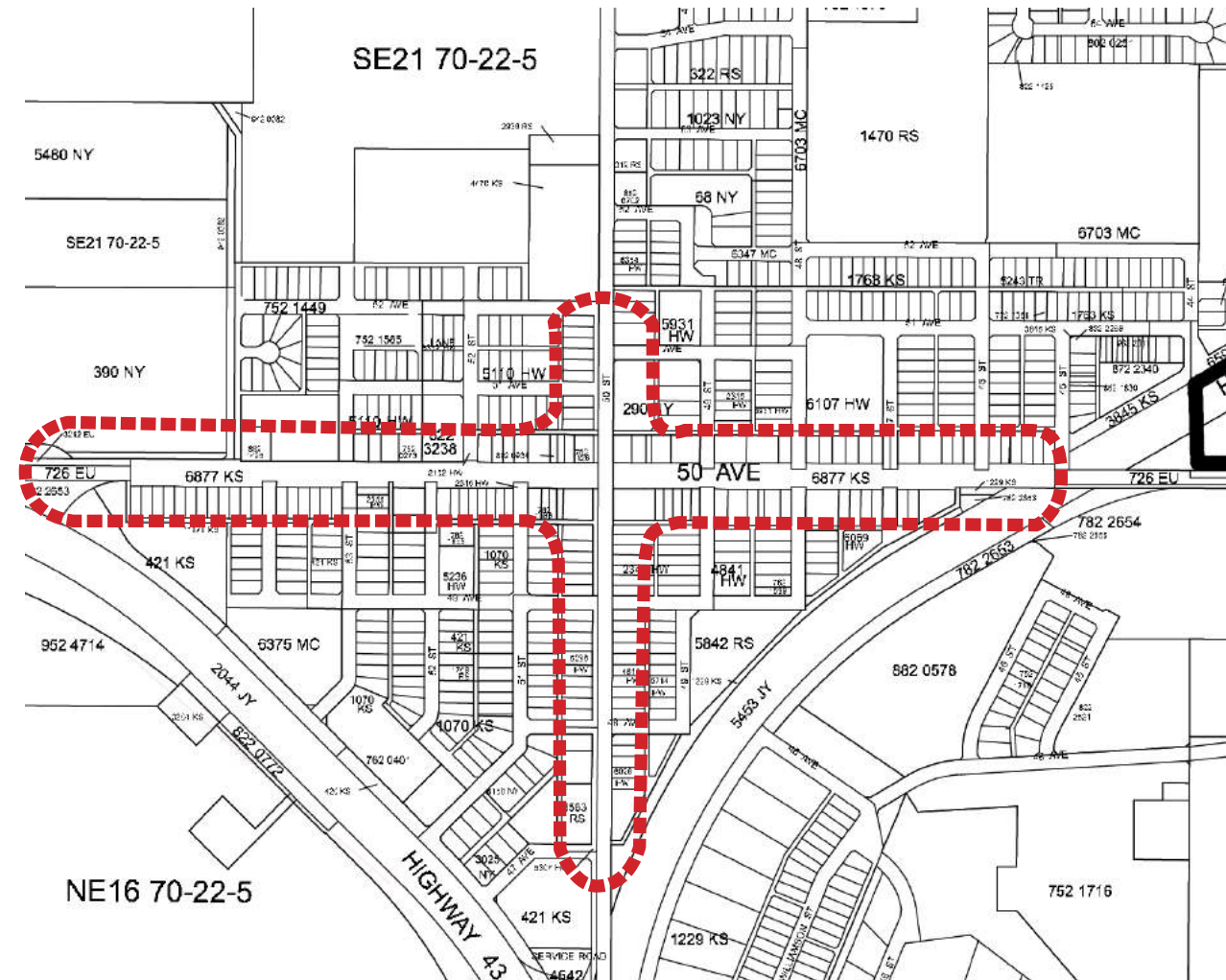




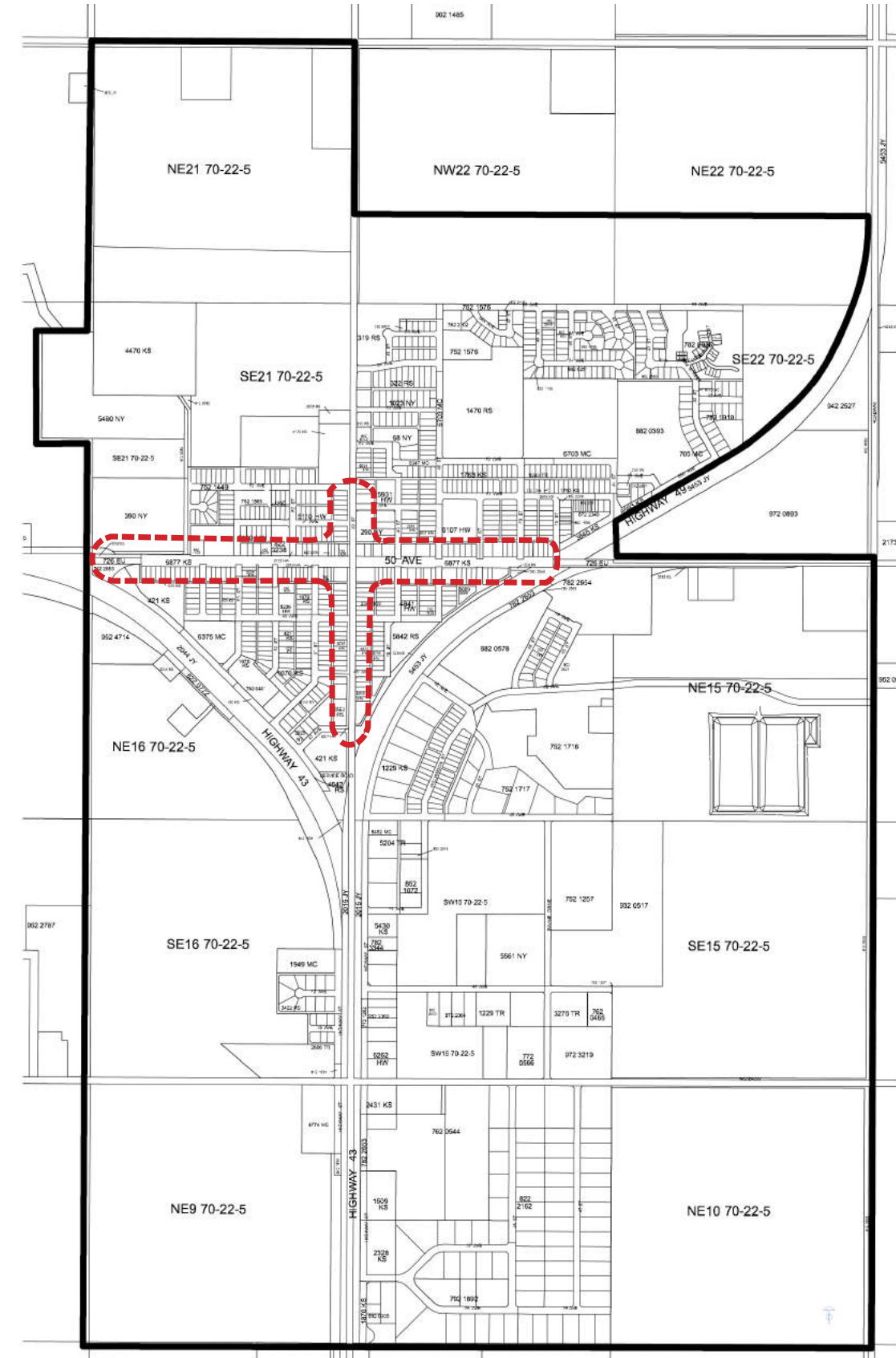
# **Town of Valleyview**

## **Downtown Commercial Design Guidelines**

**MAPS:**  
**Area where the Downtown Commercial Guidelines apply**



 Downtown Guidelines Area Boundary  
 Town Boundary



# FACADE GUIDELINES

## Intent and Overview

The intent of the facade guidelines is to encourage facade design that emphasizes the downtown as the traditional commercial and civic heart of the community , and enhances the character, pedestrian orientation and vitality of this important community focal point.

*Specifically*, the guidelines identify a range of practical facade design elements, features and details to create richness, variation and visual interest, encourage pedestrian activity and welcome users.

These guidelines are not intended to be prescriptive, but rather to encourage innovative creative and practical design responses for individual development projects and facade improvements.



Large shop front windows, weather protection and a range of simple facade features and details create an attractive and welcoming street-scape environment

## Key Elements and Approaches

Many street frontage design elements help to create an interesting and welcoming street-scape. These include building materials, special ground floor design treatments, façade modulation, corner treatments, façade elements such as window treatments, building entries, and other architectural details. All of these help define the public realm as a welcoming place.

