

# Welcome

## **SIGN CODE UPDATE PUBLIC MEETING**

Aztlan Community Center

Community Room

112 E Willow Street, Fort Collins

Thursday, May 24, 2018

5:30 – 7:30 PM

\*Brief orientation at 6:00 PM\*

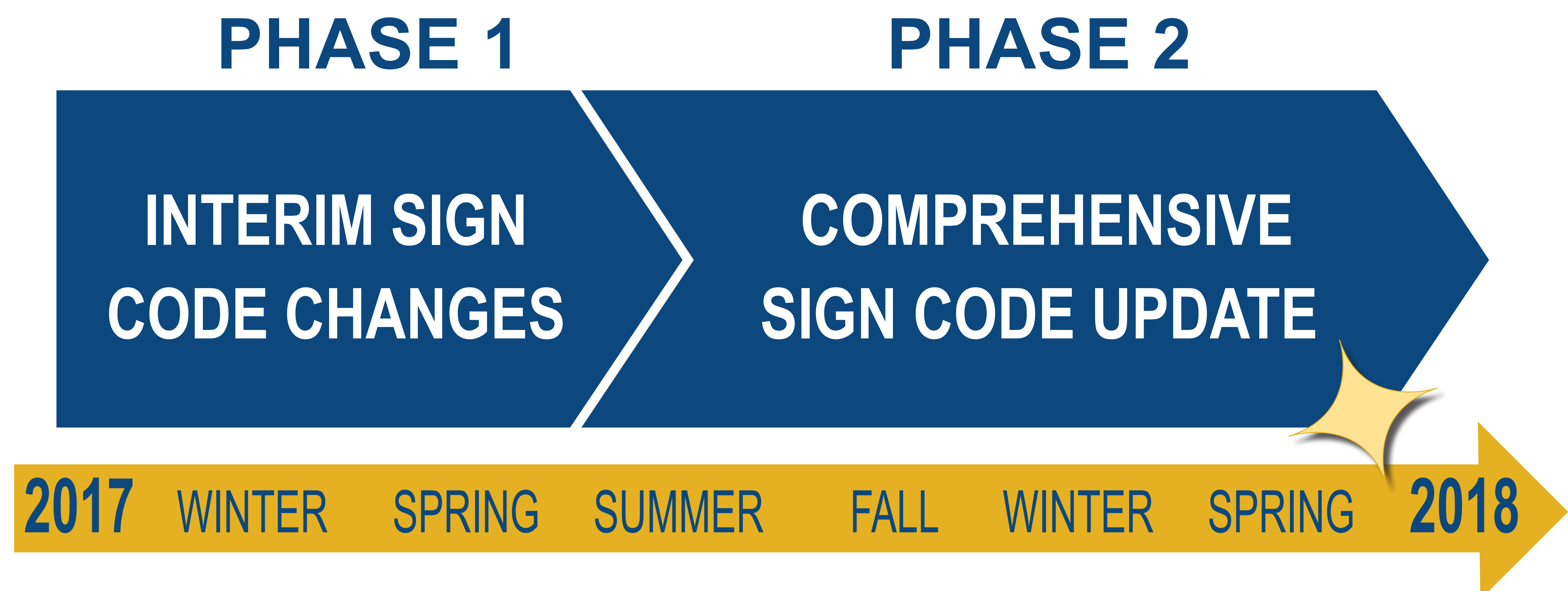


# PROCESS AND HOW TO PARTICIPATE

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The process of updating the sign code is divided over two phases. The first phase focused on an initial critical update to reflect consistent standards regardless of a sign's content.

The second phase reconfirmed the community's goals for the entire sign code, engaging the public in conversations about size, color, lighting, location, technology, and materials.



- Content neutral regulations
- Enhance legibility of Sign Code
- Implement the Downtown Plan with specific sign standards
- Explore changes to accommodate new technology
- Confirm current sign standards are achieving City's goals

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## Participation Tonight

- **6:00pm - Brief Orientation**
- **Review the information on the boards and the draft ordinance on the table**
- **Provide feedback on how to improve the sign regulations:**
  - **Fill out the comment form here at the public meeting, or**
  - **Take the online questionnaire later**



# WHAT IS THE SIGN CODE AND WHY UPDATE IT?

Fort Collins has been regulating signs since the 1970's. At the time, it was in response to rapid growth and a trend toward exaggerated signage and commercial marketing that was overshadowing the character and identity of the City. The existing sign regulations generally protect community aesthetics, preserve and enhance property values, and protect public safety. Additionally, the U.S. Supreme Court recognizes that “signs take up space and may obstruct views, distract motorists, displace alternative uses for land, and pose other problems that legitimately call for regulation.”



*N. College Ave. in the 1960s*



*S. College Ave. in the 1970s*

Like many jurisdictions across the nation, the City of Fort Collins began updating their sign code in response to the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court case, *Reed v. Town of Gilbert*. This ruling clarified that sign codes must be content neutral. This means that sign regulations cannot vary standards such as size, location, and duration based on the message of the sign (e.g. “political sign” or “for sale sign”). Some existing City codes are based on the type or message of the regulated sign.

This sign code update is also an opportunity to do the following:

1. Reconfirm that the sign standards achieve the City's aesthetic values and goals;
2. Focus on enhancements to the overall legibility and use of the code;
3. Implement of the recently adopted Downtown Plan; and
4. Explore new technology



# CONTENT NEUTRALITY AND PHASE 1

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## *Reed v. Town of Gilbert*

Similar to many jurisdictions across the nation, the City of Fort Collins is updating its sign code in response to the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court case, *Reed v. Town of Gilbert*. This ruling clarified that sign codes must be content neutral. This means that sign regulations cannot vary standards such as size, location, and duration based on the message of the sign (e.g. “political sign” or “for sale sign”). Some existing City codes are based on the type or message of the regulated sign.

