

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

March 04, 2020

HDRC CASE NO: 2020-083
ADDRESS: 909 W HOUSTON ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 263 BLK 76 LOT 15 (VIA WESTSIDE TRANSIT CENTER)
ZONING: D, H, HL
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 5
DISTRICT: Cattleman Square Historic District
LANDMARK: Washington Hotel, El Fenix Grill
APPLICANT: Nathan Perez/Work5hop
OWNER: Noe Barrientos/VIA METROPOLITAN TRANSIT
TYPE OF WORK: Re-issue of a Certificate of Appropriateness for signage
APPLICATION RECEIVED: February 11, 2020
60-DAY REVIEW: April 11, 2020
CASE MANAGER: Huy Pham
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install signage at the Joint Law Enforcement Center building 909 W Houston. Within this request, the applicant has proposed the following:

1. Two (2) awning mounted, aluminum panel sign with painted graphics to feature a total width of 3' – 0" and a height of 6" for a total size of three (3) square feet. These signs are identified as sign 1.
2. Two (2) steel frame, internally illuminated, cabinet signs to feature acrylic/composite faces featuring a width of 28" and a height of 84" for a total size of sixteen (16) square feet. These signs are identified as signs 2 and 3.
3. One (1) aluminum frame, internally illuminated, wall mounted cabinet sign to feature an acrylic/composite face to feature a width of 84 inches and a height of 24 inches for a total size of fourteen (14) square feet. This sign is identified as sign 4.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

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.

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:

