



# APPLICATION FOR SPECIAL USE APPROVAL

353 North 120th Avenue · Holland, MI 49424 · Phone: 616.395.0151 · www.hct.holland.mi.us

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### Applicant Information

Contact Name Sam Nichols  
Address 200 Monroe Ave, NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Company Michigan Sports Academies  
Phone 616-566-0739  
Email samn@michigansportsacademies.com

### Owner Information

Contact Name Sam Nichols (owner's agent)  
Address 200 Monroe Ave, NW  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Company RDV Corp.  
Phone 616-566-0739  
Email samn@michigansportsacademies.com

### Plan Preparer Information

Contact Name John Whitten, AIA, NCARB  
Address 924 Fulton West  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Company Spark 43 Architects  
Phone 616-288-4989  
Email john@spark43arch.com

### Property Information

Address or Location 12429 Ransom St, Holland, MI 49424  
Parcel Number 70 - 16 - 04 - 100 - 008 Zoning District AG - Seeking Rezone to C2  
Present Use(s) Indoor Sports Facility

Description of Special Use (attach additional pages as needed): See attached for proposed scope of project as well as descriptions for how the project complies with Section 15.3 of this application.

The undersigned does hereby request a public hearing before the Holland Charter Township Planning Commission for consideration of Special Use approval.

A hearing fee of \$350.00 shall be submitted with eleven (11) complete copies of: this form, the site plan review requirements list including a response to each item listed, and the site plan including an electronic copy of the site plan on CD or other file sharing device.

Site plans required for Special Use consideration **MUST** be submitted with this form. Applications submitted without the required site plans shall not be accepted. **The copies must be submitted to the Zoning Administrator no later than four (4) weeks prior to the hearing date.**

NOTE: You are required to be present at the hearing to present your application. You will be notified as to date and time. Your neighbors within 300 feet will also be notified concerning this hearing.


**Property Owner's Certification**

I, the undersigned owner of the above-described property, certify that I understand conditions and restrictions may be placed upon this special use approval as deemed necessary by the Holland Charter Township Planning Commission and hereby agree to conform to and abide by any and all such conditions and restrictions.

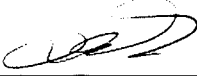
I, acknowledge there are Specific Special Land Use Approval Standards in addition to those outlined in Section 15.3 (below) that apply to the following uses and by selecting a use below further acknowledge they have reviewed the associated standards and have addressed each of them in this submittal:

- Special Use – Earth-sheltered Building
- Special Use – Mineral Extraction
- Special Use – Wireless Communications

I further agree to authorize members of the Planning Commission and representatives from the Holland Charter Township Building Department to enter my property in order to review the particulars of my request.

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

2/12/25  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Owner

2/12/25  
Date

**Section 15.3 - General Standards of Approval.**

- A. Standards of Approval. The Planning Commission shall review the particular circumstances and facts applicable to each proposed special land use with respect to the following standards:
1. The use will be harmonious and appropriate with the existing or intended character and land uses in the general vicinity.
  2. The use will be served adequately by public services and facilities, including, but not limited to, streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, refuse disposal, water and sewer facilities, and schools..
  3. The use will not involve operations, materials and equipment that will be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to any persons, property or the general welfare due to traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, vibration, or odors.
  4. The use will be consistent with the intent and purposes of this ordinance and the Holland Charter Township Comprehensive Plan.
  5. The use will ensure that the environment shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by minimizing tree and soil removal and topographic modifications, which result in maximum harmony with adjacent areas.
  6. The use will not result in traffic congestion, nor have an adverse impact on roads, nor cause hazards.
  7. There is need for the proposed use within the township, and the use will not be detrimental to the community.
- B. Approval. If the Planning Commission finds that the standards in general have been met, in addition to confirming compliance with all other zoning requirements, the permit shall be issued.



