

City Planning Department



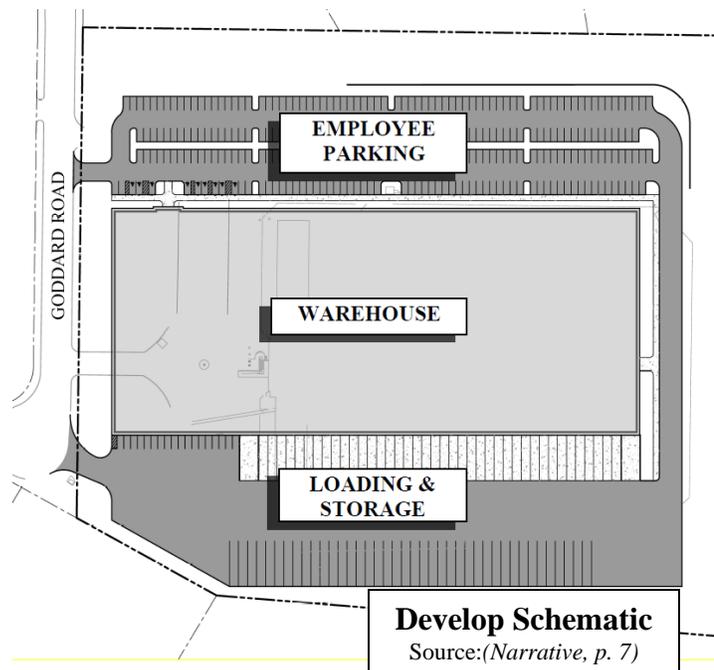
Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission
From: Joshua Berry, AICP - Senior Planner
Date: June 3, 2022
Re: "20 Goddard Drive Warehouse" - Major Land Development - Master Plan

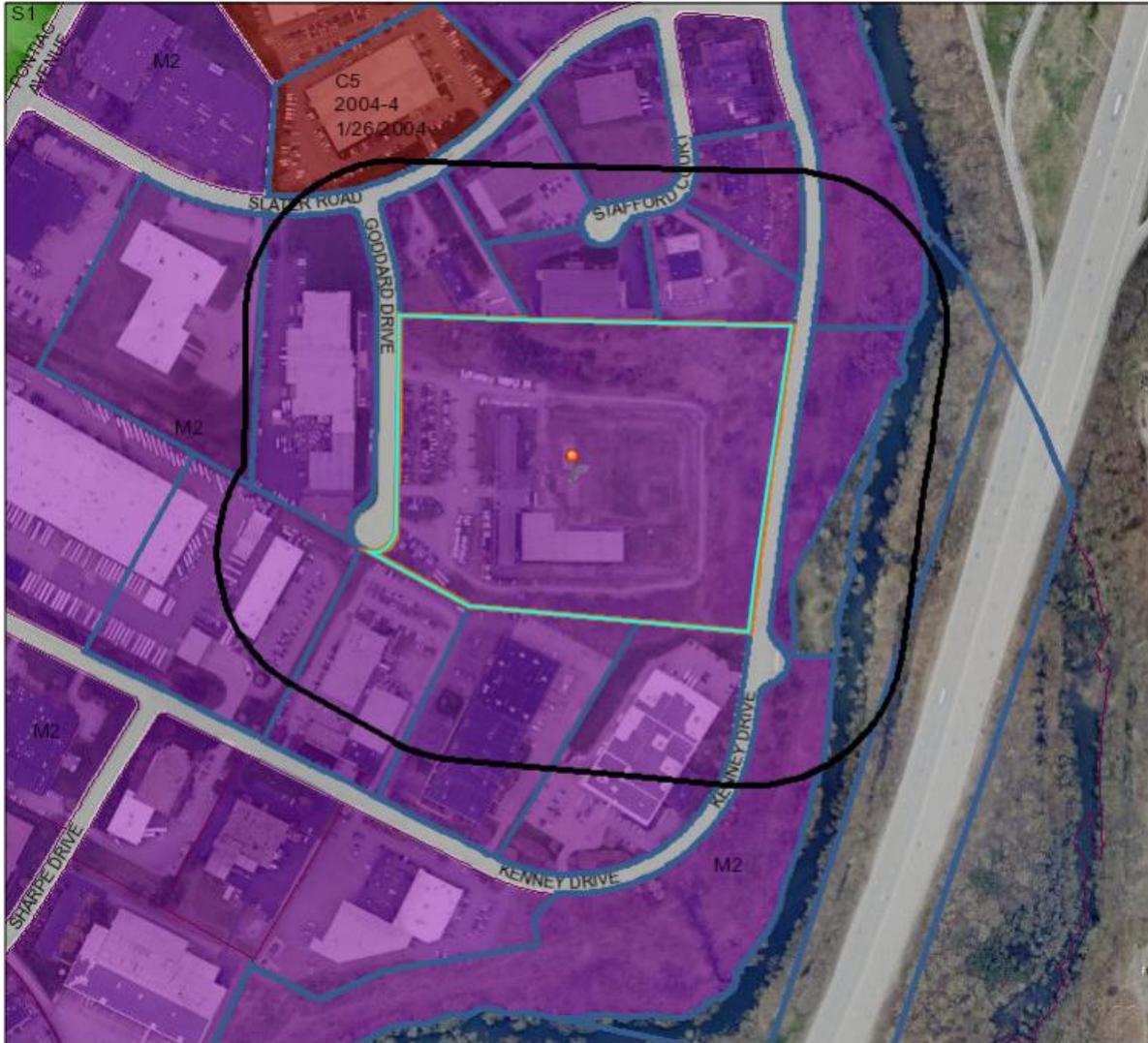
Owner/App: 20 Goddard, LLC
Location: 20 Goddard Drive, AP 13, Lot 39
Zone: M-2 (General Industry)
FLU: Government/Institutional

