TO: Denver Planning Board, Joel Noble, Chair  
FROM: Edson Ibanez, City Planner Associate  
DATE: September 10, 2020  
RE: Comprehensive Sign Plan Amendment CSA-2020-0000001-AMEND

Staff Report and Recommendation
Based on these findings, Community Planning and Development recommends approval of this Comprehensive Sign Plan Amendment CSA-2020-0000001-AMEND Market Station located at 1641 Market Street.

Request for Comprehensive Sign Plan - Large Facility Amendment
Address: 1641 Market Street  
Neighborhood/Council District: Union Station/9  
Zone Lot Area: 83,949 S.F. (1.93 Acres)  
Ground Floor Area: 89,952 S.F  
Current Zoning: D-LD UO-1  
Referrals: Lower Downtown Design Review Commission  
Property Owner: Continuum Partners  
Owner Representative: Roger Pecsok, Continuum Partners

Summary of Comprehensive Sign Plan Request - Amendment
• Amendment to the existing CSP to clarify and revise locations for upper story wall signs, project ID signs, window graphics on Market Street, sign program in the interior paseo/arcade, and new wayfinding signage.

Background
The Comprehensive Sign Plan (2017-CSP-0000008) was approved by the Planning Board on October 17, 2018. An amendment to the CSP (CSA-2019-00000003 Amend) was submitted to staff for review. The proposal was reviewed and recommended for approval by the Lower Downtown Design Review Commission in October 2019. On January 15, 2020, the Planning Board reviewed the amendment and was approved unanimously.

A second amendment to the CSP (CSA-2020-00000001 Amend) was submitted to staff for review. The proposal was reviewed and recommended for approval by the Lower Downtown Design Review Commission in June 2020.

Intent of the Comprehensive Sign Plan
This project consists of identifying the sizes, types and potential locations of proposed signage for the development located at 1641 Market Street and establishes a rigorous framework of design standards and guidelines for each Sign Type proposed.
The intent of this type of Comprehensive Sign Plan is to allow flexibility in the size, type and location of signs identifying the use and location of large facilities and the tenants within them. Flexibility is generally offered because these facilities often have a need for additional or different types of signage due to the varied physical layout of the facility and a desire for the facility to evolve and remain flexible over time. This flexibility is offered in exchange for a coordinated program of signage ensuring a higher standard of design quality for such signs.

This Comprehensive Sign Plan amendment will serve as the basis for approval of permits for individual building and tenant signs.

The property owner, Continuum Partners, are requesting an amendment to the approved Comprehensive Sign Plan for Market Station. The revised amendment will allow for 45 degree projecting signs for the ground floor tenants each of the projects four building corners at street intersections, a projecting sign for a tenant on 17th Street, a projecting sign for parking identification on 17th Street, additional clarification on the wayfinding signage on Blake Street, additional Project ID/wayfinding signage at the paseo/arcade intersection, replacement of window signs with a wall sign on the interior paseo, an additional window sign on Market Street, and alterations to the upper story sign program. All changes are clouded in red. No change to the sign design, language, requirements, or illumination style is proposed at this time.

**Site and Building Description**

According to the Denver Property Taxation and Assessment System, the primary address for the subject site is listed as 1641 Market Street. The applicable City Council District for the subject site is District 9 and the current City Council representative is Candi CdeBaca.

The subject site is in the Union Station Neighborhood. It is located at 1641 Market Street. The lot size is 83,949 S.F. and the building ground floor area is 89,952 S.F. The building is a 10 stories mixed-use project, which includes retail, office, food & beverage and residential uses.

The subject site is within the Lower Downtown Historic District and is therefore subject to the Lower Downtown Design Guidelines, as well as approval from the Lower Downtown Design Review Commission (LDDRC). The subject building is new and does not qualify as a historic structure.

