

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

May 03, 2023

HDRC CASE NO: 2023-154
ADDRESS: 111 ALAMO PLAZA
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 145 BLK LOT 11 & 12
ZONING: D, H, RIO-3
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Alamo Plaza Historic District
APPLICANT: Marco Barros/City Sightseeing Tours
OWNER: DAVID STRAINGE/ALAMO QUARTERS LTD
TYPE OF WORK: Signage, installation of mobile vending kiosks
APPLICATION RECEIVED: March 27, 2023
60-DAY REVIEW: Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Edward Hall

REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to:

1. Install a mobile vending kiosk with signage and an umbrella on the east side of Alamo Plaza across the street from 111 Alamo Plaza.
2. Install a mobile vending kiosk with signage and an umbrella at the corner of Alamo Plaza and Blum Street, adjacent to Rivercenter Mall.
3. Install a mobile vending kiosk with signage and an umbrella at the corner of Alamo Plaza and E Crockett, adjacent to the Alamo grounds.
4. Install three (3) A-frame signs in front of the storefront at 111 Alamo Plaza.

Approximately twenty (20) other signs have been installed without Certificates of Appropriateness throughout downtown (E Houston Street, Alamo Plaza, E Commerce, N Presa). These signs are unauthorized. Additionally, unauthorized signage has been attached to public safety signs, including stop signs.

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.

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.

Unified Development Code Section 35-612. - Signs and Billboards.

The intent of this section is to regulate all exterior signs and permanent interior window signs placed for exterior observance; to establish limitations on signs to ensure that they are appropriate to the neighborhood, building or use to which they are appurtenant and are adequate, but not excessive, for their intended purpose as a means of communication without adverse impact on the visual character of the area; to ensure that signs are compatible with their surroundings; to maintain and enhance the aesthetic environment of the City of San Antonio; to improve pedestrian and traffic safety; to minimize the possible adverse affect of signs on nearby public and private property; to avoid visual clutter that is potentially harmful to traffic and pedestrian safety, property values, and community appearance; and to enable the fair and consistent enforcement of these sign regulations. The historic design guidelines are intended to supplement signage and billboard regulations contained in this chapter and chapter 28 of the City Code. The historic design guidelines should be reviewed and applied in conjunction with this chapter and chapter 28 of the City Code, however, in the case of a conflict the more strict regulation or guideline shall control unless a specific exception has been granted by the city council. In an effort to promote both historic preservation and environmental awareness, applicants are encouraged to submit ideas to the office of historic preservation regarding environmentally friendly options that relate to signage proposals.

(a) General Provisions.

- (1) All signage within a historic district or on a designated historic landmark shall conform to all city codes and must have approval of the historic preservation officer prior to installation. Permits must be obtained following issuance of a certificate of appropriateness. 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 chapter and chapter 28.
- (2) Signs should respect and respond to the historic character and period being preserved.
- (3) All signage within an RIO district shall conform to the requirements of section 35-678 and 35-681 as applicable.
- (4) 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.
- (5) The name of a business, or information pertaining to 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.
- (6) 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.
- (7) 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.
- (8) 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.
- (9) Temporary displays are authorized if in accordance with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas.

(b) Sign Definitions.

- (1) Sign means any object, device, display, structure, description, figure, painting, drawing, message, plaque, placard, poster, or thing or any part thereof, situated outdoors or indoors, that is designed or used to advertise, inform, identify, display, direct, or attract attention to anything by any means, including words,

letters, figures, design, symbols, fixtures, colors, illumination or projected images. The foregoing enumeration of signs shall not be considered to be exclusive. The term "sign" shall include all other devices or structures as may reasonably be included under it; whether attached or unattached. The following types of signs are more specifically defined:

