

Main Streets on Halsey Draft Code Amendments

TO: Main Streets on Halsey HC3 Committee
FROM: Jamin Kimmell, Partner, Cascadia Partners LLC
DATE: January 25, 2021

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize draft amendments to the development codes of the cities of Fairview, Troutdale, and Wood Village to implement the vision of the Main Streets on Halsey project. The intent of the code update is to improve the economic feasibility of desired development types, especially vertical mixed use development, and to create a more consistent set of standards across the three cities that encourages pedestrian-oriented, high quality site and building design.

The proposed changes would amend code standards across four (4) commercial and mixed use zones with frontage on Halsey Street or Historic Columbia River Highway. Minor amendments are also proposed to general provisions in each city's development code to ensure consistency with the zone district amendments. The following code sections are proposed to be amended:

- Fairview
 - Chapter 19.13: Definitions
 - Chapter 19.65: Town Center Commercial (TCC) Zone
 - Chapter 19.164: Vehicle and Bicycle Parking
- Wood Village
 - Section 230: Neighborhood Commercial (NC) Zone
 - Section 335: Height Transition Standard
 - Section 720: Definitions
- Troutdale
 - Section 1.020: General Definitions
 - Section 3.130: Central Business District (CBD) Zone
 - Section 3.140: Mixed Office/Housing (MO/H) Zone
 - Appendix A: Design Standards for CBD

The proposed amendments are shown in ~~strike-out~~ (removed) / underline (added) formatting. Language that is not struck or underlined is existing and proposed to remain.

The proposed amendments generally address five (5) key issues that were identified through technical analysis of the code standards and public engagement efforts:

1. Storefront Districts and Nonresidential Use Requirements
2. Building Height and Bulk
3. Building Orientation
4. Off-Street Parking
5. Design Standards

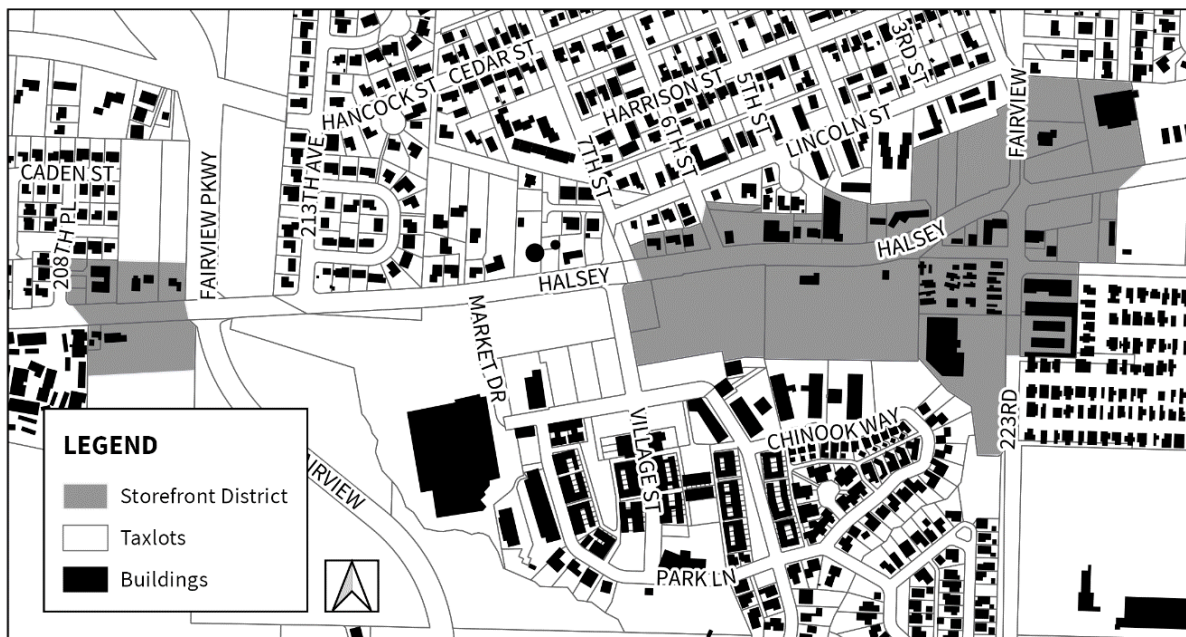
A brief summary of the amendments related to each issue is provided below.

