

SECTION 2

**SITE FEATURES**



## 2.1 SIGNAGE AND AWNINGS

Signs, as much as the buildings in which they serve, can contribute greatly to the overall sense of place of downtown Hendersonville—positively or negatively. The purpose of design review of signs and awnings is to ensure that design, location, materials, and colors are consistent with the character and scale of the building and are in keeping with the historic nature of downtown while also promoting and accommodating retail and street activity.

Sign design, overall size, location, and sign type is addressed under Article XIII of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Hendersonville. Historic Preservation Commission review of signs is limited to anchored freestanding signs and illuminated signs.

### SIGN GUIDELINES

- .1 Retain and preserve signage that is original or is important in defining the overall historic character of a building
- .2 Signs should be compatible with the architectural character of the building in size, scale, materials and style. If possible, base new sign designs on historic documentation such as old photographs.
- .3 Use traditional materials commonly found on turn-of-the century commercial buildings such as wood, metal, or stone or use modern materials that have the appearance of traditional.
- .4 Signs should be placed in locations that do not obscure any historic architectural features of the building or obstruct any views or vistas of Hendersonville’s historic downtown.
- .5 Install anchored freestanding signs appropriately, such as on well-landscaped ground bases or low standards.
- .6 Signs illuminated from within are generally not appropriate. Lighting for externally illuminated signs should be simple and unobtrusive and should not obscure the content of the sign or the building façade.
- .7 Signs must meet the requirements of Article XIII of the City of Hendersonville’s Zoning Ordinance.

### AWNING GUIDELINES

- .8 Awnings should be made of cloth or other woven fabric such as canvas or acrylic. Metal awnings are generally not appropriate, but can be used in some instances if they are compatible with the historic character of the building. Vinyl or plastic awnings are not appropriate.
- .9 Base the design of new awnings on historic documentation of the building or examples from buildings of similar style and age. Awnings for new buildings should be of similar materials, size, and scale of that commonly found in the historic district.
- .10 Mount awnings in a manner that does not obscure or damage historic architectural features of the building. Awnings should be placed appropriately above the transom and projecting over individual window or door openings. They should fit within the window or door opening. A continuous awning is not appropriate.

*Historic painted wall sign*



*Anchored freestanding sign*



*Illuminated sign*



*Fabric Awning*



- .11 Back-lit awnings or those with interior illumination are not appropriate in the historic districts.
- .12 Select awning colors that are appropriate to the design of the building.
- .13 Must meet all encroachment regulations relating to public safety as outlined in Section 46-82 of Hendersonville City Code.

## 2.2 PARKING AND PAVING

Parking areas serve a utility function more than anything else. They provide vehicular access to the consumer while also facilitating various service functions and commercial deliveries. With appropriate paving materials, landscaping and screening, a parking area can be designed to minimize its impact on the historic downtown and, with some creativity, be an attractive area for parking, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, or even as a public gathering space for events and festivals.

The location of parking areas in downtown Hendersonville is a product of the orientation of the main building on the lot. Most off-street parking areas are either to the rear of buildings fronting on a street or are within an interior area of the block. There are, unfortunately, instances in downtown Hendersonville where a building may have a suburban orientation with the main structure set back far from the street with parking in the front. This is simply not appropriate in a historic downtown.

### PARKING GUIDELINES

- .1 Whenever possible, retain and preserve the historic configuration and materials of paved areas such as alleys and sidewalks.
- .2 Parking in downtown should be located to the rear of the building. In certain cases, it may be appropriate for parking to be located to the side and rear of the structure. Parking lots should not be located on a corner lot.
- .3 Appropriate materials that complement a historic district (such as brick pavers) are encouraged to be used in the design of a parking area. This would minimize the aesthetic impact of an expansive parking area while also facilitating more efficient pedestrian & vehicular circulation.
- .4 Whenever possible, use effective screening methods for parking areas such as landscaping, wrought-iron or wooden fences, and masonry walls that are compatible with the adjacent structures and district.
- .5 Gravel and unpaved parking areas or pedestrian walkways are not appropriate.
- .6 Parking structures should be compatible with the district in design, materials, and fenestration. Structures should incorporate street level retail or offices with upper floors used for parking.

Metal Awning



## 2.3 LANDSCAPE AND STREETSCAPE

Streetscape elements such as landscaping and street furniture can have a tremendous impact on an urban historic district. While they can be mostly functional, such as a shade tree or a sidewalk bench, they can also be an attractive, pedestrian-friendly element that helps define space and encourages commerce, dining, and interaction.

These elements should be considered in any design for new construction, parking areas, and sidewalk retail.

Main Street planter box



### LANDSCAPING AND STREETSCAPE GUIDELINES

#### *Landscaping*

- .1 Retain and maintain specific landscape features that are character-defining elements of the historic district, including large trees, parks, hedges, foundation plantings, grassy lawns, and ground cover.
- .2 New landscaping areas should use planting materials compatible with the historic district and appropriate in the urban environment.
- .3 The removal of any tree larger than eighteen inches in diameter at four-and-a-half feet above the ground requires a certificate of appropriateness.
- .4 Remove a diseased, mature tree only on a written certification of its condition by an arborist, a landscape architect, a cooperative agent, or a city-designated agent. If it is necessary to remove a large tree or a hedge because of storm damage, replace it with a new tree or hedge of the same species or with a similar appearance.
- .5 Pruning techniques that promote the health and natural growth of the tree are encouraged. Unnatural pruning techniques such as topping, stubbing, dehorning or lopping are not appropriate. Tree pruning should follow accepted industry standards for arborists (ANSI 300A Standards).
- .6 Plantings should not obstruct the view of historic structures, façades, or architectural details.
- .7 Appropriate landscaping should be used to screen parking lots, utilities, garbage receptacles, and other service areas.
- .8 If it is necessary to remove a large tree because of disease or storm damage, replace it with a new tree of the same species or with a similar appearance.

#### *Streetscape*

- .9 Benches, trash receptacles, tree grates, etc. should be of a material and color that is compatible with a historic downtown. Brightly colored or contemporary streetscape improvements are not appropriate.
- .10 Sidewalk dining must meet the requirements of Hendersonville City Code 46-86.
- .11 Retain and preserve historic fences and walls. Modern fencing such as chain link is incompatible in the downtown historic district.
- .12 Landscape elements such as fences, gates, and walls are appropriate in downtown to screen parking lots or service areas. They should be

compatible with the existing structure and be made of appropriate materials such as masonry, wrought iron, and wood.

## 2.4 LIGHTING

Lighting in downtown serves several purposes including security, facilitating vehicular and pedestrian traffic, illumination of signage and façades, and accentuating architectural details of buildings. Whenever designing lighting elements in downtown, it is important to consider the level of lighting as well as the scale and overall design of the lighting fixture.

- .1 Introduce exterior lighting that is compatible with the historic nature of the structure, the property, and district. Compatibility of exterior lighting and lighting fixtures is assessed in terms of design, material, use, size, scale, color, and brightness.
- .2 Whether lighting the street or parking areas, appropriate fixtures should be selected that are compatible with existing fixtures and the historic character of the district.
- .3 When mounting lighting fixtures on buildings, select those that are as unobtrusive as possible and whose installation will not damage or conceal any historic architectural features.
- .4 Rather than indiscriminately lighting areas, introduce subtle lighting qualities by carefully locating light sources.
- .5 Introduce lighting levels that provide adequate safety, yet do not detract from or overly emphasize the structure or the property.
- .6 Introduce directional lighting that does not spill light onto adjacent properties. Exterior lighting in parking lots should be directed into the parking area itself.

*City Hall lighting*

