



Agenda Item # 11

BOA-003630-2026

View additional details on this proposal and all application materials using the following link:

[Applicant Materials for Consideration](#)

DETAILS

Location:

824 West I-65 Service Road South

Applicant / Agent:

James F. Watkins (DI Hotel Sun, LLC, Agent)

Property Owner:

DI Hotel Sun, LLC

Current Zoning:

B-3, Community Business Suburban District

Future Land Use:

District Center

Case Numbers:

6737/6567

Unified Development Code (UDC) Requirement:

- The UDC limits single business sites to a total of three (3) signs with no more than one (1) freestanding sign in a B-3, Community Business Suburban District.

Board Consideration:

- Sign Variance to allow three (3) freestanding signs and four (4) wall signs an B-3, Community Business Suburban District.

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SITE HISTORY

The site was before the Planning Commission at its May 5, 1977 meeting, where the eight (8) lot subdivision named Western America Commercial Park, Unit 2 was approved, and later recorded in Probate Court.

A portion of the subject site was then part of the Darryl's Subdivision, A Resubdivision of Lot 4, Western America Commercial Park, First Unit, which was approved by the Planning Commission at its May 5, 1983 meeting and later recorded in Probate Court.

In February 2024, the site came before the Board of Adjustment and was granted a Height Variance to allow a structure taller than 45-feet in a B-3 district. A six (6) month extension was granted in September 2024.

In November 2024, the site came before the Planning Commission and obtained approval for a one (1) lot Subdivision, which was recorded in Probate Court.

STAFF COMMENTS

Engineering Comments:

All signs must be located on private property and NOT within the public ROW.

Traffic Engineering Comments:

Signs should be located on private property and not within the public right-of-way (ROW). Before any sign is built near an intersection their placement should be checked to verify that they do not impede drivers' line of sight.

Urban Forestry Comments:

Property to be developed in compliance with state and local laws that pertain to tree preservation and protection on both city and private properties [Act 929 of the 1961 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature (Acts 1961, p. 1487), as amended, and City Code Chapters 57 and 65]. Private removal of trees in the right-of-way will require approval of the Mobile Tree Commission. Removal of heritage trees from undeveloped residential sites, developed residential sites in historic districts, and all commercial sites will require a tree removal permit.

Fire Department Comments:

All projects located within the City Limits of Mobile shall comply with the provisions of the City of Mobile Fire Code Ordinance, which adopts the 2021 edition of the International Fire Code (IFC).

Fire apparatus access roads shall be provided to within 150 feet of all non-sprinklered commercial buildings and within 300 feet of all sprinklered commercial buildings, as measured along an approved route around the exterior of the facility.

An approved fire water supply capable of meeting the requirements set forth in Appendices B and C of the 2021 IFC shall be provided for all commercial buildings.

Fire hydrant placement shall comply with the following minimum standards:

- Within 400 feet of non-sprinklered commercial buildings
- Within 600 feet of sprinklered commercial buildings

- Within 100 feet of fire department connections (FDCs) serving standpipe or sprinkler systems

Although the International Residential Code (IRC) functions as a stand-alone document for the construction of one- and two-family dwellings and townhouses, it does not govern the design or layout of emergency access or community-level fire protection infrastructure. Therefore, residential developments must also comply with the applicable requirements of the International Fire Code, including, but not limited to, those listed above concerning the design, construction, regulation, and maintenance of fire apparatus access roads and fire protection water supplies

Planning Comments:

The applicant is requesting a Sign Variance to allow three (3) freestanding signs and four (4) wall signs in a B-3, Community Business Suburban District; the Unified Development Code (UDC) limits single business sites to a total of three (3) signs with no more than one (1) freestanding sign in a B-3, Community Business Suburban District.

The entire application packet is available via the link on Page 1.

The purpose of the Sign Regulation Provisions is to promote the economic well-being of the entire Mobile community by creating a favorable physical image, to afford the business community an equal and fair opportunity to advertise and promote products and services, and to protect the right of the citizens to enjoy Mobile's natural scenic beauty.

The subject site is a single tenant Drury Plaza Hotel, which is currently under construction. The applicant proposes to place one (1) wall sign on each of the four (4) main building elevations, with one (1) high rise sign fronting Interstate 65, and one (1) monument sign at both the entrance to the site from the West I-65 Service Road South and Western America Drive. The proposed signs are within the allowed sizes of the sign regulations of the UDC.

The applicant states the increased number of signs is needed due to the large amount of street frontage the site possesses, with 376-feet of frontage along the West I-65 Service Road South and 637-feet along Western America Drive. The applicant further states that the site was previously allowed more signage, as it was multiple lots previously, but now functions as a single building site.

VARIANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Standards of Review:

Variances are not intended to be granted frequently. The applicant must clearly show the Board that the request is due to very unusual characteristics of the property and that it satisfies the variance standards. What constitutes unnecessary hardship and substantial justice is a matter to be determined from the facts and circumstances of each application.

Article 5 Section 10-E. 1. of the Unified Development Codes states that the Board of Adjustment may grant a variance if:

- The Applicant demonstrates that the variance shall not be contrary to the public interest;
- Where, owing to special conditions a literal enforcement of the provision of this Chapter will result in unnecessary hardship; and
- The spirit of this Chapter will be observed and substantial justice done.

Article 5 Section 10-E.2. states; No variance shall be granted:

- (a) In order to relieve an owner of restrictive covenants that are recorded in Mobile County Probate Court and applicable to the property;
- (b) Where economic loss is the sole basis for the required variance; or
- (c) Where the variance is otherwise unlawful.

