

1500 Joe Battle

Zoning Board of Adjustment — January 26, 2026



CASE NUMBER: PZBA26-00001
CASE MANAGER: Andrew Salloum, (915) 212-1603, SalloumAM@elpasotexas.gov
PROPERTY OWNER: 375 Properties LLC
REPRESENTATIVE: Nova Signs & Graphics Corporation
LOCATION: 1500 Joe Battle Blvd.
ZONING: C-3 (Commercial)
REQUEST: Variance from City Code Section 20.18.450.B
PUBLIC INPUT: None received as of January 20, 2026

SUMMARY OF REQUEST: Applicant requests a Variance under Section 2.16.030 to permit a proposed pole sign to exceed the maximum height as required per El Paso Code Section 20.18.450.B for a proposed automotive dealership in the C-3 (Commercial) district.

SUMMARY OF STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends **DENIAL** of the Variance request to permit a pole sign to exceed the maximum height as requested.

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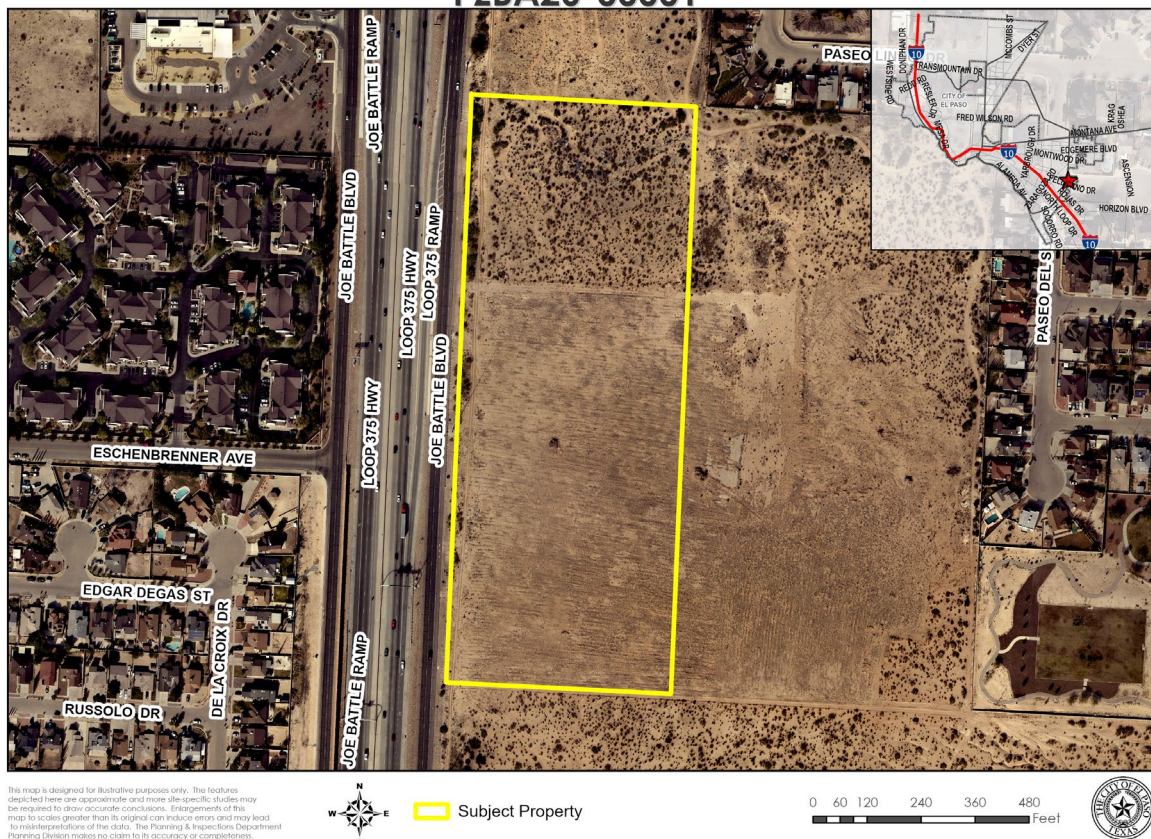


Figure A. Aerial of Subject Property & Immediate Surroundings

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST: The applicant is requesting a Variance under Section 2.16.030 to permit a proposed pole sign to exceed the maximum height on a lot with a freeway frontage in the C-3 (Commercial) district. Per El Paso City Code Section 20.18.450.B – Pole Sign, the maximum height permitted is thirty-five feet (35’). The request is for a pole sign with a height of forty-five feet (45’). The subject property is 15.04 acres in size.

