

# CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT



## Memorandum

**To:** City Plan Commission  
**From:** Jonas U. Bruggemann, MSCRP | Assistant Director /Principal Planner  
**Date:** July 30, 2025  
**RE:** 2110 Plainfield Pike (aka 2112 Plainfield Pike) – **“Realterm Minor Subdivision”** – Minor Subdivision with Zoning Relief: Preliminary Plan/Unified Development Review

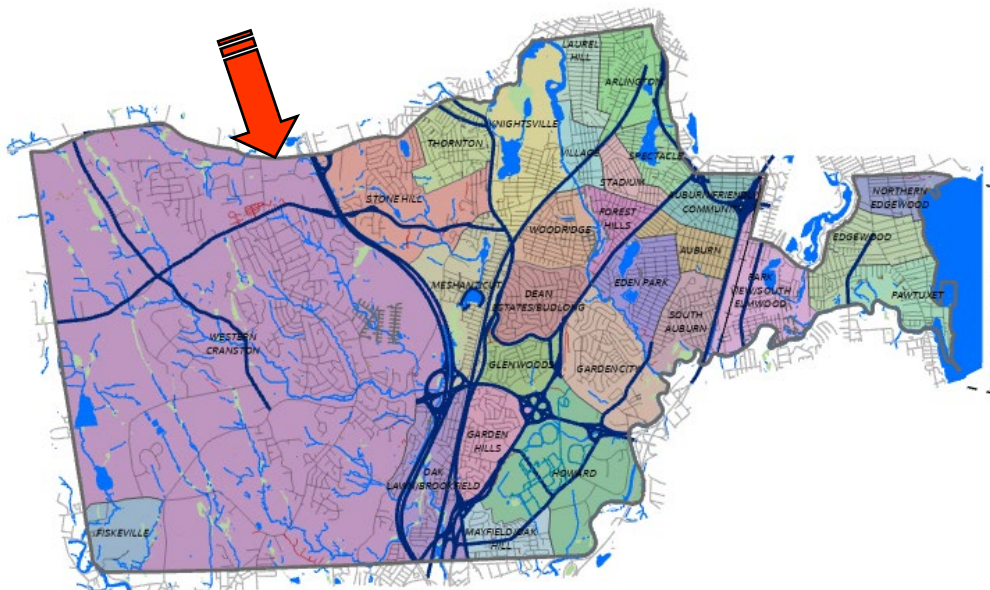
**Recommendation:** Approval of the proposed subdivision with the requested zoning relief.

### I. General Information

**Owner:** RLF IV Terminals SPE, LLC  
**Applicant:** Realterm, c/o Jack Battles  
**Representative:** Robert D. Murray  
**Location:** 2112 Plainfield Pike (2110 Plainfield Pike) - AP 36-2, Lots 24 & 99  
**Zoning:** M-2 (General Industrial)  
**Future Land Use Map:** Industrial  
**Neighborhood:** Western Cranston  
**Application Type:** Minor Subdivision  
**Stage of Review:** Preliminary Plan / Unified Development Review

### Proposal

The applicant is Realterm is proposing to re-subdivide two record lots to create a Parcel One of 77, 453 +/- square feet and a Parcel Two of 260,139 +/- square feet. Parcel One will have 212.02 feet of frontage, Parcel Two as proposed will have 136.36 feet of street frontage where 200 feet is required. Dimensional relief for lot width and frontage for Parcel Two is requested under Unified Development Review.



## II. Documents Submitted for This Application

1. Minor Subdivision; Preliminary Plan entitled "**Realterm Minor Subdivision Plan – Record Plan**" prepared by Bradford J. Travers, PLS; dated May 27, 2025
  - a. Associated Soils Map; dated May 27, 2025
  - b. Associated Aerial Map; dated June 17, 2025
2. Minor Subdivision – Preliminary Plan Application and Checklist, signed by Owner Representative Brian Dowling; dated June 26, 2025
3. Project Narrative; prepared by Robert D. Murray, dated June 27, 2025
4. Minor Subdivision Pre-Application Fee for \$140.00
5. Minor Subdivision Preliminary Plan Application Fee for \$3700.00
6. Municipal Lien Certificates of subject lots
7. 400' radius map and list of abutters certified by the Tax Assessor's Office
8. Notarized Affidavit of Notice of Compliance for Abutter Notices; signed by Applicant Legal Representative Robert D. Murray; dated July 11, 2025.
9. Notarized Affidavit of Notice of Compliance for the Town of Johnston Planning Department; signed by Applicant Legal Representative Robert D. Murray; dated July 11, 2025.

