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Staff Report

Meeting Date: August 17, 2026

Planner: Sara Dusenberry,
Senior Planner

APPLICATION SUMMARY:

Project Name: COA for Marquee Signage

Case Number: COA26-0002

Application Types: Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

Location: 2450 W. Main Street

Applicant: Paul Bryant, Bryant Flink Architecture and Design

Tenant: Town Hall Arts Center

Owners: City of Littleton, Colorado

Applicant Request: Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install marquee signage

HISTORIC DISTRICT SUMMARY:

Historic Building Name: Littleton Town Hall

Individual Landmark Designation: Yes, Town Hall was designated in 1973.

Historic District: Yes

Applicable Design Guidelines: Downtown Littleton Design Standards

PROCESS:

Per Section 10-9-8.1 of the Unified Land Use Code (“ULUC”), titled Certificate of Appropriateness (COA), before carrying out any new construction, alteration, relocation, or demolition involving the exterior of any designated landmark or property in a historic district (including non-contributing properties), the owner(s) shall submit the proposed work to the Director, as well as apply for any other required permits.

The ULUC notes that a Certificate of Appropriateness is required for the installation of marquee signage Downtown. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed signage that does not meet all standards for signs in the Downtown Main Street (DMS) district. Due to the significance of the existing building and scale of the proposed signage, the Certificate of Appropriateness was elevated to approval by the Historical Preservation Commission at a public hearing.

This request requires a two-step review process:

- 1) Historical Preservation Commission: The HPC must first review and approve the COA. If the HPC denies the COA, the application is rejected, and the item will not move forward.
- 2) Appeals and Adjustment Commission (AAC): If HPC approves the COA, the item will move forward to the AAC for variance consideration for height, number, size, location, and lighting, prior to issuance of a building permit. **AAC approval of these variances is strictly contingent upon prior HPC approval and must be secured before a building permit may be issued.**

LOCATION:

2450 W Main St. is located near the SE corner of the intersection of W. Main St. and S. Nevada St. and is zoned Downtown Main Street (DMS).



Figure 1: Aerial photo of 2450 W. Main Street with property designated by red bounding box.

PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS:

Pursuant to Section 10-9-3.5 of the ULUC, notice of public hearings shall be given in accordance with Table 10-9-3.9.1, which states, in part, for the relevant applications before the Board:

Table 10-9-3.9.1 Development Review Summary							
Development Application	Pre-App Required	Neighborhood Meeting	Review and Decision		Public Notice	Expiration (10-9-3.8)	Applicable Standards
			Review/Recommend	Decide			
CDD = Community Development Director; PC = Planning Commission; CC = City Council; HPB = Historical Preservation Board; BOA = Board of Adjustment; BBoA = Building Board of Appeals; [] = Public Hearing Required							
Historic Preservation Applications							
Certificate of Appropriateness (Sec. 10-9-8.1)	✓		CDD	[HPB]	M Po	1 year	Chapter 8

Pu = Published in newspaper 10 days prior to public hearing in accordance with Section 10-9-3.5

Po = Sign posted on property 10 days prior to public hearing in accordance with Section 10-9-3.5

M = Mailed notice to adjoining property owners or property owners within a specified distance of the subject property 10 days prior to public hearing in accordance with Section 10-9-3.5

Section 10-9-3.5 of the ULUC requires that notice be provided at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing date and that any notice provided by mail, shall be provided through the United States Postal Service to all addresses, units, and property owners located within 700 feet of the property. If there are any homeowner's or other owner associations within 700 feet of the property, then notification need only be sent to the association's designee.

In accordance with the ULUC provisions regarding public notice, staff notified all addresses, units, and individual property owners and residents within 700 feet of the site at least ten (10) days in advance of the August 17, 2026 hearing date.

