



December 20, 2012

Chris Anderson
Associate Planner/Environmental Coordinator
City of Ramsey
7550 Sunwood Drive NW
Ramsey, MN 55303

Re: McDonald's Site Plan Application

Dear Mr. Anderson:

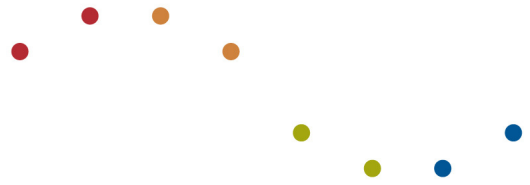
We have received your December 13th comments regarding our application on behalf of McDonalds USA, LLC.

At your request, we have prepared a colored 3D rendering of the building as viewed from the intersection of Sunwood Drive and Armstrong Boulevard and colored elevations for all four building sides. As you can see, we have prepared a building design that is consistent with the purpose and intent of the COR Design Framework. The COR Design Framework was developed with the acknowledgement that the urban core with the traditional pedestrian oriented streetscape would be focused in COR-1. The COR-2 district was developed to accommodate auto-oriented uses such as this and the design guidelines included the flexibility to allow a wide variety of users in this area.

When evaluating this location for a possible new McDonald's restaurant, our team evaluated several different site layouts before settling on the plan that we submitted. We looked at the entrance to the site, which provides a full access from the internal drive and a right-in only from the north. This access limitation severely restricts the internal circulation options. Our goal is to ensure a well-functioning site that accommodates the approximately 1,200 daily drive-thru customers while providing safe pedestrian access for our customers that either drive and park or walk to the site. It is important to provide adequate stacking space at the drive-through and ensure that pedestrians do not have to cross drive-through lanes to enter the restaurant. None of the other site layouts optimize the operation of the restaurant while providing safe, convenient customer access like this plan does. Based on our world-wide experience operating McDonalds restaurants, we have evaluated a number of different orientations and layouts and determined that this plan provides the best option.

This parcel is part of the COR TWO subdivision, which is uniquely challenged due to existing conditions related to public streets, internal access drives, existing and planned buildings to the south and an approved (but not yet constructed) building to the east. We have prepared a site plan that complies with The COR Design Framework while addressing these site constraints.

When the COR TWO subdivision was approved and the sketch plan approved by the HRA, Planning Commission and City Council, there was discussion about the fact that this subdivision was created to allow a campus-like setting within The COR and provide a global fix for a number of existing conditions that make development of this block challenging. The buildings within this subdivision are oriented around an internal drive rather than the surrounding public streets. Our building entrance, like the Wiser Liquor building, the retail center and SuperAmerica (and any other campus setting), is



oriented to this internal drive. This internal drive was an important design element the subdivision because it allowed the existing retail/office building on Lot 2 to be part of this campus environment and take advantage of shared parking opportunities with the new Wiser Choice Liquor Store building on Lot 3, thereby, solving an existing parking problem for those businesses. Our restaurant design closely evaluated the existing conditions created by lot lines, existing building orientations and traffic access. Based on this information, the front of our site faces east and is oriented toward internal street.

Due to the need for vehicles to maneuver around the site, the building cannot be constructed at the build-to line. However, the Framework anticipated this type of situation and provided a tool to create a street edge through the use of a stone and decorative aluminum fence as shown on our plans. The Framework states that when this street edge is used, the fencing edge should be 40% of the frontage. Our plans show that the fence edging covers 42% of the street frontage on Sunwood Drive. This exceeds ordinance requirements. The fencing will offer breaks to open views into the site and provide a sidewalk connection to the front door of the building. This will create a strong, yet inviting, street edge.

We understand the importance of the building appearance on all four elevations. While our customers will enter the building from the front (east) side of the building, the north, south and west elevations were designed with interesting building elevations to provide curb appeal. All elevations are treated with similar materials, including glass, brick, EIFS and metal accents—there is no “back of building” on this site. The trash enclosure is designed as part of the building and has window glazing on the north face to provide visual interest for customers in the drive-through. The fence/landscape edge along Sunwood would limit the visibility to this elevation from the street, but any glimpse of the elevation would provide an interesting face.

The COR Framework requires that “Rooftop equipment shall be screened from the line of site of pedestrians and integrated into the design and massing of the roof form.” This site complies by locating all mechanical equipment on the roof screening from line of sight of pedestrian by the proposed parapet which is designed as part of the building. This is no requirement that rooftop equipment be screened from the sky (or from the future elevated Armstrong Boulevard) nor is such screening viable.

We understand the COR TWO subdivision is unique within The COR in regard to the building orientation necessitated by the unique access situation. However, we believe that our site plan complies with the spirit and intent of the COR Framework while providing a viable site plan for the unique types of uses on this block. At your request, we have provided another copy of this approved sketch plan for the COR TWO subdivision to show how the buildings in this campus setting are all oriented toward each other around the internal drive.



We look forward to Planning Commission review on January 3rd and City Council action on January 22nd. If you have any questions, please contact me at ekellogg@landform.net or 612.638.0242.

Sincerely,
Landform

Eric Kellogg
Project Designer