



ARCHITECTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 4, 2021 NEW BUSINESS

SUBJECT: DTPS A14, LLC, OWNER, PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE SIGN PROGRAM FOR "THE BLOCK "A" BUILDING" LOCATED AT 201 NORTH PALM CANYON DRIVE, ZONE: CBD, DOWNTOWN PALM SPRINGS SPECIFIC PLAN, (CASE SP 16-002 AMND), (KL).

FROM: Development Services Department

SUMMARY:

The original sign program approved for this multi-tenant building focused primarily on first floor retail tenants. This amendment proposes additional signage for a single third floor tenant and a building identification sign.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend that the Planning Commission approve the proposed sign program amendment with the following conditions:

1. Upper Floor Tenant Wall ("Fascia / Plaque") Sign Area. That all wall signs for upper floor tenants proposed on any elevation conform to the maximum size limitations allowed in the sign ordinance with the exception that maximum letter height as proposed, not to exceed 24 inches.
2. Third Floor Tenant Sign Height. That the fascia / plaque wall signage proposed on the north elevation be allowed at 32 feet above grade because of the window configuration on that façade.
3. Deny vertical "Blade" sign. That the vertical "blade" building identification sign proposed on the east elevation be denied and recommended for future submittal as part of a more comprehensive Sign District for this area of the City.
4. Maximum Allowable Blade Signs – All tenants. That the newly proposed blade sign on the west elevation for the third floor tenant and all subsequent blade signs for all tenants be approved at a maximum area and quantity as allowed in the downtown sign ordinance for main signs of 16 square feet and not more than 4 feet in any one direction and not less than 7 feet above the adjacent sidewalk.
5. Maximum Allowable Canopy / Awning Signs – All tenants. That all future canopy / awning signs conform to the maximum allowable area and length that

is permitted in the downtown sign ordinance of 1sq. ft. of sign area per lineal feet of tenant frontage, not to exceed 30% of the awning length of the tenant space as was approved in the original sign program with the following exceptions:

- a. Canopy Signs may not exceed 24 inches in height.
 - b. Maximum area, length and height applies to all canopy signs.¹
6. Signs on Glazing. That signs on glazing be allowed for all first floor tenants to the maximum allowable height, percentage of window area and location as specified in the downtown sign ordinance.
 7. Further Amendment. That the applicant further amend the sign program for coordinated signage for second floor tenants and for multiple third floor tenants in the event the space is subdivided in the future to avoid a piecemeal approach to signage for this building over time.

ISSUES:

- The downtown sign ordinance limits signs to a maximum height of 28 feet and the top of the proposed sign on the north elevation is 32 feet.
- A vertically-oriented building identification blade sign is proposed on the east façade that is 66 square feet and roughly 39 feet in height. Such signs are limited to 20 square feet. The proposed sign is over three times larger than allowed.
- The General Plan Downtown Urban Design Guidelines recommends smaller signs for pedestrian-oriented streets like Palm Canyon. The proposal requests signs that are larger than otherwise permitted.
- No signage is proposed on any elevation for second floor tenants.
- The sign ordinance limits Canopy / Awning sign lettering height to 14 inches with first letters to 16 inches. Recent canopy sign permits have been granted with letters up to 24 inches in height.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The current sign program approved in 2016 provides unified main and accessory sign types for the various first floor tenants in the building, but no signage on the exterior of the building for second or third floor tenants. Special sign allowances were granted for “West Elm” which occupied a major first floor tenant space and other signage as follows:

- Canopy / Awning Signs: Allowed for all first floor tenants with frontages on Palm Canyon, Andreas Road and Market Street Paseo, not to exceed 16 inches in height or 16 square feet per sign.²

¹ The “Juice” sign that was approved in the original sign program was never installed and thus the special sign area approved for that sign does not apply to future signs for that tenant space. The “West Elm” sign was granted a 36 inch letter height in the original sign program because of the very large tenant space that it occupies (akin to an “anchor” tenant). This height would not be visually appropriate for all future canopy / awning signs on the building.

² Except the West Elm sign on the east elevation, all recently approved permits for canopy signs have

- Blade and Glazing Signs: Both sign types allowed for all first floor tenants per the downtown sign ordinance.
- Temporary Construction Sign Graphic: (No longer applicable.)
- Lighting: As allowed in the downtown sign ordinance.
- “Juice” sign: (No longer applicable.)
- Special Canopy / Awning Signs – West Elevation. Two allowed at a maximum height of 22 inches for West Elm.
- Special Canopy / Awning Sign – East Elevation. “West Elm” sign allowed at a maximum height of 36 inches.

BELOW WEST / SOUTH FAÇADE AND NORTH / EAST FACADE



The building owner has secured a single tenant for the third floor and the proposed amendment would provide exterior signage on the building for that tenant. New tenant signage is proposed on the north and south facades in the form of “fascia / plaque” signs: wall-mounted, illuminated, reverse channel letters. A blade sign is also proposed for the third floor tenant on the west façade over the door to the stairway. No other signage is proposed on the west elevation as part of this amendment. On the east façade a large vertical blade sign is proposed as a building / district identification sign but no additional tenant signage for upper floor tenants is proposed on the east elevation.

