



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 2909 Landmark Place

**Application Type:** Signage Exception Pursuant to MGO 31.043(3) to Permit the Use of Wall signs on a Building Façade not Adjacent to Off-Street Parking Area  
**UDC is an Approving Body**

**Legistar File ID #:** [82218](#)

**Prepared By:** Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Zane Nichols, Lemberg Electric | Jeff White, Lemberg Electric

**Project Description:** The applicant is proposing the installation of a wall sign on a wall that is not directly adjacent to a parking lot or street, on the north elevation of the building, a non-qualifying elevation for signage.

### Project Background:

- At their September 20, 2023, meeting, the UDC approved a request for signage located on a non-qualifying elevation subject to the internal illumination being changed to halo illumination (Legistar File ID [79617](#)). As part of the Commission’s discussion on this item, light glare was identified as concern.

**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 Design Considerations

**Project Site Location.** The project site is located in Madison’s south side on Landmark Place. The general character of the areas is reflective of a business park situated on a cul-de-sac that is home to a collection of a mix of uses, including office and residential, some with frontage on the W Beltline Highway frontage road. The primary street façade for the building is Landmark Place. Given the existing landscape and significant setback of the project from the W Beltline Highway, the project site has very limited visibility from the W Beltline Highway.

**Existing Signage.** The project site was recently annexed to the City as part of the dissolution of the Town of Madison. While a sign currently exists in the proposed location, it was permitted under the Town of Madison. Any changes to the sign, with the exception of a change of copy, require the sign to be consistent with MGO Chapter 31. The existing sign is a nonconforming sign as it is located on an elevation that does not qualify for signage.

**Summary of Sign Code Requirements and Proposed Signage.** Since the north façade is not adjacent to an off-street parking area or street associated with the development, signage is not allowed on this elevation. As noted above, the UDC may grant an exception to this requirement provided that the signage shall not exceed the area of wall signage permitted on the front of the building. In this case, the code allows for a 78 square-foot wall sign on the Landmark Place-facing elevation. In addition, the proposed sign is also not allowed to be larger than 30 percent of the identifiable signable area on the non-qualifying façade. In this case, the signable area on the non-qualifying, north façade is 149.45 square feet. At 44.68 square feet, the proposed sign is consistent with size limitations.

The proposed wall sign is comprised of white acrylic, raceway-mounted, individual channel letters with star logo. The sign will be internally illuminated with blue light.

**Summary of Staff Analysis.** A signage exception is required because the proposed sign is located on a non-qualifying elevation, not facing a street or parking area associated with the building. Staff notes that as part of the UDC's evaluation of whether a sign should be permitted on a non-qualifying elevation, similar to other signage requests, the proposed location of the signage high on the building, site context, overall design aesthetic of the proposed sign, including illumination, and justification for the request related to visibility and business identification, etc. are all part of the UDC's considerations.

Based on the information presented in the application materials related to design aesthetic, illumination, and justification related to visibility and business identification, staff is supportive of this request. Staff requests the UDC review the proposed sign and make findings based on the following:

- The proposed wall sign is consistent with the code limitations regarding size.
- The sign is placed in a similar location to an existing sign.
- The placement of the sign on a non-qualifying elevation, high on the building, is necessary and results in a higher level of visibility and business identification than another location on a qualifying elevation.
- Generally, the proposed sign is of quality design aesthetic, including individual channel letters mounted on a raceway that is painted to match the building, and with internal illumination. As noted in the application materials to address the UDC's previous concerns regarding glare from white light, the internal illumination will be blue lighting, which will emit significantly lower light levels than the previously proposed white illumination as noted in the Letter of Intent.