

CITY OF OLYMPIA DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

COMBINED CONCEPTUAL & DETAIL DESIGN REVIEW STAFF REPORT January 22, 2026

Project Name/Number:	TVW Expansion, 25-7165
Applicant:	KMB Architects & Rants Group
Location:	1058 Capitol Way S
Project Description:	84,000 SF building expansion adjacent to the existing 1058 Capitol Way S TVW Building. It includes 2 levels of parking garage, 1 level of office space and 1 level of event space.
Zoning District:	Downtown Business (DB)
Design District:	Downtown with Business Corridor Subdistrict
Comprehensive Plan Designations:	Central Business District with High Density Neighborhood Overlay
Pedestrian-Oriented Streets:	Capitol Way (west): A Union Ave (north): B Washington St (east): C
City Staff:	Casey Mauck, AICP, Associate Planner Phone: 360.753.8048 Email: cmauck@ci.olympia.wa.us
Public Notification:	In accordance with OMC 18.70, notice of the application, anticipated SEPA determination, and Design Review Board meeting was posted on the site and mailed to adjacent property owners on December 15, 2025.

The Design Review Board meeting is a public meeting and the public is welcome to attend. The meeting is not a public hearing and public testimony, or comments, are not taken at the meeting. Written comments for the Board may be submitted to staff prior to the start of the meeting. To allow for processing and distribution, please submit written comments to staff by 4:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Existing Site Conditions

The site includes 0.7 acres southwest of the corner of Capitol Way and Union Avenue extending east to Washington Street. The site includes two buildings, one of approximately 8,000 SF over two floors hosting the existing TVW offices, and one of approximately 1,200 SF that is currently vacant and previously held a Dairy Queen. The proposal includes demolition of the former Dairy Queen building. The eastern parcels of the site hold street parking currently used by TVW and a church to the south.

Surrounding the site, there is a mixed-use building to the north, Capitol Campus park to the east, church to the south, and the Capitol Campus (Helen Sommers building) to the west.

Public Comments

Staff have received no written or oral comments to date specific to the design of the project.

Land Use Review

The land use review is currently underway. In addition to design review, the project proposal must meet building, fire, engineering, urban forestry, and other requirements. The Site Plan Review Committee is finalizing the first round of review and has not noted any site-changing revisions. Staff will be asking for additional information and possible signage around bicycle parking, however bicycle parking requirements fall into the development code rather than design standards.

DESIGN REVIEW

Please note that this is a Combined Conceptual and Detail Design Review.

Conceptual review involves the major design elements of a project which include site analysis and contextual response, site development, and architectural and landscape concepts as they relate to the general Citywide design criteria and the specific design criteria of the design district. Detail review involves all the detailed design elements of a project including materials, colors, final architectural elevations, and final landscape design and lighting.

The section called “How to Use Design Criteria (OMC 18.100.100)” in the Olympia Municipal Code provides instructions for meeting the City’s design criteria. Compliance with each requirement is necessary; the guidelines provide methods to achieve compliance with the requirements. Applicable guidelines must be incorporated into the project design except in cases where the proposed design solutions are considered by the Board and/or staff to be equal to or better than the guidelines and meet the intent of the requirement.

Review of Design Criteria

Staff evaluated the project proposal based on:

- A checklist prepared by the applicant indicating how compliance with the Downtown Design Criteria has been achieved; and
- A design review packet prepared by the applicant with a project narrative and architectural plans.

Staff found that the proposal generally addresses the criteria within the code, though some items merit further review by the Board. These items are discussed below and included in recommended conditions of approval.

Areas Suggested for Board Review

Lighting (OMC 18.120.360): Lighting is required to increase safety and security, reduce glare and light trespass, and enhance the nighttime pedestrian environment. The final pages of the design review packet show proposed lighting on all sides of the building. The Union façade appears to only be lit on the turret and entry side, while there is no lighting for approximately 125 feet where the parking garages are. Capitol and the alley façades also appear to have large areas without lighting. Staff suggest requiring that the Union, Capitol, and alley frontages include additional lighting to match the approximate amount of lighting provided on the Washington façade. This condition could be assessed by staff at the time of building permit.

