



LAND USE APPLICATION SUMMARY

Property Location: 3433 Broadway Street Northeast
Project Name: BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota Signage
Prepared By: [Janelle Widmeier](#), Senior City Planner, (612) 673-3156
Applicant: BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota
Project Contact: Jon LeNoble, Kerch, O'Brien, Mueller & Associates
Request: To allow signage for an office building.
Required Applications:

Variance	To increase the maximum height of two wall signs from 28 feet to 67.5 feet.
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SITE DATA

Existing Zoning	II Light Industrial District
Lot Area	150,982 square feet (3.47 acres)
Ward(s)	I
Neighborhood(s)	Mid-City Industrial
Designated Future Land Use	Industrial
Land Use Features	Industrial Employment Center (Mid-City)
Small Area Plan(s)	Not applicable

Date Application Deemed Complete	March 21, 2016	Date Extension Letter Sent	Not applicable
End of 60-Day Decision Period	May 20, 2016	End of 120-Day Decision Period	Not applicable

BACKGROUND

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PRESENT USE. A 5-story, multi-tenant office building is located on the subject site. The building was permitted for construction in 1984. The site has frontage on three streets: Broadway Street Northeast, Industrial Boulevard and Godward Street. Surface parking areas separate the building from each street. No building signage is currently located on the building. There are three freestanding signs distributed around the site.

SURROUNDING PROPERTIES AND NEIGHBORHOOD. The site is located in a large industrial area. Surrounding uses include an 8-story hotel to the north, self-service storage, a dental office, automobile service station, and fast-food restaurant to the east, a truck trailer storage lot to the south, and a 5-story office building to the west. The site is also in close proximity to and visible from Interstate 35W and Highway 280.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION. BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota is proposing to install two wall signs, one on the north side of the building and the other on the south side, at the property of 3433 Broadway Street Northeast. Both signs would be 180 square feet in area, internally illuminated and located at the fifth floor level. The sign on the north side of the building would be 64.5 feet above grade and the sign on the south side of the building would be 67.5 feet above grade. The maximum allowed height for a wall sign in the 11 district is 28 feet. The applicant is requesting a variance to increase the maximum allowed height.

RELATED APPROVALS. In 2002, the Zoning Board of Adjustment approved a variance to allow a 42 square foot wall sign to be placed 60 high on the north building wall.

PUBLIC COMMENTS. Comments from the neighborhood group have been received and are attached to this report. Any additional correspondence received prior to the public meeting will be forwarded on to the Board of Adjustment for consideration.

ANALYSIS

VARIANCE

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development has analyzed the application for a variance to increase the maximum height of two wall signs from 28 feet to 67.5 feet based on the following findings:

- 1. Practical difficulties exist in complying with the ordinance because of circumstances unique to the property. The unique circumstances were not created by persons presently having an interest in the property and are not based on economic considerations alone.*

Practical difficulties exist in complying with the ordinance due to circumstances unique to the property. The proposed signs would be located on a tall multi-tenant office building over 100,000 square feet in area in an industrial park. The building is in close proximity to and is visible from I-35W and Highway 280. Wall signs located 28 feet above grade would have reduced visibility due to surrounding development and vegetation. The zoning code allows a height exception for wall signs on larger buildings, recognizing that certain buildings may have unique identification needs. However, the minimum building height needed to qualify for the exception is 6 stories, 84 feet. These circumstances have not been created by the applicant.

2. *The property owner or authorized applicant proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner that will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and the comprehensive plan.*

Regulations governing on-premise signs are established to allow effective signage appropriate to the planned character of each zoning district, to promote an attractive environment by minimizing visual clutter and confusion, to minimize adverse effects on nearby property, and to protect the public health, safety and welfare. The II Light Industrial District is established to provide clean, attractive locations for low impact and technology-based light industrial uses, research and development, and similar uses which produce little or no noise, odor, vibration, glare or other objectionable influences, and have little or no adverse effect on surrounding properties.

The proposed signs would be located on a tall multi-tenant office building over 100,000 square feet in area in an industrial park. The building is in close proximity to and is visible from I-35W and Highway 280. Wall signs located 28 feet above grade would have reduced visibility due to surrounding development and vegetation. The amount of separation between the proposed sign locations and the surrounding properties would minimize the potential for adverse impacts to the surrounding properties. Given the size and location of the building, the request is reasonable and in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and comprehensive plan.

3. *The proposed variance will not alter the essential character of the locality or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity. If granted, the proposed variance will not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the general public or of those utilizing the property or nearby properties.*

Granting the variances would have little effect on the surrounding area and would not be detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the general public or of those utilizing the property or nearby properties. The site is located in a large industrial area and is adjacent to a mix of uses. It is also in close proximity to and is visible from I-35W and Highway 280. The amount of separation between the proposed sign locations and the surrounding properties would minimize the potential for adverse impacts to the surrounding properties. Wall signs above 28 feet in height are located on the adjacent 8-story hotel (authorized by conditional use permit) as well as the nearby self-service storage building (authorized by variance).

