

October 30, 2025

Bloomington Planning Commission
1800 West Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington, MN 55431

Via Email and City Portal

Dear Planning Commission Members:

On behalf of Rosa Development ("Rosa"), I am sending this letter to summarize the intent of the ordinance amendments proposed by my clients. Earlier this month, we filed an application for a text amendment to address the status of the existing airport parking operators. In September, the City Council adopted amendments addressing the legal status of airport parking at hotels in Bloomington and created opportunities for new parking operations within the HX-R and CX-2 zoning districts. What was left undone was resolution of the status of the existing remote airport parking operations.

Background

Airport Support Business

In mid-90s, the City of Bloomington along with the Chamber of Commerce, local hotels, and Northwest Airlines worked as a coalition to keep the airport located where it is because of its importance to the local economy, and the hospitality industry in particular. That decision to keep the airport where it is means accepting the support services that go along with being an airport hub.

As you may recall, my client has operated a successful business in Bloomington, known as "Park N' Fly", for almost 38 years. The business supports the traveling public, generates taxes, and employs 52 people. Rosa has always kept the property in compliance with all applicable codes, including the City's zoning ordinance.

Rosa has been proactive throughout the City's recent study of changes to the regulations affecting the existing operators of remote airport parking. In fact, Rosa provided a survey of the zoning treatment of airport parking at the 48 locations operated by The Parking Spot. The key finding of that survey: **no other jurisdiction, other than Bloomington, treats the use as temporary**. Staff included similar findings in their work on the study.

Permanent Use

One of the most important facts in these deliberations is our client has taken the position that its right to operate remote airport parking is a **permanent not temporary use**. The simple fact is the City did not have authority under Minnesota statutes to convert a conditional use to a "temporary" use when it issued the first conditional use permit for remote airport parking in 1988. That authority was later provided by the legislature to municipalities when it amended

the zoning enabling act to provide for issuance of interim use permits. Subsequently, in 2009, the City began requiring operators to obtain interim use permits.

Summary of Amendments

We have reviewed the discussion of remote airport parking by the Planning Commission and City Council over the last year. Based on the testimony in the record, we see the following direction from decision makers:

- No Council member or Commissioner suggested shutting down the existing operations. In fact, most of the decision makers said they recognized the service that these businesses provide to travelers by providing a lower cost option for parking off-airport.
- No Council member or Commissioner favored tearing up existing facilities to put in new parking islands, stormwater facilities, and lighting. Several of you said that it would be counter to encouraging redevelopment.
- Most decision makers expressed a desire for a clear path to redevelopment of the surface lots while acknowledging that development should be responsive to the market, not compliance dates.
- Finally, everyone expressed a desire to get this matter resolved sooner than later.

With this direction in mind, we submitted the proposed ordinance which does the following:

- It provides for approval of remote airport parking as a **conditional use**. This is exactly what the Council approved for new operators of remote airport parking facilities. This is also what Rosa has operated under since 1988.
- It clarifies that new development standards will be applicable proactively to new development, not retroactively to existing development.
- It creates flexibility to expand parking and develop a commercial use along American Boulevard – this provision is written as an **incentive rather than a mandate**.
- It allows my client to respond in real time to market opportunities.

Conclusion

The current use was established in 1988, well before light rail, amendments to the comprehensive plan, or mandates for transit-oriented development. The current use is legal, permanent, and financially viable for the foreseeable future. We believe any successful resolution of the status of the existing airport parking operations must recognize the permanent nature of this business.

Too much time has been invested in finding a workable solution for all parties to put this off any longer, and we are ready to work collaboratively with the City to finally get this done. We ask the Planning Commission to support our proposal and recommend approval to the City Council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W.C. Griffith".

William C. Griffith, for
Larkin Hoffman

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