

Meeting Date:
March 9, 2026

Location:
130 N Oviatt Street

Parcel Number
3201956

Request:
Conditional Use and Site Plan request for Western Reserve Academy for an addition to the Wang Innovation Center.

Applicant:
Jason Boltz, Wheeler Boltz Architects

Property Owner:
Western Reserve Academy

Zoning:
D4 – Historic Residential Neighborhood

Case Manager:
Nick Sugar, City Planner

Staff Recommendation
Continue subject to recommendations on page 10.

Contents

- Applicant Narrative/Use Compliance Letter
- Site Plans
- Elevations/Floor Plans
- Landscaping Plan
- Photometric Plan
- Emergency Access/Logistics Plan
- Survey



Project Background:

Western Reserve is requesting a 7,620 sf addition to the Wang Innovation Center (WIC). The building is located at 130 N. Oviatt Street and is located within the historic district. The building currently houses the Knights Fine Arts Center and Wang Innovation Center. The building was constructed in 1985 and an addition to the north side was constructed in 1992. The Wang Innovation Center (WIC) opened in 2016.

WIC is a technology focused makerspace and the addition would include the following educational spaces:

- AI Lab
- 2D and 3D Art Labs
- Food Science Lab
- Dance Classroom
- Digital Media Lab
- Robotics Lab
- Print Room

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- Asst. City Engineer review dated 2.23.26
- Supplemental Documents

- Computer Lab
- Woodshop
- Office Space
- Lecture Space

The request would require Conditional Use review and Site Plan review. Private *Secondary Schools* are a conditional use in Zoning District 4.

Use Standards (Section 1206)

The overall use is classified as a *Secondary School* per the definition below. This is an Institutional Use that is a conditional use in Zoning District 4.

(262) "School, elementary, secondary, or post-secondary" shall mean any building or part thereof used for instructional purposes and licensed by the state to provide elementary, secondary, or post-secondary education.

The application is subject to compliance with the following conditional use standards of Section 1206.02

The below Conditional Use Standards are applicable to the proposed use

- (1) *The use is consistent with the policies and intent of the Comprehensive Plan.*

Staff Comment: Acceptable. The proposal aligns with the Comprehensive Plan. The Future Land Use Map (Pg. 53) within the Comprehensive Plan identifies this parcel as “Public/Semi-Public” and is defined as follows:

(Pg. 60) These areas are intended to accommodate public and semi-public uses. Public space includes buildings and land owned by government agencies, such as City Hall or municipal cemeteries. Places of worship, educational institutions, libraries, and some other non-profit uses can also be included in semi-public space. Facilities should be well designed and integrated into their surroundings. These areas should be connected to pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the area. Attractive landscaping, streetscape elements, and signage should be used to integrate larger sites into the existing community framework.

- (2) *The use is physically and operationally compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Conditions may be imposed on a proposed conditional use to ensure that potential significant adverse impacts on surrounding existing uses will be reduced to the maximum extent feasible, including, but not limited to, conditions or measures addressing:*

- A. *Location on a site of activities that generate potential adverse impacts such as noise and glare;*

Staff Comment: Acceptable. The addition would face the interior campus. No adverse impacts such as noise and glare are anticipated.

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B. Hours of operation and deliveries;

Staff Comment: Acceptable. Hours of operation would not change and are typical classroom hours. Existing loading and delivery zones, including vehicle access, are currently located on the south side of the building and would not change.

C. Location of loading and delivery zones;

Staff Comment: Acceptable. Existing loading and delivery zones, including vehicle access, are currently located on the south side of the building and would not change.

D. Light intensity and hours of full illumination;

Staff Comment: Acceptable. Exterior lighting is studied further on page 10.

E. Placement and illumination of outdoor vending machines;

Staff Comment: Not applicable

F. Loitering;

Staff Comment: Acceptable. The applicant states their campus security monitors loitering.

G. Litter control;

Staff Comment: Acceptable. The applicant states their facilities team maintains the building and grounds.

H. Placement of trash receptacles;

Staff Comment: Acceptable. Trash receptacles will be located throughout the building interior, building entrances, and exterior gathering spaces.

