

## INTRODUCTION

The goals of the Mixed-Use Town Center (M-U-TC) Zone are to promote reinvestment and redevelopment in the county's older, more established commercial districts. The development plan establishes the essential standards and guidelines that are necessary to guide development proposed within the Mixed-Use Town Center. All proposed development and exterior renovations must be reviewed by the M-U-TC Design Review Committee to ensure they meet the development plan's design guidelines.



M-U-TC Zone

## PLAN AREA

The City of Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center zone encompasses all sites along the Rhode Island Avenue corridor, east of the District of Columbia line at Eastern Avenue to east of the traffic circle at 34th Street. It includes sites along 34th Street, north of Bunker Hill Road, to just south of Rhode Island Avenue. The M-U-TC zone covers an area of approximately 11.5 acres within Planning Area 68 and Councilmanic District 2.

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In 2010, the *City of Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center Zone Development Plan* was amended through a public planning process and was approved by the Planning Board with modifications per PGCPB Resolution No. 10-115 on November 18, 2010.



Community Design Charrette

## VISION

The Mount Rainier M-U-TC zone features three distinct districts to create a pedestrian-friendly and lively commercial downtown: Upper 34th Street "Main Street"; Rhode Island Avenue "Boulevard"; and "the City Center". Each district has a unique identity that contributes to a cohesive and attractive environment that will spur economic revitalization. New and updated design standards and guidelines provide the regulatory framework to create a rejuvenated mixed-use town center.



M-U-TC Districts



## ROLE OF THE M-U-TC REVIEW COMMITTEE

All new development, signs, fencing, parking, lighting and exterior renovations occurring within the Mixed-Use Town Center Zone must be reviewed by the M-U-TC Design Review Committee at an advertised work session prior to the issuance of a permit to ensure that the development plan's goals, design principles, standards and guidelines are met.

The committee is advisory to the Prince George's County Planning Board and is assisted by a staff liaison from the M-NCPPC Planning Department's Community Planning North Division.

## COMMITTEE COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT

The seven-member committee is composed of two municipal government representatives, two residents, two business and/or property owners within the Mixed-Use Town Center or City, and one design professional. Each member of the committee is appointed by the Prince George's County Planning Board and serves a two-year term.

## MEETINGS

Applications are reviewed during regularly scheduled meetings, which are held on the second Wednesday of every month at the City of Mount Rainier City Hall, 1 Municipal Place, Mount Rainier, Maryland.

## REVIEW PROCESS

All proposed new development or improvements to existing development must be approved through either the Permit or Special Permit/Detailed Site Plan process.

### Determining the Required Application Type

Applicants should consult the use table, page 158, within the 2010 *Approved Mount Rainier M-U-TC Development Plan* to determine what type of application will be required and if the use is permitted.

### Permit

Applications for uses that are permitted (designated with a P in the use table) will be required to follow the permit review process outlined in this document.

### Special Permit/Detailed Site Plan

Special permits (SP) are required for certain uses as indicated in the use table, for departures from the development plan, and when an applicant wishes to appeal the recommendation of the M-U-TC Review Committee.

Per the use table, proposed uses that require a special permit also require a detailed site plan. These applications will require a public hearing.



Illustrative Site Plan

### Pre-Application Meeting

Applicants are encouraged to meet with municipal and/or M-NCPPC Community Planning North Division staff prior to preparing building plans to discuss the process and the applicant's building and site concepts.

### Submission to the Committee

#### Permit

Prior to the filing of any building permit application with the Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources (DER), the applicant must submit his/her permit plans to the M-U-TC Design Review Committee. All relevant building and site plan information necessary to show compliance must be submitted with the application.



### Special Permit/Detailed Site Plan

All special permit and detailed site plan applications are referred to the City of Mount Rainier for review by the M-U-TC Design Review Committee.

### Committee Meeting

The applicant (or representative) is required to present the application to the Committee during a regularly scheduled meeting.



Mount Rainier Artist's Lofts

Only complete applications will be reviewed for compliance with all relevant design recommendations and requirements in the Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan.

### Recommendation

The committee will make a recommendation to the Planning Director (in the case of a permit application) or the Planning Board (in the case of a special permit/detailed site plan application) as to whether the proposed development is in compliance with the development plan's overall goals and design principles, as well as its specific design standards and guidelines. The committee can take one of the following actions:

- Recommend approval of the application as submitted.
- Recommend approval of the application with conditions.
- Defer the application until the next meeting, which must be held within 30 days (a deferral of an application by the committee can occur only once; however, the applicant may request an additional deferral, but final action must be taken within 90 days of receipt of the application).
- Recommend denial of the application with explanation of what design criteria was not met.

