

The following is proposed to be added to [The Baltimore City Design Manual](#).

§ III - Definitions

- The following is the definition of visual clutter;
 - *The presence of, or abundance of signs, poles, mechanical equipment, and other accessory items that are of multiple sizes, types, and colors that are inappropriate for or conflict with the character of the immediate context, which includes, but is not limited to architecture/building design, street typology and surrounding uses. What might constitute visual clutter in one context may be appropriate in another.*

§ IV – Design Standards, Chapter 6 - Signs

- Signs should be placed so that they do not adversely impact residential dwelling units or office space on nearby buildings due to their proximity, illumination, the restriction of views, or combination thereof.
 - Large scale electronic signs (identified as Category III, IV, and V electronic signs), roof signs or large scale internally illuminated signs (750 sq. ft. or greater) may face residential dwelling units or office space by a distance of 400' or greater



Figure 1: This fictional example, would not meet the guidelines. It shows an illuminated blade sign on a small-scale commercial building that could restrict views from the adjacent rowhouse building.

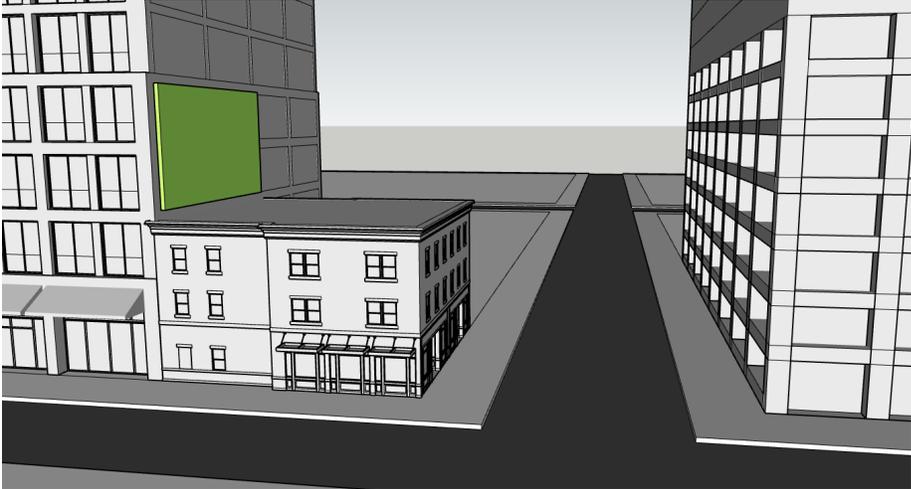


Figure 2: This fictional example shows a sign that would meet the guidelines. This sign is located on an unadorned elevation above a smaller scale building and faces a building with a parking garage at the lower levels. It does not face occupied spaces.

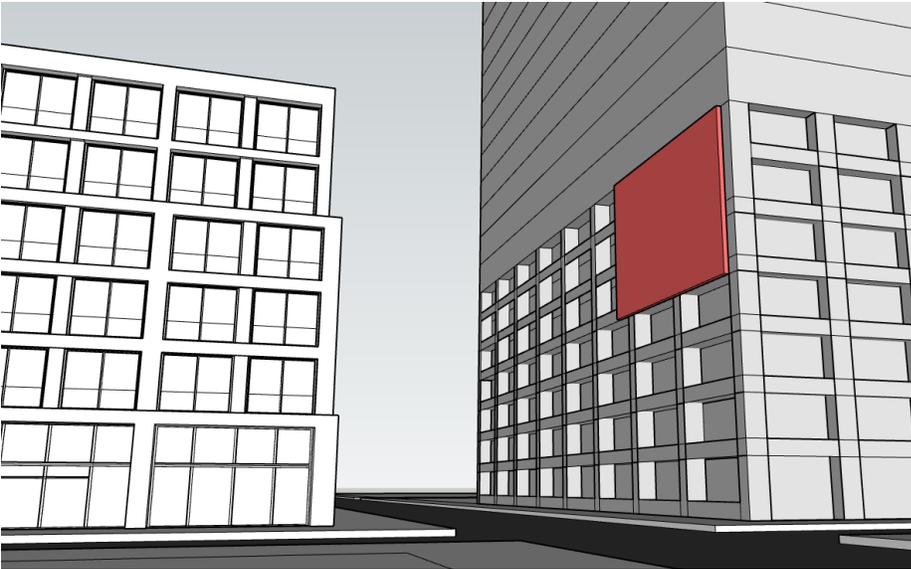


Figure 3: This fictional example does not meet the requirements. The sign, on a parking garage, is located across the street from occupied space.

