

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	SP-2025-03: Flow Honda/CDJR Outdoor Storage, Display, and Sales Expansion
Review Type	Advisory Review for a Special Use Permit
Parcel Identification	04500-00-00-068D4
Location	960 Seminole Trail
Zoned	Highway Commercial (HC) / Entrance Corridor (EC) / Airport Impact Area (AIA)
Owner/Applicant	Flow 960 Hilton LLC / Shimp Engineering (Julia Moore)
Magisterial District	Rio
Proposal	To amend an existing Special Use Permit (SP2002-46) to expand the outdoor storage/display/sales area located in front of the Flow Honda/CDJR building at 960 Seminole Trail.
Context	The Flow Honda/CDJR site is located in the heavily developed Rt. 29 commercial corridor. The Honda/CDJR building is located just north of the Flow Subaru (previously Umansky) building. A Walmart is situated to the south across Hilton Heights Rd. Just beyond Walmart is the Malloy Chevrolet auto dealership. To the west is Sam’s Club, and a DoubleTree hotel is located to the north. A variety of commercial buildings stand on the opposite side of Rt. 29. (Fig. 1.)
Visibility	The outdoor display parking along the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor will be readily visible.
ARB Meeting Date	September 8, 2025
Staff Contact	Khريس Taggart

PROJECT HISTORY

- Two Special Use Permits were approved for this site in 2003. SP-2002-46 was approved for outdoor vehicle display, and SP-2002-65 was approved for structured parking.
- Expansion of the outdoor storage, display, and sales use requires a new Special Use Permit (SP). This staff report is limited to an analysis of the proposal for that expanded use, including appearance, treatment, and screening. The ARB’s recommendation on the SP will be forwarded to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.
- To accommodate this expansion of display parking, the property owner has recently acquired .34 acres of public right-of-way from VDOT.



Figure 1: Pictometry image showing the Flow auto dealership along the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor.

