

# Approved Conditionally by CPC on 7/15/2019

## "Submittal of a revised narrative."

**CITY OF MILWAUKEE  
REQUEST TO DEVIATE FROM DESIGN STANDARDS  
FOR  
KOMATSU SOUTH HARBOR CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT ZONE**

This Request for Deviation is due to the unique site constraints associated with the parcels that will house Komatsu's new South Harbor Campus. The site is located along Greenfield Avenue on the south side of the street – extending from the railway overpass to the cul de sac, opposite the UWM School of Freshwater Science. The proposed development has views of the Kinnikinnic River to the east and is defined by active railway tracks to the west and railroad tracks that intersect the site thus creating two distinct and uniquely shaped parcels. The site is comprised of two properties totaling approximately 58.5 acres. The City owned parcel at 401 E. Greenfield Avenue and the western parcel – commonly known as the Solvay Coke site – currently owned by We Energies at 311 E. Greenfield Avenue.

Despite the campus being comprised of two distinct parcels, this development will ultimately be under the ownership and use of one entity – Komatsu Mining Corporation (KMC) use and therefore we have organized this Request for Deviation through the lens of a singular property.

With that understanding, we are seeking approval of the following deviations:

**1. *Front Setback Maximum 10'***

The Manufacturing Building requires considerable clearances on all sides for movement of trucks, production equipment, incoming materials and completed product. Due to requirements of Komatsu's manufacturing process, this setback is infeasible. Also, due to the geometries of the rail line that angles across the site – the property line along Greenfield is narrowed considerably making a 10' setback unachievable. We are seeking relief from this requirement as it relates to the Manufacturing Building.

The Office Building setback is approximately 40' from Greenfield Avenue with the purpose of creating a balanced community space in front of the main entry and the museum component of the building. We believe this meets the intent of the guidelines by creating a defined street edge opposite the School of Freshwater Science while preserving view corridors for the School. This setback also allows Komatsu much needed staging area for events, display and other supporting functions of the museum along Greenfield. It should be noted that the large display of Komatsu signature equipment – otherwise referred to as "the monument" – requires space similar to other significant art installations. Placement of the building as described allows both to co-exist in a complementary manner.

**2. *Minimum amount of street edge build-out of site: 70% within range of minimum and maximum***

Due to established rail lines that angle across the former Solvay Coke site, the street edge is marginalized and almost non-existent. That combined with contamination/remediation of soils, size and functional requirements of the Manufacturing Building – necessitated the 700' setback from Greenfield. Consequently, there were limited options for placement of the Office Building and Parking assets on the City owned parcel. Initial site studies of this side of the project determined that a bias towards the KK River and a more modest expression along Greenfield were necessary to balance the need for parking and the essential requirement for connections from the Office to the Manufacturing Building.

**3. *Build-out of all phases of a development must achieve of ratio of total gross floor area to total lot area of at least 2:3.***

The combined Building to Land Ratio after the initial phase will be 1:2.68 which exceeds the standard for initial build-out. Details for each parcel are contained within Exhibit B.

We are requesting a deviation for the future build-out of all phases. Achieving a build-out ratio of 2:3 is not feasible given the manufacturing use at 311 E. Greenfield. The office building will exceed the future requirement however, the manufacturing building(s) will lower the overall ratio. Therefore, the deviation is required.

**4. *Parking Requirements. Please disregard previous narrative. A deviation is not required for parking.***

**5. *Minimum glazed area, primary street frontage is 60% (linear footage measure)***

Technically, the north façade of the Manufacturing Building does not meet this requirement however, the Office Building exceeds this percentage. Given the use requirements of the Manufacturing Building and the fact that it is setback over 700 feet from Greenfield Avenue and 1,000 feet from Kinnickinnic Avenue, we are seeking relief from this requirement. We believe that the architecture of the Manufacturing Building does meet the guidelines relative to modulation and articulation – it is however infeasible with this type of building to meet a 60% glazed area requirement. It deserves consideration that the design of the Office Building exceeds this percentage on the street frontage along Greenfield Avenue. Please refer to Exhibit B for further clarity on this deviation request.

**6. *Entrance door requirement - Entrance Door Orientation. Every new building shall have a primary entrance door on the front façade. A primary entrance door shall not be required on the front façade if there is a primary entrance door on a side façade and that door is within 20 feet of the front façade.***

The primary entrance to the Office Building is centered on the west side of the Greenfield Avenue façade. This placement complements the Monument and relates to the interior functions that comprises Komatsu's museum and welcome center. The entry exceeds the twenty foot requirement from the front façade but is clearly marked by a canopy and highly visible from Greenfield Avenue. We believe this meets the spirit and intent of the guideline.

