



**Agenda Item # 2**  
**BOA-003526-2025**

View additional details on this proposal and all application materials using the following link:

[\*\*Applicant Materials for Consideration\*\*](#)

**DETAILS**

**Location:**

11 South Water Street

**Applicant / Agent:**

Visit Mobile

**Property Owner:**

City of Mobile

**Current Zoning:**

B-4, General Business Suburban District

**Future Land Use:**

Parks & Open Space

**Case Number(s):**

6716/6588/5326

**Unified Development Code (UDC) Requirement:**

- The Unified Development Code (UDC) limits single tenant sites in a B-4, General Business District to no more than one (1) freestanding sign and no more than two (2) wall signs.

**Board Consideration:**

- Sign Variance to allow four (4) freestanding on-premise signs and two (2) wall signs in a B-4, General Business District.

**Report Contents:**

|                               | <b>Page</b> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Context Map .....             | 2           |
| Site History .....            | 3           |
| Staff Comments .....          | 3           |
| Variance Considerations ..... | 4           |
| Exhibits .....                | 6           |

# BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING AERIAL



The site is surrounded by commercial units.

|                    |               |      |                  |
|--------------------|---------------|------|------------------|
| APPLICATION NUMBER | 6716          | DATE | December 1, 2025 |
| APPLICANT          | Visit Mobile  |      |                  |
| REQUEST            | Sign Variance |      |                  |



## SITE HISTORY

---

The subject site was annexed into the City in 1814.

With the adoption of the Zoning Ordinance in 1967, the site was assigned a R-1, Single Family Residential District, I-1, Light Industrial District and I-2, Heavy Industrial District. On August 3, 2005, the property was rezoned to B-4, General Business District to allow condominiums and retail sales.

At its August 4, 2005 meeting, the Planning Commission approved a three (3) lot Subdivision and Planned Unit Development (PUD) to allow multiple buildings on a single building site with shared access between two (2) sites. For the same development, the Board of Zoning Adjustment considered Use, Height, Front Yard, and Side Street Side Yard Setback Variances at the October 3, 2005 meeting to allow a retail and multi-family residential condominium development, but they were withdrawn by the applicant and both the Subdivision and PUD were allowed to expire.

The site was the subject of a Special Exception heard and approved by the Board of Zoning Adjustment on May 5, 2024. The request was to allow a passenger depot in a B-4, General Business District.

## STAFF COMMENTS

---

### Engineering Comments:

No comments to the proposed variance; however, for the two signs located within the Right of Way, Contact the Engineering Department for approval.

### Traffic Engineering Comments:

No comments.

### Urban Forestry Comments:

Property to be developed in compliance with state and local laws that pertain to tree preservation and protection on both city and private properties [Act 929 of the 1961 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature (Acts 1961, p. 1487), as amended, and City Code Chapters 57 and 65]. Private removal of trees in the right-of-way will require approval of the Mobile Tree Commission. Removal of heritage trees from undeveloped residential sites, developed residential sites in historic districts, and all commercial sites will require a tree removal permit.

### Fire Department Comments:

All projects located within the City Limits of Mobile shall comply with the provisions of the City of Mobile Fire Code Ordinance, which adopts the 2021 edition of the International Fire Code (IFC).

Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided to within 150 feet of all non-sprinklered commercial buildings and within 300 feet of all sprinklered commercial buildings, as measured along an approved route around the exterior of the facility.

An approved fire water supply capable of meeting the requirements set forth in Appendices B and C of the 2021 IFC shall be provided for all commercial buildings.

Fire hydrant placement shall comply with the following minimum standards:

- Within 400 feet of non-sprinklered commercial buildings
- Within 600 feet of sprinklered commercial buildings
- Within 100 feet of fire department connections (FDCs) serving standpipe or sprinkler systems

Although the International Residential Code (IRC) functions as a stand-alone document for the construction of one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses, it does not govern the design or layout of emergency access or community-level fire protection infrastructure. Therefore, residential developments must also comply with the applicable requirements of the International Fire Code, including, but not limited to, those listed above concerning the design, construction, regulation, and maintenance of fire apparatus access roads and fire protection water supplies.

