

# DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

August 22, 2011

**Case Number**

DRB2011-21

**Applicant**

Bennett Motor, Inc.

**Property Owners Agent**

Cari Yturri

**Representative**

L'Heureux Page Warner PC  
David J. Cantley, AIA

**Property Location**

26 9th Street South  
Neighborhood Council #7

**Requested Action**

Design Review of the renovation and exterior façade changes to the existing buildings and expansion for a new service bay area.

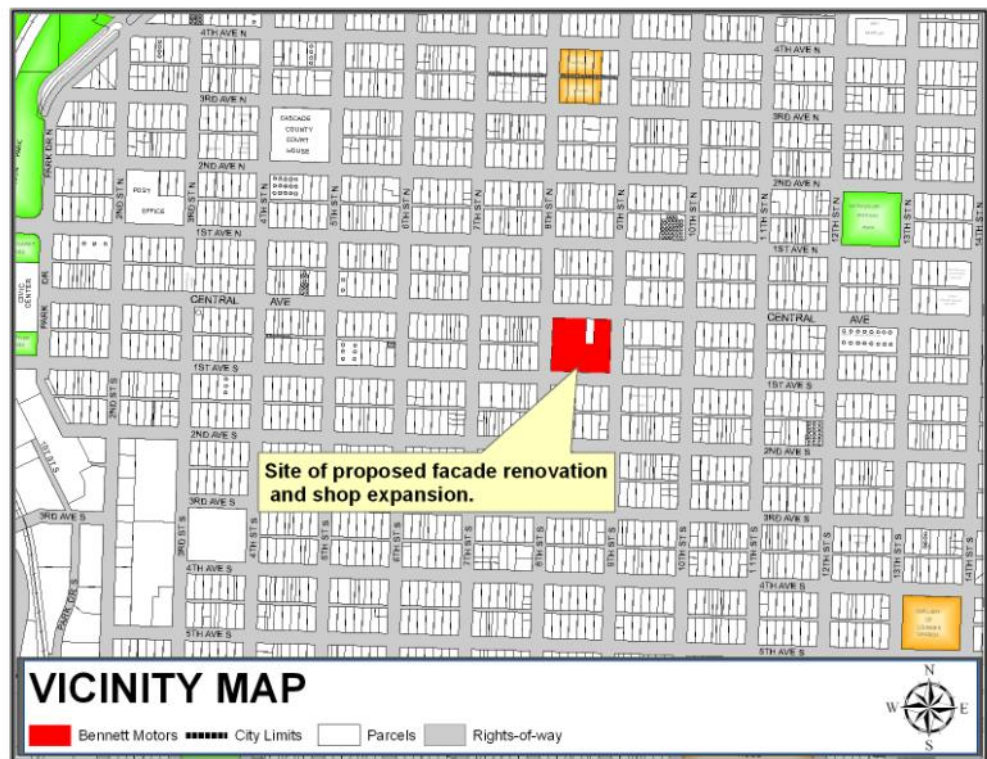
**Recommendation**

Deny design as submitted.

**Project Planner**

Charlie Sheets

## BENNETT MOTORS—26 9TH STREET SOUTH



### Project Description

The applicant is proposing renovation of the exterior façade, the interior show rooms & offices, and expansion of new service bays at the historic downtown vehicle sales business. The project proposes covering the existing brick with architectural metal panels, repainting existing painted brick, squaring the curved corners on the main showroom, installing new showroom windows and doors, constructing a new entry to the main showroom and changing the existing signage per General Motors Franchise standards.

### Background

- Legal Description: Lots 1-4, 6 & 7, 8-14, Block 360, Great Falls Original Town site
- Property Area: ± 97,500 S.F.
- Property Zoning: C-4 Central business core district
- Street Frontages: Central Avenue, 1st Avenue South, 8th & 9th Streets South

## EXHIBIT A - APPLICATION

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD  
APPLICATIONDATE: August 11, 2011NAME: Bennett Motors, Inc.ADDRESS: 26 9<sup>th</sup> Street South PHONE: 406 727 2100AGENT/REPRESENTATIVE: Cari YturriADDRESS: 26 9<sup>th</sup> Street South PHONE: 406 727 2100SITE ADDRESS: 26 9<sup>th</sup> Street SouthSquare Footage of Building Site: ± 52,500  
Square Footage of Structure(s): ± 18,750

