

# HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

June 04, 2025

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2025-128  
**ADDRESS:** 875 E ASHBY PLACE, Building 3  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 3053 (BORDEN PARK TIF), LOT 22  
**ZONING:** IDZ-3, RIO-2  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**APPLICANT:** Moris Saide/Costa Pacifica  
**OWNER:** 875 EAST ASHBY PLACE LP  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Signage  
**APPLICATION RECEIVED:** May 15, 2025  
**60-DAY REVIEW:** July 14, 2025  
**CASE MANAGER:** Edward Hall

## REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install signage at 875 E Ashby Place, Building 3. Within this request, the applicant has proposed the following:

1. Install a vinyl sticker sign on the north façade facing US Highway 281 to read “Ceviche, Fajitas, Tacos, Margaritas” to feature a total size of approximately thirty-seven (37) square feet.
2. Install a vinyl sticker sign on the east façade facing the San Antonio River to read “Happy Hour & Live Music” to feature a total size of approximately 21.84 square feet.

## APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Sec. 35-678. Signs and Billboards in the RIO.*

### (a) General Provisions.

- (1) This section governs all exterior signs and all interior signs hung within ten (10) feet of an exterior fenestration, or those signs intended to be read by exterior patrons.
  - A. All signage within an RIO district shall conform to all city codes and must have approval of the historic preservation officer prior to installation.
  - B. Permits must be obtained following approval of a certificate of appropriateness.
  - C. No sign shall be painted, constructed, erected, remodeled, refaced, relocated, expanded or otherwise altered until it has been approved and a permit has been obtained from the development services department in accordance with the provisions of this section and applicable city code.
  - D. Signs, visual displays or graphics shall advertise only the business on the premises unless otherwise allowed in this section.
  - E. Temporary displays for permitted events are authorized if in accordance with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas.
- (2) When reviewing applications for signage the historic preservation officer and the historic and design review commission shall consider the visual impact on nearby historic resources.
  - A. Signs should respect and respond to the environment and landmark or district character in which constructed.
  - B. Signs should respect and respond to the river improvement overlay districts character and the historic Riverwalk.
  - C. The content or advertising message carried by permitted signs shall pertain to the business located on the same premises as the sign or to any otherwise lawful noncommercial message that does not direct attention to a business operated for profit, or to a commodity or service for sale, provided that signs erected on buildings with multiple businesses within shall pertain to any such business within.
- (3) For signs with changeable message panels, the changeable message area of the sign shall not exceed twenty-five (25) percent of the total sign area, except for gasoline price signs which shall not exceed seventy-five (75) percent of the total sign area. Electronic changeable message boards shall be prohibited.

- (4) The name of a business may be changed through the administrative approval process if the sign conforms to the provisions of this section, and if the color, size, and style of lettering, and illumination of the sign remain the same.
- (5) Provisions under this section shall comply with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas. In cases where provisions under this section are stricter or a sign is designated as a contributing structure, then this section shall control.
- (6) Special consideration should be given to the character of the sign itself proposed in the application, and whether the proposed sign has inherently historic characteristics which may fall outside of the guidelines presented below but which would contribute to the historic district, landmark or area for which it is being proposed. Additionally, when reviewing applications for signage the historic preservation officer and the historic and design review commission shall consider the visual impact on nearby historic resources.
- (7) Memorials, markers, naming rights of public property, and recognition of charitable donations given to the City of San Antonio shall be additionally governed by any formal action passed by city council.
- (b) Sign Definitions. For signage definitions, refer to subsection 35-612(b) and chapter 28 of the City Code.
- (c) Standards for Sign Design and Placement. In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of an application to construct or alter signage on a building, object, site, or structure in a river improvement overlay district, review shall be guided by the following standards in addition to any specific design guidelines approved by city council.
  - (1) Primary sign design considerations shall be identification and legibility. Size, scale, height, color and location of signs shall be harmonious with, and properly related to, the overall character of the district and structure. Sign materials shall be compatible with that of the building facade. Highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read are not permitted.
  - (2) Signs which describe, point, or direct the reader to a specific place or along a specific course, such as "entrance," "exit," and "disabled persons access," as well as government signs, shall be reviewed but shall not be included in total allowable signage area. Emergency signs shall be exempt from historic and design review commission approval.
  - (3) All graphic elements shall reinforce the architectural integrity of any building. Signs shall not disfigure, damage, mar, alter, or conceal architectural features or details and shall be limited to sizes that are in scale with the architecture and the streetscape. Emblems and symbols of identification used as principal structural or architectural design elements on a facade shall not be included in the total allowable signage per facade per structure when approved. Review shall be guided by the building's proportion and scale when such elements are incorporated.
  - (4) Graphics and signage may be illuminated by indirect, internal, or bare-bulb sources, providing that glare is not produced; by indirect light sources concealed by a hood or diffuser; by internal illumination with standard opal glass or other translucent material or with an equal or smaller light transmission factor. All illumination shall be steady and stationary. Neon lighting shall be permitted when used as an integral architectural element or artwork appropriate to the site. For purposes of this subsection, "Glare" shall mean an illumination level of six (6) Lux or greater at the property boundary. If internal illumination is used, it shall be designed to be subordinate to the overall building composition. Light fixtures should reflect the design period of the building on which they are placed. The use of ambient light from storefront or streetlights is encouraged.
  - (5) Signage requests for multi-tenant buildings must complement existing signage with regards to size, number, placement and design, unless such existing signage is not in conformity with regulations in this article. It is recommended that the building owner or their agent develop a master signage plan or signage guidelines for the total building or property. If a property has an approved master signage plan on file with the historic preservation officer, then applications for signage may be approved administratively at the discretion of the historic preservation officer provided that they comply with such master signage plan. Notwithstanding the above, signs may not exceed the maximum size and height limitation of signage contained in chapter 28, article 9.
- (d) Proportion of Signs. For all signage, signage width and height must be in proportion to the facade, respecting the size, scale and mass of the facade, building height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. The building facade shall be considered as part of an overall sign program but the sign shall be subordinate to the overall building composition. Additionally, signs shall respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed.
- (e) Number and Size of Signs.