John Whitten, AIA, NCARB  
924 Fulton West  
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

**February 12, 2025**

Corey Broersma, Community Development Director  
**Holland Charter Township**  
353 N. 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Holland, MI 49424

**Re: Special Land Use Application: MSA Lakeshore - 12429 Ransom St, Holland, MI 49424 (Parcel #: 70-16-04-100-008)**

Dear Mr. Broersma and members of the Holland Charter Township Planning Commission,

Michigan Sports Academies (MSA) is experiencing growth in the youth sports programming they offer in Holland Charter Township (HCT). As a result, MSA is hoping to expand their existing facility to include additional indoor athletic court(s) an indoor turf field and a full-sized outdoor soccer field. Additional parking, spectator amenities and site improvements would be included as well.

The property is located at 12429 Ransom Street Holland, MI 49424 and currently zoned AG. The adjacent properties are a mix of PUD or recently rezoned as I-1 Light Industrial. It is our understanding that, with the exception of a single residence directly south of the existing building, all of the adjacent properties are currently or are intended to be used for commercial, industrial or youth sports related purposes. Through discussions with adjacent property owners, we understand that vacant parcels to the east and north are likely to be developed for light industrial uses.

When MSA originally purchased the property in 2022 the parcel immediately to the east was owned by West Ottawa Schools and it was assumed that the property would be developed for the school district's use. In 2023 that parcel was sold and has been rezoned for Industrial use. While we understand that rezoning MSA's property to C-2 may not cleanly align with the township's master plan, the facility was originally constructed and has only operated as a commercial indoor recreation facility - a use that would have been complimentary to future school district development at the time of original purchase - in fact, it was a primary reason for the purchase of the current property. Despite changes in ownership and uses of adjacent parcels, MSA does not intend to vacate the property as they currently serve a large population of Holland Charter Township through their programming.

If it weren't for increasing demand for outdoor fields and the programming MSA offers, rezoning of the property would not be necessary. Commercial outdoor recreation is not allowed in either the AG zone or in Industrial zones. Through discussions with planning staff, we believe that seeking rezoning from AG to C-2 makes the most sense as it would allow for subsequent special land use application for an outdoor field. If approved, we would then submit for site plan review and a seek a special land use permit to construct the outdoor field and programmatic elements shown in the attached site master plan.

Existing site conditions are as follows:

- Current Zone: AG with submitted application to rezone to C-2
- Building: A 20,250 GSF pre-engineered steel building is currently built on the site and includes two indoor basketball courts with restrooms, storage, mechanical and circulation space. It has a gabled roof with a crown elevation 35' above grade.
- Parking: There are 104 existing parking spaces accessed using an improved driveway from Ransom Street. Through discussions with the original owner and based on the calculated parking values in the zoning ordinance, it is our belief that the existing parking lot was constructed to anticipate a future



building addition. Using Table 10.3 we believe that the current building only requires 60 parking spaces based on calculations assuming the worst-case scenario for two basketball courts (neither of which have permanent seating). Using this calculation, we believe there are 44 excess parking spaces in the existing parking lot.

As part of Michigan Sports Academies Application for Special Land use, we propose the following development and uses for the site:

#### Proposed Addition:

Michigan Sports Academies proposes an addition to the existing facility. The addition would add a third hard court for basketball and volleyball, an indoor synthetic turf field for field sports and would be sized to accommodate 7v7 soccer. Additionally, the new addition would provide code required restrooms, add a concession stand and include administrative office space, storage and mechanical. We are proposing matching existing construction by utilizing a pre-engineered metal building that would likely include some conventional construction to break down the scale of the building for pedestrians. The proposed building addition is 54,150 square feet.

#### Improvements to 124<sup>th</sup> Ave:

The design team has been in conversations with planning staff and the Ottawa County Road Commission (OCRC). While we initially considered improving 124<sup>th</sup> Ave, ownership is actively discussing the possibility of abandoning 124<sup>th</sup> Ave. This is a result of conversations the design team had with the OCRC about the proximity of the road to the outdoor field and it was their position that the road should be centered on the property/section line to move the road away from the field. All of the other feedback from the OCRC related to quantity of driveways, and locations of driveway approaches has been implemented in the submitted site plan.

MSA is actively engaging in conversations with adjacent property owners about their desire to abandon the road. To date, none of the property owners have outright opposed abandonment and MSA has collected several of the required signatures necessary to officially begin the process of abandoning the road.

