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Staff Report to the Plan Commission

Costco Wholesale Gas Station Relocation and Parking Improvements

Prepared: 8/15/2025

Project: 2025-0348 - Costco Wholesale Gas Station Relocation and Parking Improvements

Planner: Marcus LeVigne

Petitioner: Kayleen Burnett, Costco Wholesale Corporation

Project Representative: Larry Dziurdzik, The JNL Design Group, Inc.

Location: 9913 159th Street (Proposed Gas Station), 9915 159th Street (Existing Warehouse)

P.I.N.s: 27-22-120-007-0000, 27-21-200-009-0000, 27-12-200-011-0000, 27-12-200-012-0000

Parcel Sizes: Gas Station: 6 acres, Warehouse: 15.6 acres, Detention: 18 acres

REQUESTED ACTIONS

The Petitioner, Costco Wholesale, is requesting approval to relocate its gas station to the east side of Ravinia Avenue. The existing gas station will be demolished and replaced with new parking spaces, with additional parking proposed on the south side of the building. The project also includes site reconfiguration and roadway improvements, including a new roundabout on Ravinia Avenue. The request includes approval of the following:

- Zoning Map Amendment from COR Mixed Use District to BIZ General Business District
- Plat of Subdivision
- Special Use Permit Amendment for a Planned Development
- Site Plan, Landscape Plan, and Building Elevations
- Special Use Permit for Motor Vehicle Services
- Special Use Permit Amendment for the disturbance of a non-tidal wetland
- Three modifications from the Land Development Code:
 - Allow for a reduction in the required parking for the gas station (Table 6-306(B)).
 - Allow for an increase in parking in the main Costco parking lot (Table 6-306(B)).
 - Allow for parking lots between the building and the street (Section 6-207.F.4).

HISTORY OF VILLAGE APPROVALS

The Costco site has undergone several previous approvals related to its site plan. The store was first proposed in 2004, where the Village approved a Special Use with modifications to allow the store to be located within 50 feet of a wetland, subject to conditions (Case No. 2004-0501). In 2005, a variance was granted for exterior lighting exceeding code allowed footcandles and height (Case No. 2005-0426). Most recently, in 2018, the Village approved an appearance review for the expansion of the existing gas station (Case No. 2018-0348).

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & SURROUNDING CONTEXT

Comprehensive Plan

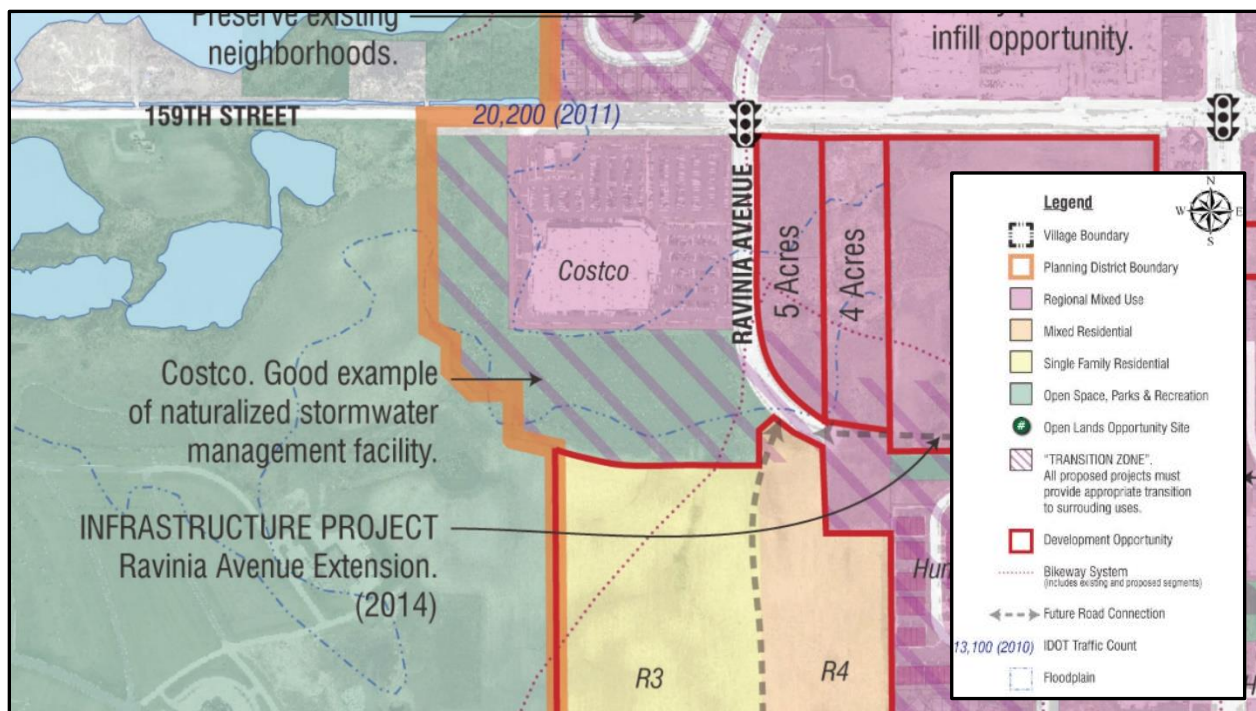
The Village's Comprehensive Plan identifies the site as a part of the Regional Core Planning District and recommends the LaGrange Road corridor be maintained as "a regional destination with a variety of shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities." It also observes that the aging retail centers in the Regional Core Planning District need "improvement, investment, or redevelopment in order to stay viable."

