



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 531 W Mifflin Street  
**Application Type:** Residential Building Complex  
**UDC is an Advisory Body**  
**Legistar File ID #:** [80724](#)  
**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Kevin Burow, Knothe & Bruce Architects, LLC | Brandon Cook, John Fontain Realty

**Project Description:** The applicant is proposing to relocate two existing residential structures from W Dayton Street to W Mifflin Street that will be displaced by a new student housing project. This includes a four unit structure and a one unit accessory structure.

These structures have previously been approved for demolition (Legistar File [76899](#)). In order to make room for the relocated structures, the existing structure on the project site would be demolished. As noted in the applicant's materials, no exterior building modifications are proposed.

**Approval Standards:** As a residential building complex, the UDC is an **advisory body** on this request. [Section 33.24\(4\)\(c\)](#), MGO states that: *"The Urban Design Commission shall review the exterior design and appearance of all principal buildings or structures and the landscape plans of all proposed residential building complexes. It shall report its findings and recommendations to the Plan Commission."*

**Adopted Plans:** The project site is located in the [Downtown Plan](#) (the Plan) planning area in the Mifflin Neighborhood. As noted in the Plan the Mifflin Neighborhood is *"...known for its abundance of student rental housing primarily characterized by older houses that have been divided into apartments..."* The Plan recognizes that with many of the buildings deteriorating over time in the Mifflin district, ultimately, this area is recommended for redevelopment with a dynamic mix of employment and residential uses at relatively high densities with the goal of creating a truly engaging mixed-use neighborhood. Specific Plan recommendations in this district including evaluating the potential to create wider terraces with larger trees, and with the goal of reducing driveway curbcuts encourage creative solutions for shared vehicle facilities, including access and parking.

The Plan notes that the maximum building height for the project site is six stories.

## Summary of Design Considerations

Staff recommends that the UDC provide feedback and make findings on the development proposal regarding the aforementioned standards related to the items noted below.

- **Site Planning Considerations.** Staff requests the UDC provide feedback related to the general site planning considerations noted below.
  - **Building placement.** As a residential building complex request, setback requirements pursuant to the underlying zoning district may be reduced. As such, consideration should be given to the general placement of the buildings on the site relative to the context, maintaining the general rhythm along the street, relationship to adjacent structures, as well as how the buildings relate to each other, and

the remnant spaces created on the site. Pursuant to MGO, 28.151, Supplemental Regulations for Residential Building Complexes note that setback requirements may be reduced as part of the conditional use approval, provided that equivalent open space areas are provided. Staff requests the UDC provide feedback related to the proposed building placement on the site, reduced setbacks and resulting open spaces.

Staff notes that the minimum setbacks for the DR-2 zoning district are as follows: Front – 10 feet; Side yard – 10% of the lot width; Rear yard – Lesser of 20% lot depth or 20 feet. As proposed, the only setback that is being reduced is the rear yard (20 feet is required where 5.56 feet is proposed).

- Landscape. Staff requests the UDC provide feedback and findings on the proposed landscape, including as it relates to providing adequate screening and buffers between uses and amenities, etc.
- Parking. As shown on the site plan, there is a parking area situated between the two buildings that is accessed from a driveway that runs along the south side of the site. It is the understanding of staff that this parking and driveway are intended to remain. Staff requests the UDC provide feedback and findings on the parking area and driveway as it relates to the adopted plan recommendations, especially in terms of seeking creative solutions to minimize curbcuts and shared vehicle facilities. Staff notes that in the Downtown Core there is not a minimum requirement for parking.