- A. Banner sign means a sign made of fabric or any non-rigid material with no enclosing framework.
- B. Building mounted sign means a sign attached to, painted on, inscribed upon or deriving its major support from a building, including a wall sign, a projecting sign or an awning sign. For the purposes of this chapter, a sign attached to or painted on a gasoline pump island canopy shall be considered a building-mounted sign. For the purposes of this chapter, permanent signs painted on windows or doors, attached to windows or doors, or hung behind and within three (3) feet of the windows or doors, either illuminated or non-illuminated, shall be considered a building mounted sign subject to the sign area regulations contained in this chapter.
- C. Directory sign means a subsidiary sign listing the names, uses and/or location of various businesses conducted within a building or group of buildings.
- D. Freestanding sign means a sign, supported by one (1) or more columns, uprights or braces, in or upon the ground, but not attached to any building. A sign attached to a flat surface not a part of the building, such as a fence or wall, shall be considered a freestanding sign. A monument sign, as defined below, shall also be considered a freestanding sign. For the purposes of this chapter, a freestanding sign listing two (2) or more businesses located on a property or in a shopping center, and which is designed as one (1) sign, shall be considered one (1) freestanding sign.
- E. Monument sign means a ground mounted sign mounted on a contiguous base having at least ninety (90) percent of the sign width and its supporting structure, and not attached to any building. For the purposes of this chapter, a monument sign listing two (2) or more businesses located on a property or in a shopping center, and which is designed as one (1) sign, shall be considered one (1) monument sign.
- F. Portable sign means any sign designed or constructed to be easily moved from one location to another, including signs mounted upon or designed to be mounted on a trailer, wheeled carrier, or other non-motorized mobile structure. A portable sign which has its wheels removed shall still be considered a portable sign. The term "nonelectric portable sign" shall mean any portable sign which does not have any electrical components. Non-vehicular signs of this type may also be referred to as "A-frame signs."
- G. Projecting sign means a sign mounted perpendicularly to a building, column, or sign standard (may also be referred to as a projecting arm sign). Freestanding projecting signs may be no more than six (6) feet in height.
- H. Temporary sign means a sign, banner, pennant, poster, or advertising display constructed of cloth, plastic sheet, cardboard, wallboard, or other like materials, not for display for a period longer than ninety (90) days and not permanently attached to a building or the ground.
- I. Wall sign means a building mounted sign attached to, painted on, inscribed upon, or deriving its major support from a wall, and which projects less than twelve (12) inches from the wall.
- J. Sandwich board means a sign of A-frame construction designed for placement on the sidewalk near or in front of the place of business being advertised, and which shall be no larger than two (2) feet wide, and three (3) feet tall when extended.
- K. Real estate sign means a sign intended to advertise the financing, development, sale, transfer, lease, exchange, or rental of real property on which the property is located.
- L. Window sign means any sign, picture, symbol, or combination thereof, designed to communicate information about an activity, business, commodity, event, sale, or service, that is placed inside a window or upon the window panes or glass and is visible from the exterior of the window. A window sign does not include merchandise or models of products or services incorporated in window display.
- M. Interior Signage means a sign hung within ten (10) feet of an exterior fenestration, or a sign intended to be read by exterior patrons outside of a building.

