

**Meeting:** 4/15/2026  
**Applicant:** Amy Sherrill Benefield Richters  
**Owner:** Break One LLC  
**Project:** 319 S. Gay St.

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### Property Information

**Location:** 319 S. Gay St. **Parcel ID:** 94 L D 031

**Zoning:** DK-H (Downtown Knoxville, Historic Core Subdistrict)

**Description:**

Former TVA Credit Union building, original core constructed prior to 1900, and most recent exterior rehabilitation dating to the early 1980s.

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### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of Certificate 4-B-26-DT, subject to the following conditions:

- 1) All windows at the pedestrian level are to be clear.
  - 2) Windows are to be constructed as depicted. Any changes to the proposed windows must be approved by the Board.
  - 3) The final design of the solid wood entry doors in the Gay Street and Wall Avenue elevations shall return to the Board for review and approval.
  - 4) All existing and new signs are subject to DRB review and approval as part of a separate application. Existing signs may be required to be removed and/or replaced with signs that are consistent with the guidelines.
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### Description of Work

Level II

Major Alteration of an Existing Building/Structure

Exterior rehabilitation scopes include renovating the existing storefronts on the Gay Street and Wall Avenue elevations, staining existing precast concrete panels on the ground floor of all elevations, and installing two new awning windows to match the existing with precast concrete sill, head, and jambs to match the existing on the west (alley) elevation.

Gay Street elevation: Three storefront bays (the first, second, and fourth) will be replaced with new windows and single-swing doors with transoms and black aluminum frames. The center (third) bay will be replaced with a new storefront entrance featuring a wide, solid wood door framed by extended metal and precast concrete panels, with natural gas lanterns on both sides of the door. The door and wall area with granite accents on the northmost (fifth) bay will remain. The decorative grills under the beams are to be removed from all bays. The upper stories will remain as-is.

NOTE: The ground floor remains unchanged from the previous approval. Modifications to the upper floors were removed from the scope of work.

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Wall Avenue elevation: The westernmost (first) bay will remain as-is, with granite panels. The second storefront bay will be replaced with a new storefront entrance featuring a wide, solid wood door, framed by an extended metal entrance port, and precast concrete panels (similar to the Gay Street entrance). The third, fourth, and sixth bays will have new black aluminum storefront systems with transoms, but no doors. The fifth bay will be replaced with new windows and single-swing doors with transoms and black aluminum frames. Precast infill panels are to be installed to cover the wall openings above the lintel of two bays with entry doors. The upper stories will remain as-is.

NOTE: The granite panels in the first bay were previously proposed for partial removal and the installation of a storefront system with a door. The second bay featured a solid wood, double door. And the third and fourth bays previously had doors. Modifications to the upper floors were removed from the scope of work.

Strong Street elevation: Two new awning windows to match the existing ones are to be installed on the north side of the elevation. The sill, lintel, and jambs are to be precast concrete to match the existing.

NOTE: Several new windows and a garage door were removed from the scope of work.

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## Comments

The Design Review Board (DRB) approved a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for this building in September 2025, subject to 3 conditions: 1) All windows at the pedestrian level are to be clear, 2) Windows are to be constructed as depicted. Any changes to the proposed windows must be approved by the Board, and 3) the final solid wood door selections must return to the Board for approval. This proposal is consistent with the first condition, the second condition is applicable through the construction process, and the third condition will be satisfied with a future submittal. If approved, this COA will replace the previous COA in its entirety.

319 S. Gay Street, while zoned DK-H, is not located within the Gay Street Commercial National Register Historic District, so the Historic Resources section of the design guidelines does not apply.

While sections of the original building were built prior to 1900, the building has had several exterior rehabilitation campaigns, most recently in 1984, so the proposal will not result in the modification or removal of any character-defining historic features. The proposal retains the existing building's use of "traditional considerations such as show-windows, transoms, friezes, and signboards," differentiating the ground-floor massing from the upper floors. Existing design elements in good condition will be retained, including the granite accents, precast concrete panels on the first floor, and precast concrete cornice and detailing. The entrances will face the two main streets.