<i>Neighborhood Meeting/Notification</i>	
Dec. 31, 2020	Agenda posting to neighborhood organizations

DETAILS OF APPLICATION REQUEST:

As noted on page III-17 of the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan, signage must be consistent with the City’s sign ordinance. Page III-4 of the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan notes that architectural features, screens, and canopies perpendicular to the building face not exceeding 10 feet into the right-of-way are permitted. (The vertical blade sign on the east elevation is proposed to extend roughly five (5) feet horizontally over the sidewalk.)

been approved not to exceed 24 inches in height.

The General Plan Downtown Urban Design Plan provides the following guidelines for signage beginning on page 52:

- “...pedestrian-oriented areas such as Palm Canyon Drive should have smaller signs than car-oriented areas.”
- “...Signs should create a sense of continuity and unity within the downtown area.”
- “Double-faced projecting signs are desirable along commercial streets provided that they are of an appropriate size, scale and location.”
- “Along traditional multi-story commercial streets, the best placement for signs is along the lintel or sign frieze (generally defined as the area between the ground floor storefront or windows and the upper story windows or cornice).”

<i>Surrounding Property</i>	<i>Existing Land Use Per Chapter 92</i>	<i>Existing General Plan Designation</i>	<i>Existing Zoning Designation</i>
Subject Property	Retail / Commercial / Office	CBD	Downtown Specific Plan
North	Hotel	CBD	Downtown Specific Plan
South	Retail / Commercial	CBD	Downtown Specific Plan
East	Retail / Commercial	CBD	CBD
West	Public Parking	CBD	Downtown Specific Plan

<i>General Plan Areas or Master Plan Areas</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Downtown Urban Design Plan	No, signage proposed is larger, not smaller than car-oriented areas.
<i>Special Purpose and Overlay Districts</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
“D” Downtown Parking Combining Zone	NA
<i>Specific Plan Area</i>	<i>Compliance</i>
Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan	No, signage does not conform to the Downtown sign ordinance.

ANALYSIS:

The purpose of the sign ordinance is to provide equitable standards for all businesses. Sign programs are required for multi-tenant buildings to provide signage for all tenants that is unified in its appearance, harmonious with the architecture of the building or complex, and that provides adequate visibility for building tenants.

Signage in the downtown is generally regulated under Zoning Code Section 93.20.06 (*Permitted signs – Downtown / Uptown*). General and Special Provision sections of the sign ordinance provide further regulatory guidance.

The proposed sign program amendment varies from the provisions of the sign

ordinance as follows:

1. Height. The wall sign proposed on the north elevation tops out at 32 feet; this exceeds the maximum allowable height for signs of 28 feet (PSZC 93.20.06 (A)).
2. Blade Sign Area. The proposed vertical building identification blade sign is 66 square feet per face. Arcade / Blade signs for tenants may not exceed 16 square feet, nor 4 feet in any one direction. The proposed large blade sign is proposed for building / district identification purposes, not for individual tenants. Pursuant PSZC 93.20.08 (I) one additional sign relating to a building or complex of businesses not to exceed twenty (20) square feet may be allowed as part of an approved sign program. The proposed 66 square foot vertical building identification blade would be over three times the maximum area allowed by the sign ordinance. The sign does not conform.
3. Wall (“Fascia / Plaque”) Sign Area. The letters shown for the specific tenant “USCAP” are 25 inches in height (almost 80% larger than the 14 inch letter height allowed by ordinance).
4. No provision for signage for second floor tenants. The only signage available for upper floor tenants is listing on the pedestrian building directory on the south elevation and that which is proposed for the third floor only accommodates a single tenant.³

Pursuant to Zoning Code Section 93.20.08 (H) (*Special Provisions for Sign Programs*), sign programs that vary from the specific requirements of the sign ordinance may be approved if the Planning Commission affirmatively makes these findings:

a. Due to the physical characteristics of the property and the orientation and design of the structures on the property, strict application of the regulations of the Sign Ordinance will not give adequate visibility to the signage;

The building is a conventional three-story mixed use commercial building with good exposure to public streets, public parking lots and private paseos, providing adequate visibility on all four sides. The window configuration on the north elevation prohibits the proposed wall sign from conforming to the ordinances’ maximum 28 foot height limit. The amendment proposes a sign height that tops out at 32 feet. This represents the least departure from the sign ordinance in order to clear the second floor windows. This finding can be met.

b. That the approved program will be compatible with the design of the property and will represent the least departure from the standards of the Sign Ordinance necessary for the effectiveness of the program; and

The building is contemporary in its design aesthetic and has excellent exposure to both pedestrian and vehicular traffic on all sides. The proposed signage is compatible with

