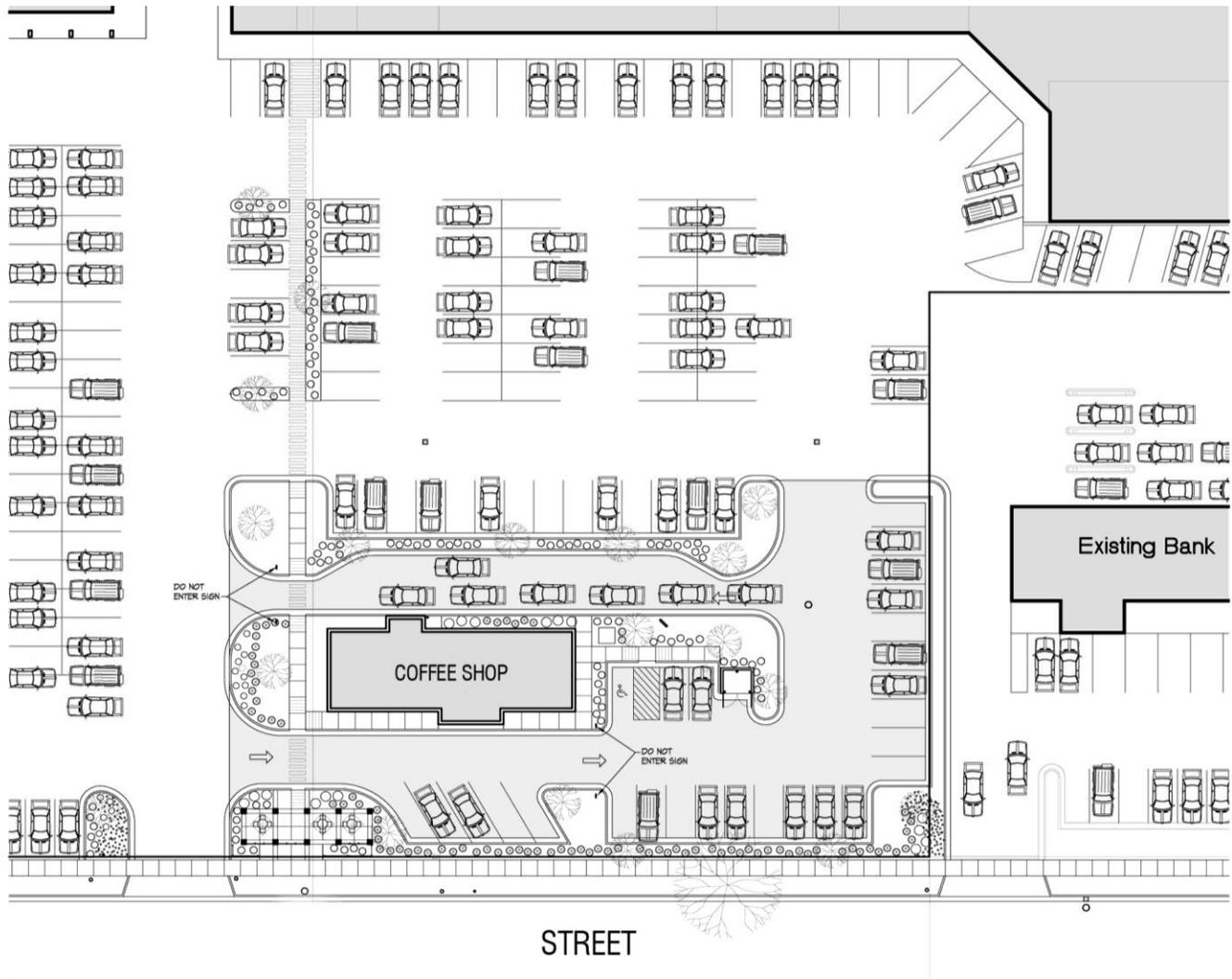


# Special Land Use



Special Land Use review and approval is needed for certain uses of property that have the potential to impact adjacent properties and the neighborhood. The Special Land Use application and review procedure is intended to ensure that the proposed use will be designed, operated, maintained and managed in a way that will be compatible with neighboring properties and will not be detrimental to the City. The application process includes public notice of the proposed use and a public hearing before the Planning Commission. Conditions of approval may be required by the Planning Commission to mitigate potentially adverse effects of the use.



