



PREPARED FOR THE URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION

**Project Address:** 1-19 N Pinckney Street, 120 E Washington Ave, 22 North Webster Street  
**Application Type:** Planned Development (PD) and New Development in UDD 4  
Initial/Final Approval is Requested  
**Legistar File ID #** [60545](#) and [62137](#)  
**Prepared By:** Janine Glaeser, UDC Secretary

## Background Information

**Applicant | Contact:** Mark Binkowski, Urban Land Interests; 10 E Doty Street; Madison, WI 53703

**Project Description:** The applicant requests approvals to develop a nine-story building that contains a total of approximately 22,000 sf of first level retail space and 300,000 sf of office space on upper levels. The proposal also includes six levels of underground parking. There are two decisions before the Urban Design Commission for this development. The first decision is an advisory recommendation related to the requested Planned Development (PD) Zoning. The second decision is regarding a development in Urban Design District (UDD) 4, in which the UDC is an approving body.

### Project Schedule:

- Landmarks Commission approved the Variance from the Historic Preservation Ordinance to allow the demolition of a Designated Madison Landmark on May 4, 2020.
- Landmarks Commission found that the proposed development is not so large or visually intrusive as to adversely affect the historic character and integrity of the adjacent landmarks on July 13, 2020.
- The UDC received an informational presentation on May 27, 2020.
- The Plan Commission is scheduled to review this proposal on November 9, 2020.
- The Common Council is scheduled to review this proposal on November 17, 2020.

**Design-Related Plan Recommendations:** The [Comprehensive Plan](#) recommends “Downtown Core” uses for the subject site, which is identified as the center of Downtown and should generally possess the highest intensity of development. The most specific recommendations for the subject site are contained within the [Downtown Plan](#). The recommended height in that plan, which was later codified in the Zoning Ordinance, is up to the Capitol View Height Limit. In regards to views, the plan recommends establishing a set of standards addressing building characteristics such as height, setbacks, and stepbacks that will maintain a varied and interesting skyline as Downtown grows, and protect and enhance visual connections to the lakes. The Views and Vistas Map identifies key views, vistas, and viewsheds within the planning area that were determined as the most important to preserve and protect. Finally, the plan also includes the Webster Street-fronting portion of the site is identified as an “Underutilized Site and/or Obsolete Building.”

### Approval Standards:

The UDC is both an advisory and approving body on this request.

The UDC is **advisory** to the Plan Commission and Common Council in regards to the Planned Development Zoning alteration component of this request. As with any Planned Development, the Urban Design Commission is required to provide a recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in Zoning Code Sections 28.098(1), Statement of Purpose, and (2), Standards for Approval.

The UDC is also an **approving** body for a site that is located in Urban Design District 4 (“UDD 4”). This requires that the Urban Design Commission review the proposed project using the design standards and guidelines for that district in MGO Section 33.24(11).

## Summary of Design Considerations and Recommendations

There are two primary components of UDC’s review. Staff recommends that the UDC review and comment based on the specific Guidelines and Standards of [UDD 4](#), and the Planned Development Standards (See Attachment).

### Planned Development Standards

This request has been submitted as a Zoning Map Amendment to the Planned Development (PD) Zoning District and is subject to the approval standards of MGO §28.098. The UDC is required to review the General Development Plan and Specific Implementation Plans and make an advisory recommendation to the Plan Commission with specific findings on the design objectives listed in Subsections 28.098(1) and (2) and the other requirements of this Subchapter. Please see the attachment for information on these standards.

In making its advisory recommendation, the UDC should consider the attached standards, which are listed as an appendix to this report. Among these standards are the following design-related standards:

- (b) The PD District plan shall facilitate the development or redevelopment goals of the Comprehensive Plan and of adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.
- (e) The PD District plan shall coordinate architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of the PD District.

### Conditional Use Standards – Capitol View Height

As a reference, the underlying request was submitted concurrently with a Conditional Use request for certain projections to exceed the Capitol View Preservation Height limit. Please note that the Plan Commission is the approving body on all Conditional Use requests, including requests related to evaluate whether mechanical projections are allowed only after Plan Commission Conditional Use Approval:

Section 28.134(3) states:

No portion of any building or structure located within one (1) mile of the center of the State Capitol Building shall exceed the elevation of the base of the columns of said Capitol Building or one hundred eighty-seven and two-tenths (187.2) feet, City datum. Provided, however, this prohibition shall not apply to any church spires, flagpoles, communication towers, elevator penthouses, screened air conditioning equipment and chimneys exceeding such elevation, when approved as conditional uses. For the purpose of this subsection, City datum zero (0.00) feet shall be established as eight hundred forty-five and six-tenths (845.6) feet above sea level as established by the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey. (Am. by [ORD-19-00081](#), 11-13-19)