BACKGROUND: The subject property will be occupied by El Paso Honda Dealership, which is currently under construction.

The purpose of the El Paso City Code Section 20.18 – Sign Regulations is to provide adequate opportunity of free speech, protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the City and its residents, enhance the aesthetic value of the City’s landscape by reducing visual clutter, protect adjacent and nearby properties from excessive or inappropriate signage, protect the safety and efficiency of the City’s transportation network by reducing confusion and distractions, and to preserve, protect, and enhance areas of designated historical, architectural and scenic value. A request may be considered by the Zoning Board of Adjustment if the variance is not contrary to the public interest and, due to special conditions, a literal enforcement of the ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship.

Definition of Unnecessary Hardship, Section 20.02.1128:

“Unnecessary hardship” means a hardship by reason of exceptional shape of a lot, exceptional topographic conditions, or other exceptional physical conditions of a parcel of land. Unnecessary hardship shall not include personal or financial hardship or any other hardship that is self-imposed.

Section 20.18.450.B of the El Paso City Code, pole signs shall comply with the following requirements:

Districts	Permit Required	Maximum Number	Maximum Height	Maximum Sign Area
Primary signs in C-2, C-3, C-4, Q, M-1, M-2 and M-3 with interstate or freeway frontage	Yes	Premises up to one acre, not more than one per premise; premises greater than one acre up to six acres, not more than one per street frontage not to exceed two per premise; premises greater than six acres, not more than two per street frontage not to exceed four per premise	35 feet above ground at the sign or the pavement grade of the freeway, whichever is greater	200 square feet

1. *Location: No portion of the sign shall be closer than fifteen feet from the back of the curbline; if the property line is located more than fifteen feet from the curbline, signs shall be erected within the property line, and no portion of a sign shall extend beyond the property line.*
2. *For the purposes of this section, interstate or freeway frontage is defined as Interstate Highway 10, US Highway 54, Joe Battle Boulevard, and Americas Avenue only. In no case shall a freeway primary pole sign exceed fifty feet or the height.*
3. *For minor and collector arterials, a primary pole sign is not permitted. Only a primary monument sign is permitted and shall not exceed eighty square feet in sign area and eight feet in height.*
4. *For minor and collector arterials, a shopping center pole sign is not permitted. Only a shopping center monument sign is permitted and shall not exceed eighty square feet in sign area and twelve feet in height.*
5. *For detached buildings in shopping center signs, the sign height shall not exceed fifteen feet along major arterial. For detached buildings in shopping center signs along minor or collector arterials, a pole sign is not permitted. Only a monument sign is permitted and shall not exceed eighty square feet in sign area and eight feet in height.*
6. *Illumination: Internal or indirect; may not be flashing or intermittent;*
7. *Additional standards: Shall comply with Section 20.18.400 of the El Paso City Code.*

The applicant has referenced the following information regarding the nature of the variance request:

- Currently we're only allowed 35 feet of overall height for the pylon sign. We're asking Zoning to give us an extra 10 feet to make the pylon sign match the size of your dealership and to match the ordinance that you already have for shopping centers. Dealerships are technically shopping center for vehicles. But we're not going to distinguish the dealership as a shopping center. We're not asking for a bigger pylon head or any extra square footage for the sign itself. We're just asking to extend it up an extra 10 feet. It's going to make a world of difference with how the sign is perceived by the public and how it will look with the rest of the property. Plus, it will be better suited at 45 feet compared to 35 feet with relationship to your 164 feet flagpole. We also have Vista Del Sol within 4,000 feet of where the sign will be placed on the corner of the property.
- In doing a flag test with a crane at 35 feet and 45 feet. This is where you put a basket up in the air and hang a tarp from it that is roughly the size of what the sign will be. We have driven up and down Joe Battle and Loop 375. You may not think it, but the sign is easily lost and kind of blends in at 35 feet OAH. At 45 feet, the sign stands out and is easily seen. The extra 10 feet in height cuts out all of the traffic sign and everything that's in the way, with bridges, and walls and things around the property.
- This will be the biggest Honda dealership in the entire United States. Honda of America has already confirmed that they will be flying in other dealers from around the United States to show them this Flagship dealership. This will put El Paso on the map for the entire United States car industry and bring massive attention to El Paso.