Design Review Board Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The following items must be submitted as part of the application:

Legal DescriptionLot(s): 1-4, 6+7, 8-14Block(s): 360Subdivision: COHAT FALLS ORIGINAL

Or Township: \_\_\_\_\_ Range: \_\_\_\_\_ Section: \_\_\_\_\_

Use Intended: VEHICLE SALESPACKET (2 Copies Drawn to Scale to Sufficiently Demonstrate the Following Items)

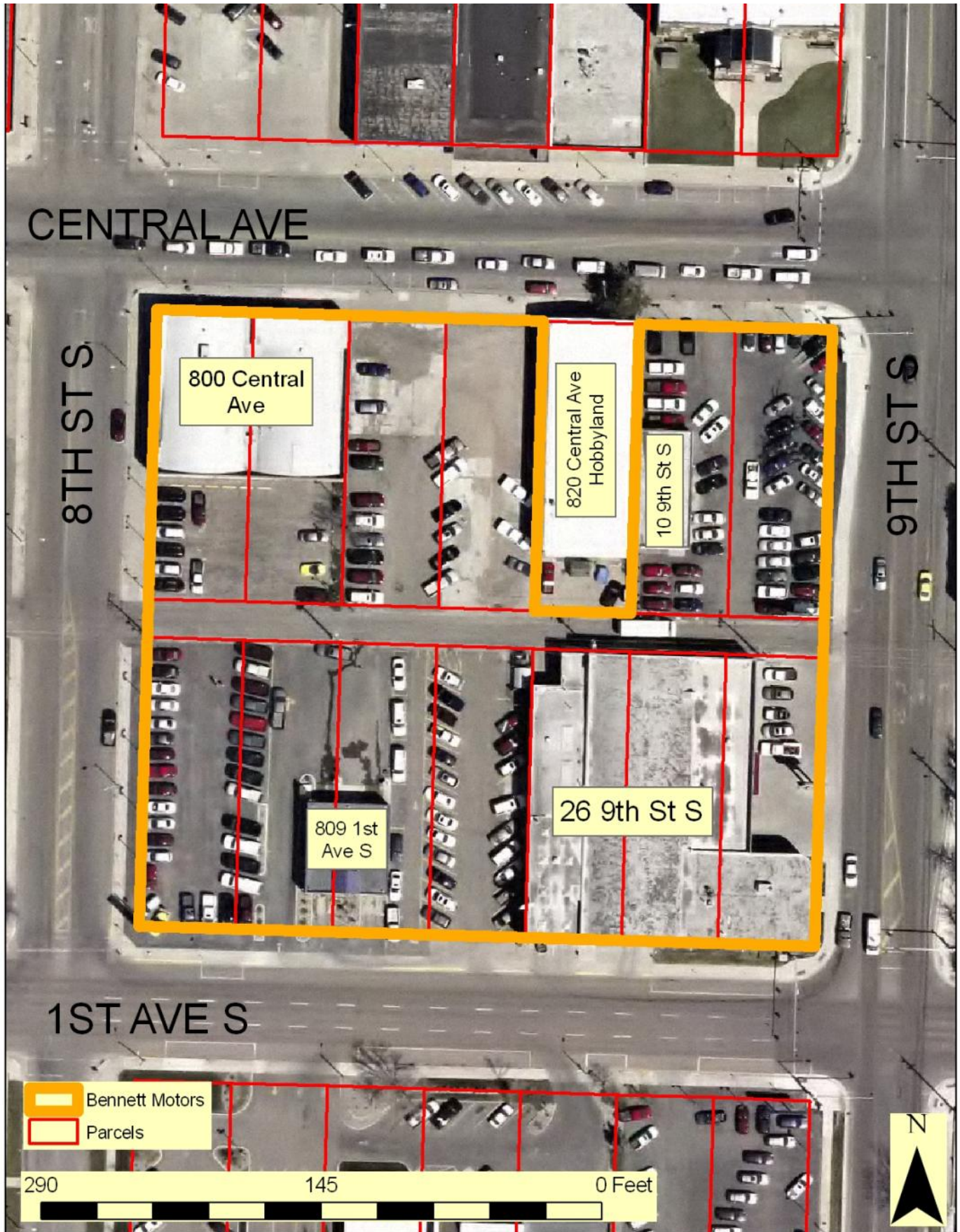
- Application
- Site Plan/Landscaping Plan/Parking Plan - 11" x 17"
- Elevation Drawings - 11" x 17"
- Topography Map - 11" x 17"
- Drawing of each Proposed Sign (Type, Copy, Dimensions, Height, & Materials)
- Written Zoning Determination (obtained from City Planning Department)