This sign code update is also an opportunity to reconfirm that the sign standards balance business interests and the City’s aesthetic values and goals. This focuses on enhancements to the overall legibility and use, materials, implementation of the recently adopted Downtown Plan, and exploration of new technology.

## *Summary of Phase 1 Updates*

Sign regulations are “content-neutral.”

Flags are considered a type of sign.

Signs are classified as permanent signs or temporary signs. The Phase 1 ordinance focuses on standards for temporary signs.

- Temporary signs include yard signs, site signs, swing signs, feather flags, banners, and pennants.

There are four Temporary Sign Districts that correspond to Zoning Districts:

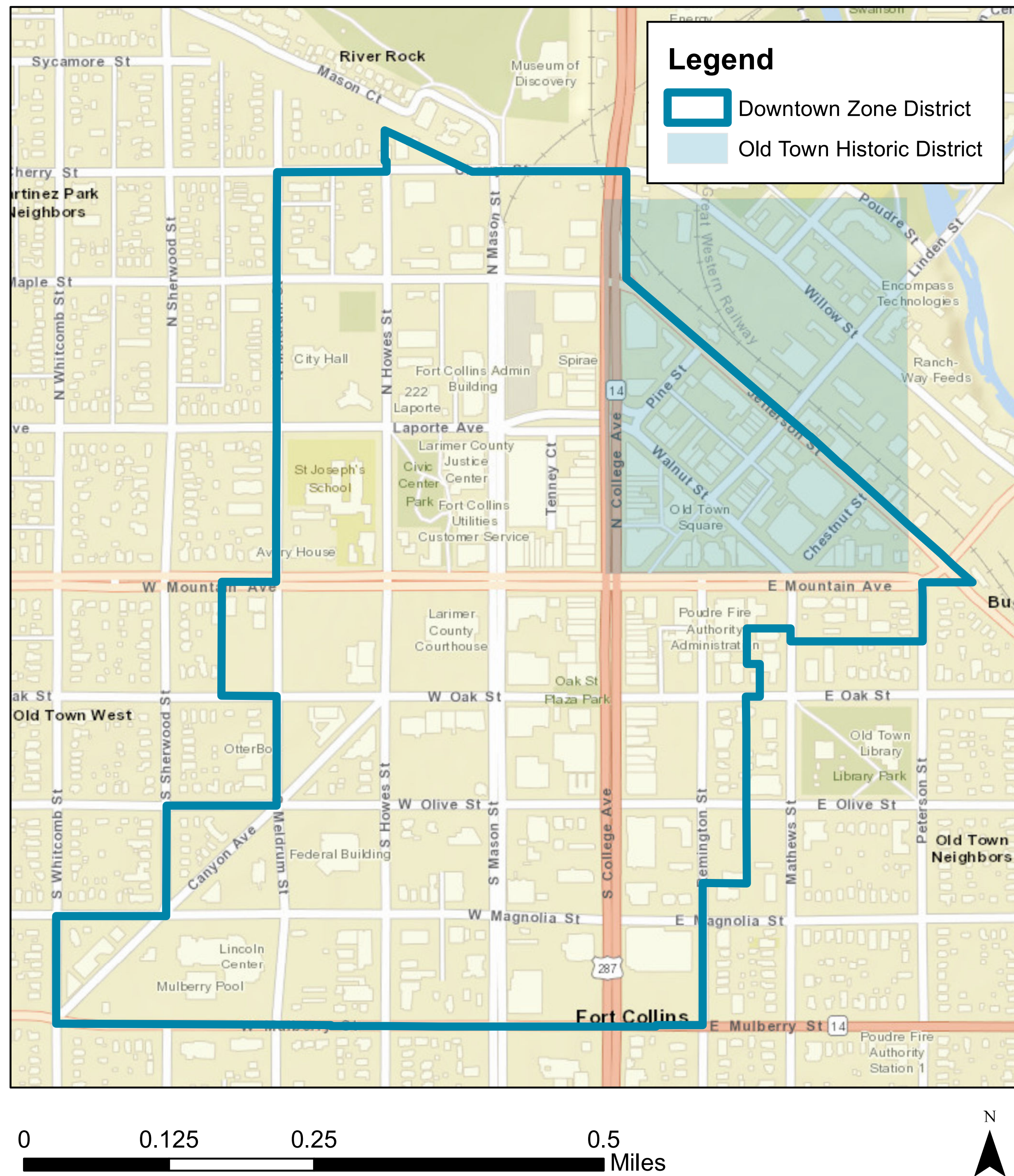
- Downtown
- Commercial/Industrial
- Multifamily/Mixed-Use
- Single-Family

Temporary signs are regulated based on attached v. detached, type, materials, components and durability, height, area and dimensions, lighting, duration, and location.



# SIGNS DOWNTOWN

## Downtown Fort Collins Zoning District



## Context

The Downtown Plan (2017) calls for preservation of historic character, attractive streets, defined downtown gateways and enhanced pedestrian experience, and recognizes that signs contribute to all these goals.

