

STAFF REPORT



Meeting: June 18, 2015

To: Design and Historic Review Commission members

From: Rebeca A. Guerra, AICP, LEED-AP, CPD
Planning Manager

Presenter: Jeff Fisher
Planner I

Case: RCC15-13

Request: A request for approval, per Section 12.703(b)(1) of the River Corridor Development Ordinance, of two (2) permanent signs: one 32-square foot lit sign which reads "JAMESON INN" and one 27-square foot lit sign which reads "333 RESTAURANT AND SALOON," to be attached to the north elevation of an existing hotel building

Location: 333 Rio Concho Drive; located approximately 365 feet southeast of the intersection of Rio Concho Drive and South Magdalene Street.

Legal Description: Fort Concho River Lots Subdivision, 5.1930 acres being all of Lot 9 and parts of Lots 10-12.

Size: 5.193 acres

General Information

Future Land Use: Commercial

Zoning: General Commercial/ Heavy Commercial (CG/CH)

Existing Land Use: Existing Hotel

Surrounding Zoning/Land Use:

North:	Central Business District (CBD), General Commercial/Heavy Commercial (CG/CH)	Firefighters Memorial City Park, Rio Concho Garden
West:	Single-Family Residential (RS-1)	Concho River, Bart DeWitt Park
South:	Low Rise Multifamily Residence District	Single Family Dwellings
East:	Central Business District (CBD)	Rio Concho Manor Apartments

District: CMD #3 Johnny Silvas

Neighborhood: Fort Concho

Thoroughfares/Streets: The subject property abuts Rio Concho Drive to the north, defined as a "Parkway" in the City's Major Thoroughfare Plan (MTP). A Parkway is a special designation utilized to classify roadways that serve public areas characterized by open space and waterfront features, and to provide access to the river and lake. Parkways require a minimum Right-Of-Way width of 60 feet and a minimum paving width of 40 feet. Rio Concho Drive has an existing Right-Of-Way of 40 feet and a minimum paving width of 26 feet, less than required. However, the existing hotel building was built in 1966 and part of the Fort Concho River Lots Subdivision, and there are no known

plans to expand the hotel which would require a Replat and road widening.

Recommendation:

The Planning Division recommends **APPROVAL** of this request, **subject to one (1) Condition of Approval.**

History and Background:

On June 4, 2015, the applicant received a River Corridor administrative approval for two (2) temporary, vinyl banner signs attached to the north elevation of the existing hotel building (RCC15-12) to advertise the hotel name and associated restaurant. At that time, the applicant submitted this application for two (2) permanent, aluminum lit signs that, if approved by the Design and Historic Review Commission (DHRC), would replace the temporary signs. The temporary signage was approved for (2) 10-day intervals, expiring on June 24, 2015, giving the applicant approximately one week to replace the temporary signs with the new, permanent signs, if approved by the DHRC. The hotel owner explained that the temporary signs were required by the parent company, Jameson Inn, in order to operate the hotel while he was waiting for a decision from the DHRC on the permanent signs. It is noted that the applicant also received administrative approval for two (2) sunscreen canvas canopies on the west elevation of the hotel (RCC15-13).

The purpose of this request is to approve two (2) permanent, aluminum lit signs on the north elevation to replace the two (2) temporary banner signs that were administratively approved. The signs will be exactly the same size and in the same location as the temporary signs facing Rio Concho Drive to advertise for the hotel. The original "Pearl on the Concho" hotel was built in 1966 and since then, has gone through several renovations. The owner stated that the hotel would now be called "Pearl on the Concho - Jameson Inn," which will include a new restaurant, and signage is needed to advertise for both. The freestanding ground sign at the front of the property, "Pearl on the Concho," will remain in its current location.

