Downtown Amarillo

URBAN DESIGN STANDARDS

7/14/10

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In recent years, parts of Downtown Amarillo have been successful in attracting people back to the central city to live, work, play, shop and learn. This renaissance of Downtown is in part attributable to the authentic urban quality of these areas of Downtown. This urban quality has been preserved in some buildings, streets and corridors such as Polk Street. Almost without exception, these more successful areas of Downtown are those that have implemented the urban characteristics described in these design standards. These Downtown Urban Design Standards were developed to improve and protect the appearance, value and function of downtown properties. The standards are intended to allow for creativity and variety within a framework of basic design parameters that will reinforce the best attributes of Downtown. The following principles serve as a basis for the standards contained in this document. Projects are evaluated with respect to the principles, in addition to the pertinent standards.

General Design Principles

1. **Promote a pedestrian oriented urban form.** The Downtown Urban Design Standards focus on promoting a walkable urban form of development consistent with the character suited to a Downtown. The focus on form promotes buildings that conform to tested urban design principles and that adapt to changing conditions over time.
2. **Maximize connectivity and access.** The continued success of Downtown Amarillo requires a multi-modal circulation network in which visitors, employees and residents may conveniently walk, drive, bike or ride public transit to destinations within and outside of the district. The Downtown Urban Design Standards are intended to promote walkable blocks and street designs that balance these transportation modes and ensure accessibility for all residents and visitors, including those with disabilities.
3. **Require excellence in the design of the public realm.** The most successful urban environments are those in which walking down the street is appealing and memorable. Streets, plazas, parks, and other public spaces should be comfortable and inviting. Buildings fronting such spaces should be active and visually interesting at the pedestrian level.
4. **Support existing Downtown businesses.** The Downtown Urban Design Standards should support the success of existing businesses.

Connecting the civic center and downtown core by creating walkable streets is important to the success of downtown.

Implementation of quality design in downtown development will support downtown businesses.

5. **Encourage adaptive reuse and support the preservation of historically significant buildings.** Downtown includes historically significant buildings. The standards and guidelines are intended to work in conjunction with the City's Landmarks and Historic Districts Ordinance to encourage preservation and adaptive reuse of significant buildings.
6. **Encourage creativity, architectural diversity and exceptional design.** The Downtown Urban Design Standards and Guidelines promote high-quality design. Standards and the development review process are intended to support creativity and exceptional design while discouraging uniformity.

Adaptive reuse of historically significant buildings is important to down-town's success.

High-quality, creative design is encouraged in these standards.

Downtown Urban Design District Boundary

Intent

The Downtown Urban Design Standards apply to projects located within the Downtown Urban Design District (see map on page 5). The standards intend to encourage a high level of design quality and provide the flexibility necessary to encourage creativity on the part of the project designers in response to existing site conditions. The Downtown Urban Design Standards included in this document are intended to be clear, concise, flexible, and to facilitate the timely approval of conforming projects. Whenever there is a conflict between the Downtown Urban Design Standards and other sections of the City of Amarillo Zoning Ordinance, the requirements specifically set forth in this document shall prevail.

Downtown Design Review Board (DDRB)

The DDRB is appointed by the Amarillo City Commission. All appointees must be residents of the City of Amarillo. The DDRB shall consist of at least seven voting members and one alternate member who represent a balanced mix of the following (all categories may not be necessarily represented):

- Real estate profession
- Structural/landscape architecture profession
- Landscape architecture profession
- Land use/planning profession
- Downtown property or business owner
- Downtown resident

The DDRB is charged with the administration of Downtown Urban Design Standards. The Planning Department Director or his/her staff serves as staff advisor to the DDRB. If desired, additional guidance may be sought from representatives from Downtown Amarillo, Inc. (DAI). DAI will always be available to work preliminarily with applicants before hearings. Hearings will be held as necessary to conduct business.

Projects Subject to Review

All development projects within the Downtown Urban Design District that include changes or additions to the walkway, landscape, building edge (new construction or façade changes) and/or building signage are subject to review by the Planning and Development Department staff and/or the DDRB for compliance with the Downtown Urban Design Standards. Exterior painting and changes to the interior of buildings that do not affect the exterior of buildings are not subject to these standards. Public projects that undergo a public review/comment process do not require review by the Downtown Design Review Board but still require standard permitting and staff review.

The DDRB may approve the application as submitted, approve the application with conditions, or deny the application. When conditions are attached to a project's approval, the conditions will require modifications to the proposed design that are necessary to ensure the project's compliance with the design standards.

Administrative Review vs. DDRB Review

Projects that are clearly consistent with all applicable General Design Principals and that clearly conform to all standards may be approved administratively by the Planning Department staff. Planning staff may work with Downtown Amarillo, Inc. (DAI) as a resource to discuss a case. Staff may also refer an administrative case to the DDRB if staff believes it needs DDRB approval. The DDRB shall review projects that require interpretation or discretionary judgment with respect to the project's compliance with standards. Applicants may always choose to have a case reviewed by the DDRB.

The following items are eligible for administrative approval:

- All signage that meets the district standards
- Landscaping and street lighting
- Sidewalk construction including trees and furnishing
- Minor modifications to existing buildings
- Temporary construction facilities
- Historic buildings restored to the original state (in kind).

DDRB will review the following:

- New construction, defined as construction of a new building on a property (Additions, modifications or alterations to existing buildings are not considered new construction)
- Major modification of buildings, defined as exterior improvements exceeding fifty (50) percent of the existing building value as shown on the tax rolls and a minimum value of the improvement of fifty thousand dollars ($50,000)
- Items that staff refers to DDRB
- Cases that vary from standards

Staff will have final approval for cases administratively approved, and the DDRB will have final approval of cases reviewed by the DDRB. Appeals of an administrative decision will be heard by the DDRB. Appeals of the DDRB will be heard by the Zoning Board of Adjustment, who will offer the final decision.

Certificate of Appropriateness

The Planning Department staff or the DDRB will issue a COA for approved public and private projects. The COA is valid for one year from the date of approval.

Required Information from Applicant

The full list of required documents is included the in application available from the City's Planning Department. The application is available on line at http://www.amarillo.gov/departments/planning.html, or call the Planning Department at 806-378-6290.

Review of Phased Projects

The DDRB may approve a COA for all phases provided that the applicant submits drawings that depict the initial phase as well as all future phases.

DDRB Discussion Items

One of the DDRB's roles is to provide informal guidance to developers during the conceptual design phase. Developers of significant projects may choose to present conceptual plans to the DDRB for discussion purposes without a final vote. This discussion may assist developers in receiving preliminary feedback on projects, but is not required. Applicants are still required to receive approval by the DDRB for all work listed in the standards and guidelines except for projects that are eligible for administrative approval.

Variances to Zoning Ordinance

The DDRB is authorized to approve appropriate exceptions to any of the Downtown Urban Design Standards provided a project complies with applicable design standards intent. However, any variance for basic property development standards related to building heights or setbacks requires approval by the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Variances should be recommended for approval by the DDRB.

Walkway Corridors

Well designed walkways create a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians. They encourage people to live, work and play downtown. They create an active, linear public place for people to walk, shop, relax and socialize. Walkways help create a marketplace of people, goods and ideas. Walkways may incorporate street trees and other landscaping, trash receptacles, street and pedestrian lighting, benches, bicycle racks and other downtown infrastructure.

