

**The City of Douglas, Arizona Historic
Preservation Overlay
Design Guidelines**

INTRODUCTION

The "Historic Preservation Design Guidelines" set forth the necessary design guidelines for the consistent promotion of high quality I well-designed developments throughout Douglas's Downtown area. The design guidelines are composed of written statements and graphic illustrations which express the City's goals and basic design philosophy for the Downtown area. The guidelines establish the design criteria and concepts for what the City considers good design and quality development.

"Quality development" as used within the context of this document means development that is in compliance with the development standards of the City of Douglas Zoning Ordinance, the design guidelines set forth in this document, and the City's General Plan.

APPLICABILITY OF THE GUIDELINES

The Historic Preservation Design Guidelines are applicable to all development projects within the Historic Preservation overlay zone that require the issuance of a building permit in compliance with Section 514 (Design Review) of the Zoning Ordinance.

An applicant changing only a portion of an existing building need only comply with the guidelines and standards related to that portion being changed and to directly related portions.

In the event that proposed modifications affect more than 60% of any facade visible from a public right-of-way or public parking area, the applicant shall be required to comply with all of the design guidelines applicable to the entire facade. In addition, activities not required to apply for a building permit, such as repairs, are encouraged to follow the guidelines to the greatest degree possible.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINES

Implementation of the Historic Preservation Design Guidelines will be through the City's "Design Review" process as outlined in Section 514 of the Zoning Ordinance #653.

The design guidelines may be implemented with some flexibility in their application to specific projects because not all principles may be appropriate for every project. Additionally, certain trade-offs may be necessary in order to maintain an appropriate balance between public and private interests. However, a guideline may be relaxed only in order to accomplish another guideline of equal or greater importance.

ORGANIZATION OF THE GUIDELINES

The Historic Preservation Design Guidelines are specifically formulated for the type and character of buildings and building storefronts that are existing and foreseen for Downtown Douglas. The guidelines respect the existing character of development and strive to build on the most positive aspects of that character in order to continually improve the Downtown area.

To accomplish this, the guidelines are organized into three distinct sections as follows:

- 1. Infill Design Guidelines** establish criteria for how new development can successfully be integrated into the existing context of the Downtown area. Various elements are discussed in this section such as site planning, street orientation, screening, parking orientation, building architecture, and storefront design.
- 2. Facade Rehabilitation Guidelines** suggest ways in which existing building facades can be cleaned up, rehabilitated and, in some cases, restored to their original character. Elements discussed include appropriate materials, storefront proportions, entries, facade color, awnings, door and window design, canopies, and storefront accessories.
- 3. Sign Design Guidelines** provide criteria for the effective design of commercial signs. The guidelines suggest appropriate ways to design signs so that they are easy to read, portray a quality image for the business and fit within the overall character of the Downtown area. Subsections of the guidelines cover general design considerations such as lettering size, typefaces, color, lighting, sign location, etc.

PROJECT DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

- A. Prior to the preparation of final architectural or engineering drawings for any building within an area containing the supplemental (DR) Design Review zoning, the property owner or his representative shall submit the following for the Design Review board; consideration;
1. An application for Design Review approval. Said application to be furnished by the City Community Development Office and to include applicant's name, mailing, address, location of property, legal description of property and such other information as deemed necessary by the Building Inspector and the Design Review Board.
 2. Rendered evaluations of the front, sides, and rear of the building, to scale, adequately illustrating the building's character and treatment.
 3. A site plan, to scale, showing an area covered by building, parking areas and landscaping treatment.
 4. A list of exterior materials, colors and their application.
- B. Prior to the issuance of a building permit within any area containing the supplemental (DR) zoning, the Building Inspector shall ascertain that the Design Review Board has approved plans which are in substantial conformance to those presented with the Building Permit application and that the time limitations imposed by this ordinance or the Design Review Board have not elapsed.
- C. Prior to the change of any building's exterior character, by remodeling or alteration, the property owner, or his designated agent, shall secure the approval of the Design Review Board.
- D. The Design Review Board shall impose such conditions as it may deem necessary in order to fully carry out the provisions and intent of this ordinance. A notation of the Design Review Board's action shall be indelibly imprinted on each sheet of two set plans. One set shall be retained in the Building Inspection file and one set shall be returned to the owner or his representative.
- E. The Building Inspector of the City shall insure that all matters approved by the Design Review Board are undertaken and completed according to the approval of the Design Review Board and shall cause any violator to be prosecuted.

