

# PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

July 27, 2026



PREPARED FOR THE PLAN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 4301 Cherokee Drive (10<sup>th</sup> Alder District – Alder Figueroa Cole)

**Application Type:** Demolition Permit and Conditional Use

**Legistar File ID #** [93594](#) and [93277](#)

**Prepared By:** Chris Wells, Planning Division  
Report includes comments from other City agencies, as noted.

**Reviewed By:** Kevin Firchow, AICP, Principal Planner

## Summary

**Applicant & Property Owner:** Scott Chehak, Madison Metropolitan School District; 545 W Dayton Street; Madison, WI 53703

**Contact:** Susan Bowersox; OPN Architects; 301 N Broom Street, Suite 100; Madison WI 53703

**Requested Actions:** There are four requests – a demolition permit and three conditional uses – before the Plan Commission:

- ID [93594](#) – Consideration of a demolition permit to demolish an institutional building at 4301 Cherokee Drive; and
- ID [93277](#) – Consideration of a conditional use in the Traditional Residential-Consistent 1 (TR-C1) District for a school, public or private; Consideration of a conditional use in the TR-C1 District for a building or structure exceeding 10,000 square feet in floor area; and Consideration of a conditional use for an increase of more than twenty (20) parking spaces that is also more than ten percent (10%) of the maximum parking requirement - all to allow construction of a new public school building to replace the existing Cherokee Heights Middle School building at 4301 Cherokee Drive.

**Proposal Summary:** The applicant is requesting four approvals – a demolition permit and three conditional uses – to allow construction of new middle school to, once fully constructed, replace the current one on the site. The applicant proposes to begin construction of the development in late 2026 and anticipates construction being completed in mid-2028. The existing school facility would be razed after that.

**Applicable Regulations & Standards:** This proposal is subject to the standards for Demolition Permits [MGO §28.185]. It is also subject to the standards for Conditional Uses [MGO §28.183(6)] as Table 28C-1 in MGO Section 28.032 states that in the Traditional Residential-Consistent 1 (TR-C1) District, a conditional use is required for both a 'School, Public or Private' and 'Building or structure with floor area exceeding 10,000 sq. ft. in floor area.' MGO Section 28.151 lists Supplemental Regulations for both uses. Furthermore, MGO Section 28.141(6)(b)(4) states "An increase of more than twenty (20) parking spaces that is also more than ten percent (10%) of the maximum parking requirement may be approved by conditional use." Lastly, the project requires Urban Design Commission approval as a public building pursuant to MGO Section 33.34(4)(d).

**Review Required By:** Urban Design Commission and Plan Commission.

## Summary Recommendations:

- The Planning Division recommends the Plan Commission find that the standards for demolition permits are found met and **approve** the request to raze the institutional building (the existing Cherokee Heights Middle School building) at 4301 Cherokee Drive; and

- The Planning Division recommends the Plan Commission find that the standards for conditional uses are found met and **approve** a three requests – 1) for a school, public or private in the Traditional Residential-Consistent 1 (TR-C1) District, and 2) for a building or structure exceeding 10,000 square feet in floor area in the TR-C1 District, and 3) for an increase of more than twenty (20) parking spaces that is also more than ten percent (10%) of the maximum parking requirement – to allow construction of a new public middle school building to replace the existing Cherokee Heights Middle School building at 4301 Cherokee Drive.

Approval of the project should be subject to input at the public hearing, and the recommended conditions beginning on **page 9** of this report.

## Background Information

**Parcel Location:** The 547,557-square-foot (16.6-acre) subject site is generally outlined by S. Midvale Boulevard to the west, Cherokee Drive to the north, single-family residences which front Waban Hill to the east, and Nakoma Road to the south. It is located within Alder District 10 (Ald. Figueroa Cole) and the Madison Metropolitan School District.

**Existing Conditions and Land Use:** The subject site is developed with the existing Cherokee Heights Middle School located in its northeast corner. A surface automobile parking lot is located along the school's east façade and takes access from Cherokee Drive. Aside from the surface parking lot and a paved play area just to the south of the school, the rest of the site is grass. The site is zoned Traditional Residential-Consistent 1 (TR-C1) District.

### Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning:

**North:** Across Cherokee Drive are single-family residences in the Traditional Residential-Consistent 1 (TR-C1) District;

**East:** Single-family residences in the TR-C1 District;

**South:** One- and four-unit residences, and an eight-unit condominium, all zoned Suburban Residential – Varied 1 (SR-V1) District. Across Nakoma Road are single-family residences in the TR-C1 District; and

**West:** Across S Midvale Boulevard are single-family residences in the TR-C1 District.

**Adopted Land Use Plan:** The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) identifies the subject site for Special Institutional (SI) uses, which it notes is used primarily to “*identify current or recommended locations for grade schools, colleges, the UW-Madison campus, and relatively large places of assembly and worship.*”

**Zoning Summary:** The site is zoned Traditional Residential-Consistent 1 (TR-C1) District.

| Requirements              | Required | Proposed      |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------|
| Lot Area (sq. ft.)        | 6,000    | 547,557       |
| Lot Width                 | 50 ft    | 610 ft        |
| Front Yard Setback        | 20 ft    | 228 ft        |
| Max. Front Yard Setback   | None     | 228 ft        |
| Side Yard Setback         | 10 ft    | 25 ft, 300 ft |
| Rear Yard Setback         | 35 ft    | 167 ft        |
| Maximum Lot Coverage      | 65%      | 34%           |
| Maximum Building Coverage | 50%      | 17%           |
| Maximum Building Height   | 35 ft    | 34.8 ft       |