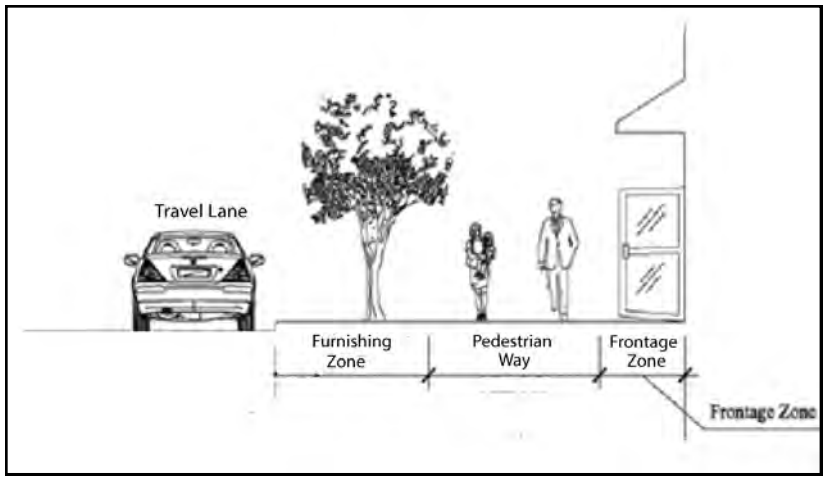
Applicants will be required to implement walkway standards to include sidewalk, street tree and pedestrian light standards for:

- All new construction projects, defined as construction of a new building on a property. Additions, modifications or alterations to existing buildings are not considered new construction.
- Buildings that have been vacant for one year or more and are converted from an inactive use (such as vacant, storage, warehouse or otherwise unoccupied) to an active use, and where conversion includes changes to the exterior façade, not including signage or painting.

All applicants must meet the requirements of the City of Amarillo Landscape Ordinance. Exceptions to the requirements of the City landscape ordinance are:

- Any trees that are installed within the right-of-way shall be of a species consistent with those listed in these standards.
- Any trees that are installed within the right-of-way shall be located within 2 to 4 feet of the curb edge.
- If trees are installed within the right-of-way, a permanent irrigation system shall be installed.

Improvements within the right-of-way including sidewalks, landscaping, pedestrian lights and other infrastructure may not be modified or removed without approval. Private property improvements shall not encroach upon the public right of way without City approval.



A typical urban streetscape with frontage zone, clear pedestrian way, and furnishing zone.

Great walkways provide a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians and enhance the downtown experience.

DOWNTOWN WALKWAY CORRIDORS: FURNISHING AND LANDSCAPE

Elements of a Streetscape:

Frontage Zone: The Frontage Zone is located immediately adjacent to buildings, walls, fences or property lines fronting a street or public space. This zone typically includes landscape, awnings and news racks, benches, and outdoor café seating.

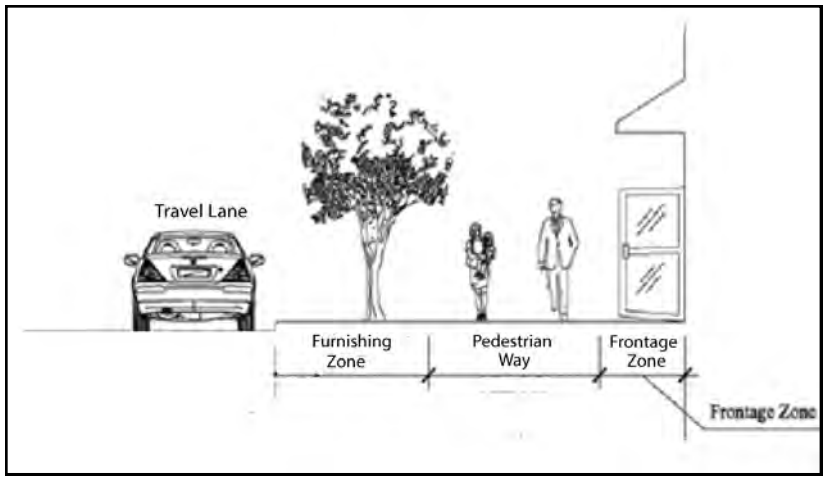
Pedestrian Way: The Pedestrian Way serves as the area dedicated to walking and shall be kept clear of all fixtures and obstructions. The clearance provided in the Pedestrian Way should generally be straight for the convenience of all pedestrians, but especially for the sight-impaired and those using a wheelchair. This zone is located between the Frontage Zone and the Furnishing Zone. The standard widths for the Pedestrian Way shall be a minimum of 7 feet. Where sufficient right-of-way and/or public access easement exists, the Pedestrian Way shall be greater in width.

Furnishing Zone: The Furnishing Zone lies between the Pedestrian Way and the Street. This zone includes street trees and utility poles, Parking and transit signage, bike and news racks, benches, transit shelters, waste receptacles, and outdoor seating depending on sidewalk width.

Walkway Landscape Intent:
Increase the quality of life for business owners, residents and visitors in Downtown.

Walkway Landscape Objectives:

- Provide shade and a sense of enclosure through the addition of more trees.
- Increase comfort for pedestrians.
- Visually enhance stark walls through the use of plant material.
- Create a linear park system.

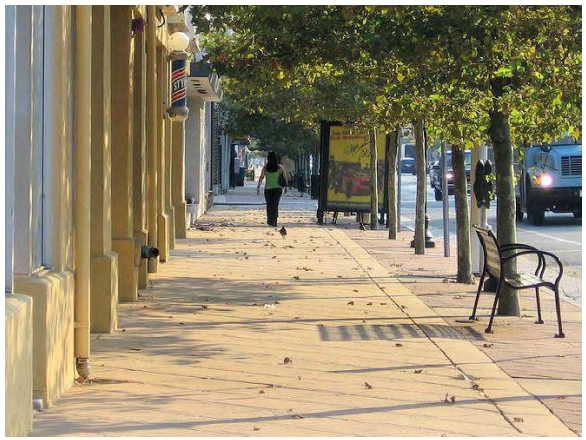


A typical urban streetscape with frontage zone, clear pedestrian way, and furnishing zone.

Great walkways provide a safe and comfortable environment for pedestrians and enhance the downtown experience.

STREET TREE STANDARDS

- Street trees shall be located in the Furnishing Zone next to the street (within 2 to 4 feet of the curb). On sidewalks greater than 18 feet, a double row of trees is allowed.
- Street trees shall be deciduous in order to provide shade in the summer and light in the winter.
- Permanent Irrigation shall be provided to ensure the life of the tree.
- Trees shall be pruned to a clearance height of 7 feet. Exceptions may be made for newly planted trees.
- Trees shall be selected to fit the size and scale of the setting.
- Trees shall be a minimum of 3-inch caliper. 4 inch or larger caliper is encouraged.
- Planting distance shall be a maximum of 25 feet. Exceptions may be made to accommodate curb cuts, fire hydrants, fixed infrastructure elements, and primary building entrances.
- Trees shall be planted flush with the sidewalk surface using tree grates or planting wells. Tree grates shall be adjustable to allow for tree growth and shall be securely attached. Tree grate openings shall not exceed 3/8 inch. Planting wells shall be planted with plants that are hardy in the Amarillo area and shall be maintained.
- In areas with narrow sidewalks, suspended paver grates that allow for the placement of pavers directly over the tree planting area may be used.
- If infrastructure prevents the use of at-grade planting, a raised planter may be used. Other techniques will be considered on a case by case basis.



Street trees shall be deciduous, a minimum of 3-inch caliper when planted and located in the furnishing zone near the curb.

- The use of root barriers is encouraged to prevent sidewalk damage as the trees grow.

Street trees help create a linear park and enhance both the aesthetics and function of downtown sidewalks.

APPROVED DOWNTOWN STREET TREE LIST

Street trees are those planted adjacent to the streets in the sidewalk Furnishing Zone. The following trees are recommended for planting in tree wells in sidewalks:

Shumard Red Oak	Shademaster Honey Locust
Lace Bark Elm	Cedar Elm

The following trees are recommended for planting in sidewalks where turf or plantings surround the trees:

Burr Oak	Shumard Red Oak	Shademaster Honey Locust
Cedar Elm	Chinese Pistache	

LANDSCAPE STANDARDS

- Developments that are set back from the building line shall incorporate landscaping such as bushes, flowers and other plantings.
- Durability of materials at street level are important Downtown. Pots and planters shall be of clay, concrete, ceramic or masonry materials.
- Potted plants shall be compatible in scale and design with the immediate surrounding area.
- Pots shall be located in the furnishing or frontage Zones and shall not interfere with the pedestrian way.
- Climbing vines and public art are encouraged for large blank walls to add texture and form.
- Drought-tolerant plantings are encouraged.