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Planning District	Regional Core Planning District
Planning Land Use Designation	Regional Mixed Use

The proposed development is a reinvestment in the Costco property, including the relocation and expansion of the gas station, reconfiguration of site circulation, and the addition of new parking and landscaping improvements. Along with the site and infrastructure upgrades, minor enhancements such as new landscape islands and a sidewalk extension along Ravinia Avenue are proposed. These improvements will contribute to the Comprehensive Plan goals for this area.

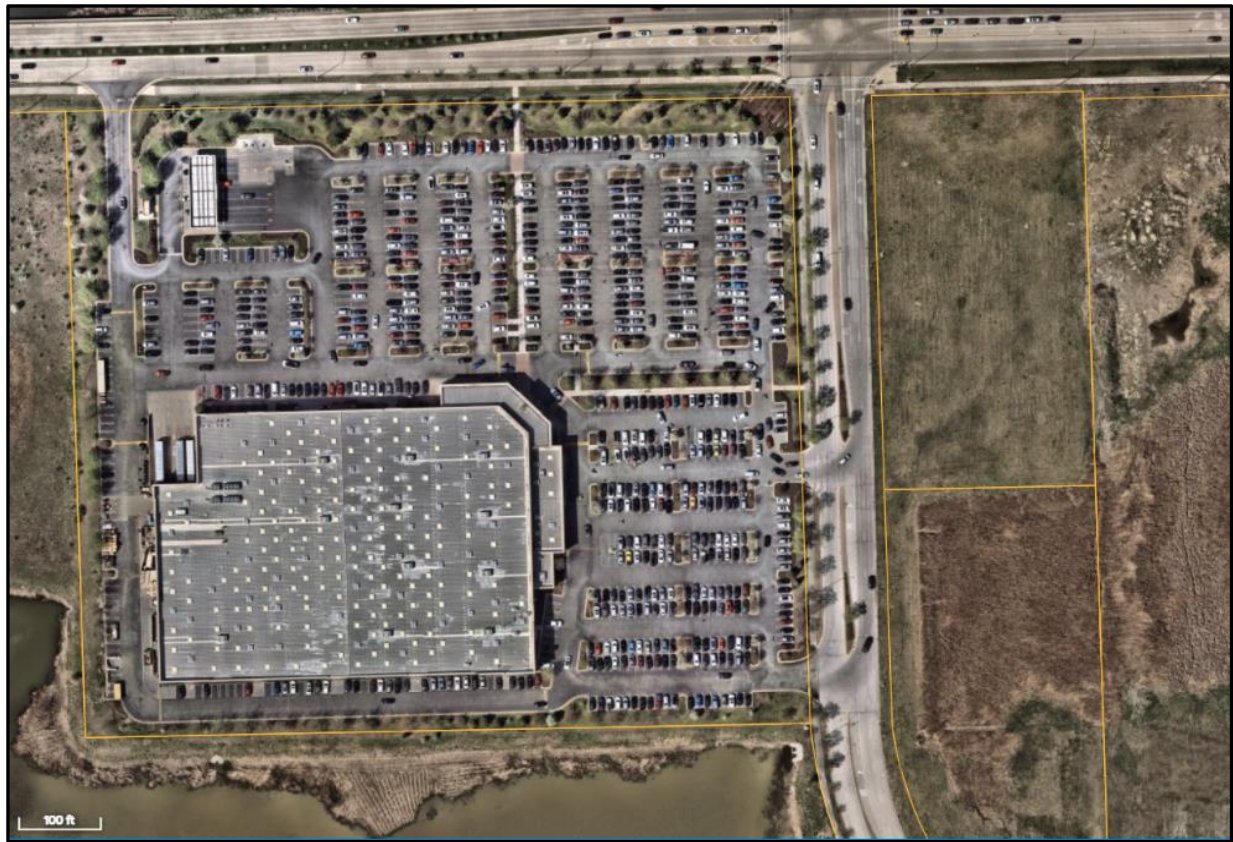
REGIONAL CORE PLANNING DISTRICT LAND USE MAP