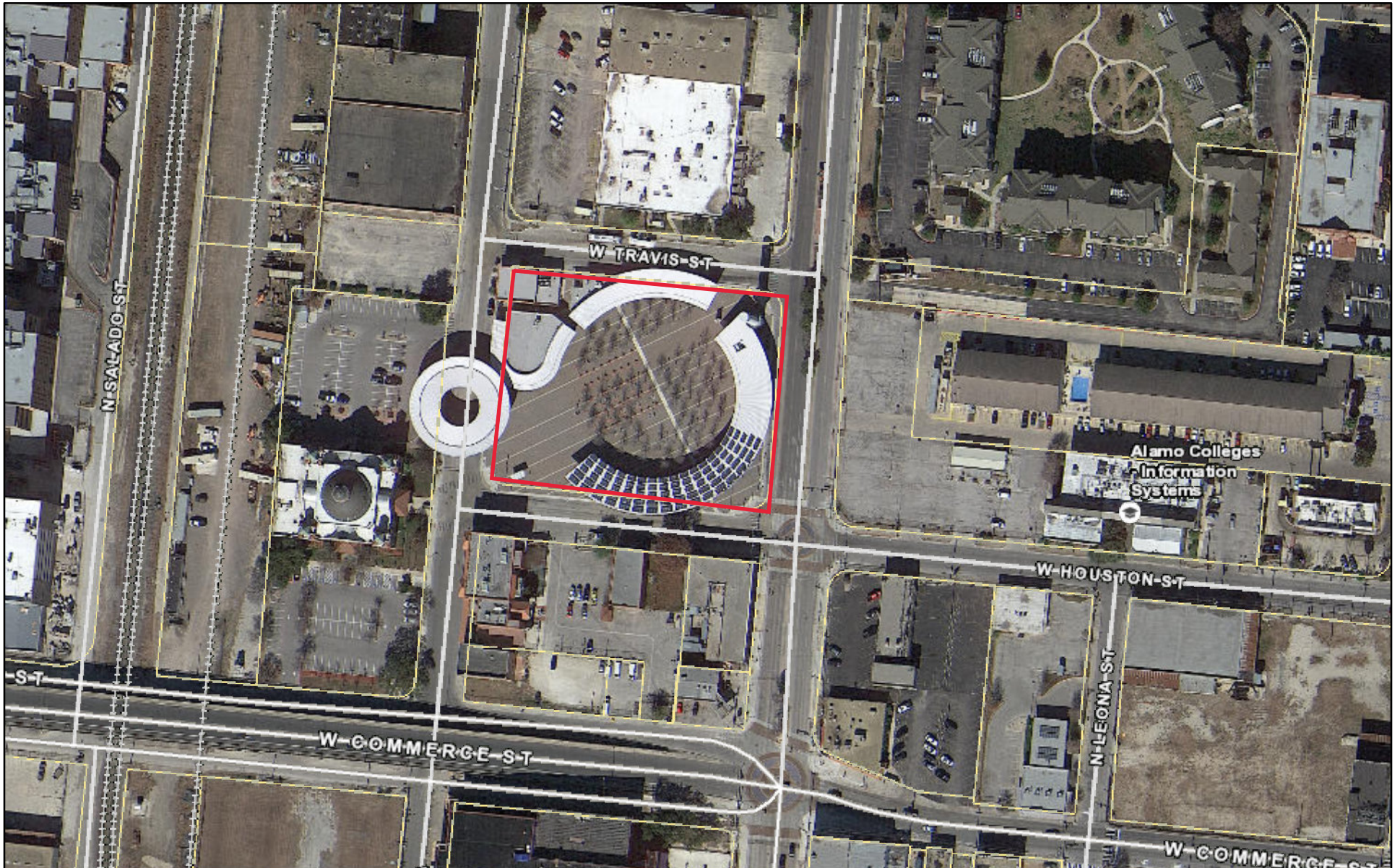
- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness issued on October 3, 2018 for approval to install signage at the Joint Law Enforcement Center building 909 W Houston featuring five (5) signs.
- b. **PREVIOUS APPROVAL** – This request was reviewed and approved by the Historic and Design Review Commission on October 3, 2018, with staff's stipulations. Certificate of Appropriateness are valid for 180 days, and the issued Certificate of Appropriateness has expired. Staff finds that the scope of work is consistent with that which was previously approved.
- c. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to install signage at the Joint Law Enforcement Center building 909 W Houston, located within the Cattleman Square Historic District. Within this request, the applicant has requested signage that totals forty-nine (49) square feet, consistent with the Guideline regarding signage.
- d. **ALUMINUM AWNING SIGN** – Perpendicular to both W Travis and N Medina, the applicant has proposed to install two (2) awning mounted, aluminum panel sign with painted graphics to feature a total width of 3' – 0" and a height of 6" for a total size of three (3) square feet. The proposed signage is consistent with the Guidelines in regards to size and design.
- e. **BLADE SIGNS** – On both the northwest and southwest corners of the historic structure, the applicant has proposed to install two (2) steel frame, internally illuminated, cabinet signs to feature acrylic/composite faces featuring a width of 28" and a height of 84" for a total size of sixteen (16) square feet. Both signs are to be mounted as blade signs. Staff finds that the proposed sizes are consistent with the Guidelines for Signage; however, the Guidelines note that signage for historic properties should feature indirect or bare bulb sources that do not produce glare. The Guidelines note that internal illumination should not be used.
- f. **CABINET SIGN** – Above an entrance way to Centro Plaza, the applicant has proposed to install One (1) aluminum frame, internally illuminated, wall mounted cabinet sign to feature an acrylic/composite face to feature a width of 84 inches and a height of 24 inches for a total size of fourteen (14) square feet. Staff finds the proposed location and size to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines; however, the proposed lighting source is not. Staff finds that indirect lighting should be used.

RECOMMENDATION:

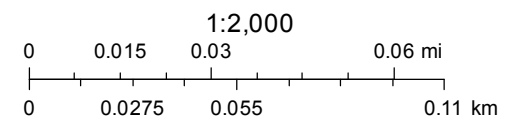
Staff recommends that the Historic and Design Review Commission extend the Certificate of Appropriateness for an additional 180 days with the following stipulation:

- i. That indirect lighting sources be used to produce signage that does not feature a glare.

909 W Houston



February 25, 2020





Bexar County Sheriff's Office

Bexar County Adult Detention Center

Avita Pharmacy

STAR Vascular Access Center

Rekeying A House
Lock San Antonio TX

Bexar County Tax Assessor-Collector

Motel 6 San Antonio
Downtown - Market...