Climbing vines and public art are encouraged to help soften large blank walls.

Benches provide comfort for downtown pedestrians and are encouraged.

MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

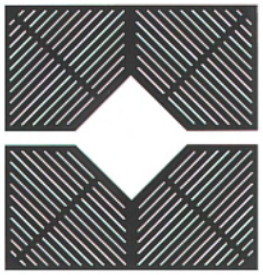
- Exhaust/venting, trash containers, and noise-generating mechanical systems shall not be placed adjacent to the walkway in a manner that diminishes the comfort of pedestrians. Exceptions for existing structures may be made if the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it is physically impossible and there are no other alternatives based on the original design of the building.
- Ventilation devices shall not be located in the pedestrian zone. Exceptions may be made if the applicant can clearly demonstrate that a prior condition based on existing infrastructure prevents an alternative.

WALKWAY FURNISHINGS

- Walkway furnishings, such as benches and trash receptacles, are encouraged. They add comfort and draw people to sidewalks downtown, reinforcing the concept of Downtown as a market place and sidewalks as a linear park system.
- Permanent elements shall not be located in the pedestrian way.
- Benches shall be compatible with other benches along a block face.
- Benches shall be constructed of quality, durable material.
- Other streetscape furnishings such as bike racks, trash cans, and other movable objects shall be compatible with existing furnishings along the block.

Bike rack

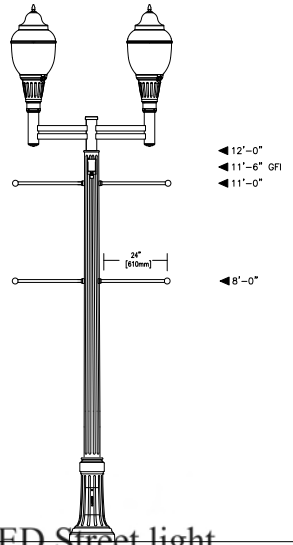
Two sided information kiosk



48” Tree grate and frame

Trash receptacle

Bench

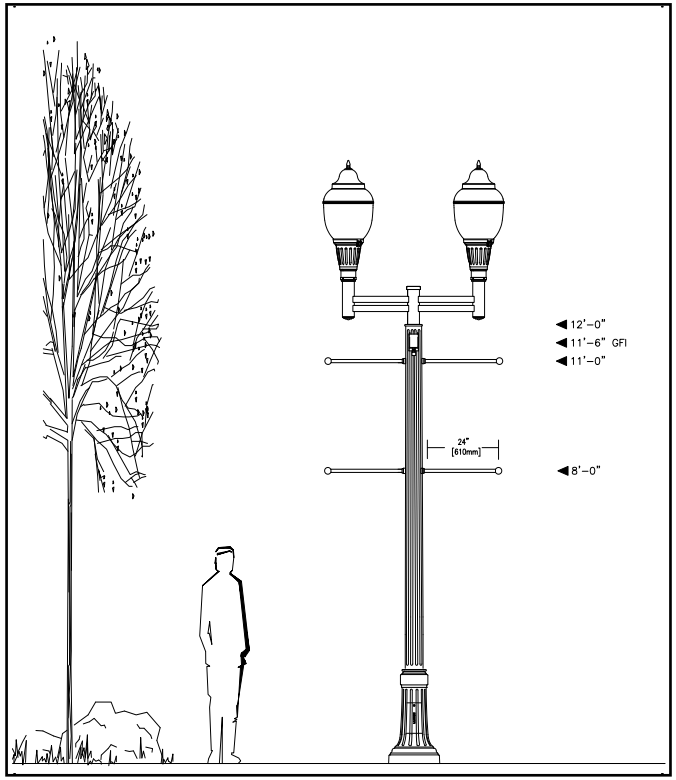


~~LED Street light~~

The above elements have been selected for Downtown as a standard. Developers installing pedestrian lighting and tree grates shall incorporate the above design.

PEDESTRIAN LIGHT STANDARDS

- Installation of pedestrian lighting is required for new developments and redevelopments of vacant buildings. Pedestrian lights shall be the designated design for Downtown (see image and description on right).
- Pedestrian lights shall be located approximately at the mid-point between street trees.
- Maximum spacing is 50 feet.
- Lights shall be located in the Furnishing Zone. Spacing requirements can be adjusted to accommodate mature existing trees, curb cuts, fire hydrants, fixed infrastructure elements, steps and existing buildings.
- All lighting within the walkways shall cast a white light.



Pedestrian lights help create a safe, pleasant environment Downtown. Lights installed shall be of the above design.

SIDEWALK STANDARDS

- Sidewalks are required for all developments downtown along street-facing facades. New developments and redevelopments of vacant buildings shall install new sidewalks if none exist or repair or replace existing sidewalks where needed.
- All sidewalks shall have a minimum of 7 feet of linear unobstructed pedestrian way.
- Sidewalks shall be concrete, brick, high quality concrete pavers, or a combination of these. Incorporating brick in sidewalks is encouraged.
- Synthetic surface treatments are not allowed.
- When sidewalks are removed and replaced or new sidewalks are added, materials used shall be compatible with the adjacent sidewalks in pattern, texture and color.
- Asphalt is not allowed.

High quality sidewalk material is important to help create a safe and attractive walkway. Incorporating brick is encouraged.

SKYWALKS AND UNDERGROUND PASSAGES

- Skywalks and underground passages are not allowed.
- Exception cases must meet the following: 1) Will not result in substantially removing pedestrians from the street or sidewalk; 2) Does not block Downtown views; 3) Does not create unpleasant or unsafe conditions for pedestrians below; 4) Is necessary for public safety where pedestrian travel on the street is either severely hampered or unsafe due to substantial obstructions to pedestrian circulation or adverse street conditions; 5) Is necessary as a connector for correction facilities for transporting inmates or for medical facilities for moving patients.

BUILDING EDGE STANDARDS

- Buildings shall face the street or other public spaces with a setback of no more than 5 feet from the back of the City right-of-way.
- Changes to existing building facades shall be consistent with existing architecture, architectural features and floor plans. The ground level shall be designed in a way to allow conversion to retail or other active uses if they are not feasible at the time of opening.
- Street-facing facades shall have significant transparency with windows.
- Overly tinted, reflective or opaque glass is not allowed on the ground floor of buildings.
- The ground floor of buildings shall include architectural relief at least every 30 feet. This relief may include, but is not limited to doors, change in depth, columns or post, windows, and changes in materials.
- New buildings should differentiate between the first and second floor.
- Windows, stoops and porches shall open to the street.
- Primary building entrances shall be clearly articulated using elements such as awnings, canopies, recessed entry or other similar treatments.
- Corner entrances are encouraged for strong visibility at intersections.
- Long facades shall be broken up with articulation or other architectural treatments.
- Where office and retail/entertainment spaces coexist, consider placing the retail entrances and prime exposure at the corners and the office entrances at mid-block locations.
- Bringing restaurant and retail activities out to the walkway is strongly encouraged where unobstructed pedestrian walkway is maintained.

Buildings shall face the street with little or no setback and shall incorporate transparency. This helps define the public space and creates interest along walkways.

Buildings that are located at or near the property line and have varying architectural articulation create interest for downtown users.

- Operable windows are encouraged for all buildings.
- Painting of the exterior is not subject to these standards.

FENCING STANDARDS

- Walled-off or fenced developments, defined as perimeter fencing around all or part of a development, are not allowed. Railings, such as railing for porches and sidewalk dining, are not considered to be included definition.
- Railings for outdoor dining shall not extend into the Pedestrian Zone, shall have a maximum height of 4 feet, and shall be of a high quality, durable material compatible with the streetscape.
- Chain-link fences are not allowed.
- Fencing of quality, transparent material, such as wrought iron, no higher than six feet may be considered for private courtyards or private parking that is part of a development. These applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Windows, stoops and porches shall open to the street.

