

# **Smithsonian Mall-wide Exterior Sign Program**

Final Design Report to the National Capital Planning Commission

May 2, 2002



Smithsonian Institution

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Smithsonian Institution contact:

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Smithsonian Institution

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## Part 1: Project Description

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## **Project overview and need for action**

With eleven Smithsonian museums on the National Mall, existing and planned, there is a genuine need to provide clear information to visitors. This is the purpose of the proposed Smithsonian Mall-wide Exterior Sign Program.

The variety of existing designs and styles of Smithsonian signs on the Mall, and their ad hoc placement, present a confusing and disorganized image to our visitors. The objectives of the Mall-wide Exterior Sign Program are to

- Provide a unified information system that clearly defines Smithsonian facilities and programs
- Provide valuable information on programs, amenities, hours and locations so that the public can better plan their time on the Mall
- Create a recognizable family of sign types, and place them in a logical sequence for pedestrian users
- Reduce visual clutter
- Increase recognition of the Smithsonian Castle as our Information Center, the recommended first stop for planning a visit; and
- Improve the identification of Smithsonian building entrances

The placement of the Museum Program Signs and Smithsonian Information Signs in consistent positions along the sidewalks will establish a visual rhythm and enhance the recognition of the various buildings as parts of the Smithsonian Institution. The Museum Program Signs and Smithsonian Information Signs will be installed along sidewalks on Constitution Avenue, Madison Drive, Jefferson Drive, and Independence Avenue. Building Identification Signs will be installed on Smithsonian grassy areas, platforms and terraces. No signs will be placed on the National Mall itself.

The Mall-wide Exterior Sign Program will improve the visual appearance along the sidewalks near the museums by reducing the current proliferation of temporary kiosks and sign types. The Sign Program will replace existing Smithsonian kiosks and signs.

Each sign location has been selected to create a clear and logical pattern. Direct observation of sidewalk conditions, pedestrian traffic, and sight lines throughout the seasons has been supplemented by photographing, measuring, modeling, and the selected use of full size mock-ups on site. Each site has been chosen so as to avoid the

need to re-route utilities or move permanent street furniture. Placement of individual sign units on sidewalks and curbs was studied to assure ADA compliance, provide ample clearance for pedestrian traffic, allow for snow removal, and maintain safe lines of sight from streets, driveways and loading areas. Engineering review of structural designs for the pylons and footings is underway. A final survey of site conditions and utilities will be performed by the installation contractor prior to commencing any site work, and minor necessary adjustments may be made at that time.

At this time, plans for improving security around the museums on the Mall are in conceptual development. The Mall-wide Exterior Sign Program design has been shared with the security planners, and the Sign Program will not conflict with interim security arrangements. If the final security design should eventually require the re-location of specific Sign Program components, these changes will be accommodated within the sitework design contract for that project, according to perimeter security guidelines currently under development by NCPC.

The Smithsonian Mall-wide Exterior Sign Program will complement Business Improvement District (BID) and National Park Service (NPS) wayfinding sign systems on the Mall. Unlike the BID system, the Smithsonian system does not include directional graphics. Rather, it provides orientation and information about museum schedules and Smithsonian programs. The Smithsonian Information Sign graphic maps will, however, echo the blue background used on all BID signs, effectively extending the network of information and wayfinding graphics on the Mall. The graphic maps being planned for future NPS kiosks on the Mall will follow the same horizontal orientation as the Smithsonian Information Sign's graphic map.

Smithsonian Information Signs will differ from the Park Service maps on the Mall, in that the Smithsonian signs provide information about the Smithsonian Institution's buildings, programs, and visitor amenities.

## Design development

The Smithsonian Sign Program for a system of permanent signs is based on a family of three sign structures. All sign structures will be constructed of high quality, durable materials and finishes: bronze panels, frames and caps; granite bases; and, where appropriate, operable glass fronts to protect graphic panels. Each sign will be installed with footings. None are illuminated. The pylon caps, carrying the Smithsonian sunburst logo and building identity, will be constructed so that these components can be removed and replaced if pylons must be relocated, or if future changes are made in Smithsonian graphic and logo standards.

### *Smithsonian Information Signs*

These are pylons similar in design to the Museum Program Signs, but with deeper sides. All will be placed at the corners of museum grounds, and will always be installed on an east-west axis parallel to the Mall. All Smithsonian Information Sign pylons will carry identical graphic caps, reinforcing their purpose as Smithsonian-wide information kiosks. All feature a map, consistently oriented to the pedestrian's view of the Mall, identifying the Smithsonian buildings on the Mall. The full graphic face includes the map, listings of building amenities and hours, and the addresses of other Smithsonian buildings beyond the Mall. These map panels will be updated and replaced twice a year, and will be produced as durable fiberglass embedments. Short sides of these pylons will carry replaceable graphic panels behind glass. These readily-changeable graphic locations will be used to announce Smithsonian-wide special events, seasonal or evening programs, off-Mall Smithsonian programs, and updates on food services and other visitor amenities.

### *Museum Program Signs*

These pylon structures will be placed perpendicular to pedestrian traffic, on the sidewalks, with two glass-fronted display faces for frequently changing graphic program inserts. Each will stand on a granite base shaped to meet the site conditions, separated from the bronze frame with a consistently detailed reveal. Each museum will have its own dedicated Program Signs, with the Smithsonian logo and the museum's name as permanent features of the bronze cap. Museum Program Signs will be placed along the sidewalks only within the blocks the museum occupies, reinforcing the identity of each museum building.

### *Building Identification Signs*

These signs are proposed for locations near the entrances of four Mall buildings, to remedy a current lack of any legible signs, or the inconsistent application of graphic



standards, or to reflect recent name changes. The four buildings scheduled for Building Identification are the National Museum of American History Behring Center, the National Museum of Natural History, the National Air and Space Museum, and the Smithsonian Information Center (the Castle). These signs are individually scaled to their locations and placed so as to legibly identify their building. Depending on site conditions, these signs rest on, or mount to the face of, existing architectural stonework, separated by a consistently detailed reveal; or on grassy areas, on their own granite base, with the same standard reveal.

The quantities and placements of each sign type have been refined since the Concept Design was presented and reviewed by the Commission (see *Site Map*, page 9.) The site plan indicates locations for all proposed signs, and also shows existing Smithsonian, BID and NPS sign locations to remain.

The detailing of each sign structure has been further developed from the concept designs, and three full-size mock-ups were installed near the Smithsonian Castle for review in April 2002 (see *Views of sign mock-ups* photographs on pages 22-27). In response to comments on these mock-ups, details of sign construction and graphics were refined (see *Family of sign types*, illustrated on pages 10-13). The mock-ups will be revised and set up again in mid-May for a final design review.

## Sign Program management

The Smithsonian Mall-wide Exterior Sign Program design team made a survey of existing Smithsonian signs on the Mall between August 2001 and April 2002. The survey counted permanent and temporary (portable) signs of all types, and identified all those which will be removed when the Mall-wide Program is implemented. The results of the survey, illustrated with examples of sign types, is presented in the *Survey of existing signs to be removed* on pages 28-32. Banners are not addressed in this report because they are the subject of a separate Smithsonian study.

The Secretary of the Smithsonian and his administration endorse the Mall-wide Sign Program and its goal to provide an organized information system that clearly defines Smithsonian facilities. The Smithsonian views the full implementation of the Sign Program as a framework in which to provide valuable program information to our visitors so they can better plan their visits. The attractive, high quality family of signs we are proposing will largely fulfill the Smithsonian need for visual information on the Mall and replace the visual clutter of ad hoc signs we are currently experiencing. Once the sign program is implemented, the Smithsonian will manage the sign program to maintain its long-term beauty and usefulness.

## **Construction and funding**

### **Phase One: FY 2002**

- 6 Smithsonian Information Signs
- 19 Museum Program Signs:
  - Freer Gallery of Art
  - Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
  - National Museum of African Art
  - Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
  - S. Dillon Ripley Center
  - Arts & Industries Building
  - National Museum of Natural History
  - National Museum of American History
- 2 Building Identification Signs:
  - Smithsonian Information Center (Castle)

### **Phase Two: FY 2003**

- 12 Smithsonian Information Signs
- 20 Museum Program Signs:
  - National Museum of Natural History
  - National Museum of American History
  - National Air and Space Museum