The first new permanent sign "JAMESON INN" will be 32-square feet, and be located above the west front entrance facing Rio Concho Drive. It will have a white background with black letters and a black-and-gold circular logo. The second new permanent sign "333 RESTAURANT AND SALOON" will be 27-square feet and be located above the east front entrance facing Rio Concho Drive. It will have a white background with the letters "333" in black and "Restaurant" and "Saloon" in gold, as per the attached renderings. Both signs, as proposed, will sit within aluminum frames and be lit with a florescent lamp inside the aluminum bracket.

Analysis:

Section 12.703(b)(1) of the River Corridor Development Ordinance requires the DHRC to review any lit sign in the River Corridor. In order for the DHRC to recommend approval of this application, the request needs to be consistent with the design guidelines of the *River Corridor Master Development Plan (RCMDP)*.

Although the property is located outside the Historic City Center, it is within the River Corridor, and would be subject specifically to the RCMDP policies pertaining to “*Commercial Use Outside of the Historic City Center*” as follows:

Design and Color

The RCMDP encourages “signage and awnings, which are color coordinated” that “can be used to introduce brighter, more intense colors” and “bright corporate colors should be limited in use to signage only.”

Although the signage policies are less restrictive outside the Historic City Center, nevertheless, Staff also took into consideration the close proximity to the River and that the fact that the surrounding environment contains parks and recreational features.

Staff believes the proposed design and colors of the two permanent signs meet the intent of both the RCMDP, and maintain the natural environment around the site. Both signs use more historical, slightly calligraphic fonts. The combination of solid black with some brighter gold enhance the light beige neutral façade.

Lighting

The Lighting Policy outside the Historic City Center encourages “decorative and functional lighting” that is “compatible with the building design and should enhance the design and safety of the site.” In addition, buildings close to the Riverfront shall “eliminate light trespass from building sites, improve night sky access, and reduce development impact on nocturnal environments.”

Staff believes the proposed lit signs will enhance the building design, breaking up the lengthy expanse facing Rio Concho Drive. However, both signs will face the north side of the river and the park in the area. The proposed aluminum sign with fluorescent bulb is typical of most commercial signage outside the River Corridor, however, there is a concern of spillover glare given that the signs will emanate towards the water, as there are no buildings immediately across the street.

As a condition of approval, Staff recommends the applicant use an LED light inside the aluminum frame of the sign, as opposed to a fluorescent bulb, to eliminate potential glare and spillover illumination onto the river.

Action Requested:

The action requested is for the Planning Commission to **APPROVE** an amendment to Case RCC15-13, **subject to the following one (1) Condition of Approval:**

