

# STAFF REPORT



**Meeting:** September 17, 2015

**To:** Design and Historic Review Commission members

**From:** Jon James, AICP  
Director of Planning and Development Services

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

**Staff Planner:** Jeff Fisher  
Planner I

**Case:** RCC15-27

**Request:** A request for approval, per Section 12.703(b)(1) of the River Corridor Development Ordinance, for a new 75-square foot, aluminum-framed ground sign with changing LED display and backlit LED lighting design on a concrete base

**Location:** 501 Rio Concho Drive (McNease Convention Center), located at the southwest corner of Rio Concho Drive and Surber Street

**Legal Description:** Fort Concho River Lots Subvdivision, Lots 17 and 18, except the south 357 feet and except the north par

**Size:** 8.4 acres

**General Information**

Future Land Use: Campus/Institutional  
Zoning: Planned Development (PD11-02/Z11-13)  
Existing Land Use: McNease Convention Center

Surrounding Zoning/Land Use:

North:	Single-Family Residence (RS-1)	Rio Concho Park B
West:	General Commercial (CG)	Clarion Hotel
South:	Single-Family Residence (RS-1)	Vacant Land
East:	Low Rise Multifamily Residential (RM-1)	Arbor Terrace Health Care Center

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 at this location has an existing Right-Of-Way of 50 feet, 10 feet less than required, and a paving width of 50 feet in compliance with the MTP. However, the existing Convention Center was built in 1978 and part of the Fort Concho River Lots Subdivision, and there are no known plans to expand the Convention Center that would require a Replat and road widening.

## **Recommendation:**

The Planning Division recommends **APPROVAL** of this request, **subject to five (5) Conditions of Approval.**

## **History and Background:**

On August 17, 2015, the City of San Angelo submitted an Application for River Corridor Review for a new ground sign at the McNease Convention Center which will replace the existing ground sign. A previous River Corridor Approval (RCC14-42) was granted on July 24, 2012, for an electronic message display ground sign, 3'-2" tall by 10'-6" long, with a total sign area of 33.25 square feet. The sign was never erected on the property and the City has now returned with a request for a new ground sign which requires River Corridor approval.

The new ground sign will be 5'-0" tall by 15'-0" wide, with a depth of 2 feet, and a total sign area of 75 square feet. It will be double-faced and be visible to vehicles driving westbound and eastbound on Rio Concho Avenue. The Sign Ordinance only counts one face as the sign area. The sign complies with the maximum sign dimensions outlined in Planned Development PD11-02 which allows for the same maximum dimensions as proposed. In addition, the sign will comply with all provisions of the City's Sign Ordinance, including the maximum Sign Area of 75 square feet, and the maximum sign height of 30 feet for signage in the River Corridor.

The new sign will be constructed with an aluminum frame and will be attached to a 3'-3" concrete base. The 5' x 10' west portion of the sign will have a black background with LED display, allowing sign messages in blue to change periodically. The 5' x 5' east portion of the sign will remain fixed, and be an LED backlit blue background with white letters: "MCNEASE CONVENTION CENTER, 501 RIO CONCHO DRIVE."

## **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, 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 proposed ground sign will meet the intent of the RCMDP policy and maintain the natural environment along the Concho River. The proposed signage uses neutral colors, consistent with other approvals, including the signage for Pearl on the Concho (RCC 15-13), and the Clarion Hotel (RCC12-18).

## **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 ground sign will be compatible with the Convention and surrounding area, and enhance the design and safety of the site. The lit sign will be visible from the street and parking lots, but the backlit LED design will eliminate potential glare onto the River as its frequency can be controlled unlike traditional lit signs.

## **Action Requested:**

The action requested is for the Design & Historic Review Commission to **APPROVE** Case RCC15-27, **subject to the following five (5) Conditions of Approval:**

- 1. Flashing light, the appearance of flashing light, animated graphics, video clips or any arrangement and timing of lighting that gives the appearance of movement shall be prohibited.**
- 2. Each message shall be displayed for at least 4 seconds.**