- (2) General maintenance means as it regards on-premises signs, shall be defined as repair or replacement of existing parts with like items, such as lamps, lamp sockets, neon tubing, ballasts, motors, pulleys, bearings, plastic faces, refacing, painting, and miscellaneous bolts, screws or rivets. However, it shall not include any rebuilding, reconstructing or any reconfiguration of the existing sign cabinet.
- (c) **Standards for Sign Design and Placement.** In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of an application for a permit to construct or alter signage on a building, object, site, or structure designated a historic landmark or located in a historic 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 historic characteristic of the district and structure.
 - (2) Signs which describe, point, or direct the reader to a specific place or along a specific course, such as "entrance," "exit," and "handicap access" signs, as well as government signs, shall be reviewed by the historic and design review commission 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 should not disfigure, damage, mar, alter, or conceal architectural features or details and should 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 by the historic and design review commission. The historic and design review commission 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 may 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 at least six (6) Lux at the property boundary. If internal illumination is used, it should be designed to be subordinate to the overall building composition.
- (d) **Proportion of Signs.** For all 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 should 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 floor space occupied by each business or service. Applicants may apply for up to three (3) signs total, with total signage per facade no bigger than twenty (20) percent of the proposed facade it will be placed upon. 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. Notwithstanding the above, signs may not exceed the maximum size and height limitation for signage contained in chapter 28, article 9. The applicant is strongly advised to coordinate his signage plan with signage plans of other building tenants. It is also 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 office of historic preservation, applications for signage may be approved administratively at the discretion of the historic preservation officer provided that they comply with such master signage plan. This provision does not apply to districts and landmarks in river improvement overlay (RIO) districts, which shall be guided by 35-678 and 35-681, respectively.
 - (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 computation of 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 approved as provided for in this section. This type of sign is to identify a building as a destination and shall not be included in the total allowable signage area.

(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. The maximum size of such sign shall be thirty-two (32) square feet. 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, parking area, historic area or district, 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, decals, 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.

- (g) **Pedestrian Menu Boards and Sandwich Boards.** Pedestrian menu boards shall not exceed two (2) square feet. Notwithstanding provisions of section 28-17, sandwich boards are permitted in historic districts, river improvement overlay districts, and historic landmarks as on premises signs provided permitting requirements of chapter 28, section 28-17 are met. 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. 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. All items listed on a menu board must be placed within the border of the menu board or within the display case. 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) **Noncommercial Speech Signs.** Noncommercial speech signs including but not limited to public service announcements may be erected in historic 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 it shall not be illuminated.
- (i) **Allowable Temporary Signs.** If approved, the area of temporary signs shall not be included in the general allowable area for the specified property. 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. Political campaign signs shall be removed within thirty (30) days after the election day for which they are erected or posted.
 - (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 unless more is authorized.
 - (5) Seasonal decorations displayed between November 20 and January 4, 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 facade of a 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. Notwithstanding the above, signs may not exceed the maximum size and height limitation for signage contained in chapter 28, article 9.
 - (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.
- (j) **Prohibited Signs.**

- (1) Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, and advertising benches shall not be permitted within historic districts or on historic landmarks;
- (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 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 historic district or historic landmark 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 case of a contributing sign. 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 signs;
- (9) Revolving signs or signs with a kinetic component;
- (10) Any sandwich board which conflicts with the Americans with Disabilities Act, or which disrupts or interferes with pedestrian or other traffic; and
- (11) 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 is 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 source proposed. Notwithstanding the above, signs may not exceed illumination restrictions contained in chapter 28.
- (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 or other floating 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 advertize 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.

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.

- (k) **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.

(l) **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.

- (m) **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 by all necessary city departments.

- (n) **Violations.** In those instances where a sign is erected or maintained in violation of the aforementioned restrictions, the historic preservation officer, or the department of development services, 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. In addition, nothing herein shall prevent the city attorney from seeking civil remedies.