### **Phase Three: FY 2004**

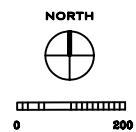
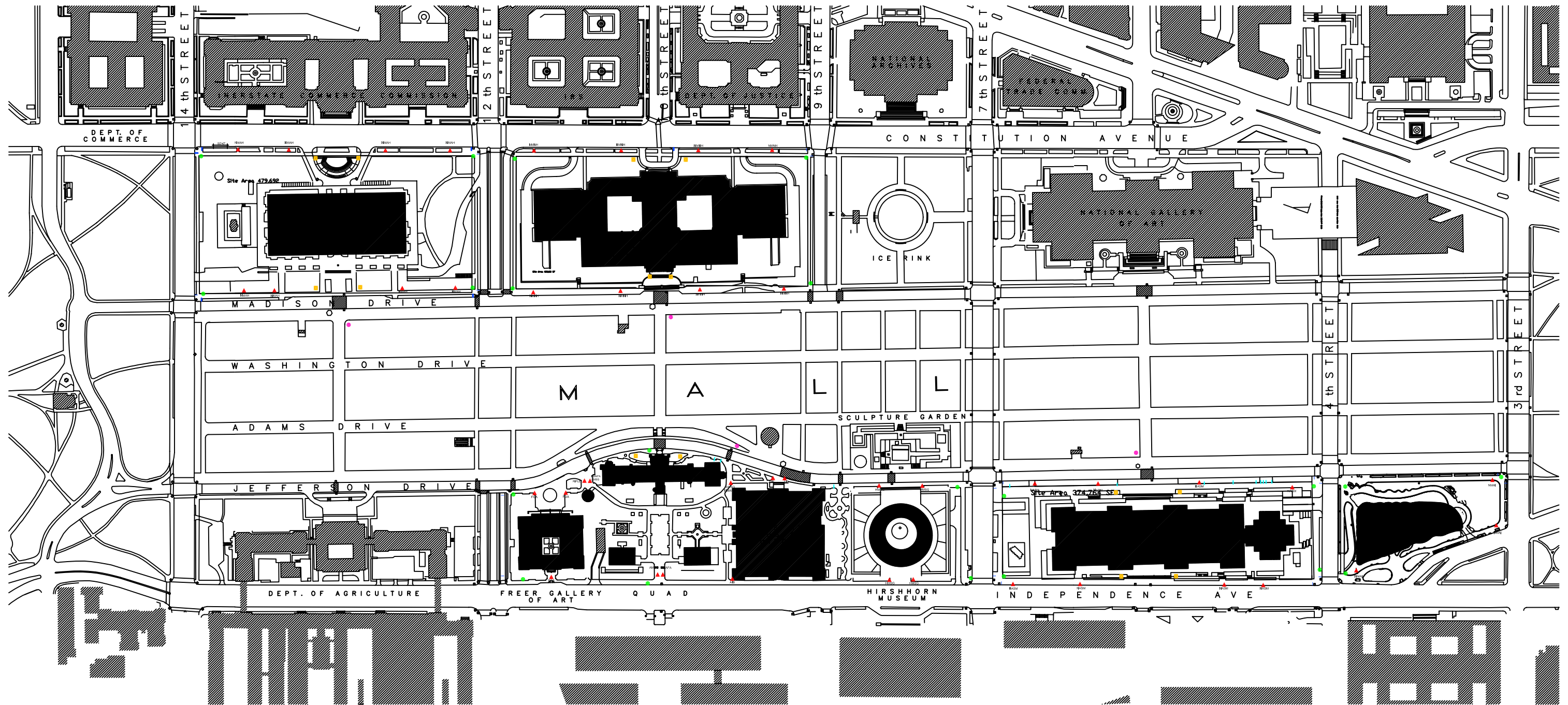
- 3 Smithsonian Information Signs
- 3 Museum Program Signs:
  - National Museum of the American Indian
- 12 Building Identification Signs:
  - National Museum of Natural History
  - National Museum of American History
  - National Air and Space Museum

## Total signs by type

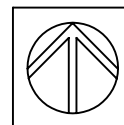
The Smithsonian Mall-wide Sign Program comprises 77 signs. There are 27 existing or proposed BID and National Park Service wayfinding signs within 100 feet of Smithsonian locations on the Mall.

SMITHSONIAN LOCATIONS	SIGN TYPES				
	<i>proposed</i> <b>Building ID</b>	<i>proposed</i> <b>SI Info</b>	<i>proposed</i> <b>SI Program</b>	<i>existing</i> <b>BID</b>	<i>planned</i> <b>NPS map</b>
National Museum of American History	4	4	8	10	1
National Museum of Natural History	4	4	8	3	1
National Air and Space Museum	4	4	8	8	1
Smithsonian Castle	2	1	0	0	0
Arts & Industries Building	0	0	3	0	0
International Art Museum Buildings *	0	5	12	0	1
National Museum of the American Indian	0	3	3	2	0
TOTAL SIGNS BY TYPE	14	21	42	23	4

\* Freer, Sackler, African Art, Ripley Center, Hirshhorn



- KEY:**
- ▲ PROPOSED MUSEUM PROGRAM SIGN LOCATIONS
  - PROPOSED BUILDING IDENTIFICATION SIGN LOCATIONS
  - PROPOSED SMITHSONIAN INFORMATION SIGN LOCATIONS
  - VOYAGE SOLAR SYSTEM LOCATIONS
  - BID SIGNS
  - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SIGNS



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**MALL-WIDE EXTERIOR SIGN PROGRAM**  
 Washington, D.C.  
 May 2, 2002

