

## HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

June 17, 2020

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2020-244  
**ADDRESS:** 623 HEMISFAIR BLVD  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 13814 BLK 3 LOT 17 (HEMISFAIR SUBD)  
**ZONING:** D, H, RIO-3  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**DISTRICT:** Hemisfair Historic District  
**APPLICANT:** Luis Martinez  
**OWNER:** HEMISFAIR PARK PUBLIC FACILITIES CORP  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Master signage plan  
**APPLICATION RECEIVED:** June 03, 2020  
**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 of a master signage plan for the structure located at 623 Hemisfair Boulevard, commonly known as The '68 Apartments. Within this request, the applicant has requested approval of projecting and wall mounted signs, freestanding signs, a corner projecting wall mounted sign, hanging canopy signs, a hanging walkway sign, and a parapet wall sign.

### APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Unified Development Code, Section 35-678 – Signs and Billboards in the RIO*

#### (a) General Provisions.

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

provisions of this section, and if the color, size, and style of lettering, and illumination of the sign remain the same.

(5) Provisions under this section shall comply with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas. In cases where

provisions under this section are stricter or a sign is designated as a contributing structure, then this section shall control.

(6) Special consideration should be given to the character of the sign itself proposed in the application, and whether the proposed sign has inherently historic characteristics which may fall outside of the guidelines presented below but

which would contribute to the historic district, landmark or area for which it is being proposed. Additionally, when reviewing applications for signage the historic preservation officer and the historic and design review commission shall consider the visual impact on nearby historic resources.

(7) Memorials, markers, naming rights of public property, and recognition of charitable donations given to the City of

San Antonio shall be additionally governed by any formal action passed by city council.

(b) Sign Definitions. For signage definitions, refer to subsection 35-612(b) and chapter 28 of the City Code.

(c) Standards for Sign Design and Placement. In considering whether to recommend approval or disapproval of an application to construct or alter signage on a building, object, site, or structure in a river improvement overlay district, review shall be guided by the following standards in addition to any specific design guidelines approved by city council.

(1) Primary sign design considerations shall be identification and legibility. Size, scale, height, color and location of

signs shall be harmonious with, and properly related to, the overall character of the district and structure. Sign materials shall be compatible with that of the building facade. Highly reflective materials that will be difficult to read

are not permitted.

(2) Signs which describe, point, or direct the reader to a specific place or along a specific course, such as "entrance,"

"exit," and "disabled persons access," as well as government signs, shall be reviewed but shall not be included in total allowable signage area. Emergency signs shall be exempt from historic and design review commission approval.

(3) All graphic elements shall reinforce the architectural integrity of any building. Signs shall not disfigure, damage, mar, alter, or conceal architectural features or details and shall be limited to sizes that are in scale with the architecture and the streetscape. Emblems and symbols of identification used as principal structural or architectural design elements on a facade shall not be included in the total allowable signage per facade per structure when approved. Review shall be guided by the building's proportion and scale when such elements are incorporated.

(4) Graphics and signage may be illuminated by indirect, internal, or bare-bulb sources, providing that glare is not produced; by indirect light sources concealed by a hood or diffuser; by internal illumination with standard opal glass

or other translucent material or with an equal or smaller light transmission factor. All illumination shall be steady and

stationary. Neon lighting shall be permitted when used as an integral architectural element or artwork appropriate to the site. For purposes of this subsection, "Glare" shall mean an illumination level of six (6) Lux or greater at the property boundary. If internal illumination is used, it shall be designed to be subordinate to the overall building composition. Light fixtures should reflect the design period of the building on which they are placed. The use of ambient light from storefront or streetlights is encouraged.

(5) Signage requests for multi-tenant buildings must complement existing signage with regards to size, number, placement and design, unless such existing signage is not in conformity with regulations in this article. It is recommended that the building owner or their agent develop a master signage plan or signage guidelines for the total

building or property. If a property has an approved master signage plan on file with the historic preservation officer, then applications for signage may be approved administratively at the discretion of the historic preservation officer provided that they comply with such master signage plan. Notwithstanding the above, signs may not exceed the maximum size and height limitation of signage contained in chapter 28, article 9.

(d) Proportion of Signs. For all signage, signage width and height must be in proportion to the facade, respecting the size, scale and mass of the facade, building height, and rhythms and sizes of window and door openings. The building

facade shall be considered as part of an overall sign program but the sign shall be subordinate to the overall building composition. Additionally, signs shall respect and respond to the character and/or period of the area in which they are being placed.

(e) Number and Size of Signs.

(1) Number and Size. The historic and design review commission shall be guided in its decisions by the total number of businesses or services per building and the percentage of visible storefront occupied by each business or service.

Applicants may apply for up to three (3) signs total. Total signage for all applicants shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet unless additional signs and/or additional total footage is approved. Additional square footage may be approved provided that the additional signage is in conformity with, and does not interfere with, the pedestrian experience on the Riverwalk. The additional square footage shall be based upon the size and scope of the site. Signs should reflect the type and speed of traffic they are meant to attract. Signs designed for pedestrians and drivers of slow moving cars should not be the same size as signs designed for highway traffic.

(2) Sign Area. The sign area shall be determined in the following manner:

A. Sign Areas. The area of a sign shall be computed on the actual area of the sign. Sign area shall be calculated as the area within a parallelogram, triangle, circle, semicircle or other regular geometric figure including all letters, figures, graphics or other elements of the sign, together with the framework or background of the sign. The supporting framework of the sign shall not be included in determining sign area unless such supporting framework forms an integral part of the sign display, as determined by the historic preservation officer. If the sign is located on a decorative fence or wall, when such fence or wall otherwise meets these or other ordinances or regulations and is clearly incidental to the display itself, the fence or wall shall not be included in the sign area. In the cases of signs with more than one (1) sign face, including but not restricted to double-faced signs, back-to-back signs, overhanging signs, and projecting signs, each side of the sign shall be included in total allowable signage area.

B. Channel Letter Signs. For channel letter signs, the sign area shall be the smallest rectangle that will encompass the limits of the writing, including spaces between the letters. Each advertising message shall be considered separately.

