

Old Town Pittsburg Design Guidelines and Principles

Appendix A: Design Guidelines Checklist

The following checklist provides an outline of the design elements contained in the Old Town Pittsburg Design Guidelines and Principles. The Checklist is to be utilized in conjunction with the Old Town Pittsburg Design Guidelines and Principles and is not intended as a substitute for the full text of the document.

I. DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

A. Setbacks, page 16

1.	Buildings are to be at the property line unless neighboring buildings have varying setbacks, then you can set the new building half way between the two or design a mini plaza.
2.	Outdoor sitting and dining areas are encouraged. Deeper setbacks are to either accommodate exterior dining for restaurants and cafés, or are to be designed as mini plazas.
3.	Mini plazas are to be designed so that they are attractive, encourage public gathering, and so that pedestrians are drawn into a park-like setting before engaging the building itself.
4.	Mini plazas must create the illusion of a continuous street façade by using gates and fences to extend the neighboring building facades.
5.	Mini plazas must be open and accessible, relate well to the public sidewalk, not obstruct the visibility and operation of neighboring uses, enhance and be compatible with the design elements of adjacent buildings and streetscape.
6.	Mini plazas are to contain special paving, seating, lighting landscaping, and accent features such as arbors, kiosks, fountains or public art.

B. Parking and Service Areas, page 18

1.	When possible, locate parking lots off of Railroad Avenue, toward the back or side of the main facade.
2.	Driveways, sidewalk cuts, and vehicular access to rear parking lots shall be from side streets, not the main street, i.e. Railroad Avenue.
3.	Pedestrian paths must be planned from rear parking lots to the main street.
4.	Parking lots and pedestrian connections must be well lit, but it is important to NOT over light parking lots and connections or they will detract attention away from the streetscape.
5.	Light fixtures must be placed at a height appropriate to the design of the building/parking lot and so that the light is not intrusive to uses above the ground floor.
6.	Parking areas must be screened from store entrances, window views and outdoor dining areas, ideally with trellises, arbors, landscaping, fencing or kiosks. Shade trees are to be provided in parking lots.
7.	Trash and delivery areas are to be located away from customer entrances and preferably at the rear of the building.
8.	Service areas including trash and delivery, utility boxes, transformers and other outdoor equipment are to be screened with the use of trellises, fencing and landscaping.
9.	Food service tenants are required to provide adequate and convenient space away from the public view to wash down equipment and accessories.
10.	Satellite dishes and/or antennas must be appropriately screened and not visible to pedestrians.
11.	Bicycle parking is to be considered and provided for where possible.

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C. Outdoor Spaces, page 20

1.	Outdoor areas must be attractively designed and the use of the outdoor area must complement the building.
2.	Maintain a four foot passageway along the sidewalk for passing pedestrians.
3.	At least 7'-0" of vertical clearance must be maintained below fabric umbrellas or awnings
4.	Outdoor seating and dining furniture must be attractive and made of high-quality materials.
5.	If barriers are required or desired around outdoor dining areas, they must be decorative in nature, they cannot exceed three feet in height, and they need to be low enough to maintain visibility of building fronts. The overriding criteria should be an attractively presented display.
6.	All items, including screens, must be portable and self-supporting.
7.	Outdoor areas to the side of the building must be screened with decorative gates or walls if used for service or other non-public use.

D. Building Corners, page 24

1.	Primary orientation of building corners should be toward the main street, such as Railroad Avenue.
2.	Protective overhangs must be considered at corner locations as they allow for passersby to wait momentarily before crossing the street.
3.	Sharp building corners are to be avoided as they create blind spots that could pose a danger to pedestrians.

E. Entrances, page 26

1.	Storefront entrances should be recessed so that the entrance door does not protrude into the public sidewalk by more than 12 inches.
2.	Building and storefront entrances are to be at sidewalk level.
3.	Whenever possible, entries are to be centered in the storefront. When a building is located on a corner, the entrance must be along the main street, such as Railroad Avenue, or oriented diagonally at the corner.
4.	When possible, separate entrances are to be designated for separate uses.
5.	For multi-use buildings, the various entrances are to be distinguishable.
6.	Entry doors to street level are to be more than 50% glass.
7.	Different materials and finishes are to be used at entrances.
8.	There must be adequate lighting and clearance at entrances.
9.	Particularly with new buildings, consideration is to be given to providing attractive exterior staircases leading to the second floor.