In the event that 124<sup>th</sup> Ave. is not able to be abandoned, Michigan Sports Academies requests that the road be reconstructed on the center line of the property/section line as is typical. This will provide a safe buffer between the road and the outdoor field as well as move the road closer to existing fire protection infrastructure located on the adjacent property.

Michigan Sports Academies will comply with directions from Authorities having jurisdiction of the road in the event 124<sup>th</sup> is not ultimately vacated.

#### Sidewalk/Pathway Construction:

Shall comply with township ordinances.

#### Parking Lot:

We have calculated the anticipated parking needs using Article 10, Table 10.3 for Recreation use. Methodology: We studied parking demand using all three ratios allowed in the ordinance and believe that using 30 spaces per indoor court yields the highest number of required parking spaces for the facility. For the indoor programs we have calculated the need for 120 parking spaces (3 basketball courts and 1 indoor mini soccer field).

We used all the three parking calculation methods in Article 10 to calculate the required parking values for a future outdoor field. It is our belief that none of the prescribed methods yields enough parking spaces for the



outdoor field based on the expected demand. No calculation exceeded 30 spaces, but we anticipate needing at least 50 parking spaces to support the field. Additionally, we have included five spaces for non-coaching staff members for a total, site-wide parking count requirement of 170 spaces. Calculated values are as follows:

Outdoor Soccer:

Roster Size	Coaches	Officials	Spectators	Outdoor Field Qty:	Zoning Requirement:	Total Spaces Required:
20 [only 18 can dress] (x2) Total: 40:	2 per team (x2) 4	3 per field/ court max.	2/ athlete (1) vehicle	1	15 spaces/ field	50 cars field

Indoor Soccer Field:

Roster Size	Coaches	Officials	Spectators	Outdoor Field Qty:	Zoning Requirement:	Total Spaces Required:
12 (x2) Total: 24:	2 per team (x2) 4	1 per field/ court max.	2/ athlete (1) vehicle	1	30 spaces/ field	30

Basketball / Volleyball:

Roster Size	Coaches	Officials	Spectators	Court Qty:	Zoning Requirement:	Total Spaces Required:
10: x2 [20]	2 per team (x2) [4]	3 per field/ court max.	2/ athlete vehicle	3	30 spaces/ court	90

**While the parking calculations show a demand for 170 spaces, the site plan proposes constructing 171 parking spaces.**

Landscaping:

Landscaping shall comply with Township ordinances for the zone being proposed. Final site designs shall include all required parking lot landscaping items as well as general requirements for green space and planting.

Outdoor Site Lighting:

Parking lot and pedestrian pathway lighting shall comply with the HCT Zoning Ordinance, and the design team shall provide photometric plans for final design.

Exterior Athletic Field:

Michigan Sports Academies seeks special land use to allow construction of an outdoor athletic field. The field would be constructed with permeable synthetic turf and be lined for a variety of field sports including soccer, lacrosse and football. The primary user of the field will be Michigan Football Academies house teams and focuses on youth soccer. There is, however, growing demand for lacrosse and football fields in the area and the fields would be lined to accommodate multiple uses.

Outdoor Field Support Building:

Because the property is extremely long and narrow, it is our intent to provide new parking between the field and the building in an attempt to limit pedestrian travel to one or the other for users coming to the facility. This orientation creates an issue in which the maximum allowable travel distance from the most remote portion of the outdoor field to restroom facilities in the main building is exceeded. Additionally, requiring users, most of whom are youth athletes to traverse a parking lot to access restroom facilities from the field is dangerous and ill



advised. We are seeking approval to construct a 1,200 square foot, three season support building adjacent to the outdoor athletic field that would include appropriately sized restroom facilities, concessions and storage for field equipment as indicated on the site plan.

Fencing:

It is the owner's intent to construct a 6' fence in accordance with the Township's requirements around the outdoor soccer field for access control. If allowed by special land use, Backstops would be provided behind soccer goals to prevent balls from leaving the field of play and entering either 124<sup>th</sup> Ave on the east side of the site or the wetland area along the north and west edge of the property. A backstop along the south end line would prevent balls from entering the parking lot.

