



PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Monday – March 2, 2026 at 6:00 PM

CASE NUMBER: #Z-2026-0011

APPLICANT: Josh Bishop, Maxi Mobile LLC

EXISTING ZONING: CC (Community Commercial)

REQUEST: #Z-2026-0011 A request by Josh Bishop, Maxi Mobile LLC, for a Use Variance for service of automobiles at 537 Main Street, Parcel #185-000037 and #185-000159.

DESCRIPTION: The applicant is requesting a Use Variance to allow an oil change company to utilize the existing structure and site. This property is currently zoned Community Commercial (CC) and as such a “Service of Automobiles” use is not a permitted nor a Conditional Use in this zoning district. An area variance is also being requested to allow the existing parking to be sufficient instead of the 22 parking spaces required by code.



Department of Development

655 Blacklick Street
Groveport, OH 43125

614-836-5301

FAX: 614-836-1953

www.groveport.org

MEMORANDUM

Date: February 25, 2026
To: Planning and Zoning Commission Members
From: Michael Loges, Development Director
Copy: Mike Poirier, Chief Building and Zoning Official
Re: Case #Z-2026-0011 Use Variance Request & Miscellaneous Area Variances

Site Address(es): 537 Main Street, Groveport, OH 43125
Containing Parcel(s): 185-000037 and 185-000159
Current Zoning: Community Commercial (CC)

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

MAXI Mobile, LLC (the Applicant) is requesting approval of a use variance to permit a “Service and Repair – Engine or machinery repairs, including automobiles, trucks, motorcycles, boats, lawn mowers, and other large engine or machinery repairs” use within the Community Commercial (CC) zoning district. The proposed business would provide automotive service, maintenance, and repair activities, but most of the service (90%) is estimated by the Applicant to be performed off-site in accordance with their mobile service business model. This use classification is not listed as either a permitted or conditional use within Section 1153.03(b) (Land Use Matrix) of the Groveport Codified Ordinances for properties zoned Community Commercial (CC). Therefore, approval of a use variance by City Council is required for the business to continue operations at the subject property.

Several area variances related to parking are also being sought by the Applicant, including a reduction in the overall number of otherwise required parking spaces for the use and the material used (gravel) for parking in the rear of the property (not visible from Main Street).

USE VARIANCE STAFF COMMENTS

As Development Director, part of my professional responsibility is to encourage reinvestment, occupancy, and sustainable commercial activity along Main Street and within Historic Groveport. Active storefronts and stable local businesses contribute to the vitality, safety, and economic health of the district. The subject property has experienced vacancy since at least mid-2025 and the Applicant proposes to occupy and invest in the existing structure rather than leave the site dormant.

Occupancy of vacant or underperforming properties is preferable to prolonged vacancy, which can negatively affect adjacent businesses and overall corridor momentum.

While traditional retail and restaurant uses are often preferred along Main Street, small-scale service-oriented businesses can also play an important role in supporting residents and nearby businesses by providing convenient, everyday services within walking or a short driving distance. For smaller communities such as Groveport, neighborhood-scale automotive service providers can serve residents without requiring travel to larger regional commercial centers, helping to keep spending within the local economy. Again – according to the Applicant – the vast majority of service will be done off-site and only approximately 10% of their performed services are expected to be completed at the subject property.

The Applicant has indicated that operations would occur primarily within the building, with limited outdoor activity, and that site improvements and property maintenance would be performed to ensure compatibility with the surrounding Historic Groveport character.

The following circumstances mitigate potential impacts and maintain neighborhood compatibility:

- All major repair activities conducted within enclosed bays;
- No outdoor storage of inoperable vehicles, parts, or equipment;
- The City’s existing code will regulate screening of service areas and refuse; and
- The City’s existing code will regulate exterior signage by the Historic District section of the Sign Regulations chapter.

These operational practices are typical for well-managed service businesses and can ensure the use remains consistent with surrounding properties.

AREA VARIANCE STAFF COMMENTS

Main Street corridors function as economic anchors. An unpaved gravel lot signals underinvestment, diminishes perceived property values, undercuts façade and streetscape improvements made by neighboring businesses, and weakens the City’s return on public infrastructure investments. The City of Groveport has invested in streetscape enhancements (benches, refuse receptacles), decorative lighting, and sidewalk upgrades along the Main Street corridor. Allowing gravel parking creates a mismatch between public investment and private site standards. Downtowns succeed when there is visual consistency and reinvestment momentum. Furthermore, development policy works best when public and private sectors both elevate standards.

Small business owners evaluating Main Street locations consider customer experience, ADA accessibility, maintenance standards, and community image. A gravel lot can create dust/mud, be perceived as temporary or substandard, and failure to better mark and designate accessible parking (for the front parking area) can reduce customer comfort and accessibility. This may discourage higher-quality retail, dining, or service users from locating nearby.

From an economic development standpoint, precedent matters. Approving the continuation of one gravel lot makes it harder to deny future similar requests, gradually lowers development standards,

and creates uneven competitive conditions among property owners. Maintaining consistent expectations protects district-wide value. Requiring proper paving and marking encourages property reinvestment, signals permanence and stability, supports higher rents and property valuations, and strengthens tax base growth. A variance may provide short-term cost savings for one property owner, but at a long-term cost to district-wide economic performance.

CONCLUSION

As it relates to Case #Z-2026-0011, the use variance, and miscellaneous area variances sought by the Applicant, Development staff finds that the proposal will activate an existing commercial property, that the use provides a needed local service to area motorists and fleet owners, that operations can be conducted in a manner compatible with nearby businesses, and that reinvestment supports the economic vitality of Historic Groveport.

Based on these findings, Development staff recommend that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend approval of the requested use variance to City Council, subject to any conditions deemed necessary to ensure compatibility with the surrounding district.



Engineering Department
655 Blacklick Street
Groveport, OH 43125
614-836-5301
FAX: 614-836-1953
www.groveport.org

MEMORANDUM
Office of the City Engineer

Date: February 25, 2026

To: Mayor Lance Westcamp
Members of Planning and Zoning Commission

From: Stephen Farst, PE, CFM, City Engineer

Copy: Mike Poirier, Chief Building and Zoning Official

Re: **CASE # Z-2026-0011-Request for Use Variance**

Case – Z-2026-0011 Request for Use Variance

Site address: 537 Main Street, Groveport Ohio

Containing parcel (s): 185-000037 & 185-000159

Current Zoning: C - Commercial

Proposed Zoning: no change

Current Use: Base of Operations for Maxi Mobile LLC (vehicle service company)

Request: Applicant Josh Bishop for Maxi Mobile LLC, is requesting a Use Variance as the proposed use ("Service of Automobiles") is not a permitted use in this zoning district.

Comments:

The applicant desires the "Use Variance" be approved to enable the business to continue operation of the business at this site.

The application did not indicate any proposed physical changes to the exterior site layout (i.e., added parking (or resurfacing) of parking areas, drives, lighting, etc.)

Summary of comments and Conclusions:

- The applicant should address potential traffic-generation resulting from the site use, during the P&Z meeting and the question, "Is there sufficient room on-site for vehicles awaiting service, without a lengthy queue-line forming that might extend out into the public street, or obstruct the sidewalk ?"
- Engineering Staff suggest that, if this application is recommended for approval by Planning and Zoning Commission, the following conditions be made a part of that approval:

"Any site change involving improvement and/or alteration of buildings, parking areas, drives, or utilities, shall require before such changes, development of a "site improvement plan" that shall be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer, in addition to receiving zoning compliance approval from the Building and Zoning Department."