

# HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

August 07, 2024

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2024-256  
**ADDRESS:** 205 E HOUSTON ST  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 407 BLK 17 LOT 1,3, & S 45.86 FT OF 2,4,6, & W PT OF 5  
**ZONING:** D, H, RIO-3  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**APPLICANT:** Jose Campos/Aetna Sign Group  
**OWNER:** Kerry Ready/205 EAST HOUSTON STREET LLC  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Signage  
**APPLICATION RECEIVED:** July 17, 2024  
**60-DAY REVIEW:** September 15, 2024  
**CASE MANAGER:** Edward Hall

## REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install signage at 205 E Houston. Within this request, the applicant has proposed the following:

1. One (1) reverse lit blade sign to feature aluminum faced channel letters to read “Gunter Hotel”. The proposed sign will feature an overall height of 30’ – 0” and widths of 5’ – 7” and 11’ – 0” at its widest, for a total size of 401 square feet, including both sides. This sign will replace an existing, internally illuminated cabinet sign located at the southwest corner (N St Mary’s at E Houston) of the building. This sign is identified as sign A in the application documents.
2. Two (2) reverse lit channel letter sign to feature aluminum faced letters to read “GH”. The proposed sign will feature an overall height of 16’ – 0” and widths of 9’ – 7” and 6’ – 4”. These signs will be located on the north and south facades of the mechanical penthouse, facing north and south. These signs are identified as signs B1 and B2 in the application documents.
3. One (1) reverse lit channel letter sign to feature aluminum faced channel letters to read “Gunter Hotel”. The proposed sign will feature heights of 1’ – 6” and 7” and an overall width of 15’ – 10” for a total size of approximately 24 square feet. This sign is identified as sign C in the application documents.
4. One (1) indirectly lit hanging sign beneath the existing canopy on the west (N St Mary’s) façade. The proposed sign will be installed within the existing bracket and will feature an overall width of 6’ – 8” and an overall height of 1’ – 4” for a total size of approximately twelve (12) square feet, including both sides. This sign is identified as sign D in the application documents.

## APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 6, Guidelines for Signage*

### 1. General

#### A. GENERAL

*i. Number and size*—Each building will be allowed one major and two minor signs. Total requested signage should not exceed 50 square feet.

*ii. New signs*—Select the type of sign to be used based on evidence of historic signs or sign attachment parts along the building storefront where possible. Design signs to respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed. Signs should identify the tenant without creating visual clutter or distracting from building features and historic districts.

*iii. Scale*—Design signage to be in proportion to the facade, respecting the building’s size, scale and mass, height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. Scale signage (in terms of its height and width) to be subordinate to the overall building composition.

#### B. HISTORIC SIGNS

*i. Preservation*—Preserve historic signs, such as ghost signs or other signs characteristic of the building’s or district’s period of significance, whenever possible.

*ii. Maintenance*—Repair historic signs and replace historic parts in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair.

### C. PLACEMENT AND INSTALLATION

*i. Location*—Place signs where historically located and reuse sign attachment parts where they exist. Do not erect signs above the cornice line or uppermost portion of a facade wall, or where they will disfigure or conceal architectural details, window openings, doors, or other significant details.

*ii. Obstruction of historic features*—Avoid obscuring historic building features such as cornices, gables, porches, balconies, or other decorative elements with new signs.

*iii. Damage*—Avoid irreversible damage caused by installing a sign. For example, mount a sign to the mortar rather than the historic masonry. *iv. Pedestrian orientation*—Orient signs toward the sidewalk to maintain the pedestrian oriented nature of the historic districts.

### D. DESIGN

*i. Inappropriate materials*—Do not use plastic, fiberglass, highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read, or other synthetic materials not historically used in the district.

*ii. Appropriate materials*—Construct signs of durable materials used for signs during the period of the building's construction, such as wood, wrought iron, steel, aluminum, and metal grill work.

*iii. Color*—Limit the number of colors used on a sign to three. Select a dark background with light lettering to make signs more legible.

*iv. Typefaces*—Select letter styles and sizes that complement the overall character of the building façade. Avoid hard-to-read or overly intricate styles.

### E. LIGHTING

*i. Lighting sources*—Use only indirect or bare-bulb sources that do not produce glare to illuminate signs. All illumination shall be steady and stationary. Internal illumination should not be used.

*ii. Neon lighting*—Incorporate neon lighting as an integral architectural element or artwork appropriate to the site, if used.

### F. PROHIBITED SIGNS

*i.* An abbreviated list of the types of signs prohibited within San Antonio's historic districts and on historic landmarks is provided below. Refer to UDC Section 35- 612(j) and Chapter 28 of the Municipal Code for more detailed information on prohibited signs.

- Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, and advertising benches.
- Pole signs.
- Revolving signs or signs with a kinetic component.
- Roof mounted signs, except in the case of a contributing sign.
- Digital and/or LED lighted signs, not to include LED light sources that do not meet the definition of a sign.
- Moored balloons or other floating signs that are tethered to the ground or to a structure.
- Any sign which does not identify a business or service within the historic district or historic landmark.
- Any non-contributing sign which is abandoned or damaged beyond 50 percent of its replacement value, including parts of old or unused signs.
- 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.

### G. MULTI-TENANT PROPERTIES

*i. Signage Plan*—Develop a master signage plan or signage guidelines for the total building or property.

*ii. Directory signs*—Group required signage in a single directory sign to minimize visual color and promote a unified appearance.

## 3. Projecting and Wall-Mounted Signs

### A. GENERAL

*i. Mounting devices*—Construct sign frames and panels that will be used to be attach signs to the wall of a building of wood, metal, or other durable materials appropriate to the building's period of construction.

*ii. Structural supports*—Utilize sign hooks, expansion bolts, or through bolts with washers on the inside of the wall depending upon the weight and area of the sign, and the condition of the wall to which it is to be attached.