| Site Design                        | Required                                                                                                                         | Proposed                        |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Number Parking Stalls              | 48                                                                                                                               | 85                              |
| Electric Vehicle Stalls            | 17                                                                                                                               | 16 (See Comment #35)            |
| Accessible Stalls                  | 4                                                                                                                                | 4                               |
| Loading                            | None                                                                                                                             | None                            |
| Number Bike Parking Stalls         | 120                                                                                                                              | 120 (See Comment #36)           |
| Landscaping and Screening          | Yes                                                                                                                              | Yes (See Comment #37)           |
| Lighting                           | Yes                                                                                                                              | Yes                             |
| Building Form and Design           | Yes                                                                                                                              | Civic or Institutional Building |
| <b>Other Critical Zoning Items</b> |                                                                                                                                  |                                 |
| Yes:                               | Urban Design (public building), Utility Easements                                                                                |                                 |
| No:                                | Historic District; Floodplain, Wetlands, Adjacent to Park, TOD Overlay, Barrier Free (ILHR 69), Wellhead Protection, TOD Overlay |                                 |

*Tables Prepared by Jacob Moskowitz, Assistant Zoning Administrator*

**Environmental Corridor Status:** The property is not located within a mapped environmental corridor.

**Public Utilities and Services:** The site is served by a full range of urban services. Metro Transit operates daily all-day transit service along Nakoma Road adjacent this property - with trips at least every 60 minutes (every 30 minutes or less during the day on weekdays).

## Project Description

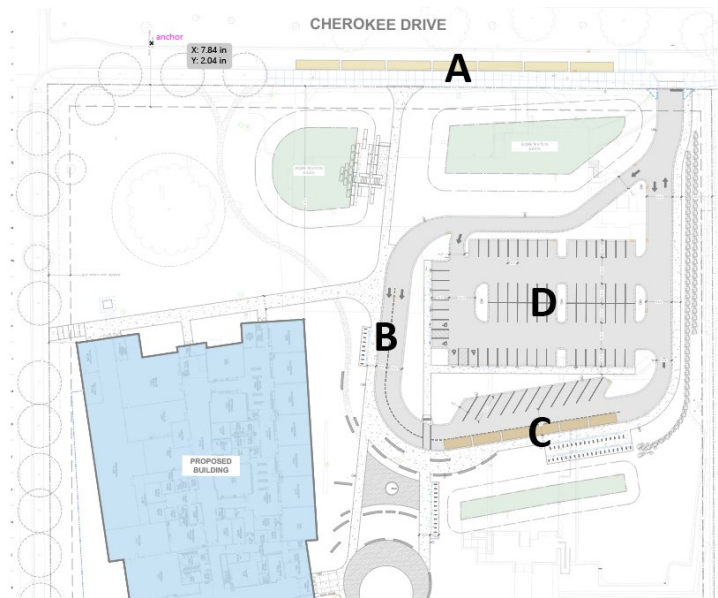
The applicant is requesting four approvals – a demolition permit and three conditional uses – to allow construction of new middle school to, once fully constructed, replace the current one on the site. The applicant proposes to begin construction of the development in late 2026 and anticipates construction being completed in mid-2028. The existing school facility would be razed after that.

Submitted materials note that the existing Cherokee Heights Middle School building, designed by Siberz, Purcell, Cuthbert Architects, was originally constructed in 1954, had a 5,000-square-foot addition constructed in 1969, and ADA (American with Disabilities Act) renovations undertaken in 2009.

Whereas the current building is located in the site's northeast corner, the new facility will be situated on the west half of the site, located centrally along the site's S Midvale Boulevard frontage (this will allow the existing facility to continue to be used until the new one is fully constructed.) The proposed building will be two levels with roughly 68,750 square feet on the lower level and 74,250 square feet on the upper level. The new facility will be larger than the current one, enabling the student capacity to increase from 532 to 600. The main entrance to the school will be centrally along the east façade with an additional entrance located centrally on the northern façade.

Regarding students and staff getting to and from the school, yellow school buses will stop along the south side of Cherokee Drive (this area is marked “A” in the graphic to the right). In the morning these buses will just drop the students off and then leave while in the afternoon they will typically queue and then load and leave 10 minutes after the bell time of the school. The drop off/pick up area for parents/guardians in personal vehicles is marked “B” in the graphic while “C” indicates the loading zone for Paratransit. Finally, the central parking lot, indicated by “D” in the graphic, is for staff and visitors.

A separate curb cut off S Midvale Boulevard, just south of the school, will be added for trash pickup, maintenance vehicles, and, as needed, fire trucks.



As for exterior materials, the lower floor façade will be clad with two shades of dark grey brick. For the upper floor façade, tan vertical composite metal wall panels with accents of wood-colored metal plank paneling will be used. However, for the gymnasium massing, i.e. the portion of the building’s second floor located at the southwest corner, cream-colored precast concrete paneling will be used.

Regarding changes to the site, on the northern half of the site, the large Oak tree in the northwest corner will be preserved and three bioretention basins will be added around the periphery of the pick up/drop off area. On the southern half of the site, a soccer field will be located along the site’s Nakoma Road frontage with a paved area with basketball hoops, four-square, and playground added just to the east. To take advantage of some of the natural grade drop south to north across the site, an outdoor amphitheater made of large stone blocks will be located in between the basketball courts and school building.

## Analysis

This proposal is subject to the standards for Demolition Permits [MGO §28.185]. It is also subject to the standards for Conditional Uses [MGO §28.183(6)] as Table 28C-1 in MGO Section 28.032 states that in the Traditional Residential-Consistent 1 (TR-C1) District, a conditional use is required for both a ‘School, Public or Private’ and ‘Building or structure with floor area exceeding 10,000 sq. ft. in floor area.’ MGO Section 28.151 lists Supplemental Regulations for both uses. Furthermore, MGO Section 28.141(6)(b)(4) states “An increase of more than twenty (20) parking spaces that is also more than ten percent (10%) of the maximum parking requirement may be approved by conditional use.” Lastly, the project requires Urban Design Commission approval as a public building pursuant to MGO Section 33.34(4)(d).

