CITY OF WEST DES MOINES
STAFF REPORT COMMUNICATION

Meeting Date: May 16, 2022

ITEM: Miscellaneous Request – Amend the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan regarding guidelines for gateway signage – City Initiated – MI-005541-2022

RESOLUTION: Approval of Amendment to Redevelopment Plan

Background: Development Services Staff is initiating an amendment to the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan (for the Val*Gate District) to modify the signage section of the plan and to change the exhibit pertaining to entrance (gateway) signage. The image for the gateway signage contained in the redevelopment plan was created in 2012, prior to redevelopment of the district and was intended as a precedent image. With the Grand Avenue reconstruction project nearing completion, Shive-Hattery Architecture and Engineering Services have finalized the gateway signage design and staff is recommending that the final design and location be incorporated in the redevelopment plan, replacing the previous precedent image.

During the design process for the gateway signs, it was discovered that with all the control equipment and signal poles at the gateway intersections, to be visible, the gateway signs needed to be taller than what is currently allowed. The proposed gateway signs are designed to be pole signs (which are allowed in the redevelopment district) but will not meet the setbacks for pole signs traditionally allowed within the Planned Unit Developments (PUD) in the district, the guideline language and exhibits contained in the redevelopment plan will need to be modified to allow Council to specifically approve the gateway signage. Staff would note that the redevelopment area is one of the few areas of the city that allows new pole signs as long as character defining features of historic signage and iconography are incorporated in the design. PUDs within the redevelopment area have required a setback distance for pole signs to be equal to the sign height.

Specifically, the following change is proposed with this request. New text is indicated with bold italics and deleted text is indicated with highlighted strikethrough text.

Section 7, Signage, Subsection B4 (page 28):

Val Gate gateway signs ***(see Exhibit 15) will exhibit design, materials and character defining features of historic signage of the era. Due to the existing constraints at the street intersections, setback distances may be less than what is currently recommended in the redevelopment district for pole signs.*** ~~and Val Gate directional signage (see Exhibits 15-16) will follow city sign ordinances.~~ Gateway signs will ~~only~~ be erected on the intersection of Grand Avenue with First Street & Grand Avenue with 4th Street.

Staff Review & Comment:

- *Key Aspects of Proposed Amendment:*
  - *Text Change*: The current section of the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan that pertains to signs states that gateway signs will follow city sign ordinances. The gateway signs (to be located at 1st Street and Grand Avenue and at 4th Street and Grand Avenue) as proposed will be pole signs and will be 18 feet tall. Pole signs have been permitted in the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan area, with the sign height allowed equal to the setback distance from the property line. Due to the tight site constraints that exist at the street intersections, the proposed location of the signs will not meet the setback distances allowed for pole signs within the PUD's in the redevelopment area.
  - *Exhibits*: Exhibit 15 (page 29) within the Redevelopment Plan will be modified to include the new gateway signs as proposed. Exhibit 16 (page 30), which is the exhibit that shows directional signs, will be modified to delete the directional signs on the exhibit since as the area redeveloped, common directional signage was not pursued.
- *Development & Planning Subcommittee*: The Development & Planning City Council Subcommittee discussed the proposed Val*Gate gateway signs at their meeting on January 18, 2022. The subcommittee members were supportive of the proposed pole signs and the additional height necessary to provide an iconic look to the Val*Gate area.

Outstanding Issues: There are no outstanding issues.

Plan and Zoning Commission Action:

Date:	May 9, 2022
Vote:	6-0, with Commissioner Conlin absent
Recommendation:	Approve the amendment to the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan

Recommendation: Approve the Amendment to the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan.

Lead Staff Member: Brian Portz

Approval Meeting Dates:

Plan & Zoning Commission	May 9, 2022
City Council:	May 16, 2022

Staff Report Reviews

Plan & Zoning Commission	☒ Development Coordinator/Director	☒ Legal Department
City Council	☒ Director ☐ Appropriations/Finance	☒ Legal Department ☑ Agenda Acceptance

Publications

Published In	Des Moines Register Community Section
Date Published	N/A

Subcommittee Review (if applicable)

Committee	Development & Planning		
Date Reviewed	January 18, 2022		
Recommendation	☒ Yes	☐ No	☐ Split

A RESOLUTION OF THE PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION
NO. PZC-22-045

WHEREAS, staff requests approval of an Amendment to the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan as it pertains to gateway signage.

WHEREAS, studies and investigations were made, and staff reports and recommendations were submitted which is made a part of this record and herein incorporated by reference;

WHEREAS, on May 9, 2022, this Commission held a duly-noticed public meeting to consider the application for an Amendment to the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan (MI-005541-2022);

NOW THEREFORE, the Plan and Zoning Commission of the City of West Des Moines recommends the City Council approve the Amendment to the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan (MI-005541-2022)

PASSED AND ADOPTED on May 9, 2022.