³ If / when the third floor is subdivided in the future, there is no accommodation for signage for multiple tenants.

the architecture of the building; however the lettering on the proposed wall signs is 25 inches; almost 80% taller than the 14 inches allowed by the sign ordinance. Other wall signs in adjacent buildings (Block “B” and Block “C”) have recently been approved with larger lettering. In those instances, the City Council made findings that the size of the building justified larger lettering (“H & M”, etc.) The area of the proposed wall signs conform to the size limitations of the sign ordinance. Thus, only letter height is proposed greater than the sign ordinance, representing the least departure from the standards of the sign ordinance. For consistency and ease of administration, staff recommends all wall signs in this sign program reflect the same height as all canopy signs at 24 inches.

c. That the approved program is compatible with the surrounding property and not contrary to the purpose of the Sign Ordinance.

The size of the proposed signs is larger than allowed for signs in the downtown. Although the over-sized nature of the proposed signage is out-of-scale for the pedestrian-oriented nature of the downtown, and the relatively low speed limit for vehicular traffic on Palm Canyon in the downtown, allowing larger signs for tenants of this building would be consistent with larger sign sizes allowed for Block “B” and “C”. Thus the proposed signage can be found to be consistent with surrounding properties.

Evaluation of the proposed sign amendment pursuant to PSZC 94.04 (*Architectural Review*).

PSZC Section 94.04.00(D) requires an evaluation of the proposed development to determine if it will provide a desirable environment for its occupants, be compatible with the character of adjacent and surrounding developments, and whether it is of good composition, materials, textures and colors. The sign program amendment is evaluated based on the following criteria:

	Guidelines [PSZC 94.04.00(D)]	Compliance
1.	<p><i>Site layout, orientation, location of structures and relationship to one another and to open spaces and topography. Definition of pedestrian and vehicular areas; i.e., sidewalks as distinct from parking lot areas.</i></p> <p>The building’s signage has excellent pedestrian and vehicular visibility on all four elevations. Window configuration on the north elevation causes conformance with the 28 foot height limit to be difficult.</p>	Partially
2.	<p><i>Harmonious relationship with existing and proposed adjoining developments and in the context of the immediate neighborhood/community, avoiding both excessive variety and monotonous repetition, but allowing similarity of style, if warranted;</i></p> <p>The signs in the proposed sign program amendment are larger than</p>	Partially

	Guidelines [PSZC 94.04.00(D)]	Compliance
	<p>otherwise permitted in the Downtown but are consistent with other sign programs approved in recent years for Blocks “B” and “C”. The purpose of the sign ordinance (PSZC 93.20.02 (A) is to provide equitable sign standards for all businesses. A general trend has been established for newer buildings in the downtown to be granted larger signs through the application of a sign program. The same procedure is available for owners of older multi-tenant buildings, thus providing an equitable means for adjusting sign standards.</p>	
3.	<p><i>Maximum height, area, setbacks and overall mass, as well as parts of any structure (buildings, walls, screens, towers or signs) and effective concealment of all mechanical equipment;</i></p>	No
	<p>The proposed sign on the north elevation is higher than otherwise permitted by the downtown sign ordinance. Lettering height is also larger but consistent with other recent sign programs in the vicinity.</p>	
4.	<p><i>Building design, materials and colors to be sympathetic with desert surroundings;</i></p>	NA
	<p>(NA)</p>	
5.	<p><i>Harmony of materials, colors and composition of those elements of a structure, including overhangs, roofs, and substructures which are visible simultaneously;</i></p>	NA
	<p>(NA)</p>	
6.	<p><i>Consistency of composition and treatment;</i></p>	Partially
	<p>The proposed sign amendment is not consistent with the sign ordinance for downtown, the Downtown Palm Springs Specific Plan nor the Downtown Urban Design Plan of the General Plan. However it is generally consistent with other recently approved sign programs in the same area.</p>	
7.	<p><i>Location and type of planting, with regard for desert climate conditions. Preservation of specimen and landmark trees upon a site, with proper irrigation to insure maintenance of all plant materials;</i></p>	NA
	<p>(NA)</p>	
8.	<p><i>Signs and graphics, as understood in architectural design including materials and colors.</i></p>	No
	<p>The sign program amendment proposes signage greater in area and quantity than otherwise allowed by the downtown sign ordinance, however is generally consistent with other recently approved sign programs.</p>	

CONCLUSION:

The proposed sign program amendment is necessary to allow processing of a sign permit for an incoming major upper floor tenant. Granting larger signs for tenants of this building through the application of a sign program is consistent with recent approvals for sign programs for adjacent buildings.

It is therefore appropriate for the AAC to recommend approval of an amendment to the sign program as conditioned.