## Conformance with Adopted Plans

The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) identifies the subject site for Special Institutional (SI) uses, which it notes is used primarily to “identify current or recommended locations for grade schools, colleges, the UW-Madison campus, and relatively large places of assembly and worship.” The Comprehensive Plan goes on to note, for SI uses, “schools and places of assembly and worship should be located to provide convenient access to such facilities. Larger uses

*in particular should be located on or near an arterial or collector street, and be designed so that high volumes of traffic will not be drawn through local neighborhood streets. SI uses should be served by public transit, if feasible, and good bicycle and pedestrian access should be provided to and within the site. Accessing the site via biking and walking should be encouraged with site design elements such as placing the building close to the street and providing bicycle parking close to building entrances. SI uses may require buffering from adjoining uses. Large SI uses are often highly visible and should be designed to fit gracefully with, rather than dominate, their surroundings."*

Staff believe the proposal to replace the existing middle school with another, therefore continuing the school use on the site, is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Supplemental Regulations**

Supplemental Regulation for *Schools, Public and Private*:

- a) Where the use is conditional, an appropriate transition area between the use and adjacent property may be required, using landscaping, screening, and other site improvements consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

Staff believe that this condition is satisfied given the fact that the new building will be situated on the west half of the site, away from nearby residences. At its closest point, the new school will be roughly 145 feet from the residential properties located across S Midvale Boulevard, to the west, and roughly 190 feet from the four units to the south. That said, staff believe the transitions to the nearby residential across S Midvale Boulevard is adequately addressed given the considerable amount of landscaping that is proposed to be added along the S Midvale Boulevard frontage. As for the transitions to the adjacent residences to the south – both the four-unit at 1201 S Midvale Boulevard and the condominium at 4310 Nakoma Road – Staff note the existing mature landscaping located on the school property but along the property lines of these residential lots which will remain as is coupled with the roughly 30 feet of grade change from the southwest corner of the new school building up to these lots which will also remain as is.

Supplemental Regulations for *Buildings or Structures Exceeding Ten Thousand (10,000) Square Feet in Floor Area*.

- a) In any residential district, building floor area, bulk, height and massing may be limited as part of the conditional use approval in order to ensure compatibility with surrounding uses.
- b) In any residential district, an appropriate transition area between the use and adjacent property may be required, using landscaping, screening, and other site improvements consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

For the same reasons mentioned immediately above, Staff believe these requirements can be found satisfied.

### **Demolition Standards**

In February 2025, the Common Council adopted Ordinance 25-00010 (ID [86649](#)) to change the demolition review process and approval standards. When a demolition application is submitted, it is first reviewed by the Landmarks Commission. The Landmarks Commission assigns Category A, B, or C to each principal building. Category A buildings have historic value based on architectural significance, cultural significance, or historic significance. Category B buildings have historic value, but the building itself is not historically, architecturally or culturally significant. Category C buildings have no known historic value. The demolition of a Category C building may be approved by the Director of Building Inspection. The demolition of a Category A or B building requires action by the Plan Commission following a public hearing.

On July 6, 2026, the Landmarks Commission reviewed the demolition application for the existing Cherokee Heights Middle School building. It recommended a Category B finding *“related to the vernacular context of Madison’s mid-twentieth century built environment, and as the work/product of an architect of note (Siberz, Purcell, Cuthbert Architects), but the building itself is not historically, architecturally or culturally significant.”* The motion on the finding passed on a unanimous vote (see the [meeting report](#) for more information on the motion and deliberation). Full information on the Landmarks Commission review of the demolition may be found in legislative file ID [93594](#).

The Plan Commission shall not approve the demolition unless it finds that two approval standards are met.

Standard 1 states: *“Demolition of the existing building(s) is consistent with or will aid in the implementation of adopted plans or with the purpose statement of this section. The Plan Commission may consider how demolition and redevelopment of the property relates to the implementation of the City’s adopted plans.”*

Per the discussion in the preceding subsection of this report, staff believe the proposed project is consistent with the City’s adopted plans.

Standard 2 states: *“There are factors that are found to outweigh the public interest in preserving historic resources. Such a finding may include, but is not limited to:*

- i. The building is found to be in such a deteriorated condition that it is not structurally or economically feasible to preserve or restore it.*
- ii. If the building has historic value, the building has been so altered that it cannot convey its historical association or architectural significance.*
- iii. There is a structural or fire hazard, unlawful use of the property, public nuisance, or other public health and safety concern that supports demolition as provided in reports from the Madison Fire Department, Police Department, and/or Building Inspection Division.”*

Planning staff believes that the Plan Commission may find that standard 2 is met. Staff is unaware of any evidence that the two-story middle school is in deteriorated condition and further, that there are no known structural or fire hazards, unlawful uses, or public nuisances present on the property. Rather, the building is likely in a condition commensurate with its 72 years of use (it was originally constructed in 1954). In communications with staff, in regard to why the school district decided to build a new building rather than renovate the existing building, the applicant noted the following:

*“We conducted an initial study which found that the renovation costs would exceed the 60% threshold compared to the cost of rebuilding. Given that the existing building is currently too small and offers limited programming for the growing population, we need to expand capacity there. Given the need for increased capacity, larger student spaces generally, and failing mechanical systems requiring a full gut and replacement, it was more cost-effective to build new while ensuring we help existing classes at the old school without disrupting student learning experiences. If we renovated, it would take a minimum of two years and cause serious student disruption.”*

Given these points raised by the applicant – *the cost of renovation exceeding their threshold as compared to new construction, the increased student capacity, the larger student spaces generally, the updated mechanical systems, and the greatly reduced disruption to the students* – Staff therefore believes these factors could be found to outweigh the public interest in preserving the historic resource, which should be considered by the Plan Commission.



