

May 15, 2025

John Radermacher
City Administrator
City of Cannon Falls
918 River Road
Cannon Falls, MN 55009

Dear Mr. Radermacher,

Kimley-Horn, on behalf of Tract, is submitting an application for a **Preliminary Planned Unit Development (PUD), Preliminary Plat, and Rezoning Review** for a proposed ±253-acre development site, located just east of U.S. Route 52, southwest of Rochester Blvd/County 29 Blvd, and north of the CHI and Northwestern Railroad in Rudolph Township, Minnesota (Dakota County) and Cannon Falls, Minnesota (Goodhue County). Under the City of Cannon Falls 2003 Comprehensive Plan ("Comprehensive Plan"), the Future Land Use of the property is guided as Industrial.



Preliminary Plat and Rezoning Request:

The subject development area consists of four parcels located within the Randolph Township & Dakota County and one parcel within the City of Cannon Falls and Goodhue County. The four parcels in Randolph Township are proposed to be annexed into the City of Cannon Falls as part of this development and the annexation request has been submitted under a separate application. Once annexed, the subject property is zoned "UR – Urban Reserve District". Subsequently, the applicant proposes to rezone the property to "I-2 – General Industrial" with a PUD overlay district. The parcels are planned to be developed to allow for a future Technology Park Campus development.

The applicant also proposes a Preliminary Plat application as this technology park will be comprised of two main lots, which are planned to be developed with several primary buildings and additional ancillary buildings and supporting uses. The site is intended to include data centers, office space, supporting electric

transmission equipment, and related accessory uses in a campus setting of complimentary buildings. The lots may be re-platted, and/or may be further subdivided, subject to future development plans of the site. The technology-based use generates proportionally low traffic volumes and low impact to city services such as schools and emergency services, but yet generate a large economic benefit for the community.

The future technology park campus is in alignment with the purpose and intent of the I-2 General Industrial District in the City of Cannon Falls Zoning Ordinance which is to "...provide for the establishment of industrial uses of a more intense nature development in areas guided for industrial land use by the Comprehensive Plan." The development is consistent with the intent of the "Industrial: land use designation as identified under the 2003 Comprehensive Plan's and would meet the goal of "accommodating new companies that will provide jobs for area residents as well as folks from surrounding communities" within the industrial park area.

The industrial land use is consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan, particularly regarding:

- Providing economic growth and diversity for the City while not overtaxing city infrastructure;
- Locating within a "modern industrial park on the north end of the city";
- Creating good-paying jobs to keep residents within the City of Cannon Falls and/or attract talent from neighboring communities for work; and,
- Visually appealing industrial development with minimal unsightly outdoor storage or equipment.

Intent of PUD Application:

This PUD application is being submitted concurrently with the Preliminary Plat and Rezoning applications. Since the Data Center use is not explicitly addressed in the current City of Cannon Falls Zoning Code, establishing clarity and agreement on allowable code 'deviations' and 'additions' (in exchange for project benefits) at this stage will help shape the design and investment of the project.

The intent of the PUD is to establish a comprehensive framework to guide both horizontal and vertical development. The details of the future development, including but not limited to architectural design and locations of buildings, locations of water and wastewater lines, access points, parking, landscaping, and other associated improvements will be determined through future site plan entitlements and engineering applications. This proposed PUD provides the foundational structure for designing and coordinating future improvements and development phases.

Planned Unit Development Request:

The proposed technology campus use would be consistent with the intent of the proposed I-2 General Industrial District zoning designation, as outlined in the Cannon Falls zoning ordinance Section 152.685 and offers the following benefits:

- Site Programming:
 - Technology campus(es) spurring development of high-paying, high skilled jobs to the community.
 - On-site office space.
- Characteristics of Site Layout:
 - Enhanced landscaping along the project perimeter for visual buffers from surrounding areas.
 - Generous setbacks and green space. The primary structures will be significantly setback from all right-of-way and neighboring uses.
 - Surface stormwater features to attenuate and treat runoff.
- Regional Benefits:

- Financial investment in the community, yielding a substantial increase to the tax base and sparking additional economic development in the City's northern industrial district.
- Improvement of the adjacent roads and utility infrastructure:
 - Project team intends to work with the City of Cannon Falls, Dakota County Transportation, and Goodhue County on necessary roadway improvements for Rochester Blvd./County 29 Blvd. to provide safe and efficient entry and exit points to the site.
 - Project team intends to support city's planned utility extensions and utility improvements to serve the development.