Additional Standards for Sign Adjustments

In addition, the Planning Commission shall consider, but not be limited to, the following factors when considering an adjustment to the number, type, height, area, or location of allowed signs on property located in an OR2 or OR3 District or a commercial, downtown, or industrial district:

1. *The sign adjustment will not significantly increase or lead to sign clutter in the area or result in a sign that is inconsistent with the purpose of the zoning district in which the property is located.*

The II Light Industrial District is established to provide clean, attractive locations for low impact and technology-based light industrial uses, research and development, and similar uses which produce little or no noise, odor, vibration, glare or other objectionable influences, and have little or no adverse effect on surrounding properties.

The request is to increase the maximum allowed height of wall signage. The signs would comply with all other applicable requirements. No other building signs are proposed at this time. There are three freestanding signs existing on the site and are distributed more or less equally around the 3.47 acre site. Because of the size of the building and the site, granting the variance would not lead to sign clutter in the area or result in a sign that is inconsistent with the II district.

2. *The sign adjustment will allow a sign that relates in size, shape, materials, color, illumination and character to the function and architectural character of the building or property on which the sign will be located.*

The signs will relate in size, shape, material, color, illumination and character of the building and the property. Each sign would be made of aluminum and would be internally illuminated. The primary exterior materials of the building are concrete and glass.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the Zoning Board of Adjustment adopt staff findings for the application by BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota for the property located at 3433 Broadway Street Northeast:

A. Variance to increase the maximum height of wall signs.

Recommended motion: **Approve** the variance to increase the maximum height of two wall signs from 28 feet to 67.5 feet, subject to the following conditions:

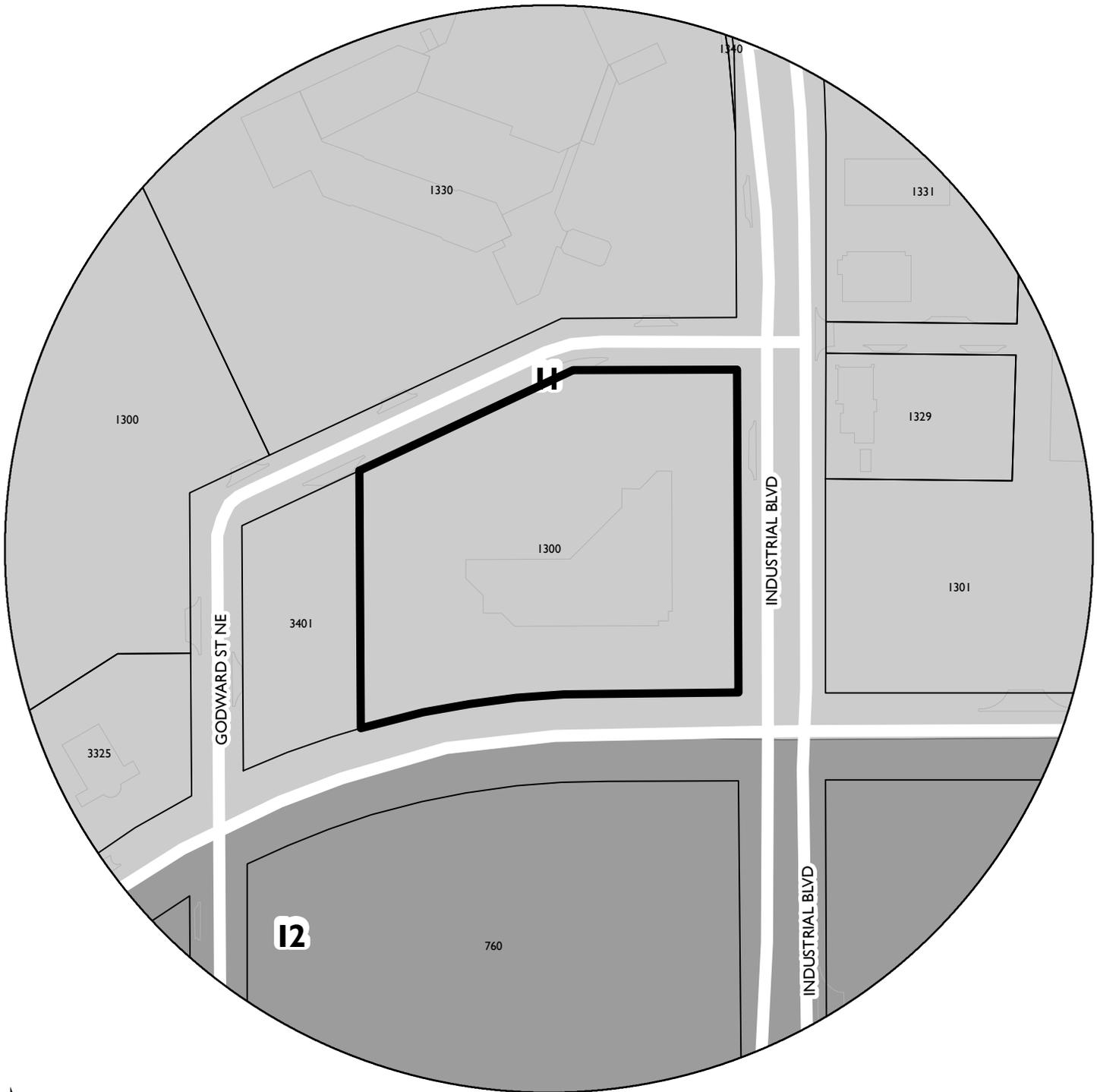
1. Approval of the sign permit by the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Zoning map
2. Written description and findings submitted by applicant
3. Site/sign location plan
4. Building elevations
5. Sign plans and rendering
6. Photos of subject and surrounding properties
7. Comments received