In approving a demolition permit, the Plan Commission may stipulate conditions and restrictions on the proposed building demolition as deemed necessary to promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the community, and to secure compliance with the standards of approval. Conditions may include plans to mitigate the loss of the building to include relocation, salvage of historic materials, adaptive reuse of portions of existing structures, interpretive installations at the site, or other creative mitigation measures. In its Category B finding, the Landmarks Commission recommended no conditions regarding reuse of or historic documentation of the existing Cherokee Heights Middle School building.

### Conditional Use Standards

The Plan Commission may not approve an application for a conditional use unless it can find that all of the standards found in Section 28.183(6)(a), Approval Standards for Conditional Uses, are met. That section states: *"The City Plan Commission shall not approve a conditional use without due consideration of the recommendations in the City of Madison Comprehensive Plan and any applicable, neighborhood, neighborhood development, or special area plan, including design guidelines adopted as supplements to these plans. No application for a conditional use shall be granted by the Plan Commission unless it finds that all of the [standards for approval in Section 28.183(6) are met]."*

Section 28.183(6), M.G.O. lists sixteen approval standards, of which not all are applicable to every conditional use. For this request, Conditional use standards 1–6 and 8 are applicable. Standards 7, 9, 10-16 do not apply. Staff believes that the Plan Commission can find standards are met and this report provides additional staff analysis regarding Standard 5:

Standard 5 states:

*"Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, internal circulation improvements for pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit and vehicles, parking supply (in cases with minimum parking requirements) and other necessary site improvements have been or are being provided."*

Staff note that Parking Staff are requiring a Transportation Demand Management Plan to be reviewed and approved as a condition of approval. Furthermore, as conditions of approval, the Traffic Engineering Division has requested a drop off, pick up, and parking plan along with an explanation of how these needs will be managed during construction, particularly during the demolition of the old school. They are also requiring a \$50,000 deposit to cover the cost of adding RRFBs (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) at Midvale Boulevard at Cherokee Drive as well as Driver Feedback Boards on Midvale Boulevard.

Regarding the increase in automobile parking proposed on site (85 stalls proposed compared to the roughly 50 stalls currently on the site), Staff note this roughly 35 percent increase is generally commensurate given the fact the number of school staff on site is also anticipated to increase at the new school by 30 (or 25 percent), to 120.

Regarding the continued access of the school from Cherokee Drive (rather than from a street classified as a collector or higher), Staff note that the Traffic Engineering Division is supportive of this access point and the Zoning Code was recently changed to remove such requirement for certain uses including public schools ([Legislative File 93403](#)).

## Urban Design Commission (UDC)

MGO Section 33.24(4)(d) states that the UDC shall approve plans for all buildings proposed to be built or expanded by the City and by any local governmental entity which has the power to levy taxes on property located within the City, which includes the school district. As such UDC is an approving body on this request.

At its meeting of July 15, 2026, the Urban Design Commission **granted initial approval** of the proposed new MMSD Cherokee Heights Middle School located at 4301 Cherokee Drive with the condition that the building design be revised to adjust the massing to incorporate additional articulation and modulation, including bringing up the base material or bringing down the top material to better balance the building proportions, and looking at the canopy and where it terminates and its height at the main entry.

Additional Information regarding the UDC's motion of initial approval is found under [Legislative File 92524](#) which includes the [UDC Staff Report](#) and the draft copy of the UDC Meeting Summary. A copy of the meeting summary can be found at the end of this report.

## Public Input

At the time of report writing, no public comments have been received.

## Conclusion

The Planning Division believes that the Plan Commission may find that the proposed development meets the standards for conditional use approval and the applicable supplemental regulations. The project's proposed use is a continuation of what is currently on the site and is consistent with the recommendation for the site of Special Institutional (SI) uses in the [Comprehensive Plan](#). Furthermore, Staff notes that the design has been reviewed by the Urban Design Commission who granted it initial approval at their September 17, 2025 meeting with only minor feedback.

During its review of the demolition of the institutional building, the Landmarks Commission found that the building has historic value *"related to the vernacular context of Madison's mid-twentieth century built environment, and as the work/product of an architect of note (Siberz, Purcell, Cuthbert Architects), but the building itself is not historically, architecturally or culturally significant"* – a Category B finding. The applicant has also laid out their reasoning for constructing a new school instead of renovating the existing – *the cost of renovation exceeding their threshold as compared to new construction, the increased student capacity, the larger student spaces generally, the updated mechanical systems, and the greatly reduced disruption to the students* – which. Taken together, Staff believes these factors could be found to outweigh the public interest in preserving the historic resource, which should be considered by the Plan Commission. Lastly, Staff note that the Landmarks Commission recommended no conditions regarding reuse of or historic documentation of the existing Cherokee Heights Middle School building.



## Recommendation

### Planning Division Recommendation (Contact Chris Wells, (608) 261-9135)

- The Planning Division recommends the Plan Commission find that the standards for demolition permits are found met and **approve** the request to raze the institutional building (the existing Cherokee Heights Middle School building) at 4301 Cherokee Drive; and
- The Planning Division recommends the Plan Commission find that the standards for conditional uses are found met and **approve** a three requests – 1) for a school, public or private in the Traditional Residential-Consistent 1 (TR-C1) District, and 2) for a building or structure exceeding 10,000 square feet in floor area in the TR-C1 District, and 3) for an increase of more than twenty (20) parking spaces that is also more than ten percent (10%) of the maximum parking requirement – to allow construction of a new public middle school building to replace the existing Cherokee Middle School building at 4301 Cherokee Drive.