Athletic Field Lighting:

Athletic Field Lighting is not specifically addressed in the HCT Zoning ordinance (that is not unique to HCT). Because schools represent the majority of property owners that install athletic field lighting and are also exempt from complying with local zoning ordinances per Section 123.1045 of the Michigan Legislature, many local zoning ordinances do not specifically address or regulate these systems. And, while the majority of property owners with field lighting systems are schools, there is growing demand for access to fields with artificial light for the general public. School district fields are seeing more demand than they have capacity to rent to the public – especially in shoulder seasons when there are less daylight hours.

Michigan Sports Academies is requesting permission to install exterior field lights to extend the usage of the outdoor field. If approved, we intend to utilize the Musco Total Light Control System (or similar). This system has been deployed nationwide in areas where light pollution, glare and spillover are a concern – including Quincy Park. Our design team has extensive experience installing this type of field lighting system on multiple projects nationwide. This includes fields that are immediately adjacent to residential neighborhoods, parks, interstate highways, and nature preserves where glare, and spillover could have a significant impact on safety, quality of life or natural habitat. Using Total Control Lighting Systems, the team has the ability to control light pollution and spillover with surgical precision, illuminating only the field surfaces intended for play.

We anticipate needing 4 to 6 light poles 75 feet tall. A full photometric study has been completed, and light poles will only be constructed to the height necessary to light the field. Light heads will be adjusted to prevent light from spilling beyond the property lines.

Public Address System:

Public address systems are not specifically addressed in the HCT Zoning Ordinance. Michigan Sports Academies requests permission to install a public address system that shall be operated in accordance with Holland Charter Township Municipal Code Article III, Section 18-63 – Noise Control.

Anticipated use of outdoor field:

During the spring and fall the field could be used up to 60 hours a week for practices and competitions. During winter months and again from June to August, the outdoor field would see minimal use based on the natural ebb and flow of the sports seasons and the realities of our weather in west Michigan. During peak times, most of the vehicle traffic to and from the facility will occur between the hours of 3pm and 10pm Mon-Fri, 8a-10p Saturday and 8a-7p Sunday (when youth athletes are not in school).

As required by the "Application for Special Use Approval," the following specifically addresses General Standards of Approval per Section 15.3:

A. Standards of Approval. The Planning Commission shall review the particular circumstances and facts applicable to each proposed special land use with respect to the following standards:

(1) *The use will be harmonious and appropriate with the existing or intended character and land uses in the general vicinity.*



The existing facility is indoor commercial recreation use. The property immediately west is also a commercial recreation facility. While the master plan does intend for adjacent properties to be Industrial in nature, this parcel was purpose built as commercial recreation and was always planned for expansion of that use by the original owner.

- (2) *The use will be served adequately by public services and facilities, including, but not limited to, streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, refuse disposal, water and sewer facilities, and schools.*

**The proposed project is adequately served adequately by public services and addresses all items outlined in standard 2. The building is fully sprinkled, and consideration of emergency access has been discussed with the fire department. Additionally, refuse collection currently takes place on the site and we propose relocating the dumpster enclosure so that it is not as highly visible as the current location but equally serviceable. Storm water will be addressed on and will comply with requirements set forth by the authorities having jurisdiction.**

- (3) *The use will not involve operations, materials and equipment that will be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to any persons, property or the general welfare due to traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, vibration, or odors.*

**The project does not introduce or offer any hazardous or risks to the general public or to the adjacent properties. Due to the nature of the use, it is possible that some noise from spectator cheering is possible but will largely occur outside the normal business hours of adjacent properties (nights and weekends). Should a public address system be granted, usage would be limited to outdoor field events and would comply with the Township's noise ordinance.**

- (4) *The use will be consistent with the intent and purposes of this ordinance and the Holland Charter Township Comprehensive Plan.*

**While the use does fall outside of the current master plan and land use map, it did not originally. Since the time of original construction, the land use map has been updated, and adjacent properties have been rezoned. The proposed use simply expands programming that is already occurring at this facility and provides expanded community access to facilities that do not widely exist in the area outside of school properties.**