Jennifer Drake, Chair
Plan and Zoning Commission

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the Plan and Zoning Commission of the City of West Des Moines, Iowa, at a regular meeting held on May 9, 2022, 2022, by the following vote:

AYES: Costa, Crowley, Davis, Drake, Hatfield, Shaw

NAYS:

ABSTENTIONS:

ABSENT: Conlin

ATTEST:

Recording Secretary

Prepared by: Brian Portz, City of West Des Moines Development Services Dept., PO Box 65320, West Des Moines, Iowa 50265-0320 515-222-3620
When Recorded, Return to: City Clerk, City of West Des Moines, PO Box 65320, West Des Moines, IA 50265-0320

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST DES MOINES, APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO THE GRAND AVENUE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of West Des Moines, requests approval of an amendment to the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan pertaining to signage; and

WHEREAS, studies and investigations were made, and staff reports, and recommendations were submitted which is made a part of this record and herein incorporated by reference; and

WHEREAS, on May 9, 2022, the Plan and Zoning Commission recommended to the City Council, by a 6-0 vote, for approval of the Amendment; and

WHEREAS, on this day the City Council held a duly noticed meeting to consider the application for amendment to the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has determined that due to the existing site constraints, context of the redevelopment district and the iconic nature of the gateway signage, there exists special circumstances that warrant a waiver to the setback requirements for the Grand Avenue Redevelopment gateway signage.

NOW, THEREFORE, The City Council does approve the amendment to the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Plan (MI-005541-2022) and approves the gateway sign design and location as incorporated in the redevelopment plan, subject to compliance with all of the conditions of approval, including any conditions added at the meeting, attached hereto as Exhibit "A". Violation of any such conditions shall be grounds for revocation of the permit, as well as any other remedy which is available to the City.

PASSED AND ADOPTED on May 16, 2022.

_____
Russ Trimble, Mayor

ATTEST:

_____
Ryan Jacobson, City Clerk

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted by the City Council of the City of West Des Moines, Iowa, at a regular meeting held on May 16, 2022, by the following vote.

Exhibit A: Conditions of Approval

1. None.

Image of the NW corner of 1st Street and Grand Avenue with proposed sign installed.

SECTION 7: SIGNAGE

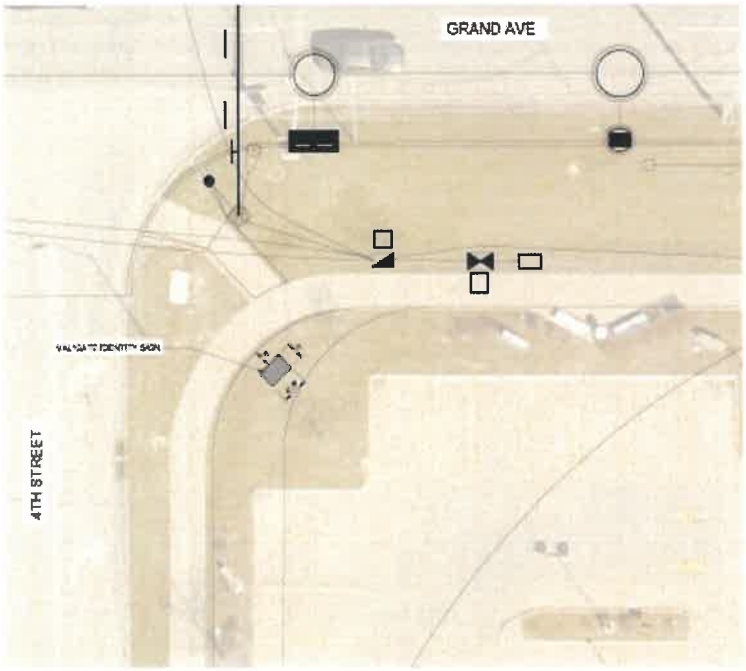
A. General

1. Iconic signage and advertising is often what defines "Googie" style and because of this, it is imperative that signs be iconic and noticeable.