Ken Lyon, RA Associate Planner



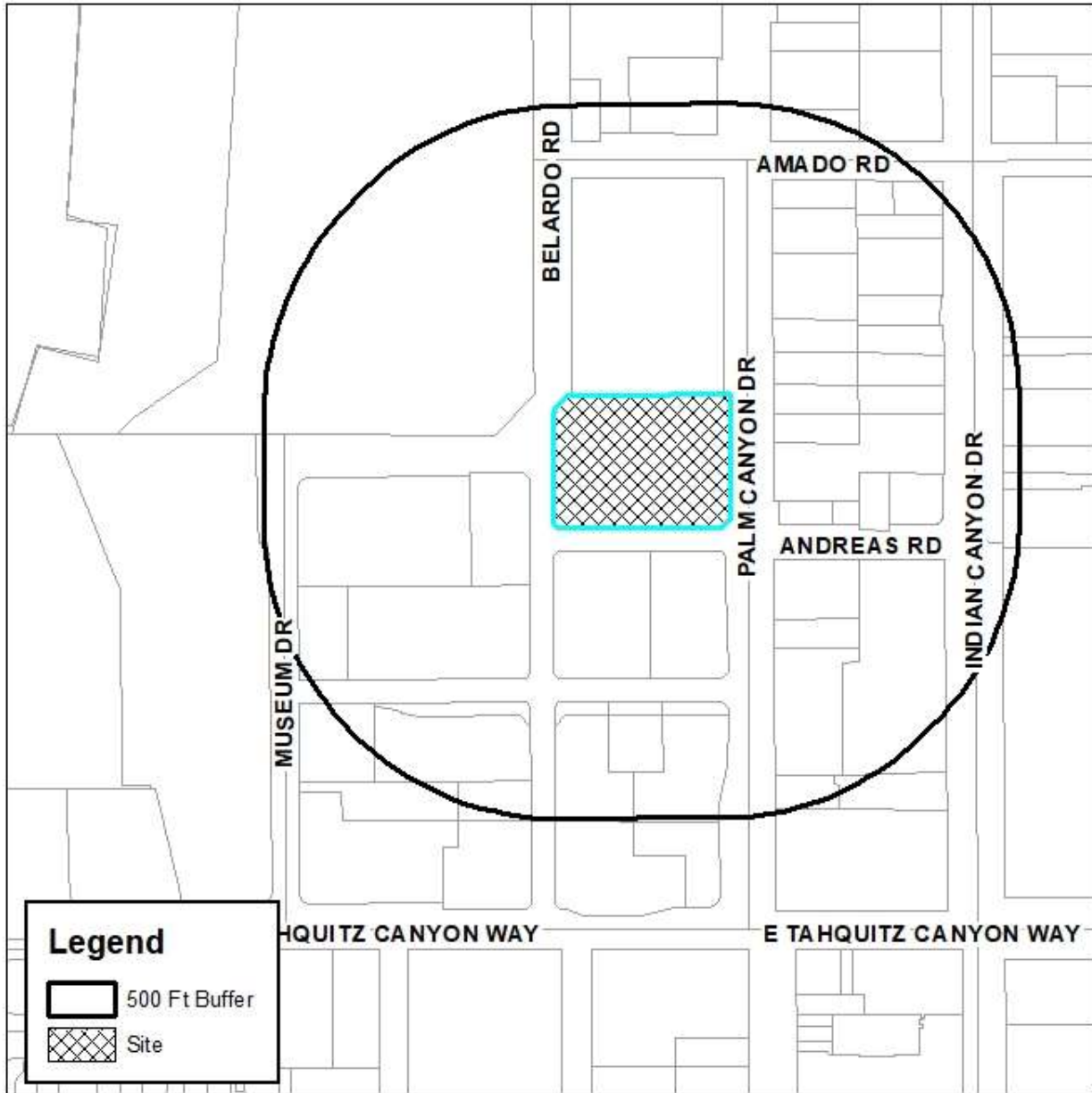
David Newell, AICP,
Assistant Director of Planning

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Vicinity Map.
2. Sign Program Amendment application materials.



Department of Planning Services Vicinity Map



CITY OF PALM SPRINGS
Case SP16-002 AMND
Block "A" 200 N. Palm Canyon Drive



PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO
**BLOCK A
DOWNTOWN SIGN PROGRAM**

PREPARED FOR



PRESENTED BY



800-50-SIGNS www.bestsignsinc.com

CONTRACTORS LIC. NO. 524483

1550 S GENE AUTRY TRAIL
PALM SPRINGS CA 92264
760-320-3042
800-50-SIGNS

OCTOBER 28, 2020



BLOCK A

- RETAIL/RESTAURANT - 1st LEVEL
- PROFESSIONAL SUITES - 2nd LEVEL
- LEARNING CENTER - 3rd LEVEL

SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT:

- PROPOSE SIGNAGE THAT SUPPORTS ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OR FEATURES
- TENANT RECOGNITION IS ESSENTIAL TO LEASING CURRENT SPACE
- CURRENT SIGN PLAN DOES NOT ADDRESS SIGNAGE FOR MAJOR TENANT OCCUPYING 3rd FLOOR