Key facade elements and approaches that can be used to enhance the pedestrian environment include:

- **Definition:** locate building facades at the sidewalk edge/property line. Do not locate off-street surface parking between the front of the building and the public sidewalk.
- **Transparency:** incorporate large areas of glazing (windows) to create visual interest and enable views into and out of businesses. A minimum 75% glazing requirement on the ground floor is desired.
- **Vitality:** Incorporate frequent entrances along the street
- **Comfort:** Incorporate functional weather protection into facades that corresponds to the placement of doors and windows.
- **Human Scale:** incorporate architectural features, details, and materials that are of human proportion and clearly oriented for pedestrian activity. A building has good human scale if its details, elements, and materials create visual interest and allow people to feel comfortable using and approaching it.
- **Substance:** Incorporate substantive, natural materials to avoid a thin veneer look

### Examples of architectural features include:

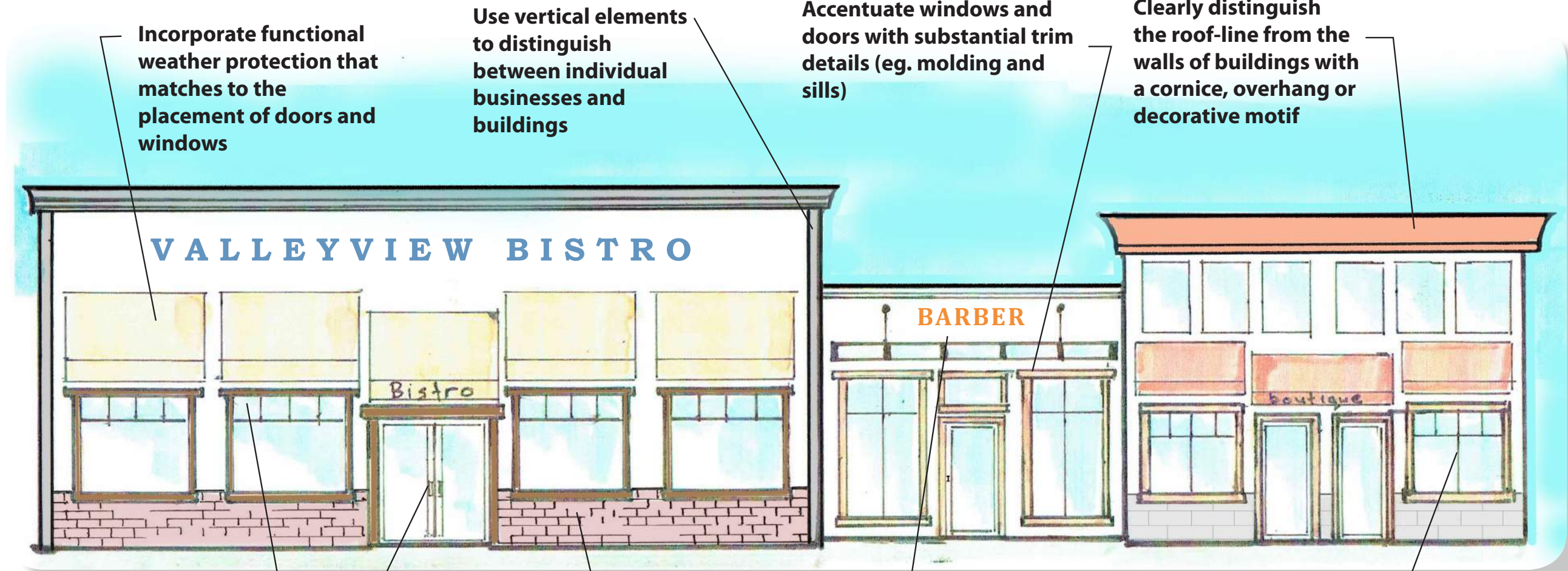
- Decorative roof-lines and cornices
- Shop-front windows and building entryways
- Awnings, canopies and overhangs
- Building articulation to accentuate building edges, corners, and entryways

### Examples of architectural details include:

- Treatment of masonry (ceramic tile, paving stones, brick patterns, etc.)
- Treatment of siding (for example, the use of score lines, textures, and different materials or patterning to distinguish between different floors)
- Use of vertical elements such as columns, piers and pilasters
- Ornamental or integrated artwork
- Integrated architectural lighting
- Detailed grilles and railings
- Substantial trim details and moldings
- Trellises and arbors



**GENERAL FACADE GUIDELINES**



Incorporate functional weather protection that matches to the placement of doors and windows

Use vertical elements to distinguish between individual businesses and buildings

Accentuate windows and doors with substantial trim details (eg. molding and sills)

Clearly distinguish the roof-line from the walls of buildings with a cornice, overhang or decorative motif

Incorporate large window areas on the ground floor to create visual interest and enable views in and out of shops and businesses

Include frequent entrances along the street

Use substantial natural materials, such as masonry, tile or stone banding at the base of the facade

Use pedestrian scale signage and lighting

Break up windows into smaller panels





## Windows and Doors

Ground floor facade (shop-front) windows should be broken up into vertical proportions using small panes of glass, and separated from adjacent windows using moldings and jambs but grouped together to form large areas of glazing.

The use of figured or frosted glass or tinted glazing is *discouraged* for windows facing the street except for compatible use of stained glass, or where figured or frosted glass comprises a small proportion (maximum 20%) of the glazing, located above pedestrian eye level.