Considerations:

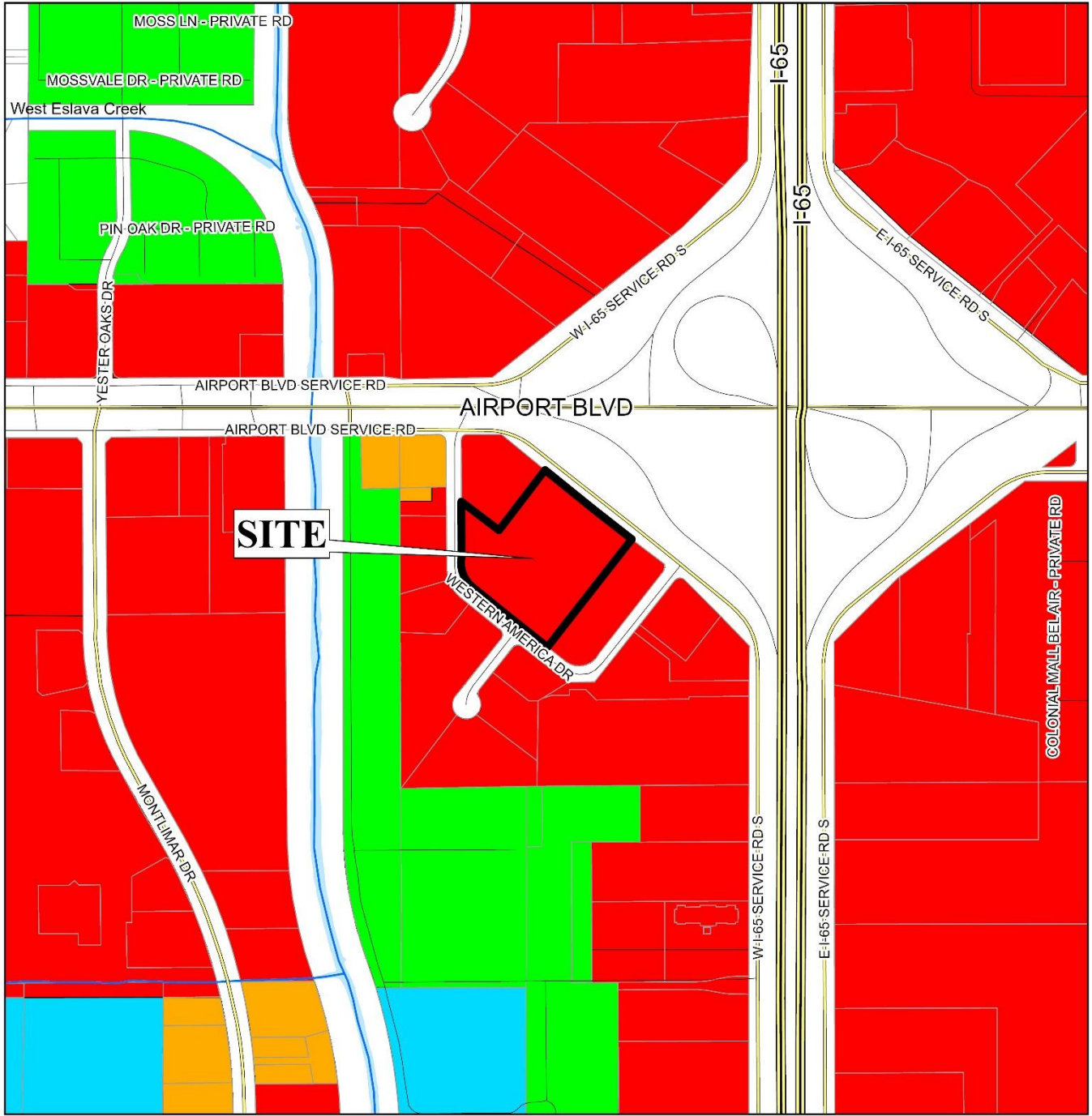
Based on the requested Variance application, and documentation submitted, if the Board considers approval of the request, the following findings of fact must be present:

- A) The variance **will not** be contrary to the public interest;
- B) Special conditions **exist** such that a literal enforcement of the provisions of the chapter **will** result in unnecessary hardship; and
- C) The spirit of the chapter **shall be** observed and substantial justice done to the applicant and the surrounding neighborhood by granting the variance.

If approved, the variance should be subject to the following conditions:

1. Obtain all required sign permits; and
2. Full compliance with all municipal codes and ordinances.

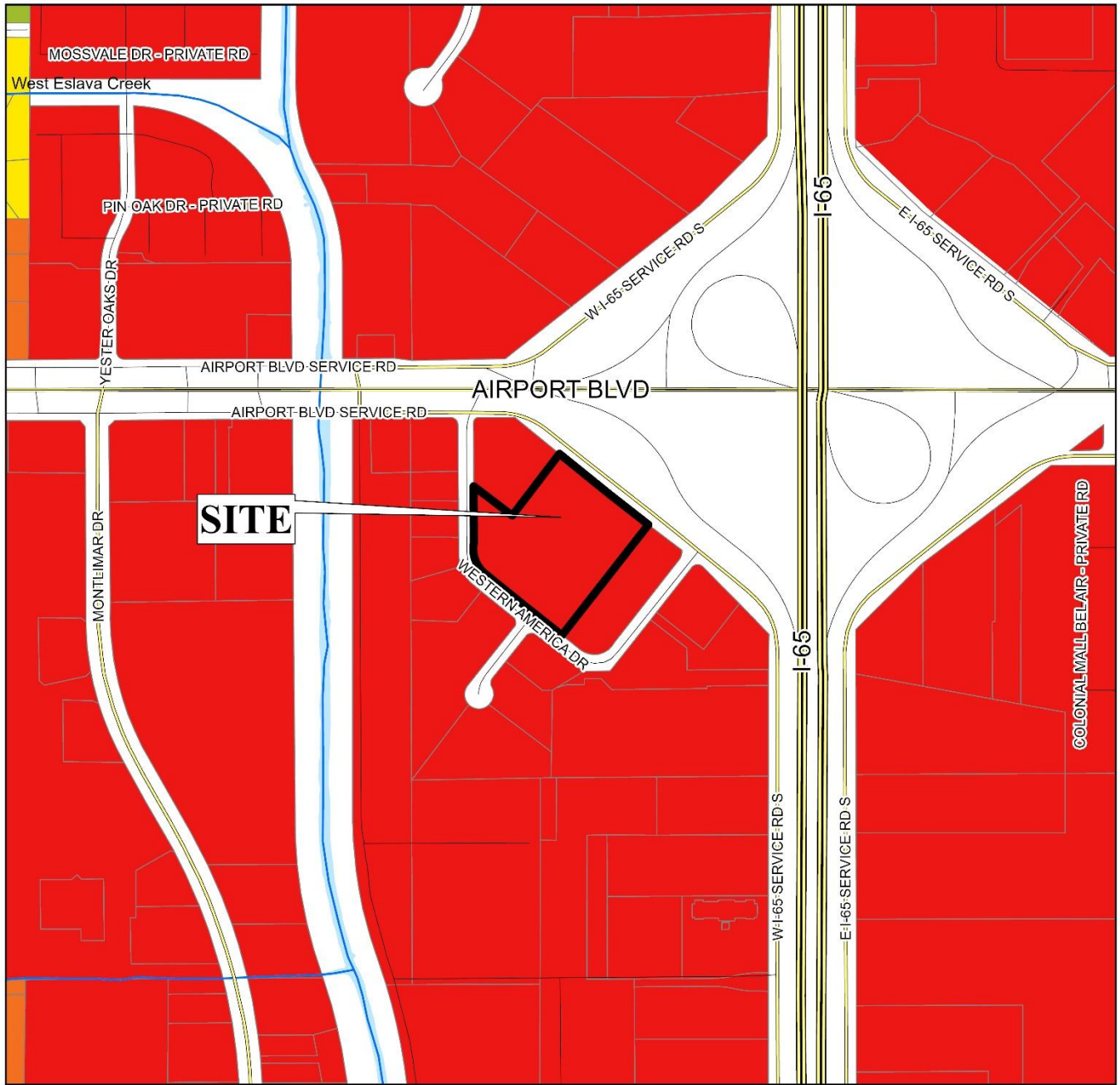
LOCATOR ZONING MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER <u>6737</u> DATE <u>March 2, 2026</u>
APPLICANT <u>James F. Watkins (DI Hotel Sun, LLC, Agent)</u>
REQUEST <u>Sign Variance</u>



