



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 121 E Wilson Street
Application Type: New Mixed-Use Residential/Commercial Building in UMX Zoning Informational Presentation
Legistar File ID #: [71621](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Dan Kennelly, Quad Capital Partners | 121 E. Wilson Investors, LLC

Project Description: The applicant is providing an Informational Presentation for a proposed 14-story mixed-use residential and commercial building. The project would involve the demolition of the existing 65,000 square foot Lake Terrace office building, as well as a rezoning from Urban Mixed Use (UMX) to Downtown Core (DC) District.

Approval Standards: The Urban Design Commission (UDC) will be an **advisory** body on this request. Section [28.076\(b\)](#) includes the related design review requirements which state that: *"All new buildings that are greater than twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet or that have more than four stories shall obtain Conditional Use approval. In addition, the UDC shall review such projects for conformity to the design standards in [Sec. 28.071\(3\)](#) and the [Downtown Urban Design Guidelines](#) and shall report its findings to the Plan Commission."*

Related Zoning Information: The property is zoned Urban Mixed-Use (UMX). The Planning Division understands that the proposed development is considered a conditional use under the Zoning Code. In addition, the Capital View Preservation Limit will also apply to the proposed development. As noted in the Zoning Code, the maximum ground story height is 18 feet, minimum 12 feet, and the maximum story height for upper stories is 14 feet. The proposed building appears to be consistent with these requirements.

Both the UMX and DC zoning districts also outline design standards that are applicable to all new buildings. As a reference, the design related zoning standards outlined in the UMX and DC zone districts are included as an attachment to this report, including, but not limited to those related to building entrance orientation, façade articulation, height, fenestration, and materials.

Design-Related Plan Recommendations: The project site is located within the [Downtown Plan](#) planning area. As such development on the project site is subject to the [Downtown Urban Design Guidelines](#). As noted in the Downtown Plan, the maximum recommended height is up to the Capital View Preservation Limit.

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommends that the UDC provide feedback on the development proposal regarding the aforementioned standards related to the items noted below. As part of this review, staff recommends consideration be given to the following:

- **Building Height.** As noted above, the Capital View Preservation Limits will apply to the project site. Based on the information provided, the proposed building **does** appear to meet those limitations. Overall building height is measured from grade to the top of the parapet wall, which appears to be a few inches shy of the maximum height. Provided the data is correctly represented, the maximum permitted height that would be permitted is shown as CVPH on the building section plan.

Limited projections and elevator overruns above this height limit are only allowed with Conditional Use approval and staff has urged the applicant to explore solutions that eliminate or minimize such projections. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the overall building height, and the rooftop mechanical in excess of the Capital View Preservation Limit.

- **Building Design and Composition.** Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the overall building composition as it relates to the design guidelines, including those that speak to proportions and articulation, balancing vertical/horizontal proportions, especially at the pedestrian level along the street, size and rhythm of windows, creating positive termination at the top of the building, etc.
- **Long Views.** Due to the prominence of this site from Lake Monona and John Nolen Drive, consideration should be given to the composition of the highly visible rear façade as part of the overall cityscape. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the proposed treatment of the blank wall of the structured parking.
- **Materials.** The building material palette primarily consists of a metal panel system and masonry. Staff notes the building material standards per the UMX and DC zone districts, footnote E, which states that: *"Metal panels shall be used in conjunction with a palette of materials; shall be a heavy gauge, non-reflective metal."* As proposed, while the proposed metal panel is part of a palette of materials, additional information will need to be submitted to ensure that it is not reflective and that it will meet the Zoning Code standard. Staff requests the Commission provide feedback on the proposed material palette and composition.
- **Pedestrian Plaza Design Elements.** As noted on the plans, a pedestrian plaza is proposed at the ground level. Staff requests the Commission's feedback on the design elements contributing to the successful activation of the space, including:
 - Sign type (wall, above canopy, and projecting), and incorporating clear sign areas into the overall architectural design,
 - Raised and sunken planters and plantings, and
 - Lighting.

28.076 URBAN MIXED-USE (UMX) DISTRICT.

(1) Statement of Purpose .

This district is intended to provide opportunities for high-density residential and office uses in combination with limited retail and service uses designed to serve the immediate surroundings.

(2) Permitted and Conditional Uses .

See Table 28E-2 for a complete list of allowed uses within the downtown and urban districts.

