

**SIDEWALK WAIVER REQUEST
STAFF REPORT****Date: December 15, 2011****NAME**

Gulf Equipment Corporation

LOCATION5152 Willis Road
(South side of Willis Road, 100' ± East of Middle Road)**PRESENT ZONING**

I-1, Light Industry District

ENGINEERING**COMMENTS**

As shown in the grading plan for the proposed site improvements there will be proposed pipes and inlets placed within the Willis Road ROW. It appears that there is sufficient room within the ROW, or partially within the property, for construction of a sidewalk.

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 (State Act 61-929 and City Code Chapters 57 and 64).

REMARKS

The applicant is requesting a waiver for the construction of a sidewalk along Willis Road.

The sidewalk waiver site is adjacent to a site that is currently undeveloped. The applicant states that the required sidewalk is not buildable because the existing right-of-way is not constructed to City of Mobile standards, has no curb and gutter, and conveys storm water runoff via roadside ditches.

Willis Road, a collector street, has a two lane cross-section at this location. There is currently no sidewalk along Willis Road; however, the area was brought into the City of Mobile in 2008 when the adjacent properties had already been developed. As these neighboring sites are re-developed, sidewalks will be required.

It should be pointed out that the Mobile City Council adopted a "complete streets" policy on May 31, 2011. The purpose of the complete streets policy is to support the design and construction of streets to enable safe access to all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, commercial and emergency vehicles, and for people of all ages and abilities. A waiver of the sidewalk, as requested, will limit accessibility for pedestrians.

The site is entirely surrounded by I-1, Light Industry District with a parcel to the immediate West of the property being used as non-conforming residential. This site was the subject of a variance request presented to the Board of Zoning Adjustment at its August 1, 2011 meeting. The applicant requested and was granted a surfacing variance to allow aggregate surfacing for an

equipment storage yard as well as a buffer variance to allow chain link fencing with the provision of fabric mesh screening on the West, North, and East sides of the property.

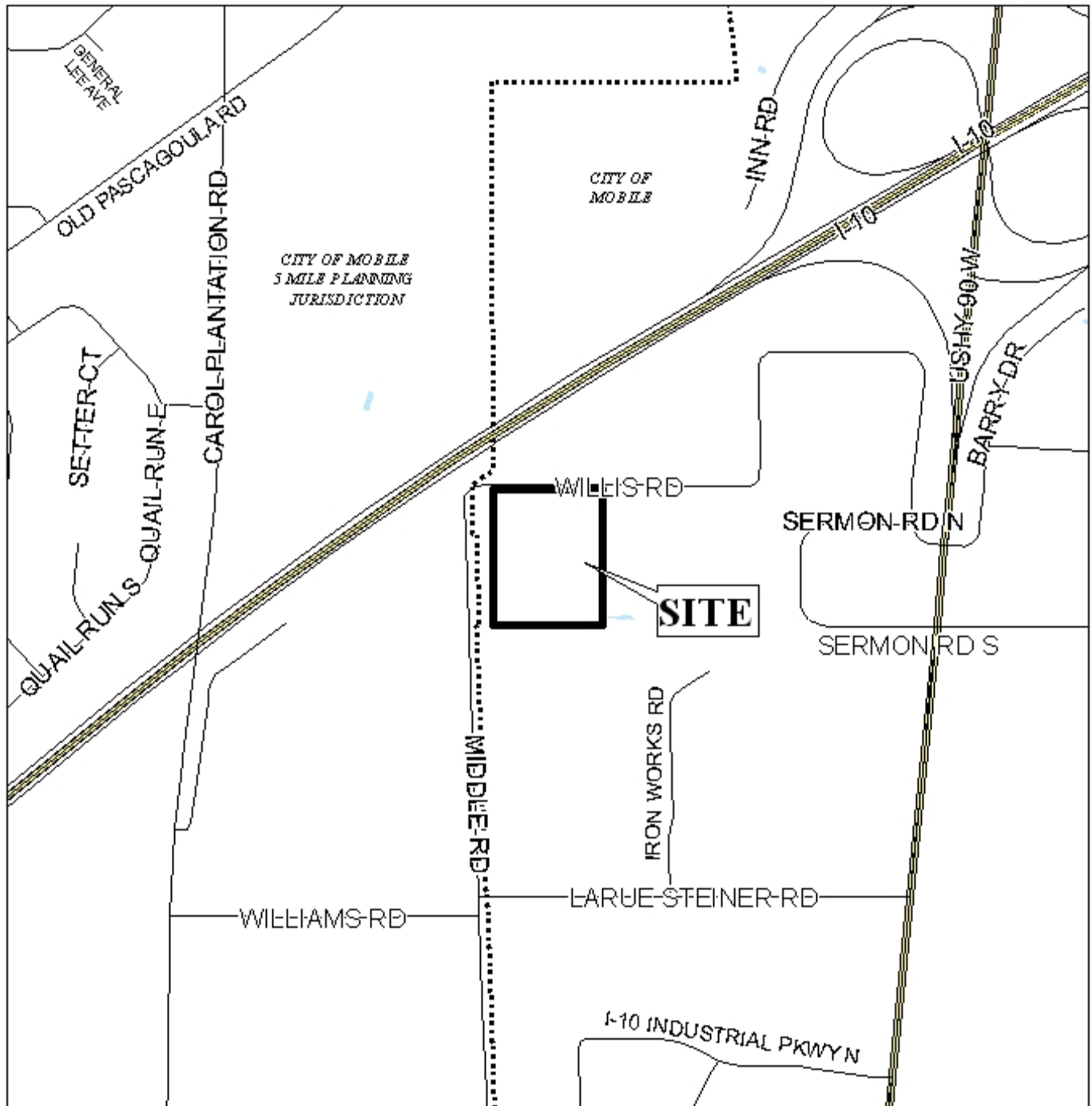
It appears from the cross section of the site that a sidewalk built to City of Mobile standards would be located in the drainage ditch, and would therefore be impractical at the location illustrated; however, it would be possible to relocate the sidewalk to the back side of the ditch. This would result in pedestrian traffic being further away from the street and would therefore cause fewer safety concerns.

