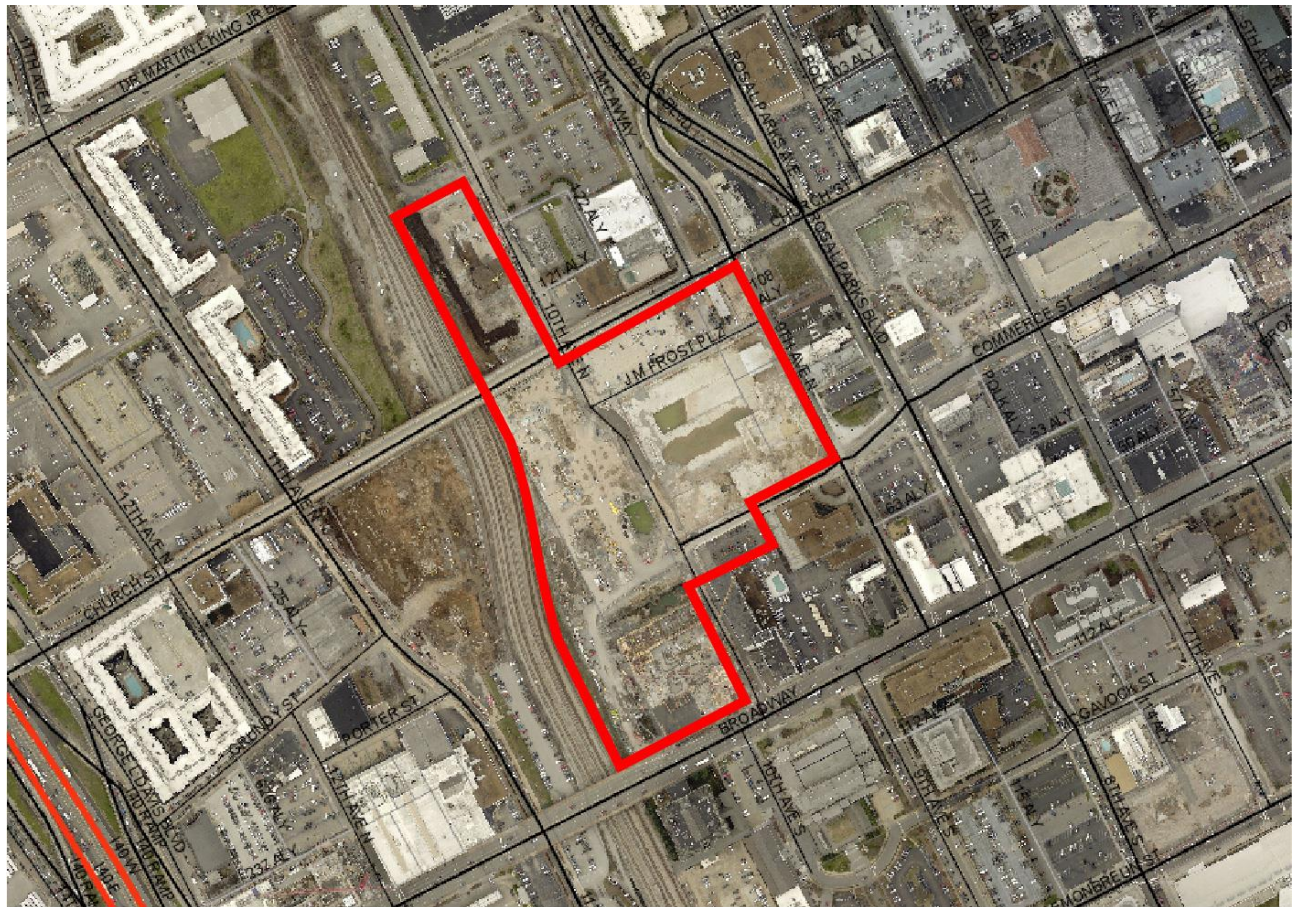




**Request**  
**Project Name**  
**Council District**  
**Requested by**  
**Staff Reviewer**  
**Staff Recommendation**

**DTC Modifications**  
**Nashville Yards Signage**  
19 – O’Connell  
Joe Bucher, with Gresham Smith;  
Hammer  
*Approve with conditions, deferral without all conditions.*