(3) Dimensional Standards .

Standards represent minimums unless otherwise noted. Dimensions are in feet unless otherwise noted.

Urban Mixed-Use District	
Lot area (sq. ft.)	3,000
Lot width	30
Minimum front yard setback	Nonresidential or mixed-use buildings: 0' or 5' 0' if the distance between the curb and property line is equal to or greater than 15' or shown on the Setback Exceptions Map. A no-build easement may be used to achieve the 15' distance. 5' if the distance between the curb and property line is less than 15'. See (a) below and Downtown Setback Map and Setback Exceptions Map. Residential buildings: 5' See (a) below and Downtown Setback Map
Maximum front yard setback	10 See (a) below and Downtown Setback Map
Side yard setback	0' or 5' 0' if the distance between the curb and property line is equal to or greater than 15' or shown on the Setback Exceptions Map. A no-build easement may be used to achieve the 15' distance. 5' if the distance between the curb and property line is less than 15'. See (a) below and Downtown Setback Map and Setback Exceptions Map.
Rear yard setback	10 See (b) below
Maximum lot coverage	90%
Minimum height	2 Stories
Maximum height	See Downtown Height Map
Stepback	See Downtown Stepback Map
Usable open space	10 sq. ft. per bedroom See (c) below

(Am. by ORD-19-00089 , 12-12-19; Am. by ORD-21-00028 , 3-30-21, Eff. 4-9-21)

- (a) Specific front yard setbacks may be designated on the zoning map and may be designated as a specific location (build to line), a minimum, or a range.

-
- (b) Underground parking may extend into the rear yard setback if it is located completely below pre-construction existing grade or under a slope of no greater than one (1) to three (3) feet to the lot line and is completely covered by landscape. (Am. by ORD-16-00051, 5-25-16)
- (c) Usable open space may take the form of at-grade open space, porches, balconies, roof decks, green roofs or other above-ground amenities.
- (4) Design Review.
- Design review for all buildings and structures shall be as follows:
- (a) Minor exterior changes or additions may be approved by the Director of the Department of Planning, Community, and Economic Development if he/she determines that the changes or additions are compatible with the existing design or consistent with the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines.
- (b) All new buildings and additions that are less than twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet and are not approved pursuant to (a) above, as well as all major exterior alterations to any building shall be approved by the Urban Design Commission based on the design standards in Sec. 28.071(3), if applicable, and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines. The applicant or the Alderperson of the District in which the use is located may appeal the decision of the Urban Design Commission to the Plan Commission.
- (c) All new buildings and additions greater than twenty thousand (20,000) square feet or that have more than four (4) stories shall obtain conditional use approval. In addition, the Urban Design Commission shall review such projects for conformity to the design standards in Sec. 28.071(3), if applicable, and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines and shall report its findings to the Plan Commission.
- (d) Class 2 Collocations and Radio Broadcast Service Facilities are permitted uses and are not subject to design review. They are subject to review as provided in Sections 28.143 and 28.148. See Wis. Stat. §§ 66.0404(3)(a)1 and (4)(gm) and 66.0406 (2013) (Cr. by ORD-13-00189, 11-26-13)
- (5) Alterations to Approved Designs.
- For buildings approved pursuant to (b) or (c) above, the Director of the Department of Planning, Community and Economic Development may approve minor alterations or additions if he/she determines that such alterations or additions are consistent with Sec. 28.071(3), if applicable, the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, and the previously approved design.
- (6) Site Standards: New and Existing Development.
- (a) All business activities shall be conducted within completely enclosed buildings except:
1. Off-street parking and off-street loading.
 2. Outdoor display and outdoor storage.
 3. Vending machines.
 4. Outdoor eating, cooking, and service areas associated with food and beverage establishments. (Am. by ORD-13-00178, 10-23-13)
 5. Bicycle-sharing facilities.
 6. Auto service stations.
 7. Agricultural activities.
 8. Temporary outdoor events.

-
9. Solar energy systems and wind energy systems.
 10. Walk-up service windows.
 11. Yard sales.
 12. Composting.
 13. Keeping of chickens and keeping of honeybees.
 14. Outdoor recreation.
 15. Vehicle access sales and service windows.
 16. Farmers market.

28.074 - DOWNTOWN CORE DISTRICT.