## What is Being Updated?

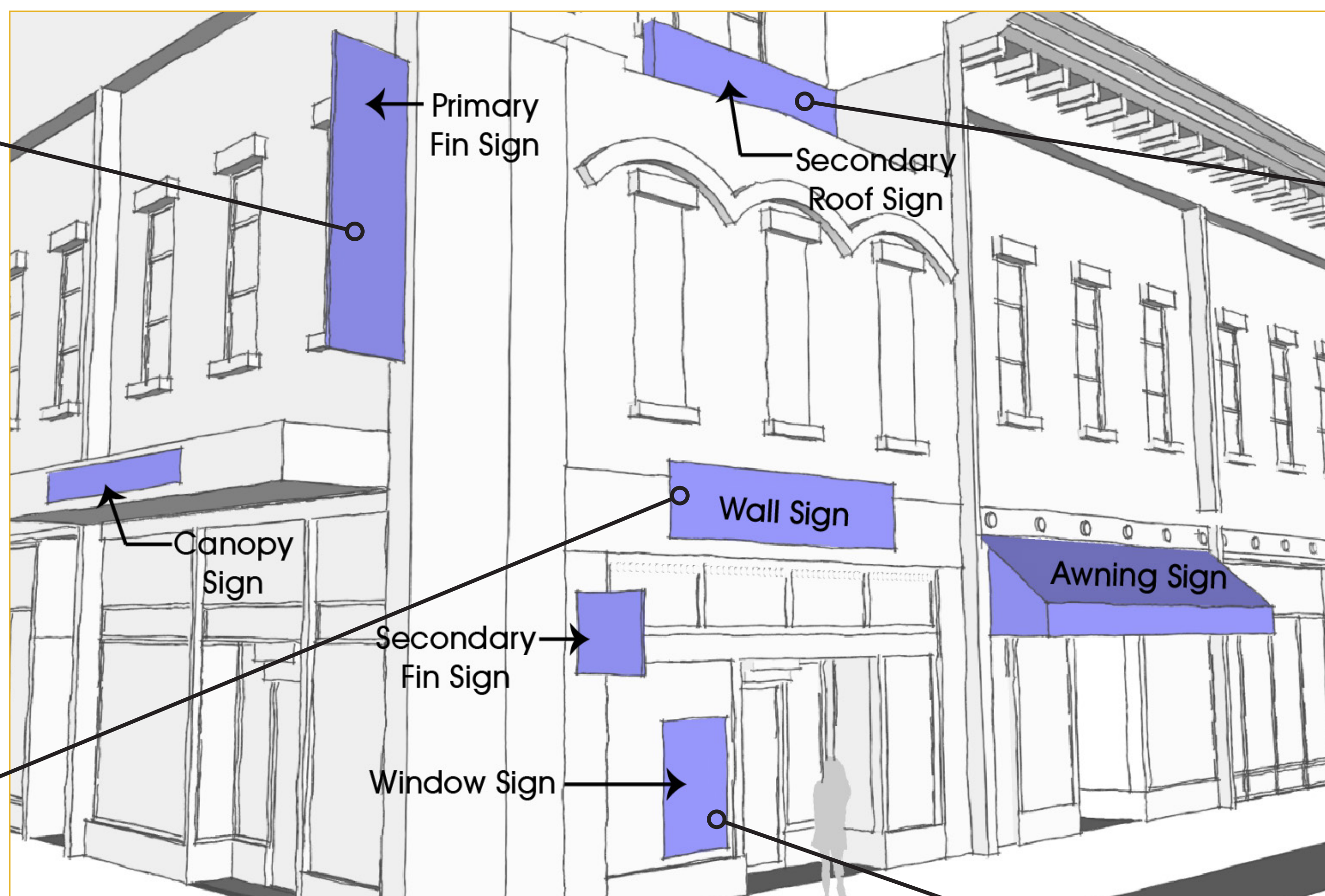
The Sign Code Update revises a limited number of regulations to customize the primary sign types in the Downtown zoning district. This will help implement the Downtown Plan and reinforce the unique and pedestrian character of the area. These recommendations should apply to the subareas from the Downtown Plan.