**Site Aerial**



## Downtown Code DRC Meeting of 2/10/2020

### APPLICANT REQUEST

A request to modify various signage standards of the Downtown Code (DTC) for property located at 913, 1010, & 1020 Church Street and 1000 & 1010 Broadway (17 acres), east of 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, south of Commerce Street and within the Core and Upper Broadway Subdistricts of the DTC.

### PROCESS

All signage modifications are deemed major modifications, requiring approval from the DTC Design Review Committee. This committee makes independent architectural and design decisions based on both the merits of the modifications requested and other factors, including the intent of the standards within the DTC. The DRC may approve or disapprove modifications based on their determination that the intent of the DTC is being met and results in better urban design.

### PROJECT OVERVIEW

Nashville Yards is generally bounded by Broadway to the south and CSX right-of-way to the west, consisting of approximately 17 acres of land stretching over 8 interrelated phases, with several towers containing various uses. The site is bound together by a series of integrated active pedestrian passageways, called “paseos”, that wind through the length of the development.

Staff has worked extensively with the applicant to revise plans and further comply with the DTC. This resulted in the gradual reduction of proposed signage from 76,477 square feet to a currently proposed 41,277 square feet. Figure 1 shows the amount of signage proposed within the Nashville Yards site. Parcels 6 is not proposing signage and Parcel 7 is not included in this package.

<b>Nashville Yards Wayfinding</b>	1,600 square feet
<b>Parcel 1: Grand Hyatt Hotel</b>	2,616 square feet
<b>Parcel 2: Residential / Retail</b>	2,409 square feet
<b>Parcel 3: Office / Retail</b>	8,625 square feet
<b>Parcels 4/5: Amazon Operations</b>	8,734 square feet
<b>Parcel 8: Residential / Retail</b>	405 square feet
<b>Parcel 9: AEG Complex</b>	16,888 square feet
<b>Total Proposed:</b>	41,277 square feet

**Figure 1: Proposed Signage**



## Downtown Code DRC Meeting of 2/10/2020

### REQUEST SUMMARY

#### 1. Building Sign Entitlements

- Required: Building signage entitlements are calculated at a rate of 2 square feet of sign area per 1 linear foot of building façade when no ground sign exists and 1 square feet of sign area per linear foot on façades not facing streets.
- Proposed: Building signage entitlements are established as proposed.

#### 2. Skyline Signage Entitlements

- Required: Buildings in excess of 75 feet in height are permitted a skyline sign per each street frontage.
- Proposed: Buildings in excess of 75 feet are permitted skyline signs as proposed.

#### 3. Digital Signage

- Required: Digital signage is allowed on wall signs or monument signs provided the changeable copy portion is no greater than 50% of the sign area.
- Proposed: Digital signage is allowed. The applicant is requesting 100% of the built sign area.

#### 4. Monument Signage

- Required: Monument signs must not exceed 10 feet in height. Only a single monument sign is allowed per frontage unless property frontage exceeds 300 feet, then 2 are allowed. Monument signs must be 32 square feet or less.
- Proposed: Monument signs at various heights, sizes, and locations.

### MODIFICATIONS

#### Building Sign Entitlements

All streets within the DTC, except for those properties within historic zoning overlays, are classified as either Pedestrian, Transitional, Gateway, Interstate, or Printer's Alley and these classifications are used to calculate entitlements for signs facing streets. This allows the signage standards to be more narrowly tailored to the context of a site. The DTC divides signage into three broad categories: skyline signs, ground signs, and building signs. Skyline sign entitlements are related to the height of a building and the number of street frontages. Building sign entitlements are calculated as a multiplier of the linear feet of a building façade. Facades facing streets have greater entitlements than those not facing streets.