Approval of the project should be subject to input at the public hearing, and the recommended conditions beginning below.

### **Recommended Conditions of Approval** Major/Non-Standard Conditions are Shaded. .

### Engineering Division (Main Office) (Contact Kathleen Kane, (608) 266-4098)

1. The property is closed with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) (#03-13-001541 Cherokee Heights Middle School) and has continuing obligations. Written approval from the WDNR is required prior to disturbing the existing barrier cap and residual soil contamination must be properly managed should it be excavated or removed. City Engineering will require a copy of WDNR approval prior to approving any site disturbance permits including demolition and/or grading. Submit any post-WDNR-closure environmental investigation documents to City Engineering. Any contaminated soil or water shall be handled and disposed of in accordance with all WDNR and Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) regulations. The developer shall provide all records pertaining to WDNR coordination, environmental investigations, and disposal activity to Environmental Review ([environmentalreview@cityofmadison.com](mailto:environmentalreview@cityofmadison.com)). Danielle Keller ([danielle.keller@wisconsin.gov](mailto:danielle.keller@wisconsin.gov), 608-419-6855) is the WDNR project manager for this site. Angie Wilcox-Hull ([awilcox-hull@cityofmadison.com](mailto:awilcox-hull@cityofmadison.com), 608-267-1986) is the hydrogeologist with the City and can support with any City-related questions.
2. This site will require a mix of redevelopment Stormwater management and new development stormwater management requirements.
3. Enter into a City / Developer agreement for the proposed public infrastructure improvements within the right- of-way. Agreement to be executed prior to sign off. Contact City Engineering to schedule the development and approval of the plans and agreement.
4. Construct sidewalk, terrace, curb and gutter, and pavement along Cherokee Drive per plans approved by the City Engineer.

5. Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) charges are due and payable prior to Engineering sign-off, unless otherwise collected with a Developer's / Subdivision Contract. Contact Mark Moder (608-261-9250) to obtain the final MMSD billing a minimum of two (2) working days prior to requesting City Engineering signoff. (MGO 16.23(9)(d)(4))
6. Obtain a permanent sewer plug permit for each existing sanitary sewer lateral serving a property that is not to be reused and a temporary sewer plug permit for each sewer lateral that is to be reused by the development. The procedures and fee schedule is available online at <http://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/permits.cfm>. (MGO CH 35.02(14))
7. Obtain a permit to plug each existing storm sewer. This permit application is available on line at <http://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/permits.cfm>. (MGO CH 37.05(7))
8. An Erosion Control Permit is required for this project. See Storm comments for permit specific details and requirements.
9. A Storm Water Management Report and Storm Water Management Permit is required for this project. See Storm comments for report and permit specific details and requirements.
10. A Storm Water Maintenance Agreement (SWMA) is required for this project. See Storm comments for agreement specific details and requirements.
11. This site appears to disturb over one (1) acre of land and requires a permit from the WDNR for stormwater management and erosion control. The City of Madison has been required by the WDNR to review projects for compliance with NR216 and NR-151 however a separate permit submittal is still required to the WDNR for this work. The City of Madison cannot issue our permit until concurrence is obtained from the WDNR via their NOI or WRAPP permit process. Contact Eric Rortvedt at 273-5612 of the WDNR to discuss this requirement. Information on this permit application is available on line: <http://dnr.wi.gov/Runoff/stormwater/constrformsinfo.htm>. The applicant is notified that the City of Madison is an approved agent of the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) and no separate submittal to this agency or CARPC is required for this project to proceed.
12. WDNR BRRS # 03-13-231614 Conney Property is also identified to be on the property. The site is closed without continuing obligations listed, but it is recommend you check in with Danielle Keller (WDNR project manager) to determine if there is residual contamination that would need to be managed. If contamination is encountered, follow all WDNR and DSPS regulations for proper reporting, handling, and disposal.
13. Revise the site plan to show all existing public sanitary sewer facilities in the project area as well as the size, invert elevation, and alignment of the proposed service. (POLICY)
14. Applicant shall provide projected wastewater flow calculations to Mark Moder at [mmoder@cityofmadison.com](mailto:mmoder@cityofmadison.com). Offsite sewer improvements by the developer may be required as a condition for development.
15. Revise the plans to show a proposed private internal drainage system on the site. Include the depths and locations of structures and the type of pipe to be used. (POLICY AND MGO 10.29)

16. This project falls in the area subject to increased erosion control enforcement as authorized by the fact that it is in a TMDL ZONE and therefore will be regulated to meet a higher standard.
17. This project will disturb 20,000 sf or more of land area and require an Erosion Control Plan. Please submit an 11" x 17" copy of an erosion control plan (pdf electronic copy preferred) to Megan Eberhardt (west) at [meberhardt@cityofmadison.com](mailto:meberhardt@cityofmadison.com), or Daniel Olivares (east) at [daolivares@cityofmadison.com](mailto:daolivares@cityofmadison.com), for approval.

Demonstrate compliance with Section 37.07 and 37.08 of the Madison General Ordinances regarding permissible soil loss rates. Include Universal Soil Loss Equation (USLE) computations for the construction period with the erosion control plan. Measures shall be implemented in order to maintain a soil loss rate below 5.0 tons per acre per year. The WDNR provided workbook to compute USLE rates can be found online at <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/stormwater/publications.html>

Complete weekly self-inspection of the erosion control practices and post these inspections to the City of Madison website - as required by Chapter 37 of the Madison General Ordinances.