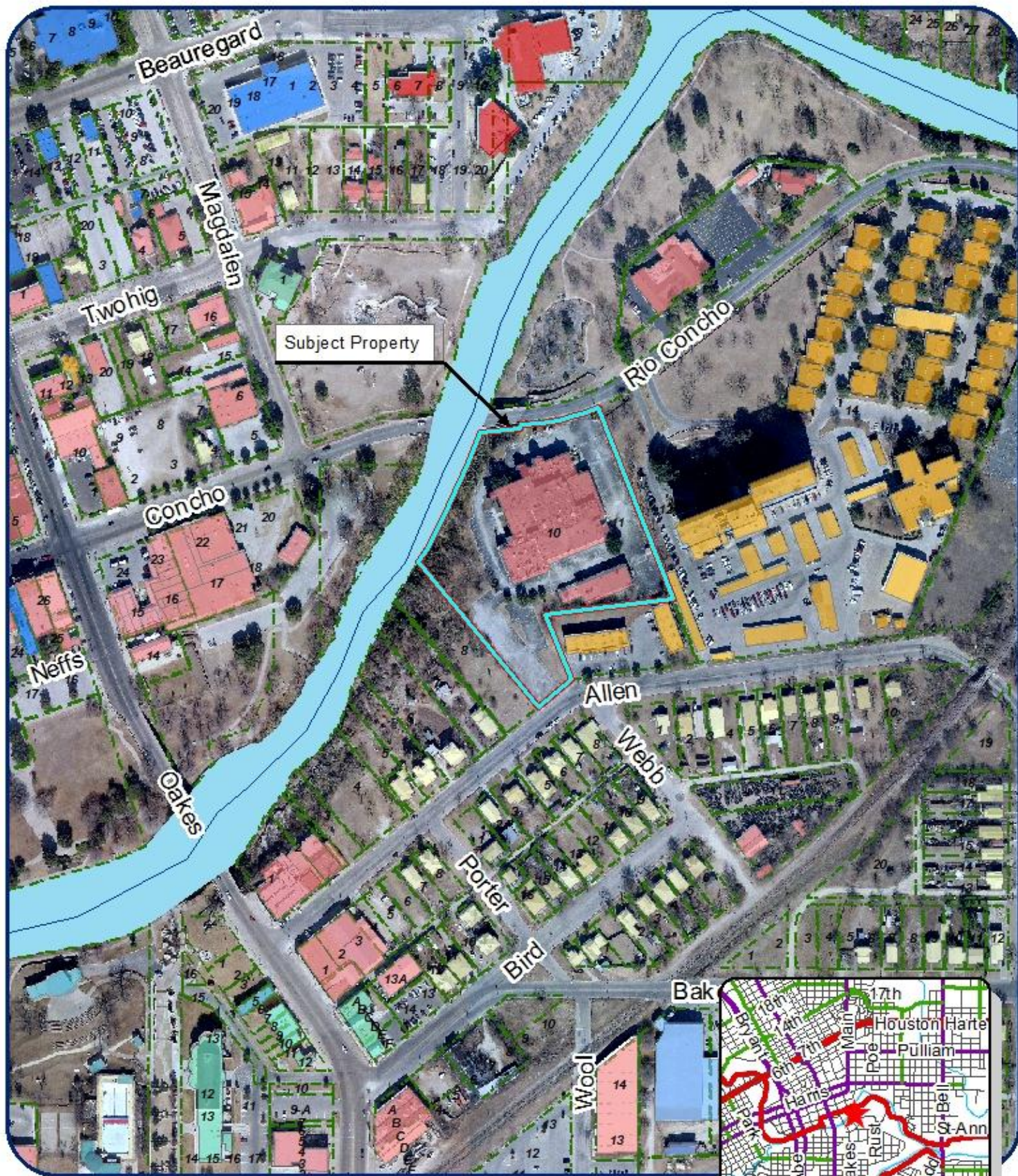
1. **There shall be no glare of spillover illumination onto adjacent properties, and the applicant shall provide the Director of the Planning & Development Services, or his/her designee, with revised sign details, replacing the florescent bulb with an LED bulb.**

Appeals:

Per Section 12.703(g) of the River Corridor Development Ordinance, an applicant who is denied a building permit will have a right to appeal to the City Council within 30 days of the Commission's decision. If the City Council approves the proposed construction, the Building Official shall then issue a permit therefore.

Attachments:

- Aerial Map
- Future Land Use Map
- Zoning Map
- Site Photos
- Site Location of Proposed Signs
- Color Renderings of Signs
- Sign Details



