

Request for Zoning Variance — Written Rationale

EDS Response Support Facility / Canteen & Equipment Garage

Submitted to: City of Waukesha — Board of Zoning Appeals

Property owner / Applicant: The Salvation Army, an Illinois corporation

Owner mailing address: 5550 Prairie Stone Parkway, Hoffman Estates, IL 60192

Project site: The Salvation Army Waukesha Corps, 445 Madison St., Waukesha, WI

Request: Variance to permit the proposed EDS Response Support Facility to be constructed along the Third Street side at a setback aligned with the existing principal building, rather than at the increased setback now prescribed by code.

Overview

The Salvation Army Waukesha Corps respectfully requests a zoning variance to allow the proposed **Emergency Disaster Services (EDS) Response Support Facility** to be constructed in line with the setback of the existing principal building along the Third Street elevation. The existing building appears to have been constructed under an earlier setback standard (approximately 10 feet), which has since been increased to 25 feet. The proposed garage seeks to work within the established site pattern of the existing building rather than force the new structure to a location that would be materially less functional and significantly more costly to build.

This facility will securely house The Salvation Army's EDS canteen, trailer and related response equipment. These assets support emergency-response operations serving fire departments, law enforcement partners, emergency management agencies, and families affected by fires, severe weather and other crises across **Waukesha, Jefferson and Walworth Counties**, with anticipated expansion of service coverage during 2026.

Basis for the Variance Request

The following points, taken together, demonstrate practical hardship and support the reasonableness of the requested variance:

1. Functional necessity of the building size and location

The proposed garage must be of sufficient size to safely house the EDS canteen, trailer and response equipment with required clearances for safe vehicle movement, equipment storage and staff access during emergency deployment. Reducing the footprint to meet the current setback would compromise the intended function and long-term operational use of the facility.

2. Existing site constraints create practical hardship

The site has significant grade changes, retaining walls, and limited usable flat area. The most practical location for the proposed building ~~corresponds to the existing prepared pad area used today for the canteen.~~ Relocating the building farther down the slope would create disproportionate hardship — additional construction complexity, site grading, retaining-wall impacts, soil and drainage challenges, and materially increased cost — without meaningful public

... is to align the floor level with 3rd Street, and the Third Floor of the existing Salvation Army Building. This location is relatively flat (near the street) and does not interfere with any other functions in the lower parking lot area. Keeping the addition close to 3rd Street will make excavation, site grading, and retaining walls easier to construct (if the addition is moved any further back from 3rd Street, the grade drops away significantly, excavations will need to go down another level and the foundation walls will be a story taller. This would also interfere with existing exit doors, terrace, and retaining walls that can remain otherwise.

benefit.

3. Alignment with the existing developed site pattern

The proposed location aligns with the existing principal building, which was itself constructed under the earlier setback standard. Aligning the new structure with the established building line preserves a consistent site pattern and avoids an irregular, offset condition that would be less orderly than the current developed frontage.

4. Minimal and atypical vehicle traffic

This facility is **not a fire station** and will not generate regular daily emergency-vehicle traffic. The EDS canteen is deployed intermittently — a limited number of emergency responses and scheduled community-response events per month — rather than multiple times per day. The canteen will be stored inside the garage and will not be parked outside on the street or apron as a regular condition.

5. Safe operational practices

Vehicle movement in and out of the facility will be infrequent and conducted with care by trained Salvation Army personnel. Spotters will be used as necessary. The Third Street frontage in this location carries limited pedestrian activity, and the surrounding use pattern supports safe occasional movement of the EDS vehicle without meaningful impact on neighboring properties or pedestrians.

6. Public-benefit purpose of the facility

The proposed building serves a recognized public-benefit function. It will protect critical emergency-response equipment that is relied upon by fire departments, law enforcement and emergency management agencies across multiple counties. Granting the requested variance enables the facility to be sited where it can most reliably and efficiently serve that function.

7. Minimal neighborhood impact

The proposed garage will be located wholly within the existing Salvation Army property and will support an existing charitable / community-service use already present on the site. The exterior design will be consistent with the existing building, including materials and aesthetic detailing. No increase in noise, traffic, glare or visual impact beyond the current site use is anticipated.

8. Consistency with the spirit of the ordinance

The requested variance is modest in scope — it aligns the new building with the setback of the existing principal building on the same parcel — and it does not conflict with the public-health, safety or welfare purposes served by the current setback standard. Granting the variance enables reasonable and effective use of the property for an emergency-services function that benefits the broader community.

Conclusion

For the reasons set forth above, The Salvation Army respectfully requests that the Board of Zoning Appeals grant the requested variance. The request arises from the practical characteristics of the site and the operational nature of the EDS facility — not from convenience — and granting the variance will permit a community-beneficial facility to be built in a location that is reasonable, safe,

orderly and consistent with the existing developed site pattern. The project will remain subject to all applicable city review, Plan Commission approval, permitting and construction requirements.

Prepared in support of the variance application submitted on April 24, 2026, for consideration at the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting anticipated for May 11, 2026.