

# **Sign Design Guidelines**

## 2C.1 Background

The purpose of the following sign design guidelines is to:

- improve the attractiveness and orderliness of the Downtown Retail District's building signs,
- appropriately identify the business being conducted on the site in a manner that is harmonious with an improving image for the retail district; and
- to prevent the loss of visual prominence resulting from excessive or inappropriate signs on nearby sites.

As in the architectural design guidelines, utilizing the history of the district has been selected as the most practical and marketable visual strategy for the long term improvement of the area.

These Sign Design Guidelines are for exterior signs on existing buildings as well as future new infill structures only. They are solely concerned with aesthetic appearance.

They are specifically not intended to contain any recommendations about the structural integrity or safety of any sign installation. The business owner and their subcontractor must comply with all city building and safety codes, regulations, ordinances, permits and inspections relevant to fabrication and installation of any sign.

*Please note that the Development Code contains Sign Standards for all other portions of the Project Area that are not covered in this docu-*

*ment. Those areas shall be governed by the standards for the underlying Zoning Districts. Please refer to the Development Code for standards not covered in these Sign Design Guidelines.*

## 2C.2 Glossary of Terms

**Awning Valance Sign:** a screen printed sign applied to the narrow vertical fabric panel at the lowest and front-most edge of a fabric awning.

**Color Palette:** a selection of preferred harmonious colors.

**Content:** the information or message of the sign.

**Gold leaf:** a sign maker's product, extremely thin sheets of pure gold which are valued for their long lasting ability not to tarnish or discolor.

**Letter Area:** the space within a rectangle drawn around all the letters in a sign.

**Letter Stroke Widths:** the width of the individual parts of the letter.

**Letter style:** the design of the alphabet. Goudy, Bodoni, Cheltenham, Helvetica and Futura are names of commonly used letter styles.

**Mid-block pass-through:** a public exterior or interior pedestrian corridor connecting the street frontage to the rear parking area.

**Mounting:** the means of installing or attaching the sign to the building.

**Placement Area:** the largest flat plane of the facade. In the 1950's styles Subdistrict only, a large

area of facade covered by a uniform patterned, textured, embossed or perforated decorative material may be considered as the Placement Area.

**Primary Facade Sign:** this is the visually dominant wall mounted and lighted required sign on the building's street frontage which identifies only the primary business in the building with street level frontage. The information message of a Primary Facade Sign is limited solely to the name of the business. Businesses elsewhere in the building without street level frontage will not be permitted to have any prominent facade signage. These non-frontage businesses will be identified at a discrete scale on /or adjacent to entry door and with second floor window signs.

**Sans serif:** letter styles with no serifs. (See figure 2C.1)

**Script Letters:** the letter style which is visually similar to handwriting.

**Secondary Facade Sign:** an optional sign on a secondary side elevation of a building. These secondary signs shall replicate as closely as possible the Primary Facade Sign while accommodating any changes in the architecture.

A rear entry sign is not considered a secondary facade sign.

**Sans serif :** a visual detail that divides letter styles into two major groups: serif letters & sans serif letters. (See figure 2C.1)

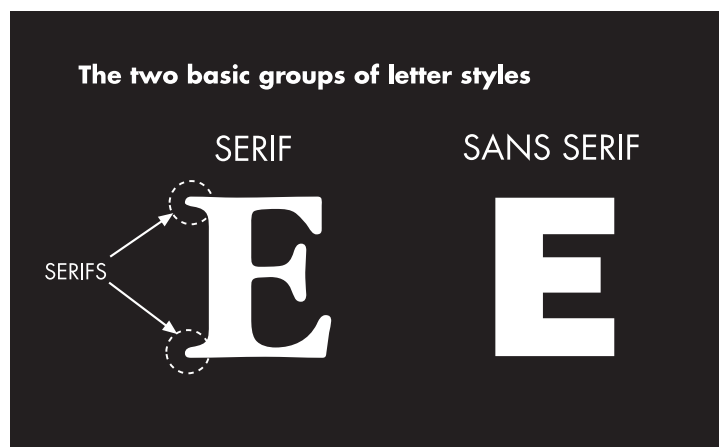
**Sign Area:** the space within a rectangle drawn around the outermost perimeter of a sign, not including mounting devices.

Why letter size is only one of the factors in sign design



The above two names, of equal area, illustrate the role that stroke width plays in the visual impact of a sign and why sign area cannot be the sole criteria for visual harmony among adjacent businesses.

The effect of stroke width on sign design



<b>THIN</b>	<i>Ontario</i> Ontario <i>Ontario</i> ONTARIO Ontario
<b>MEDIUM</b>	<i>Ontario</i> <b>Ontario</b> <b>Ontario</b> <b>Ontario</b> Ontario
<b>BOLD</b>	<b>Ontario</b> <b>Ontario</b> <b>Ontario</b> <b>Ontario</b> <b>ONTARIO</b>

Figure 2C.1: Elements of Letters

**Window Sign:** the sign(s) applied directly to the interior surface of the major display window(s) at street level. If the facade has two display windows of equal size separated by the main entry there can be a sign in each window. These sign(s) are pedestrian oriented and frequently shaded by awnings. Window signs shall not be lit externally.

### 2C.3 Permitted Signs

The following signs are permitted on all commercial facades in all three Subdistricts:

- Primary Facade Sign
- Window Sign
- Projecting Pedestrian Sign
- Rear Entry Sign
- Secondary Facade Signs
- Awning Valance Signs
- Second Floor Window Signs

Primary Facade Signs, Window Signs, Projecting Pedestrian Signs, and Rear Entry signs should be installed before the installation of the other permitted signs.

***To achieve the historic distinctions between the Subdistricts, the guidelines are different in each Subdistrict for Primary Facade Signs and Window Signs.***

These “Subdistrict specific” sign guidelines are discussed in the following sections:

- 2C.6 Turn-of-the Century Subdistrict
- 2C.7 1920 through 1940 Styles Subdistrict
- 2C.8 1950’s Styles Subdistrict

The guidelines for the Projecting Pedestrian-scaled Signs, Rear Entry Signs and Awning Valance Signs are the same for all three Subdistricts and are contained in the following section.

### 2C.4 Sign Design Guidelines common to all Subdistricts

#### 2C.4.1 Exempt Signs

One “open / closed” window sign per street frontage which does not exceed 2 square feet.

Temporary window posters which do not exceed 4 square feet for time-specific events.

Real estate “for sale or lease” signs.

Existing historic signs preserved or restored for their esthetic value.

Historic information / plaques on private property no greater than 2 square feet in area.

#### 2C.4.2 Prohibited Signs

Temporary “Sale” or holiday signs painted on windows.

Wall-mounted product billboards, posters and advertisements.

Signs painted directly on building surfaces, walls and fences. (Except windows and awning valances)

Roof mounted signs. (Except, with limitations, in the 1950’s Subdistrict)

Rectangular sign cans: sheet metal boxes with 90 degree corners, an acrylic face internally lighted usually with fluorescent tubes. *Note: Exceptions to this prohibition will be allowed in the 1950’s Subdistrict.*

Portable sidewalk signs.

Permanent banners, steamers, and bunting.

Balloons larger than 24 inches in diameter with advertising messages.

Printed posters displayed in windows for longer than 90 days.

Repetitious information within a single street frontage.

Signs with flashing lights.

Statues, sculptures, large three dimensional props and parked vehicles used for advertising.

Signs with mechanically moving elements.

Private parking information in letters larger than 2”.

Telephone numbers larger than 2” high.

Street names in letters larger than 2” high.

Information about goods and services not available on site.

**2C.4.3 Second Floor Window Signs**  
(no window signs are permitted above the second floor)

**Content:** The name of the business only.

**Maximum Number:** The maximum number of window signs shall be limited to two signs per second-floor business per elevation.

**Maximum area:** 30% of the area of the window glazing on which the sign is applied. For example, if the window is double-hung, the 30% restriction applies to only half of the total double-hung window.

**Letter style:** Serif letter styles in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict, sans serif letter styles in the 1920 through 1940's Styles Subdistrict and either in the 1950's Style Subdistrict.

**Material & color:** Must match the required street level display window sign of the same building.

**Lighting:** Window signs shall not be externally lit.

**2C.4.4 Awning Valance Signs**

Refer to the Facade Architectural Guidelines for awning materials, structure, colors, patterns and mounting heights.

**Content:** At the discretion of the business owner, awning valance graphics can contain

only one of the following types of information:

1. The address number only (no street names)
2. The name of the business
3. A one-line list of goods and services in letters of a uniform height not to exceed 50% of the vertical height of the awning valance.

**Placement:** Awning signs can only be placed on the awning valance. Address numbers or the business name graphics can be placed in the center of the valance. Placement at the left or right ends of the valance may be allowed if a street tree or light fixture is blocking the center portion of the awning.

**Maximum area:** The vertical height of the graphics must not exceed 50% of the vertical height of the awning valance not including a scalloped or decorative edge. If a striped awning fabric is selected a solid color printed panel should be placed behind the letters to increase their readability. If this is done, the height of the color panel should not exceed 60% of the vertical height of the valance (excluding any scalloped edge), and the letter height should not exceed 60% of the vertical height of the color panel.

**Letter style:** Serif letter styles in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict, sans serif letter styles in the 1920 through 1945 Subdistrict and either in the 1945 through 1960 Subdistrict. The letter style used on the awning valance must match a letter style selected for one of the other facade signs.

**Color:** The awning graphics color(s) may be selected from the Architectural Color Palette choices for appropriate contrast on the fabric color and pattern selected. Refer to the Facade Guidelines for a list approved awning materials.

**Application technique:** Due to the porous texture of awning fabric, the awning valance sign should be screen printed. This process will produce clean edges which are very difficult to achieve with hand painting. Screen printing is usually done before the awning is sewn and installed. Vinyl awning fabric and vinyl awning graphics are not permitted in this Subdistrict.

**Lighting:** The architectural lighting guidelines permit the whole awning to be internally lit. Any additional lighting shall not be permitted for the valance graphics.

### 2C.4.5 Pedestrian-scaled Projecting Signs

Every business with street level frontage should have a pedestrian-scaled projecting sign on the street facade of their building. (See figure 2C.2.)

**Definition:** A double-sided sign which hangs from a mounting device and projects out from the building facade over the sidewalk. These signs are of a size appropriate to the visibility of pedestrians, as opposed to persons in vehicles.

**Content:** The only words shall be the name of the business. Artwork is encouraged. The name of the business should dominate the design. Artwork (illustrations) shall be subordinate.

**Form & materials:** The main part of the sign shall be a panel. The shape of the panel shall be horizontal: the height of the panel shall not be greater than 70% of the panel width. Irregular shapes and cutout and applied elements are preferred.

**Placement:** The bottom edge of the sign shall be 7 feet above the sidewalk. The distance between the plane of the building facade and the sign shall be 9 inches.