### Fin Signs

- Placement
- Height
- Size

### Wall Signs

- Placement
- Height
- Size



### Secondary Roof Signs

\*New Sign Type\*

- Allowance
- Height
- Size
- Vertical Projection

### Window Signs

- Height
- Size



# DOWNTOWN SIGNS - WALL SIGNS

## Wall Signs

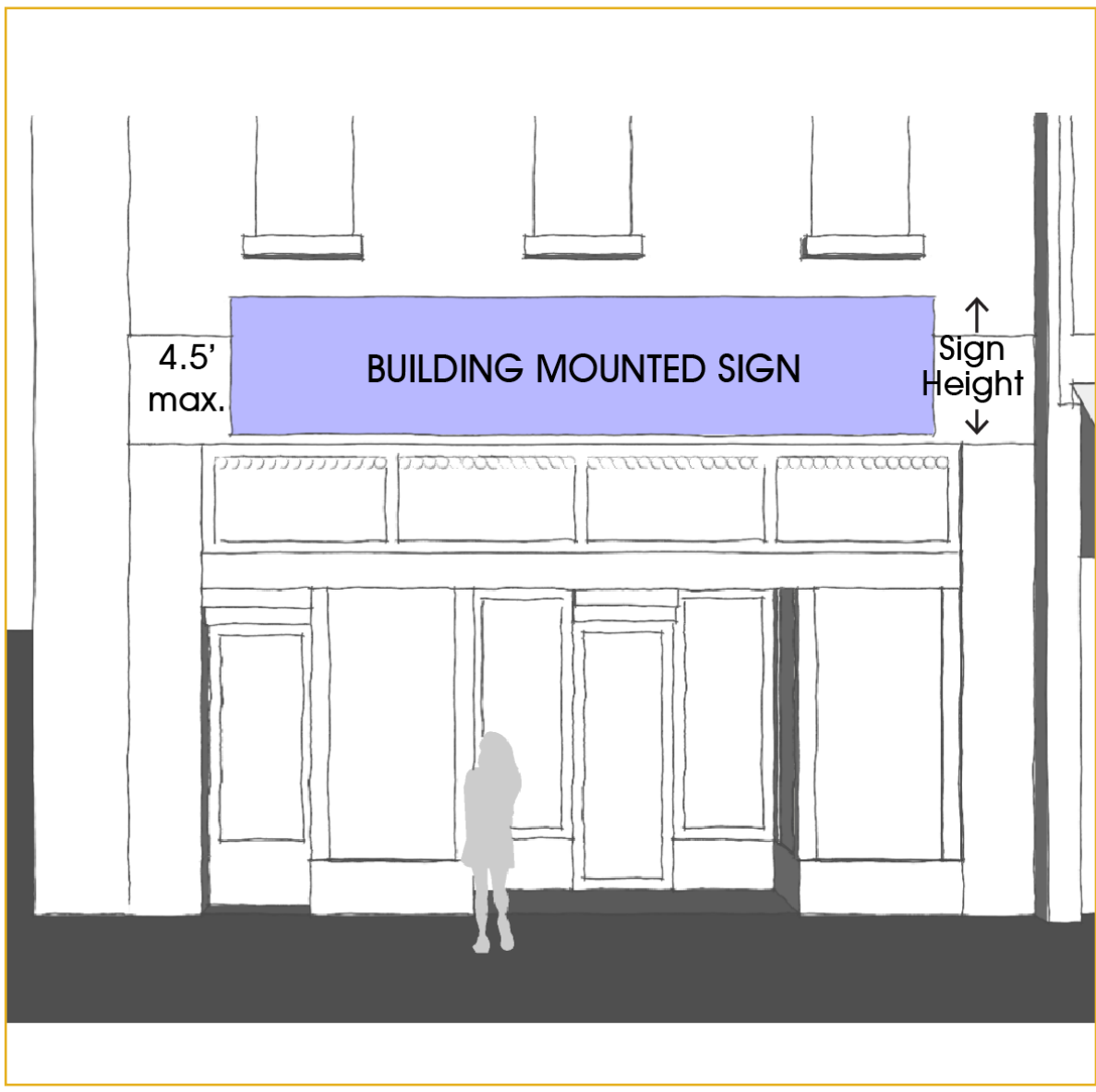
Wall sign means a sign that is painted on, applied to, or affixed to a building wall. Wall signs include applied or painted signs, bulletin boards, cabinet signs, and dimensional wall signs.



Vertical Wall Sign within Pedestrian Realm (within 15' above sidewalk)



Vertical Wall Sign above 15' from sidewalk



Horizontal Wall Sign

	What does the Code allow today?	What does the Code Update change?
Max. Height	7'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4.5 ft. if within 15 ft. of elevation of sidewalk below</li><li>• 7 ft. if above 15 ft. of elevation of sidewalk below but any portion below fourth story</li><li>• 9 ft. if entirely above fourth story</li></ul>
Max. Width	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No max. width for horizontally oriented signs</li></ul>
Max Projection from Wall	12"	(No change)
Length	<75% of width of tenant storefront	(No change)

### Vertical Orientation: Dimensions Added for For **Applied or Painted** Signs

Max. Height	NA	25 ft.
Max. Width	NA	2 ft.



