



**STAFF REPORT
WEST ALLIS PLAN COMMISSION
Wednesday, December 2, 2020
6:00 PM
Virtual Meeting**

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/user/westalliscitychannel>

- 7A. Special Use Permit for VisABILITY Center, for a proposed training, counseling or workforce development facilities operated by a not for-profit social service organization, for the purposes of enabling jobs and career opportunities for persons with sensory or physical disabilities, to be located at 1540 S. 108 St.**

- 7B. Site, Landscaping, and Architectural Plans for VisABILITY Center, for a proposed training, counseling or workforce development facilities operated by a not for-profit social service organization, for the purposes of enabling jobs and career opportunities for persons with sensory or physical disabilities, to be located at 1540 S. 108 St. submitted by Jim Kerlin of Beyond Vision (Tax Key No. 449-9981-019).**

Items 7A & 7B may be considered together.

Overview and Zoning

Beyond Vision has applied for a Special Use Permit and a Site, Landscaping and Architectural Plan review for a proposed workforce training facility, to be located at 1540 S. 108 St. The property is currently zoned C-3 Community Commercial District. Under the City's Zoning Code, Training, counseling or workforce development facilities operated by a not-for-profit social service organization, for the purpose of enabling job and career opportunities to persons with sensory or physical disabilities require a Special Use Permit.

A Public Hearing regarding the Special Use Permit



application is scheduled for December 15, 2020.

The mission of Beyond Vision is to provide sustainable and meaningful employment opportunities for people who have vision loss or blindness. To better achieve that mission, Beyond Vision is proposing to open a VisABILITY center, which will also include co-location space for other key organizations, at 1540 S. 108th St. The VisABILITY Center is expected to provide a range of services for persons with vision loss or blindness, including peer support, advocacy, eye health care, skills training, and employment. The VisABILITY Center is proposed to include elements that are tailored specifically for persons with vision loss or blindness, including universal design, audio navigation aids, textured walkways, ambient light, braille signage, accessible computers, and a dog park, among others.

Estimated Cost of Improvements

\$8-\$10 million in site and building improvements.