CALCULATIONS:

	REQUIRED	REQUESTED
Max Height	35 Feet	45 Feet

ANALYSIS: Staff recommends denial of the Variance request. There are no special conditions inherent to the subject property that would entitle it to a Variance that would allow for the relief sought. It is further found that the hardship is not inherent to the lot such as unusual shape, size, or topography, that create a hardship to prevent compliance with the maximum permitted sign height. Variances are intended to address unique physical or site-specific hardships, the request is primarily based on visibility, branding, and economic or promotional considerations, which do not constitute a qualifying hardship under variance standards. Visibility challenges related to traffic signage, bridges, and surrounding development are common along major corridors and are not unique to this property. Automobile dealerships are regulated separately from shopping centers under the zoning ordinance and are not entitled to shopping center sign standards.

While staff acknowledges the applicant's flag test results and concerns regarding visibility along Joe Battle Boulevard and Loop 375, reduced visibility and sign relationship to lot size is not sufficient justification for exceeding the maximum height. Many properties along major corridors experience similar visual competition from infrastructure, traffic signage, and surrounding development, while complying with established height limits. The property can accommodate compliant signage within the 35-foot height limit. Based on the above findings, staff recommends denial of the variance request to exceed the maximum pole sign height. The request does not demonstrate a hardship and is inconsistent with the intent and uniform application of the zoning ordinance.

COMPLIANCE WITH EL PASO CITY CODE SECTION 2.16.030

The Zoning Board of Adjustment is empowered under Section 2.16.030 to:

Authorize in specific cases a variance from the terms of a zoning ordinance if the variance is not contrary to the public interest and, due to special conditions, a literal enforcement of the ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship, and so that the spirit of the ordinance is observed and substantial justice is done.

The following questions should be carefully considered in order to grant a variance:

Questions	Does the Request Comply?
1. Is the need for the variance due to special conditions?	No. It is not inherent to the lot such as unusual shape, size, or topography, that prevent compliance with the maximum permitted sign height.
2. Would a literal enforcement of the ordinance create an unnecessary hardship?	No. The property can be reasonably used and developed with a pole sign that complies with the 35-foot maximum height.
3. Is the variance consistent with public interest?	No. The requested variance is not consistent with the public interest.
4. Would the spirit of the ordinance be observed and substantial justice done if the variance is approved?	<p>No. According to 20.18.030 (Purpose), the purpose of the sign ordinance, in part, is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow adequate opportunity for the exercise of free speech by the display of a message or an image on a sign, while balancing that opportunity against the community and public interests affected by signs; • Enhance the aesthetic value of the city's landscape by reducing visual clutter that is potentially harmful to property values and economic development; • Protect adjacent and nearby properties from the impact of excessive or inappropriate signage.