*When applying the above standards to any new construction of a building or an addition to an existing building the Plan Commission shall find that the project creates an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose for the zoning district. In order to find that this standard is met, the Plan Commission may require the applicant to submit plans to the Urban Design Commission for comment and recommendation.*

## UDD 4 Requirements

The Urban Design Commission is an approving body based on the development's location within UDD 4. The development shall meet the requirements and conform as much as possible to the guidelines. Staff notes that the requirements for this district are generally broad and provide standards and guidelines for public rights-of-way, off-street parking and loading, signs, building design, lighting, and landscaping.

The building design standards in UDD 4 do not include specific standards regarding height, setbacks, or stepbacks and state the following regarding Building Design:

### Building Design. MGO 33.24(11)(d)4

#### *Requirements*

- i. Exterior building materials shall be low maintenance and harmonious with those used on other buildings in the area.
- ii. Mechanical elements mounted on the roof or on ground pads shall be screened from views from adjacent properties and roadways in a manner consistent with requirements of public utilities.
- iii. Along East Washington Avenue west of First Street, metal shall be used as an exterior building material only as an integral part of a design of exceptional merit.

#### *Guidelines*

- i. Structures should be designed to be compatible with the structures that are adjacent to them.
- ii. Large unbroken exterior facades should be avoided.
- iii. All building elevations are of importance and should be carefully designed. When visible from roadways or adjoining properties, roof surfaces should be considered as part of the overall design.
- iv. The architecture of new in-fill buildings, additions to existing buildings and major exterior remodelings should be compatible with that of existing adjacent buildings.

## Conclusion

Procedurally, there are two decisions ultimately before the UDC. Staff recommends the following:

- 1. Due to a clarification on the postcard notice, staff recommends that UDC refer its final decision related to UDD 4 until after the public hearing can be rescheduled.**
- 2. However, the UDC can proceed with its advisory recommendation to the Plan Commission regarding the PD Advisory recommendation. Madison General Ordinance does not require a public hearing prior to the UDC making an advisory recommendation on Planned Developments.**

Staff recommends that the UDC gives careful consideration to the approval standards. Staff notes that there are public comments provided in the Legislative file. In regards to building height and views, staff notes that the Downtown Plan recommends and the Zoning Ordinance allows heights up to the Capitol View, with certain mechanical projections allowed into that area with Plan Commission Conditional Use approval. The submitted plans depict mechanical screen and elevator overrun projections into the Capitol Height View Preservation Limit.

While staff understands that concerns have been raised regarding the possible obstruction of Capitol Views from the AC Hotel building, the Attorney's office has advised that there is no legal right to a view, unless otherwise

protected by law or a private agreement between property owners. Staff is aware of no law or private agreement being violated by the proposed development.

During previous informational presentations, staff requested that elements such as the building's street orientation, long views, and façade details such as glazing be considered as part of the UDC's review. Planning staff would like to emphasize the importance of the building's activation of the public street-facing areas on Webster Street, Pinckney Street and East Washington Avenue. Staff further requests that the UDC provide feedback on the development's architectural detailing, treatment of pedestrian entrances, ground floor permeability, and relationship to the surrounding downtown context.

**Finally, Staff refers the Commission to their comments from the 5/27 informational presentation:**  
*(staff organized comments as they related to street orientation or general)*

Pinckney St.:

- Would benefit from mid-block relief south of 21 N. Pinckney – similar to the space between the glass bank building and the Tenney Building on the south side of the block.
- Wouldn't support if it didn't preserve the AEBank. Pinckney St retail level will be huge improvement over existing.
- Question whether maintaining the rhythm of multiple small store fronts on Pinckney is worth it.
- Appreciate the various outdoor terraces on different levels. Rooftop outdoor terraces are excellent additions.
- Organization of Pinckney storefront signage will be important design element. Multiple different facades may create more interesting signage or unnecessary complexity.
- Faux storefront attempt along Pinkney needs to be toned down – try 2 or 3 distinct looks instead of 7.
- The heights of the proposal are not an issue - the streetscape and how the building meets the street is unfriendly and out of scale.
- The effort to maintain character along Pinckney is appreciated, but don't ignore Webster and E. Wash.

