



Olmsted County Planning Department

Date: December 1, 2025
Application: Zoning Amendment O2025-001ZC – Pulham
Location: SE ¼ and SE ¼ of the SE quarter of Section 18 in Eyota Township
Request: Zoning District Amendment A-2 to Special District
Meeting: Eyota Township Planning and Zoning Committee

Executive Summary

Type of Application: Zoning District Amendment from A-2, Agricultural Protection District to a Special District.

What is considered: A special zoning district allows flexible rules to fit unique land or community needs. For the Pulham Special District, Eyota Township must decide whether to support dividing a 35-acre property into three large lots. The plan meets the usual density rule of one home per 10 acres and doesn't add new roads or uses. However, it goes beyond the typical limit of two homes in a quarter-quarter section. The special district would allow this exception while keeping the overall land use and density in line with surrounding areas

Planning Department Recommendation: Special District zoning isn't meant to bypass standard zoning rules and should only be used in specific cases that support broader community goals. In this case, the proposed amendment aligns with A3 district density standards, avoids impacting prime farmland, and introduces no new roads or uses—suggesting minimal overall impact. However, it would allow two additional lots that standard zoning wouldn't permit. Since Eyota Township currently has no special districts, approving this request could set a precedent for future requests.

Approval Body: Olmsted County Board

Background:

Applicant Proposal: The applicant is seeking a zoning map amendment from A-2 Agricultural Protection District to Special District (P-SD). The property currently contains a single dwelling, well, sewage treatment system, outbuildings, and fenced pasture.

The intent of the Pulham Special District is to establish a low-density rural residential overlay that allows two additional dwellings while preserving the open-space and agricultural character of the area.

Special District:

The purpose of the Special District is to permit the creation of special zoning districts to promote public health, safety, and general welfare by allowing for a more flexible method of administration of land use regulations.



Property and Land Characteristics *See maps attached

Existing Use: The 35-acre site is located in Eyota Township, the parcel consists of an existing home and open land.

Existing Zoning: Current Zoning is A-2 Agriculture Protection. Abutting parcels are A-2 Agricultural Protection.

Existing Land Use: Resource Protection

Environmental Features:

Floodplain: There are flood prone soils located on the north end of the parcel. The applicant has submitted with this application a Floodplain Analysis Report.

Soils: The parcel has low CER soil ratings; the soils are rated between 55 and 25. The parcel also has low crop production index (CPI) scores, majority of the parcel has a score between 32-36.

Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance:

Analysis: Section 4.00 of the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance provides zoning amendment criteria as follows:

Criteria for Granting Zoning Amendment: In reviewing a zoning amendment, the Eyota Planning and Zoning Committee shall consider the effect of the new zoning strict on the Comprehensive Plan and upon the health, safety and general welfare of occupants of surrounding lands. The committee shall consider the following:

(staff recommended findings are in **bold**)

1. The proposal is consistent with the policies of the Olmsted County General Land Use Plan; **According to the Olmsted County General Land Use Plan, non-farm lots within Resource Protection areas can be permitted at very low density and in such locations that cause minimal impact on surrounding resource and resource-related land uses. Per the applicant the design incorporates large lot sizes, private wells, and personal ISTS systems, maintaining adequate separation and minimizing conflicts with ongoing agricultural operations.**
2. The amendment is in the public interest; **The proposal to amend the zoning designation to a special district will allow the applicant to convert the non-prime agriculture land to additional non-farm lots. Due to the poor CER/ CPI soils of the site, locating development on poor CER soils of the site would meet the intent of protecting prime crop land- while still meeting the intent of an agriculture zoning district.**

The proposed special district density will be controlled through density restrictions on the number and density of non-farm sized lots allowed. The proposed density of three lots within 35 acres (approximately one dwelling



per 11 acres) and can be compatible with this existing pattern, if shown to have minimal impact on surrounding resource and resource related land uses. Further, the zoning amendment to a special district will match the A-3/A-2 zoning district permitted uses.