I. Proposal Summary

- The applicant seeks to raze the former Donald Price Correction Facility on the 16.84-acre parcel and construct one (1) industrial warehouse building approximately 210,000 ft².
- A specific use and tenant are not known at this time, but the project is intended to be used consistent with uses allowed by-right in the M-2 zoning district.
- The warehouse is being proposed relatively central to the parcel with 295 employee parking spaces to the north and storage/loading areas to the south of the building.
- Ingress/egress will continue to be from Goddard Drive, but the central access will be removed and replaced by one northern and one southern access points. There is no proposed access to Kenney Drive to the east.
- The project will be serviced by public water and sewer.
- Stormwater is to be collected by a closed drainage system and treated on the eastern portion of the site.
- Landscaping, pedestrian features, lighting and other amenities are proposed.
- The Comprehensive Plan – FLUM designates the property as *Government/Institutional*, but a Comprehensive Plan amendment is NOT required because the zoning governs the permissible uses.



ZONING MAP



UserSelectedParcels	Zoning	B2	EI	UNPAVED
vParcels_Buffer	none	C1	MPD	Red: Red
ParcelsInBufferOutput	A80	C2	S1	Green: Green
Parcels	A20	C3	Other	Blue: Blue
Streets Names	A12	C4	Street Names	
Zoning Dimensions	A8	C5	Roads	
Historic Overlay District	A6	M1	INVISIBLE	
	B1	M2	PAVED	