1. Storefront Districts and Nonresidential Use Requirements

The amendments implement the concept of a “Storefront District” within each city. The intent of the Storefront District is to promote a concentration of commercial and retail uses in a pedestrian-friendly, “Main Street” area. Residents along the corridor expressed high support for more restaurants, retailers, and entertainment options. However, the economic analysis of the Halsey corridor found that retail uses are most viable in certain “nodes” along the corridor.

See Figure 1 and Figure 2 and for maps of the Storefront District boundaries.¹ In between these nodes, requiring commercial uses is less viable and a significant barrier to new development which may otherwise benefit the corridor. Within Storefront Districts, commercial or nonresidential uses are required and standalone residential developments are prohibited. Outside of the Storefront District, standalone residential uses (such as an apartment building) are allowed outright.

Figure 1. Fairview Storefront District (TCC Zone)



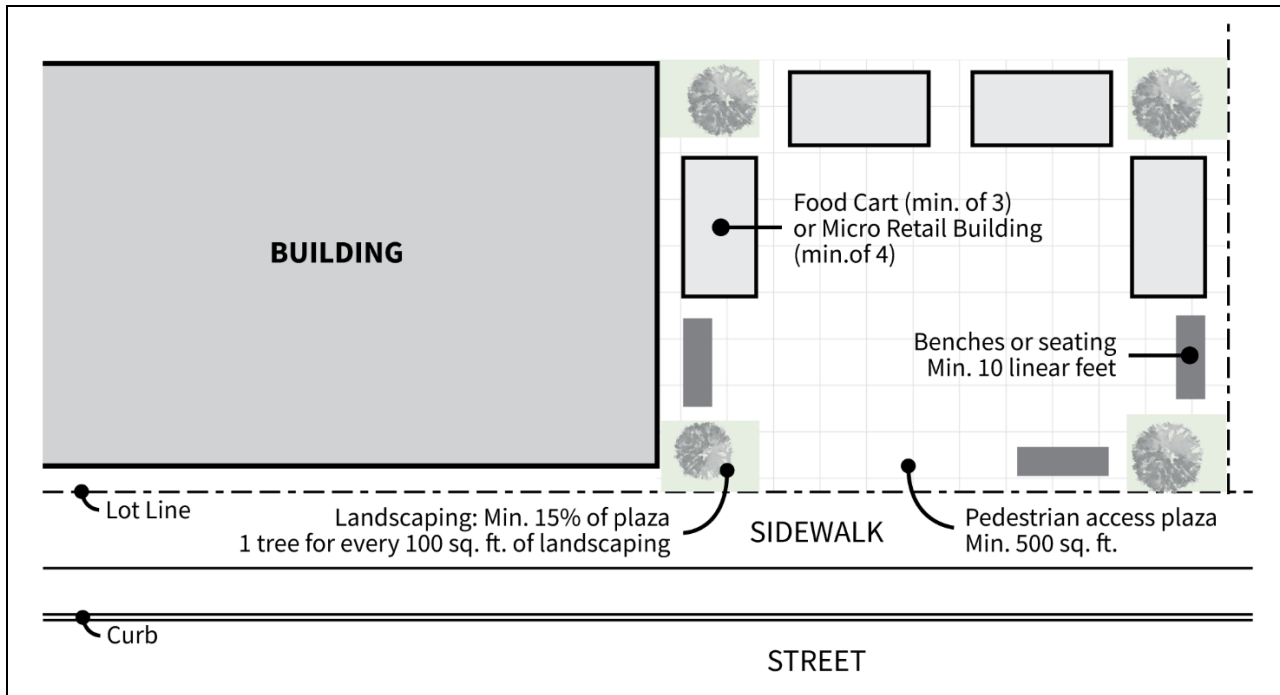
¹ The City of Wood Village opted to include the entire NC zone as a Storefront District. Thus, the term Storefront District is not used in the code but the standards align with the Storefront Districts in the other two cities.

Figure 2. Troutdale Storefront District (CBD Zone)



Additionally, the proposed code would provide more flexibility in the format of a required commercial or nonresidential use. Food cart and/or micro-retail pods may satisfy the commercial use requirement, so long as they are developed to certain standards and include certain amenities (see Figure 3).

