



STAFF REPORT

Downtown Design Commission

01/16/2025

Case No. DTCA-24-00093
Property Address 3 NE 6th St
Applicant Name Jordan Armstrong, G & S Sign Services
for Jennifer Nakayma, President & CEO
Downtown Oklahoma City Partnership
1634 SE 23rd St
Oklahoma City, OK 73129
District DBD

A. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. **Signage (variance required from prohibition of signs in the right-of-way)**
 - a. Install sign on east side of elevated railroad bridge, Oklahoma City 171.8 square feet, with LED neon;
 - b. Install sign in the underpass, Be The Light, 14.4 square feet, front illuminated channel letters;
2. **Lighting**
 - a. Install color changing LED striping on ceiling of underpass and between columns;
3. **Painting**
 - a. Paint the underpass, retaining walls on each side of the underpass, and the east and west faces of the elevated railroad bridge.

B. BACKGROUND

1. **Location**

The proposed work is on the BNSF railway bridge/underpass at NW 6th St.
2. **Site History/Existing Conditions**

In 1931, work began to elevate the at-grade crossing for the Santa Fe Railroad. This work was completed in 1933. Initially, NW 6th St was proposed to be closed. The final scope of the project was to have an underpass and keep NW 6th St open.
3. **Surrounding Environment**

This area consists of low-rise office and industrial buildings.
4. **Intended Use**

Signage and beautification.
5. **Previous Actions / Other**

The proposed entryway signage is similar to those that have been installed on the railroad overpasses at the entrances into Bricktown. The most recent of those Bricktown signs was approved by the DDRC with DTCA-13-00001 on February 21, 2013. Subsequently, BOA-13745 was approved by the Board of Adjustment on June 20, 2013 to allow installation of that sign in the right-of-way.

On 05/18/2017, the DDRC approved DTCA-17-00032 for installation of a Deep Deuce sign on railroad overpass on Robert S Kerr Ave. Subsequently, the Board of Adjustment approved BOA-14357 on 06/01/2017 to allow installation of that sign in the right-of-way.

C. ITEMS IN COMPLIANCE

1. Unless noted below in Section D. Issues and Considerations, all other case items of this proposal comply with the Development Regulations and Guidelines of the Downtown Design District zoning ordinance as referenced below:

- a. RE: §7200.1.G.(8), Signage
- b. RE: §7200.2.A., Purpose and Intent

Note: All other Regulations and Guidelines of the Downtown Design District zoning ordinance not listed above are either not applicable to this case or apply to elements of this project to be considered as a separate case at a later date.

D. ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

1. Development Regulations

This proposal does not comply with the Development Regulations of the Downtown Design District zoning ordinance as follows:

a. **RE: Signage, Case Item 1.**

- 1) Description: The applicant proposes to install a sign on the railroad overpass and a sign on the railroad overpass support structure.
- 2) Reference: §59-7200.1. Downtown Design Districts (DBD, DTD-1, DTD-2).
“A. *Purpose and Intent. This commercial district is intended to support diverse forms of business and residential activity, including mixed-uses in a single building, within the central area of the City. Development regulations and guidelines in this district are intended to:*
 - (1) *promote the development and redevelopment of the downtown area in a manner consistent with the unique and diverse design elements and urban character of the downtown districts;*
 - (2) *ensure that a proposed use is compatible with the commercial, cultural, historic, and governmental significance of the downtown districts;*
 - (3) *promote the downtown area as a vital mixed-use area;*
 - (4) *create a network of pleasant, safe, and connected public spaces and pedestrian amenities in the downtown area;*
 - (5) *enhance existing structures and circulation patterns;*
 - (6) *encourage preservation and restoration of the Historic Resources and Architectural Resources of the Downtown districts; and*

- (7) *encourage appropriate and complementary transitions between each of the downtown districts and between those districts and the surrounding zoning districts.*”

Reference: §59-7200.1.F.(6) Signage.

“Signage within the Downtown Design District shall comply with sign regulations as referenced in Chapter 59, Article XVI of the Municipal Code and shall be subject to Development Regulations and Guidelines as defined in this chapter.”

Reference: §59-16104 Prohibited Signs

“The following types of signs are prohibited in the City Oklahoma City:”

“B. Signs in Right-of-Way. Signs in the right-of-way are prohibited, except as provided in Section 59-16113 (Signs in Right-of-Way or Public Property).” NOTE: the proposed signs do not qualify for signs allowed by 59-16104.B., 59-16104.C, or 59-16104.D.

- 3) Considerations: The proposed location of both of these signs are also considered to be located within the street right-of-way of 6th St, which is located below and perpendicular to the railroad overpass.

The overall project includes a partnership between the Oklahoma City National Memorial and the City to resurface 6th St from Walnut to Walker. In addition, the Memorial is collaborating with the Downtown Oklahoma City Partnership on enhanced signage and a lighting and paint installation designed to create a sense of arrival as one enters downtown from the east. The information provided with the application states “For nearly 30 years, visitors traveling north and south on I-235 have exited 6th St to witness the very best of Oklahoma City. In 2023 alone, over 503,000 people were directed to use the 6th St exit if approaching from the north, or the Harrison Ave exit if coming from the south, east, or west, to visit the Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum.”

Since this is a regulation, a variance from the Board of Adjustment is required. Staff supports this request for a variance from the prohibition of signs in the right-of-way.

E. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. **Approve the application** on the basis that the project complies with the regulations and guidelines of the Downtown Design District zoning ordinance as referenced in Section C and D of the Staff Report with the **condition** that:
 - a. the applicant obtains a variance from the Board of Adjustment from the prohibition of signs in the right-of-way.
2. Provide a recommendation of **approval** to the Board of Adjustment for a variance from the prohibition of signs in the right-of-way.

Note: Staff recommendations do not constitute Commission decisions.

Attachments: Zoning Map, Application, Design Statement, Drawings, Photos.