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F. Storefronts, page 28

1.	Storefronts must be tall with a minimum total height of 12 feet. Special exceptions to the design of storefronts will be granted only if the existing building openings are not tall enough to accommodate 12 feet in height.
2.	Storefront must be well designed consisting of various elements such as glass windows and entry doors. Painted or stained wood storefronts are more appropriate than standard metal storefronts.
3.	A minimum of 60% of the storefront must be devoted to display windows.
4.	A variety of traditional architectural styles and shapes is encouraged.
5.	Storefronts are to be spaced in a repeated pattern along the sidewalk to maintain pedestrian continuity and interest.
6.	Facades with two or three storefronts are to have consistent storefront design and materials.
7.	Buildings with three or more storefronts may vary base material, entry locations or awning design.
8.	Wall space (pier width) between storefront windows is to be minimized.
9.	Only durable materials of high quality are to be used.
10.	The storefront framing system must be must well-proportioned and detailed.
11.	Dark or reflective glass is not to be used.
12.	Opaque elements must be limited in use and decorative in nature. Add-on mullions and grids should not be used.
13.	Translucent glass panels or display windows are to be used in lieu of revealing opaque wall surfaces through the storefront and to reduce continuous exterior opaque walls.
14.	Materials used in the area where the storefront meets the sidewalk must be durable.
15.	Appropriate storefront base materials are smooth or dimensioned stone, brick, marble, granite, and ceramic tile.
16.	Any solid portion of the storefront may not exceed 24" height from the sidewalk.
17.	Storefront base material must complement the upper facade material.
18.	Uncover and repair original storefront base materials where covered or painted over.
19.	Entry doors are not to project more then 12" into the sidewalk and must be recessed when swinging outward.
20.	Overall design, including entry doors, shall be unique in nature and not chain, corporate or franchise.
21.	Interior security gating is not encouraged but if installed must be designed in such a way that it is not visible during operating hours and so that pedestrians may clearly view window displays when the business is closed and the gating is secured. No exterior security gating is allowed.
22.	Interior window coverings are not appropriate at street level windows.
23.	Non-retail ground floor storefront windows must be used for display to provide some street-level interaction.
24.	For historic preservation, display windows should use neutral and contemporary frameless glass openings as they often preserve the authenticity of historic architecture.
25.	To strengthen the presence of a business, buildings with deep recesses and/or frequent columns should be enhanced by adding canopies in between columns or by adding bay windows that project over the sidewalk.
26.	Transom windows are encouraged in new construction, if appropriate to the architectural style of the building.
27.	In new transom windows, a variety of glass types and patterns, and creativity in mullion spacing and design, is encouraged.
28.	Existing transom windows are to be uncovered and repaired.
29.	Use high or raised ceilings near the facade wall so that daylight from transom windows will reach the interior.

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G. Display Windows, page 34

1.	Shallow display windows are to be used to camouflage solid interior elements and to continue the impression of an 'open' storefront.
2.	Display windows must be easily accessible for cleaning, frequent display changes and maintenance.
3.	Storefront display windows should be large and of clear transparent glass.
4.	Existing storefront windows are not to be reduced in size, and the sill height is not to be increased.