(1) Statement of Purpose.

The DC District is established to recognize the Capitol Square, the State Street corridor, and surrounding properties as the center of governmental, office, educational, cultural, specialty retail and recreational activities for the City and the region. Residential uses are appropriate in some locations or in combination with other uses. This district is intended to allow intensive development with high-quality architecture and urban design.

(2) Permitted and Conditional Uses.

See Table 28E-2 for a complete list of allowed uses within the downtown and urban districts.

(3) Dimensional Standards.

Standards represent minimums unless otherwise noted. Dimensions are in feet unless otherwise noted.

Downtown Core District	
Lot area (sq. ft.)	No minimum
Minimum front yard setback	0 See (a) below
Maximum front yard setback	Buildings facing State Street, King Street or Capitol Square: 5 See (a) below
Side yard setback	The first two (2) stories of one side of all buildings: 0 See (a) below
Rear yard setback	0
Minimum height	2 Stories
Maximum height	See Downtown Height Map
Stepback	See Downtown Stepback Map

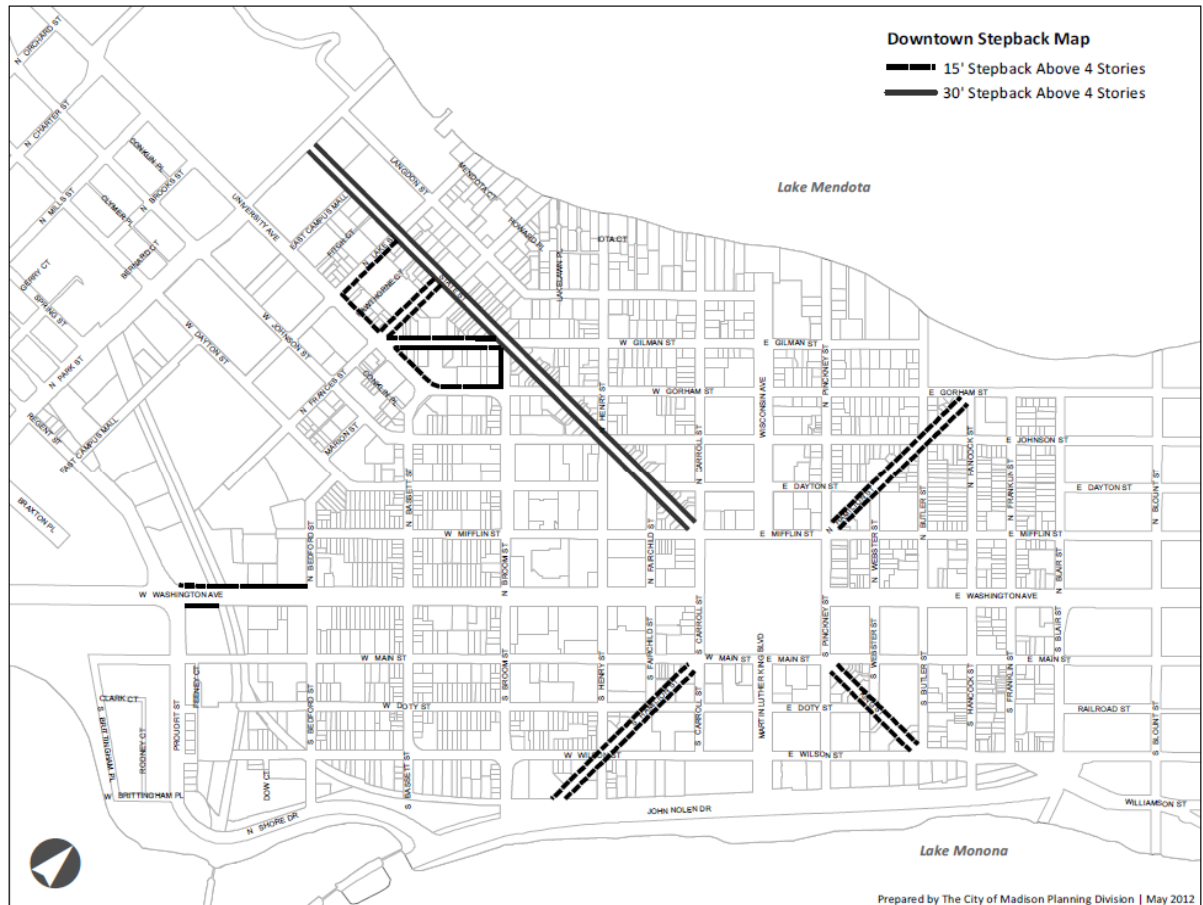
(a) Specific front and/or side yard setbacks may be designated on the zoning map and may be designated as a specific location (build to line), a minimum, or a range.