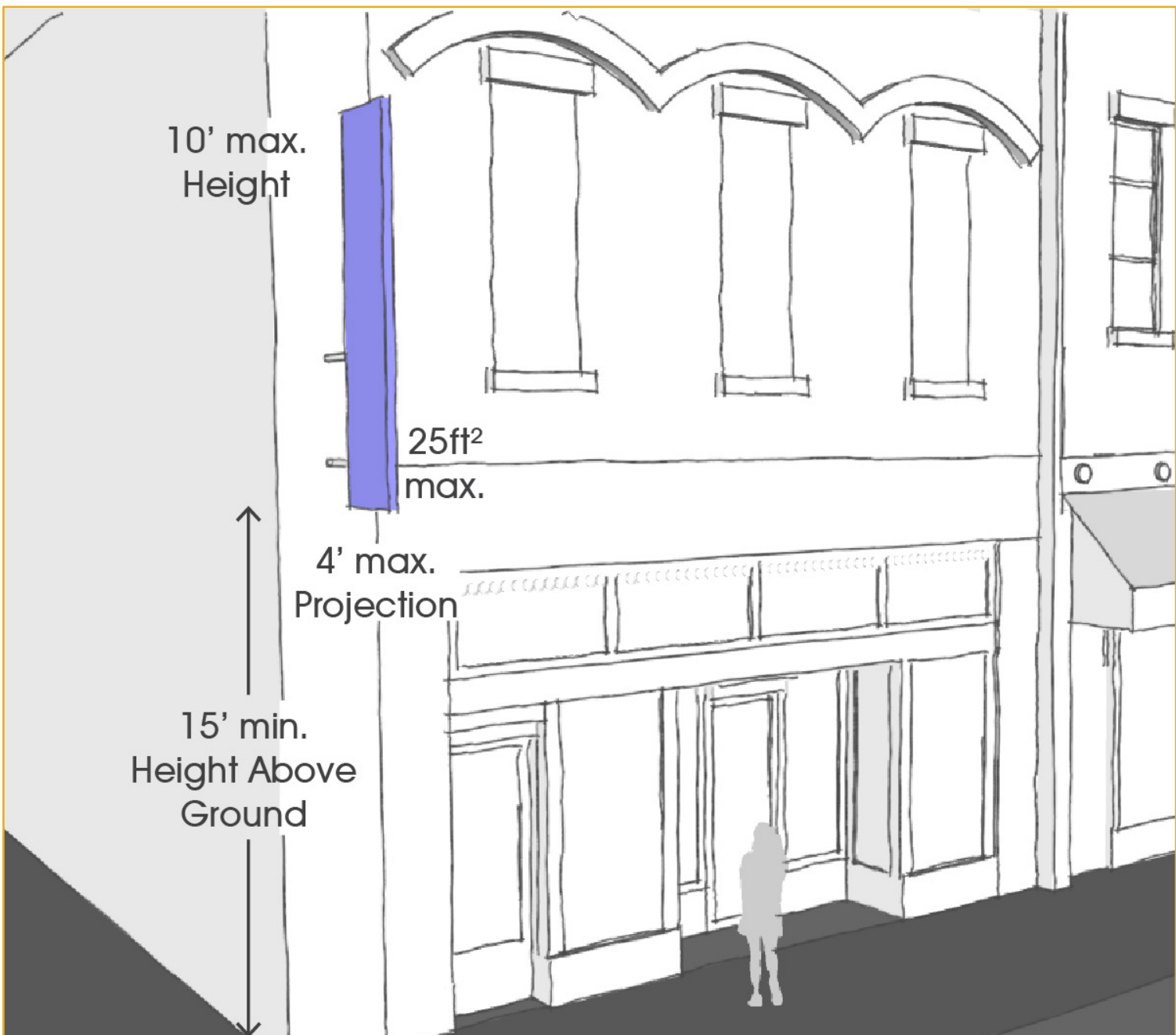
# DOWNTOWN SIGNS - PROJECTING SIGNS

## Fin Signs

Projecting Signs are a type of attached sign that extends from a building wall, usually perpendicular to the wall’s surface. Projecting signs include awning signs, fin signs, marquee signs, and hanging signs. No changes were made to awning signs, marquee signs, or under-canopy signs.



Projecting Wall Sign within Pedestrian Realm (within 15’ above sidewalk)



Projecting Wall Sign above 15’ from sidewalk

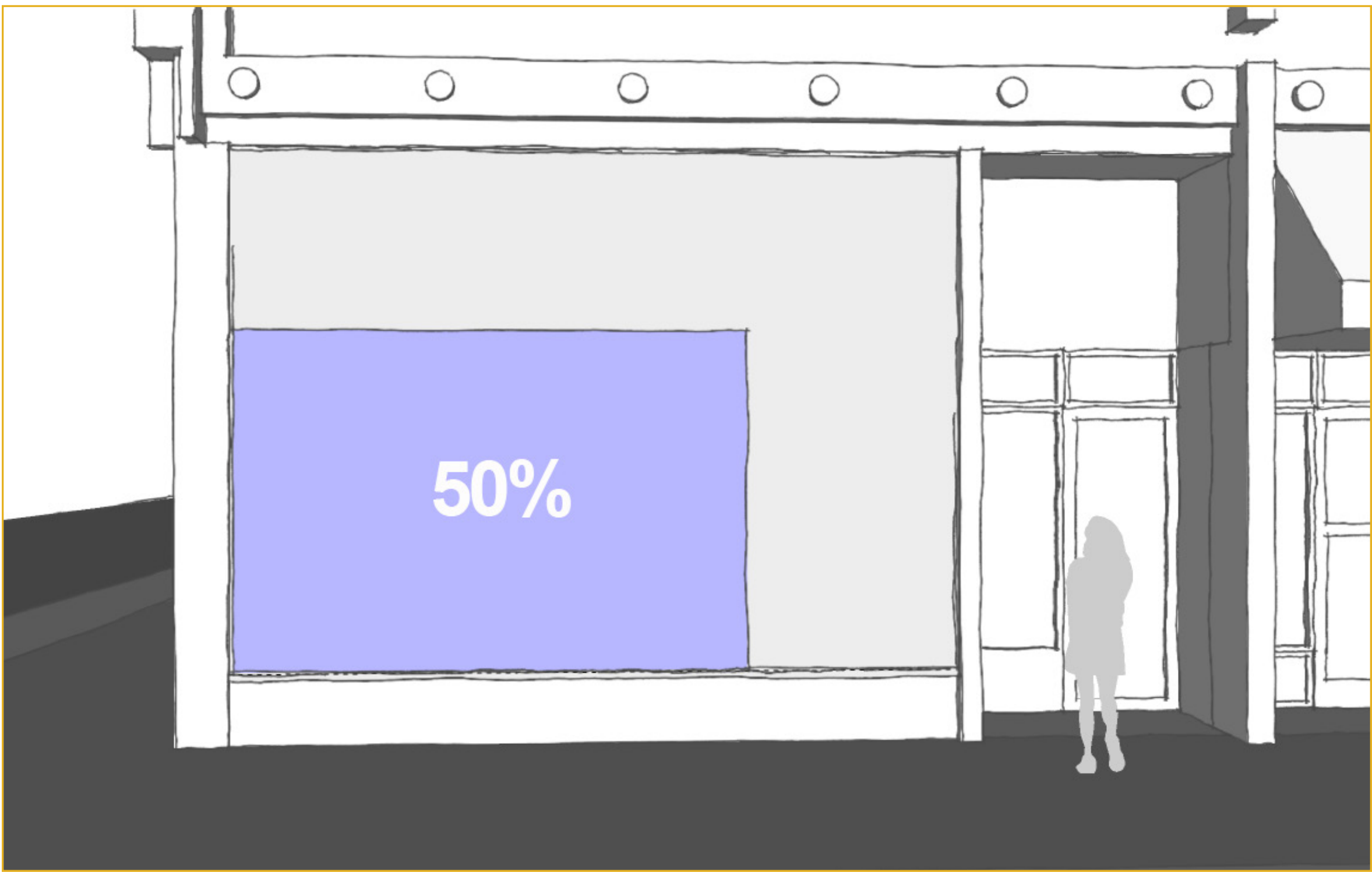
	What does the Code allow today?	What does the Code Update change?
Max. Projection into Right-of-Way	48"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Entirely or partially below third story: 3 ft.</li> <li>Entirely above third story: 6 ft.</li> <li>Not more than 4 ft. within right-of-way</li> </ul>
Max. Square Footage	15 sq. ft. per face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 sf. if within 15 ft. of elevation of sidewalk below</li> <li>25 sf. if between 15 ft. and 45 ft. of elevation above sidewalk below</li> <li>45 sf. if entirely above 45 ft. of elevation above sidewalk below</li> </ul>
Max. Height	7'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 ft. if within 15 ft. of elevation of sidewalk below</li> <li>10 ft. if between 15 ft. and 45 ft. of elevation above sidewalk below</li> <li>8 ft. if entirely above 45 ft. of elevation above sidewalk below</li> </ul>
Clearance	8' or more above public right-of-way	(No change)