*iii. Appropriate usage*—Limit the use of projecting and wall-mounted signs to building forms that historically used these types of signs, most typically commercial storefronts. To a lesser degree, these signage types may also be appropriate in areas where residential building forms have been adapted for office or retail uses, if sized accordingly.

## B. PROJECTING SIGNS

*i. Placement*—Mount projecting signs perpendicularly to a building or column while allowing eight feet of overhead clearance above public walkways.

*ii. Public right-of-way*—Limit the extension of projecting signs from the building facade into the public right-of-way for a maximum distance of eight feet or a distance equal to two-thirds the width of the abutting sidewalk, whichever distance is greater.

*iii. Area*—Projecting signs should be scaled appropriately in response to the building façade and number of tenants.

## C. WALL-MOUNTED SIGNS

*i. Area*—Limit the aggregate area of all wall-mounted signs to twenty-five percent of a building facade.

*ii. Projection*—Limit the projection of wall-mounted signs to less than twelve inches from the building wall.

*iii. Placement*—Locate wall signs on existing signboards—the area above the storefront windows and below the second story windows—when available. Mount wall signs to align with others on the block if an existing signboard is not available.

*iv. Channel letters*—Avoid using internally-illuminated, wall-mounted channel letters for new signs unless historic precedent exists. Reverse channel letters may be permitted.

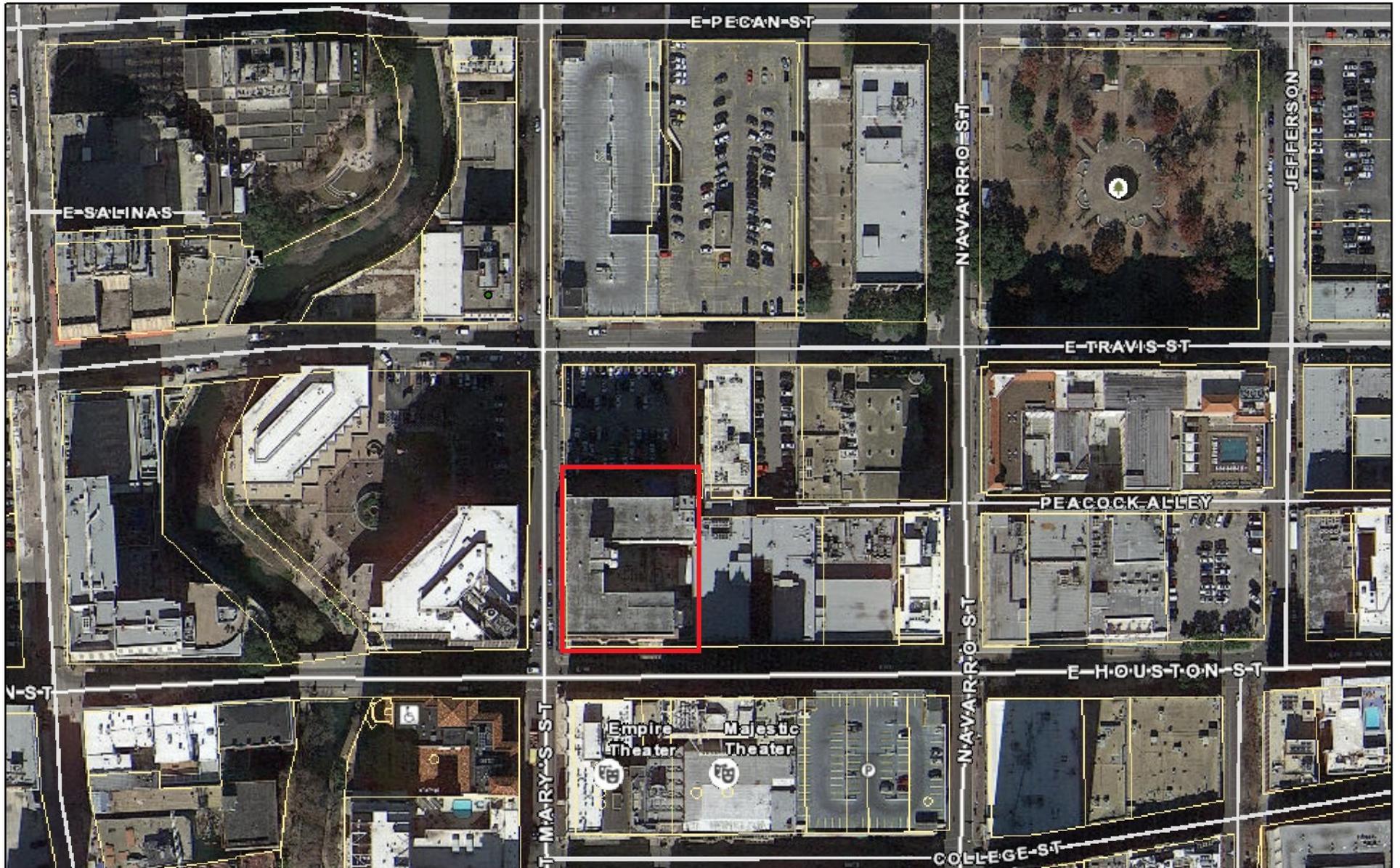
## FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install signage at 205 E Houston, commonly known as the Gunter Hotel. This property is an individual historic landmark, is located within the River Improvement Overlay, District 3, and is located within the Downtown Design District.
- b. ALLOWABLE SIGNAGE – The Unified Development Code recommends one major and two minor signs per application, not to exceed fifty (50) square feet total. Additionally, the UDC notes that signage should be designed to be in proportion to the façade. The Commission may approve additional signage and square footage.
- c. BLADE SIGN (A) – The applicant has proposed to install one (1) reverse lit blade sign to feature aluminum faced channel letters to read “Gunter Hotel”. The proposed sign will feature an overall height of 30’ – 0” and widths of 5’ – 7” and 11’ – 0” at its widest, for a total size of 401 square feet, including both sides. This sign will replace an existing, internally illuminated cabinet sign located at the southwest corner (N St Mary’s at E Houston) of the building. This sign is identified as sign A in the application documents. Generally, staff finds the proposed sign to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines.
- d. WALL SIGNS (B1 and B2) – The applicant has proposed to install two (2) reverse lit channel letter sign to feature aluminum faced letters to read “GH”. The proposed sign will feature an overall height of 16’ – 0” and widths of 9’ – 7” and 6’ – 4”. These signs will be located on the north and south facades of the mechanical penthouse, facing north and south. These signs are identified as signs B1 and B2 in the application documents. Generally, staff finds these signs to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines.
- e. WALL SIGN (C) – The applicant has proposed to install one (1) reverse lit channel letter sign to feature aluminum faced channel letters to read “Gunter Hotel”. The proposed sign will feature heights of 1’ – 6” and 7” and an overall width of 15’ – 10” for a total size of approximately 24 square feet. This sign is identified as sign C in the application documents. Generally, staff finds the proposed sign to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines.
- f. HANGING SIGN (D) – The applicant has proposed to install one (1) indirectly lit hanging sign beneath the existing canopy on the west (N St Mary’s) façade. The proposed sign will be installed within the existing bracket and will feature an overall width of 6’ – 8” and an overall height of 1’ – 4” for a total size of approximately twelve (12) square feet, including both sides. This sign is identified as sign D in the application documents. Generally, staff finds the proposed sign to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines.