**7. *Overhead garage door facing street. Overhead garage door which faces the street shall be set back at least 4 feet from the front façade of the main building mass.***

This requirement creates challenges to the internal functions of the Manufacturing Building. Given that this adversely affects Komatsu's process and that the building is significantly setback from the street - we are seeking a deviation from this requirement.

**8. *Pedestrian link. Where a lot is adjacent to a public sidewalk, each principal building on the lot shall be served by a clearly identifiable walkway leading from the public sidewalk to the entrance to the building.***

Due to security reasons, pedestrian access is not being provided to the Manufacturing Building from either Greenfield or Kinnickinnic Avenue. Pedestrian connections are provided at the main entry to the campus at the Office Building from Greenfield Avenue. Given that the two buildings act as one – we feel this approach meets the intent of the guideline.

9. **Freestanding Signs.** *The guidelines allow 1 per site, Type "A" max. display area (sq. ft.) is 100 Sq. Ft.* Based on the unique physical characteristics of the site, Komatsu is seeking placement of three (3) monument signs on campus. One at the entrance drive to the Manufacturing Building, second at the main Visitor entry near the Monument and a third facing the Kinnickinnic River. We believe that the multiple points of entry necessitated by the existing rail lines support the first two signs and the visibility from the KK River and beyond support a brand statement visible from the east.

10. **Building Mounted Signage**

We are seeking a deviation from the size limitation for exterior, building mounted signage. This deviation request applies to the Manufacturing Building at 301 E. Greenfield. We believe that the scale of the building, its multiple exposures and other challenges to visibility support larger sign applications. See Exhibit B for further detail on sign areas and overall building façade areas.

In summary, we believe that this request for a deviation from the overlay design standard meets the criteria set forth in the appeals ordinance (Ch. 295-311-9.c) as follows:

1. **The purpose of the overlay zone is met:**

- a. The main entry for the office building and the museum is adjacent to the street edge which is consistent with the design standards and complementary to the School of Freshwater Sciences. These neighboring buildings will create a favorable and pleasing endpoint to Greenfield Avenue and preserve views of the waterline. Additionally, open spaces offer similar "solid and void" relationships on both sides of the street.
- b. A high-quality urban building design is proposed that complies with the aesthetic and sustainable elements of the design standards.
- c. The ultimate site density meets the minimum requirements of the design standards
- d. The site stormwater design will utilize bioswales which is consistent with the design standards.
- e. The surface parking lot has been sensitively located on the north side of the site and will be fenced and landscaped at the street edge. The geometry of the Office building complements Greenfield Avenue with an appropriate bias to the Kinnickinnic River – offering occupants dramatic views and an appealing backdrop to the future Riverwalk. We believe this in an appropriate design response to the unique qualities of the site.

2. **The deviation improves the aesthetics of the site:** As you enter this revitalized area, the proposed development will complement the School of Freshwater Science and serve as a "co-anchor" at the east end of Greenfield Avenue. Landscape screening on the north side of the surface parking lot will obscure visibility of the parking lot from the cul de sac and create a defined pedestrian edge leading to the Main Entry.

3. **The deviation addresses one or more unique site factors that make application of the standard impractical:** In addition to the aforementioned challenges of existing rail lines, contamination and soils remediation as well as Komatsu's unique use on this site led us to the proposed solution. Early design studies determined that placing the Office Building with primary bias along the KK River not only provided Komatsu employees with terrific views of the water but also allows the Office Building to extend and connect to the parking deck and ultimately – the Manufacturing Building.

This connectivity is critical to the success of the project. On a different, contiguous site, Komatsu would have designed and built a singular, interconnected building. The unique nature of how the rail lines interrupt the site and the requirements of the DIZ necessitated elongating the Office Building to allow both frontage on Greenfield Avenue and the critical connections needed for Komatsu's use of the site.

4. **The deviation is consistent with the comprehensive plan:** The City of Milwaukee's Comprehensive Plan promotes quality urban design, transportation options, and employment opportunities.
- The proposed campus will bring up to 1,000 family sustaining jobs to the City and the surrounding neighborhood. These jobs will support local restaurants, retail and potentially the housing stock.
  - The proposed parking lot design accounts for approximately a quarter to a third of the total occupant load of the campus. The bulk of Komatsu's employees will use the parking structure which complements the overall design of the project. It is also expected that employees will utilize public transportation and bike to work opportunities.
  - The site design will complement the future Riverwalk, visually shielding the surface parking area and dramatically improving the experience along this section of the Kinnikinnic River.

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