Additionally, per the applicant agricultural protection language was added to reinforce this compatibility by acknowledging the right to farm in adjacent areas.

3. The proposed development is timely based on surrounding land uses, proximity to development, and the availability and adequacy of infrastructure;
The zoning amendment from A-2 to a Special District will allow increased density within the quarter-quarter but will not allow uses that are incompatible to current surrounding existing uses.

The property abuts both designated county road and township road. Per the site plan, the applicant proposes shared access for two dwellings onto paved County Road 23. A second access to the local unpaved township road for one remaining dwelling.

Public Works has provided comments for access to the existing county road, shared access will be allowed. We defer comments to the Eyota Township regarding access to the local road. Per the site plan, no new road would be required for this proposal.

4. The proposal permits land uses within the proposed district that are appropriate on the property and compatible with adjacent uses and the neighborhood.
The zoning amendment to a special district will match the A-3/A-2 zoning district permitted uses. This proposal will convert underutilized agricultural land to allow a limited number of residential units and permit only agriculture uses allowed in the A-3 district.
5. The proposal does not result in spot zoning;
Spot zoning occurs when a proposed zoning district is not compatible with the surrounding land uses. The surrounding land uses are compatible with the proposed special district and proposed future use of the property
6. The proposal is consistent with a General Development Plan for the area, if one exists. **A general development plan is not required for the request.**

Remaining Application Requirements

- Letter of Town Board Action
- Application Payment - For Official Submission
- Metes and Bounds Application
- Access Permit from Olmsted County Public Works
- Access Permit from Eyota Township



- Updated Pulham Special language: We have requested the applicant update the proposed Pulham Special language; See their updates attached.

Upcoming Meetings

Eyota Town Board- 2nd Wednesday of the month

County Planning Advisory Commission- TBD based on official submission date

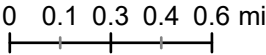
County Board- TBD based on official submission date

Attachments:

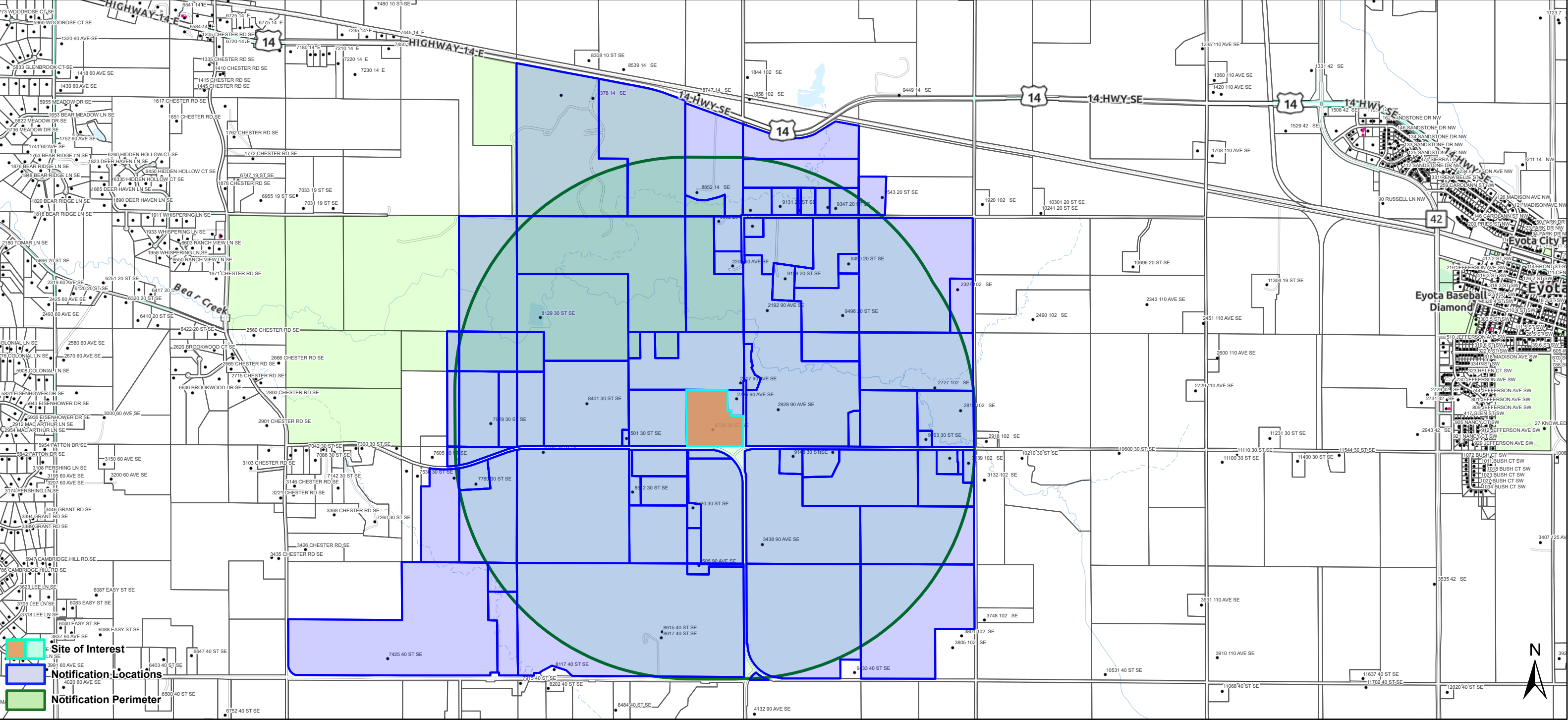
1. Public Notice Map
2. Maps
3. Updated Pulham Special language
4. Referral Comments