# DOWNTOWN - WINDOW SIGNS

## Window Signs

Window sign means a type of temporary or permanent sign that is: (i) painted on, applied to, or attached to a window; or (ii) or installed or positioned within a building such that the sign face is oriented towards and highly visible through a window that is within one foot of the sign.



	What does the Code allow today?	What does the Code Update change?
Max. Height	7'	No maximum height
Window Coverage	Not to exceed 80 sq ft and maximum of 50% of window	Up to lesser of 50% of area of architecturally distinct window



# RESTORATION OR REPLACEMENT OF HISTORIC SIGNS

This program applies to buildings in the Downtown sign district that are more than 50 years old, whether or not they are formally recognized as historic at the local, state, or national level, or whether they are located within a designated historic district.



	What does the Code Update include?
Allowance	As approved by the Design Review Sub-Committee of the Landmark Preservation Commission (DRC of the LPC)
Max. Size	As determined by historic research of the property and approved by the DRC of the LPC
Max. Height	As determined by historic research of the property and approved by the DRC of the LPC
Other Standards	An owner of a building with the Downtown sign district map apply for a sign permit to restore or replace an historic sign that may not otherwise comply with the strict provisions of the Sign Code. Restorations or replacements that comply with the strict provisions of this Sign Code are not processed as historic signs
	Owner shall provide evidence of the historic signage on the property during its period of significance (if applicable), or during the period within 20 years after its original construction



# SECONDARY ROOF SIGNS

This is a new type of sign.

Secondary roof sign means a sign that is mounted upon the horizontal plane of a flat roof structure of secondary roof of a building, which may include the roof of a canopy or porte-cochère that is attached to a building.

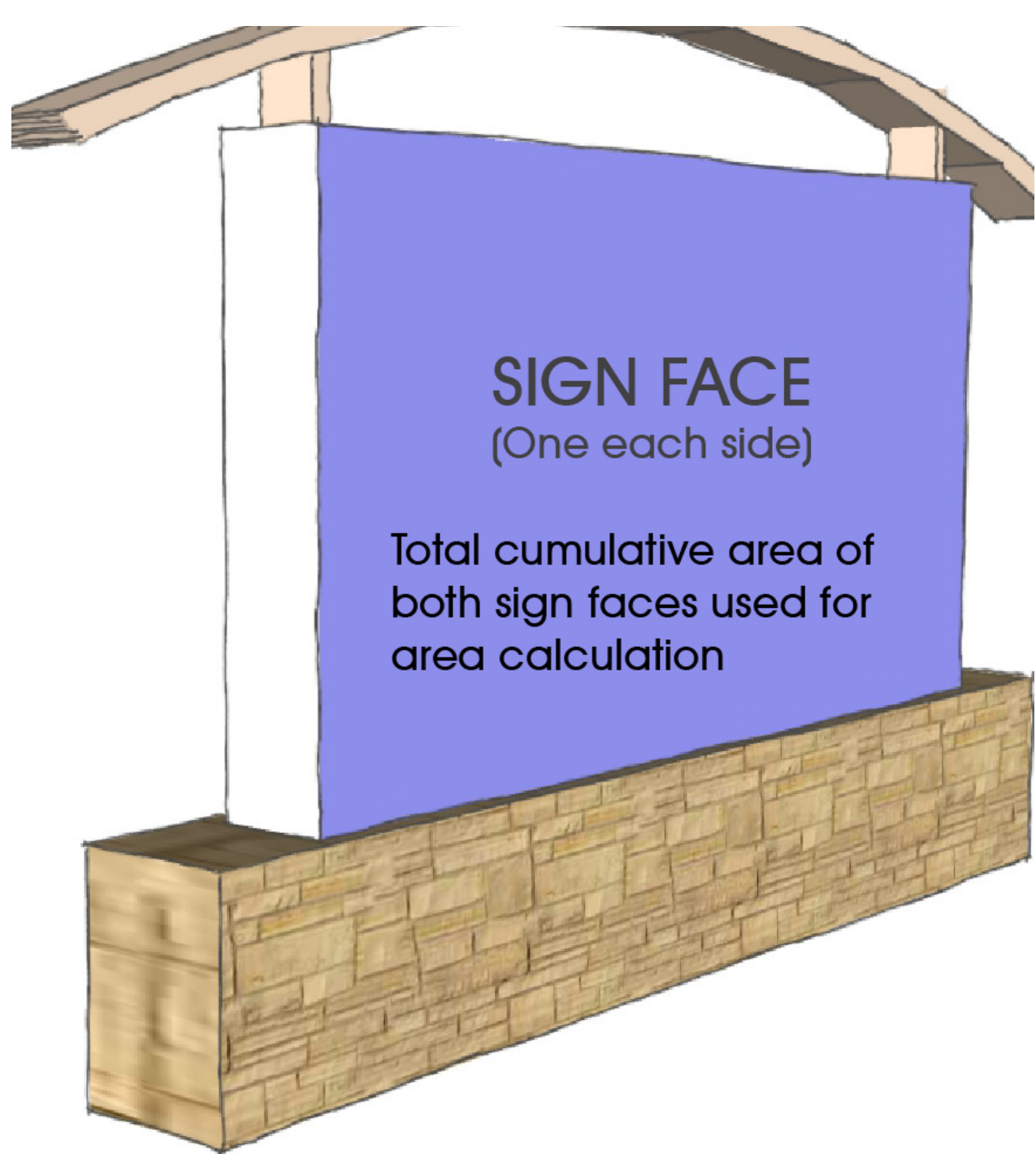


	What does the Code Update change?
Allowance	One (1) per building, for nonresidential or mixed-use property
Max. Size	Limited by sign area allowance
Max. Height	Maximum of 3 ft.
Other Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Distance between secondary roof and bottom of sign face shall not exceed 6".</li><li>Not allowed above 2nd story.</li></ul>



