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May 15, 2026

McMinnville Historic Landmarks Committee  
City of McMinnville  
Via: Evan Hietpas  
Planning Manager  
231 NE 5th St  
McMinnville, OR 97218

RE: **Case No. DDR 1-26 / HL 1-26 (the “Project”)**  
**by Bienestar Oregon (the “Applicant”)**

Historic Landmarks Committee Members:

On behalf of the Applicant, Bienestar, and the project team, thank you for your thoughtful feedback during prior hearings. We heard the Committee’s requests clearly—specifically to incorporate landscape elements that soften the street-facing parking edges, strengthen the project’s connection to the history of McMinnville and the existing United Methodist Church, and provide additional clarity regarding the project’s glazing calculations and waiver request.

In response, the applicant and design team revisited the ground-floor façade design, the architectural detailing, and the supporting glazing analysis. The revised design was developed specifically to address the Committee’s comments while continuing to respond to the unique site constraints created by the retention of the existing ministry building, the incorporation of structured tuck-under parking, and the operational requirements of an affordable housing development.

As documented in the applicant’s proposed revised findings and glazing waiver narrative (“[May 1, 2026 Design Standards Waiver - resubmittal](#)”) and supporting documentation, the design now incorporates a series of architectural and landscape elements intended to reinforce McMinnville’s historic downtown character while avoiding an artificial or themed interpretation of historic architecture. These revisions include storefront-inspired façade proportions and rhythms, vertical trellis structures with integrated planting, and decorative metal panels inspired by the stained-glass patterns of the existing United Methodist Church. Together, these elements break down the scale of the building into pedestrian-oriented storefront bays that relate to the established rhythm, proportion, and material character of downtown McMinnville.

These revisions do more than simply obscure views into parking. They create a deliberate architectural connection to this specific place—its history, its church, and the broader downtown context. The integrated planters and vertical vegetation soften the parking edges and contribute to a more inviting pedestrian experience, while the stained-glass-inspired panels are a meaningful reference to the existing church and its longstanding presence on this block. We believe the revised design fulfills the stated purpose of the Downtown Design Standards by

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enhancing the historic and cultural value of the downtown core while fostering an organized, cohesive, and authentic sense of place.

The Committee also requested additional clarity regarding the project's glazing calculations and the basis for the requested waiver. In response, in that same May 1 submittal, we have expanded the findings, clarified the application of SB 1537 mandatory adjustments, provided façade-by-façade calculations, and further demonstrated how the revised storefront-inspired openings and architectural composition satisfy the intent of the glazing standards despite the unique conditions presented by structured parking and retained on-site buildings.

We believe the revised design directly addresses each of the Committee's prior requests. Just as importantly, subsequent public testimony is entirely in support of the revised ground floor design and no comments were submitted in opposition. For these reasons, Bienestar respectfully requests the Historic Landmark Committee approve of our land use applications.

Best Regards,



Zoee Lynn Powers

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