(3) Building Identification Signs. An additional building identification sign may be placed on a building with multiple tenants, if the building name is not the same as the business(s) housed within and such sign is Recommended for approval by the historic and design review commission. This type of sign is to identify a building as a destination,

shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet, shall not be included in the total allowable signage area, and shall not include names of individual businesses.

(4) Freestanding Signs. Freestanding signs are allowed provided the sign does not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Freestanding signs shall be perpendicular to the street, two-sided and no taller than six (6) feet. Freestanding signs shall not be located in the right-of-way.

A. Projecting Arm Signs. Signs hung from poles are allowed. Pole height shall not exceed six (6) feet and the pole diameter shall not exceed three (3) inches. Blade signs are not allowed to project over a sidewalk or other right-of-way.

(f) Allowable Signs Not Included in the Total Signage Area.

(1) Parking lot signs identifying entrances and exits to a parking lot or driveway, but only when there is one-way traffic flow. No more than one (1) sign shall be permitted for each driveway entrance or exit, and no corporate or business logos shall be permitted. Additionally, parking lot signs to identify divisions of the parking lot into sections and to control vehicular traffic and pedestrian traffic within the lot provided that no corporate or business logos shall

be permitted. Signs approved under this category shall not be included in the total allowable signage per structure.

(2) Dates of erection, monumental citations, commemorative tablets, insignia of local, state or federal government, and like when carved into stone, concrete or similar material or made of bronze, aluminum or other permanent type construction and made an integral part of the structure. Signs approved under this category shall not be included in the total allowable signage per structure.

(3) Information signs of a public or quasi-public nature identifying or locating a hospital, public building, college, publicly-owned parking area, historic area, major tourist attraction or similar public or quasi-public activity; and

also including signs identifying restrooms or other facilities relating to such places or activities. Signs approved under this category shall not be included in the total allowable signage per structure.

(4) Incidental signs, including signs designating business hours, street numbers, credit card acceptance and the like provided that the signs are not freestanding, the total of all such signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet for each business, and the signs are non-illuminated. Incidental signs shall not be included in the total allowable signage per structure.

(5) Real estate signs, advertising the sale, rental or lease of the premises or part of the premises on which the signs are displayed. The maximum sign area shall be eight (8) square feet. Only one (1) sign will be permitted for each building for sale or lease that is adjacent to the Riverwalk. The sign is permitted to remain only while that particular building is for sale or the lease space is available.

(k) Prohibited Signs. The following signs are prohibited:

(1) Billboards, junior billboards, portable signs, and advertising benches;

(2) Any sign placed upon a building, object, site, or structure in any manner so as to disfigure, damage, or conceal any window opening, door, or significant architectural feature or detail of any building;

(3) Any sign or sign spinner which advertises commercial off-premises businesses, products, activities, services, or events unless otherwise allowed in this article;

(4) Any sign which does not identify a business or service within the river improvement overlay district unless otherwise allowed in this article;

(5) Any non-contributing sign which is abandoned or damaged beyond fifty (50) percent of its replacement value, including parts of old or unused signs. All remnants such as supports, brackets and braces must also be removed;

(6) Any attachment to an already affixed sign which does not meet the provisions of the City Code;

(7) Roof mounted signs, except in the cases of landmark signs or unless approved in accordance with standards set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of this section. Contributing roof mounted signs may be resurfaced with an approved certificate of appropriateness. The square footage of roof mounted signs shall be included in the total allowable signage for the building;

(8) Pole-mounted cabinet signs and pylon signs;

(9) Digital displays, digital and/or LED lighted signs, not to include LED light sources that do not meet the definition

of a sign, with or without rotating, flashing lettering, icons or images.

Except as provided below:

A. A public transportation agency may incorporate transit information signage into transit shelters, utilizing LED

or digital technology, provided the signage is contained within or under the transit shelter, and is limited to five (5) square feet of signage area, and one (1) sign per thirty (30) linear feet of pedestrian shelter.

B. A public transportation agency may incorporate transit information signage into a monument sign at transit stops, utilizing LED or digital technology, provided it is limited to five (5) square feet of signage area.

C. A public transportation agency may incorporate transit information signage into a monument sign at transit facilities (other than transit stops), utilizing LED or digital technology, provided it is limited to seven (7) square feet of signage area.

D. The historic preservation officer may impose additional restrictions on illumination to ensure that the character of signs are harmonious with the character of the structures on which they are to be placed and designated landmarks or districts in the area, provided that such restrictions are reasonably related to other conforming signs and conforming structures in the area, do not unreasonably restrict the amount of signage

allowed by this section, and are in keeping with the intent of this section. Among other things, consideration shall be given to the location and illumination of the sign in relation to the surrounding buildings, the use of appropriate materials, the size and style of lettering and graphics, and the type of lighting proposed.

E. Digital displays, digital and/or LED lighted signs are authorized in conjunction with a temporary display for

a permitted event if in accordance with chapter 28 of the City Code of San Antonio, Texas.

(10) Revolving signs or signs with a moving component.

(11) Any sandwich board which conflicts with the Americans with Disabilities Act, or which disrupts or interferes with pedestrian or other traffic.

(12) Any sign that obscures a sign display by a public authority for the purpose of giving instructions or directions

or other public information.

(13) Any sign which consists of pennants, ribbons, spinners or other similar moving devices.

(14) Any sign, except official notices and advertisements, which is nailed, tacked, posted or in any other manner attached to any utility pole or structure or supporting wire, cable, or pipe; or to any tree on any street or sidewalk or to public property of any description.

(15) Moored balloons, wind jammers or other floating or inflated signs that are tethered to the ground or to a structure.

(16) Any permanent or temporary sign affixed to, painted on, or placed in or upon any parked vehicle, parked trailer or other parked device capable of being towed, which is parked so as to advertise the business to the passing

motorist

or pedestrian; and whose primary purpose is to provide additional on-site signage or is to serve the function of an outdoor advertising sign. Excluded from this are vehicles or equipment that are in operating condition, currently registered and licensed to operate on public streets with a valid inspection sticker, and actively used in the daily function of the business to which such signs relate; vehicles/equipment engaged in active construction projects; vehicles or equipment offered for rent to the general public and stored on-premises and otherwise allowed under applicable city ordinance. Notwithstanding the above, signs designated as a contributing sign or structure.

## FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval of a master signage plan for the structure located at 623 Hemisfair Boulevard, commonly known as The '68Apartments.
- b. PROJECTING WALL-MOUNTED SIGNS (A&B) – The applicant has proposed to install two (2) projecting wall-mounted signs to feature indirect or back lighting. The proposed signs will feature an overall size of 18 square feet and will be mounted perpendicular to the building's façade. Staff finds the proposed signage to be appropriate. Additionally, staff finds that each sign should feature aluminum or similar materials.
- c. PROJECTING WALL-MOUNTED SIGNS (C) – The applicant has proposed to install one (1) projecting wall mounted sign to be installed at the northeast corner of the building to feature an overall size of thirty (30) square feet. Staff finds the location, scale and size of this sign to be appropriate. Additionally, staff finds that this proposed sign should feature aluminum or similar materials and indirect or back lighting.
- d. HANGING CANOPY SIGN (D1) – The applicant has proposed to install a hanging canopy sign near the primary entrance of the Smith House, the historic structure immediately adjacent to the new construction. The proposed sign will feature a painted design and an overall size of approximately two (2) square feet. Staff finds this sign to be appropriate.
- e. FREESTANDING SIGN (D) – The applicant has proposed to install a freestanding sign adjacent to the Smith House, the historic structure immediately adjacent to the new construction. The applicant has noted that the proposed sign will feature two signage panels, and will feature an overall height of eight (8) square feet. Per the UDC Section 35-678, freestanding signs within the River Improvement Overlay should not feature a height of more than six (6) feet. Staff finds that the proposed signage should be reduced in size to not exceed the height recommended by the UDC.
- f. CANOPY SIGNS (E) – At the northwest corner of the building, the applicant has proposed to install two (2), hanging canopy signs. The proposed signs are designed to relate to the canopy width and arcade opening width. Staff finds the proposed location and scale to be appropriate. Additionally, staff finds that these proposed signs should feature aluminum or similar materials and indirect or back lighting.

- g. HANGING WALKWAY SIGN – The applicant has proposed a hanging walkway sign on the west side of the new construction. Generally staff finds the location and size of this sign to be appropriate. Staff finds that the proposed sign should feature aluminum or metal construction.
- h. PARAPET MOUNTED SIGN (G) – The applicant has proposed to install a parapet mounted sign to face south toward Cezar E Chavez Boulevard. Generally, staff finds the proposed signage to be appropriately scaled for the building on which it is mounted. Staff finds that the proposed sign should be mounted to the parapet wall, should feature aluminum or metal construction, and should indirectly lit, or back lit.

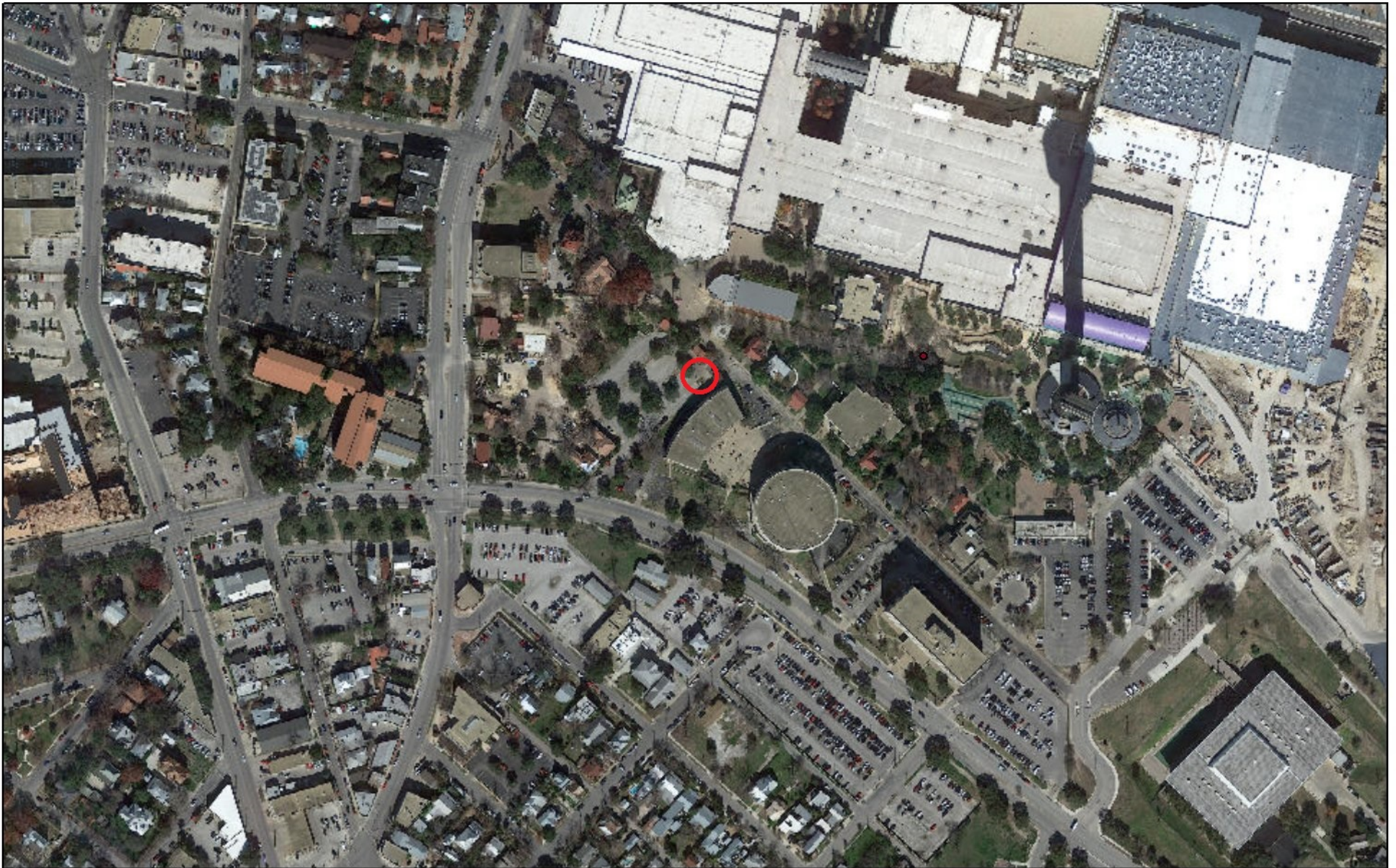
**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval based on findings a through h with the following stipulations:

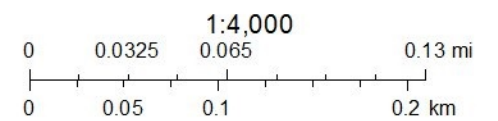
- i. That the all proposed signs feature back or indirect lighting and aluminum, wood or metal construction.
- ii. That the proposed freestanding sign does not feature a height of more than six (6) feet.
- iii. That the proposed roof level sign be mounted to the parapet wall.



