



Project Address: 1001 Wisconsin Avenue

Application Type: Major Amendment to a Previously Approved Planned Development (PD) for The Edgewater Hotel
UDC is an Advisory Body

Legistar File ID #: [93251](#)

Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Amy Supple, The Edgewater Hotel | Kavitha Marudadu, DMAC Architecture & Interiors

Project Description: The applicant is proposing exterior improvements to the Edgewater Hotel, including:

- On Level 1 of the original 1946 hotel, a new fabric and steel frame awning to cover existing waterfront amenity deck on The Boathouse, and
- On the contemporary hotel building, Level 5, a new plaza-facing concession opening in existing wall and landscape planter planted with climbing vines, and other existing plants,
- Level 7, on the lakeside of the building and wrapping around to the plaza, a new fabric and steel frame awning over the existing outdoor seating area, and
- Level 15, on the streetside of the building, a new steel frame solid roof deck, glass enclosure over existing rooftop deck area and raised planters with faux plants, and
- Also on Level 15, on the lakeside of the building, a new open steel frame roof structure covering the existing rooftop deck area, including lighting, glass railing and raised planters with faux plants.

Project Schedule:

- UDC received an Informational Presentation on June 3, 2026.
- Because the project site is located in the Mansion Hill Historic District, the Landmarks Commission is scheduled to review this application at their August 24, 2026, meeting.
- Plan Commission is scheduled to review this application at their August 31, 2026, meeting.
- Common Council is scheduled to review this application at their September 8, 2026, meeting.

Approval Standards: The UDC is an **advisory body** to the Plan Commission on this request application. For Planned Developments the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in the PD Standards for Approval (attached for reference), but including, more specifically:

PD Standard (e), which generally speaks to coordinating “...*architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of the PD District.*”

Staff note that as an advisory body, the UDC should structure a motion as a recommendation to the Plan Commission with or without specific findings and/or design-related conditions. For example, such a motion may look like one of the following:

"The UDC finds that the standards for Plan Developments have been met and recommend that the Plan Commission approve the proposed development."

or

"The UDC finds that the following design modifications shall be made in order for the Plan Commission to find the standards for Planned Developments have been met..."

Summary of Design Considerations

Staff request the UDC provide feedback and make findings as required for Planned Developments. Potential design considerations for the Commission's review and comment are identified below:

- **Building Design and Composition.** The Edgewater Hotel and plaza are prominent sites situated along the Lake Mendota waterfront and at the terminus of Wisconsin Avenue, in the Mansion Hill Historic District. As such, consideration should be given to the proposed exterior improvements and their integration into the existing overall building design and composition, including as it relates to maintaining positive termination at the top of the building, extending the same or similar true-to-design details and materials, and in maintaining datum lines.

Generally, and in summary, the Commission's Informational Presentation comments noted that the proposed improvements were tasteful additions that complemented the existing character of the building and that added nice visual elements, the proportions with the canopies are being maintained, and that the striped canopies provide a pop of modest color.

Staff request the UDC's feedback and findings on the proposed exterior changes.

- **Long views.** As noted in the submittal, the exterior changes will be located on multiple floors, including as it relates to the rooftop outdoor spaces on the 15th floor and 7th floor, and the 5th floor.

Due to the prominence of the site, consideration should be given to the overall composition of the building as part of the larger cityscape and how it will read from a distance, including as viewed from the lake, as well as Wisconsin Avenue. [**Note:** Floor/level references are measured from the lowest point of the site at the Lake Mendota shoreline. To illustrate, the 7th Floor level is generally consistent with the grade-level along Wisconsin Avenue and roughly one story above the adjacent plaza area.]

Staff note that there is a view conservation easement (See pages 15 and 18 of submittal package). The applicant's plans show a 3' 7" encroachment from the top of the canopy on the 7th floor. Should this PD Amendment be approved, the Common Council would also have to approve amendments to that view conservation easement by adoption of a separate resolution to be reviewed prior to permitting for the changes to the building.

