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MCDONALD'S IN MANSFIELD NOW OPEN AFTER COMPLETE REBUILD

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The McDonald's restaurant in Mansfield recently re-opened for business after months of construction. The renovation project, which began last July, primarily sought to improve parking and traffic flow.

"Overall, we believe the... redevelopment will not only beautify the site, but also will enhance the guest experience, while improving vehicular and pedestrian circulation," Andrea Gomes, counsel for McDonald's, wrote in a letter to the Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission.

The eatery, located at 118 Storrs Road, first opened in 1978 with a 4,312 sq. foot restaurant building — before the advent of drive-throughs and delivery. While site improvements were made over the years, the original building was demolished in favor of a newly-constructed, smaller, 3,900 sq. foot restaurant.

"The new restaurant, while smaller in size, will be constructed in roughly the same area as the existing one, and the site layout...remain[s] largely the same with a few notable changes," the 2025 proposal states.

The construction project reduces indoor seating to emphasize a better experience for vehicles — redesigning the two drive-through lanes and the restaurant's entrance and exit.

72% of patron visits to the Mansfield location were made via the drive-through, according to McDonald's area construction manager Alex Brickett.

"Given the significant percentage of drive-through guests, the proposed redevelopment plan has increased the queuing space for these customers by extending the two-lane drive-through further to the west, closer to the site entrance," said Brickett. "This change will eliminate longer queues along the southerly portion of the site, and will improve overall vehicle circulation on-site."

The restaurant accommodates 1,215 patrons daily "during the busiest periods when the University of Connecticut is in session," with peak days reaching up to 1,700 customers — with an average of approximately 900 customers per day during summer months, according to his statistics in the proposal.

"With the influx of curbside pick-up customers and meal delivery services...the number of sit-down diners at McDonald's restaurants nationwide has significantly decreased in the last decade," the letter also states.

Brickett said that the location will start employing more workers during busier seasons "to ensure smooth operations while maintaining quality service."

Among other changes are a new sidewalk in front of the building and adjustments to parking, reducing the number of available spaces whilst adding a site for electric vehicle chargers and a number of spaces reserved for mobile ordering and delivery.

"A variety of trees, shrubs, ornamental grasses and perennials" have also been planted as part of the property's landscaping alongside a decorative wall, which was designed to complement similar recent construction at adjacent properties.

The restaurant's road sign remains the only fixture from the original site, but sees its customizable marquee replaced with a static notice for the store's 24-hour drive-through service.

Small changes to the property's storm water management system, wetlands, sediment and erosion control and landscaping separating the site from nearby residences were also implemented as part of the construction.

A major component of the renovation is a new interior and exterior design, as part of what McDonald's calls "a contemporary and dynamic visual appeal."

"The design incorporates stylish...aluminum accents, creating a distinctive architectural profile that aligns with McDonald's evolving brand image," said the architectural firm Lingle Design of the remodel. "This new development is not only a reinvestment in the property but also a commitment to delivering a best-in-class restaurant experience to the community."



A McDonald's restaurant located in the United States is pictured on a bright and sunny day. The McDonald's in Mansfield has reopened after a rebuild. PHOTO BY @THEUSSUN ON PINTEREST.

The Mansfield location's original building underwent a similar full-design remodel in 2022, which also saw the addition of a second drive-through lane. Up until then, the restaurant resembled the chain's famous "mansard roof" store model.

Some people oppose the contemporary trend toward architectural uniformity, especially in businesses like fast food and casual restaurants, calling the newer muted, minimalist designs "bland and spiritless." The phenomenon has even sparked popular memes.

"McDonald's restaurants feature designs that incorporate existing architecture and other unique features," the corporation's webpage states. "The architecture of the McDonald's continues to evolve to meet our customers' expectations."

McDonald's was founded in 1940 in San Bernadino, Calif. by brothers Richard and Maurice McDonald, who developed a quick, streamlined assembly line process and trademark self-service method dubbed the "Speedee Service System" for their restaurants. Ray Kroc, their national franchise agent, later leveraged the model, helping make McDonald's one of the largest restaurant chains in the world.

The franchisee of the Mansfield McDonald's, Rachel Deane, also operates several other locations in Connecticut as part of her family's company, McDream Enterprises, including in Lisbon, Norwich and Cheshire amongst others. Deane also serves as the president of the Connecticut and Western Massachusetts arm of the McDonald's owner-operators' association.

The restaurant is located next to the Champagne Motorcars dealership on Storrs Road, also known as Connecticut Route 195. The roadway connects with US Route 6 in Willimantic and runs north, directly feeding into the main UConn campus through to Tolland. Anchored by the East Brook Mall and Big Y Supermarket plaza across the street, this commercial zone is about a 15-minute drive from UConn and is accessible on WRTD bus route 674.



The McDonald's sign is lit up to show that it is open 24 hours. The McDonald's in Mansfield is now open following a complete rebuild.
PHOTO BY @SYAHMEDED16 ON PINTEREST

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