

## **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT**

**For Planning Commission Meeting of August 5, 2025**

**SUBJECT: The Crescent (2525 Ann Arbor-Saline Road) Site Plan and Rezoning for City Council Approval  
File No. SP24-0006**

### **PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION**

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve The Crescent (2525 Ann Arbor-Saline Road) Site Plan and Development Agreement.

### **PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION**

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve The Crescent (2525 Ann Arbor-Saline Road) Rezoning from O (Office) to R4E (Multiple-Family).

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends **approval** of the **site plan** because the project complies with all applicable local, state, and federal ordinances, standards, and regulations, will not cause a public or private nuisance, and will not have a detrimental effect on public health, safety, and welfare.

Staff recommends **approval** of the proposed **R4E zoning** because the proposed location is near major thoroughfares, existing infrastructure, and commercial buildings is for residential uses and the introduction of high-density housing aligns with City policy goals.

### **LOCATION**

The subject property is located southeast of Ann Arbor-Saline Road, southwest of Oakbrook Drive, and north of Eisenhower Parkway, adjacent to the Cranbrook Village shopping center. The 4.16-acre site is vacant.

### **SUMMARY**

The proposal includes 262 apartment residential units in a five-story building with a central amenity deck and a lower-level parking garage.

#### **Residential Building Features:**

- Unit breakdown: 38 studios, 164 one-bedroom units, 55 two-bedroom units, and 5 three-bedroom units.
- Lower-level garage with EV-Capable and EV-Installed spaces.

- 82 Class A bicycle spaces provided in bicycle rooms on the ground-floor and lower-level; 72 Class B spaces in two locations in the garage; 10 Class C bicycle near the amenity deck
- Ground-level amenity deck for resident use

Infrastructure and Transportation:

- The majority of vehicle parking spaces, 268 out of 297 spaces, are enclosed underneath residential units.
- The curb cut on Ann Arbor-Saline Road will be maintained in the same location and will be modified additional pedestrian safety
- A new curb cut will be installed on Oakbrook Drive
- A new crosswalk will be constructed across Ann Arbor-Saline Road
- A new crosswalk will be constructed across Oakbrook Drive as a pedestrian connection to Cranbrook Park
- Sidewalks along Oakbrook Drive and Ann Arbor-Saline Road are maintained
- Existing bus infrastructure is relatively near the proposed development, and the nearest bus stops are located approximately 0.5 miles to the north or 0.4 miles to the south (Route 25 – Ann Arbor-Saline Road)

Zoning:

- Proposal to rezone 4.16 acres from O Office District to R4E Multiple-Family Dwelling District.
- Parcels surrounding this location are a mix of single-family and multiple-family residential zoning and commercial zoning, with R3 to the northeast, R1C to the northwest, and C1B to the south.



*Figure 1 Existing Conditions, with subject parcel outlined in blue*

## **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PETITION**

The developer is proposing to construct a five-story, C-shaped building with 262 units and 379,459 sq ft of floor area. The units will be studios, one-, two-, and three-bedrooms. There will be a central, ground-floor amenity deck for residents. The applicant has provided a sustainability statement on the cover page of the submitted site plan. The developer will seek ENERGY STAR Multifamily New Construction (MFNC) certification based on the energy efficiency requirements of the MFNC program, but otherwise there are no significant sustainability features beyond those required by code.

