

**DOWNTOWN REVIEW BOARD AGENDA
FEBRUARY 6, 2019**

STAFF: RYAN TEFERTILLER

FILE NO:
CPC DP 18-00171 – QUASI-JUDICIAL

PROJECT: SALVATION ARMY BUILDING REHAB

OWNER: WEBER STREET INVESTMENTS LLC

CONSULTANT: ECHO ARCHITECTURE



PROJECT SUMMARY:

1. Project Description: This proposal is to allow the new owner (Weber Street Investments LLC) of what was formally known as the Salvation Army property to remodel the two buildings onsite for a mix of new uses including commercial, office, and residential units. The mix of new uses demands more parking than is available on the property and therefore requires a parking warrant. The 1.42-acre property is zoned FBZ-T2B (Form-Based Zone – Transition Sector 2B) and is addressed as 501 and 505 S. Weber St. and is generally located southeast of E. Cimarron St. and S. Weber St. **(FIGURE 1)**
2. Applicant's Project Statement: **(FIGURE 2)**
3. Planning & Community Development Team's Recommendation: **Approval of the application with numerous technical modifications**

BACKGROUND:

1. Site Address: 501 and 505 S. Weber St.
2. Existing Zoning/Land Use: FBZ-T2B (Form-Based Zone – Transition Sector 2B) / The site is developed with two existing buildings and a private parking lot.
3. Surrounding Zoning/Land Use:
 - North: FBZ-T2B / Office, commercial, and service uses
 - South: FBZ-T2B / Office, commercial, and light industrial uses
 - East: FBZ-T2B / Office, commercial, and service uses
 - West: FBZ-T2B / Office, commercial, and service uses
4. Comprehensive Plan/Designated 2020 Land Use: Regional Center
5. Annexation: Town of Colorado Springs, 1872
6. Master Plan/Designated Master Plan Land Use: Experience Downtown Master Plan (2016) / General Mixed Use
7. Subdivision: Salvation Army Subdivision (1982)
8. Zoning Enforcement Action: None
9. Physical Characteristics: The site is flat and is developed with two existing buildings and a private parking lot.

STAKEHOLDER PROCESS AND INVOLVEMENT:

At the time of application submittal, the City mailed notification postcards to 111 owners of property that falls within 1,000 feet of the subject property. Those postcards included information about the proposed project including the proposed uses and the need for parking relief. Staff received input from two stakeholders as a result of the mailing: the Downtown Partnership issued a letter of conditional support, while a neighboring property owner voiced concerns about the likely parking demand **(FIGURE 3)**. The site will be posted and new postcards mailed prior to the Downtown Review Board's public hearing.

The application was reviewed by numerous City agencies including: Colorado Springs Utilities, City Engineering, City Forestry, and the City's Landscape Architect. All agencies support the project; any remaining technical concerns are included as Technical Modifications at the end of this report.

ANALYSIS OF REVIEW CRITERIA AND MAJOR ISSUES

The subject property was owned by the Salvation Army for 30+ years prior to last fall's sale to Weber Street Investments LLC. The two buildings on the property have served as office space, residential apartment units, retail space, and most recently as an emergency cold weather shelter for local homeless residents. The Downtown Review Board has approved Conditional Use permits for human service uses in 2014, 2015 and 2017.

The new owner of the property is proposing two significant changes to the existing buildings: significant remodel to accommodate a mix of new uses, and an exterior building façade project to improve the aesthetics of both buildings. While the Form-Based Code supports new uses in existing building stock, properties outside of the Code's parking exempt area (**FIGURE 4**) must address minimum parking standards when the new uses have a higher parking demand than past uses.

Section 2.6 of the Form-Based Code includes minimum parking standards for properties outside of the City's historic core to ensure that no individual use consumes all the available on-street parking in the area thereby creating problems to users and residents on adjacent properties. The Code's parking ratios are significantly less than those that are used City-wide due to the presence of on-street parking, off-street public parking opportunities in the area, presence of numerous public transit resources in the area, and the relative ease of walking, biking and other forms of mobility that don't require personal vehicles.

The subject property has a notable off-street parking lot located behind 501 S. Weber and accessed via a direct curb cut to Cimarron as well as via the public alley. Including two ADA parking stalls, the lot includes a total of 33 off-street parking stalls. No on-street parking is available along Cimarron but a total of 13 parallel on-street stalls are available on S. Weber St. immediately adjacent to the site.