## **Planning Comments:**

The applicant is requesting a Sign Variance to allow four (4) freestanding on-premise signs and two (2) wall signs in a B-4, General Business District; the Unifies Development Code (UDC) limits single tenant sites in a B-4, General Business District to no more than one (1) freestanding sign and no more than two (2) wall signs.

The entire application packet is available via the link on Page 1.

The purpose of the Sign Regulation Provisions is to promote the economic well-being of the entire Mobile community by creating a favorable physical image, to afford the business community an equal and fair opportunity to advertise and promote products and services, and to protect the right of the citizens to enjoy Mobile's natural scenic beauty.

The subject site is the location of the Amtrak train station. This is a platform-only station with no shelter. There are four freestanding signs proposed for the subject site, each includes the Amtrak name and logo. Staff has determined that two (2) of the proposed freestanding signs along South Water Street are located in the City right-of-way and are therefore not regulated by Planning and Zoning. The placement of the signs must be coordinated with the Right-of-Way Department. The remaining signs on the subject site include two (2) wall signs that read, "DESIGNATED BOARDING AREA – WAIT HERE FOR BOARDING ANNOUNCEMENT – DO NOT ENTER RESTRICTED AREA" and two (2) freestanding signs that read "Mobile AL" with the Amtrak logo.

Additionally, it should be noted that additional directional/informational signs do exist on the property but, according to Article 4 Section 3. H., these signs would not require permits.

## **VARIANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

---

### **Standards of Review:**

Variances are not intended to be granted frequently. The applicant must clearly show the Board that the request is due to very unusual characteristics of the property and that it satisfies the variance standards. What constitutes unnecessary hardship and substantial justice is a matter to be determined from the facts and circumstances of each application.

Article 5 Section 10-E. 1. of the Unified Development Codes states that the Board of Adjustment may grant a variance if:

- The Applicant demonstrates that the variance shall not be contrary to the public interest;
- Where, owing to special conditions a literal enforcement of the provision of this Chapter will result in unnecessary hardship; and
- The spirit of this Chapter will be observed and substantial justice done.

Article 5 Section 10-E.2. states; No variance shall be granted:

- (a) In order to relieve an owner of restrictive covenants that are recorded in Mobile County Probate Court and applicable to the property;
- (b) Where economic loss is the sole basis for the required variance; or
- (c) Where the variance is otherwise unlawful.

