

February 24, 2026



Community Development
City of Mankato
Intergovernmental Center
10 Civic Center Plaza
Mankato, MN 56001

RE: CUP & CDC Narrative Front Street Redevelopment

City Community Development team:

ISG is submitting a Certificate of Design Compliance (CDC) and Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application for the redevelopment in downtown Mankato for the block bound by S. Riverfront Dr/S Front Street/Warren St / Liberty Street. Attached is a map and list showing all the parcels included with this city block/application, providing the parcel number, address (if applicable) and owner on record. The submittal includes the following documents for staff's review: Site/Civil Plans, Landscape Plan, Lighting Plan, Elevations, Floor Plans (including parking plan), Materials Board, Stormwater Memo, Footings Encroachment Exhibit, Parking Analysis Memo, Traffic memo, Site Construction Logistics letter and Plan. This narrative describes the proposed project and outlines each request in further detail, demonstrating how the project is compliant with CDC and CUP criteria.

PROJECT NARRATIVE

The Front Street Place redevelopment site is a block in downtown Mankato that is zoned CBD-F (Central Business District – Fringe) and within the Front Street Connectivity Plan. Last month, our team submitted the Preliminary Plat application to consolidate the 13 parcels on this city block into 1 lot, totaling a size of 2.5 acres (109,036 square feet) to prepare the project area for a new cohesive development on one lot. The Preliminary Plat is currently in review with the city.

Front Street Plaza, LLC is proposing a mixed-use redevelopment project that will include retail, office, residential, and a shared parking facility. A 5-story office building is situated at the corner of Riverfront Drive and Warren Street. The building along Front Street will be six stories. Retail will occupy the first floor with residential on floors 2-6. A private outdoor terrace for residents will be located on the east side of the building. In between the two buildings will be a 3-story parking ramp. There will be direct access from the parking ramp to the residential, office, and café mezzanine.

Following is a summary of specific site design criteria and how these items are addressed with this proposal:

BUILDING MASSING

Our development is located within the 'Downtown' commercial area and will have four street frontages facing S. Front Street to the East, Warren Street to the north, South Front Street to the East, Liberty Street to the south, and Riverfront Drive to the west. The facades along Warren Street and South Front Street all support the urban fabric and retail corridor along South Front Street by holding the street edge for at least 50% of the building frontage, with the remaining setbacks serving as an urban plaza at the intersection of S. Front Street and Warren Street, and a garage entrance along the mid-block of Warren Street.

Along South Front Street, retail bays will help to activate and extend the shopping corridor, with inset storefronts and canopies for future retail signage and pedestrian cover. An elevated terrace at the second level will provide further engagement between the private residential development and the public sidewalk below. The primary pedestrian garage entrance along the mid-block of South Front Street will also serve as a point of entry for the café and the retail bay at the corner of Liberty and South Front Street.

On Warren Street, the parking deck will be shielded from view with architectural paneling, and the vehicular entrance will be visually minimized by the office building above.

The materiality of the development will prioritize South Front and Warren Street with mix of limestone finish, architectural panels in metal and fiber cement, as well as retail storefronts and larger glazing at key building breaks. The secondary façades that characterize Liberty Street and Riverfront Drive will continue the architectural language and but will primarily be clad in architectural fiber cement and metal panels along with limited limestone finishes along the base and at accent walls. Private balconies for residents are anticipated along this façade for views towards the river.

PRIVATE AMENITY DECK

There will be a private outdoor amenity deck for residents located on the second floor of the Front Street building. There will be direct access from the 3rd level of the parking ramp and 2nd level of the building along Front Street. Amenities could include a fenced in dog area, grills, fireplace, seating, and open space.

FLOOR AREA RATIO

The total floor area, including the parking ramp, is 308,802 GSF. This equates to a floor area ratio of 2.83.

SIGNAGE

Signage will comply with the Urban Design Guidelines. Signage calculations are provided on the development summary page. Signage will be provided in full details with the sign permits for each individual tenant. Since specific tenants are not identified and exact signage is unknown, we do not have the final signage available at this time. However, we have attached a plan showing the sign locations and allowable area for each tenant based on the code allowance. All signs will conform with Mankato Sign Code as stated in Section 10-435 and other applicable regulations.