- (1) Number and Size. The historic and design review commission shall be guided in its decisions by the total number of businesses or services per building and the percentage of visible storefront occupied by each business or service. Applicants may apply for up to three (3) signs total. Total signage for all applicants shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet unless additional signs and/or additional total footage is approved. Additional square footage may be approved provided that the additional signage is in conformity with, and does not interfere with, the pedestrian experience on the Riverwalk. The additional square footage shall be based upon the size and scope of the site. Signs should reflect the type and speed of traffic they are meant to attract. Signs designed for pedestrians and drivers of slow moving cars should not be the same size as signs designed for highway traffic.
  - (2) Sign Area. The sign area shall be determined in the following manner:
    - A. Sign Areas. The area of a sign shall be computed on the actual area of the sign. Sign area shall be calculated as the area within a parallelogram, triangle, circle, semicircle or other regular geometric figure including all letters, figures, graphics or other elements of the sign, together with the framework or background of the sign. The supporting framework of the sign shall not be included in determining sign area unless such supporting framework forms an integral part of the sign display, as determined by the historic preservation officer. If the sign is located on a decorative fence or wall, when such fence or wall otherwise meets these or other ordinances or regulations and is clearly incidental to the display itself, the fence or wall shall not be included in the sign area. In the cases of signs with more than one (1) sign face, including but not restricted to double-faced signs, back-to-back signs, overhanging signs, and projecting signs, each side of the sign shall be included in total allowable signage area.
    - B. Channel Letter Signs. For channel letter signs, the sign area shall be the smallest rectangle that will encompass the limits of the writing, including spaces between the letters. Each advertising message shall be considered separately.
  - (3) Building Identification Signs. An additional building identification sign may be placed on a building with multiple tenants, if the building name is not the same as the business(s) housed within and such sign is recommended for approval by the historic and design review commission. This type of sign is to identify a building as a destination, shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet, shall not be included in the total allowable signage area, and shall not include names of individual businesses.
  - (4) Freestanding Signs. Freestanding signs are allowed provided the sign does not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Freestanding signs shall be perpendicular to the street, two-sided and no taller than six (6) feet. Freestanding signs shall not be located in the right-of-way.
    - A. Projecting Arm Signs. Signs hung from poles are allowed. Pole height shall not exceed six (6) feet and the pole diameter shall not exceed three (3) inches. Blade signs are not allowed to project over a sidewalk or other right-of-way.
- (f) Allowable Signs Not Included in the Total Signage Area.
- (1) Parking lot signs identifying entrances and exits to a parking lot or driveway, but only when there is one-way traffic flow. No more than one (1) sign shall be permitted for each driveway entrance or exit, and no corporate or business logos shall be permitted. Additionally, parking lot signs to identify divisions of the parking lot into sections and to control vehicular traffic and pedestrian traffic within the lot provided that no corporate or business logos shall be permitted. Signs approved under this category shall not be included in the total allowable signage per structure.
  - (2) Dates of erection, monumental citations, commemorative tablets, insignia of local, state or federal government, and like when carved into stone, concrete or similar material or made of bronze, aluminum or other permanent type construction and made an integral part of the structure. Signs approved under this category shall not be included in the total allowable signage per structure.
  - (3) Information signs of a public or quasi-public nature identifying or locating a hospital, public building, college, publicly-owned parking area, historic area, major tourist attraction or similar public or quasi-public activity; and also including signs identifying restrooms or other facilities relating to such places or activities. Signs approved under this category shall not be included in the total allowable signage per structure.
  - (4) Incidental signs, including signs designating business hours, street numbers, credit card acceptance and the like provided that the signs are not freestanding, the total of all such signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet for each business, and the signs are non-illuminated. Incidental signs shall not be included in the total allowable signage per structure.