Façade articulation (OMC 18.120.440.B.1): Commercial buildings require façade articulation to provide visual interest and variety for pedestrians. This requirement applies to all frontages except the alley. The design code lays out a list of options, with the requirement that four elements are provided at intervals no greater than 30 feet apart on the ground floor façades. While the Capitol façade meets the requirement with window fenestration, changes in building material or siding, vertical building modulation, and non-continuous weather protection, the Union façade does not include articulation in the parking area, and the Washington façade is also missing four elements and appears to be treated as the “rear” of the building. Staff suggest requiring that the Union and Washington façades add additional articulation elements such as additional weather protection, modulation, or change in materials or siding. Additional weather protection could help solve an issue described

later in this report. This condition could be assessed at the time of building permit by staff, with email guidance from the Board if staff deems it necessary. Without modification, the proposal does not meet code requirements. The Board does not have the authority to waive requirements, but can provide approval of modified treatments should they achieve equal or better outcomes than those specifically listed in code.

Pedestrian-oriented facades and weather projection (OMC 18.120.460.B): The Union and Capitol frontages are required to be pedestrian-oriented with transparent window areas, a primary building entry, weather protection, and a minimum ground floor height. The design does not meet the code requirements to have 75% percent of the ground floor façade between two and eight feet be transparent, provide weather protection over at least 65% of the façade, or have a ground floor height of at least 15 feet on the two façades subject to this requirement. This project has two ground floors; level one on Union with the primary entrance, while Capitol is at a higher elevation and level two is the street level. Staff found that the minimum ground floor height requirement was almost met (14 feet) and was not feasible to require due to elevation changes. The applicant indicated that the ground level of the turret was not feasible to be transparent due to structural considerations, protection from vehicles at the intersection, and media equipment that will be kept in the space. The Board may consider determining that the turret, while not satisfying transparency requirements, achieves an equal or better outcome than code compliance would. Staff do not suggest requiring conditions around ground level height or window transparency, but does recommend conditioning the project to add additional weather protection on the Union façade in the parking area and on the Capitol façade where the building is being refaced. This condition could be assessed at the time of building permit by staff.

Blank walls (OMC 18.120.480.B.1): Blank walls facing a street of 400 square feet or larger, without a window, door, building modulation or other architectural feature, are prohibited unless treated. The Union façade adjacent to Washington Street includes a blank wall along the lower half of the building that is currently proposed to be surfaced with brick veneer. Staff suggest requiring that this part of this façade add additional elements to treat blank walls such as artwork, a vertical trellis with plants, or other architectural elements. This condition could be assessed at the time of building permit by staff.

Above-grade structured parking (OMC 18.120.490.B.1): Above-grade structured parking must have a combination of artwork, grillwork, special building material, design, or other treatments to enhance the pedestrian environment and obscure the view of cars parked inside. The project proposes mesh metal screening separated into different panels. Staff do not recommend a condition to add visual interest to the design at this time, but noted that the Board may want to add visual interest to the large widths of garage space on the Union, Capitol, and Washington frontages.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Design Review Board recommend to the Director approval of the conceptual and detail design review plans for the TVW Expansion project (25-7165), subject to the following conditions:

1. The Union, Capitol, and alley frontages must provide additional lighting to match the approximate amount of lighting provided along Washington. This condition will be assessed by staff at the time of building permit.
2. The Union and Washington façades must include additional articulation elements such as additional weather protection, modulation, or change in materials or siding to improve articulation. This condition will be assessed at the time of building permit by staff, with email guidance from the Board if staff deems it necessary.
3. Add additional weather protection on the Union façade in the parking area and on the Capitol façade where the building is being refaced. This condition will be assessed at the time of building permit by staff.

4. The side of the Union façade where it meets Washington Street must include additional elements to treat blank walls such as artwork, a vertical trellis with plants, or other architectural elements. This condition could be assessed at the time of building permit by staff.

Submitted By: Casey Mauck, AICP, Associate Planner

ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Combined Design Staff Report
- Attachment 2: Applicant Design Documents