ADJACENT PROPERTIES

	Zoning District	Land Use
North	R-4 Residential	Single Family Attached Residential (Centennial Village)
East	E-1 Estate Residential	Vacant
South	R-3 Residential	Vacant (Future Estates at Ravinia Meadows Planned Development)
West	OS – Open Space	Cemetery (Good Shepherd Cemetery)

EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS



PROPOSED SITE PLAN



ZONING MAP AMENDMENT

Proposed Rezoning

The subject property is currently zoned COR Mixed Use District. The Comprehensive Plan designates this area as "Regional Mixed Use," which identifies both BIZ General Business and COR Mixed Use as appropriate zoning classifications. Currently, Motor Vehicle Services is a prohibited land use in the COR Mixed Use District. While the existing gas station and tire center at Costco are considered legal nonconforming, the proposed addition of a new gas station is not permitted under the current zoning.

ZONING DISTRICT

Existing	COR – Mixed Use
Proposed	BIZ – General Business District

When reviewing a rezoning request, the decision-making body considers the specific factors listed below, established through 1957 Illinois Supreme Court decision *LaSalle v. County of Cook*. The petitioner has provided written responses to each factor, included in the attached supporting documents. Staff finds the petitioner's responses to be satisfactory for the proposed zoning change and recommends approval of the zoning map amendment from COR Mixed Use to BIZ General Business.

LaSalle Factors

1. The existing uses and zoning of nearby property;
2. The extent to which property values are diminished by a particular zoning classification or restriction;
3. The extent to which the destruction of property value of a petitioning property owner promotes the health, safety, morals, or general welfare of the public;
4. The relative gain to the public as opposed to the hardship imposed on a petitioning property owner;
5. The suitability of the subject property for its zoned purposes;
6. The length of time the property has been vacant as zoned, considered in the context of land development in the area;
7. The Comprehensive Plan designation and the current applicability of that designation;
8. The evidence or lack of evidence, of community need for the use proposed.

SITE PLAN

The existing Costco site includes the main warehouse building, tire center, gas station, and associated parking areas accessed from Ravinia Avenue and 159th Street. The proposed development introduces a new single-lane roundabout on Ravinia Avenue, which will serve as the primary entrance to both the warehouse and the relocated gas station. This improvement is intended to reduce conflict points, separate warehouse and gas station traffic, and improve overall site circulation.

The relocated gas station will be constructed on a vacant parcel east of Ravinia Avenue, owned by the Petitioner, and will include 40 pumps with an associated control building. Vehicles accessing the gas station will enter and exit through the roundabout, while demolition of the existing gas station will allow for additional parking spaces in its former location.

Additional site improvements include reconfiguring the drive aisles within the main site entrance to improve traffic flow and expanding the southern parking area behind the warehouse.

Parking

Per LDC regulations, the main Costco Wholesale building is required to provide 605 parking spaces based on one space per 250 square feet of gross floor area. The site currently has 763 spaces, and with the proposed improvements, this will increase to 873 spaces. For the gas station, the LDC requires one parking space and one stacking space per pump, totaling 40 parking spaces and 40 stacking spaces. The proposal provides two parking spaces and well over 40 stacking spaces.

PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Location	LDC Regulations	Parking Required	Parking Provided
Costco Wholesale	1 parking space required per 250 square feet of gross building floor area	605 spaces (763 existing)	873 spaces
Costco Gasoline	1 space per gas pump	40 spaces	2 spaces
	1 stacking space per gas pump	40 stacking spaces	>40 stacking spaces

Requested Parking Modifications

Modification #1 Allow for a reduction in the required number of parking spaces for the proposed gas station (Table 6-306(B)).

