

Downtown Ponoka Action Plan – Mixed Use and Commercial Area Architectural Guidelines

PURPOSE

The purpose of these guidelines is to seek a good fit between old and new buildings within the areas of Downtown intended for mixed use and commercial development. They seek to enhance the built environment and promote use of architectural features that create visual interest and appeal along the street.

The guidelines do not prescribe a theme of architecture or the use of older, traditional building methods and materials. Proposed building designs are expected to reflect and use the best elements of traditional commercial and downtown building design. The use of newer building techniques and materials is allowed.

Those designing new buildings for Downtown Ponoka are encouraged to exceed the requirements set out in the guidelines. The *Ponoka Downtown Design Guidelines* (December 1999) should be consulted as a resource.

Visual Continuity along the Street

Building Placement on Site

- 1 New buildings shall be placed on site within 0.3m of the front property boundary to maintain and contribute towards a consistent street edge.
- 2 Despite subsection 1, the Development Authority may consider a setback from the front property boundary to accommodate outdoor seating space, interesting architectural features, high quality landscaping or similar items. In no case shall a setback greater than 2.5m be allowed.
- 3 New building construction shall extend along the entire length of the front parcel boundary so that no gap larger than 0.3m is created between existing and future building walls. Any gap between building walls from grade to 3.0m above grade shall be filled in with non-transparent materials such as a wood pony wall.

- 4 On corner parcels, the building shall extend at least two thirds of the length of the parcel along the side parcel boundary closest to the street. A low level fence or planter box or wall or similar feature shall be installed along the side parcel boundary for the remaining length of the parcel.

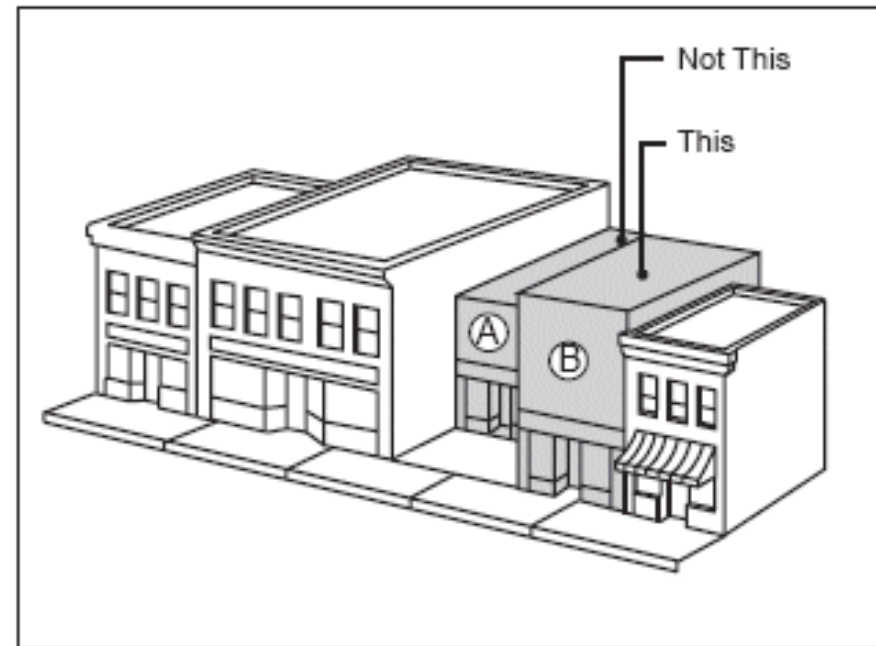


Figure 1 (above) shows the desired placement of new buildings along the street to maintain continuity along the street edge. Building A creates a gap or break while Building B reinforces the edge along the public sidewalk.

Building Height

- 5 Maximum building height shall not exceed four storeys or 18.0 m.
- 6 Despite subsection 5, where a site is adjacent to a residential district or separated from a residential district by a street or a lane, the maximum building height shall not exceed three storeys or 13.7 m.

- 7 New buildings shall have a minimum building height of 4.6 m. Where a new building is between or beside a building with a greater building height then a parapet wall or false front shall be provided to close the gap between the heights of the front facades of the buildings.

On-Site Parking

- 8 Any ground level off-street parking that is provided shall be located at the rear of the building. Access to off-street parking shall be restricted to the rear lane.
- 9 Where at grade parking is abuts a public sidewalk, a low level screen wall or hedge shall be provided to screen the view of most of the parking area and create a defined edge to the public sidewalk.

Example of Continuity of Street Wall



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Building Façade Features

Building facades along the front parcel boundary and along the side parcel boundary on a corner lot shall use a variety of features and decorative elements to create visual interest and sense of common rhythm along the street.

