



ITEM REPORT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Agenda Date: 9/9/2025
Agenda Section: New Business

TO: Baxter Planning and Zoning Commission
FROM: Matthew Gindele, City Planner
REQUEST: PUBLIC HEARING. Conditional Use Permit Amendment to allow a parking lot expansion for a church use for property located north of 6284 Fairview Road (City file 2025-026)
APPLICANT: Lakewood Church, 6284 Fairview Road, Baxter, MN, 56425
R-1, Low Density Residential
ZONING:

1. Application Request

The applicant is requesting approval of a conditional use permit amendment to allow for the expansion of an existing parking lot for Lakewood Church located at 6284 Fairview Road.

2. Context

Adjacent Land Use and Zoning

Table with 3 columns: Direction, Adjacent Land Use, and Zoning. Rows include North, South (Across State Hwy. 210), East, and West.

Natural Characteristics of the Site

The project area is flat with no trees and is currently a gravel parking surface with vegetation growing through it. The site is not located in a shoreland overlay district and there are no wetlands or floodplain on the property.

Utility Commission Review

The Utility Commission reviewed the application on September 3, 2025 and recommends that the Planning and Zoning Commission approve the Lakewood Evangelical Free Church Conditional Use Permit Amendment with the Condition of entering into a Stormwater Facilities Maintenance Agreement prior to permit issuance for the parking lot expansion.

3. Analysis of Request

Conditional Use Permit Amendment

The subject property is zoned R-1, Low Density Residential in which "Religious Institutions" are identified as a conditional use. The existing church was issued a conditional use permit (CUP) in the past for the existing church

use. The proposed expansion of the parking lot is considered an expansion of the church use, and therefore requires an amendment to the existing CUP.

Staff has reviewed the request against the general CUP standards. Section 10-7-4 of the Zoning Ordinance defines the criteria for reviewing and processing a conditional use permit (CUP). Specifically:

- A. Excessive Burden: The use shall not create an excessive burden on existing parks, schools, streets and other public facilities and utilities which serve or are proposed to serve the area.

*The City finds that the expanded parking lot will not create an excessive burden since the expanded area is already used as an informal overflow parking area.*

- B. Compatibility: The use shall be compatible with adjacent land uses so that existing uses will not be depreciated in value and there will be no deterrence to development of vacant land.

*The City finds that the parking lot expansion is compatible with adjacent land uses and will not depreciate their values because the church use is existing within in existing residential district and the church use complies with all the conditions required in ordinance.*

- C. Appearance: The use shall have an appearance that will not have an adverse affect (sic) upon adjacent properties.

*The City finds that the use would not have an adverse effect on adjacent properties because the expanded parking area is currently gravel-surfaced growing through with vegetation and the expansion will re-surface the area with asphalt which is considered an upgraded surface and will give the area a cleaner and more professional look. Additionally, the gravel area is considered legally nonconforming and the upgrade to asphalt will bring it into conformance with the ordinance.*

- D. Overall Needs: The use, in the opinion of the planning and zoning commission shall be reasonably related to the overall needs of the city and to the existing land use.

*The City finds that parking lot expansion will serve the church use which provides a needed service in the community.*

- E. Consistent With Purpose: The use shall be consistent with the purposes of this title and purposes of the zoning district in which the applicant intends to locate the proposed use.

*The City finds that the use is consistent with the purposes of the zoning ordinance and the R-1 zoning district because religious institutes are a listed allowed conditional use within the R-1 district.*

- F. Comprehensive Plan: The use shall not be in conflict with the comprehensive plan of the city.

*The use would not conflict with the comprehensive plan of the city because the property is guided as low density residential, zoned R-1, Low Density Residential and the use is a named allowed conditional use within the R-1 district.*

- G. Traffic: The use will not cause traffic hazard or congestion.

*The proposed use would not cause a traffic hazard or congestion because the use does not increase the amount of traffic visiting the subject property.*

H. Facilities: The use shall have adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and necessary facilities.

*The site has adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and necessary facilities, as reviewed by the Utilities Commission.*

#### *Site Plan Context*

Site plan review for the items listed below are not part of the review for this application. Site plan review will occur prior to issuance of a building permit. However, staff has included the information to identify key elements of the parking lot design that will need to be submitted and reviewed.

#### *Landscaping & Parking Lot Islands*

The parking ordinance limits interior rows of parking to a maximum of ten consecutive parking stalls in a row without a landscaped parking lot island to break them up. The northerly row of parking contains 11 parking stall in a row without an island. A conditional has been added to the draft resolution requiring a landscaped parking lot island be added to the plans prior to issuance of a permit. A condition requiring the submission of a landscaping plan compliant with the landscape ordinance has also been added to the draft resolution.

#### *Parking Lot Design*

The plans submitted do not include parking stall or drive aisle dimensions; a condition has been added to the draft resolution requiring submittal of full design elements showing that the design will comply with the parking ordinance standards including, but not limited to, parking stall dimensions and drive aisle dimensions.

#### **4. Recommendation**

Staff recommends approval of the conditional use permit amendment to allow for the expansion of the church parking lot for property located at 6284 Fairview Road, subject to the findings and conditions in Resolution 2025-074.

#### **Attachments**

1. Resolution 2025-074 approving conditional use permit amendment
2. Location Map
3. Site Plan
4. Project Proposal & Project Area Map
5. Applicant Narrative & Site Plan