



Project Address: 5555 Odana Road & 5534 Medical Circle

Application Type: Informational Presentation for a New Mixed-Use Building in Urban Design District 3
UDC will be an Approving Body

Legistar File ID #: [89886](#)

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Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Nick Orthmann, Bear Development, LLC | BPH, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is proposing the construction of a mixed-use development comprised of two buildings (one five and one six stories), 230 residential units and 7,670 square feet of retail. The development will be served by surface and structured parking.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **approving body** on this request. The site is located in Urban Design District 3 ("UDD 4"), 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\(10\)](#).

Adopted Plans: The project site is located in the West Area Plan planning area (the Plan) planning area and is recommended for both Neighborhood Mixed use and Employment land uses. The Plan includes design guidelines for the redevelopment of areas recommended for mixed use, employment, and medium and high density residential, including those that speak to:

- Minimizing setbacks to create a consistent, engaging, and walkable street frontage,
- Incorporating changes in plane where materials transition,
- Minimizing blank walls, incorporating design elements to enhance the visual and pedestrian character of the street,
- Maintaining a positive building orientation to the street by locating main entrances towards the street and locating parking behind the building, and
- Encourage active uses at the ground level, including outdoor patios, dining, awnings, and display windows.

Zoning Related Information: The project site is zoned Commercial Corridor-Transitional (CC-T). Within the mixed-use and commercial zoning districts there are general provisions related to building and site design that are intended to foster high-quality development. These standards are outlined in [Section 28.060](#), including those that speak to building and entrance orientation, façade articulation, door and window openings, and building materials. Staff note that ultimately the Zoning Administrator will determine compliance with the Zoning Code requirements. A complete Zoning review will be conducted as part of the Site Plan Review process.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommends that the UDC provide feedback on the development proposal regarding the aforementioned standards as it relates to the design considerations noted below.

- **Building Design and Composition.** As noted in the UDD 3 guidelines and requirements, contemporary architecture shall be the goal of the district; buildings should be designed with a sensitivity to context and the intended character of the district, utilize four-sided architecture, and minimize blank walls.

As shown on the elevation drawings, Building A on the north side of the project site fronting on Odana Road is subject to significant change in topography resulting in an increasing exposure of the garage wall as you move south across the site. Consideration should be given to design and detailing of these garage walls, including screening/softening with landscape, as well as their overall integration with the larger architectural design and composition (i.e., creating a cohesive 'base', materials, alignment and sizes of openings with those on upper floors, opening detailing, etc.).

Building B, which is situated on the relatively flat south side of the project site, fronts on Medical Circle. As indicated by the floor plans, there is a large commercial space on the ground floor of this building, however there does not appear to be a strong orientation to the street, including pedestrian connectivity, active entries, outdoor space, etc. Consideration should be given to incorporating design elements to improve the street orientation of this building, for not only the commercial space, but also the residential, including but not limited to active entries, stoops, outdoor amenity space, pedestrian connectivity, employ architectural design feature to assist in differentiating commercial from residential uses and entries, etc.

- **Materials.** UDD 3 guidelines and requirements speak to materials being durable, low maintenance and contextually appropriate and state that metal shall not be used as an exterior material for buildings, except as an integral part of a design of exceptional merit.

As noted on the elevation drawings, the material palette is comprised of split face CMU, brick veneer, and composite lap siding and panel. Staff requests the Commission's feedback and findings related to the proposed materials.

Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the proposed material palette, especially as it relates to the use of horizontal lap siding and the UDD 3 requirements that speak to appropriateness of materials as it relates to enriching the contemporary design goals of the district, site context and building scale and whether a larger format panel would be more appropriate.

- **Landscape.** UDD 3 Landscape guidelines and requirements generally speak to designing landscape to be both functional and aesthetically pleasing, including screening blank walls and parking areas, framing views, softening hardscape areas, incorporating variety in both planting design and species selections, etc. Staff requests the UDC review the conceptual site/landscape plans and provide feedback, especially as it relates to providing year-round color, texture, as well as screening of exposed garage walls, particularly the east and west elevations of Building A, views of the parking area from the W Beltline Hwy and Medical Circle, providing adequate transitions/buffers, and softening hardscape areas, including pedestrian pathways.
- **Site Planning Considerations.** Recognizing that the project site is located in a mixed use area and provides a thru-block connection and is cross connected with other parcels, consideration should be given to the design and layout of both the parking, as well as both internal and external pedestrian connectivity. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the following site planning considerations.
 - Surface Parking Layout. As indicated on the site plan, the project site will be served by a through-lot access drive and multiple surface parking areas. Consideration should be given to the design of the parking area and access drive, including utilizing more of a "complete street" design character with an alternate parking configuration (i.e., parallel parking or angled parking) to limit head light glare into residential units that are oriented towards the parking area and reduce vehicle overhangs into the pedestrian pathways, detached sidewalks with terraces or wider sidewalks to accommodate both

pedestrian circulation and vehicle overhang, utilizing a combination of compact and standard stall sizes which could result in less paving and more landscape or open space, and/or providing enhanced pedestrian amenities (striped crossings or alternative paving, benches, wider sidewalks, etc.)

- Pedestrian Connectivity. Given the project site location in an area that mixed use and with shared parking between adjacent uses, there will be a high level of pedestrian activity. As such, consideration should be given to both internal, as well as external connectivity, including providing a continuous through-site pedestrian pathway, as well as individual unit connections to the street and amenity spaces.