## Family of sign types



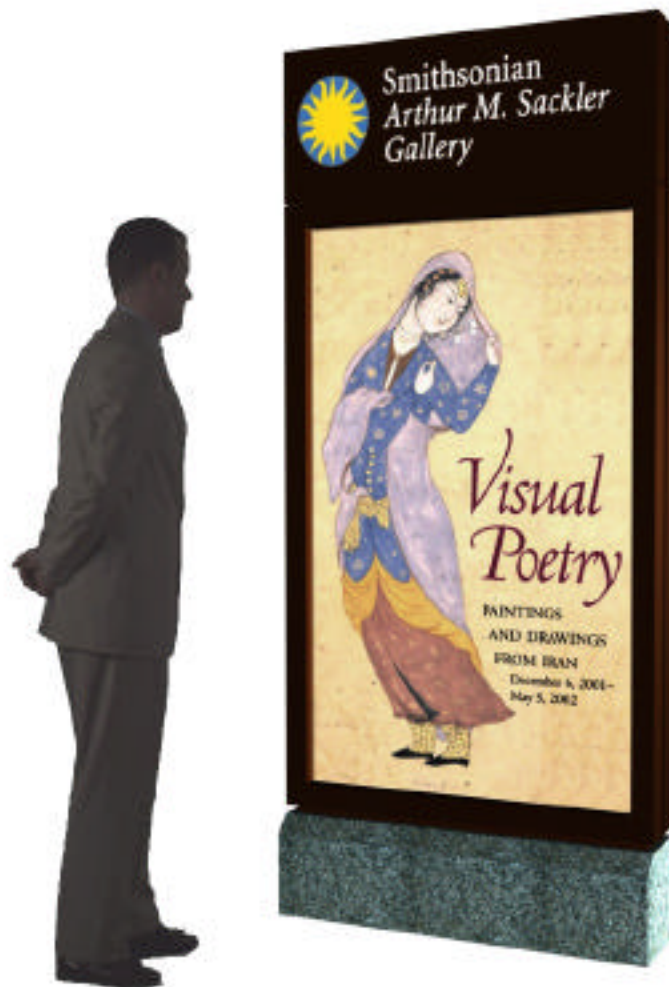
**Smithsonian Information Sign**

## Family of sign types



**Smithsonian Information Sign**  
(second side)

## Family of sign types



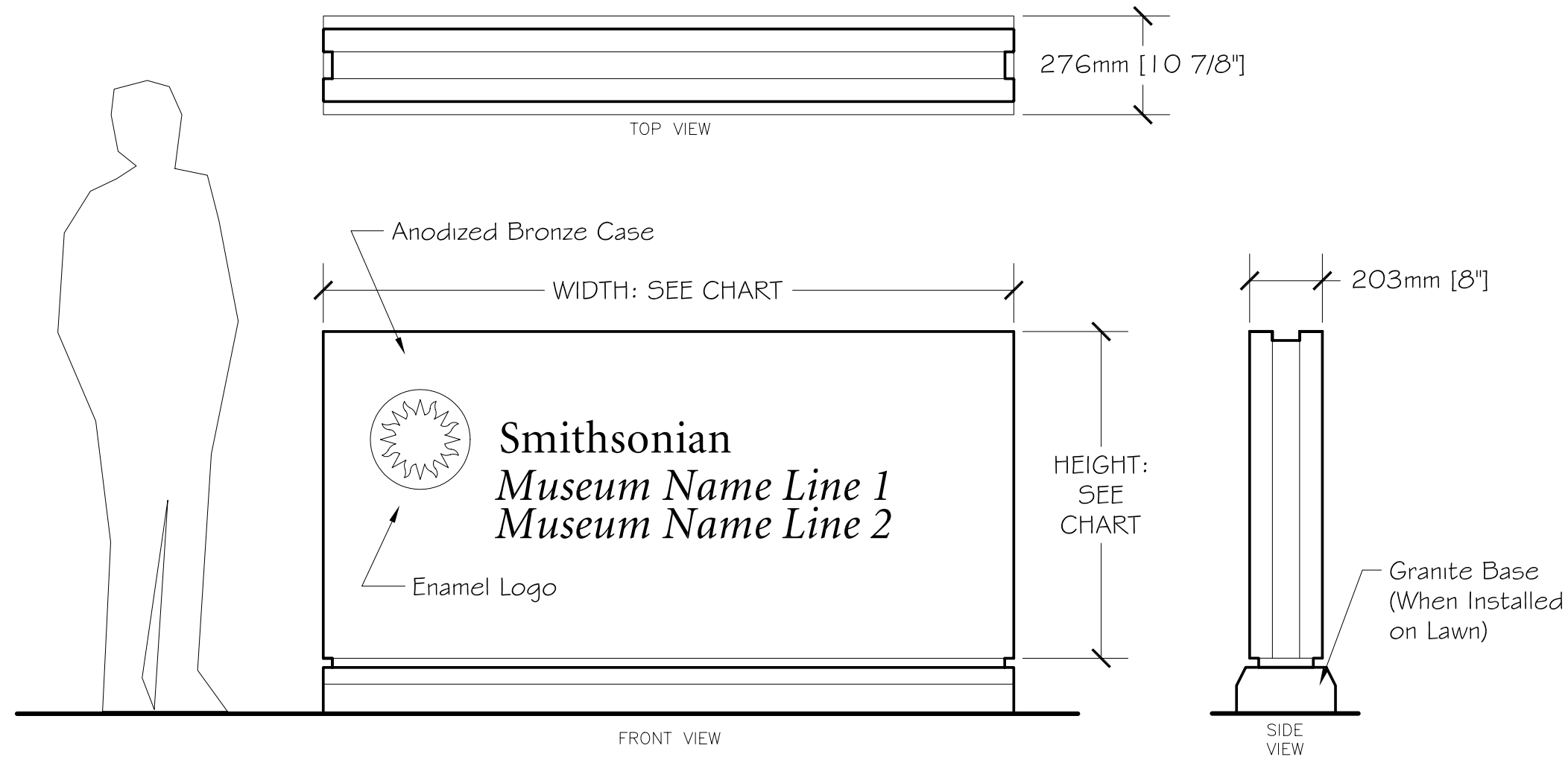
## Museum Program Sign



## Family of sign types



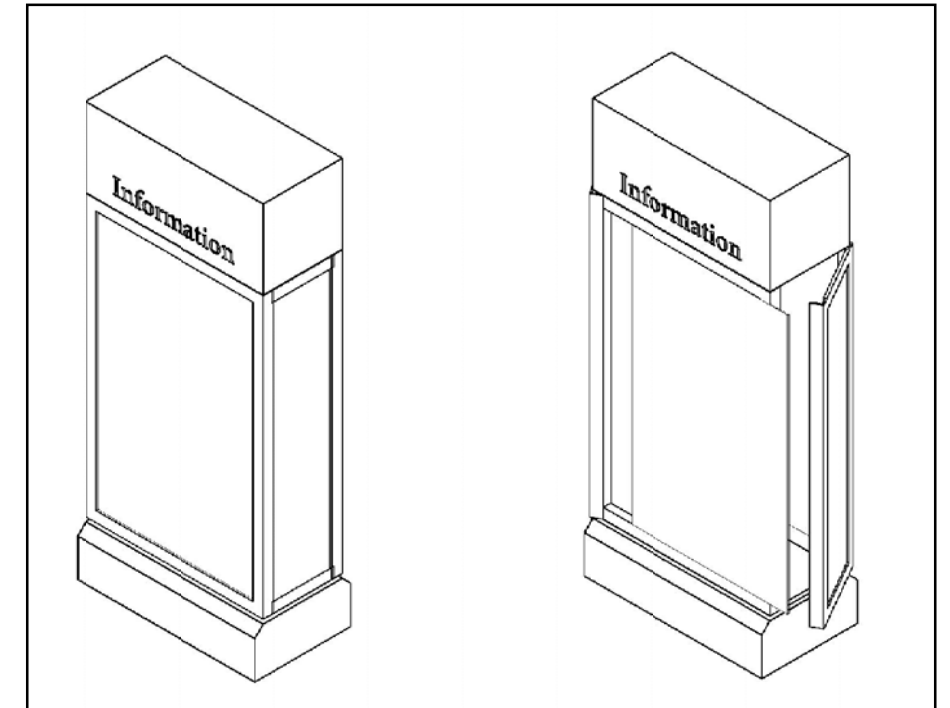
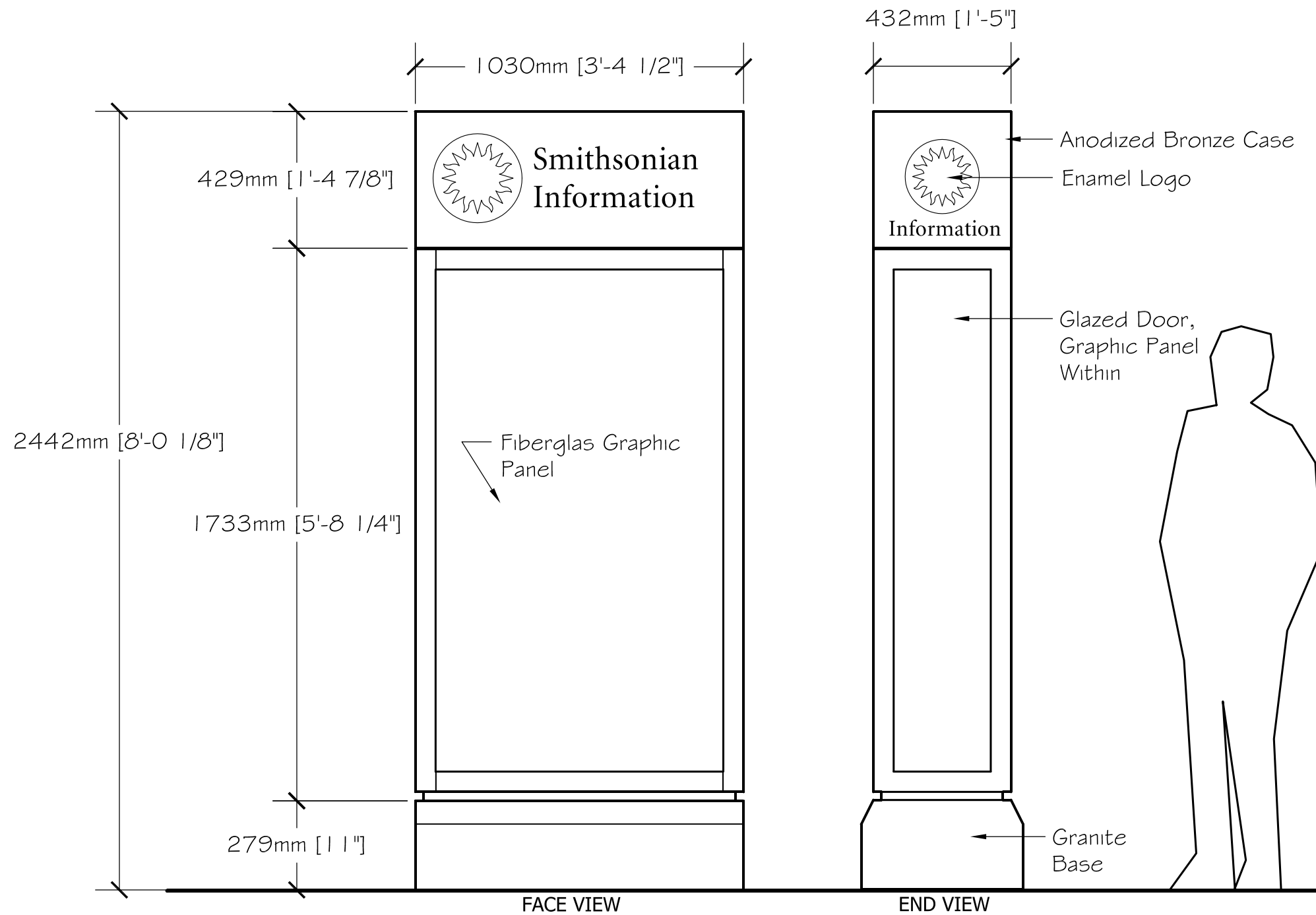
## Building Identification Sign