Figure 3. Food Cart/Micro-Retail Pod Standards



2. Building Height and Bulk

The project team conducted an economic analysis of a typical development project that could be built under the existing code standards on selected sites in each city. The results indicated that existing maximum height limits (3-4 stories) are a significant barrier to vertical mixed use development (residential over ground floor commercial). Yet, vertical mixed use development is consistent with the vision for Halsey and is ideal for promoting a vibrant Main Street environment. Community members who responded to the concepts survey expressed some support for taller buildings, so long as they provided open space and ground floor commercial uses.

The proposed amendments address this issue by allowing taller buildings in certain locations and subject to additional standards related to bulk and massing. Based on feedback from the HC3, Planning Commissions, City Council and community, the proposal has been refined since originally presented in May, to limit height in certain locations and require bonus amenities. The following amendments are proposed:

- Increase base maximum heights as summarized in Table 1. Max height is proposed to vary within each zone to respond to existing built context and topography. See Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6, and Figure 7 for max height map of each zone.
- Require developments to meet additional requirements to achieve additional allowed height. Bonuses may be achieved by providing ground floor commercial space, small scale commercial space, affordable housing, or additional design elements.
- Require developments to meet new design standards that will help to reduce the perceived scale of taller buildings. These include a maximum building length standard, facade articulation standard, and height step-down standard. See Figure 8, Figure 9, and Figure 10.

Table 1. Summary of Proposed Max Height Amendments

Zone District	Existing Max Height	Proposed Max Height	
		Base	With Bonus
Fairview TCC	45 feet w/ 12' bonus	45-55 feet	55-65 feet
Wood Village NC	45 feet	45-55 feet	55-65 feet
Troutdale M/OH	35 feet	45-55 feet	55-65 feet
Troutdale CBD	35 feet	35 feet (most lots)	35 feet (most lots)