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City of Cranston

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

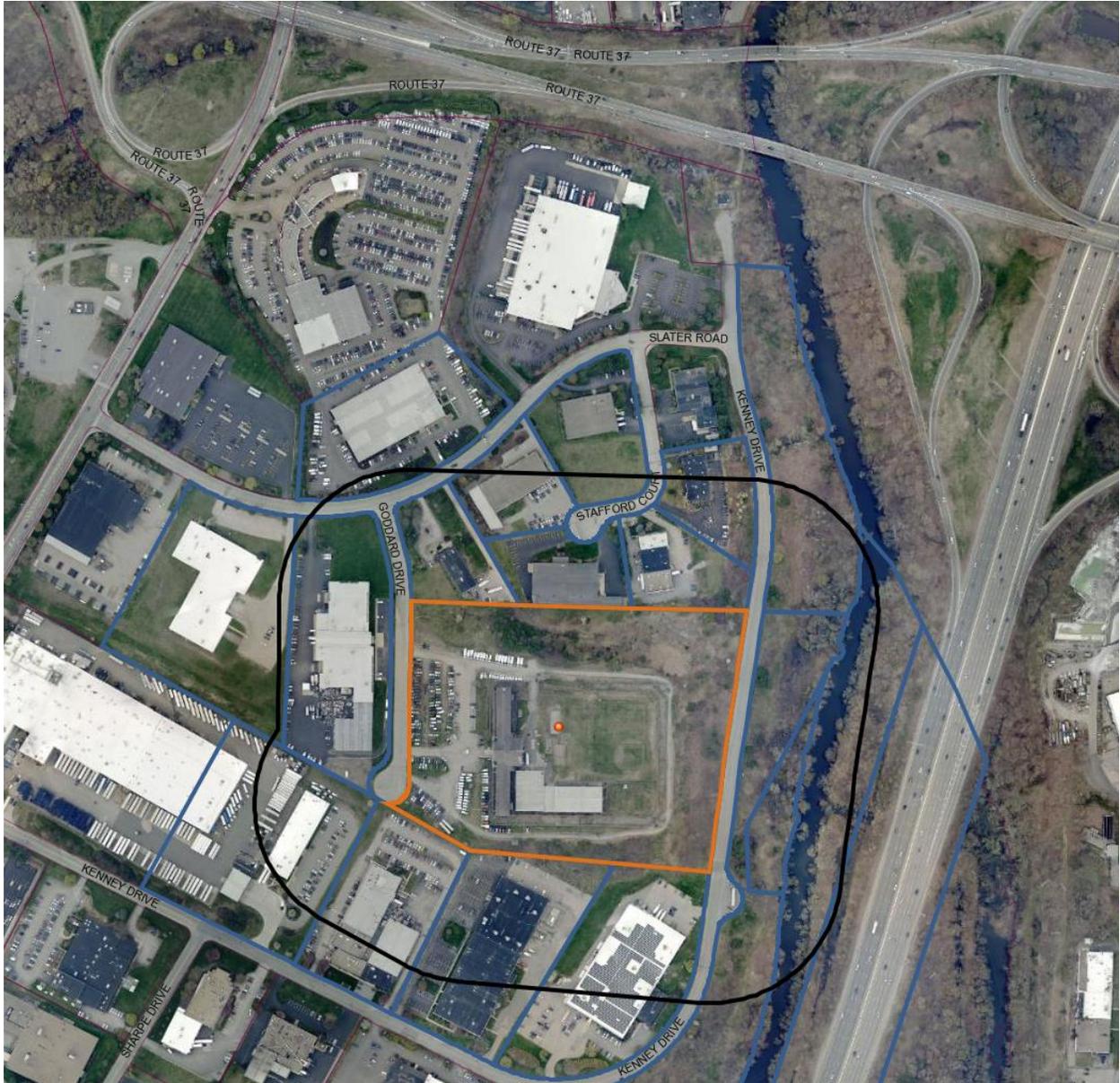


