



Project Addresses: 1111 Highland Avenue
Application Type: CI Zoning District Master Plan Amendment
Legistar File ID # [90540](#)
Prepared By: Timothy M. Parks, Planning Division
Report includes comments from other City agencies, as noted

Summary

Applicant: Cindy Torstveit, University of Wisconsin-Madison; 21 N Park Street, Suite 6101; Madison.

Contact Person: Scott Kammer, Potter Lawson, Inc.; 749 University Row, Suite 300; Madison.

Property Owner: The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System; 1220 Linden Drive; Madison.

Requested Action: Amending Section 28.022-00289 of the Madison General Ordinances to amend the Campus-Institutional (CI) District Master Plan for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Campus for the portion of the campus generally addressed as 1111 Highland Avenue, to include plans to construct a three-story, 54,260 square-foot addition to University Hospital.

Proposal Summary: The School of Medicine and Public Health at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is requesting approval to construct a three-story, 54,260 square-foot addition to University Hospital that will contain a 30-MeV (Million electron Volts) cyclotron and associated laboratory space for medical research. The proposed addition will be located between Towers I and II of the Wisconsin Institutes for Medical Research (WIMR) on the north side of the hospital complex. The master plan approved in 2017 and effective through 2028 does not include any projects for the portion of the hospital complex located in the City of Madison, therefore requiring an amendment to include the "WIMR East Wedge Cyclotron and Expansion." Following approval of the proposed master plan amendment, the addition will be subject to final approval by the University's campus design review board and required to undergo site plan approval pursuant to Section 28.186 of the City's Zoning Code. The application indicates that construction of the addition will commence in September 2026 for completion in November 2027.

Applicable Regulations & Standards: The purpose, uses, master plan process, and uses in the CI (Campus-Institutional District) are outlined in Section 28.097 of the Zoning Code.

Review Required By: Joint Campus Area Committee, Plan Commission, and Common Council.

Note: Only the eastern half of the proposed addition and about a third of the overall hospital complex are located in Madison. The remainder is located in the Village of Shorewood Hills, which is reviewing the project separately. The City's review of the proposed addition shall be limited to only the portion located within its corporate boundary. Notice of the Plan Commission and Common Council hearings for this amendment was sent to the Village concurrent with the notices required in Section 28.181 of the Zoning Code as a courtesy. Additionally, the Village participates in the Joint Campus Area Committee, where the project has been discussed.

Summary Recommendation: The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find the applicable standards are met and forward the amendment to the Campus-Institutional (CI) District Master Plan for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Campus to the Common Council with a recommendation of **approval** to allow a three-story, 54,260 square-foot addition to the Wisconsin Institutes for Medical Research at University Hospital

to be constructed on the portion of the campus addressed as 1111 Highland Avenue. Approval of the plan amendment shall be subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions from reviewing agencies beginning on **page 5** of this report.

Background Information

Parcel Location: The portion of University Hospital located in the City of Madison occupies a 14.3-acre parcel located on the western and southern sides of Highland Avenue as it wraps around the hospital before intersecting with University Bay Drive in the Village of Shorewood Hills. The subject parcel is located in Alder District 5 (Vidaver) and the Madison Metropolitan School District.

Existing Conditions and Land Use: University Hospital sits at the center of a large complex bounded by Highland Avenue on the east and north, University Bay Drive on the west, and University Avenue and Campus Drive on the south, which also includes the Veterans Administration Hospital and American Family Children's Hospital. The Wisconsin Institutes for Medical Research (WIMR) occupies two towers at the northern edge of the complex. As noted elsewhere, about half of the WIMR facility is located in Madison, with the rest in Shorewood Hills.

Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning: The proposed facility is surrounded on three sides by other facilities associated with the hospitals and School of Medicine and Public Health. Nielsen Tennis Stadium, the University Bay Drive Parking Ramp (UW Lot 76), and University Bay Fields are located north of the subject site in the City of Madison. The tennis stadium and parking structure are zoned CI (Campus-Institutional District), while the fields are zoned CN (Conservancy District).

Adopted Land Use Plans: The Comprehensive Plan as amended through 2024 includes the subject site and surrounding properties in the Special Institutional district. The subject site is not located within the boundaries of an adopted neighborhood or sub-area plan.

Zoning Summary: The subject parcel is zoned CI (Campus-Institutional District). The specific bulk and area requirements for the site will be governed by the amended CI zoning district master plan for the larger campus.

Environmental Corridor Status: The property is not located in a mapped environmental corridor.

Public Utilities and Services: The site is served by a full range of urban services, including Metro Transit, which operates daily all-day transit service at and near the hospital complex on all nearby streets, with trips on most routes at least every 30 minutes (every 15 minutes or less during the day on weekdays). Metro Transit would initially estimate the following counts of potentially eligible trips towards US Green Building Council/LEED Quality Access to Transit points: 306 Weekday and 121 Weekend (average). Please contact Metro Transit if additional analysis would be of interest.