FLUM LOCATOR MAP



APPLICATION NUMBER 6737 DATE March 2, 2026

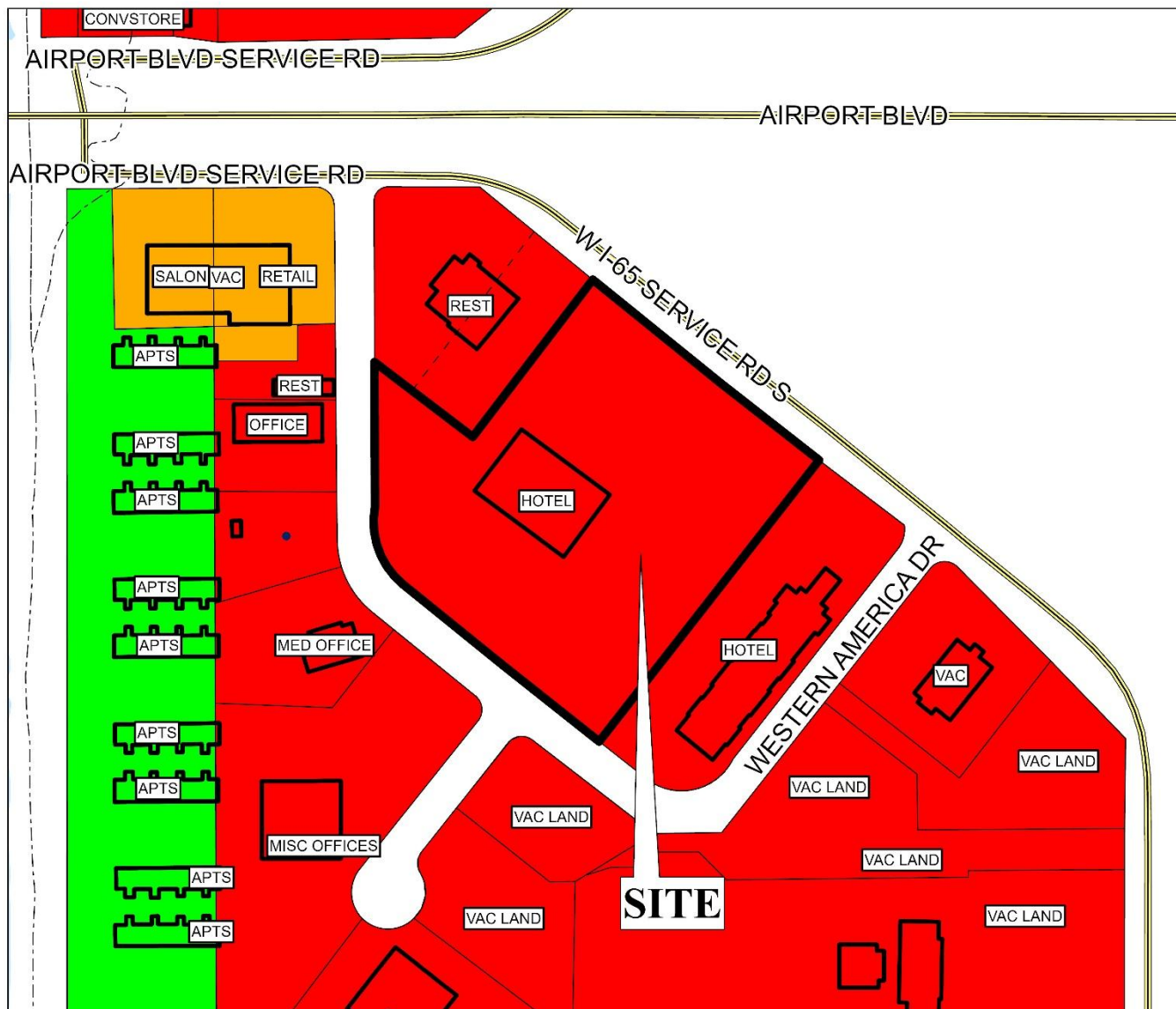
APPLICANT James F. Watkins (DI Hotel Sun, LLC, Agent)