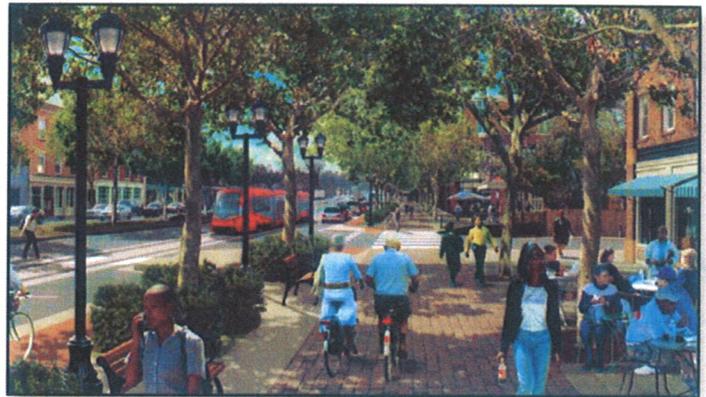
The Planning Board may only approve a special permit contrary to the recommendation of the municipality upon the affirmative vote of four-fifths of the members of the full Planning Board.

### Appeal of Committee's Recommendation

If an application is recommended for denial, or approval with conditions that an applicant is not in agreement with, the applicant may appeal the decision to the Planning Board through the special permit process.

### Public Hearing

Applications requiring a special permit/detailed site plan will require a hearing before the Planning Board. The Planning Board's decision may be appealed to the District Council and/or Circuit Court.



Rhode Island Avenue Proposed Vision

### Approved Plans

#### Permit

A copy of the committee's recommendations must be submitted with all building permit applications and all building plans must be stamped by the committee signifying that the plans are in compliance with the requirements of the Development Plan and conditions recommended by the committee. Any necessary revisions must be made to the plans prior to submitting them for a building permit.

#### Special Permit/Detailed Site Plan

After approval, the plans will be required to be revised by the applicant to address any conditions of approval and then will be certified by Planning Department Staff. These approved plans will be submitted to DER along with a DER permit application.



## ROLE OF THE M-NCPPC LIAISON

### Committee Meetings

- Attends all Committee meetings and act as facilitator for discussion of development proposals to ensure that discussion is focused on the requirements of the Development Plan.
- Provide clarification and/or analysis of the Development Plan and its design guidelines, the enabling legislation that created the M-U-TC Zone (CB-2-1994), and the Prince George's County Zoning Ordinance as they pertain to an individual development proposal before the Committee, or in general.
- Assures that the Committee fully understands its role as an advisory group to the Planning Board, and the parameters within which it must operate.
- Recommends to the Committee design alternatives for development applications, when necessary.

### Amendments to Development Plan

- Advises and guides the Committee through the process and requirements of proposing an amendment to the Development Plan.

