

ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

October 22, 2025



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 1802 & 1902 Wright Street
Project Name: McAllen Truax Business Park
Application Type: Major Amendment to an Approved Comprehensive Design Review for Signage
Legistar File ID # [89896](#)
Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector
Reviewed By: Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

The applicant is requesting a major amendment to a previously approved Comprehensive Design Review for Signage (CDR). The original CDR that was approved by the Urban Design Commission (UDC) November 15, 2000, allowed for 1802 Wright Street two double-faced, internally illuminated, monument signs to identify the tenants in each of the two buildings, but excluded any wall signage. On December 11, 2019, the UDC then approved an amendment to the original CDR, to expand the CDR coverage to 1902 Wright Street, and allow for projecting signs to face the parking lot, and for limited wall signage on the zoning lot. This zoning lot is in the Industrial Limited (IL) district, and abuts Wright Street (4 lanes, 25 mph), Hoffman Street (2 lanes, 25 mph), and Kinsman Boulevard (4 lanes, 25 mph).

As part of the CDR request, the applicant is requesting:

- To modify the existing CDR to allow wall signage on the brick fascia of the building, in addition to the identified signable areas on the building walls, and to permit backer panels to be a different color than the building wall color.

Comprehensive Design Review – Approval Criteria

Pursuant to Section 31.43(4)(d), MGO, any changes to the approved plan must first be approved by the UDC using the full Comprehensive Design Review process under Sec. 31.043(4)(a):

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 MGO Section 31.07, there shall be one signable area for each façade facing a street or parking lot 33 feet in width or greater. For a tenant space with less than twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet in floor area, the maximum net area of wall signs shall be forty percent (40%) of the signable area, or two feet per lineal foot of tenant frontage, not to exceed 100% of the signable area. In no case shall a wall sign exceed eighty (80) square feet in net area. For a tenant space with twenty-five thousand (25,000) square feet or more in floor area in a multi-tenant building, the maximum net area of all wall signs shall be thirty percent (30%) of the signable area. In no case shall a wall sign exceed one hundred twenty (120) square feet in net area.

Proposed Signage: The applicant is requesting modifications to the wall signage allowances in the previously approved CDR, which would increase the number of signable areas on the buildings and remove the requirement that the backer panel matches the building façade color.

Staff Comments: This site is a through lot, with traffic primarily coming from Wright Street. All entrances to tenant spaces face a double-loaded parking lot, where traffic moves slowly through the site. The CDR currently allows for two oversized multi-tenant ground signs near entrances on Wright Street, with each sign having a net area of 50 sq. ft. per side (therefore having a cumulative total of 200 sq. ft.), whereas the code currently allows for this zoning lot to have two signs with a cumulative net area of 80 sq. ft. Overall, the proposed wall signs appear to be compliant with the Sign Code requirements.

With that, however, the approved CDR on file limits the design, placement and size of wall signage beyond that of the Sign Code. The approved CDR on file further limits each tenant space to one wall sign per elevation facing the parking lot or street. In addition, wall signage is to be located within the first, five-foot tall EIFS band above the building windows, with a maximum net area of 32 sq. ft. Projecting signage, no larger than 12 sq. ft. in area is also allowed. Wall signage is to consist of individual letters mounted directly to the fascia or to the backer panel that is painted the same color as the building.

The applicant is requesting that the CDR be amended to allow corner tenants the option of having a signable area on the brick corner element in addition to the five-foot tall EIFS. The backer panels would also have the option of being different colors instead of matching the building façade. While an increase in the sign size is not proposed, this amendment would change the current uniform look for wall signage required by the CDR. In addition, this would allow corner tenants to have a signage higher on the building, since the brick corner elements are taller than the limited 5' EIFS above the windows. Both of which bring into question whether the proposed amendment is consistent with CDR Criterion No. 1, which speaks to creating visual harmony between signs.

While this request is compliant with the Sign Ordinance, staff are concerned with whether the proposed sign design and location changes are consistent with CDR Criterion No. 1, which speaks to creating visual harmony with other wall signage on the site. The proposed changes would allow signage in different areas on the building, change the backer panel color to match various logo colors, and to be mounted at different heights,

potentially resulting in less uniformity in signage across the zoning lot. The intent of the CDR approval was to create consistency and uniformity across the site with regard to sign size, placement and design. The proposed amendment seems to allow additional sign locations higher up on the building seems to reduce that intention.

Staff also have concerns about whether this request meets CDR Criterion No. 2, which speaks to necessity due to unique or unusual design aspects in the architecture or limitations on the site. The CDR already has two ground signs larger than what the code permits for tenants to identify their business location. As the ground signs already provide adequate visibility for tenants at this site, it does not appear to be necessary for corner tenants to also have signage closer to the street or higher on the building.

Recommendation: Staff request the UDC provide feedback on the proposed request to alter the wall signage requirements currently required by this CDR. If the UDC can find the proposed CDR amendment is consistent with the CDR approval criteria, staff recommend that the DC make specific findings related to CDR Criterion No. 1, which speaks to design and creating visual harmony between signs, and CDR Criterion No. 2, which speaks to demonstrated necessity as a result of a unique or unusual characteristic in the building site or surrounding environment that warrants the quantity proposed.

This recommendation is subject to further testimony and new information provided during the hearing.

Recommended Conditions of Approval:

- The parking lot directional sign shown in the CDR packet is not part of this amendment and does not comply with code. The CDR packet shall be updated to remove this sign, and a code compliant size is required to be installed in its place.
- Approval of amended CDR does not permit any signage shown in CDR currently without a permit. All signs shall obtain a sign permit for signage that conforms with the CDR requirements.