(4) Design Review.

Design review for all buildings and structures shall be as follows:

- (a) Minor exterior changes or additions may be approved by the Director of the Department of Planning, Community, and Economic Development if he/she determines that the changes or additions are compatible with the existing design or consistent with the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines.
 - (b) All new buildings and additions that are less than twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet and are not approved pursuant to (a) above, as well as all major exterior alterations to any building shall be approved by the Urban Design Commission based on the design standards in Sec. 28.071(3), if applicable, and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines. The applicant or the Alderperson of the District in which the use is located may appeal the decision of the Urban Design Commission to the Plan Commission.
 - (c) All new buildings and additions greater than twenty thousand (20,000) square feet or that have more than four (4) stories shall obtain conditional use approval. In addition, the Urban Design Commission shall review such projects for conformity to the design standards in Sec. 28.071(3), if applicable, and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines and shall report its findings to the Plan Commission.
 - (d) Class 2 Collocations and Radio Broadcast Service Facilities are permitted uses and are not subject to design review. They are subject to review as provided in Sections 28.143 and 28.148. See Wis. Stat. §§ 66.0404(3)(a)1 and (4)(gm) and 66.0406 (2013) (Cr. by ORD-13-00189, 11-26-13)
- (5) Alterations to Approved Designs .
- For buildings approved pursuant to (b) or (c) above, the Director of the Department of Planning, Community and Economic Development may approve minor alterations or additions if he/she determines that such alterations or additions are consistent with Sec. 28.071(3), if applicable, the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, and the previously approved design.
- (6) Site Standards: New and Existing Development .
- (a) All business activities shall be conducted within completely enclosed buildings except:
 - 1. Off-street parking and off-street loading.
 - 2. Outdoor display and outdoor storage.
 - 3. Vending machines.
 - 4. Outdoor eating, cooking, and service areas associated with food and beverage establishments. (Am. by ORD-13-00178, 10-23-13)
 - 5. Bicycle-sharing facilities.
 - 6. Auto service stations.
 - 7. Agricultural activities.
 - 8. Temporary outdoor events.
 - 9. Solar energy systems and wind energy systems.
 - 10. Walk-up service windows.
 - 11. Yard sales.
 - 12. Composting.
 - 13. Keeping of chickens and keeping of honeybees.
 - 14. Outdoor recreation.
 - 15. Vehicle access sales and service windows.
 - 16. Farmers market.

(c) Downtown Stepback Map.



(3) Design Standards.

The following standards are applicable to all new buildings and additions, within any ten- (10) year period, exceeding fifty percent (50%) of existing building's floor area for non-residential buildings, mixed-use buildings, lodging houses, and residential buildings with 8 or more dwelling units.

(a) Parking.

1. Parking shall be located in parking structures, underground, or in surface parking lots behind principal buildings. Parking structures shall be designed with liner buildings or with ground floor office or retail uses along all street-facing facades.
2. For corner lots or through lots, rear yard surface parking areas abutting any street frontage are limited to fifty percent (50%) of that frontage, and shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet from the street property line.
3. Parking garage openings visible from the sidewalk shall have a clear maximum height of sixteen (16) feet and a maximum width of twenty-two (22) feet. Garage doors or gates shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet from the front property line. Doors to freight loading bays are exempt from this requirement.
4. No doors or building openings providing motor vehicle access to structured parking or loading facilities shall face State Street, King Street, or the Capitol Square.

(b) Entrance Orientation.

1. Primary building entrances on all new buildings shall be oriented to the primary abutting public street and have a functional door.
2. Additional secondary entrances may be oriented to a secondary street or parking area.
3. Entries shall be clearly visible and identifiable from the street, and delineated with elements such as roof overhangs, recessed entries, landscaping, or similar design features.
4. Within ten (10) feet of a block corner, the facade may be set back to form a corner entry.

(c) Facade Articulation.