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City of Cranston

NEIGHBORHOOD AERIAL (400 ft. radius in black)



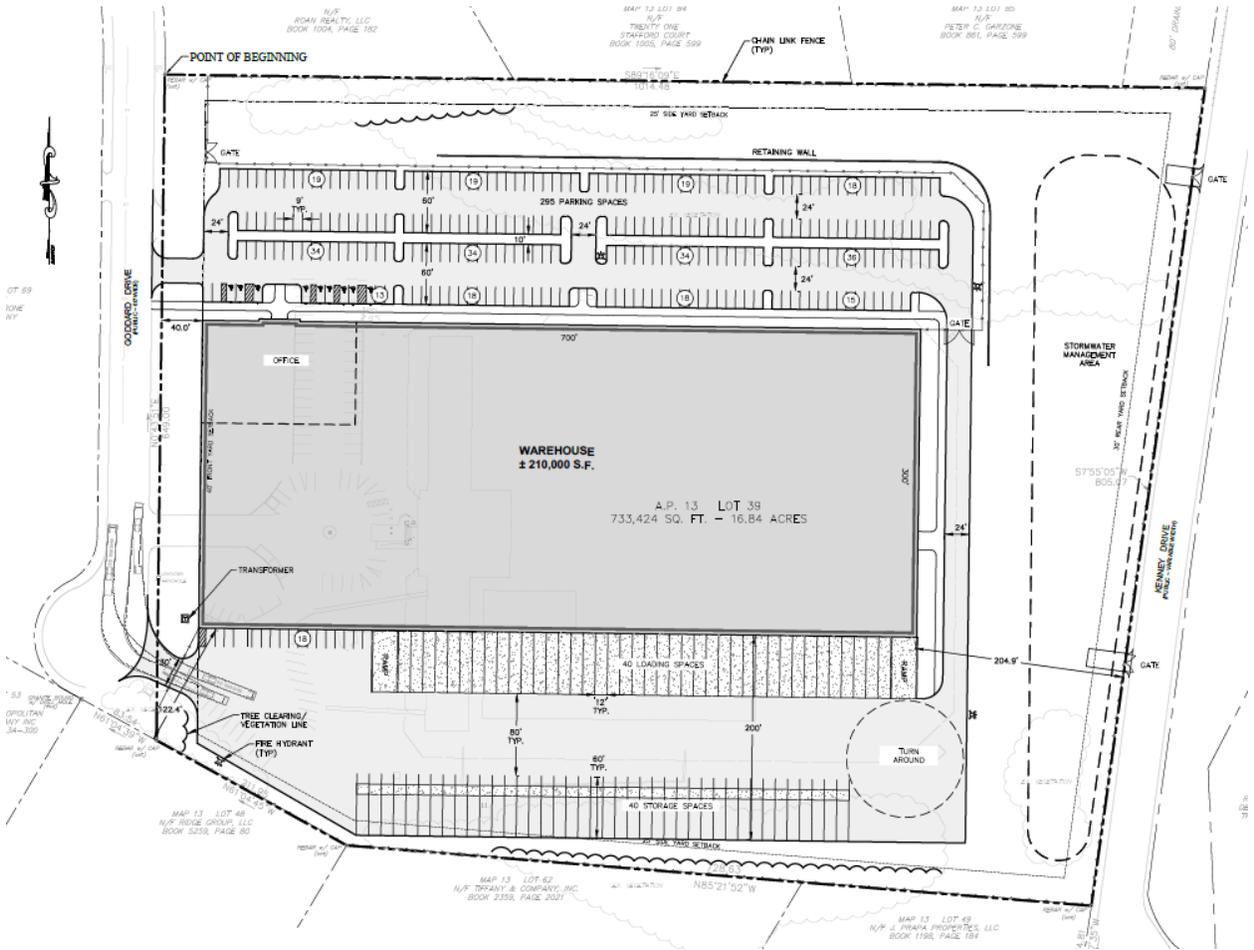
3-D AERIAL (facing east)