18. Prior to approval, this project shall comply with Chapter 37 of the Madison General Ordinances regarding stormwater management. Specifically, this development is required to submit a Storm Water Management Permit application, associated permit fee, Stormwater Management Plan, and Storm Water Management Report to City Engineering. The Stormwater Management Permit application can be found on City Engineering's website at <http://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/Permits.cfm>.

The Storm Water Management Plan & Report shall include compliance with the following:

Report: Submit prior to plan sign-off, a stormwater management report stamped by a P.E. registered in the State of Wisconsin.

Electronic Data Files: Provide electronic copies of any stormwater management modeling or data files including SLAMM, RECARGA, TR-55, HYDROCAD, Sediment loading calculations, or any other electronic modeling or data files. If calculations are done by hand or are not available electronically, the hand copies or printed output shall be scanned to a PDF file and provided to City Engineering. (POLICY and MGO 37.09(2))

Rate Control New Development: Detain the 2, 5, 10, 100, & 200 - year storm events, matching post development rates to predevelopment rates and using the design storms identified in Madison General Ordinances Chapter 37.

Rate Control Redevelopment: By design detain the 10-year post construction design storm such that the peak discharge during this event is reduced 15% compared to the peak discharge from the 10-year design storm in the existing condition of the site. Further, the volumetric discharge leaving the post development site in the 10- year storm event shall be reduced by 5% compared to the volumetric discharge from the site in an existing condition during the 10-year storm event. These required rate and volume reductions shall be completed, using green infrastructure that captures at least the first 1/2 inch of rainfall over the total site impervious area. If additional stormwater controls are necessary beyond the first 1/2 inch of rainfall, either green or non-green infrastructure may be used.

Infiltration: Provide infiltration of 90% of the pre-development infiltration volume.

TSS New Development: Reduce TSS by 80% (control the 5-micron particle) off of newly developed areas compared to no controls.

TSS Redevelopment with TMDL: Reduce TSS by 80% off of the proposed development when compared with the existing site.

Oil/Grease Control: Treat the first 1/2 inch of runoff over the proposed parking facility and/or drive up window. 100-year Overflow: The applicant shall demonstrate that water can leave the site and reach the public ROW without impacting structures during a 100-year event storm. This analysis shall include reviewing overflow elevations and unintended storage occurring on site when the storm system has reached capacity.

Submit a draft Stormwater Management Maintenance Agreement (SWMA) for review and approval that covers inspection and maintenance requirements for any BMP used to meet stormwater management requirements on this project.

19. Submit, prior to plan sign-off but after all revisions have been completed, digital PDF files to the Engineering Division. Email PDF file transmissions are preferred to: [bstanley@cityofmadison.com](mailto:bstanley@cityofmadison.com) (East) or [ttroester@cityofmadison.com](mailto:ttroester@cityofmadison.com) (West).

**City Engineering – Mapping** (Contact Jeffrey Quamme, (608) 266-4097)

20. The Applicant shall Dedicate additional right of way in the Norwest corner of the parcel using a 25' radii fillet to accommodate future ramp needs. Provide the map and legal description to Jeff Quamme ([jqamme@cityofmadison.com](mailto:jrqamme@cityofmadison.com)) to set up a Real Estate Project to draft and administer the final conveyance document.
21. Add a note for the Rock Retaining Wall at the southwesterly corner of the site that it is subject to conditions per Document No. 991718.
22. The address of the new building is 4305 Cherokee Dr. The site plan shall reflect a proper street address of the property as reflected by official City of Madison Assessor's and Engineering Division records.

**Traffic Engineering Division** (Contact Bill Putnam, (608) 267-8713)

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 23. Applicant to provide \$50K deposit to cover cost of RRFBs on Midvale Boulevard at Cherokee Drive and Driver Feedback Boards on Midvale Boulevard. |
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24. The applicant shall submit one contiguous plan showing proposed conditions and one contiguous plan showing existing conditions for approval. The plan drawings shall be to engineering scale and include the following, when applicable: existing and proposed property lines; parcel addresses; all easements; vision triangles; pavement markings; signing; building placement; items in the terrace such as signs, street light poles, hydrants; surface types such as asphalt, concrete, grass, sidewalk; driveway approaches, including those adjacent to and across street from the project lot location; parking stall dimensions, including two (2) feet of vehicle overhang; drive aisle dimensions; semitrailer movement and vehicle routes; dimensions of radii; and percent of slope.

25. The Developer shall post a security deposit prior to the start of development. In the event that modifications need to be made to any City owned and/or maintained traffic signals, street lighting, signing, pavement marking and conduit/handholes, the Developer shall reimburse the City for all associated costs including engineering, labor and materials for both temporary and permanent installations.
26. The City Traffic Engineer may require public signing, marking and street lighting related to the development; the Developer shall be financially responsible for such signing, marking and street lighting.
27. All parking facility design shall conform to MGO standards, as set in section 10.08(6).
28. "Stop" signs shall be installed at a height of seven (7) feet from the bottom of the sign at all class III driveway approaches, including existing driveways, behind the property line and noted on the plan. All directional/regulatory signage and pavement markings on the site shall be shown and noted on the plan.
29. All pedestrian walkways adjacent parking stalls shall be 7 feet wide to accommodate vehicle overhang, signage and impediments to walkway movements. Any request for variance shall be submitted to and reviewed by City Traffic Engineering.
30. All bicycle parking adjacent pedestrian walkways shall have a 2 foot buffer zone to accommodate irregularly parked bicycles and/or bicycle trailers.
31. The applicant shall adhere to all vision triangle requirements as set in MGO 27.05 (No visual obstructions between the heights of 30 inches and 10 feet at a distance of 25 feet behind the property line at streets and 10 feet at driveways.). If applicant believes public safety can be maintained they shall apply for a waiver of MGO 27.05(2)(bb) - Vision Clearance Triangles at Intersections Corners. Approval or denial of the waiver shall be the determination of the City Traffic Engineer. Contact Jeremy Nash with Traffic Engineering at 608-266-6585 or [jnash@cityofmadison.com](mailto:jnash@cityofmadison.com) to begin waiver process.
32. No Public Access shall be allowed for proposed driveway on Midvale Boulevard. Coordinate access to drive with Madison Fire Department.
33. Provide drop off, pick up, and parking plan. Explain how these needs will be managed during construction, particularly during demo of old school.