**Maximum area:** 3.5 square feet.

**Minimum area:** 3 square feet.

**Letter styles, ornaments & colors:** The sign design does not need to be identical to the window or facade signs, but the elements

of letter style, ornaments and colors should be the same as those used elsewhere on the building.

**Mounting:** The sign may be hung from a wall-mounted bracket or hung from the structure of a non-retractable awning or mounted on the underside of an architectural cantilevered canopy. The sign shall be mounted in a manner that would allow it to swing if struck.

**Lighting:** Optional, if lighted, the source shall be external.

### 2C.4.6 Rear Entry Signs

**Content:** Only the name of the business.

#### Sign type options:

**Type 1:** A single-sided sign wall mounted parallel to the wall with 2” spacers between the sign and the wall.

**Mounting location:** Shall be no greater than 24” to the edge of the door. The mounting location may be on the left or right of the rear entry door. The top of the sign should be 4 inches below the top of the door.

**Maximum sign area:** 12 square feet.

**Minimum sign area:** 5 square feet.

**Type 2:** A double-sided sign mounted so as to project at a right angle to the plane of the wall. The bottom of the sign shall be 8 feet above the finished grade.

**Maximum sign area:** 9 square feet per side.

**Minimum sign area:** 5 square feet per side.

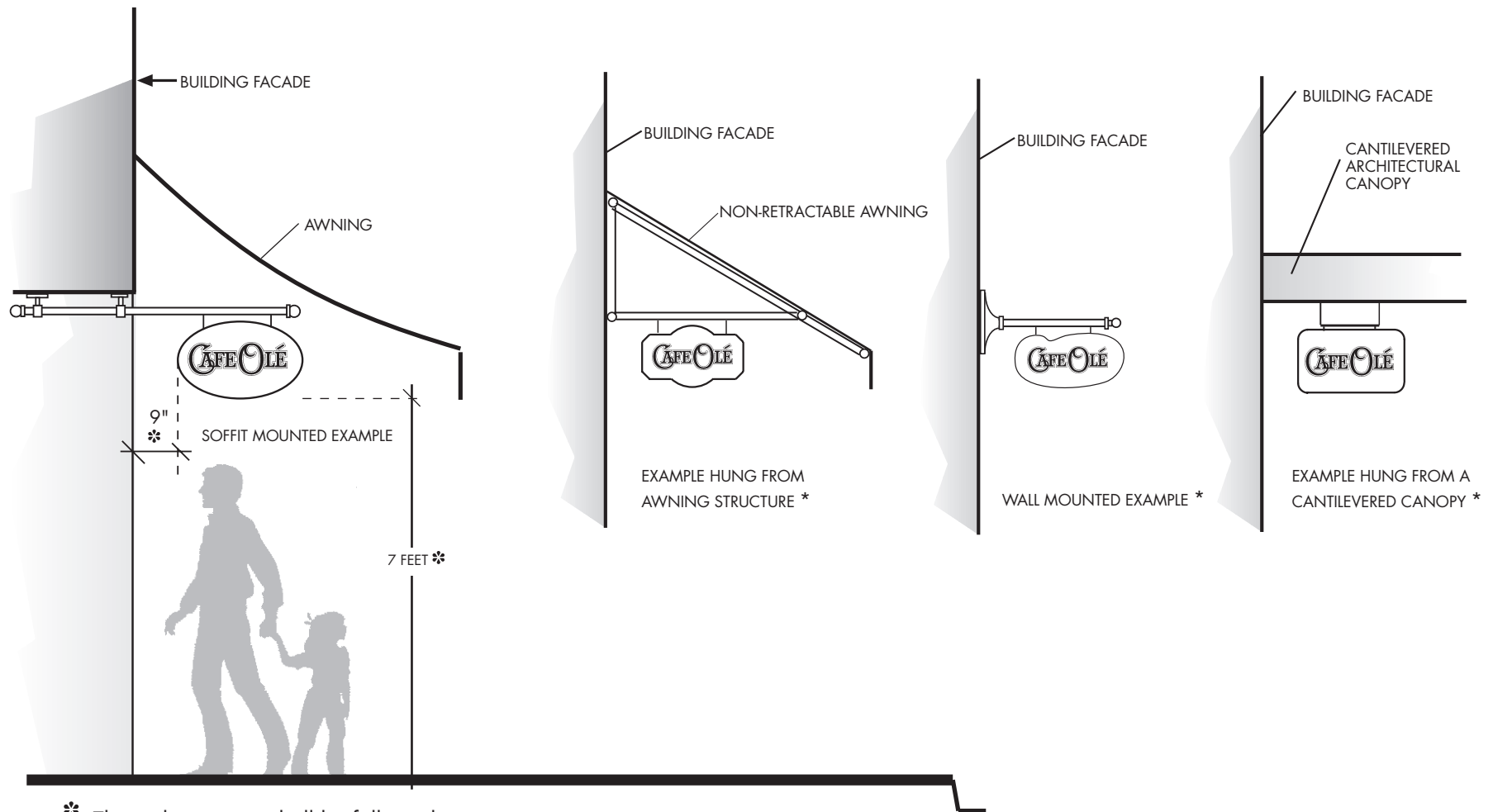
**Mounting location:** No part of this sign shall be closer than 2 feet to the property line.

**Letter styles, ornaments & colors:** Rear entry signs do not have to match the materials and fabrication methods of the Primary Facade Sign. But the letter styles and colors on the Rear Entry Sign should match those of the Primary Facade Sign. None of the letters shall be closer than 6 inches to the edge of the sign.

**Lighting:** External lighting is required on rear entry signs.

### 2C.4.7 Multi-tenant Signs

A building with multiple tenants shall be restricted to identifying those tenants without street level frontage at a discrete pedestrian scale on, or adjacent to, the entry door. The maximum letter height for this tenant list is 2 inches. Only businesses with street level entries and window frontage are permitted to display large vehicle-oriented Primary Facade Signs as described later in these Guidelines. Second floor business with second floor windows are permitted to have a sign in each of their windows displaying only their business name in an area no larger than 30% of a single pane of glass. No window signs are permitted above the second floor.



\* These dimensions shall be followed to maintain visual harmony between adjacent facades.

\* The minimum dimensions shall be followed regardless of mounting method.

Figure 2C.2: Examples of Mounting Options for Pedestrian-scaled Projecting Signs

### 2C.4.8 Mid-block Pass-through Signs

See the Facade Guidelines section for a description of and design guidelines for these pedestrian corridors.

No private business signs shall be allowed on the walls or within the landscaping of the mid-block pass-throughs unless there is a public entry that opens onto a mid-block pass-through. If there is a business entry on the mid-block pass-through, the sign guidelines will be the same as the guidelines for sign and sign lighting at a rear entry. Windows on a mid-block pass-through can be used for a business name, goods and services signs subject to the same letter area and placement guidelines as the street-facing windows.

## 2C.5 General Considerations

### 2C.5.1 Letter style exemptions and corporate graphic programs

These guidelines provide examples of historically preferred letter styles for each Subdistrict. However the business owner may use a non-historic letter style for the name of the business only for reasons of marketing. This exemption recognizes the evocative power of a letter style to communicate the nature of the goods or services offered. For example, a business in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict might have a particularly contemporary product line, for which a contemporary letter style might be more communicative. This exemption also allows busi-

nesses with existing multiple locations and an established graphic style to benefit from the public's familiarity with their visual image. This exemption applies only to the letter style of the business name. All other visual aspects of the business' sign such as scale, placement and content must conform to the Guidelines.

### 2C.5.2 Relationship between letter style and sign area

The letter stroke width has an important affect on the visual impact of a sign. Please refer to figure 2C.1. Letters that use very thick bold stroke widths do not need to be as large as letters that use thinner stroke widths to achieve the same readability and public awareness. Therefore, when these guidelines refer to maximum letter area some judgment must be exercised depending on large, medium or small stroke widths. Please refer to the stroke width example chart in figure 2C.1. Sign impact is also affected by the use of capital letters and script letters. Words using all capital letters do not have to be as large in rectilinear area as words using capital and lower case or script letters. The effect of these distinctions on sign area will be subject to the design review process.

### 2C.5.3 Multi-cultural, multilingual marketing

These Sign Design Guidelines primarily specify four types of signs for each commercial facade: Primary Facade Sign, Window Sign, Aw-

ning Valance Sign and a Pedestrian-scaled Projecting Sign. For those businesses who appeal to a multilingual clientele, these guidelines suggest using only one language per sign. Other signs on the facade may be in another language. This will avoid the visual clutter of making each sign bilingual. The use of more than one language or alphabet does not alter or expand the content and maximum area restrictions of these Sign Design Guidelines.

### 2C.5.4 Nonpermanent promotional banners

Temporary fabric banners can be displayed for a maximum of three times per year and shall be removed after 45 days, and shall not be replaced within the following 30 days. Holiday decorations shall be removed no later than 7 days after the holiday. Temporary window painting is not permitted.

### 2C.5.5 Incidental or minor signs

Incidental signs such as store hours, parking information, telephone numbers, credit cards accepted should be scaled for pedestrian, not vehicular, visibility. The maximum letter height for this type of information is 1.5". Sign location is limited to either on, or adjacent to, entry doors. The total sign area is limited to 2 square feet.



**2C.5.6 Address numbers**

Every business shall display an address number.

**Content:** Only the number. Not the street name.

**Required letter height:** 4 inches.

**Placement:** Centered, left to right, 12” from the top, on a glass door or centered on a glass transom or on the awning valance.

**Letter style:** Repeat a letter style used elsewhere on the building facade.

**Color and materials:** On glass, use a light color or gold or silver leaf that is in use elsewhere on the building, hand paint or screen print to the interior side of the glass. On the awning valance, screen print in a contrasting color selected from the Architectural Color Palette of the relevant Subdistrict.

**2C.5.7 Quality of sign materials, fabrication and installation**

All signs must be fabricated and installed to the highest standards of quality craftsmanship. All possible attention must be paid to the details of fabrication that result in an attractive and durable sign. Only exterior grade materials shall be used. Sheet metal detailing is a particular area for concern. The electrical power source such as wires or conduit for internal and external sign lighting must not be exposed. All the

appropriate manufacturers recommendations shall be followed when fabricating components, applying sealers, primers and finish coats of paint. The City reserves the option of inspecting the finished sign prior to installation.

**2C.5.8 Sign maintenance**

All exterior signs shall be kept clean and properly maintained. All supports, braces, anchors and electrical components shall be kept safe, presentable and in good structural condition. Defective lighting elements shall be promptly replaced. Weathered and/or faded painted surfaces shall be promptly repainted.

**2C.5.9 Encroachment Permits**

An encroachment permit is required before the installation of any sign that extends into the right-of-way.

Please contact the City of Ontario Engineering Department for further information.