NAME OF APPLICANT

WARD



PROPERTY ADDRESS

3433 Broadway Street Northeast

FILE NUMBER

BZZ-7619



KRECH, O'BRIEN, MUELLER & ASSOCIATES, INC.

6115 Cahill Avenue Inver Grove Heights Minnesota 55076 651.451.4605 phone 651.451.0917 fax www.komainc.com

3/8/2016

Land Use, Design & Preservation
City of Minneapolis
250 South 4th Street – Room 300
Minneapolis, MN 55415

RE: Signage variance for BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota (BCBS of MN)

To whom it may concern:

We are providing this letter in conjunction with the signage variance application for BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota at 3433 Broadway Street Northeast, an existing multi-tenant building.

BCBS of MN is seeking a variance to place two signs, one on the south façade and one on the north, higher than the 28 foot above grade limit of the current I1 industrial zone. The building in question was originally constructed in 1984-1985 and at that time the zoning classification for the property was M2-2, a designation that no longer exists.

The rezoning of the property established Zone I1, which limits signage to a maximum of 28 feet above grade, also limits building height to 56 feet or four stories, whichever is less. The existing building at 3433 Broadway Street Northeast is minimally 65 feet high. Placing signage only 28 feet above grade would locate it not even half way up the building but also directly outside the lease space of another tenant as BCBS of MN only occupies part of the fourth and the entire fifth floor of this five story building.

The proposed signs are designed to conform to the remaining regulations of Zone I1: Each sign is 180sf, consists of internally lit channel letters, projects from the wall 6 inches, and responds to context by their horizontal orientation fitting between the ribbon glazing and the parapet cap. Each sign letter will have an aluminum body, which synchronizes with the metal panel exterior of the existing structure. Neither sign will obstruct clear vision of persons using the streets, or may be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal, or device. The proposed signs will not contribute to clutter as they will be the only two wall mounted signs on the building at this time placed on opposing facades. Similar signs are mounted to the walls of nearby properties just not as high above grade as the neighboring buildings are not as tall.

Per the landlord both the north and south facades of the existing building have a total signage allowance of 237sf and that BCBS of MN can use 180sf of that allowance on each of these facades, which is their intent.

Hopefully this explanation of the project provides enough information to garner the approval of the variance by the City Of Minneapolis. Please let us know if additional information is necessary to advance the approval process.

Sincerely:

Jon LeNoble, AIA

Krech, O'Brien, Mueller & Associates, Inc.

C: Randy Blaha, BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota

BCBS MID-CITY OFFICE - EXTERIOR SIGNAGE

MINNEAPOLIS, MN



KRECH, O'BRIEN,
MUELLER & ASSOCIATES, INC.
Architecture Structural Engineering Interior Design

6115 Cahill Avenue
Inver Grove Heights
Minnesota 55076

651.451.4605
fax 651.451.0917
komainc@komainc.com

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DATE: _____ REG. NO.: _____

TITLE SHEET AND SITE PLAN

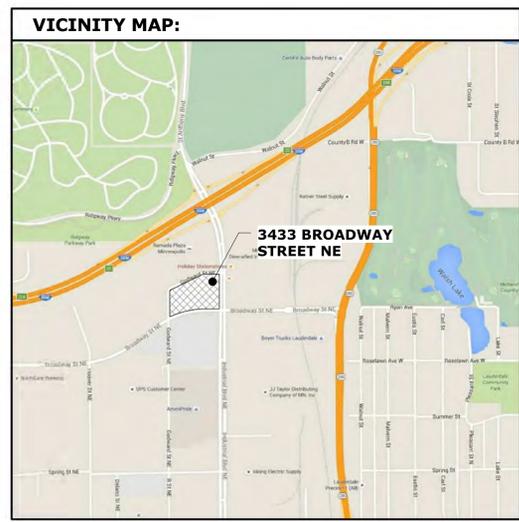
MID-CITY OFFICE, EXTERIOR SIGN
BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN
3433 BROADWAY STREET NE
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55413

