



Department of Planning & Zoning Staff Report – Special Permit Use Case No. 2026-1-SPU

APPLICATION INFORMATION

- **Applicant / Property Owner**
GM Elite Co.
c/o Cali & Laplace Engineers, LLC
5524 David Drive
Kenner, LA 70065
- **Request:**
Automobile Fleet Services in C-3 zoning

SITE INFORMATION

- **Location:** 150 Almedia Plantation Road, Lot B2, Almedia Plantation
- **Size of Site:** 77,715.92 sq. ft. (1.78 acres)
- **Current Zoning and Land Use**
C-3, Highway Commercial District—Wholesale and retail sales; the site is vacant.
- **Surrounding Zoning and Land Use**
C-3 is adjacent to each side and to the rear; M-1 is located across Almedia Plantation Drive.

Surrounding land uses consist of Desco Auto Body & Paint adjacent to the east and an overflow parking lot for Enterprise Car Rental located across Almedia Plantation Drive. The property adjacent to the west is undeveloped.

- **Future Land Use Recommendation**
Commercial: This category includes single-use commercial, retail, office and service uses. Commercial areas should seek to strengthen existing retail and service uses, encourage the introduction of new uses, and introduce complementary adjoining uses such as public facilities and moderate-density residential, to reinforce the retail base and support the continued health of these uses. Commercial uses must be consistent with the surrounding area and compatible with adjacent uses.
- **Flood Zone & Minimum Building Elevation**
1992 Flood Insurance Rate Map: A99
2013 Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map: AE4 & DFIRM X
- **Traffic Access**
Lot B2 has 238.93 feet of frontage on Almedia Plantation Drive with unimproved dedicated site access.

Almedia Plantation Drive is a 40-foot right of way improved with an approximately 20-foot-wide asphalt surface. Open swale drainage is located along the south side of the ROW and overhead utilities are along the north side.

The Department of Public Works expressed concerns regarding potential impacts from heavy vehicle traffic on Almedia Plantation Drive. A Traffic Impact Analysis will be required during permitting if this Special Permit Use is approved, and improvements may be necessary based on its findings.

- **Utilities**
Per Parish GIS, drainage, gravity sewer, and water facilities are available along Almedia Plantation Drive.

The Departments of Wastewater and Waterworks have no objections. DPW offered no objections regarding drainage, but did provide comments addressing roadway/traffic as detailed in the previous section.

APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

Appendix A. Section VI. – Zoning District Criteria and Regulations

[IV.] C-3. *Highway commercial district*—Wholesale and retail sales:

1. Use Regulations:
 - a. A building or land shall be used for the following purposes.
 - (1) All uses allowed in the C-2 District.
 - (2) Commercial auditoriums, coliseums or convention halls
 - (3) Retail manufacturing
 - (4) Automobile sales and service
 - (5) Wholesale uses
 - (6) Warehouses (less than 10,000 sq. ft.)
 - (7) Bus, railroad, passenger and truck terminals (without video poker gaming facilities)
 - (8) Bottling works
 - (9) Dog pound
 - (10) Building supply
 - (11) Heating and air conditioning service
 - (12) Plumbing shops
 - (13) Automotive repair, minor and major
 - (14) Glass installation
 - (15) Fabrication of gaskets and packing of soft metal material
 - (16) Creameries
 - (17) Parcel delivery service
 - (18) *Reserved.*
 - (19) Frozen food lockers
 - (20) Public stables
 - (21) Bulk dairy products (retail)
 - (22) Animal hospitals
 - (23) Gymnasiums
 - (24) Sheet metal shops.
 - (25) Upholstery
 - (26) Other uses of similar intensity
 - (27) Customary accessory uses incidental to the above uses when located on the same lot.
 - b. Special exception uses and structures:
 - (1) Temporary construction facilities for a period of one (1) year upon approval of the Planning Director.
 - c. Special permit uses and structures include the following:
 - (1) Barrooms, night clubs, lounges, and dancehalls upon review and approval by the Planning Commission and supporting resolution of the Council.
 - (2) R-1A and R-1B uses upon review and approval by the Planning Commission.
 - (3) R-3 uses upon review and approval by the Planning Commission and supporting resolution of the Council.
 - (4) *Reserved.*
 - (5) Cellular installations and PCS (personal communication service) installations.
 - (6) *Reserved.*
 - (7) Warehouses (non-hazardous materials) over ten thousand (10,000) square feet.
 - (8) Green markets upon review and approval by the Planning Commission and supporting resolution of the Council. Such sites must possess frontage on a hard-surfaced public collector or arterial street.
 - (9) Bingo Halls, Video Bingo Parlors, and Off-Track Betting Establishments upon review of the Planning Commission and Ordinance of the Parish Council.
 - (10) Outdoor storage, when accessory to an otherwise permitted use in the district.
 - (11) **Automobile Fleet Services: Examples include rental car facilities, overnight truck parking, dispatch locations, and any use related to the temporary or periodical parking of operative motor vehicles.**
2. Spatial Requirements:
 - a. Minimum lot size: Seven thousand (7,000) square feet, minimum width - seventy (70) feet.
 - b. Minimum yard sizes:
 - (1) Front - twenty (20) feet
 - (2) Side - five (5) feet
 - (3) Rear - ten (10) feet
 - (4) Whenever property abuts a major drainage canal as defined by the Subdivision regulations the required setback for all structures shall be ten (10) feet measured from the inner boundary of such servitude or right-of-way, not withstanding any other more restrictive setbacks, this provision shall not apply to any lot of record created and existing prior to the effective date of Ordinance No. 99-12-8, December 15, 1999.
3. Transportation System: Arterial, local industrial, rail, water.
4. Special Provisions:
 - a. Where any commercial use in a C-3 zoning district abuts any residential district or use, a six-foot high solid wood fence or masonry wall shall border the same and there shall be a buffer strip ten (10) feet wide designated and maintained on the site planted with plant materials acceptable for buffer zones unless the Planning and Zoning Department shall require a greater or lesser buffer strip.