-
- DESIGN TO COMPLIMENT THE ARCHITECTURE WITHOUT AFFECTING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BUILDING FEATURES
 - TO MAXIMIZE LEGIBILITY AND VISIBILITY OF TENANT SIGNAGE
 - DETERMINING APPROPRIATE SCALE TO BUILDING
 - CONCEAL STRUCTURAL AND ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS
 - MAKE SIGN TYPE/METHOD CONSISTENT WITH ARCHITECTURE
 - CREATE SIGN TYPE THAT ALLOWS FOR FUTURE CHANGES WITHOUT COMPROMISING STRUCTURAL AND ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS
 - ALLOW FOR THE USE OF ALL LOGOS AND BRANDS
 - ALLOW THE USE OF ALL THE USE OF COLORS AND COLOR COMBINATIONS THAT MAKE UP A TENANTS LOGO OR BRAND
 - ALLOW FOR MULTI COMBINATIONS OF FABRICATION METHODS THAT SUPPORT A TENANTS LOGO, NAME OR BRAND

* ALL SIGNAGE TO BE PRESENTED TO GRIT DEVELOPMENT FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL PRIOR TO SUBMITTING TO CITY OF PALM SPRINGS FOR PERMITTING



SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT:

* GRIT DEVELOPMENT SEEKS APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING SIGN TYPES TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THE CURRENT SIGN PLAN; INCLUSIVE OF ANY AND ALL PREVIOUSLY APPROVED SIGN TYPES SUCH AS AREAS OF TENANT SIGNAGE, DIRECTORIES AND/OR BLADE SIGNS.

NORTH ELEVATION

ILLUMINATED REVERSE CHANNEL LETTERS
(1 QTY FOR MAJOR TENANT - 3rd FLOOR)

SOUTH ELEVATION

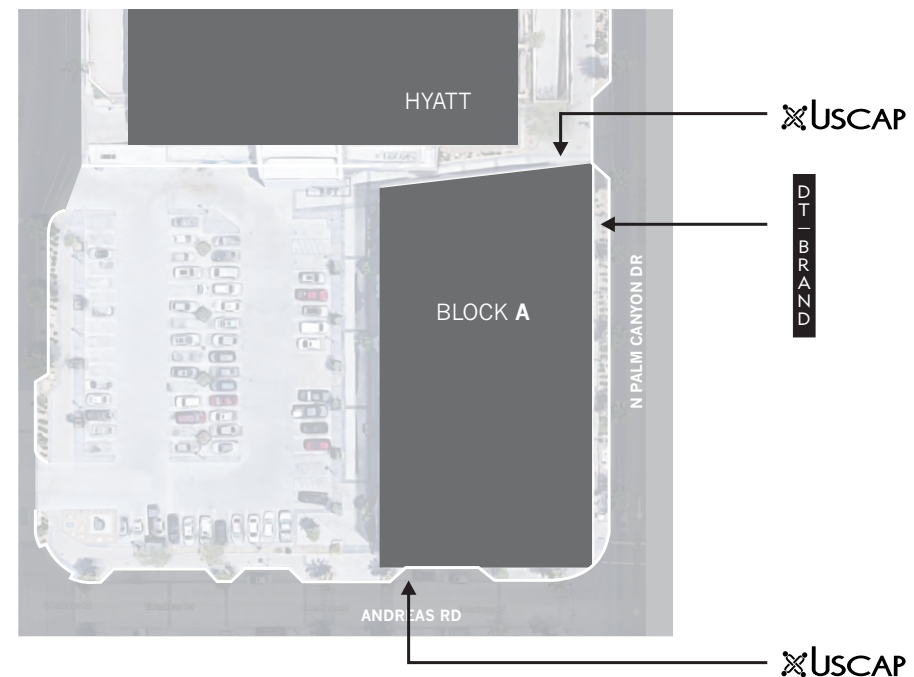
ILLUMINATED REVERSE CHANNEL LETTERS
(1 QTY FOR MAJOR TENANT - 3rd FLOOR)

EAST ELEVATION

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION (BLADE SIGN)