Recessed entries is one method of clearly defining primary building or retail entrances.

(left) Bringing dining into the sidewalk where sufficient side-walk width exists is encouraged. Railings shall be no more than four feet and made of quality material.

Corner entrances and architectural features are encouraged for buildings located at intersections.

ROOF STANDARDS

- Roof shape and roofing materials shall be harmonious with existing buildings and overall building design.
- Parapets shall be high enough to screen all roof-mounted equipment from the view of pedestrians.

EXTERIOR LIGHTING STANDARDS

- Building-mounted lighting on facades or other accent lighting on architectural features are encouraged.
- Building lights shall be compatible with the architecture of the building.
- Lighting shall be designed in a manner to avoid disturbances and glare onto adjacent properties.
- White lights in street trees are encouraged.

BUILDING EQUIPMENT AND SERVICE AREA STANDARDS

Building equipment and service area include but are not limited to rooftop equipment, mechanical and electrical equipment and conduit, ducts, piping, fire equipment, water backflow devices, trash facilities, recycling facilities, utilities, satellite dishes, solar collectors, antennas, loading and unloading areas, and draining facilities.

- Building equipment and service areas shall be designed and located so that they are not the primary building feature or interfere with pedestrian and/or vehicular circulation.
- Equipment and services shall be combined when possible.
- Equipment and service areas shall be incorporated into the design of the building.
- Dumpsters shall be located in the alley if it exists. If no alley exists, dumpsters shall be located at the rear of the property or out of sight from the street and screened from public view.
- Rooftop equipment shall not be visible from the street or neighboring properties at the same level or below.
- Visible equipment shall be constructed of non-reflective material and screened to the greatest extent possible.
- Screening materials shall be chosen to blend with and complement the architectural style of the building.

Parapets shall screen all roof-mounted equipment from the view of pedestrians.

Exterior lighting can accent architectural features and is encouraged.

TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION FACILITIES

Temporary construction offices, storage sheds, trailers, barricades, fences and the like will be allowed as necessary during the construction of a permanent building.

- Such facilities shall be placed as inconspicuously as possible to the general public and/ or neighboring property owners.
- Construction trailers shall be located within the designated limits of construction.
- Under certain circumstances approval may be given to locate construction trailers at another location. Approval shall be limited to cases where site characteristics make it difficult or impractical to locate a trailer on the construction site.
- Temporary screening materials along fenced construction area are encouraged to minimize the visual impact of the construction areas and fencing.
- Creative designs on the construction fence are encouraged, including renderings of the proposed development.

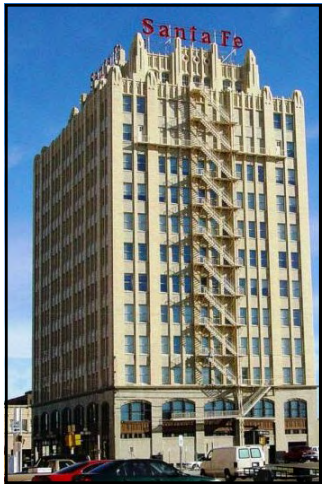
Temporary construction fences can add interest to downtown by utilizing renderings of the project or artistic images.

Temporary construction trailer

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The goal of historic preservation is to preserve and adaptively reuse the remaining historic and architectural resources and to make sure that new construction complements the adjacent historic and architecturally significant buildings Downtown. The character of historically and architecturally significant structures without local, state or national designation should also be respected. Property owners planning exterior changes to these buildings shall take into consideration their unique character.

Downtown Amarillo has many historic buildings. The preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings have been a focal point of the rebirth of Downtown Amarillo, particularly along Polk Street. Even with existing successful projects, there are still many more historic resources that are not yet rehabilitated. Every effort should be made to restore historic buildings in a manner consistent with the character of their original state. preservation creates a distinct identity for downtown and the community as a whole. These distinctive features attract people, particularly young people, and serve the greater good of building a cultural identity for the community Rehabilitation is the process of returning a property to a condition that makes contemporary use possible while still preserving features of its historic, architectural and cultural significance.



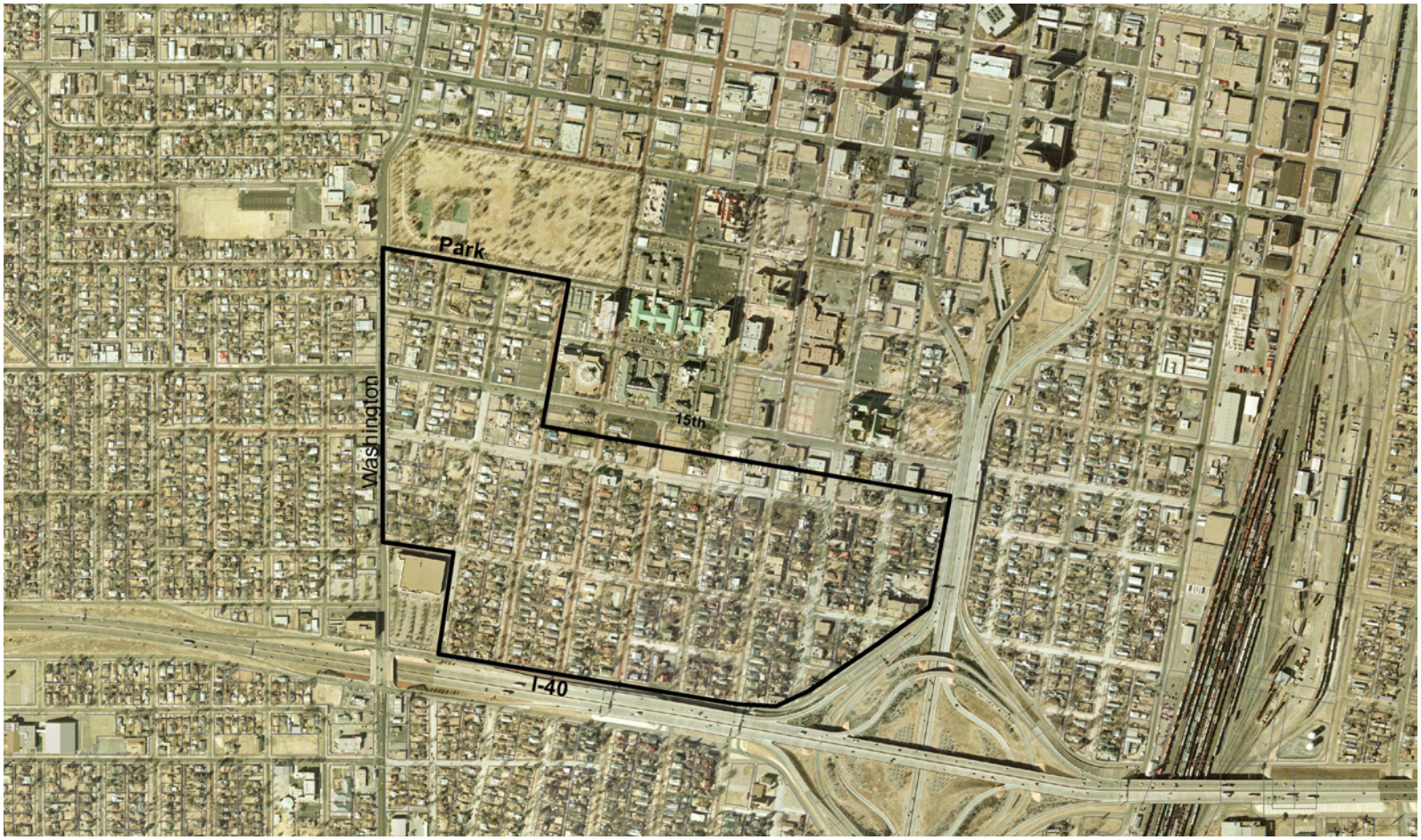
Preserving the architectural and cultural history of building downtown by restoring them for adaptive reuse is important to sustaining a vibrant downtown.