River Corridor Case File

RCC15-13: Pearl on the Concho

Council District: Johnny Silvas

Neighborhood: Fort Concho

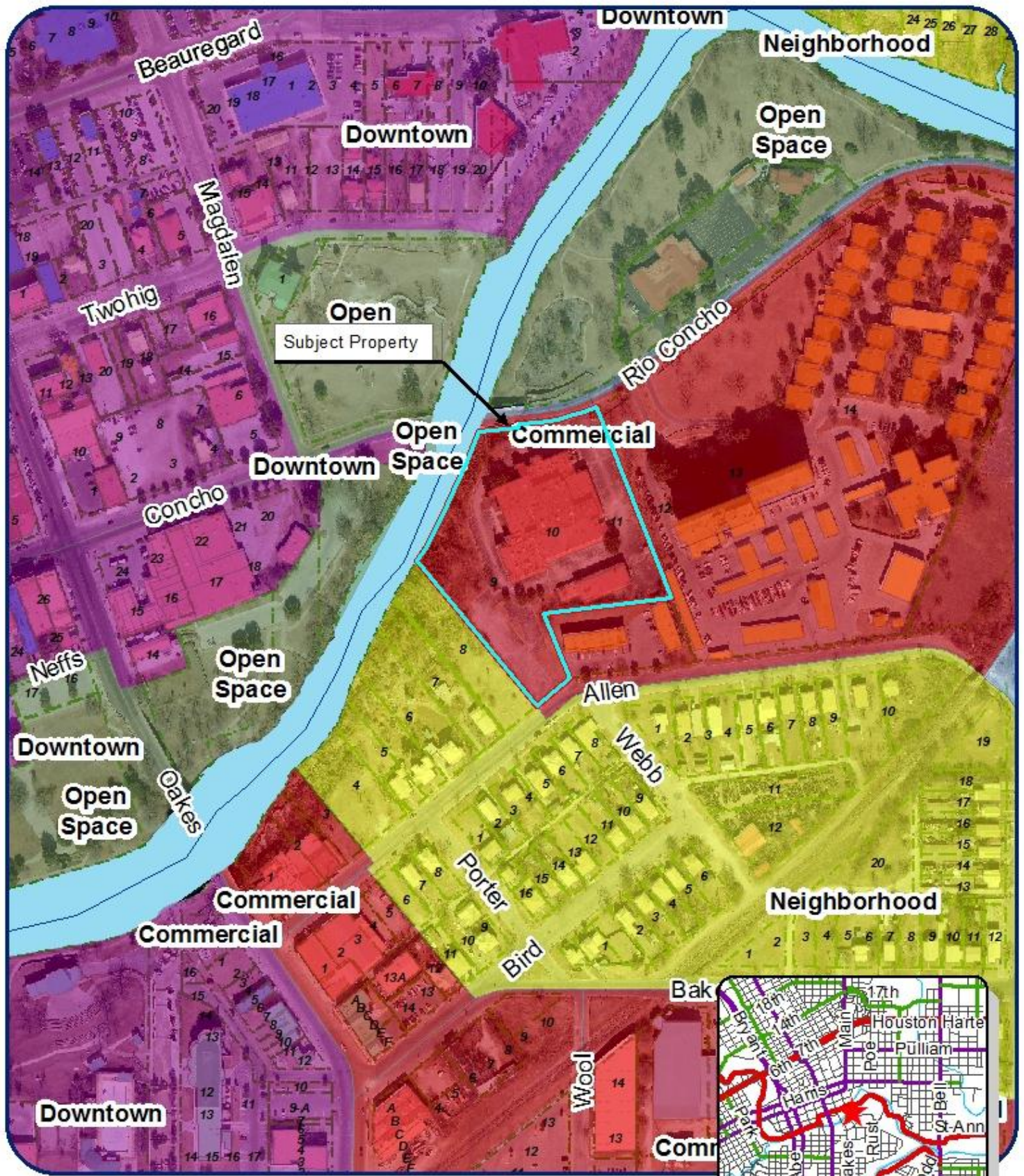
Scale: 1" approx. = 300 ft

Subject Property: 333 Rio Concho Drive

Legend

- Subject Properties: —
- Current Zoning: CG/CH
- Requested Zoning Change: N/A
- Vision: Commercial