REQUEST Sign Variance

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| ■ Low Density Residential | ■ Neighborhood Center - Traditional | ■ Light Industry | ■ Water Dependent |
| ■ Mixed Density Residential | ■ Neighborhood Center - Suburban | ■ Heavy Industry | |
| ■ Downtown | ■ Traditional Corridor | ■ Institutional | |
| ■ District Center | ■ Mixed Commercial Corridor | ■ Parks, Open Space | |



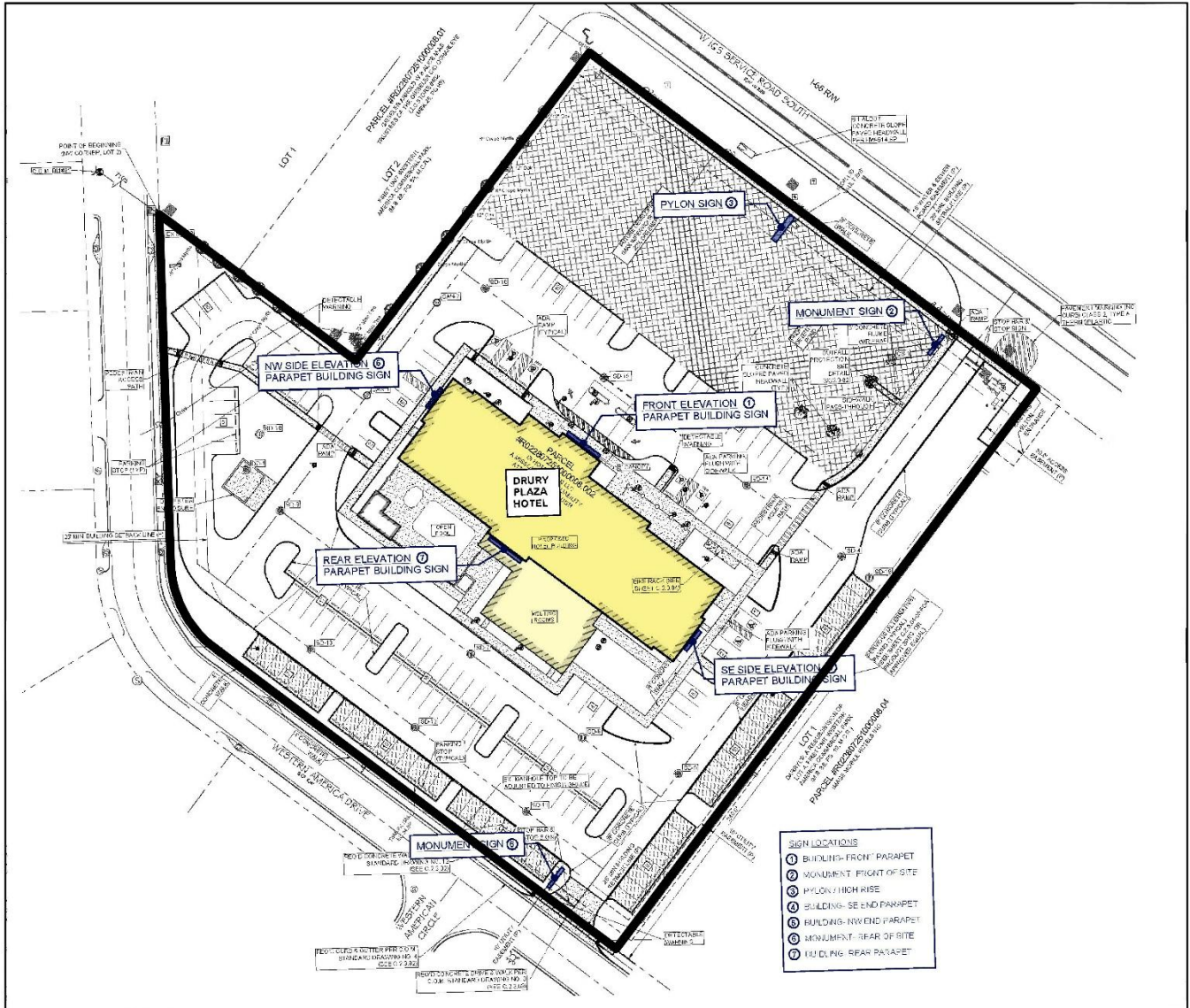
BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VICINITY MAP - EXISTING ZONING



The site is surrounded by commercial and residential units.

APPLICATION NUMBER <u>6737</u> DATE <u>March 2, 2026</u>	 NTS																														
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<table style="width: 100%; font-size: small;"> <tr> <td> R-A</td> <td> R-3</td> <td> B-1</td> <td> B-2</td> <td> B-5</td> <td> ML</td> <td> I-2</td> <td> OPEN</td> <td> T-3</td> <td> T-5.2</td> </tr> <tr> <td> R-1</td> <td> R-B</td> <td> T-B</td> <td> B-3</td> <td> CW</td> <td> MH</td> <td> PD</td> <td> SD</td> <td> T-4</td> <td> T-6</td> </tr> <tr> <td> R-2</td> <td> H-B</td> <td> LB-2</td> <td> B-4</td> <td> MM</td> <td> I-1</td> <td> MUN</td> <td> SD-WH</td> <td> T-5.1</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		 R-A	 R-3	 B-1	 B-2	 B-5	 ML	 I-2	 OPEN	 T-3	 T-5.2	 R-1	 R-B	 T-B	 B-3	 CW	 MH	 PD	 SD	 T-4	 T-6	 R-2	 H-B	 LB-2	 B-4	 MM	 I-1	 MUN	 SD-WH	 T-5.1	
 R-A	 R-3	 B-1	 B-2	 B-5	 ML	 I-2	 OPEN	 T-3	 T-5.2																						
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SITE PLAN