Specific tenants aren't finalized for either building on the property. However, the plan as proposed indicates the following uses and parking requirements:

- 501 S. Weber ground floor – nearly 11,000 SF of restaurant space requiring 43 stalls
- 501 S. Weber basement – approximately 6,600 SF of storage requiring 7 stalls
- 501 S. Weber second floor – 15 apartment units requiring 15 stalls
- 505 S. Weber first and second floor – nearly 43,000 SF of office use requiring 87 stalls

The Form-Based Code allows parking reduction factors to apply for mixed use projects. Utilizing a 25% reduction available to projects that include both residential and office uses brings the total required parking stalls to 122 – which is still far fewer than the 33 available on site.

Before the proposed mix of uses can be established within the buildings on the site, a Warrant must be granted by the Downtown Review Board to grant relief from the Code's parking standards. A Warrant is evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Is the requested warrant consistent with the intent of the Form-Based Code?
2. Is the requested warrant, as well as the project as a whole, consistent with Section 4 – Design Guidelines of the form-based code?
3. Is the requested warrant reasonable due to the proposed project's exceptional civic or environmental design?
4. Is the requested warrant consistent with the Imagine Downtown Master Plan?
5. Is the requested warrant consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan?

The proposed project is well aligned with most of the required Warrant criteria. The proposed improvements to the buildings are notable as is the proposed mix of uses on the site. While the extent of the requested Warrant is significant (33 on site stalls where 122 are required), Staff

believes that the area has adequate on-street public parking as well as nearby private surface lots that could become available via future lease or purchase by the developer.

However, the plan as presented does fall short on one particular issue. The plan proposed no significant improvement to the public streetscape along S. Weber St. or E. Cimarron St. While the existing streetscape in front of 501 S. Weber largely adheres to the “wide” amenity zone standards in Section 2.8.4 of the Code, the area in front of 505 S. Weber is fully paved with no street trees, pedestrian lighting, or notable hardscape improvements. Furthermore, the plan retains the existing streetscape design along Cimarron where additional landscaping or a short wall could help screen the rear parking lot and service area.

As a Minor Improvement Plan and Warrant (not a full development plan), some proportionality is reasonable when considering public space improvements. Staff acknowledges that the removal of some of the concrete along Weber and the addition of street trees, tree grates, and irrigation would require additional investment by the property owner. However, Warrant criteria #3 requires exceptional design and criteria #2 requires conformance with the Code’s design guidelines. Sections 4.2.1. Services, 4.2.3. Parking, and 4.2.5. Hardscape Elements all call for site improvements in these areas.

Staff fully supports the proposed project and specifically the requested parking Warrant. However, the technical modifications listed at the conclusion of the report include a few changes to the plan to bring it closer to conformance with the Code’s public space standards and multiple design guidelines. It should be noted that the applicant does not support these changes to the plan and prefers to leave the streetscape along S. Weber St. and E. Cimarron St. largely as they are today.

Staff finds that the project substantially complies with the required Warrant criteria if all the Technical Modifications listed below are fully implemented.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

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Approve the minor improvement plan and parking warrant use based on the findings that the warrant criteria found in section 5.4.3. of the Form-Based Code will be substantially met once the following modifications are made:

Technical modifications to the minor improvement plan:

1. Revise the plan to add amenity zone improvements adjacent to 505 S. Weber to include street trees with tree grates and pedestrian scale lighting; other amenity zone improvements described in Section 2.8.4. of the FBC are encouraged but not required.
2. Add a low wall or landscape material to screen the rear parking lot from the Cimarron St. roadway.
3. Add the file number to all plan sheets
4. Revise the plan to ensure that all project, zoning and building data correctly and consistently cite the building and property sizes
5. Add a note to the plan documenting the need for a revocable permit to allow awnings/canopies on the building façade as well as any other private encroachments in the public right-of-way.
6. Add glazing calculations for the front facades of both buildings.
7. Modify key note number 30 to read “driveway apron”

8. Modify the site plan to clarify what existing landscaping is to be preserved versus where new landscaping is proposed; in areas where new landscaping is proposed details must be included on the plan.
9. Clarify on the plan what street trees are to be preserved versus which are proposed for removal; street trees that are removed due to health considerations must be replaced with new trees approved by the City Forester.
10. Address the City's Stormwater Division's review comments including:
 - a. Add plat name to the plan title
 - b. Submit a drainage letter for review and acceptance
 - c. Revise the floodplain note to include standard FEMA information