### 2C.6 Signs for the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict

#### 2C.6.1 Primary Facade Sign

**Content:** The name of the business only.

**Placement:** The sign must be centered within the sign band of the building. (See figure 2C.3)

**Maximum letter height:** The maximum height of the largest letter must not be more than 70% of the flat vertical dimension of the building's sign band. The letters must not be placed closer than two feet from the left or right edge of the sign band. (See figure 2C.4)

**Minimum letter height:** The minimum height of the largest letter must not be less than 50% of the flat vertical dimension of the building's sign band.

**Letter style:** Serif and script letter styles similar to those shown on the Turn-of-the-Century letter style, ornaments and borders sample page are preferred. (See figure 2C.5)

**Graphic ornaments:** Refer to the Turn-of-the-Century Primary Facade Sign Ornament chart shown in figure 2C.5 for examples of acceptable ornaments. Ornaments shall not be painted directly on the wall. The material of the ornament shall be a minimum of half an inch thick. Ornaments shall be discreet in size and used in pairs symmetrically within

the sign band. They are not calculated as part of the maximum letter area.

**Color:** Gold or silver leaf is preferred. For painted letters, select either the major trim color, minor trim color or accent color from the architectural color palettes in the Facade Section of these Guidelines. Painted letters should have a high gloss finish.

**Materials / mounting:** Individually cut out letters are required. (Script letter styles can be linked). The letters must be a minimum of 1" in depth and mounted on spacers a minimum of 1" off the build surface. (See figure 2C.3) Any exterior grade materials and fabrication techniques are acceptable for the letters. Sculpted letters are preferred over straight cut letters. Refer to figure 2C.4).

**Lighting:** Refer to figure 2C.6. Visible neon tube light is prohibited in this Subdistrict.

#### 2C.6.2 Window Sign

**Content:** Window signs must contain the name of the business. They may also contain brief information about the goods and services. The letter size of any supplemental information about goods and services should be no larger than 30% of the letter size of the business name. (See figures 2C.7 & 2C.8)

**Placement:** If the building facade is symmetrical with a central entry and two major windows, there should be a window sign in each window. If the facade is asymmetrical, a

window sign should be applied in only the largest window.

**Maximum letter area:** 15% of the area of the window glazing on which the sign will be applied, not including ornaments or borders. (See figure 2C.7)

**Minimum letter area:** 10% of the area of the glass, not including ornaments and borders.

**Letter style:** Serif and script letter styles similar to those shown on the letter style, ornaments and borders sample page are preferred. (See figure 2C.4)

**Borders and ornaments:** Every window with a sign must have an ornamental border. Borders on all frontage windows are preferred. Borders do not have to be placed on all four sides of the window. The inner edge of the border should not be further than 6" from the outer edge of the glass. The outer edge of the border shall be no closer than 3 inches to the outer edge of the glass. Words of a uniform height not to exceed 2" may be used as part of a border. (See figure 2C.8)

**Material & color:** For letters, ornaments and borders, gold or silver leaf or metallic vinyl are the preferred materials for window signs in this Subdistrict. Very light value colors are also acceptable. A black or very dark "drop shadow" color behind the letters is recommended to increase visibility. The sign(s) and borders shall be applied directly to the interior side of the glass window.

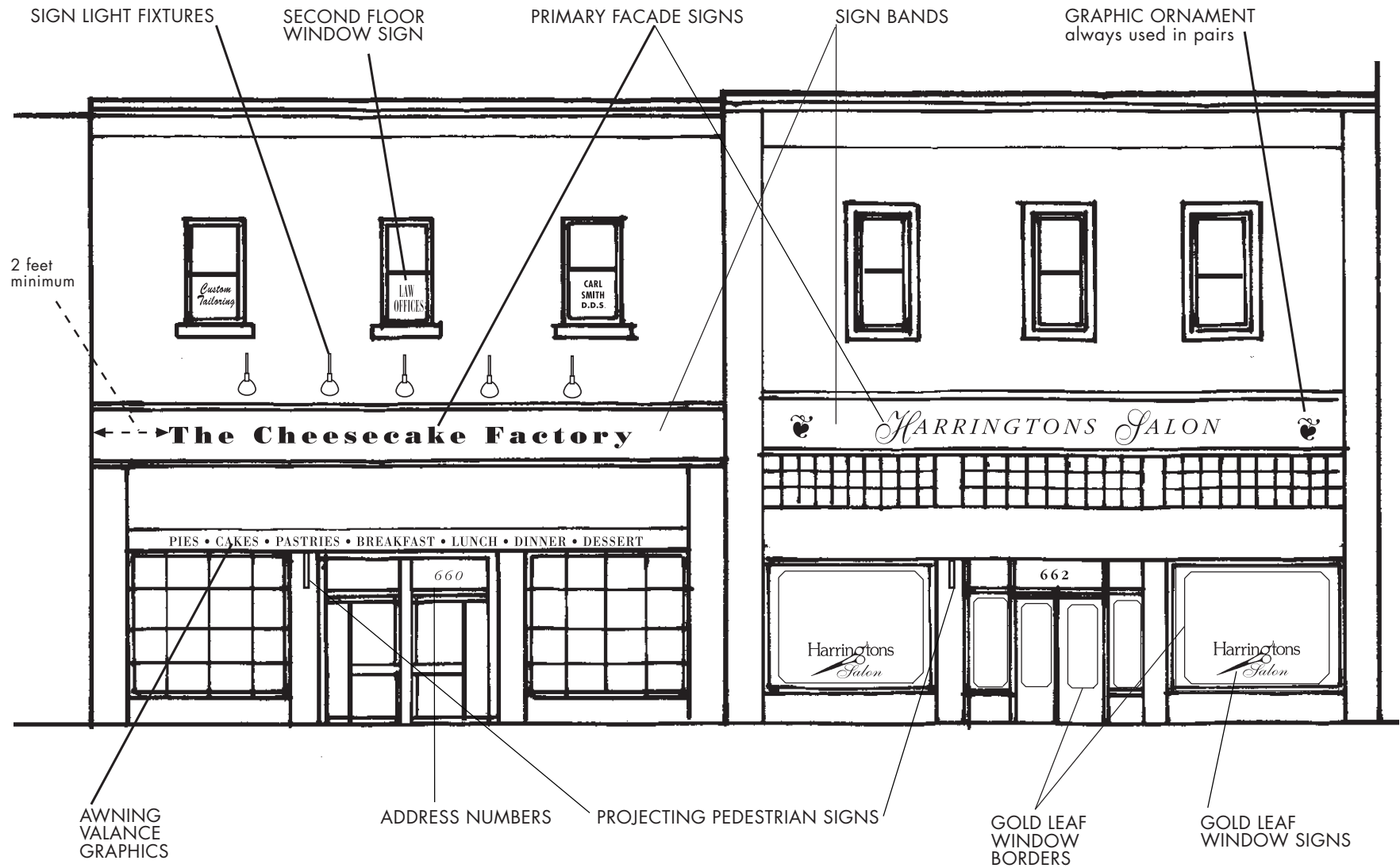


Figure 2C.3: Example of Facade Signs in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict

**2C.6.3 Prohibited Signs in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict**

Window signs above the second floor.

Pole mounted or freestanding signs.

Signs with neon tube lighting.

*Please see section 2C.4.2 for a complete list of prohibited signs in all Subdistricts on Page 84.*

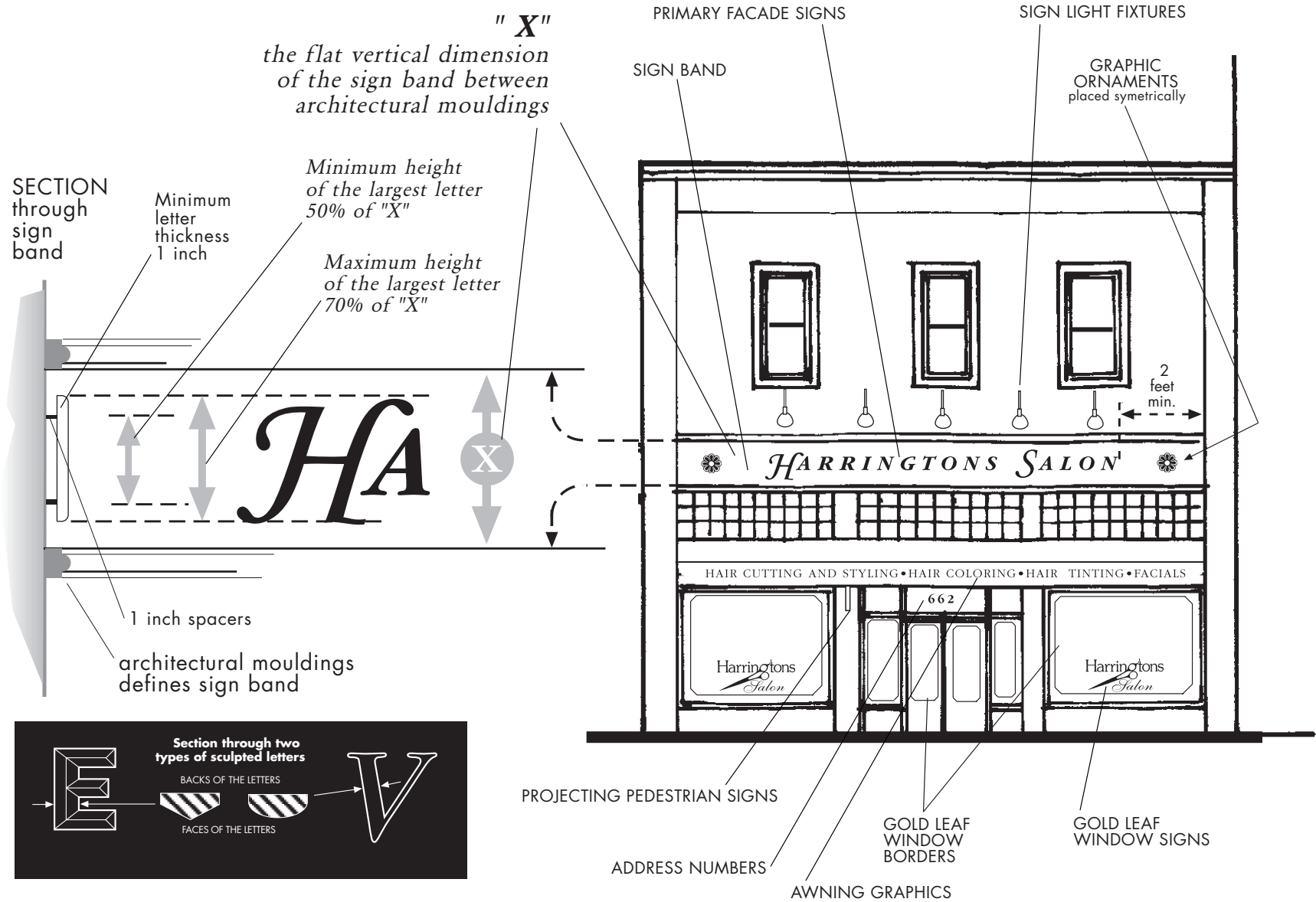


Figure 2.C.4: Detail of Primary Facade Sign in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict

Letters styles with "serifs" are preferred

**CENTURY SCHOOLBOOK**  
**Century Schoolbook**  
**BOOKMAN Bookman**  
**COLLEGE BLACK**  
**GARAMOND**  
**Garamond**  
**BODONI Bodoni**  
**PALATINO Palatino**  
**MICHELANGELO**  
**Goudy Bold**  
**Goudy Bold**

Script and italic serif letter styles

*Shelley Alegre*  
*Monotype Cursive*

Custom lettering, ornaments and decorative border examples



Figure 2C.5: Suggested Letter styles and Ornaments in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict

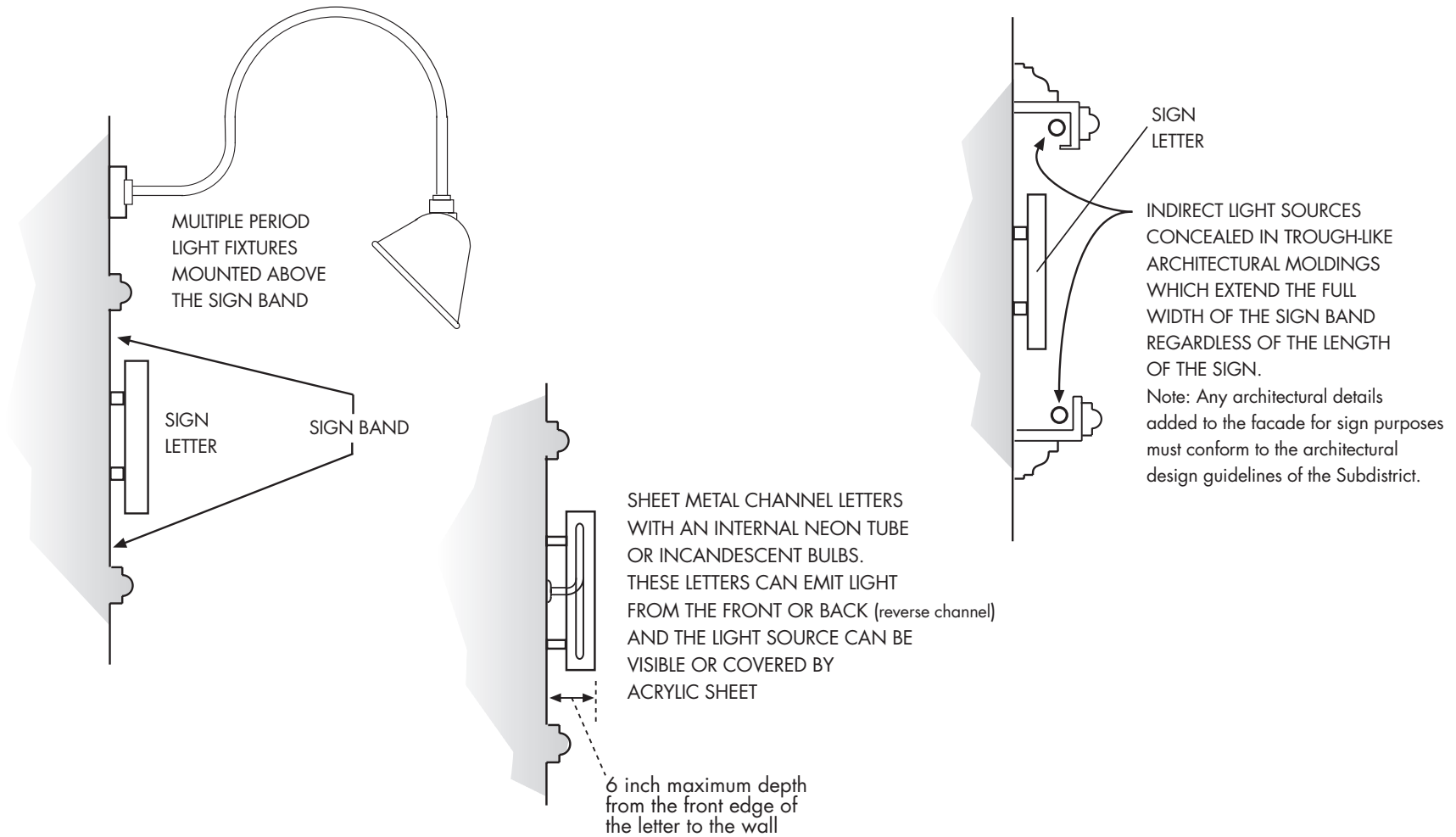


Figure 2C.6: Suggested Methods of Primary Facade Sign Lighting in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict



Figure 2C.7: Street level Window Sign Example in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict





Street level window sign example showing services information used as a border. This information is scaled for pedestrian, not vehicular, visibility. The height of the services/ merchandise letters must not be larger than 2"

Figure 2C.8: Street level Window Sign Example in the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict

## 2C.7 1920 through 1940's Subdistrict

This Subdistrict is more stylistically diverse than the Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict and therefore more open to interpretation by the Design Review Process. The most distinct styles within this time span are Art Moderne, Art Deco and the Streamline Style.

### 2C.7.1 Primary Facade Sign

**Content:** The name of the business only.

**Placement area:** Within the largest flat rectangular area on the facade. (See Figure 2C.9)

**Maximum letter area:** If the placement area as described above is 20% or more of the total rectilinear area of the facade, the maximum letter area is 15% of the placement area. (See Figure 2C.9)

If the placement area is less than 20% and more than 5% of the total rectilinear area of the facade, the maximum letter area is 20% of the placement area.

If the placement area is 5% or less of the total rectilinear area of the facade, the maximum letter area is 30% of the placement area. (See Figure 2C.10)

Ornamental elements are not calculated as part of the maximum letter area.

**Minimum letter area:** 60% of the allowable maximum letter area.

**Letter style:** Sans serif preferred, refer to Suggested Letter Styles for the 1920 through 1945 Subdistrict. (See Figure 2C.11)

**Color:** Select colors which are compatible with the Architectural Color Palette for this Subdistrict. Exterior grade metallic finishes are also appropriate for this Subdistrict.

**Materials / mounting:** Individual sheet metal letters or sheet metal signs with curvilinear silhouettes faced with painted graphics and visible neon are very appropriate for this Subdistrict. As in all Subdistricts, rectangular sign cans with an acrylic face and an internal light source (usually fluorescent) are specifically prohibited. (See Figure 2C.10)

**Lighting:** Double-sided projecting blade signs with neon are also appropriate. Blade signs are narrow in width, predominantly vertical with stacked letters. Channel letters mounted on exposed "raceways" are not allowed. (See Figure 2C.12)

### 2C.7.2 Window Signs

To promote marketability in all the Subdistricts, the preferred use of windows is to provide a view of products (merchandise) or a view into the business interior. Therefore, the greater portion of the window area must remain clear, free from graphics or obstructions. Windows should not be covered 24 hours a day by interior curtains, very dark tinting or non-merchandise equipment that blocks the view into the building.

**Content:** Window signs must contain the name of the business. They may also contain brief information about the goods and services. The letter size of any supplemental information about goods and services should be no larger than 30% of the letter size of the business name.

**Placement:** If the building facade is symmetrical with a central entry and two major windows, there should be a window sign in each window. If the facade is asymmetrical, a window sign should be placed in only the largest window.

**Maximum letter area:** 15% of the area of the window glazing on which the sign will be applied, not including ornaments or borders.

**Minimum letter area:** 10% of the window glazing, not including ornaments and borders.

**Letter style:** Sans serif letter styles are recommended. (See Figure 2C.14)

**Borders and ornaments:** Optional; Art Deco, Art Moderne and Streamline styles are encouraged.

**Material & color:** For letters, ornaments and borders gold or silver leaf or metallic vinyl are the preferred materials for window signs in this Subdistrict. Very light value colors are also acceptable. A black or very dark "drop shadow" color behind the letters is recommended to increase visibility. The graphics should be applied directly to the interior side of the glass window.

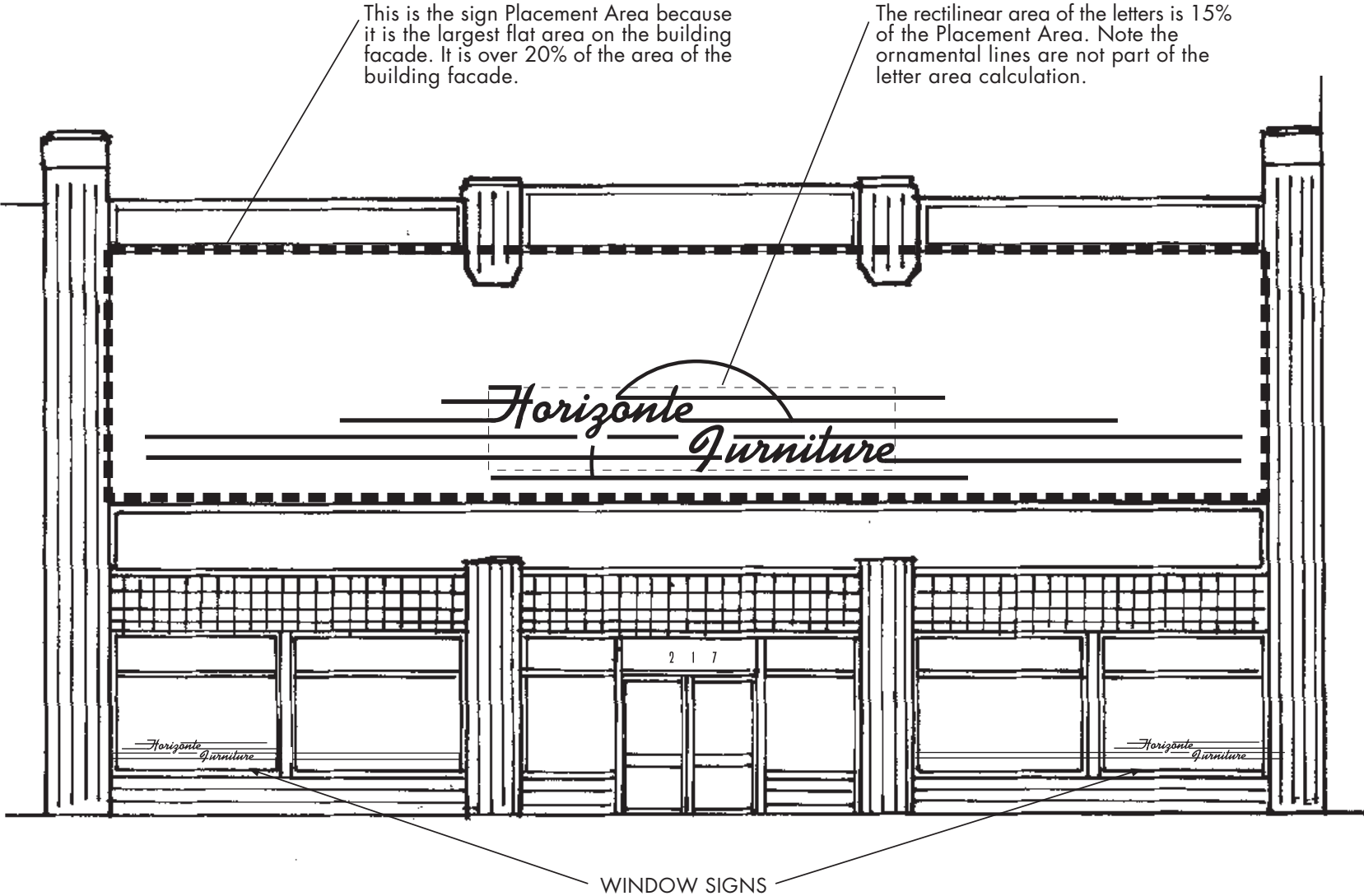


Figure 2C.9: Calculation of Maximum Letter Area for Primary Facade Signs in 1920's-1940's Subdistrict: Method 1

## 2c Sign Design Guidelines: Retail Districts

**Lighting:** Window signs should not receive their own exterior light source.

### 2C.7.3 Prohibited Signs in the 1920's - 1940's Subdistrict

Window signs above the second floor.