Renovating storefronts on the first story will enhance pedestrian interest and engagement at the site. However, the proposed wide, solid-wood doors and solid-panel infill are inconsistent with the guidelines' recommendations to "enhance pedestrian interest in commercial and office buildings by creating a largely transparent and consistent rhythm of entrances and windows." The Board previously approved the storefronts, subject to the final door design being returned to the Board for approval, and with the understanding that during hours of operation, the solid doors will remain in the open position, resulting in the transparency intended by the design guidelines.

The window installation on the Strong Street elevation creates a "largely consistent rhythm," as recommended by the guidelines. The new awning windows and precast sill, head, and jambs will match the existing, creating a cohesive look.

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## Applicable Design Guidelines

Downtown Design Guidelines

### B. PRIVATE REALM

The private realm is composed of the buildings, structures, and private or quasi-public open spaces. The private realm is commonly defined by building envelopes.

### 1. Building Mass, Scale and Form

Building form should be consistent with the character of downtown as an urban setting and should reinforce the pedestrian activity at the street level. Creating pedestrian-scale buildings, especially at street level, can reduce the perceived mass of buildings. Human-scale design elements are details and shapes that are sized to be proportional to the human body, such as, upper story setbacks, covered entries, and window size and placement.

1a. Maintain a pedestrian-scaled environment from block to block.

1c. Use building materials, cornice lines, signs, and awnings of a human scale in order to reduce the mass of buildings as experienced at the street level.

### 3. Building Materials

New building materials should relate to the scale, durability, color, and texture of the predominate building materials in the area.

3a. Use complimentary materials and elements, especially next to historic buildings.

### 4. Architectural Character

Buildings should be visually interesting to invite exploration by pedestrians. A building should express human scale through materials and forms that were seen traditionally. This is important because buildings are experienced at close proximity by the pedestrian.

4a. Encourage first floor uses that draw walk-in traffic; businesses that do not require pedestrian traffic should be located on other floors.

4b. Enhance pedestrian interest in commercial and office buildings by creating a largely transparent and consistent rhythm of entrances and windows.

4d. Differentiate the architectural features of ground floors from upper floors with traditional considerations such as show-windows, transoms, friezes, and sign boards.

### 5. Ground Floor Doors and Windows

Entrances and ground floor windows should foster pedestrian comfort, safety and orientation.

5a. Use consistent rhythm of openings, windows, doorways, and entries.

5b. Orient front entrances to the main street; secondary entrances should be clearly defined and oriented towards streets and alleys, as appropriate.

5d. Consider corner entrances at the ends of blocks.

5c. Design entrances according to the proportions of the building's height and width.

5e. All windows at the pedestrian level should be clear.



**4-B-26-DT**

**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**



319 S. Gay St.

Level 2: Major alteration of an existing building/structure

Original Print Date: 3/25/2026 Revised:  
Knoxville/Knox County Planning · Design Review Board

Petitioner: Amy Sherrill Benefield Richters



**DESIGN  
REVIEW  
BOARD**

ADJACENT PARKING LOT  
307 S. GAY STREET  
PARCEL ID: 094LD028

UT TOWER  
400 W. SUMMIT HILL DR  
PARCEL ID: 094LD018

**STRONG ST**

**319 SOUTH GAY STREET**  
PARCEL ID(S): 094LD032  
094LD031  
094LD030

STREET LIGHT

CENTURY BUILDING  
310 S. GAY STREET  
PARCEL ID: 095IA043

STREET LIGHT

SIDEWALK

CENTER LINE (R.O.W.)