Upper storey windows should also be vertically proportioned and include substantial trim and molding details and be separated by adjacent windows by a strong vertical element.

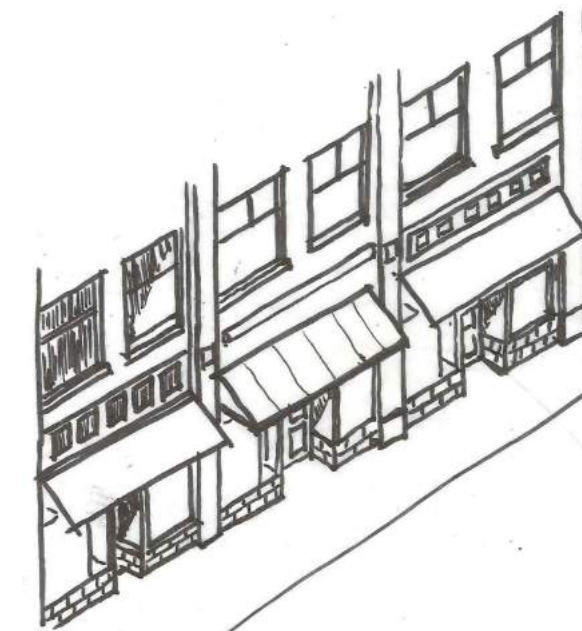
Punched windows with vertical proportions create variation and texture in the façade.



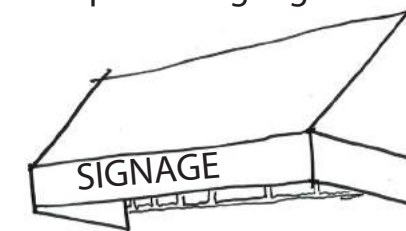
## Awnings and Canopies

An *awning* is a light, detachable structure of fabric, sheet metal or other flexible material supported from the building by a frame (fixed or retractable) to offer shelter from sun, rain and snow.

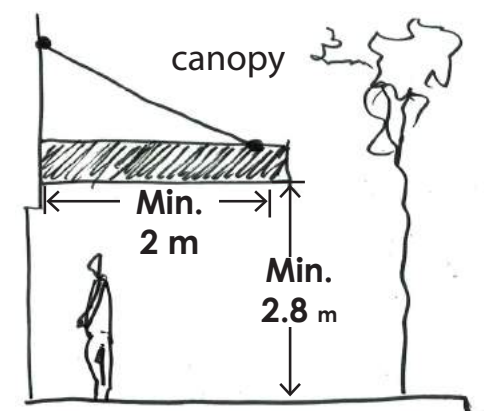
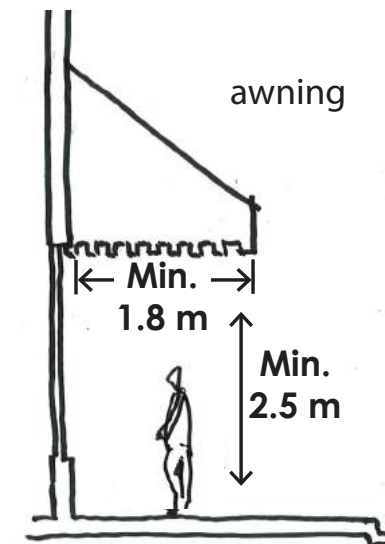
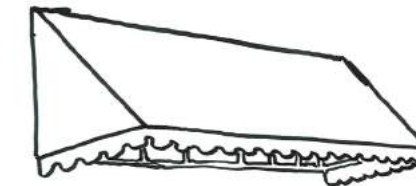
A *canopy* is a rigid structure extending out from the building face and supported entirely from the building.



4-point awning with compatible signage.



3-point awning with valance.





## Features and Details

A range of features and details can be incorporated into the facade to create variation and visual interest along the street.