Pole mounted signs.

Freestanding signs.

*Please see section 2C.4.2 for a complete list of prohibited signs in all Subdistricts on Page 84.*



*Sheet metal signs with curvilinear (non-rectangular) silhouettes faced with painted graphics and visible neon are very appropriate in the 1920's through 1940's Subdistrict. These signs are double-sided and projecting. Single-sided signs mounted flat to the facade could also share this method of fabrication.*

Figure 2C.10: Examples of Allowed Sheet Metal Signs

This is the Sign Placement Area because it is the largest flat area on the building facade. It is 5% of the area of the building facade.

The rectilinear area of the letters (Letter Area) is 30% of the Placement Area.



Figure 2C.11: Calculation of Maximum Letter Area for Primary Facade Signs in 1920's-1940's Subdistrict: Method 2

FUTURA LIGHT Futura Light

**FUTURA EXTRA BOLD Futura Extra Bold**

**FUTURA CONDENSED BOLD ITALIC**

FUTURA CONDENSED LIGHT ITALIC

**IMPACT Impact**

**FRANKLIN GOTHIC CONDENSED Franklin Gothic Bold Italic**

*Franklin Gothic Book Italic*

ANNA *Kaufmann Bold*

Custom lettering of the era



Figure 2C.12: Suggested Letter styles and Ornaments in the 1920's - 1940's Subdistrict

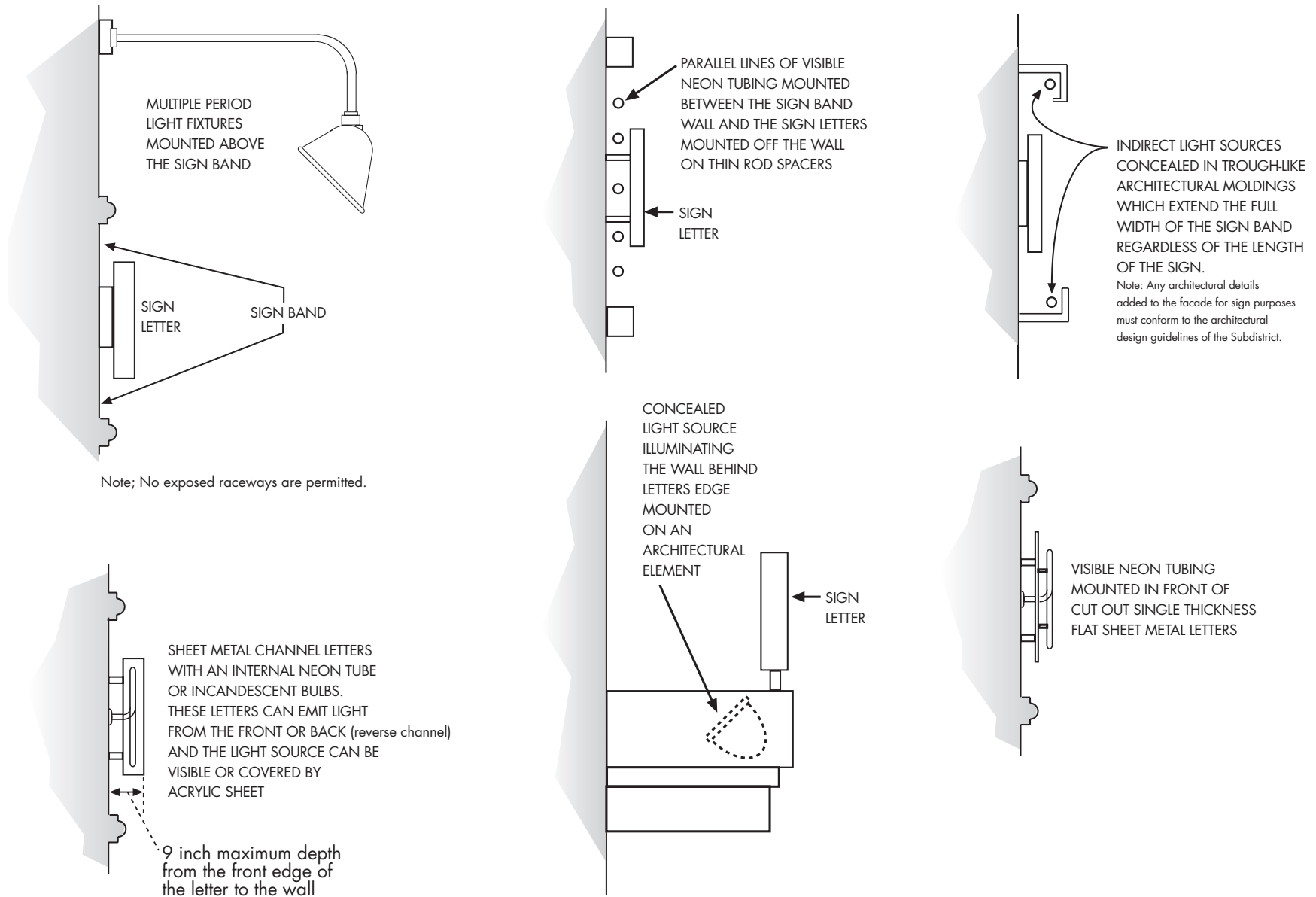


Figure 2C.13: Suggested Methods of Primary Facade Sign Lighting in the 1920's - 1940's Subdistrict

## 2C.8 1950's Styles Subdistrict

This Subdistrict is most stylistically flamboyant of the three commercial Subdistricts. The distinction between major architectural details and sign elements was frequently indiscernible in this style. Signs of the 1950's era were visually more important in the overall architectural design of the building than in earlier architectural styles. The name "Googie's" is often used for this style of commercial architecture. It was the name of a chain of coffee shops of the era. Double-sided signs that projected out from the facade and above the roof line were typical of the style. This "exuberance" is difficult to codify in design guidelines and therefore will be more dependent on the design review process to maintain harmony within the Subdistrict. Design and context will be very important in the approval process.

### 2C.8.1 Primary Facade Sign

**Content:** The words are limited solely to the name of the business.

**Placement area:** Within the largest flat rectangular area on the facade. In this Subdistrict only, a large area of facade which covered by a uniformed patterned, textured, embossed or perforated decorative material can be considered as the Placement Area. Ornamental portions of a sign, not the letters, may touch the edge of this placement area. (See figure 2C.14) Double-sided signs that project

out a maximum of 3 feet from the facade are allowed. Facade-mounted signs that protrude not more than 3 feet above the top of the facade are allowed. (See figure 2C.15)

**Maximum letter area:** If the placement area as described above is 20% or more of the total rectilinear area of the facade, the maximum letter area is 15% of the placement area. If the placement area is less than 20% and more than 5% of the total rectilinear area of the facade, the maximum letter area is 20% of the placement area. If the placement area is 5% or less of the total rectilinear area of the facade, the maximum letter area is 30% of the placement area. Ornamental elements of the sign design are not calculated as part of the letter area.

Figures 2C.9 and 2C.11 in the 1920's -1940's Subdistrict show the method of calculation of the letter areas for this Subdistrict as well.

**Minimum letter area:** 60% of the allowable maximum letter area.

**Letter style:** Custom designs, particularly script letters, are very appropriate. (See figure 2C.16)

**Ornaments:** Ornaments of the time period are encouraged in this Subdistrict. (See figure 2C.16)

**Color:** Colors must be compatible with the Architectural Facade Color Schemes.

**Materials / mounting:** Plastic and painted sheet metal are very appropriate. Textural and perforated sheet metal are also permit-

ted. Multiple elements of varying thickness are typical of this style.

**Lighting:** Neon, indirect lighting and internal lighting. (See figure 2C.17)

### Partially Roof Mounted Primary Facade Sign

The 1950's Style Subdistrict is the only subdistrict that allows any part of a sign to be attached to the building roof. In this subdistrict, projecting, double-sided primary facade signs can be partially roof mounted. The term "partially" means the sign must also be attached to the vertical facade of the building below the roof line.

The dominant thickness of the sign shall not exceed 9", subordinate portions of the sign design can be as much as 18" in thickness.

If the largest portion of the sign is below the roof line, (see Figure 2C.15 ) the maximum height above the roof line is limited to 4 feet and the maximum projection from the face of the building is limited to 3 feet.

If the largest portion of the sign is above the roof line, the maximum height above the roof line is limited to 8 feet and the maximum projection from the face of the building is limited to 3 feet. In addition, the widest portion of the sign (in side view) can not be higher than 75% of the distance from the roof line to the top of the sign. Irregular, non-rectangular shapes are more desirable in the design of these signs. For example, if the sign is 8 feet high above the roof line, the top of the widest portion of the sign should be no more than 6 feet above the roofline.