H. Upper Facades, page 36

1.	Original facade designs on historic buildings are not to be covered or altered. They are to be restored or repaired.
2.	The windows in the Upper Facade are to be smaller than ground floor windows. Vertical, rectangular windows are preferred.
3.	The windows in the Upper Facade are to create a rhythm, either symmetrically or equally spaced across the facade related to openings below.
4.	Separate windows by sufficient wall area to set them apart from each other.
5.	Whenever possible, Upper Facade windows are to be recessed to add depth to the building.
6.	Dark or reflective glass is not to be used.
7.	Thin profile aluminum or plastic/vinyl windows are not allowed. If simulated mullions are used, they must appear real and be on both sides of the glass.
8.	Upper facades are to utilize special window trim, accent windows, flower boxes, projecting sills and decorative railings.
9.	Non-shielded lights are not allowed on the interior of floors above the ground. Specifically prohibited are 2x4 lay-in lights, also known as a dropped ceiling with fluorescent lights.
10.	Use the highest quality materials for the facade wall consistent with the architectural style of the building.
11.	Maintain consistent wall material throughout the upper facade.
12.	Simulated materials may be used if determined to have an authentic appearance.
13.	Materials that have poor durability, are prone to vandalism, and are usually associated with the "backside" of buildings are not appropriate.
14.	Do not remove, alter, or cover over original upper story windows. Uncover, reopen, and repair where found.

I. Rooflines, page 38

1.	The roofline outer edges must be designed to link with the neighboring building/roofline.
2.	The rooflines of small one-story buildings must be designed as an integral part of the small facade.
3.	Accent materials are required and include patterns, cornices, brackets and finials. False roof forms applied to the facade, such as fake sloping roofs (sometimes called mansards), are not permitted.
4.	Flat roofs are to be hidden by extending the facade wall.
5.	Rooftop and building mounted equipment including HVAC, satellite dishes and antennas must be located so that the equipment is not visible to pedestrians.
6.	Equipment must be screened from view with the facade/roof, not an independent equipment screen.
7.	Residential style roof forms are not to be used unless the structure is residential-style.

J. Small Facades, page 40

1.	The property owner and/or tenant is encouraged to utilize the entire small facade when applying the Storefront Guidelines (Page 28) and Signage Guidelines (Page 60).
2.	The individual facade is to be designed so that it acts as a divider from the adjacent building or to emphasize the differing height or style of adjacent buildings.

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K. Rear Facades, page 42

1.	Rear facades must be well lit.
2.	Rear facades must be attractive, but not compete with the main street fronting facades.

L. Awnings, page 44

1.	Awnings must maintain a vertical clearance of 8 feet from the sidewalk. Should the existing building design force otherwise, a minimum 7' 6" must be maintained.
2.	Uniqueness is required within the design. Vinyl is not an appropriate Old Town awning material.
3.	Awnings must be distinguishable from the awnings of adjacent tenants, and color is to complement the facade wall color.
4.	Valances are to be loose, rather than fixed and open sided awnings are encouraged. Consider retractable awnings.
5.	Awning shapes and sizes are to be based upon the size and shape of the storefronts and openings.
6.	When possible, locate light fixtures under awnings to illuminate the sidewalk.
7.	Awning is to be mounted just above the storefront opening without blocking storefront visibility. Awning is to cover storefront opening only, not extend over piers.
8.	Awning is not to obscure architectural details on the facade or cover existing transom windows.

M. Arcades, page 46

1.	Arcades are to be visually open, well detailed, and scaled to the facade.
2.	Arcades are to be functional, serving as weather protection for the sidewalk below.
3.	Arcades must be designed to not hide or interfere with architectural features of the facade.
4.	Upon removal of the arcade, the facade's architectural character and integrity must remain intact.
5.	Arcades are to be attached just above the storefront, in alignment with adjacent arcades or horizontal elements on neighboring buildings
6.	If the arcade is supported vertically, posts or columns are to be spaced to reinforce existing facade rhythms, such as piers. Pedestrian movement is not to be interrupted; supports are to be placed alongside existing street trees.
7.	Arcade design must relate to or complement the architectural style of the building and adjacent building projections.
8.	Arcades must have architectural or decorative details/ elements.
9.	Arcade roofs must be shallow sloped (4 inch to 12 inch maximum).
10.	Roughhewn materials are not to be used for arcade posts and framing unless appropriate to the architectural style of the building.
11.	Arcade landscaping cannot interfere with pedestrian movement.

N. Canopies, page 48

1.	Design canopies to enhance the architectural style of the building.
2.	Use top quality materials.
3.	Canopy roof materials to be considered should be either transparent, translucent, or of lightweight material.
4.	Mount canopies just above storefront or entrance opening.
5.	Do not extend canopy over piers; cover the storefront opening only.