STREET VIEW (Goddard Dr facing east)



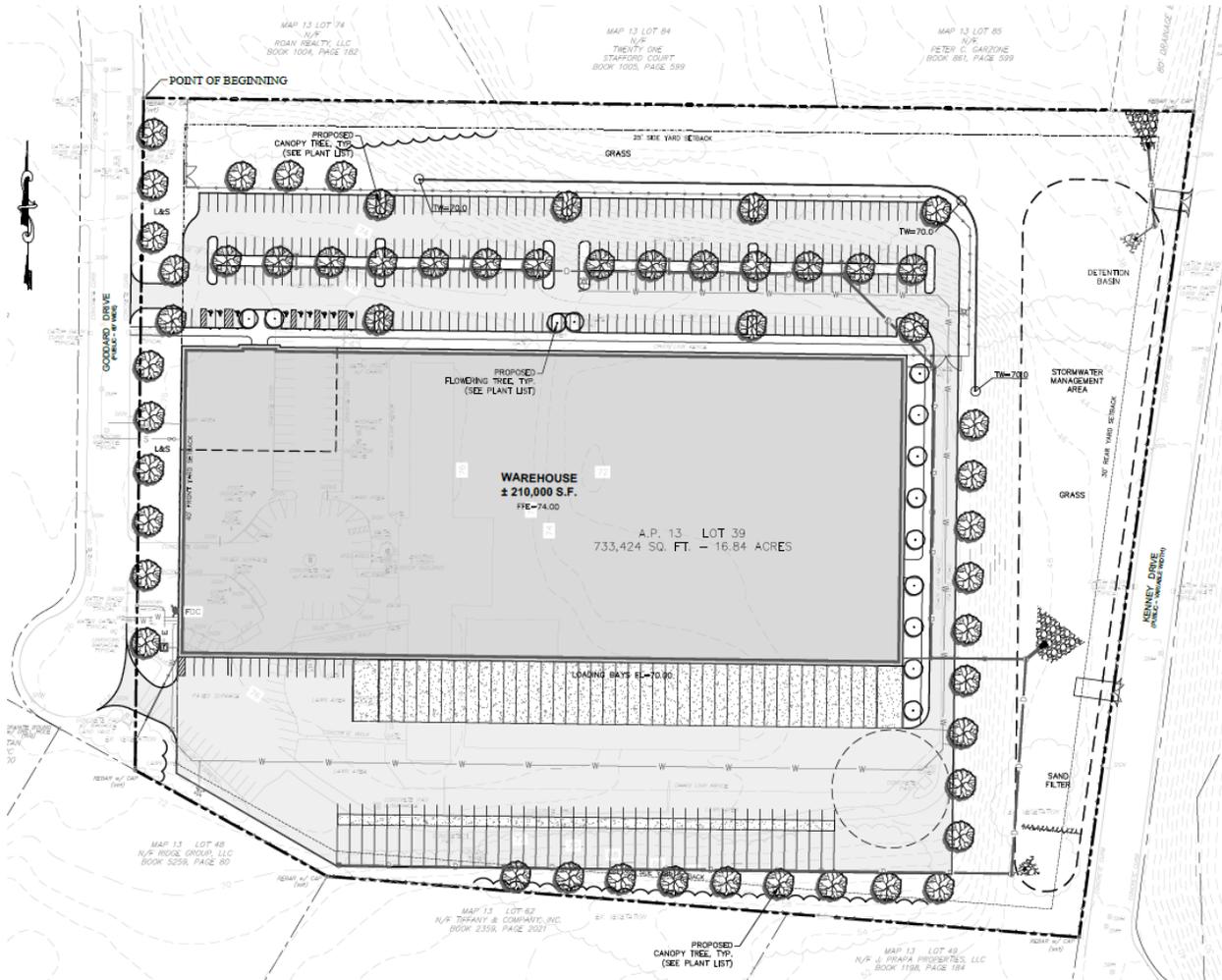
SITE PLAN



DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY ASSESSORS MAP 13, LOT 39 ZONING: INDUSTRIAL M-2 (M2)			
DESCRIPTION	REQUIRED	EXISTING	PROPOSED
SITE DATA			
LOT AREA	60,000 S.F.	733,424 S.F. (± 16.74 Ac.)	733,424 S.F. (± 16.74 Ac.)
DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS			
FRONTAGE	200'	649'	SAME
FRONT YARD	40'	>40'	±40.0'
REAR YARD	30'	>40'	±204.9'
SIDE YARD	25'	>25'	±122.4'
MAX. LOT COVER	60%	<60%	28.6% (1)
MAX. BLDG HEIGHT	35'	<35'	<35'

LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS	
LANDSCAPE REQUIRED	PROPOSED
15 PERCENT OF DEVELOP PARCEL	>15%
PARKING REQUIREMENTS	
PARKING REQUIRED	PROPOSED
ESTABLISHMENTS PROCESSING: 1 SP FOR EACH EMPLOYEE OR 1 SP FOR EACH FOUR EMPLOYEES AT MAX. EMPLOYMENT (2)	295 SPACES (3)
LOADING REQUIREMENTS	
LOADING REQUIRED	PROPOSED
NON-RESIDENTIAL: 1 PER BUILDING	40 LOADING BASES 40 STORAGE SPACES

LANDSCAPE PLAN



CONCEPTUAL LANDSCAPE PLANT LIST



BOTANICAL NAME:

COMMON NAME:

CANOPY TREES:

ACER RUBRUM 'RED SUNSET'
 CARPINUS CAROLINIANA
 FAGUS GRANDIFOLIA
 TILIA CORDATA 'GREENSPIRE'

RED SUNSET MAPLE
 AMERICAN HORNBEAM
 AMERICAN BEECH
 GREENSPIRE LITTLELEAF LINDEN



FLOWERING TREES:

AMELANCHIER 'AUTUMN BRILLIANCE'
 ACER GRISEUM
 CERCIS CANADENSIS

AUTUMN BRILLIANCE SHADBLOW
 PAPER BARK MAPLE
 EASTERN REDBUD

II. Documents which are part of the Master Plan application

1. Master Plan application;
2. Application filing fees;
3. Plan set entitled "20 Goddard Drive Warehouse," prepared by Samuel S. Hemenway, PE and Samuel A. White, PLS of Garofalo & Associates, Inc. with date of April 26, 2022;
4. Master Plan checklist;
5. Master Plan Narrative by Garofalo & Associates, Inc, dated May 2022;
6. 100' radius map, list of abutters; and affidavit confirming notice was sent signed by Robert D. Murray, Esq., dated 5/23/22;
7. Letter regarding sewer availability signed by Edward Tally, Environmental Program Manager of the City of Cranston;
8. Letter regarding water availability from Providence Water;
9. Certificate of Municipal Leans;
10. Traffic Impact Study entitled "Proposed Warehouse Facility" by Paul J. Bannon of BETA Group, Inc., dated May 2022.

III. Surrounding land use and context

Analysis using Geographic Information System (GIS) and other resources indicates that:

1. The subject parcel is located in southeastern Cranston in the Howard Industrial Park just west of Route 95 and south of Route 37, with frontage on Goddard Drive and Kenney Drive;
2. The land uses east of Pontiac Ave are all industrial with the sole exception of the Tasca car dealership and Tasca Truck Center which were rezoned to C-5 in 1998 and 2004, respectively. The Pastore Complex is located on the west side of Pontiac Ave;
3. There are no wetlands or other significant natural features on the subject property;
4. The property is free of any regulated floodplains or historic/cultural districts;
5. The 2018 Natural Heritage Map does not show any known rare species located on or near the site;
6. The site has minimal topography in the western and central portions of the site but considerable slopes in the northern, southern and eastern edges of the site. A retaining wall is proposed to the north/northeast of the parking area.