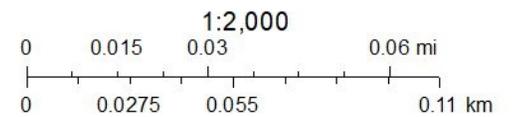
## RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of items #1 through #4 based on findings a through f, as submitted.

# City of San Antonio One Stop



July 29, 2024



AETNA SIGN CO

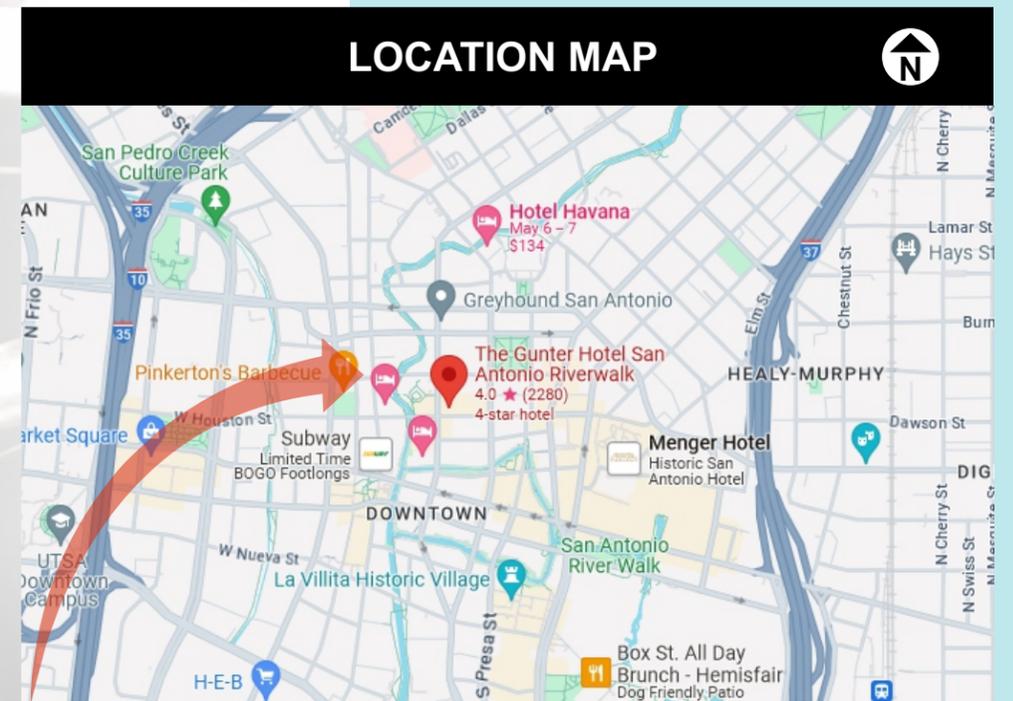


EST. **GUNTER** 1909  
HOTEL

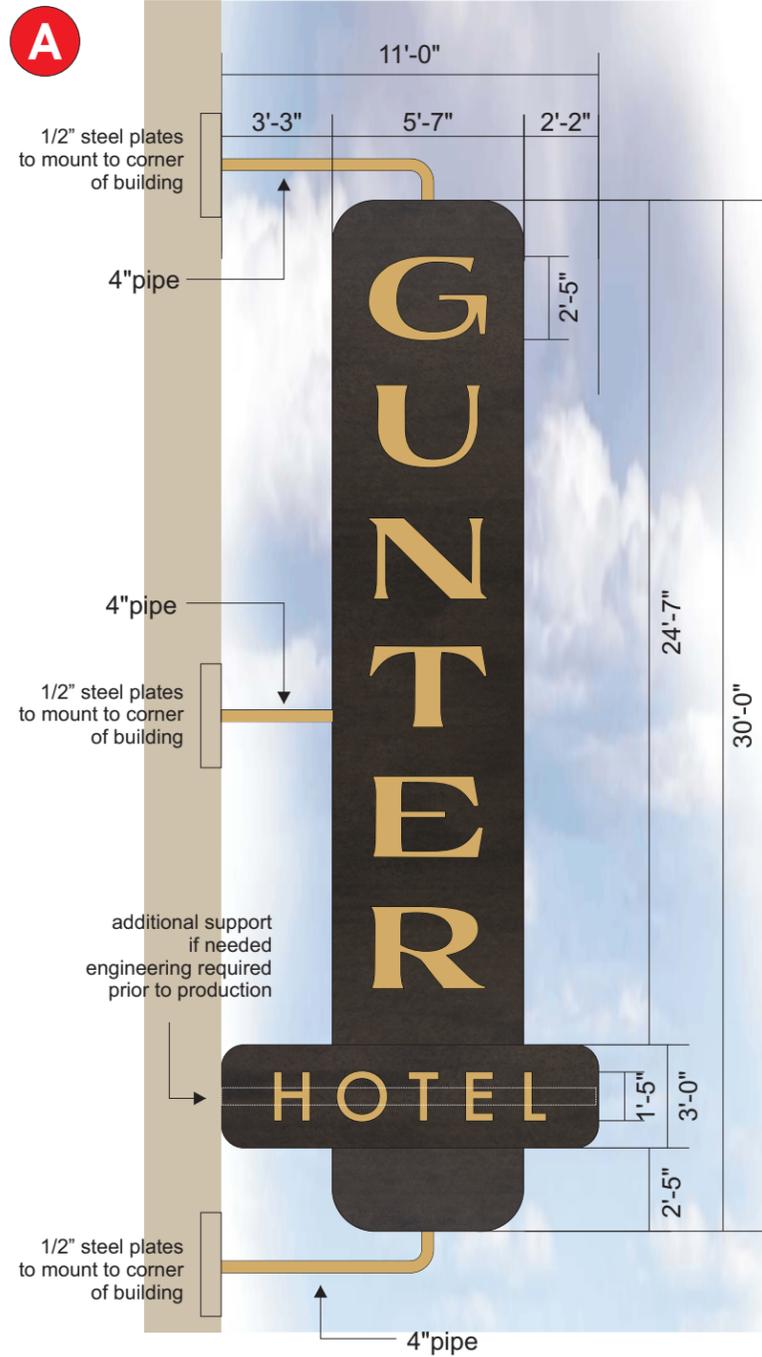
2438 FREEDOM DRIVE  
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78217  
PH: 210.826.2800

WWW.AETNASIGN.COM

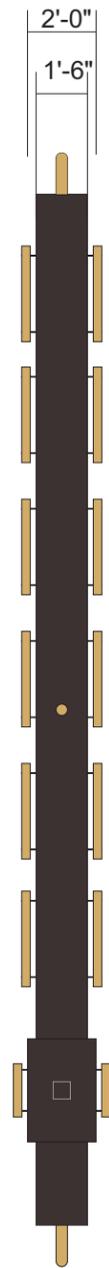
**Gunter Hotel**  
311 N St Mary's  
San Antonio, Texas



OVER 95 YEARS OF SIGNING THE BEST NAMES IN BUSINESS



Front View - Scale: 3/16"=1'-0"



Side View

Specifications:

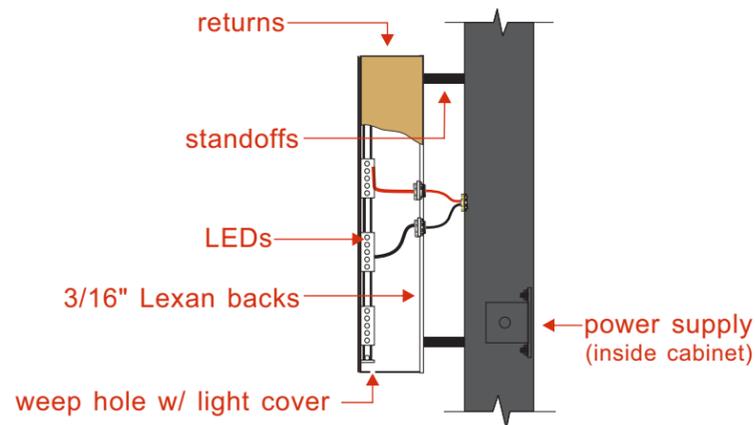
Manufacture and install one (1) new D/F Blade Sign.

Main Cabinet - alum construction, painted with Dk Bronze Oil Rubbed finish

Rev Ch Lit Letters - alum construction, 3" returns, 2" stand-offs painted brass color, clear lexan backs, internally illuminated with warm white LEDs