- (5) *The use will ensure that the environment shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practicable, by minimizing tree and soil removal and topographic modifications, which result in maximum harmony with adjacent areas.*

**The areas of the site on which we are proposing expansion have largely been cleared for agriculture purposes and do not require major clearing of trees or noncommercial vegetation. The design team is taking great care to avoid impacting existing wetlands to the greatest extent possible. Construction of an outdoor field will preserve green space and limit impact to the amount of impervious surface on the site.**

- (6) *The use will not result in traffic congestion, nor have an adverse impact on roads, nor cause hazards.*

**There is likely to be a slight increase in traffic to the property, but it will largely occur outside of normal business hours for the majority of the adjacent properties. Ransom St. is almost certain to see significant increase in traffic based on all the other development projects being proposed on adjacent properties.**

- (7) *There is need for the proposed use within the township, and the use will not be detrimental to the community.*

**This use will be an expanded amenity for the community. It is not, in our opinion, detrimental to the community. Many of the families that utilize this facility must travel to Grand Rapids and Norton Shores for large portions of the year to participate in the programming being offered by MSA. This facility will enable those families to stay closer to home. It will likely also mean that**

**families without the means to travel outside of the community to participate in MSA programming will now have the ability to do so much closer to home.**

We look forward to continuing collaborating closely with Township staff and other AHJ's as we take the next development steps to bring this project to reality and welcome any and all questions related to our application.

Sincerely,



**John Whitten**, AIA, NCARB

principal architect, owner

Attachments:

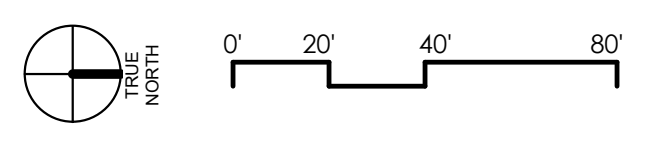
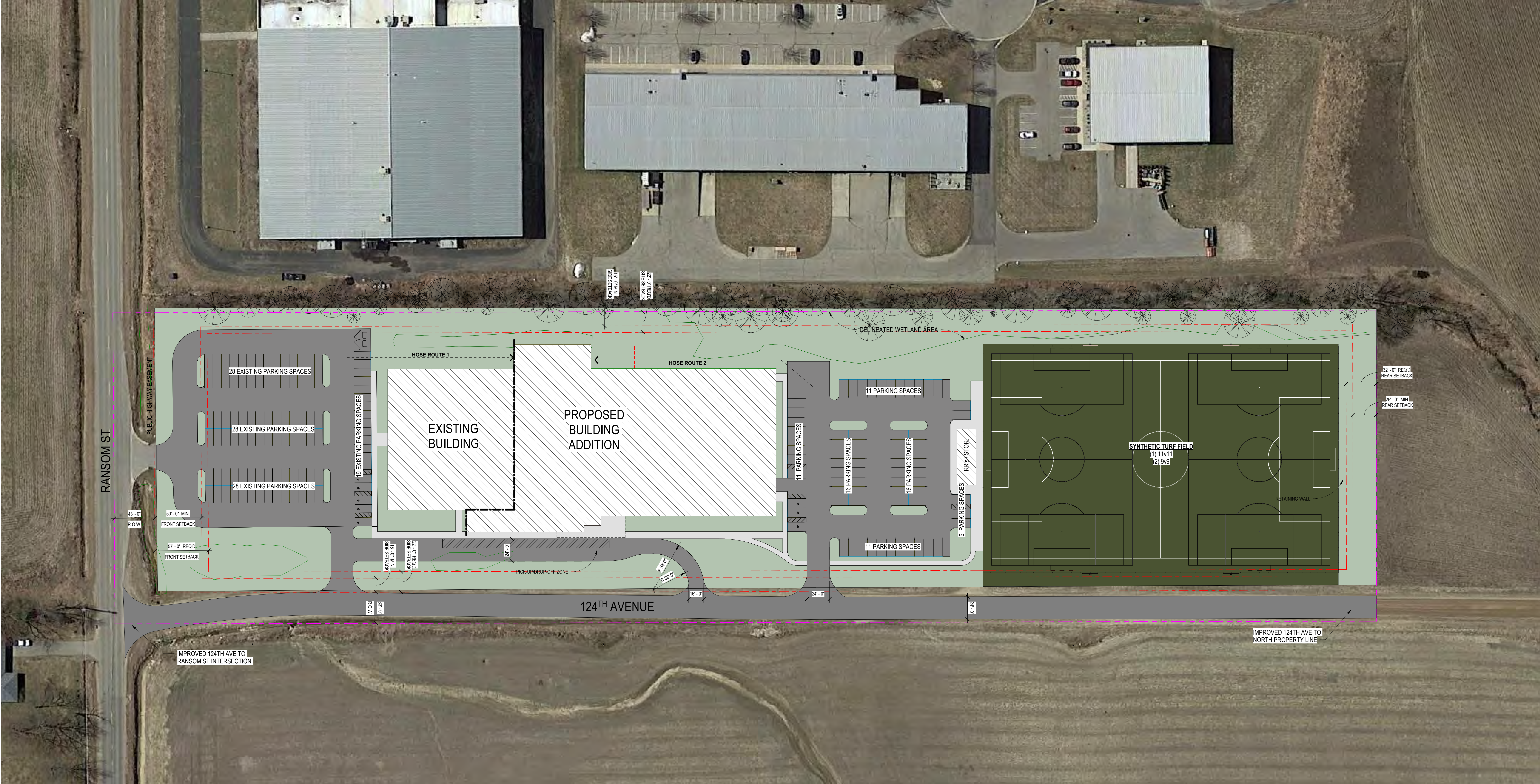
- Proposed Site Plan





