

Chapter 4 OLD TOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

A. Introduction

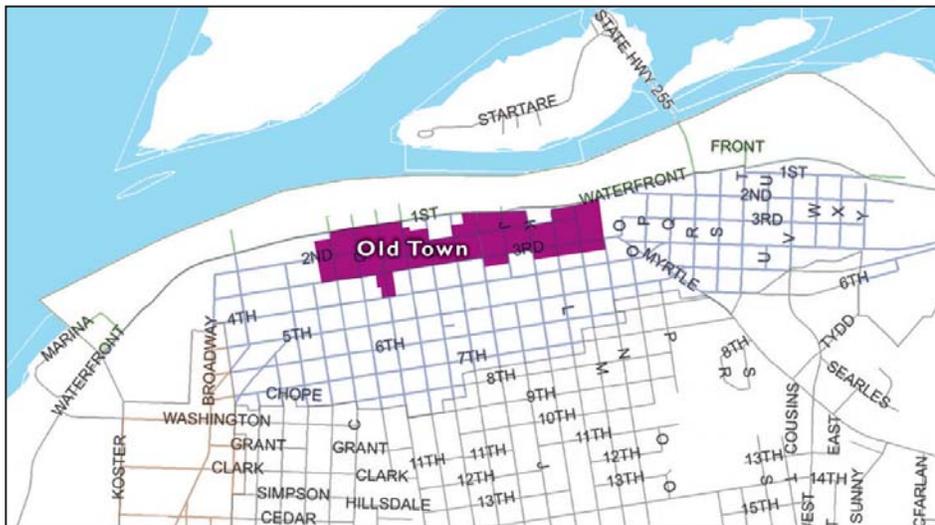
The Old Town area has been declared a Historic District and is on the National Register of Historic Places. These design guidelines are focused on the area between B Street and H Street, south of 1st Street and generally north of 3rd Street. These guidelines discuss how new construction or infill and renovations should be designed to respect the existing built character of the Old Town in Eureka.

1. Objective

New buildings in the Old Town District will be designed to complement the existing historic buildings while using current architectural design trends. Restorations to those buildings deemed to be historically significant by the Historic Preservation Commission shall follow the Secretary of the Interiors Historic Preservation Guidelines for exteriors.

2. Applicability

These guidelines apply to the Old Town Design Review District.



3. Traditional District Pattern

The Old Town District is characterized by dense development on smaller lots with multi-story masonry and wood frame buildings adjacent to the public right-of way. The small scale grid street, east west trending alleys and block pattern influences the building and parking placements. Building footprints

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are adjacent to the back of sidewalks and on the alley to the rear. The street frontage of buildings has a small storefront at a regular rhythm along the street. Parking is located on-street, mid block, and on street corners.

Relationship to Other Documents

- *Sign Standards*
- *Development Standards*
- *Core Area Design Guidelines*
- *Eureka: An Architectural View*
- *Secretary of the Interiors Historic Preservation Guidelines*
- *Main Street Façade Improvement Program*

Tips for Applicants

- *Verify the operating hours of the Planning Department counter: (707) 441-4160.*
- *Verify the zoning and Design Review overlay of your parcel.*
- *If your project is in the redevelopment area, a Façade Improvement Program is available for financial assistance.*
- *Acquire a Design Review checklist for your district.*
- *Acquire the site plan and architectural application content checklists*
- *Inquire about proposed development/ renovations of neighboring parcels. Is it possible to participate in a shared parking agreement with your neighbor/s?*
- *Determine if your building is considered historic by the Historic Preservation Commission.*

4. Old Town Guidelines

Infill projects within this district should use quality materials and be designed in a manner, which is compatible with the neighboring buildings or block context. Roof heights and styles, building scale and massing, and storefront and window orientations are all important and must be considered in the creation of new structures within the Old Town District.

a. Site Planning

Site planning refers to how each building relates to the street, sidewalk, and neighboring buildings in Old Town. Building placement should follow the pattern established in the block.

8) Building Setbacks

- i. Place the street level floor of an infill building at the back of sidewalk.
- ii. All building floor plates should be inline with the ground floor, to maintain a consistent facade.



