

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

October 06, 2021

HDRC CASE NO: 2021-482
ADDRESS: 420 BROADWAY
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 432 (SAN ANTONIO LIGHT), BLOCK 16 LOT 14
ZONING: FBZ T6-1,HL
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
LANDMARK: San Antonio Light Building
APPLICANT: Mark Henderson/Ford Powell & Carson Architects
OWNER: GRAYSTREET 420 BROADWAY LLC
TYPE OF WORK: Signage
APPLICATION RECEIVED: September 17, 2021
60-DAY REVIEW: Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders
CASE MANAGER: Stephanie Phillips
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for a master signage plan and multiple new signs at the property addressed 420 Broadway. The requested signage includes:

1. A wall-mounted sign on the tower of the historic building facing Broadway on the southwest façade to read “SA” with channel letters reading “Express News.” The sign will measure approximately 59 square feet and will be constructed of bronze aluminum faced, reverse lit channel letters.
2. A wall-mounted sign on the first floor facing Broadway and McCullough to measure approximately 12 square feet. The sign will read “SA” with channel letters reading “Express News” beneath the logo.
3. Three separate cast stone monument signs to feature multi-tenant signage. The monument signs will measure approximately 4’ in height and be located at the intersections of Broadway & 4th St, 4th St & Alamo St, and at a driveway to the parking lot off Broadway. The letters for the signage will be 4” tall cast bronze anchored into cast concrete and will be indirectly lit by a light recessed in the concrete above.
4. A cast stone monument sign near the center of the parcel to serve as pedestrian signage for those entering the building from the parking lot. The monument sign will measure approximately 4’ in height. The letters for the signage will be 4” tall cast bronze anchored into cast concrete and will be indirectly lit by a light recessed in the concrete above.

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.

4. Freestanding Signs

A. GENERAL

- i. *Appropriate usage*—Freestanding signs are most appropriate in locations where building forms are set back from the street, such as in areas where historic residences have been adapted for office or retail uses, or in commercial districts where they may be used to identify parking areas or other accessory uses.
- ii. *Placement*—Place freestanding signs near the public right-of-way where they are clearly visible to passing pedestrians and motorists, a minimum of five feet from the street right-of-way and ten feet from all interior side lot lines. No freestanding sign should be placed in a manner that obstructs the pedestrian walkway.
- iii. *Number*—Limit the number of freestanding signs per platted lot to one, unless the lot fronts more than one street, in which case, one sign is allowed on each street on which the lot has frontage.
- iv. *Monument signs*—Do not use —suburban-style monument signs or electronic messaging signs not historically found in San Antonio’s historic districts.

B. DESIGN

- i. *Height*—Limit the height of freestanding signs to no more than six feet.
- ii. *Area*—The size of new signs should be appropriate within the historic context, and should not exceed 25 square feet on either side, for a total of 50 square feet. Appropriate size shall be determined by considering historic precedent, sign patterns within historic districts, and conditions specific to individual properties.
- iii. *Structural supports*—Use subtle structural elements (in terms of their scale and mass) with historically compatible materials to support a freestanding sign.

5. Window Signs

A. GENERAL

- i. *Location*—Limit the use of window signs to first floor windows where they may be readily viewed by pedestrians.
- ii. *Appropriate building types*—Use window signs in high traffic pedestrian areas, such as on commercial storefronts or other buildings that have been adapted for non-residential use.
- iii. *Historic signage*—Retain historic window signage if it reflects a historic building name, owner, or early business.

B. DESIGN

- i. *Window coverage*—Do not cover more than 30 percent of the window area with signage.
- ii. *Opacity*—Do not use window signs constructed of opaque materials that obscure views into and out of windows, either partially or completely.
- iii. *Prohibited window signs*—Do not use paper signs, banners, or graphic films that adhere to the exterior of window glazing.
- iv. *Symbols and lettering*—Incorporate lettering, symbols, and other design elements that reflect the type of business or institution at the location to increase a sign’s impact.
- v. *Temporary signs and banners*—Place temporary signs in a manner that is appropriate for the building scale and style, as allowed by UDC sec. 35-612(i).

FINDINGS:

- a. The Light Building was constructed circa 1931 as the home of the San Antonio Light newspaper on the corner of Broadway and McCullough. The structure features five stories with ornamental detailing on both street sides and a stucco façade. The structure is an individual local landmark and was recently restored to include a

connector element to the adjacent Print Building. The applicant is requesting two new wall mounted anchor tenant signs on the Light Building and four multi-tenant monument signs located at various areas on the site.