### AERIAL VIEW



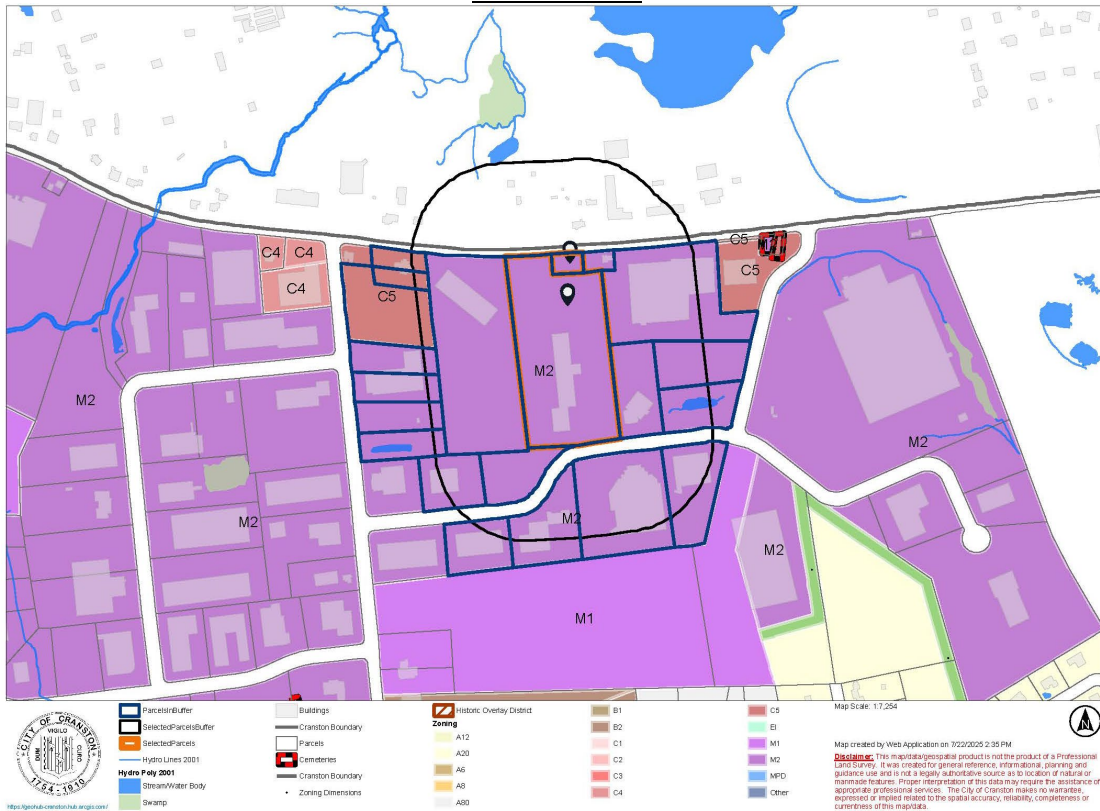
Map Scale: 1:1,254

	Selected Parcel 1 Boundary	Hydro Poly: 2001	Stream/Air/Water Body	Parcel Boundary	Parcel ID
	Selected Parcel 2 Boundary		Swamp		Census Tract
	Hydro Lines 2001		Buildings		