- **Landscape.** As indicated in the submittal materials, the proposed landscape changes are limited to the 5th floor Icehouse Concession area. While the raised planter has been reduced in size, some existing plantings will remain and new plantings are proposed, including a climbing vine, to reduce the blank wall in this area. As part of the UDC's Informational Presentation comments, the Commission noted that consideration should be given to softening this blank wall. Staff request the UDC's feedback and findings on the proposed landscape.

- **Lighting.** Staff note that while some light fixture specifications were included in the submittal materials, a photometric plan was not. A photometric plan is required to confirm that the light levels are not excessive, creating a “beacon” effect at the top of the building and that they comply with MGO 29.36 technical requirements, including fixture cutoff and the maximum light levels for pedestrian areas. Staff note that, as indicated on the Lighting List, fixtures are intended to be dimmed at certain hours. However, from a regulatory perspective lighting enforcement is only based on whether a fixture is on, not whether it is dimmed or the timing of dimming. Dimming of fixtures is not enforced and should not be assumed to be regulated accordingly.

As part of the Commission’s Informational Presentation, the Commission discussed light spill and that the type of fixtures, direction of mounting, and light levels could have an impact on night views.

Staff request the UDC’s feedback and findings related to lighting. If the Commission believes that further review of lighting can be completed administratively by staff, the Commission should note that in their motion along with any design parameters.

Staff note and the applicant is advised that additional technical review of lighting for compliance with MGO 29.36 will occur as part of the Site Plan Review process.

- **Signage.** Staff note and the applicant is advised that while sign locations are indicated on the 15th floor and 7th floor of the west elevation and on the north elevation of the 5th floor concession, the review of signage is not a part of this review. As indicated on the elevation drawings, the proposed sign locations **do not** comply with the [Sign Code](#) and special approval would be required. A separate review and approval are required for all new signage. Staff encourage the applicant team to work with Zoning Staff to confirm the review and approval process for the proposed signage.

Summary of Informational Presentation Questions and Comments

As a reference, the Commission’s questions and comments from the June 3, 2026, Informational Presentation are provided below.

The Commission inquired about the conservation easement. There is an encroachment into the easement, but it is limited to the corner of the canopy.

The Commission discussed light spill coming off the rooftop. Right now, it kind of disappears at night. Specific fixtures and directions of those will be very important. The sky bar canopy on the north side has a nice overhang relative to the structure; the glass volume looks tight like a greenhouse. The applicant replied they will refine the roof profile as it relates to how they treat acoustics, and they will an extension to keep light spills minimal. Not all of it would be a glass roof, there would be certain opaque elements to contain light spills.

The Commission commented that these are tasteful additions that complement the existing character of the building and will add nice visual elements from the lake. Well done.

The Commission commented that the large blank wall in plaza space could use some nice greenery to soften that corner. Something vertical would be a nice addition.

The Commission noted this as being a very mature application of this enhancement, it does nothing to take away from the building, the proportions with the additional canopies work. This is a great design, don’t go far in terms of trying to change a lot. The striped canopies are enough color, a pop of modest color that works well, great project.

The Commission commented on the stunning design, the articulation, activities, great improvement. Wouldn't change too much, agree with the detailed recommendations that were given.

The Commission note that everything is making this space designed better for humans, a quality occupied space with an amazing view. Where does this go, as far as the intrusion into the conservation easement? The Landmarks Commission, Plan Commission and Common Council will be part of that discussion. This is the first stop; they will come back with a formal application.

ATTACHMENT
PD Zoning Statement of Purpose and Standards

28.098 (1) Statement of Purpose.