WEST ELEVATION

NO CHANGE

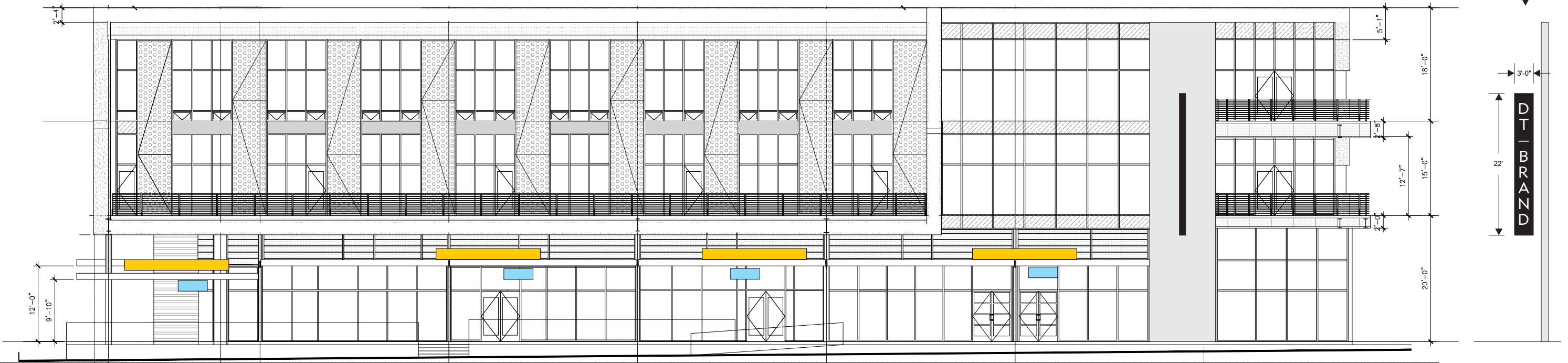


BLOCK A - SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT

= CURRENT APPROVED
TENANT PRIMARY SIGN

= CURRENT APPROVED
TENANT BLADE SIGN

3'X22' BLADE SIGN WITH PROJECT MONIKER
(DESIGN/NAME TBD)



SCALE 1/16"=1'-0"

NO CHANGES TO RETAIL FRONTAGE

4'X30' BLADE SIGN WITH PROJECT MONIKER
(DESIGN/NAME TBD)

INDIVIDUAL REVERSE ILLUMINATED
CHANNEL LETTER/LOGO



EAST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



NORTH & EAST ELEVATION

NORTH ELEVATION

- ILLUMINATED REVERSE CHANNEL LETTERS
(1 QTY FOR MAJOR TENANT - 3rd FLOOR)

EAST ELEVATION

- BLADE SIGN - PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

BLOCK A - SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT



= CURRENT APPROVED
TENANT SIGN



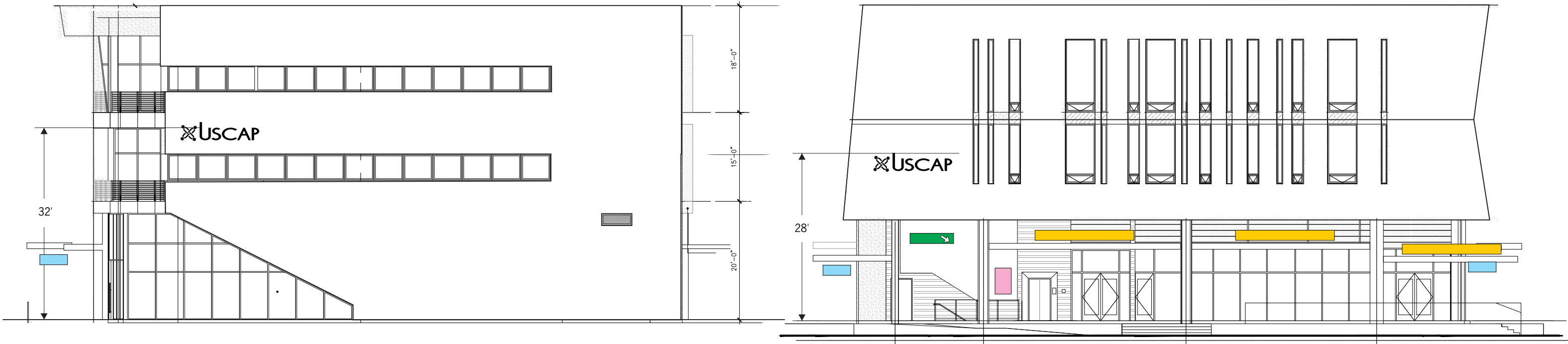
=CURRENT APPROVED
PARKING WAYFINDING



=CURRENT APPROVED
TENANT DIRECTORY



= CURRENT APPROVED
TENANT BLADE SIGN



SCALE 1/16"=1'-0"

INDIVIDUAL REVERSE ILLUMINATED
CHANNEL LETTER/LOGO



NORTH ELEVATION

NORTH/WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH/WEST ELEVATION

INDIVIDUAL REVERSE ILLUMINATED
CHANNEL LETTER/LOGO

NORTH ELEVATION

- ILLUMINATED REVERSE CHANNEL LETTERS
(1 QTY FOR MAJOR TENANT - 3rd FLOOR)


SOUTH ELEVATION

- ILLUMINATED REVERSE CHANNEL LETTERS
(1 QTY FOR MAJOR TENANT - 3rd FLOOR)