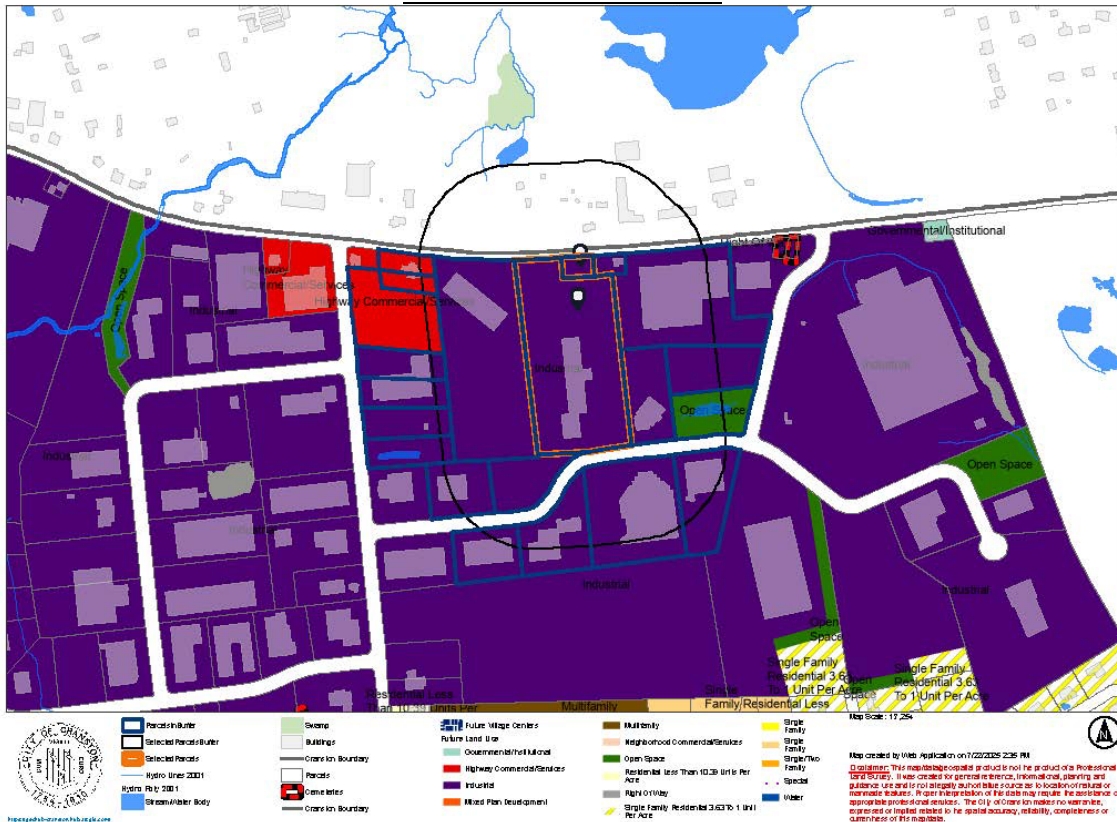
Map created by VAB Application on 7/22/2025 2:30 PM  
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## ZONING MAP



## FUTURE LAND USE MAP



## STREET VIEWS



View from Plainfield Pike (Google, July 2025)



View from Plainfield Pike (Google, May 2025)

### III. Site Description

1. The subject property is located at 2112 Plainfield Pike, also listed 2110 Plainfield Pike, in the Western Cranston neighborhood. Lot 24 has 11,928 SF with frontage on Plainfield Pike and Lot 99 has 326,700 SF with frontage on Plainfield Pike and Amflex Drive. An industrial building used as a trucking terminal is located on Lot 99. The area proposed to be Parcel 1 is currently vacant. The driveway to access the trucking terminal from Plainfield Pike passes through Lot 24.
2. The subject property abuts other developed or partially developed, M-2 zoned parcels, used for commercial and industrial purposes.
3. The subject property is outside of any regulated resource areas under jurisdiction of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, (RIDEM).
4. The subject property is outside of any identified historic / cultural districts under jurisdiction of the Local Historic District Commission, State Historical Preservation Commission, State, or National Registers of Historic Places.
5. The subject property is located in FEMA Flood Zone X (unshaded). Zone X (Unshaded) designates an area of minimal flood hazard. The area is therefore outside of the Special Flood Hazard District.

#### IV. Requested Zoning Relief

##### 17.20.120 Schedule of Intensity Regulations

Proposed "Parcel 2"

Standard	Required	Proposed	Relief Sought
Lot width	200 ft	136.36 ft	63.64 ft

#### V. Requested Waivers

None

#### VI. Public Comments

None to Report.

#### VII. Municipal Review

Pursuant to RIGL §45-23-37, these Plans and submitted documents were distributed for comment to the following agencies. Responses are as follows:

1. Department of Public Works

- a. Engineering Division: Mr. Frank Corrao, P.E., Public Works Director: no comment.
- b. Traffic Safety Division: Mr. Steven Mulcahy: no comment.
- c. Sewer Division: Mr. Edward Tally, Environmental Program Manager, no comment. Review is not required as no new sewer service is proposed
- d. Providence Water Authority: Review is not required as no new water service is proposed.

2. Department of Building Inspection & Zoning Enforcement

- a. Mr. David Rodio, Building Official: no comment
- b. Mr. Stanley Pikul, Alt. Building Official: no comment.