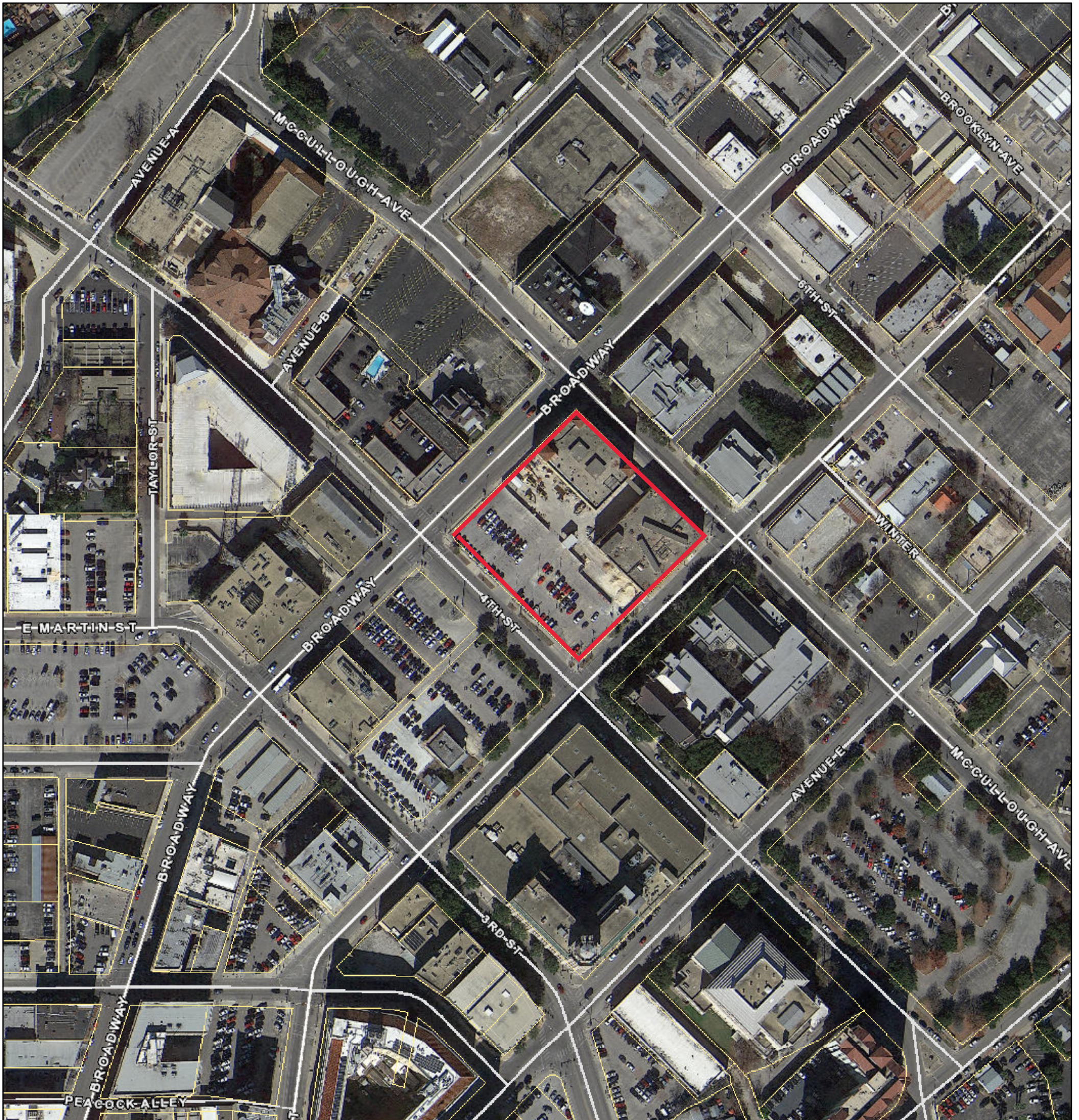
- b. **DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE** – The applicant met with the Design Review Committee (DRC) on September 28, 2021. The documents reviewed at this meeting included the wall mounted and internal monument signs as proposed, but included taller and larger monument signs at the street frontage. The DRC suggested reducing the height and size of the street-fronting monument signage and developing more design consistency with the concrete blocks, landscaping, and tenant name locations. The DRC also encouraged setting the monument signs back from the sidewalk to increase visibility for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The DRC supported the design of the wall mounted signage.
- c. **WALL MOUNTED SIGNS: LOCATION** – The applicant has proposed to install two new wall-mounted signs. One will be located on the southwest facade facing Broadway & 4th St to read “SA Express-News.” Another will be located on the 1st floor of the northwest façade facing McCullough & Broadway, centered below an existing character defining rosette window. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, signs should be placed where historically located and reuse sign attachment parts where they exist. Signs should not be erected 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. Wall signs should be located on existing signboards or mounted to align with others on the block if an existing signboard is not available. Staff finds the two locations consistent with the Guidelines.
- d. **WALL MOUNTED SIGNS: SQUARE FOOTAGE** – Between the two signs, the overall square footage to be introduced is equal to approximately 71 square feet. An existing double-sided projecting sign reading “The Light” exists at the corner of Broadway & McCullough. While the Guidelines generally recommends no more than three signs totaling 50 square feet per building, the Guidelines also state that signage should be appropriate for the size, scale, and design of a building. The proposed square footage is consistent with the scale of the existing building.
- e. **WALL MOUNTED SIGNS: MATERIAL & DESIGN** – The applicant has proposed two reverse lit channel letter signs with painted bronze aluminum faces. According to the Guidelines, wall-mounted signs should not feature internal illumination and should be constructed of durable materials that are consistent with the overall style of the building. Colors should be limited to a maximum of three and be legible. Staff finds the sign material, design, and lighting method consistent.
- f. **MONUMENT SIGNS: LOCATION** – The applicant has proposed four monument signs on the property. Three will be located at the street frontage: Broadway & 4th St, 4th St & Alamo St, and at a driveway to the parking lot off Broadway. Another will be located internal to the site, intended to function as pedestrian directional and directory signage upon entering either the Print or Light Building from the surface parking lot. Per the Guidelines, the number of freestanding signs should be limited to one per plotted plat, unless the lot fronts more than one street, in which case, one sign is allowed on each street on which the lot has frontage. Place freestanding signs near the public right-of-way where they are clearly visible to passing pedestrians and motorists, a minimum of five feet from the street right-of-way and ten feet from all interior side lot lines. No freestanding sign should be placed in a manner that obstructs the pedestrian walkway. The applicant has recessed the location of the street-fronting signs by 1’-8” from the sidewalk, revising a previous proposal that had the signs nearly abutting the sidewalk. This allows for more visibility from vehicular traffic and a low landscaping buffer between the public right-of-way and the signage. The locations are consistent with the Guidelines.
- g. **MONUMENT SIGNS: SQUARE FOOTAGE** – Per the Guidelines, the size of new signs should be appropriate within the historic context, and should not exceed 25 square feet on either side, for a total of 50 square feet. Appropriate size shall be determined by considering historic precedent, sign patterns within historic districts, and conditions specific to individual properties. Staff finds the square footage of the monument signage appropriate for the scale of the this specific lot.
- h. **WALL MOUNTED SIGNS: MATERIAL & DESIGN** – The applicant has proposed a 4’ tall cast concrete block design with cast bronze lettering. The lettering for tenant signage will be 4” in height exclusively located in the second (top) concrete banding along the same horizontal plane to maintain legibility and consistency. A landscaping area will surround the signage on all sides and will be bordered by a low brick wall with cap. Per the Guidelines, multi-tenant signage should be consolidated in a single directory or sign area to promote a unified appearance. Materials should be consistent with the style of the building and the established architectural and material precedents in vicinity. Monument signage should be limited to a maximum of 6’ in height. Staff finds the material, design, and lighting strategy consistent with the Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION:

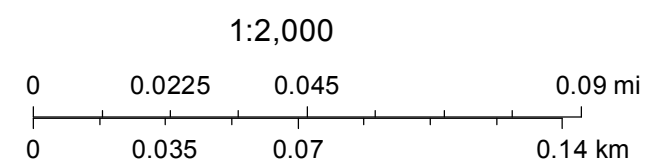
Items 1 through 4, Staff recommends approval of the proposed wall mounted and monument signage based on findings a through h with the following stipulations:

- i. That the applicant submits final signage drawings and material specifications to staff prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- ii. That the applicant submits final landscaping information for the area around the monument signage to staff prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

City of San Antonio One Stop



May 26, 2021



SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS NEWS & SITE SIGNAGE 420 BROADWAY STREET

September 17th, 2021



FORD POWELL CARSON

SEPTEMBER 17th, 2021

HDRC PROJECT DESCRIPTION – COA APPLICATION

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1901 SOUTH ALAMO

SAN ANTONIO, TX 78204

Project Description:

Ford, Powell & Carson (FPC) was approached by Graystreet Partners to develop an exterior tenant signage package for the Hearst Corporation as well as exterior site signage at the property known as the Light Building and located at 420 Broadway.

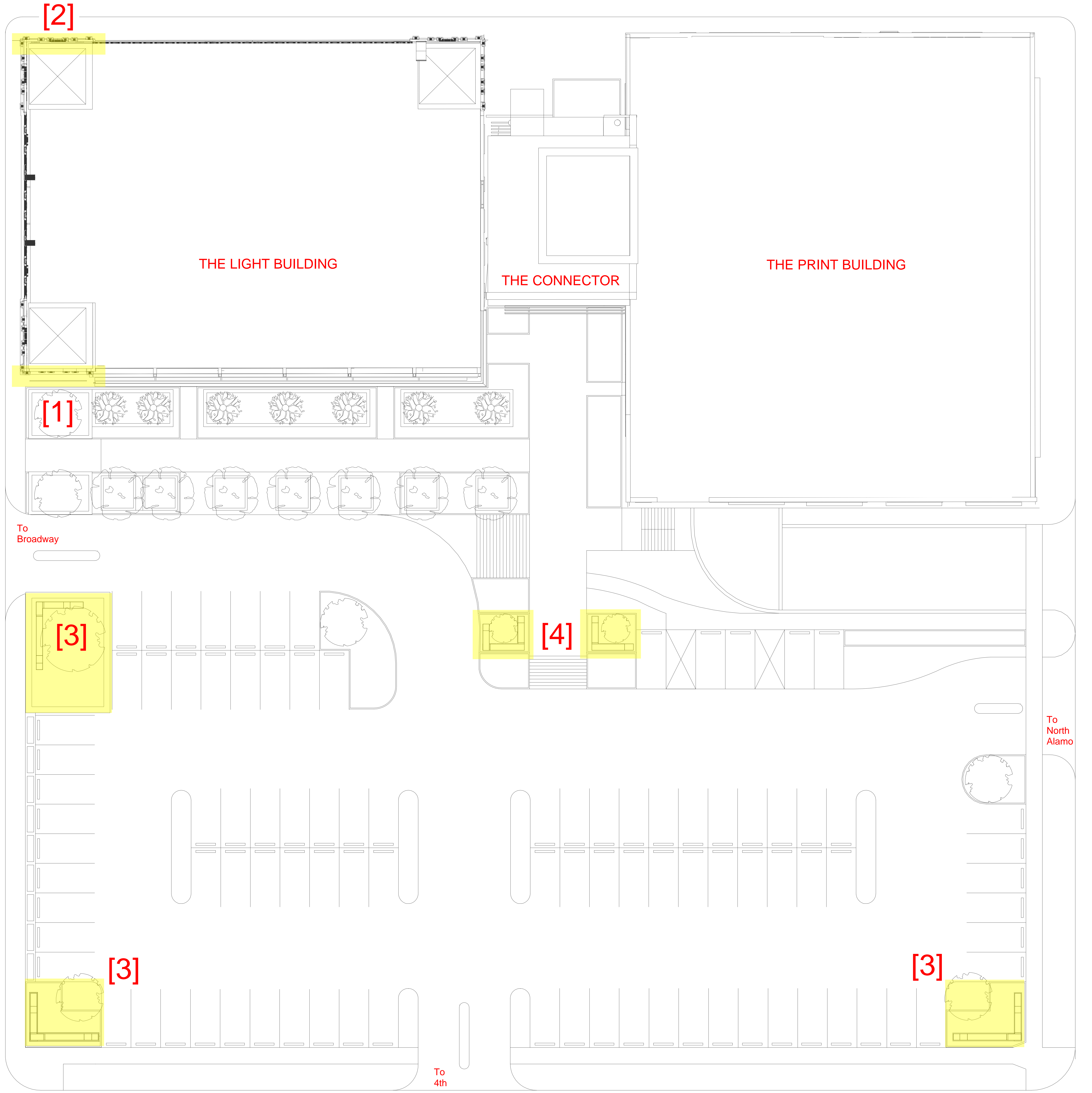
This application is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to:

[Hearst Corporation Tenant Signage]

- A. Broadway Tower Sign - Install one (1) set of bronze aluminum faced, reverse lit channel letters to include a logo that reads “SA” with channel letters reading “Express News” beneath the logo. The sign will be installed on the southwest façade to measure approximately 59 square feet. Refer to item #1 in the submittal package. AND
- B. Broadway & McCullough Sign – Install one (1) set of bronze aluminum faced, reverse lit channel letters to include a logo that reads “SA” with channel letters reading “Express News” beneath the logo. The sign will be installed on the northeast façade to measure approximately 12 square feet. Refer to item #2 in the submittal package.

[420 Broadway Signage Master Plan]

- C. Light & Print Building Site Signage – Install up to (3) “L” shaped, exterior corner signs constructed of site cast concrete and utilizing bronze aluminum lettering with concealed LED down lighting. The signs will be “L” shaped and dimensioned approximately 20’x12x6’, refer to item #3 in the submittal package.
- D. Site Entry Signage – Install (2) “L” shaped exterior signs depicting the building names, address number and tenants. These signs will be constructed in the same manor as the site signage mentioned above (Item C). Dimensions for the signs are 10’x12’x4’, refer to item #4 in the submittal package.



[2]

THE LIGHT BUILDING

THE CONNECTOR

THE PRINT BUILDING

[1]

[4]

[3]

[3]

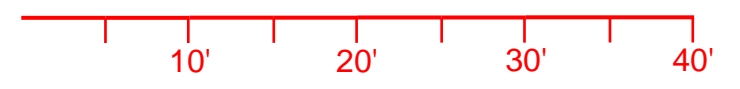
[3]

To
Broadway

To
North
Alamo

To
4th

420 Broadway Signage Site Plan

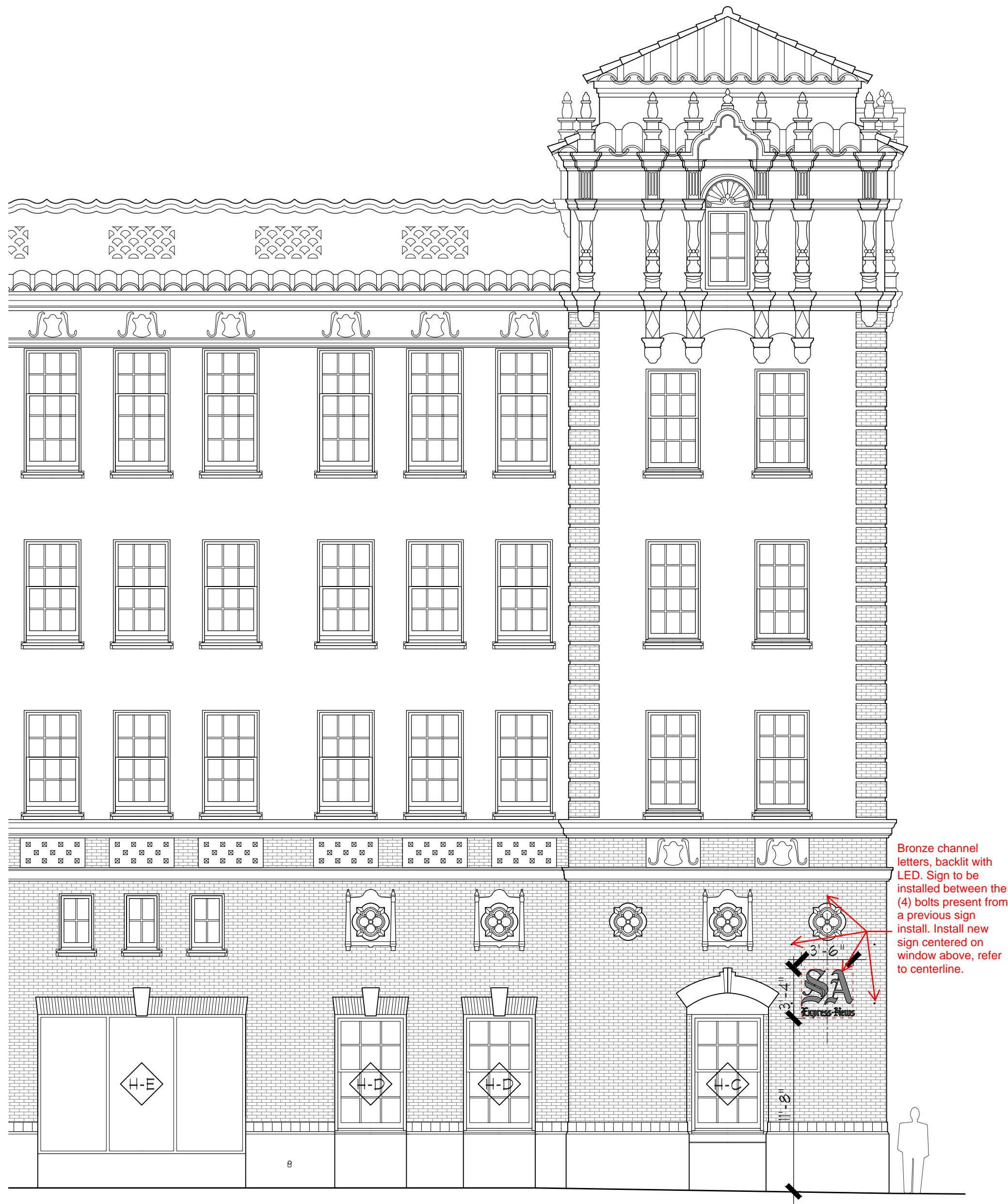




[1] SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS NEWS BROADWAY TOWER SIGNAGE