Previous Approval

On July 18, 2017, the Common Council adopted Substitute Ordinance 17-00074 (ID 47245), adopting a Master Plan for the portions of the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus zoned in the Campus-Institutional (CI) District. Following final approval of the plan document by City staff, the CI zoning district master plan for the campus took effect on January 1, 2019 and will remain in effect until January 1, 2029 consistent with the ten-year master plan approval period stipulated in Section 28.097 of the Zoning Code. This master plan is hereinafter

referred to as the “2017/2019 CI zoning master plan” for the year of Common Council approval and the year the plan took effect. A link to that plan may be found [here](#).

Project Description

The University of Wisconsin-Madison is requesting a major alteration to the approved Campus–Institutional (CI) District Master Plan for its campus to allow construction of a three-story, 54,260 square-foot addition to the Wisconsin Institutes for Medical Research (WIMR) adjacent to University Hospital on a 14.3-acre parcel addressed as 1111 Highland Avenue. The application materials provided note that the “WIMR East Wedge Cyclotron and Expansion” will house a 30-MeV (Million electron Volts) cyclotron and associated laboratory space for medical research, which will be located between Towers I and II of WIMR in place of an existing courtyard area.

University Hospital sits at the center of a large complex bounded by Highland Avenue on the east and north, University Bay Drive on the west, and University Avenue and Campus Drive on the south, which also includes the Veterans Administration Hospital and American Family Children’s Hospital. WIMR occupies two towers at the northern edge of the overall hospital complex. Only the eastern half of the proposed addition and about a third of the overall hospital complex are located in the City of Madison; the remainder is located in the Village of Shorewood Hills.

The approved 2017/2019 CI zoning master plan does not identify any projects for the portion of the University Hospital complex located in Madison. [Two projects are identified in the master plan for the portion of the complex located in Shorewood Hills. While for the City’s purposes the plan serves as the framework for campus projects on University-owned or affiliated parcels located in Madison, the document is also used by the University for planning purposes for the entirety of its campus, including the portion in Shorewood Hills.] In order for the portion of the WIMR cyclotron addition located in Madison to proceed, an amendment to the City’s CI zoning master plan is required.

Detailed plans for proposed addition have not been provided with the requested master plan amendment. The letter of intent for the amendment, however, notes that that proposed cyclotron will be located in a finished basement, with two levels of “white box” shell space for associated future research to be located above. The letter of intent further states that there is no parking or public access proposed, and the project will use existing infrastructure for utilities. Following approval of the proposed master plan amendment, all buildings properly identified on a campus master plan must be reviewed and approved by an architectural review committee prior to construction per Section 28.097(7) of the Zoning Code. Prior to presenting final building design to the architectural review committee, the University is required by Section 28.097(8) to present the final building design plans to the Joint Campus Area Committee (JCAC) after giving notice of the meeting by first class mail to the owners of record and occupants of multi-tenant buildings within 200 feet of the boundaries of the properties affected. The final plans for the building will also be reviewed using the site plan approval process in Section 28.186 of the Zoning Code prior to commencement of the project.

WIMR and University Hospital are located in the ‘Health Sciences Neighborhood’ as identified by the approved campus master plan. According to the approved master plan, many of the buildings in this neighborhood are physically connected but designed and detailed to appear as separate buildings through material changes and varied setbacks. A key recommendation to this area is the enhancement of the connection to Lake Mendota, which is recommended to occur both visually from the University Hospital complex and physically via a green corridor from Highland Avenue to the lakeshore. Building heights should step down toward the lake to promote views from the hospital. Buildings shall have a base, middle, and top, and should also include changes in material,

fenestration, architectural detailing, or other elements to break down the scale. Page 232 of the adopted master plan indicates that buildings in the Health Sciences Neighborhood may be up to nine stories tall (between 135-153 feet), with no stepbacks mandated along Highland Avenue and a 20-foot build-to line.

Analysis & Conclusion

The requirements for campus master plans are outlined in Section 28.097(5). CI zoning district master plans are adopted as part of the Zoning Code following the process for zoning map amendments in Sections 28.182. Per Section 28.097(10) of the Zoning Code for the CI district, no alteration of an approved campus master plan shall be permitted unless approved by the Plan Commission, provided however, the Zoning Administrator may, following consideration by the alderperson of the district, issue permits for minor alterations that are approved by the Director of Planning and Community and Economic Development and are consistent with the concept approved by the Common Council. If the change or addition constitutes a substantial alteration of the original plan, the procedure in Sec. 28.097(6) is required.

In this case, the scale of the proposed addition to the Wisconsin Institutes for Medical Research warrants a full amendment to the master plan. Approval of master plans and major amendments to master plans shall be based on how the plan meets the intent of the CI district, whether the plan serves the public interest as well as the interest of the institution developing the plan, and shall be consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and any adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans adjacent to campus boundaries.

