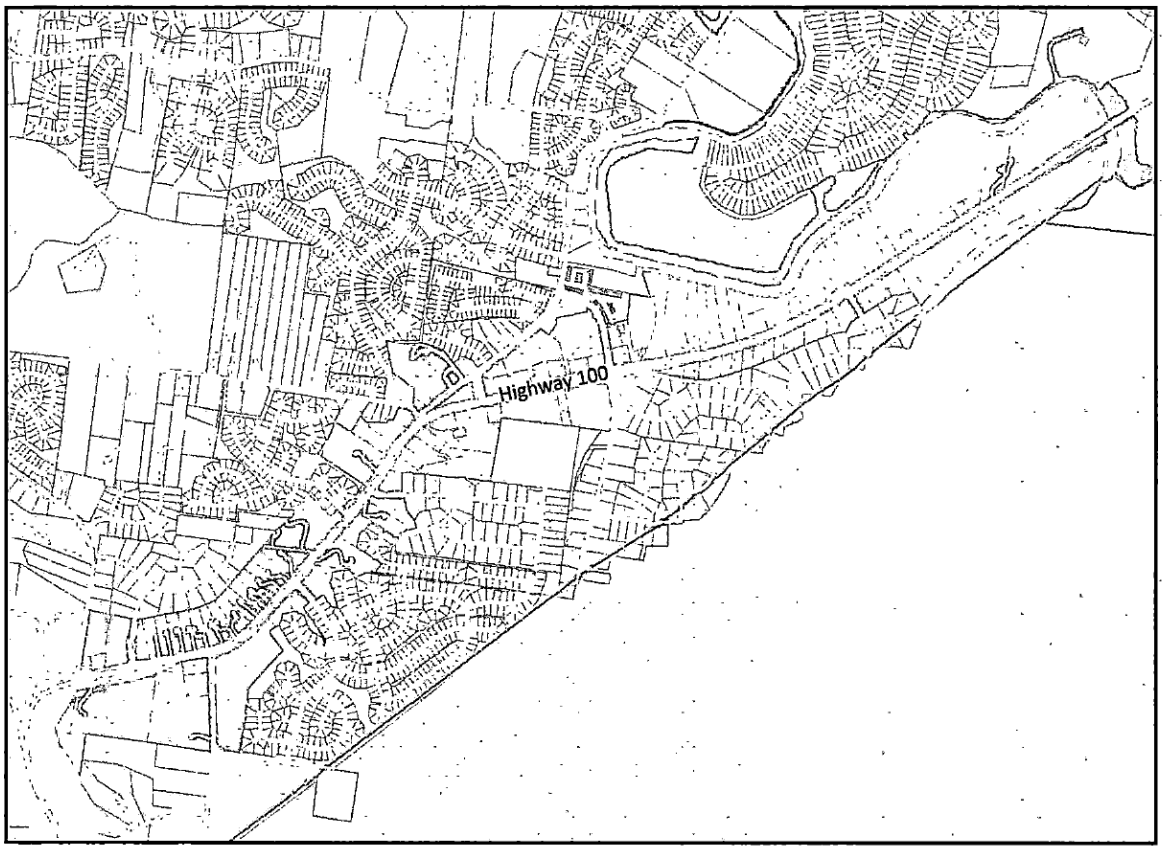
RIVER-TRACE URBAN DESIGN OVERLAY

DAVE ROSENBERG
METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 35

In accordance with the Bellevue Subarea plan and the goals and objectives of the various community character policies covering this area, this is an application for an Urban Design Overlay (UDO). The Overlay is for various parcels located along Highway 100 between the Harpeth River and the Natchez Trace that are located within Conservation policy, Suburban Neighborhood Maintenance, Suburban Neighborhood Evolving, Rural Neighborhood Center, Civic, Open Space and Suburban Community Center policies.

The standards of this Urban Design Overlay preserve and enhance the general development pattern by providing for uniform standards such as maximum height that matches the surrounding context, signage standards that are pedestrian in scale, fence standards that do not overwhelm and material standards that enhance and match the existing construction pattern along this portion of Highway 100.



How to Use this Document

The design standards established in the River-Trace Urban Design Overlay (UDO) are intended to guide future development in a manner that addresses architectural treatment, landscaping and screening, lighting, and signage.

