

ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

May 7, 2025



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 1849 Wright Street
Project Name: Madison College
Application Type: Major Amendment to an Approved Comprehensive Design Review for Signage
Legistar File ID # [87952](#)
Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector

The applicant is requesting a major amendment to a previously approved Comprehensive Design Review (CDR) for signage to add an additional ground and wall sign. The Urban Design Commission approved the original CDR for Madison College on June 22, 2011, at 3550 Anderson St. There have been two major amendments to the CDR which were approved on September 2, 2020, for an additional signage for the daycare facility on Wright St., and June 28, 2023, for a ground sign near the bus stop on Anderson St. This major amendment requests to install signage on the newest parcel of the zoning lot north of the daycare facility. This parcel is in a Campus Institutional (CI) district, is part of the zoning lot for the Madison College campus, and fronts Wright St., which is 4 lanes and 25 mph.

Comprehensive Design Review and Approval Criteria

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.*

Signs Permitted by Sign Ordinance: Summarizing 31.14(1)(e), one wall and one ground signs per street frontage may be displayed identifying the entity, with a maximum of two ground signs and two wall signs per zoning lot. Signs, whether displayed on a wall or the ground, shall not exceed 12 sq. ft. in net area, nor be closer than ten feet to any lot line, except such signs may be increased in net area by one square foot for each additional foot that the sign is set back more than 12 feet from the street lot line. No sign under this section shall exceed 32 square feet in net area. No sign shall project higher than one story, or 12 feet above the curb level, whichever is lower.

Proposed Signage: The applicant is proposing an internally illuminated, monument-style ground sign, as well as an internally illuminated wall sign. The ground sign would have a total net area of 25.5 sq. ft. and an overall height 6' 2". The site plan notes that the ground sign will be installed 10' from the property line, where a typical ground sign would require about a 26-foot setback due to its size. The wall sign would have a total net area of 22.09 sq. ft. and be over 800' away from the property line. This sign faces the parking lot and internal drive instead of the street.

Staff Comments: The proposed signs are similar in size and style as the other approved wall and ground signs found on the Madison College campus, keeping the signage uniform in appearance within the zoning lot. The proposed signs appear necessary to assist people navigating through the campus and identifying the building occupancies and parking areas. **Recommendation: Staff have no objections to this CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review and approval have been met. This recommendation is subject to further testimony and new information provided during the hearing.**