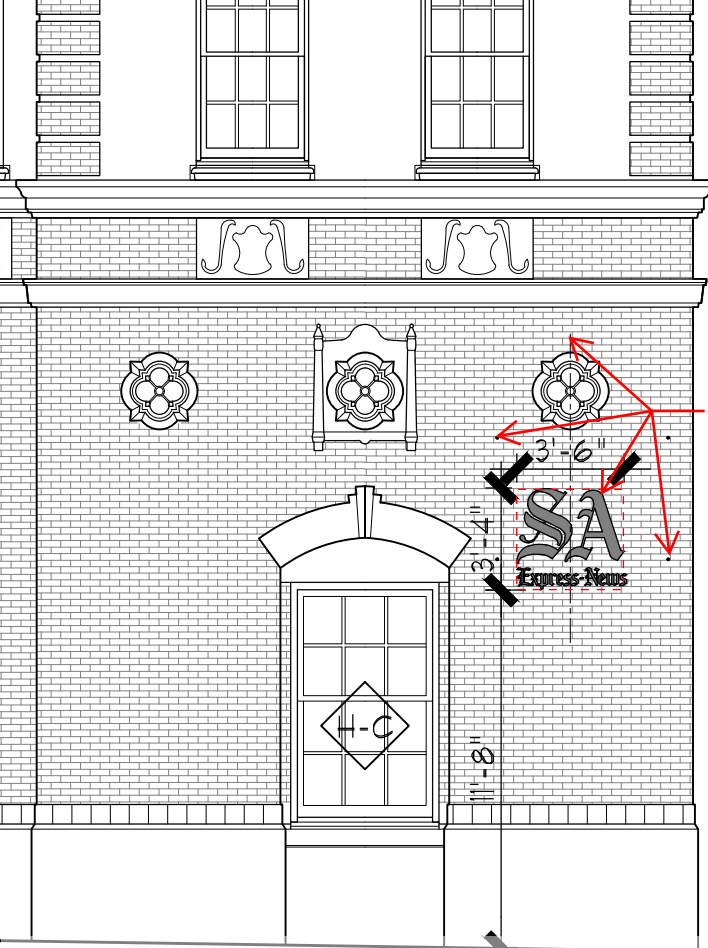
[1] SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS NEWS BROADWAY TOWER SIGNAGE



Bronze channel letters, backlit with LED. Sign to be installed between the (4) bolts present from a previous sign install. Install new sign centered on window above, refer to centerline.

McCullough Facade

[2] SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS NEWS McCULLOUGH & BROADWAY



Bronze channel letters, backlit with LED. Sign to be installed between the (4) bolts present from a previous sign install. Install new sign centered on window above, refer to centerline.

[2] SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS NEWS McCULLOUGH & BROADWAY



[2] SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS NEWS McCULLOUGH & BROADWAY



[2] SAN ANTONIO EXPRESS NEWS McCULLOUGH & BROADWAY

Job Name:

San Antonio
Express-News

☒ **Proposal Drawing**
☐ Final Drawing

Client: Graystreet Light LP
420 Broadway LP
Location: 301 Avenue E
San Antonio, TX 78205
Salesperson: Carter
Prj. Mngr.: Debbie
Date: 04/22/2021
Designer: Jocelyn
File Name: 60022 San
Antonio Express-News RLCL
R2
Proposal #: 60022
Job #: n/a

Revisions (M/D/Y)-(initials): desc.
R2/4.27.21/JY: B-enlarged.
R1/4.26.21/JY: rev. pg 4.



License #: 18010

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Austin, TX 78753
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Tyler (Design Center Signs)
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Dimensions to be revised per
dimension on elevation

8' - 0"
~~9' - 5"~~

9'-3 1/2"

Scope of Work:

Fabricate and install one (2) new set of reverse lit channel letters.
Bronze .alum. faces ptd.
3" Bronze alum. returns.
Internally illuminated with white LED.
Install on existing fascia with 1 1/2" stand off.

Colors:

- Bronze



(1) - Broadway & McCullough Sign

(1) - Broadway Tower Sign

Scale: 3/4" = 1'-0"

B

REVERSE LIT CHANNEL LETTERS

QTY: ONE (1) SET

CUSTOMER APPROVAL

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: ____ / ____ / ____



**VECTOR ART REQUIRED
PRIOR TO PRODUCTION.**



**FIELD SURVEY REQUIRED
PRIOR TO PRODUCTION.**

Job Name:

San Antonio
Express-News

☒ Proposal Drawing
☐ Final Drawing

Client: Graystreet Light LP
420 Broadway LP
Location: 301 Avenue E
San Antonio, TX 78205
Salesperson: Carter
Prj. Mngr.: Debbie
Date: 04/22/2021
Designer: Jocelyn
File Name: 60022 San Antonio Express-News RLCL R2
Proposal #: 60022
Job #: n/a

Revisions (M/D/Y)-(initials): desc.
R2/4.27.21/JY: B-enlarged.
R1/4.26.21/JY: rev. pg 4.



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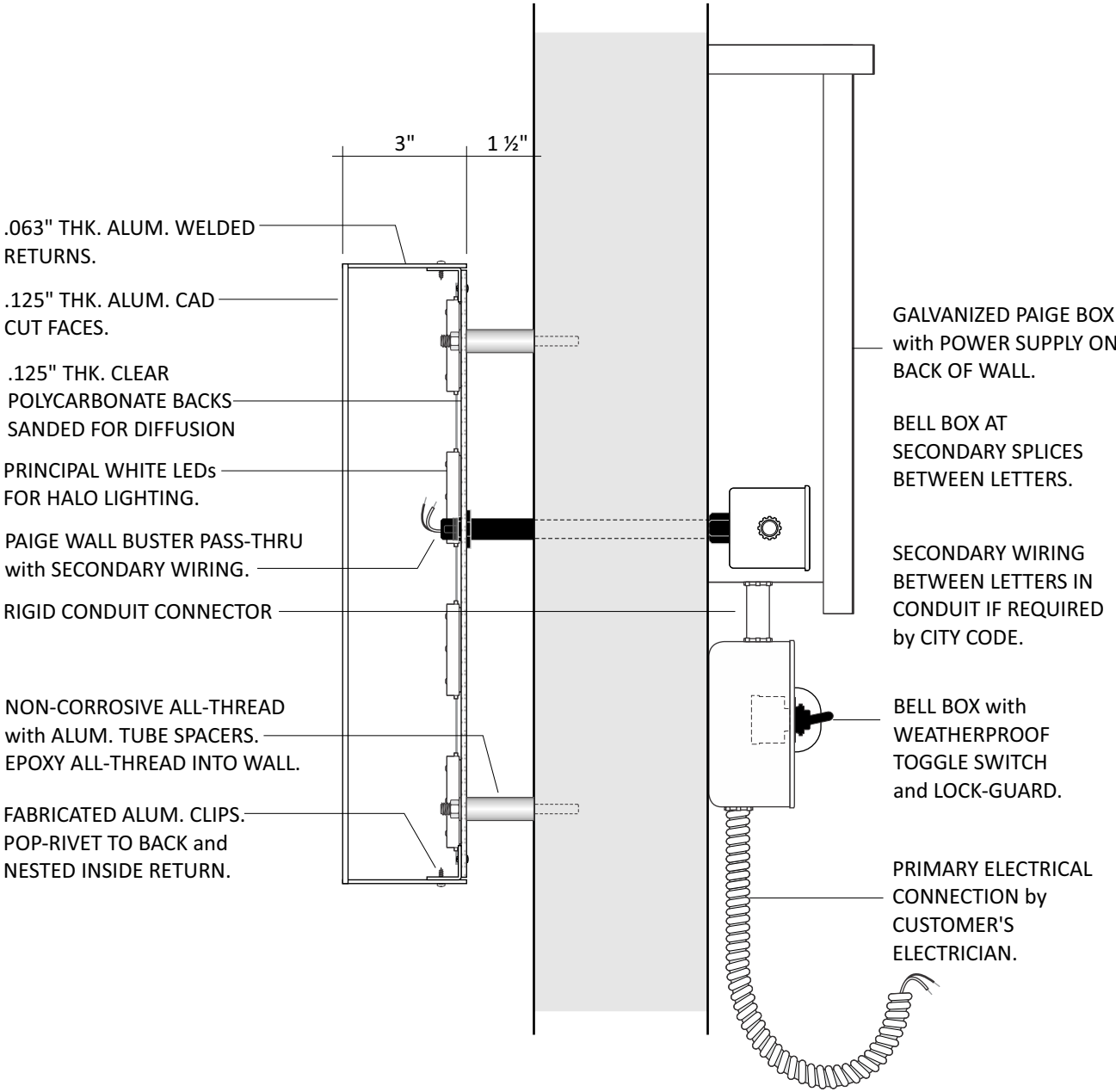
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Houston, TX 77061
(713) 943-1831