**SMITHSONIAN  
BUILDING  
IDENTIFICATION  
SIGN**

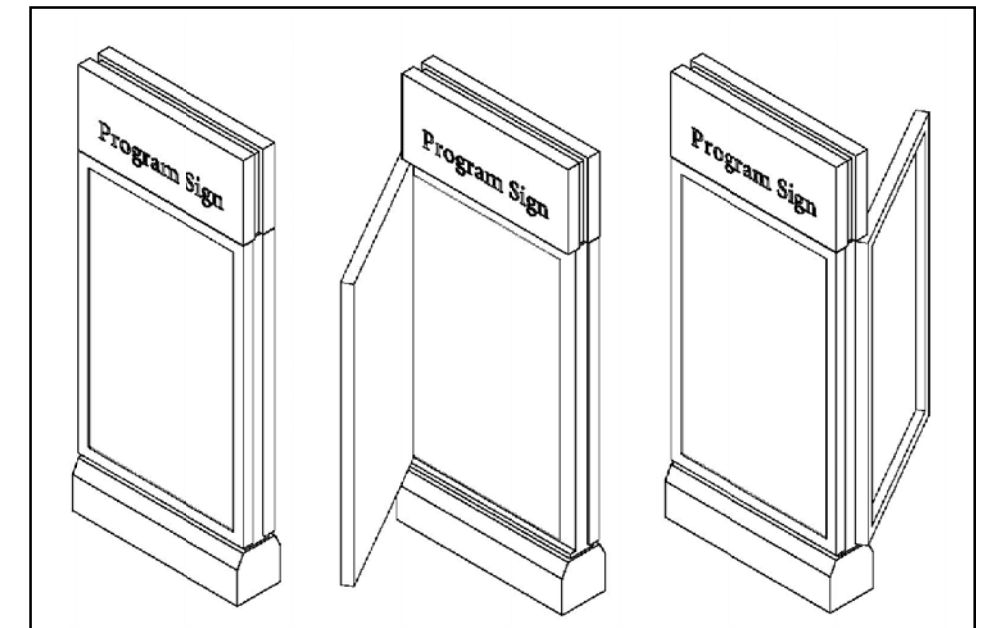
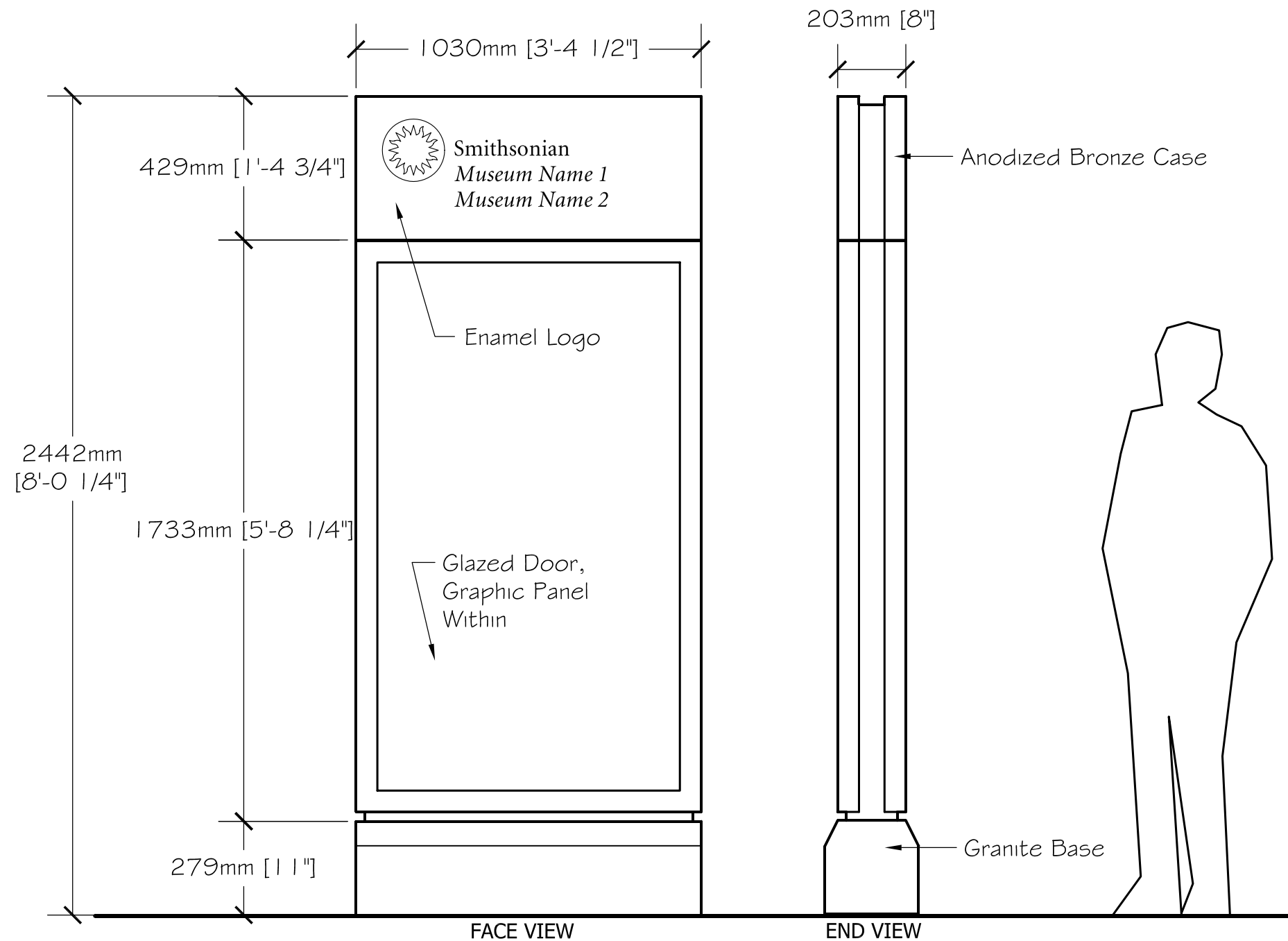
All Faces and Sides Fixed

BUILDING NAME	LOCATION	HEIGHT	WIDTH	ATTACHMENT	QUANTITY
AMERICAN HISTORY	CONSTITUTION AVE.	36"/914MM	96"/2438MM	ATOP EXSTNG. STONE PLINTH	2
	MALL (MADISON DR.)	36"/914MM	96"/2438MM	ATOP GRANITE BASE IN LAWN	2
NATURAL HISTORY	CONSTITUTION AVE.	36"/914MM	96"/2438MM	ATOP GRANITE BASE IN LAWN	2
	MALL (MADISON DR.)	18"/457MM	101"/2566MM	TO FACE OF EXSTNG. STONE PLINTH	2
CASTLE	MALL (JEFFERSON DR.)	36"/914MM	76"/1930MM	ATOP GRANITE BASE IN LAWN	2
AIR AND SPACE	MALL (JEFFERSON DR.)	36"/914MM	120"/3048MM	ATOP EXSTNG. STONE WALL	2
	INDEPENDENCE AVE.	36"/914MM	120"/3048MM	ATOP EXSTNG. STONE WALL	2



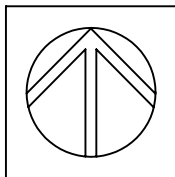
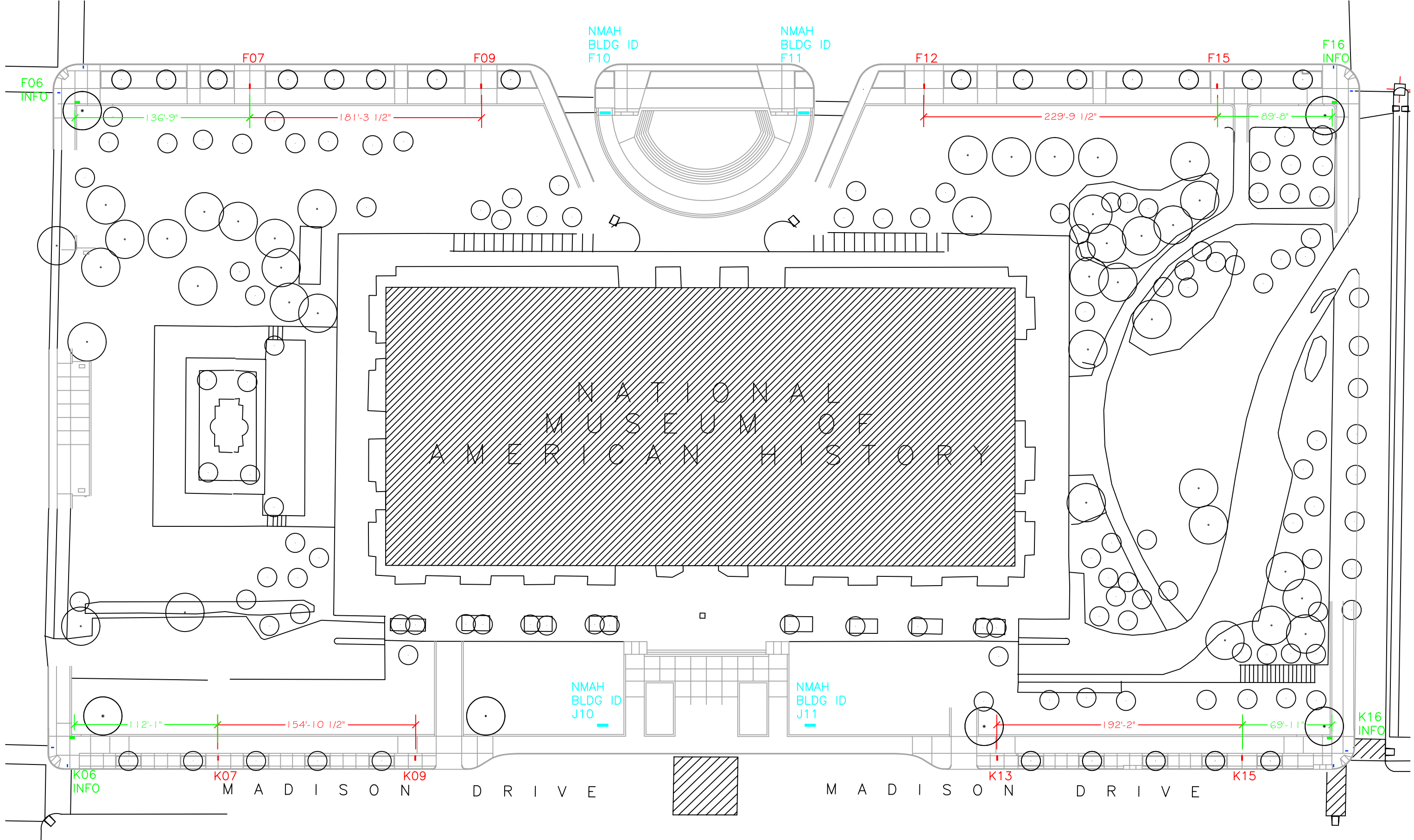
## SMITHSONIAN INFORMATION SIGN

