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Terracon.com

July 14, 2025

Rymak Construction Group LLC
208 18th St Ste 206
Rock Island, IL 61201

Attn: Mr. Jeff Hughbanks
P: (309) 428-9197
E: jeffhughbanks94@gmail.com

RE: Bald Eagle Nest Survey
Milan Bottoms / Bally West Development
± 10 Acres of Land
Rock Island, Rock Island County, Illinois
Terracon Project Number: CJ257097

Dear Mr. Hughbanks,

Terracon Consultants, Inc. (Terracon) is pleased to submit this letter report summarizing the results of a bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) nest survey update conducted for the project site. The project site consists of ±10 acres of land located in Rock Island, Rock Island County, Illinois. The proposed project includes the construction of a gas station, car wash, and commercial retail store, and associated parking lot.

Bald and golden eagles are awarded protections under the Bald and Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) Protection Act:

"The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (16 U.S.C. 668-668c), enacted in 1940, and amended several times since then, prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from "taking" bald eagles, including their parts, nests, or eggs. The Act provides criminal and civil penalties for persons who "take, possess, sell, purchase, barter, offer to sell, purchase or barter, transport, export or import, at any time or any manner, any bald eagle ... [or any golden eagle], alive or dead, or any part, nest, or egg thereof." The Act defines "take" as "pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb." "Disturb" means: "Disturb means to agitate or bother a bald or golden eagle to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, 1) injury to an eagle, 2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or 3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior." In addition to immediate impacts, this definition also covers impacts that result from human-induced alterations initiated around a previously used nest site during a time when eagles are not present, if, upon the eagle(s) return, such alterations agitate or bother an eagle to a degree that injures an eagle or substantially interferes with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering habits and causes, or is likely to cause, a loss of productivity or nest abandonment." (National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines, 2007).

Explore with us

Project Area and Site Description

The project is located within Milan Bottoms region. This region spans \pm 3,500 acres of the Mississippi and Rock Rivers floodplain. The site is bounded to the north by wooded land, followed by a pond (former quarry) and US Interstate 280; to the east by Jumer Drive, followed by Centennial Expressway and Bally's Quad City Casino & Hotel (former quarry); and to the south and west by Kickapoo Slough (former quarry).

Historically, the \pm 10-acre project site was commercially developed since at least 1994. It was most recently utilized as construction equipment storage and sales which appears to have operated until 2008. Currently, the site largely consists of vacant grassland with a wooded perimeter. Remnants of building foundations, access drives, and utility connections were observed during the survey. The on-site wooded habitat consisted of a mixed-age deciduous forest. Dominate tree species include silver maple (*Acer saccharinum*), eastern cottonwood (*Populus deltoides*), hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), red mulberry (*Morus rubra*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), shumard oak (*Quercus shumardii*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*), and northern red oak (*Quercus rubra*).

Proposed Development

The proposed construction consists of a gas station, car wash, and commercial retail store, and associated parking lot. The development includes constructing an earthen berm along the perimeter which will be revegetated with trees to serve as a buffer from the project site to Milan Bottoms. Additionally, the development will include the use of downward facing lighting to reduce ambient lighting on abutting properties. Details on the proposed lighting are included as an attachment to this letter report.

Eagle Nest Survey

A bald eagle nest survey was completed for the site and surrounding areas on May 6, 2025, by a trained Terracon biologist familiar with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines. Terracon conducted a survey of the site and within a 660-foot buffer of the site boundaries focusing on potential nesting habitat of mature trees and large snags. These areas on site included tree lines on the northern, eastern, southern, and western boundaries. Consistent with the guidelines, survey efforts were also focused on suitable nesting habitat within a 660-foot buffer surrounding the site. The buffer area was accessed by means of existing roadways and rights-of-way, and observation of these areas was aided by the use of binoculars. To the extent feasible, areas outside of the buffer area were also observed for bald eagle activity.

Terracon did not observe nests on site or within the 660-foot buffer. During the survey, two bald eagles were observed in the southern adjoining wetland, perched in a snag. No additional sightings were observed within the site boundaries or within the 660-foot study area buffer.