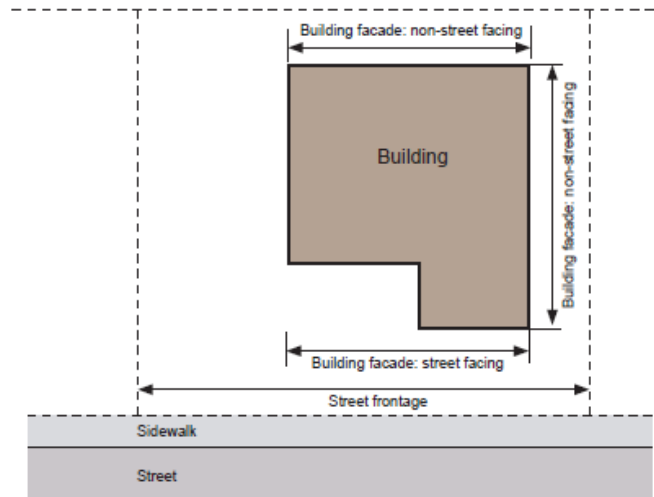


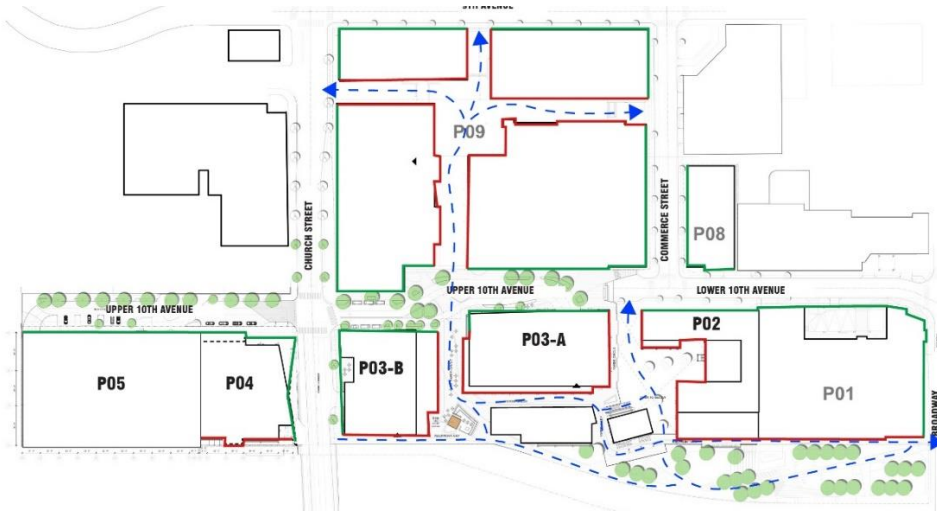
Figure 2: Sign Entitlement Diagram





## Downtown Code DRC Meeting of 2/10/2020

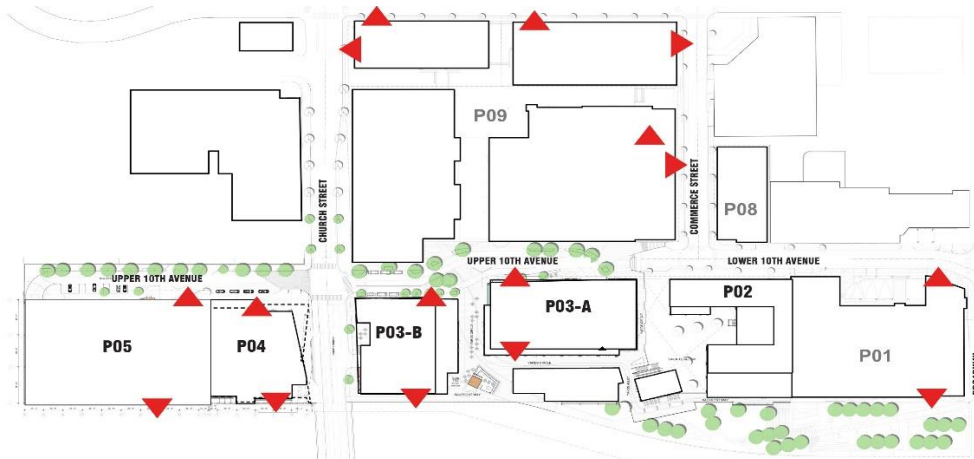
In addition to activating façades that face streets, Nashville Yards activates the pedestrian paseo that flows through the site with pedestrian-only space lined with active uses. Figure 3 below shows this condition, with activated non-street facing façades shown in red and internal pedestrian flow shown in blue. Several non-street-facing façades within Nashville Yards feature two levels of activated space facing walkways or other pedestrian spaces, which essentially doubles the signage on a façade that is allocated half of the typical entitlement for façades facing streets.