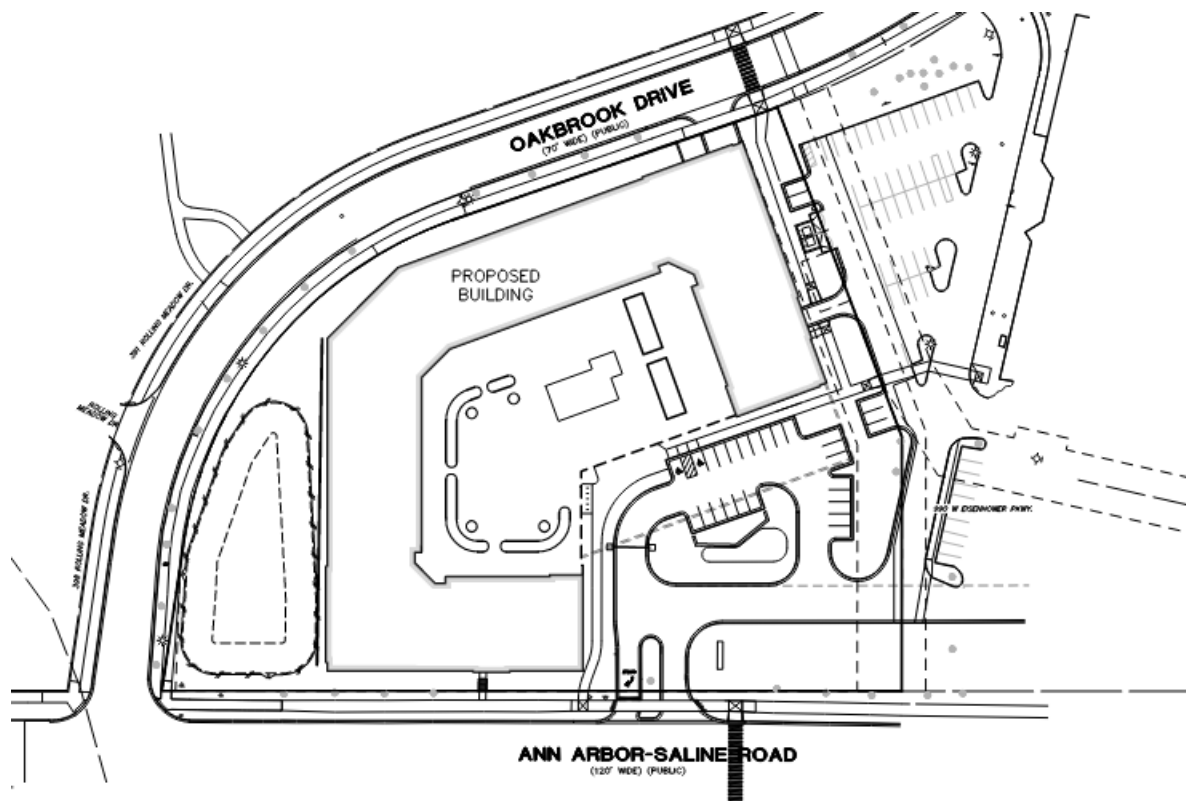
The building will be 58.5 feet tall and 332 feet wide, with 379,459 square feet of floor area. The subject property is triangular with two front lot lines (along Ann Arbor-Saline Road and Oakbrook Drive) and a side lot line. Per footnote B of Table 5.17-3, the building is subject to an additional side setback of 41.2 feet (for a total of 51.2 feet) because of the proposed height and width. The project received an 18 ft variance for the side setback at the July 23, 2025, Zoning Board of Appeals meeting (ZBA25-0013). The applicant has proposed establishing an 18-foot “no build” easement that extends 18 ft from the side lot line into the adjacent parcel, effectively creating the total side setback of 51.2 feet. The subject property and the adjacent parcel have the same owner.

There is an existing curb cut along Ann Arbor-Saline Road that leads to the Cranbrook Village shopping center. This curb cut will be maintained in the current location, but it will be modified for additional safety. City transportation and engineering staff were involved in the redesign of the curb cut and have approved the proposed. The width will be slightly decreased, the central island will be extended, and the sidewalk will carry through the curb cut. This will still provide access to the Cranbrook Village shopping center, as well as the main entrance of the proposed development. Additionally, a new curb cut will be installed on Oakbrook Drive for access to the lower-level parking garage.

There are currently sidewalks along Ann Arbor-Saline Road and Oakbrook Drive. New internal sidewalks will be added to connect the right of way to the building entrances. A new crosswalk is proposed across Ann Arbor-Saline Road. The final location will be determined in consultation with city staff during the civil plan review process. Another new crosswalk is proposed across Oakbrook Drive to provide pedestrian access for residents and community members to Cranbrook Park.

The existing surface detention basin for storm water at the north edge of the site will be maintained in the same location. The grading will be slightly changed because part of the current detention basin is outside of the drainage easement, but the volume of the regraded basin will be sufficient based on stormwater calculations. There are street trees around the perimeter of the site; none are landmark trees. No other natural features exist on the site. New street trees will be planted along Ann Arbor-Saline Road and Oakbrook Drive, and other landscaping is proposed on the site, particularly near the entrance off of Ann Arbor-Saline Road.

A postcard was sent to residents within 1,000 feet of this site notifying them of this project. A neighborhood meeting was held on April 4, 2024. There were approximately 37 people in attendance. A meeting summary has been uploaded to the project file in STREAM. General questions and comments were regarding the height, environmental impact, and concerns about traffic and stormwater drainage.



*Figure 2 Proposed Layout*

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chapter Four: Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Action of the Comprehensive Plan: Land Use Element, recommends Office use for the subject parcel.

## REZONING ANALYSIS

Changes to the text or map of the Unified Development Code (Chapter 55 of the Ann Arbor City Code) may be made pursuant to Section 5.29.9. To assist the Planning Commission and City Council with their decision, applicants provide a rezoning petition (attached) with justifications in support of the request. The petition addresses:

1. The extent to which the rezoning is necessary.
2. How the rezoning will affect the public welfare and property rights of persons located in the vicinity.
3. How the rezoning will be advantageous to the City.
4. How this particular location will meet the convenience and service requirements of potential users and occupants.
5. Any changed or changing conditions in any particular area, or in the City generally, which may have bearing on the request.
6. Other circumstances and factors which further justify the request.

Staff Comments – The petition for rezoning (attached) requests the proposed rezoning for increased density on this site and argues that this is an appropriate location for high-density

housing because it is near a major thoroughfare (Ann Arbor-Saline Road) and existing shopping centers.

