

Campus Barbershop/ Campus Spa
1205 University Ave Ste 100/ Ste 400
Columbia, MO 65201

December 29, 2025

City of Columbia Planning and Zoning Commission
701 East Broadway
Columbia, MO 65201

RE: Conditional Use Permit Application – Expansion of Campus Barbershop

Dear Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission,

I am writing to formally request approval for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to expand the existing commercial services at Campus Barbershop. This expansion will introduce specialized spa and wellness services, bringing our total footprint to over 500 square feet of commercial space within University Place Apartments.

Campus Barbershop has served this city for **90** years. We have proudly operated out of our current location at University Place since July 1, 1980. This building is an ideal site for expanded mixed-use services that cater directly to the convenience and well-being of its residents, the downtown district, the University community and the broader Columbia population.

Recently, the building management approached us regarding the potential expansion into the space situated between our current suite and the neighboring business, an International Church/ coffee Shop. This specific unit has remained vacant and unused for several years. Based on the building's current layout (and recent re-zoning), this space will most likely remain vacant indefinitely unless utilized as an extension of our existing operations. By integrating this "dead space" into a thriving business, we aim to: 1. Revitalize an unused portion of the commercial corridor that would otherwise remain empty. 2. Strengthen a local (and locally owned) business that is already an established part of the community. And 3. Maintain compatibility with the existing building's footprint as this will not negatively impact local traffic, noise levels, or public safety but simply benefit those who use its services, while generating tax revenue for the City. The proposed expansion will increase the business footprint from 0.3% to 0.6%, remaining well under 1% of the total building square footage. Our lease includes two

parking spots, which is more than sufficient, as it is reasonable to expect most customers will arrive on foot. This site serves as a definitive model of the "walkable city" goals outlined in Columbia's adopted strategic plan.

As a lifelong resident of Mid-Missouri, an alumna of the University of Missouri, a female entrepreneur and a graduate of the Chamber of Commerce's 2017 Columbia Leadership Program, I am deeply committed to Columbia's economic vitality. My goal is to evolve a new aspect of the business to meet modern wellness demands while maintaining the character and charm of the barbershop and to respect its history that has allowed us to thrive and serve our community for nearly a century. As a mother of three boys, I want my children to believe/see that if you work hard with good intentions, follow the rules, and serve your community with honesty and sincerity, the community and its city government will support you in return.

Regrettably, the path to this expansion has been hindered by significant delays. Unfortunately, I was not aware of the re-zoning of University Place (and therefore the need for this request) at the time of our expansion plan. Furthermore, a breakdown of communication regarding the application requirements has hindered our progress, preventing us from opening our doors to the public, and has resulted in unforeseen financial and operational strain. I am eager to partner with your department to streamline the CUP process and respectfully ask the Commission to consider our long-standing history of compliance and community/customer service as you review this request. The proposed wellness services are a low-impact, high-value addition to the building's current infrastructure. We believe this expansion is a mutually beneficial solution for the building, the city, and our business, while aligning with Columbia's goals for vibrant, sustainable mixed-use developments.

Attached are our detailed responses to the general criteria for your review. I look forward to discussing this application further at the upcoming hearing. Thank you for your time and for your dedication to our city's growth.

Sincerely,

Cari Nichols

Owner, Campus Barbershop/ Campus Spa

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(i) *General criteria.*

(A) The proposed conditional use complies with all standards and provisions in this chapter applicable to the base and overlay zone district where the property is located;

The spa is an accessory use to the established barbershop, based out of University Place since July 1, 1980. Both functions fall under the primary use category of 'Personal Care Services,' which is consistent with the intent of the base zone to encourage neighborhood-serving commercial activity.

The expansion has been conducted entirely within the existing building footprint, ensuring no impact on the architectural character or physical mandated setbacks. Any new signage adheres to the specific design and size guidelines of the overlay to maintain aesthetic harmony.

All licenses will be performed by insured practitioners holding active State of Missouri licenses.

Because the Barbershop has been based out of University Place for over 45 years, we had no reason to believe it didn't offer commercial zoning. I've learned the property was re-zoned to R-MF in 2017 for reasons I'm not aware of. The lower level has no residential units whatsoever, as it houses the main office for the apartment complex, and boasts many other commercial suite units, as well as a mailroom and gym for the tenants.

