

ITEM #:	<u>27</u>
DATE:	<u>12-09-25</u>
DEPT:	<u>P&H</u>

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

**SUBJECT: MAJOR SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND ADAPTIVE REUSE PLAN
AMENDMENT FOR FAST FOOD RESTAURANT AT 2615 GRAND AVENUE**

BACKGROUND:

In 2007, an Adaptive Reuse Plan (ADP) was adopted for the North Grand Mall site, which contained allowances to waive certain parking and landscaping standards. **Ed Kaizer, representing the owner of 2615 Grand (Grand 1350 LLC), is requesting an amendment to the 2007 Adaptive Reuse Plan and approval of a Major Site Development Plan to allow a fast-food restaurant (KFC) with a drive-thru on the property, which was previously a US Bank location.**

The proposed new fast-food project alters the current approved ADP in regard to the total number of parking stalls and site circulation, resulting in the need for an amendment with a Major Site Development Plan and waivers.

A location map showing the subject property and the ADP boundaries is attached. More information regarding the ADP and past amendments is included in the addendum.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The building site is a 0.18 acre parcel that is an island within the overall "Mall" site. The Mall site is divided into multiple ownerships between the original mall area and the redeveloped mall area. The subject site is a separate parcel surrounded by a property under the same ownership that includes shared parking stalls and access aisles. Parking for the use and drive-thru circulation will affect this abutting property under the same ownership. **The changes do not affect the layout of the mall site to the north under separate ownership.**

The site contains the bank building, former bank drive-thru area, and three parking spaces on the south side of the building. **The existing brick building will be retained and reused for the new restaurant.** Excerpts from the site plan including building elevations are attached. An addendum includes more information on the modifications to the building and site design elements.

Several conditions are proposed requiring a lighting plan, additional directional signage, and landscaping prior to occupancy. These are further discussed in the addendum. **The primary issue for reuse related to the site is the proposal for circulation of the drive-thru and additional reduction in required parking.**

Site Circulation and Drive-Thru Design

Reuse of the site for a fast-food restaurant was complicated by how to queue vehicles for the drive-thru without impeding the general circulation within the site. The proposed design directs traffic to approach the drive-thru from the south. The menu board is located on the southeast corner of the building, parallel to Grand Avenue. The drive-thru lane adjacent to the building

will be one-way and also serve as an access aisle for angled parking. Once ordering is complete, vehicles will then turn left around the north end of the building to access the pick-up window and exit to the main mall parking lot driveway.

Staff has reviewed multiple iterations of how to configure a drive-thru to function appropriately and meet queuing and circulation interests. **With vehicles approaching from the south and following the proposed directional signage, staff believes that adequate queueing will exist and that the primary drive aisles of the parking area will remain unobstructed.**

Due to a limited turning radius around the building's south and east sides, vehicles traveling east cannot turn left to enter the drive-thru. Staff has proposed a condition to discourage drivers from approaching the drive-thru at this location. Additional striping on the pavement near the menu board and a diverter will delineate the drive aisle and reinforce right-turn-only movement at this location to emphasize that drive-thru vehicles circulate from the south.

Directional signage on the pavement will direct this traffic to turn right before reaching this point and loop around the off-site parking area south of the building to enter the queue. Staff proposes a condition that similar signage be installed at the southern entrance to the off-site parking area to reinforce this routing and prevent vehicles from attempting to enter the queue near the building. A drive-thru directional sign at the south end of the parking lot may also be provided.

To approve the proposed drive-thru configuration, a waiver of the 5-foot drive-thru setback requirement is required with the ADP amendment. The parcel's "island" configuration would not permit conformance to the typical drive-thru setback standards as the queue crosses property lines.

Parking

The original ADP and subsequent amendments have addressed parking as an overall requirement of the combined mall properties that are governed by the ADP. All parking is considered shared within the context of the ADP with a set minimum number of spaces for the overall site to serve the specific uses allowed within the ADP.

The result of the proposed fast food plan is a net loss of 6 parking spaces for the overall ADP due to a change in the configuration of the parking (change from a two-way access aisle to one-way angled parking along the drive-thru). This requires Council to grant a waiver to modify the minimum parking allowed with the ADP.

The proposed fast food use requires 1 less parking space than the prior bank use. The reconfiguration of the parking lot is what results in the need for the parking waiver, not the change in use.