Automobile Service Stations, as defined in the code, are required to provide one parking space per pump, plus one stacking space per pump. Staff supports a reduction in this requirement, as no convenience store is proposed for this location, unlike a conventional gas station.

Modification #2 Allow for an increase in parking in the main Costco parking lot (Table 6-306(B)).

The main Costco parking lot will exceed the code requirement by 268 spaces, or approximately 44.3 percent. While the Development Services Department can approve up to a 20 percent increase, a larger increase requires a modification to the Special Use Permit. Staff supports this request, as Costco consistently utilizes all available parking spaces on site.

Modification #3 Allow parking lots to be located between the building and the street (Section 6-207.F.4)

The LDC requires buildings to be located along the street, with parking located to the side or rear of the building. This modification is necessary due to the placement of the building on the gas station parcel, and also to the increase in the number of parking spaces for the main warehouse parking lot. The gas station building's placement along Ravinia Avenue results in two parking spaces between the front building setback line and the street. Staff support this modification, as the spaces will be screened with landscaping and are not intended for use by Costco customers.

The main warehouse parking lot currently has parking located between the building and the street. Given the previously approved existing layout of the site, the proposed plan would increase this nonconformity. Staff supports the modification to allow this increase, as the expansion is consistent with the design of the previously approved site plan and addresses the continued high level of customer demand. Additionally, the increase in parking will improve site functionality without negatively impacting circulation or access.

Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Access

159th Street and Ravinia Avenue both have existing 8-foot-wide asphalt paths providing direct access to the main entrance of Costco. 8 bicycle parking spaces are located to the left of the main store entrance next to the Tire Center. Crosswalks within the parking lot contain stamped concrete to provide distinction from the asphalt pavement and enhance the overall appearance of the parking lot.

A new 5-foot-wide sidewalk is proposed along the east side of Ravinia Avenue, extending the full length of the Costco property to the present end of Ravinia Avenue. In accordance with LDC Section 6-406.A.1, sidewalks are required on both sides of all streets. This improvement will complete pedestrian connectivity along the present portion of Ravinia Avenue and provide a continuous walkway to future development east of the site.

Costco is not directly served by any public transportation routes. The nearest bus stop is located along Pace Route 364 at 159th Street and 94th Avenue, approximately 0.8 miles from Costco, or about a 20-minute walk. The 153rd Street Metra Station is located about 1.5 miles away, or about a 30-minute walk away.

VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

The existing warehouse currently has 3 access points: 2 driveways on Ravinia Avenue (north and south) and a right-in/right-out driveway on 159th Street. The north driveway on Ravinia Avenue is the most heavily used entrance. As part of the gas station relocation, the north driveway will be reconstructed as a roundabout, with a new east driveway providing direct access to the gas station. The south driveway will be reconfigured to allow right-in, right-out, and left-in movements only, shifting all northbound exiting warehouse traffic towards to the north driveway exit.

Ravinia Avenue North Driveway Access

Existing Conditions

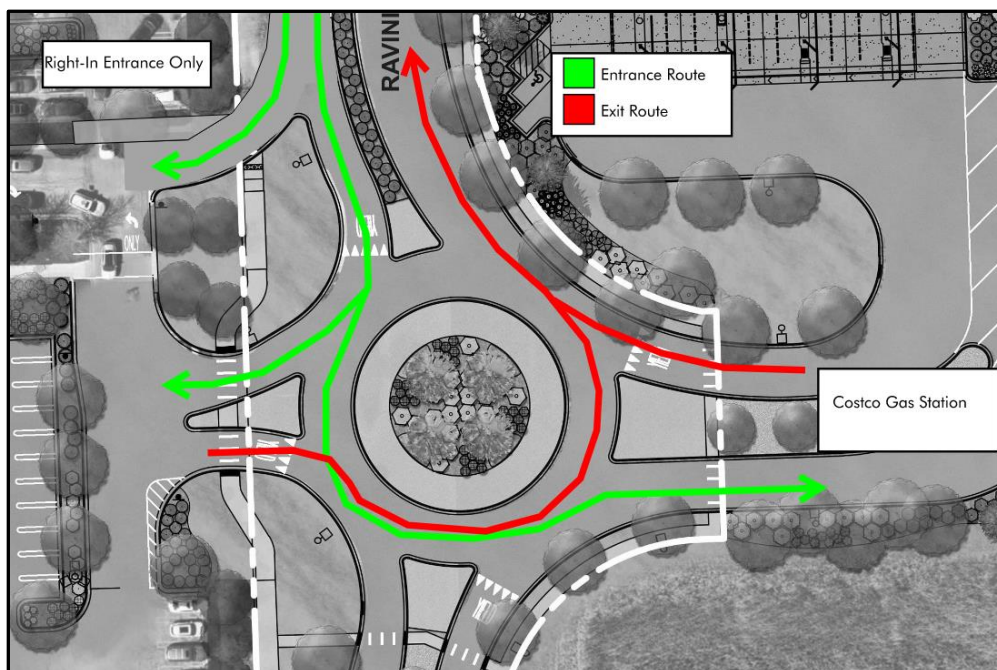
The north driveway on Ravinia Avenue currently operates as a full-access T-intersection, allowing left and right-turn movements both into and out of Costco.