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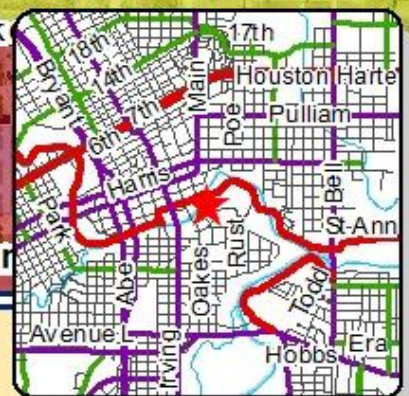
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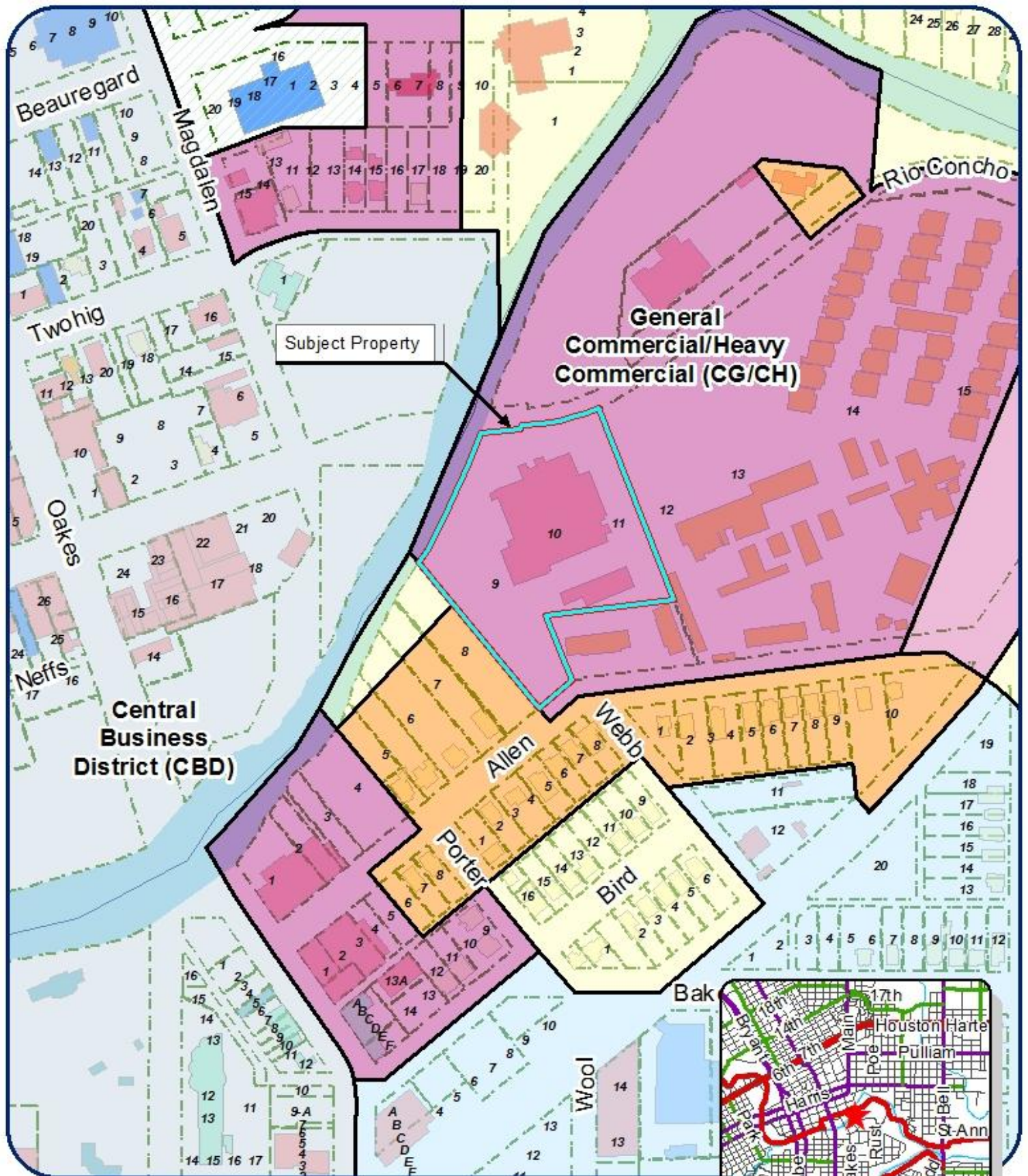
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Current Zoning: **CG/CH**

Requested Zoning Change: **N/A**

Vision: **Commercial**



Photos of Site and Surrounding Area

North



West



East



South (location of proposed signs)