GENERAL DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR ALL COMMERCIAL PROJECTS

This section provides general design guidelines/principles, which are applicable to commercial projects throughout the Downtown Historic Preservation, overlay zone area including retail, service, and office uses. When appropriate, these guidelines are to be used in conjunction with other, more specific guidelines for pedestrian oriented development found in a subsequent part of this document.

A. *Overall Design Objectives For Commercial Projects*

The design of each project should keep in mind the following objectives:

1. Consider Downtown Douglas's small town/historic scale/character and demonstrate sensitivity to the contextual influences of the surrounding area;
2. Articulate building forms and elevations to create interesting roof lines, building shapes, and patterns of shade and shadow while maintaining compatibility with surrounding development;
3. Preserve the design integrity of historic buildings;
4. Utilize landscaping to screen parking and equipment areas, and to provide project amenities whenever possible;
5. Provide site access, parking, and circulation that is laid out in a logical, safe manner;
6. Consider the need for signs and their appropriate locations early in the design process; and
7. Design spaces for outside equipment, trash receptacles, storage, and loading areas in the least conspicuous part of the site.

B. *General Site Design Guidelines*

1. Consider Neighboring Development
 - a. Plans (i.e., elevations and site development drawings) should show buildings and other important physical features on adjacent properties.
 - b. Plans should demonstrate compatibility with surrounding development. For example, if adjacent buildings are not set back from the sidewalk, the proposed development should not be set back.
 - c. New projects should provide links to adjacent development using sidewalks and shared access drives whenever possible.

- d. New projects should consider the location and type of landscaping and open space on neighboring properties and use these elements to create visual relationships between adjacent developments

2. Functional Relationship

- a. Side and rear yards, when utilized, should be integrated into the overall site arrangement and not left as unused portions of the site.
- b. When multiple buildings are proposed for a site they should be clustered with parking provided at the rear or side of the property. This creates opportunities for pedestrian plazas and prevents long barracks-like rows of storefronts. When clustering is impractical, a visual link between buildings that may be separated by parking lots should be established. This link can be accomplished through the use of an arcade system, trellis, and special pavement treatments.

3. Parking and Circulation

- a. Circulation patterns should provide clear definition of access, vehicle and pedestrian movements, directions to uses, and relationship of parking distribution to use (e.g., employee, disabled, etc.)
- b. The visual impact of parking lots should be minimized by locating these facilities to a portion of the site least visible from the street and by providing adequate screening (i.e. landscaping, berms, low walls).

4. Site Utilities

- a. Electrical meters and transformers, telephone junction boxes, traffic control panels, and other above ground utility equipment should be located to reduce their visual impact and should be screened from public view with landscaping and/or low walls.
- b. Newly installed utility services, and service relocations necessitated by exterior alterations must be placed underground in compliance with current City requirements.

5. Landscaping

- a. In the Downtown area, landscaping should be used to help define outdoor spaces (plazas, outdoor dining areas), soften a building's appearance, and to screen parking, loading, and equipment areas.
- b. The use of on-site pedestrian amenities (e.g. benches, shelters, drinking fountains, lighting, and trash receptacles) is encouraged. These elements should be provided in conjunction with on-site open spaces and be integrated into the site plan as primary features, not afterthoughts tacked on to artificially dress up a proposal.

6. Screening

- a. Screening is a technique used to protect and separate uses and site functions from one another for the purpose of decreasing adverse noise or

visual impacts and to provide privacy. The need for screening should be considered early in the design process so that screening elements (i.e., walls, fences, berms, landscaping, etc.) can be properly integrated into the overall project design and not added later as an afterthought.

- b. Any outdoor equipment, whether on a roof, side of a building, or on the ground, must be appropriately screened from view, in compliance with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. The method of screening should be architecturally integrated with the adjacent building in terms of style, materials, and color.
- c. Where screening is required at ground level, a combination of elements should be used, including solid masonry walls, berms, trellises, and landscaping.

7. Walls and Fences

- a. If not required for a separation of land uses or a specific screening security purpose, walls and fences should generally not be used within commercial areas. Where walls are required, say when used to screen parking lots~ the intent should be to keep them as low as possible while performing their screening and security functions.
- b. Where walls are visible from a public right-of-way or parking lot, they should be compatible with the site's architecture. Landscaping should be used in combination with walls/fences, whenever possible, to conceal their flatness, and greenery, and discourage graffiti.
- c. When security fencing is required, it should be a combination of solid wall segments and open wrought iron grille work.