Proposed Conditions

As part of the site improvements, a single-lane roundabout is proposed at the intersection of Ravinia Avenue and the north entrance for the Costco warehouse and gas station. The roundabout is intended to improve traffic flow and safety by reducing conflict points and managing vehicle speeds. The traffic study, prepared by V3 Companies, last revised June 25, 2025, projects that with the roundabout in place, the intersection will accommodate projected 2050 traffic volumes. This design is expected to create efficient circulation for vehicles entering and exiting the Costco warehouse and gas station sites while reducing present delays on Ravinia Avenue.

With the proposed plan, southbound traffic on Ravinia Avenue will either turn right into the right-in-only driveway or continue through roundabout to enter Costco warehouse. All gas station traffic will enter and exit through the roundabout using the single access point.

All vehicles exiting the warehouse or the gas station towards 159th Street will be routed through the roundabout. This configuration consolidates access, improves circulation, and reduces conflict points along Ravinia Avenue.



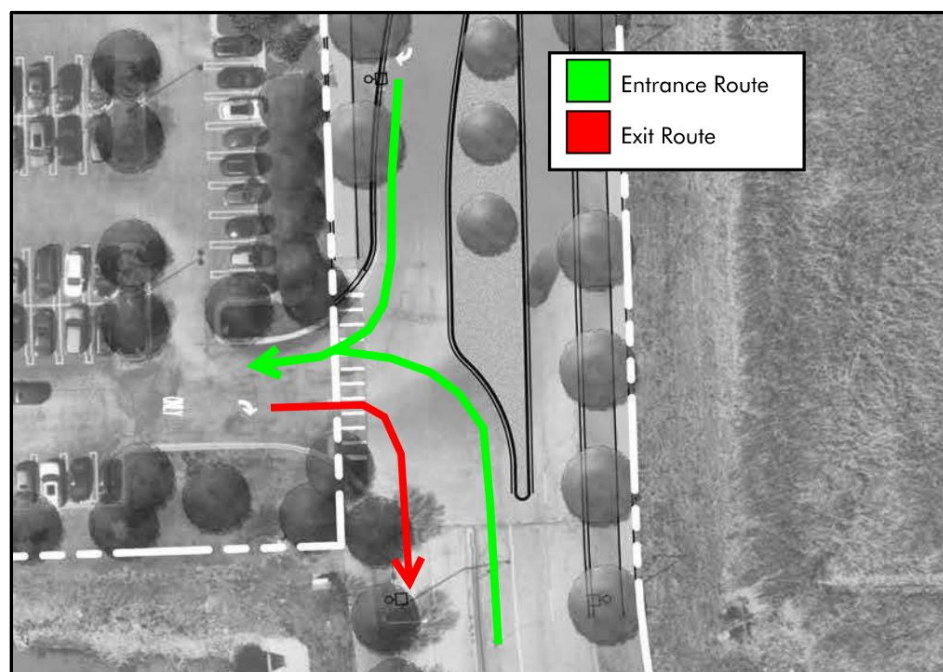
Ravinia Avenue South Driveway Access

Existing Conditions

The south driveway on Ravinia Avenue currently functions as a full-access intersection, allowing vehicles to turn left and right both into and out of the Costco site. This driveway primarily serves as a secondary access point for the main store parking lot.

