



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 5702-5712 Odana Road (District 19 – Ald. Clear)
Application Type: Final Approval (Urban Design District #3)
Legistar File ID # [35814](#) & [42563](#)
Prepared By: Chris Wells, Planning Division
Reviewed By: Kevin Firchow, AICP, Principal Planner

The applicant seeks final approval from the Urban Design Commission (UDC). An earlier version of this project was granted Initial Approval by the UDC on November 19, 2014.

Background Information

With this request, the applicant would demolish an office building and a vehicle sales office for the purpose of creating a new two-story, 15,861 vehicle sales building and expanded parking/inventory lot. The following request is within Urban Design District 3. In summary, Urban Design District 3 (UDD 3) was established to make Odana Road and adjacent areas an “attractive visual experience” and to preserve and enhance the property values in the district.

Approval Standards

This request is subject to the approval standards for UDD 3. [MGO §33.24(10)] In addition, the Plan Commission will review this project against the Demolition and Conditional Use Standards of the Zoning Code. Conditional Use Approval Standard #9 relates to design and states: *“When applying the above standards to any new construction of a building or an addition to an existing building the Plan Commission shall find that the project creates an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose for the zoning district. In order to find that this standard is met, the Plan Commission may require the applicant to submit plans to the Urban Design Commission for comment and recommendation.”*

Design Considerations for the UDC

The Planning Division’s primary question is in regards to the compliance with the frontage landscaping standard.

The specific standards for “Landscaping” [Sec 33.24(10)(c)1] require landscaping be used for a functional as well as decorative purpose, including framing desirable views, screening unattractive features and views along the roadway. The specific standards for “Parking and Service Areas” [33.24(10)(c)5] require that off-street parking areas shall have effective screening on any public or private street. Screening vegetation is required to be planted at a minimum height of 30 inches and grow to a mature height of 54 inches.

The Planning Division does not believe the proposed landscaping along Odana Road is sufficient as proposed to meet the above standard and would like the Urban Design Commission to weigh in on this matter. Staff also point out that adequate landscaping should also be added along the entire lot frontage of Tokay Boulevard.

Staff also notes that the Odana Road frontage includes a mapped 25-foot building setback approved in 1975 as part of the original certified survey map approved for this property. This requirement applies to the subject properties, but was not required on other properties to the east, up to Whitney Way. Further, it was not required on the South Side of Odana Road. This setback requirement has been discussed with Planning, Engineering, and Traffic Engineering Divisions. Upon reviewing this request, these Divisions don’t object to release of this setback. Such an action would require Common Council approval of a separate resolution removing or modifying this setback. The Planning Division notes that the UDC can act on the request, as proposed.