

October 13, 2022

To City of Aurora Planning & Development Services Ariana Muca, Landscape Architect / Planner I 303-739-7259 <a href="mailto:amuca@auroragov.org">amuca@auroragov.org</a>	Project: Texas Roadhouse - Aurora CO Re: Letter of Introduction & Operations Plan - Updated Project #: 20200123
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Dear Ariana,

Please accept this summary as our Letter of Introduction and Detailed Operations Plan as required for the site plan and conditional use processes on behalf of Texas Roadhouse restaurant.

#### Description of Site:

The site is located at 14150 E. Iliff Avenue and is currently a 2.69-acre site developed as the Ajuua Mexican restaurant with associated parking and infrastructure in place. Texas Roadhouse is in operation at an existing location easterly adjacent and proposes to relocate to the new site. We are proposing a 9,301 SF full-service sit-down restaurant and bar operation with a drive-thru to pick up to-go / carry-out orders. There will be no ordering of food in the drive-thru component. The restaurant's hours of operation are Monday – Thursday 3pm-9:30pm, Friday 12pm-10:30pm, Saturday 11am-10:30pm, and Sunday 11am-9:30pm. There are approximately 40 employees split across 2 shifts.

#### City Concerns from Pre-Application Notes:

- Compatibility with Iliff Station Area Plan & Adjacent TOD Zoning: Because the property is directly across Blackhawk Street from a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) zone district as well as within the Iliff Station Area Plan's core sub-district, it will be necessary to ensure consistency and compatibility with both. Planning will ask for frontage on the west side of the building as depicted on the site plan, pedestrian amenities that integrate into the streetscape, and appropriate landscaping. **RESPONSE: Since the pre-application meeting, the building location was shifted to the northwest corner of the site to be closer to Blackhawk Street and the private drive. Compatible pedestrian amenities and landscaping is being proposed in accordance with the TOD area along Blackhawk Street.**
- Traffic Engineering: The alignment of the southern access on Blackhawk Street with Wesley Street to the west is recommended. The internal intersection located immediately west of the northern access on Blackhawk Street shall be removed due to the close proximity to Blackhawk Street. A detailed letter to address trip generation from the site, site circulation, and pedestrian connectivity is required. **RESPONSE: Since the pre-application meeting, the site plan layout has been shifted to**

accommodate the shift of the southern access drive so that it aligns with Wesley Street and the existing access to the north has been removed. A trip generation letter is provided as part of the original submittal package.

- Public Improvements: An urban street section along the Blackhawk frontage is required, starting at the south side of the existing northern access. This section shall include pedestrian street lighting in conformance with the urban street section. Coordinate with Xcel Energy to update the light fixtures on the existing street lights along Blackhawk. Updating the curb ramps at the access points are required. **RESPONSE: Pedestrian lighting will be provided, we will need the spec on the light to match the existing. We will begin coordination with Xcel Energy to update light fixtures on existing public streetlights. Curb ramps will be updated at access points.**
- Tree Mitigation: There are many trees on this site that could be impacted by development. The requirement to hire a Consulting Arborist for the tree inventory and appraisal will depend on the size and scope of the project, related to the number of trees that will be impacted. **RESPONSE: A tree mitigation plan is provided as part of the submittal package, and we have since hired a consulting arborist who took inventory and as a result our tree mitigation plan was updated accordingly.**
- Common space and amenities: For a building this size, the common area should be a minimum of 400 square feet with a minimum dimension of 15 feet. This includes an outdoor patio area and the provision of site furniture, landscaping, and pedestrian-scaled lighting and design. An outdoor dining area can count toward this requirement. **RESPONSE: A common space area with pedestrian amenities is being proposed at the northwest corner of the building along the northern building elevation. This area includes benches, landscape planters, trash receptacle, and appropriate lighting.**

#### Conditional Use Request:

The site is zoned MU-OI and the use of a restaurant with drive-thru is subject to conditional use. Per Section 146-5.4.3.A of the UDO, the site addresses the approval criteria for conditional use. The Comprehensive Plan place type calls out the site as Innovation Campus which a restaurant use is a supporting land use. The size, scale, height, density, multi-modal traffic impacts and hours of operation are compatible with existing and planned uses in the surrounding area. The existing and adjacent sites as well are restaurant users which are also compliant to the place type. Our traffic study indicates there will not be a negative impact on the surrounding infrastructure, in fact by shifting and closing drive aisles per staff's comments, the redevelopment of the site will fall more into compliance with the TOD friendly area. There is infrastructure in place to serve the existing restaurant, and it is anticipated the existing utilities will have adequate capacity to serve the new restaurant. The proposed building height is 28'10" to the top of the tower and 40'10" to the top of the flagpole which is under the maximum height requirement in this zoning district. Lastly, the conditional use is not anticipated to have any adverse impacts to the surrounding area due to the existing restaurant users in the area, and the drive-thru is consistent with the McDonalds to the north.

#### Conformance with City Code:

Per Section 3.3.6.E of the UDO, the site addresses approval criteria for accessory use specific standards for drive-thru operations. The drive-thru is located at the rear of the building and screened from Blackhawk Street. Appropriate landscape buffering and tree preservation in conjunction with new landscaping will be provided throughout the site. The proposed redevelopment is replacing an existing older restaurant use with a new restaurant user but provides for the appropriate pedestrian friendly amenities to stay compatible with the TOD area.

#### Adjustments:

- Aurora Unified Development Ordinance Section 4.10.5

- B.1. Number of Permitted Signs. A total of 5 signs are permitted per use, with a total of 80 sf minimum.
- We are proposing a total of 7 signs, breakdown below.
  - Signs A1 and A2 make up the Texas Roadhouse with State of Texas logo on the west elevation wall sign facing Blackhawk.
  - Sign C is on the north elevation above the door signifying the public entrance.
  - Sign D is on the north elevation above the door signifying the to-go pick up entrance.
  - Signs E, F & G are directional signs for the drive thru.

SIGNAGE AREA	
SIGN A1:	69.3 sq. ft.
SIGN A2:	34 sq. ft.
SIGN C:	18.1 sq. ft.
SIGN D:	7.98 sq. ft.
SIGN E:	3 sq. ft.
SIGN F:	3 sq. ft.
SIGN G:	3 sq. ft.
TOTAL:	138.38 sq. ft.

- Adjustment Justification:
  - Three of the seven signs are directional signage. These signs direct vehicles throughout the site to the drive thru for pick up orders. This provides a safe internal vehicular movement for pedestrians and vehicles.
  - The total of all signage SF is 138.38 SF which is well under the total allowable 600 SF per code.
  - The site is not proposing a monument sign.
- **Aurora Unified Development Ordinance Section 4.6.7**
  - Table 4.6-6 requires restaurants to have 7 stacking spaces of which 4 must be located before ordering station.
  - We are proposing a reduction to permit 3 stacking spaces.
  - Adjustment Justification:
    - The 7 dedicated stacking spaces cannot be achieved without significantly affecting the layout and losing parking. The intent of this drive-thru is for pick up orders only. They've been implementing this in new restaurants since covid and found it very successful with the operation. Orders are not placed at this drive-thru, nor is there even an ordering mechanism available.
    - There are an additional 4 designated 'to-go' pick up parking spaces to support the drive-thru operation.

We appreciate the opportunity for you to review and advise on our project. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at [mkolman@greenbergfarrow.com](mailto:mkolman@greenbergfarrow.com) or 708-705-3980.

Sincerely,

Marisa Kolman  
Development Manager