Communal Roost/Foraging Area

Twenty-eight communal roosts are documented within the Center for Conservation Biology (CCB) National Eagle Roost Registry within Illinois. Milan Bottoms (Roost-BAEA-01123) was identified as a communal roost on the CCB eagle roost records (Center for Conservation Biology, 2014). A polygon of the communal roost area was not available on the CCB Mapping Portal. The coordinates for the Milan Bottoms roost centroid is located ± 0.62 miles west-northwest of the site.

Anecdotal information provided by the public to Terracon indicated that bald eagles near Milan Bottoms have a primary and secondary communal roost. The primary roost area is located near the project site, and the secondary communal roost is located further from the site, further from anthropogenic disturbance. Additionally, the Milan Bottoms communal roost has not been utilized for the past two seasons. Instead, bald eagles have been reported to be utilizing habitat along the Mississippi River in Cordova, Illinois. Cordova is located ± 22 miles north of the project site.

National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines state the following recommendations for avoiding disturbance to foraging and communal roost areas:

- Minimize potentially disruptive activities and development in the eagles' direct flight path between their nest and roost sites and important foraging areas.
- Locate long-term and permanent water-dependent facilities, such as boat ramps and marinas, away from important eagle foraging areas.
- Avoid recreational and commercial boating and fishing near critical eagle foraging areas during peak feeding times (usually early to mid-morning and late afternoon), except where eagles have demonstrated tolerance to such activity.
- Do not use explosives within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile (or within 1 mile in open areas) of communal roosts when eagles are congregating, without prior coordination with the USFWS and your state wildlife agency.
- Locate aircraft corridors no closer than 1,000 feet vertical or horizontal distance from communal roost sites.

Recommendations

Terracon recommends submitting this letter report for consultation with USFWS to determine if seasonal construction restrictions or a disturbance permit would be required for the proposed development in association with the communal roost.

Additionally, a follow-up nest survey should be conducted prior to construction to verify that no nests have been constructed within 660 feet of the project site.

Eagle Nest Field Survey
Milan Bottoms / Bally West Site | Rock Island, Rock Island County, Illinois
July 14, 2025 | Terracon Project Number: CJ257097

Terracon appreciates the opportunity to have provided these services on this important project. Please feel free to contact Chrissy Bienz at (817) 591-4235 or chrissy.bienz@terracon.com if you have questions or require additional information regarding the content of this letter.

Sincerely,
Terracon Consultants, Inc.



Christina Bienz
Group Manager



Aric Larson
Senior Scientist

Attachments:

- Exhibit 1: 660 Foot Study Area Buffer Map

References:

Center for Conservation Biology. (n.d.). CCB Mapping Portal. <https://www.ccbbirds.org/maps/>. Accessed July 2024.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service. 2007. *National bald eagle management guidelines*. U.S. Department of the Interior. https://www.fws.gov/sites/default/files/documents/national-bald-eagle-management-guidelines_0.pdf.

Mojica, E. K. and B. D. Watts. 2014. Creation of a national registry for bald eagle communal roosts. The Center for Conservation Biology Technical Report Series: ccbtr-14-20. College of William and Mary & Virginia Commonwealth University, Williamsburg, VA. 11 pp.