**S. GAY ST.**

932

STREET LIGHT

930

HYDRANT

ADJACENT PARCEL  
305 S. GAY STREET  
PARCEL ID: 095AO4101

STREET LIGHT

STORM INLET

USPS

TRAFFIC LIGHT

STORM INLET

STORM INLET

SIDEWALK

WM

STORM INLET

**WALL AVE.**

931.1

934

932

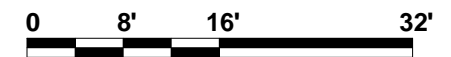
STORM INLET

1 SITE PLAN  
DRB-01 1" = 20'-0"

0 20' 40' 60'



1 SOUTH ELEVATION - WALL AVE - DRB REVIEW  
 DRB-02 1/16" = 1'-0"



TRANSOM WINDOWS TO REMAIN  
AND BE REPAINTED TO MATCH EXISTING.

NEW PRECAST INFILL AT FLYING BEAM

NEW STOREFRONT ENTRANCE + WINDOWS



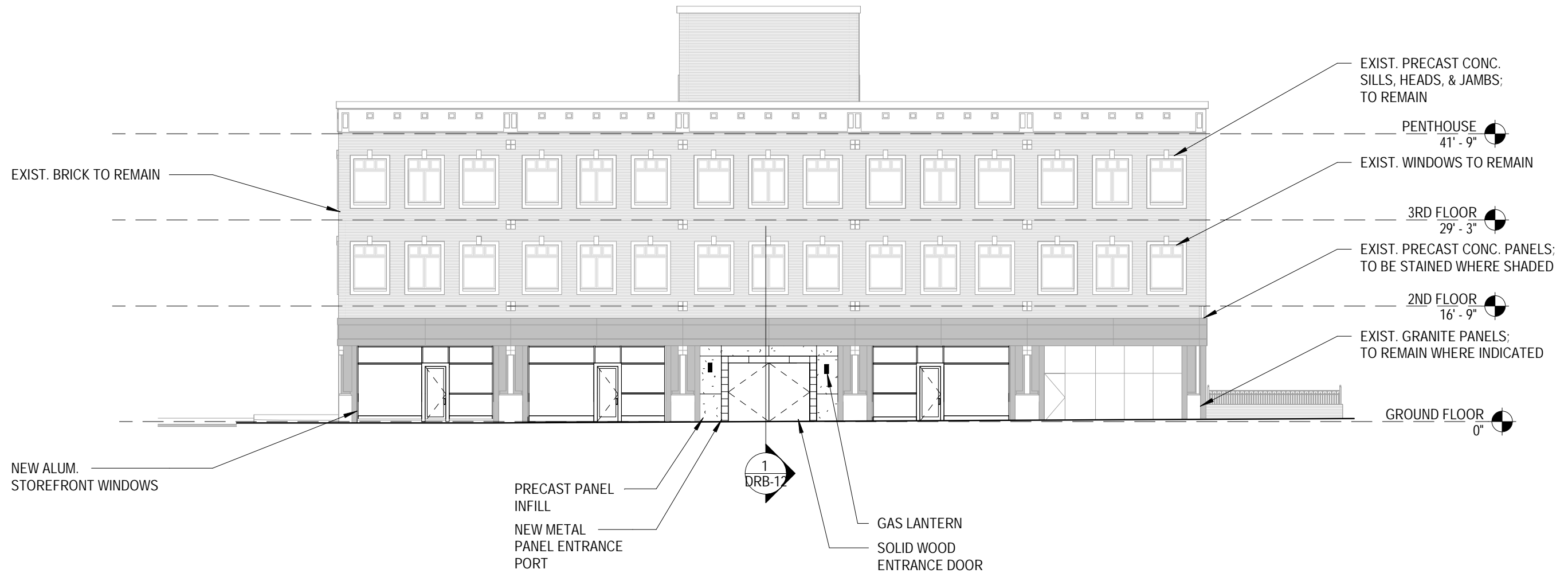
TRANSOM WINDOWS TO REMAIN  
AND BE REPAINTED TO MATCH EXISTING.