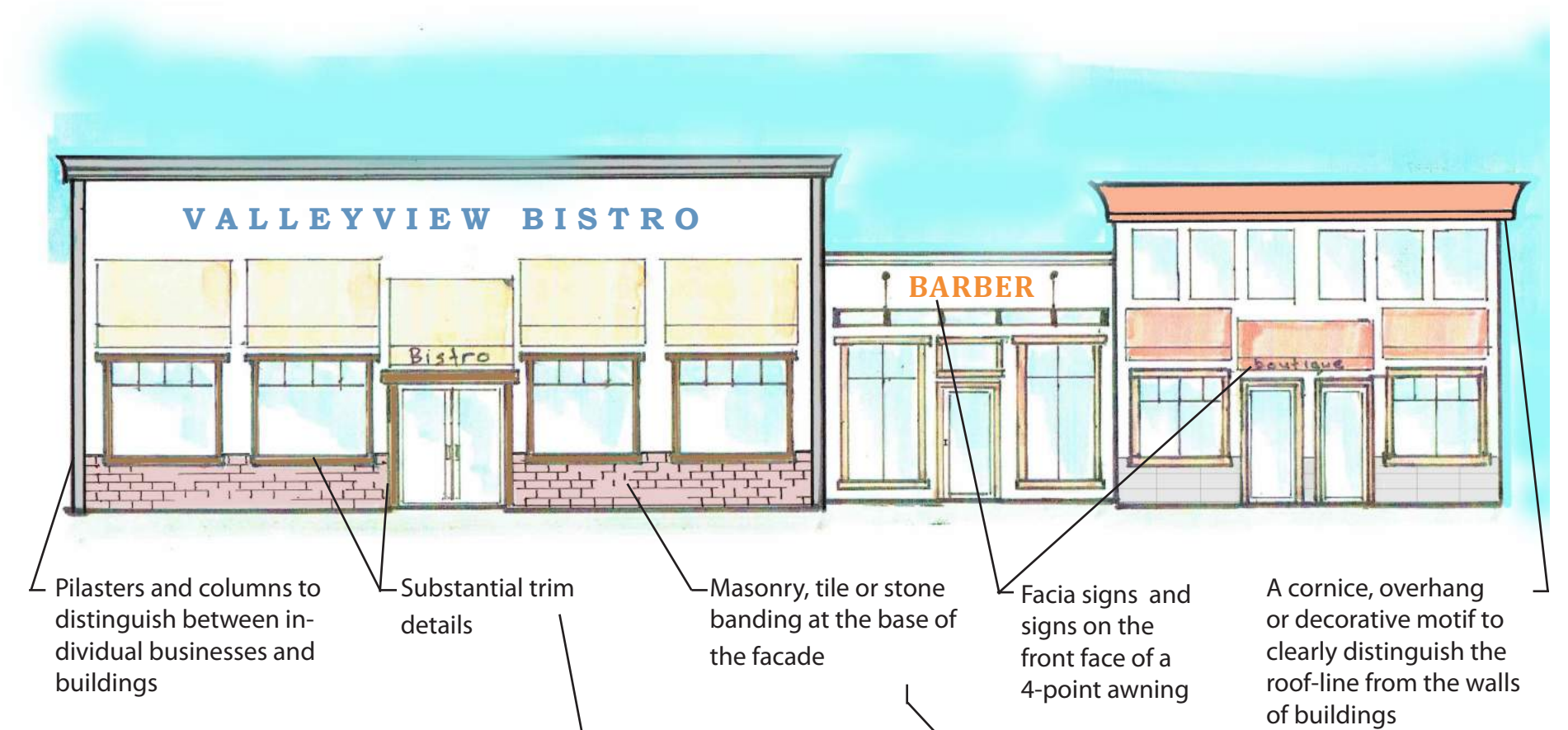
### Materials

In general, natural building materials are encouraged for facades to avoid a “thin veneer” look and feel, which can be incorporated in a more traditional or compatible modern treatment. Suggested materials include:

- Natural wood materials, including:
  - » Milled and un-milled timbers
  - » Window and door trim
  - » Siding
  - » Signage
- Brick masonry
- Glazed tile
- Stone
- Concrete, painted
- Flat profile “slate” concrete tiles
- Glass and wood for window assemblies
- Pre-finished metal, non-corrugated type, emphasizing either vertical or horizontal arrangements *but not both*
- Limited amounts of stucco
- cement fiber board panels (not siding)

Vinyl siding, swirl type stucco, and vinyl for window frames are *discouraged*.

*Discourage* large homogenous treatments of any one material and vertical expanses.



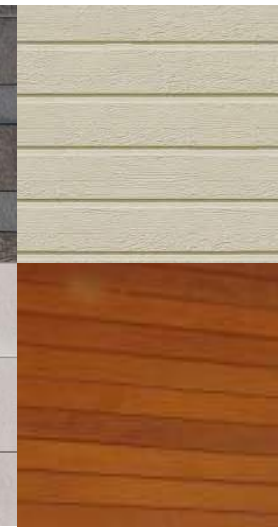
Large shop-front windows broken up using substantial trim and moulding treatments



A mixture of wood, tile and stucco in Smithers, BC makes for a practical, attractive and unique facade design