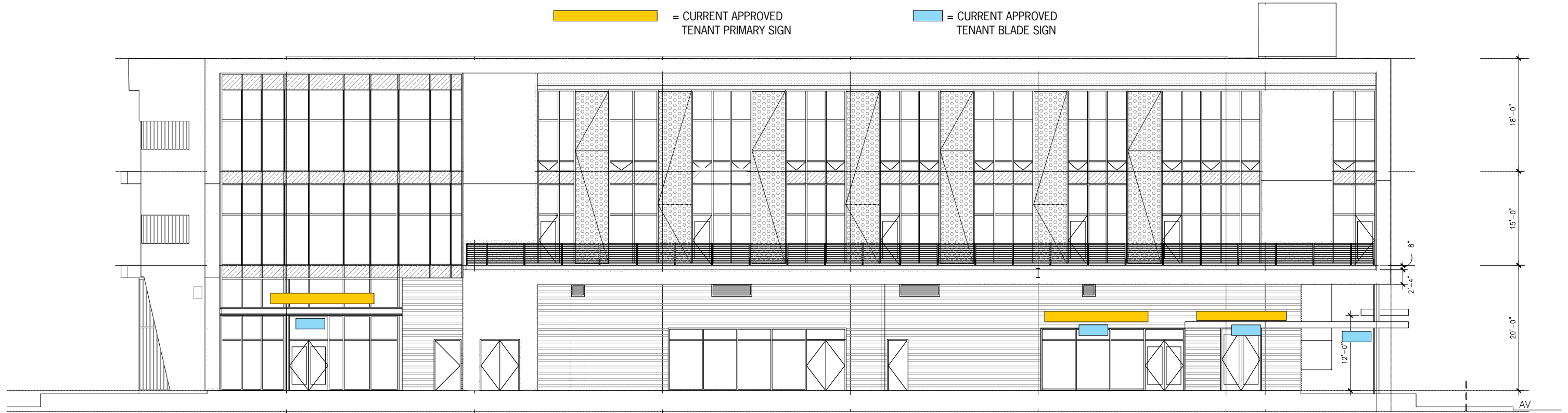
WEST ELEVATION

- NO CHANGE

BLOCK A - SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT

 = CURRENT APPROVED
TENANT PRIMARY SIGN

 = CURRENT APPROVED
TENANT BLADE SIGN



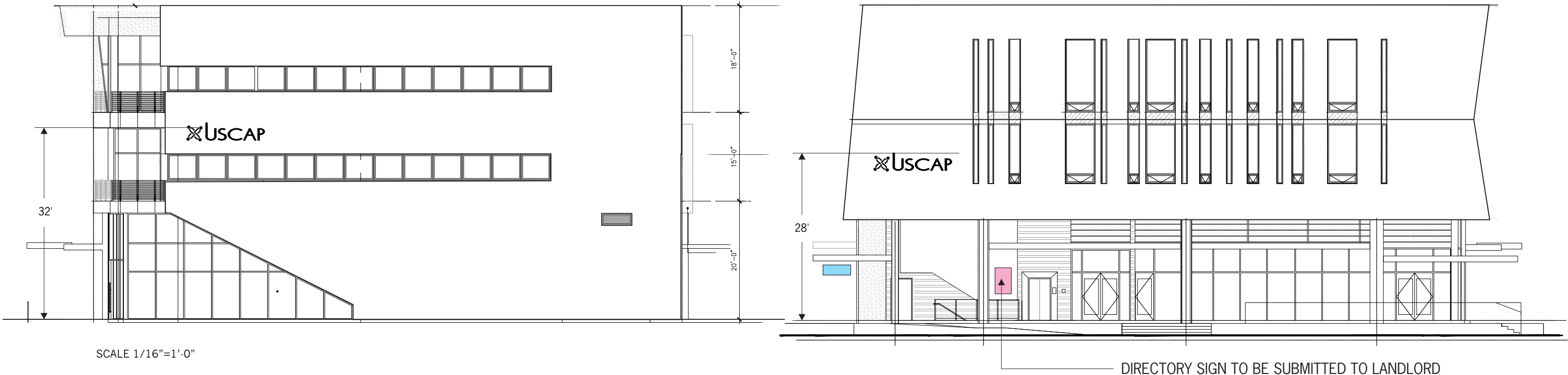
WEST ELEVATION

WEST ELEVATION

NO CHANGE

WEST ELEVATION

BLOCK A - SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT



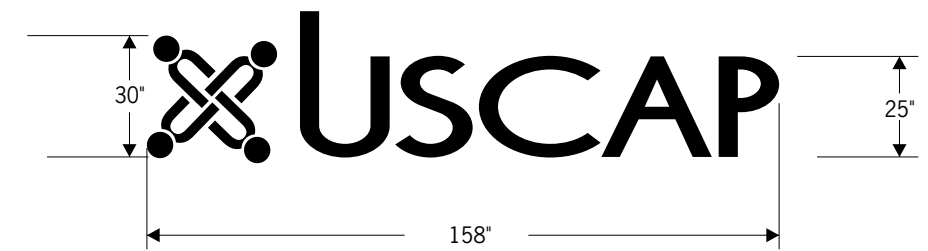
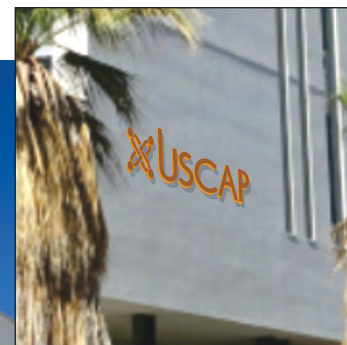
INDIVIDUAL REVERSE ILLUMINATED CHANNEL LETTER/LOGO