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- iii. Place the corner store street level floor of any new building at back of sidewalk on both sides of the corner.
- iv. The storefront may be placed as a 45 degree angle at the corner, but this is not necessary for all buildings.
- v. The rear of the building may be built to the back of the alley.



Existing corner entry



Existing alley in Old Town

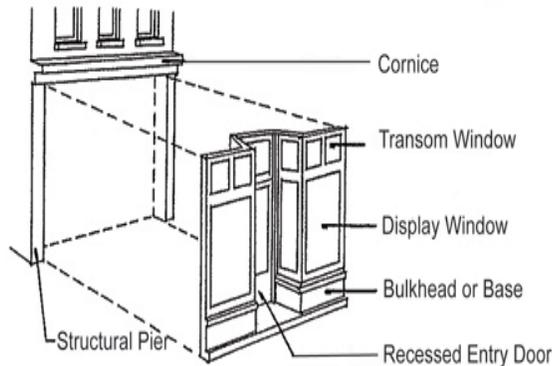
2) Storefront and Entrance Locations

Storefronts in new development should echo the proportion and placement of storefronts of neighboring buildings on the block. Design both street elevations of corner buildings to provide visual interest for pedestrians.

- i. Orient the main storefront entry to the primary street.
- ii. Provide additional storefront entries on the side street when possible.
- iii. Corner buildings shall include storefront design features, such as window elements and cornices, on at least 50% of the side street wall.
- iv. Incorporate recesses, canopies, or awnings into the building design to provide protection from the weather.
- v. The first floor of the primary facade should be predominantly transparent glass.
- vi. Use storefront setbacks similar to neighboring building storefronts.
- vii. Do not use highly reflective (mirrored) or darkly tinted glass.
- viii. Unique personalization of individual tenant spaces of the same building is encouraged, with the use of different storefront colors, awnings and signage.

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Typical storefront elements



Side street wall treatments

3) Landscaping

- i. Potted or hanging plants may be used to accent entries.

b. Parking

Parking guidelines are focused on reducing the dominance of parking areas, and to visually buffer parking lots from the street. This includes the placement and lighting of driveways and parking areas in relationship to the buildings on a block.

8) Driveway Locations

- i. Parking lot entries should be located on side streets or alleys.
- ii. Use shared access driveways in order to minimize driveways and curb cuts when feasible.

2) Parking Locations

- i. Locate parking lots to the rear of buildings.
- ii. Design rear parking lots to connect to each other to create a single vehicle access drive.
- iii. Do not locate parking lots at street intersections.
- iv. Do not place parking frontages on F Street or 2nd Street.
- v. Locate parking garages at the center of blocks, and provide a mix of ground floor uses to activate the street.

3) Parking Lot Landscaping

- i. Provide a walkway at the rear of buildings adjacent to parking lots. This should be a

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minimum of a 4' wide space between cars and the building wall.

- ii. Landscape the sidewalk edge of parking lots with a 3- 4' planter using locally compatible, climate appropriate trees, shrubs, and groundcover.
- iii. Provide transparent landscaping for a safe walking environment. Hedges, walls, or fences should be two to three feet height limit.
- iv. Use water efficient/conserving irrigation systems, such as drip systems (except for lawn areas).
- v. Design irrigation to not allow overspill onto adjacent impervious area such as walkways.
- vi. Group plants according to water needs.
- vii. Replace dead or dying plants in a timely manner.

4) Parking Lot Lighting

- i. Provide low level wattage, downward directed and shrouded lighting to protect the night sky.
- ii. Use pedestrian scale lighting, no taller than 18 feet.
- iii. Practice energy conservation in lighting with energy efficient lamps and timed operating hours.



Midblock parking lot

c. Architectural Compatibility

Infill development or new buildings should strive to use modern interpretations of the historic elements and character found in the Old Town. Architectural compatibility incorporates the rhythm of the building components and forms of neighboring buildings to help create a harmonious relationship to other buildings on the block.

Renovations and restorations should seek to be true to the original architecture of the historic building subject to the renovation. Restorations to those buildings deemed to be historically significant by the Historic Preservation Commission shall follow the Secretary of the Interiors Historic Preservation Guidelines for exteriors.