SINGLE FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods that are largely single-family, such as the Plemons-Eakle Historic District, have distinct characteristics that are worthy of preserving. The preservation of the homes and character of these neighborhoods are important to the City and to Downtown. These neighborhoods are characterized primarily by single-family and multi-family homes that were built as early as the late 19th century. These older neighborhoods are located within the Downtown Urban Design District, and require some variation of certain design standards. The following are those standards that will vary. All other standards in this document will apply to these neighborhoods.

- Sidewalks: New sidewalks shall be a minimum of 4 feet in width and consistent with the prevailing sidewalk width on the block.
- Setbacks: Setbacks for new developments shall be consistent with the prevailing setback on the block.
- Driveway width shall be consistent with the prevailing driveway width on the block façade.
- No off-street parking is allowed in the front setback except within the driveway. Front lawns and right-of-way other than the sidewalk shall not be paved.
- One-lane circular drives are allowed only where property is a minimum of 60 feet in width.
- Garage location shall be consistent with the prevailing pattern on the block.
- Allowed maximum height is two stories.
- Roof pitch shall be consistent with the prevailing roof pitch on the block.
- For single family properties, fencing shall be consistent with the citywide standard for single family use.
- Modifications (excluding normal maintenance) to trees, lighting and sidewalks within the public right-of-way are subject to these standards.
- Landscape and other non-structural improvements on private property outside of the public right-of-way are not subject to these standards or review.

SINGLE FAMILY NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICTS



The above boundary represents the single family neighborhood where special standards apply that differ on some issues from the rest of the downtown urban design district (see page 19).

STREET GRID

- Multiple block developments shall not close or span existing streets.
- Vacation of streets is highly discouraged and should be avoided. In unique circumstances where street closure is necessary, the street shall remain open to all pedestrians.

DRIVE THROUGH FACILITIES

- Traditional drive-through facilities are not allowed in the district. Exceptions are granted for bank drive-throughs. Non-Traditional drive-through facilities will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

PARKING STRUCTURE STANDARDS

- The amount of street frontage devoted to a parking structure shall be minimized by placing its shortest dimension(s) along the street edge.
- Parking garages shall be designed to provide retail and/or office uses at the street level. If these uses are not feasible at the time of development, design of the first level shall allow for future conversion to these uses and shall be significantly transparent.
- Parking structures shall incorporate architectural articulation to break up long facades.
- When parking structures are located at street corners, corner architectural elements shall be incorporated such as a corner entrance, signage, glazing, and/or visually exposed stairs.
- Garage facades shall be softened with landscaping such as vines or trailing plants, and/ or the use of architectural features and color. Architectural screens or techniques shall be provided to mitigate any adverse visual effect of the parking garage to the pedestrians and adjacent properties.

Parking garages can be designed in a way that positively contributes to the Downtown urban fabric. Architectural articulation, corner elements, and creating interest at the ground level are elements that are encouraged to be utilized.

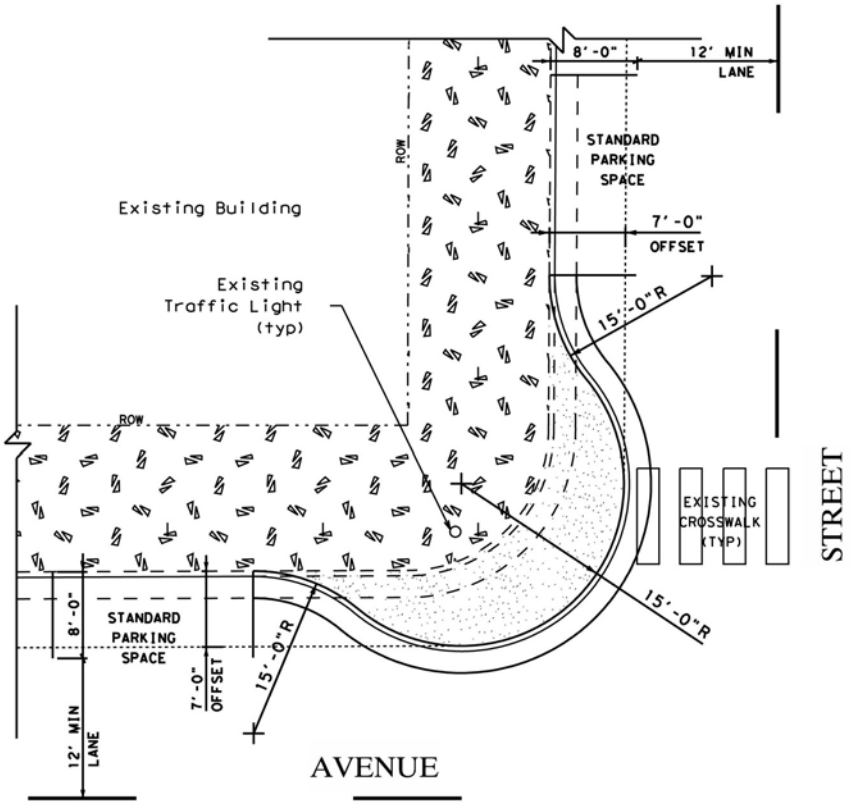
- Lighting within parking structures shall be directed inward to prevent light pollution.
- Parking structures and adjacent sidewalks shall be designed so pedestrians are clearly visible to entering and exiting automobiles.

PARKING LOTS

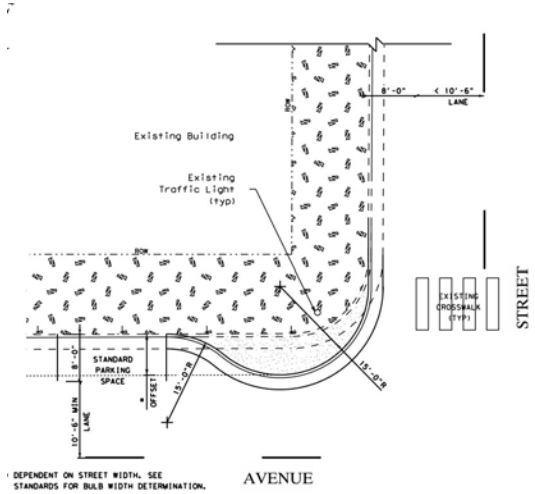
- Parking lots shall be screened with landscaping and/or fencing or walls of three to four feet. Fencing and walls must be of high quality material, such as metal, wrought iron, brick or stone. Chain link fencing is not allowed.
- Alternatively, parking lots may be set back from the public right-of-way with at least five feet of landscaped separation. The landscape area can include grass, ground cover, and/or low plantings. A fence or wall of no more than four feet may also be installed in this type of screening but is not required.
- Parking lots shall not extend into the public right of way.
- A maximum of one entrance/exit drive is allowed per parking lot per block façade.

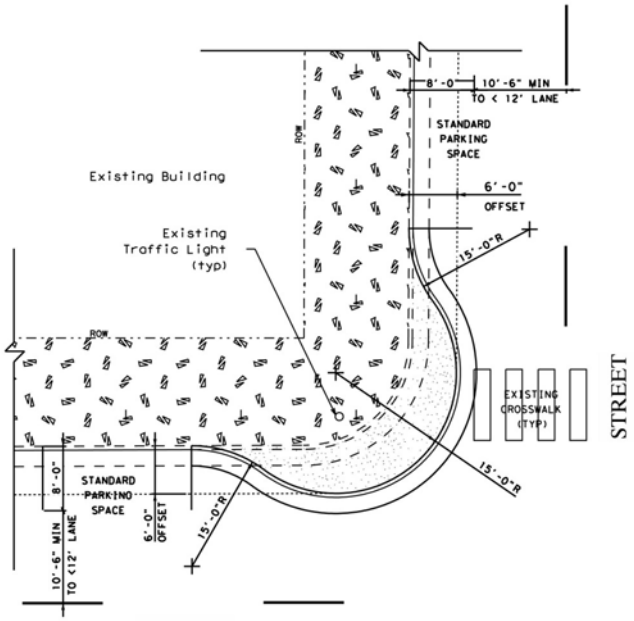
Examples of parking lot screening with low fencing and/or landscape.