Olmsted County Notification Area

11/12/2025 Olmsted County Geographic Information Systems



Scale: 1:36,112

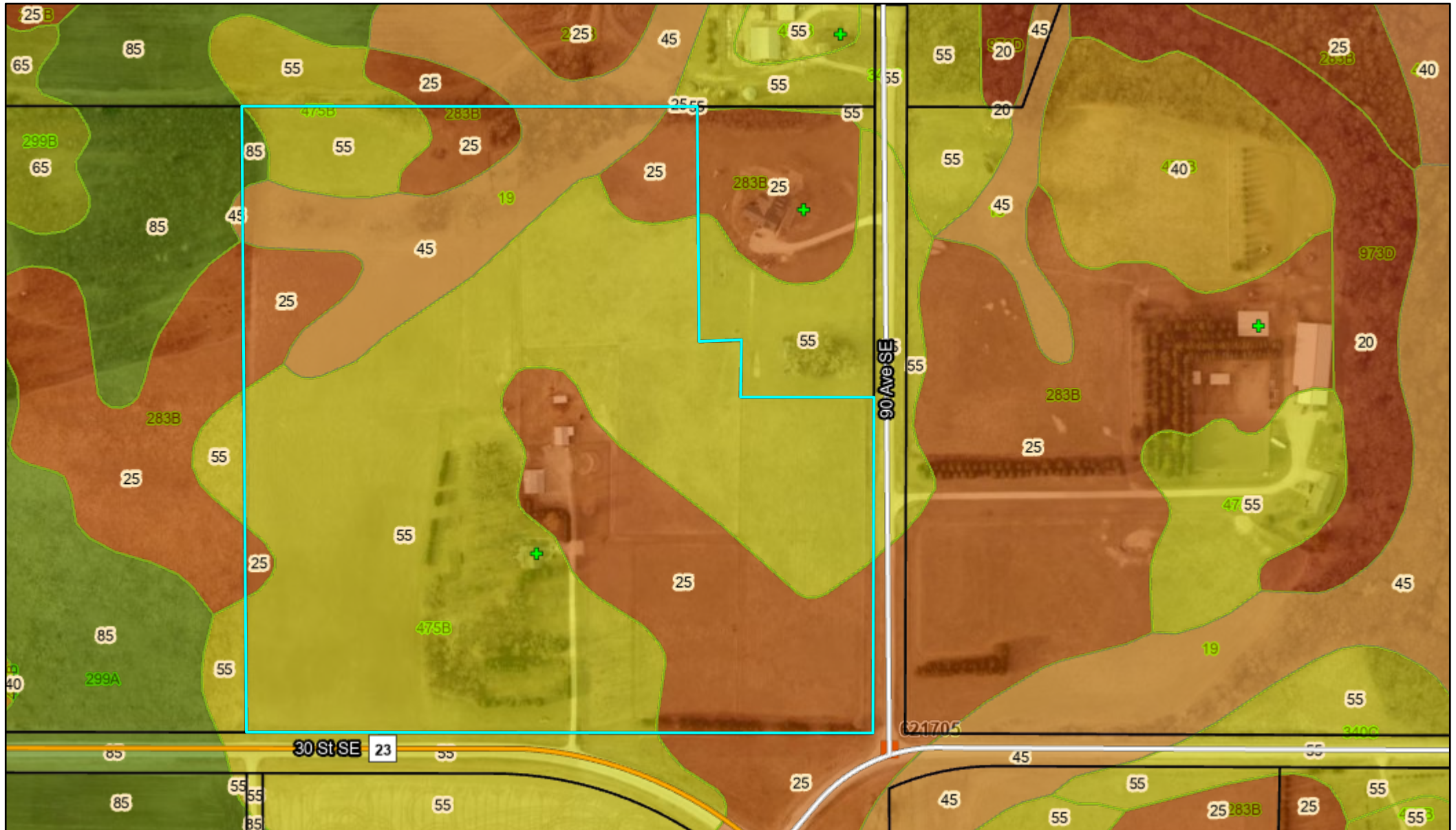


OLMSTED COUNTY
MINNESOTA

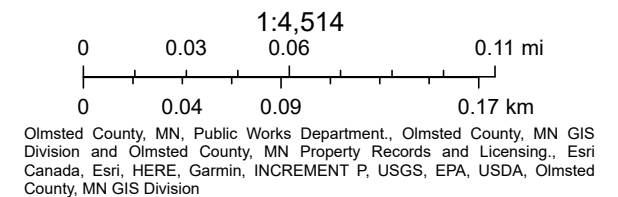
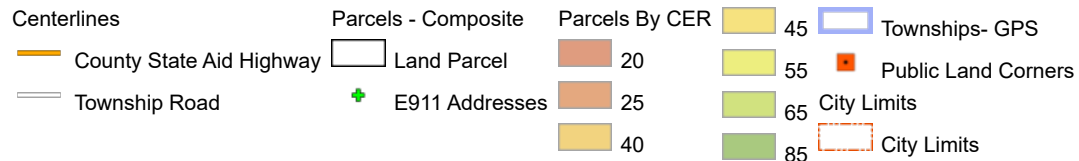
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MN Dept Natural Resources, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METINASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USFWS, MN Dept Natural Resources, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METINASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, USFWS

CER Soil GIS Web Map



11/20/2025, 8:21:43 AM



Web AppBuilder for ArcGIS

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PUHLAM SPECIAL DISTRICT (PUHLAM – SPECIAL DISTRICT)

The purpose of this Special District is to provide for zoning regulations to administer residential and other uses in the Pulham Special District (P- Special District) under the provisions and land development policies for Special Districts, which are contained in the Olmsted County General Land Use Plan, dated August 16, 2022, amended 2024 and the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance, Section 8.10.

This Special District shall be an overlay zoning district designed to encourage the attractive and compatible development of the site and contains zoning regulations that vary from the standard requirements and regulations of a conventional low-density A-3 agricultural zoning district of the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance adopted by Eyota Township, effective August 2024.

The authority to establish Special Districts are contained in the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance dated August 2024.

