

TURTLE CREEK PUMP STATION  
DESIGNATION REPORT  
CITY of DALLAS



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## Cultural Significance

After the original Dallas water supply at Browder Springs proved insufficient, the City elected to create and develop a supply from the Trinity River, taking water above Dallas to minimize pollution. Land was purchased in 1887 on the Trinity above the confluence of Turtle Creek, a primitive pump station was erected on the river bank, and a water main laid in Alamo Street into town to connect with the distribution system. The following year a more substantial pump station was built. This second station was replaced in 1896 by a larger station located on the west side of present Harry Hines Boulevard and south of Oak Lawn Avenue extension, to accommodate the new water supply from Record's Crossing. Finally, the present building was built in 1909 both to enlarge the system and to provide a pump station for the proposed new treatment plant.

When this land was bought, it was open country, grazing land or farmland. In later years a portion of the land was converted to Reverchon Park; another portion was occupied by Parkland Hospital at Oak Lawn and Maple, and still later by the Children's Hospital. The area was served by Maple Avenue and a road known as Northwest Highway that went out from downtown to Irving and Coppell. Maple gradually became a residential area of finer and more imposing homes, while the area south of the pump station became more devoted to industry.

One prominent feature of the Turtle Creek station was the Gill well, drilled in 1903 and named for Alderman C. A. Gill who served on the Water Supply Committee. The well was intended to supply a soft, non-corrosive water for boilers, but the well penetrated the Glen Rose sands and yielded a highly mineralized water that became locally famous for its therapeutic qualities. A favored buggy ride on Sundays was out to the Gill Well to fill bottles with the water. Three other wells were drilled in the same area to supply additional clear water and water for the steam boilers at Turtle Creek. All these wells are now capped off and abandoned.

When the muddy water from the Trinity was declared unacceptable by many citizens, two large settling basins were built in the late 1880's to serve as storage reservoirs and settling basins to remove at least part of the silt and mud from the river water. When Turtle Creek became obsolete in 1930, the basins were left intact. P. C. Cobb Stadium and field house now occupy these basins.

From 1887 until 1930 the Turtle Creek Pump Station was the focal point of the entire water supply for the City, assisted somewhat by the White Rock supply after 1913. The Turtle Creek - Parkland Hospital Association was a close one - Turtle Creek boilers supplied the steam heat for Parkland for many years and a goodly part of the maintenance work at Parkland was done by Water Department personnel. Dallas city limits were edged out Maple Avenue as rapidly as possible to take this whole area into the city proper.

When the building was left unoccupied in 1954, it was still complete. In the course of years the coping became dislodged and was restored. When the Harry Hines connection and the Dallas North Tollway were planned, a portion of the west end of the building was removed to make way for the Hines outbound lanes. For this reason, only a portion of the old engine room remains. The east end, high-ceilinged boiler room that contained three large boilers is still relatively intact. This section of the building was used for a number of years as headquarters of the Department's Pumping division, with offices in the balcony spaces. The original boiler room was used as a machine shop for repair work, and the old engine room was the welding shop.

Turtle Creek Pump Station is important to the Water Utilities as the recognized first place where water was diverted from the Trinity for municipal supply, and it is therefore the basis of the historic Certified Filing 75 under which Dallas registered its water supply with the State of Texas to establish its riparian rights to the river waters. This right continues to the present and makes available to Dallas the critical volumes of water that permit continued growth and comfort. It was also the site of pioneer use of oil-fired boilers. Chief Engineer J. M. Bassett arranged shortly after 1900 with the oil developers around Corsicana to supply oil for special tests at Turtle Creek to convert the wood and coal-fired boilers.

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## Architectural Significance

The Turtle Creek Pump Station was built in 1909 and designed by architect C. A. Gill. The architectural style is an eclectic mix of Richardsonian Romanesque and modified Italianate details. The ornate facade reflects the high level of masonry detail and craftsmanship typical of the functional industrial/institutional architectures of the period. A stone cornice encircles the top of the building, further adding to its architectural richness.