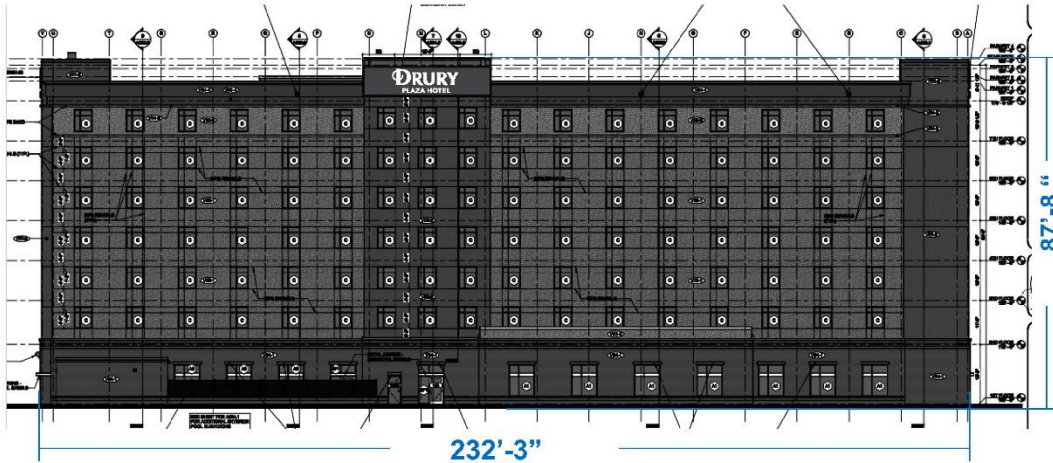


The site plan illustrates the proposed sign placements and current buildings.

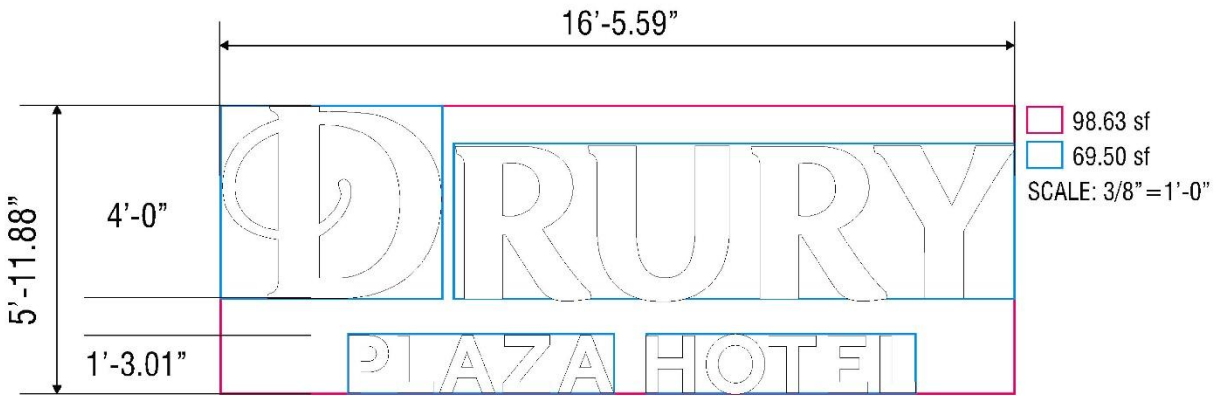
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DETAIL SITE PLAN