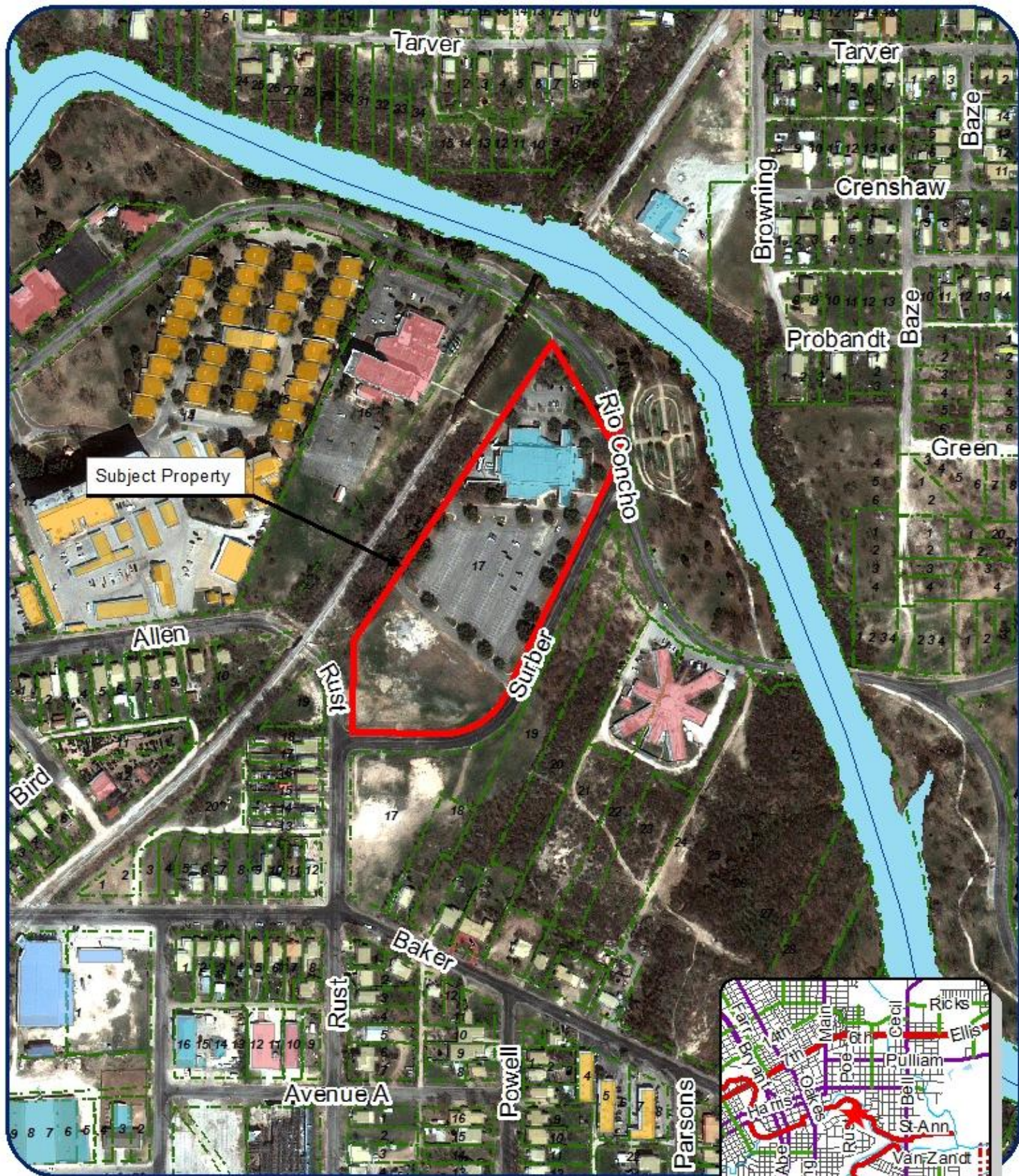
3. A change of message shall be accomplished within no more than two (2) seconds and shall occur simultaneously on the entire sign face.
4. The sign shall produce no uncomfortably harsh or bright light objectionable to passing motorists or to occupants of adjacent and nearby property.
5. The applicant shall obtain a Sign Permit from the Permits and Inspections Division in compliance with the above conditions, and all other applicable provisions of the Sign Ordinance.

