



Baltimore
Development Corporation

Property Improvement Inspiration

Baltimore Development Corporation

01.2024 V.1

Design Inspiration

- The following pages shall serve as the inspiration in developing your storefront, the signage program, and acceptable interior and exterior improvements for your storefront.
- Landlords/Tenants shall retain a Licensed General Contractor for the completion of the storefront.
- The Landlord and Tenant are responsible for any needed agreement with each other around the scope of work, ensuring all Baltimore city codes are met, and the scope of work is permitted.



Façade Elements

Materials + Finishes

- The materials selected for the storefront and signage shall be of the highest quality and assembled in a craftsman like manner.
- Think about how different materials can come together to create something beautiful. Be aware even the best materials without proper installation can look shoddy. Below are the suggest qualities for storefront materials:

MATERIAL & FINISH REQUIREMENTS

- DURABLE - Materials shall stand up to day-to-day abuse, especially at the pedestrian level, or where customers will come in direct contact with the storefront.
- FINISHED - All exposed faces of the materials shall be finished.
- SEAMLESS - Material to material connections shall be seamless, aligned and without apparent gaps unless a part of an intended design.
- MAINTAINABLE - Materials that are susceptible to wear shall be easy to replace or repair

PAINT

- Choose commercial-grade paints that provide the long-lasting protection you need. Commercial brands recommended: Sherwin Williams, Benjamin Moore, Matthews Paint, etc.
- For exterior colors, you will also want to take into consideration any neighboring buildings and how your storefront will look next to them.



Façade Elements

Materials + Finishes

FIBER CEMENT SYSTEMS

- A fiber cement cladding system allows for adequate ventilation and waterproofing in commercial buildings. Products like Nichiha, James Hardie, Allura, and Equitone, provide an array of patterns, textures, finishes and colors, designs are only limited by your imagination.
- By itself, fiber cement is not well-equipped to provide moisture, thermal or acoustic benefits but most manufactures provide systems to add in the these required layers. Have your contractor Review your products specs to secure the best system.
- Finishes: Fiber cement finishes range from smooth to highly textured, as well as those that imitate wood, stone and brick.

EXTERIOR INSULATION FINISHING SYSTEMS (EIFS)

- EIFS is a general class of non-load bearing building cladding systems that provides exterior walls with an insulated, water-resistant, finished surface in an integrated composite material system.

METAL

- Stretch your imagination to create unique sculptural facades using panels versatile metal cladding systems that come in various sizes, depths, profiles, and colors.



Façade Elements

Materials + Finishes

STONE + CONCRETE

- NATURAL STONE - Granite, marble, limestone, slate and other natural stone may be used in storefront applications
- Natural stone should be protected against staining and discoloration by means of sealers appropriate to the material.
- CAST STONE, GFRC AND PRECAST CONCRETE - Cast stone, Gypsum Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC) and precast concrete may be used to add shapes and unique detail to the storefront
- design.
- Cast Stone: could be in the manufacturer's special or custom shapes.
- GFRC or a similar product can be painted, or integrally colored, and should receive an appropriate protective sealant.