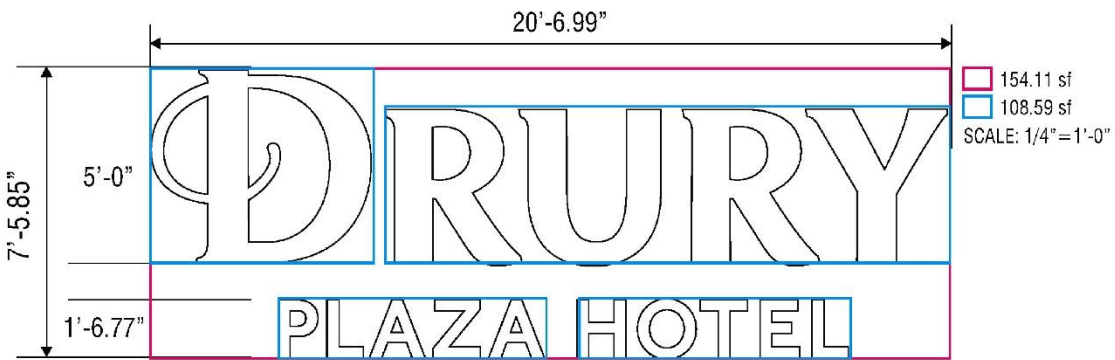
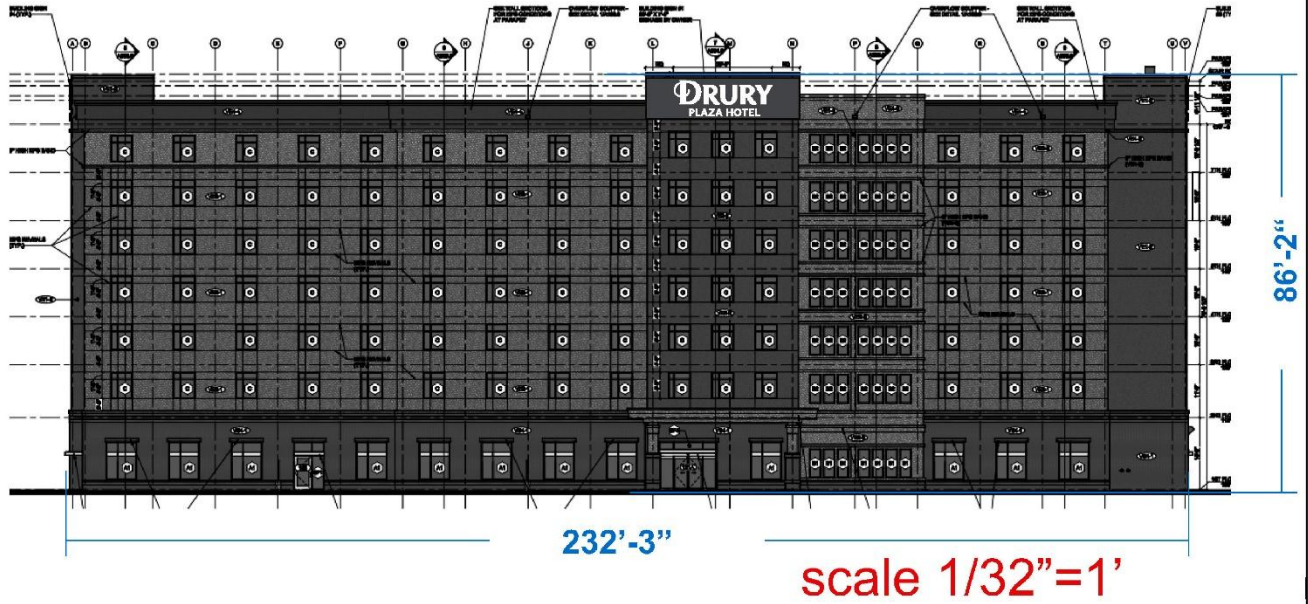
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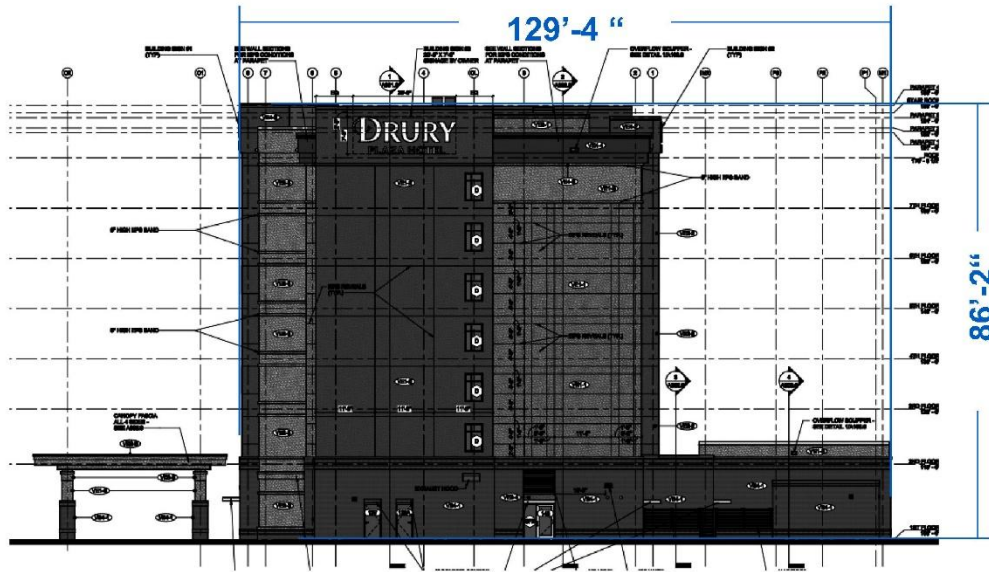
DETAIL SITE PLAN