The statement of purpose for the CI District states that the district “is established to recognize the City’s major educational and medical institutions as important activity centers and traffic generators, accommodate the growth and development needs of these institutions, and coordinate the master plans of these institutions with the City’s plans, policies and zoning standards.” The district is also intended to “permit appropriate institutional growth within boundaries while minimizing the adverse impacts associated with development and geographic expansion;” “balance the ability of major institutions to change and the public benefits derived from change with the need to protect the livability and vitality of adjacent neighborhoods;” and “encourage the preparation of Campus Master Plans that enable adjacent neighborhoods and the broader community to understand the levels of development being proposed, their likely impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures.”

The Planning Division believes that the Plan Commission may find that the proposed amendment to the CI District Master Plan for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Campus to allow construction of the three-story, 54,260 square-foot addition to the Wisconsin Institutes for Medical Research at University Hospital can meet the standards for approval. The site is not located within the boundaries of a City-adopted neighborhood or sub-area plan, and staff believes that the amendment is consistent with the recommendations for the Special Institutional category in the Comprehensive Plan (pages 25-26 of the Growth Framework) and with the intent and purpose of the CI zoning district. No comments have been submitted by reviewing agencies that would suggest a negative impact on the City’s infrastructure as a result of the proposed addition.

The City’s review of the proposed addition is limited to only the portion located within its corporate boundary. Notice of the Plan Commission and Common Council hearings for the zoning master plan amendment was sent to the Village of Shorewood Hills as a courtesy concurrent with the notices required in Section 28.181 of the Zoning Code. Additionally, the Village participates in the Joint Campus Area Committee (JCAC), where the project was discussed at its December 11, 2025 meeting, at which time the JCAC recommended approval of the master plan amendment to the Plan Commission and Common Council.

Recommendation

Planning Division Recommendation (Contact Timothy M. Parks, (608) 261-9632)

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find the applicable standards are met and forward the amendment to the Campus-Institutional (CI) District Master Plan for the University of Wisconsin-Madison Campus to the Common Council with a recommendation of **approval** to allow a three-story, 54,260 square-foot addition to the Wisconsin Institutes for Medical Research at University Hospital to be constructed on the portion of the campus addressed as 1111 Highland Avenue. Approval of the plan amendment shall be subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions from reviewing agencies that follow.

Recommended Conditions of Approval Major/Non-Standard Conditions are Shaded

Planning Division

1. Include graphics in the campus master plan as approved by the Planning Division that more clearly show the boundary between the City of Madison and Village of Shorewood Hills in relation to existing and proposed University buildings in the 'West Campus' campus planning district and 'Health Sciences Neighborhood'.

City Engineering Division (Contact Gretchen Aviles Pineiro, (608) 266-4089)

2. The applicant shall provide evidence that UW Facilities has reviewed and verified that the UW-owned sewer facilities that can handle the additional wastewater flow generated from the proposed hospital expansion.
3. Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) charges are due and payable prior to City Engineering Division sign-off, unless otherwise collected with a Developer's / Subdivision Contract. Contact Mark Moder at (608) 261-9250 to obtain the final MMSD billing a minimum of two (2) working days prior to requesting City Engineering Division signoff.
4. The property is a closed Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Bureau of Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System (BRRTS) site (#03-13-211167 and # 02-13-001602–UW HOSPITAL & CLINICS). If contamination is encountered, follow all WDNR and Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS) regulations for proper handling and disposal.

City Engineering Division – Mapping Section (Contact Julius Smith, (608) 264-9276)

5. Note: Portions of the amendment #8 to the Master Plan are located in the Village of Shorewood Hills. The applicant will need approval of such portions with the Village of Shorewood Hills.

Traffic Engineering Division (Contact Sean Malloy, (608) 266-5987)

This agency has reviewed the request and recommended no conditions of approval.

Zoning Administrator (Contact Jenny Kirchgatter, (608) 266-4429)

6. Add W-03 to Table 4-1 Proposed Building Summary.

Fire Department (Contact Matt Hamilton, (608) 266-4457)

This agency has reviewed the request and recommended no conditions of approval.

Parks Division (Contact Ann Freiwald, (608) 243-2848)

This agency has reviewed the request and recommended no conditions of approval.

Water Utility (Contact Jeff Belshaw, (608) 261-9835)

This agency has reviewed the request and recommended no conditions of approval.

Forestry Section (Contact Bradley Hofmann, (608) 267-4908)

This agency has reviewed the request and recommended no conditions of approval.

Metro Transit (Contact Tim Sobota, (608) 261-4289)

This agency has reviewed the request and recommended no conditions of approval.

Parking Division (Contact Trent W. Schultz, (608) 246-5806)

This agency has reviewed the request and recommended no conditions of approval.