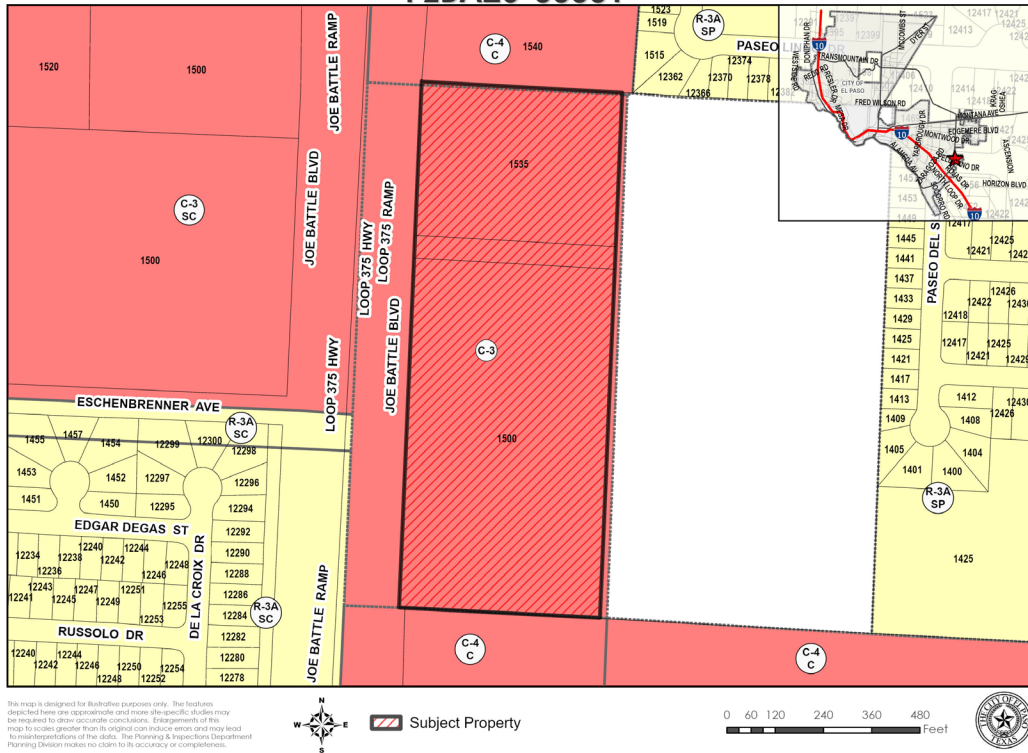
PUBLIC COMMENT: Public notice was sent on January 15, 2026 to all property owners within 300 feet of subject property. The Planning Division has not received any communications in support or opposition to the special exception request.

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT OPTIONS: The purpose of the Zoning Ordinance is to promote the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the City. The Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) may authorize in specific cases a variance from the terms of the zoning ordinance (Title 20) or as specified in (Title 21) SmartCode if the variance is not contrary to the public interest and, due to special conditions, a literal enforcement of the ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship, and so that the spirit of the ordinance is observed and substantial justice is done. In evaluating the request, the ZBA may take any of the following actions:

1. **Approval** of the variance request, finding that the request is in in harmony with the spirit and purposes of Titles 2 and 20, including the preservation of the essential character of the district in which the property is located, that the public convenience and welfare will be substantially served, and that the use of neighboring property will not be substantially injured.
2. **Approval with Modifications** of the variance request to bring the request into conformance as provided in El Paso City Code Titles 2 and 20 as the board deems appropriate.
3. **Denial** of the variance request, finding that the request does not conform to the review criteria as provided in El Paso City Code Titles 2 and 20. **(Staff Recommendation)**