8. Refuse, Storage, and Equipment Areas

- a. Refuse containers, service/loading areas, etc. should be located in areas out of view from the general public and so that their use does not interfere with parking and circulation.
- b. Trash storage areas that are visible from the upper stories of adjacent buildings should have an opaque or semi-opaque horizontal cover/screen to screen unsightly views. The covering building should be compatible with the site's architecture.
- c. All screening facilities should be of adequate size for their intended purpose without dominating the site, blocking sight distances, or creating unnecessary barriers.

C. **General architectural Design Guidelines**

1. Compatibility

Buildings should have a harmonious relationship with surrounding development. Among the factors which contribute to the desired relationship are:

- a. Compatible design theme;
- b. Compatible building scale and proportions; c. Compatible roof shape and materials; and
- c. Compatible roof shape and materials; and
- d. Harmonious colors, textures, and building materials. 2. Orientation

2. Orientation

- a. The design and orientation of buildings should respond to the pedestrian or vehicular nature of the street. Buildings on very urban streets with high pedestrian use (i.e., G Ave. and F Ave.) should face on, and be directly accessible from, the sidewalk. (Refer to the "Design Guidelines for Pedestrian Oriented Areas" later in this document.)
- b. Buildings in more vehicular areas of the CBD (i.e. 10th Street), which rely more on the use of the automobile for access, should be oriented to major site open spaces and streetscape elements.

4. Design Consistency

There should be a consistent use of colors, materials, and detailing throughout all elevations of the building. Elevations which do not directly face a street should not be ignored or receive only minimal architectural treatment.

5. Form and Mass

- a. Building design should provide a sense of human scale and proportion reflective of Douglas's existing character. Horizontal and vertical wall articulation should be expressed through the use of pilasters, horizontal bands, recessed windows and entries, awnings, pedestrian scale storefronts, brow canopies, and heavy ornamental cornices.

6. Architectural Visual Contrast

- a. Architectural visual contrast should be avoided. The project designer should avoid the use of visual contrast from neighboring buildings as an advertising tool or attention-getter.
- b. Buildings should be designed to reinforce the traditional character and small town, historic image of Downtown Douglas. The trademark architectural styles of some franchise uses will be incompatible with this principle and will be inappropriate if they are not consistent with the design principles and guidelines provided herein.

7. Roofs

- a. The design of a building's roof contributes strongly to its image as a quality, permanent building. Flat roofs with heavy decorative cornices project a more of a downtown mercantile image and reinforce the pedestrian orientation that is so prominent in Douglas's Downtown.

With the exception of G Avenue and F Avenue, where buildings are usually built to the front and side property lines, new freestanding buildings could incorporate full pitched roofs if that is compatible with surrounding structures.

- b. When flat roofs are used, there should be a screening parapet topped with a coping, cornice, or, if determined appropriate to the project's style, a modified mansard. Mansards should have a low profile and be deep enough to create the illusion of being a true roof. Small, steeply-pitched mansard "eyebrows" are strongly discouraged.
- c. All roof equipment must be completely screened from a horizontal line of sight. Screening should be an integral part of the roof design and not appear as a tacked-on afterthought.

8. Parapets

- a. Parapet walls should be treated as an integral part of the building design. They should receive architectural detailing consistent with the rest of the facade and should not appear as unrelated elements intended only to screen the roof behind.
- b. Where a mansard roof is incorporated into the parapet design, views from above the building should also be considered relative to any visible structural support elements.

9. Additions

Additions to buildings should be an interpretation of the existing building wherein the main characteristics of the existing building are incorporated. This may include: the extension of architectural lines from the existing building to the addition; repetition of bay, window, and entrance spacing; use of harmonizing colors and materials; and the inclusion of similar architectural details (i.e., window/door trim, lighting fixtures, tile/brick, terra cotta decoration, etc.)

10. Building Materials

- a. False or overly decorative facade treatments, wherein one or more unrelated materials appear tacked onto a building, should be avoided. Materials should be used honestly. Products which attempt to imitate other materials (i.e., wood, stone, brick, etc) are discouraged.