## Building and Property Frontage:

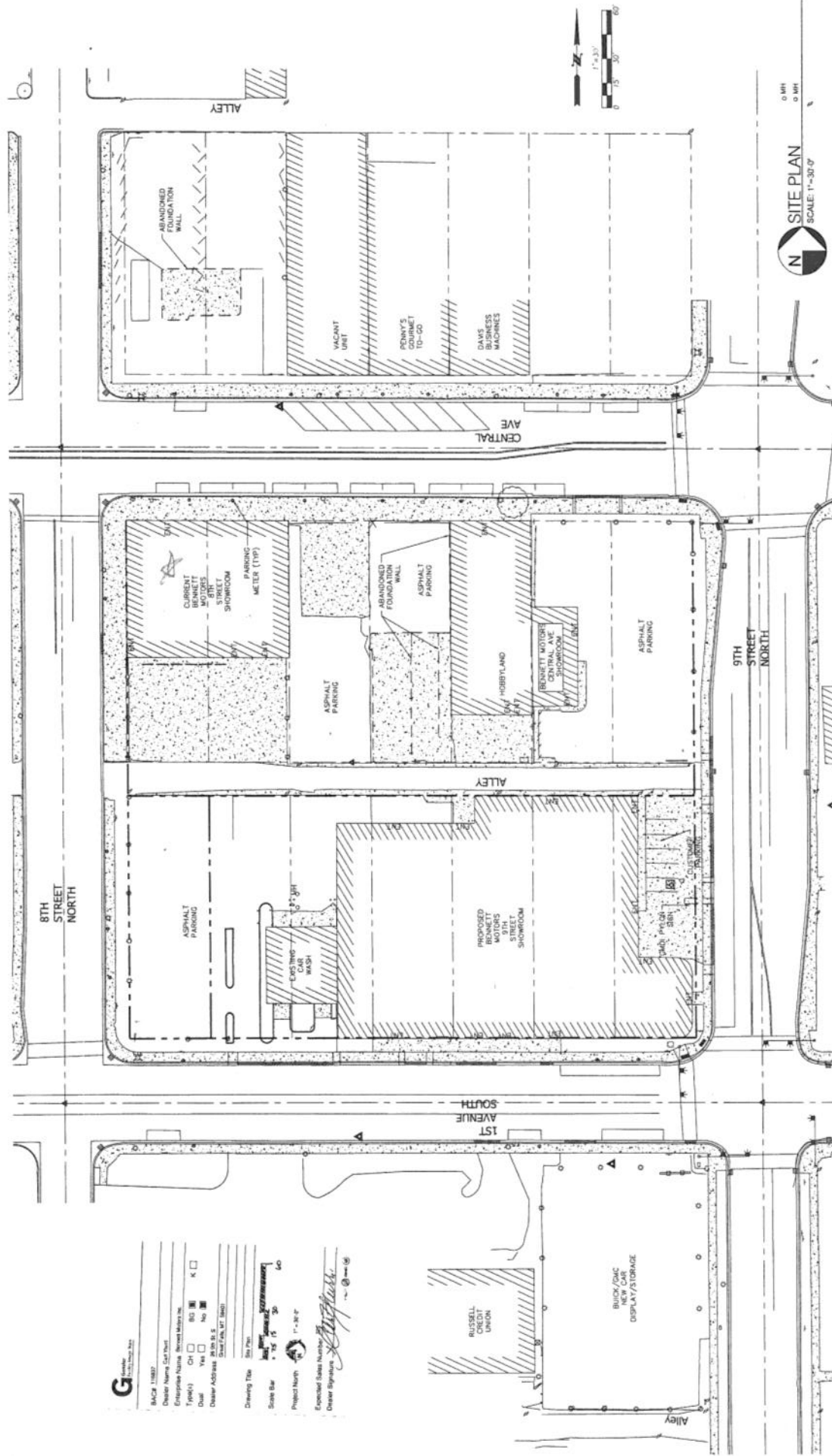
Street: 9<sup>th</sup> ST S Building Frontage: 150' Property Frontage: 150'Street: 1<sup>st</sup> AVE S Building Frontage: 150' Property Frontage: 350'