Proposed Conditions

With the proposed plan, the south driveway will provide left-in, right-in, and right-out movements only. When traveling south on Ravinia Avenue, vehicles can use this driveway to enter the main Costco parking lot after passing through the roundabout. When traveling north, vehicles can use the existing left turn lane. Vehicles exiting the site at this location will only be able to turn right towards proposed 161st Street.



159th Street Driveway Access

The existing right-in/right-out driveway along 159th Street will remain unchanged. This driveway will continue to serve vehicles traveling east on 159th Street and provides an additional access point that disperses customer and truck traffic across the site entrances.

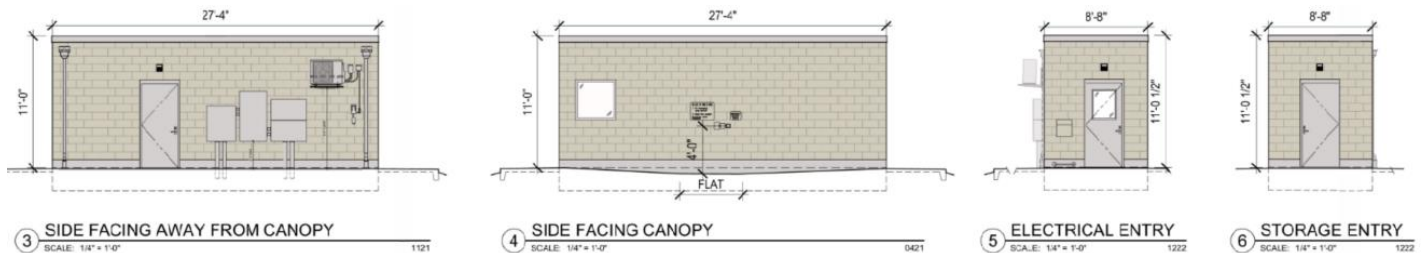
Truck Turning Radius Study

A truck turning radius study was provided for semi-trucks, fuel tanker trucks, and Orland Fire Protection District Truck specifications. The attached roundabout plan shows that the turning motions for each of these vehicles can be accommodated with this proposed layout.

BUILDING ELEVATIONS AND SITE DESIGN

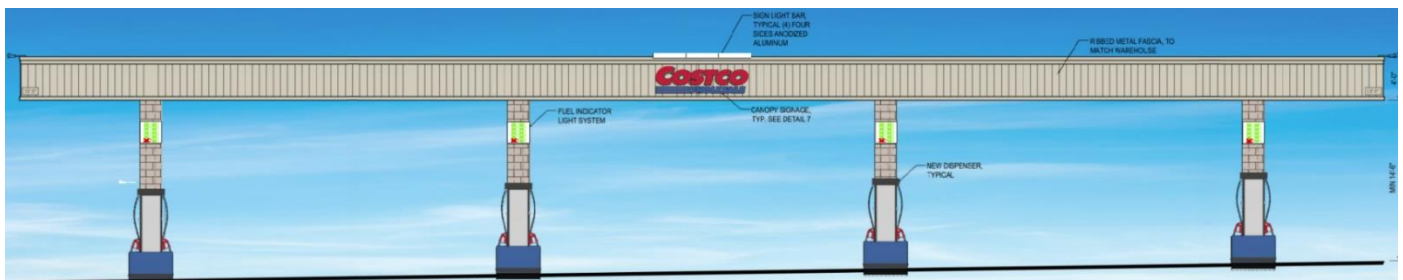
Gas Station Building Elevations

The proposed gas station will include a single-story control building approximately 236 square feet in size. There will be no customer access to the building. The structure will be constructed of split-face concrete masonry unit (CMU) walls in a neutral tone consistent in color with the main Costco warehouse.



Gas Station Canopy Elevations

The proposed canopy will be approximately 18 feet 6 inches in height with a vehicle clearance of up to 13 feet 6 inches. The design incorporates split-face CMU masonry columns in a neutral tone matching both the existing Costco warehouse building and the new control building. The canopy fascia will be metal panels that match the existing warehouse.



Exterior Lighting

A lighting variance was previously granted for the main warehouse parcel, which allows for parking lot lighting poles to be up to 30 feet tall, and to allow for lighting level of 50 foot-candles at the gas station and near the Costco building entrance rather than the 15 foot-candles permitted without a variance. (Ordinance 4084).

New and revised exterior lighting will be approved during final engineering in compliance with LDC Section 6-315. No additional variances were requested with this petition.