Bulb-outs or curb extensions calm traffic, improve pedestrian safety, and delineate on-street parking. They are encouraged downtown where there is sufficient outer lane width. Applicants must coordinate any plans for bulb-outs with City staff to determine if they are appropriate for each location. Proper drainage must be maintained. These renderings show various concepts of bulb-outs that can be utilized downtown and vary depending upon existing traffic lane widths.



TYPICAL FOR STREETS WITH LANES GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO 12'PLUS 8' PARKING LANE





TYPICAL FOR STREETS WITH DRIVING LANES LESS THAN 12' PLUS 8' PARKING LANE

INTENT

- To encourage excellence in signage, both as a communication tool and as an art form.
- To allow and encourage creative and unique sign designs while preventing cluttered and unattractive streetscapes.
- To provide basic parameters for creative signs that may be as varied and unique as the businesses they represent.

The standards do not dictate design. Photographs of sign examples are used to illustrate design concepts, but should not be viewed as an exclusive list of acceptable signs. There are many acceptable ways to conform to the standards. In general, effectively designed signs should respond to the site, landscape, and architectural design context within which they are located. Signs shall be compatible in scale, proportion, and design with the building's façade and its surroundings.

The sign standards address the following:

- Appropriate locations
- Number of signs allowed on a property
- Maximum area for individual signs
- Height limits
- Color and materials
- Lighting

Well designed, creative signage can add vibrancy and interest to the downtown environment.

PROHIBITED SIGNS

- Off-premise signs
- Rooftop signs except when replacing historic sign
- Standard box cabinet wall signs
- Pole signs with the exception of parking lot pole signs and directional signs (Pole signs are signs on a pole, whether wrapped or unwrapped, and exceed 8 feet in height.
- Supergraphic signs

PROHIBITED SIGNS

Pole Signs

Supergraphic Sign

Rooftop Sign

Cabinet Sign

COMPREHENSIVE BUILDING SIGNAGE PLAN

Commercial signs on a new development with a uniform façade and more than one storefront, should relate to each other in terms of height, proportion, color, and background value. Maintaining uniformity among these characteristics reinforces the buildings façade composition while still retaining each business's identity. A comprehensive building signage plan shall be submitted for new developments and redevelopments of vacant buildings that will include retail storefronts.

A comprehensive building signage plan helps ensure continuity in the façade.

GENERAL DESIGN STANDARDS

Location

- Signs shall be positioned to emphasize or accent building elements such as storefront openings or entrances.

Dimensions and Scale

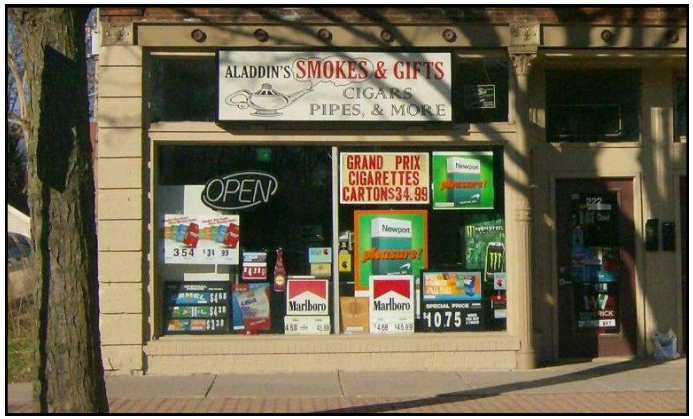
- Signs shall be consistent with the human scale of Downtown buildings and blocks.

Measurement of Sign Area

- Sign area for all signs shall be measured by means of the area of one rectangular or circular shape that encloses all sign elements except the support structure.
- For signs consisting of individual letters and/or graphics mounted on a building wall or window, the sign area shall be measured by means of the area of one rectangular or circular shape that encloses all of the letters and graphics that constitute the sign.

Number of Signs

- The number of signs per building façade shall be limited to the fewest necessary to clearly identify businesses located within the building.



An example of signage clutter

Colors and Materials

- Signs shall relate in color and material with the building facade and streetscape.
- Colors should contribute to legibility and visual appeal.

Graphics

- Sign graphics should be simple. Symbols and logos on signs should be able to be quickly read and easily remembered. Lettering shall be in proportion to the size of the sign.

Lighting

- Lighting sources should be external, shielded, and directed only at the sign. Internal illumination is acceptable only when the letters and/or logo, not the background, are lit.

WALL SIGNS

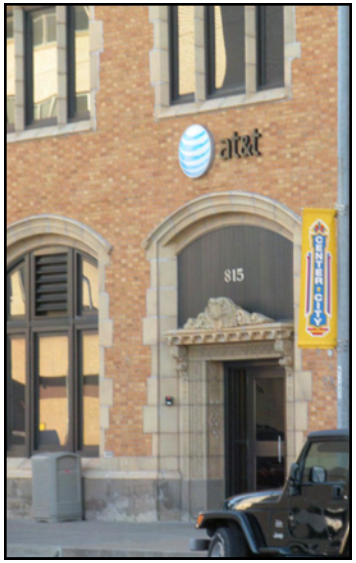
Wall signs are attached to and completely supported by exterior walls. A wall sign should be placed above first floor windows on a one-story structure or between windows on multiple story structures. One wall sign for each storefront or building façade that fronts a public street or alley is usually sufficient.

- Maximum width: 66 percent of the linear width of the business.
- Letter height: Lettering shall be in proportion to the size of the sign and the width of the storefront. Wider storefronts could have taller letters. As a general rule, the maximum height of a capital letter should be 3/4 the height of the sign background.

Signs on Side or Rear of Building

- Signs on aside or rear building elevations for a ground floor business is permitted, provided that the elevation contains a public entrance, fronts on a parking lot, or a street right-of-way.

The number of signs should be limited to the fewest necessary to clearly identify the business. This building has excessive signage.



Examples of wall signs that are in proportion to the size and width of the storefronts.

Upper Floor Signs

- Businesses located on a second floor and facing a street may have sign above the second floor windows, with lettering in proportion with the size of the sign and the width of the business.
- Wall signs above the 3rd finish floor line are not allowed. Building identification signs are an exception.

Building Identification Signs

Building identification signs are typically located at the top of a building and is often the name of a building or the major tenant.

- Limited to one sign per façade and to two signs per building with one message
- Sign on each building façade may include text and/or logo.

Building identification signs are limited to one sign per façade and two signs per building with one message.

AWNING AND CANOPY SIGNS

Awning and canopy signs are painted on or attached to an awning or canopy above a business door or window.

- Awning signs may be allowed on the shed portion of the awning, but is preferred on the valence flap. The flap height should be large enough for letters and symbols to be read easily.
- Maximum letter height: 75 percent of the height of the valence flap/shed area
- Minimum valence height: 8 inches
- Minimum vertical clearance from sidewalk: 8 feet
- Material: Matte finish canvas, glass, or metal
- Awning shape should relate to the window or door opening. Barrel shaped awnings should be used to complement arched windows while rectangular awnings should be used on rectangular windows.
- The color of an awning sign should complement the color and material of the building to which it is attached.

Awning and canopy signs are a good way to identify retail businesses. Awnings should be of quality material and relate to the shape of the window or door opening.

GRAPHIC/LOGO SIGNS

Graphic/logo signs bear a brand name, registered trademark or business logo.

- Signature graphics and logos are allowed to be used as signs for the businesses they represent.
- Graphic/logo signs can be wall signs, awning and canopy signs, or any other sign types identified in these standards.

PROJECTING SIGNS

Projecting signs are attached to the face of a building and project more than 12 inches from the wall surface.

- No more than one projecting sign may be maintained per tenant space frontage at the ground level of a building.
- Minimum vertical clearance: 11 feet.
- Maximum projection: 48 inches.
- Maximum area: 12 square feet.
- Location: Limited to first or second floor. A second or third story tenant with a separate entry door on the street is allowed to have a small projecting sign with a maximum area of 6 square feet near the tenant's street entry. Larger creative signs may be considered on a case by case basis.