The following provisions shall be the zoning regulations applicable to this Zoning District, (Pulham District), as approved by Eyota Township in accordance with Resolution dated _____, 202__.

The terms and provisions of this Special District shall remain in effect until such time that it is amended by the Eyota Townboard or Olmsted County Board.

1.0 Legal Description of the Property Within the Special District:

THAT PART OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 18, TOWNSHIP 106 NORTH, RANGE 12 WEST, OLMSTED COUNTY, MINNESOTA, LESS THE LAND DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEGINNING AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER; THENCE SOUTH 89°37'09" WEST, ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER, 383.20 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00°54'33" EAST, PARALLEL WITH THE EAST LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER, 480.04 FEET; THENCE NORTH 87°20'48" EAST 86.76 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00°24'30" WEST 117.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH 89°37'09" EAST, PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER, 299.16

FEET TO THE EAST LINE OF SAID SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER;
THENCE NORTH 00°54'33" WEST, ALONG SAID EAST LINE, 593.59 FEET TO THE POINT OF
BEGINNING.

2.0 Land Use and Zoning Regulations:

2.01 Land Use:

The Property within the Special District lies within the Resource Protection area of the "Olmsted County General Land Use Plan" (August, 2022).

2.02 Zoning Regulations:

The zoning regulations for the Special District shall provide criteria for allowable uses and performance and site appearance standards, in accordance with the A-3 Agricultural Zoning District of the Olmsted County Zoning Ordinance, effective (August 2024), except as herein modified by the regulations of the Pulham Special District.

2.02(a) Uses Allowed:

- Three Single family detached dwellings with a minimum density of one dwelling unit per 10-acres
- Accessory Buildings
- Agricultural Operations
- Crop Production

2.02(b) Minimum Setback Requirements:

Setback	Detached Single Family
• Front Yard	45 feet
• Side Yard	25 feet Minimum Interior Side Yard
• Rear Yard	25 feet

2.02(c) Minimum Lot Width

The Minimum width of the Lot at the building line shall be as follows:

Detached Single Family	150 feet at building setback
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2.02(d) Minimum Lot Size in Square Feet:

Minimum square feet = 304,920 (7.0 acres)

3.0 Individual Wastewater Treatment Systems (ISTS)

3.1 Single Family Residential Parcels:

The Single-Family Residential parcels will be served by Individual Sewage Treatment System (ISTS) in the locations shown on the Special District Plan.

3.2 Septic Tanks

Septic tanks and drainfields shall be located on each parcel as shown on the Special District Plan. The drainfield sites are sized for primary and secondary treatment drainfield.

4.0 Water Supply/ Individual Water Wells

The owner of the individual parcels shall be served by an individual water well.

5.0 Private Driveways

All driveways within the Special District will be private and constructed by the owner for each parcel of the development as shown on the special district plan. Each driveway shall apply for an access permit by the designated road authority.

6.0 Agricultural Protection:

The Protective Covenants for Pulham Special District shall include language that discusses that the Development lies in close proximity to active agricultural operations and that it is expected that these operations shall continue on an indefinite basis.

Referral Agency Comments

Application No: O2025-001ZC

Pulham Zone Change

11/21/2025	County Public Works	<p>Additional right of way will be required. Public Works will work with the landowner to acquire through the metes and bounds process.</p> <p>An access application is required to be submitted to Olmsted County due to the split. Per previous discussions with the applicant, only one access will be permitted on CSAH 23. All other access along CSAH 23 (which could include the shared access on the west edge of the property) will need to be removed to be in compliance with the Olmsted County Access Management Ordinance.</p>
11/20/2025	County Public Works	<p>Additional right of way will be required. Public Works will work with the landowner to acquire through the metes and bounds process.</p>
11/13/2025	Inspections - Well/Septic	<p>There are no Wetland or Decorah Edge related concerns with this project. The proposed Septic locations appear to meet the soil requirements and the use of individual wells meet well code.</p>