3. Fire Department: Mr. Armand Niquette: no comment.

#### VIII. Planning Analysis

##### Consistency with the Surrounding Area

Staff has reviewed this Application in consideration of the compatibility with the general character of the surrounding area. Planning Staff have found that the proposal is **consistent** with the surrounding area. The proposed lot layouts match the existing infrastructure on the site and open up the vacant site for future development in line with the surrounding area that is primarily industrial and commercial in nature. While the lot width would remain non-conforming for Parcel 1, the Proposal would overall create lots that are more conforming to the Zoning Ordinance and more consistent with the surrounding M-2 zoned lots.

##### Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

No specific uses are proposed but the subject lots are zoned M-2 and the proposed lot layouts of the Proposal would aid in the continuance of the existing industrial use of the trucking terminal by rearranging the lot to align with the driveway, thereby being consistent with the Future Land Use Map. Additionally,

approval of the Proposal would create a new lot for development of an industrial building, thereby aligning with Goal ED-2 and Policy ED-23.

- Staff find that the following goals, policies, and action items outlined in the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to residential (re)development support the approval of this Application:
  - Goal ED-2: Attract capital into the Cranston area and expand the City's economic base.
  - Policy ED-23: Revitalize underused areas of the City for uses that are in keeping with the needs and values of the community.

### Environmental Impact

No significant environmental impacts are anticipated as:

- The project area is outside of any FEMA flood hazard zones.
- No wetlands are known to be on the subject lot.
- RIDEM's Natural Heritage Map shows that there are no known rare species or sensitive habitats located on or near the site.
- No new uses or structures are proposed that would create any environmental impacts.
- The RIDEM Environmental Resource Map shows that the vacant area proposed as "Parcel 1" contains soils designated as "Prime Farmland". However, there is no active agricultural use on the property and future agricultural use of the site is unlikely due to the proximity to industrial uses.
- The Proposal will be subject to all state and local regulations pertaining to environmental impacts, wetlands, and erosion control.

### Parking and Traffic Circulation

No changes to existing circulation are proposed. No changes to the existing uses that would affect circulation are proposed.

### Zoning Analysis

The proposal intends to align the lot lines to the existing driveway leading to the trucking terminal and create a new lot conforming with the M-2 zone. Despite having plenty of lot area for the M-2 zone, there is not enough frontage along Plainfield Pike for two conforming lots. Notably, the proposed Parcel 2 does have enough cumulative frontage as there is 158 feet of frontage along Amflex Drive in addition to the proposed 136 feet of frontage. The Cranston Zoning Ordinance does not specify that the total frontage must be cumulative. However, provided the definition for "lot width" in the Zoning Ordinance, the lot does require relief for lot width.

This request for dimensional relief is dictated by the shape of the lot and the existing driveway arrangement. The long and narrow shape of the lot does not provide enough frontage for two parcels despite having more than enough land area for two lots in the M-2 district. The driveway provides access to the trucking terminal [RIGL § 45-24-41(d)(1)].

As discussed in previous sections, granting of the relief would permit an additional use on the property which is consistent with Goal ED-2 and Policy ED-23 of the Comprehensive Plan. The general character of the surrounding area is industrial in nature and granting the variance would overall create lots that are more conforming to the Zoning Ordinance, more consistent with the surrounding M-2 zoned lots, and permit industrial uses on Parcel 1, while continuing to allow the industrial use on Parcel 2. The proposal will also not impair the general purposes listed in § 17.04.010 of the Zoning Ordinance [RIGL § 45-24-41(d)(3)].

Provided that both proposed lots meet all but one-dimensional standard of the M-2 district and are able to provide adequate access and area for industrial uses permitted in the M-2 zone, denial of the variance would be more than a mere inconvenience [RIGL § 45-24-41.(e)(2)].

### Summary

Planning Staff find that the project meets all standards for approval of the requested variances and subdivision standards.

### **IX. Findings of Fact – Variance Standards**

*Staff Note: RIGL § 45-24-41.(d)(2) is not listed as a finding of fact as it cannot be used to deny requests for dimensional relief for projects being reviewed under Unified Development Review. This is due to the signing of HB5794B / S1086Aaa on June 27, 2025 which amended RIGL § 45-24-46.4.*

Staff has reviewed the requested dimensional relief for conformance and consistency with the required Findings of Fact in accordance with RIGL § 45-24-41 and finds as follows:

*RIGL § 45-24-41. General provisions – variances. (d)(1) states, “That the hardship from which the applicant seeks relief is due to the unique characteristics of the subject land or structure and not to the general characteristics of the surrounding area; and is not due to a physical or economic disability of the applicant, excepting those physical disabilities addressed in § 45-24-30(a)(16);”*

- The hardship from which the applicant seeks relief is due to the unique characteristics of the subject land as the long and narrow shape of the lot does not provide enough frontage for two parcels despite having more than enough land area for two lots in the M-2 district.