The applicant has not provided sufficient reasoning to justify the approval of the sidewalk waiver. The sidewalk could be constructed on the back side of the drainage ditch away from Willis Road, possibly on private property, which the City of Mobile has allowed previously in similar situations.

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the preceding, this application for waiver of the sidewalk along Willis Road is recommended for denial, with the installation of the sidewalk to be coordinated with City of Mobile Engineering.

LOCATOR MAP



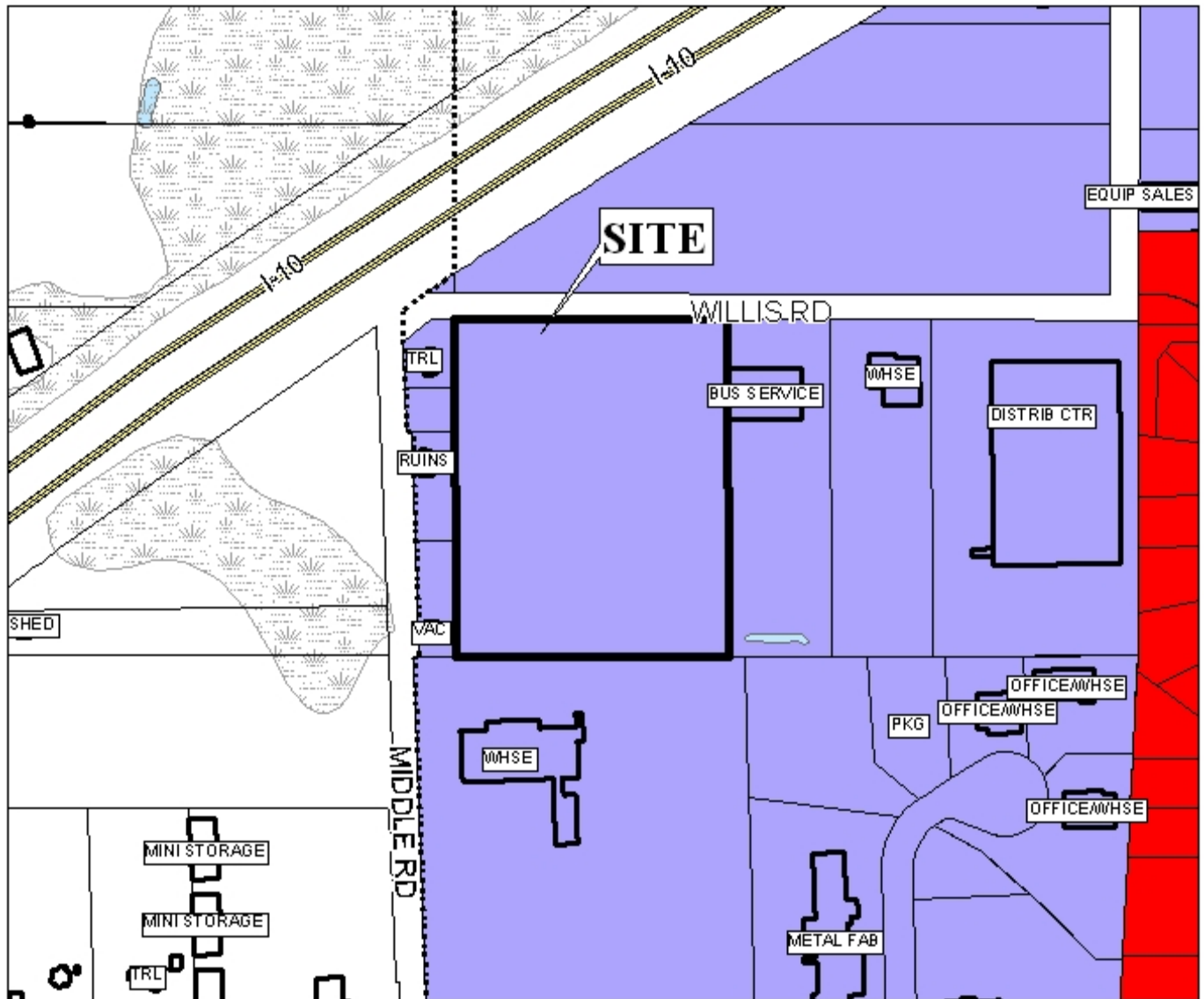
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PLANNING COMMISSION VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