Floor areas/uses

60,000-sf (47%) administration and commercial services

32,000-sf (25%) floor space light manufacturing

49,500-sf (38%) other services mixed commercial and light manufacturing services

Employment

Current employment: 112 jobs

Future employment: 200-300 additional jobs over the next several years

Hours of operations

Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Truck traffic

2 UPS panel trucks/work day

5 semi-trucks/work day

Site and Landscaping Plans

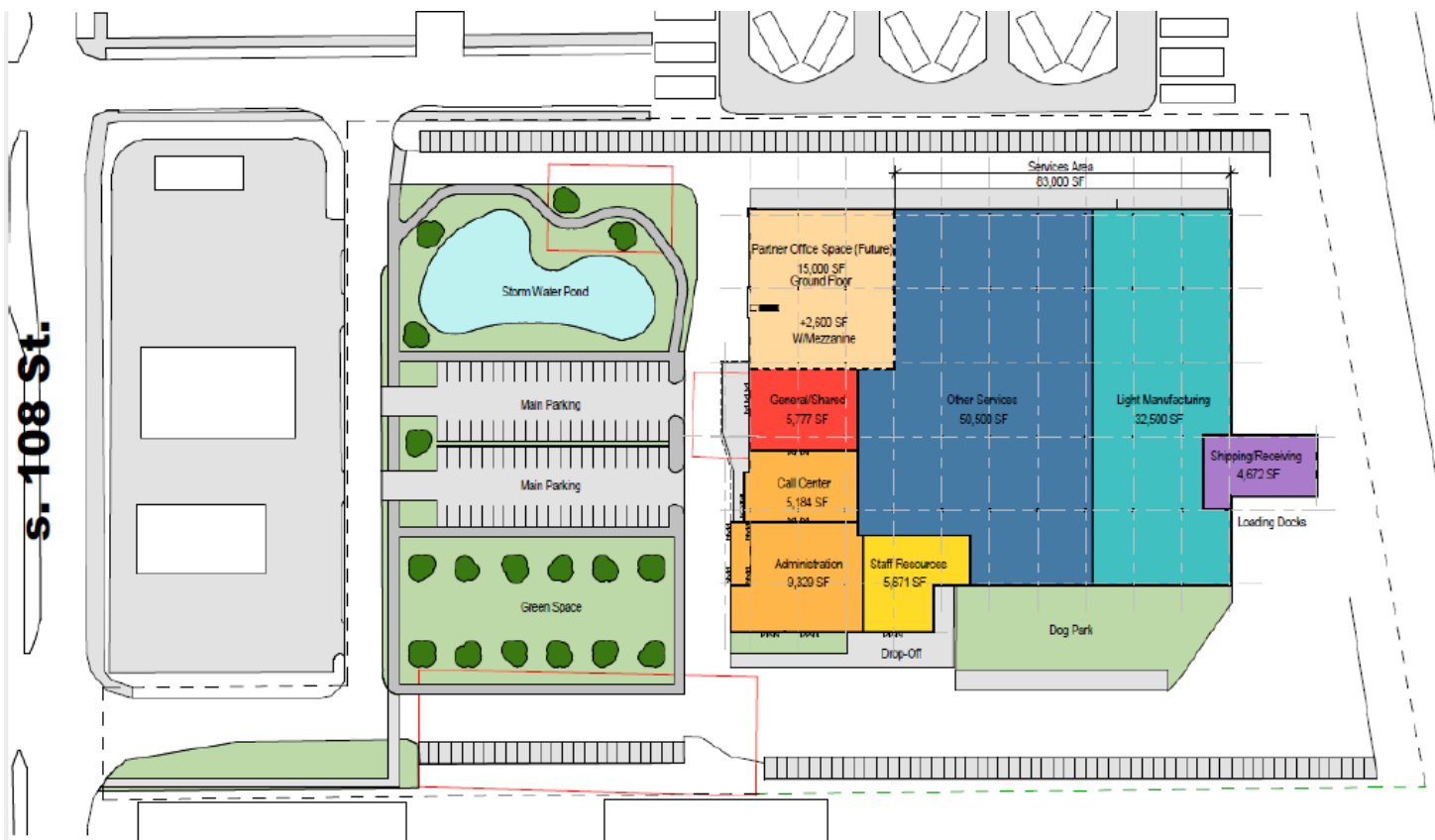
The existing site features over 646 parking stalls and with the changes proposed would be reduced to 299 stalls. City Code calls for 255 parking stalls which includes both the Commercial floor areas, as well as the light manufacturing and areas called out as other services.

The reduction of parking is driving many of the site improvements being proposed on site including park-like green areas that will also feature pedestrian walkways for improved walkability pedestrian access to the main entrance and adjacent sidewalk connections to abutting sites and public transportation.