# City of San Antonio One Stop



February 27, 2020



# MULTI-TENANT PROPERTIES . Signage Plan

## **THE 68' Apartments at Hemisfair**

623 Hemisfair Blvd, San Antonio, Texas 78205



## Projecting and Wall-Mounted Signs

Pedestrian Oriented Nature of Commercial Uses.

Visually Interesting Streetscape Free of Clutter.

Scale Overall Sf per sign: 18sqft

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.

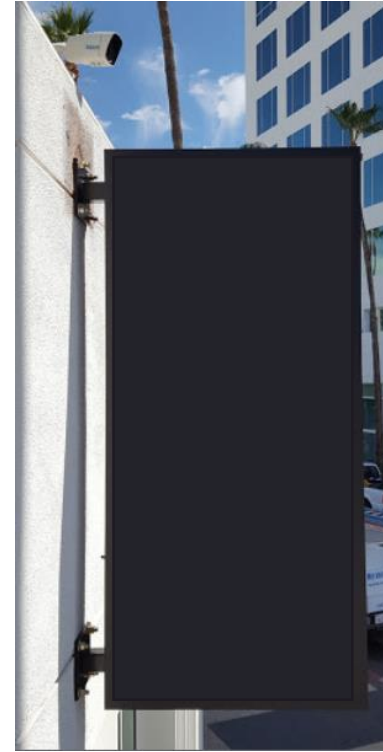
Lighting:

Indirect – No glare

Back Lit – Non intrusive (predominant black box color)

Installation:

Two-sided signs; suspended from the building and mounted perpendicular or to its face (or 45 degrees in the event of a corner installation).



## Freestanding Signs.

Small scale freestanding signs can help reinforce the historic character of a residential buildings and streetscapes that have been adapted for office and retail uses, while providing necessary identification for businesses

Scale Overall height per sign: 8'

Lighting:

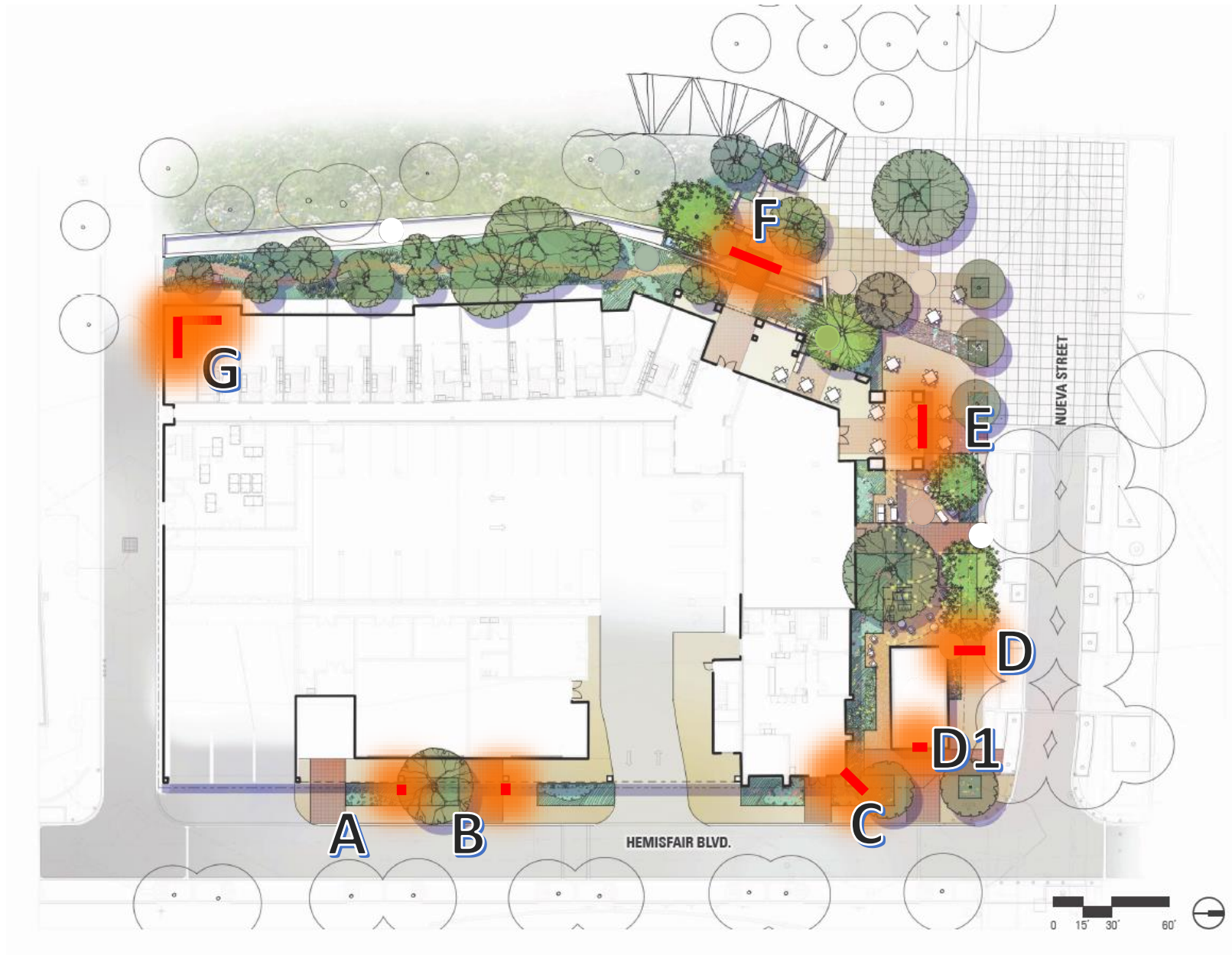
Indirect – No glare

Back Lit – Non intrusive

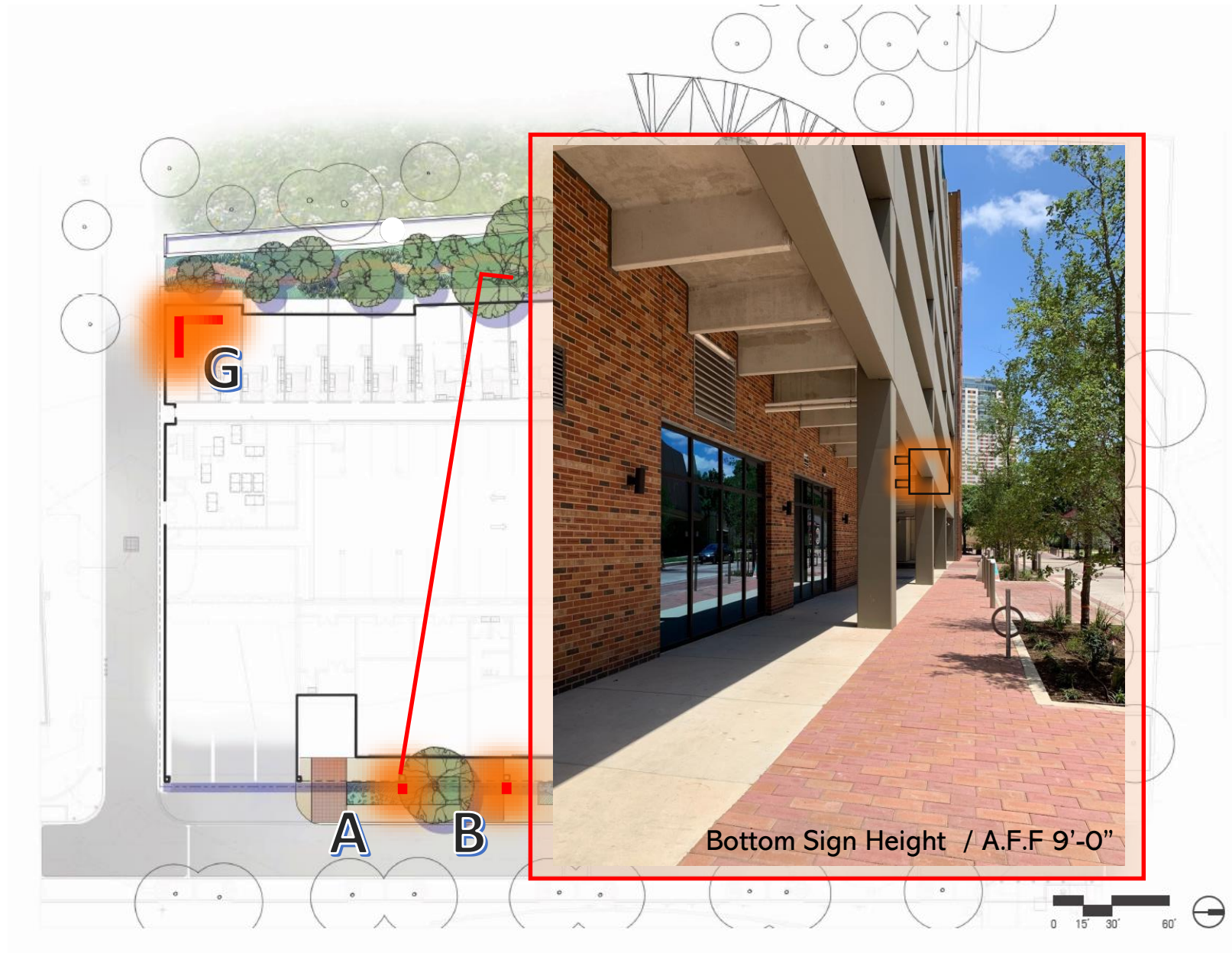
Installation:

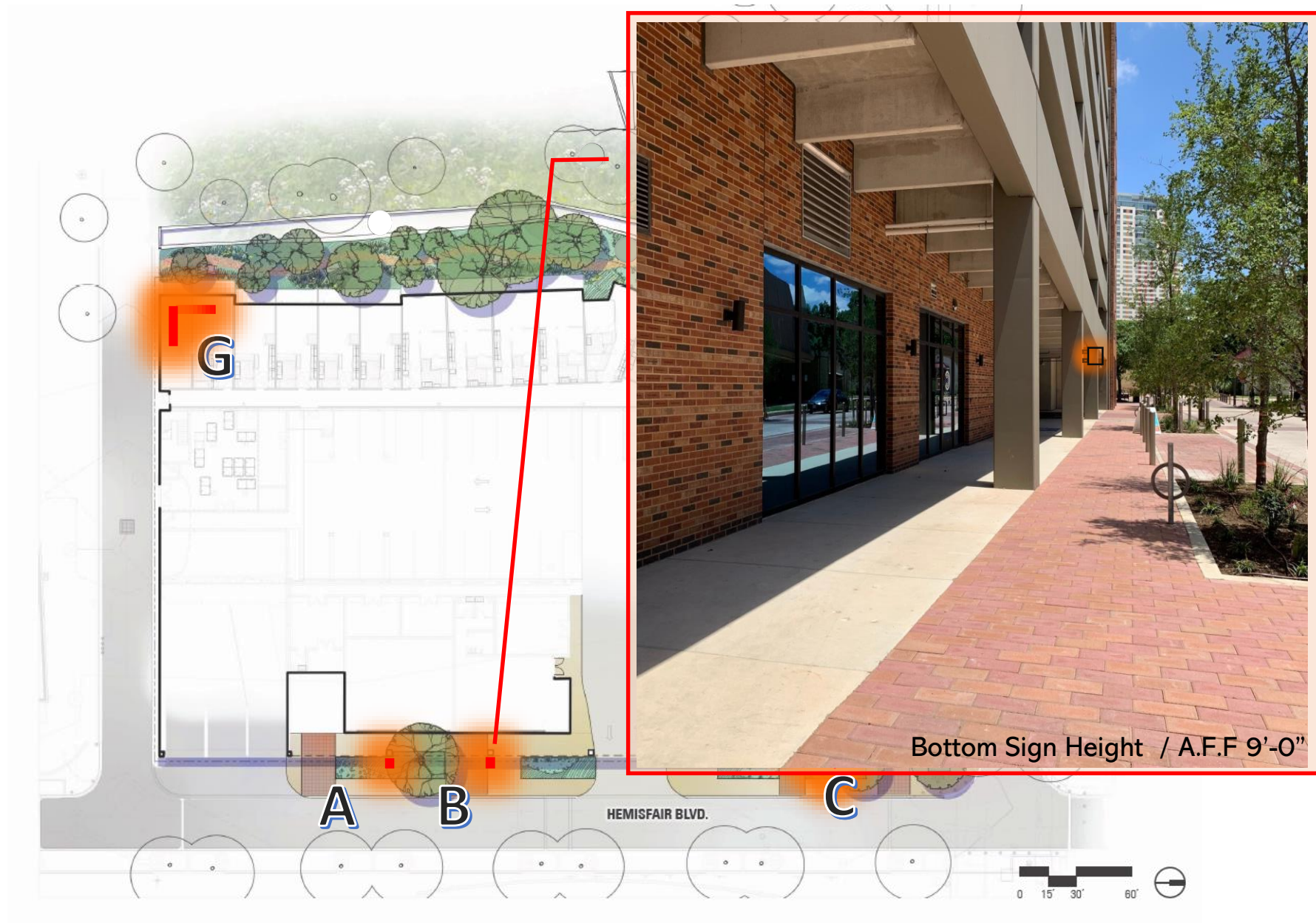
Place freestanding signs near the public right-of-way where they are clearly visible to passing pedestrians and motorists, a minimum of five feet from the street right-of-way and ten feet from all interior side lot lines.