(B) The proposed conditional use is consistent with the city's adopted comprehensive plan;

A primary economic objective in Columbia is to **support existing businesses** in maintaining or expanding their local operations. By expanding an established barbershop into a full-service spa, the project directly fulfills the city's goal to help local entrepreneurs scale their businesses and increase their economic footprint within the community.

The comprehensive plan emphasizes **strengthening neighborhood identity** and providing essential services close to where residents live, adding convenience and livability.

Adding spa services to an existing commercial site enhances the mix of uses in the area, providing personal care services that contribute to the "quality of life" considerations central to the Columbia Imagined plan.

Columbia's 2025 strategic priorities include **stimulating economic revitalization** and promoting growth in diverse service sectors. Transitioning from a single-service barbershop to a multi-service spa creates a more

resilient business model that contributes to a "Resilient Economy," one of the five priority areas in the city's current Strategic Plan.

The city prioritizes the **sustainable use and development** of existing land and infrastructure over sprawling new developments. Expanding within an existing footprint or on a currently developed site utilizing existing sewer, transportation, and utility infrastructure, aligns with the city's "Reliable & Sustainable Infrastructure" goals.

I believe in evaluating its comprehensive plan, the City desires commercial use to adapt to **new and evolving trends**. The shift toward wellness and integrated personal care services (barbershop/spa hybrids) reflects modern consumer trends which prioritize self-care and community-focused experiences.

(C) The proposed conditional use will be in conformance with the character of the adjacent area, within the same zoning district, in which it is located. In making such a determination, consideration may be given to the location, type and height of buildings or structures and the type and extent of landscaping and screening on the site;

The lower level of University Place is a mix of commercial suites, a workout facility, a church, an international language support program, and the main business office of University Place Apartments. There are NO residential units in the lower/ground level, nor will there be. The space now rented by Campus Barbershop/ Campus Spa has been a vacant area for years, housing all the amenities and utilities needed to expand our services.

As the expansion is contained within the existing structure, the current site layout, including existing landscaping, will be maintained. No additional screening is required because the new services do not generate external impacts—such as excessive noise, vibrations, or light pollution—that would differ from the existing barbershop operations. All new signage will comply with City standards to maintain the aesthetic integrity of the streetscape.

(D) Adequate access is provided and is designed to prevent traffic hazards and minimize traffic congestion;

The expansion will not create a deficit in required off-street parking. The project provides sufficient spaces for both the existing barbershop and the new spa area. Any increase in customer volume is offset by the available on-site parking or verified alternative parking agreements.

Primary customers of the barbershop and spa are/will be tenants of University Place, students of the University, University employees, etc., so there will not be an extra demand for traffic and/or cause of congestion.

The Spa will be able to service 2 people (max) at one time, and our lease provides 2 parking spaces should those customers arrive in separate vehicles. Additionally, Campus Barbershop provides 6 parking spaces for customers. These spaces are in a lot directly to the east of the building, 20 steps to the main South entrance. This main entrance is within 10 feet of the doors to Campus Barber shop/ Campus Spa. There are four different access points to said parking lot: 2 off of College Ave, one off of University Ave, and one off of Mathews St.

(E) Sufficient infrastructure and services exist to support the proposed use, including, but not limited to, adequate utilities, storm drainage, water, sanitary sewer, electricity, and other infrastructure facilities are provided; and

All infrastructure and utilities existed and are provided in the space. Code requires an engineered ventilation system. City of Columbia approved our construction permit December 16th. This system has since been installed so we now meet code and are ready for final inspection.

(F) The proposed conditional use will not cause significant adverse impacts to surrounding properties.

For over 90 years, Campus Barbershop has remained a treasured fixture, serving the University, the City of Columbia, and the surrounding region!

Expanding the footprint to offer additional wellness services will ONLY benefit surrounding properties and the people that live, work and play in/around those properties.

Spa services are inherently quiet and restorative. All activities will be conducted entirely within the enclosed structure, ensuring no sound or vibration is transmitted to neighboring residential or commercial properties. The business will remain in full compliance with Columbia's noise ordinance.

The proposed services—facials, therapeutic massage, reflexology—do not involve heavy machinery or hazardous chemicals that would pose a risk to the surrounding area. Our nail services will ONLY offer acrylic-free services, providing a cleaner, healthier environment. Any water usage or waste disposal will remain consistent with standard commercial personal care operations already established at this location.