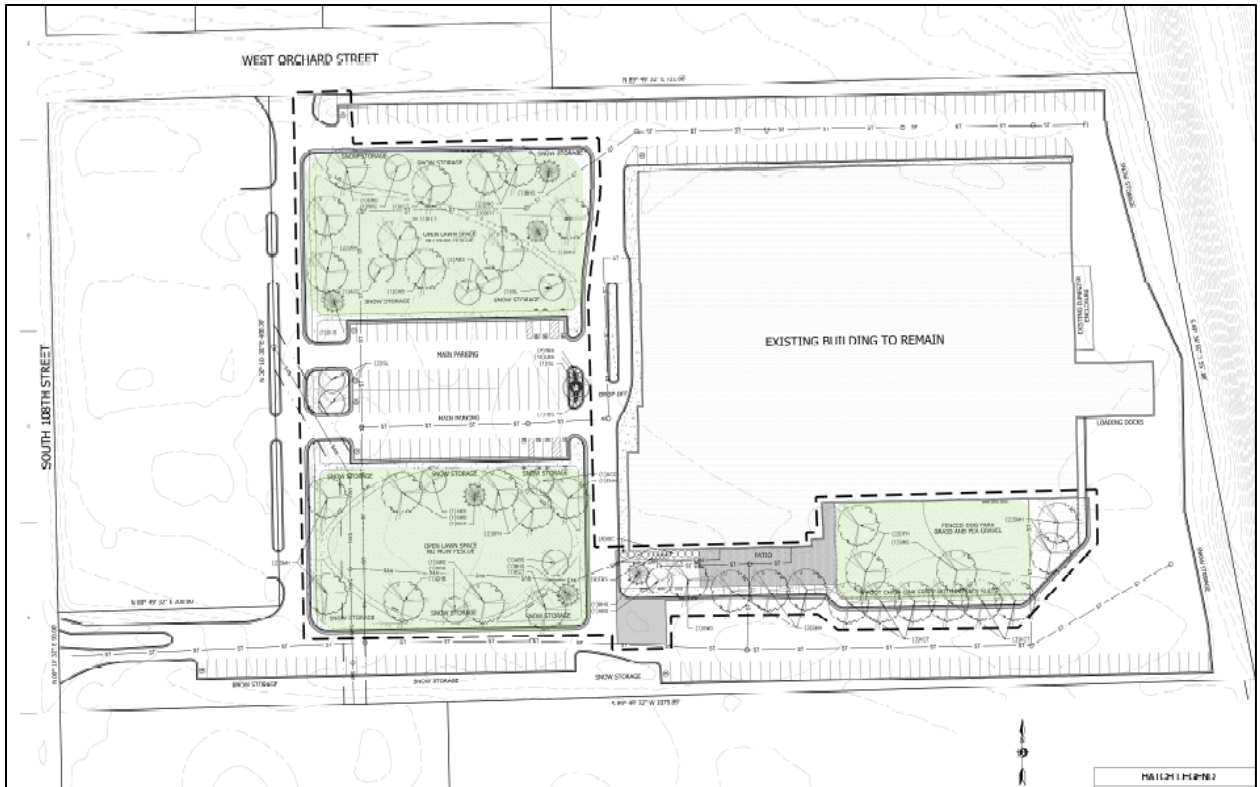
Highlights, Beyond Vision is proposing to:

- Removal of about 350 parking spaces and improve pedestrian access to the property
- Increase landscaping (pervious areas) on site
- Add new landscape areas within the new greenspace areas

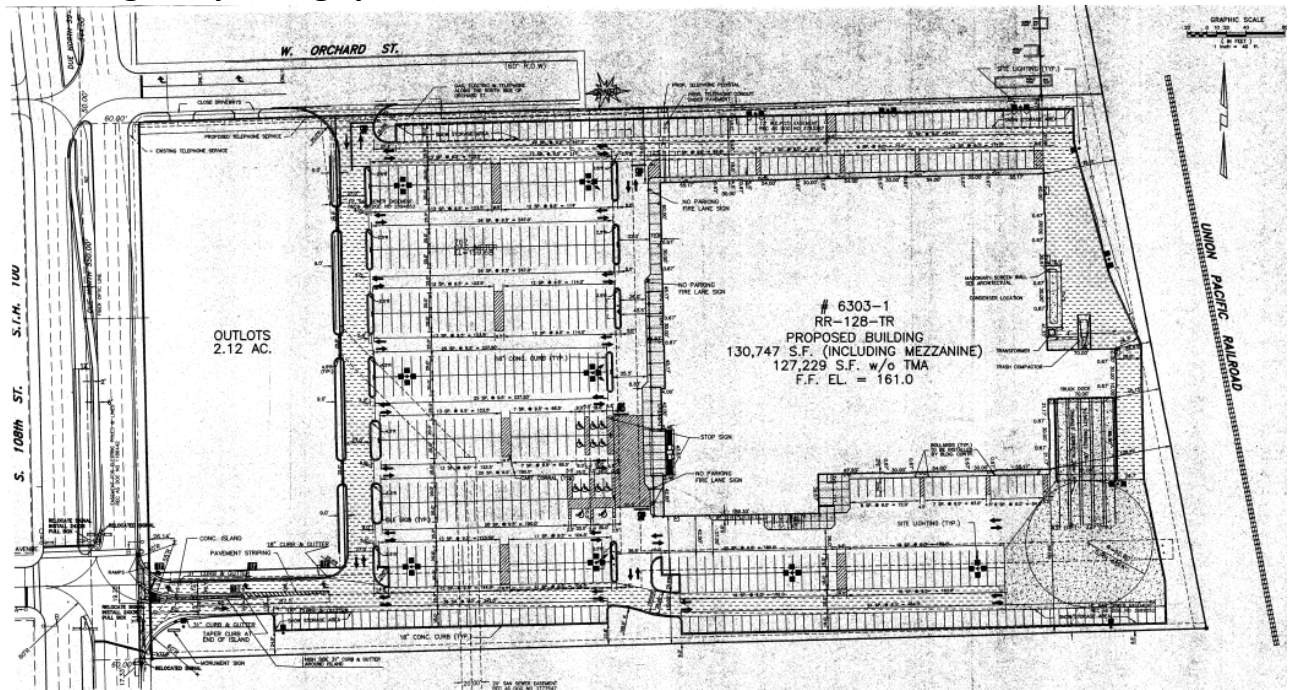
- Add new pedestrian walkways to the main entrance of the building
- Adding an employee break patio area and service dog run along the south side of the building.
- Update lighting to full cut-off LED fixtures, while maintaining existing poles
- Refuse Plan is to reuse the existing recessed area on the north side of the receiving room for a recycling compactor with trash dumpsters being stored in the existing gated area on the east (back) side of the building and set out for pick up when scheduled. None of the trash dumpsters will be visible to neighboring properties.



