

**City of Alma
Planning Commission Minutes
May 4, 2026**

Planning Commission Chairperson Heather Therrien called a regular meeting of the Alma Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Alma Municipal Building. A quorum of the Planning Commission was present.

Present: Joshua Cromer, Justin Fonley, Jessica Gilkins (arrived after roll call), David Justin, Greg Mapes, Michelle Pitts, Tim Rath, and Heather Therrien.

Absent: Ellen Richter.

Chairperson Therrien led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Justin, seconded by Mapes, to approve the minutes of April 6, 2026, as presented. Motion carried.

Yes: Cromer, Fonley, Gilkins, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Rath, and Therrien.

No: none.

Absent: Richter.

Site Plan Review

Chairperson Therrien provided the following information: A site plan has been received from Yatooma Oil to install a six-pump gas station, with a 25' x 75' canopy over the pumps, and renovation to the 1550 sq. ft. convenience store.

City Manager Aeris Ripley added the following information regarding staff review:

Location: 1604 E. Superior Street, a/k/a Sun-Up Foodmart.

Zoning District: B2, General Business

Fueling Station Convenience Store is permitted within the B2, General Business district as a special use and requires a special use permit.

Maximum Lot Coverage in the B2, General Business District is 40%.

- Lot Size: .43 acres – 18,731 sq. ft.
- Lot Coverage: 3,425 sq.ft.
 - Existing Building: 1,550 sq.ft.
 - New Canopy Over Fuel Pumps: 1,875 sq.ft.
 - Total Lot Coverage: 17%, Maximum 40%

Setbacks:

The existing building will remain and will be renovated. The renovation does not include changing the building envelope.

- Front (North) 33.5' from existing building to property line, required 35'.
- Rear (South) 48.4' from existing building to property line, required 30'.
- Side (East) 83.5' from existing building to property line, required 5'.
- Side (West) 21' from existing building to property line, required total of two sides equals 10'.

New Fuel Station Canopy

- Front (North) 27' from property line, required 15'.
- Rear (South) 26' from property line, required 15'.
- Side (East) 20.4' from property line, required 15'.

New Pump Islands

- Front (North) 31' from property line, required 25'.
- Rear (South) 30' from property line, required 25'.
- Side (East) 30.4' from property line, required 25'.

Parking

- Use is classified as a Convenience Store with Gasoline Services. Parking spaces required are 11; a total of 18 spaces are proposed around the convenience store and the fuel locations. Two of the proposed spaces are accessible. The number of proposed parking spaces meets the requirements. The spaces are 9' x 19', the maneuvering lane between parking spaces and the fuel pumps is 35', the space between the parking spaces and the edge of the canopy is 20', and the proposed spacing will provide adequate movement of vehicles.

Lighting

- Lighting plan shows the maximum fc (foot candle) at the property line is 0.6 fc, which is below the required fc at the property line of no more than 1 fc. The lighting plan meets the requirements of the ordinance.

Trash Removal

- A dumpster enclosure is proposed on the southeast corner of the parcel, meeting the requirements of the ordinance.

Landscaping

- No Landscaping plan provided; there is a note that screening will be provided for all mechanical equipment.

Planning Commission Member Jessica Gilkins arrived at 6:05 p.m.

Ripley noted Public Services Director, David Ringle, provided a review memo of the site plan. Ripley added the following staff comments and indicated site and canopy plans were included in the agenda packet.

Staff Comments:

- The engineer stated they would be consulting with the Drain Commission regarding the drain easement in the front yard setback.
- Section 60-78 – Automobile service stations/automobile convenience marts, auto repairs, paint and body shops: (13) The installation and use of an oil-water separator with monitoring capabilities in the facility's stormwater management system shall be required, as well as the use of best management practices for pollution for automobile filling/service operations, in order to protect surface water and groundwater quality.

Motion by Mapes, seconded by Pitts, to approve the March 9, 2026, Site Plan Review application, as submitted by Yatooma Oil, for construction of a six-pump gas station, with a 25' x 75' canopy over the pumps and renovation to the 1550 sq. ft. convenience store located at 1604 E. Superior Street. Motion carried.

Yes: Cromer, Fonley, Gilkins, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Rath, and Therrien.

No: none.

Absent: Richter.

Parcel Division/Split Request

Chairperson Therrien provided the following information: an application for Parcel Split has been received from Kristin and Julio Benitez for the property identified as parcel number 29-51-344-563-10, which is currently a .205 acre parcel used as residential property. The Planning Commission is responsible for approving all splits/divisions, unless it is just a property line adjustment.

City Manager Ripley provided the following additional information:

Kristin and Julio Benitez have applied for a Parcel Division of the property identified as Parcel Number 51-344-563-10 (529 Gratiot), which is a combined parcel of 51-344-563-00 (parent parcel/parcel with the home) and 51-344-562-00 (child parcel/vacant parcel). The combination was completed because of Benitez's purchase of the vacant parcel 51-344-562-00. The combined parcel is now .205 acres and is zoned R1, Residential.

Ms. and Mr. Benitez propose to split off .0314 acres and sell it to the property owner at parcel 51-344-564-00. This parcel, too, contains a home (525 Gratiot), the sale will square up the parcels, with each parcel measuring .17 acres, more or less.

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The proposed split/division is located in the R1, Single Family Residential District. The current and future uses will remain R1, Single Family Residential uses.

The proposed split and combinations do not expand the noncompliance with the width at the building site, which is currently 45' more or less for each parcel, the requirement is 60'. The new parcel sizes of 7,405.2 sq.ft. pushes each lot over the minimum size per lot per dwelling unit of 6,000 sq.ft.

The City Assessor has requested and was provided with a copy of the final certified survey and certified legal descriptions and is waiting for the Commission's decision regarding the request.

Commission Member Justin spoke briefly about the history of the property. Brief discussion followed regarding location of houses on the related lots.

Motion by Justin, seconded by Fonley, to approve a Parcel Division application, dated November 25, 2025, from Kristin and Julio Benitez, for property identified as parcel number 29-51-344-563-10. Motion carried.

**Yes: Cromer, Fonley, Gilkins, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Rath, and Therrien.
No: none.
Absent: Richter.**

Other Business

No other business was presented.

Invitation to Public

No public comments were offered.

Adjourn

Motion by Justin, seconded by Fonley, to adjourn the meeting at 6:10 p.m. Motion carried.

**Yes: Cromer, Fonley, Gilkins, Justin, Mapes, Pitts, Rath, and Therrien.
No: none.
Absent: Richter.**

Sara Anderson, Alma City Clerk

Date of Approval