McDonald's

811 W Houston St Parking

821 W Commerce St Parking

Golden Star Cafe

Texstar National Bank

San Antonio Metropolitan Ministry

Google

AVANCE, Inc

Hoover Construction

Pik Nik Foods

VIA Metropolitan Transit - The Grand

VIA Metropolitan Transit - Centro Plaza...

909 West Houston Street

123 N Medina St Parking

BEXAR PROBATION

A-Action Bail Bonds
Cowboy Bail Bonds



McDonald's

Texstar National Bank

Golden Star Cafe

San Antonio
Metropolitan Ministry

The Center For Health
Care Service Adult Clinic

Motel 6 San Antonio
Downtown - Market...

811 W Houston
St Parking

Pik Nik Foods

AVANCE, Inc

909 West Houston Street

VIA Metropolitan
Transit - Centro Plaza...

STAR Vascular
Access Center

VIA Metropolitan
Transit - The Grand

123 N Medina St Parking

armacy

Fresenius Kidney Care
Central San Antonio

Google



Description of Project:

This component of the previously approved building rehabilitation describes the Signage Plan for the proposed signage at the JLEC (Joint Law Enforcement Center) building on Centro Plaza. The historic structure on the Plaza was saved and rehabilitated to support functions for the Clty, County, VIA, and other agency law enforcement officers. These agency officers may utilize this secure, 24/7 environment as temporary office space to conduct strategic command operations in and around the VIA Villa area, and as administrative space to complete daily reports.

Due to the security demands and usage of the space, it is important the proposed signage offer clear visibility to both the pedestrian and driver. Using the minimal number of signage components to accommodate the visibility requirements of the building from a distance, and the security requirements within the building, the following components are being requested:

1. 2 - double sided canopy signs, perpendicular to the buildings along Travis & Medina
2. 1 - externally illuminated, double sided sign on the Northwest corner of the building.
3. 1 - externally illuminated, single sided sign on the Southwest corner of the building.
4. 1 - externally illuminated, single sided sign on an aluminum structural armature, behind the JLEC building, spanning between 2 recently constructed Via Centro Plaza buildings.



Detailed Project Description

VIA Joint Law Enforcement Center (JLEC) - Signage Application
Centro Plaza - Washington Hotel Landmark 909 W. Houston St.

VIA JLEC Signage

This document, dated as above, authorized by Jay Loudon (registration #20100), is incomplete. Do not use for regulatory approval, permit, or construction.

