



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 1253 John Q Hammons Drive  
**Application Type:** Signage Exception  
**Legistar File ID #** [73952](#)  
**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Andrew Haas, Comfort Suites

**Project Description:** The applicant is requesting Final Approval for a wall sign not directly adjacent to a parking lot or street to be located on the north elevation of an existing 3-story Comfort Suites hotel.

**Approval Standards:** The UDC is an **approving body** on this request. The Sign Control Ordinance, [MGO Sec. 31.043\(3\)\(d\)](#) states that: *“After a public hearing as provided in Sec. 33.24(4)(e)3(d), the Urban Design Commission (UDC) may permit the use of wall signs on building façades not adjacent to off-street parking areas where, due to a variation of building setbacks, a signable area exists, provided the area of the sign shall not exceed the area of the wall sign permitted on the front of the building.”*

## Summary of Staff Recommendation

**Project Site Location.** The project site is located along US HWY 12/18. While the building sits significantly lower than the highway and there is ample mature vegetation, the cupola architectural feature provides three sign areas that are visible from both east and west bound highway traffic.

**Existing Signage.** In 2002 a sign permit was issued for the existing wall signs that currently occupy the north, east and south elevations of the building’s cupola. At the time of permit issuance the wall signage was allowed on all three elevations. Following the issuance of the wall sign permit, the code was changed to limit the use of wall signs to elevations that were relevant to the building, including those facing streets or off-street parking areas associated with the building. Since the east and south elevations of the cupola either face a public street (east), or a parking area associated with the development (south), an exception is not required. Because the north elevation does not face a public street or is it adjacent to a parking lot associated with the development, an exception is required.

As noted in the letter of intent, the applicant is seeking to update their existing signage on site to include the new logo and corporate colors. To replace the existing wall sign on the north elevation, a sign exception is required, pursuant to MGO 31.043(3)(d), for which the UDC is an approving body.

There are currently no ground signs associated with this development located along the highway.

**Summary of Sign Code Requirements and Proposed Signage.** The code allows for 120 square feet. As proposed, the signage is comprised of individual internally illuminated channel letters with acrylic face and aluminum returns. The proposed sign is 48.86 square feet.

**Summary of Staff Analysis.** Staff believes that there is justification for the proposed sign to be located on the north elevation of the cupola, not facing a street or parking area associated with the building given that:

- There is limited visibility of signage by east-bound US HWY 12/18 traffic as a result of grade and landscaping,
- The north elevation is the only visible façade by east bound traffic,
- There is no ground signage, and
- The proposed wall sign is smaller than the existing wall sign, and compliant with code.