PROJECT: 15407
DRAWN BY: JML
CHECKED BY: JML
DATE: 21-MAR-16
REVISIONS:

VAR1

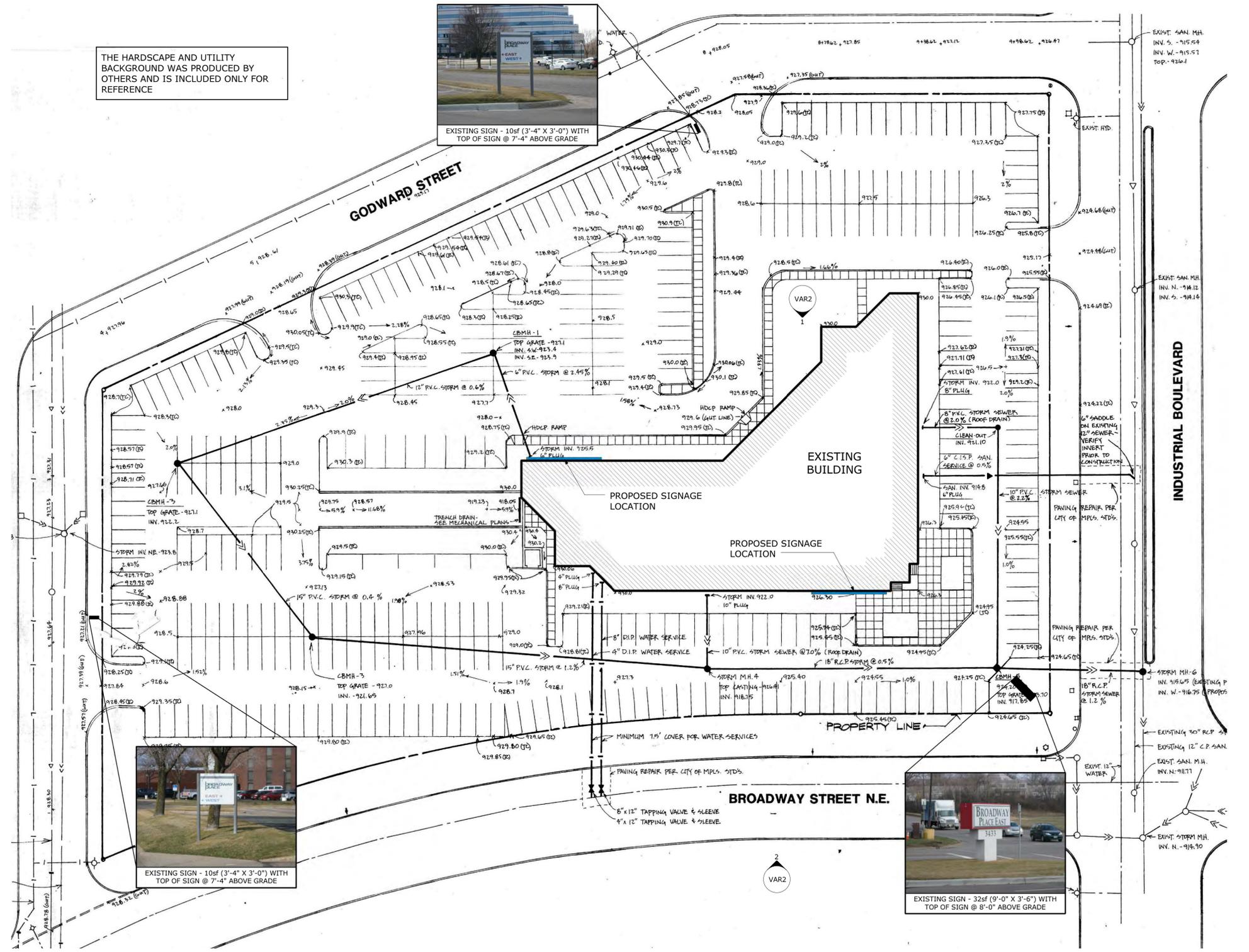
ROSTER:

OWNER:	BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD OF MINNESOTA 3535 BLUE CROSS ROAD EAGAN, MN 55122
ARCHITECT, STRUCTURAL ENGINEER AND INTERIOR DESIGNER:	KRECH, O'BRIEN, MUELLER & ASSOCIATES, INC. 6115 CAHILL AVENUE INVER GROVE HEIGHTS, MN 55076 ARCHITECT: JON LENOBLE, AIA 651-789-4133 PHONE 651-789-4183 FAX INTERIOR DESIGNER: LEANNE TANGUAY, CID 651-789-4131 PHONE 651-789-4181 FAX WWW.KOMAINC.COM
MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEER:	EMANUELSON-PODUS, INC. 10401 BREN ROAD EAST MINNETONKA, MN 55343 ELECTRICAL ENGINEER: VICKY MARTIN 952-540-4016 PHONE MECHANICAL ENGINEER: JIM JACKSON 952-540-4030 PHONE WWW.EPTINC.NET
GENERAL CONTRACTOR:	SULLIVAN DAY CONSTRUCTION 3030 HARBOR LANE NORTH, SUITE 100 PLYMOUTH, MN 55447 CONTACT: STEVE DAY 763 231-2411 PHONE WWW.SULLIVANDAY.COM