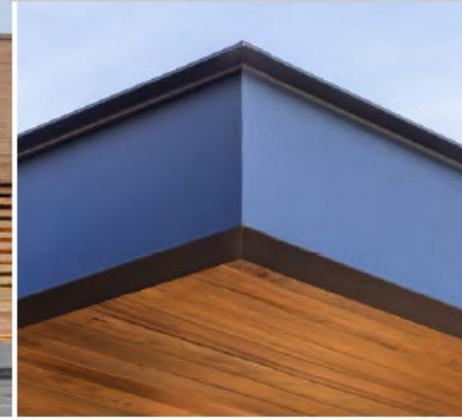


Façade Elements

Materials + Finishes

WOOD

- Painted or stained wood may be used in many design applications, such as window frames, decorative trim or molding, and for solid areas, such as decorative bulkheads. In some cases, it may be used for larger architectural elements.
- Think creatively with your Wood paneling
- Wood used in the construction of the storefront shall be kiln-dried, mill-quality hardwood intended for exterior use.
- Painted wood shall enamel finish and be sealed for weather protection.
- Wood without a paint finish should receive a clear, preservative sealant. **But consider all wood weather no matter what so plan your design accordingly.**
- Wood panel systems can be a great alternative to natural wood. Each system comes with pros and cons, when using these systems take those factors into account
- Some suggested faux wood systems:
 - Longboard Arch. Products (metal panel)
 - Knotwood Systems (metal panel)
 - Woodtone Systems (fiber cement)
 - Zuri Decking Systems (PVC)
 - Parklex Prodema (Wood Veneer)
 - Resawn Timber Co. (Wood Veneer)



Façade Elements

Materials + Finishes

PLASTER

- Plaster was designed to last for centuries, which makes it a very durable material. Plaster finish and external render are essential elements in exterior wall construction that can help maximize the durability of a building. Not only do they protect the walls from weather and water damage, but they also provide additional insulation.
- Plaster and cement plaster (stucco) finishes may be considered for storefront applications, provided the finish texture is a light dash, sand or smooth finish.
- Polished plaster, is a style of plastering that is more opulent than traditional plaster or paint. The plaster dries hard, and gives the appearance of real stone without the cost.
- Polished plaster is a versatile material that can be used in many ways and can provide unique rounded forms or clean monochromatic looks.
- Plaster is a pliable material that can be molded into many shapes and designs, including decorative effects such as stenciling and banding, making these finishes an optimal choice for storefronts.

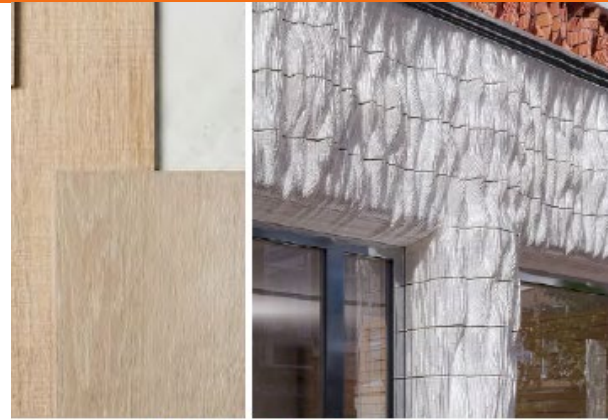


Façade Elements

Materials + Finishes

TILE

- Tile may be used as an accent to the storefront design, it has low water absorption, it is easy to clean, and is resistant to chemicals or staining.
- It may be used to create a pattern or intricate mosaic field to add a sculptural quality, or as a band of detail similar to those found on some Terra-cotta buildings.
- Porcelain, ceramic or glass tiles in glazed or natural finishes could be used as accents.
- Small and intricate mosaic tile patterns could be utilized for detail and accent.
- All tiles should be carefully detailed at outside corners with bullnose edges or special corner trims.
- If larger field of tile is preferred ceramic or porcelain tiles come in all shapes and sizes. These tiles can come in many different color, textures and finishes. **They often are used to simulated**
- **stone and wood as well.**



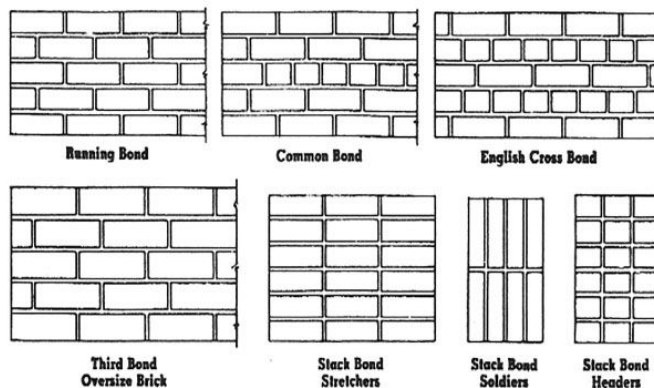
Façade Elements

Materials + Finishes

BRICK

While much of Baltimore City's building stock is created with Brick you may consider modify your brick storefronts with paint, stain, or completely replacing the façade materials. Think creatively with your brick storefronts. Consider glazed brick, varied colorization, mortar sizes and colors, and variation of stacking styles.