- (5) Real estate signs, advertising the sale, rental or lease of the premises or part of the premises on which the signs are displayed. The maximum sign area shall be eight (8) square feet. Only one (1) sign will be permitted for each building for sale or lease that is adjacent to the Riverwalk. The sign is permitted to remain only while that particular building is for sale or the lease space is available.
- (g) Pedestrian Menu Boards.
  - (1) Pedestrian menu boards shall not exceed two (2) square feet.
  - (2) Permanently displayed menus may be properly installed inside the business' window or in an approved wall-mounted or freestanding display case adjacent to the business entrance.
  - (3) The name of the establishment may not be displayed on the menu board if the business has other signage installed on the premises. It is permissible for the name of the restaurant to be placed on the actual menu. The established logo of a business is considered a sign.
  - (4) All items listed on a menu board must be placed within the border of the menu board or within the display case.
  - (5) There may be no more than one (1) pedestrian menu board per establishment unless there are two (2) primary entrances to a building on different facades, in which case a pedestrian menu board for each entrance may be approved.
- (h) Sandwich Boards. Notwithstanding provisions of chapter 28-17, sandwich boards are permitted in river improvement overlay districts as on-premises signs provided permitting requirements of chapter 28, section 28-17 are met. A sandwich board shall:
  - (1) Mean an A-frame or single panel double sided design for placement in front of the place of business.
  - (2) Be no larger than two (2) feet wide and three (3) feet tall when extended.
  - (3) Be prohibited on the pedestrian Riverwalk pathway
  - (4) Count towards overall signage and must be included in any signage requests
- (i) Noncommercial Speech Signs. Noncommercial speech signs including but not limited to public service announcements may be erected in river improvement overlay districts following approval provided all regulations in this article are met. The maximum size of a noncommercial speech sign shall be eight (8) square feet, and shall not be illuminated. However, political signs, and the regulation thereof, shall not violate Section 216.903 (Regulation of Political Signs by Municipality) of the Texas Local Government Code.
- (j) Allowable Temporary Signs. If approved, the area of temporary signs shall not be included in the general allowable area for the specified property. No more than one (1) temporary sign will be allowed at any given time. Temporary signs may be approved administratively, shall be non-illuminated, and limited to the following types:
  - (1) Construction signs, including those which identify the architects, engineers, contractors and other individuals or firms involved with the construction. Such signs shall be removed upon issuance of a certificate of occupancy. The maximum area of such signs shall be thirty-two (32) square feet, and no more than one (1) sign shall be permitted for each street frontage.
  - (2) Political campaign signs announcing the candidates seeking public political office and other information pertinent thereto.
  - (3) Signs advertising only the name, time, and place of any fair, festival, bazaar, education seminar or similar event, when conducted by a public agency or for the benefit of any civic, fraternal, religious or charitable cause provided that all such signs shall be removed within twenty-four (24) hours after the last day of the event to which they pertain. The maximum sign area shall be thirty-two (32) square feet.
  - (4) Grand opening signs shall be permitted provided that such signs shall not be displayed for more than ten (10) days and the maximum size shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.
  - (5) Seasonal decorations displayed between November 20 and January 10, and during the official designated Fiesta time period. Such decorations shall not display the name of a business or shopping center, nor the words "open," "sale," "vacancy" or other similar words or phrases related to the business activity on the premises.
  - (6) Change of business name banners/hoods/covers over existing building mounted and freestanding signs while new signs are being manufactured, provided that such sign or signs shall not be displayed for more than eight (8) weeks and shall not exceed the sign area that they are replacing or covering.
  - (7) Yard sale signs in a residential district provided that such signs shall be displayed only on the day of the event and on the property holding the event. The maximum sign area shall be eight (8) square feet.