IV. Staff / Agency Comments

Pursuant to RIGL 45-23-41 A3, these plans were distributed for comment to the Public Works Department, Engineering Division, Bureau of Traffic Safety, Building and Inspections Department, Conservation Commission and the Fire Department.

The Fire Department provided the following comment:

- *The Fire Department does not have concerns at this time but will require information regarding the specific use, materials and products stored on site during the Preliminary Plan phase.*

The Bureau of Traffic Safety provided the following comment:

- *Concur with provided traffic impact study including evaluation/improvements at the Pontiac/Kenney traffic signal.*

The Engineering Division conveyed that they would like to know the construction materials for the proposed retaining wall, and they would like the applicant to agree to repave Goddard Drive curb to curb along the portion where the property has frontage. (Planning staff believes this issue can be discussed at the Preliminary Plan phase).

V. Interests of Others

There was a pre-application held at the Plan Commission meeting on May 3, 2022. No public comments were received.

There have been no comments received on the Master Plan proposal at this time.

VI. Planning Analysis

The following observations indicate the relatively straightforward nature of the “20 Goddard Drive Warehouse” Major Land Development Master Plan application:

- No zoning map change or Comprehensive Plan amendments are proposed or required;
- No zoning relief or waivers are proposed or required;
- The subject site is located within the Howard Industrial Park and does there are no residential uses in the area;
- Conforming industrial uses are intended at this time. Deviation from conforming uses would be fully subject to city review process and regulations; and
- The site is located near highway access to Route 95 and Route 37, minimizing potential traffic impacts on local roads.

Staff offers the following concise analysis by category:

Land Uses & Zoning:

1. The intended warehousing use is a by-right use under the existing M-2 zoning.

2. The fact that a specific use or end user is unknown leaves questions to be answered, but none that are required to be answered at the Master Plan phase. Staff is confident that the proposal meets the requirements for a master plan level of review. Page 3 of the applicant's narrative page 3 states, "The final configuration is expected to vary somewhat based on end user requirements." The city and staff have all the tools necessary to review a modified plan if the applicant changes course.
3. The proposal is compliant with all M-2 zoning requirements.
4. The abutting land uses are all industrial. Any allowed use in M-2 should be compatible with the surrounding uses in the industrial park.

Traffic Impacts:

1. The applicant provided a traffic study by BETA Group, LLC, that concludes, "*The proposed warehouse facility project was determined to have adequate and safe access to a public street, and will not have an adverse impact on public safety and welfare in the study area*" (p. 19).
2. The majority of the level of service on impacted intersections remain within the acceptable range of the Plan Commission's Traffic policy (that intersections should operate at a LOS 'D' or better). The two exceptions are that the level of service on Slater Rd westbound left turns from 'D' to 'F' in the AM peak hour and from 'E' to 'F' in the PM peak hour. The conclusion from the Traffic Impact Study reads:

The estimated increase in traffic during the peak periods resulting from the proposed warehouse facility project will have a minor impact on overall traffic operations along Pontiac Avenue, Slater Road, and Goddard Road in the project area, particularly during the weekday morning and afternoon peak hours when the site would service its greatest daily volumes. (p. 18)

3. Specifically referring to safety, the Traffic Impact Study conclusion reads:

RIDOT could review the following safety enhancements at the signalized intersection of Pontiac Avenue with Kenney Drive as part of their general signal maintenance and optimization program:

1. *The clearance intervals to determine if they require adjustment in an effort to reduce the number of rear-end collisions.*
2. *Addition of signal head backplates with reflectorized yellow strips to enhance traffic signal visibility.*

In addition, as noted earlier in the report, it is recommended that the city as part of their infrastructure maintenance program, review the Stop sign for the intersection of Slater Road with Goddard Road for potential replacement if not presently scheduled, to meet current standards for placement, color, shape, and reflectivity. (p. 18)

4. The City's Traffic and Safety Bureau has reviewed the proposal and "*concur with provided traffic impact study including evaluation/improvements at the Pontiac/Kenney traffic signal.*

5. Staff did not require a peer review of the traffic impact study. Conforming uses should not be overly scrutinized at the conceptual, master plan phase. Staff felt that it would be prudent and sufficient to conduct a peer review at the preliminary plan phase once more specific information is available.