Bottom Sign Height / A.F.F 9'-0"



Bottom Sign Height  
A.F.F 9'-0"

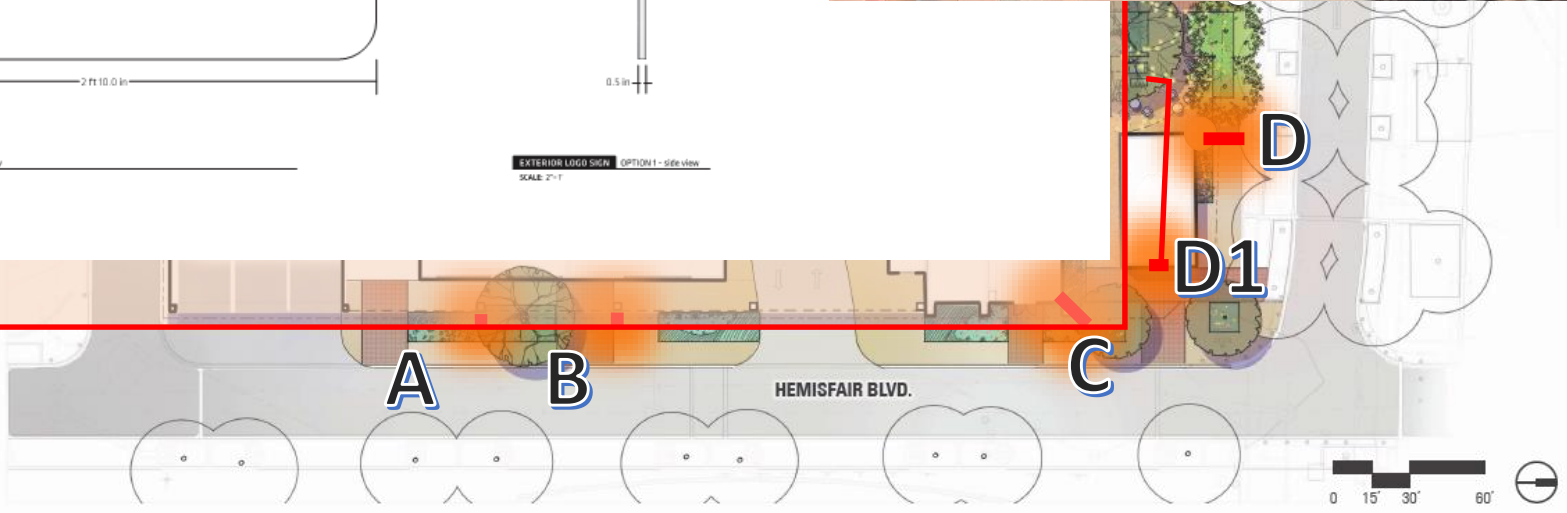
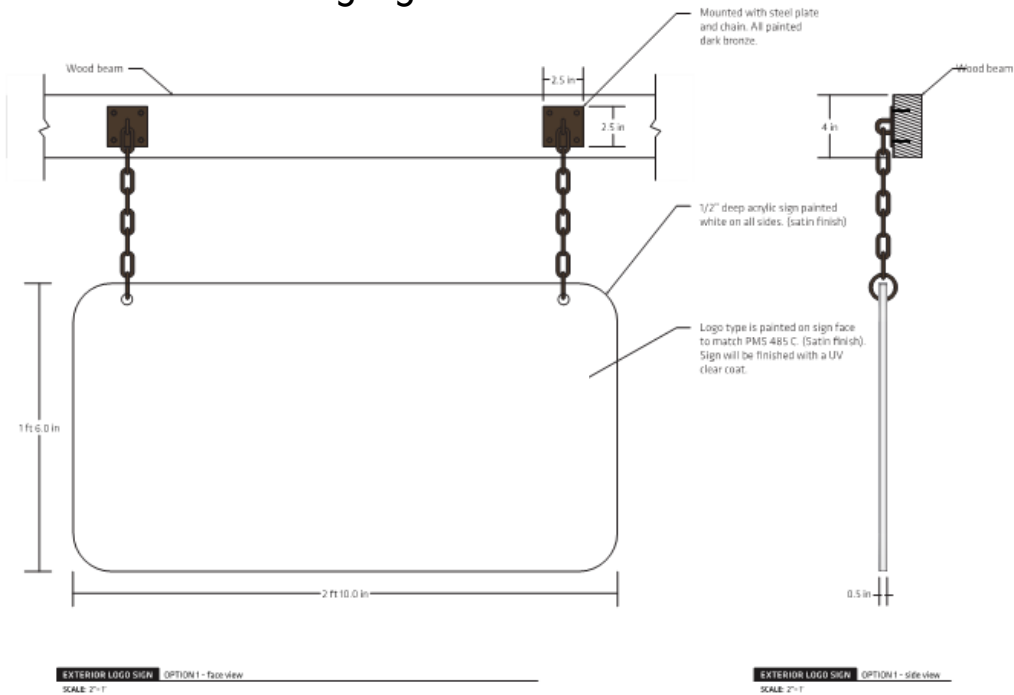
Top Sign Height  
A.F.F. 19'-0"