- b. The following materials are discouraged as exterior wall materials:
- . asphalt shingles;
 - . corrugated metal, plastic, or fiberglass;
 - . illuminated siding and awnings;
 - . imitation "rock work" veneers;
 - . plastic laminate;
 - . plywood (painted or otherwise);
 - . reflective mirror-type glass, especially on the ground floor;
 - . standing seam metal walls;
 - . bare aluminum (anodized is preferred).
 - . vertical or horizontal wood siding
- c. The composition of materials should avoid giving the impression of thinness and artificiality. Veneers should turn comers, avoiding exposed edges.

12. Colors

- a. Color(s) should be compatible with the existing colors of the surrounding neighborhood but need not duplicate existing colors.
- b. Accent colors should be used carefully and be complementary to the base color or a variation of its hue, either weaker or stronger.
- c. The transition between base and accent, colors should relate to changes in building materials or the change of building surface planes. Colors should generally not meet or change without some physical change or definition to the surface plane of the building.

** Selection of appropriate colors is a delicate assignment. The City may decide that providing an actual palette may be too restrictive.*

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE DOUGLAS HISTORIC DISTRICT ALONG GAVE.

The following design guidelines apply in those commercial streets in the Downtown that have historically been developed with buildings adjacent to the sidewalk; namely, G Avenue.

A. Pedestrian Oriented Development

The primary design issues related to pedestrian oriented commercial areas are issues related to compatibility with, and relationship to, adjacent buildings and maintaining a strong pedestrian orientation. It is important that the continuity of the street facade be maintained and that new buildings are not set back from the sidewalk. The idea of encouraging traditional "storefronts" is an important aspect of pedestrian oriented development.

B. Site Planning Guidelines for Pedestrian Oriented Areas**1. Setbacks**

- a. Buildings in pedestrian oriented areas should provide continuous storefronts at the ground level front elevation. ¹
- b. Buildings located at intersections are encouraged to "cut back" their corners up to six feet along street frontages to create a diagonal at the ground level. Main entrances should be located on the diagonal when appropriate.

2. Parking and Access

- a. The preferred location for off-street parking is at the rear of the site, especially if alley access is available. However, if site conditions do not allow parking to be located at the rear it may be provided on the interior side if properly screened.
- b. Dimensions of parking lots and access drives along the primary street frontage should be kept to the minimum required so as to minimize disruption of the continuous storefront facade.

C. Architectural Guidelines for Pedestrian Oriented Areas

Since all new buildings in the Downtown area will be infill projects adjacent to existing buildings, it is important to consider the scale and architectural style of surrounding development when designing a new project. Whenever a new infill project is proposed, the following design guidelines should be considered.

1. Facade Composition

- a. The characteristic proportions of adjacent buildings (i.e., mass and facade composition) should be respected. Whenever a new building is proposed that is wider than the existing typical storefront module, the new building should be visually divided into modules of 50 feet or less in order to maintain

the rhythm and scale of the block face. Modules may be created by door and window groupings, projecting or recessing wall surfaces, changes in roof lines, placement of piers and pilasters, changes in materials, and similar architectural design techniques.

- b. The ground level facade should provide a minimum of 60% transparency with a maximum of 85% transparency for visual penetration of the storefront. Upper stories should be a minimum of 35% transparent.
- c. A new building should not attempt to duplicate the design of neighboring buildings/facades. Rather, it should be a contemporary *design* influenced by its surroundings - a blend of new and old. The new infill building should not pretend to be historic by *using* fake "historical" detail. This approach only compromises what is authentically historic.

2. Special Architectural Elements

The use of special architectural elements (i.e., towers, turrets, and corner cut-offs) is encouraged at major street corners to accent buildings and provide visual *interest*.

These elements should be kept in scale with the overall *building*. It is not the intent to have such elements dominate the building's architecture.

3. Storefront Design

a. Main Entrances

The entrance is one of the most important parts of the facade and should be easily identifiable. The customer should be invited into the store by a pleasant entry. Doors and entryways should follow a traditional storefront design (usually recessed) and should be designed to be compatible with the architectural style of the building.

c. Windows

Windows, as an architectural element are of critical importance to the storefront design. Windows create a visual rhythm of building openings, as well as views of the interior.

- 1) Storefront windows should be square or vertical in proportion; as large as possible; and not closer to the ground than 18 inches. For new construction, the height of the bulkhead should not exceed 30 inches. By limiting the height of the bottom of the window (bulkhead), visibility to the storefront displays and into the retail interior is maximized.
- 2) Clear glass, with minimal tint, should be used on ground floor windows. *Tinted* glass allowing a minimum of 50% light transmission will be considered only for use in second floor windows. The use of reflective glass is strongly discouraged.
- 3) If privacy is desired for certain uses (i.e., restaurants or private offices),

the use of cafe-style curtains may be an effective means of blocking views at lower levels while still allowing some views and light into the interior.