The arches, pilasters, cornice treatment, and window spacings are typical of the Italianate style. The overall scale and massing of the building as well as the use of brick and stone detailing are typical of the many industrial buildings of the period built in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. Tall clearstory windows provided light to the interior of the structure as well as ventilation of the smoke and fumes created by the pumps. Except for the engine room, the building is a flat-roofed structure. A simple gable roof covers the engine room, where more clearstory windows and a clay tile roof treatment are used.

The scale and proportion of the pump station make it appear larger than it really is. It seems to be a three-story structure, but in reality is a one-story shell surrounding a large open space. This open area housed the massive pumps and intricate piping that were necessary in providing portable water to the City of Dallas. Its design is a direct contradiction to the "form follows function" philosophies that succeeded its construction. The articulation of the windows give the illusion of a tall, long building made up of several levels and rooms. Inside, there are three intermediate levels that were originally platforms which surrounded the pumps, pipes, and valves of the pump house. Ladders and small, steep, narrow stairs provided vertical access to the pumping facilities. Sleeping and eating, as well as shop areas were located within the pump house. This permitted 24-hour maintenance and surveillance of the installation.

The Turtle Creek Pump Station sits on a hill where an imposing view of the structure is created. The overall height of the building is approximately 70 feet. It is 101 feet long, and 73 and 105 feet wide at its narrowest and widest points. The west wall angles inward, aligning with Harry Hines Boulevard. Except for the removal of part of the west side of the building, the structure has remained intact. In 1954 it was no longer used as a pump station, and later, the expansion of Harry Hines Boulevard required that part of the west side of the structure to be demolished.

It is felt that this period survivor has great potential for innovative adaptive reuse. The Turtle Creek Pump Station is a fine example of national turn-of-the-century industrial building styles and techniques applied in Dallas. Most of Dallas' other examples of period, industrial architectures are located in and around the Downtown -- most notably, the West End Historic District. Other examples are the White Rock pump station, the Bachman Lake pump station, and the original sewage treatment plant on Industrial Boulevard.

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## Designation Merit

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>A. Character, interest, or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City of Dallas, State of Texas, or the United States. <u>  X  </u></p> | <p>H. Embodiments of elements of architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship which represent a significant architectural innovation. <u>      </u></p>                              |
| <p>B. Location as the site of a significant historical event. <u>      </u></p>  | <p>I. Relationship to other distinctive buildings, sites, or areas which are eligible for preservation according to a plan based on historic, cultural, or architectural motif. <u>      </u></p> |
| <p>C. Identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the culture and development of the city. <u>      </u></p>  | <p>J. Unique location of singular physical characteristics representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the city. <u>      </u></p>                   |
| <p>D. Exemplification of the cultural, economic, social, or historical heritage of the city. <u>      </u></p>   | <p>K. Archeological value in that it has produced or can be expected to produce data affecting theories of historic or prehistoric value. <u>      </u></p>                                       |
| <p>E. Portrayal of the environment of a group of people in an era of history characterized by a distinctive architectural style. <u>      </u></p>                                 | <p>L. Value as an aspect of community sentiment or public pride. <u>      </u></p>  |
| <p>F. Embodiment of distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen. <u>      </u></p>   |   |
| <p>G. Identification as the work of an architect or master builder whose individual work has influenced the development of the city. <u>      </u></p>                             |   |

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## Recommendation

The Landmark Survey Task Force requests the Historic Landmark Preservation Committee to deem this proposed landmark meritorious of historic recognition as outlined in city ordinance 19-A.

Date:

Further, this task force endorses the preservation criteria, policy recommendations, and landmark boundary as presented by the Dept. of Urban Planning staff.