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O. Lighting, page 50

1.	Parking lots and paths of travel must be well lit. Service areas must have adequate light levels for the area's tasks.
2.	Light fixtures on or around the storefront must be designed to provide direct or indirect lighting onto the storefront, signage and surrounding area whether or not that particular business is open after dark. Streetlights are not sufficient for this purpose.
3.	Include downlighting to promote safety and because shade from trees can diminish both storefront and street lighting.
4.	Lighting must be installed and programmed for operation so that the exterior around the storefront remains lit in the evenings for an extended time past the closing times of most other neighboring businesses, or at least until 9:00 p.m. Timers can be used to facilitate light fixture operation after closing.
5.	Exterior display boxes must be adequately illuminated. Special attention must be given to ensure that restaurant menu displays are illuminated.
6.	Glare must be reduced through the shielding of the actual light source or by using frosted bulbs.
7.	When designing the exterior lighting, it is necessary to accent architectural elements and rooflines on buildings to help define buildings after the sun goes down.
8.	When possible, lighting is to be integrated into landscaping to enhance outdoor spaces.
9.	Exterior light fixtures are required to be decorative. If standard fixtures are mounted, they must be artistically enhanced to accent the area and complement the architecture of the building.

P. Color, page 52

1.	Selected colors must be appropriate for the architectural style of the building.
2.	Use paint colors that complement the colors of existing materials on the facade, such as brick or ceramic tile.
3.	The use of multiple accent colors is appropriate for architectural styles with ample detailing; however, accent colors should not be too different from each other as that would cause the building to look garish.
4.	Muted, soft colors are best used to soften hard lines and spaces, and bright colors to energize a space.
5.	Lighter colors are to be used at the storefront level, since storefronts are generally well lit.
6.	The building color cannot overpower the look of street-level businesses.
7.	Consider patterns and shade created by landscaping (particularly trees) and awnings on the building.

Q. Additions and Renovations, page 54

1.	'Small' additions should duplicate original shapes and materials.
2.	Additions containing new elements or forms should avoid mimicking the older building. Instead, design the addition with forms and materials that denote a relationship to the older structure.
3.	Simple background building additions are preferred to changes in the building front, so they do not interfere with the original building image along the streetscape.
4.	Always check for code restrictions and historic building designations before designing additions.

R. Landscaping, page 56

1.	Blank walls or trellises are to be dressed up with low maintenance, hardy climbing vines.
2.	If space is available, consideration must be given to dressing up spaces below storefront windows. Place pots, window boxes, planters and/or containers against walls, well out of the way of pedestrian traffic.
3.	Plant selections must complement the surrounding architecture styles and colors.
4.	Do not allow plant material to obscure architectural elements on the building.
5.	Consideration must be given to water and light requirements. When selecting plants, decide if the landscaping will be hand watered or irrigated.
6.	Landscaping on private property should complement public plantings.

S. Materials Guidelines, page 59

1.	Materials and details must be appropriate to the style of the building. Only durable materials of high quality are to be used.
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II. SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

A. General Signage Guidelines, page 62

1.	All signs should be architecturally integrated with their surroundings in terms of size, shape, color, texture, and lighting so that they are complementary to the overall design of the building and are not in visual competition with other signs in the area.
2.	All signs should convey their message clearly and legibly, shall be vandal-resistant and weather resistant, and if illuminated, shall not be overly bright for their surroundings.
3.	New signs proposed for existing buildings should provide a compatible appearance with the building signage of other tenants. When there are multiple signs on a single building, there should be an attempt to bring in a unifying element (such as size or material), even where no sign program exists.
4.	New building design should provide logical sign areas, such as tall storefronts with a minimum height of 12 feet (see page 28) allowing flexibility for new users as the building is re-tenanted over time. Designs which provide for convenient and attractive replacement of signs are encouraged.
5.	Signage which contains business slogans or advertising is not permitted. However, signs may include information describing the products sold or services provided.
6.	Extremely small letters on the sign face (or very small individual letters used as part of a sign) do not read well and are discouraged.
7.	Repetitious signage information on the same building frontage shall be avoided regardless of the sign area square footage allowed.
8.	Buildings with businesses that do not have ground floor usable space may have one ten (10) square foot sign, such as a directory sign, to be utilized by all above ground floor businesses so long as those businesses do not also occupy ground floor usable space. Sign to be placed adjacent to the primary entrance for the above ground floor businesses.
9.	Total Sign Area Allowed: Minimum of twenty (20) square feet, maximum of seventy-five (75) square feet.