A range of masonry and stone materials can contribute to an attractive facade



Painted or stained wood siding provides warmth and brightness



# SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING GUIDELINES

## Overview

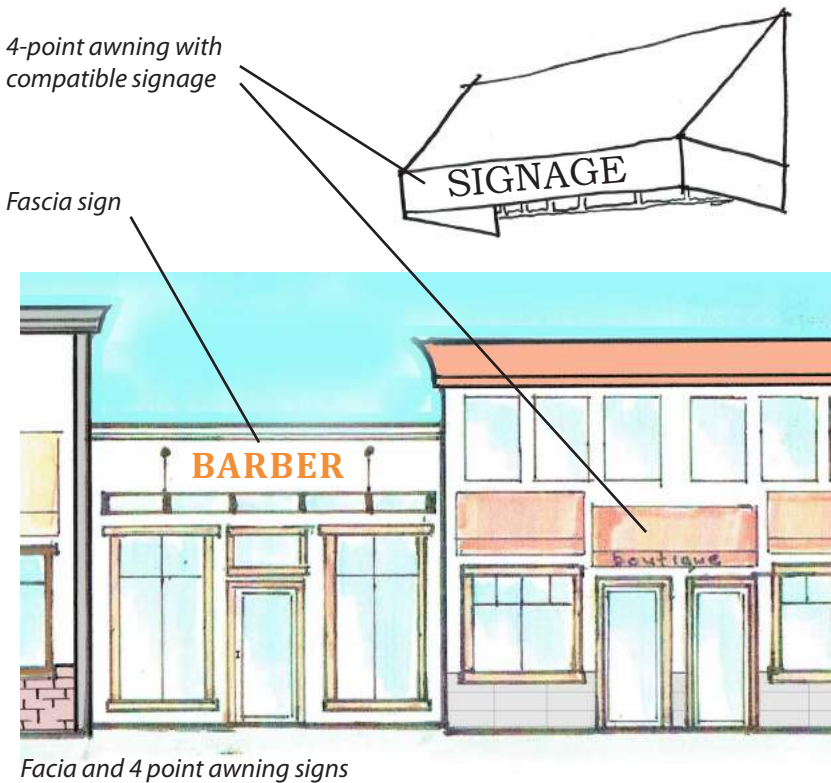
A signage and lighting program for any commercial development should be designed as a totality, with signs, lighting, and weather protection architecturally integrated from the outset. Integrated building lighting can make a positive contribution to the sense of safety and security pedestrians experience in the downtown through a combination of street, sidewalk, and architectural lighting. Business signage can contribute to the overall quality and identity of the downtown.



Blade sign suspended from canopy

## Signage

- i. Provide attractive signage on commercial buildings that clearly identifies uses and shops.
- ii. Scale signs to the pedestrian rather than the motorist.
- iii. Provide visible signage identifying the building address at all entrances.
- iv. Limit signage in number, location, and size to reduce visual clutter and make individual signs easier to see.
- v. Representational and iconic signs (for example, signs that reference Valleyview's history) are encouraged to supplement conventional text-based signs to help establish the special character of the downtown.
- vi. A single external sign band may be applied to each façade at the first storey, and should not exceed 1.0 m in height along any length.
- vii. Signage should be externally lit. Signage within shop front glazing may be backlit, but should not exceed 0.5 m in height and 2 m in length.
- viii. Flush-mounted signs and blade signs hanging from awnings and canopies are preferred to create pedestrian scale.
- ix. A minimum clearance of 2.3 metres should be maintained for signs projecting over the sidewalk or other public space.
- x. The following are preferred or acceptable types of signage in the downtown:
  - Projecting two-dimensional or blade signs suspended from canopies and awnings (fitting within a 92 cm X 153 cm (36" x 60") horizontal rectangle)
  - Flush-mounted fascia signs



Mounted individual cut-out/silhouette letter signs





4-point awing signs



Flush-mounted fascia sign and 4-point awing signs



Externally lit, individual cut letter sign

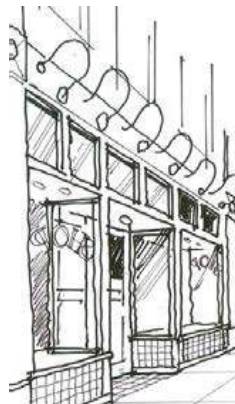
- Externally lit signs
  - Small vertical banners and signs. Individual letters should not exceed 45 cm (18") in any dimension.
  - Individual cut-out or silhouette letter signs mounted on storefronts. Individual letters should not exceed 45 cm (18") in any dimension.
- xi. The following types of signage are strongly discouraged and should be avoided:
- Signs as awnings/awnings as signs
  - Internally lit plastic box signs
  - Pylon (stand alone) signs
  - Rooftop signs

## Lighting

- i. Illuminate building façades and features by providing architectural lighting on the face of buildings.
- ii. Light paths and entry areas sufficiently to ensure pedestrian comfort and security.
- iii. Provide pedestrian-scaled lighting with high-quality design detail above sidewalks for night time visibility.
- iv. Full-spectrum white light or incandescent sources are preferred in public areas.