[V.] *Prohibited use*: Medical waste storage, treatment or disposal facilities.

Appendix A. Section IV.

- A. Evaluation Criteria – those uses requiring approval for either a Special Exception or a Special Permit Use shall be evaluated by the criteria below. These criteria are to be considered illustrative and not restrictive. Other criteria may be considered though not specifically listed below if said criteria affect the general health, safety, and welfare of the public.
1. Compliance with the current St. Charles Parish Comprehensive Plan.
 2. Compatibility with existing uses on abutting sites in terms of site development, building design, hours of operation, and transportation features related to safety and convenience of vehicular and pedestrian circulation.
 3. Adequacy and convenience of off-street parking and loading facilities and protection of adjacent property from glare of site lighting.
 4. Potentially unfavorable impacts on other existing uses on abutting sites to the extent such impacts exceed those impacts expected from a permitted use in the zoning district.
 5. Protection of persons and property from erosion, flood or water damage, fire, noise, glare, and similar hazards or impacts.
 6. A site development plan shall be required as part of the application process. The following design criteria shall be evaluated on the plan:
 - a. Required yards and open space
 - b. Ingress and egress to property
 - c. Parking and loading areas
 - d. Location of garbage facilities
 - e. Landscaping, buffering, and screening
 - f. Signage
 - g. Height and bulk of structures
 - h. Location and direction of site lighting

SPU CRITERIA COMPLIANCE

The proposal meets the criteria as follows:

1. *Compliance with the current St. Charles Parish Comprehensive Plan.*

The site is designated *Commercial* on the Parish’s Future Land Use Map (FLUM), anticipating uses permitted in the CR-1, C-1, C-2, and C-3 zoning districts, with a focus on those serving the general public and appropriate near residences.

Automobile Fleet Services is permitted by right starting in the M-1 zoning district and typically not considered under this designation. But the *Commercial* designation also states, “commercial uses must be consistent with the surrounding area and compatible with adjacent uses.” Since the C-3 district provides the opportunity to permit Automobile Fleet Service as an SPU, this specific use’s compatibility with the surrounding area/adjacent uses may be considered when evaluating this criteria. Given the presence of a large Automobile Fleet Services operation directly across Almedia Plantation Road, the Department can determine the use under this request, and at this specific location, is compliant with the comprehensive plan. **Complies**

2. *Compatibility with existing uses on abutting sites in terms of site development, building design, hours of operation, and transportation features related to safety and convenience of vehicular and pedestrian circulation.*

The proposed use will operate primarily as a dispatch facility for GM Elite, Co. fleet vehicles with inclusion of overnight parking, routine vehicle maintenance, and office space. The building is designed as a warehouse with two (2) truck bays and seven (7) roll-up doors, connected to the internal warehouse and office area fronting on Almedia Plantation Drive. The building will feature a metal façade.

The site plan indicates that all vehicular and pedestrian circulation will comply with Parish site design requirements. The building design, layout, and hours of operation are compatible with similar nearby developments, including those at 120 Almedia Plantation Drive and 421 Almedia Road, and are not expected to conflict with existing commercial uses along Almedia Plantation Drive. **Complies**

3. *Adequacy and convenience of off-street parking and loading facilities and protection of adjacent property from glare of site lighting.*

The proposed use requires one (1) parking space per two (2) employees, one (1) space per 200 square feet of office floor area, and one (1) space for each company vehicle maintained on-site. The applicant anticipates a maximum of ten (10) employees on-site at one time, requiring five (5) parking spaces. The office area totals 1,800.91 square feet, excluding the lounge, locker room, and conference room, requiring nine (9) spaces. A maximum of fifteen (15) company vehicles will be maintained on-site. In total, fourteen (14) standard spaces are

required along with fifteen (15) for company vehicles. All required parking is shown as per the submitted site plan (sheet A-101).