### Considerations:

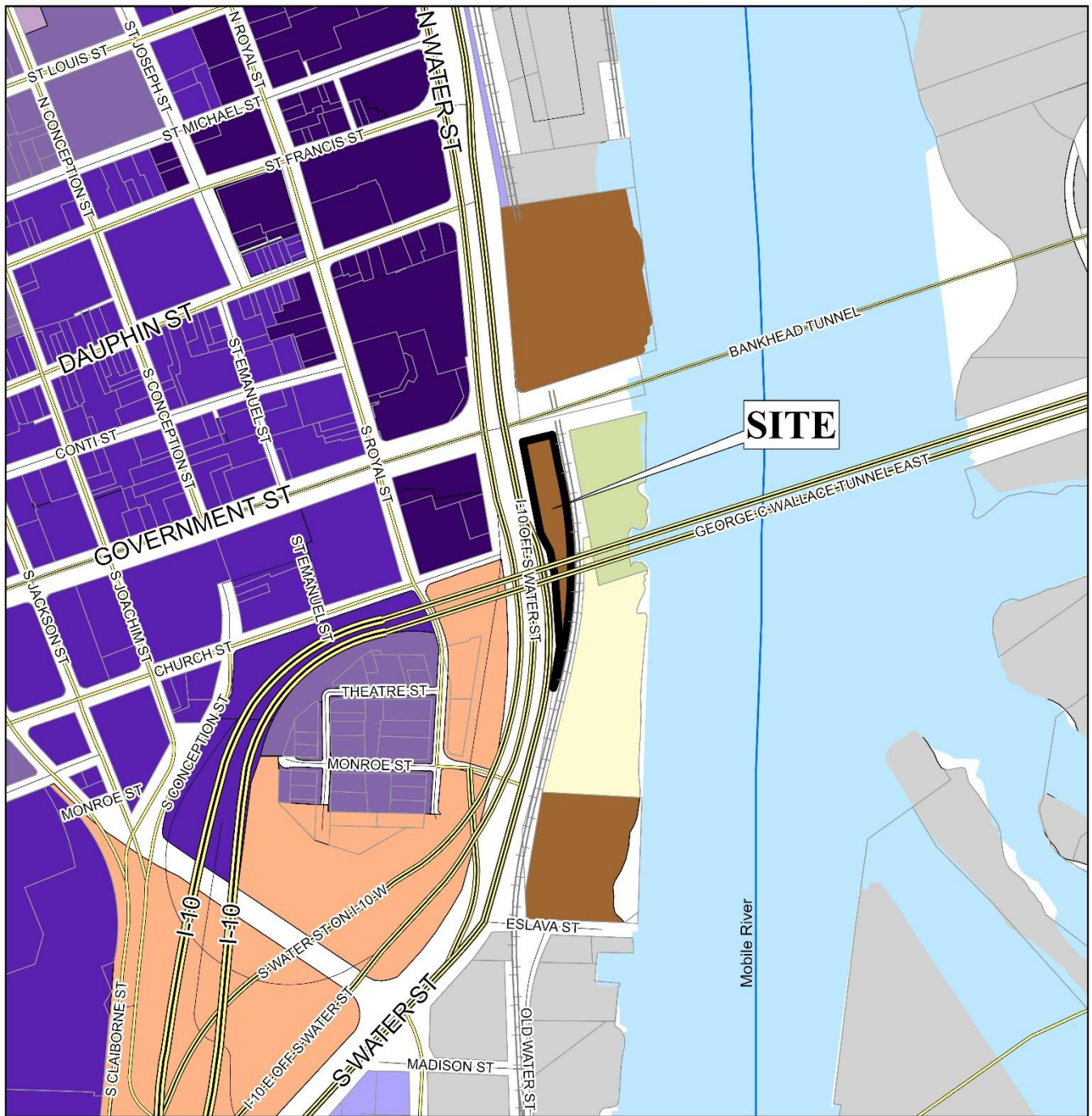
Based on the requested Variance application and documentation submitted, if the Board considers approval of the request, the following findings of fact must be present:

- A) The variance **will not** be contrary to the public interest;
- B) Special conditions **exist** such that a literal enforcement of the provisions of the chapter **will** result in unnecessary hardship; and
- C) The spirit of the chapter **shall be** observed and substantial justice **done** to the applicant and the surrounding neighborhood by granting the variance.

Should the Board consider approval of the Sign Variance, the following conditions should apply:

- 1) Obtaining sign permits for each new sign;
- 2) Coordination with the City of Mobile Right-of-Way Department regarding the proposed signs to be located in the right-of-way;
- 3) Compliance with Engineering comments; and
- 4) Full compliance with all municipal codes and ordinances.

