

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 502 S First Street, Application Number HDC21-097

**DISTRICT:** Old West Side Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** December 9, 2021

**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:**

	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>APPLICANT</b>
<b>Name:</b>	Bruce Christie 502 S First St	DTE Energy Rijvana Patel
<b>Address:</b>	Ann Arbor, MI 48103	14270 Schaefer Hwy Detroit, MI 48227
<b>Phone:</b>		(313) 409-4034

**BACKGROUND:** This two-story, hipped roof, frame house is an Italianate cube which first appears in City Directories in 1888 as the home of clerk August T. Sinke and his wife Sarah. It remained in the Sinke family until after 1940. The house has an elaborate full front porch with hipped roof, bracketed columns and turned balustrade. The current owner restored the front porch, which had been in very poor condition, after receiving HDC approval in 1989. In 1992, he received a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace two first-floor windows over the front porch with windows more closely matching the original size and location.

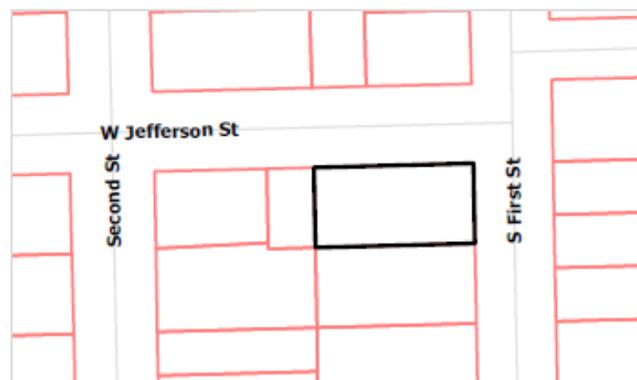
**LOCATION:** The house is located on the southwest corner of South First Street and West Jefferson Street.

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to install a gas meter on the north (side) elevation, two feet east of the northwest corner of the home.

#### APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

##### From the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- (2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.



- (9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
- (10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

**From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):**

**Mechanical Systems**

*Recommended:* Installing a completely new mechanical system if required for the new use so that it causes the least alteration possible to the building's floor plan, the exterior elevations, and the least damage to the historic building material.

**From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines:**

**Mechanical Equipment**

*Appropriate:* Installing new air conditioning units and mechanical equipment in such a manner that historic materials and features are not damaged or obscured.

Using compatible screening around outdoor mechanical equipment such as vegetation and fencing.

Attaching mechanical equipment so historic fabric is not damaged or destroyed.

Installing mechanical equipment and wiring in locations on the roof, rear elevations, or in alleys, so they are not visible from the street.

Painting mechanical equipment to blend with the historic building.

*Not Appropriate:* Installing new mechanical equipment systems or wiring in locations that change or destroy character-defining features and materials.

**STAFF FINDINGS**

1. The application states that the meter manifold will not be visible from the street. Staff requested clarification, which was submitted and attached to the application. It states that the meter manifold cannot be placed on the south or west side of the home due to existing stairwells. Also, that they are unable to move it to another location and maintain less than ten feet of fuel line. It further states that the homeowner has insisted that the meter be placed in the proposed location.



2. The house is on a corner lot and a semi-attached (via a covered breezeway) garage is behind the west elevation of the house. The breezeway is narrow and paved. On the south side elevation is a covered exterior stairwell down to the basement.
3. DTE is undergoing a construction project to move all gas meters in basements to exteriors of houses. In this work the damage to historic materials in meter installations is minimal – there is typically one penetration through the wall above the foundation, and the meters themselves can be mounted on small posts to avoid touching historic materials. A meter on or near the front of a house is visibly undesirable, however, and detracts from the historic integrity of the home. For this reason, staff may not approve new meters or other mechanical units on or near the fronts of buildings.
4. The application includes a photo of a post mounted meter. The post mount is appropriate because it does not touch historic materials the way a bracket (the alternative) installed on the house does.
5. The meter work is assumed to be necessary and post mounted meters appear to not destroy historic materials. The commission must weigh the proposal against the SOI standards, SOI guidelines, and Ann Arbor design guidelines. Questions to consider include:
  - a. Does the work cause the least alteration possible to the building's floor plan, the exterior elevations, and the least damage to the historic building material?
  - b. Does it damage, destroy or obscure historic materials or features?
  - c. Is there visual screening by vegetation or fencing?