I. On-site parking configuration and facilities;

Staff Comment: Acceptable. Existing onsite parking configurations and facilities will not change.

J. On-site circulation;

Staff Comment: Acceptable. Changes to onsite circulation include minor modifications to the interior campus sidewalks.

K. Privacy concerns of adjacent uses.

Staff Comment: Acceptable. Staff notes the abutting properties and buildings are owned and operated by WRA.

- (3) *The use can generally be accommodated on the site consistent with any architectural and design standards set forth in the applicable district regulations of this Code, and in conformance with all dimensional, site development, grading, drainage, performance, and other standards for the district in which it will be located.*

Staff comment: These standards are further described in the site plan analysis of this staff report.

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The architectural design of the structure would be reviewed by the Architectural and Historic Board of Review. The applicant presented the design to the AHBR at the February 11, 2026 meeting for informal comment. The AHBR noted general compliance with the design criteria; however, the glass enclosed portion of the addition will be further studied relative to its visibility from N. Oviatt.

- (4) *To the maximum extend feasible, access points to the property are located as far as possible, in keeping with accepted engineering practice, from road intersections and adequate sight distances are maintained for motorists entering and leaving the property proposed for the use.*

Staff Comment: Acceptable. Access points along public roads would not be altered.

- (5) *On-site and off-site traffic circulation patterns shall not adversely impact adjacent uses.*

Staff Comment: Acceptable. No adverse impacts to on-site or off-site traffic circulation patterns are anticipated.

- (6) *The use will be adequately served by public facilities and services.*

Staff Comment: Acceptable. The addition would be served by Hudson water and Summit County sewer.

- (7) *The use provides adequate off-street parking on the same property as the use.*

Staff Comment: Acceptable. The applicant states there would be no additional faculty/staff or students.

- (8) *The use will be screened with fencing and/or landscaping in excess of what is required in this Code if the use may otherwise result in an adverse impact.*

Staff Comment: Acceptable. Landscaping is further studied on page 8.

- (9) *The residential use is proposed at a density consistent with that of the existing neighborhood density or is compatible by its use of architecture, orientation of structures and parking, and landscape buffer. Where sufficient natural screening does not exist, or will be disturbed, development adjacent to existing residential shall blend with neighboring properties and increased density shall be directed away from neighboring properties.*

Staff Comment: Not applicable

Schools are also subject to the following special conditions:

- (1) *The only dwelling on the property, if one is provided, shall be for the priest, deacon, minister, or rabbi associated with the place of worship, or for a facility's manager, caretaker, or maintenance person, and related family provided the underlying zoning district permits residential use.*

Staff Comment: No dwellings are proposed.

- (2) *All preschools shall provide a play area of at least 6,000 square feet, and all elementary and secondary schools shall be accredited and licensed by the State of Ohio and shall include academic instruction.*

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Staff Comment: Acceptable. No preschool is offered. The applicant states WRA is accredited with the Independent Schools Association of the Central States. These schools are recognized by the Ohio Department of Education.

- (11) *The parking area for the use shall be a minimum of fifty feet from adjacent properties use for residential uses.*

Staff comment: No parking is proposed

- (12) *Safe areas for pick-up and discharge of persons shall be provided.*

Staff comment: Acceptable. WRA consolidates pick-up and discharge of day students at the Murdough Athletic Center.

- (14) *Adequate provisions shall be made for access by emergency medical and fire vehicles on two sides of the building.*

Staff comment: Acceptable. The Fire Marshal has reviewed the proposal. Access for emergency services will be provided.

General Site Plan Review Standards (Section 1204.04)

(a) *The development shall be consistent with the purposes and intent of this Code, and with the policies, goals, and objectives of any applicable community plan, including the City Comprehensive Plan, as amended from time to time.*

- (1) *The development complies with the use regulations as set forth in Chapter 1206.*

Staff Comment: The regulations of Chapter 1206 are studied further on pages 2-5.

- (2) *The development complies with all applicable requirements set forth in Chapter 1207, "Zoning Development and Site Plan Standards," except to the extent modifications, variances, or waivers have been expressly allowed.*

Staff Comment: The regulations of Chapter 1207 are studied further on pages 7-10.