- (1) **Dilapidated Signs.** Signs shall be maintained in good working condition so as to present a neat and orderly appearance. 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, the development services department, or the 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. Additionally, whether the sign has been designated a contributing structure shall be taken into account when evaluating the condition of the sign.
- (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.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install signage and mobile vending kiosks throughout the Alamo Plaza Historic District.
- b. ALLOWABLE SIGNAGE – The Historic Design Guidelines and Unified Development Code recommends one major and two minor signs per application, not to exceed fifty (50) square feet total. The Commission may approve additional signage and square footage.
- c. TEMPORARY SIGNAGE – City of San Antonio staff temporarily approved the location of a charter bus to be parked within Alamo Plaza to serve as signage with the condition that all unapproved signage be removed. The condition of this approval has not been met.
- d. VIOLATION – OHP staff performed a site visit in December 2022, and identified approximately twenty (20) unapproved signs located throughout Alamo Plaza. Requests for removal of unapproved signage have not been followed.
- e. PROHIBITED SIGNAGE – The UDC Section 35-612(j) prohibits the following signage within historic districts:
 - i. Revolving signs or signs with a kinetic component;
 - ii. Any sign which advertises commercial off-premises businesses, products, activities, services, or events unless otherwise allowed in this article;
 - iii. Any sign which consists of pennants, ribbons, spinners or other similar moving devices;
 - iv. 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;
 - v. Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, and advertising benches shall not be permitted within historic districts or on historic landmarks;
- f. MOBILE VENDING KIOSKS – The applicant has proposed to install three (3) mobile vending kiosks within Alamo Plaza. The first will be located on the east side of Alamo Plaza across the street from 111 Alamo Plaza, adjacent to a bus parking location. The second will be at the corner of Alamo Plaza and Blum Street, adjacent to Rivercenter Mall. The third will be at the corner of Alamo Plaza and E Crockett, adjacent to the Alamo grounds. Each kiosk will feature attached signage and an umbrella. Staff finds the installation one (1) kiosk to be appropriate in front of the storefront at 111 Alamo Plaza, on the west side of the street. The kiosk must be in a location authorized by a lease agreement with Center City Development & Operations Department. Additionally, the kiosks shall not impede normal pedestrian traffic at any time.
- g. A-FRAME SIGNS – The applicant has proposed to install three (3) A-frame sign in front of the storefront on E Houston. The Unified Development Code Section 35-678(g) notes that A-frame signs should be double sided and placed in front of the place of business. Additionally, menu boards are to be no larger than two (2) feet in width and three (3) feet in height, when extended. Staff finds the installation of one (1) A-frame sign to be located in front of 111 Alamo Plaza to be appropriate.
- h. ADDITIONAL SIGNAGE – Staff finds that additional signage at 111 Alamo Plaza may be appropriate. One (1) building mounted sign and one (1) hanging blade sign would both be eligible for administrative approval provided that they are consistent with the Guidelines for Signage; not to exceed fifty (50) square feet in size, be constructed of metal, and be indirectly lit.
- i. TABLE, CHAIRS & UMBRELLAS – The installation of a small table, chairs and umbrellas, as shown in the presentation is eligible for administrative approval per authorization by a lease agreement with Center City Development & Operations Department.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Staff recommends approval of item #1, the installation of a mobile vending kiosk with signage and an umbrella to be located directly in front of 111 Alamo Plaza with the following stipulations:
 - i. That the proposed kiosk be installed in location authorized by a lease agreement with Center City Development & Operations Department on the west side of the street, in front of 111 Alamo Plaza. Additionally, the kiosk shall not impede normal pedestrian traffic at any time.

2. Staff does not recommend approval of items #2 and #3, the installation of a mobile vending kiosks with signage and umbrellas at the corner of Alamo Plaza and Blum Street and Alamo Plaza and E Crockett. Staff recommends the installation of one mobile vending kiosk total.
3. Staff recommends approval of item #3, with the stipulation that only one (1) A-frame sign is located on site. The sign is to be located directly in front of 111 Alamo Plaza.

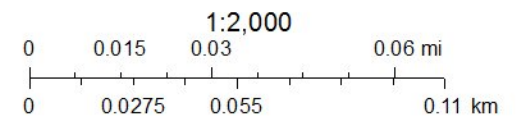
In addition to the above stipulations, the following unapproved signs are to be removed prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- i. All unapproved A-frame signs located downtown. This includes signage throughout Alamo Plaza, on E Houston Street, on E Commerce Street, and on N Presa.
- ii. All unapproved signage located at and in front of 101/105 Alamo Plaza. This includes A-frame signs, signage attached to building columns, and free-standing signs installed on the sidewalk.
- iii. All unapproved signage attached to signage within the right of way, including stop signs.