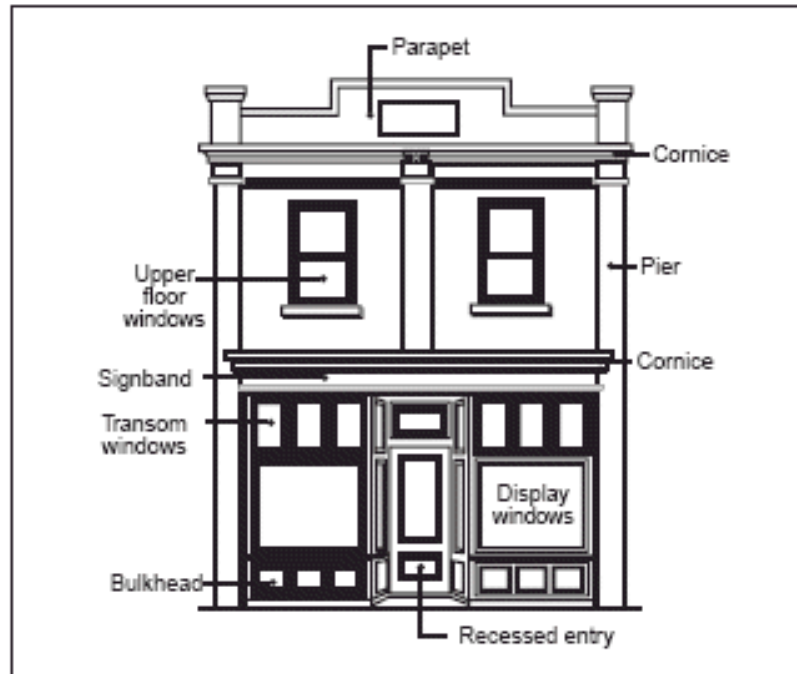


Figure 2 (above) shows the major components of a traditional commercial building façade.

Main Floor Elements

- 1 A recessed front entry with a minimum depth of 1.2m shall be provided to prevent doors from swinging out into the public sidewalk and to add a variation in façade depth at the main floor level.
- 2 Front entries shall be spaced to maintain a consistent pattern along the block face. Along 50 Street and Chipman Avenue this shall require a 7.5 m spacing between front entries. For all other areas the spacing may be 15 m between front entries.

- 3 Lower building facades shall include large display windows having minimal partitioning at eye level with transom windows above and a bulkhead panel below.

Example of Main Floor Elements



Horizontal Elements

- 4 New building construction and major redevelopment of building facades shall respect and enhance horizontal alignments on adjacent buildings and along the block face where feasible.
- 5 Decorative details and façade articulation, such as banding, the height of bulkhead panels, the height of display windows and doors, and the height of upper floor windows shall respect or make continuous the horizontal features of neighbouring buildings.

- 6 Sign bands, cornices, windows, canopies and awnings shall be aligned with similar features on neighbouring buildings