SHEET SCHEDULE - EXTERIOR SIGNAGE

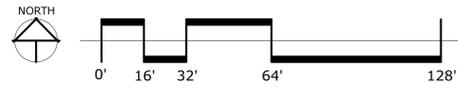
VAR1	TITLE SHEET AND SITE PLAN
VAR2	ELEVATIONS
VAR3	DETAILS AND PERSPECTIVES



THE HARDSCAPE AND UTILITY BACKGROUND WAS PRODUCED BY OTHERS AND IS INCLUDED ONLY FOR REFERENCE



1 SITE PLAN
1/32" = 1'-0"



3/21/2016 9:06:12 AM C:\Working\15407 - Mid-City Office - JML.rvt



**KRECH, O'BRIEN,
MUELLER & ASSOCIATES, INC.**
Architecture Structural Engineering Interior Design

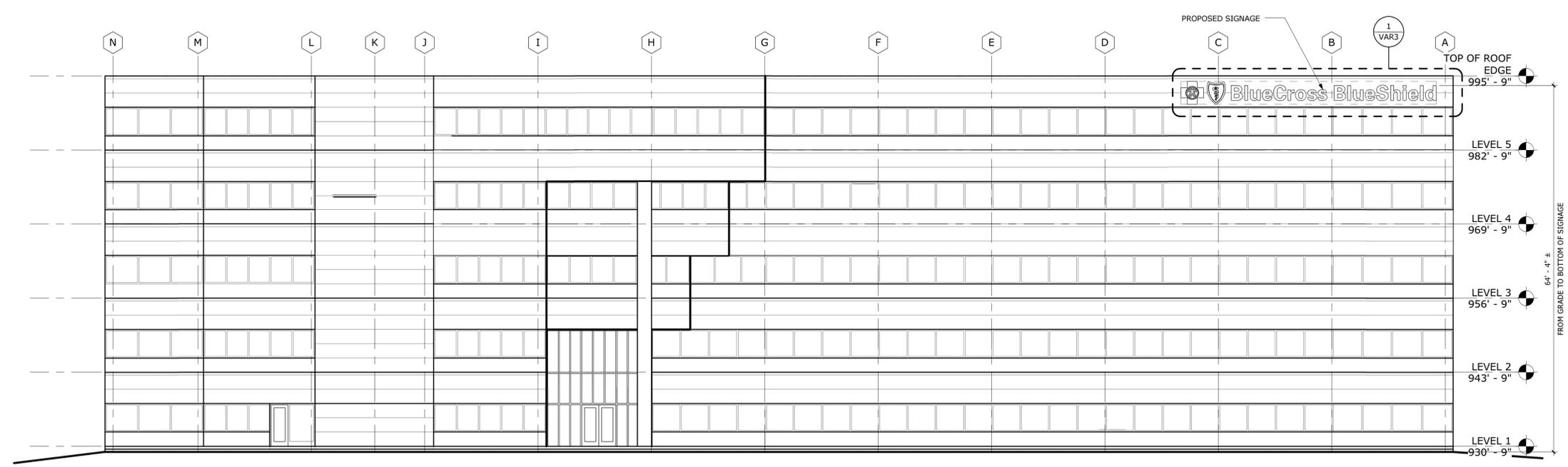
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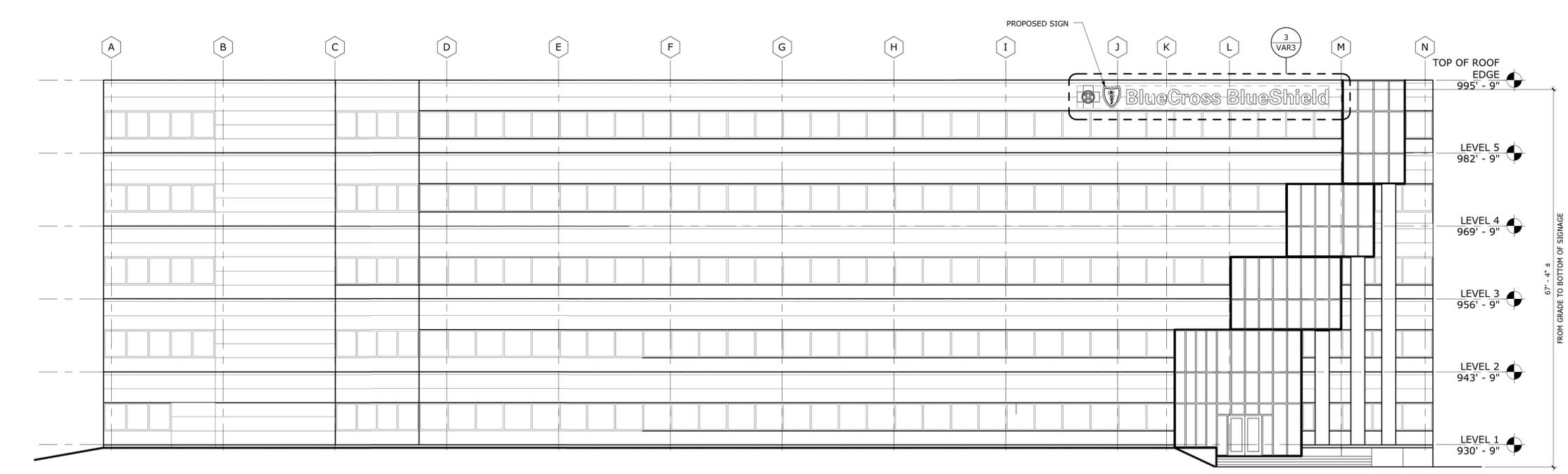
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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN SPECIFICATION OR REPORT WAS PREPARED BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED ARCHITECT UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA.