WAIVERS:

Since City Council has already made the determination of the long-term benefits of the redevelopment of the site with the 2007 ADP, the amendment requires Council to only consider the requested waivers to the Development Standards and determine if they believe it is in the interest of the neighborhood and the City to approve them. Approval of the Major Site Development Plan, as proposed, will approve the three requested waivers listed below.

The specific waivers requested include:

1. Drive-Thru Setback. **The applicant requests waiver of the 5-foot setback for drive-thrus from property lines to allow queuing across properties under common ownership.** While the setback is not met from the subject property's property lines, it is met from all exterior property lines and property lines not under common ownership.
2. Parking. **The applicant requests a reduction of 6 spaces and approval of 1,720 total parking spaces on the site for the proposed and existing mix of uses.** The proposed use itself has sufficient parking on-site and nearby, but the overall ADP site is short of required parking for all uses established with the original approval and subsequent amendments. Through approval of the requested amendment to the ADP, City Council would permit the continued waiver for reduction of overall parking requirements.
3. Landscaping. **The applicant requests City Council determine that the landscaping as shown on the site plan is adequate for the purpose of enhancing the site and supporting reinvestment, waiving full landscaping standards.** A new drive-thru island will be landscaped with grass and two overstory trees. The building site currently has no landscaping. This landscaping significantly increases landscaped area. Staff believes this is the most landscaping that can be practicably added to the site, given that proposed improvements are limited to this area.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION:

The Planning and Zoning Commission reviewed the request at its November 19, 2025, meeting. The primary focus was on the reconfiguration of the parking and drive-thru access.

The Commission wanted to ensure the accessible parking, which is located across the drive-thru lane from the building, was permitted because of its separation from the front door and location crossing through the drive-thru. Staff responded that, at this time, the City's Inspections Division staff considered it compliant with the Building Code because it is located along an accessible route. Striping and a sloped ramp will be added to guide pedestrians from the parking to the entrance. The spaces could be relocated if an additional accessible route is defined for a different location of the spaces. Staff has also proposed a condition to add a painted stop bar in front of the ordering board so that drive-thru traffic does not block the sidewalk and parking lot crossing that occurs at the southeast corner of the building.

The Commission also took an interest in the function of the angled parking stalls and their transition to 90 degree stall to the south of the menu board ordering location. Staff reviewed the overlap of a drive-thru lane and access aisle and noted that while it is not ideal, is it not prohibited by the Zoning Ordinance and is a common configuration for other drive-thrus.

A Commissioner also asked if other improvements to the larger ADP site were triggered by the proposal or could otherwise be required. Staff did not revisit the overall scope of the mall property when reviewing this proposal; the review was confined to the footprint of this project. Prior amendments did trigger other site enhancements, such as landscaping and walkway connections. Staff responded that this project did not trigger any upgrades to other parking or common areas based upon the prior ADP conditions.

The Commission voted 6-0 to recommend approval.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve the amendment to the Adaptive Reuse Plan and Major Site Development Plan for 2615 Grand Avenue subject to the following conditions:
 - a. A painted stop bar shall be added in front of the ordering board so that drive-thru traffic does not block the sidewalk and pedestrian parking lot crossing in this area.
 - b. Directional signage be installed at the southern entrance to the drive-thru to direct traffic prior to occupancy.
 - c. Prior to Occupancy, work with Planning staff to define the painted area and diverter options at the southeast corner of the building to deter vehicle entering the drive-thru queuing area.
 - d. The 8 shrubs along the site frontage with Grand are replanted prior to occupancy.
 - e. A lighting plan compliant with City standards is submitted for review and approval by the Planning Division.
2. Approve the amendment to the Adaptive Reuse Plan and Major Site Development Plan for 2615 Grand Avenue with modified conditions.
3. Deny the amendment to the Adaptive Reuse Plan and Major Site Development Plan for 2615 Grand Avenue.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

In reviewing the proposed amendment to the Adaptive Reuse Plan/Major Site Development Plan, staff prioritized review of the circulation for the site. The proposed plan accommodates a drive-thru use that does not impact the overall circulation of the site and creates a new restaurant space that will be complementary to the uses at the mall and provide services to the residents of north Ames.

The overall benefit of adding new uses to the site support findings for approval of the Adaptive Reuse Plan amendment, even with the granting of waivers as requested to facilitate the design. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1, as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[ADDENDUM KFC.pdf](#)

[Location Map.pdf](#)

[Site Plan Excerpts.pdf](#)

[Adaptive Reuse Plan and Major Site Development Plan Criteria.pdf](#)