Figure 4. Base Maximum Height, Fairview TCC Zone



Figure 5. Base Maximum Height, Wood Village NC Zone



Figure 6. Base Maximum Height, Troutdale CBD Zone



Figure 7. Troutdale MO/H Zone

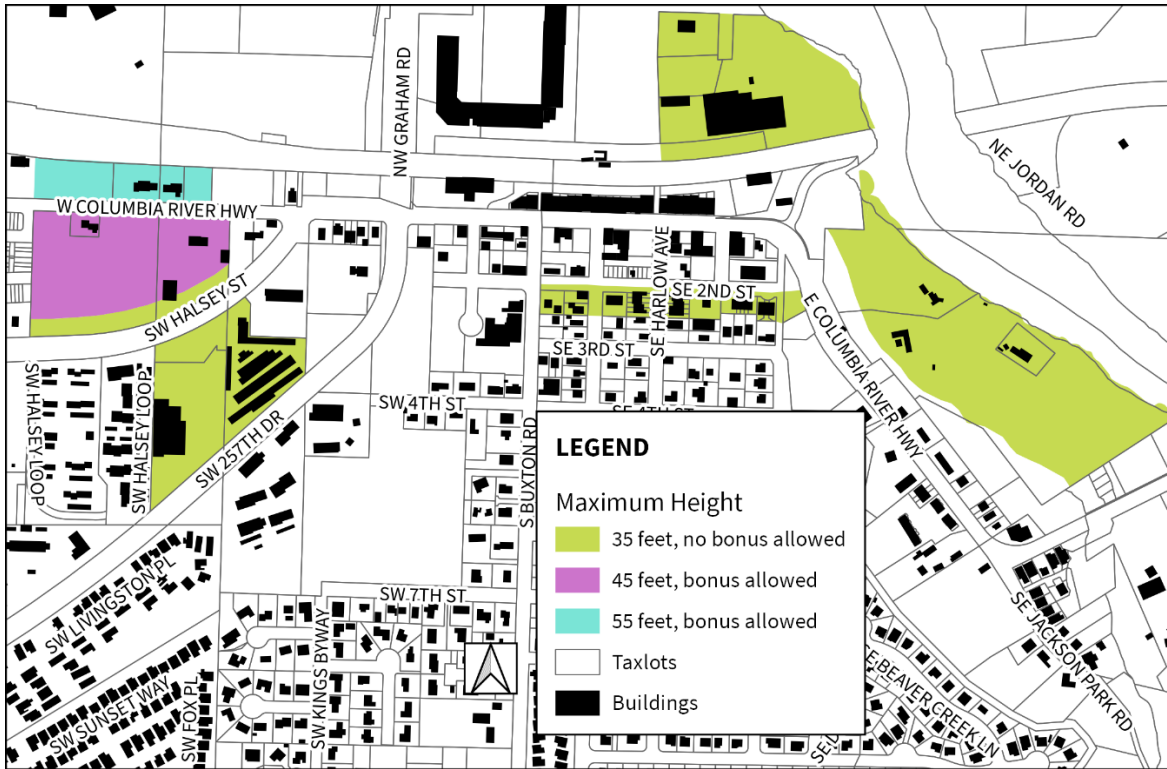