Hinged Glazed Doors Both Ends,  
Sliding Fiberglass Graphic Panels on Faces

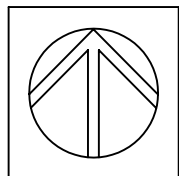
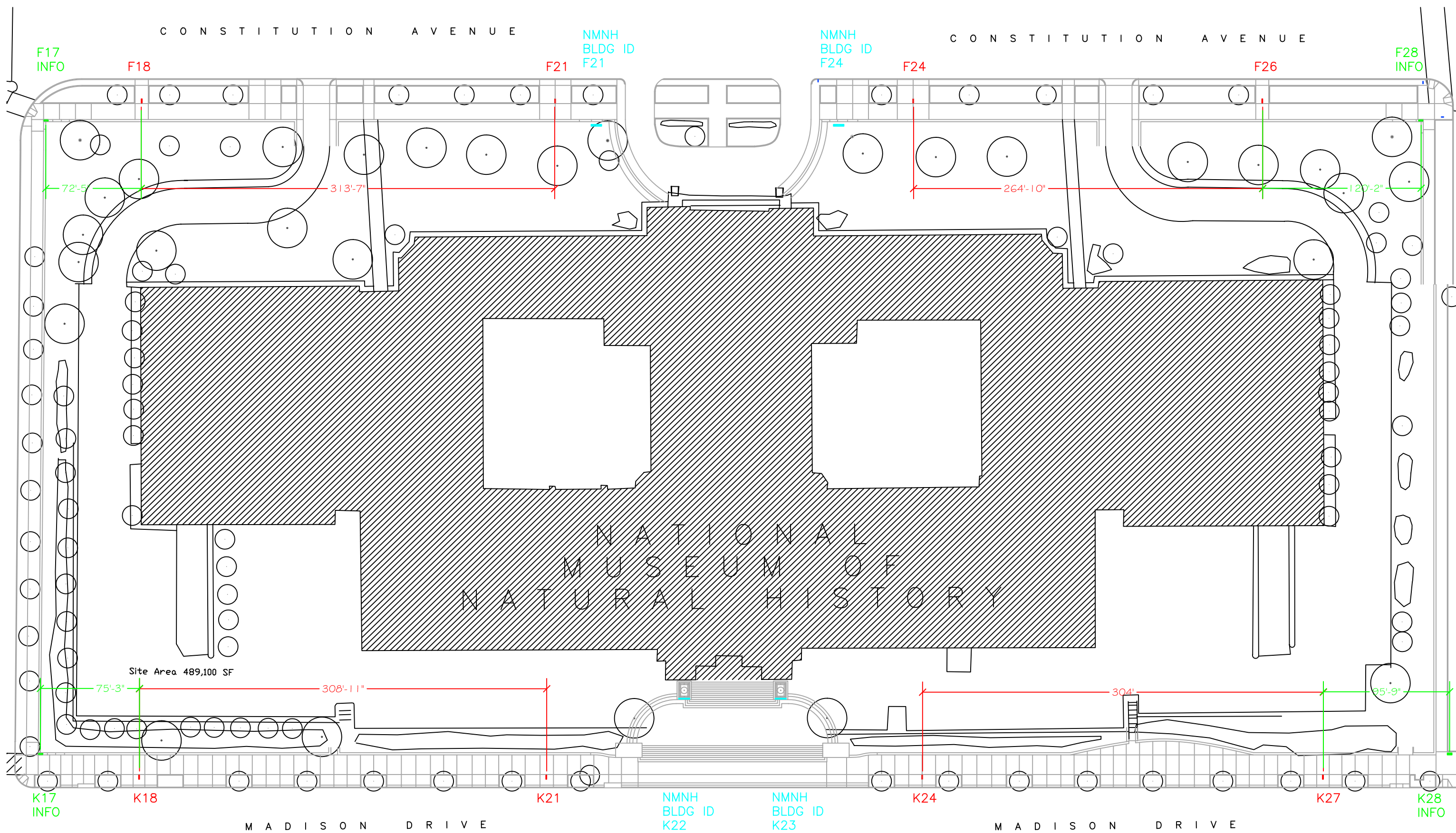


## MUSEUM PROGRAM SIGN

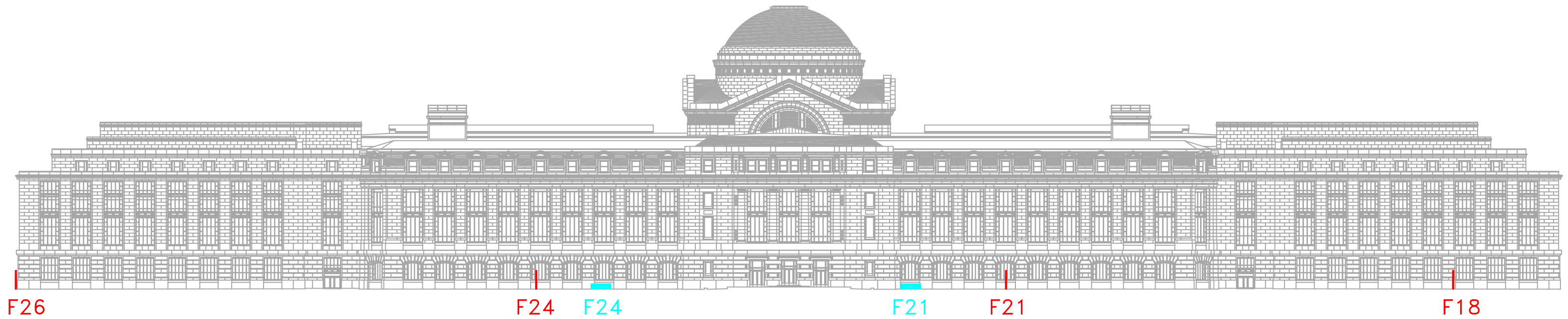
Hinged Glazed Doors on Both Main Faces



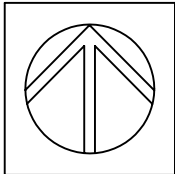
Smithsonian Institution  
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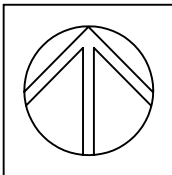
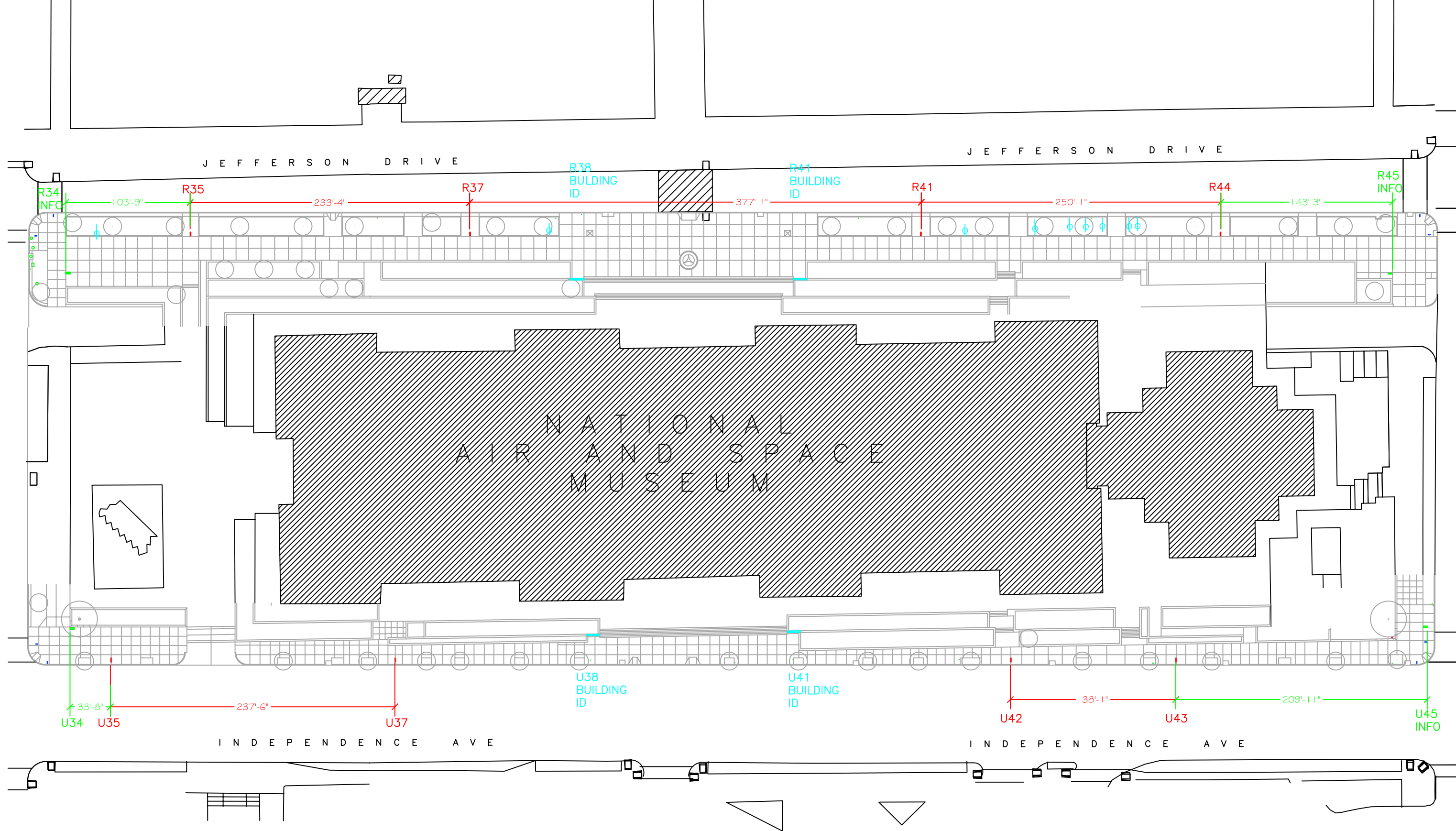