- Varied stacking / mortar styles include:
 - Running Bond
 - Common Bond
 - English Bond
 - Flemish Bond
 - Dutch Bond
 - Stack Bond
 - Stack Bond Soldiers
 - Garden Wall Bond
 - Stretcher Bond
 - Header Stretcher Bond
 - American Bond
 - Cross Bond
 - Stepped Bond
 - Soldier Course
 - Herringbone
 - Protruding Brickwork
 - Corbeling



Façade Elements

Pop-outs + Recesses

Some storefronts may include recessed or projection areas beyond the face of the base building.

- In some specific conditions, owners may propose a projection. This will only be considered if permitted and all right of way easements are secured.
- Recessed entries may be used as part of the storefront design or, in some cases where a shallow sidewalk is present.
- Recessed entry floors shall match existing sidewalk materials or be of a unique, high quality material that is consistent with the Tenant's design.



Façade Elements

Entries + Doors

Creative uses of entry doors could be explored as a connection to the street and a key expression of the Tenant's individual identity. The door type and hardware style could also tie with the Tenant identity.

- Doors should swing out (unless otherwise dictated by local codes) within the Tenant's designated lease area. However, door swings should never impede the flow of pedestrian traffic. In the case of recessed entries, Tenants may design exterior floors to coordinate with store design or shall match existing/adjacent streetscape material.
- Consider doors that have the ability to be held open without the use of a door stop.
- Multiple doors or operable storefronts that can remain open (as allowed by local code) during shop hours are encouraged.
- **Roll-down security doors and security gates are NOT PERMITTED.**



Façade Elements

Windows + Glazing

The use of glazing in retail buildings and storefronts creates an important connection between the interior and exterior environments and allows for effective window shopping and merchandising opportunities. Things to consider about glazing are as follows:

- **Mullion Hierarchy** - A system of major and minor components shall create a glazing pattern. Major mullions should be associated with architectural features such as entries and doors, structural column covers at the transition to an attached buildings or storefronts
- **Glazing Properties** - Glazing shall be generally clear to allow an unobstructed view into the store. Opaque glass used as part of the storefront design would be considered an “infill panel”.
- **Infill Panels** - On a case-by-case-basis, infill panels of contrasting or matching materials may be used as part of the storefront design.
- **Operable Walls / Glazing** - Operable storefront at restaurants are encouraged. Typically for food & beverage lessees, operable walls could be installed such as Nana Wall, Armstrong, Pella, and others offer moving glass wall systems.



Façade Elements

Canopies + Awnings

- Canopies and Awnings emphasize entrances and should be a part of a Tenant's image. They add interest and texture to building facades and streetscapes, while simultaneously providing shade to patrons and protecting storefront displays from sun exposure.
- Flat canopies or awnings should control drainage to avoid icing and slip conditions at doors and along primary travel pathways.
- Awnings must be made of high-quality, durable materials. Painted surfaces should be factory finished.
- If canopies wrap a building opening to the ground they must not impede the right-of-way.
- Minimum height from sidewalk to bottom of canopies or awnings should be no lower than 7'- 6" generally.
- However, other heights may be required in certain locations.