The Planned Development (PD) District is established to provide a voluntary regulatory framework as a means to facilitate the unique development of land in an integrated and innovative fashion, to allow for flexibility in site design, and to encourage development that is sensitive to environmental, cultural, and economic considerations, and that features high-quality architecture and building materials. In addition, the Planned Development District is intended to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- (a) Promotion of green building technologies, low-impact development techniques for stormwater management, and other innovative measures that encourage sustainable development.
- (b) Promotion of integrated land uses allowing for a mixture of residential, commercial, and public facilities along corridors and in transitional areas, with enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections and amenities.
- (c) Preservation and enhancement of important environmental features through careful and sensitive placement of buildings and facilities.
- (d) Preservation of historic buildings, structures, or landscape features through adaptive reuse of public or private preservation of land.
- (e) Provision of more adequate, usable, and suitably located open space, recreational amenities, and other public facilities than would otherwise be provided under conventional land development techniques.
- (f) Facilitation of high-quality development that is consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.

28.098(2) Approval Standards for Project

The standards for approval of a zoning map amendment to the PD District, or any major alteration to an approved General Development Plan, are as follows:

- (a) The applicant shall demonstrate that no other base zoning district can be used to achieve a substantially similar pattern of development. Planned developments shall not be allowed simply for the purpose of increasing overall density or allowing development that otherwise could not be approved unless the development also meets one or more of the objectives of (1) above. Conditions under which planned development may be appropriate include:
 - 1. Site conditions such as steep topography or other unusual physical features; or
 - 2. Redevelopment of an existing area or use of an infill site that could not be reasonably developed under base zoning district requirements.
- (b) The PD District plan shall facilitate the development or redevelopment goals of the Comprehensive Plan and of adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.
- (c) The PD District plan shall not adversely affect the economic health of the City or the area of the City where the development is proposed. The City shall be able to provide municipal services to the property where the planned development is proposed without a significant increase of the cost of providing those services or economic impact on municipal utilities serving that area.
- (d) The PD District plan shall not create traffic or parking demands disproportionate to the facilities and improvements designed to meet those demands. A traffic demand management plan may be required as a way

to resolve traffic and parking concerns. The Plan shall include measurable goals, strategies, and actions to encourage travelers to use alternatives to driving alone, especially at congested times of day. Strategies and actions may include, but are not limited to, carpools and vanpools; public and private transit; promotion of bicycling, walking and other non-motorized travel; flexible work schedules and parking management programs to substantially reduce automobile trips.

- (e) The PD District plan shall coordinate architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of the PD District.
- (f) The PD District plan shall include open space suitable to the type and character of development proposed, including for projects with residential components, a mix of structured and natural spaces for use by residents and visitors. Areas for stormwater management, parking, or in the public right of way shall not be used to satisfy this requirement.
- (g) The PD district shall include suitable assurances that each phase could be completed in a manner that would not result in an adverse effect upon the community as a result of termination at that point.
- (h) When applying the above standards to an application for height in excess of that allowed in Section 28.071(2)(a) Downtown Height Map, except as provided for in Section 28.071(2)(a)1. and Section 28.071(2)(b), the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans and no application for excess height shall be granted by the Plan Commission unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
 - 1. The excess height is compatible with the existing or planned (if the recommendations in the Downtown Plan call for changes) character of the surrounding area, including but not limited to the scale, mass, rhythm, and setbacks of buildings and relationships to street frontages and public spaces.
 - 2. The excess height allows for a demonstrated higher quality building than could be achieved without the additional stories.
 - 3. The scale, massing and design of new buildings complement and positively contribute to the setting of any landmark buildings within or adjacent to the project and create a pleasing visual relationship with them.
 - 4. For projects proposed in priority viewsheds and other views and vistas identified on the Views and Vistas Map in the City of Madison Downtown Plan, there are no negative impacts on the viewshed as demonstrated by viewshed studies prepared by the applicant.
- (i) When applying the above standards to an application to reduce or eliminate setbacks required by Section 28.071(2)(c) Downtown Setback Map, the Plan Commission shall consider the recommendations in adopted plans, including the downtown plan. No application to reduce or eliminate setbacks may be granted unless it finds that all of the following conditions are present:
 - 1. The lot is a corner parcel.
 - 2. The lot is not part of a larger assemblage of properties.
 - 3. The entire lot is vacant or improved with only a surface parking lot.
 - 4. No principal buildings on the lot have been demolished or removed since the effective date of this ordinance