Jan M. LeKobbe
DATE: _____ REG. NO.: 50117



① NORTH ELEVATION
3/32" = 1'-0"



② SOUTH ELEVATION
3/32" = 1'-0"

ELEVATIONS

**MID-CITY OFFICE, EXTERIOR SIGN
BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN
3433 BROADWAY STREET NE
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55413**

PROJECT: 15407
DRAWN BY: JML
CHECKED BY: JML
DATE: 21-MAR-16
REVISIONS:

VAR2



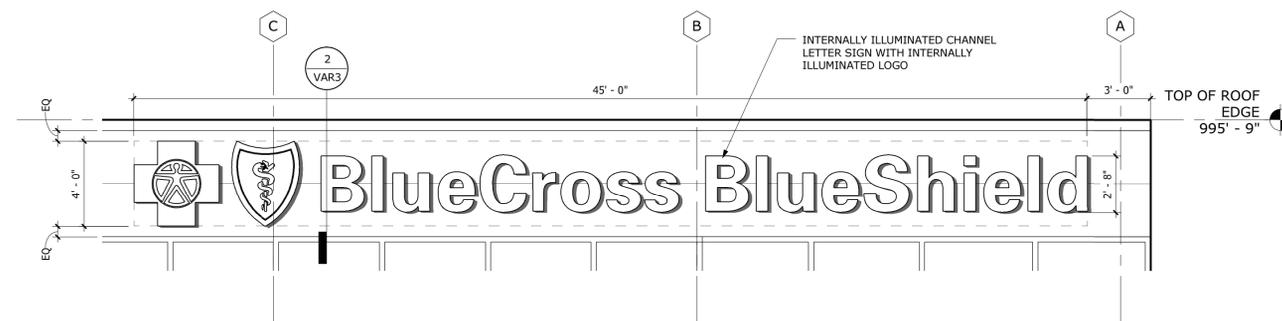
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Architecture Structural Engineering Interior Design

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Inver Grove Heights
Minnesota 55076

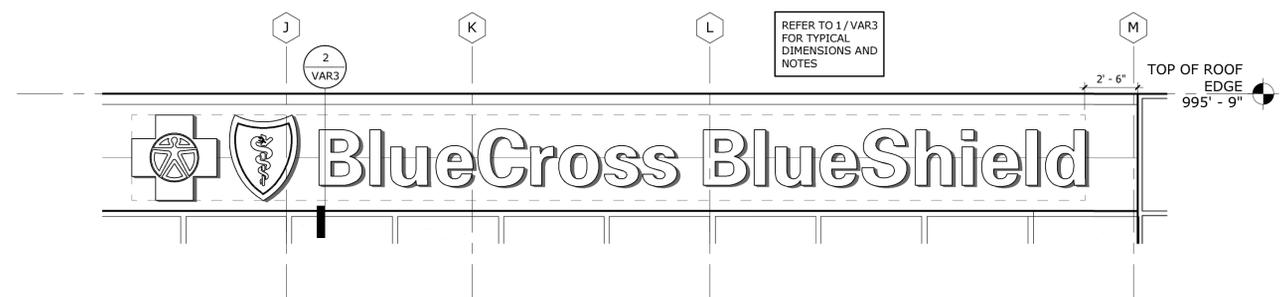
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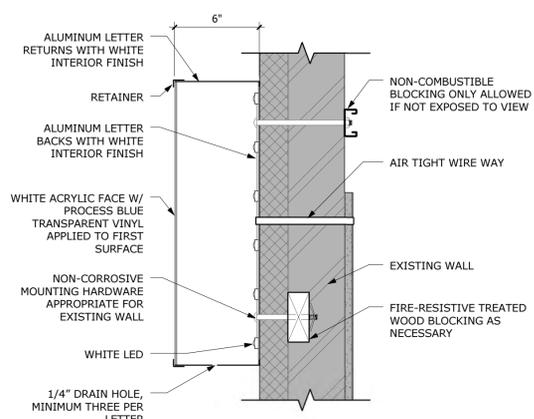
DATE: _____ REG. NO. _____