PUBLIC WALK

The walk along Riverfront Drive, Warren Street, and South Front Street will match the standard downtown exposed aggregate banding finish.

OFF-STREET LOADING

The city code states that central loading facilities are allowed if each zoning lot has direct access without crossing streets or alleys. The total loading berth requirement is based on all the uses and areas may be total before computing number of loading berths.

Calculations:

- Retail 2 has a loading dock located along Liberty Street, so it wasn't included in the central loading facility calculation.
- The tenants identified as Retail 1, Café and Restaurant equals 16,778 SF. The retail/commercial loading berth requirement is two short loading berths for 25,000 SF. Therefore, the retail requires $16,778/25,000=0.67$
 $0.67*2=1.34$ short loading berths.
- The office is 36,524 SF. The office loading berth requirement is one short loading berth for 200,000 SF. Therefore, the office requires $36,524/200,000=0.18$ short loading berth.
- $1.34+0.18=1.52$ short loading berths required.

Provided:

- Two short loading berths are provided along Warren Street.
 - Screening cannot be provided due to access constraints.
- Loading dock provided along Liberty Street.
 - Screening of 6ft in height will be provided.
- The loading berths are located more than 30 feet from the nearest point of intersection.

REFUSE PLAN

Residents and Retail 2 will have access to an interior trash room located near the loading dock. The remaining tenants will share a central exterior trash enclosure located west of Retail 2 and south of the parking ramp.

PARKING

The proposed mixed-use development will operate using a shared parking model that requires more stalls than the city code. Refer to the attached Shared Parking Analysis Memorandum for parking calculations and shared parking model.

BICYCLE PARKING

A bicycle storage locker is included as a residential amenity, so the residential parking requirement was removed from the bicycle parking requirement. Therefore, the 5% bicycle space requirement was applied to the 122 non-residential parking stalls, requiring 6 bicycle spaces.

SNOW STORAGE

All snow is planned to be hauled off-site. Temporary snow storage areas are identified on the attached Site Code Plan for the surface parking area. Snow will also be temporarily stored in the corners of the upper deck parking ramp prior to being hauled off-site.

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

Based on the low trip generation potential and alternative routes provided to access the site, it is expected that the development will have minimal impacts to the surrounding roadway network. It is expected that the existing roadway network would be able to accommodate the new trips generated. Refer to the traffic memorandum for additional information.

TRAFFIC CONTROL

Temporary road closures will be required for the project. Refer to Site Logistics Plan for additional information.

STORMWATER

The proposed project provides a stormwater management system that meets all MPCA NPDES and City of Mankato requirements. This includes rate, water quality, and volume control. An NPDES Construction Stormwater Permit will be applied for prior to construction. Refer to the Stormwater Management Report for additional information.

ENCROACHMENTS

All the doors along the right-of-way will be set into the building, so there will be no at grade encroachments into the right-of-way. Below is a list of proposed encroachments:

- The proposed building at the corner of Liberty Street and Front Street will encroach the sight triangle on floors 2-6.
 - A minimum clear height of 18 feet will be provided.
- Store front canopies will encroach the right-of-way along Front Street.
 - A minimum clear height of 15 feet will be provided.
- A residential terrace will encroach the right-of-way along Front Street.
 - A clear height of 18 feet will be provided.
- The proposed building at the corner of Riverfront Drive and Warren Street will encroach the right-of-way on floors 2-6.
 - A minimum clear height of 18 feet will be provided.
- Building footings will encroach into the right-of-way approximately 3 feet. See attached exhibit.
- Off-street loading along Warren Street is proposed in the right-of-way.