The subject property is zoned as Lower Downtown District (D-LD) zone district with a Use Overlay (UO-1). The D-LD zone district is intended to provide for and encourage the preservation and vitality of older areas that are significant because of their architectural, historical and economic value. A variety of land uses will be permitted in order to facilitate the reuse of existing structures without jeopardizing or reducing zoning standards promoting the public safety, convenience, health, general welfare and the preservation of the comprehensive plan. New residential development is encouraged. The design of new structures should recognize the style and character of adjoining building exteriors.
Legal Notice and Community Response

As required by the Denver Zoning Code provisions, notice of receipt of the complete Comprehensive Sign Plan and notice of the Planning Board meeting were provided to RNOs within 3,000 feet of the Plan area and to the district and at-large City Council representatives. The property was posted as required for at least 30 days prior to the meeting date.

Notified Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs)
1. Center City Denver Residents Organization
2. Downtown Denver Business Improvement District
3. Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC)
4. LoDo District, Inc.
5. Lower Downtown Neighborhood Association
6. Northeast Denver Friends and Neighbors (NEDFANS)
7. Union Station Advocates
8. Windsor Condominium Association

As of the preparation of this staff report, there has been no comment from the public.

Review Criteria and Findings

Each section of the criteria for review is listed below. Bullets clarify how the proposed project meets the criteria of that section.

1. The sign plan shall exhibit design excellence, inventiveness and sensitivity to the context.
   This Comprehensive Sign Plan located at 1641 Market Street sets the framework for a variety of high-quality signs that will exhibit design excellence and inventiveness. Each of the individual sign types proposed provide a high-quality outcome tailored to individual locations on the multiple building faces and on the site located on pages 2.1 to 2.34.
2. **Signs shall not be oriented or illuminated so that they adversely affect the surrounding area, particularly existing nearby residential uses or structures.**
   Examples of adverse effects are glare from intense illumination, and large signs or structures which visually dominate an area. The proposed signs, as anticipated, are appropriate for a mixed-use, pedestrian scaled context located on page 4.18 of the CSP. Specific language is included in the CSP that states, “All illuminated signs must be controlled by a central timer or photosensitive switch (photo cell) to regulate the sign’s hours of operation, allowing for dimming or non-use during the late night/early morning hours.”

3. **Roof signs shall not be allowed unless such signs are designed to appear as an integral part of the building to which they are attached.**
   No roof signs are contemplated.

4. **The Comprehensive Sign Plan shall include design guidelines to ensure that all features of the proposed signage, including the illumination, support structure, color, lettering, height and location, shall be designed so that it will be an attractive and complimentary feature of the building which it serves.**
   All features of the new signage are thoroughly detailed and described in the plan and will ensure that signs are attractive and complimentary to the building. Additionally, all proposed signs will be subject to review by Lower Downtown Design Review Commission.

5. **Sign design should reflect the existing or desired character of the area.**
   Signage opportunities are shown in anticipation of creative solutions and opportunities for signage. As shown, these signage allowances will reinforce the retail nature of the ground floor of the mixed-use structure and respond appropriately to all sides of the site. The design intent and purpose are shown on page 4.1 of the CSP.

6. **Signs shall be professionally designed and fabricated from quality, durable materials.**
   The specifications contained in the Comprehensive Sign Plan require the use of quality materials in creating professionally designed and fabricated signs referenced on page 4.17 of the CSP.

7. **Signs for accessory uses, which are prohibited by other provisions of Division 10.10 (DZC) are allowed as part of an approved sign plan.**
   Not applicable.

**Board Authority and Role**

This Denver Planning Board authority is established in Denver Zoning Code section 10.10.3.3. This section allows large facilities to submit a comprehensive sign plan that provides more flexibility in the size, type and location of signs in exchange for a coordinated program of signage with a higher standard of design quality. Flexibility is not allowed for an increase in the number of signs proposed. This section also establishes the process, content and approval criteria for a comprehensive sign plan. This same process is required for an amendment to a Comprehensive Sign Plan.

The Planning Board is required to conduct a public hearing only for Large Facility for the purposes of receiving staff and public review comments and forwarding a recommendation to the Zoning Administrator of approval,
approval with conditions, or denial not later than 15 days after the public hearing. All previously notified neighborhood organizations are notified of this public hearing.

**Attachments**

1. Final Comprehensive Sign Plan CSA-2020-0000001-AMEND Market Station - 1641 Market Street
2. LDDRC Recommendation Letter