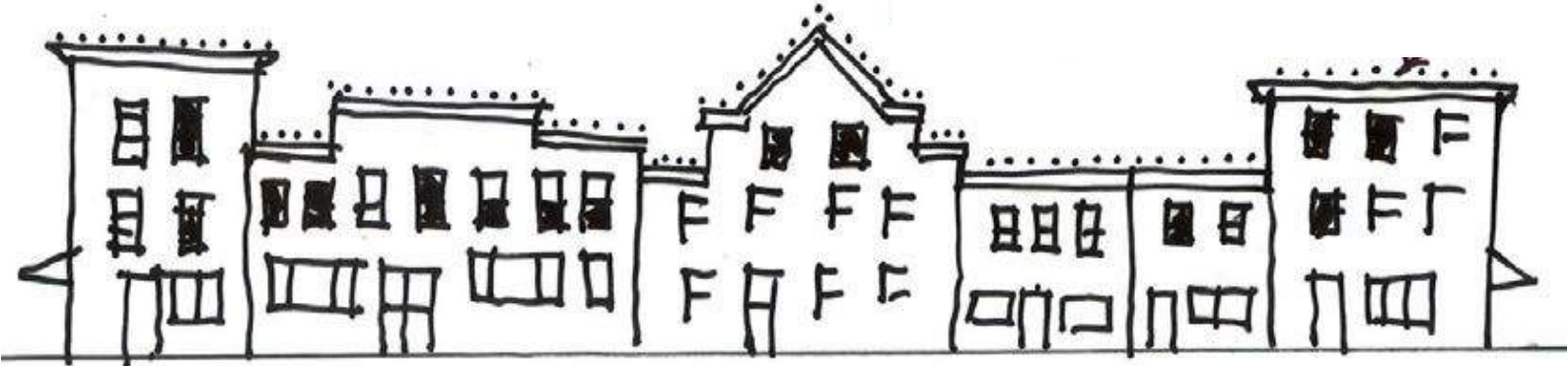
- v. Ensure lighting is sensitive to nearby residential uses. Avoid visible, glaring light sources by using down-lights or up-lights with cut-off shields.
- vi. Gooseneck lights and sconces applied to fascias underneath weather protection elements are the preferred types of storefront lighting.
- vii. Incorporate valence lighting into canopies and uplighting to illuminate pathways.
- viii. Use of LED lighting for storefronts and street trees is encouraged.
- ix. Avoid the use of exterior fluorescent light sources.
- x. Incorporate architectural glare-free lighting into the canopy soffit that has either a low-level light source or one not directly visible to pedestrians. Fluorescent tube lights are not permitted for this use.



*Gooseneck lighting*



*Gooseneck lighting under canopies*



*LED Lights along the roofline*



# FRONTAGE IMPROVEMENT GUIDELINES

## Intent & Overview

Building frontage design can positively impact the overall experience of the downtown area through a combination of improvement and access strategies. Landscaping, direct access to buildings and discouragement of undesirable uses and elements will help create definition for the frontage, which will in turn add activity and vitality to the town centre.

The location of new buildings in relation to the property line and sidewalk plays a major role in creating conditions that enhance the downtown experience.

The intent of the frontage improvement guidelines is to provide some design strategies for buildings that are set back significantly from the fronting sidewalk and/or have large expanses of blank walls.

## Typical Conditions - Existing



Buildings that are located close or at the front property line create a seamless and safe pedestrian experience



Outdoor storage and fences diminish the experience of the the downtown



Fences create barriers and diminish the experience of the downtown

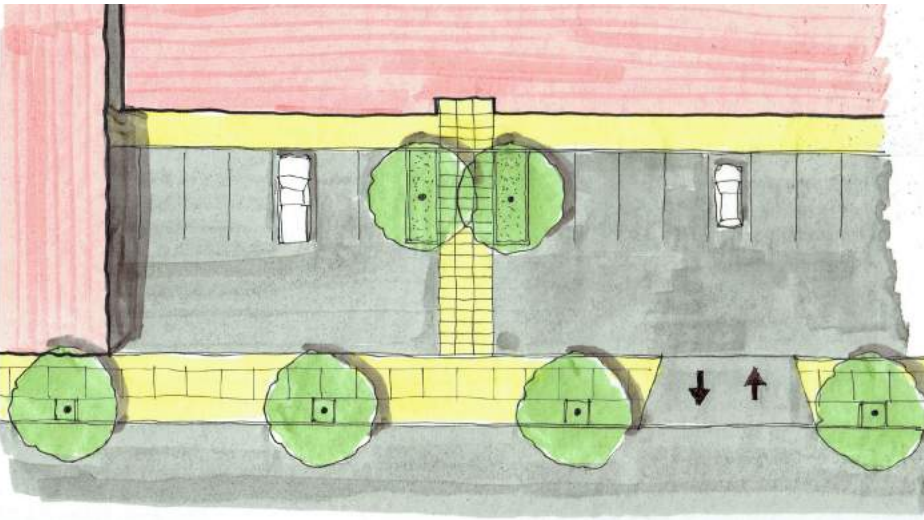
## Guidelines

- i. Buildings should be located at the front of the property at, or near, the sidewalk edge. Off-street surface parking should not be located between the front of the building and the public sidewalk.
- ii. Where off-street surface parking located in front of the building cannot be avoided, a direct pedestrian connection from the public sidewalk to the building should be created and maintained.