# ELECTRONIC MESSAGING CENTERS (EMCs)

Digital electronic message center means a display surface that is composed of light emitting diodes (LEDs) or comparable light sources that is capable of displaying variable messages and graphics, which are generally created on a computer. Digital electronic message centers are also known as EMCs.

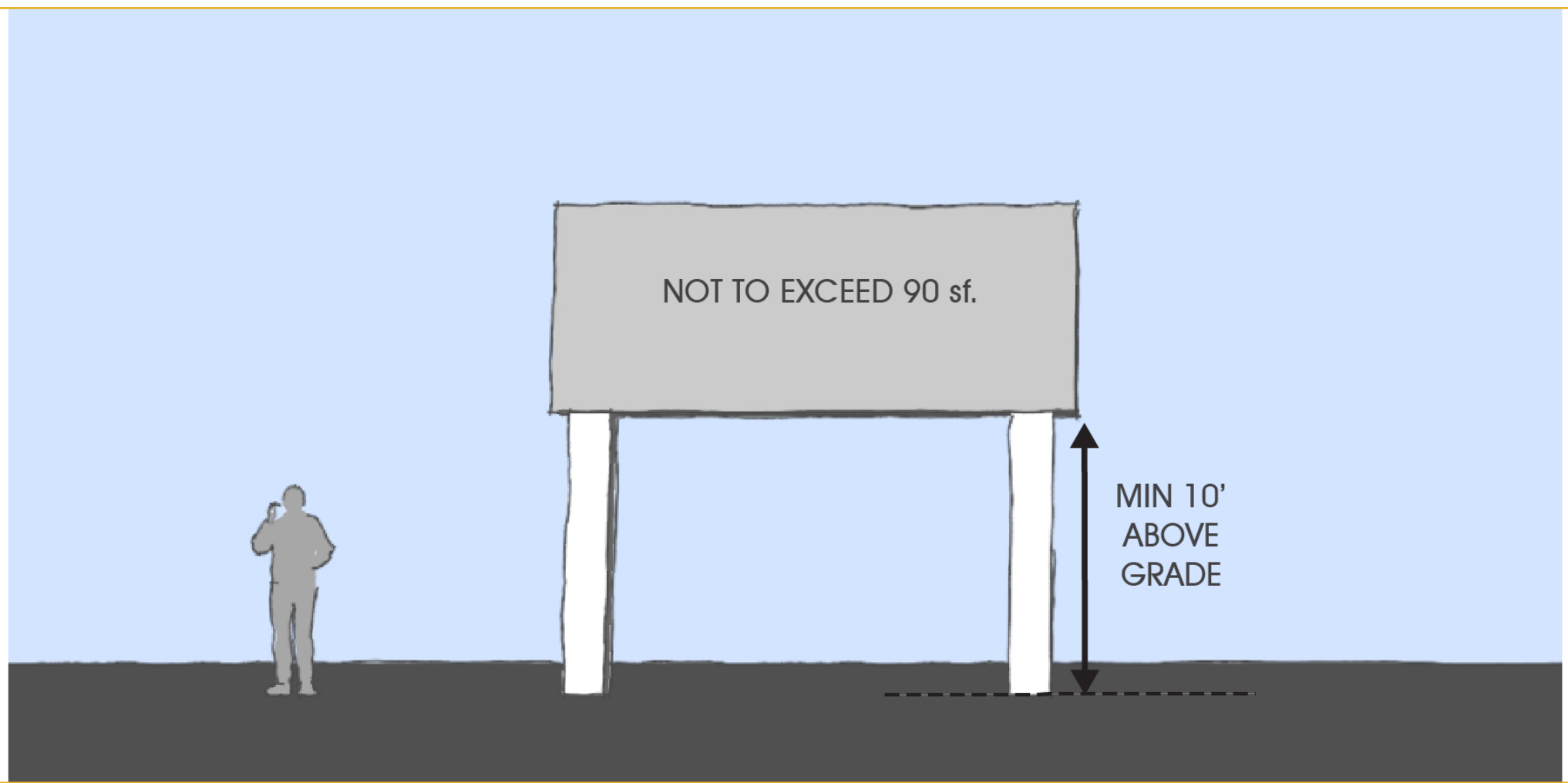


	What does the Code allow today?	What does the Code Update change?
Coverage	50% of sign	(No change)
Colors	Limited to 2 colors	Allow full color
Resolution	Pixel size no more than 16 mm	EMCs shall not have a pixel pitch that is greater than 12 mm.
Dwell Time	Can change message every 60 seconds	(No change)
Brightness	Must be controlled by dimming software and sensors to adjust brightness.	(No change)
Other Standards	Static messages only.  Both sides of freestanding signs are counted toward the sign allowance.	(No change)



# CONVERSION OF NONCONFORMING BILLBOARDS

The purpose of this program is to provide an incentive for the reduction of sign clutter by allowing for digital billboard replacements in exchange for the removal of existing nonconforming billboards.