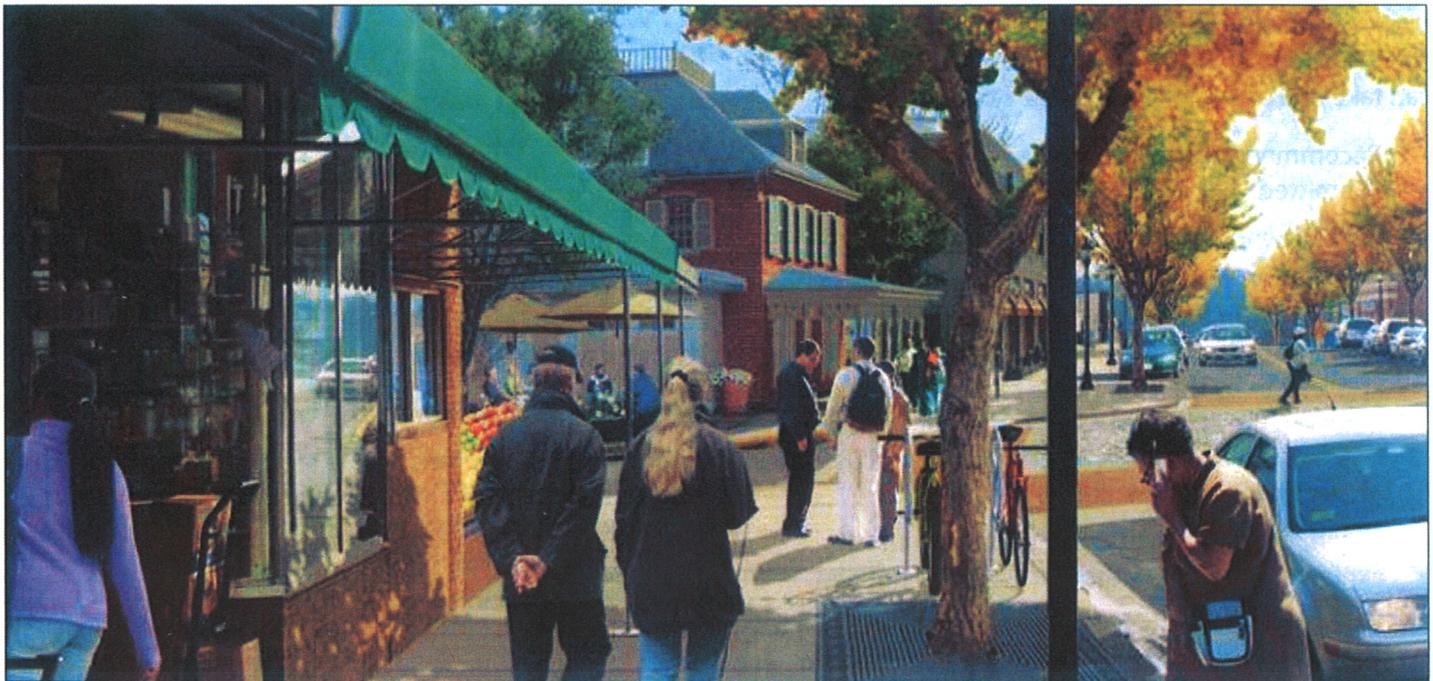
### Permit/Special Permit/Detailed Site Plan Review Process

- Reviews all permits within the M-U-TC Zone. This process includes determining if the development proposal was reviewed by the Committee, and if so, determining the recommendation of the Committee. The application must reflect any conditions of approval recommended by the Committee.
- Provides information to applicants regarding the Committee's role in the permit review process.
- Reviews all applications for special permits/detailed site plans to determine if the proposal meets the requirements of the Development Plan. These findings are reported to the Committee.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please contact Sara Chadwick, Community Planning North Division of the Prince George's County Planning Department at 301-952-4225.

Copies of the *2010 Approved Secondary Amendment to the City of Mount Rainier Development Plan* and the *2004 Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment* are available on our website: [http://www.pgplanning.org/Resources/Publications/Approved\\_Mount\\_Rainier.htm](http://www.pgplanning.org/Resources/Publications/Approved_Mount_Rainier.htm).



Upper 34th Street Proposed Vision



The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission  
Prince George's County Planning Department  
Community Planning North Division



Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant : \_\_\_\_\_

BusinessAddress: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Building/Site Plan Information**

PropertyAddress: \_\_\_\_\_

Existing/Proposed Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Proposed Improvements: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Application Checklist**

\_\_\_\_\_ Completed M-U-TC Application Form

\_\_\_\_\_ Drawings, Sketches, Sign Proofs of all proposed signage and location on building

\_\_\_\_\_ Photos of Existing Property Before any Changes and Buildings in Vicinity

\_\_\_\_\_ Sample of proposed paint colors (swatches or chips)

\_\_\_\_\_ Drawings, Sketches, Photoshop Illustrations of all proposed exterior work

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Site Plan/Plat/Survey

**An application will only be reviewed by the M-U-TC Committee if all documentation, when applicable, listed above is submitted with the application to Michael Jackson, Assistant City Manager. Complete applications must be received at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled M-U-TC Committee meeting. Regular meetings are the 2nd Wednesday of each month. All exterior work must be approved by the Committee and subsequent County and municipal permits must be applied for subsequent to M-U-TC review and approval.**



**Details for Signage**

Materials: \_\_\_\_\_

Colors: \_\_\_\_\_

Position on Building (Provide Photos): \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Lighting (Back-lit signs NOT PERMITTED): \_\_\_\_\_

Height above Street Level: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dimensions:**

