



City of Orange

Legislation Text

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TO: Chair and Members of the Design Review Committee
THRU: Anna Pehoushek, Assistant Community Development Director
FROM: Kelly Ribuffo, Associate Planner - Historic Preservation

1. SUBJECT

Design Review No. 5023-21, Chipotle Mexican Grille, 112 E. Maple Avenue

2. SUMMARY

Final determination by the Design Review Committee.

The applicant proposes tenant improvements for an existing restaurant space, including new exterior signage and creation of outdoor patio seating in an existing parking area. The property is a contributing resource within the Plaza Historic District.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Applicant:	AO Architects
Owner:	KMapleJ
Property Location:	112 E. Maple Avenue
General Plan Designation:	Old Towne Mixed Use -15 (OTMIX-15)
Zoning Classification:	Old Towne Mixed Use -15 (OTMU-15)
Existing Development:	2,382 square foot restaurant tenant space and adjacent parking lot
Associated Application:	Minor Site Plan No. 1035-21
Previous DRC Project Review:	None

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes tenant improvements with exterior alterations to an existing restaurant space for a new Chipotle Mexican Grille. Design features of the proposed project include:

- Installation of new neon channel letter wall signs on the north and east elevations.
- Removal of an existing roll-up door on the east elevation and installation of new service entrance.
- Removal of one window on the east elevation to create a new pedestrian pickup window with

metal awning and sign.

- Removal of four existing parking spaces along the east side of the building and creation of a new approximately 500 square foot outdoor dining patio with landscape buffer.

Detailed plans are included as Attachment 3 of this report. The proposed project meets the development requirements for the OTMU-15 zoning district.

5. EXISTING SITE

The project property is a contributing resource to the National Register-listed Plaza Historic District. The single-story commercial building was constructed c. 1912. The building is currently divided into two tenant suites, addressed 177 N. Glassell Street and 113 E. Maple Avenue. The façade of 177 N. Glassell Street was restored to its historic appearance in 2008 (Building Permit #0708-184). The balance of the building, including the portion included in the proposed project, has been altered heavily since the period of significance of the historic district, including the application of cement plaster and replacement of storefronts, and the current façade is not considered a contributing historic element of the building.

The property includes four parking spaces on the east side of the building, located on private property adjacent to a City-owned parking lot.

6. EXISTING AREA CONTEXT

The subject property is located on the south side of E. Maple Avenue, east of the intersection of Maple Avenue and N. Glassell Street in the Old Towne Historic District. The property is located at the eastern edge of the N. Glassell Street commercial corridor in an area of transition between commercial, institutional, and residential uses.

North: Mixed-use commercial restaurant, office, single and multi-family residential uses (OTMU-15, OTMU-15S, R-1-6)

East: City-owned parking lot, church institutional uses including daycare (OTMU-15)

South: Mixed-use commercial uses (OTMU-15)

West: Mixed-use commercial and church institutional uses (OTMU-15)

7. ANALYSIS AND STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

Issue 1 Wall Signage:

The applicant has proposed new wall and awning signage on the north and east elevations of the building. All signs as proposed meet the size and material requirements for signage as set forth in the Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne (Design Standards).

However, staff has concerns about the proposed “Chipotle” neon channel letter sign on the east elevation. The Design Standards discourage oversized signs and state that the proportions of the building should guide sign size. It is the opinion of staff that the proposed sign is not proportional to the size of the elevation and not consistent with the size of other signs along the parking lot facing elevation of buildings along N. Glassell Street. Signs facing the parking lot have customarily treated secondary, with smaller signs that indicate that service or secondary business entrances. Furthermore, the character of the sign is inconsistent with that of the other parking lot facing signs in its form and manner of illumination. It is the opinion of staff that having a sign the same dimensions as the sign facing E. Maple Avenue is not consistent with this precedent and is not compatible with

the historic configuration of primary and secondary elevations.

In addition, the sign would be facing down E. Maple Avenue. Maple Avenue is primarily a residential street, not a commercial corridor, with a mix of residential and institutional uses running east. Therefore, having a large sign facing east down Maple Avenue is not appropriate and may create a nuisance for adjacent residential and hotel (under construction) properties.

Staff recommends that the maximum size of the east elevation sign be reduced to no more than 20 square feet, with lettering no taller than eighteen inches, to reflect the secondary nature of the façade and conform to signage precedent for other buildings along Glassell Street. Staff also seeks direction from the Design Review Committee on the general appropriateness of a neon sign on the east elevation.

Issue 2. Outdoor Dining Patio

The applicant proposes to remove four parking spaces on the east side of the property to create a new outdoor dining patio. These spaces are located on private property but are accessed through the adjacent city-owned public parking lot.

Outdoor dining is encouraged in the Design Standards as a means to promote pedestrian activity in the historic downtown core. It is the opinion of staff that the design and materials of the patio and landscaping are compatible with the building and historic district. In addition, the plants have been chosen that reflect the residential character of E. Maple Avenue.

8. ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The inter-departmental staff review committee (SMART) reviewed the application on February 17, 2021, April 14, 2021, and August 11, 2021, and recommended approval of the project to the Design Review Committee on September 29, 2021, subject to the conditions of approval included in Attachment 5.

9. PUBLIC NOTICE

None.

10. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Categorical Exemption: The proposed project is categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per the following State CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Class 1 - Existing Facilities) because the project consists of alterations to an existing commercial restaurant space in an urbanized area. No public review is required.

11. STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND REQUIRED FINDINGS

Findings for DRC applications come from four sources:

- The Orange Municipal Code
- The Infill Residential Design Guidelines
- The Historic Preservation Design Standards for Old Towne (commonly referred to the Old Towne Design Standards or OTDS)
- Orange Eichler Design Standards (or OEDS)

The Findings are applied as appropriate to each project. Based on the following Findings and statements in support of such Findings, staff recommends the DRC approve the project with recommended conditions.

