



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 1814-1818 Parkside Drive  
**Application Type:** Public Building in Urban Design District (UDD) 5  
"Imagination Center" at Reindahl Park, City of Madison Public Library  
**UDC is an Approving Body**  
**Legistar File ID #:** [79954](#)  
**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Jennifer Camp, JLA Architects | City of Madison Library

**Project Description:** The applicant is proposing the construction of a single-story, roughly 17,000 square-foot new public building, the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park. The building will function as a public library/community center.

**Project Schedule:**

- The UDC received an Informational Presentation on October 18, 2023.

**Approval Standards:** The site is located in Urban Design District 5 ("UDD 5"), which requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in MGO Section 33.24(12).

In addition, pursuant to MGO Section 33.24(4)(d), "*The UDC shall approve plans for all buildings proposed to be built or expanded in the City by the State of Wisconsin, the University of Wisconsin, the City of Madison, Dane County, the Federal Government or any other local governmental entity which has the power to levy taxes on property located within the City.*"

## Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommends that the UDC review the proposed development and make findings related to the criteria noted above giving consideration to the following design considerations:

- **Building Design and Composition.** Generally, the UDD 5 Building Design requirements and guidelines speak to utilizing design elements and treatments that reflect compatibility with context, avoiding large unbroken facades, and incorporating the same level of design and details on all sides of a building. Staff requests the UDC's feedback and findings on the overall building design and composition.

For reference, the UDC's Informational Presentation comments were focused on creating more consistency in the patterns present in the design, including the green trellis, the use of colors and scale of use, and window proportions, height and pattern, etc.

- **Materials.** As proposed, the building reflects a modern design that is primarily clad in engineered composite wall panels. UDD 5 requirements state that exterior building materials shall be low maintenance and harmonious with those present in the area and that mechanical equipment shall be screened from view. Staff requests the UDC review and make findings related to the proposed materials palette.

- **Landscape and Site Amenity Details.** UDD 5 Landscape guidelines and requirements generally speak to utilizing landscape designs that are functional as well as decorative, including screening unattractive features, framing views and providing year-round color, texture and interest. Staff requests the UDC provide feedback and make findings on the proposed landscape plan as it relates to screening and providing year-round color and texture.
- **Lighting.** As indicated on the photometric plan, light levels appear to be relatively low and generally consistent with the UDD 5 guidelines and requirements related to lighting. The applicant is advised that additional information related to Fixtures OD (light bar) and OF (LED light strip) is required to determine compliance with cutoff requirements and mounting details. Staff recommends that the continued review of lighting be completed administratively.

## Summary of UDC Informational Presentation Comments

As a reference, the Commission's discussion and comments from the October 18, 2023, Informational Presentation comments are provided below.

- The combination and usage of project is exciting. The massing and scale, the way you're avoiding trees is working well, it has a nice human scale to it which is important in a park and a library. This isn't necessarily UDC, but the use of color; it works well for the setting. It has a strong character that this neighborhood can be proud of, that this belongs to them. The fact you enter and can see through to the park is a really thoughtful move. A lot of great things going for this right now.
- This is an exciting project, looks really fun. I echo the comments on color. The use of form and pattern is really interesting, I think it's more successful on what we're calling the backside (west). The backside embodies the color, patterns, but also feels timeless. The other side loses a bit of the timeless quality, I'm not exactly sure what it is. Maybe it's the different color green and gray, which I like, but maybe it's the scale because it's so dominant. There are a lot of different patterns that make room for some consistency. Where you have the vine structures is a very strong pattern, with a different playful pattern next to it. I'd like to see more consistency tying that all together.
- Kudos for working around the trees. Your site plan, splaying out the geometric patios are really successful and interesting, different than a very safe landscape and site design we often see. Overall I think it's a really fun, playful, awesome start. I look forward to seeing refinement of it.
- I too agree with a lot of the comments. I do like the color but I'm struggling a bit with the same area of green grey block on the front elevation. The other thing that needs some study are some of your window proportions. Some of the brick areas have windows decreasing in height, curtain wall, punched openings in a random pattern, but I'm not sure if I'm really following that language in some of the other areas where you have brick. It needs study, I don't know what the answer is. I'm bothered mostly by the punched opening in the brick; how do those relate to the brick or trellises? There's a lot of typology that could be a little bit simplified.
- This is really exciting. I saw 60s patterning, which to me is not timeless. This one we're excited by color, but study that some more. The lower level of that pattern seems more okay, the scale isn't so overwhelming. I look forward to seeing what you come back with.
- One request is to address how you're going to deal with the western sun in those rooms. We'll want to understand how, this being a LEED Gold building, how you're going to address that. Otherwise it's a nice project.