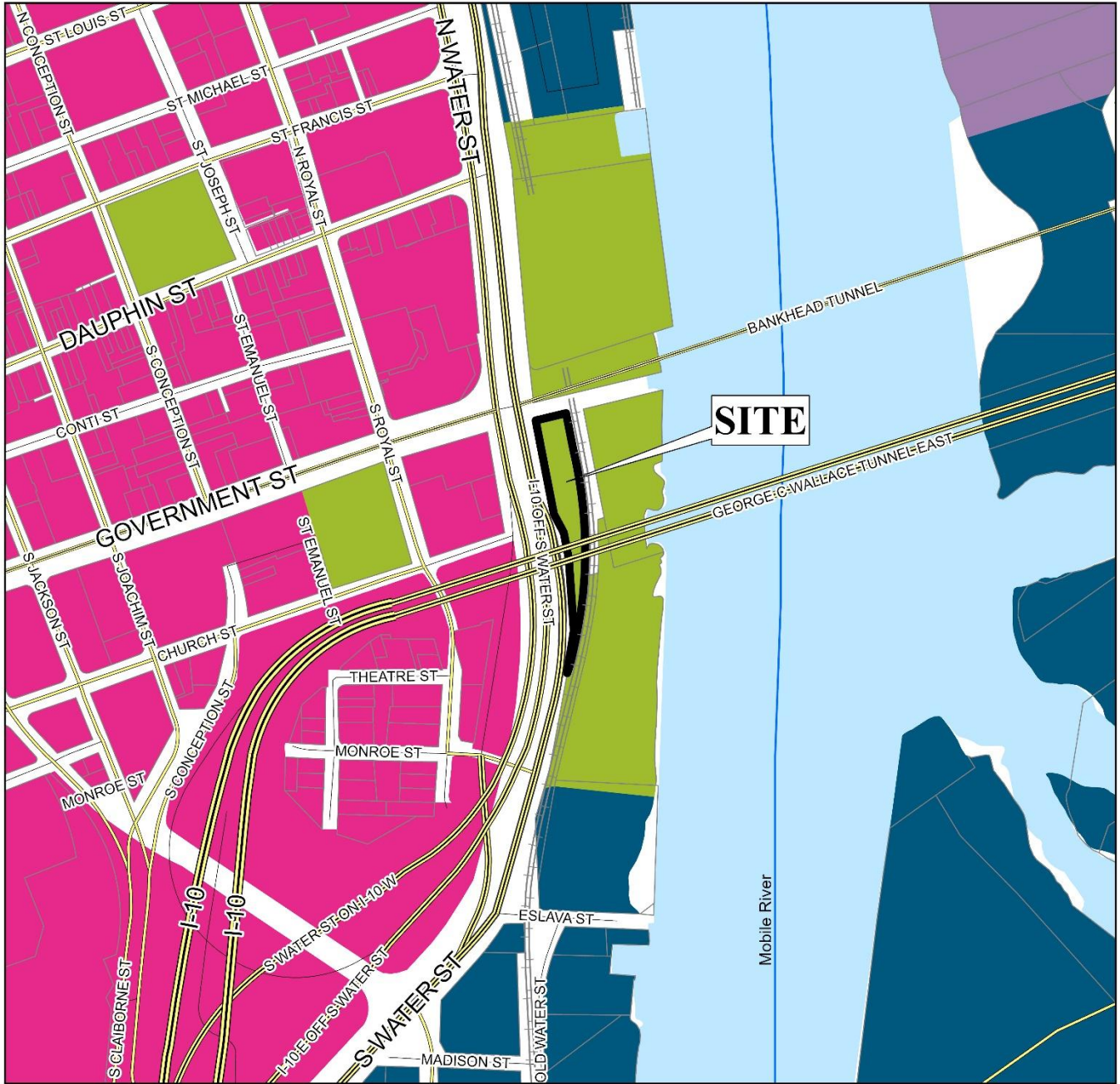
# LOCATOR ZONING MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 6716 DATE December 1, 2025  
 APPLICANT Visit Mobile  
 REQUEST Sign Variance