There is a trailer to the west of the site, a warehouse to the south and industrial land uses to the east.

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LEGEND

R-1	R-2	R-3	R-A	R-B	H-B	T-B	B-1	LB-2	B-2	B-3	B-4	B-5	I-1	I-2
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PLANNING COMMISSION VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING

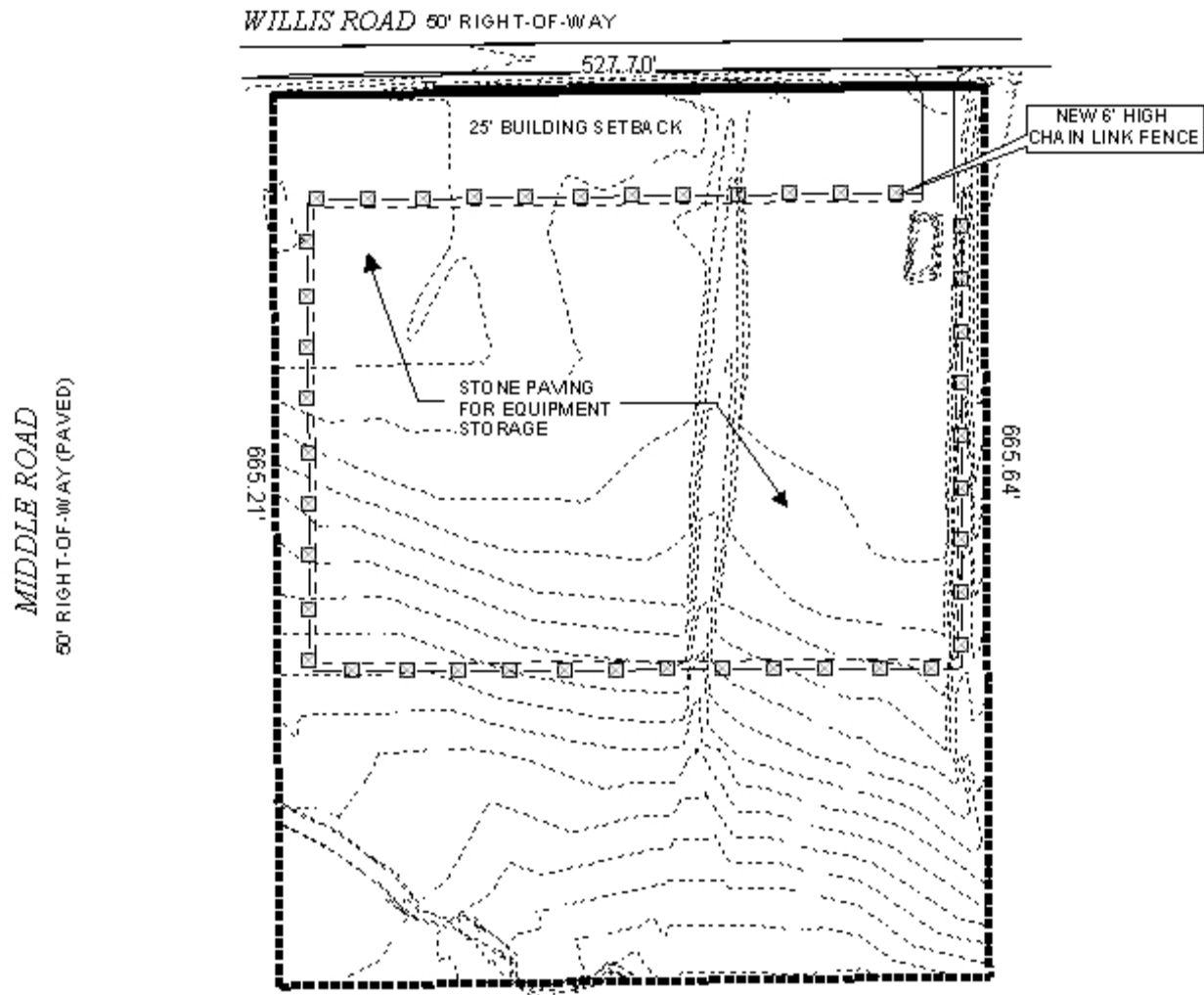


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SITE PLAN

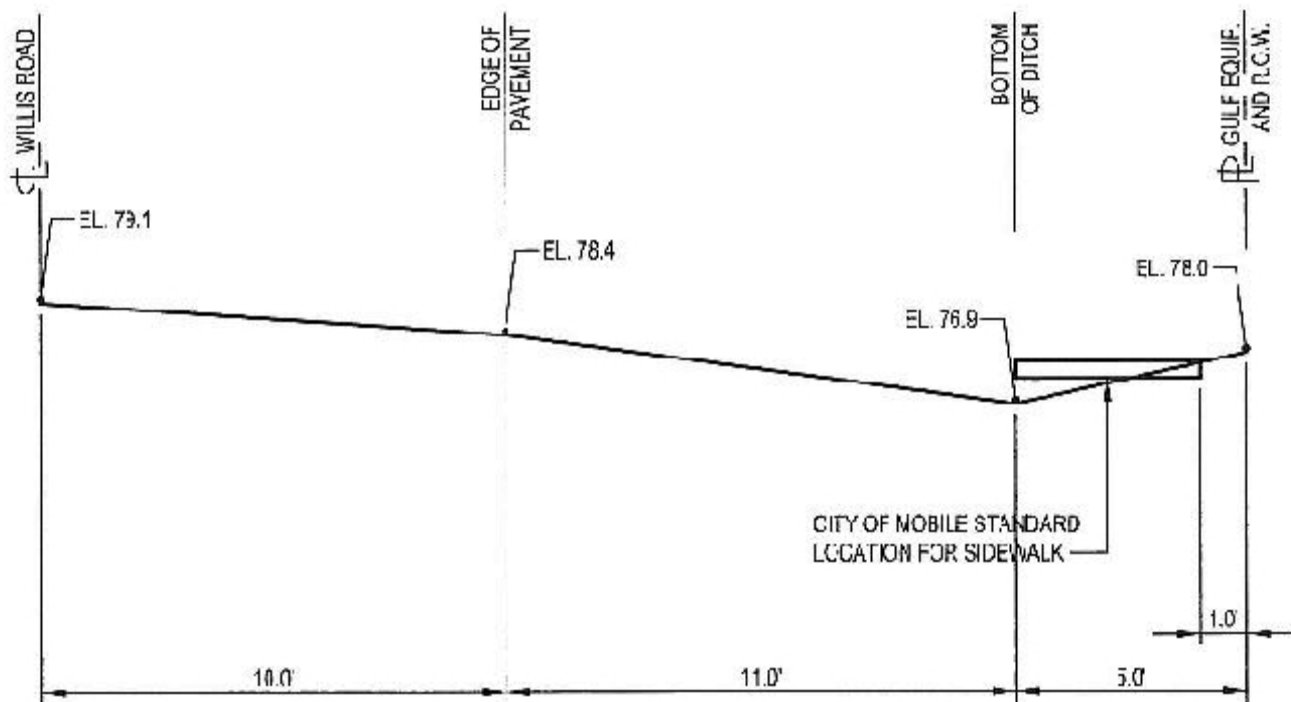


The site plan illustrates the proposed improvements.

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SIDEWALK CROSS SECTION DETAIL



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