- *In the Old Towne Historic District, the proposed work conforms to the prescriptive standards and design criteria referenced and/or recommended by the DRC or other reviewing body for the project (OMC 17.10.070.G.1).*

As conditioned, the project complies with the Design Standards for Old Towne. The project involves minor exterior alterations, including new signage, that do not alter historic fabric or features of the building. The addition of new wall signs, as conditioned, is in keeping with the Design Standards and does not create a negative effect on adjacent residential and institutional properties. Furthermore, the project maintains the existing development pattern of the site by continuing to use the property for a commercial purpose, with a minimal extension of patio area into an existing private parking area. Outdoor dining is encouraged in the Design Standards as a means to promote pedestrian activity in the historic downtown core. The design and materials of the patio and landscaping are compatible with the building and historic district.

- *In any National Register Historic District, the proposed work complies with the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines (OMC 17.10.07.G.2).*

The subject property is a contributing resource to the National Register-listed Plaza Historic District. The project involves minor exterior alterations, including new signage, to a non-historic façade of the building. These alterations do not detract from the historic character of the building façade facing N. Glassell Street, as the elevation faces a different street and there is a separation of space along the façade between the restored façade and the altered façade. Addition of new wall signs, as conditioned, is in keeping with the Design Standards and does not create a negative effect on adjacent residential, planned hotel, and institutional properties.

The project was also evaluated based on its potential to affect the setting of the streetscape along E. Maple Avenue. The proposed project does not adversely affect the integrity of the historic character of the Plaza Historic District. The project maintains the existing development pattern of the site by continuing to use the property for a commercial purpose, with a minimal extension of patio area into an existing private parking area.

- *The project design upholds community aesthetics through the use of an internally consistent, integrated design theme and is consistent with all adopted specific plans, applicable design standards, and their required findings (OMC 17.10.07.G.3).*

The project is internally consistent with an integrated design theme. Minimal alterations are proposed to the exterior of the building that are in keeping with the existing appearance of the building and do not alter historic fabric or features of the building.

The project maintains the existing development pattern of the site by continuing to use the

property for a commercial purpose, with a minimal extension of patio area into an existing private parking area. Outdoor dining is encouraged in the Design Standards as a mean to promote pedestrian activity in the historic downtown core.

Required findings for Minor Site Plan Review approval are as follows:

- *That the project design is compatible with surrounding development and neighborhoods (OMC 17.10.060.H.1).*

The project meets the findings for design compatibility as outlined in the findings of fact for Design Review per OMC 17.20.070.G.

- *That the project conforms to City development standards and any applicable special design guidelines or specific plan requirements (OMC 17.10.060.H.2).*

The project meets all development standards for the OMTU-15 zone and, as conditioned, meets all design requirements in the Old Towne Design Standards.

- *That the project provides for safe and adequate vehicular and pedestrian circulation, both on- and off-site (OMC 17.10.060.H.3).*

The project site has existing pedestrian and vehicular access to E. Maple Avenue and to the City-owned parking lot at the southwest corner of E. Maple Avenue and N. Orange Street. Access will not be altered by the approval of this project.

- *That City services are available and adequate to serve the project (OMC 17.10.060.H.4).*

The project has adequate access to all utilities and public safety services.

- *That the project has been designed to fully mitigate or substantially minimize adverse environmental effects (OMC 17.10.060.H.5).*

The project is categorically exemption from the provisions of CEQA.

12. CONDITIONS

The approval of this project is subject to the following conditions:

1. This project is approved as a precise plan. All work shall conform in substance and be maintained in general conformance with the plans included as Attachment 3 (date stamped October 27, 2021) of this report, including modifications required by the conditions of approval, and as recommended for approval by the Design Review Committee. Any changes from the approved plans shall be subject to subsequent review and approval by the Design Review Committee.
2. After any application has been approved, if changes are proposed regarding the location or alteration of any use or structure, a changed plan may be submitted to the Community Development Director for approval. If the Community Development Director determines that the proposed change complies with the provisions and the spirit and intent of the approval action, and that the action would have been the same for the changed plan as for the approved plan, the Community Development Director may approve the changed plan without

requiring a new public meeting.

3. The wall-mounted channel letter sign on the east elevation shall be reduced in size to no more than 20 square feet in area, with lettering no taller than 18 inches in height.
4. The color temperature of exposed neon lights shall be equal to or less than 3000k.
5. Prior to building permit issuance, the applicant shall pay required in-lieu parking fees for the removal of four private parking spaces for creation of the new outdoor dining patio.
6. All conditions of approval recommended by the SMART inter-departmental staff review team shall be adopted as part of the approval of the project.
7. The applicant agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the City, its officers, agents and employees from any and all liability or claims that may be brought against the City arising out of its approval of this permit, save and except that caused by the City's active negligence.
8. The final approved conditions of approval shall be reprinted on the first or second page of the construction documents when submitting to the Building Division for the plan check process.
9. Construction permits shall be obtained for all future construction work, as required by the City of Orange Building Division. Failure to obtain the required building permits will be cause for revocation of this permit.
10. If not utilized, project approval expires 24 months from the approval date. Extensions of time may be granted in accordance with OMC Section 17.08.060.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1 - Vicinity Map
- Attachment 2 - Letter of Explanation
- Attachment 3 - Architectural Plan Set date stamped 10/27/2021
- Attachment 4 - DPR Form for 112 E. Maple Avenue
- Attachment 5 - SMART Recommended Conditions of Approval