*RIGL § 45-24-41. General provisions – variances. (d)(3) states, “That the granting of the requested variance will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the zoning ordinance or the comprehensive plan upon which the ordinance is based.”*

- Granting the requested variance will create lot sizes suitable for M-2 use and align the lots to continue the existing access to the industrial building on Lot 99 which is consistent with Goal ED-2 and Policy ED-23 of the Comprehensive Plan and will not alter the general character of the surrounding area or impair the intent or purpose of the zoning ordinance.

*RIGL § 45-24-41. General provisions – variances. (e)(2) states, “In granting a dimensional variance, that the hardship suffered by the owner of the subject property if the dimensional variance is not granted amounts to more than a mere inconvenience, meaning that relief sought is minimal to a reasonable enjoyment of the permitted use to which the property is proposed to be devoted. The fact that a use may be more profitable or that a structure may be more valuable after the relief is granted is not grounds for relief. The zoning board of review, or, where unified development review is enabled pursuant to § 45-24-46.4, the planning board or commission has the power to grant dimensional variances where the use is permitted by special-use permit.”*

Provided that both proposed lots meet all but one-dimensional standard of the M-2 district and are able to provide adequate access and area for industrial uses permitted in the M-2 zone, denial of the variance would be more than a mere inconvenience meaning that relief sought is minimal to a reasonable enjoyment of the permitted use to which the property is proposed to be devoted.

### Findings of Fact - Subdivision Standards

Staff has reviewed this Preliminary Plan application for conformance and consistency with the required Findings of Fact in accordance with RIGL § 45-23-60 as well as the Subdivision & Land Development Regulations and finds as follows:

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(1) states, “The proposed development is consistent with the comprehensive plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.”*

- The Proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Map designation of “Industrial” as well as the following goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan:
  - Goal ED-2: Attract capital into the Cranston area and expand the City’s economic base.
  - Policy ED-23: Revitalize underused areas of the City for uses that are in keeping with the needs and values of the community.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(2) states, “The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the municipality’s zoning ordinance or has obtained relief from the same, or another provision of this chapter that exempts compliance with a specific provision or standard.”*

- The Proposal requires and will seek dimensional zoning relief for substandard frontage and lot width for Parcel Two which if granted, will establish compliance with the standards and provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(3) states, “There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the **final** plan, with all required conditions for approval.” (emphasis added)*

- This finding pertains specifically to the Final Plan, however, no significant environmental impacts are anticipated as:
  - The project area is outside of any FEMA flood hazard zones.
  - No wetlands are known to be on the subject lot.
  - RIDEM’s Natural Heritage Map shows that there are no known rare species or sensitive habitats located on or near the site.
  - No new uses or structures are proposed that would create any environmental impacts.
  - The RIDEM Environmental Resource Map shows that the vacant area proposed as “Parcel 1” contains soils designated as “Prime Farmland”. However, there is no active agricultural use on the property and future agricultural use of the site is unlikely, due to the proximity to industrial uses.
  - The Proposal will be subject to all state and local regulations pertaining to environmental impacts, wetlands, and erosion control.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(4) states, “The subdivision, as proposed, will not result in the creation of individual lots with any physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable. (See definition of Buildable lot). Lots with physical constraints to development may be created only if identified as permanent open space or permanently reserved for a public purpose on the approved, recorded plans.”*

- The Proposal will not result in the creation of individual lots with such physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(5) states, “All proposed land developments and all subdivision lots have adequate physical and permanent physical access to a public street unless there are local zoning ordinance provisions allowing exceptions to this requirement or the applicant has obtained the required relief from this provision.”*


- Both proposed lots will have adequate physical and permanent physical access to Plainfield Pike, a public city street.
- The Proposal provides for safe and adequate local circulation for vehicular traffic.

**X. Recommendation**

Staff finds this Proposal generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and the standards for required Findings of Fact set forth in RIGL § 45-23-60.

Staff therefore recommends that the City Plan Commission adopt the Findings of Fact documented above and **APPROVE** the Preliminary Plan submittal.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Jonas U. Bruggemann, MSCRP  
Assistant Director / Administrative Officer

Cc: City Planning Director  
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