Length: \_\_\_\_\_ Width: \_\_\_\_\_

Letter Size (Not to exceed 12"): \_\_\_\_\_

Percent of Window Coverage (Not to exceed 30%): \_\_\_\_\_

Gross Area of Total Signage (Not to exceed 10%): \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee Actions**

Date Accepted: \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee Reviews:**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee Recommendation**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Committee Stamp: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Approval                      \_\_\_\_\_ Approval with Conditions                      \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproval

Conditions of Approval (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Design Standards and Guidelines **4**

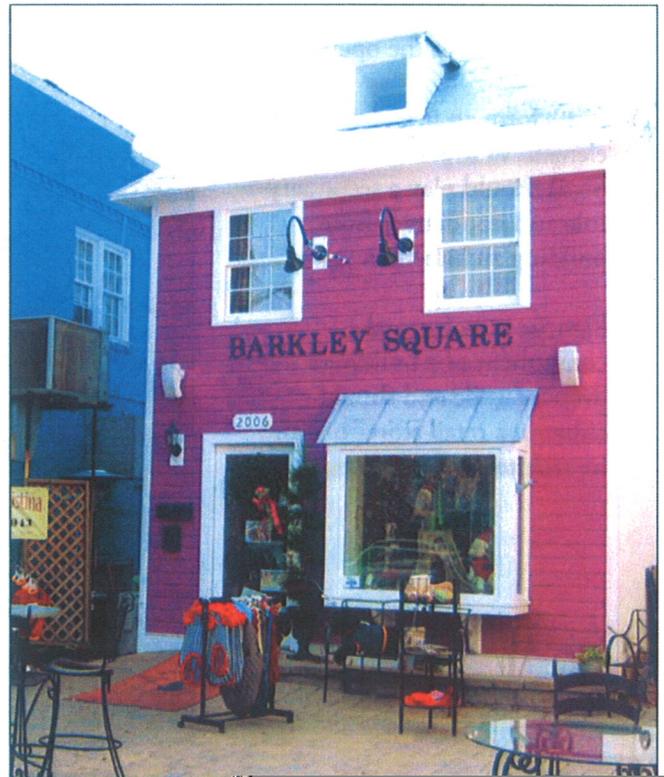


## Architectural Elements | Signage

### Standards and Guidelines

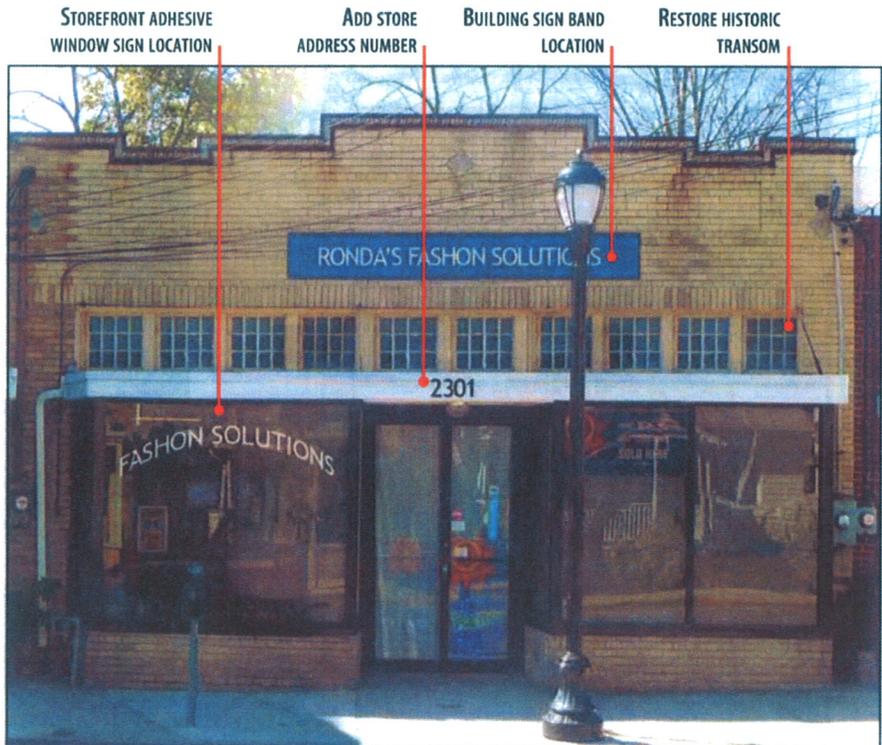
Signs should complement the architecture of buildings in terms of size, shape, color, texture, and lighting. Signage considerations include the name of a business and its address to temporary sales and product information.