Austin (Custom Sign Creations)
1130 Rutherford, Suite 180
Austin, TX 78753
(512) 374-9300

Tyler (Design Center Signs)
2971 Elkton Trail
Tyler, TX 75703
(903) 561-4995



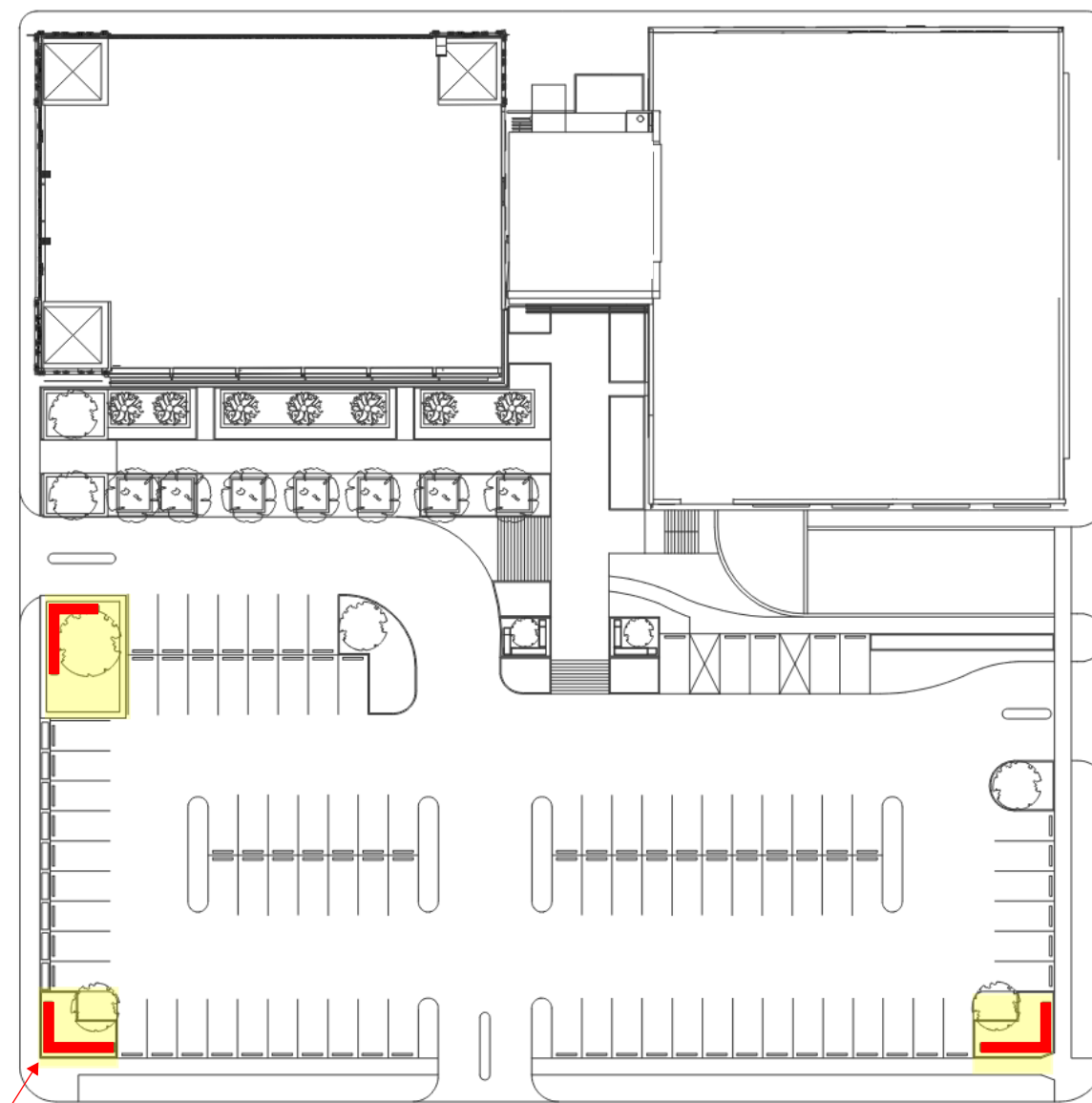
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SECTION (VERT) 3" = 1'-0"
REVERSE CHANNEL LETTER w/ CLOUD BACKER