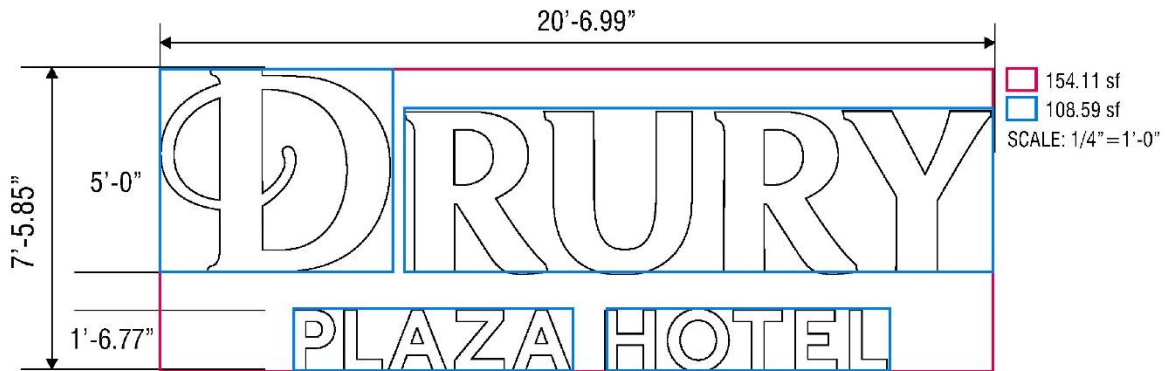
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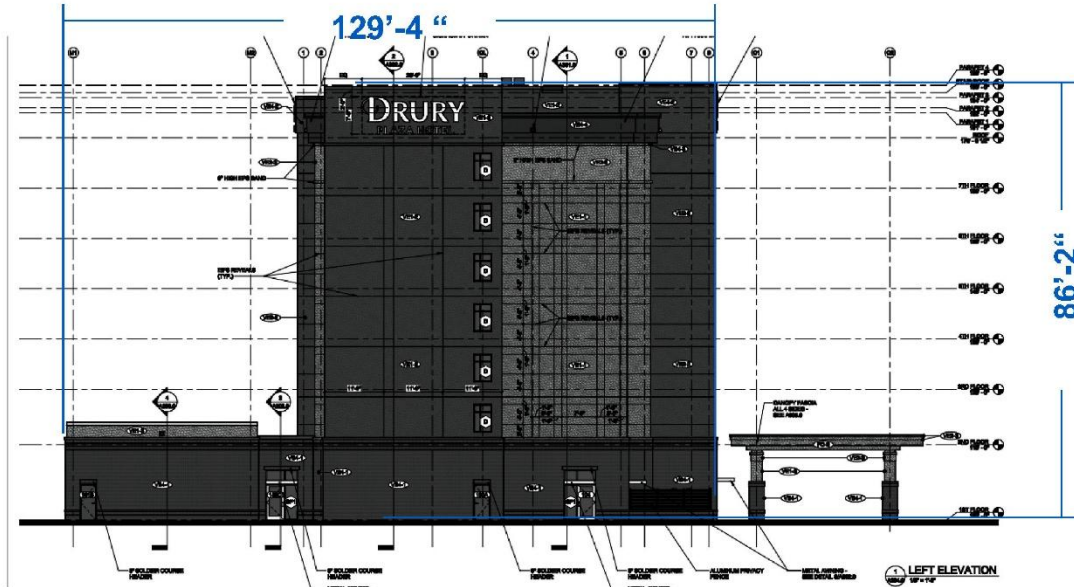
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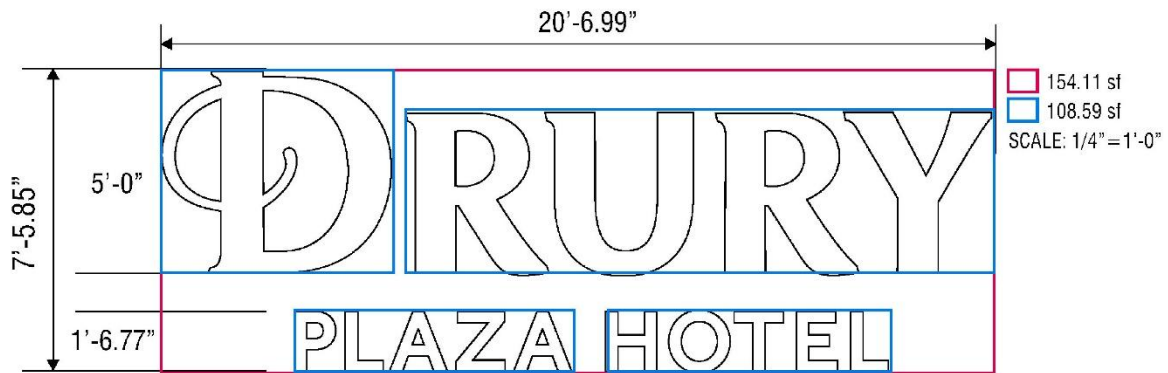
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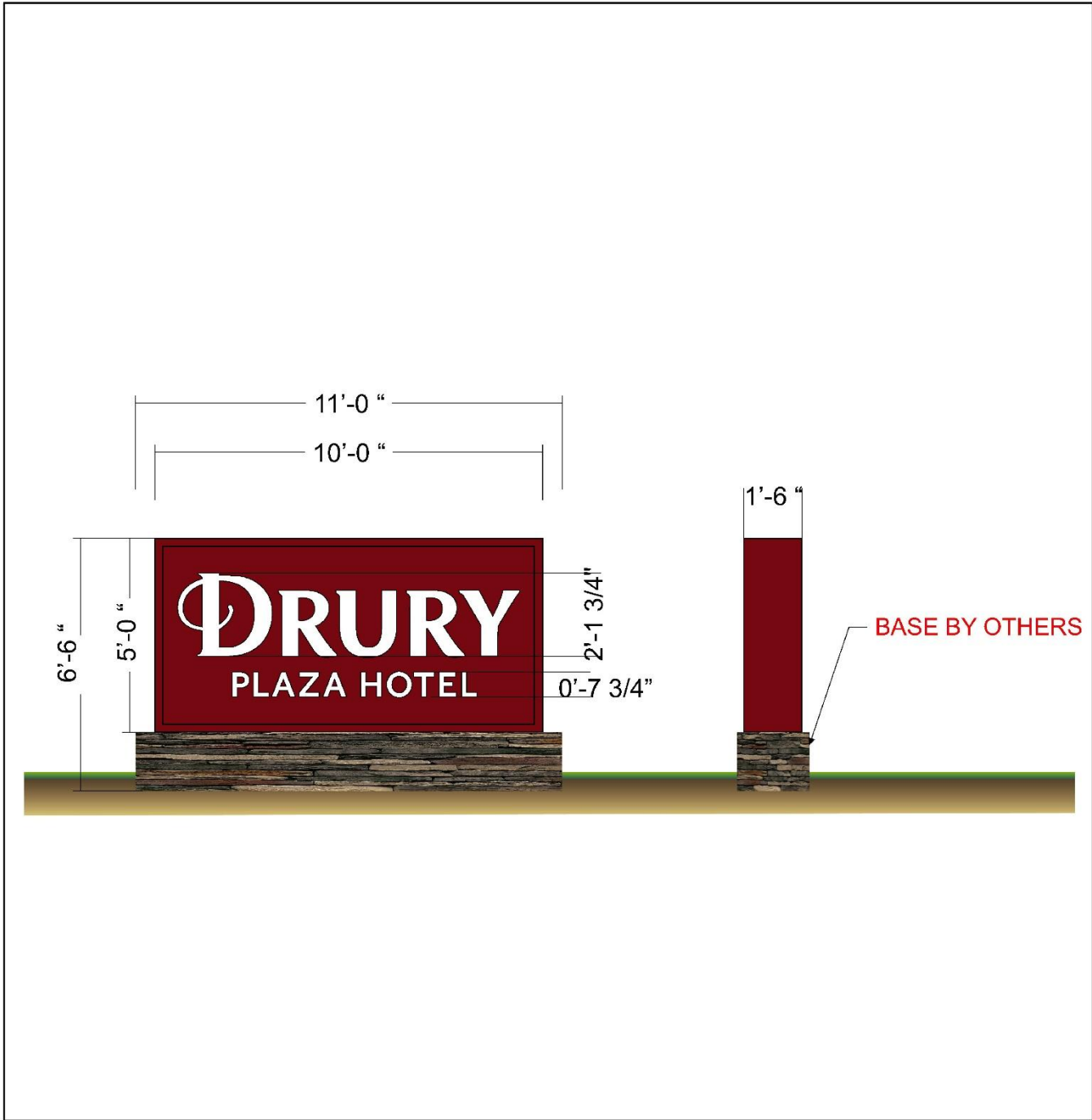
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NTS