- Signs should be designed and placed to complement the building on which they are located. The below principles must be incorporated when designing and locating signs;
 - Proportion – Signs should be designed to be compatible with the proportions of the building upon which they are located.
 - Rhythm – Signs should not interrupt critical rhythmic elements of buildings and should respond to the rhythm of building elements when possible.
 - Orientation – Signs should be oriented for viewing by the intended audience and should be located on street facing elevations.
- Buildings may be modified to accommodate signs, including large scale electronic signs. If the modification includes the removal of windows, the loss of light and air to the interior of the building must be considered.
- Any alterations to existing buildings or new construction for signs must meet all other guidelines outlined in this Design Manual and requirements set forth in the Zoning Code.
- Signs must take into consideration the pedestrian experience.
- New Category III, IV, and V electronic signs must not face residential zoning districts from a distance of 250' or less.

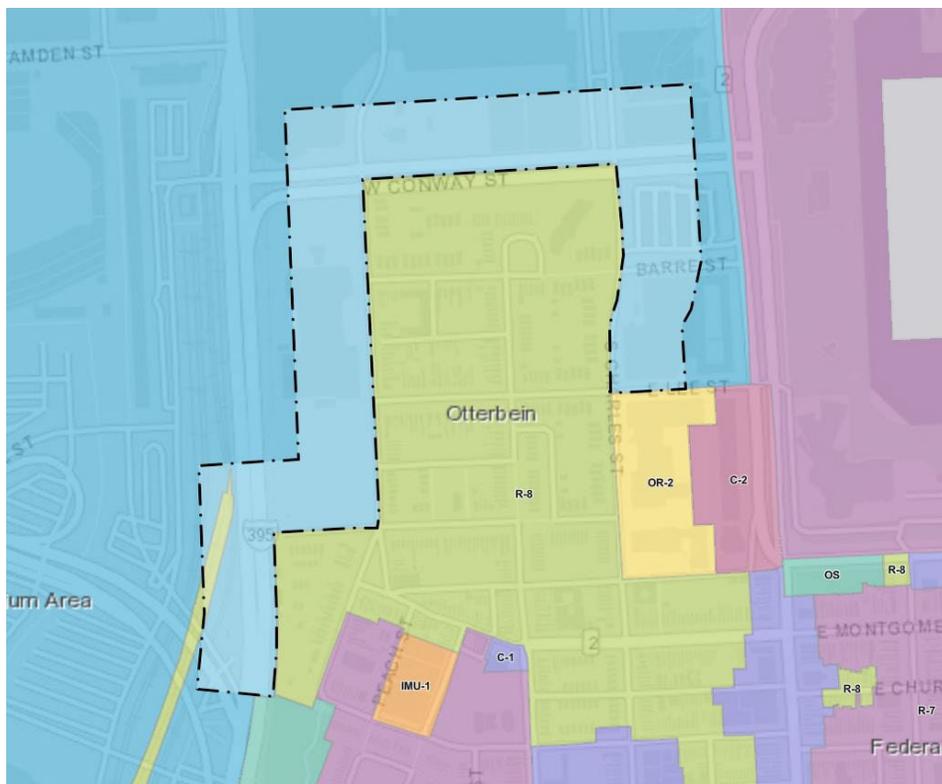


Figure 4: This map shows a 250' buffer around R-8 districts south of downtown.

- **Sign Within Areas of Special Sign Control (ASSC) and ASSC Sign Plans**
 - The Sign Plan and any signs within an ASSC must conform to any other requirements and definitions set forth in this Design Manual and Zoning Code.
 - The Sign Plan must identify and respond to important visual elements within or immediately surrounding the boundaries of the Area of Special Sign Control. These can include visual landmarks, view corridors, public spaces, and/or circulation patterns.
 - The boundaries of the proposed Sign Plan must respond to the design of the area.
 - Sign Plans must visually articulate and support the unique character of the area.
 - The Sign Plan must provide drawings that illustrate the impact area of all the proposed signs together; i.e. where each sign will be visible. This may include site plans, elevations and other drawings.
 - The Sign Plan must identify impacted historic buildings and historic areas. This could include properties both within the ASSC or adjacent to the ASSC.
 - The Planning Commission may consider the condition of the building before approving any signage for the building.