- (3) *The development complies with all applicable federal, state, or county development regulations, standards, and requirements, or plans, including but not limited to wetlands, water quality, and wastewater regulations.*

Staff Comment: Acceptable. The development complies with federal, state, and county regulations.

- (4) *The proposed development shall avoid or minimize land disturbance and grading and preserve the original contours and other natural topographical features of the site to the maximum extent feasible and shall incorporate measures to minimize soil erosion during all construction phases.*

Staff Comment: Overall, the proposed development minimizes land disturbance and grading. Staff notes additional grading is proposed at the rear foundation to create a lower level “well” and allow light to enter the space. This would be a similar design to the existing building and to Seymour Hall depicted in Figure 1.



Fig 1

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Land disturbance and greater impacts related to tree preservation are further studied on pages 7-8.

- (5) *The development must protect and enhance historic structures, sites, and archeological features designated by federal, state, and local agencies, and the applicant shall commit, to the maximum extent feasible, to protecting and enhancing any such structures, sites, and features eligible for designation discovered during the development process.*

Staff Comment: Staff notes, while the WRA campus is historic and located within the historic district, this building was not constructed until 1985.

District Standards (Section 1205)

- ☑ **Building Setback**
1205.07(d)(6) *Front Yard Setback: Minimum of one and one-half times the maximum height of the principal building.*
Staff Comment: Acceptable. The addition would be located to the rear of the building. The existing building would not be extended towards N Oviatt Street. Staff notes a portion of the original building (the Knights Fine Arts Center) is nonconforming; however, this addition would be made to the 1992 addition, which is compliant. Furthermore, the addition would have a footprint under 50% of the existing building footprint.
- Side Yard Setbacks – Not specified for institutional/non-residential*
Staff Comment: Acceptable. Staff notes the addition would be made to the interior of a large 14.84 acre parcel.
- Rear Yard Setback: 40 ft*
Staff Comment: Acceptable
- ☑ **Maximum Structure Height**
1205.07(d)(8) *Non-residential: forty feet*
Staff Comment: Acceptable. The addition would have a typical height of 30 ft
- ☑ **Building siting and orientation**
1205.04(d)(7) The following building, siting, and orientation standards apply to *Non-residential development*:
- The main entrance to the principal structure shall face the street.*
Staff Comment: Acceptable. Staff notes the building has multiple entrances on N. Oviatt and facing the interior campus. The entrance facing N. Oviatt, adjacent to the parking lot has been utilized as the primary entrance to the building (See Figure 2).
 - The front wall of the principal structure shall be parallel to the street or perpendicular to a radius of the curve of the street extended through the approximate center of the main mass, if the street is curved.*



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Staff Comment: Acceptable. The existing building is oriented parallel to N. Oviatt Street.

- *The main body of the principal structure shall be closest to the street.*

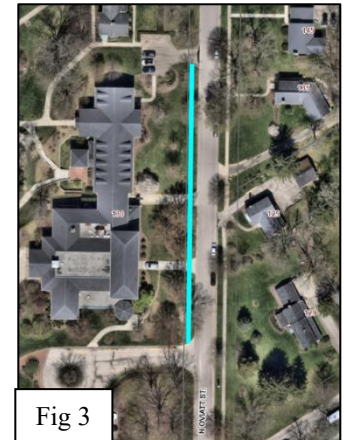
Staff Comment: Acceptable. The addition would be located to the rear, opposite of N. Oviatt Street.

☒ **Pedestrian/bicycle pathways and linkages**
1205.04(d)(11)

Provision shall be made in the design of all developments for non-vehicular circulation systems, including but not limited to sidewalks, pathways, and bikeways.

Sidewalks at least five feet wide shall be provided on both sides of all streets in District 4, shall run parallel to the street within the right-of-way, and shall be separated from the curb by a planting strip at least five feet in width.

Staff Comment: Staff recommends sidewalks be installed along N Oviatt between the adjacent curb cuts to meet this requirement (see Figure 3).