PROPERTY HISTORY:

1920	Year of construction
1976-77	City of Littleton constructs a new City Hall
1978	Remodeled to house Littleton Town Hall Arts Center
2025	Applicant receives approval for roof addition and exterior modifications
2026	Applicant applies for COA to install marquee signage

BACKGROUND:

The building was built in 1920 and served as the city's town hall. The building was designed by Jules Jacques Benoit Benedict, who also designed the Carnegie Library at the west end of Downtown. Town officials requested that the front of the building would "have a character that would dominate the design." Benedict reportedly drew his inspiration for the building from the Palazzo della Regione in Vicenza, Italy. The Denver Terra Cotta produced and installed the facade's terra cotta cladding. Benedict made the lanterns from old iron balconies and donated them to the city. The building drew national notice in architectural and municipal journals and was proclaimed the "finest town hall for a small American town." The building housed town offices and the fire department; a small jail building stood in the southwest corner of the parcel at the alley. In 1911, the first motion picture show in Littleton was presented in the Town Hall. As Littleton grew over the years, the Town Hall became inadequate to house city staff and programs. In 1976-77 a new city building (Littleton Center) was constructed at 2255 W. Berry Ave. This building then was remodeled to house the Littleton Town Hall Arts Center, a performing arts facility. Michael Barber of Muchow Associates was in charge of the restoration and remodeling, which created a proscenium theater and basement cabaret.

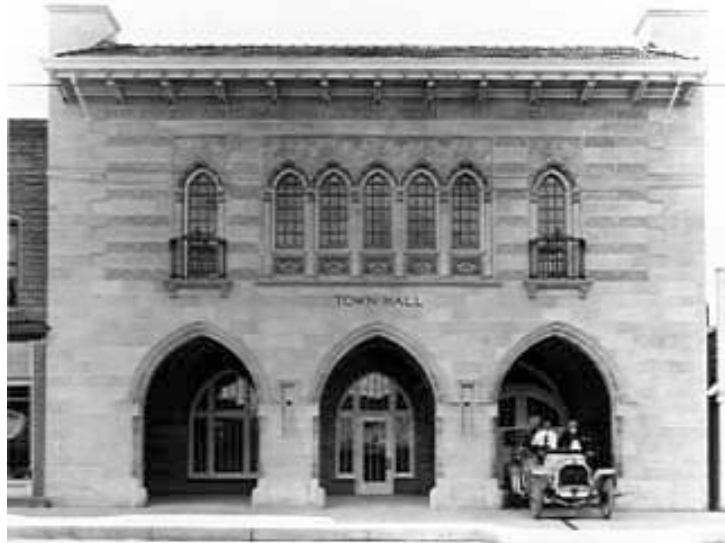


Figure 2: Historic photo of 2450 W. Main Street c. 1920

The building is two and a half stories with its main facade clad with architectural terra cotta. The side and rear walls are composed of brick with a concrete foundation. The roof is flat with projecting piers framing a central hip roof. As is common for Italian Renaissance style buildings, there is an overhanging roof with bracket eaves. This portion of the roof features terra cotta roofing tiles. Terra cotta tiles cast to resemble smooth stone blocks clad majority of the facade. At the foundation, a different type of terra cotta with slightly rougher face and grained appearance was used. The first story features an arcade of triple pointed arches accentuated by molding and ornamentation. Each arch contains an inset entrance with multi-light doors, overdoors, and sidelights. Flanking the central arch are wrought iron lanterns. The second story includes a central arcade of five slender pointed arch windows with polychromatic ornaments that are accentuated by small columns and flanked by single windows with wrought iron balconets. Other decorative features on the second story include quoins and bands of cast ornament. A large concrete block addition was added to the rear of the building during its conversion into a performing arts center.

In 2025, Paul Bryant, Bryant Flink Architecture and Design, applied for a certificate of appropriateness (COA25-0005) on behalf of the tenant, Town Hall Arts Center, to modify the building. The COA was approved for a roof addition and exterior modifications to accommodate upgrades to the theater space and restoration of some features. The current application, submitted by the same applicant, is for the installation of a vertical marquee and two window signs.

APPLICATION DETAIL

The proposed signage is part of a larger renovation project to enhance the theater and public spaces of the building. The proposed signage includes a vertical marquee sign located on the western side of the façade and two signs within the glazing of the east and west arched windows on the first floor.

The marquee sign is composed of two main sections, a vertical section featuring decorative elements influenced by the front façade and advertising the building as a theater. The second section is horizontal in orientation and features changeable copy to be utilized for promoting shows. All components of the sign project in a perpendicular manner from the façade. The total height of the sign is 18ft with the bottom edge 12ft above the sidewalk and projecting out from the building 6ft. The vertical component of the sign is approximately 15ft-3in in height and a width of 2ft-5in. The horizontal section is 2ft-9.5in in height and 5ft-10.25in in width. The sign has a depth of 1ft-6.25in, and includes the face that is parallel to Main St. The total area of the sign is roughly 53.45sf, with the upper section at 37.13sf and the lower section at 16.32sf.