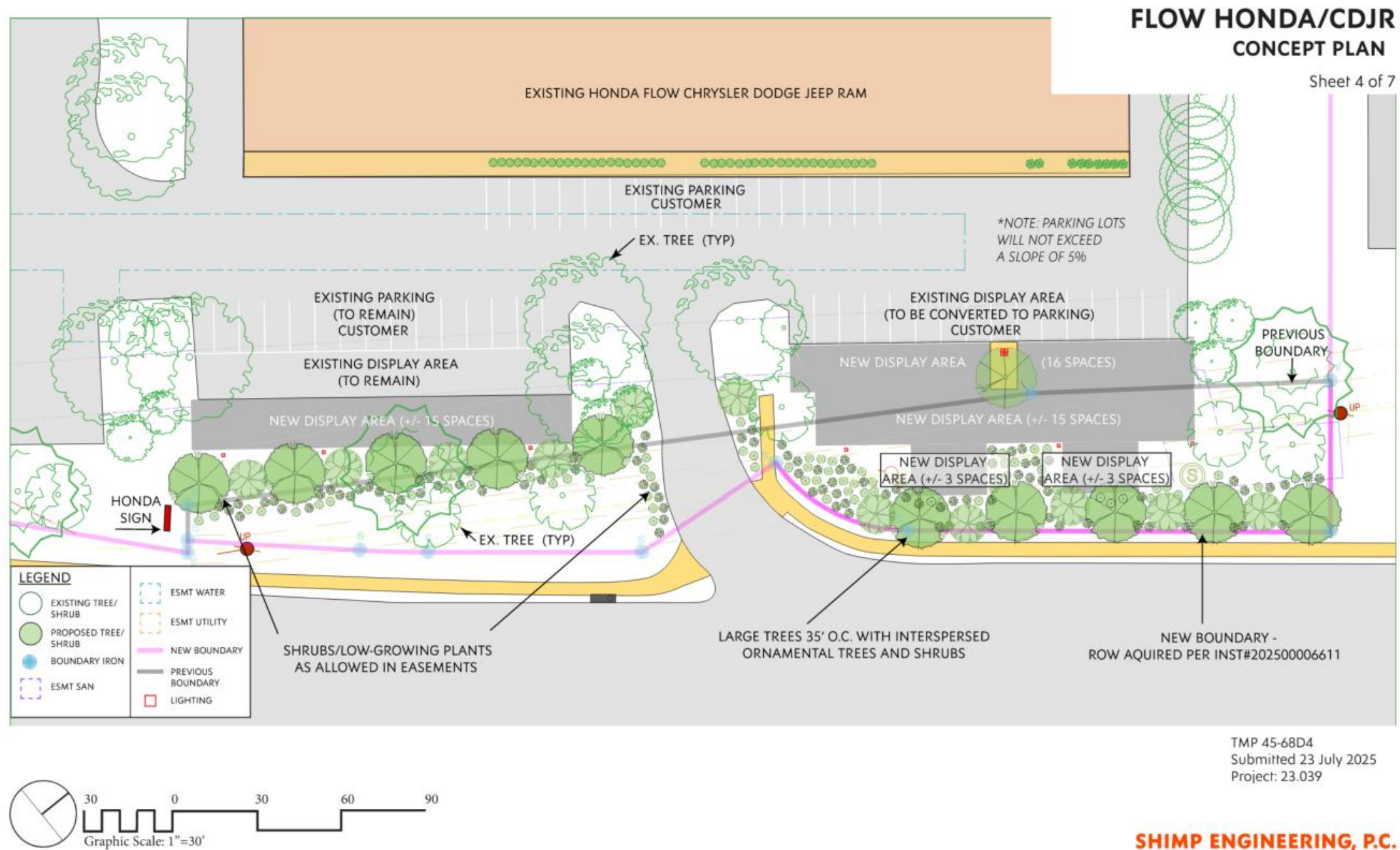


Figure 2: Proposed concept plan identifying new vehicle display areas, existing display areas that are to be converted to parking, and existing parking that is to remain.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE 9/8/2025	RECOMMENDATION 9/8/2025
1-5, 9-19, 21	Purpose, <i>Compatibility with significant historic sites, Compatibility with the Character of the Entrance Corridor, Structure Design, Accessory structures and equipment</i>	No changes to the existing building architecture are proposed with this application.	See lighting and landscaping recommendations, below.
	Lighting		
22	Light should be contained on the site and not spill over onto adjacent properties or streets;	A lighting plan has not been provided with the concept plan. The ARB has consistently applied conditions to minimize the visual impact of parking lots by limiting illumination at the ground to 30 footcandles for display lots and 20 footcandles for other uses, and by limiting pole light height to 20’ maximum. Color temperatures for lighting have also been limited to a range between 2000K and 3000K and finishes for pole fixtures limited to dark brown, dark bronze, or black.	A complete lighting plan will be needed prior to final site plan approval. Limit all fixtures to full cutoff styles to minimize visual impacts of the development on the EC street. Maximum light levels must not exceed 30 footcandles in the display lot and 20 footcandles in all other locations.
23	Light should be shielded, recessed, or flush-mounted to eliminate glare. All fixtures with lamps emitting 3000 lumens or more must be full cutoff fixtures.		
24	Light levels exceeding 30 footcandles are not appropriate for display lots in the Entrance Corridors. Lower light levels will apply to most other uses in the Entrance Corridors.		
28	In determining the appropriateness of lighting fixtures for the Entrance Corridors, the individual context of the site will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis.		All fixtures must have lamps whose color temperature is between 2000 and 3000 Kelvin. The finish for freestanding poles must be either dark brown, dark bronze, or black. Pole-mounted fixtures must not exceed 20’ in height maximum.
25	Light should have the appearance of white light with a warm soft glow; however, a consistent appearance throughout a site or development is required. Consequently, if existing lamps that emit non-white light are to remain, new lamps may be required to match them.		
26	Dark brown, dark bronze, or black are appropriate colors for free-standing pole-mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors.		
27	The height and scale of freestanding, pole-mounted light fixtures should be compatible with the height and scale of the buildings and the sites they are illuminating, and with the use of the site. Typically, the height of freestanding pole-mounted light fixtures in the Entrance Corridors should not exceed 20 feet, including the base. Fixtures that exceed 20 feet in height will typically require additional screening to achieve an appropriate appearance from the Entrance Corridor.		
29	The following note should be included on the lighting plan: “Each outdoor luminaire equipped with a lamp that emits 3,000 or more initial lumens shall be a full cutoff luminaire and shall be arranged or shielded to reflect light away from adjoining residential districts and away from adjacent roads. The spillover of lighting from luminaires onto public roads and property in residential or rural areas zoning districts shall not exceed one-half footcandle.”	A lighting plan has not been provided with the concept plan.	Include the standard lighting note on the lighting plan.
30-31	<i>Guidelines for the Use of Decorative Landscape Lighting</i>	A lighting plan has not been provided with the concept plan.	A complete lighting plan will be needed prior to final site plan approval. Limit all fixtures to full cutoff styles to minimize