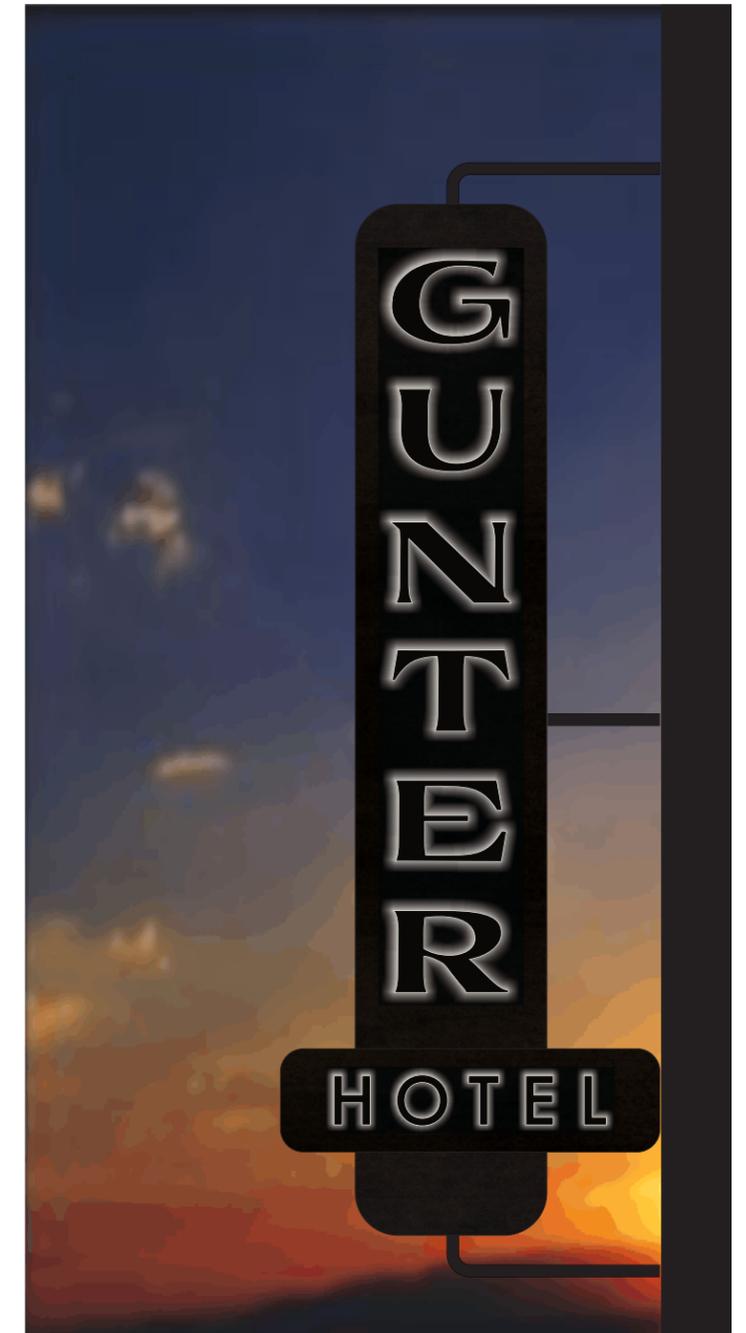
support pipes Top, Center, Bottom- steel pipes, painted brass color  
Note: size and additional support pipe to be determined with engineering

sign to be corner mounted with sq tubes and corner brackets



Reverse-Lit Channel Letter - NTS

Note: seal all fascia penetrations watertight



Night View - Scale: 3/16"=1'-0"