Legend

- Study Area
- 660-Foot Buffer
- Bald Eagle Sighting

0 175 350 700
Feet



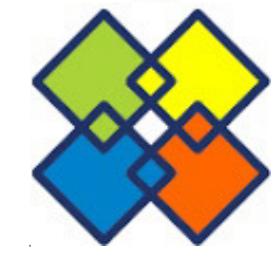
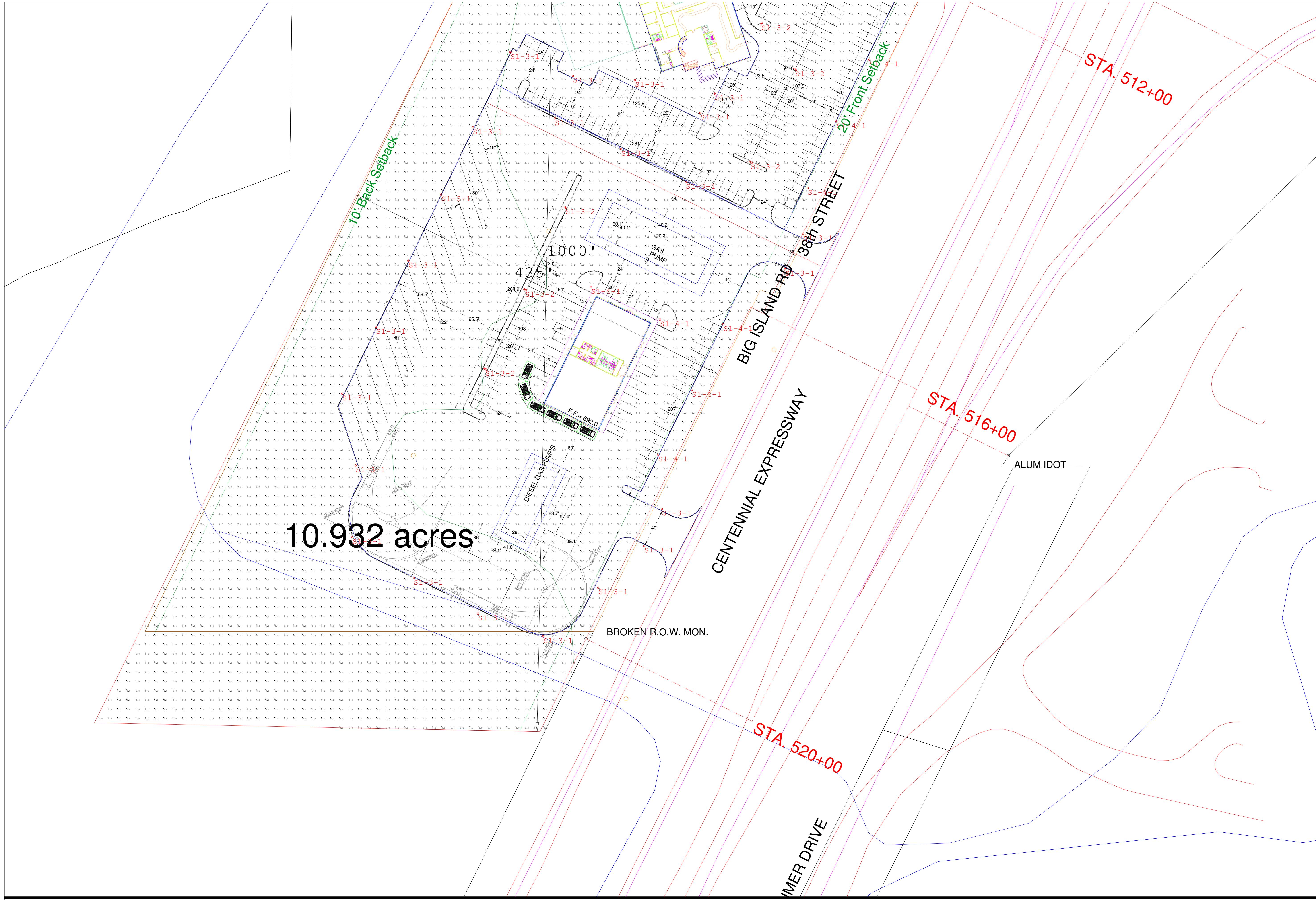
DATA SOURCES:
ESRI WMS - World Aerial Imagery, OpenStreetMap

Project No.:	CJ257097
Date:	Jul 2025
Drawn By:	DNR
Reviewed By:	AAL



660 Foot Study Area Map
Milan Bottoms / Bally West Development
± 10 Acres of Land
Rock Island, Rock Island County, Illinois