			visual impacts of the development on the EC street.
	Landscaping		
7	The requirements of the Guidelines regarding landscaping are intended to reflect the landscaping characteristic of many of the area's significant historic sites which is characterized by large shade trees and lawns. Landscaping should promote visual order within the Entrance Corridor and help to integrate buildings into the existing environment of the corridor.	The existing building is set back approximately 140' from the EC. There is a planting area between the building and the EC, with a double row of parking south of the right-in entrance, and single rows of parking north of the entrance and next to the showroom building.	A complete landscaping plan will be needed prior to final site plan approval. Ensure that the proposed landscaping does not conflict with the existing landscaping that is to remain and has a coordinated appearance.
8	Continuity within the Entrance Corridor should be obtained by planting different types of plant materials that share similar characteristics. Such common elements allow for more flexibility in the design of structures because common landscape features will help to harmonize the appearance of development as seen from the street upon which the Corridor is centered.	The current paved area measures between 73 and 78 feet from the edge of the pavement. The proposed concept plan shows that the display parking area will be expanded by approximately 8,355 square feet. This will be done by converting a portion of the existing landscaped area along the frontage into paved parking, which will include triple-stacked parking arrangements on both the northern and southern sides of the right-in entrance. North of the entrance, the proposed display extends towards the EC with two paved "bumpouts" accommodating approximately 6 additional vehicles. This brings the display parking within 25' of the edge of pavement. The existing display spaces north of the entrance will be converted to customer parking.	
32	Landscaping along the frontage of Entrance Corridor streets should include the following: a. Large shade trees should be planted parallel to the Entrance Corridor Street. Such trees should be at least 3½ inches caliper (measured 6 inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 35 feet on center. b. Flowering ornamental trees of a species common to the area should be interspersed among the trees required by the preceding paragraph. The ornamental trees need not alternate one for one with the large shade trees. They may be planted among the large shade trees in a less regular spacing pattern. c. In situations where appropriate, a three or four-board fence or low stone wall, typical of the area, should align the frontage of the Entrance Corridor street. d. An area of sufficient width to accommodate the foregoing plantings and fencing should be reserved parallel to the Entrance Corridor street, and exclusive of road right-of-way and utility easements.	Conceptual landscaping is included on the concept plan. The area subject to the special use permit (see sheet 7 of Attachment 2) has approximately 355' of frontage along the EC and utilities – both underground and overhead – are in place along the frontage, further limiting the available planting area. The concept plan shows large shade trees with ornamental trees and shrubs interspersed behind the overhead line (labeled in yellow) south of the right-in entrance and in front of the overhead line north of this entrance. The proposed large trees south of the entrance seem to conflict with existing trees designated to remain. Additionally, the arrangement of shrubs along the southern edge of the entrance and in the planting area to the north appears random and uncoordinated. While this layout generally satisfies the frontage planting requirements and is expected to mitigate the visual impact of the expansion of paved area on the EC, it requires better coordination with the	

		existing landscaping and more refinement of the arrangement of proposed landscaping. The layout shown in the concept plan provides sufficient planting area to avoid conflicts with existing utilities.	
33	Landscaping along interior roads: a. Large trees should be planted parallel to all interior roads. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a plant species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 40 feet on center.	There are no existing or proposed interior roads within this site.	None.
35	Landscaping of parking areas: a. Large trees should align the perimeter of parking areas, located 40 feet on center. Trees should be planted in the interior of parking areas at the rate of one tree for every 10 parking spaces provided and should be evenly distributed throughout the interior of the parking area. b. Trees required by the preceding paragraph should measure 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground); should be evenly spaced; and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be planted in planters or medians sufficiently large to maintain the health of the tree and shall be protected by curbing. c. Shrubs should be provided as necessary to minimize the parking area's impact on Entrance Corridor streets. Shrubs should measure 24 inches in height.	There are existing trees that are to remain along the northern perimeter of the site that meet the perimeter parking area requirements. The proposal does not appear to meet the requirement for interior parking trees. Approximately 52 new parking spaces are proposed, requiring an additional 5 trees, but only one interior tree has been added. The trees located north and south of the right-in entrance, as well as those along the northern perimeter of the site, compensate for the absence of interior trees in the expanded paved area. Additionally, the arrangement of trees and shrubs along the front of the site is expected to effectively filter the view of the additional display spaces, reducing the necessity for trees within the paved area itself.	None.
34	Landscaping along interior pedestrian ways: a. Medium trees should be planted parallel to all interior pedestrian ways. Such trees should be at least 2½ inches caliper (measured six inches above the ground) and should be of a species common to the area. Such trees should be located at least every 25 feet on center.	No changes are proposed to the existing interior pedestrian ways.	None.
36	Landscaping of buildings and other structures: a. Trees or other vegetation should be planted along the front of long buildings as necessary to soften the appearance of exterior walls. The spacing, size, and type of such trees or vegetation should be determined by the length, height, and blankness of such walls. b. Shrubs should be used to integrate the site, buildings, and other structures; dumpsters, accessory buildings and structures; "drive-thru" windows; service areas; and signs. Shrubs should measure at least 24 inches in height.	No changes to the existing building architecture are proposed with this application. The arrangement of plantings proposed along the frontage is expected to help integrate the showroom building into the surrounding context.	None.