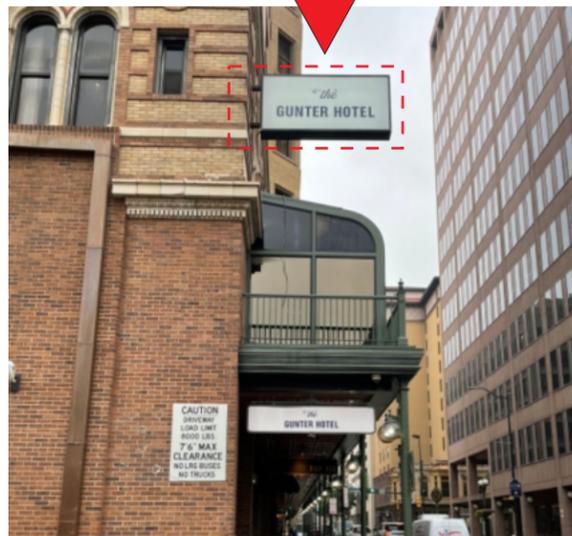
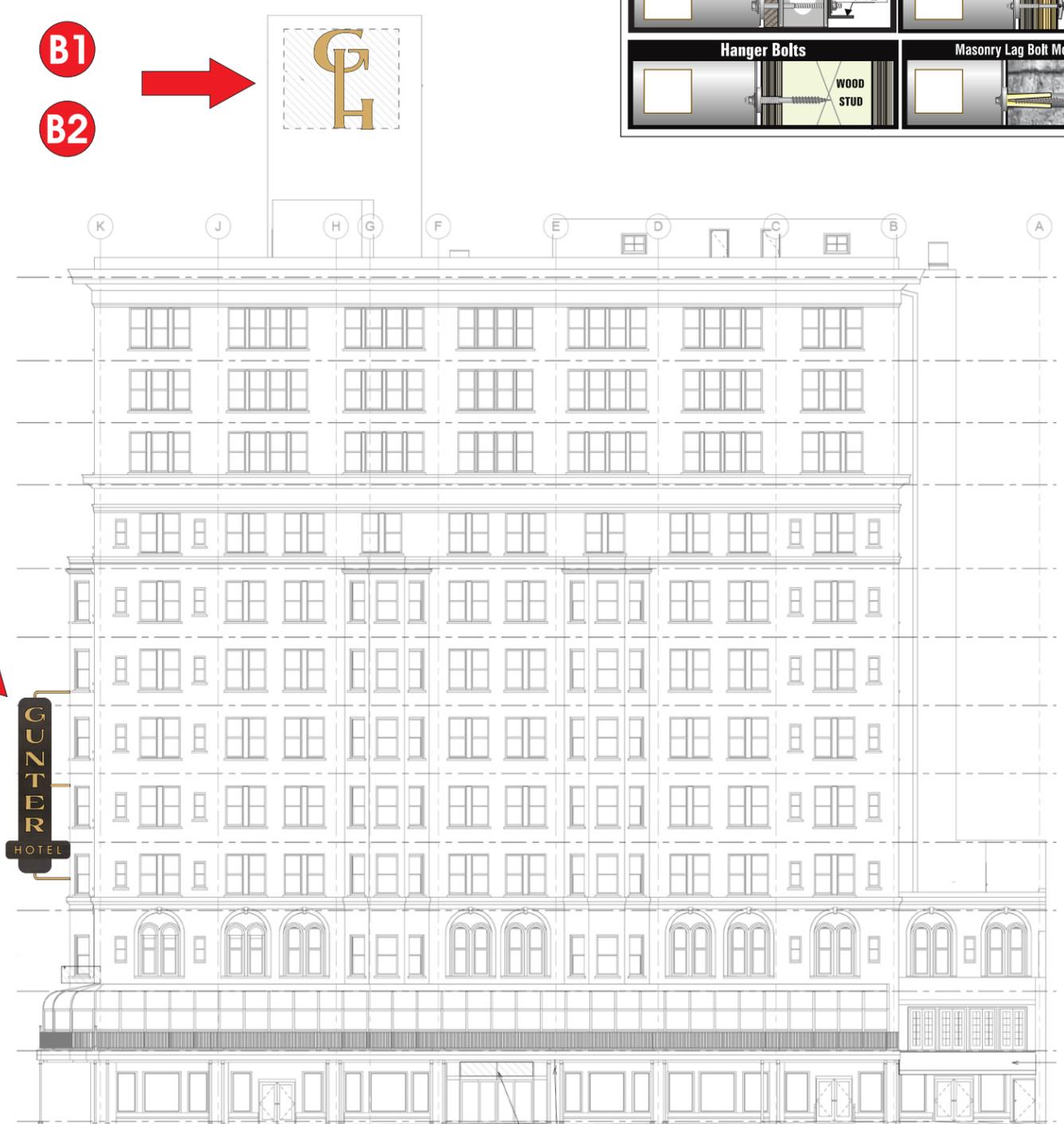
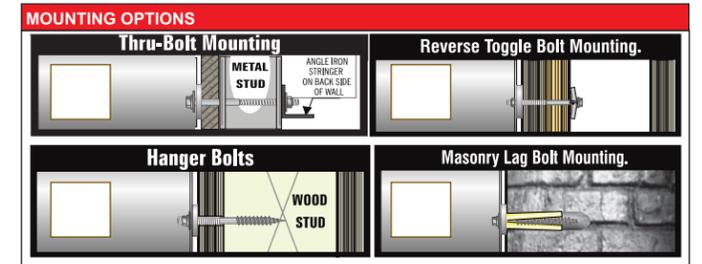
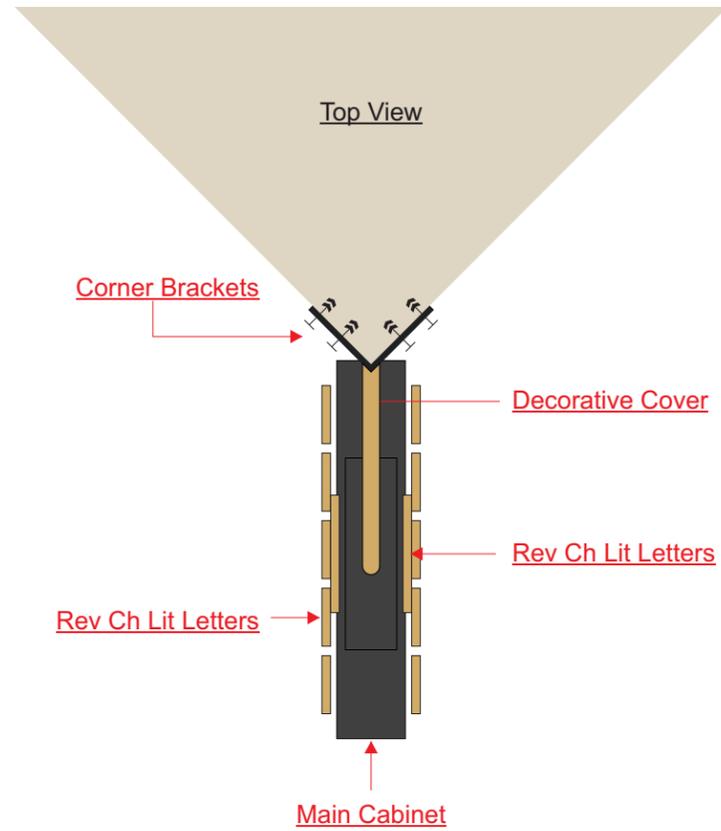
Colors:

- MP 26077 DK BRONZE
- MP 21606 TUCSON GOLD



2438 FREEDOM DRIVE + SAN ANTONIO, TX 78217 + PH: 210.826.2800  
FAX: 210.477.2323 + WWW.AETNASIGN.COM + FOLLOW US ON

|  |                       |   |                   |
|--|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| CLIENT: Gunter Hotel                     | DRWG#: 7709.1         | CITY: San Antonio, Texas  | DESIGNER: Arnie V |
| ADDRESS: 311 N St Mary's St              | SALES REP: Jeanette M | DATE: 04-07-24  | CLIENT APPROVAL:  |
| COMPUTER FILE: art\drwg\misc\7709_gunter | TSC#18370             | Unpublished Work. Aetna Sign Group, LTD. All rights reserved. This is an original drawing created by Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It is submitted for your personal use; however, it shall at all times remain the property of Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It may be used in connection with the project being planned for you by Aetna Sign Group, LTD., but not otherwise. © 2023 Aetna Sign Group, LTD. |                   |