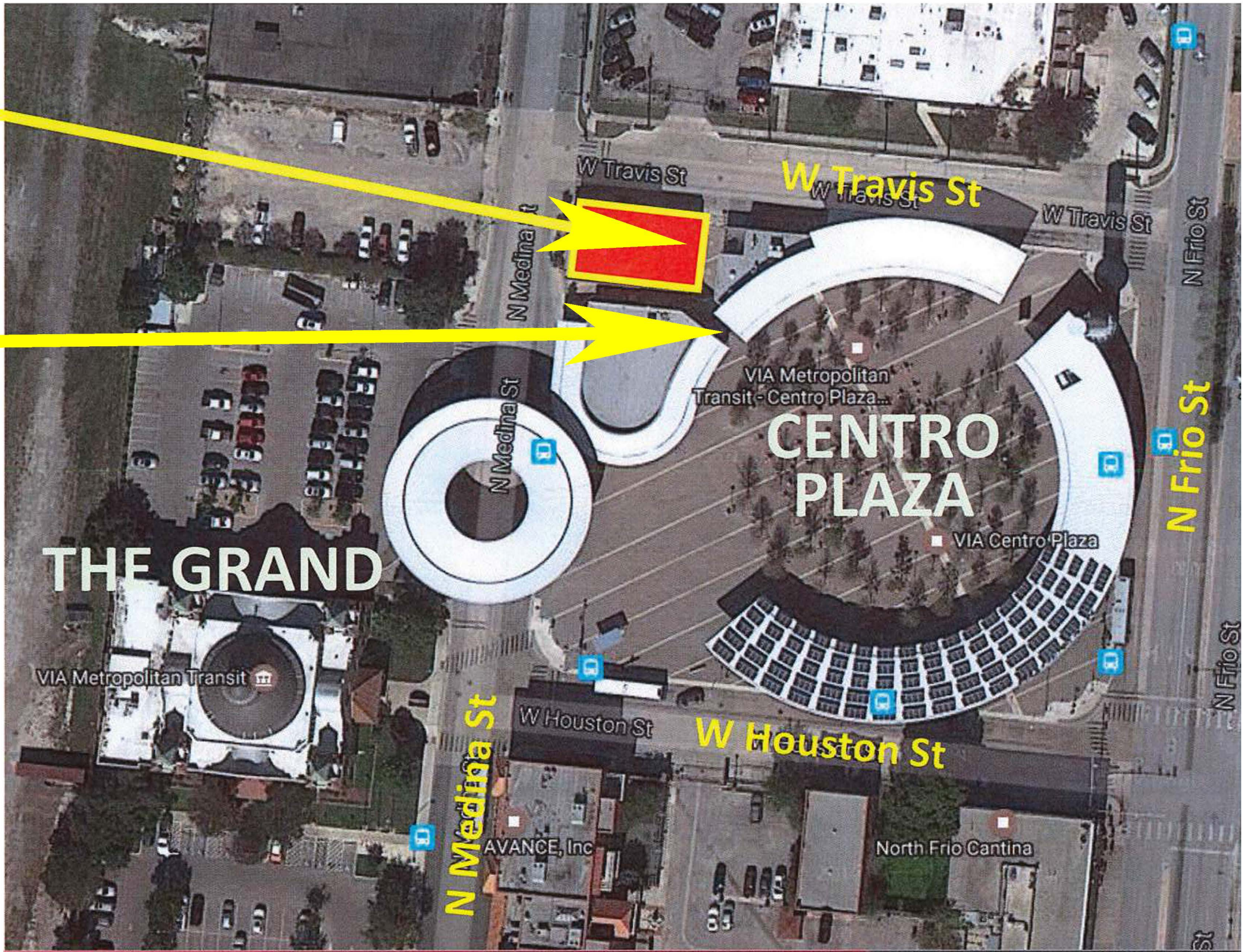


JLEC Landmark Building
Location (New Signage
to be added)