CERTIFICATE OF DESIGN COMPLIANCE REQUEST

The following items are included within this submittal in support of Certificate of Design Compliance approval:

- Site Plan
- Landscape Plan
- Site Lighting Photometrics Plan & Light Fixture Details
- Colored Rendering
- Materials Sample Board
- Preliminary Floor Plan

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT REQUEST

Following are the Standards from Section 10-883 of the City of Mankato code for the review of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) request. Each standard is listed below verbatim from the city code followed with a response on how this project addresses each CUP standard:

1. It is one of the conditional uses listed in the particular district.

Response: The property is zoned CBD-F. The Front Street Redevelopment includes Apartments and Restaurants, which are both listed in Section 10-542 of the Mankato code as conditional uses as copied below:

- **Apartments**, provided residential uses are limited to not more than 50 percent of the ground floor. The entirety of the upper floors may be used for residential purposes. At least 50 percent of the ground floor, including the portion of the building abutting the street frontage, common area, or plaza, shall be devoted to principal nonresidential uses permitted in this district.
- **Restaurants**, including drive-through and carry-out, and other eating and nonalcoholic drinking establishments, including unenclosed seating and servicing areas as regulated in article X, division 2, of this chapter.

The proposed apartments comply with the CUP requirement and are not more than 50 percent of the ground floor area. The ground floor area is designed for restaurant, grocery and retail uses.

2. It is in keeping with the comprehensive planning policies of the city and this article as amended from time to time.

Response: This development supports goals for additional housing options where a walkable neighborhood character is being built. It also supports economic development and revitalization downtown.

3. It does not interfere with or diminish the use of property in the immediate vicinity.

Response: This site is predominately vacant or surface parking. This project is providing a large redevelopment investment to this area that will help revitalize this area of downtown.

4. It can be adequately served by public facilities and services.

Response: All needed public facilities and services are available and equipped to support this size of development. Additionally the existing water and sanitary sewer mains are located in the adjacent streets and are sized to accommodate the proposed increased density.

5. It does not cause undue traffic congestion.

Response: A traffic study has been provided with this application to show that the anticipated traffic generated with the mix of proposed uses can adequately be serviced by the surrounding streets without need for improvements and that the locations of the proposed access drives do not cause any conflicts to adjacent uses.

6. It preserves significant historical and architectural resources.

Response: The majority of the site is vacant and the existing buildings that will be demolished are not contain historical or architectural significance to prevent the redevelopment of the site.

7. It preserves significant natural and environmental features.

Response: The site is a flat urban infill of a city block with no significant natural or environmental features.

8. It will not cause a negative cumulative effect, when considered in conjunction with the cumulative effect of various special uses of all types on the immediate neighborhood, and the effect of the proposed type of conditional use upon the city as a whole.

Response: The mix of uses – apartment, office and retail – bring a positive, live-work presence to the downtown area. Opposite of a negative effect, these uses bring life and economic vitality to the area.

9. It complies with all other applicable regulations of the district in which it is located and other applicable ordinances, except to the extent such regulations have been modified through the planned development process or the granting of a variance.

Response: The proposed development is compliant with the applicable city and state codes. Additionally, this property is located within the Front Street Connectivity Plan and supports the following goals stated in the plan, with the main elements bulleted below:

- Improve the economic viability, market position, and accessibility of Front Street
- Maintain Pedestrian Access through Front Street
- Provide parking in expandable parking ramps or within the building itself. Building upwards for commercial, office, residential uses along with parking purposes provides for greater utilization of space and limits the presence of expansive hard-surfaced parking lots. Reducing expansive hard surface parking lots ...

The proposed development designed the buildings along Front Street as the dominant pedestrian side, with the goal to enhance the streetscape and engage the pedestrian. Surface parking is limited overall, with the majority of parking in a parking ramp. No parking is accessed from Front Street and parking is screened by buildings and not visible to Front Street.

10. It will not jeopardize the public's health, safety, or general welfare.

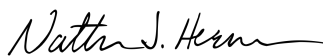
Response: This project does not jeopardize the public's health, safety, or general welfare. The proposed mix of apartments, office and retail are compatible with adjacent uses and the character of the area, are not uses that pose safety or nuisance issues.

Thank you again for reviewing the application and attached materials. Please contact us with any questions or if there is any additional information we can provide in support of this project. Andrea Rand is the application coordinator and her contact is Andrea.Rand@ISGInc.com or 952.426.0699. Nate Hermer is the project manager and civil engineer and his contact information is Nathan.Hermer@ISGInc.com or 507-387-6651.

Sincerely,



Andrea Rand, AICP
Development Services Coordinator



Nate Hermer, PE
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