NEW SOLID WOOD ENTRANCE DOOR

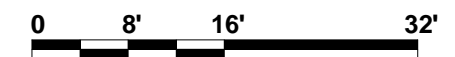
EXIST. PRECAST CONC. PANELS; TO BE STAINED WHERE INDICATED

NEW METAL PANEL ENTRANCE PORT





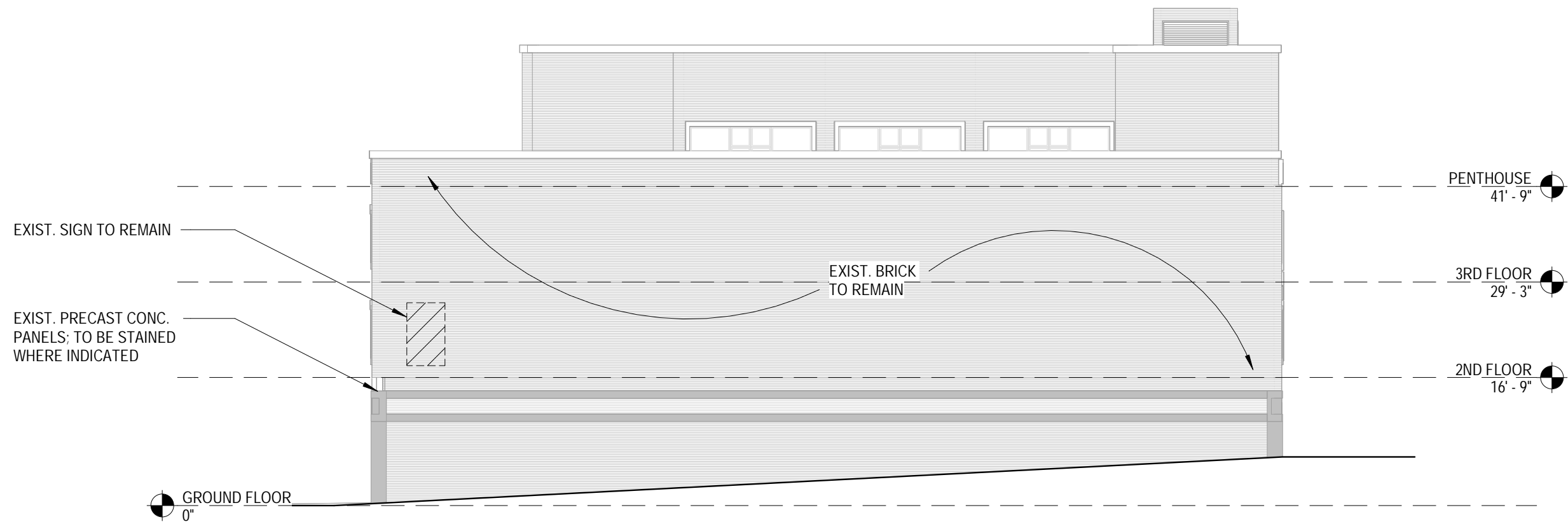
1 EAST ELEVATION - GAY STREET - DRB REVIEW  
 DRB-04 1/16" = 1'-0"