37	Plant species: a. Plant species required should be as approved by the Staff based upon but not limited to the <i>Generic Landscape Plan Recommended Species List</i> and <i>Native Plants for Virginia Landscapes (Appendix D)</i> .	A complete landscape plan has not been provided with the concept plan. This guideline will be reviewed when a landscape plan is submitted.	A complete landscape plan will be needed for review prior to final site plan approval.
38	Plant health: The following note should be added to the landscape plan: “All site plantings of trees and shrubs shall be allowed to reach, and be maintained at, mature height; the topping of trees is prohibited. Shrubs and trees shall be pruned minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant.”	The standard plant health note does not appear on the plan.	Include the standard plant health note on the landscape plan provided with the site plan submittal.
	Development pattern		
	Site development and layout		
6	Site development should be sensitive to the existing natural landscape and should contribute to the creation of an organized development plan. This may be accomplished, to the extent practical, by preserving the trees and rolling terrain typical of the area; planting new trees along streets and pedestrian ways and choosing species that reflect native forest elements; ensuring that any grading will blend into the surrounding topography thereby creating a continuous landscape; preserving, to the extent practical, existing significant river and stream valleys which may be located on the site and integrating these features into the design of surrounding development; and limiting the building mass and height to a scale that does not overpower the natural settings of the site, or the Entrance Corridor.	No changes are proposed to the layout of the existing showroom building, travelway, and pedestrian and vehicular connections. In addition to landscaping, there are a few standard practices related to the display of vehicles that can help reduce visual impacts. Over the years, the ARB has developed a standard recommended condition of approval for vehicle display that requires vehicles not be elevated anywhere on site. This means that vehicles cannot be displayed on ramps, turntables, or on other similar equipment or by other similar methods. This helps maintain an appropriate, organized, and orderly appearance on site.	Standard conditions of approval for outdoor display are recommended: Vehicles must be displayed or stored only in areas indicated for display or storage on the Concept Plan. Vehicles must be parked in striped parking spaces.
39	The relationship of buildings and other structures to the Entrance Corridor street and to other development within the corridor should be as follows: a. An organized pattern of roads, service lanes, bike paths, and pedestrian walks should guide the layout of the site. b. In general, buildings fronting the Entrance Corridor street should be parallel to the street. Building groupings should be arranged to parallel the Entrance Corridor street. c. Provisions should be made for connections to adjacent pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems. d. Open spaces should be tied into surrounding areas to provide continuity within the Entrance Corridor. e. If significant natural features exist on the site (including creek valleys, steep slopes, significant trees, or rock outcroppings), to the extent practical, then such natural features should be reflected in the site layout. If the provisions of Section 32.5.2.n of the <i>Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance</i> apply, then improvements required by that section should be located so as to maximize the use of existing features in screening such improvements from Entrance Corridor streets. f. The placement of structures on the site should respect existing views and vistas on and around the site.	The ARB has also required that storage/display/sales spaces must be striped like standard parking spaces. This allows a distribution and orientation of parked cars that is more like standard parking lots, helps ensure a consistent appearance over time, and it makes it easier to assess conformity with the approved plan. The incorrect application number for the previously approved special use permit is noted on sheets 6 and 7 of the concept plan. The incorrect application number for the current special use permit is noted throughout the concept plan. The area of proposed amendment boundaries shown on sheets 6 and 7 of the concept plan extends beyond where	Vehicles must not be elevated anywhere outside of a building on site. Revise the concept plan to note the correct SP number (SP-2002-46) that is being amended. Revise the concept plan to note the correct SP number (SP-2025-03) under review. Revise the boundaries of the proposed amendment area shown on sheets 6 and 7 of the concept plan to include only the area where changes are proposed.