B. Transom Signs, page 64

1.	The following application choices are available for transom signs on glass: a. Materials such as vinyl, paint or gold leaf may be applied directly to the glass on the interior. b. Sandblasting of the glass itself. c. Three-dimensional images, such as plaques, mounted on the inside of the glass.
2.	The following application choice is available for transom signs on storefront panels or beams, or a suspended sign: a. Materials such as wood, tile, metal, high-quality plastic, halo lit, push through acrylic or a combination of these materials.
3.	Transom signs are to be placed directly on, behind or in front of transom windows or located in the vertical area between the storefront entrances in front of the transom window or panel.
4.	Depending upon the transom sign materials selected and the placement of the materials, interior illumination of the glass will create positive results.
5.	Ambient or indirect lighting will be sufficient for most transom signs.
6.	Transom signs shall comply with the following standards: a. Maximum Sign Area: Eighty (80) percent of transom area. b. Maximum Letter Height: Twelve (12) inches. c. Exception To Height: Maximum letter height allowed up to sixteen (16) inches with FINE font or small name, i.e. GAP. d. Accent Letter: Can be twenty (20) percent larger.

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C. Awning Surface Signs, page 68

1.	Refer to page 44 of these Guidelines for information relating to awning installation.
2.	Awning graphics must complement awning color (See page 44 #3).
3.	Graphic displays on the incline surface are available to ground floor occupancies.
4.	Awnings on upper floors, if utilized, are limited to text only, and the text must be placed only on the valance, for better visibility.
5.	Spot lights, gooseneck light fixtures and other decorative light fixtures should be utilized for illuminating awning signs.
6.	Typically, only ground floor awnings are illuminated.
7.	In the event radio frequency welding (a production technique resulting in the translucent fusing of materials, an alternative to traditional painting) is utilized, supplemental lighting under the awning is allowed so long as it provides soft illumination and is designed and located such that the light will not cause glare to vehicles or pedestrians. Otherwise, internal illumination of awning signs is prohibited.
8.	Awning signs shall comply with the following standards: a. Maximum Sign Area: Thirty (30) percent of the overall awning incline surface. b. Text On Valance: Not to exceed eight (8) inches tall, and the length of the text shall not exceed eighty (80) percent of the length of the front valance.

D. Edge Signs, page 72

1.	Individual letters pinned up or down from canopies are very effective.
2.	Color and font must be compatible with the building color and architecture.
3.	When selecting a sign shape, unusual or flowing shapes show better.
4.	Edge signs must be centered on canopies.
5.	Special care is to be taken to avoid blocking any architectural features of the building.
6.	Internal illumination is not allowed.
7.	Gooseneck light fixtures are best to illuminate edge signs, and can be mounted up or down.
8.	All light sources are to be shielded to prevent glare from interfering with passing motorists.
9.	All wiring and junction boxes must be carefully concealed or camouflaged.
10.	Edge signs shall comply with the following standards: a. Maximum Sign Area: Eighty (80) percent of the overhang area, edge to edge, but in no case more than twelve (12) feet long. b. Maximum Letter Height: Twelve (12) inches. c. Exception To Height: Maximum letter height allowed up to sixteen (16) inches with FINE font or small name, i.e. GAP. d. Accent Letter: Can be twenty (20) percent larger.