The standards established in this document vary from the underlying base zone district standards for the properties in the UDO.

This document is to be used by developers, property owners, government officials, residents, and any individual who is interested in development or redevelopment of any property located within the UDO boundary.

Urban Design Overlay

An Urban Design Overlay (UDO) is a zoning tool that requires unique physical design standards for development or redevelopment within a designated area that would otherwise not be ensured by the standard provisions of the zoning regulations. A UDO can modify base zoning standards such as setbacks, building height, floor area ratio, and parking per the provisions outlined in Section 17.36.320 of the Zoning Code. All provisions are regulatory in nature and have the same force and effect as the zoning regulations of the Metro Code. Any final plans submitted for approval under a UDO will be reviewed for adherence to its provisions and to the provisions of the base zoning that are not varied by the UDO.

Overlapping Plans

Within the UDO boundary area, there may exist other regulations and design guidelines intended to work in conjunction with the UDO. Property owners and developers should consult with all departments and agencies during the development process to address any and all rules, regulations and policies. Property owners should consult with Metro Planning and Public Works to make the necessary improvements to the streetscape in accordance with the Major and Collector Street Plan and the Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways and Title 17.20.120 Provision of sidewalks.

Finally, there may be some properties within the UDO boundary zoned Specific Plan (SP) or within a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

- If a property is zoned Specific Plan then all standards contained with the Specific Plan shall apply and the UDO standards would apply for any standard not addressed in the SP.
- If a property has a Planned Unit Development Overlay then the standards of the PUD shall apply and the UDO standards would apply for any standards not addressed in the PUD.

Compliance

All provisions of the Metro Zoning Code shall apply, unless otherwise addressed by the UDO standards. Standards of the UDO shall not, however, apply to single- and two-family residential land uses, accessory residential land uses or agricultural uses. The UDO standards shall apply as follows:

New Development

Full Compliance with all standards of the UDO.

An addition to the square footage of an existing building:

The addition shall be in compliance with applicable standards of the UDO and shall not increase any degree of non-conformity.

A new structure on a lot with existing building(s):

The new structure shall be in compliance with applicable standards of the UDO and shall not increase any degree of non-conformity.

Signage Compliance:

- New signs shall comply with all Signage Standards.
- Existing legally non-conforming signs shall not increase the degree of non-conformity.
- Existing signs of a type prohibited (pole-mounted, etc.) shall be permitted to only replace existing sign panels. Panels installed must be compliant with the illumination standards set forth by the UDO.

Development Review

Process

Applicants are encouraged to contact Metro Planning Staff early on in the design and development process for a preapplication meeting. Where physical constraints exist on the site, Planning Staff will review alternate design solutions that achieve the intent of the UDO.

Prior to applying for a building permit, applicants shall apply for a UDO "Final Site Plan" application with the Planning Department. The "Final Site Plan" shall be reviewed and approved by all departments prior to the issuance of a building permit. Permits for signage and single and two-family residential uses and agricultural uses require no final site plan.

Following the approval of the Final Site Plan, a Final Plat may be required to establish lots, rights-of-way and easements.

Modifications

The natural landscape and man-made environment may present difficulties in compliance with some standards of the UDO. Based on site-specific issues, modifications to the standards may be necessary. Modifications may be permitted because of the exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property, exceptional topographic condition, or other extraordinary and exceptional condition of a property. The condition shall be unique to the subject property and generally not prevalent to other properties in the general area, and shall not have been created by the previous actions of any person having an interest in the property after the effective date of this ordinance.

Any standard within the UDO may be modified, insofar as the intent of the standard is being met; the modification results in better urban design for the neighborhood as a whole; and the modification does not impede or burden existing or future development of adjacent properties.

Planning Commission or Planning Department staff may approve modifications as follows. The Planning Department staff may approve minor modifications, deviations of 20 percent or less. Should the property owner or developer disagree with any determination made by the Planning staff, the property owner or developer may request that the Planning Commission consider the modification request. The Planning Commission shall consider major modifications, deviations of 21 percent or more.

Variances and Special Exceptions

Variances and special exceptions that are not specifically for standards of the River-Trace UDO shall follow the procedures of the applicable chapters of the Metro Zoning Code. Variances and special exceptions shall not be applicable to the height standards of the UDO.