Proposed 299 parking spaces & added greenspace



Existing 646 parking spaces



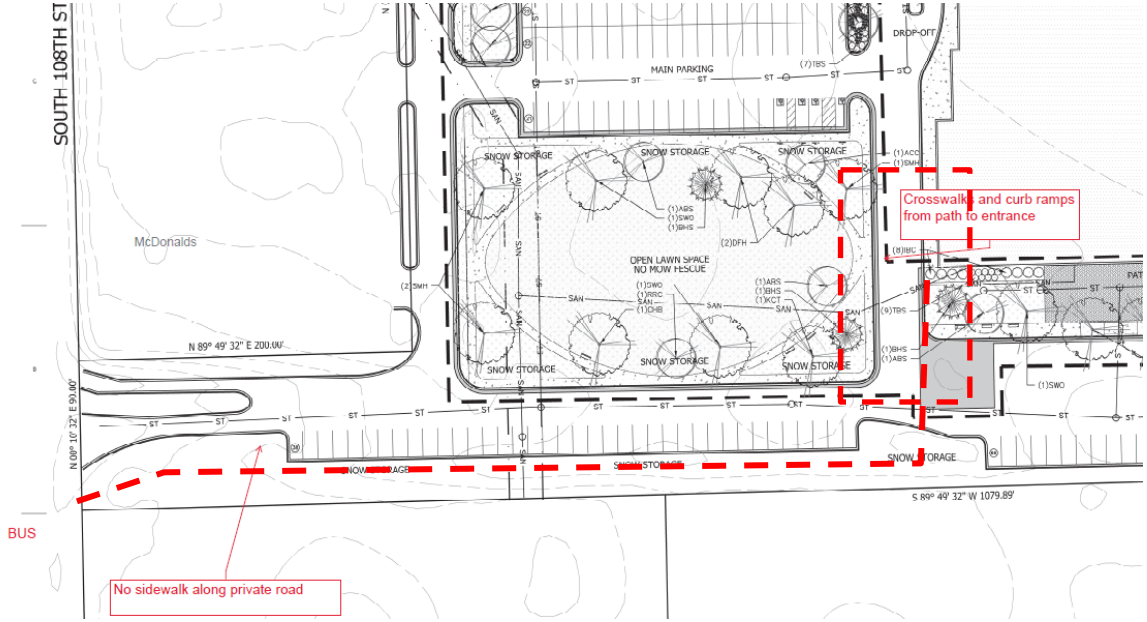
Coordination with MCTS and WisDOT

Planning and City Engineering have shared the Beyond Vision plans and are seeking coordination with Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation)