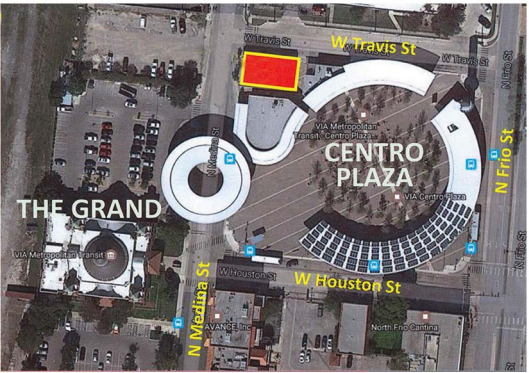
Centro Plaza, Signage
Location



Centro Plaza Site

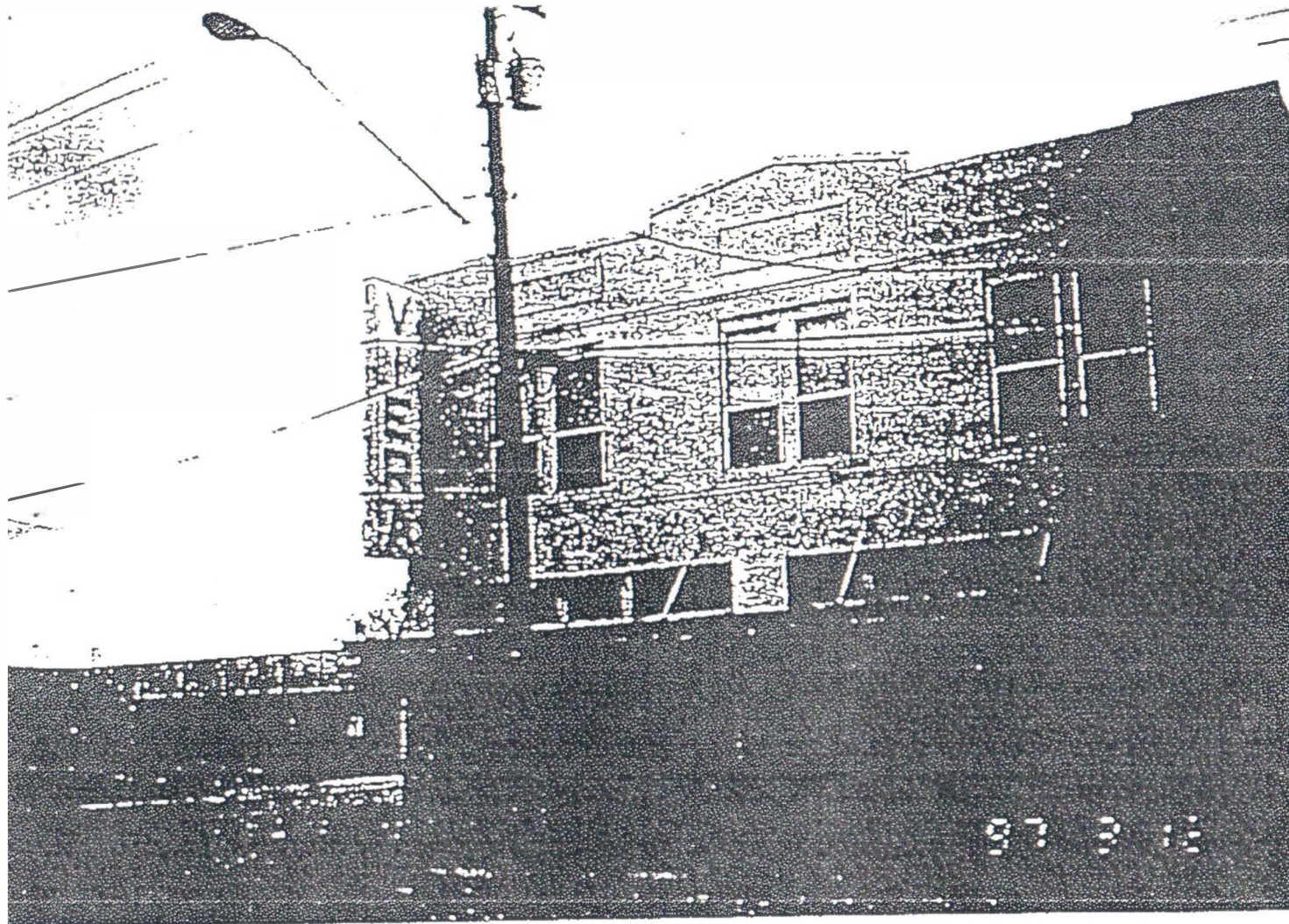


ITEM	SPECS	MATERIALS
1 Awning Mounted Sign	36"(W)x6"(H) 3s.f.	Aluminum panel with painted graphics
2 Wall Mounted Sign	28"(W)x84"(H) 16s.f.	Painted steel frame (match window color), with acrylic/composite panels. Externally lit with LED lighting. (Dbl. sided.)
3 Wall Mounted Sign	28"(W)x84"(H) 16s.f.	Painted steel frame (match window color), with acrylic/composite panels. Externally lit with LED lighting.
4 Wall Mounted Sign	84"(W)x24"(H) 14s.f.	Aluminum frame with acrylic/composite panels. Externally lit with LED lighting and mounted to aluminum structural armature
TOTAL SQ. FT	49 s.f.	