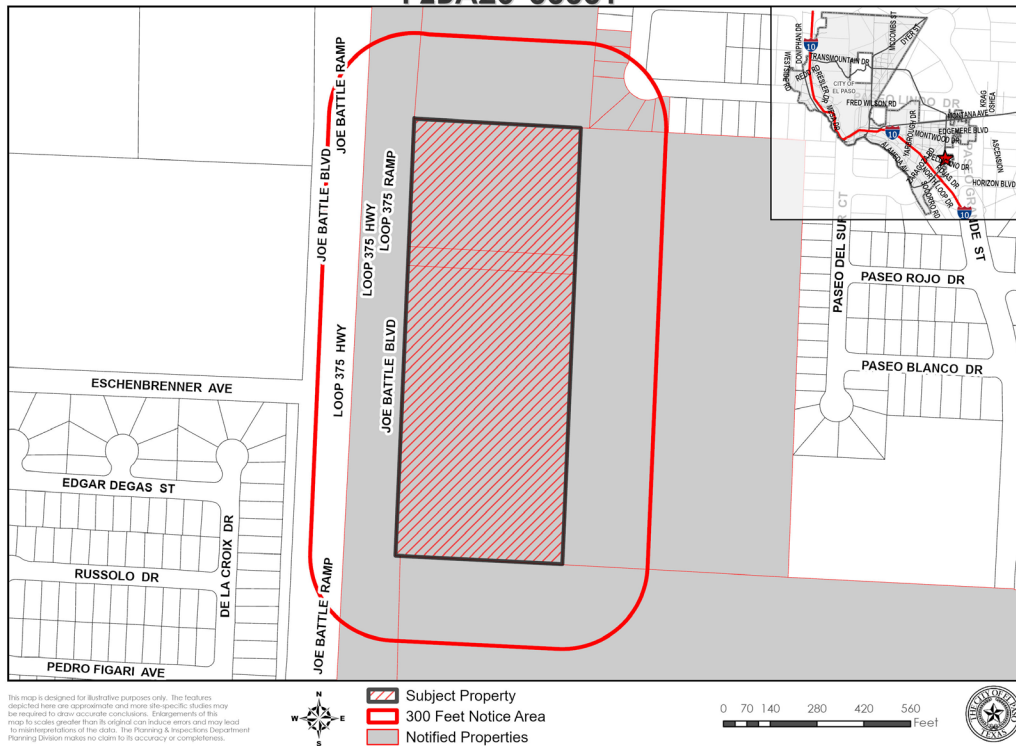
ZONING MAP

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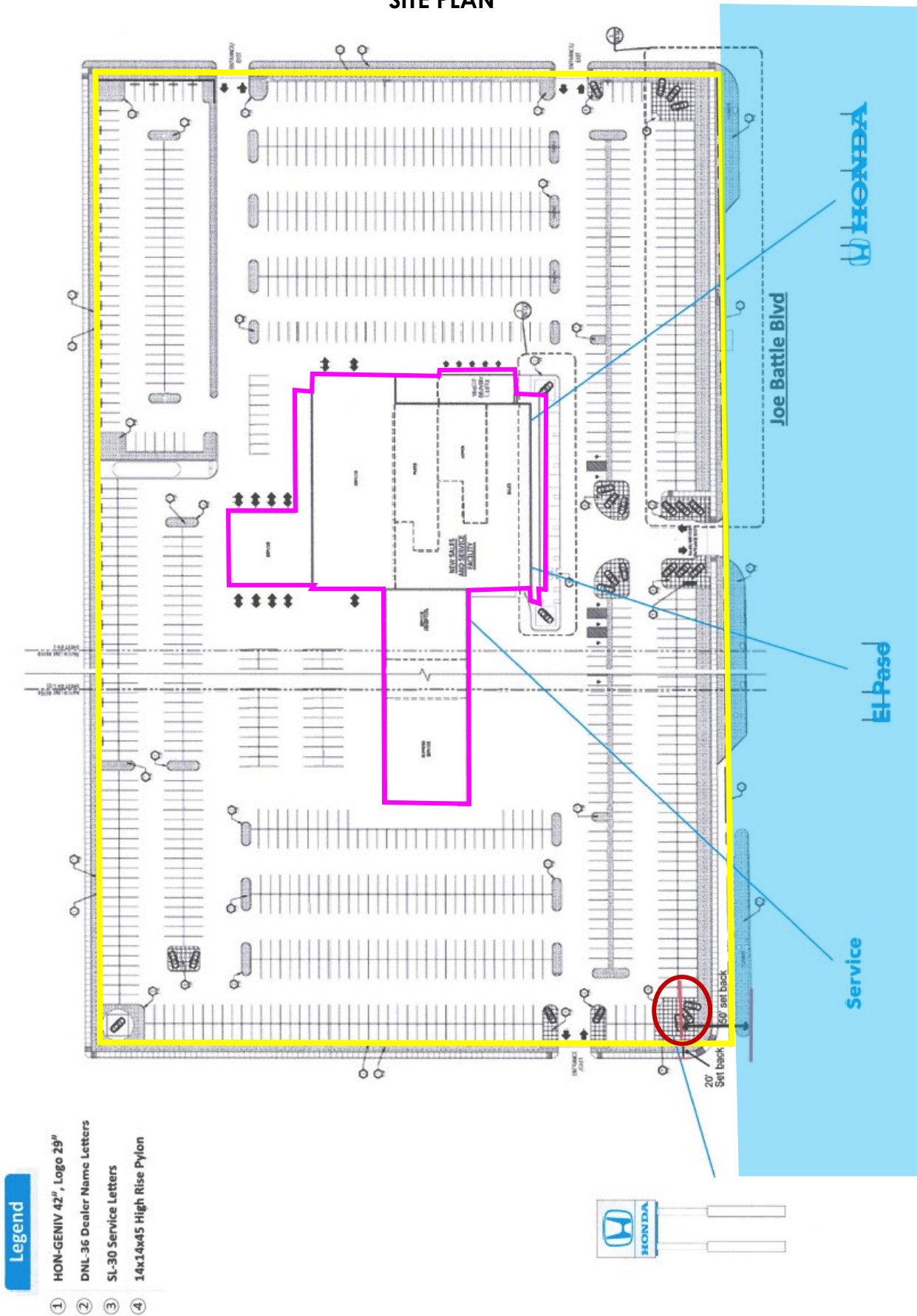