8) Street wall Height- Infill

The term “street wall” refers to the building elevations coinciding with a public right of way where public access to the structure is available. The street walls of Old Town include an eclectic mix of building facades and heights. Generally, historic construction created a consistent façade alignment on all floors with no step-backs on upper floors.

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See Street wall articulation guidelines as well.

- i. Limit the street wall height to no more than one or two stories taller than the neighboring building, to help create a consistent enclosure of the buildings along the street.

2) Street Wall Articulation-Infill

Street wall articulation refers to the change in elevations of the street wall roof lines. The design of individual building facades should support an interesting and varied roofline reflective of Old Town with varied heights and building materials.

Create a strong street edge by placing a building to back of the sidewalk and the full width of the parcel.

- i. The block should contain a mix of building heights.
- ii. Provide canopies or awnings to contribute to the street wall form.

3) Building Massing- Infill

Building massing refers to the bulk of a building created by the exterior walls.

- i. Design new buildings to match the bulk of the neighboring buildings.
- ii. With long narrow building orient the narrow end of the rectangle footprint to face the street, where the lot allows.



Compatible Infill development



Compatible Infill development

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4) Building Scale -Infill

Building scale refers to the proportion of one building to another, and the scale of the components of a building. The preferred scale is referred to as “pedestrian” or “human” scale, which incorporates building elements that relate to the human body or are comprehensible to our perceptions.



Using similar scale

- i. Use the current size and scale of the neighboring buildings as a general guideline of how large to make the infill building.
- ii. Use the scale of the different floors of neighboring buildings on the block.
- iii. Do not create a building which will dominate the surrounding built environment.
- iv. Typically rectangular building forms are common to Old Town.

5) Façade Materials - Infill

Infill buildings should use a combination of similar materials as neighboring buildings along with new materials reflective of current architectural design. The following is a list of recommended and unacceptable materials:

- i. Recommended exterior materials
 - clear glass
 - glass block
 - stucco/external plaster (smooth trowled)
 - new or used face-brick
 - cut stone
 - precast stone
 - wood
 - split face block
 - cement fiber board
 - ceramic tiles (storefront bulkhead and/or base)

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- ii. Unacceptable exterior materials
 - imitation masonry (e.g. imitation, rusticated block) of any kind
 - reflective mirror or opaque glass
 - volcanic stone or flagstone parquet
 - rough sawn or “natural” (d i s h e d) wood
 - “pecky” cedar
 - used brick with no fired face (salvaged from interior walls)
 - imitation metal wood siding
 - coarsely finished “rough-sawn” on rustic materials (e.g. wood shakes, barn wood, board and batten or T-111 siding)
 - plastic panels or vinyl siding
 - corrugated metal siding

6) Façade Proportions - Infill

Use similar proportions for the façade elements as on neighboring buildings in the block. The street level floors should be clearly distinguishable from the upper floors.

- i. Street walls should be designed as simple building forms with recessed windows, and a wall area to window opening ratio similar to Old Town Eureka.
- ii. Design ground floor height taller than upper floors.
- iii. Use the same or similar rhythm of storefronts and upper level fenestrations as the



Use of similar proportions of elements



Inappropriate proportion of floor heights

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neighboring buildings on the block.

- iv. Use a greater solid to void ratio on the upper floors than the ground floor facades.
- v. Do not over exaggerate decorative elements on the building facade.
- vi. Maintain the general alignment of horizontal features on building fronts. Typical elements that align include: window moldings, tops of display windows, cornices, copings and parapets at the tops of buildings.

8) Color

The district is characterized by the use of many different color combinations for buildings and these design guidelines encourage this pattern. Color guidelines are general suggestions and not color specific. Generally rich colors are found in the downtown.

- i. The colors for a building should help accentuate the components of the façade; the storefront, the main walls, and the details. Use a minimum of two colors.
- ii. Use a field color for the walls.
- iii. Use an accent color for the building base, pilasters, cornices or the bands.
- iv. Use a contrasting color for the trim around windows and doors and smaller details. Typically when using two colors on the trim, the minor trim is darker than the major trim.
- v. There are color palettes associated with historic periods. Research appropriate color palettes with the Historic Societies or library.

8) Windows & Doors

Use the same pattern of window and door placements as the existing neighboring buildings in Old Town.