- (8) Special exhibition signs for museums and art galleries provided that the signs are limited to one (1) sign for each building used primarily as a museum or art gallery, the sign shall be placed on the building no earlier than seven (7) days before and removed within twenty-four (24) hours after the last day of the exhibition to which it pertains. Additionally, the maximum signage area per building shall be two hundred (200) square feet, unless additional square footage is approved.
  - (9) Promotional signs not exceeding six (6) square feet advertising special events or promotions provided that the signs are properly placed on the property or on the inside of windows and such signs are removed within twenty-four (24) hours after the promoted event is over. Promotional signs may be approved for up to five (5) events per calendar year, with no more than thirty (30) days a year total approved for all qualifying signs or events per property.
  - (10) Any special purpose sign not covered above provided that it is removed within thirty (30) days from the date of approval unless otherwise specified. If within the specified period the applicant feels there is a continued need for the special purpose sign the applicant may file a new application to request additional display time. Non-governmental banners and flags, excluding flags included as elements of an overall streetscape or design plan, are considered special purpose signs under the provisions of this section and are appropriate for advertising and decoration only during special events or celebrations. No permanent advertising may be handled in this way.
  - (11) The director of downtown operations may provide written authorization for one (1) approved symbol, logo, or sign to be temporarily placed on chartered watercraft for special events. The sign shall not exceed eight (8) square feet.
  - (12) Temporary construction screening shall provide for safe pedestrian access along exposed construction sites. These screens can be temporary art and use graphics to enhance the screen. Such screens shall not use chain link in RIO-3. Temporary construction screens shall contain a project sign which shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet. Such project sign shall include the project name, project architect, consultants, general contractor, principal use, and project start and end time.
  - (13) Temporary displays are authorized if in accordance with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas.
- (k) Prohibited Signs. The following signs are prohibited:
- (1) Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, and advertising benches;
  - (2) Any sign placed upon a building, object, site, or structure in any manner so as to disfigure, damage, or conceal any window opening, door, or significant architectural feature or detail of any building;
  - (3) Any sign or sign spinner which advertises commercial off-premises businesses, products, activities, services, or events unless otherwise allowed in this article;
  - (4) Any sign which does not identify a business or service within the river improvement overlay district unless otherwise allowed in this article;
  - (5) Any non-contributing sign which is abandoned or damaged beyond fifty (50) percent of its replacement value, including parts of old or unused signs. All remnants such as supports, brackets and braces must also be removed;
  - (6) Any attachment to an already affixed sign which does not meet the provisions of the City Code;
  - (7) Roof mounted signs, except in the cases of landmark signs or unless approved in accordance with standards set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of this section. Contributing roof mounted signs may be resurfaced with an approved certificate of appropriateness. The square footage of roof mounted signs shall be included in the total allowable signage for the building;
  - (8) Pole-mounted cabinet signs and pylon signs;
  - (9) Digital displays, digital and/or LED lighted signs, not to include LED light sources that do not meet the definition of a sign, with or without rotating, flashing lettering, icons or images.
- Except as provided below:
- A. A public transportation agency may incorporate transit information signage into transit shelters, utilizing LED or digital technology, provided the signage is contained within or under the transit shelter, and is limited to five (5) square feet of signage area, and one (1) sign per thirty (30) linear feet of pedestrian shelter.
  - B. A public transportation agency may incorporate transit information signage into a monument sign at transit stops, utilizing LED or digital technology, provided it is limited to five (5) square feet of signage area.

