

ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

January 16, 2018



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 1809 W. Beltline Highway
Project Name: Zimbrick Hyundai West
Application Type: Comprehensive Design Review Initial/Final Approval
Legistar File ID # [54199](#)
Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector
Reviewed By: Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review INITIAL/FINAL APPROVAL. This is a newly constructed auto dealership built near the Beltline is located in a Commercial Center (CC) District. The applicant is requesting for two wall signs on the north elevation of the building, and for a monument ground sign that is taller than 13'. This property abuts West Beltline Highway (6 lanes, 55 mph), and is part of a larger zoning lot owned by Zimbrick, with parcels abutting Bryant Street.

Pursuant to Section 31.043(4)(b), MGO, the UDC shall apply the following criteria upon review of an application for a Comprehensive Sign Plan:

1. *The Sign Plan shall create visual harmony between the signs, building(s), and building site through unique and exceptional use of materials, design, color, any lighting, and other design elements; and shall result in signs of appropriate scale and character to the uses and building(s) on the zoning lot as well as adjacent buildings, structures and uses.*
2. *Each element of the Sign Plan shall be found to be necessary due to unique or unusual design aspects in the architecture or limitations in the building site or surrounding environment; except that when a request for an Additional Sign Code Approval under Sec. 31.043(3) is included in the Comprehensive Design Review, the sign(s) eligible for approval under Sec. 31.043(3) shall meet the applicable criteria of Sec. 31.043(3), except that sign approvals that come to Comprehensive Design Review from MXC and EC districts pursuant to 31.13(3) and (7) need not meet the criteria of this paragraph.*
3. *The Sign Plan shall not violate any of the stated purposes described in Sec. 31.02(1) and 33.24(2).*
4. *All signs must meet minimum construction requirements under Sec. 31.04(5).*
5. *The Sign Plan shall not approve Advertising beyond the restrictions in Sec. 31.11 or Off-Premise Directional Signs beyond the restrictions in Sec. 31.115.*
6. *The Sign Plan shall not be approved if any element of the plan:*
 - a. *presents a hazard to vehicular or pedestrian traffic on public or private property,*
 - b. *obstructs views at points of ingress and egress of adjoining properties,*
 - c. *obstructs or impedes the visibility of existing lawful signs on adjacent property, or*
 - d. *negatively impacts the visual quality of public or private open space.*
7. *The Sign Plan may only encompass signs on private property of the zoning lot or building site in question, and shall not approve any signs in the right of way or on public property.*

Wall Signs Permitted per Sign Ordinance: Summarizing Section 31.07, **there shall be one signable area for each façade facing a street or parking lot 33 feet in width or greater.** Standard net area allows for 40% of the signable area, or two square feet of signage for each lineal foot of building frontage not to exceed 100% of the signable area. In no case shall the sign exceed 80 sq. ft. in net area.

Proposed Signage: Zimbrick Hyundai is requesting two wall signs on the North elevation, which faces the Beltline.

Hyundai and logo – 2' 8.19" x 19' 3.13" = **51.7 sq. ft.**

Zimbrick – 18" x 7' 9.44" = **11.68 sq. ft.**

Based on the dimensions of the signable areas, these signs are under 40% of the signable area.

Staff Comments: It is common for auto dealerships to have more than one sign on an elevation, identifying the dealership name, the vehicle manufactures, and accessory signage for service or repairs. In this case, there is only one manufacturer. **Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met for the wall signs.**

Ground Signs Permitted by Sign Ordinance: A zoning lot is allowed up to two ground signs with a **combined net area of 288 sq. ft., or 144 sq. ft. per side**, based off of the prevailing speeds and number of traffic lanes. Also, depending on the size of the sign's base, *pole signs* have a maximum height of 22' and **monument signs have a maximum height of 13'.**

Relevant Sign Ordinance definitions:

Pole Sign. A Ground Sign that is supported by one or more poles or other supporting structures, if the total width of the pole(s) or supporting structure(s) is one third (1/3) or less than the width of the net area of the sign copy it supports. The width of all pole(s) and supporting structures at their widest point and any space between poles or supports shall be included when measuring the total width of the pole(s) and supporting structure(s).

Monument sign A Ground Sign supported by and integrated into an internal structural framework or some other solid structural features other than a pole or poles, if the total width of such supporting structure(s) is more than one-third (1/3) of the width of the net area of the sign copy it supports.

Staff Comments: The applicant is requesting a monument style ground sign that has a net area of 66.23 sq. ft. (8'-10"w x 7'-6"t) per side, 9'-7" wide from base to top and is nearly 18' tall. This sign exceeds the maximum monument-style ground height allowance by about 5'. The sign replaces a former pole-type sign, which although slightly taller, was significantly smaller in gross sign area. The color of the proposed ground sign appears consistent with the color of the sign band on the main dealership building. The applicant states that the necessity for the extra height is to be viewable from the beltline, and Hyundai does not have pole sign option in their Hyundai sign design options. They also claim that there are other ground signs that are as tall or taller on the beltline, such as the adjacent advertising sign (billboard). However, the photos the applicant provides (the SAAB ground sign, which is located in the Town of Madison, and the existing Zimbrick ground sign that is now removed) are **pole** signs, not monument signs. The advertising sign is permitted under a different section of the sign ordinance, and is not held to the requirements for on premise ground signs. As for the argument of visibility

on the beltline, the newly constructed auto dealership is built close to the frontage road, is at a grade above the highway and frontage road, and is prominent/visible from both westbound and eastbound lanes of the beltline highway, providing clear visibility of the dealership wall signs. A ground sign at this location will mainly serve as identification for customers visiting the site, accessing the site from the frontage road. The ground sign request appears to be based upon the desire of the applicant for a sign that exceeds the code requirements rather than any site-based specific challenge or condition, and does not appear to meet standards #1 and #2. Therefore, **Staff recommends UDC find the CDR standards are not met and refer the request for more information, or deny the request for a monument ground sign taller than what would be otherwise allowed.**

Other signage shown in the application: The Hyundai wall sign shown on the East elevation complies with code, as it is the only wall sign on this façade, faces the parking lot, and is under 40% of the signable area. The signage plan also includes a logo on the north elevation, located near the front entrance doors that is less than 6 sq. ft., and an accessory wall sign above the garage doors that is half the height and more than half the size of the main wall sign, and less than 40% of the signable area. These signs comply with code and do not special approvals.

Notes:

- It should be noted in the final CDR “Future signage submittals not specifically addressed by this document shall comply with the standards of Chapter 31.”