

ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

January 21, 2026



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 2501 & 2601 West Beltline Highway

Project Name: Arbor Gate

Application Type: Amendment to an Approved Comprehensive Design Plan for Signage

Legistar File ID # [91181](#)

Prepared By: Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector; Jessica Vaughn, Urban Design Commission Secretary

The applicant is requesting an amendment to a previously approved Comprehensive Design Review for Signage (CDR). The original approval allowed for first story signage to be mounted on a raceway installed between columns and to cross architectural detail, for two projecting signs each with a maximum net area of 63 sq. ft. per side, six wall signs above the first story, and five ground signs. This parcel is in a Commercial Corridor - Transitional (CC-T) District and abuts West Beltline (6 lanes, 55 mph), Todd Drive (2 lanes, 25mph) and McDivitt Road (2 lanes, 25 mph).

As part of this amendment request, the applicant is requesting:

- Two additional wall signs above the first story, creating a total of eight wall signs above the first story where six were originally approved.

Comprehensive Design Review – Approval Criteria

Pursuant to Section 31.043(4)(b), MGO, any change 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 buildings with more than one tenant, each tenant is allowed to have a signable area as reasonably close to its tenant space as possible. Standard net area allows for 40% of the signable area. In no case shall the sign exceed 80 sq. ft. in net area. For multi-story buildings with more than one vertical occupancy, *there may be up to two additional signable areas per façade displayed above the first story, with no limitation on the height of placement, but only one sign per occupant, per façade.*

Proposed Signage: To better identify their tenants, the applicant is requesting approval for two additional wall signs above the first story, for a total of eight wall signs above the first story. The two wall signs to be added would be considered secondary tenant signs as identified in the existing CDR and would follow the existing design criteria and size allowance.

Staff Comments: The existing CDR currently allows for six wall signs above the first story, with two of them being classified as primary tenant signs, and four of them being classified as secondary tenant signs. One primary tenant sign is permitted on each wing of the building (the left and the right), and then two secondary tenant signs are permitted in the middle of the building elevation on the left and right side of the building. The existing CDR has a balance of signage between the two building wings, and the proposed sign designs will maintain a uniform look consisting of individual channel letters, with the secondary tenant signage only permitted to have halo lighting.

The applicant is requesting to amend the existing CDR to allow for additional signable areas for secondary tenant signs, which would let more businesses have signage visible on the Beltline. The secondary tenant signs are much smaller in size in comparison to the primary tenant signs, so the request for additional signage would not be a substantial increase of signage on the building. In addition, given the extents of the Beltline-facing elevation and size and location of the additional signage consistent with other signage on the building, the façade will maintain its balanced appearance without appearing to be cluttered.

The proposed additional signs would maintain the uniform look of the secondary tenant signage by having a limited height and size, as well as consist of halo lit individual channel letters and logo. **Recommendation: Staff have no objection to the requested ground signage and recommend the UDC find the CDR criteria have been met. This recommendation is subject to further testimony and new information provided during the hearing.**