 1: Additional Tree Line Recommendations

- “All mechanical equipment should be screened from view from non-industrial areas.” *Equipment locations are not required to be shown in the GDP submittal and therefore have not been provided. However, the narrative notes that rooftop HVAC units will be used. Given the height and scale of the roof, it would appear there is ample room to arrange any roof top units to reduce their visibility from the main corridors.*
- “The following design elements should not be allowed in new industrial developments that area adjacent to office or non-industrial uses, or are easily visible from main corridors: large, blank unarticulated wall surfaces; unscreened chain link fences and barbed wire; non-architectural façade materials; and ‘pole barn’ type metal or wood buildings.” *As noted above, the facades have architectural complexity and utilize higher quality materials, and the loading areas are to be screened.*

Economic development chapter:

- Starting on p. 9-20 the economic development chapter discusses targeted industry types for the Village. Figure 9.35 is a matrix that shows the desirability of various industry types within the different geographic areas in the Village. ‘Wholesale trade’ and ‘transportation and warehousing’ are among the highest scoring industries for the area north of I-94.
- Page 9-25 discusses the CDA’s recommendation for the land north of I-94 which states that some land should be reserved for office with some small commercial parcels along N and TT with the remainder of the site dedicated to light industrial/distribution uses. The proposed project includes mostly distribution with an additional 90,000 sq. ft. of office included within the structure. While the current project does not include any commercial development along N or TT, the site plan leaves space available for that potential use in the future.
- Figure 9.36 includes a comparison of selected Madison region business parks and commercial centers.
 - The proposed Project Silver Eagle is anticipated to employ approximately 1,500 employees over approximately 150 acres, resulting in 10 employees per acre. This figure is comparable to other business parks in the region that are more fully built out. For example, the Sun Prairie Business Park was estimated to have 5.5 employees per acre while the Middleton Airport Road Business Park was estimated to have 17.6 employees per acre. Business parks with a higher ratio of office uses such as the Epic Campus or Madison’s American Center have over 20 employees per acre. Therefore, the projected number of employees at Project Silver Eagle is well within the range of expectation for a typical business park development and should not place extraordinary demands on the Village beyond those of a more traditional multi-user business park.
 - An estimate of construction value is not required as part of a GDP submittal, but given the scope of the proposed project it appears likely the value of improvements per acre at Project Silver Eagle will match or exceed the improved value of the comparable parks. Therefore, the tax base generated by Project Silver Eagle should be at least comparable to a more traditional multi-user business park.

- Economic Development goal #1 on p. 9-36 is to “expand the commercial tax base in the Village of Cottage Grove to ease the tax burden on local residential property owners.”
- Economic Development objective #1 is to “prioritize the preparation of land north of Highway TT and near the I-94 and Highway N interchange for future commercial, office, and light industrial development.” The proposed project represents the culmination of such efforts including annexation into the Village, annexation into the urban service area, and the creation of TID 10.

ZONING CONSISTENCY

The proposed project is considered a ‘distribution center’ as described by 325-49(F)(4). Per the Village Comprehensive Plan, the project site is within a ‘Planned Office/Industrial’ area on the Future Land Use map. The plan states that “the Village’s Planned Office (PO) and Planned Industrial (PI) zoning districts are generally the most appropriate to implement this future land use category. Planned Unit Development (PUD) may be appropriate for larger or more complex projects.” Due to the scale of the proposed project, certain aspects of the project exceed the regulations of the PI district. Therefore, as suggested by the Comprehensive Plan, the applicant is seeking the project’s approval as a Planned Unit Development.

Per 325-115(A)(2), Planned Unit Developments are intended “to accommodate forms of development that forward public and private objectives that are not possible within standard zoning districts.” Furthermore, “planned unit developments are designed to forward both the aesthetic and economic objectives of the Village by controlling the site design and appearance, density or intensity of development in terms of more flexible requirements for land uses, density, intensity, bulk, landscaping, and parking requirements.” Finally, “in exchange for such flexibility, the planned unit development shall provide a much higher level of site design, architectural control and other aspects of aesthetic and functional excellence that normally required for other developments.”

In the opinion of staff, the proposed project meets the Village’s objectives for the site due to the alignments and consistencies with the Comprehensive Plan described above. Therefore, staff recommends the requested variations be granted via the PUD process. The most comparable zoning district for the given project in absence of a PUD would be PI, Planned Industrial which is regulated under 325-41(A). Variations requested from the base PI zoning regulations include the following:

- Per 325-41(A)(2)(B) a ‘distribution center’ is permitted as a conditional use in the PI district. 325-115(B)(2) indicates that land uses are a flexible zoning standard and therefore the conditional use is incorporated into the PUD approval.
- Per 325-115(2)(B) bulk requirements and density and intensity requirements are deemed flexible zoning standards under a PUD. The applicant seeks approval of the following exceptions to the bulk, density, or intensity regulations of the PI district:
 - Per 325-41(A)(7)(a)(1), the max. number of floors in the PI district is 4. The proposed project includes five floors plus a mezzanine.