Standards specific to the River-Trace UDO may be modified based on the Modifications section of this document.

Materials

Building façades fronting a public street or open space must be clad with a durable and high finish material, including but not limited to: brick, brick veneer, stone, stucco, and hardy board.

The following materials are prohibited on all facades: plywood, plastics, unfinished concrete block, EIFS and vinyl siding.

Primary façade materials shall not change at outside corners and shall wrap the corner a minimum of 10 feet.

Auto-oriented Canopies and Awnings

The design of auto-oriented canopies and awnings and their components shall be architecturally integrated with the main building using similar colors, materials, and architectural detailing.

Auto-oriented canopies and awnings, for uses such as drive-throughs and gas station pumps, shall not be considered the main building on the principal frontage but may be attached to a main building according to the following:

- Auto-oriented canopies and awnings shall be considered secondary to the main building. The main building shall comply with all frontage standards.
- The auto-oriented canopy and/or awning shall be located to the side or rear of the main building.
- The setback for the auto-oriented canopy and/or awning shall be a minimum of 10 feet from the front building facade.
- In cases of two principal frontages, exceptions may be made via modification.

Landscaping and Screening Standards

Fences and Walls

Appearance

- Fences shall be installed so that the finished side faces outward and all bracing shall be on the inside of the fence.
- Fences and walls shall be constructed of any combination of brick, stone, masonry materials, treated wood, or metal.

- Chain-link fencing and razor wire shall not be permitted within the front setback area or between the building and public streets.
- Fences and walls used to screen refuse areas shall be opaque and include gates that prohibit unauthorized users to access the area.

Standards by Location and Function

- Fences and walls located within the front setback area or between the building and public streets shall not exceed 4 feet in height. Fences greater than 2.5' in height shall be a minimum of 30 percent transparent to allow visibility into the property.
- Fences and walls along rear lot lines, behind a principal building, and along side property lines not fronting a public street shall not exceed 8 feet in height.
- Fences and walls used to screen parking shall be a minimum of 2.5 feet above the grade of the parking lot. When a fence or wall is combined with plantings, the majority of the plantings shall be between the right-of-way and the fence or wall.
- Fences and walls used to screen service and utility areas shall be a minimum of 16 inches taller than the element being screened.

Parapet Walls or Integrated Building Elements

Parapet walls or integrated building elements (such as knee walls, alcoves, wing walls, roof extensions, etc.) may also be used to enclose site features required to be screened such as dumpsters, mail kiosks, etc.

Building Height

All structures shall have a maximum height of three stories. No height control plane shall apply within the boundaries of the UDO.

Lighting Standards

All site lighting shall be shielded so that all directly emitted light falls within the property line. This standard note shall be added to all final site plans submitted for review.

Signage Standards

Intent

The Signage Standards of this UDO allow each business to communicate its message clearly without detracting from the envisioned visual character of the area. Signage should be attractive, appropriately scaled, and contribute positively to the surroundings without producing visual clutter.

Applicability

These sign regulations shall not apply to single- & two-family zoning districts in the River-Trace UDO. Base district standards that are not varied by the provisions set forth in this section shall apply within the River-Trace UDO. In addition to the standards set forth within this section, the following Sections of the Metro Zoning Code shall apply to all regulated signage within the River-Trace UDO.

- Section 17.04.06 - Definitions of general terms
- Within Chapter 17.32 SIGN REGULATIONS:
    - Section 17.32.020 - General Provisions
    - Section 17.32.040 - Signs allowed without a permit
    - Section 17.32.050 - Prohibited signs
    - Section 17.32.060 - Permitted on-premises temporary signs
    - Section 17.32.145 - Landmark signs
    - Section 17.32.160 – Computations

Right-of-way Encroachments

Where a sign is proposed to encroach into the public right-of-way, an application shall be made with the Public Works Department. The application shall include the requirements of the Public Works Department available at their website: http://www.nashville.gov/public-works/permits.aspx, in addition to the submittal requirements for sign permit applications in the Metro Zoning Code.

Nonconforming Signs

Applicable provisions (Sections 17.40.660 and 17.40.690) of the Metro Zoning Code apply.