NEIGHBORHOOD NOTIFICATION MAP

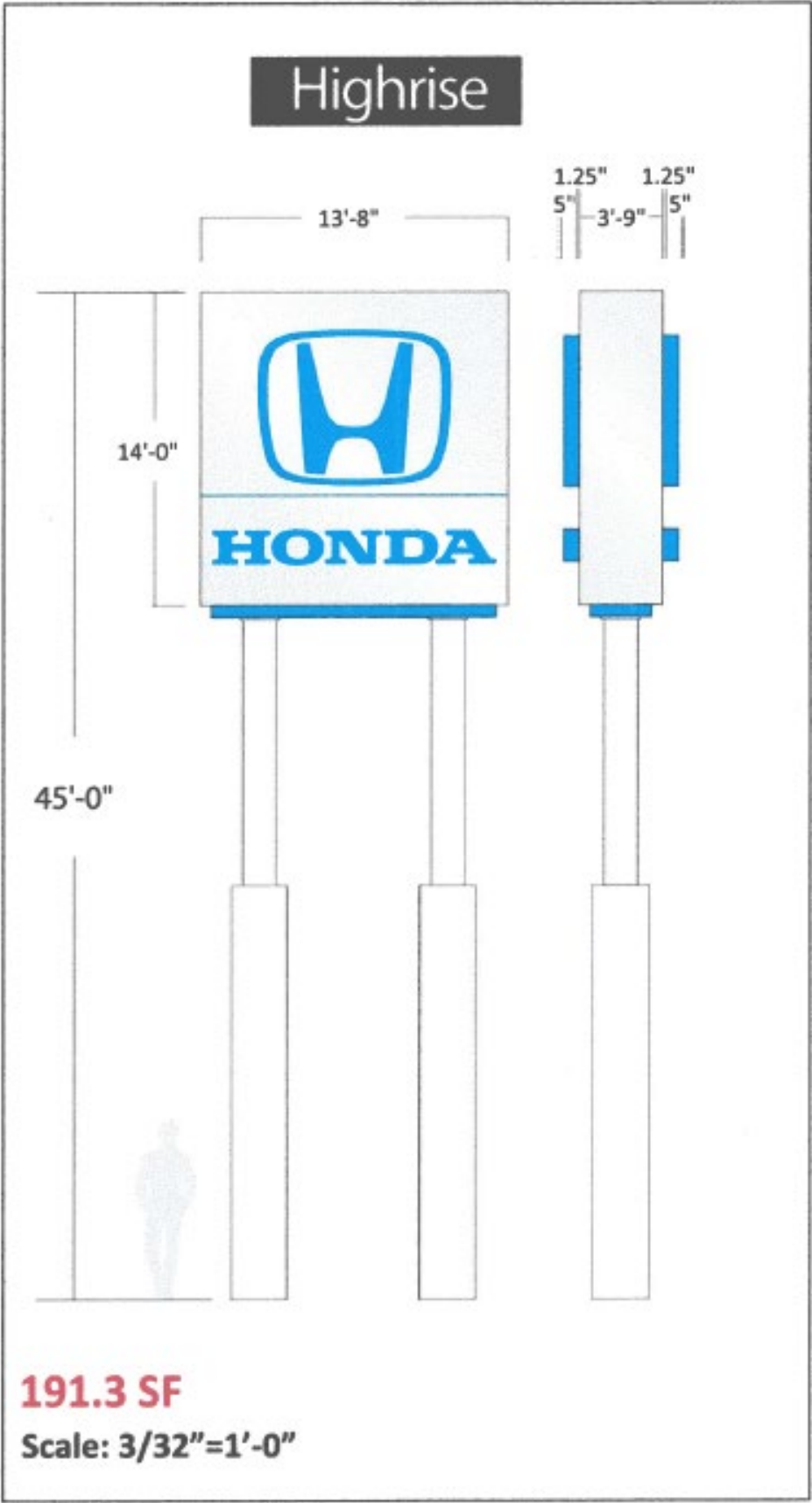
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SITE PLAN



SIGN DESIGN



Front Elevation
Scale: 1/16" = 1'-0"