City of San Antonio One Stop



April 27, 2023



Street View of Mobile Kiosk with Umbrella at Alamo Plaza/ Blum Street



- Image displays red mobile kiosk occupying an approximate 5-foot radius.
- As requested, A-board signage has been removed including those sitting next to the fire hydrant in front of the H&M shopping outlet.
- As requested, umbrellas feature no logos or advertisements. These units are stored during non-operating hours.
- Red mobile kiosk is not obstructing pedestrian walkways.

Street View of Approved Advertisement Bus Staging Area



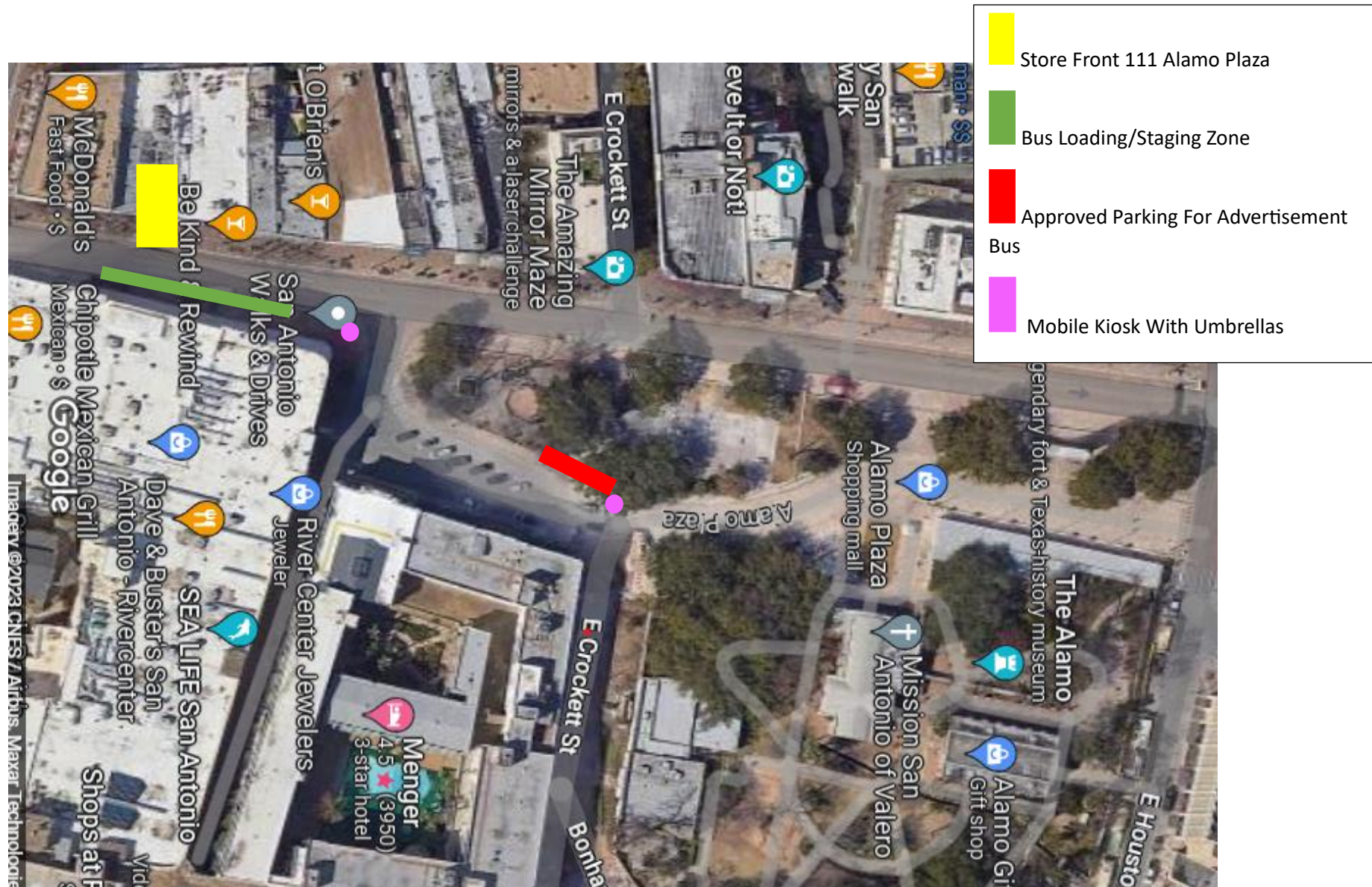
- Image displays approved stationary advertisement bus.
- Image displays red mobile kiosk occupying an approximate 5 foot radius.
- Units are not obstructing pedestrian walkways.
- With the Official City of San Antonio/ Visit San Antonio Information Center now permanently closed, both these units encourage where tourists and visitors can go to inquire about local information, directions, etc.