Dedicated loading facilities are not required for this use; however, the building includes a maintenance and repair area with seven (7) roll-up doors. Parking, circulation, and lighting are designed to meet Parish site design standards. Lighting is located at each corner of the warehouse and, given the approximately 250-foot separation, is not expected to impact the adjacent residential neighborhood. **Complies**

4. *Potentially unfavorable impacts on other existing uses on abutting sites to the extent such impacts exceed those impacts expected from a permitted use in the zoning district.*

Existing uses in the immediate vicinity include an automotive repair facility and an overflow rental vehicle parking lot. The C-3 zoning district permits warehousing, truck terminals, small-scale manufacturing and fabrication, among other uses of similar intensity. The proposed use includes office space, vehicle maintenance and repair, and fleet parking for a dispatch business (the primary cause for review as an SPU).

The anticipated frequency of large vehicles trips may impact the nearby neighborhood, but other uses permitted by right as referenced above would have similar impacts. **Complies**

5. *Protection of persons and property from erosion, flood or water damage, fire, noise, glare, and similar hazards or impacts.*

This proposal requires full review as a new commercial development, including approvals for traffic, drainage, fire protection, and building code compliance. Exceptional hazards or impacts to surrounding persons or property are not expected from this use.

But as detailed under the Traffic Access section of this report the Department of Public Works expressed concerns about the impact of heavy truck traffic on Almedia Plantation Drive. This concern would extend to similar by right uses permitted under C-3 zoning (truck terminals), and in either situation a Traffic Impact Analysis addressing those concerns and providing remedies must be submitted with the standard permit application. **Complies.**

6. *A site development plan shall be required as part of the application process. The following design criteria shall be evaluated on the plan:*

a. *Required yards and open space.* All C-3 zoning district setback requirements are met, as shown on the site plan (Sheet A-101) by Cali & Laplace Engineers, LLC, dated January 2026. **Complies**

b. *Ingress and egress to property.* Two ingress/egress points are proposed on Almedia Plantation Drive, measuring 18 feet and 40 feet in width. Both meet site development design criteria. **Complies**

c. *Parking and loading areas.* Dedicated loading facilities are not required for this type of use. Parking areas are shown to meet the Parish's site design requirements for parking lot design. **Complies**

d. *Location of garbage facilities.* Garbage facilities will be located at the rear of the warehouse. With vehicle maintenance being a part of the proposed use, the operation should be compliant with all state and federal regulations regarding the disposal of fluids, tires, etc. **Complies**

e. *Landscaping, buffering, and screening.* Buffering and screening specific requirements do not apply to this site.

7,771 sq. ft. of designed landscaping is required. The submitted landscape plan (sheet LS 1.0) shows 8,479 sq. ft. of sodded area, with portions of those areas planted with the required trees. Approximately 2,300 sq. ft. of this sodded area is unplanted, including the 5-foot sodded strip along the side property line, the viability of which is questionable. As a result, the Department cannot count this 2,300 sq. ft. towards the designed landscaping requirement, bringing the total area of viable, planted landscape areas to 6,179 sq. ft., or a deficiency of approximately 1,592 sq. ft.

The applicant has requested a waiver to allow the proposed landscape plan with this deficiency.

The Department aims to ensure full landscaping requirements are met with new developments, but the size and shape of this site and the presence of a gas pipeline right-of-way limits the application of the required landscaping. Space is available in the rear to make up the deficit, but the usefulness of dedicated landscape beds in this area is questionable. And if largely out of sight, enforcement ensuring those areas are maintained is limited. The front side provides the best opportunity to implement required landscaping, but to make up the deficiency the building footprint must be reduced or repositioned further into the property, but this is likely precluded by the pipeline right-of-way through the middle of the site.

With this in mind, the Department does not object to waiving the overall landscaped area requirement based off what is shown on the landscaping plan, but requests supplementing the deficiency with additional planting in the available sodded areas to each side of the building. **Does not comply, waiver requested.**

- f. *Signage.* Signage is not proposed as part of this request. Any on-premises signage would be reviewed as part of a sign permit application. **N/A**
- g. *Height and bulk of structures.* The building will consist of two floors and measure 30 ft. in height. It is shown to meet required setbacks for the C-3 zoning district. **Complies**
- h. *Location and direction of site lighting.* Any lighting will be standard for this type of development. Given the location and surrounding uses, an adverse impact from site lighting is not expected. **Complies.**

ANALYSIS

This request is for a business involving Automobile Fleet Services, specifically an office and maintenance facility for a fleet of trucks for GM Elite at 150 Almedia Plantation Drive, St. Rose.

Most of the above applicable criteria are met, but as detailed under criteria 6.(e.), required landscaping is not, specifically Appendix A., Section VIII., item I.3.a which states:

- Landscape requirements: a minimum of ten (10) percent of the site shall be designated for designed landscaping.

The applicant submitted a waiver request from the landscape requirements. The Department does not object to the waiver, citing the viability of placing additional landscaping in the rear and the inability to relocate the building in order to provide more landscaping in the front.

The Department does recommend providing additional plantings in those available but sparsely planted landscaped areas in an effort to supplement the overall deficit.

Additionally, as detailed in the Traffic Access section, the Department of Public Works expressed concern regarding roadway conditions given the anticipated frequency of heavy vehicle trips. If approved, a Traffic Impact Analysis will be required and may necessitate roadway improvements, ranging from widening the roadway to additional exit lanes.

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION

Approval.

If the Planning Commission approves this request, it will be forwarded to the Parish Council.