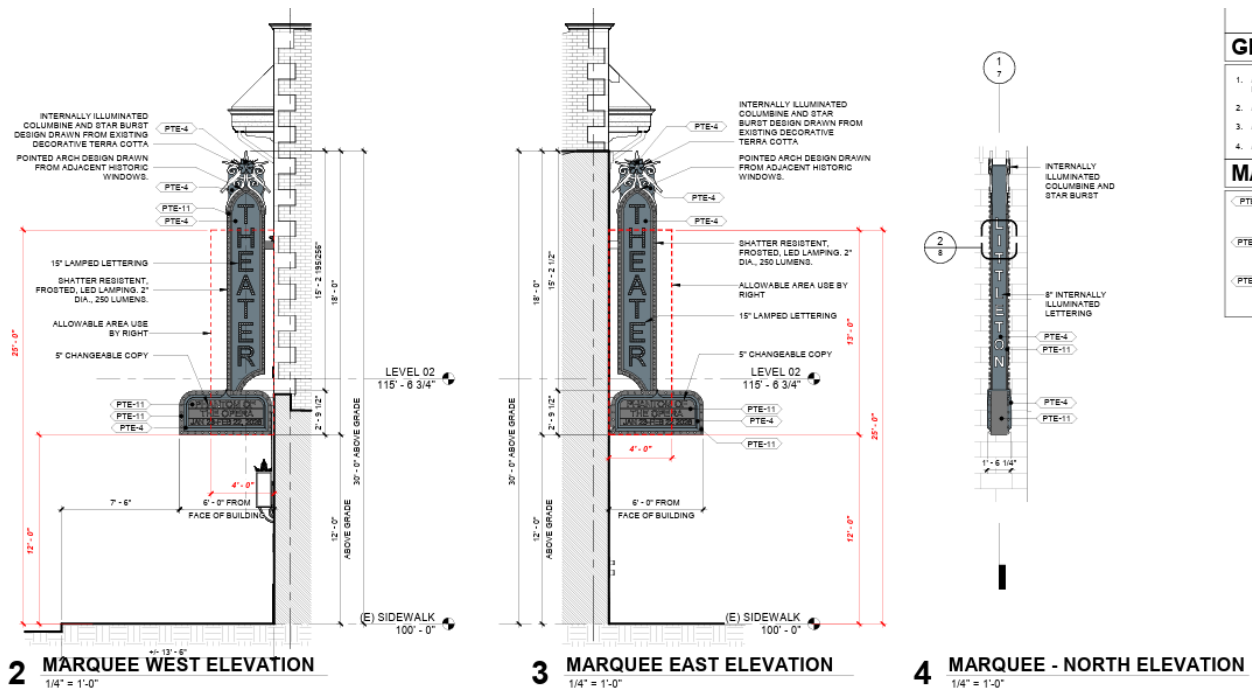


Figure 3: Proposed marquee sign elevations

The base color of the sign is drawn from the blue, glazed terra cotta accents around the second-floor windows. Taken from the embossed designs on the same level, the sign features a columbine and starburst design at the top. This feature is placed directly above a pointed arch that is drawn from the adjacent

windows. The proposed sign also includes exposed, shatter-resistant, frosted LED bulbs with 2in diameter. The bulbs will be installed around the edges of the sign on both the east and west faces and within the lettering on those faces. The columbine and starburst element, as well as, the lettering along the street facing side of the sign will be internally illuminated. The lettering on the east and west faces of the sign has a height of 15in, the changeable copy lettering is 5in tall, and the lettering on the parallel face is 8in in height.

