

November 16, 2020

City of Madison  
Planning Division  
Madison Municipal Building  
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd  
Suite 017  
Madison, WI 53701-2986

Re: Urban Design Commission Application – Portillo’s Hot Dogs at West Towne Mall

To Whom It May Concern:

Please consider this package to be a formal request for approval of a Major Alteration to the previously approved Conditional Use for a proposed new Portillo’s Hot Dogs restaurant to be located in an outlot of the existing West Towne Mall. Additionally, the property owner will be pursuing a Certified Survey Map to subdivide the existing property.

Portillo’s is a fast-casual dining restaurant that features inside seating in a casual atmosphere, outside seating and drive-through service. The restaurant services lunch and dinner and is generally open from 1030AM – Midnight, seven days a week. Peak hours are typically 11:30AM – 1PM and 4PM – 6PM.

Portillo's Hot Dogs was founded in 1963 by Dick Portillo, as a hot dog stand in a 6' x 12' trailer located in Villas Park, Illinois. The first drive-through Portillo’s opened in 1983 and is known for speedy, reliable drive-through service due to its unconventional practice of sending employees outside to take orders and deliver food. Portillo’s family menu has expanded from hot dogs only, to include Italian beef sandwiches, char-grilled burgers, fresh salads, ribs, and their famous chocolate cakes. The catering division opened in 1999, and in 2000 Portillo’s began shipping food to all 50 states.

The site proposed will front the interior mall ring road with indirect and shared access provided from S Gammon Road. Placing the building along the western property line allows the isolation of the drive through lane traffic on the site perimeter, away from the main parking field and pedestrian pathways. The building, at 7800 SF, contains 178 interior and 52 exterior seats, and the maximum shift size will be 30 employees. The proposed site layout incorporates 60 total parks, which will accommodate potentially 220+ patrons during peak hour as well as employee parking during max shift. Additionally, the site will accommodate the City’s bike parking requirement of 5% capacity with provision of 18 total bike parking spaces.

Design considerations for this proposed Portillo’s maintain the high standards of construction that other Portillo’s restaurants enjoy, with our new and widely loved contemporary 50’s diner building, consisting of 4-sided design, covered outside dining, an amply stacked drive through lane with bypass, extensive landscaping, and a trash enclosure integral to the main building structure. The building design contains high-end materials including brick, stamped metal panels, and custom created features that create vertical articulation to offset the horizontal feel of a one-story building. Examples of these are the main entry feature extended pediment, the two drive through window projections, and the blade element perpendicular to the drive-through side of the building. The high-level of articulation on the drive-through, entry and rear facades put the entire building easily on par with a main façade elevation. Tasteful building lighting will

accent the upscale design of the building at night. This environment is continued on the interior, with a vibrant interior design of the same era. Customers will be met with the Portillo's crew in an open kitchen, who prepare each meal individually for consumption either in the restaurant, or for carry-out. Other staffers occupy the drive-through lane with menus, assuring orders are properly understood, prepared, and delivered as quickly as meals are ready.

The West Town Mall location will also incorporate a proposed new three-lane drive through concept. The new third lane will be available to facilitate online and mobile app orders for customers that wish to order their meals ahead of time. Portillo's has successfully operated a double-lane drive-through concept with the help of trained employees that are assigned to pre-set stations within the drive-through area. The three-lane concept will continue this effective operation by implementing employees that have had specific training for drive-through sales and are provided with outerwear that protects them from the elements as appropriate and offers visual alerts to vehicles through vibrant colors and reflective tape. Further, they are provided with equipment that allows customers to pay at the time of ordering. These employees will carry portable menus and will approach each vehicle personally to take the order and subsequent payment. A numbered tag will be placed under the windshield wiper that correlates with the number of the order entered for the vehicle to assure the food delivered is correctly identified. After ordering, the vehicle will move forward in the line. As the food is delivered to a vehicle, an employee will direct the vehicle out of the waiting lane into the bypass lane to exit the site. This prevents larger or more time intensive orders to remain in the waiting queue without forcing customers with orders more quickly prepared to also wait for that food delivery. Should vehicles in the drive through lane waiting to order begin to build up, an employee will direct vehicles into the bypass lane where another order-taking employee will process them simultaneously. This does not block customers who have already ordered from exiting upon food delivery, as they have moved forward awaiting their orders.

Safety of our employees is of the utmost importance to the Portillo's brand. The pavement within the drive-through lane is striped, marking the area for the potential second order-taker, and traffic cones will be placed to warn drivers of the presence of personnel. Further, a raised sidewalk area is built against the main drive-through lane for employees to be elevated from adjacent vehicles.

Portillo's anticipates the development of this site will result in an investment of over \$3 Million on the building alone, with the site work yet to be priced. Sales are anticipated in the \$4-6 Million range, with numerous employment opportunities for residents of Madison and suppliers of goods utilized in the operation and running of a major restaurant.

We are excited about our continued growth within the City of Madison and are available to facilitate any questions or comments that may arise as a result of this application. Should you require any additional materials in order to facilitate this review, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

Melanie Bagley  
*for Portillo's Hot Dogs*