1. The facades of new buildings more than forty (40) feet in width shall be divided into smaller vertical intervals through techniques including but not limited to the following:
 - a. Facade modulation, step backs, or extending forward of a portion of the facade.
 - b. Vertical divisions using different textures, materials, or colors of materials.
 - c. Division into multiple storefronts, with separate display windows and entrances.
 - d. Variation in roof lines to reinforce the modulation or vertical intervals.
 - e. Arcades, awnings, window bays, arched windows, and balconies to reinforce the vertical intervals.

(d) Story Heights and Treatment.

1. For all buildings, the maximum ground story height is eighteen (18) feet, measured from the sidewalk to the second story floor. An atrium that exceeds eighteen (18) feet will be considered more than one (1) story.
2. Upper stories shall not exceed fourteen (14) feet floor to floor.
3. For all buildings, the minimum ground story height is twelve (12) feet, measured from the sidewalk to the second story floor.
4. For non-residential uses, the average ground story floor elevation shall not be lower than the front sidewalk elevation nor higher than eighteen (18) inches above the sidewalk elevation.
5. For ground-story residential uses, landscaping, steps, porches, grade changes, and low ornamental fences or walls or similar treatments shall be located between the sidewalk and the front door to create a private yard area.

(e) Door and Window Openings.

1. For street-facing facades with ground story non-residential uses, the ground story door and window openings shall comprise a minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the facade area.
2. For street-facing facades with ground story residential uses, ground story openings shall comprise a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the facade area.
3. For all buildings, upper story openings shall comprise a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the facade area per story.
4. Garage doors and opaque service doors shall not count toward the above requirements.
5. Glass on all windows and doors shall be clear or slightly tinted, allowing views into and out of the interior. Spandrel glass may be used on service areas on the building.

(f) Building Materials.

1. Buildings shall be constructed of durable, high-quality materials. Table 28 E-1 below lists allowable building materials.
2. All building facades visible from a public street or public walkway shall use materials and design features similar to or complementary to those of the front facade.

Table 28E-1: Building Materials in Downtown and Urban Districts.

Building Materials	Trim/Accent Material	Top of Building	Middle of Building	Base/Bottom of Building	Standards (see footnotes)
Brick (Face/Veneer)	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Smooth-Face/Split-Face Block	✓	✓	✓	✓	A
Wood/Wood Composite	✓	✓	✓	✓	B
Fiber-Cement Siding/Panels	✓	✓	✓	✓	B
Concrete Panels (Tilt-up or Precast)	✓	✓	✓	✓	C
EIFS/Synthetic Stucco	✓	✓			D
Stone/Stone Veneer	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Metal Panels	✓	✓	✓	✓	E
Hand-Laid Stucco	✓	✓			D
Reflective Glass/Spandrel	✓				F
Glass (Transparent)	✓	✓	✓	✓	

A - Shall be used in conjunction with a palette of materials and shall not comprise more than thirty-three percent (33%) of any building.

B - Wood and fiber cement panels shall not be used on the ground story except between the sidewalk and the bottom of storefront windows or as an accent material.

C - Shall incorporate horizontal and vertical articulation and modulation, including but not limited to changes in color and texture, or as part of a palette of materials.

D - Shall not be within three feet of the ground or used on building facades facing State Street, King Street, or the Capitol Square.

E - Shall be used in conjunction with a palette of materials; shall be a heavy gauge, non-reflective metal

F - Shall be used in limited quantities as an accent material.

(g) Equipment and Service Area Screening.

1. Outdoor loading areas or mechanical equipment are not permitted in the front yard. When visible from an abutting public street or walkway, they shall be screened by a decorative fence, wall, or screen of plant material.
2. No doors or openings providing access to parking or loading facilities shall abut the Capitol Square, State Street or King Street.
3. Fences and walls shall be architecturally compatible with the principal structure.

(h) Screening of Rooftop Equipment.

1. All rooftop equipment, with the exception of solar and wind equipment, shall be screened from view from adjacent streets and public rights-of-way. Rooftop equipment shall be screened from view from adjacent buildings to the extent possible.
2. The equipment shall be within an enclosure. This structure shall be set back a distance of one and one-half (1½) times its height from any primary facade fronting a public street. Screens shall be of durable, permanent materials (not including wood) that are compatible with the primary building materials. (Am. by ORD-15-00104, 10-15-15)