1. All proposed flush mount, projecting, and window signage, as well as banners and flags, shall be included in the building sign plans submitted for review by the county and M-U-TC Design Review Committee. Signage plans shall specify color, size, type, and location of all signs on or adjacent to buildings.
2. All signs shall be attached to building façades. Signs shall be flat against façades or mounted projecting from façades. Buildings with existing front yards may also have free-standing bracket signs (as part of allowable gross signage area).
3. The maximum gross area of signage shall be one gross square foot of signage for every linear foot of building frontage. Total signage should not exceed 10 percent of the building's façade area (also see sign dimension restrictions).
4. Signs shall relate in color, size, and placement to building architecture. Signs shall not block, alter, or remove architectural details, such as windows, cornices, or decorative details, or extend above the roofline.
5. Signage submitted for multi-tenant buildings shall coordinate and present unified signage strategies.
6. Illuminated signs shall be designed to enhance the overall composition of façades. Sign illumination shall be limited to illuminate the signs only.



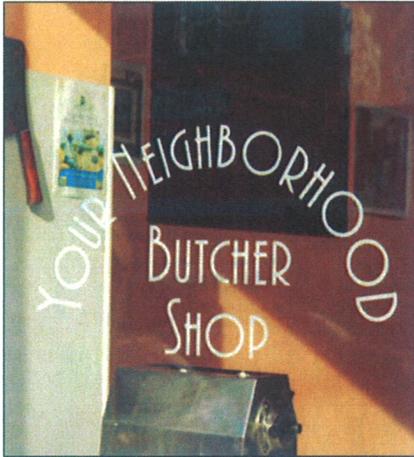
## Architectural Elements | Signage

7. **Backlit signs shall not be allowed, with the exception of channel letter signs with individually-lit letters and numbers.**
8. **Signs shall be made of attractive and durable materials, such as metal, wood, and glass. Signs shall be of professional quality and finish. Signs shall be properly repaired and maintained throughout the year.**
9. Street numbers should be legible and located in one of the above-mentioned areas.
10. Street numbers located in transoms should be sized proportional to the openings.
11. Signs form an important visual element of urban streetscapes. Signs should play a secondary role and not detract from building architecture.
12. Signage is an integral component of a building's overall façade and should enhance a retail storefront and its architectural character.



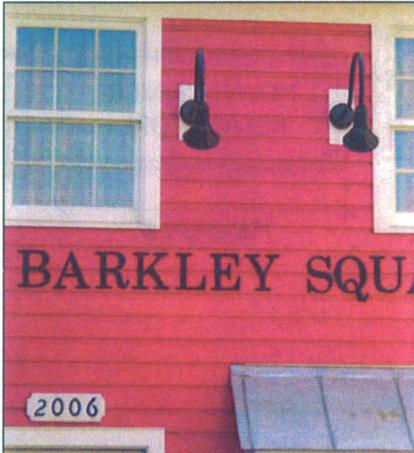
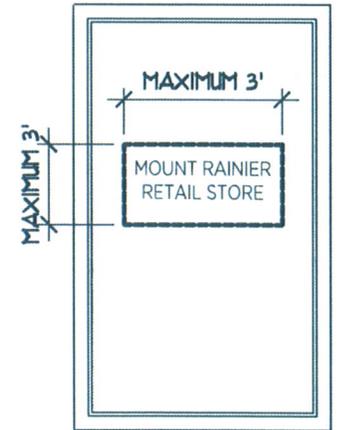
EXAMPLES OF SIGNAGE AND PRESERVATION FOR HISTORIC BUILDINGS.

## Architectural Elements | Signage



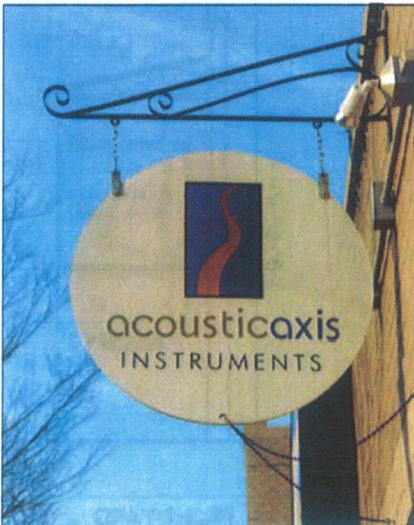
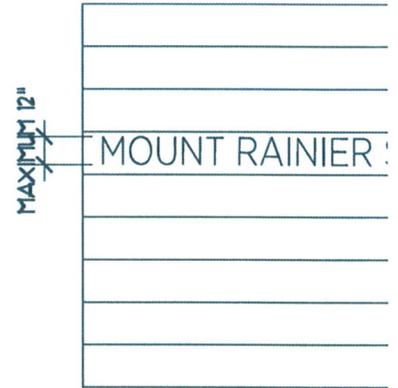
### Adhesive and/or Window Painted Signs