Signage

All proposed signage will be reviewed under a separate administrative application for compliance with Section 6-307 of the Land Development Code. Canopy signs are planned for the gas facility. Gas pump indicator light systems will be mounted on each canopy column at the entrance station to help customers locate available pumps. Additional way-finding signs are proposed for gas station's entry and exit points.

Roundabout and other right-of-way signs will be reviewed and approved by the Director of Engineering for compliance with MUTCD standards.

PLAT OF SUBDIVISION

Plat of Subdivision

As part of the proposed improvements, the petitioner is requesting approval of a Plat of Subdivision to reconfigure the stormwater management area on the site. The subdivision will create two lots, identified as Lot 3 and Lot 3A, with Lot 3A established as a new stormwater detention outlot, as part of an agreement with the neighboring Estates at Ravinia Meadow Planned Development (Case No. 2024-0676). The proposed outlot meets the minimum lot size standards within the BIZ General Business District requirements.

Plat of Dedication

While not approved by this hearing body, a plat of dedication is proposed for the east and west sides of the roundabout, in order to dedicate the full roundabout to the Village. The Plat of Dedication will be approved by the Board of Trustees at a future date.

PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING PLAN

Civil Engineering Plans

The preliminary engineering plans, reviewed by staff, are compliant with the Land Development Code. All outstanding engineering items, including the establishment of a letter of credit and final lighting plan, will be addressed during final engineering reviews.

Stormwater Management

The existing detention basin maintenance will involve regrading the southeast corner of the pond, where sediment has built up over time, to increase the overall detention capacity as it was originally approved when Costco was built. The regraded slopes will be planted with native prairie vegetation to limit erosion and improve water quality. The restoration of the pond was originally going to be performed by Pulte as part of the Estates at Ravinia Meadows project. However, the two parties were unable to finalize an agreement so the Petitioner will be required to provide plans for the restoration during final engineering and implement the improvements.

Additionally, the applicant has included underground volume control storage at the northeast corner of the roundabout on the gas station parcel to further meet stormwater management requirements.

Wetlands

There are existing wetland areas within the boundaries of the proposed Planned Development. Per LDC Section 6-410.D.1, any activity occurring within 50 feet of a nontidal wetland requires a Special Use Permit. Costco has an existing Special Use Permit (Case No. 2004-0501) for Lots 1 and 3 that allows development within 50 feet of a nontidal wetland. The plans show the limits of the existing wetland area, which is located just south of the proposed gas station. While the new gas station will not involve work within the wetland area, a Special Use Permit is still required, and a wetland delineation must be submitted during the final engineering phase for project approval.

Utilities

While not currently proposed on the plan, the Village is requesting that the watermain located at the southeast corner of 159th Street and LaGrange Road is extended to the east property line of the gas station parcel. This extension will ensure that future development to the east of the property can access water. Per LDC Section 6-410.B.1.e, the Developer is required to extend the water distribution system as determined by Director of Engineering. This requirement has been added as a condition of approval during final engineering.

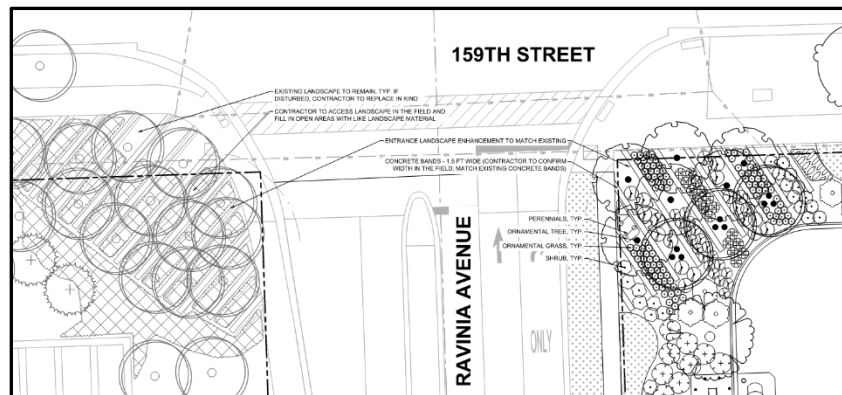
PRELIMINARY LANDSCAPE PLAN

Landscape Plan

The preliminary landscape plans are compliant with the Land Development Code. No modifications or variances have been requested, and any outstanding comments must be completed during the final landscape review. The representative plant list appears to meet diversity requirements for number of species, and the percentage of species will be evaluated during the final landscape plan review.