**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 Plan  
Color Rendering of Sign



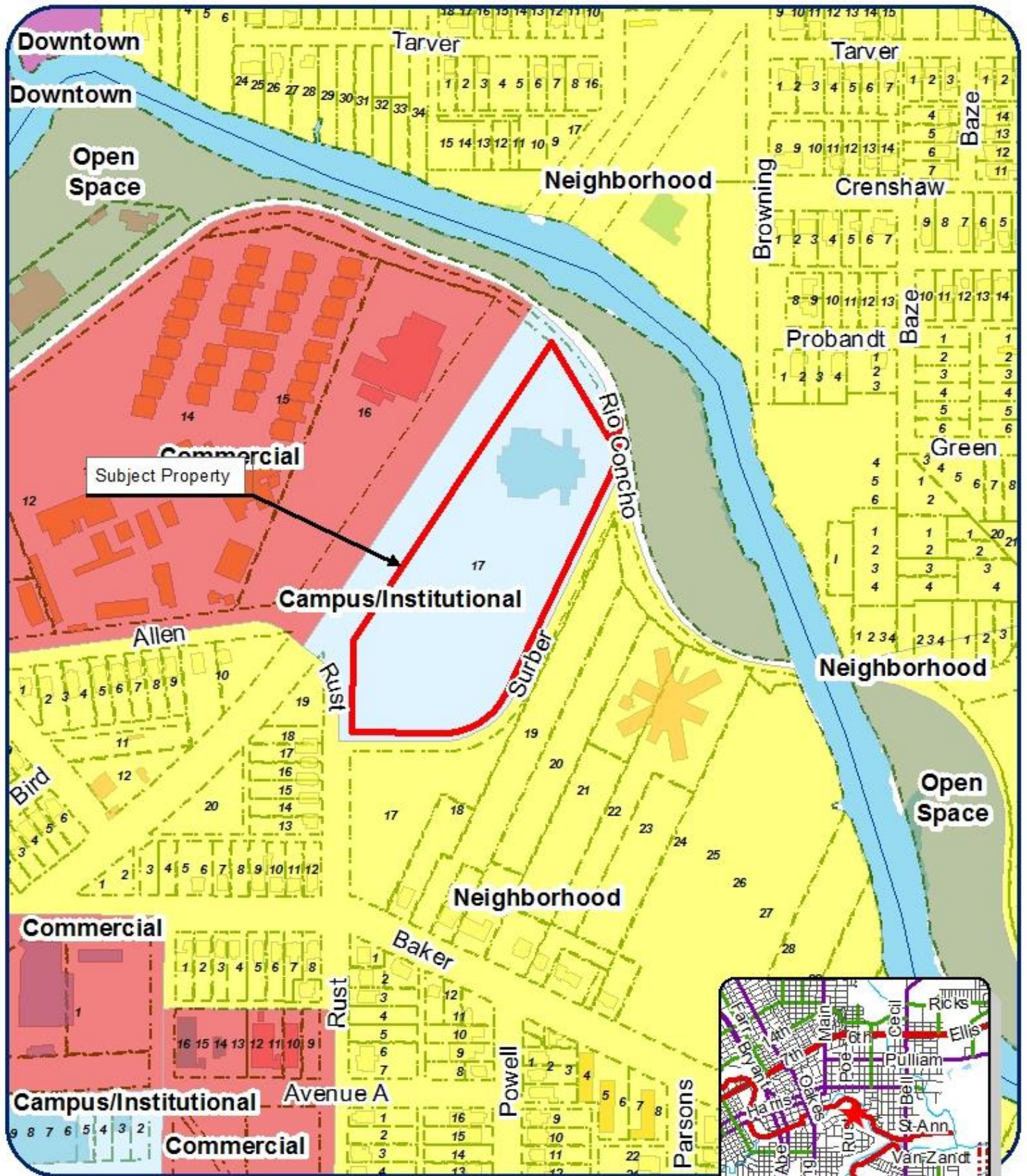
**River Corridor Case File**  
**Case RCC15-27: COSA**

Council District: Johnny Silvas (SMD #3)  
 Neighborhood: Fort Concho  
 Scale: 1" approx. = 350 ft  
 Subject Property: 501 Rio Concho Drive

**Legend**

- Subject Properties: —
- Current Zoning: PD11-02
- Requested Zoning Change: N/A
- Vision: Campus/Institutional