Site Plan Standards (Section 1207)

☒ **Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage Section**
1207.01

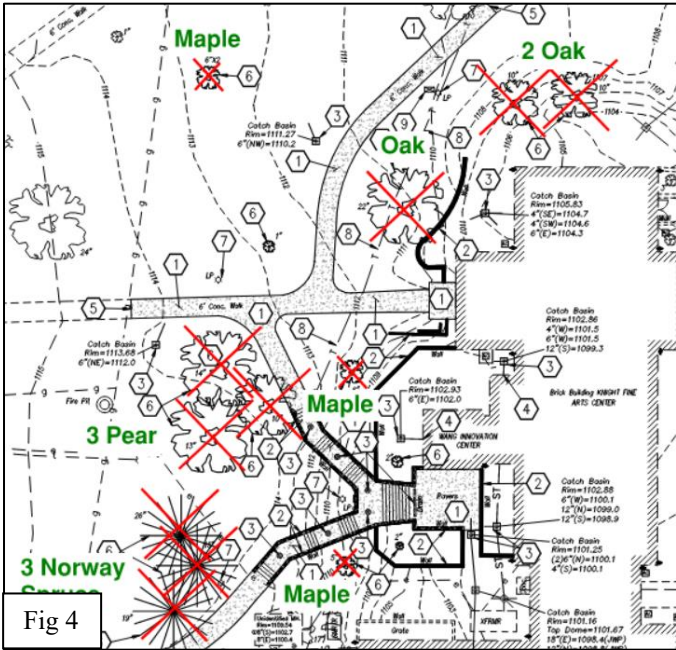
60%. Impervious Coverage is defined as *that portion of a lot that is covered by principal and accessory buildings or structures, and by surfaces that prevent the passage or absorption of stormwater into the existing water table*

Staff Comment: Acceptable. The applicant has provided a proposed impervious surface calculation for the entire 15-acre parcel. Proposed impervious surface is 24%.

☐ **Tree and Vegetation Protection**
1207.02

Staff notes several mature trees are proposed to be removed in order to accommodate the improvements (see Figure 4). Staff has reviewed the proposal with the City Arborist with the following comments:

- The Land Development Code states “*Whenever practicable, significant trees and existing vegetation within the limits of disturbance should be preserved*”. Question if the site plan could be modified to retain the three mature Norway Spruce trees (See Figure 5).
- The two trees marked for removal on the north side of the building are maples, not oaks as indicated.
- The size and species of the proposed plant material is acceptable.
- Out of the trees proposed to be preserved, the Catalpa located the southwest corner of the proposed addition is most susceptible for construction damage. The City Arborist recommends root pruning prior to construction where the roots are likely to be severed. If root pruning doesn’t occur prior to bud break, state that roots should be cut cleanly with a saw, not torn with excavator bucket. Cut roots should be backfilled promptly to prevent desiccation
- The following should be avoided in the tree protection zone where possible: cuts, fills, change of grades, cutting of roots, storage of materials/heavy equipment.



**Wetland/Stream
Corridor Protection
1207.03**

There are no known wetlands or streams at or near the project area. Additionally, there are no conflicts with the Ecological Integrity Index.

**Landscaping/
Buffering 1207.04**

The landscaping/buffering requirements are applicable as the proposed expansion would be classified as “substantial” based on the classification below.

When Existing Structure is...	A Substantial Expansion is...
0–1,000 sq. ft.	50% or greater
1,001–10,000 sq. ft.	40% or greater
10,001–25,000 sq. ft.	30% or greater
25,001 and larger	20% or greater

Bufferyard Requirements: The addition is proposed within the interior of the parcel and the building is not adjacent to residential. Therefore, a bufferyard is not applicable.

General Landscaping: The LDC requires institutional developments to provide the following - “One tree shall be planted of a minimum two inches DBH shall be planted for every 2,000 square feet of gross area of building footprint or fraction thereof. Existing trees properly preserved within or outside of the limits of disturbance, of equal or greater DBH, will satisfy this requirement.”