View of Store Front 111 Alamo Plaza



- As requested, A-frame signage (2' x 3.5') has been reduced to three units in total and have no illuminating features.
- As requested, air dancer inflatable advertisement has been removed.
- Umbrellas feature no logos or advertisements.
- Walkway is unobstructed.

Aerial View of Operating/Staging Areas



Apr 24, 2023 at 11:58:13 AM
205 E Houston St
San Antonio TX 78205
United States



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:05:11 PM
112-198 E Crockett St
San Antonio TX 78205
United States



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:06:29 PM
202 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:06:59 PM

CitySightseeing 

Hop-On Hop-Off Tours
River Walk Cruise Packages

INFORMATION

Apr 24, 2023 at 12:07:10 PM



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:07:24 PM
100 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States
Shops at Rivercenter



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:08:00 PM
100 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States
Shops at Rivercenter



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:08:02 PM
100 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States
Shops at Rivercenter



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:08:29 PM
100 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States
Shops at Rivercenter

Hop-On
Hop-Off
Tour Tickets

Fiesta Parade
Seats
available here

Ki
Chocolate
Ice

Apr 24, 2023 at 12:08:32 PM
100 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States
Shops at Rivercenter



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:08:36 PM
100 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States
Shops at Rivercenter



Apr 24 2023 at 12:08:13 PM



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:08:51 PM
100 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States
Shops at Rivercenter



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:10:57 PM
400 E Commerce St
San Antonio TX 78205
United States
The San Antonio River Walk



Apr 24, 2023 at 12:11:04 PM
220 N Presa St
San Antonio TX 78205
United States
The San Antonio River Walk





Investigation Report

Property

Address	Approximately the 100 and 200 blocks of Alamo Plaza
District/Overlay	Alamo Plaza
Owner Information	Alamo Quarters, LTD; 101 Alamo, LLC

Site Visit

Date	12/21/2022
Time	10:10 AM (-6 GMT)
Context	internal report
Present Staff	Edward Hall
Present Individuals	None
Contractor/Realtor Companies	City Sight Seeing
Types of Work Observed	Signage
Amount of Work Completed	Not applicable
Description of work	Signage installed in the right of way without proper approvals, signage installed without Certificates of Appropriateness, signage installed in excess of UDC standards, off-premise signage, prohibited signage, kiosks installed within the right of way, structure extending from a parked vehicle over the right of way.

Action Taken

Violation Type	No Certificate of Appropriateness (Code 35-451a)
OHP Action	No Action Taken/Photos Only
Will post-work application fee apply?	To be determined

Documentation



Investigation Report

Photographs





Investigation Report





Investigation Report





Investigation Report





Investigation Report





Investigation Report





Investigation Report





Investigation Report



December 21, 2022 at 9:54 AM
105 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States



December 21, 2022 at 9:54 AM
105 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio TX 78205
United States



Investigation Report



12/21/2022 10:15 AM

Additional photos were taken on another device.

No