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Chairman, Landmark Survey Task Force

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Urban Design Program Manager  
Department of Urban Planning

# Preservation Analysis

## STRUCTURE

1. Surface Materials
2. Fenestration and Portals
  - a. style, type
  - b. o/w ratio
  - c. rhythms
  - d. placement
3. Trim and Detailing
  - a. style
  - b. unique trim or detailing
  - c. structural members
4. Roof
  - a. style, form
  - b. slope
  - c. materials
5. Design Concepts
  - a. stylistic demands
  - b. functional concepts
6. Utilities
  - a. design
  - b. placement
7. Signs
  - a. style, design
  - b. placement
8. Exterior Connections
  - a. design
  - b. penetration points

## SITE

- |          |                               |          |
|----------|-------------------------------|----------|
| <u>X</u> | 1. Prohibited Structure Areas | ---      |
|          | a. approach                   | ---      |
| <u>X</u> | b. view corridors             | <u>X</u> |
| <u>X</u> | c. site feature protection    | <u>X</u> |
| <u>X</u> | d. vertical additions         | <u>X</u> |
| <u>X</u> | 2. Access/Egress              | ---      |
| <u>X</u> | 3. Adjacent R.O.W.'s          | <u>X</u> |
|          | a. existing treatment         | <u>X</u> |
| <u>X</u> | b. proposed changes           | ---      |
| ---      | 4. Landscaping                | <u>X</u> |
|          | a. existing plant removal     | <u>X</u> |
| <u>X</u> | b. new plant selection        | <u>X</u> |
| <u>X</u> | c. site design                | ---      |
| <u>X</u> | 5. Site Fixtures              | ---      |
|          | a. furniture                  | ---      |
|          | b. sculpture, art             | ---      |
| <u>X</u> | c. paths                      | ---      |
|          | d. utility units              | <u>X</u> |
| <u>X</u> | e. signs                      | <u>X</u> |
| <u>X</u> | 6. Lighting                   | ---      |
|          | a. exteriors                  | <u>X</u> |
| <u>X</u> | b. grounds                    | <u>X</u> |

## COLOR

- |          |                      |          |
|----------|----------------------|----------|
| <u>X</u> | 1. Surface Materials | <u>X</u> |
|          | 2. Trim and Details  | <u>X</u> |
|          | 3. Roof              | <u>X</u> |
|          | 4. Utilities         | ---      |
|          | 5. Signs             | ---      |
|          | 6. Site Fixtures     | <u>X</u> |
|          | 7. Accent Color      | <u>X</u> |

# Land Use Analysis

Proposed zoning change:

from: Industrial - 2  
 to: Change depends on R.F.P. selection

Recommended use variances:

Recommended uses are being reviewed  
this time by the Water Department  
(Several R.F.P.'s have been submitted  
proposing a variety of uses).

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF DALLAS:

SECTION 1. That CHAPTER 51, "DALLAS DEVELOPMENT CODE," of the Dallas City Code, as amended, be, and the same is, hereby amended insofar as the property hereinafter described shall be classified and placed into the use district hereinafter set forth and be subject to the provisions of said ordinance generally; and the Zoning Map or Plat be, and is, hereby amended and corrected so that the property hereinafter described, which is presently zoned Industrial-2 District, to-wit:

Being a part of City Block 1/1000, bounded by Dallas North Tollway on the east, Harry Hines Boulevard on the southwest and the right-of-way for the Oak Lawn Avenue interchange with Harry Hines Boulevard and Dallas North Tollway on the northwest, and containing approximately 0.856 acres of land.

shall hereafter be zoned as an Industrial-2-Historic District/14 District District.

SECTION 2. That this Historic District designation shall be subject to the following Preservation Criteria:

1. Surface Materials

Reconstruction, renovation, or repair of the facade shall employ only brick and stone of equal texture, grain, color, and module size of the existing main structure, as practicable. Additions to the structure shall employ the same materials, building forms, and style elements as the main structure.