**POSSIBLE MOTIONS:** (Note that the motion below is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will meet with the applicant on site and then make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 502 S First Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to install a gas meter on the north elevation, two feet from the northwest corner of the house, as shown in the application. As proposed, the work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the building and the surrounding area and meets *The City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for mechanical equipment, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2, 9 and 10, and the guidelines for mechanical systems.

## MOTION WORKSHEET

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 502 S First Street in the Old West Side Historic District

\_\_\_ Provided the following condition(S) is (ARE) met: 1) STATE CONDITION(s)

The work is generally compatible with the size, scale, massing, and materials and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard(S) number(S) (*circle all that apply*): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

**ATTACHMENTS:** application, drawing, photos

502 S First Street (November 2020 Google Street View)





# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

City Hall: 301 E. Huron St. Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6120  
 Mailing: P.O. Box 8647, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8647  
 Phone: 734.794.6265 ext. 42608 [jthacher@a2gov.org](mailto:jthacher@a2gov.org)  
 Fax: 734.994.8460

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Permit Number	HDC# _____
	BLDG# _____
DATE STAMP	

**APPLICATION MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY**

### PROPERTY LOCATION/OWNER INFORMATION

NAME OF PROPERTY OWNER <b>CHRISTIE BRUCE S</b>		HISTORIC DISTRICT <b>OLD WEST SIDE</b>	
PROPERTY ADDRESS <b>502 S FIRST ST</b>			CITY <b>ANN ARBOR</b>
ZIPCODE <b>48103</b>	DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER <b>( )</b>	EMAIL ADDRESS	
PROPERTY OWNER'S ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)		CITY	STATE, ZIP

### PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNATURE

<b>SIGN HERE</b>	<b>PRINT NAME</b> <b>BRUCE CHRISTIE</b>	<b>DATE</b> <b>8/3/21</b>
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### APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME OF APPLICANT (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE) <b>DTE (Rijvana Patel)</b>			
ADDRESS OF APPLICANT			CITY
STATE	ZIPCODE	PHONE / CELL # <b>( 313 ) 409-4034</b>	FAX No <b>( )</b>
EMAIL ADDRESS			

### APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE (if different from Property Owner)

<b>SIGN HERE</b>	<b>PRINT NAME</b> <b>X</b>	<b>DATE</b>
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### BUILDING USE - CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SINGLE FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> DUPLEX	<input type="checkbox"/> RENTAL	<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> INSTITUTIONAL
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### PROPOSED WORK

Describe in detail each proposed exterior alteration, improvement and/or repair (use additional paper, if necessary).

Relocate inside meter to outside. Install meter 2' East of the West building wall on the North side of home.

### DESCRIBE CONDITIONS THAT JUSTIFY THE PROPOSED CHANGES:

Meter Manifold will be installed near the rear of home and hidden by a bump out. Meter Manifold will not be visible from the street.

For Further Assistance With Required Attachments, please visit [www.a2gov.org/hdc](http://www.a2gov.org/hdc)



# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

## FEE CHART

DESCRIPTION	
<b>STAFF REVIEW FEES</b>	
Application for Staff Approval	\$35.00
Work started without approvals	Additional \$50.00
<b>HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION FEES</b>	
All other proposed work not listed below	\$100.00
Work started without approvals	Additional \$250.00
<b>RESIDENTIAL – Single and 2-story Structure</b>	
Addition: single story	\$300.00
Addition: taller than single story	\$550.00
New Structure - Accessory	\$100.00
New Structure – Principal	\$850.00
Replacement of single and 2-family window(s)	\$100 + \$25/window
<b>COMMERCIAL – includes multi-family (3 or more unit) structures</b>	
Additions	\$700.00
Replacement of multi-family and commercial window (s)	\$100 + \$50/window
Replacement of commercial storefront	\$250.00
<b>DEMOLITION and RELOCATION</b>	
Demolition of a contributing structure	\$1000.0
Demolition of a non-contributing structure	\$250.00
Relocation of a contributing structure	\$750.00
Relocation of a non-contributing structure	\$250.00

### FOR COMMISSION REVIEWS:

- Application withdrawals made before public notice is published will qualify for a 50% refund of the application fee.
- Application withdrawals made after public notice is sent but before the public hearing will qualify for a 25% refund of the application fee.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

All HDC applications must be signed by the property owner and the applicant, if different, with the exception of staff approvals, which may be signed by only the applicant.