FUTURE LAND USE MAP CORRESPONDENCE TO ZONING

A primary purpose of the Future Land Use Map is to guide zoning decisions. In many cases the designation on the FLUM may match the existing use of land, but in others the designated land use may differ from what is on the ground today. For example, a parcel that is in commercial use today but designated as any of the “mixed use” types on the map could redevelop with a mix of residential and commercial uses (such as retail, office, entertainment, etc., depending on the location).

Each future land use designation on the FLUM will have at least one corresponding zoning district, allowing a more precise application of the FLUM based on specific local conditions. In most cases, there are multiple combinations or types of zoning techniques that can accomplish the future land use designation's objectives.

The correspondence between the FLUM and the zoning district structure is described in the matrix below. This tool gives the City the flexibility over the long-term to determine appropriate changes to the zoning map based on various factors.

The designation of an area with a FLUM land use category does not mean that the most intense zoning district consistent with that category is “automatically” assigned to a property. Instead, an area retains its existing zoning category until it is changed through a landowner-initiated rezoning application, or a rezoning that follows an area plan. This is because the FLUM is a long-term designation, while a change in zoning considers current conditions – such as market demands, availability of infrastructure, or impacts on the immediate neighborhood.

Zoning correspondence matrix

	RESIDENTIAL - AG (R-A)	ONE-FAMILY RESIDENCE (R-1)	TWO-FAMILY RESIDENCE (R-2)	MULTIPLE-FAMILY (R-3)	RESIDENTIAL BUSINESS (R-B)	HISTORIC BUSINESS (H-B)	BUFFER BUSINESS (B-1)	TRANSITIONAL BUSINESS (T-B)	LIMITED BUSINESS (LB-2)	NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS (B-2)	COMMUNITY BUSINESS (B-3)	GENERAL BUSINESS (B-4)	OFFICE-DISTRIBUTION (B-5)	COMMERCIAL WAREHOUSE (CW)	MARITIME MIXED (MM)	MARITIME LIGHT (ML)	MARITIME HEAVY (MH)	LIGHT INDUSTRY (I-1)	HEAVY INDUSTRY (I-2)	VILLAGE CENTER (TCD)	NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER (TCD)	NEIGHBORHOOD GENERAL (TCD)	DOWNTOWN DEV. DDD (T-6)	DOWNTOWN DEV. DDD (T-5.1)	DOWNTOWN DEV. DDD (T-5.2)	DOWNTOWN DEV. DDD (T-4)	DOWNTOWN DEV. DDD (T-3)	DOWNTOWN DEV. DD (SD-WH)	DOWNTOWN DEV. DD (SD)			
LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (LDR)	■	S	S	S			O																								O	
MIXED DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (MDR)		U	U	■	■			■	■						■																O	
DOWNTOWN (DT)						■						■											■	■	■	■	■		O	O		
DISTRICT CENTER (DC)								■			U	O	O																			
NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER - TRADITIONAL (NC-T)	■	■	U	■	■	O	■	O	O	O											■	■	■									
NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER - SUBURBAN (NC-S)			S			S	■	S	S	O											■	■									O	
TRADITIONAL CORRIDOR (TC)		■	■	■	■	U	■	U	U	O																					O	
MIXED COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR (MCC)						■		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■																	
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (LI)													■	■	■	■														O	O	
HEAVY INDUSTRY (HI)																■	■	■	■											O	O	
INSTITUTIONAL LAND USE (INS)											■	■		O	O																	
PARKS & OPEN SPACE (POS)	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
WATER DEPENDENT USES (WDWRU)	■					O									■	■	■		O													

- Zoning district is appropriate to implement the future land use category.
- US Zoning district with Urban or Suburban subdistrict is appropriate to implement the future land use category.
- O Elements of the zoning district are related to the future land use category and may be appropriate with qualifications or conditions.
- Zoning district is appropriate, but the district does not directly implement the category (e.g., open space in an industrial district)

Mixed Use Areas: Centers

DISTRICT CENTER (DC)

This designation applies across the city beyond Downtown to large areas of existing mixed-use character or where such character is encouraged. District Centers generally serve several surrounding neighborhoods and may even have a city-wide or region-wide reach. They are often anchored by a major commercial or institutional employer such as a shopping mall or a medical center. Depending on location residential areas in District Centers may incorporate a mix of housing types with minimum densities of 20 du/ac in dynamic, horizontal or vertical mixed-use environments ranging from mid-rise multifamily buildings containing apartments and lofts, to townhouses and detached single-family homes. Major civic cultural institutions and public spaces provide regional and neighborhood destinations.

Development intent

- › District Centers should be designed to induce pedestrian activity, with high quality streetscapes connecting the different components of a center as well as the center to its surrounding area.
- › District Centers may be served by transit and include development of an intensity and design that supports transit use.

Land use mix

Primary Uses

- › Commercial
- › Office
- › Civic
- › Residential, Multifamily

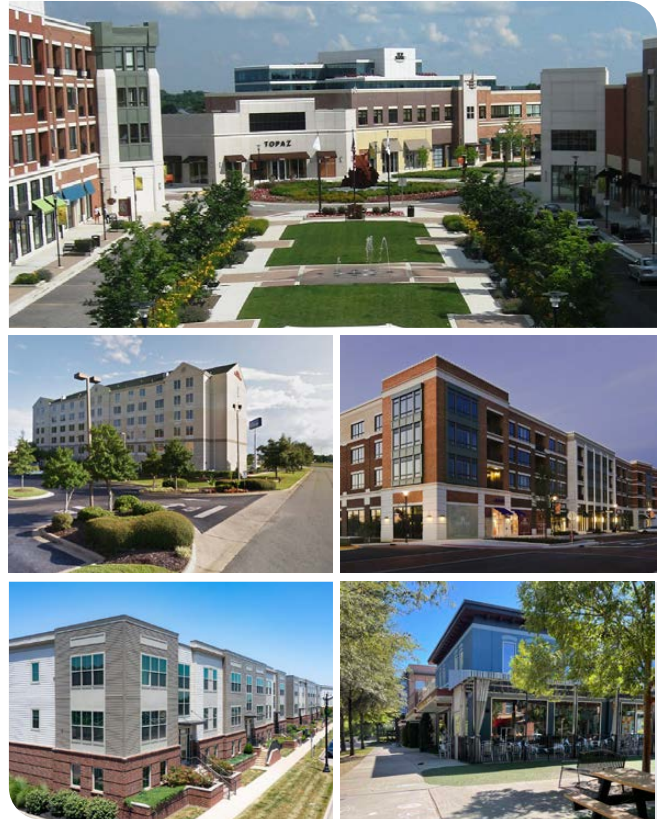
Secondary Uses

- › Residential, Attached
- › Residential, Single Family
- › Parks

Housing mix

- › Residential units above ground-floor retail
- › Multifamily buildings
- › Attached residential such as duplexes, multiplexes, and townhomes

Character Example



Existing district centers should evolve into large walkable mixed-use areas.

Rendering: Dover Kohl