B. Requirements

1. All signage will comply with the West Des Moines sign ordinance (City Code Chapter 18), except as herein modified.
2. All signage will follow the architectural theme of the redevelopment district. For examples of historic signage and iconography, see Exhibits 17.1-17.2.
3. Due to the fact that several sign types that are not currently allowed in the sign ordnance exhibit design, materials and character defining features of historic signage and iconography, the following sign types will be allowed within the district, subject to them meeting all location and design requirements of the PUD for the related redevelopment parcel.
   - Projecting Signs
   - Panel Signs
   - Signs above building parapet
4. Several existing signs within the district represent the unique features of the original era of the district's development. These signs may be reused in a redevelopment effort for their related parcel. Sign location and treatment must comply with the requirements of the PUD for the redevelopment parcel. See Exhibit 17.2 for photos and location of these specific signs.
5. Use of L.E.D. illumination for signage emulating "neon-style" lighting and relevant to the architectural theme of the district may be considered with approval by the Director of Development Services.
6. Val Gate gateway signs (see Exhibit 15) will exhibit design, materials and character defining features of historic signage of the era. Due to the existing constraints at the street intersections, setback distances may be less that what is currently recommended in the redevelopment district. Gateway signs will be erected on the intersection of Grand Avenue with First Street & Grand Avenue with 4th Street.

EXHIBIT I5: VAL GATE ENTRANCE SIGN



A3 SITE PLAN 4TH AND GRAND

D3 SITE PLAN 1ST AND GRAND

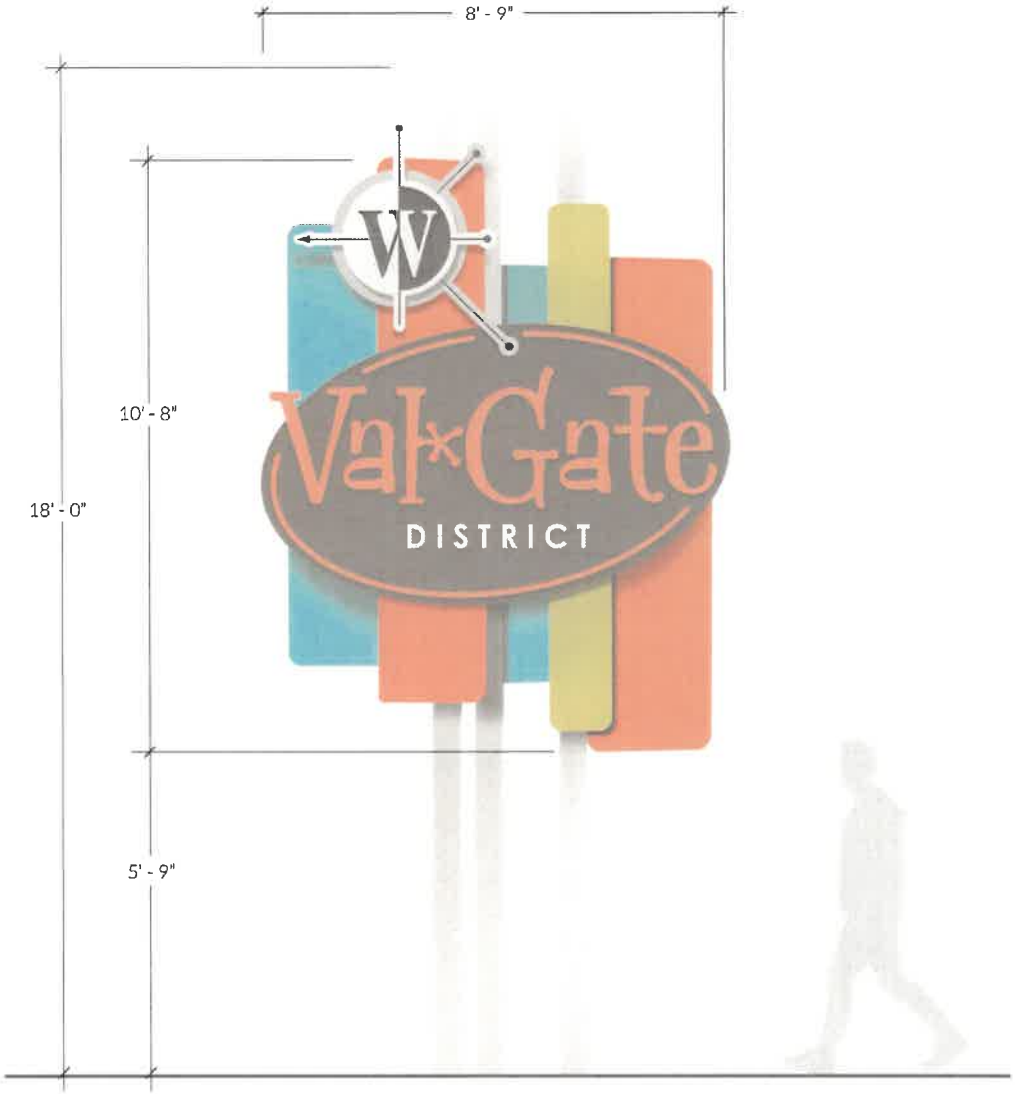


EXHIBIT 16: VAL GATE DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE

NOT USED