HANGING SIGNS

Hanging signs are projecting signs suspended below a marquee or canopy, or from a bracket attached to a wall. Hanging signs can include logos, symbols, or lettering. A hanging sign is generally intended to be read by pedestrians and by motorists in slow-moving vehicles and should hang perpendicular to the building.

- To minimize visual clutter, hanging signs shall not be located within close proximity to other hanging signs or projecting signs, preferably at least 25 feet from each other.
- Minimum vertical clearance: 8 feet.
- Maximum projection: 48 inches.
- Maximum area: 6 square feet
- Location: First floor businesses and upper floor businesses with covered entries, porches, or balconies.

Creative projecting signs can add interest and contribute to the vibrancy of downtown.

MARQUEE SIGNS

Marquee signs are projecting signs attached to the perimeter or border of a permanently roofed building, and are constructed as a part of the building. Marquee signs are usually installed on theaters, cinemas, and performing art facilities.

- Sign copy: Limited to include the facility name and changeable copy related to current and future attractions.
- Maximum area for facility name: 40 percent of total sign area.
- Maximum area for the changeable copy: 80 percent of total sign area.

WINDOW SIGNS

Window signs are painted on or attached to the inside of a window facing the street. This type of signage can contain text, graphic logos, and other images.

- Window signs shall not completely obscure visibility into or out of the window. Exceptions may be made for signs that screen utility and office equipment.
- A maximum of one window sign is permitted per window pane or framed window area.
- Temporary window signs are allowed to identify special events and sales provided they are removed immediately following the event.
- Handwritten, paper, cardboard, and plastic signs are prohibited.
- Neon signs are permitted provided that all electrical supply cords, conduit, and electrical transformers are hidden from view through the window.

Marquee signs are typically installed on theaters, cinemas and performing art facilities.

Hanging signs can hang from a canopy or wall-attached bracket and help pedestrians identify retail businesses.

- Maximum area: 25 percent of the total transparent glass area of windows parallel to the street excluding the area of all glass doors.
- Location: Limited to ground floor window facing the primary street frontage and adjoining parking lot or commercial uses on second floor windows for commercial uses that do not have ground floor occupancy.
- Material: High quality, such as paint, gold-leaf, or neon.

PLAQUE SIGNS

Plaque signs are attached to surfaces adjacent to entries and are smaller versions of wall signs.

- Maximum projection: 2 inches.
- Maximum area: 2 square feet.
- Location: Limited to wall surfaces adjacent to tenant entry.
- Graphics: Business name and logo.

Examples of Window Signs

Examples of Plaque Signs

MONUMENT SIGNS

Monument signs are freestanding and are located adjacent to sidewalks. Such signs are typically used for buildings that are separated from adjacent streets by substantial setbacks.

- A monument sign shall be set onto a base or frame, presenting a solid, attractive and well-proportioned appearance that compliments the building design and materials.
- Locate in landscaped area and/or provide landscape around the sign.
- Maximum area: 60 square feet per sign face with no more than two sign faces.
- Minimum setback from the public right-of-way: 5 feet.
- Material: Opaque backgrounds with a non-reflective material.
- Lighting: External lighting fixtures designed to complement the appearance of the sign or internal lighting that only illuminates text and logos.
- Maximum height: 8 feet including base.
- Text: Limited to the building or development name, logo, and the business address.
- Background: Opaque and non-reflective.

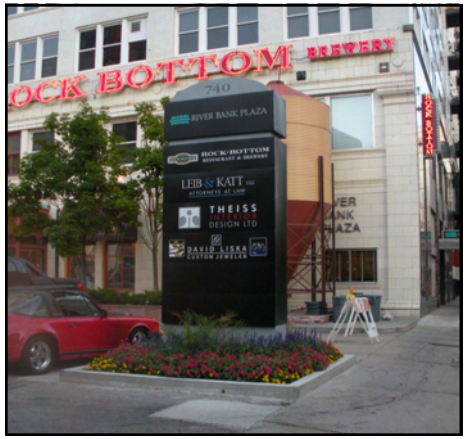
Monument signs are freestanding signs for buildings with substantial setbacks. They must be located in a landscaped area or landscape provided around the sign.

Tenant directory signs are pedestrian oriented in design.

TENANT DIRECTORY SIGNS

Tenant directory signs are used to identify businesses in multi-tenant buildings that do not have direct frontage on a public street. The design of the sign should complement the building's design. Tenant directory signs could be mounted flat against a solid wall within or near a main entrance, or incorporated into a freestanding sign.

- Orientation: To the pedestrian
- Location: Mounted flat against a solid wall within or near a main entrance or incorporated into a free-standing sign located on the property on which the tenants are located.



Free-standing tenant directory sign

Building banners add liveliness, color and a sense of movement to the walkway.

- Lighting: Directories may be externally illuminated.
- Maximum sign height: 6 feet including the sign base.
- Sign copy: May include building or development name, development logo, address, tenant names, and suite addresses.
- Maximum letter height: 8 inches for building/development name or logo, 4 inches for all others.

BUILDING BANNERS

Building banners contain a logo or design placed on lightweight material that can move with the wind. Banners are intended to add liveliness, color, and a sense of movement to a pedestrian-oriented street. The size of commercial banners should be in scale with the building. Flagpoles and brackets should be placed to not obscure architectural elements. Locations should be considered in context of the entire facade.

- Orientation: Vertical and mounted perpendicular to the building face.
- Projection: No more than 4 feet.
- Distance above ground: 8 feet at lowest point.
- Banners along the same block of a street should be set at the same angle from the buildings.

MURALS

Murals painted on a wall surface may be permitted upon approval to ensure that the artwork complements the design of the building in color, shape, and location on the building, and that material is durable and resistant to graffiti and weather.

Murals should complement the design of the building. A trompe l'oeil, or three –dimensional mural, can add character to a large blank wall.

SERVICE STATION SIGNS

Automotive service stations present unique design challenges when constructed within pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use districts like Downtown. These guidelines are intended to help ensure that service stations and related signage is compatible with other Downtown development. Service station design and signage should reflect a balance between providing adequate visibility for the business and protecting the visual appeal of Downtown streetscapes.

- Signs and business identity should not be the dominant architectural feature of the service station.
- Ground mounted monument signs are encouraged instead of signs located on the station canopy.
- When multiple corporations share one site, the corporate logos shall be located on the same sign.
- Signs related to safety, operations, and products is allowed at pump islands but shall be scaled for the visibility of the immediate user only.
- Repetitious signage on the same building frontage should be avoided regardless of the sign area allowed by ordinance.

A. Business Identification Sign Standards

Wall Signs

- Previous wall sign standards apply.

Monument Signs

- Previous monument sign standards apply.

Canopy Signs

- Maximum area: 24 square feet
- Maximum projection: 12 inches

B. Price Sign Standards

- Price signs shall be monument signs and can either be separate or incorporated with business identification signs. If separate, the following standards apply:
- Maximum height: 6 feet
- Maximum width: 3 feet

Service stations shall incorporate monument signs and voice repetitious signage on the same building frontage.

TEMPORARY SIGNS

Temporary signs include grand opening banners, community interest signs on private property, construction signs, and real estate signs. Temporary signs are allowed for a limited amount of time, as described below.

Event Signs

Signage for events will be approved by staff on a case by case basis. Event signage shall be removed within 24 hours of the end of the event.

Grand Opening Banner

Banners advertising a new business opening are permitted for a maximum of 30 days.

Community Interest Sign on Private Property

A single designated area not exceeding 6 square feet of a single window may be used for the display of a maximum of two temporary, professionally prepared, posters announcing an event of general public interest. This is in addition to any other permanent signs allowed. Such signs should be removed within 30 days or upon the conclusion of the event, whichever occurs first.