Entryway Feature

A proposed entryway landscaping feature is shown at the southeast corner of 159th Street and Ravinia Avenue. This entryway feature is designed to mirror the existing southwest corner of the intersection and create a consistent entryway that screens the existing parking lot on the west and proposed gas station on the east.



FINDINGS OF FACT

When considering an application for a special use permit, the decision-making body shall consider the Findings of Fact below. The petitioner has submitted responses to the Special Use Standards Worksheet for a Planned Development and for Automobile Services [... and non-tidal wetland?]. Responses are attached to this report, and staff finds the petitioner responses sufficient for this case.

1. The special use will be consistent with the purposes, goals, objectives and standards of the Comprehensive Plan, any adopted overlay plan, and these regulations.
2. The special use will be consistent with the community character of the immediate vicinity of the parcel proposed for development.
3. The design of the proposed use will minimize adverse effects, including visual impacts on adjacent properties.
4. The proposed use will [not] have an adverse effect on the value of adjacent property.
5. The applicant has demonstrated that public facilities and services will be capable of serving the special use at an adequate level of service.
6. The applicant has made adequate legal provision to guarantee the provision and development of any open space and other improvements associated with the proposed development.
7. The development will [not] adversely affect a known archaeological, historical, or cultural resource.
8. The proposed use will comply with all additional standards imposed on it by the particular provision of these regulations authorizing such use and by all other applicable requirements of the ordinances of the Village.

STAFF RECOMMENDED ACTION

Regarding Case Number 2025-0348 - Costco Wholesale Gas Station Relocation and Parking Improvements, Staff recommends to accept and make findings of fact as discussed at this Plan Commission meeting and within the Staff Report dated August 15, 2025;

And

Staff recommends the Plan Commission **approves** a Zoning Map Amendment from the COR – Mixed Use District to the BIZ – General Business District for lots 1, 2, 3, and 3A.

And

Staff recommends the Plan Commission **approves** a Special Use Permit for a Planned Development for lots 1, 2, 3, and 3A.

And

Staff recommends the Plan Commission **approves** the following Modifications to the Planned Development:

1. Allow for a reduction in the required number of parking spaces for the proposed gas station (Table 6-306(B)).
2. Allow for an increase in parking spaces permitted in the main Costco Wholesale parking lot (Table 6-306(B)).
3. Allow parking lots to be located between the building and the street (Section 6-207.F.4)

And

Staff recommends the Plan Commission **approves** a Special Use Permit Amendment for the Disturbance of a non-tidal wetland, subject to the condition that a wetland delineation is provided with the final engineering plan submittal.

And

Staff recommends the Plan Commission **approves** a Special Use Permit for Automobile Services.

And

Staff recommends the Plan Commission **approves** the Site Plan, Landscape Plan, and Building Elevations, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall be in substantial conformance with the preliminary site plan titled "Costco Wholesale Overall Site Plan," prepared by MG2, last revised June 27, 2025; the building elevations titled "Fuel Elevations," prepared by MG2, last revised June 13, 2025; the landscape plan titled "Costco Landscape Plan," prepared by Kimley Horn and Associates, last revised June 20, 2025; the preliminary civil engineering plans titled "Preliminary Engineering Plans for Costco Wholesale," prepared by V3 Companies, last revised June 18, 2025.
2. The Final Engineering Plan shall include a watermain extension from the existing watermain located at the southeast corner of 159th Street and Ravinia Avenue to the east property line of the gas station parcel.
3. That a stormwater management area restoration plan is submitted with the Final Engineering Plans for the site.

4. Meet all building code requirements and final engineering requirements, including any required permits from outside agencies.
5. All ground-based and roof-mounted mechanical equipment must be fully screened from view and shall meet the requirements listed in Section 6-308.J.
6. Submit a sign permit application to the Development Services Department for separate review. Signs are subject to additional review and approval via the sign permitting process and additional restrictions may apply.

And

Staff recommends the Plan Commission **approves a Plat of Subdivision**, subject to the condition that final copy of the plat being printed on mylar and submitted to the Village with all non-Village related signatures ready for recording at the Cook County Recorder of Deeds office.

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION

Regarding Case Number 2025-0348, also known as Costco Wholesale Gas Station Relocation and Parking Improvements, I move to approve the Staff Recommended Action as presented in the Staff Report to the Plan Commission for this case.