**Parking Review** (Contact Trent W Schultz, (608) 246-5806)

34. The applicant shall receive final approval of a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan, as part of project resubmittal following Plan Commission and Urban Design Commission approval. TDM Plan review fees will be required as part of final site plan review sign off.

**Zoning Administrator** (Contact Jacob Moskowitz, (608) 266-4560)

35. Provide electric vehicle ready stalls per Section 28.141(8)(e) Electric Vehicle Charging Station Requirements. A minimum of 20% of the parking stalls (17 stalls) must be electric vehicle ready. Identify the locations of the electric vehicle ready stalls on the plans.

36. Submit a detail showing the model of bike rack to be installed.
37. Submit the landscape plan and landscape worksheet stamped by the registered landscape architect. Per Section 28.142(3) Landscape Plan and Design Standards, landscape plans for zoning lots greater than ten thousand (10,000) square feet in size must be prepared by a registered landscape architect.
38. As proposed, rooftop mechanical equipment will not be visible to view. Upon installation, if rooftop mechanical equipment is visible, screening will be required per Section 28.142(9)(d).

**Forestry Review** (Contact Zachary Eckberg, (608) 266-4816)

39. All proposed street tree removals within the right of way shall be reviewed by City Forestry before the Plan Commission meeting. Street tree removals require approval and a tree removal permit issued by City Forestry. Any street tree removals requested after the development plan is approved by the Plan Commission or the Board of Public Works and City Forestry will require a minimum of a 72-hour review period which shall include the notification of the Alderperson within who's district is affected by the street tree removal(s) prior to a tree removal permit being issued. Add as a note on the street tree plan set.
40. City Forestry will issue a street tree removal permit for (X) tree(s) (dbh) diameter (variety) tree due to (reason) at (location). The Contractor shall contact City Forestry at (608)266-4816 to obtain permit. Add as a note on both the demolition and street tree plan set.
41. Contractor shall take precautions during construction to not disfigure, scar, or impair the health of any street tree. Contractor shall operate equipment in a manner as to not damage the branches of the street tree(s). This may require using smaller equipment and loading and unloading materials in a designated space away from trees on the construction site. Any damage or injury to existing street trees (either above or below ground) shall be reported immediately to City Forestry at (608) 266-4816. Penalties and remediation shall be required. Add as a note on the site, grading, utility, demolition, and street tree plan set.
42. As defined by the Section 107.13 of City of Madison Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction: No excavation is permitted within 5 feet of the trunk of the street tree or when cutting roots over 3 inches in diameter. If excavation is necessary, the Contractor shall contact Madison City Forestry at (608) 266-4816 prior to excavation. City of Madison Forestry personnel shall assess the impact to the tree and to its root system prior to work commencing. Tree protection specifications can be found on the following website: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/business/pw/specs.cfm> Add as a note on the site, grading, utility, demolition and street tree plan sets.
43. Section 107.13(g) of City of Madison Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction (website: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/business/pw/specs.cfm>) addresses soil compaction near street trees and shall be followed by Contractor. The storage of parked vehicles, construction equipment, building materials, refuse, excavated spoils or dumping of poisonous materials on or around trees and roots within five (5) feet of the tree or within the protection zone is prohibited. Add as a note on both the site and street tree plan sets.

44. On this project, street tree protection zone fencing is required. The fencing shall be erected before the demolition, grading or construction begins. The fence shall include the entire width of terrace and, extend at least 5 feet on both sides of the outside edge of the tree trunk. Do not remove the fencing to allow for deliveries or equipment access through the tree protection zone. Add as a note on both the site and street tree plan sets.
45. Street tree pruning shall be coordinated with City Forestry at a minimum of two weeks prior to the start of construction for this project. Contact City Forestry at (608)266-4816. All pruning shall follow the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A300 - Part 1 Standards for pruning. Add as a note on both the site and street plan sets.
46. The Developer shall post a security deposit prior to the start of the development to be collected by City Engineering as part of the Developers Agreement. In the event that street trees are damaged during the construction process, City Forestry will draw from this deposit for damages incurred.
47. Additional street trees are needed for this project. Tree planting specifications can be found in section 209 of City of Madison Standard Specifications for Public Works Construction (website: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/business/pw/specs.cfm>) - All street tree planting locations and tree species within the right of way shall be determined by City Forestry. A landscape plan and street tree planting plan shall be submitted in PDF format to City Forestry for approval of planting locations within the right of way and tree species. All available street tree planting locations shall be planted within the project boundaries. Add following note on both the landscape and street tree plan sets: At least one week prior to street tree planting, Contractor shall contact City Forestry at (608) 266-4816 to schedule inspection and approval of nursery tree stock and review planting specifications with the landscaper.
48. On this project, the installation of a pavement support system (Silva Cell®, GreenBlue® or equivalent as approved by city) surrounding tree grate locations is required where the terrace is concrete. The Contractor shall contact City Forestry at (608) 266-4816 to identify and locate underground conflicts (utilities, vaults, conduit) or other underground obstructions and determine grate locations before support system installation. Add as a note on both the site and street tree plan set.
49. No later than five business days prior to forming concrete and constructing tree grate sites, the Contractor shall contact City Forestry at (608) 266-4816 to identify and locate underground conflicts (utilities, vaults, conduit) or other underground obstructions and determine grate locations. The Contractor will be required to obtain the grate, matching frame and/or tree guard. Tree grate type and matching frame: Neenah 4x8 (R-8815-A). Tree guard Neenah (R-8501-4818). Add as a note on both the landscape and street tree plan set.