**Figure 3: Street Facing and Non-Street Facing Activated Facades with Pedestrian Paths**

### Skyline Sign Entitlements

Within the DTC, skyline sign entitlements are allocated based on the height of a building and the number of street frontages. A building must be at least 75 feet in height to qualify for a skyline sign, with the maximum display area varying between 480 and 720 square feet depending on the height of the building. Based on current approved plans and the conceptual master plan, 10 towers within Nashville Yards qualify for some amount of skyline signage.



**Figure 4: Locations and Orientation of Skyline Signage within Nashville Yards**



## Downtown Code DRC Meeting of 2/10/2020

The proposed sign package seeks to transfer the skyline signage entitlements from the entitled façades facing streets to more visible non-street facing façades particularly on the west side of the site along railroad right-of-way, as indicated on Figure 6. the package also proposes allowing the towers on Parcel 3a and 5, which only have frontage on 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue North, to have 2 skyline signs where each would typically only be allowed 1. The maximum area of individual skyline signs is determined by the height of the building. All parcels are compliant with the number of entitled skyline signs, except:

	Allowed	Proposed
<b>Parcel 3a: Office / Retail</b>	1	2
<b>Parcel 5: Amazon Operations II</b>	1	2

Overall, the site is entitled to 17 skyline signs and is proposing 16.

### Digital Signage

Nashville Yards proposes use of digital signage on several façades. While any standard of the DTC can be modified, the DTC allows consideration of larger digital technology through use of the Modifications for Exceptional Design and Tourist-oriented Businesses sections.

In weighing the proposal’s merits, the DTC requires conformance with lighting standards and requires consideration of any impacts on residential or hotel uses. The site must have a fixed-seating capacity of 500 and offer activities or services to the general public of cultural, historical, recreational, educational, or entertainment purposes. The DTC specifies design criteria that must be considered when judging the merits of digital signage, including architecture, the configuration or location of the building or property, building scale, legibility, technical competence, and quality in design, construction, and durability.

Parcel 9 features a theatre at the second floor and as a result has blank sections of the building where these signs could be integrated. Parcel 9 qualifies as a tourist-oriented business. Digital signs within Parcel 9 are proposed along internal pedestrian pathway, where they are integrated into façades.

On Parcel 5, there is a proposed digital sign on the north-facing façade.



## Downtown Code DRC Meeting of 2/10/2020



**Figure 5: Digital Signage on the Northwest Corner of Church Street and 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue North**



**Figure 6: Digital Signage on Parcel 1 (left), Location of Digital Signage on Parcel 3 (right)**

Digital signs on Parcel 1 and Parcel 3 face gathering spaces that are internal to the property. The sign on Parcel 1 faces the Nashville Yards open space and is integrated into the structure of the building. The digital sign is nearly 300 feet back from Broadway and is oriented towards the gathering space and not the street. The sign on Parcel 3, as shown in Figure 6, is internally focused and positioned above the heart of the pedestrian walkway system.

