

AGENDA

A. Call to Order

B. Approval of Agenda

Any additions, deletions, modifications to the agenda will be done at this time.

- a. Full Agenda

C. Presentations, Public Hearings & Related Approvals

D. New Business

- a. Elect Officers for 2026
- b. Confirm Meeting Schedule for 2026.
- c. Planning and Zoning Orientation/Refresher
- d. Discuss Orphans Baseball Organization Request for Memorial Field
- e. Discuss Downtown Redevelopment Opportunities

E. Old Business

F. Adjourn

The will adjourn to a Workshop following the regular meeting.



CITY OF HOWARD LAKE

PARKS AND PLANNING COMMISSION

*The City of Howard Lake strives to build upon its good neighbor traditions –
A welcoming community for all, supported by vibrant and engaged businesses and community organizations, involved
citizens, and diverse amenities that provide a well-rounded quality of life.*

Howard Lake City Hall
TENTATIVE AGENDA
January 28, 2026 – 5:30 pm

- A. **CALL TO ORDER**
 - B. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
Any additions, deletions, modifications to the agenda will be done at this time.
 - C. **CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - D. **PRESENTATIONS, PUBLIC HEARINGS & RELATED APPROVALS**
 - E. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - a. Elect Officers for 2026
 - b. Confirm Meeting Schedule for 2026
 - c. Planning and Zoning Orientation/Refresher
 - d. Discuss Orphans Baseball Organization Request for Memorial Field
 - e. Discuss Total Lake Treatment Plan
 - f. Discuss Downtown Redevelopment Opportunities
 - F. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - G. **ADJOURN**
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PLANNING COMMISSION NOTE: The following materials were used by the city council for a study session held recently. At the request and direction of the city council, they are soliciting additional ideas and feedback on the following items.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Purpose

The intent of this workshop item is to accomplish the following:

1. Update Council on current efforts and status of the former library and former grocery store properties.
2. Provide high level options for the properties.
3. Obtain direction from the council for possible next steps with the properties.

Background

Properties are currently active including retaining all furniture and fixtures necessary to support a grocery store. Utilities including water and heat are active at both properties at the recommendation of LMCIT and our real estate broker. There have been no leads brought to us from CRS. All interest in either location has been internally generated.

Former Howard Lake Foods

The general feedback provided is that the grocery store building is too large for most retailers and overall retail is difficult both in this specific location due to building entrance location. Additionally, Howard Lake in general, is not viewed as a retail hub. To the best of our knowledge, only one active lead working with city staff, Herald Journal Publishing.

Options to Consider

1. *Status Que (Passive)*
 - Winterize
 - Liquidate any/all contents as possible
 - Lower asking price of listing
 - o Currently \$499,000; would likely move at \$250,000

Resources Needed

- **Plumber, Electrician and Coolant Techs to fully winterize building.**
Best Guess Cost → \$1,000 - \$2,000

2. *Status Que (Active)*

- Make Available for use with limited modifications (single user)
 - o Pickleball
 - o Soccer
 - o Batting cages
 - o Indoor playground
 - o Meetings/Events
- Make Available for use with modest modifications (multi-tenant)
 - o Vendor booths
 - o Full subdivision

Resources Needed

- **Sweat equity to take down/move/setup vendor booths. Staff time to recruit and manage vendors or registration/use of the space.**
- **Remove carpeting, purchase and installation of pickleball nets or similar equipment.**
Best Guess Cost → \$10,000-\$25,000



3. Significant Renovation (Multi-Use Tenant)

A 2023 Retail Trade Analysis commissioned by the Wright County Economic Development Corporation showed significant retail 'leakage' to other communities based on lack of appropriate retail space available. Renovating the building to provide several smaller store fronts with entrances off of 8th Avenue would may help for marketability of the building overall.

Resources Needed

- Engage architect for feasibility study. Estimated Cost \$5,000 - \$10,000
- Buildout Estimate \$175,000 - \$500,000



View looking west towards US12 and 8th Avenue



Former Library/Dalbec Property

The former library site is not listed with a broker. However, we have had discussions with CRS who has mentioned it while discussing the former grocer store building. We have consulted with two other business brokers on this site as well who have it in mind for proposed buyers. Finally, we have facilitated meetings with a half a dozen or more developers and builders who specialize in apartment/housing projects.