Attaining the above City goals and project benefits on a large-scale site requires efficiency in site planning and the following additions and deviations from the City Zoning Code, assuming General Industrial (I-2) zoning district.

We respectfully request that the following principal and accessory uses be added as permitted uses by right for the technology campus:

- 1) The following principal and accessory uses shall be permitted:
 - a) Principal Uses:
 - i) Data Center
 - ii) Electric power transforming station (a/k/a substation and/or switching station), including but not limited to: All electric generation, distribution, switchyard, and transmission facilities (including renewable energy systems), Such uses may be located on a separate parcel or outlot than where data center buildings are located.
 - b) Accessory Uses
 - i) Access (public or private),
 - ii) Buildings for support offices, storage, logistics, maintenance, and security,
 - iii) Enclosed energy, battery and fuel storage facilities, such as but not limited to, Battery Energy Storage Systems,
 - iv) Public and private water and wastewater facilities,
 - v) Water treatment facilities,
 - vi) Water storage and cooling facilities and associated water pumps, tanks and equipment,
 - vii) Communication, broadband, and fiber optic utilities
 - viii) Air handlers, cooling equipment and heat pumps,
 - ix) All critical infrastructure related to data centers (i.e. generators), and
 - x) All other utilities (public or private), in each case together with all other supporting uses that relate to and support the permitted use(s) constructed on the Property.
- 2) All principal and accessory uses as allowed under the I-2 Zoning District are allowed subject to approval by the City and in accordance with the applicable review processes set forth in the Cannon Falls City Code Section 152.

Dakota Electric Association and private substation(s) are proposed to be located within the Developable Area of the project to support the technology use of the campus. To allow for the greatest support of the principal use of the campus, the following is requested:

- 1) Substation and overhead transmission lines are exempt from the design regulations of the I-2 District.
- 2) Substations and Overhead Transmission Lines are permitted uses allowed by right and do not require a Conditional Use Permit.

In an effort to promote additional green space to preserve existing natural vegetation and allow for additional future landscaping, and to maintain sufficient separation with neighboring properties, the following adjustments to current minimum site design criteria are being proposed:

- 1) §152.691 & §152.237: Minimum Principal Structure Setbacks
 - a) 150 feet adjacent to Rochester Blvd. and County 29 Blvd.
 - b) 150 feet adjacent to Agricultural or Commercial Uses.
 - c) 100 feet adjacent to railroads.
 - d) 150 feet adjacent to Highway 52 right-of-way.
 - e) 200 feet adjacent to Residential Uses to include a 50 foot landscape buffer.
 - f) 0' from internal lot lines or in accordance with the applicable building and fire code standards.
- 2) §152.692(A) & §152.238: Maximum Building Height
 - a) 60-feet for Principal Structures at the Building Setback adjacent to Residential Uses with a 5:1 step back above 60-feet, up to 80-feet total building height. (80-foot building would be setback 300 feet from adjacent Residential Uses)
 - b) 60-feet for Accessory Structures.
- 3) §152.336(B)(2)(b): Towers & Antenna
 - a) Private communication towers are permitted up to a maximum height of 80 feet.
- 4) §152.279: Landscaping
 - a) Earthen berms shall be allowed up to a maximum height from existing grade permitted and approved under a future site plan.
 - b) Berms are permitted adjacent to Residential Uses within the Natural Buffer Yard.
 - c) Landscaping maybe added to the berms where feasible.
 - d) Landscaping for the berms must be planted during the Minnesota growing season or as recommended by a certified Landscape Architect. If the berms are to be constructed outside the Minnesota growing season, all required landscaping must be completed by June 1 of the following growing season.

The nature of a data center campus is to have several data center buildings and support or accessory structures that may consist of buildings such as access control building(s), office building(s), logistics/construction building(s) which all support the campus operations. Therefore, the following adjustments from the City Code are proposed:

- 1) §152.236(B): Maximum Number of Structures
 - a) Up to 10 Principal or Accessory Structures located within one lot.
- 2) §152.258(H): Maximum Driveway Width
 - a) No maximum width.