Off-Street Parking:

1. The site plan shows 295 parking spaces, 40 loading areas and 40 trailer storage spaces.

The off street parking requirement in Code Section 17.64.010.(1)(21) is “*one space for each employee-used vehicle or one space for each four employees employed at maximum employment, whichever is greater; plus space for every company owned and operated vehicle plus spaces for customers' vehicles as determined appropriate by the inspector of buildings.*” Review for compliance with the requirements can only be conducted when an end user and further information is supplied to the city. However, it is more likely that the parking is conservatively estimated rather than insufficient. Table Note #3 on the site plan states, “*A portion of the parking shown may be reserved as future expansion based on final tenant requirements.*”

Environmental Impacts:

1. The site was previously developed as a state corrections facility. There is no reason to believe that there are environmental concerns on the subject site.
2. “Environmental Protection Note” #2 states that “The project site is not documented by the Rhode Island Department of environmental Management (RIDEM) geographic information system (GIS) mapping as being within an area containing hazardous environmental conditions.”
3. No habitats will be impacted and no tree removal is required.
4. The project is located within Zone “X” (areas outside the 0.2% annual floodplain) on the F.E.M.A. Flood Insurance Rate Map.
5. There are no wetlands on site.
6. The Rhode Island Natural Heritage Survey maps indicate that the project is not within a natural heritage area.

Landscaping & Buffering:

1. The applicant has provided a conceptual landscape plan.
2. A specific calculation was not provided but the site plan indicates that more than 15% of the site is landscaped, meeting or exceeding the city’s requirement.

Economic Impacts:

1. The number of jobs created is unknown at this time;

2. Tax revenue estimates are not available at this time, but it should be noted that the previous use exempt from local taxes so any private use of the set will increase the tax benefit of this property.

Energy/Sustainability:

1. The city has recently amended its policies regarding solar energy and in doing so has articulated that it strongly supports rooftop and carport solar energy systems. **Staff recommends that the applicant strongly consider rooftop solar, and/or solar canopies.** This does not need to be fully addressed at the Master Plan Phase and but should be revisited during the Preliminary Plan phase, as applicable;
2. **Staff recommends that the applicant strongly consider installing Electronic Vehicle (EV) charging stations.** This does not need to be fully addressed at the Master Plan Phase and but should be revisited during the Preliminary Plan phase, as applicable;
3. The two recommendations above are generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Action Item LU-17 “*Apply sustainability policies to new projects.*” (p. 48 & 54)

Utilities:

1. The subject site has available public water and sewer.

Easements:

1. There are no existing or proposed easements on site.

Sidewalks:

1. No sidewalks are proposed, and no sidewalks are required. No waivers are needed.
2. There are no sidewalks on Goddard Drive.

Comprehensive Plan Analysis:

1. The Comprehensive Plan – FLUM designates the property as *Government/Institutional*, but a Comprehensive Plan amendment is NOT required because the zoning governs the permissible uses.
2. Staff finds this proposal to be consistent with Land Use Goal (LUG)-4, “*Ensure that sufficient land is properly zoned and provided with adequate infrastructure to provide for the City’s future industrial development needs.*” This contributes to the reason why staff would NOT recommend the property be rezoned to be consistent with the FLUM.
3. Staff finds this proposal to be consistent with Land Use Policy (LUP)-4.2, “*Protect the capacity and integrity of roads, sewers and water systems serving the Howard and*

Western Cranston Industrial Parks, in order to preserve these areas as resources for long-term industrial development” (p. 8). This project will comply with the sewer and water system permitting process and acts to fulfill the industrial development goals of the city.

4. Staff finds this proposal to be consistent with Land Use Goal (LUG)-5, *“Ensure that redevelopment of major sites for economic development incorporates the protection of environment and neighborhood character” (p. 8)* This project solidifies the industrial nature of the area and has no anticipated environmental impacts.
5. Staff finds this proposal to be consistent with the *“Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act Goal: To promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall economic well-being of each municipality and the state” (p. 11)* which is incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Goals. Reducing prisons and creating jobs certainly speaks to the overarching goal, as well as the following Economic Development Goals:
 - EDG-1A Preserve and increase employment opportunities for Cranston residents.
 - EDG-1B Maintain and increase the quality of job opportunities – in terms of wages, skill requirements, and working conditions – available to Cranston residents.
 - EDG-2 Attract capital into the Cranston area and expand the City’s economic base.
 - EDG-3 Add to the City’s taxable property base by constructing industrial and commercial structures which are properly designed and sited in keeping with environmental, planning and design considerations.
 - EDG-4 Revitalize underused areas of the City for uses that are in keeping with the needs and values of the community.
 - EDP-4.1 Continue the City’s active role in seeking the redevelopment of major industrial and institutional sites for economic development.

Conclusion:

1. **This application is a “by-right” use under zoning and is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies**, despite the inconsistency with the FLUM.
2. Staff is supportive about the economic and fiscal impacts of this proposal. The transfer of the property from the State to private ownership will generate new industrial tax base at a critical time;
3. Staff does **not** make negative findings on the traffic impacts of the proposal. This issue will be closely monitored at the preliminary plan phase;
4. Details about the parking, landscaping, lighting, drainage, sustainability efforts, and other issues will be handled at the preliminary plan phase.