Exhibit
1.0



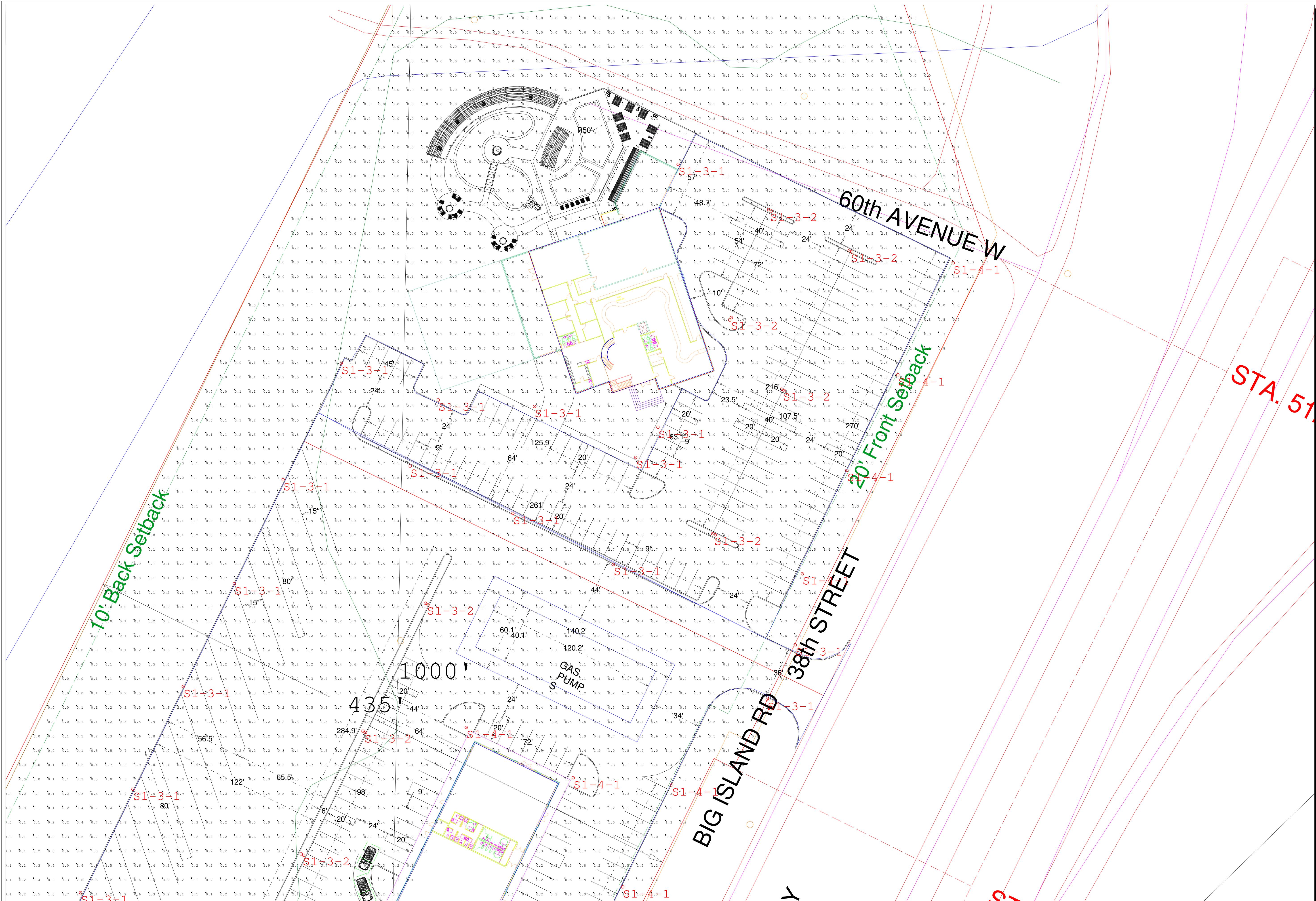
convergence

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Checked By: _____
Date: 3/26/2021
Scale: _____

NTI Dispensary & Travel Center

Rock Island, IL

Site Lighting rev 1



convergence		
		
#	Date	Comments
Revisions		
Drawn By: Checked By: Date: 3/26/2025		
Scale:		
NTI Dispensary & Travel Center Rock Island, IL		
Site Lighting rev 1		
Page 2 of 3		



Luminaire Schedule

Symbol	Qty	Label	Arrangement	LLF	[MANUFAC]	Description	Lum. Watts
●	24	S1-3-1	SINGLE	0.930	ANP Lighting	SWBFT18E080LDST330K	80
●●	8	S1-3-2	BACK-BACK	0.930	ANP Lighting	SWBFT18E080LDST330K	80
●	9	S1-4-1	SINGLE	0.930	ANP Lighting	SWBFT18E080LDST530K	80

#	Date	Comments

#	Date	Comments

Drawn By: Checked By: Date: 3/26/2025	Scale:
NTI Dispensary & Travel Center Rock Island, IL	Site Lighting rev 1