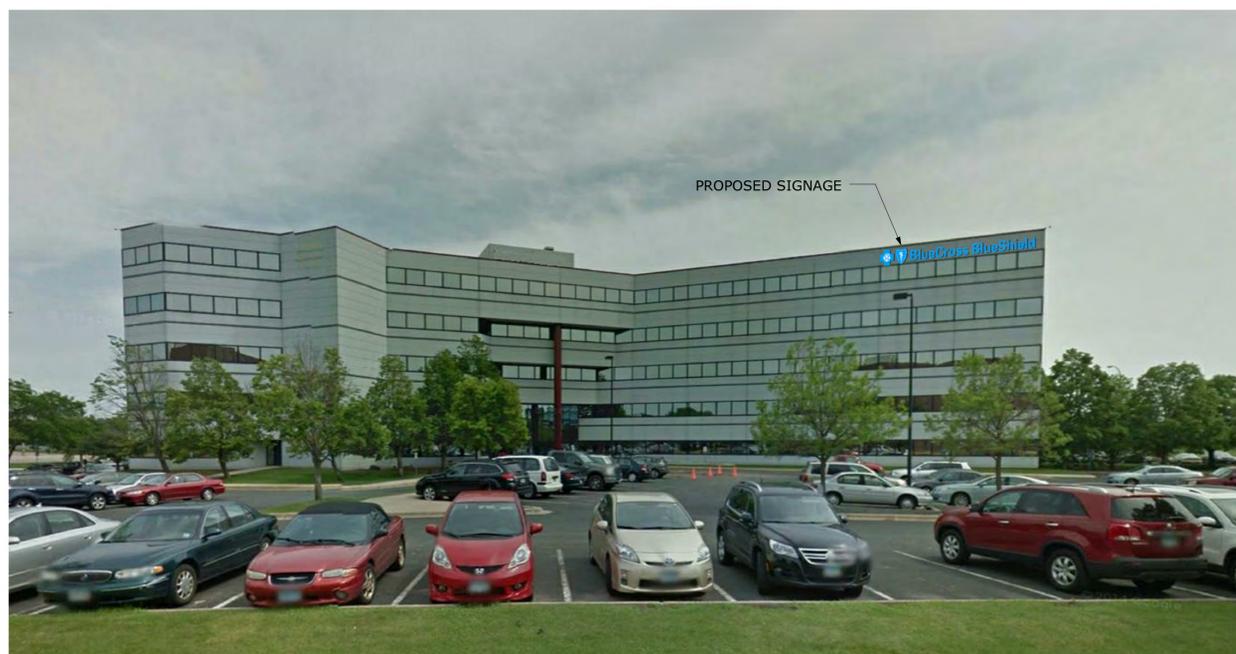
① NORTH SIGN
1/4" = 1'-0"



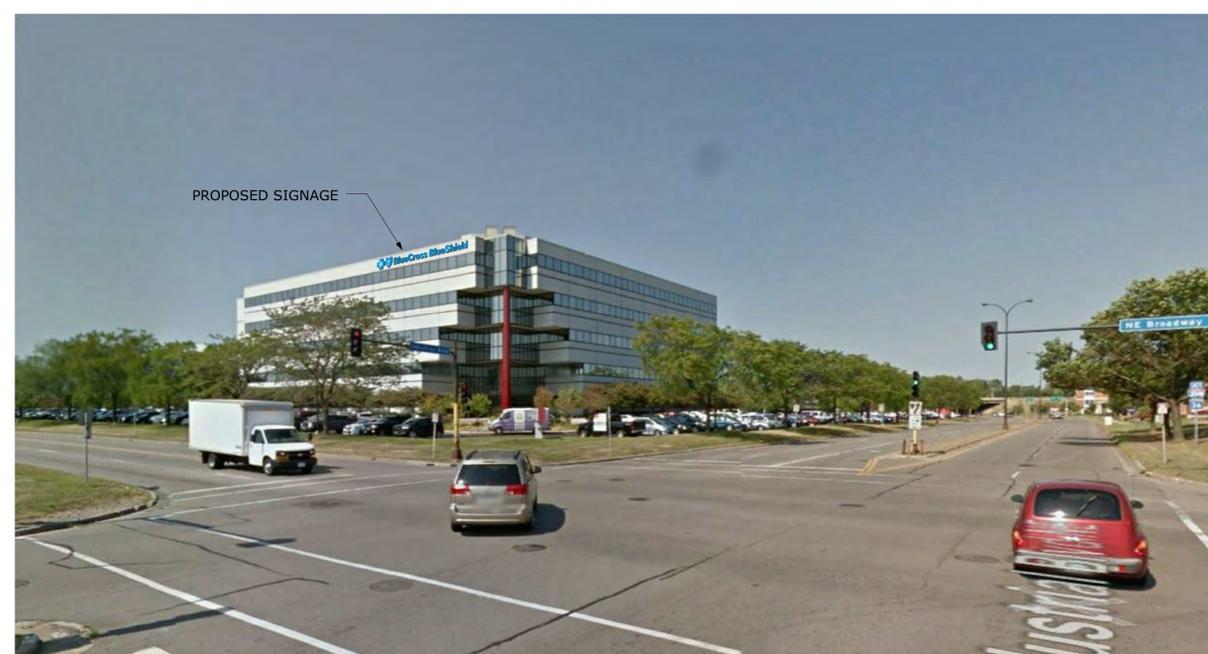
③ SOUTH SIGN
1/4" = 1'-0"