- i. Center the storefront or main entrance in each tenant building façade, with storefront windows flanking either one side or both sides.
- ii. Provide a sign board or transom above the storefront or between the floors.
- iii. Do not use vinyl windows. Vinyl clad windows with moldings and dimensioning similar to wood framed windows may be used.

Emphasize the main entry to a building in one or more of the following ways:

- i. Flanked columns, decorative fixtures or other details;

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- ii. Recessed within larger cased or decorative opening;
- iii. Covered by means of a portico (formal porch) or canopy projecting from or set into the building face (refer to zoning guidelines for allowable projections);
- iv. Punctuated by means of a change in the rooflines, a tower, or a break in the surface of the subject wall.
- v. Some corner buildings may provide a prominent corner entrance to street level shops.
- vi. Storefronts should be:
 - Recessed in a manner similar to the existing neighboring entries, or;
 - Sheltered by an awning, arcade structure, or canopy, and;
 - Set back the storefront at a minimum of 3’.



In Development

9) Awnings and Canopies

- i. The design dimensions of canopies and awnings must follow the standards specified in the zoning code (section _____).
- ii. Enhance the storefront by installing awnings or canopies to protect from inclement weather.
- iii. Awnings may be retractable and adjustable to light conditions.
- iv. Use simple designs on the awning and valance flap.
- v. Awnings should be well-maintained, washed regularly and replaced when faded or torn.
- vi. Awnings should be located within, and not overlap vertical building elements such as masonry piers.



In Development

10) Roof Style & Materials

Flat roof lines are the dominant roof form in Old Town with a large parapet and decorated cornice or a pediment (gabled roof end) used as finishes and accents. New buildings should use the same roof style or elements.

- i. Encouraged roof materials:
 - standing seam metal roofs

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- Asphaltic materials and tar
- New sustainable waterproofing materials
- i. Unacceptable roof materials
 - crushed stone
 - shake
 - brightly colored tile (orange, blue, etc.)
 - corrugated fiberglass

11) Building Lighting

Buildings have architectural elements which can be enhanced by the creative and correct usage and placement of light fixtures. Indirect lighting (from street lights or store fronts) is typically more appropriate for historic districts and produces a more intimate ambiance on the street.

- i. Provide accent light on important distinguishing building features while preserving the night sky.
- ii. Illuminate exterior ground floor walls with downward directed light fixtures.
- iii. Use light fixtures which are architecturally compatible with the building.
- iv. Use interior lighting of storefront windows to create ambient light on the street.
- v. Prevent off-site glare or light spills.

12) Façade Restoration

- i. Retain and restore the original elements of the building. If damage or deterioration is too severe, the element should be recreated using original materials to match the design, color, texture and important design features.
- ii. New facades must complement the historic architectural quality and fabric as prescribed.
- iii. Do not cheaply replicate historic buildings.
- iv. Historic buildings may be replicated by using the same quality of materials and details.

d. Signs

The following guidelines discuss the appropriate styles, colors, and lighting for signage for Old Town Eureka. These guidelines apply to new infill development as well as historic buildings

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8) Color and Materials

- i. Use contrast to increase the legibility of signs. Light letters on a dark background or dark letters on a light background are most legible.
- ii. Use sign colors which complement or are the same colors used on the structures and the project as a whole.
- iii. Use sign materials compatible with the materials of the façade.
- iv. Do not paint signs directly on the street frontage of brick facades.
- v. Retain historic signs on brick facades.
- vi. Paper and cloth signs are appropriate for interior use only.
- vii. Wood (carved, sandblasted, etched, and properly sealed, primed and painted, or stained).
- viii. Metal (formed, etched, cast, engraved, and properly primed and painted or factory-coated to protect against corrosion).



Existing colorful sign

2) Sign Styles

- i. Window Signs
 - Use the fewest words to create a more effective sign. A sign with a brief, succinct message is easier to read and looks more attractive.
 - Window signs, permanent or temporary, should not cover more than 25% of the area of each window.
 - Use a brief message whenever possible. The business name and text identifying the type of product or service (e.g., “maternity wear” or “attorney”) or pertinent information (e.g., “reservations required”).
 - Give letters and words ample space between each letters.
 - Letters should not occupy more than 75% of sign panel area.
 - Limit the number of lettering styles in order to increase legibility.
 - Avoid Faddish or bizarre, hard-to-read, or overly intricate typefaces and symbols.