Façade Elements

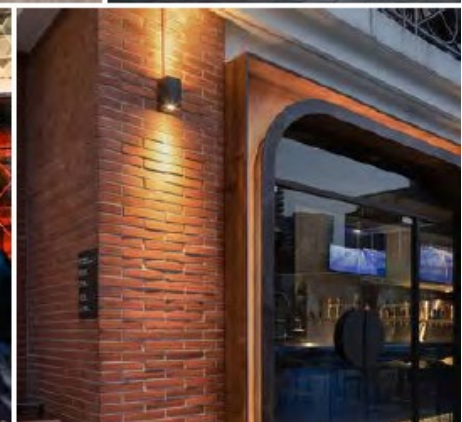
Lighting

The quality of light is important to the atmosphere and safety of the streets. Night lighting will extend street life after retail business hours, activate the neighborhood with entertainment and dining and as a result will increase the perceived pedestrian experience for a safe environment.

- While the overall impact of lighting is an essential element of identity and attraction for retailers, we must also be conscientious light trespass in and around residential and other light sensitive environments as well as energy code compliance.

LIGHTING TEMPERATURES

- Warm White Light ranges from 2700K to 3500K. This produces a calming and relaxing light that is great for restaurants.
- Natural White Light is in the 3500K to 4500K range. Cool and clean, this LED color most closely mimics sunlight, which makes it good for use in almost any location indoor or outdoor.
- Daylight White Light ranges from 4500K-6000K. This is a crisp and clear white light that is great for security lights, interiors of offices or retail locations.



Façade Elements

Display Zone

This zone is to be used for the most attractive display of merchandise, thereby promoting a pedestrian friendly, window-shopping atmosphere. The control zone includes all signs, display fixtures, merchandise, lighting, materials, finishes, and colors within the zone. While the overall impact of lighting is an essential element of identity and attraction for retailers, we must also be conscientious light trespass in and around residential and other light sensitive environments as well as energy code compliance.

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Façade Elements

Cafe Zones

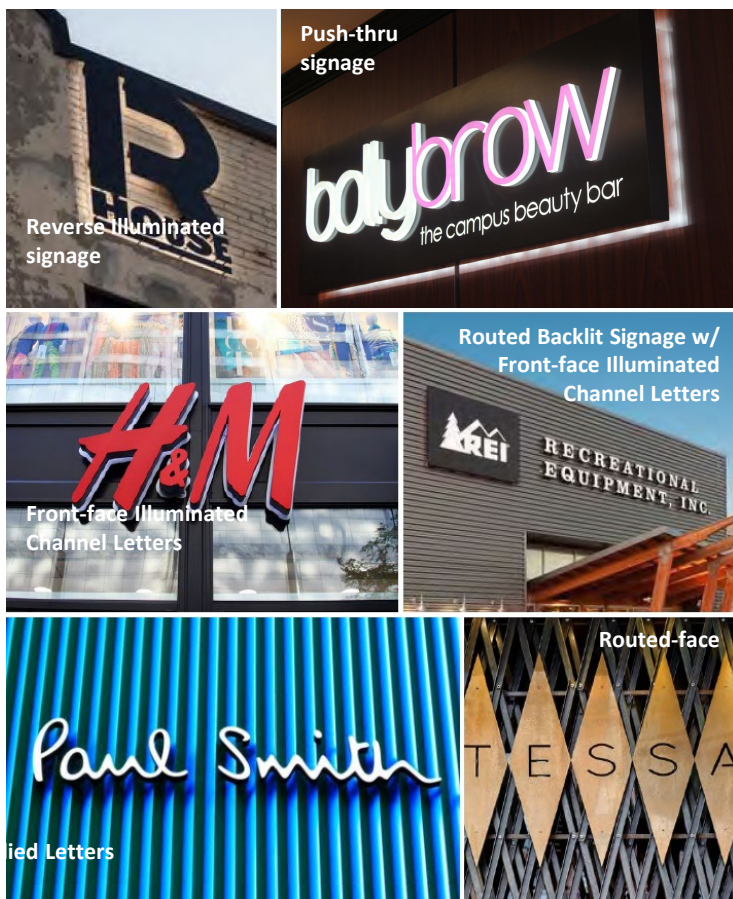
Cafe zones are any group of tables, chairs or other seating fixtures and all related appurtenances maintained within the public sidewalk and intended for the purpose of consumption of food or beverage by patrons. Barriers should also be removable unless otherwise approved by Landlord and permitted by Baltimore City.