Overall Sf max sign  
30 sqft

Corner Projecting  
Wall Mounted



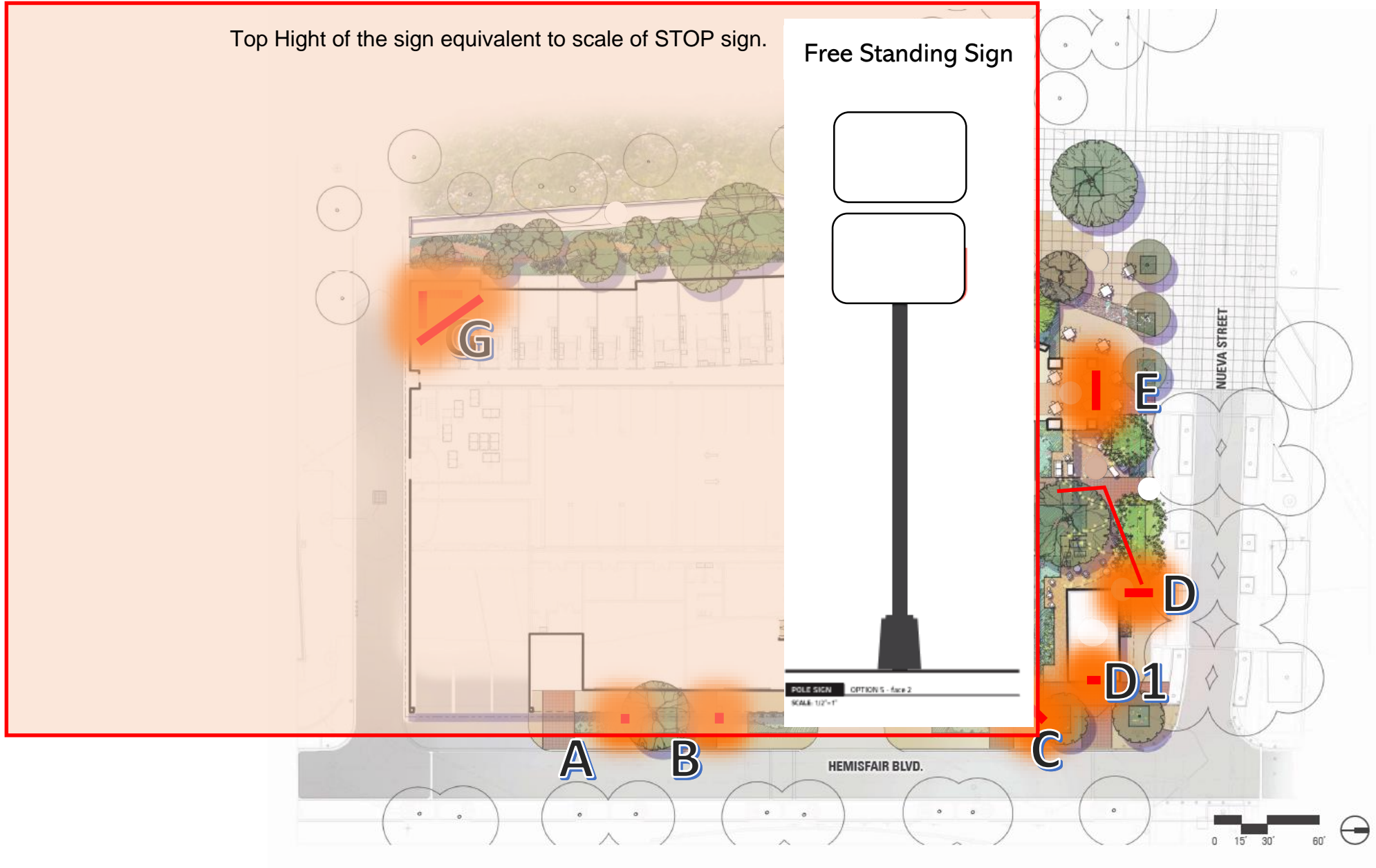
Canopy-Top-Mounted signs (center) should complement the scale and character of historic signage.