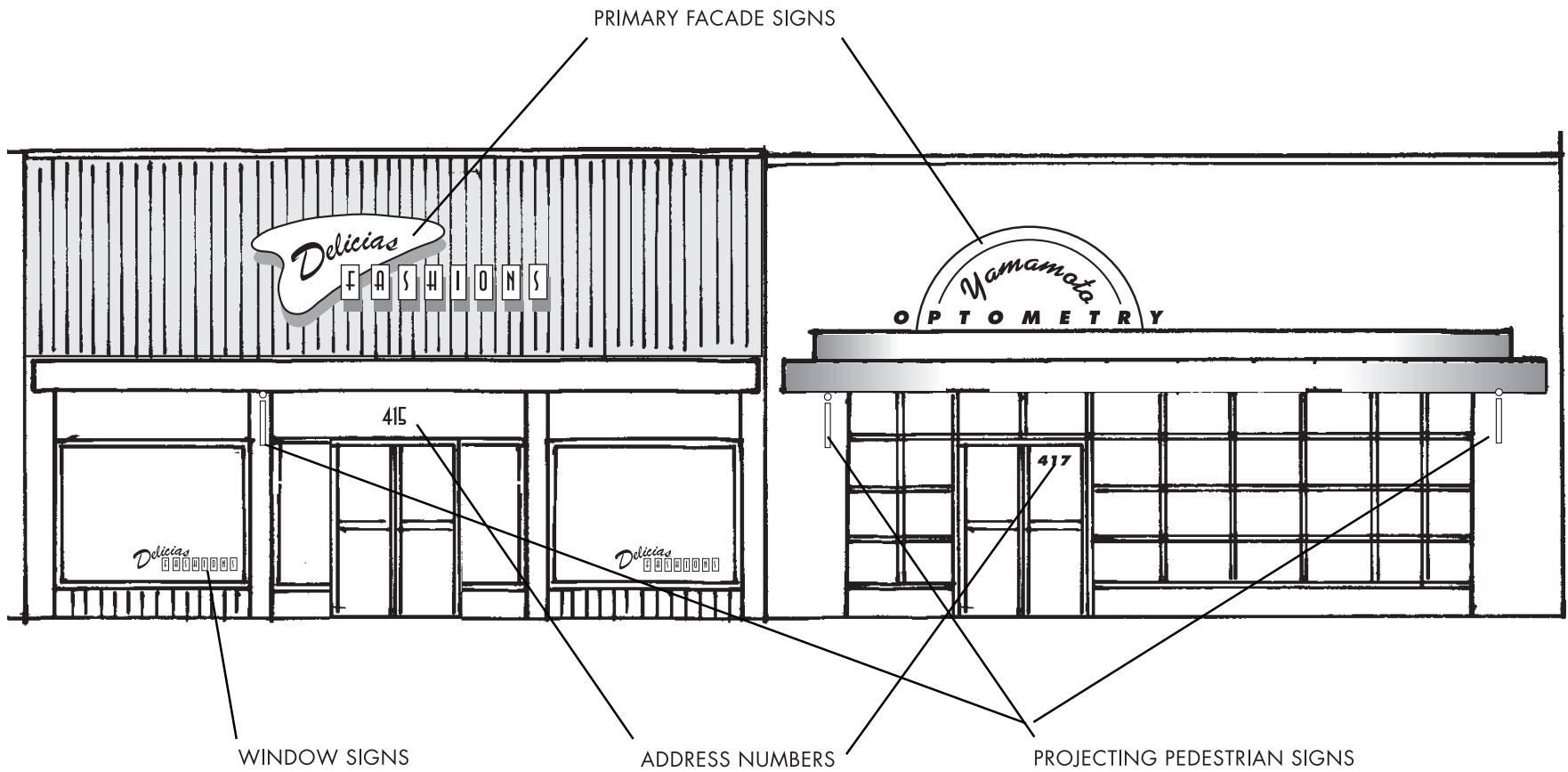


Figure 2C.14: Example of Facade Signs in the 1950's Style Subdistrict

To preserve appropriate sightlines these roof mounted signs can only be utilized on buildings with a minimum linear frontage of 20 feet. Special attention must be given to the position of roof signs on adjacent or adjoining buildings.



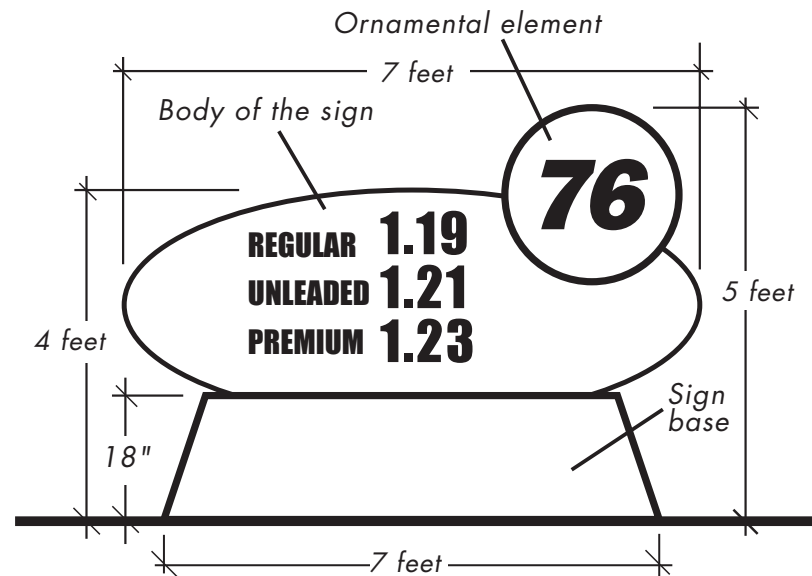
An example of a 1950's style partially roof-mounted sign with the largest portion of the design above the roof line.

**Monument Signs**

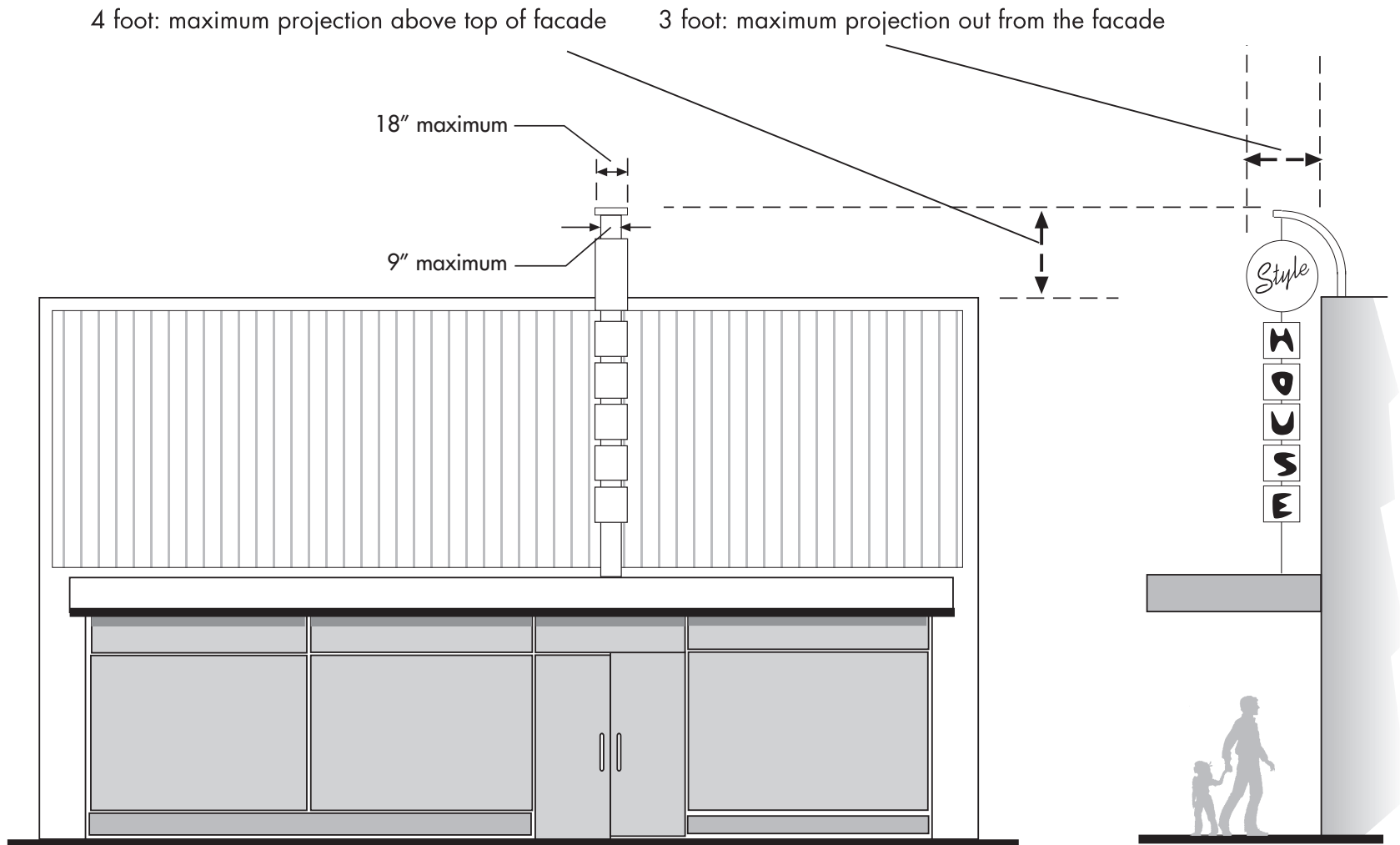
The 1950's Subdistrict permits freestanding doublesided monument signs under very specific conditions. The property must be a corner location. The building must be set back at least 20 feet from the front (Euclid) property line. The sign must be located at the corner of the property where the streets meet. The sign must be positioned at a 45 degree angle to the front street.

No part of the sign shall be closer than 5 feet to the property line. The sign must be mounted within a landscaped area no smaller than 60 square feet. The sign must be mounted

on a base 18 inches high and at least 12 inches thick. The length of the base must be at least 3 feet and not exceed 6 feet. The sign must not be rectangular. The main body of the sign may not be taller than 4 feet. A subordinate portion of the sign may be 5 feet above grade. This subordinate portion of the sign should be primarily ornamental, containing perhaps a symbol, trademark or logo, but no text. The total area of the sign may not exceed 18 square feet, not including the base. The total area of the sign is determined by multiplying the greatest width dimension (in feet) by 2.5 feet. (See figure below)



An example of a freestanding monument sign allowed in the 1950's Subdistrict.



NOTE: signs mounted solely from the roof are not permitted.

*An example of a 1950's style partially roof-mounted sign with the largest portion of the design below the roof line*

Figure 2C.15: Example of Facade Roof Signs in the 1950's Styles Subdistrict

### 2C.8.2 Window Sign

In the 1950's styles, the display windows were commonly a larger proportion of the overall area of the facade. Therefore, the glass area to letter area ratio has been changed in this Subdistrict so the window signs are not inappropriately large.

**Content:** Window signs shall contain the name of the business. They may also contain brief information about the goods and services. The letter size of any supplemental information about goods and services should be no larger than 50% of the letter size of the business name.

**Placement:** Window signs should be placed asymmetrically on the largest frontage window on the side closest to the entry, within 12" to the edge of the glass.

