

# ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

September 2, 2020



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 1835 Wright Street  
**Project Name:** Madison Area Technical College  
**Application Type:** Approval for an Alteration to an Approved Comprehensive Design Plan  
**Legistar File ID #** [61637](#)  
**Prepared By:** Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector  
**Reviewed By:** Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

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The applicant is requesting an amendment to a previously approved Comprehensive Design Review. The Urban Design Commission approved the original Comprehensive Design Plan for MATC on July 24, 2013, at 3550 Anderson Street. The facility expanded the zoning lot to the north by adding a new daycare facility to their campus (which UDC reviewed and approved December 11, 2019) and would like to expand the original CDR approval to the newest parcel of the zoning lot. This parcel is in a Campus Institutional (CI) district and this part of the zoning lot fronts Wright Street, which is 4 lanes and 25 mph.

Pursuant to Section 31.043(4)(b), MGO, the UDC shall apply the following criteria upon review of an application for a Comprehensive Sign Plan:

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.*

**Signs Permitted by Sign Ordinance:** Summarizing 31.14(1)(e), one wall and one ground signs per street frontage may be displayed identifying the entity, with a maximum of two ground signs and two wall signs per zoning lot. Signs, whether displayed on a wall or the ground, shall not exceed 12 sq. ft. in net area, nor be closer than ten feet to any lot line, except such signs may be increased in net area by one square foot for each additional foot that the sign is set back more than 12 feet from the street lot line. No sign under this section shall exceed 32 square feet in net area. No sign shall project higher than one story, or 12 feet above the curb level, whichever is lower.

**Proposed Signage:** The proposal shows the ground sign to have a total net area of 25.48 sq. ft. with an overall height 6' 2". The site plan notes that the ground sign will be installed 4' from the sidewalk, where a typical ground sign would require about a 26' setback due to its size. This location might conflict with an existing utility easement, resulting in the sign location being required to shift to provide a setback of 10' from the property line.

The proposed wall sign would have a setback of approximately 130' back from the front property line; however, it would have a total net of 37.88 sq. ft., 5.88 sq. ft. greater than what the code would allow, and would be placed on the building higher than 12' above the curb level.

**Staff Comments:** The proposed signs are similar in size and style as compared to the other previously approved signage found in the Madison College campus, keeping the uniform look of the zoning lot. The size and height of the signs appear necessary to assist people navigating through this campus and identifying the building occupancies. **Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met, with the condition that all other wall signage shall comply with code.**

**Notes:** The proposed location of the ground sign is currently in placed in a 10' public utility easement. The location of the ground sign in the final submittal will need to be located outside of this easement.