- C. A public transportation agency may incorporate transit information signage into a monument sign at transit facilities (other than transit stops), utilizing LED or digital technology, provided it is limited to seven (7) square feet of signage area.
  - D. The historic preservation officer may impose additional restrictions on illumination to ensure that the character of signs are harmonious with the character of the structures on which they are to be placed and designated landmarks or districts in the area, provided that such restrictions are reasonably related to other conforming signs and conforming structures in the area, do not unreasonably restrict the amount of signage allowed by this section, and are in keeping with the intent of this section. Among other things, consideration shall be given to the location and illumination of the sign in relation to the surrounding buildings, the use of appropriate materials, the size and style of lettering and graphics, and the type of lighting proposed.
  - E. Digital displays, digital and/or LED lighted signs are authorized in conjunction with a temporary display for a permitted event if in accordance with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas.
- (10) Revolving signs or signs with a moving component.
  - (11) Any sandwich board which conflicts with the Americans with Disabilities Act, or which disrupts or interferes with pedestrian or other traffic.
  - (12) Any sign that obscures a sign display by a public authority for the purpose of giving instructions or directions or other public information.
  - (13) Any sign which consists of pennants, ribbons, spinners or other similar moving devices.
  - (14) Any sign, except official notices and advertisements, which is nailed, tacked, posted or in any other manner attached to any utility pole or structure or supporting wire, cable, or pipe; or to any tree on any street or sidewalk or to public property of any description.
  - (15) Moored balloons, wind jammers or other floating or inflated signs that are tethered to the ground or to a structure.
  - (16) Any permanent or temporary sign affixed to, painted on, or placed in or upon any parked vehicle, parked trailer or other parked device capable of being towed, which is parked so as to advertise the business to the passing motorist or pedestrian; and whose primary purpose is to provide additional on-site signage or is to serve the function of an outdoor advertising sign. Excluded from this are vehicles or equipment that are in operating condition, currently registered and licensed to operate on public streets with a valid inspection sticker, and actively used in the daily function of the business to which such signs relate; vehicles/equipment engaged in active construction projects; vehicles or equipment offered for rent to the general public and stored on-premises and otherwise allowed under applicable city ordinance.

Notwithstanding the above, signs designated as a contributing sign or structure by the historic preservation officer shall not be prohibited unless or until such designation is revoked.

- (l) Installation. Signs, posters, decals or advertisements may not be affixed, tacked, nailed, pasted, or taped to any portion of a building, object, site or structure in a manner that will cause irreversible damage or loss, or is considered inappropriate under any applicable guidelines utilized by the office of historic preservation. Signs installed on masonry structures shall be installed in the mortar, not in the masonry unit.
- (m) Hardship Cases.
  - (1) Whenever the location, topography or configuration of any lot is such as will cause a hardship by the limitations placed on the signs permitted by this article due to sight distances, existing vegetation, location of buildings on adjacent lots, and/or the topography of the parcel, approval may be granted to either allow additional signage, or to increase the amount of building mounted sign area by not more than twenty-five (25) percent.
  - (2) No additional signage shall be approved unless it is found that approval of the proposed application will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent property and that the character of the area will not be changed by the granting of additional signage.
  - (3) Any additional signage approval shall be limited to the applicant only, and shall not apply to any future tenant or business.
- (n) Nonconforming Status. Any legally erected sign that, by reason of revisions to this chapter, no longer complies with its provisions, shall be awarded nonconforming status upon review by all necessary city departments.
- (o) Performing Arts Center Signs. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter or chapter 28 of the City Code of the City of San Antonio, a wall sign that is a digital display monitor meeting the following parameters may be

allowed in the "RIO-3" River Improvement Overlay District-3 by the city council with a specific use authorization provided that such digital display monitor meets the following standards:

1. The monitor must be situated on a performing arts center premises.
  2. The monitor may only be utilized during ticketed events, either indoor or outdoor, of the performing arts center.
  3. The monitor shall not be used for on-premise or off-premise advertising.
  4. Sound associated with the monitor must be in compliance with the noise ordinance in the City Code.
  5. The light intensity of the monitor shall not exceed:
    - (a) One thousand (1,000) nits during the day; and
    - (b) Five hundred (500) nits at night, measured from sunset until sunrise.
  6. The monitor must automatically adjust the monitor's light intensity according to ambient light conditions.
  7. The size of the monitor must be in compliance with the provisions of subsection 35-678(d).
  8. The monitor must comply with all condition(s) imposed by the city council as part of the specific use authorization.
- (p) Violations in River Improvement Overlay Districts and on the Riverwalk.
- (1) In those instances where a sign is erected or maintained in violation of the aforementioned restrictions, the historic preservation officer, the department of development services, park police or code compliance shall notify the sign's owner, agent, operator, or lessee. If the owner, agent, operator, or lessee of the sign fails to remove the sign within three (3) days after notification, the department of development services or historic preservation officer may file an action in municipal court as outlined in section 28-15 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas. In addition, nothing herein shall prevent the city attorney from seeking civil remedies.
  - (2) Dilapidated Signs - All signs shall be maintained in good working condition so as to present a neat and orderly appearance. All signs and components thereof shall be maintained in good repair, free of rust, peeling, flaking, fading, broken or cracked panels, and broken or missing letters. All signs, components, supports and their surroundings shall be kept free of all sign materials, weeds, debris, trash, and other refuse. The historic preservation officer, the code compliance department, department of development services or park police may give written notice to remove or repair, within thirty (30) days, any sign which shows gross neglect or which is dilapidated. Failure to comply shall be considered a violation of this chapter, and the sign shall be removed at the owner's expense. Additionally, whether the sign has been designated a contributing structure shall be taken into account when evaluating the condition of the sign.
  - (3) Abandoned Signs - A sign, including its supporting structure or brackets, shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located when the business which it advertises is no longer on the premises and such sign has been determined to be abandoned under the provisions of chapter 28. Such sign, if not removed within thirty (30) days from the determination of abandonment by such business shall be considered to be in violation of this chapter, and shall be removed at the owner's expense. This does not include signs that are approved as contributing structures.