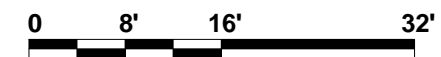
NEW METAL PANEL ENTRANCE PORT, PRECAST  
PANEL INFILL, LIGHTS, AND DOOR

NEW ALUM. STOREFRONT WINDOWS  
AND ENTRANCES





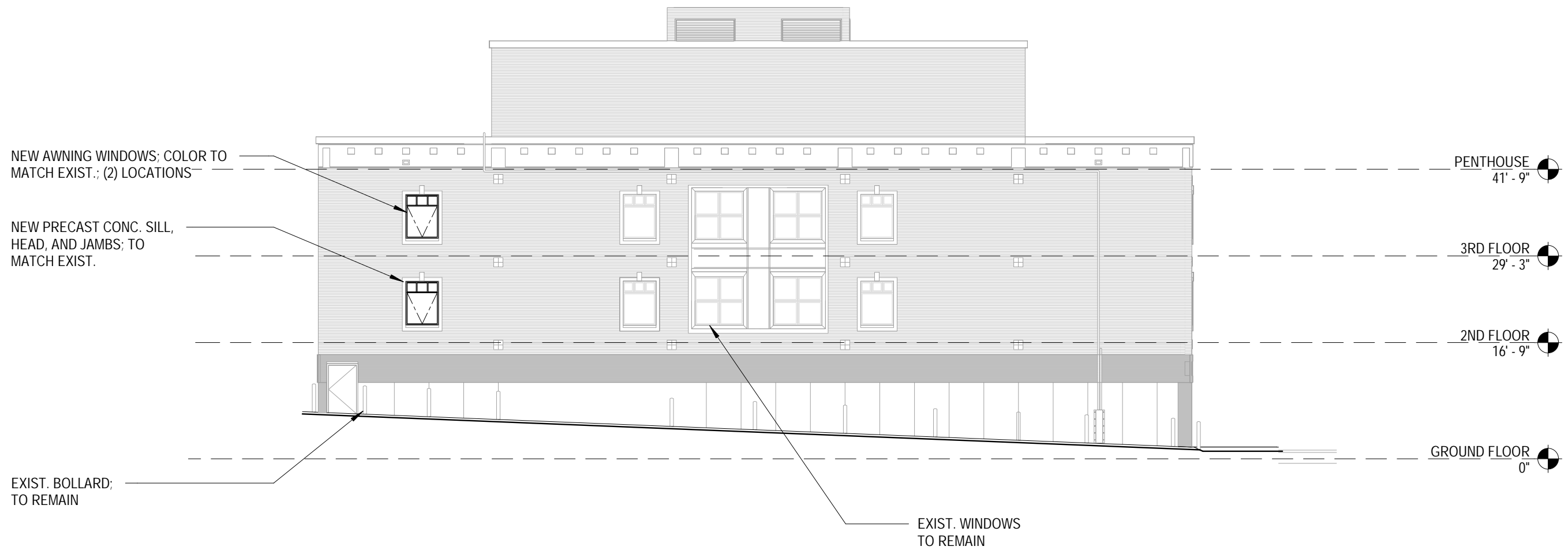
1 NORTH ELEVATION - DRB REVIEW  
 DRB-06 1/16" = 1'-0"