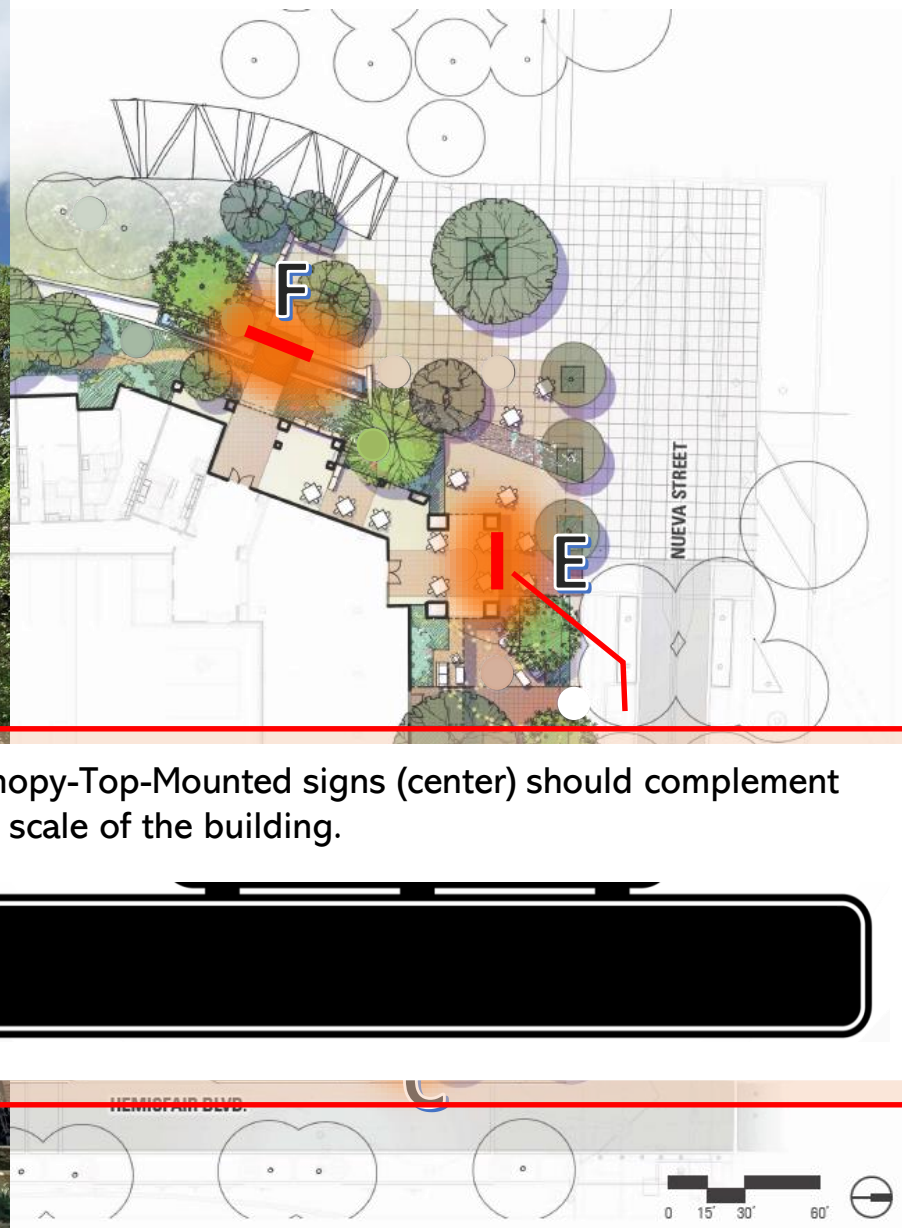
Top Hight of the sign equivalent to scale of STOP sign.

Free Standing Sign





Retail E



Canopy-Top-Mounted signs (center) should complement the scale of the building.





Awning Mounted signs should complement the scale and character of the building

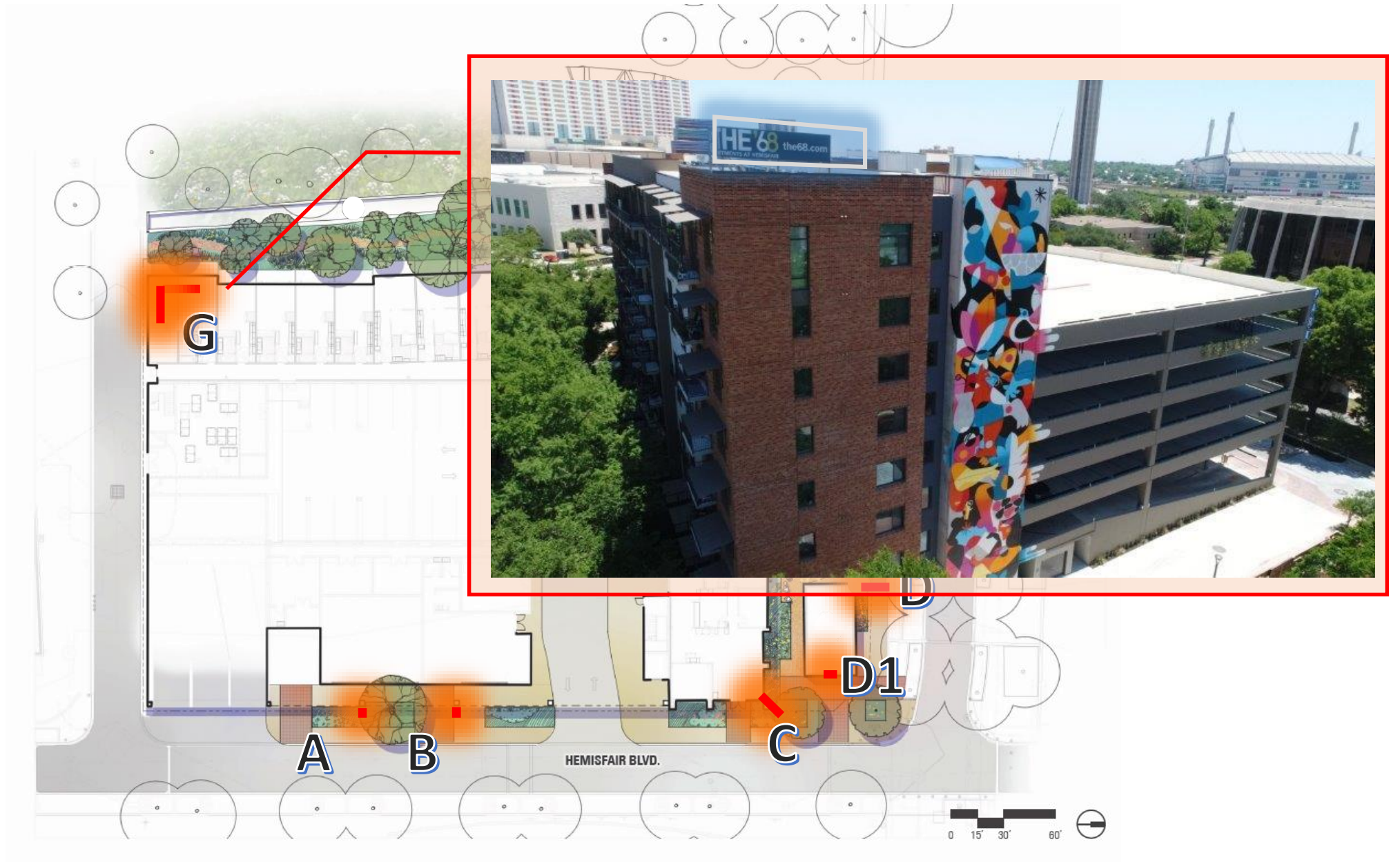


Placeholder for THE68' apartments

**THE'68**  
APARTMENTS AT HEMISFAIR

 Hemisfair





Placeholder for THE68' apartments

Thank you