- 4) If metal window frames are used, they should be either factory painted (coated) or anodized a dark color. Bare aluminum or gold color window frames are strongly discouraged.

c. Building Materials

- 1) The palette of wall materials should be kept to a minimum, preferably no more than two, with a third possibly for accent. Using the same wall materials (if appropriate) as adjacent or nearby buildings will help strengthen the overall character of the Downtown area.
- 2) Fake-looking veneers that appear to be "added-on" to a building should be avoided.

d. Awnings

"Awnings can be an important element of a commercial building. Awnings are encouraged because they add "visual interest" and help reduce a building's "apparent scale" and the impression of height by adding a strong horizontal element at the ground level. Awnings also provide protection for pedestrians from sun and rain.

- 1) Awnings used along a row of contiguous storefronts in the same building should be of the same color, form, and general location.
- 2) A minimum 8 foot vertical clearance between the sidewalk and the lowest portion of the awning should be maintained.
- 3) Heavy canvas, matte finish vinyl, and fabric awnings are encouraged. Plastic, shiny vinyl, metal, and plexiglas awnings should be avoided. Metal awnings may be appropriate if they were part of the original design of the building.
- 4) Internally illuminated awnings are not allowed. When lettering is applied to these types of awnings they become large illuminated signs and the effect of the awning is lost.
- 5) On multi-story buildings, the highest point of an awning should not be higher than the midpoint of the space between the second story window sills and the top of the first floor storefront window or transom. This leaves a comfortable space between the top of the awning and the windows and will maintain the proper proportion of awning size to storefront area.
- 6) Breaking awnings at the vertical divisions of the building (i.e., vertical piers, or the break between the display windows and the entrance) is

encouraged in order to eliminate long expanses of awnings that can have a monotonous appearance.

- 7) Signs may be placed on awnings but are limited to the awning flap (valance) and end panels only.
- 8) The awnings' shape and style should be compatible with the character of the building and with the shapes of the openings they are placed over. Awnings should not be placed so that they cover important design features, if at all possible.

e. Signs

Business identification signs are an integral part of any commercial building. The size, location, and type of signs to be used should be considered in the initial design of the project.

Specific design guidelines for signs are provided later in this document.

f. Storefront Accessories

The following guidelines should be considered for storefront accessories to ensure that they contribute *to*, rather than detract from, the building's appearance.

- 1) Mechanical appurtenances attached to a facade (i.e., equipment for an automatic retractable security grille) should be concealed by placing them under an awning (when available) or enclosing them in a housing compatible with the building's architecture and painting them to match the facade.
- 2) Air conditioning units, vent fans, and similar equipment placed in windows or above door entries on the primary facade are strongly discouraged.

GUIDELINES FOR THE RENOVATION OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

The renovation or remodeling of an existing building requires that care be taken to complete the work in a manner that respects the building's original design. The appropriate design guidelines in this sub-section are to be implemented whenever a building in the Downtown area is to be renovated.

A. *Respect Original Design*

When an existing building is to be renovated, care should be taken to complete the work in a way that respects the original design integrity of the building. To attempt to "modernize" an older building will most certainly destroy its inherent aesthetic and historic value. Past modernizations of the City's oldest storefronts have often covered significant architectural features that can and should be restored when the building is renovated.

Existing building materials and elements that are incompatible with the original design of the building should be removed during renovation. The facade should then be remodeled or restored to reflect its original appearance. The remodeling/restoration should stress the conservation of any unique stylistic features of the original building.

B. *Preserve Existing Decoration/Details*

Many times, in a previous remodeling of a storefront, original decorative details are left partially intact as visual "leftovers" or simply covered over with new construction. During renovation, these forgotten details should not be wasted. If enough details remain, they should be restored as part of the original design. If only a few remain, they can be incorporated as design features in a new storefront. In either case, the design of new improvements should grow out of the building's remaining details and create a harmonious background, which emphasizes them.