Construction Signs

- Signs advertising the various construction firms participating in the development project are allowed.
- The sign area shall not exceed 24 square feet.
- The sign shall not extend beyond the subject property nor interfere with traffic safety or visibility.
- Illumination is not allowed.
- Free standing signs shall have a maximum height of five feet.
- Temporary screening materials along fenced construction area are encouraged to minimize the visual impact of the construction areas and fencing.

Grand opening banners are permitted for up to 30 days.

Free standing construction signs may be a maximum of 24 square feet and five feet tall.

A-Frame Signs

Portable A-frame signs are signs or advertising devices which rest on the ground and are not designated to be permanently attached to a building or permanently anchored to the ground. A-frame signs in Downtown are designed to attract pedestrians, not passing motorists.

- Each restaurant or retailer is allowed to have one A-frame sign.
- A-frame signs shall not encroach into pedestrian walkway, required off-street parking areas, public roadways or alleys, and may not be arranged so as to create site distance conflicts or other traffic hazards.
- A-frame signs can only be utilized during regular business hours and shall be removed during non-business hours.
- Location: On private property or within the public right-of-way, providing they do not interfere with vehicle access, pedestrian movement or wheelchair access to, through and around the site. A minimum clear, linear access width of seven (7) feet shall be maintained along all sidewalks and building entrances accessible to the public.
- Material: Sturdy and not subject to fading or damage from weather. The use of paper or cloth is not permitted unless located within a glass or plastic enclosure.

Theater electronic message display

A-frame signs add interest to downtown and attract pedestrians to retail. They should not be placed in the pedestrian way.

Outdoor Electronic Message Display Signs

- Window electronic display sign locations shall not contribute to light pollution for any adjacent residential developments, produce a strobe-like effect, interfere with the effectiveness of any official traffic sign, signal or device, or exceed 5,000 nits during daylight hours or 500 nits between dusk and dawn as measured from the closest property line.
- Maximum of 25% of the sign face may be devoted to changeable copy.
- The message shall not change at a rate faster than one message every 5 seconds, except rolling signs. The interval between messages shall be a maximum of 2 seconds.
- Changeable copy signs shall not contain animation, flashing lights or displays.
- Changeable copy signs may not be used to display commercial messages relating to products or services that are not offered on the premises.

REAL ESTATE SIGNS

Real estate signs include leasing and for sale signs, and may be permanent or temporary, depending on the type of sign.

Permanent Real Estate Signs

Real estate signs intended to provide contact information for a management company leasing a building may be permanently placed in two ways:

- Integrated into an existing monument sign for the building on that property. The sign shall not be a stand-alone sign, but be secondary in nature to a monument sign that serves the purpose of identifying a building and/or its tenants.
- installed on a building façade that is no larger than 10 square feet. The sign shall be of quality, durable materials, shall be integrated with the building architecture.

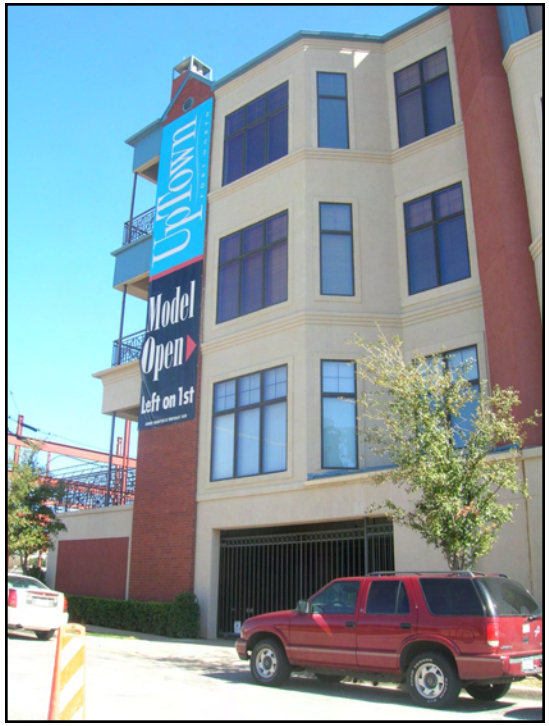
Permanent real estate signs are limited to one per building and to title text such as “for lease” or “office space for lease”, the name of the company and/or real estate agent and contact number.

Temporary Real Estate Signs

Temporary real estate signs are allowed for a six-month period. Extensions may be granted up to an additional six months if the applicant shows the necessity for additional time.

- Two exceptions to the 6 month time limit are 1) sign for first floor vacant ground floor space, which may have a sign meeting the size requirements below until that space is leased. The sign must be placed in the window for the vacant space it is referencing; 2) For sale sign for a building, which may be placed until the building is sold. One sign is allowed per building façade, no larger than 10 square feet and of quality, durable material.
- Window signs shall not exceed 10% of the window area or 10 square feet, whichever is larger. The window area shall be calculated by multiplying the window width times the height of the window, with a maximum calculated height of 15 feet. General temporary leasing or for sale signs in windows are limited to one per building façade, not including signs in ground floor space advertising that specific space.
- Where windows exist on the first floor and the first floor is fully leased, a sign may be placed on the façade if it is of quality material and integrated with the building architecture.
- No more than one non-illuminated for-sale real estate sign per occupancy frontage is permitted.
- Should the building not have windows on the street façade, a real estate sign , not to exceed 10 square feet of quality, durable material, may be placed on the façade.
- For buildings with a setback of 20 feet or more, a free-standing temporary sign of no larger than 16 square feet per face may be considered.
- Free-standing signs no larger than 16 square feet per sign face may be placed on vacant properties or parking lots. More than one double-sided or L-shaped sign may be considered if the parcel has 3 block faces or more.

Window signs may be used to advertise space for lease.



Examples of creative real estate signs for adaptive re-use of a building and new development.

Examples of permanent real estate sign of quality material integrated with building architecture.

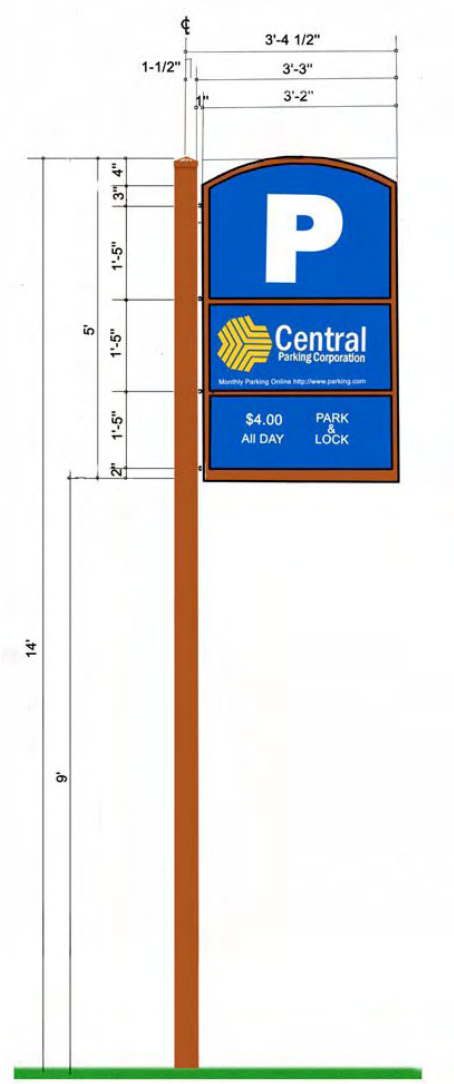
CREATIVE SIGNS

Creative signs bring fun and vitality to Downtown streets and are encouraged. Creative signs, like other signs, should be compatible with the architecture of the building in scale and location. They may be larger than the maximum size requirements stated in this document and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

PARKING LOT POLE SIGNS

The specifications shown in the graphic to the right serve as the basic standard for Downtown parking lot pole signs. Applications that conform to these standards will be approved. Any deviation from this basic design must be reviewed by the DDRB. Pole signs other than parking lot pole signs and directional signs are not allowed.

Examples of creative signs



Conforming Parking Lot Pole Sign

Well-designed creative signs add to the vibrancy of downtown and are encouraged.