Memorandum

TO:	City Council
FROM:	Izaak Peterson , Associate Planner
DATE:	October 6, 2025
SUBJECT:	1090 Gramsie Road- Planned Unit Development (Amendment) Concept Stage- Christian Brothers Automotive
ITEM NUMBER:	10.a
SECTION:	GENERAL BUSINESS

REQUESTED MOTION
No formal action is taken on Planned Unit Development - concept stage applications.

INTRODUCTION
Kimley Horn, on behalf of Christian Brothers Automotive have submitted a Planned Unit Development Amendment (PUD)- concept stage application for the proposed infill development of a Christian Brothers auto repair services facility at the property located at 1090 Gramsie Road. The proposed development concept seeks to plat a .97 acre portion of the existing property to facilitate the development of a 6,557 sf, 10 bay auto repair facility. The underlying property is located within an existing PUD. Proposed development and subdivision of a PUD necessitates approval of a PUD Amendment. The applicant has chosen to solicit feedback of development proposal in advance of a formal PUD amendment application with a concept stage application in order to receive initial feedback and direction from the planning commission and city council.

The PUD Concept Stage is an informal review process that allows the public, planning commission and city council an early opportunity to provide general feedback, and identify issues and concerns to the developer before more detailed plans are prepared for formal consideration. There is no formal action taken by either the planning commission or city council at this stage.

DISCUSSION
Background & Site Description
The subject property is 2.28 acres in size, containing frontage along Lexington Ave N to the west, Gramsie Road to the north, and I-694 to the south. The site is zoned within a Planned Unit Development (PUD) and immediately abutted by PUD properties to the north and east, which include the Shoreview Corporate Center, Loden apartment building, and Hilton Garden Inn hotel. In addition, the Land O'Lakes corporate campus is located across Lexington Ave N, within the City of Arden Hills. The property currently contains the Red Robin restaurant and associated parking facilities on the western portion of the property. Access to the site is served from a single curb cut on Gramsie Road.

The Red Robin site was initially approved by way of a PUD zoning approval "The Reiling

PUD", from the UND district in 2004. At that time, subsequent future subdivision of the western portion of the site was anticipated. Permitted and prohibited land uses allowed through the PUD approval include the following:

- Office and Professional Services
  - Adult and continuing education centers
  - Financial Institutions
  - Public or quasi public facilities
  - Medical and dental offices and clinics
  - Licensed day care facilities
  - Restaurants which: qualify for a on-sale liquor license; do not have drive up facilities; food sales constitute 60% of gross sales; accommodate gatherings of 20 or more people; and do not accept food orders after 11 pm
- Limited Retail and Service
  - Salon and/or Spas
  - Photocopying service
  - Restaurants that are fast-serve, provide a sit down eating experience and do not have drive-through facilities.
- Prohibited Uses
  - Automobile sales accessories and parts
  - Bars

The associated PUD Agreement specified that PUD amendment was necessary in order to develop the remaining undeveloped portion of the site.

Planned Unit Development

Development of this site will be reviewed under the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process. The PUD process is used to encourage or provide flexibility, creativity, and innovation in the planning and design of development to achieve a variety of objectives related to the Development Code and the City's land use and housing goals.

The PUD Concept Stage application provides the applicant the opportunity to present a general plan showing the basic intent and nature of the development and the informal review is designed to address the overall appropriateness of a development proposal from the perspective of general land use compatibility. While there is no official public hearing held or formal action taken during the concept level review, it does provide an opportunity for the general public and nearby property owners to provide comments and state concerns. This public input, as well as general comments and issues/concerns identified by the planning commission and city council, are to provide the developer initial feedback to take into consideration when preparing the more detailed development plans for formal consideration. It also provides an open forum in which more specific development issues and potential concerns requiring further information and additional analysis can be identified. No formal action is taken on the concept stage application by either the Planning Commission or City Council.

The proposed development would need to satisfy certain objectives in order to be approved through the PUD process. Proposals that do not comply with the minimum standards of this ordinance need to provide a benefit to the city by meeting certain objectives including but not limited to life-cycle housing, sustainable and high quality building design, innovative stormwater management, and transportation demand

management.

Based on the conceptual site plan submitted, deviation from the City's previously approved PUD for the site would be needed to address and permit the proposed auto repair and service facility land use. An automobile service facility was not identified as a permitted land use within the approved Reiling PUD, and generally prohibited for future development under the automobile sales, accessories and parts land use contemplated with the 2004 PUD approval. In addition, the application proposes deviation to the city's minimum parking requirement for an automobile service station.

Comprehensive Plan Consistency

Chapter Four of the Comprehensive Plan designates this property for an Office land use within the future land use map. This designation is intended for property located adjacent to land planned for residential use but may also be located in areas surrounded by nonresidential uses. Professional offices, daycare centers, medical and dental clinics and similar uses are intended for these locations.

The proposed auto service facility conflicts with the 2040 future land use guidance of the site, and would most appropriately fall under a commercial future land use category. This designation is intended for a variety of service, office, restaurant, and retail uses ranging in intensity from those that serve the immediate neighborhood to those whose patrons come from outside of the community. The comprehensive plan instructs that the intensity of commercial use chosen for a particular site, through the adoption of a zoning designation, must be compatible with the uses planned for the adjoining property.

As the sites Office future land use designation conflicts with the proposed commercial use of the property, a comprehensive plan amendment would be required in order to consider future development of the site as proposed. The comprehensive plan identifies the following areas of consideration when contemplating revision of a future land use designation:

1. Land use decisions should be influenced by the availability of urban services, the transportation network, existing development pattern, nearby land uses, natural characteristics of land and community needs.
2. Revision of a land use plan map designation shall require the City Council to find that the proposed designation will not facilitate development which would have a significant, adverse impact on the planned land use of surrounding property. The City may require documentation to support said findings. The existing planned land use of the property shall be the basis for comparison from which to judge the impact of the proposed designation.
3. When a land use plan amendment is proposed, the following elements shall be considered relative to the site and the characteristics of adjoining planned land uses: probable building mass differences; traffic generation; separation to dissimilar land uses; carrying capacity of the site (sewer, water, access, topography, etc.); and buffering potential of dissimilar but adjoining land uses.