The general feedback notes difficulty covering anticipated costs to develop a new build given lower rent capacity and demand in Howard Lake, especially in comparison to challenges with the site: demolition, possible soil remediation, retaining walls due to topography, etc. One builder noted “even with the site leveled, transferred for a \$1 and full waiving of city fees and extended TIF – meeting desired profit margins will be difficult.” Exploring this site for a possible strip mall development has yielded no leads and everyone consulted does not believe the cost of new construction would lead to rents appropriate to support the costs.

Options to Consider

Status Quo

Holding costs make it much easier to be patient with this site. An option is to simply do nothing different than what we are currently.

Option 1

The City could reasonably begin seeking grant and loan funding to demolish existing structures.

- Offset 50% of costs associated with demolition
- Make the site more shovel ready if/when a development comes along.
- Offers budget flexibility
- Will add considerable expenses – prevailing wages to anything built on the site and additional environmental considerations not otherwise required of the City.

Resources Needed

- **Sweat equity for grant applications**
- **Anticipated investigation and demolition costs \$300,000 of which 50% would be grant eligible as a reimbursement if awarded for a total investment of \$150,000**

Option 2

Begin exploration of the feasibility city or HRA led projects. Proposed Project would be two-story twin homes to provide massing to US12 as a gateway to downtown. Additional units on west property line instead of retaining wall. The former library and garage could be kept on site as amenities to a to-be-created HOA managed by the HRA ****OR**** we believe there is some demand/interest to sell privately for twin home development.

Resources Needed

- **Architect or engineer feasibility study estimated cost of \$5,000 - \$10,000**

Orphans/Memorial Park

The Orphans are requesting \$100,000 for various maintenance and improvements at Memorial Field. In the past, there have been various projects listed then retracted or reprioritized. In 2025, the city unsuccessfully sought a DNR grant with the improvements shown in the table below. The grant did not materialize which would have firmed up commitments and use of funds. However, its noted that the Orphans were disappointed that monies committed would not be specifically to enhance baseball play or related amenities.

Facility (e.g., picnic area, campground, walkway, shelter, restroom)	Description (linear feet, dimensions, material used, number of components, etc.)	Cost Per Unit	Total Cost
<i>Example: Bathroom/Shower/Storm Shelter</i>	<i>Materials and labor for construction of one 37' x 38' concrete block facility. Also includes septic system and drain field.</i>	<i>\$596,000</i>	<i>\$596,000</i>
Grandstand Renovation & Observation Deck	Materials for the rehabilitation of existing baseball field grand stand and construction of observation deck. NOTE this has been updated to REMOVE the actual seating area but retain access routes to/around consistent with application requirements.	\$100,000	\$100,000
<i>Safety /separation net</i>	Materials and labor for the purchase and installation of safety net between baseball field and public access boat launch/fishing pier	\$70,000	\$70,000
Parking Lot	Materials and labor for the stabilization of class 5 parking lot, establish new swale and stormwater BMP and light replacement	\$60,000	\$60,000
<i>Unmotorized boat launch</i>	Materials and labor for small unmotorized boat launch	\$5,000	\$5,000
Sidewalk/Trail Connections	Material and labor related to sidewalk connections from parking to boat launch/pier, within grandstand area	\$95,000	95,000
<i>Shoreland Restoration</i>	Material and labor related to shoreland clean up and planning of native plantings and establishing a rustic trail adjacent to lake	\$10,000	\$10,000
General Site Cleanup/Landscaping	Landscaping including parking barriers	\$20,000	\$20,000
Wayfinding & Interpretative Signage	Amenity use and description and wayfinding signage	\$20,000	\$20,000
<i>Bathroom Renovation</i>	Remove partition walls (currently two stall) convert to one, handicap accessible room	\$20,000	20,000
Grand Total			\$400,000