2. Fenestration and Openings

Existing openings in the facade shall remain intact and new openings shall not be permitted. New or replacement windows shall be multi-paned with mullions and glass segments that

match existing windows or shall be typical of the period and style of the building. Tinted or reflective glass shall not be permitted, however, insulating glass may be used. All exterior window awnings, shades, or shutters shall be subject to Historic Landmark Preservation Committee (H.L.P.C.) approval. The relationship between brick walls, windows, and door openings shall be maintained. Existing windows and doors shall be maintained. New window and door openings shall not be permitted.

### 3. Roof

The slope, configuration, and surface pattern of the existing roof shall be maintained. No new vertical extensions shall be allowed and all existing extensions, gables, clearstories, and skylights shall be preserved. All replacements or repairs to the designated structure shall employ a roofing material comparable to the existing roof in texture, design, and color.

### 4. Embellishments and Detailing

All ornamental detailing listed below shall remain intact. Any reconstruction, renovation, or replacement of these detail elements shall be identical in composition and texture as practicable:

- A. Ornamental stone cornices, pediments, caps, brackets, and stone work.
- B. Metal trim located along cornice lines.
- C. Decorative brick arches and corbelling.
- D. Parapets and stepped gables.

### 5. Color

A. **Predominate Facade Material:** The existing, natural color of the brick and stone work shall be preserved and unpainted. There will be no alterations to the facade materials, except for necessary maintenance and cleaning. A clear sealant may be applied as necessary. The color of any accessory structures to the pump station shall coincide, as nearly as practicable, to the color and materials of the existing main structure. Where appropriate, paint colors for accessory structures shall conform to a color range defined by the Munsell Color System as outlined in the Munsell Book of Color, Neighborhood Hues Collection, 1973.

B. **Trim Colors:** Colors for all wood window and door frames, soffits, and other trim shall coincide with the hue,

value, and chroma listed in the Munsell Color Rating System. Where it is determined appropriate to paint metal trims, the same criteria and requirements shall apply as for wood trims. A clear sealant may be applied as a preservative. All existing concrete surfaces shall remain unpainted, however, foundation surfaces may be painted a natural or earth color (to be selected from the Munsell Color Rating System). Any stone or metal trim shall not be painted or altered, except for maintenance and cleaning. A clear sealant may be applied as a preservative.

#### 6. Lighting and Landscaping

All plans for exterior lighting and the placement and removal of trees and shrubs shall be approved by the H.L.P.C. prior to commencement of the work. All plans for parking and ingress and egress to the site shall be approved by the H.L.P.C.

#### 7. Public Improvements

All proposed public improvements of streets and associated rights-of-way abutting the site shall be approved by the H.L.P.C. prior to commencement of the work.

#### 8. Signs

No signs shall be erected on the site nor attached to the structure without the approval of the H.L.P.C. All signage shall meet City of Dallas Sign Regulations. Signage shall be compatible with the architectural qualities of the existing main structure.