		changes are proposed. Reducing the boundaries to only include the area where changes are proposed would be appropriate.	
	Site Grading		
40	Site grading should maintain the basic relationship of the site to surrounding conditions by limiting the use of retaining walls and by shaping the terrain through the use of smooth, rounded landforms that blend with the existing terrain. Steep-cut or fill sections are generally unacceptable. Proposed contours on the grading plan shall be rounded with a ten-foot minimum radius where they meet the adjacent condition. Final grading should achieve a natural, rather than engineered, appearance. Retaining walls 6 feet in height and taller, when necessary, shall be terraced and planted to blend with the landscape.	There is a gentle change in topography between the showroom building and the EC. Grading is shown to establish the expanded display area; however, this grading is minimal and is not expected to have a negative visual impact on the EC. The slope of the new planting area shown on the site section (Sheet 6 of Attachment 2) appears to be exaggerated.	Revise the site section in the concept plan to show a more accurate representation of the proposed grading.
41	No grading, trenching, or tunneling should occur within the drip line of any trees or other existing features designated for preservation in the final Certificate of Appropriateness. Adequate tree protection fencing should be shown on, and coordinated throughout, the grading, landscaping and erosion and sediment control plans.	There are existing trees that are to remain, but no tree protection fencing has been shown.	Ensure tree protection fencing is included around the trees that will remain and coordinated throughout the site plan set.
42	Areas designated for preservation in the final Certificate of Appropriateness should be clearly delineated and protected on the site prior to any grading activity on the site. This protection should remain in place until completion of the development of the site.		
43	Preservation areas should be protected from storage or movement of heavy equipment within this area.		
20	Surface runoff structures and detention ponds should be designed to fit into the natural topography to avoid the need for screening. When visible from the Entrance Corridor street, these features must be fully integrated into the landscape. They should not have the appearance of engineered features.	No changes are proposed to the existing stormwater management features.	None.
44	Natural drainage patterns (or to the extent required, new drainage patterns) should be incorporated into the finished site to the extent possible.		

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Primary points of discussion:

- 1. The extent to which proposed landscaping mitigates the visual impacts of the storage, display and sales parking.
 - a. Interior parking lot trees.
 - b. The arrangement of shrubs along the frontage.

Recommended revisions to the Concept Plan prior to Planning Commission review:

- 1. Revise the site section in the concept plan to show a more accurate representation of the proposed grading.
- 2. Revise the concept plan to note the correct SP number (SP-2002-46) that is being amended.

3. Revise the concept plan to note the correct SP number (SP-2025-03) under review.
4. Revise the boundaries of the proposed amendment area shown on sheets 6 and 7 of the concept plan to include only the area where changes are proposed.

Recommendation on the Special Use Permit:

Staff recommends no objection to the proposed outdoor storage, display, and sales with the following conditions:

1. Use of this site must be in general accord with the Flow Honda/CDJR Concept Plan + Exhibits by Shimp Engineering dated XYZ. To be in general accord, vehicles for sales, storage and/or display must be parked only in the spaces indicated for sales, storage and display on the Flow Honda/CDJR Concept Plan.
2. Vehicles must be parked in striped parking spaces.
3. Vehicles must not be elevated anywhere outside of a building on site.
4. Final site plan approval is subject to ARB approval of the landscape plan (submitted with the site plan). Landscaping shown on the plan may be required to be in excess of the minimum requirements of the ARB guidelines and/or the Zoning Ordinance to mitigate the visual impacts of the proposed use.
5. Final site plan approval is subject to ARB approval of the lighting plan (submitted with the site plan). Maximum light levels must not exceed 30 footcandles in the display lot and 20 footcandles in all other locations. The maximum height of pole lights must not exceed 20'. All fixtures must have lamps whose color temperature is between 2000 and 3000 Kelvin.

Recommendations for the Site Plan

1. A complete lighting plan will be needed prior to final site plan approval. Limit all fixtures to full cutoff styles to minimize visual impacts of the development on the EC street.
2. The finish for freestanding poles must be either dark brown, dark bronze, or black.
3. Include the standard lighting note on the lighting plan: Each outdoor luminaire equipped with a lamp that emits 3,000 or more initial lumens shall be a full cutoff luminaire and shall be arranged or shielded to reflect light away from adjoining residential districts and away from adjacent roads. The spillover of lighting from luminaires onto public roads and property in residential or rural areas zoning districts shall not exceed one-half footcandle.
4. A complete landscaping plan will be needed prior to final site plan approval. Ensure that the proposed landscaping does not conflict with the existing landscaping that is to remain and has a coordinated appearance.
5. Include the standard plant health note on the landscape plan: All site plantings of trees and shrubs shall be allowed to reach, and be maintained at, mature height; the topping of trees is prohibited. Shrubs and trees shall be pruned minimally and only to support the overall health of the plant.

ATTACHMENTS

- Attach. 1: [SP2025-03: Flow Honda/CDJR Narrative](#)
- Attach. 2: [SP2025-23: Flow Honda/CDJR Concept Plan](#)