To promote advanced technology and specialized equipment supporting the data center campus, mechanical and electrical equipment will be housed in mechanical yards that are fenced and screened and adjacent to the building(s). Additionally, each lot may include up to one private communication tower to facilitate site operations. Zoning Deviation:

- 1) §152.688(H): Open & Outdoor Storage
 - a) Mechanical equipment, electrical equipment, and functioning structures integral to the Principal Use shall be allowed by right and do not require a Conditional Use Permit and will be housed in mechanical yards that are fenced and screened in accordance with §152.281.
 - b) Outdoor storage shall be allowed on all frontages.

Campus buildings will feature high-quality materials and complementary architecture, creating a premier technology park environment. Primary buildings will be situated over 200 feet from residential properties, over 150 feet from commercial or agricultural uses, and 100 feet from adjacent railways. Due to this significant separation, certain architectural details may not be visible from public rights-of-way, rendering related code requirements inapplicable. Therefore, the following Zoning Regulation deviations are requested:

- 1) §152.208: Architectural Requirements: In lieu of the architectural standards outlined in §152.208 (A.d) and (B), the following architectural standards shall apply:
 - a) Principal Building Facades will meet the following standards:
 - i) For the purposes of this subsection, the term "principal building facades" shall include all building facades substantially visible to abutting public roads or adjacent to planned or existing residential districts.
 - ii) Principal building facades shall avoid the use of undifferentiated surfaces by including at least two (2) of the following design elements:
 - (1) change in building height
 - (2) building step-backs, projections or recesses
 - (3) fenestration
 - (4) changes in building material, pattern, texture, color
 - (5) use of accent material
 - (6) overhangs
 - (7) canopies or porticos
 - (8) arcades
 - (9) variations in the roof line
 - (10) Faux windows
 - (11) Green walls
 - (12) Other enhanced design elements which may be approved by the Planning Commission
 - b) When a building has more than one principal facade, such facades shall be consistent in their design, materials, details, and treatments.
- 2) Lighting:
 - a) The maximum height of pole-mounted exterior lighting shall be eighteen feet (18'). All exterior lighting fixtures, including pole-mounted exterior lighting and building-mounted exterior lighting, shall be fully shielded with house side shields installed.
 - b) Lighting that is exempt from these requirements includes temporary lighting, construction lighting, and lighting provided for emergency or safety and security purposes as requested by: the Building Code, Electrical Code, or otherwise within the City Code.
 - c) Signage related to the authorized uses shall not be illuminated.
 - d) Uplighting of buildings is prohibited. The maximum height of any building-mounted exterior light fixture shall be thirty-five feet (35') in height, with the exception of motion-activated security lighting or lighting required for aeronautical navigation.

Technology Park primary function buildings typically have low occupancy during normal operation conditions. Occupancy for technology-based campuses tends to be concentrated in administrative buildings or portions of a building. As such, parking requirement is requested:

- 1) Amount of Required Parking
 - a) 1 space per 1,000 SF of Office Space Use
 - b) For the data center building use, in lieu of a standard parking requirement, a Parking Analysis Memo, as agreed by City staff, will determine the appropriate amount of parking required for the Campus.
 - c) No standard parking requirement for any other use on site.

2) §152.258: Parking Stall, Aisle and Driveway Design

- a) Clear and well-lit walkways shall extend between building entrances, onsite parking facilities, and the public right-of-way. Sidewalks are not required along private, interior access drives.

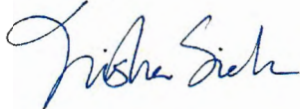
Technology Park campuses tend to be private developments, surrounded by a secure high-quality fence. The fence varies in height around the perimeter of the site and is most typically 10 to 12 feet in height but may exceed that in some instances with grade variations. Therefore, the following Zoning Regulation deviation is requested:

1) §152.276(H): Fences

- a) Maximum fence height of 14 feet.
- b) Fencing, including security fencing, is allowed by right in front, side, and rear yards including abutting Residential Uses, for business and industrial use. No conditional use permit is required.
- c) Fencing, including security fencing, is allowed up to the property line of front, side, and rear yard including abutting Residential Uses.

We respectfully request that these entitlement requests be presented at the next available Planning Commission meeting for consideration. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (612) 315-1272.

Sincerely,



Trish Sieh, P.E.
Project Manager