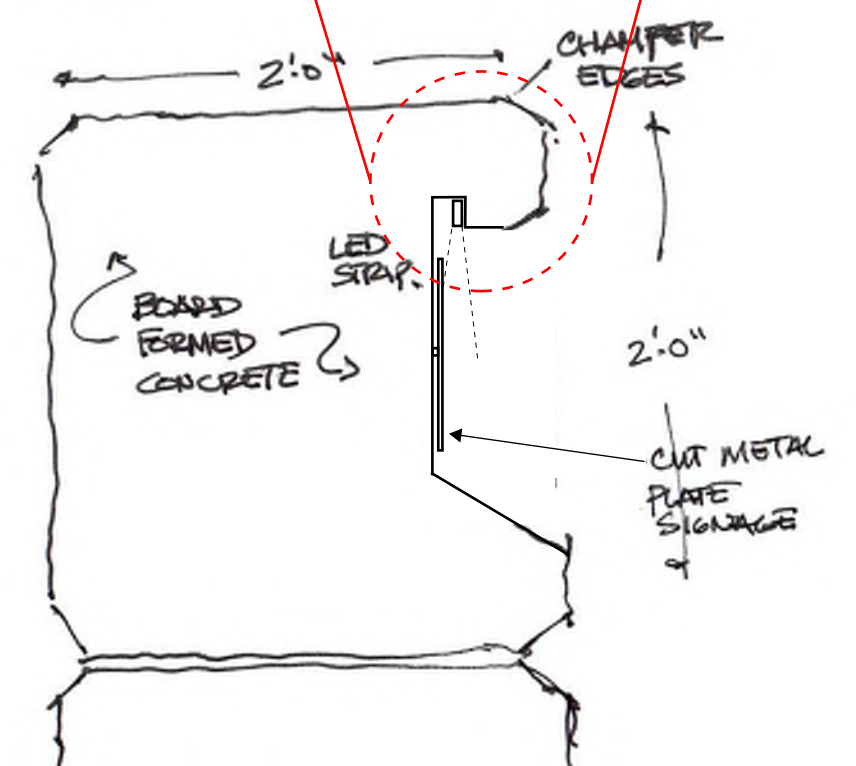
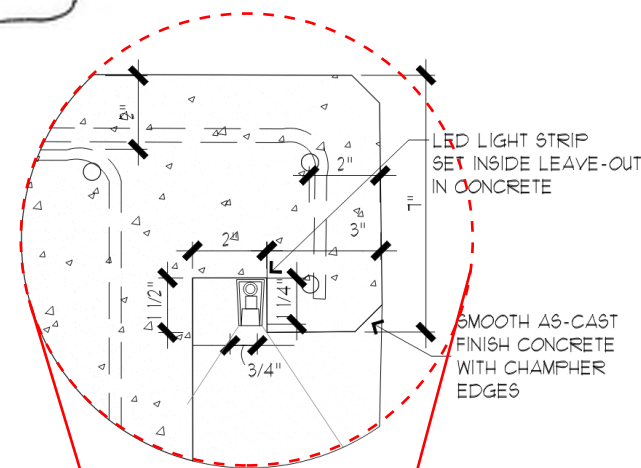
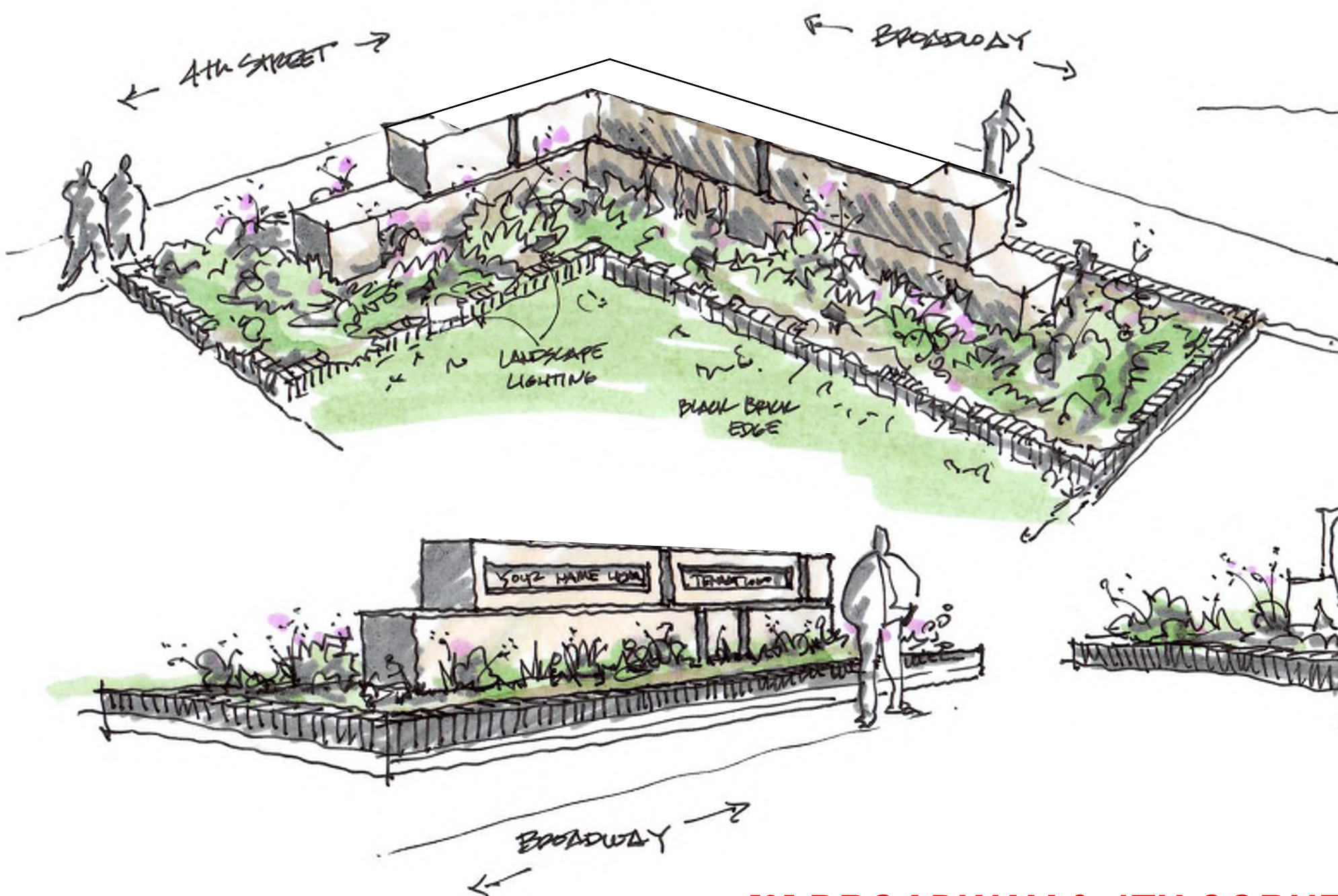
CUSTOMER APPROVAL