Smithsonian Institution  
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May 2, 2002



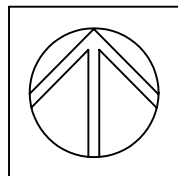
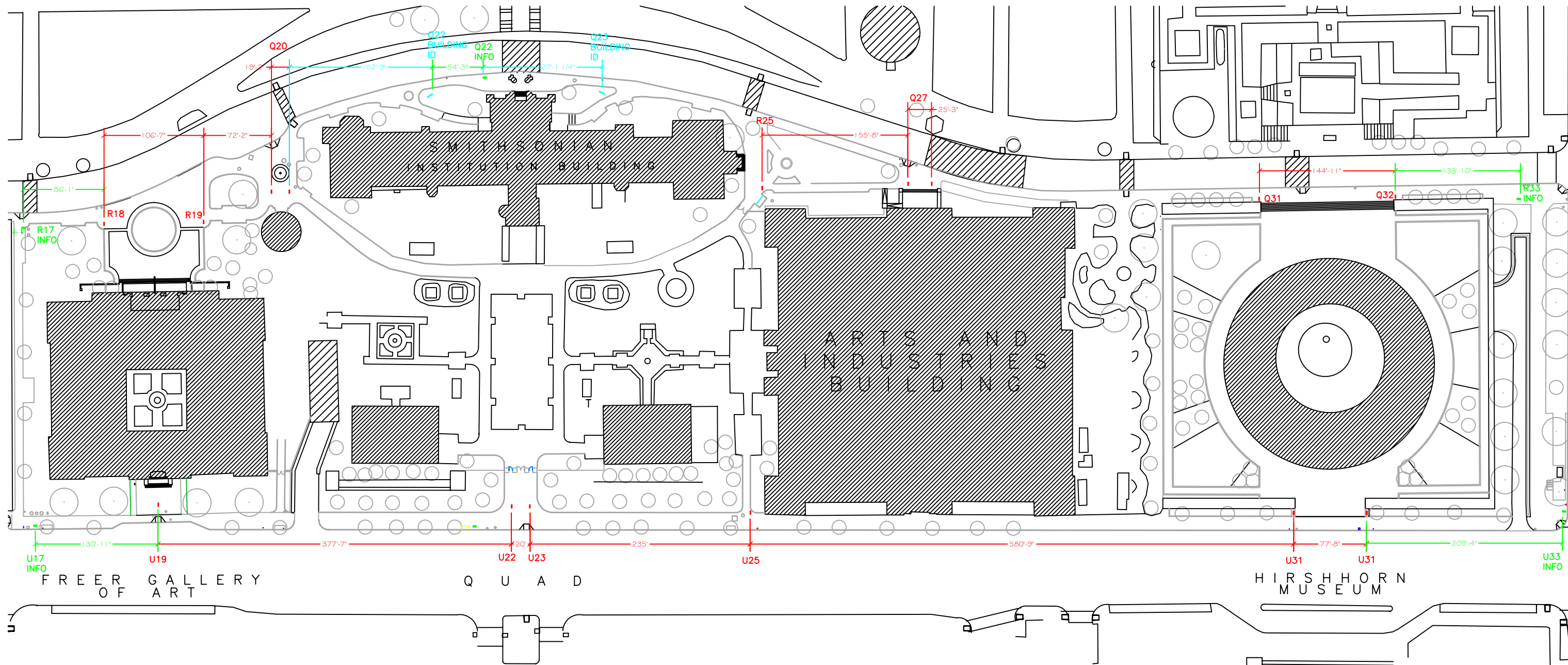
NATURAL HISTORY  
NORTH ELEVATION





Smithsonian Institution  
**MALL-WIDE EXTERIOR SIGN PROGRAM**  
Washington, D.C.  
May 2, 2002







### **Smithsonian Information Sign in front of Castle**

Mock-up on site, April 9, 2002



## Smithsonian Information Sign

Mock-up on site, April 9, 2002





## Smithsonian Information Sign

Mock-up on site, April 9, 2002



**Smithsonian Information Sign** (next to existing Information kiosk for comparison)  
 Mock-up on site, April 9, 2002





### **Building Identification Sign**

Mock-up on site, April 9, 2002

*This design has been modified based on mock-up review comments.*



### **Museum Program Sign**

Mock-up on site, April 9, 2002

*This location has been modified based on mock-up review comments.*

## Survey of existing signs to be removed

Documented August 2001-April 2002

Museum identity 4 at NMAH



Museum identity 4 at NMNH



Museum identity 4 at NASM





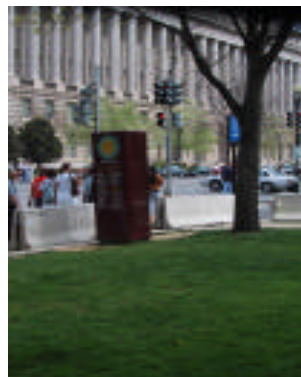
## Survey of existing signs to be removed

Documented August 2001-April 2002

Museum identity 1, at HMSG



VIARC kiosks 11, various sites



Portable kiosks 13-16, various sites



## Survey of existing signs to be removed

Documented August 2001-April 2002

Lollipop standards 3-6, various sites



Portable easels, 5-8, various sites



Program signs 6-10, various sites



## Survey of existing signs to be removed

Documented August 2001-April 2002

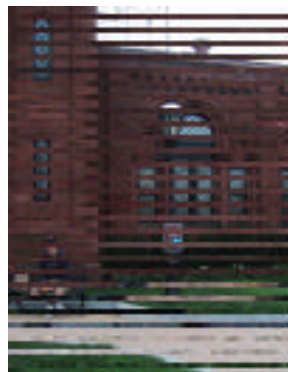
Banner frame 1 at Ripley Center



Signs on fences 5-8, various sites

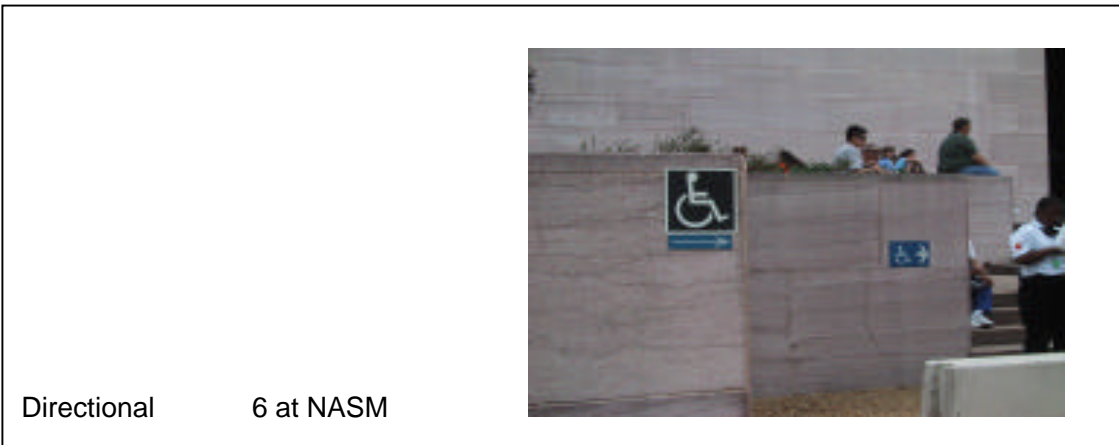


Building identity 3 at Castle



## Survey of existing signs to be removed

Documented August 2001-April 2002



Based on the August 2001-April 2001 survey, an estimated 57 to 82 signs of various types, both permanent and portable, can be eliminated when the Mall-wide Sign Program is implemented.