C. *Storefront Renovation*

1. Where the original storefront remains (little or no remodeling has occurred), it should be preserved and repaired with as little alteration as possible. Changing storefront features just to "modernize" can sometimes do more damage than good.
2. Where only part of the original storefront remains (limited remodeling has occurred), the storefront should be repaired, maintaining original materials where possible, including the replacement of extensively deteriorated or missing parts with new parts based upon surviving examples of entries, bulkheads, transoms, clerestory windows, pilasters, signs, etc.
3. Where the original storefront has undergone extensive remodeling, it is recommended to reconstruct the storefront based upon historical, pictorial, and physical documentation. If that is not practicable, the design of the new storefront should be compatible with the size, scale, proportion, material, and color of the existing buildings, and if appropriate, adjacent buildings. Keep the following design principles in mind:
 - a. Consider the scale and proportion of the existing building in the new storefront

- design;
- b. Select building materials that are appropriate to the original storefront and, if possible, materials that were available during the time the building was constructed;
 - c. Maintain the original relationship between the storefront and the entire facade. Respect the horizontal separation between the storefront and the upper stories;
 - d. Differentiate the entrance to commercial uses on the first floor from the secondary entrances to upper floors. Entrances should be placed where original entrances existed, especially when delineated by architectural detailing; and
 - e. Make the storefront as transparent as possible with the use of glass in doors, transoms, and display areas to allow for maximum visibility into and out of the store. Do not cover over or fill in upper story windows.

D. Window Replacement

The effect of windows on the overall design of the facade is determined by the size, shape, pattern of openings, spacing and placement within the facade. When altering or reconstructing windows, consideration of these elements is crucial to retaining the building's original architectural balance and integrity:

1. Retain original window openings, or at least do not make them smaller;
2. If possible, save and restore the original windows and frames. Replace missing, rotting, or broken sash, frames, mullions, and muntins with similar material;
3. If the original window openings have been altered, restore the openings to their original configuration and detail. Avoid blocking or filling the window openings that contribute to the overall facade design; and
4. Do not eliminate windows for taverns or private offices that are adjacent to the public sidewalk. Blank walls are not pedestrian friendly and they make a downtown appear vacant. If privacy is required, use blinds, shades or cafe curtains to partially block views.

E. Door Replacement

1. Original doors and door hardware should be retained, repaired, and refinished provided they can comply with ADA requirements.
2. If new replacement doors are necessary they should be compatible with the character and design of the building.

F. Painting

1. The color palette should be consistent throughout the facade, even if more than one business occupies the space.
2. Exterior colors should compliment the colors of neighboring buildings and should be selected to support the overall character of the Downtown.
3. Avoid using paint on materials that historically were not painted (i.e., glass, brick, terra cotta, and tile).

SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Sign Design Guidelines are intended to provide direction to property owners and project designers in understanding the City's goals for maintaining high quality business identification that is sensitive to the character of Douglas's Downtown area. The guidelines encourage signs that:

1. **Provide clear identification for businesses and other activities;**
2. **Harmonize with surrounding buildings and streetscapes; and**
3. **Incorporate high-quality design and materials.**

The following guidelines apply to all sign development projects within the CBO Zone. Any addition, remodeling, relocation, change of copy, or construction of signs shall adhere to these guidelines.

A. Color

Color is one of the most important aspects of visual communication. It can be used to catch the eye or to communicate ideas or feelings. Too many colors used simultaneously can confuse and negate the message of a sign. Even the most carefully planned sign may look unattractive due to poor color selection. Consider the following:

1. Contrast is an important influence on the legibility of signs. Light letters on a dark background or dark letters on a light background are most legible. For internally illuminated cabinet signs, use white letters on a black or dark color opaque background.
2. Limit the number of colors to 2 or 3 on anyone signs. Small accents of several colors may make a sign unique, but the competition of large areas of many different colors decreases readability.
3. Colors or color combinations that interfere with legibility of the sign copy or that compete for attention and, therefore, interfere with viewer identification of other signs should be avoided. Bright day-glo (fluorescent) colors should be avoided as they are distracting and do not usually blend well with other background colors.

4. Sign colors should complement the colors used on the adjacent buildings and the area as a whole.

B. *Materials*

Signs can be fabricated from many materials; brick, concrete, glass, metal, plastic, stone, wood, and even cloth and paper in certain circumstances. While there is nothing inherently wrong with any of these materials; insensitive use of materials can cause a deterioration of the CBD's visual environment.