As guided by the policies and goals of the Comprehensive Plan, the city council would be required to make a determination as to whether the commercial auto service and repair land use would meet a community service need, not lead to adverse impacts to surrounding properties, and be cohesive with the surrounding office, restaurant, and hotel land uses.

Development Analysis
Generally, at the time of concept stage to determine the extent of flexibility that will be needed from the Development Code until detailed plans are developed, and direction is given for the viability of the proposed auto service and repair land use. For the purposes of comparative review, the project has been reviewed in accordance with the intent of C-2 General Commercial zoning district standards, which most closely reflect the proposed commercial land use. Automobile service stations are permitted as a conditional use within the C2 district.

Subdivision & Lot Orientation
The application proposes to subdivide a .97 acre portion of the existing 2.28 acre site to serve the automobile service facility. Within the C2 district, no minimum lot size is established. The proposed lot contains 140 feet of frontage along Gramsie Road (north), and 184 feet of frontage adjacent I-694 (south). The proposed lot appears to be compliant with the dimensional standards set forth within Sec 107-60, as it applies to the C2 district.

Although the proposal contemplates the creation of less than three properties, consideration of Preliminary and Final Plat applications would be required, as specified by Sec. 105-36. - Minor subdivision exemptions and exceptions.

Building Setbacks
The proposal appears generally to meet or exceed of typical commercial zoning standards. The following table compares the proposed building setbacks with the Development Code Requirements for the C2 District:

	C2 District	Proposed Auto Service Building
Front (Gramsie Road)	50 feet	51.8 feet
Side (West)	10 feet	78.9 feet
Side (East)	10 feet	11 feet
Rear (I-694)	30 feet	66.7 feet

Parking & Access
Access to the site is proposed as a consolidated shared access at the location of the existing Red Robin curb cut. Shared access with zero setbacks may be permitted, with the submittal of a shared access agreement between the affected parties.

Development code Sec 109-93(2)(i) specifies minimum parking requirements for auto service station facilities. Auto service stations require one parking space per employee plus five per service stall. Ten service bays are proposed within the facility, a requirement of 50 parking spaces. At this time, the applicant has indicated that the facility will employ 8-11 individuals. At the time of this review, staff anticipates that 59 to 61 parking spaces would be needed to achieve parking code compliance. The concept plan proposes a total of 30 parking spaces on the site.

The city may provide deviation to base parking standards through the PUD review and approval process. However, staff is generally concerned that the concept proposal does not contain enough parking to adequately serve the 10 bay service facility proposed, which may lead to adverse impacts to adjacent properties and overnight parking enforcement.

Architectural Design
The applicant has provided precedent images and renderings of similarly sized Christian Brothers Automotive facilities to provide reference of the intended design of the sought building. The proposed use of brick, stone, of varying colors and materials appears to be consistent with the standards set forth by the development code. In addition, brick screening of a dumpster enclosure is proposed through the concept plan.

Landscaping
The applicant has provided an initial landscaping plan of the proposed development. The landscaping plan initially shows the planting of three overstory trees, three ornamental trees, three coniferous shrubs, and several areas of ornamental grasses/shrubs. Generally, the proposed landscaping plan appears to be compliant with city landscaping standards. However, given the nature of the proposed use and large areas of available green space preserved on the site, staff believes that there is opportunity to plant several additional overstory trees and screening ornamentals in available greenspace preserved on the site.

Public Comments
Public notice was distributed to property owners within 350' of the subject property. At the time of this report, one public has been received, which opposes the proposed concept plan. The comment notes opposition to an auto service land use on the property due to visual aesthetic, and potential adverse parking impacts to their property (4000 Lexington Ave N).

Agency Comments
Notice of the proposed concept plan has been distributed to partner agencies for initial review and comment. The Rice Creek Watershed District has provided feedback regarding the anticipated permitting requirements of the district. The Lake Johanna Fire Department has indicated initial concern with site access and navigation of the Fire Departments ladder truck. The applicant has recently provided verification plans regarding the viability of fire truck access specifications, which are under review by Lake Johanna.

Planning Commission
The planning commission reviewed the proposed concept plan at their September 23, 2025 meeting. The planning commission generally expressed interest and support for a prospective comprehensive plan and PUD amendment to accommodate the proposed concept. The commission did share concern regarding parking availability for the site as shown on the concept.

RECOMMENDATION
The PUD Concept Stage is the first step in the City's review process. While optional to the developer, the concept level provides an early opportunity for the public and City to review, identify issues and concerns, and provide guidance to the applicant on possible plan revisions and additional analysis that may be required. Formal applications and approvals would be needed from the city, including a Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Preliminary and Final Plat, and Development and Final Stages for the PUD.

The city council is being asked to review the concept plans, provide general feedback, and identify any issues or concerns regarding the proposed uses and the site and building design that should be considered by the developer as they move forward with PUD Development Stage and other related applications.

Comments from the public should also be taken during the review, although an official public hearing would be held at the next review stage. No formal action is taken on this PUD Concept application.

ATTACHMENTS

Location Map
Applicant Narrative
Concept Building Elevations
Concept Site Plan
Concept Landscaping Plan
Reiling PUD Agreement
Agency Comment- Lake Johanna Fire Dept.
Agency Comment- Rice Creek Watershed District
Public Comment- Eleven Investments, LLC