# Special Land Use

## A. Property and Project Information

Property Address \_\_\_\_\_

Parcel Number \_\_\_\_\_ Zone District \_\_\_\_\_

Lot Size Frontage: \_\_\_\_\_ ft Depth: \_\_\_\_\_ ft Area: \_\_\_\_\_ Acres/Sq Ft  Rectangle  Irregular

Current use of property \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed use of property \_\_\_\_\_

Number of parking spaces on site \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Land Use(s) requested:** (Check all that apply)

- Sale or Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages
- Live Entertainment and/or Dancing
- Banquet Facility or Theatre
- Outdoor Seating and/or Other Outdoor Activity
- Natural Features Protection Area Reduction
- Off-Site Parking Lot
- Drive-Through
- 24-hour Operation
- Religious Institution
- Social Service Facility
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Applicant Information

### 1. Applicant

Identify the person or organization requesting the Special Land Use:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Applicant Interest

The applicant must have a legal interest in the subject property:

- Property Owner
- Purchaser by Option or Purchase Agreement
- Purchaser by Land Contract
- Lessee/Tenant

### 3. Property Owner Check here if Applicant is also Property Owner

Identify the person or organization that owns the subject property:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Representative

Identify any person representing the property owner or applicant in this matter:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_



# Special Land Use

## C. Required Application Attachments

- 1. Nature of Proposed Use** (Use letterhead if possible)  
Written description of the nature of the proposed use(s), including: the products or services to be provided, the activities to be conducted inside and outside the building, types of equipment to be used, other required state or local permits or approvals, hours of operation, number of employees, expected levels and types of vehicular traffic coming to and from the site, any joint use agreements, and other relevant information.
- 2. Site and Building Layout** (Use letterhead if possible)  
Written description of the proposed site and/or building layout, building and structure design information, floor plans, parking calculations, fencing, landscaping, current environmental conditions, adjacent land uses, and other pertinent information.
- 3. Site Plans, Building Elevations and Floor Plans**  
Enclose the site plans, building elevations and floor plans required on the Site Plan Review Checklist.

## D. Request and Affidavit

The applicant must read the following statement carefully and sign below:

The undersigned requests that the City of Grand Rapids review this application and related required documents and site plans as provided in Article 12 of the Grand Rapids Zoning Ordinance. The applicant further affirms and acknowledges the following:

- That the applicant has a legal interest in the property described in this application.
- That the answers and statements contained in this application and enclosures are in all respects true and correct to the best of his, her or their knowledge.
- That the approval of this application does not relieve the undersigned from compliance with all other provisions of the Zoning Ordinance or other codes or statutes, and does not constitute the granting of a variance.
- That the applicant will comply with any and all conditions imposed in granting an approval of this application.
- If also the owner, the applicant grants the City of Grand Rapids staff and the Planning Commission the right to access the subject property for the sole purpose of evaluating the application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Applicant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

If the applicant is not the property owner, the property owner must read and sign below:

The undersigned affirms and acknowledges that he, she or they are the owner(s) of the property described in this application, and:

- Is/are aware of the contents of this application and related enclosures.
- Authorizes the applicant to submit this application and represent the undersigned in the matter being reviewed by the City of Grand Rapids.
- Grants the City of Grand Rapids staff and the Planning Commission the right to access the subject property for the sole purpose of evaluating the application.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner Name (printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



# Special Land Use

In addition to the Site Plan Review Standards of Section 5.12.08.E., the Planning Commission shall consider whether the proposed Special Land Use meets the following standards:

## Standard #1. Master Plan/Zoning Ordinance.

Describe how the proposed use will be consistent with the purpose and intent of the *Master Plan* and Zoning Ordinance, including the Zone District.

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## Standard #2. Site Plan Review Standards.

Describe how the project will meet the Site Plan Review Standards of Section 5.12.08.E., including site design, environment; vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation; and public facilities. Additional information may be required for projects involving significant earthmoving or site changes.

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## Standard #3. Neighborhood Effects.

**a.** Describe how the proposed use will be compatible, harmonious and appropriate with the existing or planned character and uses of the neighborhood, adjacent properties, and the natural environment.

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**b.** Describe how potentially adverse effects arising from the proposed use on the neighborhood and adjacent properties will be minimized through the provision of adequate parking, the placement of buildings, structures and entrances, as well as the location of screening, fencing, landscaping, buffers or setbacks.

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**c.** Describe how the proposed use will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future adjacent uses or to the public welfare by reason of excessive traffic, noise, smoke, odors, glare, visual clutter, and electrical or electromagnetic interference.

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# Special Land Use

**d.** Describe how the proposed use will not adversely affect the walkability of the neighborhood, impair pedestrian circulation patterns, disrupt the continuity of the urban street wall or otherwise hinder the creation of a pedestrian-oriented environment.

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## Standard #4. Environment.

Describe how the proposed use will retain as many natural features of the landscape as practicable, particularly where the natural features assist in preserving the general character of the neighborhood.

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## Standard #5. Public Facilities.

**a.** Describe how adequate public or private infrastructure and services already exist or will be provided at no additional cost, and will safeguard the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.

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**b.** Explain how the proposed use will not be detrimental to the financial stability and economic welfare of the City.

