

## ZONING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

November 6, 2019



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 309 W. Johnson Street  
**Project Name:** Ovation  
**Application Type:** Comprehensive Design Review Initial/Final Approval  
**Legistar File ID #** [57756](#)  
**Prepared By:** Chrissy Thiele, Zoning Inspector  
**Reviewed By:** Matt Tucker, Zoning Administrator

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The applicant is requesting Comprehensive Design Review INITIAL/FINAL APPROVAL. This property is located in a Planned Development (PD) District, which previously had a sign package approved by UDC. The shown signage remains the same (except for the request for one more projecting sign) but is back for UDC approval because of a change to the Sign Ordinance (Sec. 31.13(4)), which requires previously approved sign packages to either comply with the sign ordinance for the selected zoning district assigned by the Zoning Administrator, or, if it cannot, obtain approval from the UDC through Comprehensive Design Review. This property abuts West Johnson Street and West Dayton Street (both 2 lanes, 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.*

**Signable Area defined in Sign Ordinance:** One designated area of the facade of the building up to the roof line that is free of doors, windows (for purposes of this definition, spandrel panels or other non-vision glass used as an exterior building material are not considered windows) or other major architectural detail, that extends no higher than the juncture of the wall and the roof.

**Proposed Wall Signage:** Specific signable areas are called out on the above the first floor commercial spaces, all no more than 3' tall and designated a specific length. The signable areas that are called out do cross architectural detail. Each tenant space is allowed one wall sign over their tenant space. Tenants are limited to individual LED illuminated channel letters.

**Staff Comments:** The architecture of the building provides small and limited signable areas for the first floor tenants. Any qualifying signable areas would allow for a small and narrow looking sign. The proposed locations for the wall signs, as well as the limit to height and style, creates a uniformed look between tenants on the first floor. As shown in images of the existing signage, the signs appear to fit with the architecture of the building. **Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met.**

**Canopy Signs Permitted per Sign Ordinance:** Summarizing Section 31.071, above-canopy signs can be installed instead of canopy fascia signs, but are restricted to the business name and logo, be constructed of freestanding characters and the logo, have a max height of 2' and the next of the logo being a max size of 4 sq. ft. These signs also cannot be wider than the width of the canopy or the corresponding façade, whichever is narrower. Above-canopy signage may not project further than from the building than the canopy to which it is attached and a sign that crosses architectural detail may not be displayed closer than three feet from the nearest face of the building.

**Proposed Signage:** There are two existing above canopy signs. The sign located on the south elevation is of compliant size and height, however the sign on the north elevation has an oversize logo (almost 7' in height).

**Staff Comments:** This is existing signage that will not be changing, however must be addressed in the CDR. The sign is of high design and fits with the architecture of the building. To have a compliant sign in its place would make the sign appear small and unnoticeable. **Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met.**

**Parking Lot Signage Permitted per Sign Ordinance:** Summarizing Section 31.03(2) and 31.044(1)(I), parking lot directional signage are necessary for safety or prompting traffic flow to a location on the premises on which the sign is located. These signs can be a maximum size of 3 sq. ft. with a maximum height of 10 ft., and two signs per street frontage. These types of signs are exempt from permits.

Parking lot regulation signs, on the other hand, designate the condition of use or identity of such parking areas. These signs can be a maximum of 9 sq. ft. and require a 10 ft. setback from the property line.

**Proposed Signage:** The parking sign above the garage entrance appears to be over 3 sq. ft., although no dimensions were provided. The parking lot regulation sign on the side of the building is 40.88 sq. ft.

**Staff Comments:** The location of the building provides limited on street parking for anyone visiting the building. The oversized parking lot directional signage identifies the entrance to the parking garage to anyone seeking parking. **Staff has no objection to the CDR request and recommends the UDC find the standards for CDR review have been met.**

Staff Comments regarding other shown signage: The applicant shows the option of having three projecting signs. These signs are of a compliant size and location. No special exceptions are need.

Notes:

- Dimensions of the parking sign above the garage door will be added to the final CDR packet.
- Dimensions of each signable area shall be provided in the final CDR packet (some are illegible on the provided elevations).
- The final CDR documents shall state that all other signage complies with MGO 31.
- Any ground signage would require a new review from the Urban Design Commission.