Figure 8. Height Step Down Standard, Example from Wood Village NC Zone

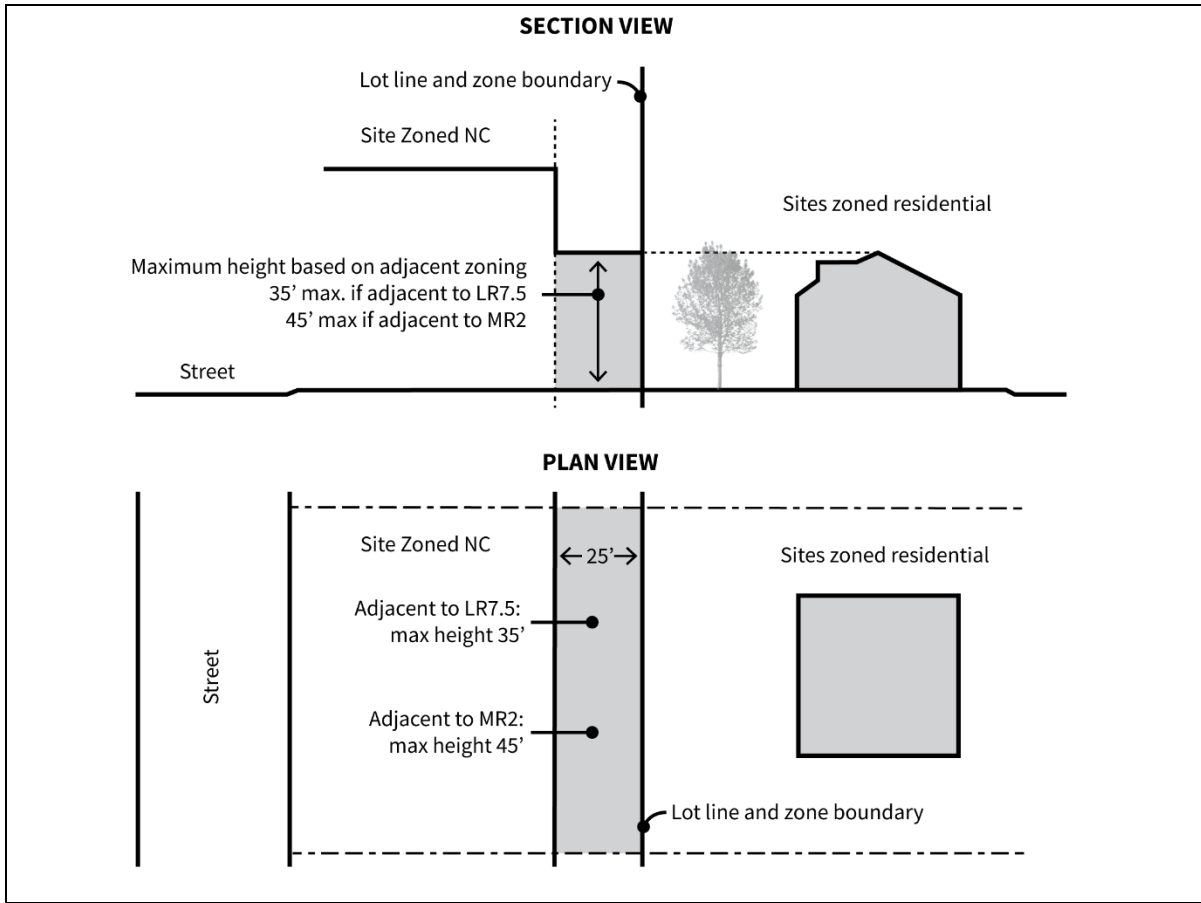


Figure 9. Maximum Building Length Standard

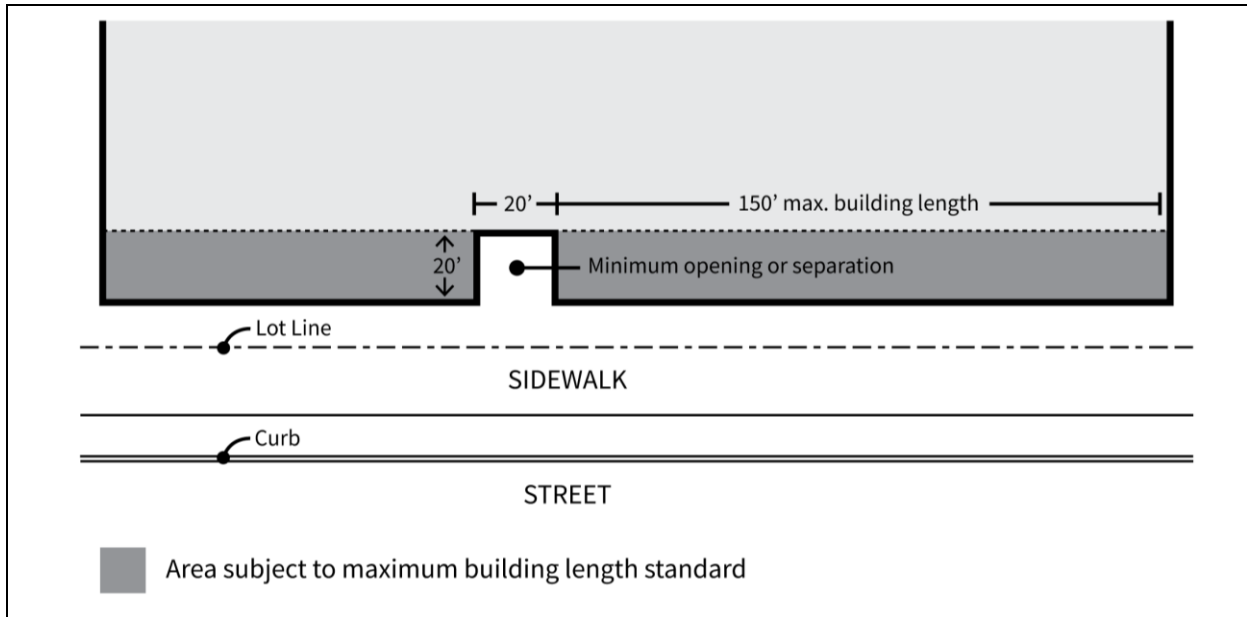
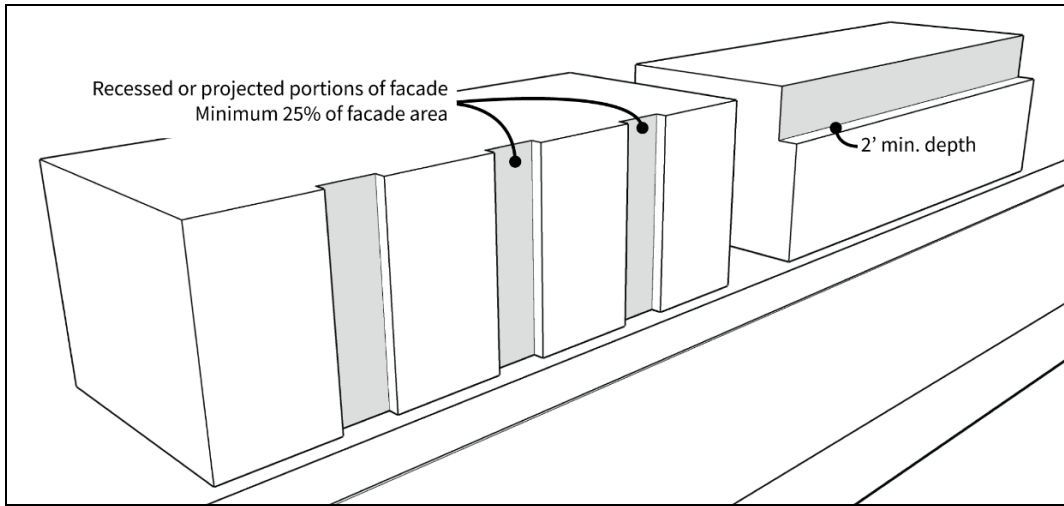