1. Sign materials should be compatible with the materials on the facade where they are placed.
2. The selected materials should contribute to the legibility of the sign. For example, glossy finishes are often difficult to read because of glare and reflections. Consider how the sign will be illuminated.
3. Individually-mounted channel letters and internally-lighted plastic-faced cabinet signs are discouraged because they weren't available during the era of Douglas' CBO buildings. However, plastic-faced cabinet signs may be appropriate if existing similarly situated signs on the same building are also of the same or similar construction. In these cases, new cabinet signs should incorporate white letters on a dark opaque background.
4. Paper and cloth signs/banners are not appropriate for exterior use because they deteriorate quickly and do not present a quality business image. Paper and cloth signs are appropriate for interior temporary use only.

C. *Sign Legibility*

An effective sign should do more than attract attention, it should communicate its message. Usually, this is a question of the readability of words and phrases. The most significant influence on legibility is lettering.

1. Use a brief message whenever possible. The fewer the words and letters, the more effective the sign. A sign with a brief, succinct message is easier to read and looks more attractive.
2. Avoid spacing letters and words too close together. Crowding of letters, words or lines will make any sign more difficult to read. Conversely, over-spacing these elements causes the viewer to read each item individually, again obscuring the message. As a general rule, letters should not occupy more than 75% of sign panel area.
3. Limit the number of lettering styles in order to increase legibility. A general rule to follow is to limit the number of different letter types to no more than two for small signs and three for larger signs.
4. Avoid hard-to-read, overly intricate typefaces and symbols. Typefaces and symbols that are difficult to read reduce the sign's ability to communicate.

5. The use of pictographs is strongly encouraged in order to illustrate the type of business graphically and without the use of words. Pictographic images will usually register more quickly in the viewer's mind than a written message.

D. *Sign Illumination*

The way in which a sign is to be illuminated should be considered carefully. Like color, illumination has considerable value for visual communication.

1. First, consider if the sign needs to be lighted at all. Lights in the window display may be sufficient to identify the business. This is particularly true if good window graphics are used. Often, nearby street lights provide ample illumination of a sign after dark.
2. If the sign can be illuminated by an indirect source of light, this is usually the best arrangement because the sign will appear to be better integrated with the building's historic architecture. Light fixtures supported in front of the sign will cast light on the sign and generally a portion of the facade as well. Thus, indirect lighting emphasizes the continuity of the building's surface and the sign becomes an integral part of the facade.
3. Whenever indirect lighting fixtures are used (fluorescent or incandescent), care should be taken to properly shield the light source to prevent glare from spilling over into residential areas and any public right-of-way. Signs should be lighted only to the minimum level required for nighttime readability.
4. Internally illuminated (light fixtures, usually fluorescent tubes, placed within a translucent sign) have an advantage over indirect/external sign illumination in that the fixtures are protected from weather and vandals, and the sign cabinet has a cleaner profile, uncluttered by the struts of most indirect lighting systems. Although there are these advantages, there is the disadvantage that when lighted, the sign alone becomes bright, separating it from the building's surface. The sign then becomes a contemporary element that is obviously attached to the facade of the historic building rather than a part of it. As a result, this type of sign can disrupt the continuity of the facade and is, therefore, discouraged.
5. Individually illuminated letters, either internally illuminated or back-lighted solid letters, while appropriate in newer areas of Douglas are discouraged in the CBD.

E. *Sign Placement*

Signs should be placed consistent with the proportions and scale of the elements within the building's facade. A particular sign may fit well on a plain wall area, but might overpower the finer scale and proportion of a lower storefront. A sign, which is appropriate near an entry, may look tiny and out of place above the ground level.

1. Look at the facade of the building. Are there any architectural features or details that suggest a location, size, or shape for the sign? These could be bands or frames of brickwork or stone, indentations in the face material, gaps between columns, or other

- permanent features. If these details exist, use them to locate the sign.
2. Look at the facade of the building in relation to where adjacent businesses have placed their signs. It may be that there is already an established pattern of sign locations. This can establish visual continuity among the storefronts, and at the same time provide uniform sight lines for viewers.
 3. Along G Avenue, signs should relate to the sidewalk and pedestrians instead of motorists. In this case, small projecting signs or signs under canopies or awnings in conjunction with wall signs are most appropriate.
 4. When the architectural details of a building do not suggest the shape of the sign, choose simple shapes. Squares, circles, rectangles and ovals are considered to be most effective for visual communication. Avoid signs with strange shapes. Signs that are unnecessarily narrow or oddly shaped can restrict the legibility of the message.