VII. Findings of Fact

An orderly, thorough and expeditious technical review of this Master Plan has been conducted. Property owners within a 100' radius have been notified via first class mail, a display ad was published in the Cranston Herald and the meeting agenda has been properly posted.

Staff has reviewed this Master Plan application for conformance with required standards set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60, as well as the City of Cranston's Subdivision and Land Development Regulations and finds as follows:

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(1) states, “The proposed development is consistent with the comprehensive community plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.”

1. The Comprehensive Plan – FLUM designates the property as *Government/Institutional*, but a Comprehensive Plan amendment is NOT required because the zoning governs the permissible uses.
2. The proposal is consistent with Land Use Goal (LUG)-4, “*Ensure that sufficient land is properly zoned and provided with adequate infrastructure to provide for the City’s future industrial development needs.*” This contributes to the reason why staff would NOT recommend the property be rezoned to be consistent with the FLUM.
3. The proposal is consistent with Land Use Policy (LUP)-4.2, “*Protect the capacity and integrity of roads, sewers and water systems serving the Howard and Western Cranston Industrial Parks, in order to preserve these areas as resources for long-term industrial development*” (p. 8). This project will comply with the sewer and water system permitting process and acts to fulfill the industrial development goals of the city.
4. The proposal is consistent with Land Use Goal (LUG)-5, “*Ensure that redevelopment of major sites for economic development incorporates the protection of environment and neighborhood character*” (p. 8) This project solidifies the industrial nature of the area and has no anticipated environmental impacts.
5. The proposal is consistent with the “*Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act Goal: To promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall economic well-being of each municipality and the state*” (p. 11) which is incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan Economic Development Goals. Reducing prisons and creating jobs certainly speaks to the overarching goal, as well as the following Economic Development Goals:
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 - EDG-4 Revitalize underused areas of the city for uses that are in keeping with the needs and values of the community.

- EDP-4.1 Continue the City’s active role in seeking the redevelopment of major industrial and institutional sites for economic development.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(2) states, “The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the municipality’s zoning ordinance.”

1. The proposal is compliant with the allowed uses and zoning regulations in the M-2 zoning district. No relief or waivers are required.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(3) states, “There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the **final** plan, with all required conditions for approval.” (emphasis added)*

1. This finding pertains specifically to the final plan. At this phase (Master Plan), there is no reason to believe that there are environmental concerns on the subject site.
2. “Environmental Protection Note” #2 states that “The project site is not documented by the Rhode Island Department of environmental Management (RIDEM) geographic information system (GIS) mapping as being within an area containing hazardous environmental conditions.”
3. No habitats will be impacted, and no tree removal is required.
4. The project is located within Zone “X” (areas outside the 0.2% annual floodplain) on the F.E.M.A. Flood Insurance Rate Map.
5. There are no wetlands on site.
6. The Rhode Island Natural Heritage Survey maps indicate that the project is not within a natural heritage area.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(4) states, “The subdivision, as proposed, will not result in the creation of individual lots with any physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable. (See definition of Buildable lot). Lots with physical constraints to development may be created only if identified as permanent open space or permanently reserved for a public purpose on the approved, recorded plans.”

1. The proposed Major Land Development does not propose any new lots or subdivision.

RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(5) states, “All proposed land developments and all subdivision lots have adequate and permanent physical access to a public street. Lot frontage on a public street without physical access shall not be considered in compliance with this requirement.”

1. The subject property has adequate and permanent physical access to a public right-of-way through conforming lot frontage on Goddard Drive. The proposed access points have been reviewed by the city’s Bureau of Traffic Safety and will be reviewed in further detail at the Preliminary Plan phase.

VIII. Recommendation

Staff finds this proposal consistent with the standards for required Findings of Fact set forth in RIGL Section 45-23-60, the Comprehensive Plan, and the City of Cranston's Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. Therefore, staff recommend that the City Plan Commission adopt the Findings of Fact documented above and **approve** the Master Plan submittal, subject to the following conditions:

IX. Recommended Conditions of Approval

1. The applicant shall explore the feasibility of incorporating solar energy systems on the roofs of the proposed buildings and parking areas. The applicant shall address this issue in the narrative for the preliminary plan submittal.
2. The applicant shall explore the feasibility of incorporating electronic vehicle charging stations on site. The applicant shall incorporate their findings into the narrative as part of the Preliminary Plan submittal during the preliminary plan phase.