# FLUM LOCATOR MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 6716 DATE December 1, 2025

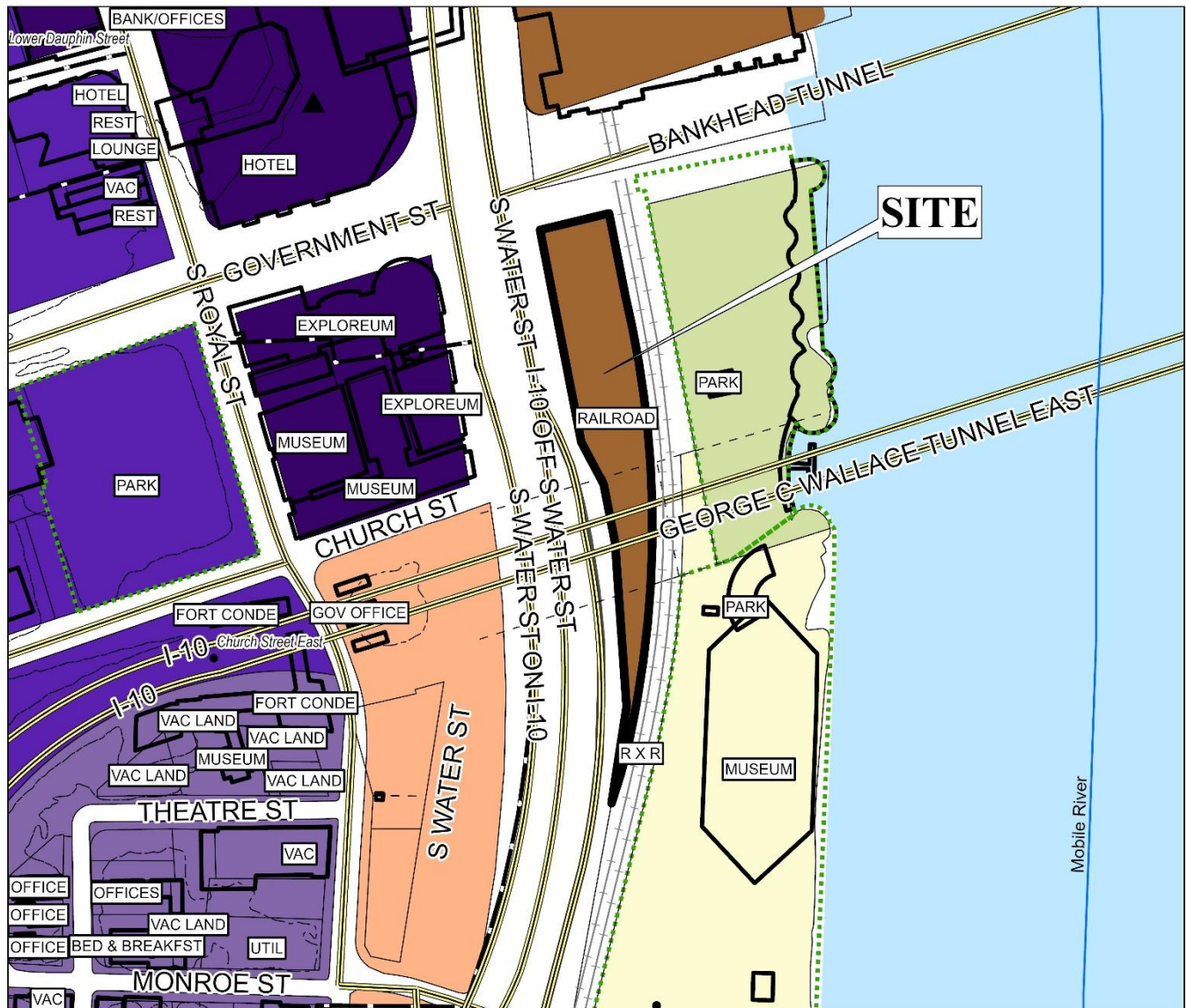
APPLICANT Visit Mobile

REQUEST Sign Variance

- |                                                                 |                                                                        |                                                         |                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Low Density Residential   | <span style="color: brown;">■</span> Neighborhood Center - Traditional | <span style="color: lightgray;">■</span> Light Industry | <span style="color: darkblue;">■</span> Water Dependent |
| <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Mixed Density Residential | <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Neighborhood Center - Suburban   | <span style="color: gray;">■</span> Heavy Industry      |                                                         |
| <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Downtown                    | <span style="color: lightpink;">■</span> Traditional Corridor          | <span style="color: lightblue;">■</span> Institutional  |                                                         |
| <span style="color: red;">■</span> District Center              | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Mixed Commercial Corridor        | <span style="color: green;">■</span> Parks, Open Space  |                                                         |



## BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



The site is surrounded by commercial units.