(Ord. No. 95352 § 3 Attachment 2; Ord. No. 98697 § 4) (Ord. No. 101816, § 2, 12-15-05) (Ord. No. 2009-01-15-0001, § 2, 1-15-09) (Ord. No. 2010-06-24-0616, § 2, 6-24-10) (Ord. No. 2010-11-18-0985, § 2, 11-18-10) (Ord. No. 2011-03-31-0240, § 2, 3-31-11) (Ord. No. 2011-08-18-0673, § 2, 8-18-11) (Ord. No. 2014-05-29-0377, § 3, 5-29-14)(Ord. No. 2015-04-09-0291 , § 7, 4-9-15)(Ord. No. 2015-12-17-1077 , § 2, 12-17-15)

#### *UDC Section 35-678 – Signs on the Riverside of Properties Abutting the River or Creek*

This section governs all exterior signs on the riverside of public and private property abutting the San Antonio River and its extensions, San Pedro Creek, and all interior signs hung within ten (10) feet of an exterior fenestration, or those signs intended to be read by exterior patrons on the riverside of a building.

- (a) Character of Signs. Signs should respect and respond to the character of the historic Riverwalk area or Creek Improvements. The display of signs and other graphics on the riverside of property abutting the river shall not be permitted except as provided for in this article. Additionally, when reviewing applications for signage the historic preservation officer and the historic and design review commission shall consider the visual impact on nearby historic resources.
- (b) Sign Definitions. For signage definitions, refer to subsection 35-612(b) and chapter 28 of the City Code.
- (c) Standards for Signage.

- (1) Proportion. For all signage, signage width and height must be in proportion to the facade, respecting the size, scale and mass of the facade, building height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. The building facade shall be considered as part of an overall sign program but the sign shall be subordinate to the overall building composition. Additionally, signs shall respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed.
- (2) Size. The maximum allowable size for any sign on the riverside of property abutting the publicly owned Riverwalk and visible from the Riverwalk shall be eight (8) square feet. If a building surface is used for signage, the letters or design shall not exceed a surface area of eight (8) square feet. In RIO-7, the maximum allowable size of any sign on the creek-side of property abutting the publicly owned Paseo shall be twelve (12) square feet. However, additional square footage may be approved, except in RIO-3, provided that the additional signage is in conformity, and does not interfere with, the pedestrian experience on the Riverwalk. The additional square footage shall be based upon the size and design of the site, setback from the river and shall be appropriate for the area in which it is being placed.
- (3) Roof Top/Parapet Signs. No signs shall be displayed from the parapet or roof of any building unless designated by the historic preservation officer as a contributing structure.
- (4) Signs for Riverwalk Business Only. No sign, visual display, or graphic shall be placed in the Riverwalk area unless it advertises a bona fide business conducted in, or on premises adjacent to the Riverwalk. Only buildings that have an entrance directly onto the Riverwalk may display a sign or graphic.
- (5) Number of Signs. Only one (1) identification sign shall be allowed for each store, shop, restaurant, nightclub, or place of business in the Riverwalk area and fronting on the Riverwalk. In addition to a sign, establishments serving food or beverages may erect a menu board, which shall be used only for displaying menus.
- (6) Illumination. Internally illuminated signs are prohibited in RIOs 1 through 6. The light source for exterior illumination shall be steady light concealed by a hood or other acceptable method of indirect lighting. Flashing lights, rope lighting and exposed neon lights are prohibited. In RIO-7, halo-lit letters are permitted as a source of internal illumination.
- (7) Materials. Signs may be constructed of wood, metal, glass. Lettering may be painted, stamped, etched, carved, applied metal or wood. Vinyl lettering may be permitted for interior signs provided it respects and responds to the character of the historic Riverwalk area.
- (8) Pedestrian Menu Boards.
  - (A) Pedestrian menu boards shall not exceed two (2) square feet.
  - (B) Permanently displayed menus may be properly installed inside the business' window or in an approved wall-mounted or freestanding display case adjacent to the business entrance.
  - (C) The name of the establishment may not be displayed on the menu board if the business has other signage installed on the premises. It is permissible for the name of the restaurant to be placed on the actual menu. The established logo of a business is considered a sign.
  - (D) All items listed on a menu board must be placed within the border of the menu board or within the display case.
  - (E) There may be no more than one (1) pedestrian menu board per establishment unless there are two primary entrances to a building on different facades, in which case a pedestrian menu board for each entrance may be approved.
- (9) Signage on Umbrellas or Street Furniture. Advertising brand name products may not be placed on umbrellas, tables, chairs, table decorations or other street furniture that are located on outdoor patio areas. Additionally, logos or wording of any kind may not be placed on umbrellas, tables, chairs, table decorations or other street furniture that are located on outdoor patio areas.
- (10) Directory Signage. Buildings with several businesses may be permitted to install directory signage in lieu of individual signs. Directory signage may not exceed eight (8) square feet.
- (11) Revolving Signs, Etc. Revolving signs, flashing lights, search lights and attention-getting devices, including, but not limited to, banners, festoons, paper and vinyl rope-like-banners are not permitted. Digital and/or LED lighted signs, with or without rotating, flashing lettering, full motion video, icons or images are also not permitted.
- (12) Projecting Arm Signs. Signs hung from poles are allowed on the riverside of properties abutting the publicly owned river right-of-way as long as the pole height does not exceed seven (7) feet, the pole diameter does not exceed three (3) inches, and does not encroach upon the right-of-way.
- (13) Temporary Signage. No more than one (1) temporary sign is allowed at any given time. Temporary signs facing the river shall not exceed eight (8) square feet in RIO-3 and twenty-four (24) square feet in