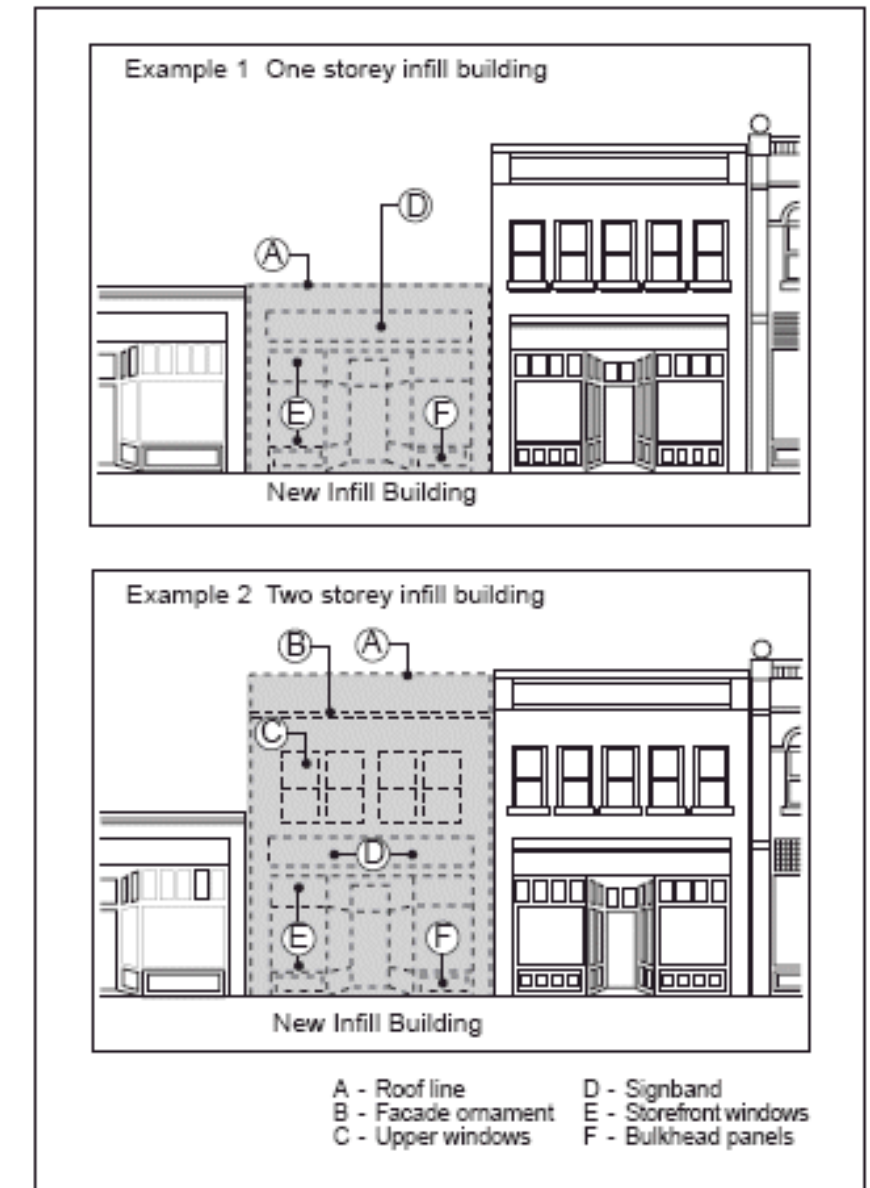


Figure 3 (above) shows examples of how the major horizontal elements of a façade can match or align with those of adjacent buildings.

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Vertical Elements

- Major vertical elements shall be introduced into the façade design of new buildings and major redevelopment of existing building facades at regular intervals to maintain the traditional vertical pattern of façade design along the block face.
- Upper floor windows shall reflect the repetitive, vertical pattern along the street and maintain a width to height ratio of 2:3. Horizontal strip windows are not allowed.

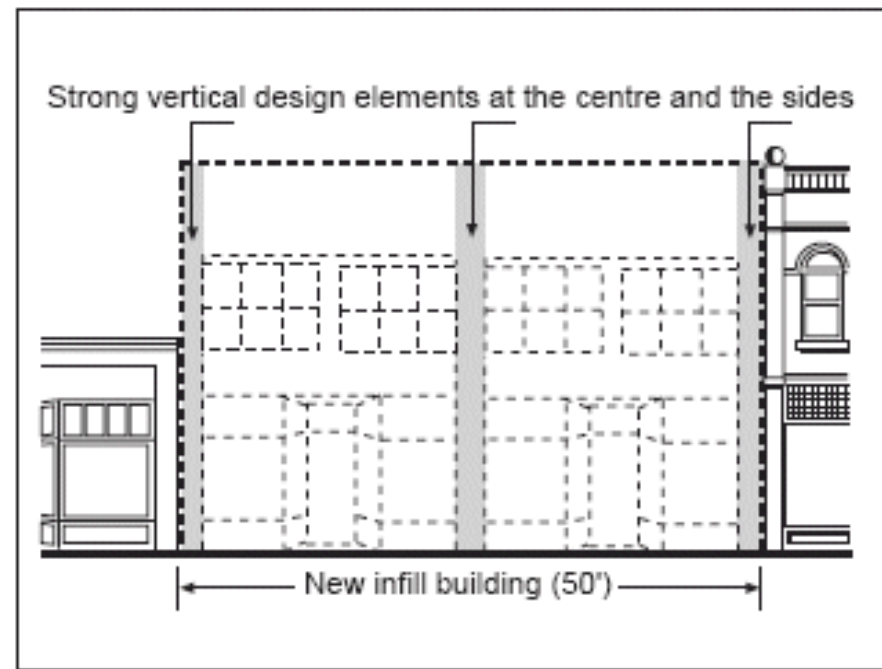


Figure 4 (above) shows how vertical elements can be used to break up the width of a building façade to create the impression of two smaller buildings consistent with the width of storefronts of other buildings on the block face.

Examples of Vertical and Horizontal Elements



Awnings, Signs and Lighting

- Awnings that have a traditional profile and are fixed in place or retractable are allowed. Awnings shall project at least 1.5m from the building face. Awnings shall be mounted between and not cover the piers on the building facades outer edges.
- Where possible the height of the awning shall align with the height of any awning on the adjacent buildings. A minimum clear space of 2.6m between the sidewalk and the lowest portion of the awning frame shall be provided.
- Backlit and bubble style awnings are not permitted.