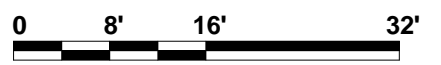
EXIST. SIGN TO REMAIN

EXIST. PRECAST CONC. PANELS;  
TO BE STAINED WHERE INDICATED





1 WEST ELEVATION - STRONG STREET - DRB REVIEW  
 DRB-08 1/16" = 1'-0"



NEW CASEMENT WINDOWS;  
COLOR TO MATCH EXIST.; (2) LOCATIONS.  
WITH NEW HEAD / JAMB/ SILL TO MATCH EXISTING



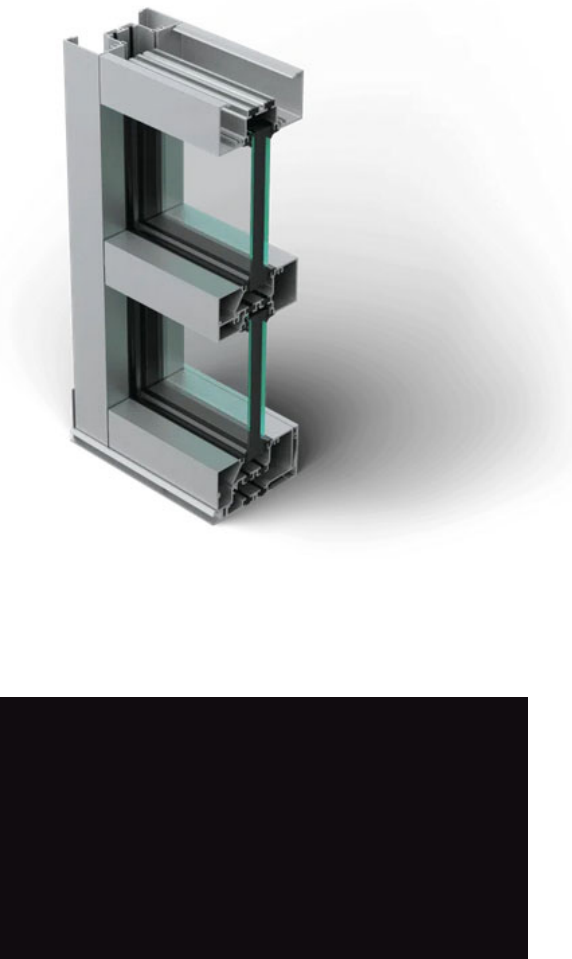
## CONCRETE STAIN

- EXISTING PRECAST CONCRETE WALL SURFACES AT AND BELOW BANDING DEMARCATING THE FIRST FLOOR ABOVE GRADE.
- TEXTURE TO REMAIN SMOOTH.
- COLOR TO BE DARK GREY.



## STOREFRONT

- AT SOUTH AND EAST ELEVATIONS
- ANODIZED FINISH, KAWNEER FINISH #29 'BLACK'
- 2" SITE LINE
- 4-1/2" DEPTH



## PRECAST CONC. PANELS

- SOUTH ELEVATION (INFILL AT FLYING BEAMS AND NEW PRECAST FACED WALL.
- STAINED TO MATCH EXISTING PRECAST WALL SURFACES TO RECEIVE STAIN.



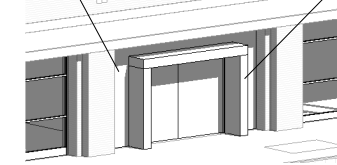
## WOOD ENTRANCE DOOR

- IMAGE SHOWN AS DESIGN INTENT
- SOLID CARVED WOOD DOOR: STAINED
- BRASS KICK PLATE WITH BRASS HARDWARE



**NATURAL GAS LANTERN**

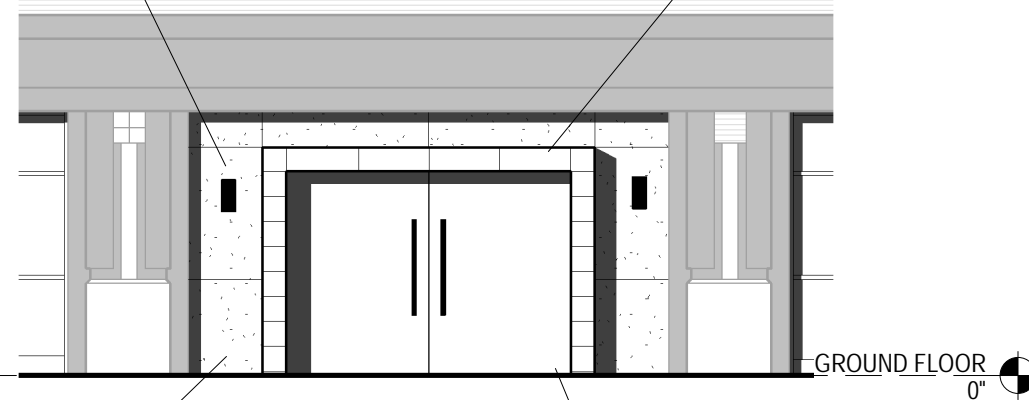
- AT GALLERY ENTRANCE ON GAY STREET
- FIXTURE TO BE BLACK TO MATCH STOREFRONT



**ENTRANCE AXON**

**METAL PANEL**

- MORIN 12" FLUSH PANEL
- CHAMPAGNE GOLD, ALUMINIUM



GROUND FLOOR 0"

**PRECAST PANEL INFILL**

- MAIN ENTRANCE TO GALLERY SPACE AT EAST ELEVATION FROM GAY STREET.
- FINISH:
  1. MATERIAL: HIGH PERFORMANCE CONCRETE PANEL RAIN SCREEN SYSTEM AS MANUFACTURED BY 'TAKTL'.
  2. TEXTURE/COLOR: 'KORSA' A02 W/ WHITE 87 AS BASE COLOR.