Howard Lake Watershed Alliance/Wright County Soil Water – Total Lake Treatment

	SWCD	Lake Association (v2)	HL (v2)	State	Federal	Grand Total
2026	\$6,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$12,500.00	\$139,250.00		\$153,100.00
2027		\$5,000.00	\$15,000.00		\$109,250.00	\$117,100.00
2028	\$6,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$17,500.00			\$75,500.00
2029	\$30,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$17,500.00			\$70,500.00
2030		\$5,000.00	\$17,500.00			\$21,500.00
2031		\$5,000.00	\$18,000.00			\$14,500.00
2032		\$5,000.00	\$18,000.00			\$15,500.00
2033		\$5,000.00	\$20,000.00			\$15,500.00
2034		\$5,000.00	\$20,000.00			\$15,500.00
2035		\$5,000.00	\$20,000.00			\$15,500.00
Total	\$42,000.00	\$47,500.00	\$176,000.00	\$139,250.00	\$109,250.00	\$514,200.00

Row Labels	Tasks
2026	<u>Flouridone</u> , Native survey, Delineation, carp removal, carp survey
2027	<u>Flouridone</u> , Native survey, Delineation
2028	Full population spot (~75 acres), native survey, Delineation, turion survey, carp survey
2029	Full population spot (~37.5 acres), native survey, Delineation
2030	Full population spot (~15 acres), native survey, delineation
2031	Spot treatment (~7 acres), delineation, native survey
2032	Spot treatment (~7 acres), delineation
2033	Spot treatment (~7 acres), delineation
2034	Spot treatment (~7 acres), delineation
2035	Spot treatment (~7 acres), delineation, native survey



Howard Lake Central Business District



Former Grocery Store



US Highway 12/8th Avenue

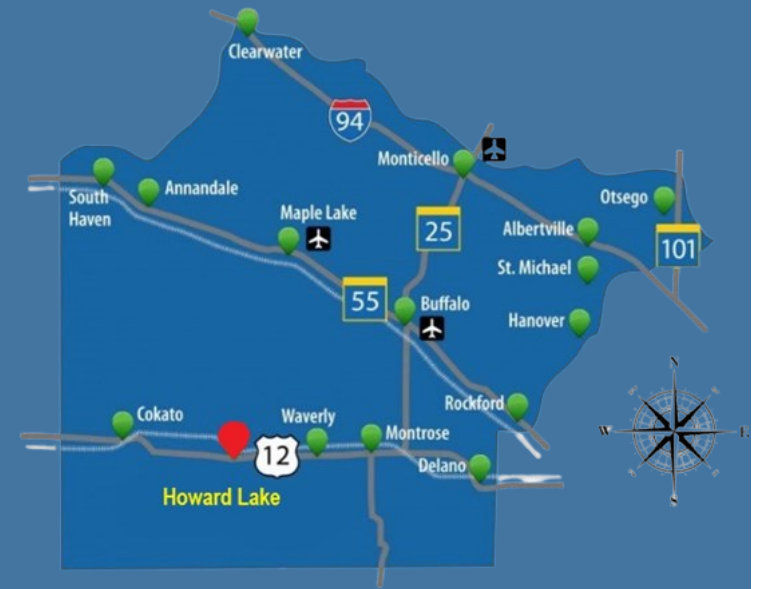
Former Library/Single Family Home



US Highway 12
&
6th Avenue

Community and Market Information...

- ◆ 2,500 residents and growing
- ◆ 7,070 people in trade area (2 miles of city)
- ◆ 11,000 ADT on US Highway 12
- ◆ 35+/- annual residential startups
- ◆ Full-service community with police, fire, ambulance, assisted living, nursing home, 10+ apartment complexes, established commercial and industrial developments.
- ◆ Good Neighbor Days Community Celebration (5,000 visitors)
- ◆ Wright County Fair (80,000 visitors)