**Maximum area:** 10% of the area of the piece of glass on which the sign will applied, including ornaments.

**Minimum area:** 5% of the area of the glass, including ornaments.

**Letter style:** Should match the Primary Facade Sign.

**Material & color:** Gold or silver leaf or metallic vinyl are the preferred materials for window signs in this Subdistrict. Very light value colors from the architectural color palette are also acceptable. A black or very dark "drop shadow" color behind the letters is recommended to increase visibility. The sign

should be applied directly to the interior side of the glass window.

**Lighting:** Window signs should not receive their own external light source.

### 2C.8.3 Prohibited Signs in the 1950's Subdistrict

Window signs above the first (street) floor

Pole mounted signs

*Please see section 2C.4.2 for a complete list of prohibited signs in all Subdistricts on Page 84.*

Custom lettering typical of the era

DOM CASUAL Dom Casual

BARNEY BARNEY

McBOING

*Coffee Shop*

*Custom Car*

TIKI HUT

CALYPSO

*Brush Script*

WIDE LATIN

BRITANNIC

FUTURA BOLD Futura Bold

CAMPANILE

*Kaufmann Bold*

The word "ROCK" is in a bold, blocky font, and "ville" is in a cursive script. The "v" in "ville" has a long, sweeping tail that underlines the word.The word "Fanny's" is written in a cursive script inside a diamond-shaped frame with a grid pattern. The frame is set against a dark, circular background with a scalloped edge.The word "Goody's" is in a bold, rounded font. To the left of the word are three small circles of increasing size, and to the right are three larger circles of increasing size, suggesting motion or a trail.The word "Siam" is in a cursive script, and "MANIA" is in a bold, blocky font with a stippled or dotted texture.The words "AUSTIN NIGHTS" are in a bold, blocky font, slanted to the right. The text is set against a background of horizontal lines that create a sense of motion and depth.

Figure 2C.16: Suggested Letter styles and Ornaments in the 1950's Styles Subdistrict

## 2c Sign Design Guidelines: Retail Districts

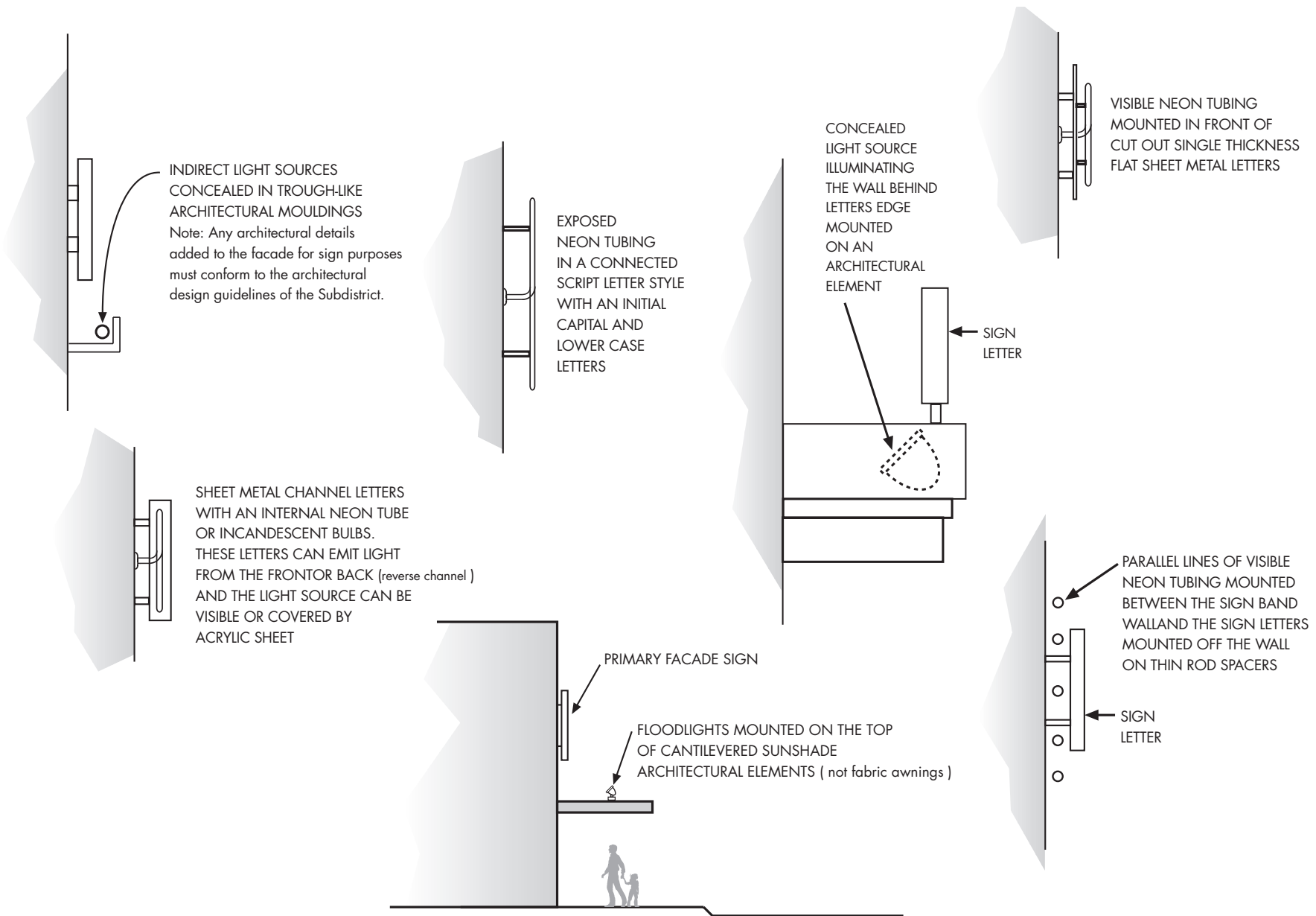
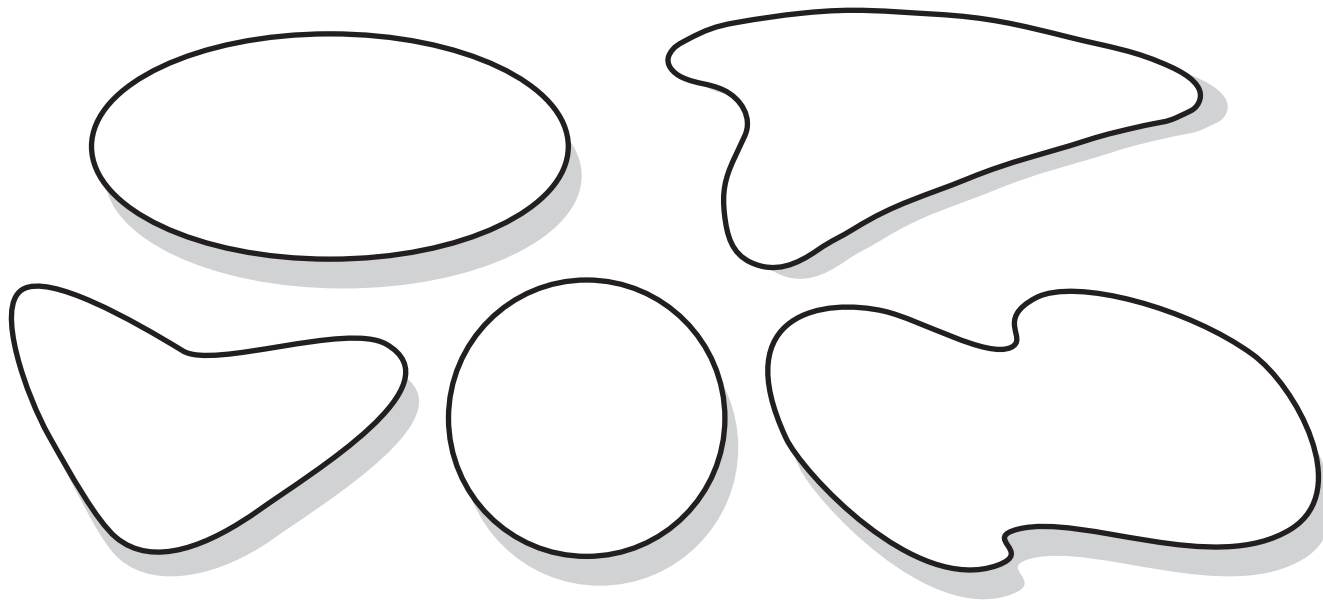


Figure 2C.17: Suggested Methods of Primary Facade Sign Lighting in the 1950's Styles Subdistrict

Sign Cans:

sheet metal sign cabinets with translucent acrylic faces illuminated by internal lights are permitted if they are not rectangular. (\*except as noted below)

( ACCEPTABLE SIGN CAN SHAPES ARE NOT LIMITED TO THOSE SHOWN HERE. )



\*INDIVIDUAL RECTANGULAR SIGN CANS MAY BE USED FOR INDIVIDUAL LETTERS ONLY.



Figure 2C.18: Example of Allowed Sign Cans

### 2C.9 Freestanding Signs for Businesses in Residential Buildings

Buildings whose architecture and grounds (front yard lawn) are predominantly residential in character must confine their name and information to a single freestanding sign. This one sign per building limitation is not altered by multiple businesses within a single building.

See figure 2C.19.

Note: no signs of any size should be mounted on any part of the structure. This limitation is consistent with the preservation of the historic character of the district. It would not be consistent with the purpose of these design guidelines to permit the same amount of sign area on a residential structure that would be appropriate on a commercial structure of similar size.

**Content:** Business name, hours and one telephone number per separately owned business.

**Form:** Freestanding, single-sided if parallel to the street, double-sided if positioned at 90 degrees to the street. The bottom edge of the sign area must be no lower than 18" off the ground. Some physical element of the sign should be a repetition or variation of an element on the building. This could be, for example, a porch bracket, a finial, a molding or window shape.

**Materials:** The predominant material of the building (residence) should be used as some component of the sign. For example, if the

residence wall material is shingle or plaster or brick, those materials may be used as a base on which a sign panel could be mounted.

**Placement:** To preserve the residential character of the site, the freestanding sign should be mounted in a landscaped area (the lawn) midway between the building (or porch) and the property line. If the distance from the front of the building (or porch) to the front property line is greater than 20 feet, the sign shall not be closer than 10 feet to the property line.

**Maximum sign area:** 10 square feet for a single business. 12 square feet total for multiple businesses.

**Minimum sign area:** 8 square feet.

**Maximum height:** 48 inches from the finished grade to the top of the sign.

**Maximum base height:** 24 inches from the finished grade to the bottom of the sign.

**Minimum base height:** 18 inches from the finished grade to the bottom of the sign.

**Letter styles:** Any serif letter style.

**Colors:** Colors that are compatible with the colors on the building exterior. Colors used for letters may be darker than the colors used on the building to increase their legibility. The predominant background color of the sign must match the predominant color of the building.

**Lighting:** Optional, if lit the source shall be external only.



Example of a free standing sign for a commercial business in a structure which is residential in character.