NORTH ELEVATION

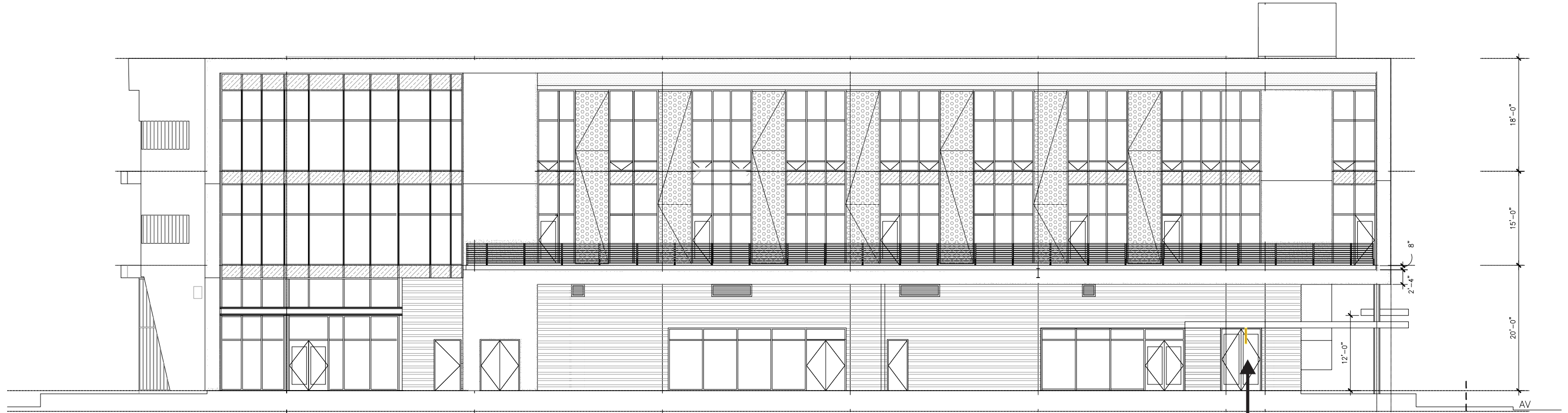


SOUTH/WEST ELEVATION

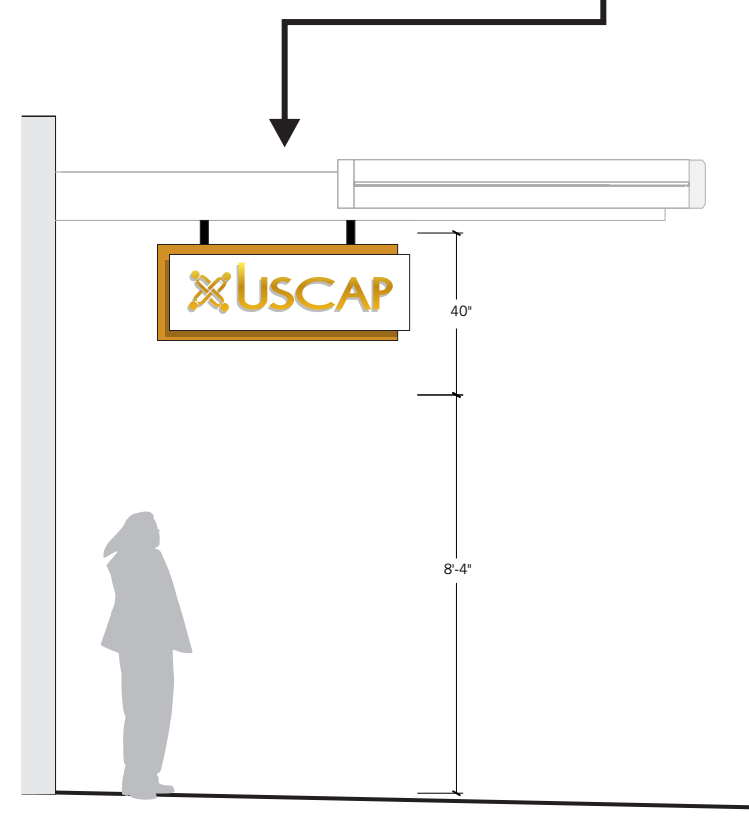


- 2 SETS INDIVIDUAL REVERSE (HALO ILLUMINATION) CHANNEL LETTERS
- LOGO AND LETTERS PAINTED TO MATCH CLIENT BRAND (COLOR TBD)

BLOCK A - SIGN PROGRAM AMENDMENT



WEST ELEVATION



ELEVATION VIEW
SCALE 3/8"=1'