	What does the Code Update include?
Replacement Ratio	The greater of eight static sign faces or 2,200 sf. of static sign face from existing billboards within the City of Fort Collins or its Growth Management Area will be permanently removed for each sign face that is the subject of a digital billboard replacement
Replacement Location	Only within the Digital Billboard Overlay.
Spacing	Separated from each other by not less than two miles, measured in a straight line between the billboards.
Setbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From public rights-of-way: 25 ft.</li><li>• From traffic control devices and driver decision points: 100 ft.</li><li>• From Downtown sign zone, designated historic districts or landmarks, natural areas or parks, or property that is used or zoned for single-family, duplex, or single family attached residential uses: 500 ft.</li><li>• From interchanges with limited access highways: 1,000 ft.</li></ul>
Max. Size	Not to exceed 90 sf. in area, unless it is directed at an interstate highway, in which case it shall not exceed 250 sf. in area.
Max. Height	Not to exceed 18 ft. in height, unless it is directed at an interstate highway, in which case it shall not exceed 22 ft. in height.
Resolution	EMCs shall not have a pixel pitch that is greater than 16 mm.
Dwell Time	Messages can change based on the speed limit of the street that the EMC faces: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 50 miles per hour: 60 seconds</li><li>• More than 50 miles per hour: 24 seconds</li></ul>
Other Standards	The message displayed on an EMC shall be a single static message (not a split screen with more than one message)



# PROJECTED LIGHT SIGNS

This is a new type of sign.

Projected light sign means any image, text, or other content that is projected onto an outdoor surface (e.g., a building wall or sidewalk) by a laser projector, video projector, video mapping, or other comparable technology, in a location such that the image, text, or content is obviously visible from outside of the premises.

## Horizontal Projected Light Signs

Horizontal projected light signs that are projected onto public sidewalks are allowed only by portable sign permit, except that with respect to such signs, the area in which the portable sign permit may be issued is expanded to include additional commercial zoning districts and all pedestrian-oriented shopping streets. A permit will be required.



	What does the Code Update include?
Location	Entirely within 10 ft. of a building entrance, projected onto a sidewalk or landscaped area
Max. Size	Not to exceed 6 sf. in area
Other Standards	Not to be projected onto safety or traffic signage (e.g., crosswalk markings, bicycle dismount signs, etc.). Cannot be displayed on the public sidewalk at the same time as a sidewalk sign.

## Vertical Projected Light Signs

Vertical projected light signs are projected on to a building facade, and are not allowed as permanent signs. They may be used in connection with and during the term of a temporary special event. A permit will be required.

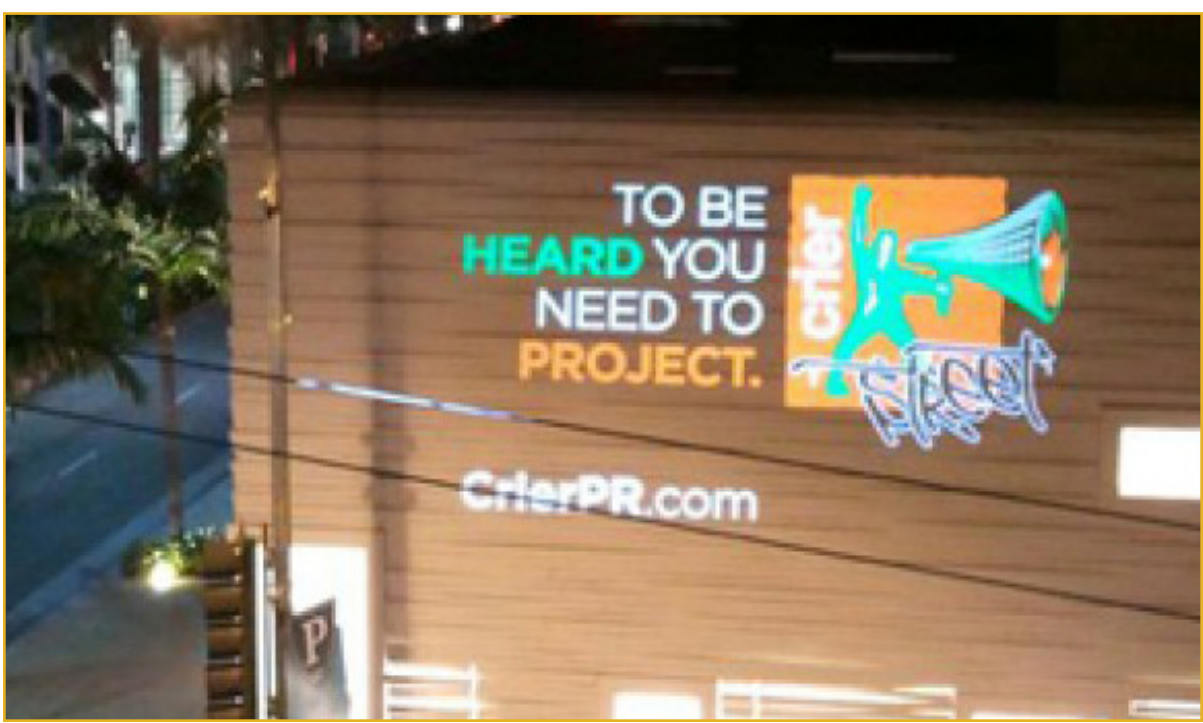


Image for reference only, size does not reflect max. allowable size

	What does the Code Update include?
Max. Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not to exceed 15 sq. ft. if any portion is on the first story wall</li><li>• Not to exceed 30 sq. ft. if entire image is above the first story.</li><li>• May occupy 100% of side or rear wall area in Downtown’s Alley Enhancement Project</li></ul>
Other Standards	The path of the projection shall not cross public rights-of-way or pedestrian pathways at a height of less than 7’. Static messages only.