Signage Specifications





Historic Signage



Proposed Signage



Historic Signage Precedent

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2 - 28" wide x 84" tall, externally LED illuminated signs, "fixed" and mounted to the existing building



Signage Locations

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Orientation Map



Front Elevation: West

VIA Joint Law Enforcement Center (JLEC) - Signage Application
 Centro Plaza - Washington Hotel Landmark 909 W. Houston St.

VIA JLEC Signage

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2 - 36" wide x 6" tall, painted aluminum signs, "fixed" and mounted to the underside of existing awning



Awning Sign Locations

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Centro Plaza - Washington Hotel Landmark 909 W. Houston St.

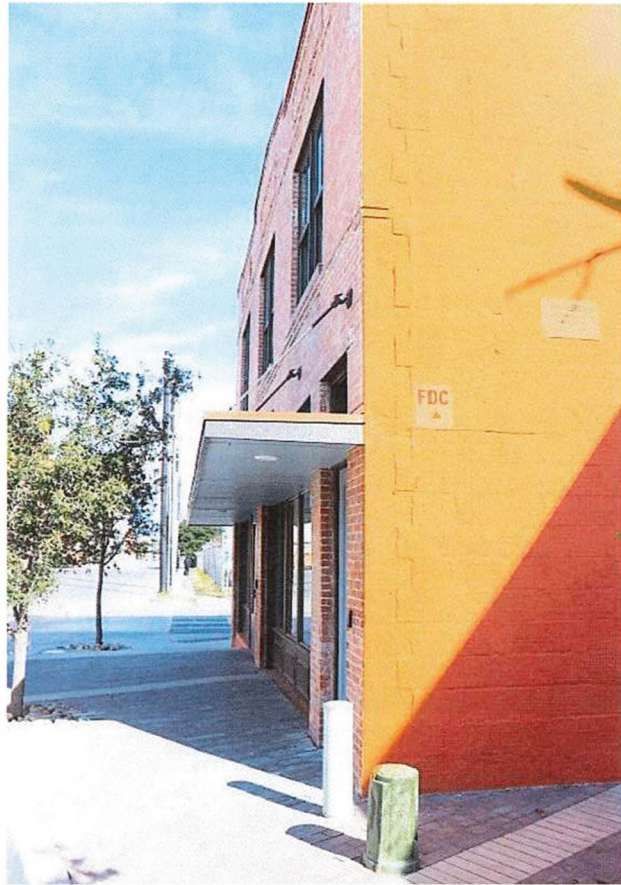
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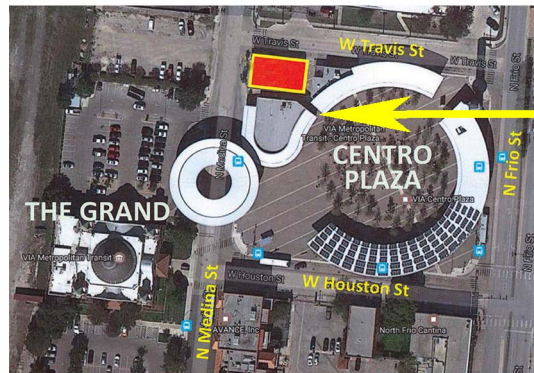
Side Elevation: South

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Location of externally illuminated 84" wide x 24" tall, single sided sign, on an aluminum structural armature. This sign is necessary in order announce the the plaza and general area are protected by a police presence 24 hours a day.

Due to the security demands of the area, it is important the proposed signage offer clear visibility to both pedestrians and drivers, 24 hours a day. Using the minimal number of signage components to accommodate the visibility requirements of the building & plaza from a distance, and the security requirements within the building, the following components are being requested:

1. 2 double sided canopy signs, perpendicular to the buildings along Travis & Medina
2. 1 externally illuminated, double sided sign on the Northwest corner of the building.
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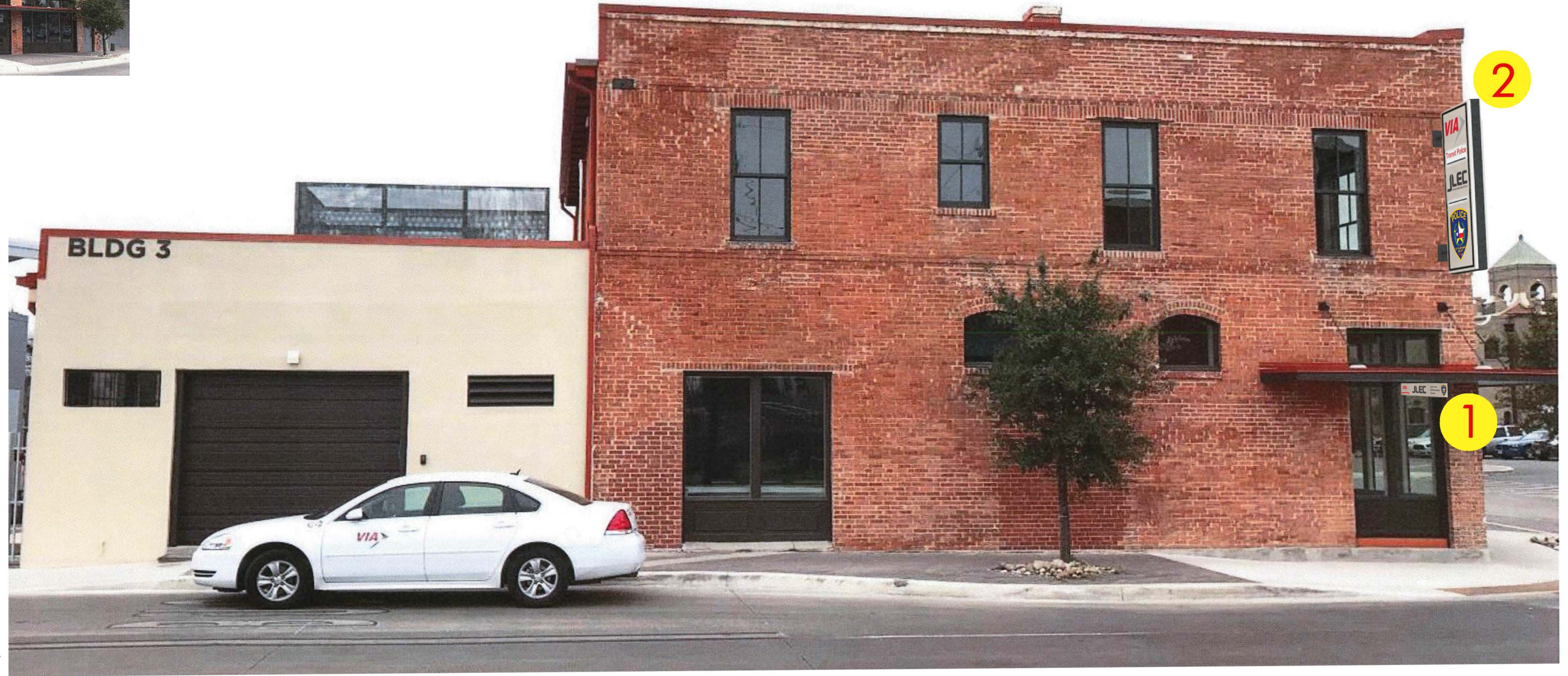
Signage Locations

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Signage Locations

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Centro Plaza - Washington Hotel Landmark 909 W. Houston St.

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Orientation Map



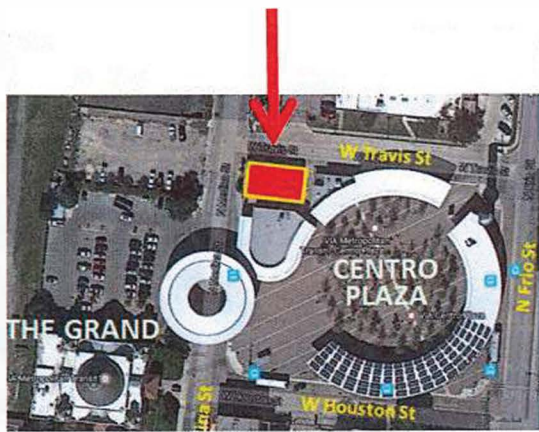
Side Elevation: East

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Centro Plaza - Washington Hotel Landmark 909 W. Houston St.