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E. Wall Signs, page 74

1.	Wall sign materials include paint, gold leaf, metal, ceramic tile, wood and high-density plastic.
2.	Wall signs are not encouraged and must complement the building's style.
3.	Since wall signs are the least desirable in Old Town, creativity is required with the use of material, color, size and font. Painted signs must be unique and artistic.
4.	Design may consist of painted text and graphics, fabricated sign boards, non-illuminated individual letters, or some effective combination.
5.	For ground floor businesses, wall signs are to be located below the eave or parapet line of the facade.
6.	If placed above storefronts, the wall sign is to be centered.
7.	If there is a recessed or framed area on the upper facade, the wall sign is to be placed within it.
8.	Flat sheet signs (such as wood) shall have a trimmed edge or frame to improve the finished appearance of the sign.
9.	Wall signs cannot distract from the architectural style of the building.
10.	Decorative light fixtures are to be used to externally illuminate signage. Gooseneck light fixtures are particularly appropriate for wall signs.
11.	All light sources must be shielded to prevent glare from interfering with passing motorists.
12.	Light spill over must be limited. Only those areas that need to be displayed are to be illuminated.
13.	Internally-illuminated channel letters are prohibited.
14.	Wall signs shall comply with the following standards: a. Maximum Sign Area: Twelve (12) square feet. b. Maximum Letter Height: Twelve (12) inches. c. Exception To Height: Maximum letter height allowed up to sixteen (16) inches with FINE font or small name, i.e. GAP. d. Accent Letter: Can be twenty (20) percent larger.

F. Projecting Signs, page 76

1.	Preferred materials for suspended signs include wood, metal, or a high-quality composite material.
2.	Use iconic graphics. Creative signs that "symbolize" the business are encouraged.
3.	Sign brackets are almost always metal, must be securely mounted to the building, and should be decorative.
4.	Projecting signs are usually attached to or suspended from the bracket. Metal rods, bolts, chains or cables may be used for this purpose. However, use of chains or cables will allow suspended signs to sway in the wind.
5.	Projecting signs are to be placed near store entrances, either above or to either side.
6.	Projecting signs may be mounted on pilasters between storefronts or windows.
7.	Signs must always be mounted high enough to be out of reach of pedestrians.
8.	Projecting signs are required for each business operating under an arcade.
9.	Indirect or discrete spot lights are not required but can be effective.
10.	Neon and other interior illumination is prohibited.
11.	Projecting signs shall comply with the following standards: a. Maximum Sign Area: Five (5) square feet. b. Wall Mounted Signs: Cannot project more than four (4) feet from the wall. c. Wall Mounted Signs: Must maintain at least eight (8) feet clearance from the bottom of the sign to the sidewalk and cannot be mounted higher than sixteen (16) feet from the sidewalk. d. Under overhang mounted signs are to be centered within the width of the overhang. e. In no event shall any business place more than two (2) projecting signs per frontage.

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G. Window Signs, page 80

1.	Approved materials include vinyl, paint or gold leaf which are to be applied directly to the glass on the interior.
2.	Sandblasting of the glass itself is approved.
3.	Three-dimensional images, such as plaques, are approved to be mounted on the inside of the glass.
4.	Window signs typically consist of text and graphics.
5.	Artistic signage is always encouraged.
6.	Artistic signage is always encouraged.
7.	Window signs made of paper are generally not allowed, as they are too flimsy.
8.	Window signage must be durable.
9.	Temporary sales signs or notices are not allowed.
10.	For maximum effect, window signs are not to block a good view of the interior.
11.	Illumination is not generally needed for window signs, as they are meant to be viewed at close range.
12.	If illumination is used, such as in a shadow box or as an accent to glazed or stained glass, all wires and transformers should be concealed.
13.	Neon window signs are not allowed.
14.	Businesses that do not have ground floor usable space may have window signs provided that such signs are non-illuminated, occupy not more than ten (10) percent of the window area of the tenant/occupant space, and are adhered to the glass. Temporary window signs are not permitted above the ground floor.
15.	Window Signs shall comply with the following standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Maximum Sign Area: Not to exceed twenty-five (25) percent of a single pane and no more than fifteen (15) percent of the total storefront glazing. b. Maximum Letter Height: Twelve (12) inches. c. A minimum of six (6) inches of clear space must be maintained on the glazing between the edge of the sign and the nearest framing member.