APPROVED BY: _____ DATE: ____ / ____ / ____

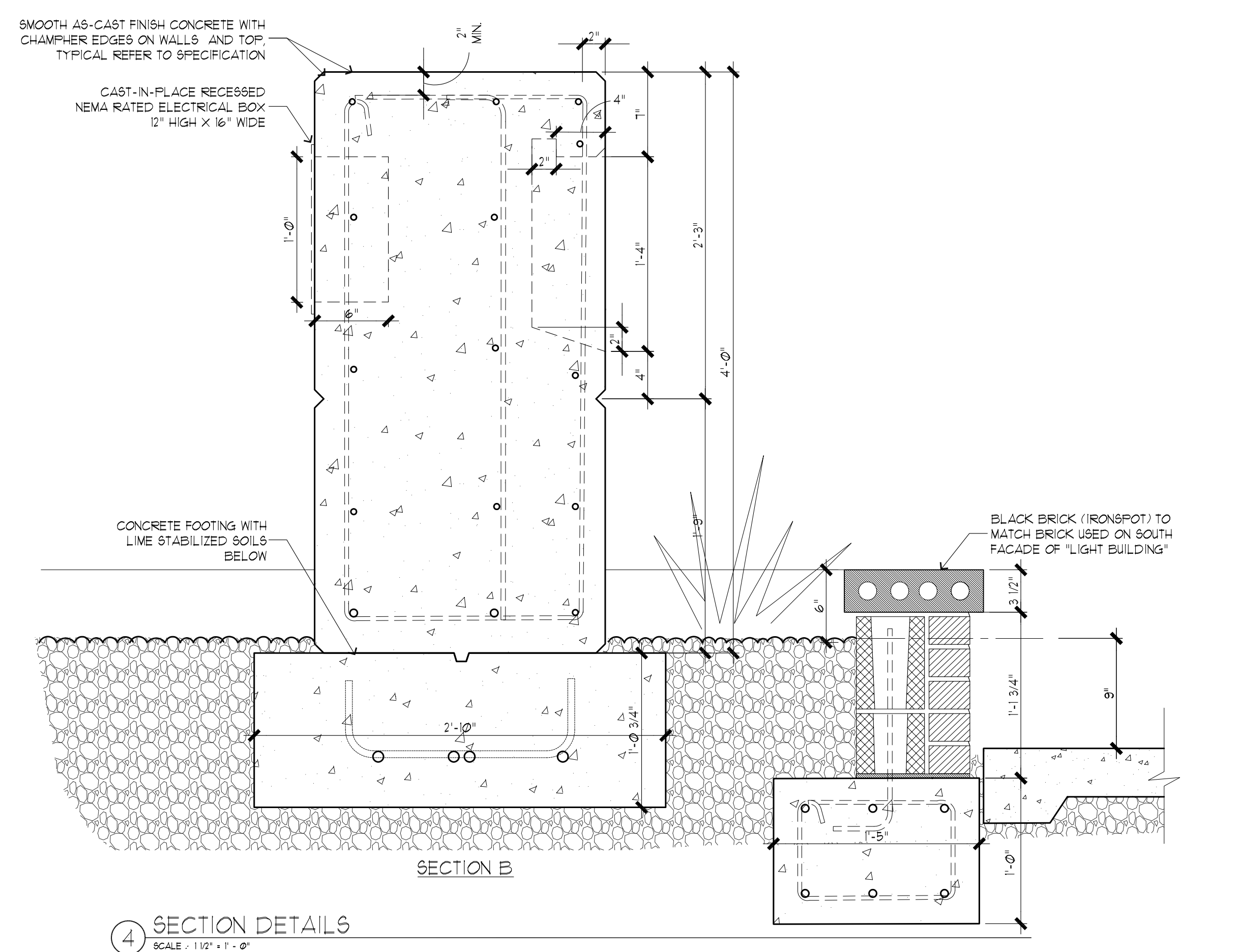
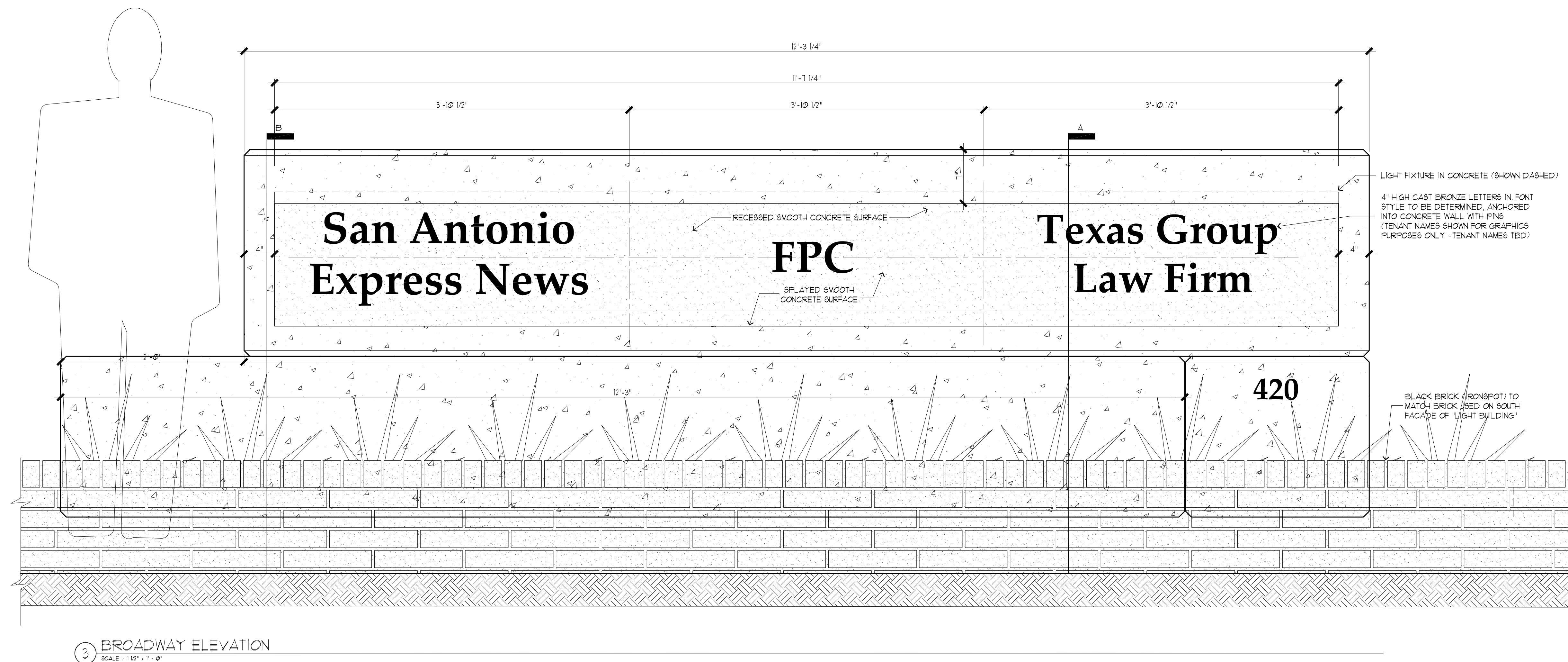
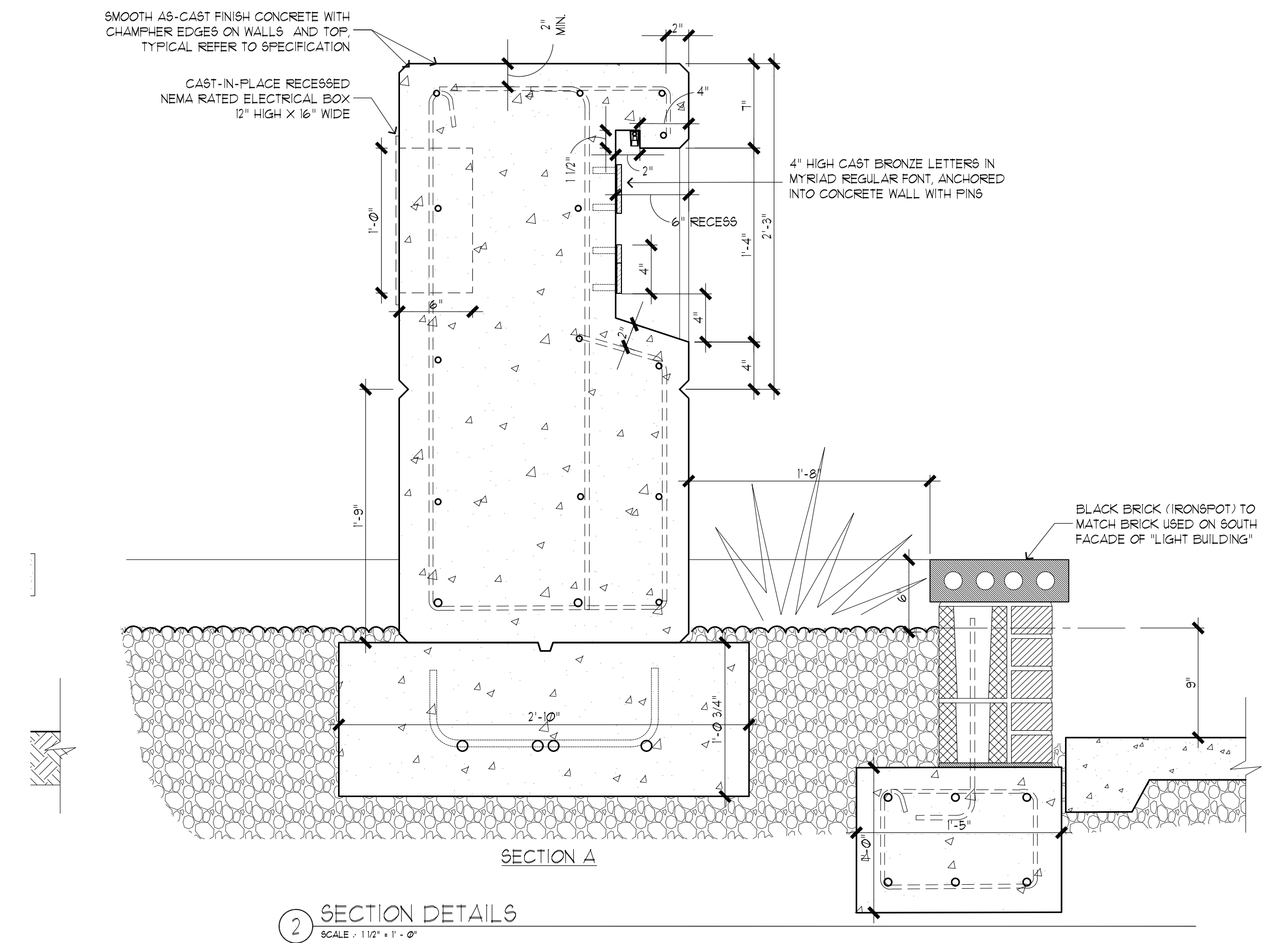
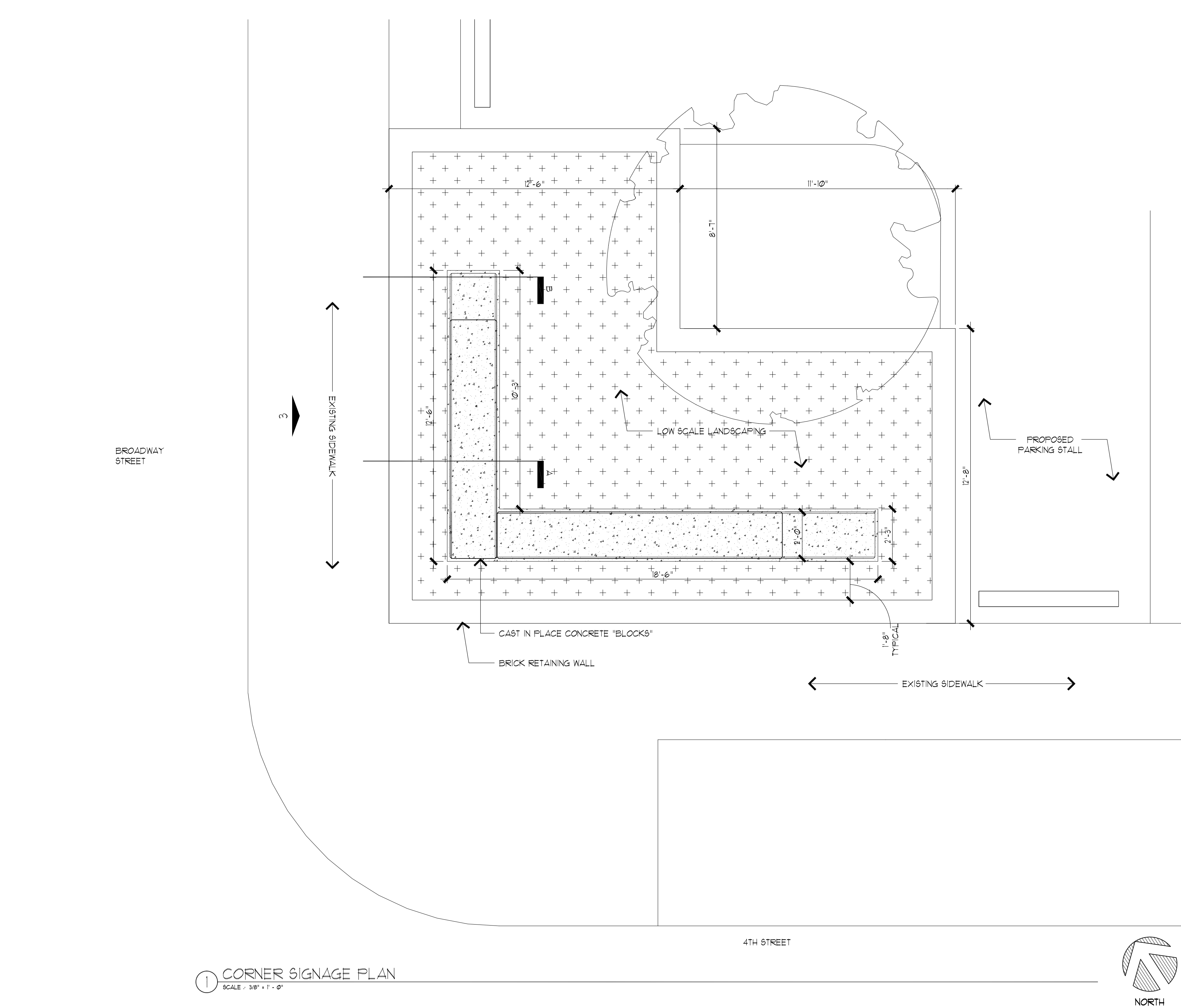