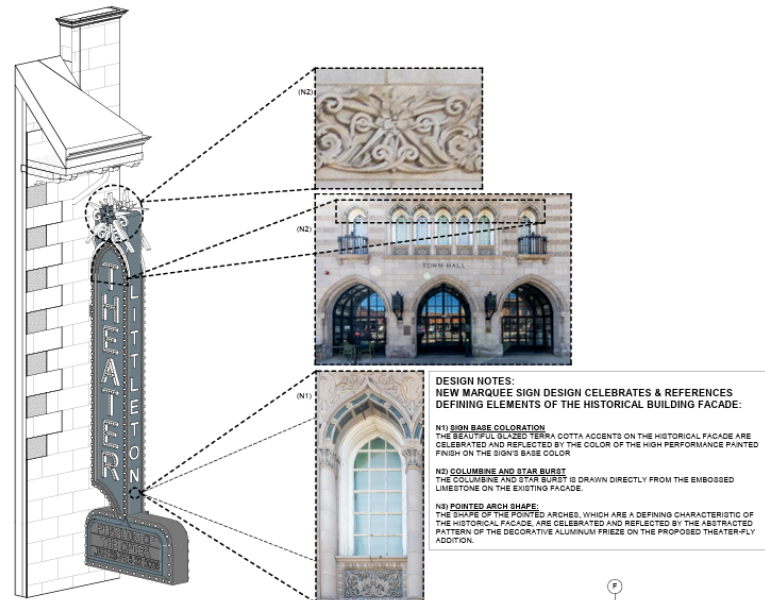


Figure 4: Design elements referenced in marquee sign

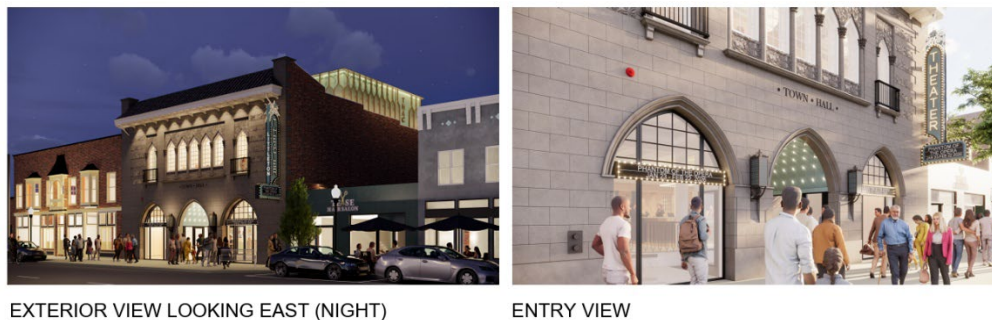
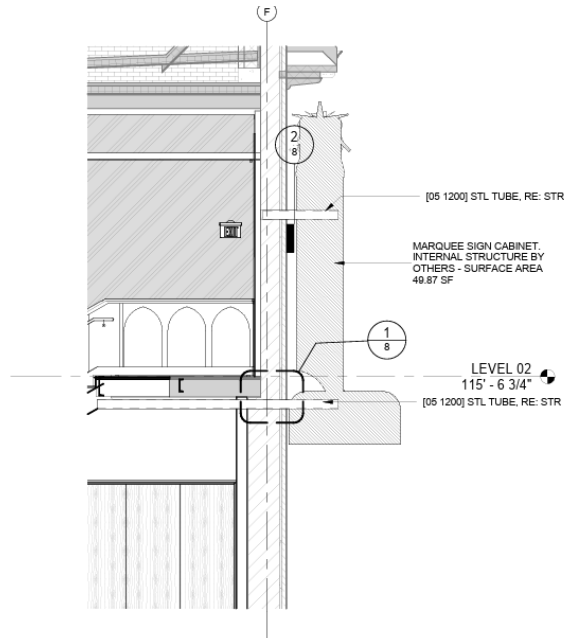