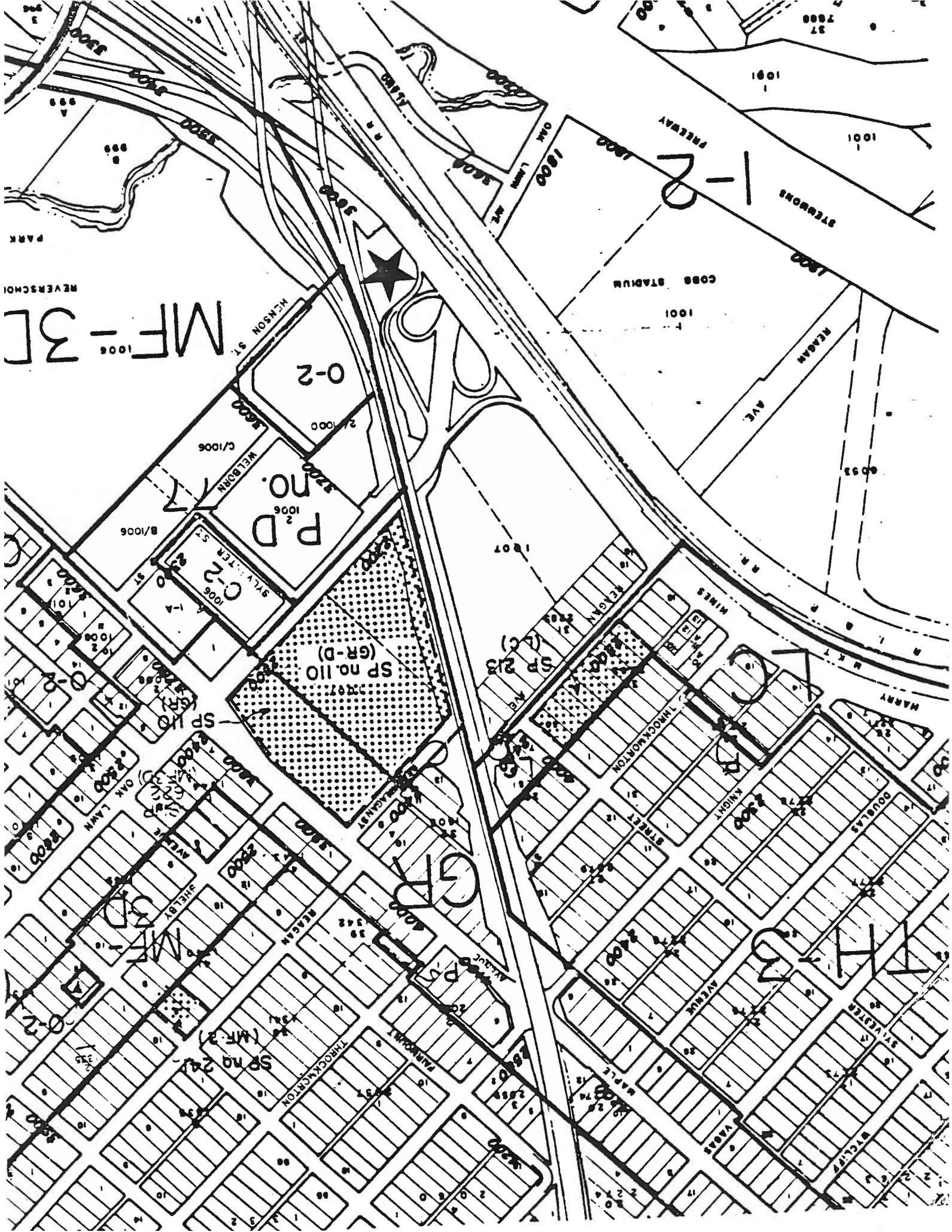
When appropriate, all signage attached to the structure shall be placed in the following areas:

A. Facade voids located beneath cornice lines and above the topmost facade openings.

B. The stepped gables on the north elevation and the stepped parapet wall on the south elevation.

Signage on additions to the structure and on necessary structures (when appropriate) shall conform to the same guidelines as signage on the designated structure. In no case shall a sign permit be issued without H.L.P.C. review and approval.

SECTION 3. That the Director of the Department of Urban Planning is hereby directed to correct Zoning District Map No.



MF-3D

1-2



P.D. no. 1006

0-2

SP no. 110 (GR-D)

SP 215 (C)

GR

TH

REVERSCHOI PARK

COBB STADIUM

STEWARTS

REAGAN AVE.

1800

FREWAY

1800

HENSON ST.

WELDON C/1006

B/1006

P.D. no. 1006

0-2

1807

MINES

THROCKMORTON

HARRY

KNIGHT

DOUGLAS

AVENUE

STEVENS

BIGGINS

THROCKMORTON

SP no. 244 (MT. 2)

0-2

0-2

0-2

0-2

0-2

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