## Part 2: Responses to Concept Review Comments

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# THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

ESTABLISHED BY CONGRESS 17 MAY 1910

NATIONAL BUILDING MUSEUM  
441 F STREET, N.W., SUITE 512  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20001-3728

202-304-2300  
202-304-2187 FAX

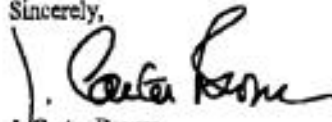
31 October 2001

Dear Mr. Rombach:

The Commission was pleased to see you during its meeting of 18 October 2001 for the review of the concept design for the Smithsonian Mall-wide Exterior Sign Program. The members approved the concept design for the individual sign units, provided a uniform color and graphic system is developed for the information signs. The location and number of signs to be included in the program, however, were not approved. A request was made for a survey of all existing signs and banners currently in place around the Mall museums. The survey should be comprehensive and identify signs to be removed. Other informational signs, such as the BID directional signs and NPS kiosks should be included in the survey. The concern was that perhaps there were too many signs proposed for these already congested sidewalks. Perhaps simple cardboard mockups can be assembled to help visualize their placement and size.

The Commission looks forward to another look at this proposal. Please resubmit when ready. As always, the staff is available should questions arise.

Sincerely,



J. Carter Brown  
Chairman

Mr. Harry Rombach, RA  
Associate Director for Facilities Master Planning  
Smithsonian Institution  
750 9th Street, NW, Suite 5200  
Washington, D.C. 20560

## **Response to Commission of Fine Arts comments**

We considered colors for the changeable background and text of the information sign that coordinated with the bronze structural frame and provided sufficient contrast and readability. We looked at existing colors and materials on the Mall. We also looked at the existing and proposed blue directional signs developed by the Downtown Business Improvement District and the National Park Service for the National Mall. We selected the identical blue to reinforce the hierarchy of signs for wayfinding.

We surveyed existing signs in August 2001 and April 2002. We include the results, with illustrative photographs, beginning on page 28. We found that there are typically between 57 and 82 signs placed on the Mall around Smithsonian buildings. These include obsolete building identification signs, visitor information kiosks, kiosks advertising exhibits in buildings across the Mall, "art night", and theater performances. All of these signs could be removed and replaced by an equal or fewer number of structures under the Mall-wide sign program. Based on our survey and comments received from the Commissions, we have adjusted the proposed locations where possible to reduce congestion.

We conducted a mock-up of the three sign types: program, information and building identification, simulating the proposed materials, on April 9. This installation was viewed by staff members of the Commissions. Photographs of the mock-up are included in this submission on pages 22-27. We refined the sign designs and modified placement according to comments on the mock-up.



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**Commission Members**

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President of the United States  
John V. Cogbill, III, Chairman  
Richard L. Friedman  
Robert A. Gaines

Appointed by the Mayor of  
the District of Columbia  
Armitage Dixon  
Dr. Patricia Elwood

Secretary of Defense  
The Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld

Secretary of the Interior  
The Honorable Gale A. Norton

Administrator of General Services  
The Honorable Stephen A. Perry

Chairman, Committee on  
Governmental Affairs  
United States Senate  
The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman

Chairman, Committee on  
Government Reform  
U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Dan Burton

Mayor, District of Columbia  
The Honorable Anthony A. Williams

Chairman, Council of the  
District of Columbia  
The Honorable Linda W. Cropp

**Executive Director**  
Patricia E. Gallagher, AICP

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
NCPC File No. 6217

FEB 19 2002

Mr. Harry Rombach, R.A.,  
Associate Director for Facilities  
Master Planning  
Smithsonian Institution  
P.O. Box 37012  
Victor Building, Suite 5200, MRC 908  
Washington D.C. 20013-7012

Dear Mr. Rombach:

Thank you for the information presentation to the Commission on February 7 regarding the Smithsonian Institution's proposal to install new information signs on the Mall. Properly designed and located information signs throughout the Mall could greatly enhance the visitor experience by providing clear information regarding museum programs, locations, and identification. A new comprehensive signing program could also provide the opportunity to remove many of the existing, varied signs currently cluttering the Mall.

Attached to this letter, please find the talking points that had been prepared by NCPC staff to facilitate the Commission discussion. These talking points were endorsed by several members of the Commission and we hope they are helpful to you as you continue to refine the design of this signing program. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact David L. Hamilton at (202) 482-7232.

Sincerely,

William G. Dowd  
Director, Office of Plans Review

Attachment

NATIONAL CAPITAL PLANNING COMMISSION



**SMITHSONIAN MALL-WIDE EXTERIOR SIGN PROGRAM*****BACKGROUND***

With eleven Smithsonian museums on the National Mall, existing and planned, there is a need to provide clear information regarding museum programs, locations, and identification for visitors. The variety of existing designs and styles of Smithsonian signs on the Mall and their ad hoc placement result in confusion and an unorganized image to visitors. The current proposal is intended to provide a system of signs that will orient visitors, provide clear building identification, and provide information on Smithsonian programs.

***TALKING POINTS / QUESTIONS***

- The proposed signs need to interface and be compatible with both the Voyager exhibit, and the NPS wayfinding and map signs on the Mall.
- The Smithsonian should prepare a Master Plan that provides for the placement of the proposed signs, including any proposed development plans other than the signs for those green areas that provide the setting for each individual museum building.
- It appears as though there may be too many museum proposed program signs (over 40), particularly in proximity to each other in the Quadrangle area. The rationale for the number and placement of these signs should be further studied.
- It appears that the proposed new "layer" of signs could add to the visual clutter on the Mall, and should be coordinated with the signs that currently exist on the Mall. Any future proposal should identify any and all existing signs that could be eliminated in conjunction with the addition of the new signs.
- Consideration should be given to designing the signs so that they may be incorporated as elements in the physical security perimeter of the museum buildings. The design of the signs should also be compatible with other security elements being considered for the Mall.

## **Response to NCPC talking points/questions**

We have coordinated sign locations with Voyage exhibit structures, BID directional sign, and NPS map sign locations. These are indicated with proposed sign locations on the map on page 9.

A schematic plan for future potential development around Smithsonian museums on the Mall may be completed by the Commission meeting date.

Much thought has been given to the number of signs. About 40 program signs are included. Many need to be concentrated around the Quadrangle building, housing two museums and a major changing exhibition space below grade, which have limited physical presence at ground level. We have modified the location of signs according to comments, while addressing the need for effectively communicating program information to visitors about the range of museum programs located in the Quadrangle Building.

Around the monumental Museum of Natural History, Museum of American History, and Air and Space Museum, we have increased the spaces between program signs to consistent intervals of about 200 feet to 300 feet apart.

The three part Mall-wide sign program complements the BID and NPS wayfinding sign system, which provides directions to and around attractions on the Mall, without specific information about Smithsonian museums. Again, in August and in April, we conducted a survey of existing signs, and have identified about 57 to 82 signs that could be eliminated with the implementation of the Mall-wide sign program. These are indicated on pages 28-32.

We are working with NCPC to jointly develop guidelines for perimeter security for the National Mall. Sign locations may be modified in the future as required to coordinate with security, development or accessibility plans.

## Part 3: Environmental Analysis

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## Summary

This proposal will have no significant, adverse impact on the human environment.

## Description, purpose, and need for action

In recent years, much thought has been given to several problems with visitor orientation in the National Mall and Monumental Core areas. The Downtown Business Improvement (BID) and the National Park Service have developed signage systems to address the visitor way finding in the downtown and Mall areas. In this proposal the Smithsonian has developed a signage system that clearly informs visitors about the range of programs and the museums that make up the Institution. The existing situation presents an ad hoc grouping of signs that vary in design, style, and method of conveying information. The haphazard placement of signs contributes to visitor confusion and disorientation. In harmony with the BID and NPS signage programs, the Smithsonian proposes a complementary sign program that will give information on several levels while presenting a unified design face for the Institution's facilities on the Mall.

The Smithsonian proposes a family of signs that includes the following three types:

- Information signs: BID signs direct visitors onto the Mall and NPS signs orient visitors once on the Mall. The Smithsonian's twenty-one proposed information signs will be placed at strategic corners and other locations, and will give visitors information on the many experiences open to them at the Smithsonian museums. Besides the basic listing of museums, the signs will give hours of operation, orientation on the Mall, and opportunities related to special events.
- Program signs: These forty-two signs, located in sidewalk areas adjacent to museums, carry the museum's name and identify the museum as a Smithsonian facility. The major portion of the sign will be devoted to displaying current exhibits and other program-oriented offerings related to the museum. They will act as an invitation to visitors not only to enter the museum but also to enjoy exhibits or other activities that might otherwise be overlooked.
- Building identification signs: The three larger museums and the Smithsonian Castle (the latter houses the central information center) will have fourteen building identification signs. The proposed building identification signs first inform the visitor both by text and symbol that a building is part of the Smithsonian complex. Immediately below the name of the Institution is the name of the particular museum.