# EXHIBIT B - AERIAL PHOTO

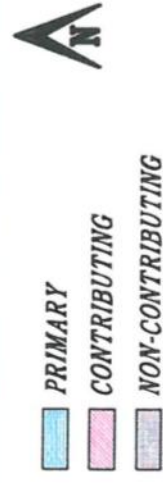


# EXHIBIT C - PROPOSED SITE PLAN





# EXHIBIT D - CENTRAL BUSINESS HISTORIC MAP



Project made possible by a grant from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior through the State Historic Preservation Office.

Additional support from: Business Improvement District, Community Development, Historic Preservation Advisory Commission and Great Falls City-County Planning.

9/07/2006  
C:\DATA\FILE\MELLEN-40

## EXHIBIT E - EXISTING EAST FAÇADE AND PROPOSED RENDERING



## NON-SITE SPECIFIC FRANCHISE RENDERING





## EXHIBIT F - EXISTING EAST & SOUTH FAÇADE AND PROPOSED RENDERING



## NON-SITE SPECIFIC FRANCHISE RENDERING

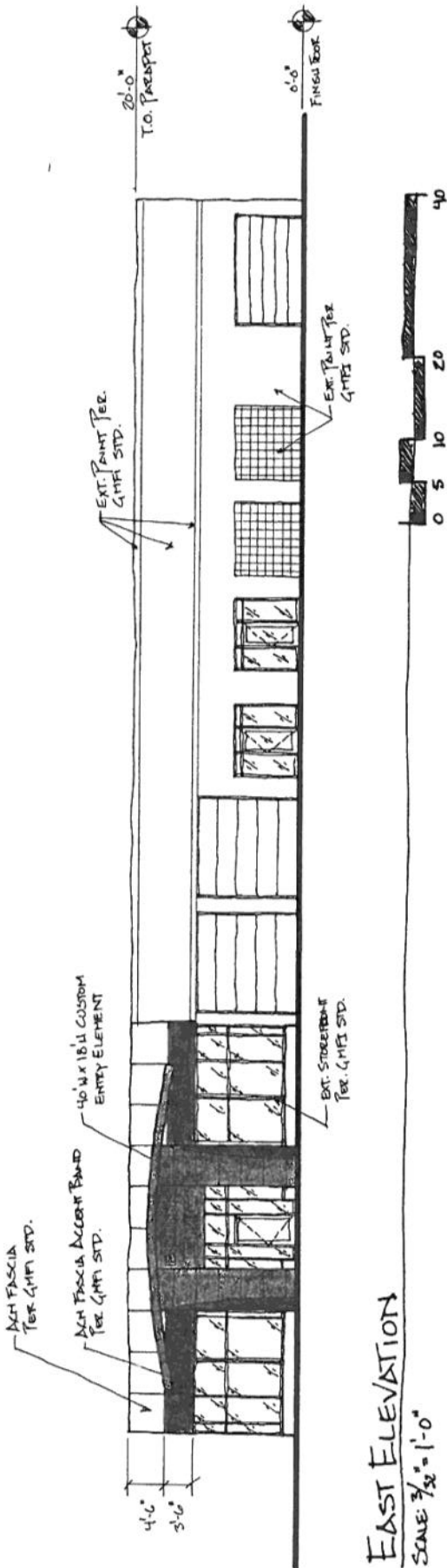


Exterior

Buick GMC Facility Image Design Intent | Version 2.2

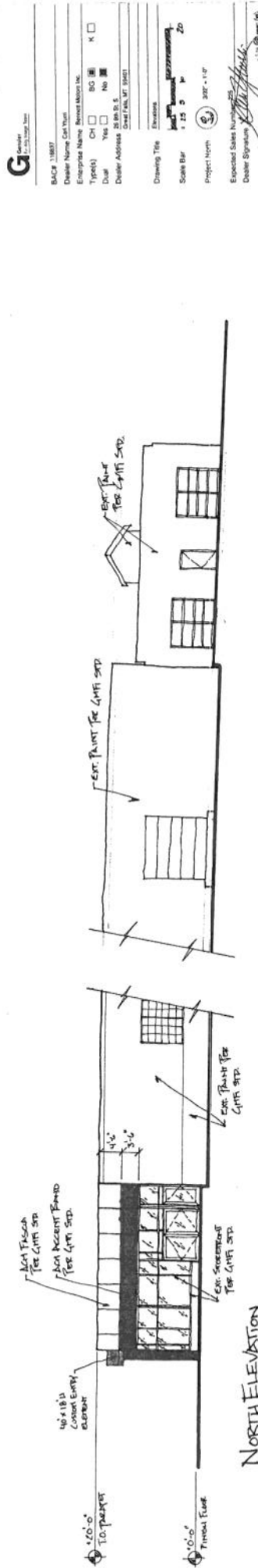
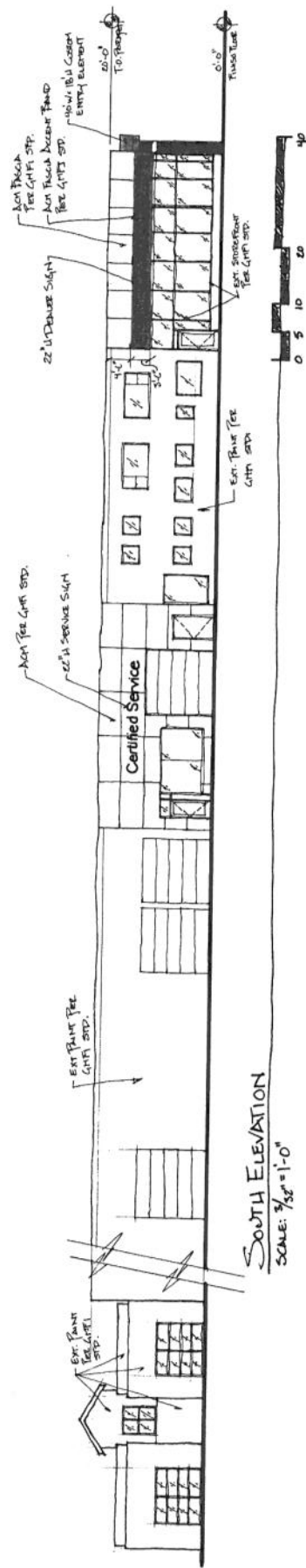
Gensler

EXHIBIT G - PROPOSED EAST ELEVATIONS





# EXHIBIT H - PROPOSED NORTH AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS



## Project Overview

General Motors has requested the applicant renovate their property to match the manufactures “Branding” elements that standardize the franchise image nationwide. The primary difference between the non-site specific renderings and the site specific elevations, is the applicant is proposing approximately half of Bennett Motors exterior be clad with new metal panels, and the other half be made to match by painting all remaining exterior brick white. For a new building, GM would require exterior metal panels. The main floor of the existing building is 20,000 S.F., with approximately 10,000 S.F. of additional office and storage space on the existing mezzanine level. In addition to the façade renovation work, the applicant anticipates adding approximately 10,000 S.F. of service area on the west side of the building, and include renovation of the majority of the building interior. Renovation and addition work will include interior alterations that have not yet been finalized.

### **Central Historic Business District**

The property is within the boundaries of the Central Business Historic District (CBHD). Historic districts include areas within a City that encompass buildings which are deemed historically significant to the City’s cultural heritage; they are areas where historic buildings and their surroundings are protected through the process of public review. Historic properties are worth protecting because their historical and architectural character give character to our City. The historical character of downtown is an asset worth preserving. A critical component of a thriving historic district is the sensitive rehabilitation and renovation of structures.

The building located at 26 9th Street South is a historically significant building in the City of Great Falls and is part of the CBHD. It’s significance is due in part to the fact that it was owned by Carroll Bennett an early day rancher and car salesman. Bennett Motors is the oldest, longest running and continuous automobile business in Great Falls. The historic integrity of this property has been retained due to the survival of the original design, materials, and continuity of use, setting and location. Several of the original windows are intact and the openings are mostly original. The Prairie Style is well represented in the brick coursing and the unique style in the curved window bay at the corners of the main showroom.