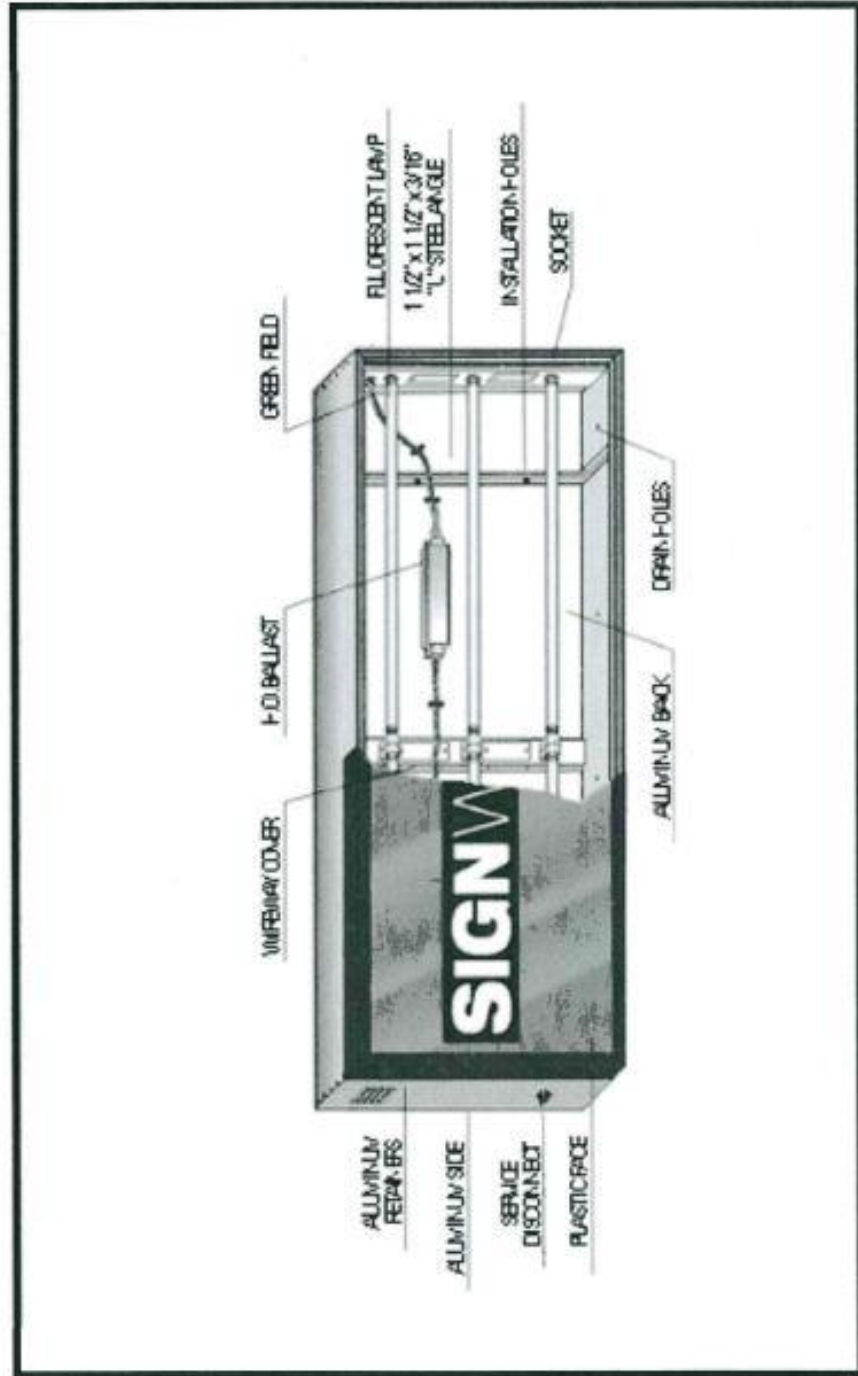








SIGN CABINETS



INTERIOR VIEW