These signs will identify the museums and will improve visitor identification of building entrances. While a building may have many entrances, security and accessibility influence a museum to direct visitor movement. The building identification signs will make the point of entrance more apparent to all visitors. They will promote a sense of arrival.

The design and location of each sign can be found in the preceding chapters of this submission document.

## **Alternatives**

The following alternatives were considered in developing this proposal:

No Action: This alternative will result in the continued practice of placing signs with different designs and messages throughout the Mall area. This practice often presents confusing and incomplete information to the visitor. The no action alternative misses an opportunity to greatly enhance the visitor's experience and the appearance of the Nation's Capital and the National Mall.

Reduced Scope: This alternative will not meet the objectives of this proposal, that is, to fulfill the needs of Smithsonian programs on the National Mall and present a unified, clear presentation of information to visitors. Reducing the scope or the number of signs does not reduce the need. Implementing a reduced scope alternative will result in the continued practice of placing additional signs of different designs and message in haphazard patterns, resulting in a diminished experience for visitors to the Smithsonian Institution museums and the National Mall.

Proposed Scope: This alternative fulfills the signage needs for Smithsonian programs on the National Mall. Implementation will stem the proliferation of Smithsonian-generated signage on the Mall. Further, the implementation will replace an ad hoc, disjointed display of signs with a signage program that is visually cohesive and conveys the appropriate amount of information to Mall visitors. Its implementation will make known to visitors the broad breadth of their National Collection and encourage them to take the opportunity to view it within the Smithsonian museums.

## **Physical – Biological Consequences**

This proposal will not affect topography, hydrology, soils, flora, fauna, floodplains, wetlands, coastal zones, endangered species, and so on.

It will not affect air quality, sound levels, vehicular traffic patterns, and surrounding area land uses, plans, policies, and controls. Care will be taken not to block pedestrian and vehicular sight lines. Signs in the public right-of-way will be coordinated with the DC Department of Public Works.

Pedestrian traffic and circulation patterns may change slightly because visitors may be drawn to signs that convey information on programs, facilities, and visitor amenities.

## **Urban Systems Consequences**

This proposal will not affect water supply, wastewater treatment, or storm water runoff.

The proposal will not affect energy requirements and conservation. During implementation interference with public utilities will be avoided. No relocation or disruption of utilities is anticipated.

Other than debris associated with installation, no solid waste will be produced by this proposal. Construction waste will be promptly removed from the site and disposed of properly.

This proposal will not affect community facilities and services, such as police, fire, schools, and libraries. By providing needed information, the proposal will enhance the visitor experience in the entire National Mall area.

## **Socio-Cultural and Economic Environments Consequences**

This proposal will not affect socio-cultural factors such as population, demographic trends, and changes in land use, water, and public services.

This proposal will not significantly affect local or regional economics.

This proposal's greatest effect on the human environment will be visual impact and aesthetics. The signage proposal will add several new sign components to the National

Mall. Care is being taken in terms of detailing, material, and content. The sign exteriors will be bronze, a material that is dignified, monumental, and fits in well with the palette of the Mall. Laminated glass will be used for the program sign, and for durability, embedded fiberglass will be used for the information sign. All graphic material will be designed by professional graphic designers who are members of the museum staff and who will use broad Smithsonian-wide guidelines.

The following factors will help mitigate the effects of new signage on the Mall:

- The Smithsonian, NPS, and BID signs will not be redundant. Each serves a different function.
- The Smithsonian signs will be spread over the Mall as evenly and separated as widely as possible to avoid any adverse, cumulative visual effect.
- The Smithsonian signs will fulfill the Smithsonian's signage need and will eliminate the need for the ad hoc system of existing signs. These signs can then be removed as the new signage program is phased in over the next few years.

## **Historic Resources**

As a trust instrumentality of the United States, the Smithsonian Institution is not a federal, executive agency, and therefore, is not subject to the provisions set forth in Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act. However, for the purposes of submissions to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPD), a federal agency, Smithsonian staff are cooperating with NCPD staff to complete the Section 106 process with NCPD acting as the applicant. Materials and analyses have been provided to NCPD staff indicating that little or no effect on historic fabric would occur due to implementation of this proposal. Any minor effects would be mitigated considering that this proposal would replace a cacophony of different designed and sized signs with a unified, dignified signage program that is appropriate for its place, the National Mall.

## **Appendix: Notes from coordinating meetings**

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## **Mall-wide Signage meeting with the National Park Service**

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: March 6, 2002

Attendees: For the National Park Service:

Arnold Goldstein

Alice McLarty

Sally Blumenthal

Lance Hatten

Bob Karotko

For mfm design:

Beth Miles

For the Smithsonian:

Ewa Lewandowska, OFEO/ OEDC

Harry Rombach, OFEO/ OFP&R

Jane Passman, OFEO/ OFP&R

The purpose of this meeting was to coordinate with affected parties before submitting the sign program proposal to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC). We presented the program for a family of three sign types, program, Smithsonian information, and building identification signs, and identified proposed locations. The group discussed the number of signs, the apparent concentration around the Ripley Center kiosk, and why the number of signs was necessary. The group discussed a comment made at an information briefing to NCPC by a commissioner. The comment related to "hardening" and incorporating sign structures as part of overall perimeter security. The consensus of the group was that this was not warranted and would give the signage a degree of permanence that would make any future relocation, removal, or modification extremely difficult. In addition, the group recommended that signs not be located on curb walls around tree boxes, as these curbs have inadequate footings to hold the signs, and in order to discourage traffic in the planting beds; and not in sidewalk areas where they might impede pedestrian flow. Some discussion of building banners occurred. Both sides pointed out that banners could be positive additions. As a side issue, Arnold Goldstein, NPS, noted that proliferation of Smithsonian vending operations on the Mall has occurred. Harry Rombach provided him with information on how best to pursue this issue with Smithsonian management. The NPS staff provided information about the design and location of NPS/BID map signs proposed to be located on the National Mall. Following the discussion, we noted that all sign locations would be subject to modification according to future security plans and development.

## **Mall-wide Signage Meeting with the National Gallery of Art**

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: April 22, 2002

Attendees: For the National Gallery of Art:

Carl Campioli

Jim Grupe

Barbara Keyes

Mark Leithauser

Susan Wertheim

For the Smithsonian:

Ewa Lewandowska, OFEO/ OEDC

Jud McIntire, OFEO/OPM

Harry Rombach, OFEO/ OFP&R

Jane Passman, OFEO/ OFP&R

The purpose of this meeting was to coordinate with staff from the National Gallery of Art (NGA) before submitting the sign program proposal to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC), as suggested by one member of the National Park Service at our meeting. We presented the program for a family of three sign types, program, Smithsonian information, and building identification signs, and identified proposed locations. The group discussed the number of signs, the need for establishing building identity at entrances, appropriate content for information signs, and proportions and design of building identification signs. The group discussed the proliferation of signs on the Mall, generally. NGA staff shared their conclusions about sign materials and information from going through a similar process, but with different objectives. NGA staff members made a number of helpful suggestions about refining the design and scaling back the frequency of signs on the Mall. Harry Rombach noted that there were about 71 signs proposed in 3.1 miles.

## **Mall-wide Signage Meeting with the Government of the District of Columbia Office of Planning**

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: April 29, 2002

Attendees: For the DC Office of Planning:  
Stephen Cochran, AICP  
John Moore (part)  
Steve Callcott (part)

For the Smithsonian:  
Ewa Lewandowska, OFEO/ OEDC  
Harry Rombach, OFEO/ OFP&R  
Jane Passman, OFEO/ OFP&R

The purpose of this meeting was to coordinate with staff from the Government of the District of Columbia before submitting the sign program proposal to the National Capital Planning Commission (NCPD). We presented the program for a family of three sign types, program, Smithsonian information, and building identification signs, and identified proposed locations. The group discussed the reason for the number of signs, coordination with Business Improvement District (BID) and NPS wayfinding signs, and information to be provided on information signs. In response to a request from Stephen Cochran, Harry Rombach replied that the Smithsonian would look at including a line on the information sign directing visitors, through the DC information web site, to information about DC tourism sites. We also explained that, while SI information will be changed twice a year, in addition, the caps of signs could be replaced in the event that the name or logo changes in the future. We discussed the durability, particularly vandal-resistance, of materials. We noted that glazing will be laminated glass. John Moore provided information about the requirements and timing for requesting a permit to place signs on DC public space. He indicated that placement of the signs would provide adequate pedestrian clearance. He added that the DC review would include ensuring preservation of vehicular sight lines at intersections. Again, as a side issue, it was pointed out that vending operations have expanded over the sidewalks on Independence and Constitution Avenues.