The building located at 800 Central Avenue is a historically significant building in the City of Great Falls and is part of the CBHD. This building is significant because it was designed by prolific architects, Shanley and Backer; Shanley was Great Fall’s most noted architect having designed several significant buildings. This property is also significant because of its association with Leonard Taylor and Carroll Bennett. The historic integrity of this property has been retained due to the survival of the original use as an automotive business, design, setting and materials. The brick work is intact including the frieze, piers and cornice. The building displays the elements of the Prairie Style in the long sweeping lines of the building and emphasized by the building length, brick banding, and the strings of windows.

The building located at 809 1st Avenue South was built in 2007 and was purposely designed to match the original building façade, colors and architectural features. Staff support the reuse and renovation of historic buildings; however, the façade renovation as submitted compromises the historic integrity of the building there by degrading the native, character and quality of the historic district.

### **Zoning, Building Height, and Setbacks**

The property is zoned C-4 Central business core district. This district is intended to accommodate and create a high level of business and social activity from morning through the nighttime hours. This district hosts a wide range of employment and businesses. Vehicle sales and service are allowed in this district. Customer parking is available, but occurs primarily within the building and on-street parking. The conceptual renovation of the vehicle sales and service property is permitted and in compliance with the zoning, height and setback requirements of the code.

### **Parking**

The parking requirement for vehicle sales and service is 2 spaces per service bay plus 1 per employee per shift. The existing site is nonconforming for the required parking in that it existed prior to the current code requirements. The conceptual plans are incomplete and shall be resubmitted for review.



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### **Fragility of a Buildings Visual Character**

There are some aspects of this sites visual charter that are fragile and are easily lost. The brickwork on the subject buildings is one of these aspects, which can be irreversibly damaged with inappropriate or insensitive renovation practices. There are at least two factors that are important contributors to the visual character of brickwork, namely the brick itself and the craftsmanship. The quality of the brick could be easily damaged by painting the brick, by covering the brick with foreign materials, such as metal, by raking out the joint with power tools, or by repointing a joint that is too wide. Staff concludes that the proposed refinishing of the brick greatly diminishes the character and craftsmanship of the historic downtown buildings. Staff recommends the applicant be required to resubmit a complete set of plans for the project to the Design Review Board and provide conceptual plans that retain the historic features of the existing buildings and the property.

### **Landscaping**

The project is required to meet Title 17, Chapter 44, Article 3, Design Standards for Commercial Buildings. The existing site is nonconforming for the required landscaping in that it existed prior to the current code. The existing site has almost no landscaping except for sod on the east and south side of the main showroom and landscaping around the wash bay facility that was constructed in 2007. The conceptual plans are incomplete and shall be resubmitted for review.

### **Sidewalks**

Public sidewalks already exist along the frontages of the site and would be require to be inspected by the City Engineer's office. The applicant would be required to make alteration as directed by the City.

### **Signage**

Per code, the property is allowed a maximum 10% coverage per frontage for wall signage plus and addition 200 S.F. maximum for a freestanding/monument sign. The freestanding/monument sign is permitted to a maximum of 25'-0" height. The conceptual plans are incomplete and shall be resubmitted for review. The signage will require a separate permit from the Planning & Community Development Department.

### **Outdoor Lighting**

The project is required to conform with the requirements within Title 17, Chapter 40, Outdoor lighting. The conceptual plans are incomplete and shall be resubmitted for review.

### **Neighborhood Council Input**

The renovation project has not been submitted to Neighborhood Council #7.

Recommendation**Suggested Motion**

## 1. Board Member moves:

“I move that the Design Review Board deny the application of Bennett Motors, for the renovation of the exterior façade, the interior show rooms & offices, and the expansion for new service bays at the historic downtown vehicle sales business, as shown in the conceptual development plans contained within this report and as provided within this meeting by the property Owners Agent. The proposed design is inconsistent with the character of the CBHD, degrades a number of contributing building in the district and is contrary to the purpose statement for the Design Review Board which encourages development/redevelopment that is compatible with nearby properties and neighborhood character. The proposed design is inconsistent with the land Use goals within the Growth Policy to preserve and enhance the character, quality and livability of the existing neighborhoods.

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## 2. Chairman calls for a second, discussion, inquiries from the public, and calls the vote.

CC City Engineering, Dave Dobbs  
Patty Cadwell, Neighborhood and Youth Council Coordinator  
Bennett Motors, Inc., Cari Yturri, 26th 9th Street South, Great Falls, MT 59405  
L'Heureux Page Werner, PC, David J. Cantley, AIA, 15 Fifth Street South, Great Falls, MT 59401