Figure 10. Façade Articulation Standard

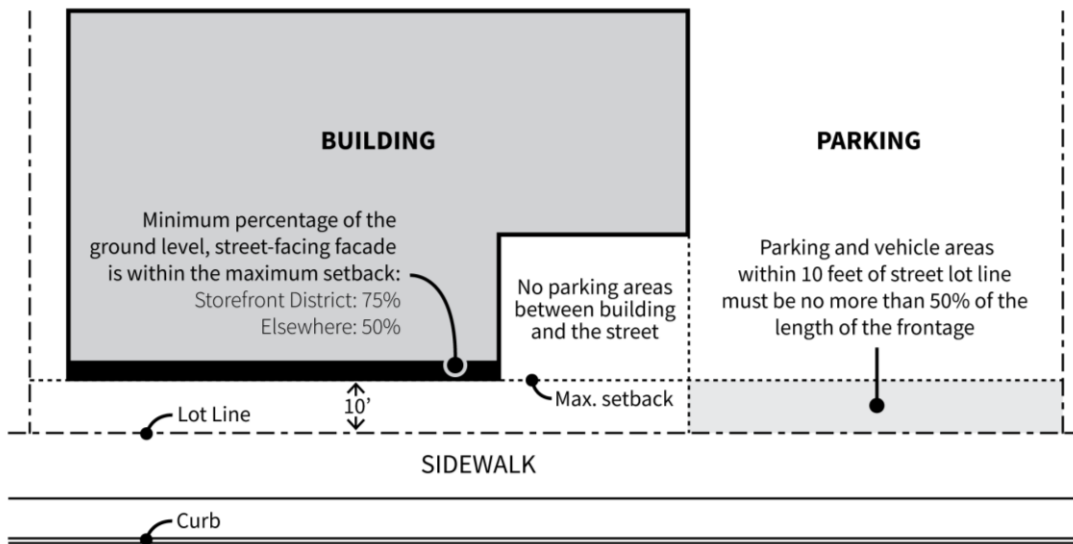


3. Building Orientation

A critical element of pedestrian-oriented design is that buildings front the street and provide convenient, visible access for pedestrians from the public sidewalk. If buildings are set back behind parking lots or orient their main entrance to the parking lot, and not to the sidewalk, then it is less safe and comfortable for pedestrians to access the building.

Each City has existing standards which attempt to address this issue, but they are inconsistent in their approach and may result in inconsistent outcomes across Halsey. A new building orientation standard is proposed to replace each City’s existing standards. The standard requires the most of the building facade to be placed within 10 feet of the street, limits parking lots that front the street, and requires main entrances to be close to the street and architecturally emphasized for visibility and convenience. See Figure 11.

Figure 11. Building Orientation Standard



4. Off-Street Parking

The economic analysis of the existing code standards indicated that minimum off-street parking standards can be a significant barrier to some forms of development, particularly vertical mixed use development. At the same time, many residents along with members of HC3, Planning Commission and City Council, indicated that sufficient parking was needed for the corridor, particularly because Halsey Street lacks on-street parking in most areas. Developers of new residential properties also noted that most new tenants did own cars and there was demand for dedicated off-street parking, however, some developers noted that they may have provided less parking than required by the code and still satisfied this market demand.

To provide more flexibility for developers that see a market for properties with less parking, the amendments proposed to provide “parking credits” for projects that provide certain features or amenities. The features/amenities are similar to those that can be provided to be granted a height bonus: ground floor commercial space, small scale commercial space, affordable housing, additional design elements, and transit amenities. Each credit would allow a 10-20% reduction in off-street parking requirements. The total amount of the credit would be limited so that off-street parking requirements do not fall below 0.75-1 space per residential unit and 2 spaces per 1,000 square feet of nonresidential floor area. The proposed parking standards went through a number of iterations in response to feedback from community stakeholders and staff, including adding a minimum parking requirement in Fairview, where no parking is currently required.