TYPES OF BARRIERS

- Various styles of barriers are acceptable for sidewalk cafés. Generally barriers should be 36 inches in height, and must be freestanding and stable.
Sectional Fencing: Rigid fence segments may be placed end-to-end to create the appearance of a single fence. Footing shall be flat. Sectional fencing shall be composed of metal or wood and painted or finished in the owner's choice of color, subject to the approval of the Landlord. Sectional fencing may be composed of aircraft cable, fabric, steel or iron elements.
- **Planters:** Outdoor planters may be used as a barrier component and should be placed at the corners and entry of the cafe zones.
- **Shade Coverings:** Permanent or temporary shade coverings will be granted on a case-by case basis, with written Landlord approval.

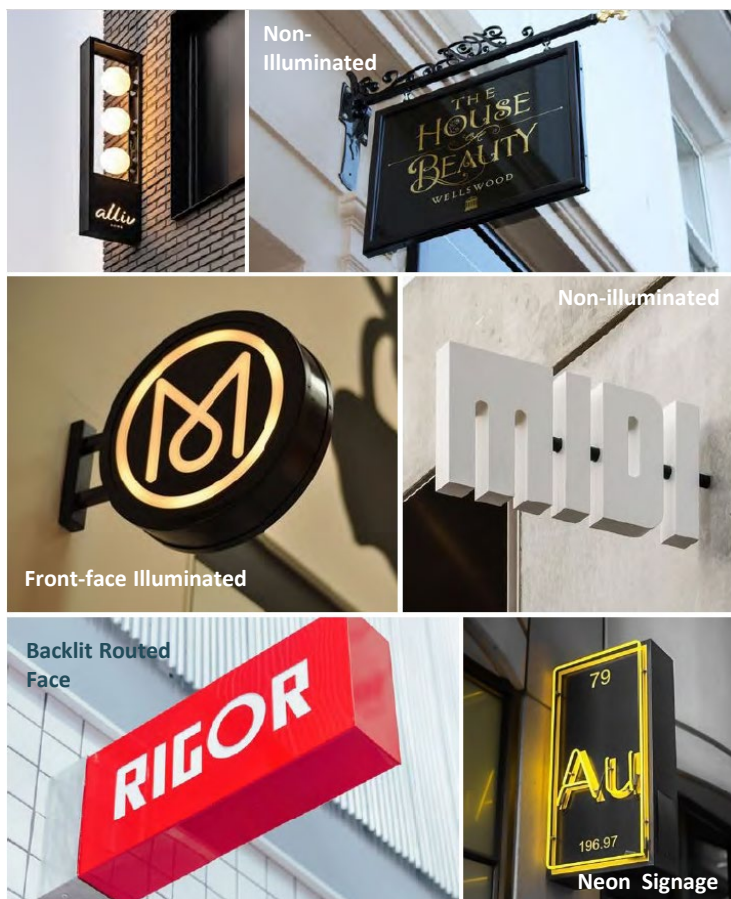


Wall Signs



- Wall signage typically consist of individual letters or a panel with graphics and letters, or vinyl graphics. These signs will typically be a primary means of identification for businesses.
- Letter types may include:
 - Front-face Illuminated channel letters
 - Reverse Illuminated channel letters
 - Open Channel Letters
 - Edge-Lit Channel Letters
 - Push-thru signage
 - Applied Letters
- Signs may be externally or internally illuminated.
- **Back-lighted sign cabinets are NOT permitted.** If creating a cabinet letters must be push-thru or mounted channel letters.
- They should be easily read, of appropriate size and typeface, and include the business's name and/or logo. They should be made of high-quality materials that can withstand all weather conditions.
- **All diagrams or photos are for example only, NOT meant to represent actual storefronts, nor do they show an anticipated amount of signage.**
- **All signage is subject to [Baltimore City Zoning Code – Title 17. Signs](#)**

