

## URBAN DESIGN COMMISSION –

## COMPREHENSIVE DESIGN REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS

**This document describes the process and application requirements for CDR Applications requiring Urban Design Commission review and approval.**

*If you need an interpreter, translator, materials in alternate formats or other accommodations to access these forms, please call the Planning Division at (608) 266-4635.*

*Si necesita interprete, traductor, materiales en diferentes formatos, u otro tipo de ayuda para acceder a estos formularios, por favor llame al (608) 266-4635.*

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### Purpose and Intent

Comprehensive Design Review (CDR) is a voluntary process by which a property owner may request special approval for signage on their property. CDR is typically requested when unusual or unique signage is proposed, of exceptional design and style, complementing the building and building site. CDR is also used for large commercial centers that desire additional ground signage.

While the CDR process allows for significant flexibility for signage, it cannot authorize certain illegal signs or approve signs that would otherwise not meet the requirements of MGO Ch. 31. When approved, the CDR becomes the sign regulation for the property and is supplemental to all other provisions of Ch. 31. A copy is kept on file in the Zoning Office and any sign permit requested must be consistent with the approved CDR.

CDR requests are reviewed and approved by the City's Urban Design Commission (UDC) as part of a public hearing. CDR requests must meet all criteria for approval. The criteria for approval are listed below.

When a CDR is applied for, the applicant must provide photographic records of all signage on the zoning lot, including signs not under the control of the applicant. All signs controlled by the applicant on the zoning lot must be reviewed and approved by the UDC, including any existing signs regulated by MGO Ch. 31. Full detail for all signs must be provided and becomes part of the approval, including but not limited to: eligible facades, signable area, percentage of signable area to be occupied by specific signs, illumination method, height, designs, color, placement, number of signs, all different types of signs, etc. In addition, if a proposed sign deviates from regulations in MGO Ch. 31, a description of each section of MGO Ch. 31 where the proposed signs deviate (where an exception is being made) must be included in the CDR package.

After a CDR has been approved, at any time, the property owner or authorized agent may request an amendment to the CDR, which is reviewed through an administrative process, or by returning to the UDC for review.

# UDC-Comprehensive Design Review Instructions

## Prior to Submittal

**Pre-Application Meeting.** Prior to the submittal of a CDR Application, the applicant is strongly encouraged to meet with Planning and Zoning staff to discuss the development proposal, review concept plans in detail, and discuss the approval process. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to meet with the district alderperson, adjoining neighbors, property owners, and neighborhood association, if applicable, prior to submitting an application.

## Submitting Your Application

1. **Submittal:** The applicant shall file the required application with the required fee(s). Application submittal deadlines are as noted on the annual Development Review Schedule for the Urban Design Commission. Applications must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. on the due date. Applications received after 12:00 p.m. will be scheduled for the next application cycle.
2. **Completeness Review:** The UDC Secretary will review all applications for completeness. A “complete” application includes a completed CDR Application Form and all application materials and supplemental materials as indicated on the Application Checklist and Supplemental Requirements. Per Section 28.181(4), MGO, the UDC Secretary may refuse to accept an application. If an application is determined to be incomplete, it will not be accepted. There are many factors that contribute to the timing of an application’s review and public hearing schedule, including required plan revisions or the need for additional information. Submittal of an application by the published deadline does not guarantee a specific public hearing date.
3. **Electronic Copies Required:** Electronic copies of all items submitted in hard copy are required. Individual PDF files of each item submitted should be compiled on a CD or flash drive, or in an email to [udcapplications@cityofmadison.com](mailto:udcapplications@cityofmadison.com). The email must include the project address, project name, and applicant name. Electronic submittals via file hosting services (such as Dropbox.com) are not allowed. Applicants who are unable to provide the materials electronically should contact the Planning Division at (608) 266-4635 for assistance.

## After Filing an Application

1. **Public Hearing:** The UDC shall hold a hearing to review a complete application that includes all information required by this subsection and following the UDC’s procedures for a public hearing in Sec. 33.02(4)(e)3.
2. **Decision:** The UDC shall make a final decision on all complete applications for CDR within sixty (60) days of the date of the application, unless the applicant waives this deadline in writing or in person at a UDC meeting.
3. **Acknowledgement:** Once UDC has approved your CDR, you will need to submit two hard copies of a Comprehensive Design Review acknowledgement letter. (Email and facsimile copies will not be accepted.) The letter must include the date of the UDC meeting and original signatures from the project manager, property owner, and a blank line for the UDC Secretary’s signature. You also must include with the letter all plans and images that are part of the CDR that UDC approved, along with any corrections or alterations required by the commission. One of the letters will be returned with the UDC Secretary’s signature for your records. Sign permits will not be issued until this is completed.

# UDC-Comprehensive Design Review Instructions

## Comprehensive Design Review Criteria

The UDC shall apply the following criteria upon review of an application for a Comprehensive Design Review of signage:

1. The proposal 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 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 proposal shall not violate any of the stated purposes described in Secs. 31.02(1) and 33.24(2).
4. All signs must meet minimum construction requirements under Sec.31.04(5).
5. The proposal 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 proposal 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 proposal 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.

# UDC-Comprehensive Design Review Instructions

## Submittal Materials:

*The items listed below are minimum application requirements. Please note that the UDC and/or staff may require additional information in order to have a complete understanding of the project. Providing additional information beyond these minimums may generate a greater level of feedback from the Commission.*

*Each submittal must include fourteen (14) 11' x 17' collated paper copies. Please refrain from using plastic covers or spiral binding.*

- Application form
- Letter of Intent (the letter of intent should address specifically how the proposed signage is consistent with the CDR criteria)
- Locator map
- Proposed signage (to scale and dimensioned)
- Signage as it relates to code (what would be permitted)
- Site Plan (show location of all existing and proposed buildings and all existing and proposed signage, specifying which existing signs, if any, are to be removed, and sign setbacks)
- Description and/or samples of materials and colors for each proposed sign
- Context information including site photographs, existing sign photos and signs in surrounding parcels, in addition to the site being discussed
- Electronic copies of above materials
- Application fee (\$500)

**Note:** If supplemental perspective renderings are provided, an emphasis should be placed on providing pedestrian/automobile scale viewsheds, in addition to the other required graphics.