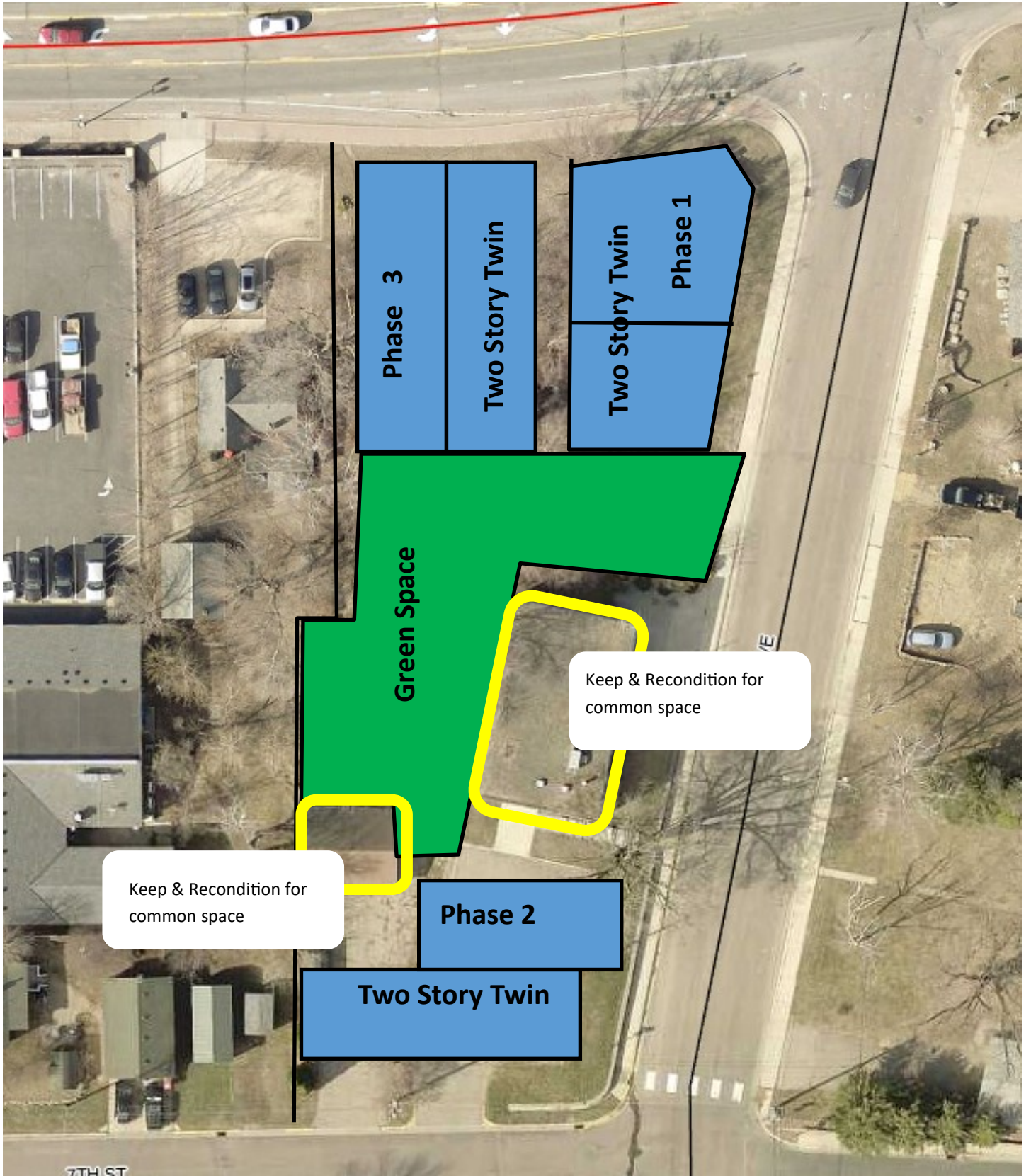
Desired Development...

- ◆ Redevelopment of blight
- ◆ Create visual and economic 'cornerstones' to Downtown Business District
- ◆ US12 massing and frontage
- ◆ Two story construction
- ◆ Enhanced exterior finishes
- ◆ Address housing/apartment need
- ◆ Provide multi-tenant opportunities
- ◆ Address grocery/food needs
- ◆ Increase downtown foot traffic

Development Incentives...