### SITE COVERAGE REQUIREMENTS

ZONING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DISTRICT:		SITE COVERAGE:	
PROPOSED CONDITIONAL RE-ZONE COMMERCIAL (C-2):		EXISTING PARKING LOT:	405,600 SF (9.3 ACRES)
• MIN. FRONT SETBACK (FT.)	NON-RESIDENTIAL: 50'	EXISTING SIDEWALKS:	4,925 SF
• MIN. SIDE SETBACK (FT.)	NON-RESIDENTIAL: 15' PLUS 1' PER 1' HT BEYOND 35'	EXISTING BUILDING:	1,330 SF
• MIN. REAR SETBACK (FT.)	NON-RESIDENTIAL: 25' PLUS 1' PER 1' HT BEYOND 35'	EXISTING SITE COVERAGE:	20,250 SF (16.4% COVERAGE)
• MAX. BLDG. COVERAGE	NON-RESIDENTIAL: 25%	PROPOSED PARKING LOT:	43,740 SF (NEW)
• MAX. LOT COVERAGE	NON-RESIDENTIAL: N/A	PROPOSED SIDEWALKS:	9,140 SF (NEW)
• MAX. HEIGHT (FT.)	NON-RESIDENTIAL: 50' (DESIGNED AT 42' HIGH)	PROPOSED BUILDING:	49,700 SF (NEW)
		PROPOSED SITE COVERAGE:	105,070 SF (NEW)
BUILDING FOOTPRINT:		EXPECTED MAX. PARKING REQUIREMENTS:	
EXISTING BLDG:	20,250 SF	EXISTING SPACES:	103
ADDITION SIZE:	48,500 SF	MAX. PROPOSED NEW SPACES:	70
STOR. BLDG:	1,200 SF	TOTAL SPACES PROVIDED:	173 (170 REQ'D)
TOTAL BLDG:	69,950 SF (17.24% < 25%)		
		TOTAL PARKING LOT:	88,665 SF
		TOTAL SIDEWALKS:	10,470 SF
		TOTAL BUILDING:	69,950 SF (17.24% COVERAGE) COMPLIES < 25%
		PROPOSED SITE COVERAGE:	169,085 SF (41.69% TOTAL SITE COVERAGE)



PRELIMINARY & ADVISORY, NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



**PROPOSED BUILDING ADDITION**  
 12429 RANSOM STREET  
 HOLLAND, MI 49424

**PROPOSED SITE PLAN - REVISION 21**



MARCH 04, 2025

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