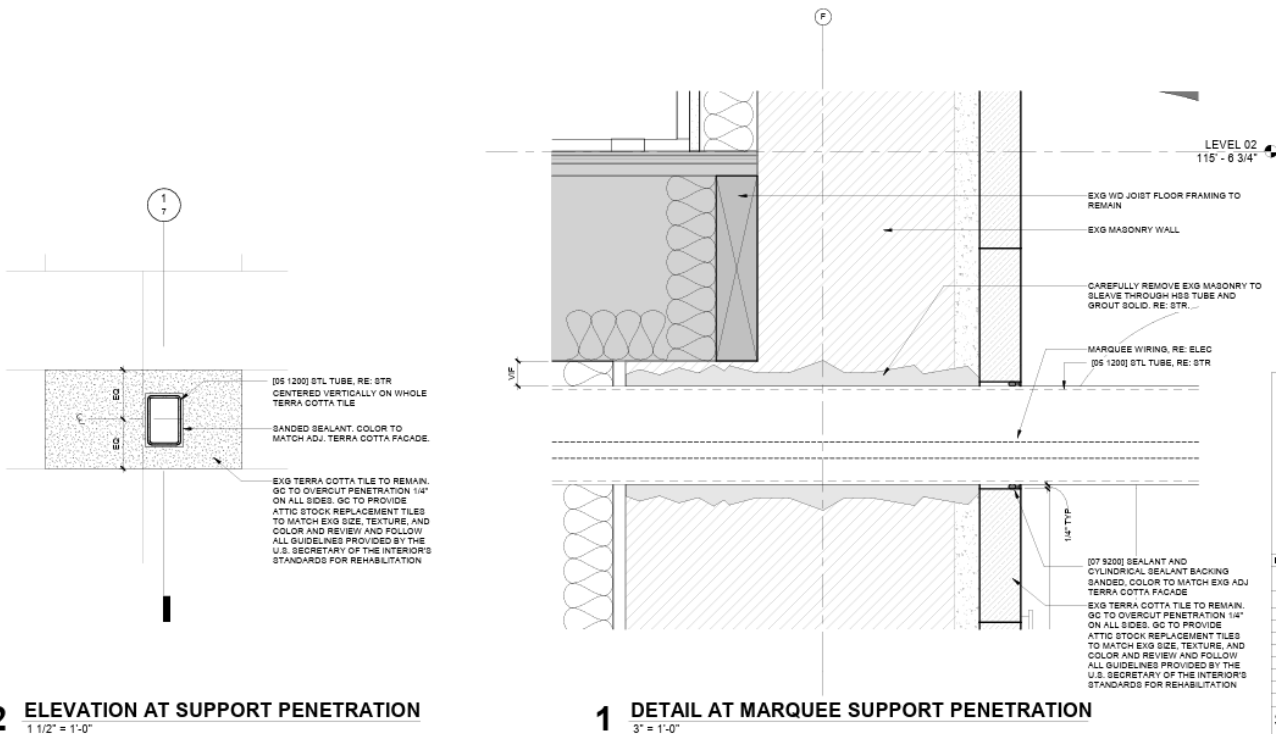
Figure 5: Renderings of proposed signs

The sign will be installed via two connection points, top and bottom, with the building. Installation requires the use of a 6-in steel tube that will be inserted through a terra cotta block to mount to the internal structure of the building. Each block will be pre-cut, with an overage of 1/4in, then the tube will be inserted and sealed around the edges. If the sign were to be removed in the future, the blocks may be replaced in-kind, and it is noted on the plans attic stock will be retained for potential future use.



1 SECTION AT MARQUEE
1/4" = 1'-0"

Figure 6: Section drawing depicting installation method of marquee sign



2 ELEVATION AT SUPPORT PENETRATION
1 1/2" = 1'-0"

1 DETAIL AT MARQUEE SUPPORT PENETRATION
3" = 1'-0"

Figure 7: Detail drawings of sign supports

The remaining two signs will be mounted to the new storefronts that will be installed into the east and west arches of the first-floor arcade. The storefronts are not historic and were approved for installation under COA25-0005. The signs will be identical, with a height of 1ft-3in and width of 9ft-2.5in. The sign includes

changeable copy with 5in letters to advertise shows and showtimes. The sign includes exposed, shatter-resistant, frosted LED bulbs with a 2in diameter.