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**c.** Describe how the proposed use will comply with all other applicable City ordinances and policies and all applicable State laws.

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## Standard #6. Sale and/or Consumption of Alcohol.

Alcohol-related uses tend to have a particularly detrimental effect on a neighborhood where there is a concentration of these uses. Compliance with the standards of review for uses including alcohol sales in Section 5.9.05.D. shall be in addition to the Review Standards of this Section. Completion of the Supplemental Application for Alcohol Sales is required for these uses.



# Application Procedures

# Special Land Use

## 1. General Information

A Special Land Use (SLU) approval is required where the use of land requires an intensive review, often with conditions tied to approval, to ensure compatibility with adjacent properties and the community as a whole. Special Land Uses are identified in Articles 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of the Zoning Ordinance and often vary from district to district. The Zoning Ordinance lists application procedures and review standards in Article 12, Section 5.12.09.

## 2. Pre-Application Consultation

A pre-application meeting with Planning staff is recommended prior to the submission of the application. Such a meeting helps ensure a smooth application process.

## 3. Neighborhood Outreach

Neighborhood outreach is strongly recommended for a Special Land Use application. The purpose of neighborhood outreach is to inform nearby stakeholders of the proposed project, receive comments and address concerns about the proposal, and whenever possible resolve conflicts in advance of Planning Commission review. Failure to conduct outreach activities may result in a tabling of the request. Recommended procedures are found in Section 5.12.06. of the Zoning Ordinance.

## 4. Application

An application packet for a Special Land Use is available from the Grand Rapids Planning Department, located on the third floor of 1120 Monroe Avenue NW or at the Planning Department's website [www.grandrapidsmi.gov/planning](http://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/planning) under Forms and Applications. You may also call 616-456-4100.

A complete application must be received at least one (1) month prior to the Planning Commission meeting. See [www.grandrapidsmi.gov/planning](http://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/planning) for a calendar of Planning Commission meetings and application deadlines. The project description is a very important part of the application.

## 5. Beer, Wine or Other Alcoholic Beverages

If the application for a Special Land Use involves the sale or consumption of beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages, a supplemental application form is required to address Alcohol Sale Review Standards under Section 5.9.05. of the Zoning Ordinance. Other information, listed in the Alcohol Sales Supplement Checklist, is also required.

## 6. Staff Review

The application will be reviewed by Planning Department staff prior to submission to the Planning Commission. A Planner may contact the applicant with questions or a request for additional information, or may advise the applicant on recommended changes or revisions to the application and submittals for the purpose of clarity.

## 7. Notice of Public Hearing

Following the staff review, the Special Land Use request is forwarded to the Planning Commission for a public hearing. A notice of the public hearing is published in the Grand Rapids Press 15 days prior to Planning Commission meeting. Property owners and residents within a 300 ft radius of the subject property are notified by post card. Interested persons may submit a letter or speak at the public hearing.

## 8. Planning Commission Meeting

All meetings of the Planning Commission are held in the City Commission Chambers of City Hall on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor of 300 Monroe Avenue NW.

Public hearings begin at 1:00 p.m. The Planning staff introduces and explains the request to the Planning Commission. The applicant is then asked to present information on their proposal. The Planning Commission may ask questions of the staff and/or applicant. The Planning Commission then allows public comment on the application, and a chance for the applicant to respond to any concerns or questions. The public hearing is then closed and the Planning Commission deliberates on the request in open session. The Planning Commission may approve, approve with conditions, deny, or table the SLU application. If approved, the effective date is 16 days following the decision.

## 9. Written Notice

The applicant will be provided with a letter and resolution that documents the decision of the Planning Commission, including any conditions of approval.

## 10. Appeal of Denial

If the Planning Commission denies an application for a Special Land Use, the applicant may appeal the decision to the Board of Zoning Appeals. The appeal must be filed with the Planning Department within 15 days of the decision. Conditions of approval cannot be appealed.



# Site Plan Review Checklist

## Special Land Use

### General Plan Requirements

- Project Info: Project address and name, scale, north arrow, location map, date(s) of submission/revisions, sheet number, name, address, phone number, and email of the designer(s) who prepared each plan
- Scale:
  - For less than 3 acres, 1" = 50'
  - For more than 3 acres, 1" = 100'

### Site Data

- Existing zoning of property and all abutting properties
- Property dimensions and gross acreage or square footage (including width, length, and frontage)
- Net acreage or square footage, minus rights-of-way and submerged land
- Existing and proposed topography of the property and within 100' of the property at 2-ft intervals
- Existing lot lines, lot dimensions, building lines, structures, parking areas, and other improvements on the property and within 100' of the property
- Proposed lot lines, lot dimensions, building lines, structures, parking areas, and other improvements on the property and within 100' of the property
- Existing and proposed easements, including type