Maximum sign area:

10 square feet per side for one tenant

12 square feet per side for multi tenants

\* Examples of elements which relate the sign to the building

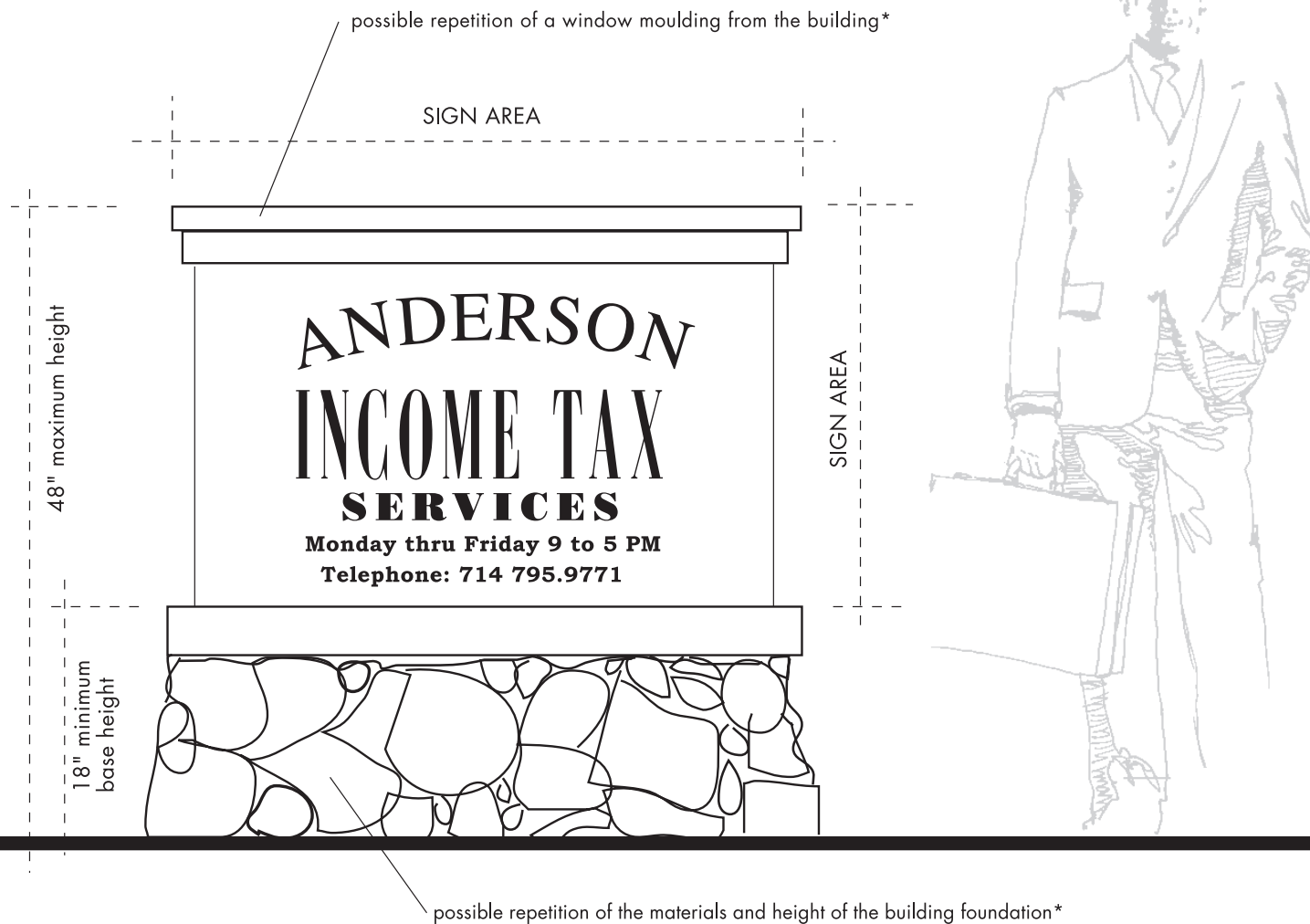


Figure 2C.19: Example of Freestanding Sign

### **2C.10 Sign Design Review Process and Submittal Items**

Sign Plans shall be submitted to the City of Ontario Planning Department for review and approval with final approval by the Building Department for permit issuance.

#### **2C.10.1 Submittal materials required for signs on new buildings**

Scale drawings of the entire facade showing the size and location of all signs, including window, rear entry and awning valance signs.

Engineering drawing certifying the structural integrity of the mounting technique for the Primary Facade Sign.

Colors and materials samples for the building facade and the signs.

Fee payment.

#### **2C.10.2 Submittal materials required for signs on existing buildings**

For new or modified signs on existing buildings submit the above items and current color photographs of the building.

If the design submittal does not comply with these Sign Design Guidelines and the Development Code, approval will not be granted. An applicant may appeal the Planning Department Staff decision to the Planning Commission.

**Table A: Sign Guidelines common to all Sub-Areas**

(N/A = not applicable)

Sign Type	Content	Placement	Max Number	Min. Sign Area	Max. Sign Area	Min. Letter Height	Max. Letter Height	Illumination
<b>Second Floor Window</b>	Business Name	Second floor windows only; no signs above second floor	Maximum of 2 signs per second floor business per street elevation	N/A	30% of glass area (1/2 the total glass area for double hung windows)	N/A	N/A	None
<b>Awning Valance</b>	1). address only, or 2). business name only or 3). one line list of goods & services @ 50% of valance height max.	Message layout centered on valance	One	N/A	50% vertical height including scalloped edge; 60% for stripped awning, excluding scalloped edge	N/A	N/A	None
<b>Projecting Pedestrian</b>	Business Name	7' from finished grade; 9" between bldg. & sign	One	3 SF	3.5 SF	N/A	N/A	External
<b>Rear Entry: Type 1</b> (single sided wall sign w/2" spacers between sign & wall)	Business Name	24" from left or right side of door; 4" from top of door	One (either Type 1 or Type 2 - not both)	5 SF	12 SF	N/A	N/A	External
<b>Rear Entry: Type 2</b> (double sided sign projecting sign)	Business Name	8' from finished grade	One (either Type 1 or Type 2 - not both)	5 SF	9 SF	N/A	N/A	External
<b>Multi-Tenants without street frontage</b>	Business Names suite numbers optional	Wall adjacent to entry or on entry door	One per entry: front, rear or mid-block passthrough	Determined by Max. and Min. letter height	Determined by Max. and Min. letter height	0.25 inch	2 inches	External

*Please note:*

*These tables provide a useful synopsis of the Sign Design Guidelines. **But these are not a substitute for reading the foregoing text.** Important details, variations, options, exceptions and subtleties of design are contained in the text and cannot be simplified into these tables.*

**Table 2C.1: Permitted Signs Common to all Subdistricts**

## 2c Sign Design Guidelines: Retail Districts

**Table B: Turn-of-the-Century Subdistrict**

Sign Type	Content	Placement	Max. Number	Sign Area	Min. Letter Area	Max. Letter Area	Min. Letter Height	Max. Letter Height	Illumination
<b>Primary Facade</b>	Business Name	Centered within sign band (Fig.2.C.3 )	One	N/A	N/A	N/A	50% of flat vertical dimension of sign band (Fig.2.C.4)	70% of flat vertical dimension of sign band (Fig.2C.4)	Refer to FIG.2.C.6 Visible Neon prohibited
<b>Window (ground floor)</b>	Business Name (information on goods & services: optional see Fig.2.C.8)	See Fig.2.C.7	1 per window for symmetrical facades w/2 equal windows & central entry; or 1 in largest window for asymmetrical facades	N/A	10% of window area, not including ornaments & borders	15% of glass area, not including ornaments / borders	N/A	info on goods & services: 30% of letter size of business name - max.	Interior display lighting only, no exterior lights for window signs

**Table C: 1920's through 1940's Subdistrict**

Sign Type	Content	Placement	Max. Number	Sign Area	Min. Letter Area	Max. Letter Area	Min. Letter Height	Max. Letter Height	Illumination
<b>Primary Facade</b>	Business Name	W/in largest flat rectangular area of facade (Figures 2C.9 & 2C.11)	One	N/A	60% of max. area	15% of placement area (see P 98 )	N/A	N/A	Refer to lighting chart Fig.2.C.12
<b>Window (ground floor)</b>	Business Name (information on goods & services: optional )	One per major window for symmetrical facades w/central entry; or 1 in largest window for asymmetrical facades	Two	N/A	10% of window area, not including ornaments & borders	15% of glass area, not including ornaments / borders	N/A	info on goods & services: 30% of letter size of business name - max.	Not Permitted

*Please note:*

*These tables provide a useful synopsis of the Sign Design Guidelines. **But these are not a substitute for reading the foregoing text.** Important details, variations, options, exceptions and subtleties of design are contained in the text and cannot be simplified into these tables.*

**Table 2C.2: Permitted Signs in Turn-of-the-Century and 1920's through 1940's Subdistricts**

**Table D: 1950's Style Subdistrict**

Sign Type	Content	Placement	Max. Number	Min. Sign Area	Max. Sign Area	Max. Height	Base Limits	Illumination
<b>Primary Facade</b>	Business Name	See page 104	One	60% of Max. Letter Area	See page 104	N/A	N/A	Internal or External see Fig.2.C.16
<b>Partially Mounted Roof Sign (Primary Facade)</b>	Business Name	See page 104	One	See Page 104-105		See Figures 2C.15 and pages 104-105.	N/A	
<b>Freestanding Monument (double sided)</b>	Business Name	Only on a corner lot, within landscape, at a 45° angle, not closer than 5' to the property line.	One	N/A	18 SF	48" from finished grade to top of sign with an additional 12" allowed for subordinate projection.	Required Height:18" Min. base length: 3' Max. base length: 6' Min. base width:12"	External (optional)
<b>Window (ground floor)</b>	Business Name	Asymmetrically (not centered) on the largest frontage window,12" from the edge of the window that is nearest the entry	Two	5% of the area of the piece of glass (not the total glass area of the facade)	10% of the area of the piece of glass (not the total glass area of the facade)	N/A	N/A	

**Table E: Sign for businesses in buildings of a residential character**

Sign Type	Content	Placement	Max. Number	Min. Sign Area	Max. Sign Area	Max. Height	Min. Base Height	Illumination
<b>Freestanding Monument (single or double sided)</b>	Business name, hours, & 1 phone no. per business	within landscape, 10' from property line or equidistant from the house/porch to the property line if this is less than 10'	One	8 SF	10 SF single business; 12 SF multiple business	48" from finished grade to top of sign	18"	External (optional)

*Please note:*

*These tables provide a useful synopsis of the Sign Design Guidelines. **But these are not a substitute for reading the foregoing text.** Important details, variations, options, exceptions and subtleties of design are contained in the text and cannot be simplified into these tables.*

**Table 2C.3: Permitted Signs in 1950's styles Subdistrict**