all other RIO districts. Temporary signage for special events shall be limited to installation forty-eight (48) hours before the event and must be removed within twenty-four (24) hours of completion of the event for a total of no more than thirty (30) days.

- (14) Prohibited Signs. No billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, posters, sandwich boards or advertising benches shall be allowed on the riverside of buildings abutting the river. Any sign, visual display, or graphic which is located in the Riverwalk area and which is visible from the publicly owned portion of the San Antonio River channel or adjacent walkways must meet the requirements for signs, visual displays, and graphics as set out in this division. No sign, visual display or graphic shall be allowed in the Riverwalk area unless it is advertising or giving information concerning a business or activity that is located on the same lot as the sign, visual display or graphic.
- (d) Installation. Signs, posters, decals or advertisements may not be tacked, nailed, pasted, or taped to any portion of a building, object, site or structure in a manner that will cause irreversible damage or loss, or is considered inappropriate under any applicable guidelines utilized by the office of historic preservation.
- (e) Hardship Cases.
  - (1) Whenever the location, topography or configuration of any lot is such as will cause a hardship by the limitations placed on the signs permitted by this article due to sight distances, existing vegetation, location of buildings on adjacent lots, and/or the topography of the parcel, approval may be granted to either allow additional signage, or to increase the amount of building mounted sign area by not more than twenty-five (25) percent.
  - (2) No additional signage shall be approved unless it is found that approval of the proposed application will not be of substantial detriment to adjacent property and that the character of the area will not be changed by the granting of additional signage.
  - (3) Any additional signage approval shall be limited to the applicant only, and shall not apply to any future tenant or business.
- (f) Nonconforming Status. Any legally erected sign which, by reason of revisions to this chapter, no longer complies with its provisions, shall be awarded nonconforming status upon review of all necessary city departments.
- (g) Violations in River Improvement Overlay Districts and on the Riverwalk. In those instances where a sign is erected or maintained in violation of the aforementioned restrictions, the historic preservation officer, the department of development services or park police shall notify the sign's owner, agent, operator, or lessee. If the owner, agent, operator, or lessee of the sign fails to remove the sign within three (3) days after notification, the department of development services, park police or historic preservation officer may remove the sign within three (3) days after notification, and/or the department of development services, the historic preservation officer or park police may file an action in municipal court as outlined in section 28-15. In addition, nothing herein shall prevent the city attorney from seeking civil remedies.
  - (1) Dilapidated Signs. All signs shall be maintained in good working condition so as to present a neat and orderly appearance. The historic preservation officer, through the office of historic preservation, code compliance department, department of planning and development services or the park police may give written notice to remove or repair any sign which shows gross neglect or which becomes dilapidated. Failure to comply shall be considered a violation of this chapter, and the sign shall be removed at the owner's expense.
  - (2) Abandoned Signs. A sign, including its supporting structure or brackets, shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located when the business which it advertises is no longer on the premises and such sign has been determined to be abandoned under the provisions of chapter 28. Such sign, if not removed within thirty (30) days from the determination of abandonment by such business shall be considered to be in violation of this chapter, and shall be removed at the owner's expense. This does not include signs that are currently approved as contributing structures.