### Access, Circulation and Parking Plans

- Dimensions, curve radii and centerlines of existing and proposed access points, streets, rights-of-way, or access easements
- Existing driveways and street intersections within 250 feet of the property
- Dimensions of acceleration, deceleration and passing lanes
- Cross section details of proposed streets, driveways, parking lots, sidewalks and non-motorized paths, with materials and thickness
- Traffic regulatory signs and pavement markings
- Designation of fire lanes
- Existing and proposed parking and loading areas, including location and size
- Calculations for the required number of parking and loading spaces
- Dimensions of parking spaces, landscape islands, circulation aisles, and loading zones
- Existing and proposed sidewalks or pathways within the site and in the right-of-way

### Landscape and Screening Plans

- Locations, sizes, and types of existing trees 6 inches in diameter, measured at 3½ ft off the ground, including what is to be removed and what is to be preserved
- General location of all other existing plant materials, identification of the plant material, including what is to be removed and what is to be preserved
- Existing and proposed lawns and landscaped areas

### Landscape and Screening Plans (cont.)

- Location and type of all proposed shrubs, trees, and other live plant material
- Planting list for proposed landscape materials with caliper size or height of material, quantity, botanical and common names, and method of installation
- Details on screening
- Location, size, height, and construction materials for all fences, walls and berms

### Building and Structure Plans

- Location, height, and exterior dimensions of all proposed structures on the property
- Building floor plans and total floor area, including number and height of stories
- Building elevations for all sides, at an appropriate scale
- Description of all exterior building materials and colors (samples may be requested)
- Calculations of transparency requirements

### Drainage and Utility Plans

- Location of existing drainage courses, floodplains, streams, wetlands, and other water bodies
- Existing and proposed water mains, water service, storm water loads and fire hydrants
- Stormwater retention/detention ponds, including grading, side slopes, depth, high water elevation, volume and outfalls, and calculations
- Site grading, drainage patterns, and other stormwater management measures
- Underground storm sewers and drains, including location and size
- Existing and proposed, above and below ground gas, electric, and telephone lines
- Transformers and utility boxes, including locations and dimensions

### Other Site Features

- Location, height, and dimensions of storage facilities
- Waste receptacles and transformer pads and enclosures/screening
- Extent of any outdoor sales or display area
- Existing and proposed building and site lighting
- Photometric plan with: 1) foot candle readings at 10' intervals or less, 2) table showing minimum and maximum lighting levels, and maximum to minimum illumination ratios, and 3) location and mounting heights of fixtures [If the project is located in the East Beltline Overlay District, see Section 5.8.04.F.]
- Size, height, and method of shielding for all lighting on the building and the site
- Location, size, height, and lighting of all proposed signs on the building and the site



# Application Checklist

## Special Land Use

The following items are required for a complete Special Land Use (SLU) application. Please note that Site Plan Review is part of a SLU review. Incomplete applications will be returned.

If the Special Land Use request involves the sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages, please refer to the **Supplemental Application for Alcohol Sales**, which contains its own checklist.

- Signed Application Form**  
Complete pages 2 and 3 of the SLU application form.  
Application must be signed by the applicant and the property owner (if different).
- Response to SLU Review Standards**  
Complete pages 4 and 5 of the SLU application form. Use a separate document if needed.
- Nature of Proposed Use**  
Written description of the nature of the special land use requested, including: the products or services to be provided, the activities to be conducted inside and outside the building, types of equipment to be used, other required state or local permits or approvals, hours of operation, number of employees, expected levels and types of vehicular traffic coming to and from the site, any joint use agreements, and other relevant information.  
*(Use letterhead if possible.)*
- Site and Building Layout**  
Written description of the proposed site and/or building layout, building and structure design information, floor plans, parking calculations, fencing, landscaping, current environmental conditions, adjacent land uses, and other pertinent information. *(Use letterhead if possible.)*
- Site Plans, Building Elevations and Floor Plans**  
Enclose plans as described in the Site Plan Review checklist:
  - Survey of existing conditions
  - Site plan
  - Floor plan(s)
  - Elevations
  - Drainage and utility plan
  - Landscape and screening plan
  - Any other plans as requested by Staff
- Neighborhood Outreach**  
Include a summary of activities conducted, any correspondence distributed, meeting sign-in sheets, meeting notes, letters of support, etc. Failure to conduct outreach activities may result in tabling of the application.
- Fee (FY2026)** (Either by check made payable to City of Grand Rapids, by credit card in person, or by credit card over the phone by calling (616) 456-4100)
  - Special Land Use \$2,570
  - Amendment to previous SLU approval \$1,770
  - SLU in combination with other PC application \$1,440
- Plan Submittal**  
One (1) digital copy in PDF format (CD, flash drive, cloud storage, or email to [planning@grcity.us](mailto:planning@grcity.us))