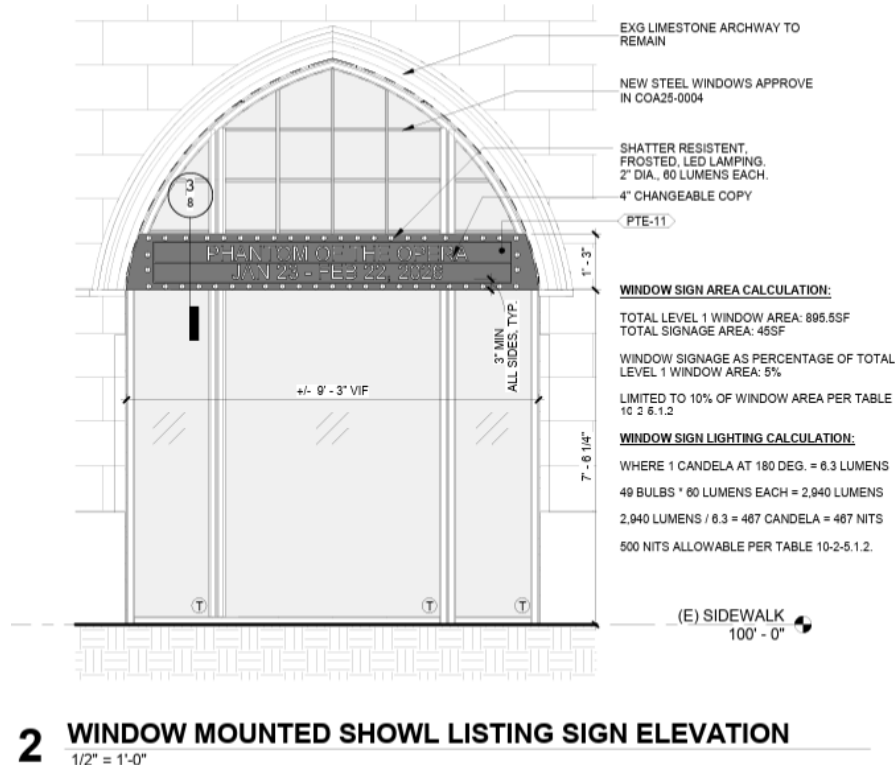


Figure 8: Proposed sign in storefront

DECISION CRITERIA AND ANALYSIS:

Eligibility

Pursuant to Section 10-8-1.2 of the ULUC, prior to beginning work on a designated historic landmark or property in a Historic District, the property owner shall consult with the Director and submit materials for a certificate of appropriateness. Additionally, per Section 10-9-8.1(A) of the ULUC, the Certificate of Appropriateness “provides for the preservation of historic resources and establishes criteria for the proposed alterations to designated landmarks and buildings in historic districts.” 2450 W. Main Street is a contributing building in the Littleton Downtown Historic District, and as such any proposed work must be approved through a COA process.

Approval Criteria & Analysis

10-9-8.1(C). General Decision Criteria. A Certificate of Appropriateness may be approved, approved with conditions, or denied based on the following criteria:

1. **Federal Standards.** The proposed changes are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, & Reconstructing Historic Buildings as adopted by the National Park Service:

Secretary of Interior Standards

Standard #1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that

requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

This building was originally used for civic office purpose. The building has been utilized as a theater for roughly 45 years. The proposed signage is meant to highlight the theater use, while maintaining elements of the building that speak to its original use as the Littleton Town Hall. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

The overall historic character of the property will be retained. Historic materials will be minimally altered. The sign will impact two terra cotta masonry units, that will need to be replaced if the sign is removed. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historic development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

The proposed changes do not create a false sense of historic development. The proposed marquee sign references design elements on the building but does not create a false sense of history. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

The proposed changes do not affect any modifications that may have acquired historic significance. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

The symmetrical nature of the façade will be somewhat altered, but the sign is proportional and offset in a manner that does not affect the overall integrity or significance of the building. No other distinctive features, finishes, or construction techniques will be altered by the proposed changes. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive features, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

This standard is not applicable, as the proposal does not involve repair or replacement of deteriorated historic features.

Standard #7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials, such as sandblasting, shall not be used.

The applicant is aware that no harsh treatments, such as sandblasting or corrosive chemicals may be used. The options before HPC in this application for a COA do not anticipate inclusion of any harsh treatments. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #8. Significant archaeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measure shall be undertaken.

There are no known archaeological resources on the property. No excavation is expected with these alterations. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

The proposed signage is compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the building. The proposed signs appear contemporary but are in keeping with the scale and size of the storefronts and larger building features. The placement of the marquee on the west side of the building prevents obscuring important features or decorative elements on the façade. This standard appears to be met.

Standard #10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

The signage may be removed in the future without impacting the essential form and integrity of the property. This standard appears to be met.

2. ***Littleton Design Standards and Guidelines.*** The proposed changes are in compliance with the adopted design standards and guidelines documents, such as the Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines, as outlined in the Design Requirements section on the city's Envision Littleton webpage:

Downtown Littleton Design Standards

The Downtown Littleton Historic Preservation Design Guidelines defers to the Downtown Littleton Design Standards for standards related to signs in Downtown. Marquee signs are noted as allowed along Main Street and that they should be placed above entrances. The proposed sign is located on the west side of the front façade and designed with a more vertical profile. This prevents obscuring any significant features, including the original "Town Hall" signage on the

front facade. Further, *Preservation Brief 25: The Preservation of Historic Signs* notes that new signs on historic buildings should not obscure any significant features and should respect the size, scale, and design of the building. Staff finds that the placement and verticality of the sign is appropriate in relation to the historic façade and preservation guidance.