1. Adhesive signs shall not obscure views into the interior of retail establishments.
2. Window signs, including those advertising sales in any one window, shall not exceed 30 percent of the window area.
3. Text displaying web site addresses and phone numbers shall not exceed three inches in height.



### Pin-mounted Signs

1. The size and position of signs shall fit within architectural features.
2. Individual letter signs should be mounted on the front of the building. Fastening hardware shall not be visible from the street.
3. Pin-mounted letters should use clear, bold fonts.



### Hanging Signs

1. Hanging signs shall be suspended from brackets and mounted perpendicular to façades.
2. Hanging signs shall be hung at least 10 feet above the sidewalk, shall project no more than 42 inches from the face of buildings, and shall not exceed 9 square feet.
3. The size of a hanging sign shall be proportional to the building façade.

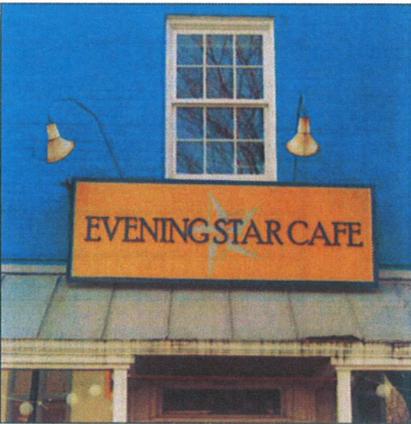


## Architectural Elements | Signage



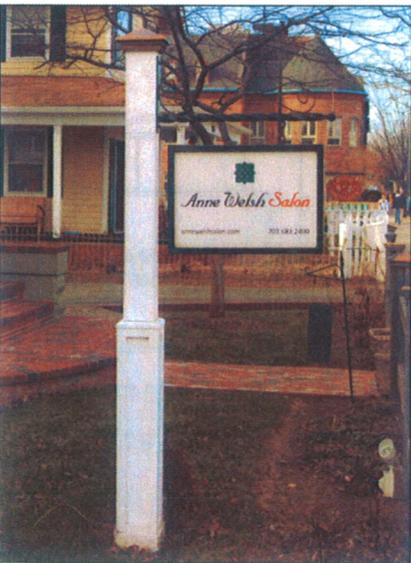
### Plaque Signs

1. Signs shall be located adjacent to the main entrances to businesses.
2. Metal or cast metal should be used as materials for plaques.
3. Signs should be for professional offices and home-work studios.



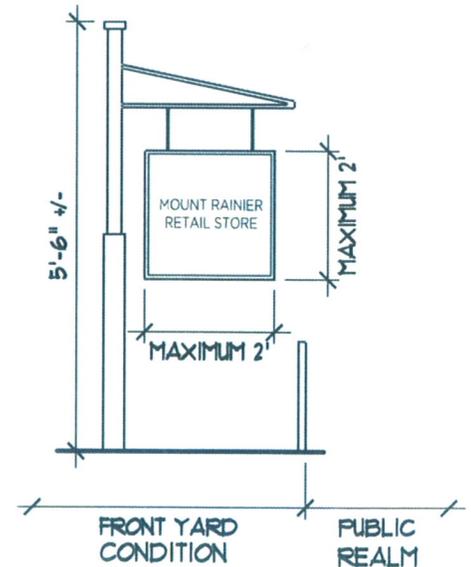
### Flat signs

1. Flat signs shall be mounted flush against the walls of buildings.
2. Flat signs shall respect building proportions and architectural features, such as bays and cornices.
3. Lettering height shall not exceed 12 inches.