- Per 325-41(A)(7)(b)(8), the max. building height in the PI district is 45 feet. The applicant is requesting a building height of up to 103'-6" to the top of the tallest wall panels as shown on the building elevations.
- Per 325-106(1)(a)(1)(b) a wall sign shall not exceed 200 sq. ft. The wall sign indicated on the south elevation is labeled as up to 275 sq. ft.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the requested Precise Implementation Plan be **APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS**, with the conditions as follows:

1. The Village agrees to the following variations to the requirements of the most comparable zoning district (Planned Industrial) via the Planned Unit Development process:
 - a. Per 325-41(A)(7)(a)(1), the max. number of floors in the PI district is 4. The proposed project includes five floors plus a mezzanine.
 - b. Per 325-41(A)(7)(b)(8), the max. building height in the PI district is 45 feet. The applicant is requesting a building height of up to 103'-6" to the top of the tallest wall panels as shown on the building elevations.
 - c. Per 325-106(1)(a)(1)(b) a wall sign shall not exceed 200 sq. ft. The wall sign indicated on the south elevation is labeled as up to 275 sq. ft.
2. It is the Village's understanding the proposed project is and will remain a 'middle-mile' facility that is not intended to host vehicles that deliver directly to customers. If a change from the proposed facility type is ever considered in the future, an amendment to the Planned Unit Development approval will be required.
3. The applicant shall submit a plan showing and describing the full range of proposed noise mitigation practices, structures, materials, and landscaping for staff review and approval. The Village maintains the right to engage a sound engineer or similar professional to review the noise mitigation plan at the applicant's expense.
4. Minor changes to proposed grading and landscaping type and location may be permitted with staff approval if proposed with the goal of furthering approved noise mitigation objectives described above.
5. To improve screening as described by the Comprehensive Plan, the applicant shall add tree plantings in areas shown in green on Figure 1, unless landscaping at such locations conflicts with the approved noise mitigation plan described above. These shall consist primarily of large conifers with some climax deciduous species.
6. The final stormwater management plan shall comply with the requirements outlined in the WDNR's Water Quality Approval letter for this site dated July 9, 2020 which were provided as a culmination of the urban service area approval process, including maintaining the "suitable hydrology" of the existing wetland and direction to

“coordinate the management of stormwater discharging into the Town (of Sun Prairie), with the Town Engineer.”

7. Driveway locations and configurations and other traffic related improvements may be modified from those shown on the PIP to accommodate final traffic data, input from all relevant governmental agencies, and best engineering practices.
8. There is an existing environmental easement on the former Gariti property (parcel #0811-332-9782-1) held by the Town of Sun Prairie. Treatment of the applicable area shall comply with the terms of the easement. The existing conditions and demolition plan (Sheet C2.00) appears to show tree removal within the easement. The easement area shall be left in its existing state.
9. Coordinate with the Cottage Grove Fire Department regarding the potential recommendation for radio boosters within the proposed facility.
10. Impact fees will be assessed per ordinance based on the number of employees and will be due prior to issuance of a building permit.
11. The applicant shall reimburse the Village for all connection fees charged by the Madison Metropolitan Sewer District prior to issuance of a building permit.
12. The Village of Cottage Grove shall maintain the right to test for compliance with the noise ordinances (325-83). The applicant shall be responsible for any costs related to remediating issues causing violations.
13. Trees shall be replaced as needed to maintain the amount and type of landscaping required in all bufferyards in perpetuity.
14. The Native Plantings Maintenance Notes on Sheet L4.00 call for a ‘prescribed burn’ every fourth year in the proposed prairie areas. The Village of Cottage Grove, the Town of Sun Prairie, and the Cottage Grove Fire Department shall be notified no less than 72 hours prior to any planned burn.
15. Detail 3 on Sheet L3.00 provides instructions for planting a tree on a slope. Amend the detail to provide the minimum slope at which this detail must be implemented.
16. A bike/ped path, separate from the vehicular drives, connecting from the Highway TT frontage to a bike parking area in the vicinity of the entrance shall be required.
17. The pole light fixtures proposed in the parking lots and drive aisles are dark sky compliant fixtures. The applicant shall provide a full lighting plan indicating all outdoor lighting including any wall mounted lights. A photometric plan shall be provided to demonstrate compliance with Village lighting ordinances.