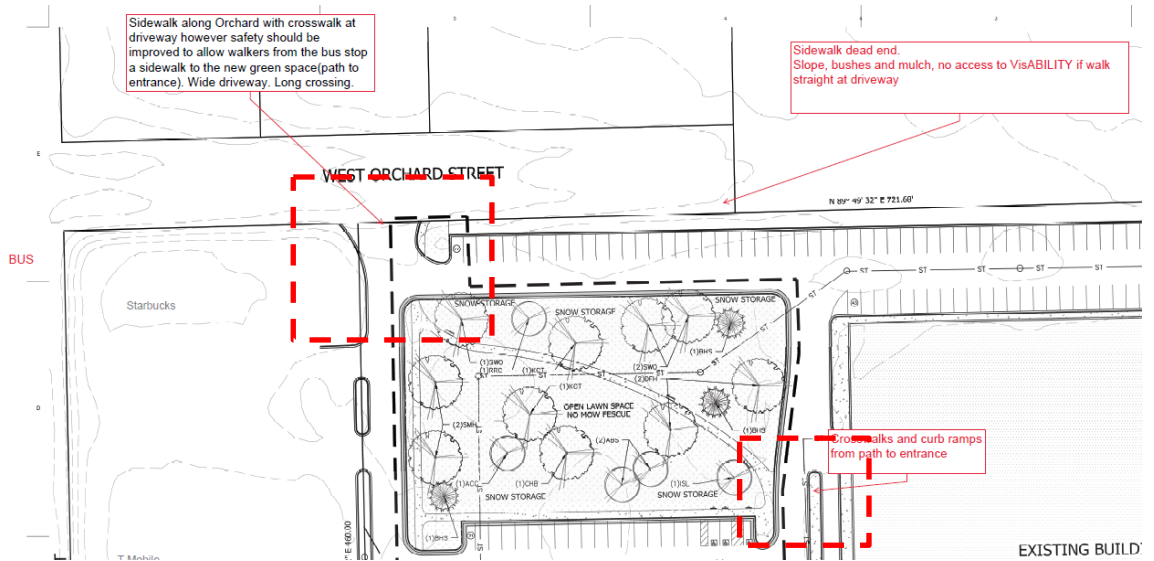
- a) Beyond Vision notes that there are a variety of ways employees will come to work including MCTS, Para Transit , Uber/Lyft, and some dropped off by a family member or friend.
 - Given the modes of transport to work staff is seeking data from Beyond Vision on the means of transport to/from work given the current number of employees (112), with planned expansion in 5 years to 300.
- b) There are a number of bus stops in this area. On the east side of Hwy 100 several within a block or two (W. Mitchell St., W. Lapham St., W. Orchard St., W. Greenfield Ave.). W. Lapham St stop is at an intersection with crosswalks to the east/west side of the Hwy. None of the other stops, except W. Greenfield Ave, feature crosswalks to the opposite side of the Hwy 100 (Note that W. Lapham St. intersects with Hwy 100. East of Hwy 100 W. Lapham St. becomes a private drive and doesn't have sidewalks.)
 - Sidewalk connection from the bus stop to the main entrance recommended.
- c) The W Orchard St stop (stop No 1620) features a city sidewalk up to the 1540 S 108 St property (just north of Starbucks). However, there is an opportunity to improve pedestrian safety where the north-south drive aisle exists onto W. Orchard St. The drive aisle was developed for sweeping turn in and out of the access aisle. Efforts to increase motorist awareness of pedestrians in and around this area are recommended.
 - Drive-way approach adjustments and/or cross walk improvements recommended along the south side of W. Orchard St. where the N-S driveway meets W. Orchard St.
- d) What is the likelihood MCTS would modify Route 28 North to drop off the visually impaired near the VisAbility Center entrance? The bus could turn right on the private street at the Lapham signalized intersection, drive through the parking lot, and reenter Hwy 100 at Orchard.