**SIGN 1 - Remove and Discard Existing Flag mounted Cabinet**



**SIGN 2 - Remove and Discard Existing Flag mounted Cabinet**

Photo Survey Existing - NTS

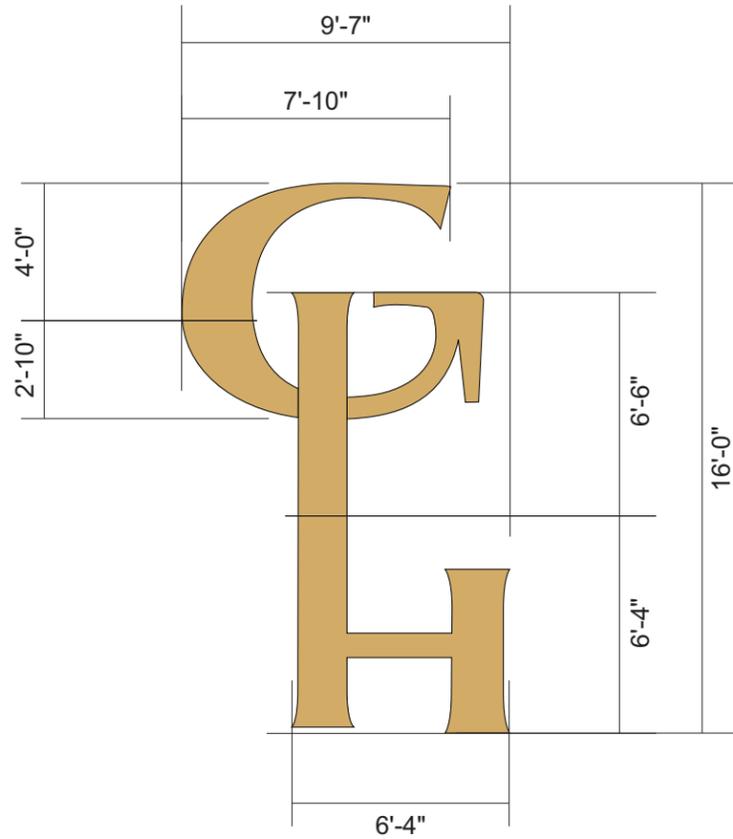
Elevation Proposed - NTS



|  |                       |   |                   |
|--|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| CLIENT: Gunter Hotel                     | DRWG#: 7709.2         | CITY: San Antonio, Texas  | DESIGNER: Arnie V |
| ADDRESS: 311 N St Mary's St              | SALES REP: Jeanette M | DATE: 04-07-24  | CLIENT APPROVAL:  |
| COMPUTER FILE: art\drwg\misc\7709_gunter | TSC#18370             | Unpublished Work. Aetna Sign Group, LTD. All rights reserved. This is an original drawing created by Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It is submitted for your personal use; however, it shall at all times remain the property of Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It may be used in connection with the project being planned for you by Aetna Sign Group, LTD., but not otherwise. © 2023 Aetna Sign Group, LTD. |                   |

B1

B2



Front View - Scale: 3/16"=1'-0"

**Specifications:**

Manufacture and install Two (2) new Logo Signs as shown.

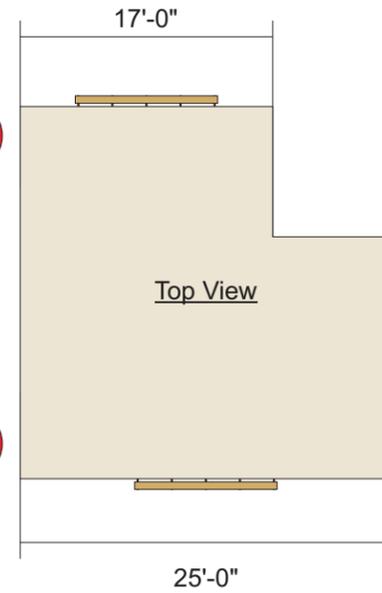
Rev Ch Lit Logos - alum construction, 6" returns, 2" stand-offs painted brass color, clear lexan backs, internally illuminated with warm white LEDs

**Note:**

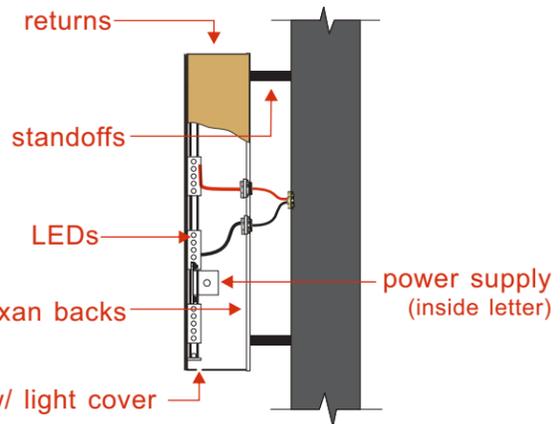
Sign made in sections, largest section to exceed 4'-0"x6'-6" to fit up freight elevator