In addition, panel changes in a legally non-conforming cabinet sign shall be permitted. All new panels shall conform to all illumination standards herein.

Prohibited Signs

In addition to signs prohibited in the base zoning district, on-premise temporary signs, pole mounted signs, and billboards shall not be permitted. Any sign which has any visible moving part, flashing or osculating lights, visible mechanical movement of any description, or other apparent visible movement achieved by any means are prohibited. Digital signs are prohibited.

Other Sign Types

Auto-oriented canopy/awning signs: The allocation of signage for auto-oriented canopies and awnings shall be measured as wall signs and shall only be used on the canopy/awning. The following standards shall apply:

- Only one sign shall be permitted on each side of a canopy/awning which faces a public ROW.
- Internal illumination shall be permitted only in the sign area.

General Requirements

Placement of Signs

Signs, other than those on windows, shall be placed so as not to obscure key architectural features or door or window openings. No sign shall extend above the eave line or parapet of the principal building(s) on the lot.

Materials

All permanent, on-premises signs shall be constructed of a rigid, weatherable material such as hard plastic, wood, MDO plywood, aluminum, steel, PVC, glass and/or Plexiglas. On-premises, permanent signs shall not be constructed of non-rigid materials including, but not limited to, vinyl, fabric, canvas, or corrugated plastic. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to approved, permitted canopies, awnings, and porticoes.

Illumination

Lighted signs shall be either spotlighted, externally lit, or back-lit with a diffused light source. Lighting sources shall be directed and shielded so that they do not produce glare off the site or on any object other than the sign. Bulbs should not be visible.

Internal lighting shall be permitted to illuminate letters and logotype only. Sign backgrounds shall be opaque. Portions of signs with manual changeable copy may be internally lit to illuminate the background of the sign.

Transformers and other mechanical equipment related to sign illumination shall be located inside the building or otherwise concealed from public view.

Exposed raceways must be finished to match or complement the sign or the building surface on which the sign is mounted.

Maximum Aggregate Building Signage

The maximum aggregate amount of display surface area of all permanent on-premise building signage permitted on a given building facade facing a street or parking lot, shall not exceed 15% of the building facade area. Facade area is calculated by multiplying the ground floor building façade length by a height of 14 feet.

A maximum of one ground sign is permitted per 200 feet of street frontage.

Building Signage

Awning Sign: A building sign that includes graphics or symbols that are painted, sewn, or otherwise adhered to the awning material as an integrated part of the awning itself.

Canopy Sign: A building sign that is attached above, below or to the face of a canopy.

Projecting Sign: A building sign that projects outward from the facade, typically at a ninety degree angle. Projecting signs are typically, but not always, vertically oriented and generally mounted above the first floor.

Shingle Sign: A smaller building sign that projects outward, typically at a ninety degree angle, and hangs from a bracket or support that is located over or near a building entrance.

Wall Sign: A building sign that is attached flat to, or mounted away from but parallel to, the building facade. A wall sign may be painted on the building facade.

Window Sign: Any sign attached to or directly applied on a window or glass door and intended for viewing from the exterior.

Ground Signage

Monument Sign: A low lying ground sign that is attached along its entire length to a continuous pedestal.

Building Sign - Awning

General Provisions

- Only awnings on the first story may contain signs.
- A maximum of one sign is permitted per awning surface.
- A maximum of two awning surfaces may contain signs.
- The name and logo of the establishment are the only signs permitted on awnings.
- An awning sign shall not be internally illuminated.

Design Standards

A. Sloping plane sign area (max) 25% of surface area
B. Valance sign area (max) 50% of surface area
C. Valance sign width (max) 75% of valance width
D. Height of text and graphics on valance (max) 2 feet
E. Vertical clearance from sidewalk grade, excluding valance (min) 8 feet (12 feet with ROW encroachment).

Building Sign - Canopy

General Provisions

- A canopy sign cannot extend outside the overall length or width of the canopy. However, a canopy sign may extend above or below the canopy provided the sign meets all other design standards.
- Maximum of one sign per canopy.
- Raceways are permitted for signs extending below or above the canopy.
- A canopy sign can be externally or internally illuminated in accordance with page 7.
- Cabinet signs are not permitted as canopy signs.
- This definition does not include freestanding canopies over fuel pumps. See the Auto-oriented canopy/awning signs on page 6.