All completed HDC applications and their attachments may be submitted to Planning and Development Services by mail, in person (paper or digital), faxed, or via email to [building@a2gov.org](mailto:building@a2gov.org).

We accept CASH, CHECK, and all major credit cards. Checks should be made payable to "City of Ann Arbor"

HDC applications that are incomplete or not submitted with the required documentation or payment will not be processed or approved.

## APPLICATION EXPIRATION

HDC applications expire three (3) years after the date of approval.

## OFFICE USE ONLY

Date of Hearing:		
Action	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC COA	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC Denial
	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC NTP	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff COA
Staff Signature		
Comments		
Fee:	\$ _____	
Payment Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Check: # _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card	

November 30, 2021

Ann Arbor Historical District

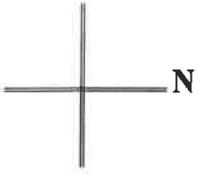
RE: 502 S First St

To Whom It May Concern:

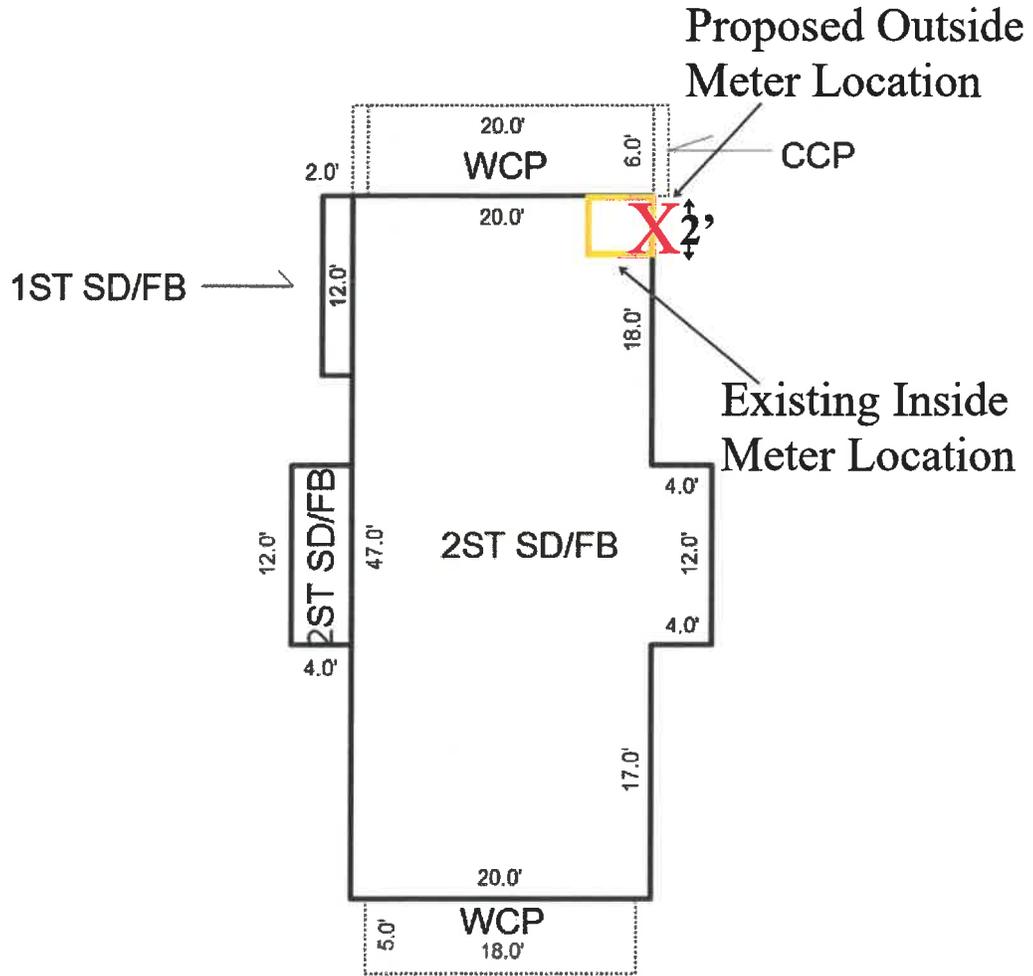
502 S First St is a corner lot. The meter manifold cannot be placed on the South or West side of home due to existing stairwells. Unable to move to another location and maintain less than ten foot of fuel line. The homeowner has insisted that the meter be placed in the proposed location. They have suggested they will plant shrubbery to block visibility.

