



# CITY OF CHANHASSEN

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## Memorandum

**To:** *MacKenzie Young-Walters, Associate Planner*

**From:** *Matt Unmacht, Water Resources Coordinator*

**CC:** *Charles Howley, Public Works Director/City Engineer*  
*Ryan Pinkalla, Water Resources Technician*  
*Erik Henricksen, Project Engineer*

**Date:** *January 21, 2021*

**Re:** *10151 Great Plains Boulevard Variance - City Planning Case No. 2021-08*

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The Water Resources Department has reviewed variance request located at 10151 Great Plains Boulevard. These comments are divided into two categories: general comments and proposed conditions. General comments are informational points to guide the applicant in the proper planning of any water resources issues or stormwater infrastructure for this project, to inform the applicant of possible extraordinary issues and/or to provide the basis for findings. Proposed conditions are requirements that Water Resources recommends be formally imposed on the applicant in the final order.

### **General Comments/Findings**

1. The applicant is requesting variances, including exceeding the 1,000-square foot, detached accessory structure size limit, construction of a detached garage and adding a bathroom to an existing detached structure on a property located at 10151 Great Plains Boulevard. The applicant has submitted application material to the City.
2. The primary issue identified by Water Resources staff as part of this variance review is the presence of a basin, which appears to show wetland characteristics. The applicant is proposing to place an accessory structure very close to this basin.
3. This basin has some characteristics indicating that it could potentially being man-made. As such, Water Resources staff reviewed the property for the presence of historic wetlands. This review is important to complete in order to understand the historical context of wetlands on a site and how they should be managed.



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4. A review for historical wetlands helps identify if an area with wetland characteristics has historically been a wetland area and thus should be governed by the Wetland Conservation Act or if it should be considered incidental, that is, it was a *created* wetland in an upland area. Three factors are typically used to determine if a wetland is incidental: aerial imagery, soil data, and antecedent precipitation.
5. City staff has reviewed these three factors. Aerial photos were reviewed from years 1937, 1951, 1957, 1963, 1969, 1979, 1991, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2020. These photos show that a structure, similar to the one being proposed by the applicant, was present in the area in question going all the way back to 1937. This structure was removed sometime between 2005 and 2008. After 2008, a circular basin can be seen which appears to hold water. It appears this basin likely exists due to the demolition of the previous structure. As a result, given the factors listed above, it is unlikely that this area was historically a wetland. The City's full aerial photo review and antecedent precipitation analysis are available upon request.
6. The National Resource Conservation Service's Web Soil Survey shows that the area in question consists of Lester-Kilkenny complex soils, with have a 0% hydric rating. This means this area does not contain hydric soils, and thus is further evidence that this wetland area was created from an upland area.
7. As for other water resources issues: there are no other wetlands or streams on this property. In addition, this project does not involve any City owned stormwater infrastructure. As such, there are no concerns or conditions to place on the project based on these conditions.
8. Based on City staff's review of aerial imagery, soil data, and antecedent precipitation, it is the opinion of the Water Resources Department that this variance request can be granted in accordance with the requirements of the Chanhassen Code of Ordinances (as it pertains to Water Resources requirements) and City Standards, provided it fully addresses the comments and conditions contained herein, if applicable, and can be approved.

## Proposed Conditions

1. There are no proposed conditions associated with a review by the Water Resources department. Given the proximity to steep slopes and bluff areas which ultimately lead to Bluff Creek, extra care and review will be undertaken during the building permit process to ensure that proper erosion and sediment control measures are undertaken during construction.