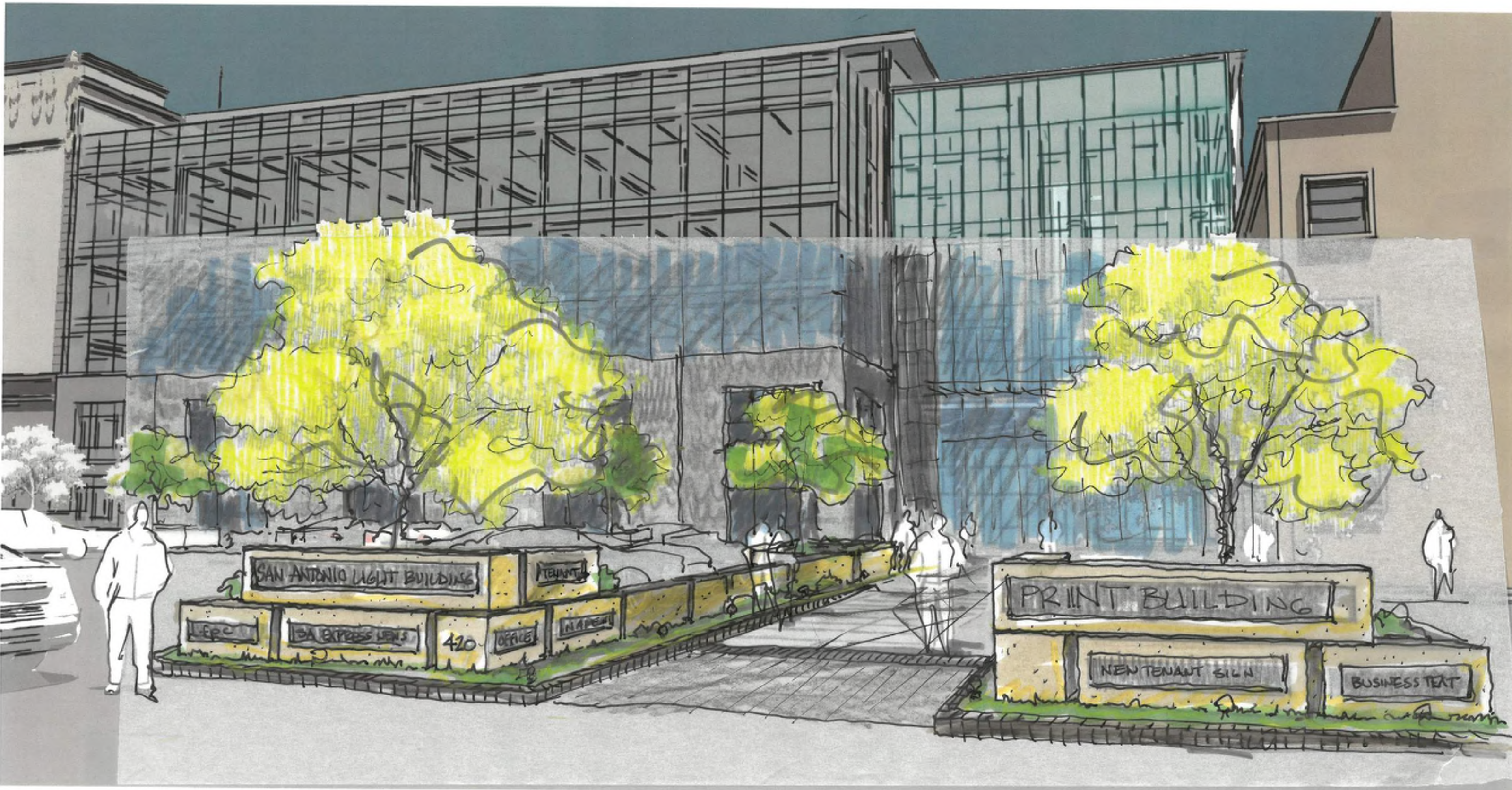
Tenant signage at this corner Only

Site Plan



[3] BROADWAY & 4TH CORNER SIGNAGE





[4] SITE ENTRY SIGNAGE