The R4E zoning supports the density proposed. A location near a major transit corridor and existing commercial buildings is appropriate for high-density housing, and the development is appropriate given the surroundings to the south. Staff agrees with the applicant that adding these 262 units would create a mixed-use area on the southeast side of the city and reduce vehicle miles traveled for residents of the building. The proposed development has a higher density than the surrounding residential uses to the northeast and northwest, with townhouses across Oakbrook Drive and single-family houses across Ann Arbor-Saline Road. Staff believes that the streets provide transition from the lower-density housing. The existing lower-density housing is also near the commercial and the high traffic areas of Ann Arbor-Saline Road.

The Land Use Element recommends office use for this parcel. Staff has not seen a demand for more office space in recent years, while more housing in Ann Arbor continues to be a top priority of City Council. Multiple-family residential is a permitted use in the Office District, however the density in the O District is governed by floor area ratio (FAR). The maximum FAR in the O District is 75%. In residential districts, density is governed by minimum lot area per dwelling unit; in R4E a minimum of 580 sq ft per dwelling unit is required. The proposed development has a 209% FAR, which would more than double the allowed density in O District. There is sufficient area on site for the proposed 262 dwelling units (691 sq ft per unit) if the site were rezoned to R4E.

Beyond the density, the zoning standards for the R4E and O districts are similar for the subject parcel. There are no height limits in the R4E District. The O District does not have height limits unless adjacent residential zoning, which this parcel is not since the existing residential is separated by Ann Arbor-Saline Road and Oakbrook Drive. The front setback requirements are the same in R4E as they are in O. The side setback in the O District is 0 ft minimum, unless abutting residential, which this parcel is not. The R4E zoning does increase the side setback to 51.2 feet, for which the applicant has received a variance of 18 feet (ZBA25-0013).

According to historic aerials, the site has been vacant since at least 1947. The current detention basin was installed in 1987, but otherwise the site has remained unchanged and is ripe for redevelopment. The proposed rezoning would allow the site to be redeveloped with a high-density residential building that meets the City's goals for more housing, particularly near existing infrastructure.

### **PLANNING SUMMARY**

The site plan and rezoning of this parcel from O to R4E zoning is supported by City Planning Staff. The project complements nearby uses, improves pedestrian connections on Ann Arbor-Saline Road and Oakbrook Drive, and aligns with the City's policy goals by introducing over 250 new residential spaces near retail space and major thoroughfares with nearby existing transit lines. The density is much higher than adjacent residential construction, and the proposed residential building is not consistent with the recommended Office use of the site. However, city staff believes that this is an appropriate location for high-density residential because of the existing infrastructure and the proximity to commercial areas and parks.

### SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

	LAND USE	ZONING
<b>NORTHWEST</b>	Residential	R1C (Single-Family District)
<b>NORTHEAST</b>	Residential	R3 (Multiple-Family District)
<b>SOUTH</b>	Commercial	C1B (Community Convenience Center)

### COMPARISON CHART OF REQUIREMENTS

	EXISTING	PROPOSED	REQUIRED / PERMITTED
<b>Zoning</b>	O (Office)	R4E (Multiple-Family)	R4E (Multiple-Family)
<b>Gross Lot Area</b>	4.16 acres (181,236 sf)	4.16 acres (181,236 sf)	14,000 sf MIN
<b>Lot Area/Dwelling Unit</b>	N/A	691 sf/unit	580 sf/unit
<b>Height</b>	N/A	5 Stories – 58.5 ft.	None
<b>Setbacks</b>	N/A	Front (Ann Arbor-Saline) – 15 ft Front (Oakbrook Dr) – 15 ft Side – 33.2 ft (ZBA25-0013) Rear – N/A	Front – 15 ft min, 40 ft max Side – 10 min + 41.2 ft for building height/length Rear – 30 ft min
<b>Minimum Open Space</b>	N/A	45%	40% of lot area
<b>Minimum Active Open Space</b>	N/A	273 sf/unit	150 sf/unit
<b>Parking – Automobile</b>	N/A	297 spaces total 268 garage spaces 29 surface spaces	None
<b>Parking – EV</b>	N/A	30 – EV I (85%) 269 – EV C (15%)	10% EV I 90% EV C
<b>Parking – Bicycle</b>	N/A	82 Class A spaces 72 Class B spaces 10 Class C spaces	53 spaces 50% Class A 50% Class C

## STAFF COMMENTS

Parks and Recreation – The petitioner has agreed to a crosswalk across Oakbrook Drive that connects to Cranbrook Park at the request of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Transportation – Transportation staff has agreed to work with the petitioner to determine the final location of the proposed crosswalk on Ann Arbor-Saline Road during the civil plan review process.

Prepared by Mariana Melin-Corcoran, City Planner  
Reviewed by Brett Lenart, Planning Manager

Attachments: Site Plan  
Rezoning Application  
Zoning/Parcel Maps  
Aerial Photo  
Draft Development Agreement  
[Additional Project Files \(STREAM file SP24-0006\)](#)

c:

Petitioner/Owner

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Petitioner's Representative

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Systems Planning  
File No. SP24-0006