**Water Utility** (Contact Jeff Belshaw, (608) 261-9835)

50. The Madison Water Utility shall be notified to remove the water meter at least two working days prior to demolition. Contact the Water Utility Meter Department at (608) 266-4765 to schedule the meter removal appointment.



51. A Water Service Application Form and fees must be submitted before connecting to the existing water system. Provide at least two working days notice between the application submittal and the requested installation or inspection appointment. Application materials are available on the Water Utility's Plumbers & Contractors website (<http://www.cityofmadison.com/water/plumbers-contractors>), otherwise they may be obtained from the Water Utility Main Office at 119 E Olin Ave. A licensed plumber signature is required on all water service applications. For new or replacement services, the property owner or authorized agent is also required to sign the application. A Water Meter Application Form will subsequently be required to size & obtain a water meter establish a Water Utility customer account and/or establish a Water Utility fire service account. If you have questions regarding water service applications, please contact Madison Water Utility at (608) 266-4646.

**Metro Transit** (Contact Timothy Sobota, (608) 261-4289)

52. In coordination with any public works improvements, the applicant shall maintain or replace the concrete boarding pad surface at the existing Metro bus stop on the east side of Midvale Boulevard, south of Cherokee Drive.
53. The applicant shall include the location of these transit amenities on the final documents filed with their redevelopment permit application so that Metro Transit may review the design.

*The Planning Division, Fire Department, Parks Division, and Assessor's Office have reviewed this request and recommended no conditions of approval.*

## URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION MEETING REPORT

July 5, 2026



**Agenda Item #:** 6

**Project Title:** 4301 Cherokee Drive - Public Building for MMSD Cherokee Middle School. (District 10)

**Legistar File ID #:** 92524

**Members Present:** Shane Bernau, Chair; Rafeeq Asad, Anina Mbilinyi, Davy Mayer, Nicholas Hellrood

**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

### Summary

At its meeting of July 15, 2026, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL** of a public building located at 4301 Cherokee Drive for Cherokee Heights Middle School. Registered and speaking in support was Susan Bowersox. Registered in opposition but not wishing to speak was Nicholas Davies. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Kevin Yeska, and Matt Haase.

#### Summary of Commission Discussion and Questions:

The Commission talked about tightening up the bioretention edges, allowing for more recreation/recess space. Could the overall footprint of the pond be reduced to incorporate steeper terraced walls? The applicant responded understanding the vision, but noted limitations with using all of the stone on the amphitheater, as well as the safety factor of introducing a wall adjacent to a pond.

The Commission inquired about the material at the top; it is light colored aluminum composite panel, utilizing the metal panels in a way to add the delineation, how you add reveals and projections in terms of how they're installed. The Commission asked about consideration of various colors to help further emphasize that. The applicant noted there are sunscreens creating a rhythm, with accent panels above the windows to tie in the variation. The light color panel finishes are varying to help with that presentation, tied back to the chimney swifts.

The Commission commented on the heaviness of the building the way the floors are expressed, making it look less contemporary or modern. That proportion of the two materials, the heavy brick and thickness of that metal panel, you could play with that top proportion to get a less mansard like roof. Like the application of the curves, and if it does have various sheens and finishes, that will help it more. The prow of the brick gives it a more lid like aesthetic. The applicant noted that the interior of the building plays out in how the architecture is expressed.

The Commission thought many of their informational comments had been addressed.

The Commission inquired about the hinge point at the main entry, creating some space at the southwest corner of the site but taking away space from the southeast where you have the outdoor programming and recreation. What went into that decision making to hinge the building in that way? The applicant replied that the main concerns heard were about the position and relationship to Midvale Boulevard, and to create more of a buffer as much as possible. They also designed the corridor and glazing so that they align with the heritage oak, to emphasize those vista points within the building. They are also managing the topography on the site, to work through the grades with sidewalks, pathways, and access points.

The Commission commented that in thinking about safety, the zoning required shrub quantity needs to be rethought, to make sure there is 2-9 or 3-10 foot open zone. Those species are pretty large and will occupy that middle space which you don't want at a school.

The Commission discussed some remaining concern with the massing and placement on the site. They appreciated accommodating a lot of the things talked about at informational, there are great improvements in this plan: moving the trash and service function where it exists on the site, much better consolidated outdoor play area, the use of stone around the main entry, the materiality of the amphitheater. Make sure there aren't dead areas on the landscaping where people trample with their bikes.

Commissioner Asad asked others their opinions on his comments of massing, the upper level, and the mansard roof look. Commissioner Hellrood replied he did like the movement on the upper portion of the building, with the lines mimicking the chimney swift movements, but that personally it didn't really change the impact of the building. The lack of comments is more so not really having a strong opinion on this.

The Commission noted that the entry is a little bit of a missed opportunity, the canopy could be more dynamic and be more dramatic to draw you in.

## Action

On a motion by Asad, seconded by Hellrood, the Urban Design Commission **GRANTED INITIAL APPROVAL**, with the following condition:

- The building design shall be revised to adjust the massing to incorporate additional articulation and modulation, including bringing up the base material or bringing down the top material to better balance the building proportions, and looking at the canopy and where it terminates and its height at the main entry.

The motion was passed on a unanimous vote of (4-0).