Sincerely,

Tara Erickson  
Corby Energy Services



# 502 S 1<sup>st</sup> Street



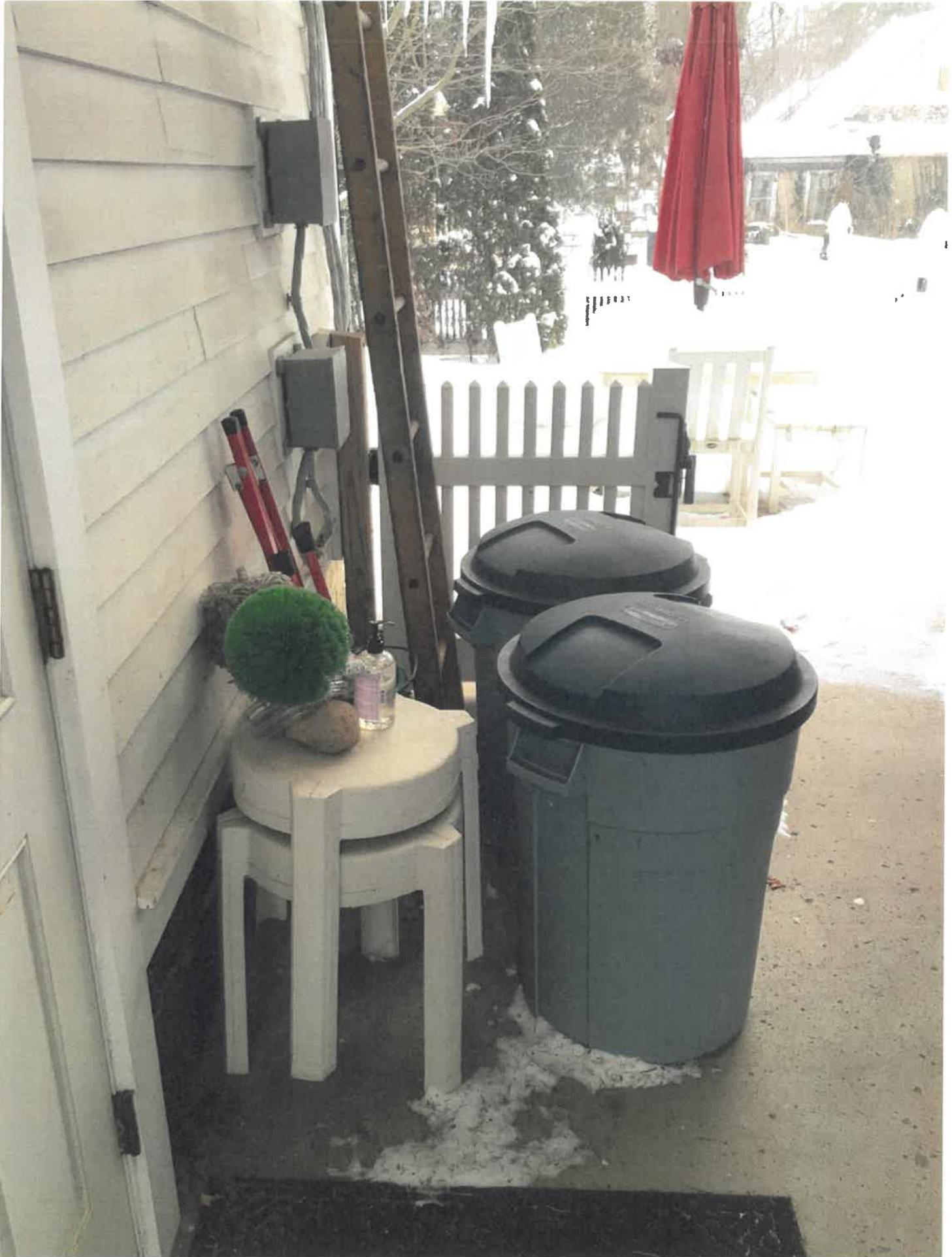
## Front of House

502 S 1<sup>st</sup> St











POST  
EXAMPLE