See Google Maps: [street view](#)

- Include sidewalk on south side of property toward main entry w/ crosswalks to main entry

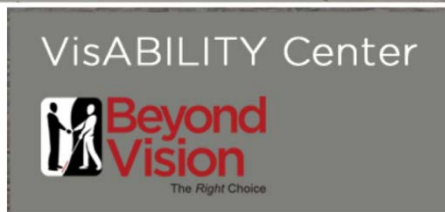
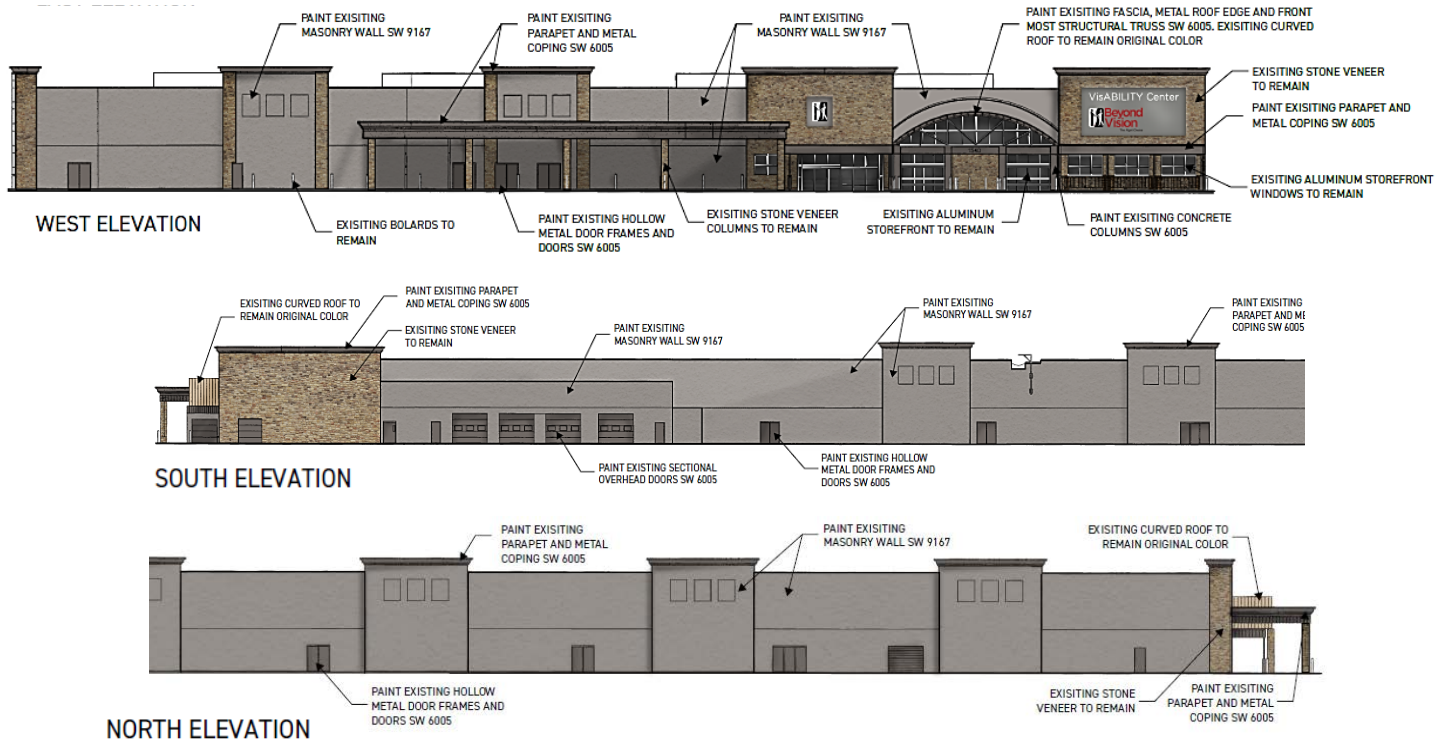


- Improve safety of crosswalk along W. Orchard St sidewalk crossing



Architectural Plans

Beyond Vision is proposing to repaint the exterior of their building. In addition to repainting of the building, Beyond Vision will also be installing new business signage on the west elevation. The exterior color changes were shared and approved at the August 26, 2020 meeting along with a master signage plan for new wall signage and replacement of a freestanding sign.