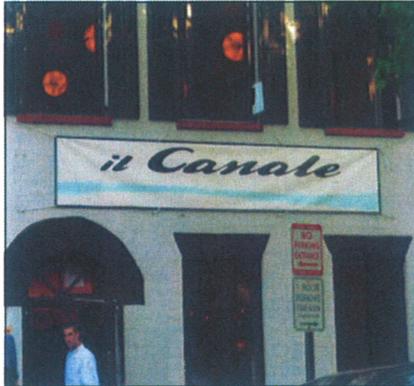


### Free-standing Bracket Signs

1. Free-standing bracket signs shall only be utilized for buildings with existing setbacks and defined front-yard conditions.
2. Bracket signs shall be independent from buildings and mounted on wood or metal posts. Signs shall be pedestrian-scaled with a maximum post height of five foot- six inches.
3. Only bracket-type signs shall be used on freestanding posts.



## Architectural Elements | Signage



BANNER SIGNS.

### Temporary Signs

1. Temporary banner-style signs can be used as an interim low-cost option for new businesses in Mount Rainier. Temporary signs shall be reviewed by the M-U-TC Design Review Committee and will require permits. Temporary sign permits shall be valid for six months. By the end of the six-month period temporary signage will have to be replaced with properly approved permanent signage.



INTERNALLY-LIT PLASTIC SIGNS.

### Prohibited Signs

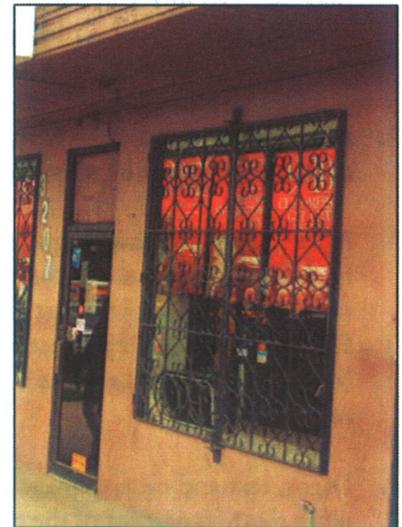
1. The following sign types are prohibited in the M-U-TC downtown area:
  - Animated, flashing or electronic scrolling signs.
  - Tall, free-standing, or oversized signs that visually overpower.
  - Pole-mounted signs.
  - Internally lit plastic signs or box signs.
  - Vinyl signs, except for temporary signage for which permits have been issued (see temporary signage above).
  - Window signs that block interior views.



MULTIPLE PERMANENT VINYL SIGNS.



POLE-MOUNTED SIGNS.



WINDOW SIGNS.

## Architectural Elements | Awnings



EXAMPLES OF AWNINGS.

### Standards and Guidelines

Awnings and canopies traditionally protect pedestrians and merchandise from the weather. They provide color and a three-dimensional quality to storefronts. Awnings and canopies can enliven utilitarian exteriors and tie together different buildings along a block. They can be used for signs if printed with the name, symbol, and street number of the store.

1. **Awnings shall be made of durable fabric and may be fixed or retractable. The design and color should complement building architecture and the historic character of Mount Rainier.**
2. **Metal, plasticized, synthetic, and back-lit awnings shall not be allowed.**
3. **A standard street awning shall be mounted with its valance between eight and twelve feet above the sidewalk, so it will not obstruct pedestrian flow. Awnings shall project out a maximum of four to six feet and are exempt from setback requirements.**
4. Logos, text and other signage should not cover more than 30 percent of the awning surface. This

signage surface area counts towards the allowable gross signage area of a façade.

5. The awning should be attached above the display windows and below the cornice or sign panel. Individual awnings should be installed over each separate opening.
6. The awning should emphasize the frame of the storefront and should not cover the piers or be too close to the upper floor window sills or the building's cornice.

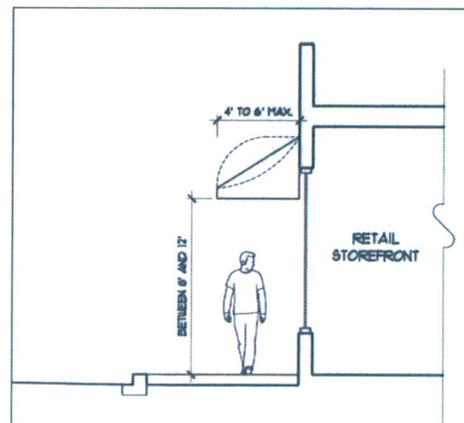


FIGURE 46: DIAGRAM SHOWING AWNING HEIGHT DIMENSIONS.