### Monument Wayfinding Signage

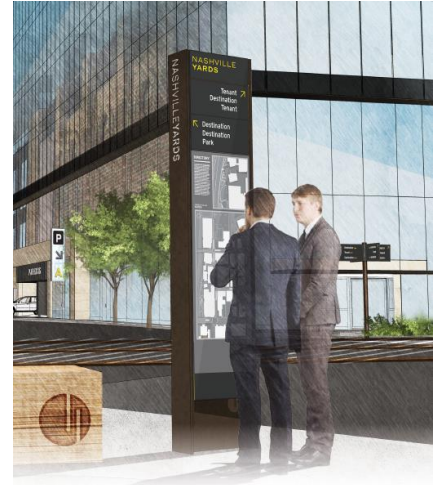
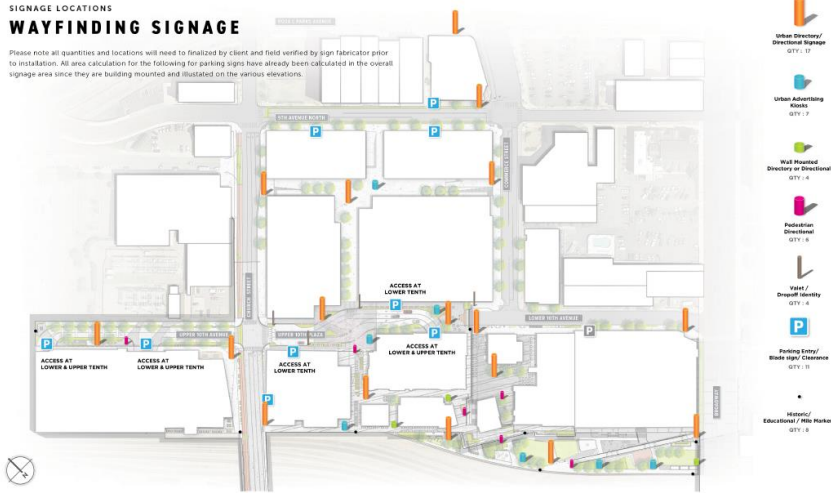
Due to the size of the Nashville Yards site and the configuration of spaces, including pedestrian walkways and elevated private roadways, wayfinding signage is proposed for navigation purposes. This signage package proposes a range of wall-mounted and free-standing directional signage, which indicate parking areas, valet drop-off areas, and directional signage. Although some freestanding pedestrian-oriented directional signage is placed at critical entrances to the area, most of the signage is placed within internal pedestrian walkways or adjacent to the elevated private street of Upper 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. There are several urban kiosks that also display advertising, but these are all located internal to the site and in locations that will minimize disruption.



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## SIGNAGE LOCATIONS WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Please note all quantities and locations will need to be finalized by client and field verified by sign fabricator prior to installation. All area calculation for the following for parking signs have already been calculated in the overall signage area since they are building mounted and illustrated on the various elevations.



**Figure 7: Wayfinding Sign Locations and Example Imagery**

As described previously, the DTC allows monument signs and places several limitations on them. Along Transitional Streets, it limits the size of monument signs to 32 square feet and limits the height of the signs to 10 feet. One monument sign is permitted per one street frontage, unless the frontage exceeds 300 feet, in which case a second is allowed. Monument signs must be spaced a minimum of 200 feet apart when co-located along the same street frontage and a setback of 5 feet must be applied in certain cases.

In this case, this monument signage is not being proposed for specific business identification, but generalized wayfinding and environmental branding. Proposed signage along streets is oriented to pedestrians and is constructed with durable materials that reinforce the sense of place within the Nashville Yards site. The proposed signs range from approximately 4 feet to approximately 12 feet.



**Figure 8: Pedestrian-oriented Wayfinding and Environmental Branding Signage**



## Downtown Code DRC Meeting of 2/10/2020

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

The requested modifications meet the intent of the DTC given the context of adjacent streets and orientation of buildings. Staff recommends approval with the following conditions and deferral without the conditions:

1. Skyline signs affixed to the conceptual tower on Parcel 3a and both conceptual towers on the western portion of Parcel 9 shall conform to the sign area allowed for each building's final height.
2. Modifications approved to allow digital signage shall terminate if the subject sign is moved from the placement specified by this common sign package.
3. All other standards associated with the use of digital signs, including brightness and duration must be followed.