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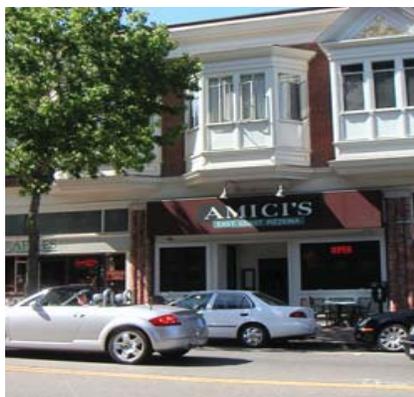


Existing window signs



Awning signs within structures

- Symbols and logos may be used instead of words whenever appropriate.
- ii. Awning
- All signs which project over a public-right-of-way require a City sign permit.
 - Text copy should be limited to the name of the business only.
 - Locate text only on the valance flap of the awning. Letter color should be compatible with the awning and the building color scheme.
 - The shape, design, and color of awnings should be carefully designed to coordinate with, and not dominate, the architectural style of the building.
 - In pedestrian-oriented areas, signs should be placed close to the store entrance and should relate to the sidewalk instead of motorists.
 - Small projecting signs or signs under awnings are most appropriate in pedestrian-oriented areas.



Appropriate awning sign



Poorly placed awning sign

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- The bottom of awning signs should maintain at least a 10-foot pedestrian clearance from the sidewalk level.
- Provide removable valances and end panels to accommodate future changes in sign copy.
- Do not paint cloth awnings in order to change sign copy, as this will decrease the fire resistant/retardant properties of the treated canvas.



Existing metal on metal sign

iii. Hanging/ Figurative Signs

These are signs that advertise the occupant business through the use of graphic or crafted symbols, such as shoes, keys, glasses, or books and are encouraged.

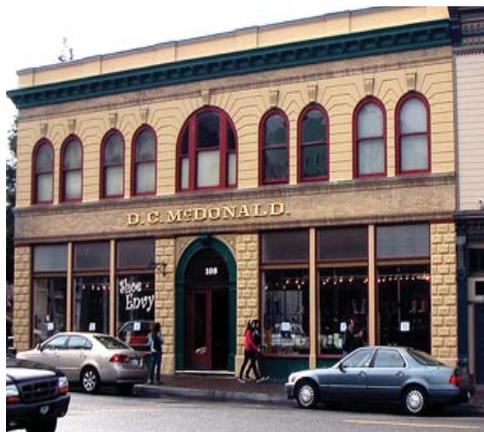
- Use only one projecting sign per business.
- Use small projecting sign areas (maximum 24"?)
- Use pictographic images for unique individualized character.
- Figurative signs may be incorporated into any of the allowable sign types identified herein.



Hanging/projecting sign

iv. Wall Signs

- Place signs consistent with the proportions and scale of the elements of the structure's



Existing wall sign in sign board



Custom wall sign & graphic

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façade, the sign should not dominate the façade or the sign board.

- The best location for a wall sign is generally a band or sign board area between the first and second floors of a building.
 - Establish visual continuity among store fronts by placing new signs consistent with sign locations on adjacent buildings.
 - On a multi-storied building, the sign should be suspended between the bottom of the second story window sills and the top of the doors or windows of the first story.
 - On a one-story building, the top of the sign should be above/at top of doors and/or windows.
 - Use decorative iron and wood brackets to support projecting signs.
 - To avoid damaging brick and stonework, brackets should be designed to be bolted into masonry joints when possible.
- v. Activated light signs (LED) are prohibited

3) Sign Lighting

The most appropriate type of sign illumination in the Old Town is indirect lighting. However low level lighting may be used as well.

- Use the minimum level of lighting required for nighttime readability.
- Minimize the amount of wall attached lighting to better integrate signs with the building's architecture.
- Properly shield the light source to prevent glare from spilling over into residential uses and any public right-of-way.
- Back-lighted, solid letters are preferred to internally illuminated letter signs.
- Use neon to illuminate sign letting or face.
- Do not use internally illuminated channel letters, or internally illuminated plastic-faced cabinet signs.



Historic neon sign lighting

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Design Guidelines