The applicant will meet these general landscaping requirements with the proposed planting plan including:

- Foundation plantings including Lilacs, Hydrangeas, Boxwoods, and Myrtles
- 2 Red Maple trees
- 3 Tupelo trees
- 2 Magnolia trees
- 3 Arborvitae

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☐ **Stormwater
Management
1207.07**

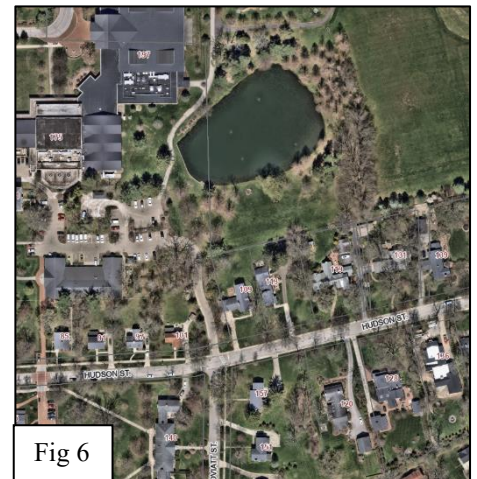
Stormwater retention/detention applies to all development in the City of Hudson except "minor development" as defined in Section 1203.09(d), Site Plan Review

The City of Hudson Engineering Standards for Infrastructure Construction are the accepted design and construction specifications for stormwater management facilities in the City. All provisions in the Engineering Standards shall be applicable to all development in the City of Hudson, Ohio.

The applicant has proposed a series of yard drains to manage storm water for the addition. Stormwater detention/retention is not proposed. The applicant states the following:

- *The proposed building addition will slightly increase the overall impervious area of the parcel by .06 acres.*
- *Using standard storm water models, the amount of storm water does not increase, as there is no increase in the storm water runoff coefficients for the parcel area. This is due to the large size of the parcel relative to the small increase in impervious area.*

The Assistant City Engineer has reviewed and suggested modifying the pond to the north (see Figure 6) to fulfill the LDC requirement of stormwater retention/detention for new major development proposals. The Assistant City Engineer recommends the pond be enlarged and the control structure be modified to reduce storm flow. This pond is located in the same drainage basin as the proposed building addition and would provide benefit for heavier storms.



Staff recommends the applicant design these modifications and submit for review as part of this application.

☑ **Performance
Standards
1207.10**

Acceptable. The proposal is anticipated to comply with the Performance Standards of Section 1207.10 regulating noise, hours of operation, refuse collection, and truck loading.

☑ **Adequate Public
Facilities/
Transportation
1207.11**

Acceptable. No additional vehicle traffic is anticipated as the addition would not result in additional staff or students.

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- ☒ **Exterior Lighting 1207.14** The proposed lighting plan would include the following:
- LED Recessed step lighting along the northern portion of the building
 - LED downlighting under the western entrance
 - Relocation of an existing wall sconce
 - Relocation of a pedestrian scale light pole
- Staff Comment: Acceptable. The proposed lighting plan meets the design and lighting level requirements.
- ☒ **Special Development Standards 1207.19** Staff notes no oil and gas wells or tanks batteries are located on or near the property.

City Departments:

- ☐ **Engineering** Assistant City Engineer David Rapp has submitted the attached review letter dated February 23, 2026.
- ☒ **Fire Department** Fire Marshal Shawn Kasson has noted the proposed addition would be compliant with the Fire Code.
- ☒ **Hudson Public Power** Public Works Assistant Superintendent Dave Griffith has reviewed the request and stated there are no issues. Electrical service to building is supplied by privately-owned WRA equipment. WRA will need to confirm their equipment can support any increased load requirements.

Required PC Action

The PC shall consider the development application, the staff report, and then take final action. PC shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application based on its compliance with the appropriate review standards. All decisions of the Commission shall be based on findings of fact related to the relevant standards of the Code.

Recommendation

Continue the Conditional Use and Site Plan application for Western Reserve Academy, Case 2026-71, to incorporate the following:

1. Revise the civil drawings to incorporate stormwater improvements to the northern pond in order to be compliant with the requirements for retention/detention as stipulated in Section 1207.07.
2. Revise the civil drawings to include a sidewalk extension as depicted in Figure 3 of the staff report in order to be compliant with pedestrian pathways and linkages requirements of Section 1205.04(d)(11).
3. Further study tree and vegetation protection per the analysis on pages 7 and 8.