(Ord. No. 2010-11-18-0985, § 2, 11-18-10) (Ord. No. 2011-03-31-0240, § 2, 3-31-11; Ord. No. 2016-10-13-0798 , § 1(Att. A), 10-13-16)

## **FINDINGS:**

- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install vinyl wall signage at 875 E Ashby Place, Building 3. This property is located within the River Improvement Overlay, District 2.
- b. ALLOWABLE SIGNAGE – The UDC Section 35-678(e)(1), notes that applicants may apply for up to three (3) signs total. Total signage for all applicants shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet unless the Historic and Design Review Commission recommends additional signs and/or total footage.
- c. EXISTING SIGNAGE – A previously approved open face channel letter sign is installed on the fascia of the roof, facing north. This sign reads “Costa Pacifica” and features a total size of forty-eight (48) square feet.
- d. WALL SIGN (North) – The applicant has proposed to install a vinyl sticker sign on the north façade facing US Highway 281 to read “Ceviche, Fajitas, Tacos, Margaritas” to feature a total size of approximately thirty-seven (37) square feet. Given the sign’s location and orientation towards US Highway 281, staff finds the size and placement to be appropriate.
- e. WALL SIGN (East) – The applicant has proposed to install a vinyl sticker sign on the east façade facing the San Antonio River to read “Happy Hour & Live Music” to feature a total size of approximately 21.84 square feet. Staff finds the proposed sign’s placement, recessed and on a terrace away from the river, as well as its design to be appropriate. Additionally, staff finds the proposed sign’s size to be appropriate as river facing signs are commonly found along the museum reach that range from twelve (12) to twenty-four (24) square feet. The proposed sign is approximately fifty-three (53) feet from the river.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Staff recommends approval of item #1, the installation of a vinyl wall sign on the north façade, as submitted, based on finding e.
2. Staff recommends approval of item #2, the installation of a vinyl wall sign on the east façade, as submitted, based on findings c and f.



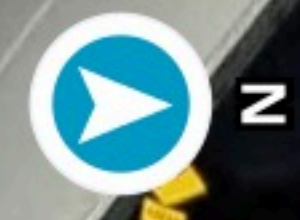
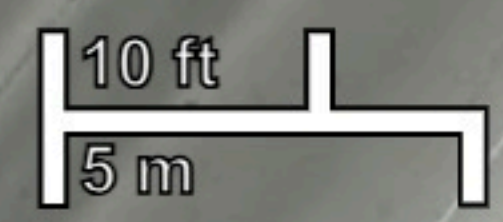


EagleViewImage  
Captured: Mar 20, 2025





EagleViewImage  
Captured: Mar 20, 2025







COSTA RICA

HAPPY HOUR  
LIVE MUSIC

CEVICHE  
FAJITAS  
TACOS  
MARGARITAS





City of San Antonio  
**Office of Historic Preservation**  
**User Portal**

Costa Pacifica

875 E Ashby Pl. Bldg. 3 Vinyl on wall

<https://www.costapacificamargaritagarden.com>

**Ceviche**

9 ft long by 1.4ft h

**Fajitas**

7.8 ft long by 1.4 h

**Tacos**

6.8 ft long by 1.4 h

**Margaritas**

13 ft long by 1.4 h

**Material:**

Vinyl Sticker no Paint



CEVICHE

1.4ft H x 9ft L

FAJITAS

1.4ft H x 7.8ft L

TACOS

1.4ft H x 6.8ft L

MARGARITAS

1.4ft H x  
13ft L

7' 1"

13' 6"



**Happy Hour**

7.8 ft long by 1.4ft h

**Live Music**

7.8 ft long by 1.4 h

**Material:**

Vinyl Sticker No paint



HAPPY HOUR  
& LIVE MUSIC

1.4ft H x 7.8ft L

1.4ft H x 7.8ft L