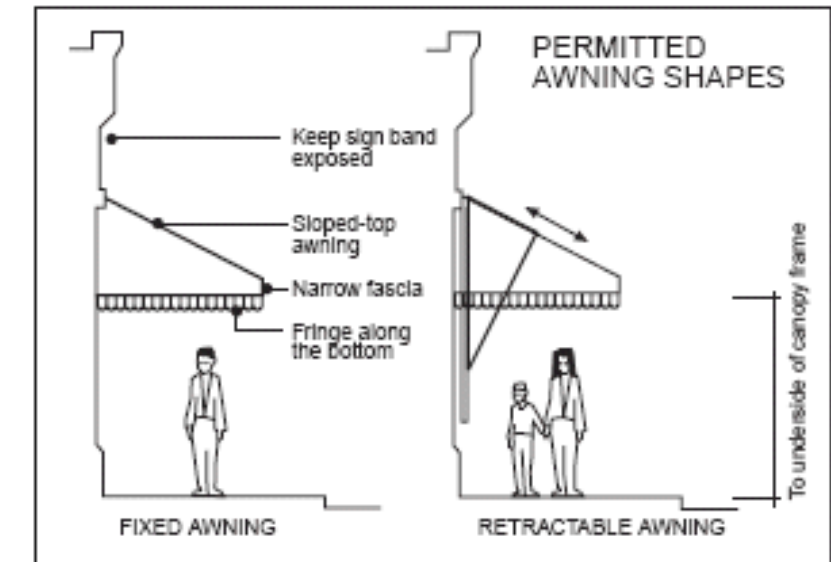


Figure 5 (above) shows the permitted types of awnings and their relation to the building front and sidewalk.

- Use of projecting signs shall be encouraged as the most effective form of signage for both pedestrians and motorists.
- Traditional fascia and painted signs within the sign band shall be allowed.

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- 14 The preferred means of lighting signs on the building façade shall be direct lighting cast onto the sign from a position above the sign using gooseneck lighting. Backlit and ground lit signs are not allowed.

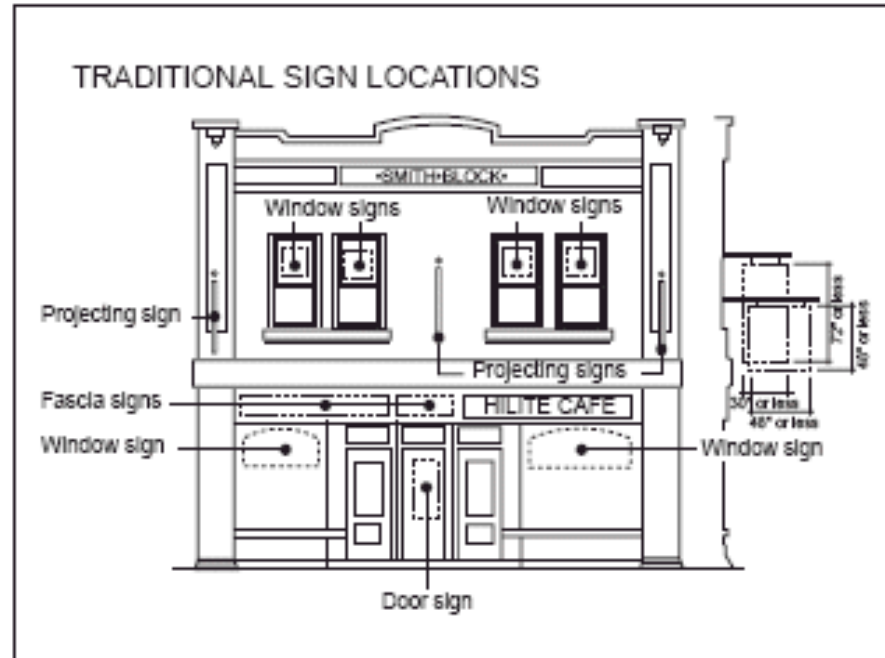


Figure 6 (above) shows the variety of sign locations traditionally used on commercial buildings.

Example of Sign Placement and Awnings



Colours and Materials

- 15 Traditional materials of painted wood, stucco, stone and brick shall be used. Newer building materials that imitate or have a similar look to these types of materials may be used.
- 16 Colours shall reflect the traditional, subdued colour range used for older commercial buildings in the downtown.
- 17 Variation in colour shall be used to accent key façade features such as window trims and door frames so these features are distinguishable from the colour of the wall panel.
- 18 Reflective glass windows and reflective window tints are not allowed.