Projecting/Blade Signs



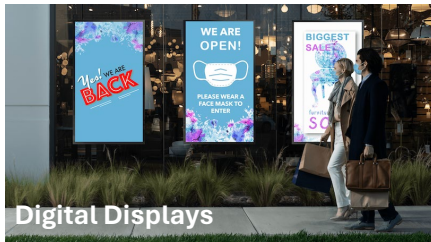
- Projecting signs are affixed perpendicularly to the storefront and are highly visible to pedestrians. These signs are typically a secondary form of identification for a business, but in some cases they may be the primary identity sign.
- Illumination types may include:
 - Front-face Illuminated
 - Backlit
 - Edge-Lit
 - Push-thru signage
- Signs may be externally or internally illuminated.
- **Back-lighted sign cabinets are NOT permitted.** If creating a cabinet letters must be push-thru or mounted channel letters.
- These signs could be a primary means of identification for businesses.
- They should be easily read, of appropriate size and typeface, and include the business's name and/or logo. They should be made of high-quality materials that can withstand all weather conditions.
- **All diagrams or photos are for example only, NOT meant to represent actual storefronts, nor do they show an anticipated amount of signage.**
- **All signage is subject to [Baltimore City Zoning Code – Title 17. Signs](#)**

Items BDC's grant will not apply towards

Ineligible Improvements



Sign Cabinets with majority white background/field



Digital Displays



Digital Displays

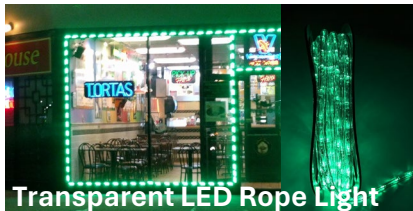


Vacuum Formed Sign

- BDC aims to promote the creation of attractive, high-quality signs that maximize visual impact and contribute positively to the streetscape and overall business environment.
- While these types of signs or construction methods are allowed by Baltimore City Code, BDC's grant funds are **not permitted** to be used for the design or construction of the following signs.
 - Vacuum Formed Signs
 - Sign Cabinets with acrylic face and vinyl Copy with a majority white background/field
 - Digital Display Signs
 - Flashing, Blinking, Strobging Signs
 - Transparent LED Rope Light or Window-mounted LED lights
 - Signs, fabricated from non-exterior grade material such as Styrofoam, cardboard, or paper.
 - Banners or Vinyl Signs (except for storefront window graphic vinyl)

Items BDC's grant will not apply towards

Ineligible Improvements



- BDC aims to promote the creation of attractive, high-quality storefronts that maximize visual impact and contribute positively to the streetscape and overall business environment.
- While these items or construction methods are allowed by Baltimore City Code, BDC's grant funds are **not permitted** to be used for the design or construction of the following items.
 - Exterior Roll-Down Security Doors (Must be see-through)
 - Transparent LED Rope Light or Window-mounted LED lights
 - Non-ornamental Flood Lighting
 - Barbed Wire
- Some projects include expenses that BDC does not consider eligible expenses for the purposes of a Façade Improvement Grant. However, an applicant may proceed with the following improvements at their own cost without jeopardizing the Façade Improvement Grant for other eligible items:
 - Deferred maintenance
 - Roof work
 - Structural repairs
 - Landscaping materials (planters, plants, mulch, etc., only a percentage eligible for BDC's "Outdoor Spaces" grant)
 - Security systems and cameras
 - Wheelchair ramps or similar improvements required by law
 - Outdoor seating areas (May only be eligible for BDC's "Outdoor Spaces" grant)
 - Improvements not permanently affixed to the building
 - Rear or service alley-facing building work