- ◆ Reduced or waived real-estate sale price
- ◆ Tax Increment Financing
- ◆ Reduced or waived development fees
- ◆ Expedited entitlements and approvals
- ◆ Lease-up support
- ◆ EDA Loans
- ◆ DEED Grants
- ◆ Zero lot line setbacks
- ◆ No parking requirements (public parking)

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Keep & Recondition for common space

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Phase 3
Two Story Twin

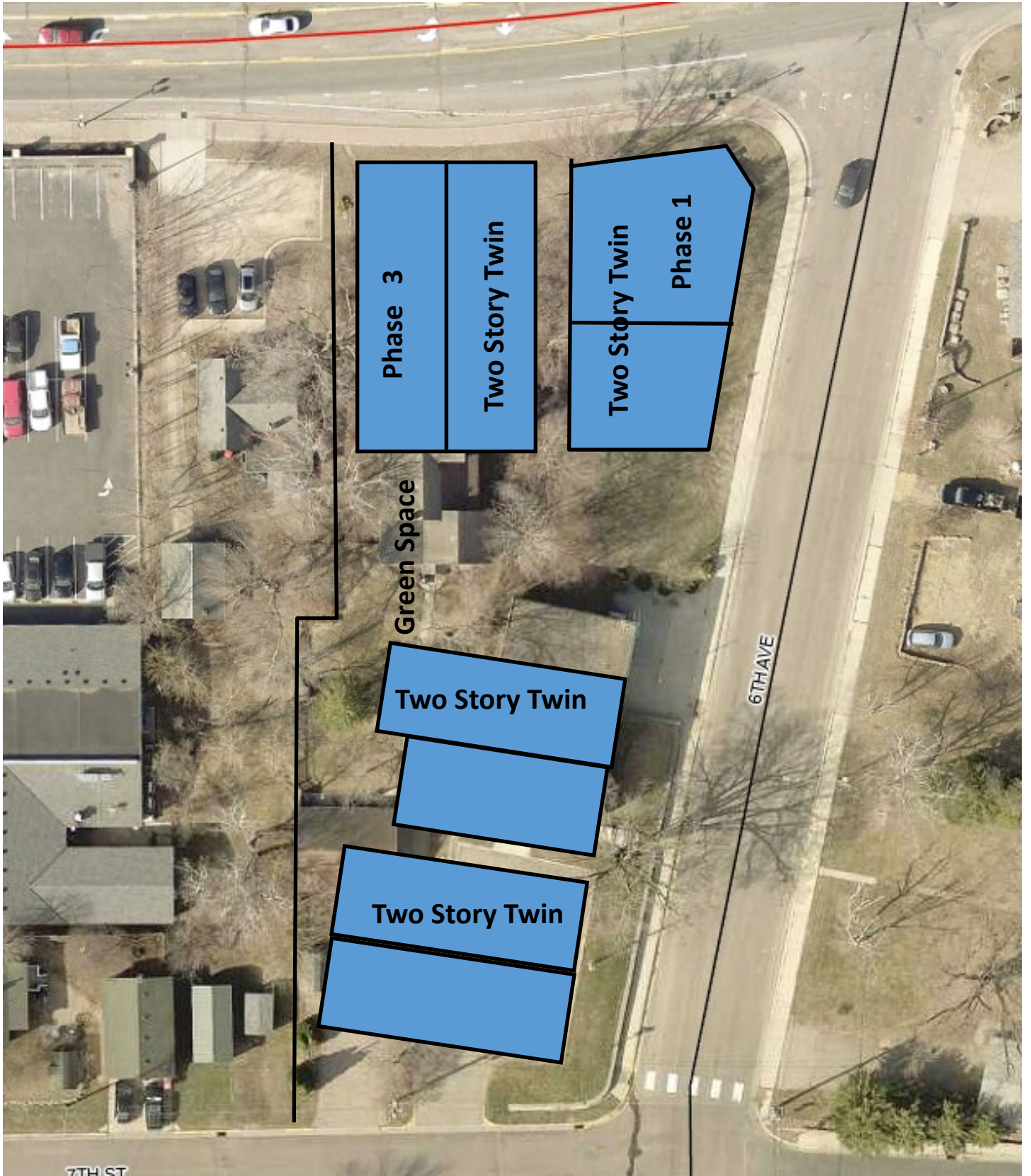
Two Story Twin
Phase 1

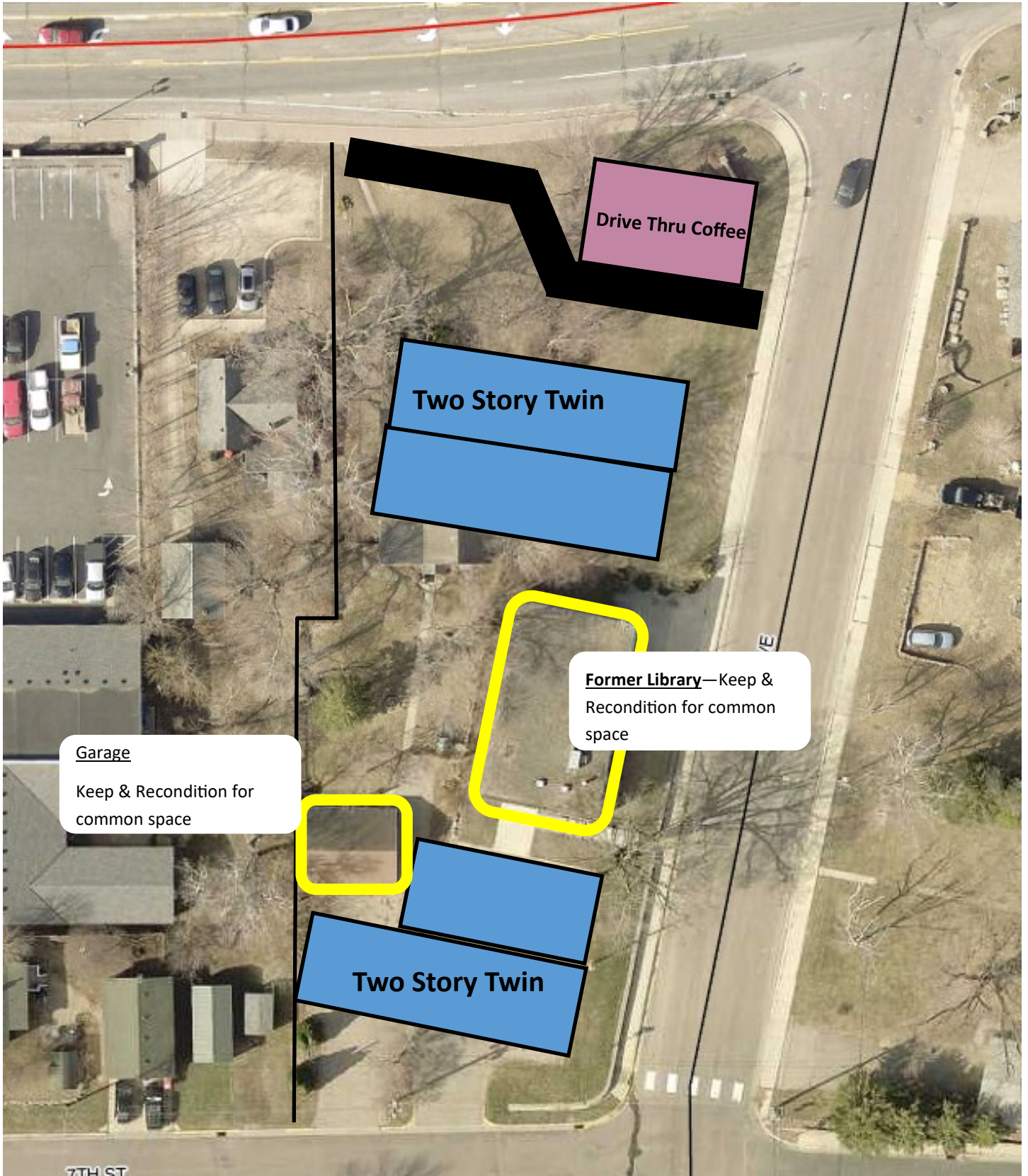
Phase 2
Two Story Twin

Green Space

7TH ST

VE





Drive Thru Coffee

Two Story Twin

Former Library—Keep & Recondition for common space

Garage
Keep & Recondition for common space

Two Story Twin

