



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

Project Address: 406 N Frances
Application Type: Major Exterior Alterations to an Existing Building in UMX Zoning
UDC is an Approving Body
Legistar File ID # [83419](#)
Prepared By: Jessica Vaughn, AICP, UDC Secretary

Background Information

Applicant | Contact: Jeremy Cynkar, Destree Architects

Project Description: The applicant is seeking approval of a façade improvement grant for exterior modifications to an existing building. The scope of the work includes removing and reconstructing the existing angled storefront to be flush across the front of the building, shifting the entry, adding an architectural canopy with red LED accent lighting, painting masonry walls, and incorporating metal panels as a fill material in areas that were previously storefront glazing.

Approval Standards: The Urban Design Commission (“UDC”) is an **approving body** on this request because the site is located in the Urban Mixed Use zoning district. Pursuant to MGO Section 28.076(4)(b):

All new buildings and additions that are less than twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet and are not approved pursuant to (a) above, as well as all major exterior alterations to any building shall be approved by the Urban Design Commission based on the design standards in Sec. [28.071\(3\)](#), if applicable, and the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines.

Staff notes that a Façade Grant Application has also been submitted for review and approval for the proposed exterior building improvements, which is a separate agenda item. This request has been reviewed by the City’s Façade Grant Team, who has recommended approval of the proposed exterior improvements as the proposal is believed to meet the goals of that program.

Staff notes that while the UDC may consider these two items together as noted on the agenda, staff recommends that the Commission make two separate, distinct motions; one as it relates to the Façade Grant Request, and one as it relates to the Façade Alteration in the UMX Zone, both with findings and conditions, if applicable.

Related Zoning Information: Staff notes that while the project is zoned Urban Mixed Use (UMX) zoning district, the design-related zoning standards as outlined in MGO 28.071 are not applicable to this project there is not a building addition proposed.

Design-Related Plan Recommendations: The project site is located within the [Downtown Plan](#) planning area, within the State Street neighborhood. As such, development on the project site is subject to the [Downtown Urban Design Guidelines](#). The Plan recommendations for development in this neighborhood generally speak to maintaining and enhancing the district as a premier designation for a variety of commercial and civic uses, the unique sense of place, the diverse and vibrant mix of uses, encouraging human-scale developments that actively engage the street, and creating pedestrian-oriented streetscapes.

The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines are intended to ensure that buildings and developments are compatible not only in design to each other, but also contextually. The guidelines generally speak to creating an engaging

pedestrian orientation, utilizing high quality, durable materials, and building designs that reflect the use of the structure. The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, also speak to lighting, including the following:

- Full cut-off fixtures should be used. Lighting should not spill into the sky, encroach on neighboring properties, nor cause excessive glare.
- The lighting on the top of a building should not compete with the view of the Capitol dome in views of the skyline.
- Exterior Lighting to accentuate building architecture and landscaping should not be excessive in either amount of intensity.
- Building-mounted fixtures should be compatible with the building facades.

Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

Staff recommends that the UDC review the proposed exterior modifications and make findings based on the aforementioned approval standards, including as it relates to the following design considerations.

- **Exterior Materials and Architecture Details.** The Downtown Urban Design Guidelines generally speak to utilizing a high quality, simple materials palette. In addition, the guidelines also speak to canopies and awnings as it relates to their compatibility and integration with the overall storefront/building design. As noted in the application materials, the proposed changes to the building include painting the existing masonry, adding a metal canopy, and metal panels with exposed fasteners as an infill material.

Staff requests that the Commission provides feedback and findings on the proposed material palette and building storefront composition.

- **Lighting.** As noted in the Downtown Urban Design Guidelines, lighting should be full cutoff and generally be used to accentuate architectural features, including entrances, but should not be excessive in amount of intensity. Staff requests the Commission provides feedback and findings on the proposed canopy lighting.

Staff notes that as proposed, the LED light strip will trigger full cutoff compliance. The applicant is advised that additional details will be required to be submitted to confirm that the cutoff requirements pursuant to MGO 29.36 are being met. In addition, a photometric plan will also be required to be submitted to show that the proposed lighting is compliant with maximum/minimum light levels pursuant to MGO 29.36 for light trespass, average footcandle ratings, and uniformity ratio. Staff notes that this can be handed administratively as part of the Site Plan Review/Façade Alteration in DC and UMX review and approval process.