5. Design Standards

An important goal of the Main Streets on Halsey project is to promote high quality, pedestrian-oriented design which helps to actualize the vision of a vibrant Main Street that connects all three cities. To that end, a consistent set of design standards is proposed to be implemented across the four zone districts. The standards have two primary objectives:

- Facilitate a built environment that is a comfortable, safe, and attractive space for people to gather and spend time on Halsey Street;
- Establish consistent patterns in the design of buildings and site improvements across to promote a coherent and distinct sense of place for Halsey Street as a whole;

The design standards are structured to achieve these goals, while providing flexibility for a wide range of architectural styles and for each City to customize the desired look and feel of development in their locality. To achieve this balance, the design standards are generally organized in three parts, as summarized below.

- 1. Base Requirements.** These standards are relatively consistent across each City. They generally focus on the critical, basic elements of ensuring the ground floor of the building contributes to a pedestrian-friendly street environment and high quality public realm. The standards address ground floor height, ground floor facade elements, plazas, corner features, and exterior lighting. See Figure 12Figure 13

- 2. Menu of Options for Additional Requirements.** These standards provide a menu of options for additional elements that further contribute to a pedestrian-friendly street environment and high quality public realm. Each element is assigned a point value and each proposed development is required to earn a minimum number of points. These standards include a wide range of optional elements that primarily focus on the ground floor of the building and site design.
- 3. Local Design Standards.** Each City has an existing set of design standards or guidelines. If any of these existing standards or guidelines is addressed by the new Main Streets on Halsey set of design standards, then the standard is eliminated and replaced by that standard. The remaining, local standards and guidelines generally focus on requiring elements related to a particularly architectural style, materials or colors, upper floor windows, roof elements, or other details which are important to local identity but not addressed by the Main Streets on Halsey standards.

Figure 12. Ground Floor Design Standards, Nonresidential Uses

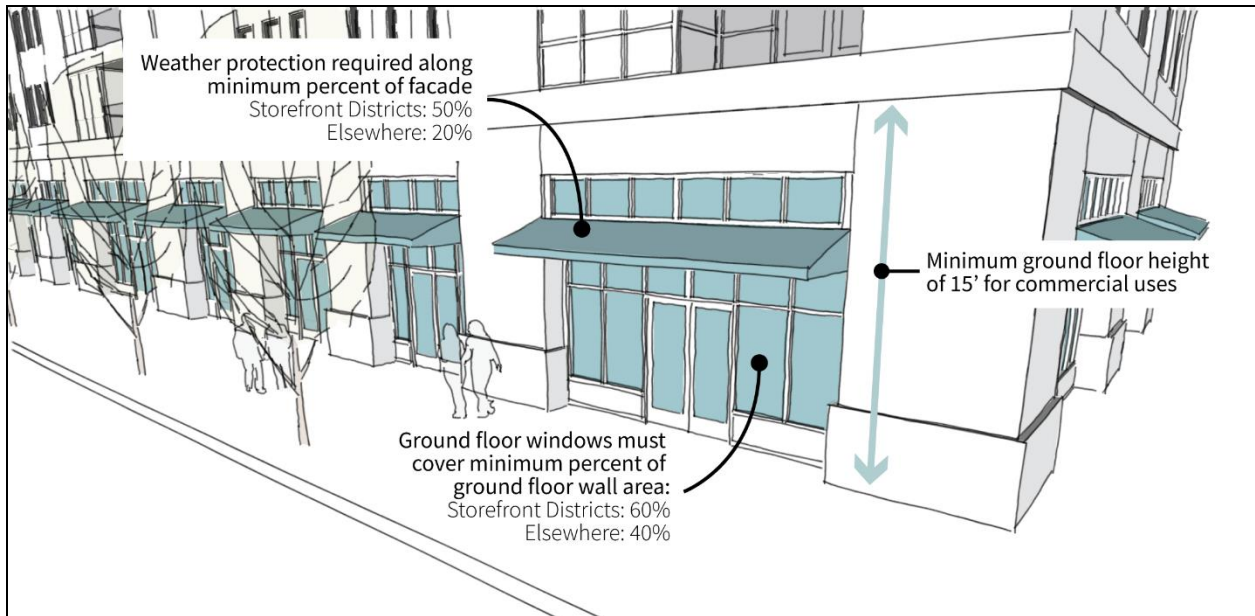


Figure 13. Corner Features Standard