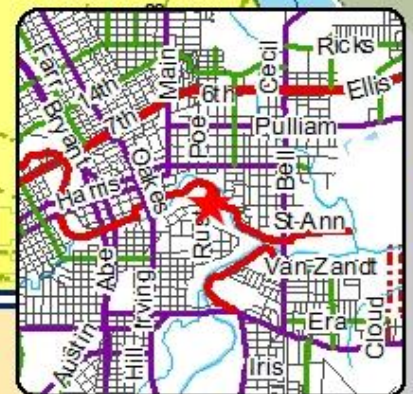


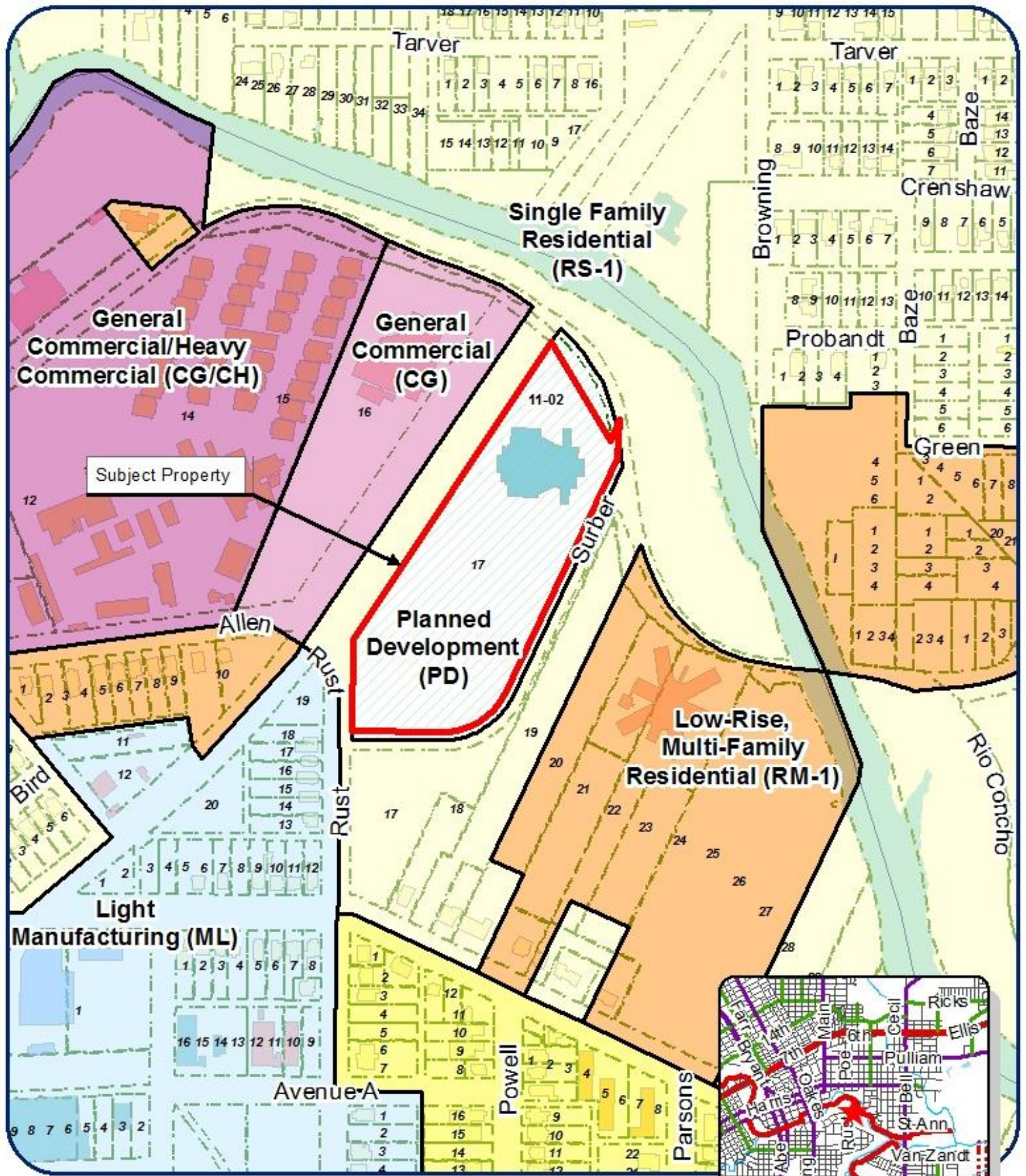
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**Photos of Site and Surrounding Area**