E Wash & Webster St.:

- Adding a substantial entrance at E. Wash & Webster nicely activates a now-dead corner.
- All auto and service entrances off of Webster is appropriate.
- Like the classical rhythm of the Webster St. façade with glazing down to eye level.
- The stone patterns created at the E. Wash entry don't enhance the appearance and actually detract from the overall geometry of that corner element. Perhaps the rough cut stone could mimic the cubic forms above?
- The aesthetic along E. Washington and Webster at pedestrian level is not human scale, which is not in keeping with the surrounding fabric.
- The Webster facade is particularly lacking in scale for pedestrians.

General:

- The glass boxes do not seem to relate to the base structures. The smoothness of the glazing detail is not harmonious with the timeless character of the American Exchange Bank - why add more anonymous glazing to the Capital area?
- Perhaps somehow acknowledging the forms or proportions or rhythms of the first floor elements would tie it in better
- Highly recommend using special glazing to prevent bird strikes.
- Support the development of this massively underutilized space, but really want to see something more special across from the State Capitol.
- Really like the varied volumes of the 'glass box'

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- Tower seems to loom over American Exchange Bldg. It would benefit by moving upper tower portion north toward middle of block. Pinckney St. façade too disjointed. It's a new building, so make it look like one. Webster Street more unified & successful.

**ATTACHMENT**  
**PD Zoning Statement of Purpose and Standards**

**28.098 (1) Statement of Purpose.**

The Planned Development (PD) District is established to provide a voluntary regulatory framework as a means to facilitate the unique development of land in an integrated and innovative fashion, to allow for flexibility in site design, and to encourage development that is sensitive to environmental, cultural, and economic considerations, and that features high-quality architecture and building materials. In addition, the Planned Development District is intended to achieve one or more of the following objectives:

- (a) Promotion of green building technologies, low-impact development techniques for stormwater management, and other innovative measures that encourage sustainable development.
- (b) Promotion of integrated land uses allowing for a mixture of residential, commercial, and public facilities along corridors and in transitional areas, with enhanced pedestrian, bicycle and transit connections and amenities.
- (c) Preservation and enhancement of important environmental features through careful and sensitive placement of buildings and facilities.
- (d) Preservation of historic buildings, structures, or landscape features through adaptive reuse of public or private preservation of land.
- (e) Provision of more adequate, usable, and suitably located open space, recreational amenities, and other public facilities than would otherwise be provided under conventional land development techniques.
- (f) Facilitation of high-quality development that is consistent with the goals, objectives, policies, and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.

**28.098(2) Approval Standards for Project**

The standards for approval of a zoning map amendment to the PD District, or any major alteration to an approved General Development Plan, are as follows:

- (a) The applicant shall demonstrate that no other base zoning district can be used to achieve a substantially similar pattern of development. Planned developments shall not be allowed simply for the purpose of increasing overall density or allowing development that otherwise could not be approved unless the development also meets one or more of the objectives of (1) above. Conditions under which planned development may be appropriate include:
  - 1. Site conditions such as steep topography or other unusual physical features; or
  - 2. Redevelopment of an existing area or use of an infill site that could not be reasonably developed under base zoning district requirements.
- (b) The PD District plan shall facilitate the development or redevelopment goals of the Comprehensive Plan and of adopted neighborhood, corridor or special area plans.
- (c) The PD District plan shall not adversely affect the economic health of the City or the area of the City where the development is proposed. The City shall be able to provide municipal services to the property where the planned development is proposed without a significant increase of the cost of providing those services or economic impact on municipal utilities serving that area.
- (d) The PD District plan shall not create traffic or parking demands disproportionate to the facilities and improvements designed to meet those demands. A traffic demand management plan may be required as a way

to resolve traffic and parking concerns. The Plan shall include measurable goals, strategies, and actions to encourage travelers to use alternatives to driving alone, especially at congested times of day. Strategies and actions may include, but are not limited to, carpools and vanpools; public and private transit; promotion of bicycling, walking and other non-motorized travel; flexible work schedules and parking management programs to substantially reduce automobile trips.

- (e) The PD District plan shall coordinate architectural styles and building forms to achieve greater compatibility with surrounding land uses and create an environment of sustained aesthetic desirability compatible with the existing or intended character of the area and the statement of purpose of the PD District.
- (f) The PD District plan shall include open space suitable to the type and character of development proposed, including for projects with residential components, a mix of structured and natural spaces for use by residents and visitors. Areas for stormwater management, parking, or in the public right of way shall not be used to satisfy this requirement.
- (g) The PD district shall include suitable assurances that each phase could be completed in a manner that would not result in an adverse effect upon the community as a result of termination at that point.