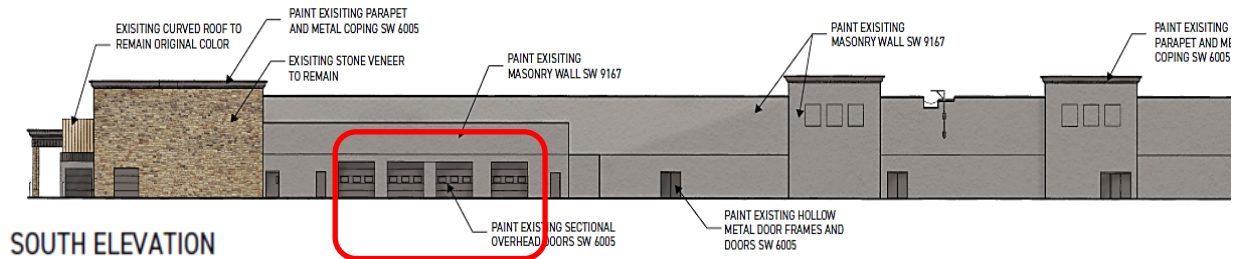
350" x 160" Flat Metal Painted Panel Backer
290" x 125" Individual Flush Mounted Letters/Logo to building facade
Internally Illuminated Dimensional Channel Letters/Module
White Acrylic Face (with vinyl) / Trim Cap / White Returns - White LED lighting inside each module



Face Change on existing monument sign
Double Sided
OPAQUE vinyl graphics for background
Illuminated Letters and Logo ONLY

The majority of initial changes over the next several months will be internal within the building. These changes will include demolition of interior areas to setup the light manufacturing area and Commercial areas.

Beyond Vision is working on preparing more detailed architectural floor plans. As part of the plans, staff is recommending the revised plan incorporate additional windows on the south elevation that would complement the proposed patio area outside of the employee breakroom on the south elevation/side of the building.



Recommendation: Common Council approval of the Special Use Permit and approval of the Site, Landscaping and Architectural plans for VisABILITY Center, for a proposed training, counseling or workforce development facilities operated by a not for-profit social service organization, for the purposes of enabling jobs and career opportunities for persons with sensory or physical disabilities, to be located at 1540 S. 108 St. submitted by Jim Kerlin of Beyond Vision, subject to the following conditions:

(Items 1 through 5 are required to be satisfied prior to the issuance of building permits associated with the proposed work reviewed by Plan Commission. Contractors applying for permits should be advised accordingly.)

1. Revised Site, Landscaping, and Architectural Plans being submitted to the Department of Development to show the following: (a) updated exterior elevations to reflect future changes to the south elevation (replacement of select overhead doors for windows); (b) sidewalk connection along the south side of the property from the MCTS bus stop along Hwy 100 to the main entrance; (c) driveway approach and/or crosswalk modifications inclusive of signage cues adjacent to the sidewalk and driveway intersect at W. Orchard St. and at the drive aisle intersects near the main entrance; (d) contingency plan for possibility of route modification in coordination with MCTS (Milwaukee Co Transit System) and WisDOT; (e) construction schedule being provided to indicate key dates for start and completion of Phase 1 and Phase 2 floor plan build outs; (f) schedule for site and landscaping implementation and completion; (g) City Forester approval of landscaping species and number; (h) chain-link fence around the dog area being lowered below 6-ft and an ornamental style being indicated on plans.
2. An estimated cost of landscaping and screening being submitted to the Department of Development for approval.
3. A surety bond or other form of security as required under Sec. 12.13(14) of the Revised Municipal Code in the amount of 125% of the estimated cost of

landscaping and screening shall be executed by the applicant prior to the issuing of a building permit.

4. Documentation and approval showing compliance with the City of West Allis storm water Management Ordinance, to be submitted to the Building Inspections and Neighborhood Services Department by a registered Civil Engineer. A storm water permit must be obtained from the City.
5. Common Council approval of the special use (scheduled for December 15, 2020) and applicant's acknowledgement of the special use resolution.

(Remaining conditions of approval to be satisfied by the property owner within one year of Plan Commission approval)

6. Contingency plans for pedestrian connections from public right-of-way to the main entrance as approved by staff and in coordination with MCTS (Milwaukee Co Transit System) and WisDOT
7. Lighting and photometric plan being submitted to the Department of Development for approval.