|                    |               |      |                  |
|--------------------|---------------|------|------------------|
| APPLICATION NUMBER | 6716          | DATE | December 1, 2025 |
| APPLICANT          | Visit Mobile  |      |                  |
| REQUEST            | Sign Variance |      |                  |

|                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #00FFFF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> R-A | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #00FF00; border: 1px solid black;"></span> R-3 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #00FFFF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> B-1  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFA500; border: 1px solid black;"></span> B-2 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #0000FF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> B-5 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> ML  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #D3D3D3; border: 1px solid black;"></span> I-2 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black;"></span> OPEN  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFB6C1; border: 1px solid black;"></span> T-3   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #800080; border: 1px solid black;"></span> T-5.2 |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFFFFF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> R-1 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FF00FF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> R-B | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #D2B48C; border: 1px solid black;"></span> T-B  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FF0000; border: 1px solid black;"></span> B-3 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #A0522D; border: 1px solid black;"></span> CW  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #008080; border: 1px solid black;"></span> MH  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black;"></span> PD  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFDAB9; border: 1px solid black;"></span> SD    | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #DDA0DD; border: 1px solid black;"></span> T-4   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #4B0082; border: 1px solid black;"></span> T-6   |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFFF00; border: 1px solid black;"></span> R-2 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFDAB9; border: 1px solid black;"></span> H-B | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FF00FF; border: 1px solid black;"></span> LB-2 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #8B4513; border: 1px solid black;"></span> B-4 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #87CEFA; border: 1px solid black;"></span> MM  | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #9370DB; border: 1px solid black;"></span> I-1 | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFFFE0; border: 1px solid black;"></span> MUN | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FF8C00; border: 1px solid black;"></span> SD-WH | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #8A2BE2; border: 1px solid black;"></span> T-5.1 |                                                                                                                                   |



## SITE PLAN



The site plan illustrates proposed sign placement, platform location, and parking.

|                    |               |      |                  |  |
|--------------------|---------------|------|------------------|--|
| APPLICATION NUMBER | 6716          | DATE | December 1, 2025 |  |
| APPLICANT          | Visit Mobile  |      |                  |  |
| REQUEST            | Sign Variance |      |                  |  |

## DETAIL SITE PLAN



**MOCKUP**

APPLICATION NUMBER 6716 DATE December 1, 2025

APPLICANT Visit Mobile

REQUEST Sign Variance

N  
NTS

A primary purpose of the Future Land Use Map is to guide zoning decisions. In many cases the designation on the FLUM may match the existing use of land, but in others the designated land use may differ from what is on the ground today. For example, a parcel that is in commercial use today but designated as any of the “mixed use” types on the map could redevelop with a mix of residential and commercial uses (such as retail, office, entertainment, etc., depending on the location).

The correspondence between the FLUM and the zoning district structure is described in the matrix below. This tool gives the City the flexibility over the long-term to determine appropriate changes to the zoning map based on various factors.

### Zoning correspondence matrix

[illegible]

## INSTITUTIONAL LAND USE (INS)

This designation includes land and buildings occupied by municipal and other governmental agencies for the exercise of their functions, to serve the public or provide a civic use or amenity. These include major libraries, airports, public schools and public safety facilities. Semi-public uses such as schools, colleges and universities, hospitals, and other major institutions that serve the public and/or operate in a public function are included.

### Development Features

- ▶ The specific location and design of these complementary uses is subject to zoning. In some cases, depending on ownership, these areas may not be subject to City zoning.
- ▶ Small-scale properties (less than 2 acres) accommodating subsidiary public and semi-public facilities, such as branch libraries, substations, satellite clinics, etc., may not be specifically called out in the FLUM under this land use designation, but may instead be considered part of the array of integrated complementary uses typically found in a residential neighborhood or a mixed-use center or corridor.

### Character Example



## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE (POS)

This designation applies to land maintained in a natural, semi-natural state, or developed with facilities and set aside for human enjoyment and recreation or for the protection of wildlife or natural habitats. This designation includes existing parks, squares, playgrounds, playfields, gardens, greens, cemeteries, greenways and blueways, and other recreational areas and facilities that are accessible to the public. These areas are generally owned by a public entity but may include some privately owned areas that have been designated as open space. This designation is not intended to identify public land acquisition or to prohibit the development potential of individual privately-owned properties.

### Character Example

