

MEMORANDUM

To: City of Whitewater Plan and Architectural Review Commission

From: Allison Schwark, Zoning Administrator

Date: July 13, 2026

Re: Conceptual Review

Summary of Request	
Requested Approvals:	Conceptual Review
Location:	1155 W Main Street (/L 00007)
Current Land Use:	BicycleWise
Proposed Land Use:	7 Brew Coffee Shop
Current Zoning:	B-1A University Mixed-Use Neighborhood Overlay District
Proposed Zoning:	N/A
Future Land Use, Comprehensive Plan:	Community Business

Staff Review

The applicant has submitted a conceptual site plan for the development of a new 7 Brew Coffee drive-through coffee shop on the subject property. The proposal consists of a single-story, approximately 510-square-foot building designed primarily to serve customers through a dual-lane drive-through system. The preliminary concept includes 11 employee parking spaces and a vehicle stacking capacity of approximately 21 vehicles, which reflects the operational model commonly utilized by 7 Brew locations.

This request is being presented to the Plan Commission as a Concept Review. The purpose of a concept review is to provide an opportunity for the applicant to introduce the proposed development, receive initial feedback from the Plan Commission, and identify any significant site design, circulation, architectural, landscaping, or ordinance-related issues prior to the

preparation and submission of formal development plans. No formal action is required or requested at this stage of the review process.

From a planning perspective, staff believes the concept review is an appropriate opportunity to evaluate the overall site layout, vehicle circulation, access management, pedestrian connectivity, parking configuration, buffering and landscaping, stormwater considerations, and compatibility with surrounding land uses. Given the nature of drive-through coffee establishments, particular attention should be given to the proposed vehicle stacking capacity, internal traffic circulation, and the potential impacts on adjacent properties and public roadways during peak operating periods.

Following Plan Commission discussion and feedback, the applicant will have the opportunity to refine the proposed plans prior to submitting a formal site plan for review in accordance with the City's zoning and development regulations.

The subject property is located within the B-1A University Mixed-Use Neighborhood Overlay District, which incorporates the standards of the underlying B-1 Community Business District except where specifically modified by the overlay. The B-1A overlay primarily establishes provisions related to mixed-use and multifamily residential development and does not alter the development standards applicable to the proposed commercial use. Therefore, the proposed 7 Brew Coffee development is evaluated primarily under the regulations of the B-1 Community Business District.

Based upon the conceptual site plan submitted, staff offers the following preliminary observations:

Permitted/Conditional Use

A drive-through coffee shop is considered a restaurant with drive-through service. While restaurants are permitted in the B-1 District, all uses with drive-in or drive-through facilities require approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The ordinance specifically directs that such developments maintain visual continuity and attractive pedestrian movement along street frontages. As proposed, the project will require Conditional Use Permit approval in addition to Site Plan Review.

Purpose of the District

The proposal is generally consistent with the intent of the B-1 District to accommodate neighborhood-serving retail and commercial services along major transportation corridors. A coffee shop is a commercial use that provides a service to both local residents and visitors. However, because the site is located within the B-1A Overlay, the Commission should also

consider how the development contributes to the overlay's goal of creating an active, pedestrian-oriented environment serving both the university community and surrounding neighborhoods. The current concept is heavily vehicle-oriented, and additional pedestrian amenities may warrant discussion.

Site Layout and Traffic Circulation

The conceptual plan provides a dual-lane drive-through with approximately 21 stacking spaces, which appears intended to prevent vehicle queues from extending onto adjacent streets or properties. Internal circulation appears organized; however, a detailed traffic analysis has not yet been submitted, and staff cannot determine whether the proposed stacking capacity will adequately accommodate anticipated peak demand without affecting surrounding traffic operations. As part of the concept review discussion, the applicant has indicated that the proposed dual-lane drive-through configuration would require the acquisition of a portion of the adjacent property through a lot line adjustment. This additional land area is necessary to accommodate the second drive-through lane and the associated vehicle circulation. At this time, the lot line adjustment has not been completed and will be required prior to or in conjunction with the formal development approval process. Until the property boundary modification is finalized, the concept should be viewed as contingent upon the successful acquisition and reconfiguration of the adjacent parcel.

Setbacks and Site Dimensions

The concept plan does not include sufficient dimensional information to verify compliance with required yard setbacks, lot dimensions, or building placement. Compliance with the B-1 setback requirements will need to be demonstrated on the formal Site Plan submittal.

Parking

Employee parking is shown on the conceptual site plan; however, staff cannot verify compliance with Chapter 19.51 parking requirements until a detailed parking analysis and calculation are submitted with the formal application. If the proposal is lacking required parking, our ordinance does allow the Planning Commission to make exceptions on the reduction of parking.

Landscaping, Screening, and Buffers

The conceptual plan does not provide sufficient information regarding landscaping, street trees, foundation plantings, screening of the dumpster enclosure, or any required buffer yards. These

items will require detailed review during Site Plan approval and should be designed to satisfy both ordinance requirements and the City's Comprehensive Plan design objectives.

Architectural Design

The submitted plan is limited to a conceptual site layout and does not include building elevations or architectural details. The B-1 District requires building design to contribute to the character of the community and specifically allows the City to require modifications to standardized corporate franchise architecture where necessary. Staff anticipates that architectural review will be a significant component of the formal development review process.

Staff Summary

At this conceptual stage, the proposed use appears to be generally compatible with the commercial intent of the B-1 District, subject to obtaining a Conditional Use Permit for the drive-through operation. Because this application is a Concept Review, staff is not making a determination of ordinance compliance at this time. Several items including parking, setbacks, landscaping, architectural design, pedestrian connectivity, lighting, signage, and traffic circulation will require additional information and formal evaluation during the Site Plan Review and Conditional Use Permit processes. The purpose of this review is to provide the applicant with preliminary guidance from the Plan Commission before preparation of final development plans.