② SIGNAGE SECTION
2" = 1'-0"



④ NORTH SIGNAGE
NOT TO SCALE



⑤ SOUTH SIGNAGE
NOT TO SCALE

DETAILS AND PERSPECTIVES

**MID-CITY OFFICE, EXTERIOR SIGN
BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MN
3433 BROADWAY STREET NE
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55413**

PROJECT: 15407
DRAWN BY: JML
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VAR3



KRECH, O'BRIEN, MUELLER & ASSOCIATES, INC.
6115 Cahill Avenue Inver Grove Heights Minnesota 55076 651.451.4605 phone 651.451.0917 fax www.komainc.com

Pictures of Existing Building (3433 Broadway Street Northeast)



Pictures of Existing Building (3433 Broadway Street Northeast)



Pictures of Existing Building (3433 Broadway Street Northeast)





KRECH, O'BRIEN, MUELLER & ASSOCIATES, INC.
6115 Cahill Avenue Inver Grove Heights Minnesota 55076 651.451.4605 phone 651.451.0917 fax www.komainc.com

Pictures of existing signage around 3433 Broadway Street Northeast



Pictures of existing signage around 3433 Broadway Street Northeast



Pictures of existing signage around 3433 Broadway Street Northeast



Widmeier, Janelle A.

From: Christine Levens <CLEvens@minneapolischamber.org>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2016 10:53 AM
To: 'Jon LeNoble'; Reich, Kevin A.
Cc: Widmeier, Janelle A.
Subject: RE: Variance application for signage

The Chamber is happy to support this variance. Please let me know if you further assistance or a formal letter of support.

Christine

Christine Levens
President
Northeast Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce
An Affiliate of the Minneapolis Regional Chamber of Commerce

p. 612 378-0050 f. 612 378-8870
2329 Central Avenue NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418
www.northeastminneapolischamber.org

From: Jon LeNoble [mailto:jlenoble@komainc.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 2:44 PM
To: Christine Levens; kevin.reich@minneapolismn.gov
Cc: janelle.widmeier@minneapolismn.gov
Subject: Variance application for signage

RE: Signage variance for BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota (BCBS of MN)

To concerned parties:

Per the General Land Use Application Guidelines we, Krech, O'Brien, Mueller, and Associates, are providing this e-mail to summarize the signage variance application for BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota at 3433 Broadway Street Northeast, an existing multi-tenant building.

BCBS of MN is seeking a variance to place two signs, one on the south façade and one on the north, higher than the 28 foot above grade limit of the current I1 industrial zone. The building in question was originally constructed in 1984-1985 and at that time the zoning classification for the property was M2-2, a designation that no longer exists.

The rezoning of the property established Zone I1, which limits signage to a maximum of 28 feet above grade but also limits building height to 56 feet or four stories, whichever is less. The existing building at 3433 Broadway Street Northeast is minimally 65 feet high. Placing signage only 28 feet above grade would locate it not even half way up the



5 SOUTH SIGNAGE
NOT TO SCALE

Please let me know if there are any questions. I can be reached per the contact information below.

Full Name: Jon LeNoble
Job Title: Architect
Company: Krech, O'Brien, Mueller and Associates, Inc.
Business Address: 6115 Cahill Avenue
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076
Business: (651) 789-4133
E-mail: jlenoble@komainc.com
Web Page: <http://mail.komainc.com/exchange>

Our client contact:

Full Name: Randy Blaha
Job Title: Senior Project Manager / Real Estate & Facilities Services
Company: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of MN
Business Address: P.O. Box 64560, Route N194
St. Paul, MN 55164
Business: (651) 662-2542
Business Fax: (651) 662-7627
E-mail: randy_blaha@bluecrossmn.com
Web Page: www.bluecrossmn.com

Jon LeNoble, AIA, Architect

Krech, O'Brien, Mueller & Associates, Inc.
Architecture | Interior Design | Structural Engineering

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