

As discussed, staff requires the following information for your Petition Application for a Conditional Use and Parking Variance:

- **Response to Standards for the Parking Variance (see Municipal Code [6-3-6:2: Standard+s for Granting a Zoning Variance](#) & also Page 9, Exhibit B on Petition Application):**

1. The variance is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this Title and the adopted comprehensive master plan; and

The requested variance is in full harmony with the general purpose and intent of the City of Naperville's Zoning Ordinance (Title 6) and the adopted Comprehensive Master Plan. The majority of escapology locations operate successively and in harmony within shopping centers such as Westridge court. The variance supports the city's goals of promoting responsible land use, encouraging economic vitality, and ensuring compatibility with surrounding properties. Our customers will cross shop with restaurants and retail before and after their Escapology experience. The proposed use is low impact, operates entirely indoors, and is managed by timed appointments, which aligns with the city's emphasis on maintaining neighborhood character, minimizing disruption, and supporting diverse commercial opportunities. The variance facilitates a use that complements the surrounding area while adhering to the broader planning objectives of sustainability, safety, and community enrichment. Therefore, the variance is consistent with both the spirit and the letter of Naperville's zoning regulations and long-term planning vision.

2. Strict enforcement of the Title would result in practical difficulties or impose exceptional hardships due to special and unusual conditions which are not generally found on other properties in the same zoning district; and

Strict enforcement of the standard parking requirements would impose practical difficulties and exceptional hardship due to the unique operational characteristics of the Escapology model: The proposed site will feature 12 escape rooms, but even during peak hours, only 8 rooms will be in use simultaneously for optimal staffing and guest experience. Based on franchise data from over 90 international locations, a 12-room site operating at peak capacity requires only 17 parking spaces. Peak hours are limited to Friday and Saturday evenings (5–10 PM) and Sunday afternoons (12–7 PM), further reducing the need for continuous high-volume parking. The appointment-only model ensures staggered guest arrivals and departures, minimizing traffic and parking congestion.

3. The variance, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood and will not be a substantial detriment to adjacent property.

Historical experience shows that Escapology is a low parking, low impact operator which will not adversely affect the existing parking or be a detriment to the adjacent properties. Typical locations have between 6-8 games. Games are on a staggered schedule to start every 15 minutes so there are typically no more than 4-6 games going on at ultimate peak. All games are private to those who have booked the games and on average 3.9 people are playing the games. On average we have observed, because of the private nature of the games, that games are typically occupied by groups coming in in 1-2 cars (on average 1.5 cars). At peak we will have 4-5 employees and a lot less in off peak. A general calculation of locations would be: 6 games Simultaneously (hardly occurs) x 1.5 cars per game + 5 Employee cars = 14 parking spaces needed. A general calculation for a location with 8 games would be 8 games x 1.5 car + 5 Employee cars = 17 parking spaces. Our proposed site will have 12. At peak times a 12-room site will be most efficiently run at 8 rooms. Requiring 17 parking spots. Our peak days and hours would be Fri 5pm to 10pm, Sat 5pm to 10pm and Sunday 12pm to 7pm. As Escapology has 93 current open locations internationally the concept is proven.

In summary:

Controlled, appointment-based scheduling,

Predictable and limited peak hours,

Proven franchise data on parking demand,

With the above calculations we not alter the essential character of the neighborhood and will not be a substantial detriment to the adjacent properties.

Conclusion

The requested variance is reasonable, justified, and consistent with the City of Naperville's planning principles. It allows for the efficient use of land while maintaining neighborhood character. Escapology is a family friendly operator who is good Neighbor with surrounding tenants and adjacent property which does not negatively impact or burden adjacent tenants or property.

We respectfully request approval of this variance to support the successful establishment of Escapology at 2603 Aurora Ave.

- **Response to Standards for Conditional Uses (see Municipal Code [6-3-8:- Conditional Uses](#)):**

2. Standards For Conditional Uses: Any recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission and any decision by the City Council shall be predicated on evidence and findings that:

2.1. The establishment, maintenance or operation of the conditional use will not be detrimental to, or endanger the public health, safety and general welfare; and

We are firmly committed to fostering a safe and healthy environment for our employees, contractors, visitors, and the broader community. Health and safety are foundational values that guide every aspect of our operations and decision-making processes. Our organization adheres to all relevant local, national, and international health and safety laws and regulations. We strive not only to meet these standards but to exceed them by aligning our practices with recognized industry best practices. We take a proactive approach to identifying and evaluating potential hazards associated with our activities. Through ongoing training and awareness initiatives, we cultivate a culture where health and safety are integral to our daily operations and embraced by all members of our team.

2.2. The conditional use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate area for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood;

The proposed Escapology escape room franchise is a quiet, clean, and professionally operated entertainment venue that will enhance the area without disrupting the surrounding properties. All activities occur indoors in sound-insulated, private rooms, with no outdoor noise, lighting, or amplified sound that could affect neighbors or adjacent businesses. The venue operates by appointment, which prevents large gatherings, limits traffic flow, and ensures a calm and orderly environment at all times. Escape rooms are widely accepted in mixed-use and even residential-adjacent commercial areas, with more than 90 Escapology locations around the world—many of

which are located in similarly zoned areas. These venues have a strong track record of integrating successfully into communities without generating complaints or adverse effects on surrounding properties. Additionally, the Escapology brand is known for maintaining upscale, well-designed interiors and customer service standards that align with the aesthetics and expectations of higher-end suburban communities like Naperville. Rather than being a nuisance, the business will provide a safe, engaging amenity for local families, students, and professionals, supporting a vibrant neighborhood experience.

2.3.The establishment of the conditional use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the adjacent property for uses permitted in the district.

No, the location, nature, and physical characteristics of the proposed site will not unreasonably hinder or discourage the appropriate use or development of adjacent or nearby land and existing buildings. The Escapology franchise will be located within an existing commercial space, and no significant changes are proposed to the building's height, exterior walls, or footprint. Any updates to the façade or signage will be professionally designed to meet local design guidelines and will be in keeping with the aesthetic character of the district. There are no new fences or obstructions planned that would block visibility, access, or light for neighboring properties. Because the business is entirely indoors, low-impact, and not visually imposing, it will not interfere with the use or enjoyment of surrounding properties. The project will respect existing development patterns and promote a cohesive look and feel in the neighborhood, encouraging continued investment and improvement in the area

2.4.The establishment of the conditional use is not in conflict with the adopted comprehensive master plan.

The proposed conditional use is fully consistent with the City of Naperville's adopted Land Use Master Plan, which serves as a guiding document for responsible growth and development. The plan emphasizes compatibility with surrounding land uses, enhancement of community amenities, and support for diverse, low-impact commercial activities that contribute to the city's economic and social vitality. The proposed use—an indoor, appointment-based entertainment venue—aligns with these principles by offering a quiet, professionally managed operation that complements nearby businesses and residential areas. It does not introduce adverse impacts such as noise, traffic congestion, or incompatible design, and therefore supports the city's vision for sustainable and community-friendly

development. Accordingly, the establishment of this conditional use does not conflict with the goals, policies, or land use designations outlined in Naperville's comprehensive planning framework