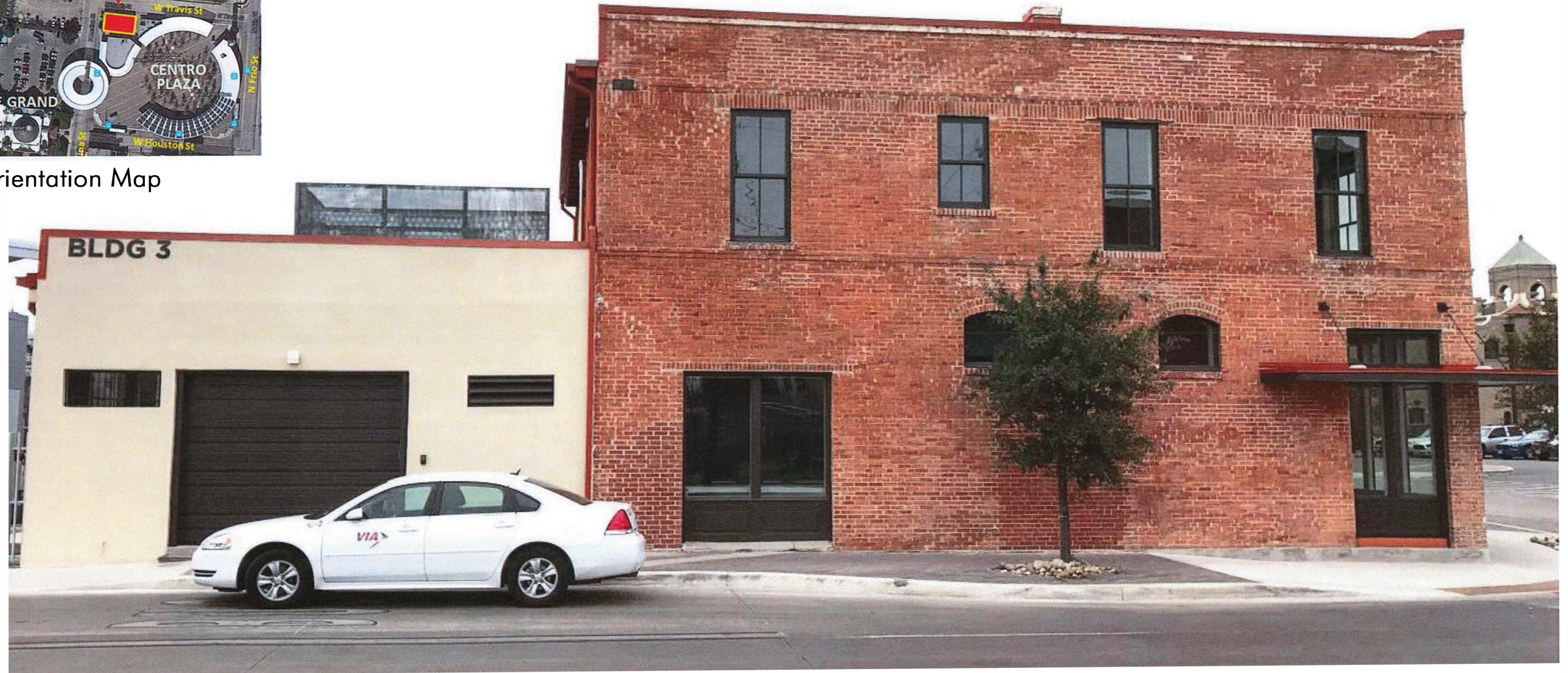
VIA JLEC Signage

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Orientation Map



Side Elevation: North

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