



Agenda Item #:	10
Project Title:	4301 Cherokee Drive - Public Building for MMSD Cherokee Middle School. (District 10)
Legistar File ID #:	92524
Members Present:	Shane Bernau, Chair; Jessica Klehr, Davy Mayer, Nicholas Hellrood, Anina Mbilyni, David McLean
Prepared By:	Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Summary

At its meeting of April 15, 2026, the Urban Design Commission **RECEIVED AN INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION** for a Public Building located at 4301 Cherokee Drive. Registered and speaking in support was Susan Bowersox. Registered in support and available to answer questions were Kevin Yeska, and Matt Haase.

Summary of Commission Discussion and Questions:

The Commission asked about the three sloped roof areas on the west elevation; those are clerestories over the corridor in the middle of the building for natural light.

The Commission acknowledged the importance of preserving the chimney piece and the heritage oak.

The Commission inquired how the color palette and architecture were chosen. The applicant noted that while design decisions are not final, they did look at the context of the neighborhood, and the history of the site and school. They studied color that relates to more of the natural elements of the site at this particular location, and the experience of how you perceive the building as you travel down Midvale Boulevard. They tried to break down the scale of a long building without being too busy. The design is less about a specific style of architecture than how can we blend in a building of this size on this site without it feeling like a foreign object.

The Commission noted the existing school has some pretty interesting blue metal panels which stand out. This has something fresh and subtle about the colors.

The Commission liked the indoor/outdoor relationship. There is a lot of bioretention on the site, exploring different ways with a bridge or boardwalk crossing through them. The applicant replied that the school district may not be in support or a bridge element, these are explorations of how to tie things together. There is an elevation or just the perception of an elevated walkway experience that will be surrounded by native plantings.

The Commission remarked that the site feels scattered, with no real outdoor recess experience, and there doesn't seem to be one open space that's the main collector of students.

The Commission commented there is an inadequate amount of basketball court which is disconnected from the playground, which is disconnected to the soccer field, which is disconnected to the amphitheater – seems like there is not a go-to spot. The basketball court is not large enough, and it is heavily used, is that driven by the hinge point in the building? Would shifting or reorienting the building on the site, removing the hinge result in better site programming and layout? Noise from Midvale isn't mitigated at all from the kink. Shifting or reorienting the building might make

sense. The applicant replied that they have been having the same discussions, looking at how to make the site amenities work and connect; changes will be apparent in future design iterations.

The Commission noted the impacts to the sledding hill and taking that into consideration. The intent is to provide a safe sledding environment next to the school.

The Commission noted the building masses being nestled into the hill, but there is a large amount of blank walls, noting the design is still in progress. Look at ways to break that down with landscaping, fenestration, etc.

The Commission commented on the location of the trash enclosure off the corner of the parking lot as perhaps not the best location.

The Commission noted that the site plan dashed lines is a strongly desired path for students coming from Midvale and Cherokee; they will create that path if you don't provide it.

Action

Since this was an **INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION**, no formal action was taken by the Commission.