B1

B2



**Colors:**  
 ■ MP 26077 DK BRONZE  
 ■ MP 21606 TUCSON GOLD



Self Contained Reverse-Lit Channel Letter - NTS

Note: seal all fascia penetrations watertight

B2

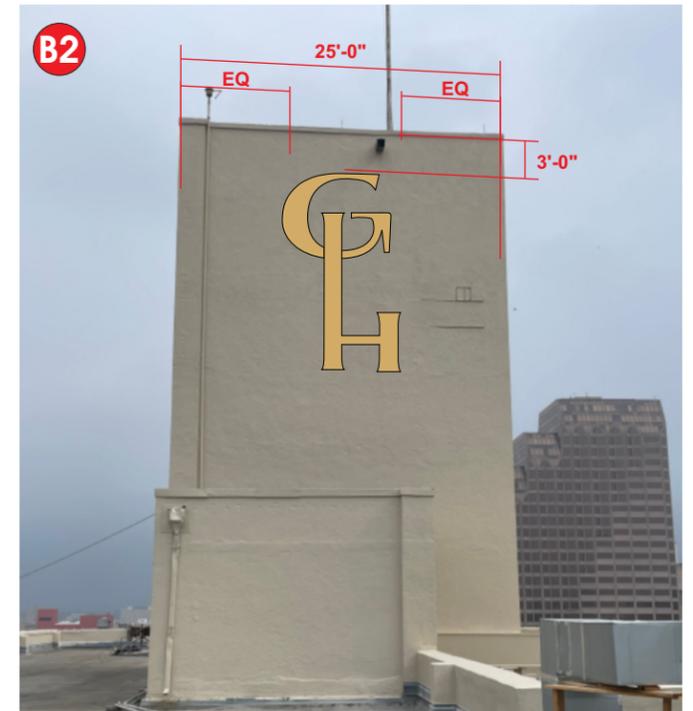


Photo Survey Proposed - NTS



Night View - NTS



2438 FREEDOM DRIVE + SAN ANTONIO, TX 78217 + PH: 210.826.2800  
 FAX: 210.477.2323 + WWW.AETNASIGN.COM + FOLLOW US ON

|  |                       |   |                   |
|--|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| CLIENT: Gunter Hotel                     | DRWG#: 7709.3         | CITY: San Antonio, Texas  | DESIGNER: Arnie V |
| ADDRESS: 311 N St Mary's St              | SALES REP: Jeanette M | DATE: 04-07-24  | CLIENT APPROVAL:  |
| COMPUTER FILE: art\drwg\misc\7709_gunter | TSC#18370             | Unpublished Work. Aetna Sign Group, LTD. All rights reserved. This is an original drawing created by Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It is submitted for your personal use; however, it shall at all times remain the property of Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It may be used in connection with the project being planned for you by Aetna Sign Group, LTD., but not otherwise. © 2023 Aetna Sign Group, LTD. |                   |



Front View - Scale: 3/8"=1'-0"

Colors:  
 ■ MP 26077 DK BRONZE  
 ■ MP 21606 TUCSON GOLD



Photo Survey Existing - NTS

Remove and Discard Existing Ch Lit Letters



Night View - NTS

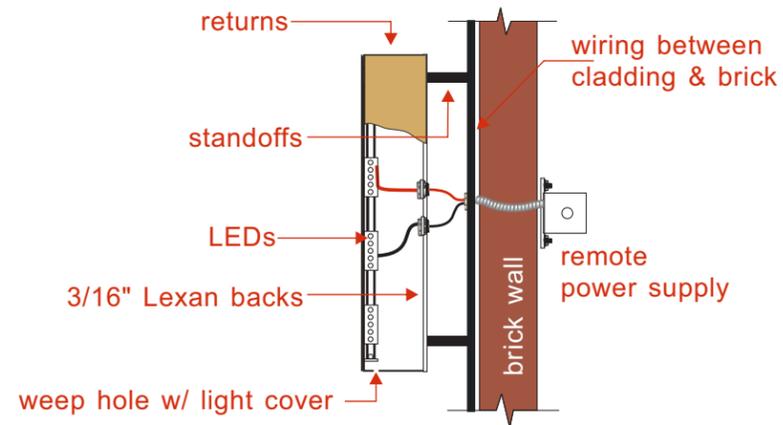
Specifications:

Manufacture and install Two (2) new Logo Signs as shown.

Rev Ch Lit Logos - alum construction, 3" returns, 2" stand-offs painted Brass color, option 2: Letters with brushed brass finish clear lexan backs, internally illuminated with warm white LEDs

Note:

Customer to supply metal cladding for letters to be installed and wired in shop



Reverse-Lit Channel Letter - NTS

Note: seal all fascia penetrations watertight



Photo Survey Proposed - NTS



2438 FREEDOM DRIVE + SAN ANTONIO, TX 78217 + PH: 210.826.2800  
 FAX: 210.477.2323 + WWW.AETNASIGN.COM + FOLLOW US ON

|  |                       |   |                   |
|--|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| CLIENT: Gunter Hotel                     | DRWG#: 7709.4         | CITY: San Antonio, Texas  | DESIGNER: Arnie V |
| ADDRESS: 311 N St Mary's St              | SALES REP: Jeanette M | DATE: 04-07-24  | CLIENT APPROVAL:  |
| COMPUTER FILE: art\drwg\misc\7709_gunter | TSC#18370             | Unpublished Work. Aetna Sign Group, LTD. All rights reserved. This is an original drawing created by Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It is submitted for your personal use; however, it shall at all times remain the property of Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It may be used in connection with the project being planned for you by Aetna Sign Group, LTD., but not otherwise. © 2023 Aetna Sign Group, LTD. |                   |

D



Front View - Scale: 1"=1'-0"



Photo Survey Existing - NTS

Specifications:

Remove and discard Existing Sign, reuse existing bracket

Manufacture and install one (1) new D/F Panel Sign.

Alum Construction Painted as Shown

1/4" FCO copy, Painted as Shown

1" sq tube frame

Colors:

- MP 26077 DK BRONZE
- MP 21606 TUCSON GOLD



Photo Survey Example - new sign to match colors - NTS



Photo Survey Proposed - NTS



2438 FREEDOM DRIVE + SAN ANTONIO, TX 78217 + PH: 210.826.2800  
 FAX: 210.477.2323 + WWW.AETNASIGN.COM + FOLLOW US ON

|                   |                           |            |            |   |                    |                  |         |
|-------------------|---------------------------|------------|------------|---|--------------------|------------------|---------|
| CLIENT:           | Gunter Hotel              | DRWG#:     | 7709.5     | CITY:   | San Antonio, Texas | DESIGNER:        | Arnie V |
| ADDRESS:          | 311 N St Mary's St        | SALES REP: | Jeanette M | DATE:   | 04-07-24           | CLIENT APPROVAL: |         |
| COMPUTER FILE:    | art\drwg\misc\7709_gunter | TSC#       | 18370      | Unpublished Work. Aetna Sign Group, LTD. All rights reserved. This is an original drawing created by Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It is submitted for your personal use; however, it shall at all times remain the property of Aetna Sign Group, LTD. It may be used in connection with the project being planned for you by Aetna Sign Group, LTD., but not otherwise. © 2023 Aetna Sign Group, LTD. |                    |                  |         |
| REVISION HISTORY: |                           |            |            |   |                    |                  |         |