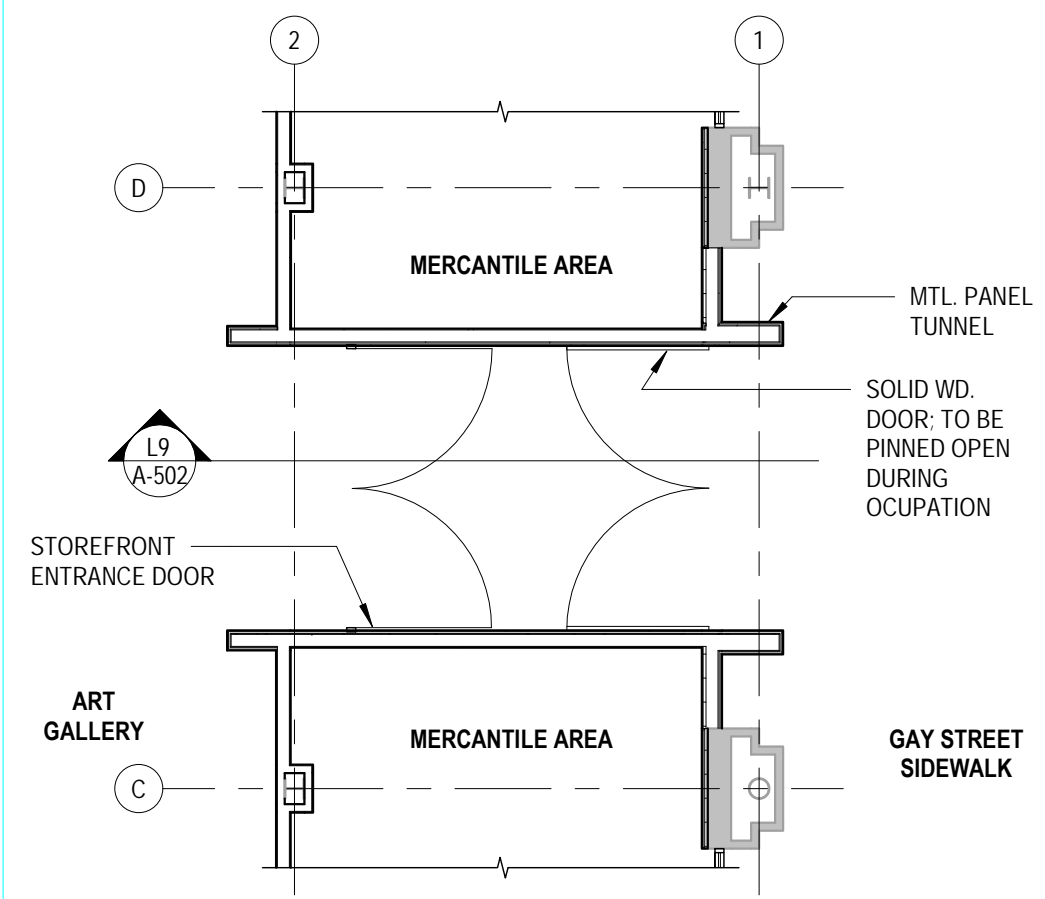
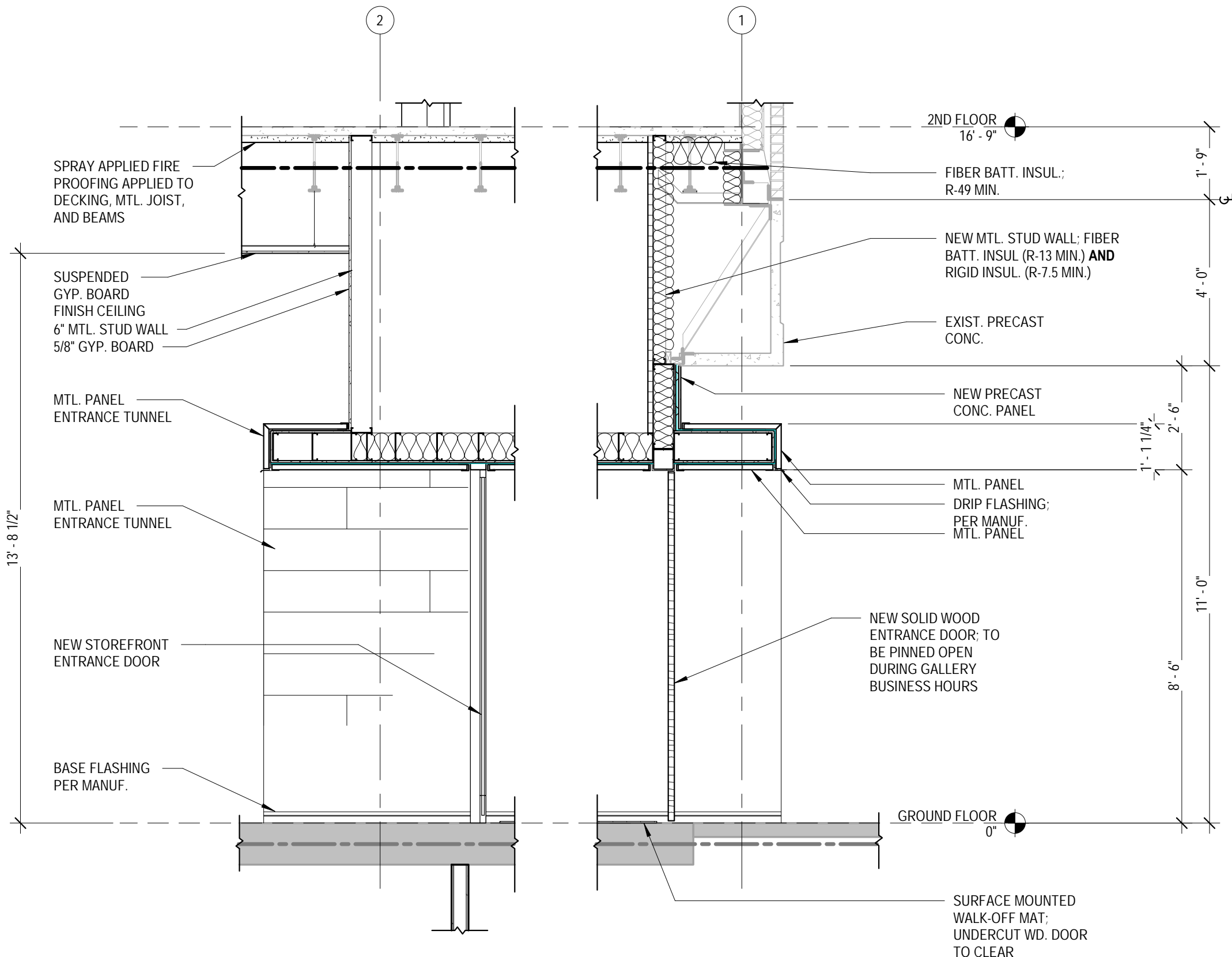


**WOOD ENTRANCE DOOR**

- ORNATE SOLID WOOD DOOR
- RECESSED FRAME WITH BLACK HARDWARE



1 EAST ELEVATION - GAY STREET - ENTRANCE PORT - TYPICAL  
DRB-11 1/8" = 1'-0"



1 ENTRANCE TUNNEL - LONGITUDINAL SECTION (DRB) - TYPICAL  
 DRB-12 3/8" = 1'-0"

2 VESTIBULE - ENLARGED PLAN (DRB)  
 DRB-12 1/8" = 1'-0"





benefield richters  
architecture + planning

**GALLERY ENTRANCE VESTIBULE**  
[GAY STREET]



benefield richters  
architecture + planning

**MERCANTILE STOREFRONTS**  
[CORNER OF WALL & GAY]