Design Standards

A. Sign area (max) 5% of the Facade Area or a maximum of 64SF for single story and 84SF for multistory, whichever is less
B. Sign Width (max) 75% of canopy length
C. Height of text and graphics (max) 2 feet
D. Exposed Raceway height (max) 50% of the letter height, OR if the Raceway is used as the sign background, the Raceway may extend 3 inches beyond the largest part of the sign.
E. Vertical clearance from sidewalk grade (min) 8 feet (12 feet with ROW encroachment)

Refer to the Illumination section (page7) for additional raceways standards and permitted locations.

Building Sign - Projecting

General Provisions

- A projecting sign must be located at least 25 feet from any other projecting sign. When building width prohibits adherence to this standard, flexibility shall be permitted though a Minor Modification to be reviewed by staff.
- A projecting sign may be erected on a building corner when the building corner adjoins the intersection of two streets. Allocation of sign area from both streets may be used, however, in no case shall the sign exceed the maximum dimensional standards below.
- A projecting sign can be externally or internally illuminated in accordance with page 7.

Design Standards

A. Sign area (max) 20 SF
B. Height (max) 1 foot below bottom eave line or top of parapet
C. Projection Width (max) 4 feet
D. Vertical clearance from sidewalk grade (min) 8 feet (12 feet with ROW encroachment)

Building Sign - Shingle

General Provisions

- Signs shall be located within 8 feet of an active pedestrian building entrance. This does not include service entries or entries that primarily remain locked.
- An active pedestrian entrance at the corner of a building is allowed signs on both streets.
- A shingle sign shall be located below the window sills of the second story.
- A shingle sign shall not be internally illuminated.

Design Standards

A. Sign area (max) 9 square feet
B. Height (max) 3 feet
C. Width (max) 3 feet
D. Vertical clearance from sidewalk grade (min) 8 feet (12 feet with ROW encroachment)

Building Sign - Wall

General Provisions

- A wall sign shall either be located lower than the window sills of the second story or at the top of the building, not to be placed below the windows of the highest floor.
- No portion of a wall sign may extend above the roof line or parapet wall of a building with a flat roof, or above the lower eave line of a building with a pitched roof.
- A wall sign shall not cover windows or architectural details.
- An exposed raceway shall be finished to match the background wall or be integrated into the overall design of the sign.
- A wall sign can be externally or internally illuminated in accordance with page 7.

Design Standards

A. Sign area (max) 5% of the Facade Area or a maximum of 48 SF for single story building and 64 SF for multi-story buildings, whichever is less
B. Projection from wall (max) 12 inches
C. Exposed Raceway height (max) 50% of the letter height, OR if the Raceway is used as the sign background, the Raceway may extend 3 inches beyond the largest part of the sign. Refer to the Illumination section (page 7) for additional raceways standards and permitted locations.

Building Sign - Window

General Provisions

- Only openings on the first story may contain window signs.
- Window signs attached to or directly applied on glass shall be placed between 2 feet and 8 feet above the sidewalk grade.
- Window signs attached to or directly applied on glass shall have a clear background, and shall not be illuminated.
- Window signs displayed within one foot of the interior of a window shall have a clear background, and can be internally lit to illuminate letters and logotype only.

Design Standards

A. Sign area (max) 15 SF
B. Height (max) 3 feet
C. Width (max) 5 feet

Ground Sign - Monument

General Provisions

- A maximum of one ground sign is permitted per 200 feet of street frontage.
- A monument sign must be set back at least 5 feet from property lines.
- A sign erected on the top of a retaining wall is required to meet the standards for a monument sign. The height of the wall shall be included in the overall height calculation. In this case, the 5 foot minimum setback is not required.

- A sign affixed to the face of a retaining wall or seat wall that is an integral part of a plaza or streetscape design may utilize the sign area allocated to Wall Signs. In this case, the 5 foot minimum setback is not required.
- A monument sign can be externally or internally illuminated in accordance with page 7.

Design Standards

A. Sign area (max per sign) Single Tenant: 28 SF Multi-Tenant: 48 SF
B. Height (max) Single Tenant: 5 feet; 2.5 feet for any part of sign within 15 feet of a driveway. Multi-Tenant: 7 feet