**South (location of proposed sign – replace existing)**



**West**



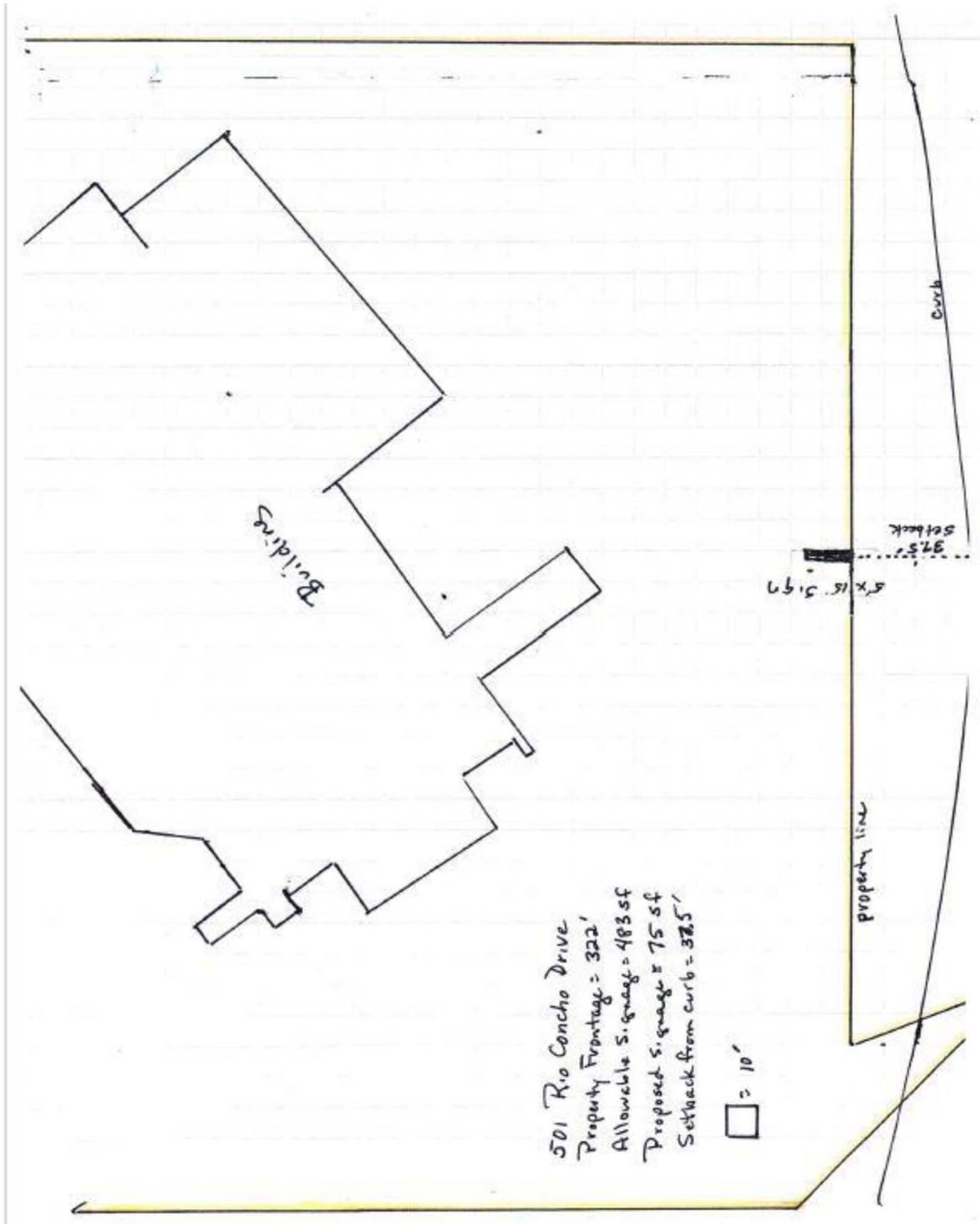
**East**



**North**



# Site Plan



## Color Rendering of Sign



signs will be bolted and welded with square tubing frame



4382 Southwest Blvd.  
San Angelo, Texas 76904  
All About Signs  
Phone: 325-949-7168  
Fax: 325-949-7829  
sales@allaboutsinstx.com

Client: San Angelo Convention Cntr  
Job #: 22976 - San Angelo Convention Cntr  
Size(s):  
Qty:  
Sides:  
Material(s):  
Finishing:

Please review artwork and specifications. Your signature or emailed approval guarantees you have checked for errors. If you disagree with the art above please make changes and we will send a new proof ASAP.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_