## Existing Condition - Off-Street Surface Parking



Off-street surface parking areas between sidewalk and buildings rupture pedestrian connections



Create and maintain direct pedestrian access between sidewalk and building entrance



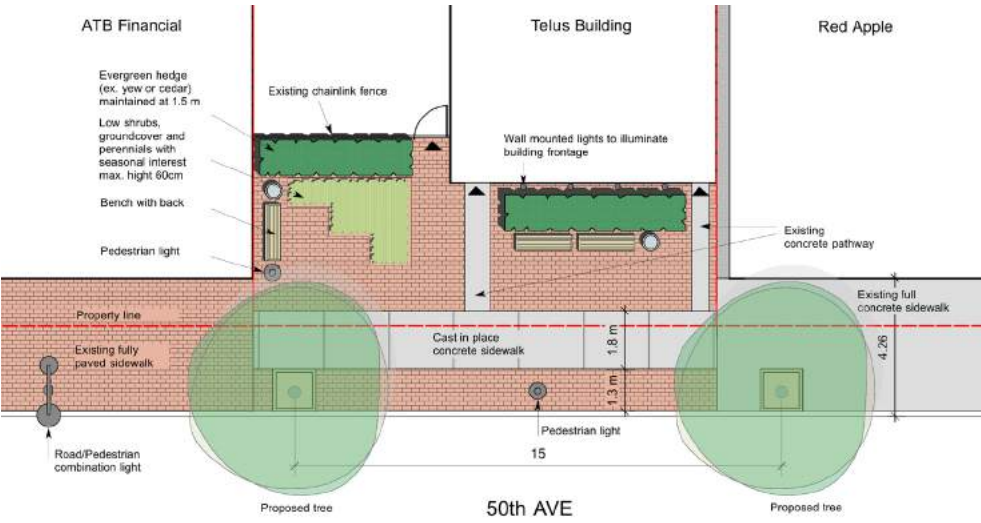
Facade and frontage improvements



# Existing Condition - Building Set Back



Buildings that are set back from the front property line create gaps and a less safe street experience



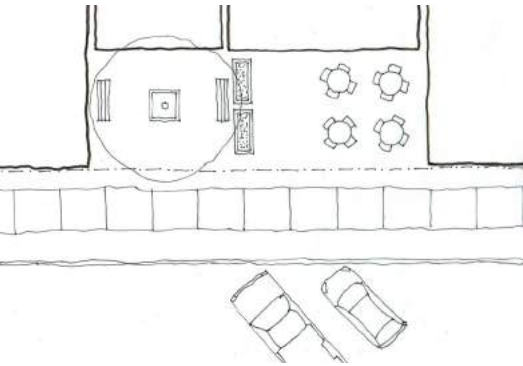
Proposal for an outdoor sitting area on 50th Avenue



Proposal for an outdoor sitting area on 50th Avenue



Benches and planters invite to dwell



A small outdoor patio does not need much space



Lighting, trellis and climbing plants decorate blank walls

# Guidelines

- i. Where buildings are set back from the front of the property line:
  - Use landscaping to create small outdoor dwelling spaces or 'pocket parks'
  - Where possible, provide outdoor patios in relation to building use
  - At a minimum incorporate decorative planters, benches and trees where less space is available to activate sidewalk areas
- ii. Mitigate or break down large expanses of blank building walls by incorporating trellis structures, murals and public art.



When blank walls are unavoidable, they should be screened with planting or treated with special materials



Vacant Lots, Temporary Uses



A summer patio and lighting can activate night time uses of empty lots



Make use of the gap: a decorative transparent steel fence and public art create interest and animate the walls of this outdoor patio between buildings

Fence Design Examples



Low wood fence



Green metal fence



Vinyl fence

Guidelines

- i. Where fences cannot be avoided, use transparent and decorative fences that maintain sight-lines between the sidewalk and main building entrance. Steel, aluminum, wood or vinyl are possible materials.
- ii. Chainlink, barbed wire or razor wire fences are strongly discouraged.
- iii. Fence heights of 4'0" should not be exceeded at the building frontage. 6'0" is permissible at the back and along the sides of properties.
- iv. Keep vacant lots clean, clear and grassed, and consider temporary seasonal uses (e.g. outdoor patio, sitting area).



Black steel fence



Galvanized commercial metal fence