Window Replacement Design Guidelines

No window replacement is proposed as part of this application.

3. ***Original Features.*** The proposed work preserves, rehabilitates, or reconstructs the original architectural features, and proposed new features are visually compatible with designated historic structure(s) located on the property in terms of design, finishes, material, scale, mass, and height.

The proposed signage is visually compatible with the original features of the building. The window signs will be mounted to non-historic storefronts and fit within the design and scale of the storefronts. The marquee sign references existing architectural features in its design and is located so as not to obscure or negatively impact the historic façade. This criterion appears to be met.

4. ***Compatibility.*** If property is in a designated historic district, the proposed work is visually compatible with the development on abutting properties and those on the same block. The HPC shall consider characteristics such as setbacks and building scale.

The proposed work is compatible with the surrounding district. The proposed signage is no taller than surrounding two story buildings and does not overshadow surrounding buildings. The lighting is a departure from what is seen currently in Downtown, but a marquee type sign with exposed lighting is located at 2420 W. Main St. (The Alley). This sign is not historic but is utilized as an example of a marquee sign in the Downtown Littleton Design Standards. This criterion appears to be met.

5. ***Character, Interest, and Value.*** Aside from changes that do not require a Certificate of Appropriateness, as set out in paragraph B.3.a, above, the proposed work does not adversely affect the special character or historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value of a landmark or property in a historic district.

Staff finds that the proposed work does not adversely affect the special character or historical, architectural, or aesthetic interest or value of the building. The proposed signs may be removed in the future without negatively impacting the historic significance or integrity of the building. This criterion appears to be met.

6. ***Color and Materials.*** The architectural style, arrangement, textures, paint colors especially if applied to brick or stone, and arrangement of colors and materials used on existing and proposed structures are compatible with the character of the existing landmark or property in a historic district; and

The proposed signs are compatible and draw on colors and design elements of the existing building. This criterion appears to be met.

7. Exterior Features. The proposed work preserves, enhances, or restores, and does not damage or destroy the exterior architectural features of a historical landmark or property in a historic district.

Staff finds that the proposed signs will not negatively impact the exterior features of the building. Two terra cotta masonry units will be impacted through the installation of the marquee sign, but could be replaced in-kind if the sign is removed in the future and will not reduce the historic integrity of the building. This criterion appears to be met.

Required Variances: As noted in the Process section above, the proposed signage does not meet all the standards for signs in the Downtown Main Street District, and variances in height, number, size, location, and lighting are required prior to the issuance of a building permit under Section 10-9-9.4 of the ULUC. **Approval of this Certificate of Appropriateness does not constitute approval of the required variances, and approval is subject to review by the Appeals and Adjustment Commission.** The marquee and window signage may **not** be installed as proposed unless and until the applicable variances are separately approved by the Appeals and Adjustment Commission.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION COMMISSION OPTIONS:

Pursuant to Section 10-9-8.1.E, the HPC shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny the certificate of appropriateness. The board may also issue an order to continue the application process if the board determines that additional information is necessary to make a decision.

APPEAL.

Pursuant to Section 10-9-3.7, the applicant may appeal a denial or condition of the certificate of appropriateness to the City Council within fifteen (15) days of such decision. If no appeal is filed within fifteen (15) days, the decision is final. If an appeal is filed, the Council shall hold a public hearing to consider the appeal after notice is provided in Section [10-9-3.5](#), *Public Notice*, of the ULUC. The Council shall consider the notice of appeal, HPC's reasons for denial of or conditions on the application, comments made during the HPC hearing, and any evidence, including new evidence, it deems relevant to the application. The Council shall apply the same approval criteria the HPC used to make an independent and final determination.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff finds that the Certificate of Appropriateness for 2450 W. Main St. does meet all the approval criteria in the ULUC Section 10-9-8.1. subject to certain conditions. Planning staff recommends approval, of HPC Resolution 04-2026, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The two impacted terracotta masonry units shall be replaced in-kind;
- 2) The attic stock shall be retained in the event that the marquee sign is removed in the future;
- 3) No building permit shall be issued until all required height, number, size, location, and lightning variances have been separately applied for and approved by the Appeals and Adjustment Commission.