

Discussion: Neon South of Tracks? How far South?

In making connections with other Route 66 Community Sara and I met (zoom) with a group from Tulsa Oklahoma's regarding our Façade and Sign Grant Program. They informed us about their neon sign program and were interested in Flagstaff's façade program and how they could incorporate aspects for signs and facades. Their neon sign program was predominantly funding new neon signs. We were shown several examples of new signs and saw their approval of a new application. The sign designs were of a high quality, intended to add to the vitality of their community. It is noteworthy that Tulsa also has two routing of Route 66 through their community as does Flagstaff.

The discussion suggested some applicability to Flagstaff regarding neon signage as well as facades along current Route 66 and the older Historic Route 66 segment along Phoenix Ave and Mike's Pike. It is clear that restoration of historic Route 66 signs north of the tracks is highly encouraged but that does leave some questions of applicability for new neon signage. Along the older south route of 66 there has not been much consideration of identifying it and linking it with the route north of the tracks. Consultants for the Downtown are looking at unifying the north CBD with the South CBD. Are the 2 routes of 66 a potential for this? Heritage considerations note that there are various designated Historic Districts and differing applicable sign regulations to consider. When considering design review of signs, discretion is handed to the Heritage Preservation Commission & HPO on what is compatible. This brings us to some potential questions. The questions are not to be resolved at this time but are intended to focus on long-range planning and assist the HPO focus when new projects come up:

- Should neon be encouraged further south on San Francisco (2 & ½ blocks south) and Beaver (1 & 1/2blocks).
- Is preservation of character (i.e Tourist home) more important than sign restoration with neon?
- What efforts should be focused on the motel tower signs?
- Is neon appropriate on early century buildings not of the mid-century Route 66 era (both north & south of the tracks).
- With façade and sign grants along Route 66 (both north & south of the tracks) is heritage preservation encouraging restoring to the earliest era possible or focusing on Route 66 mid-century?

3. Neon Sign Standards.

- a. Exposed neon sign lighting is only permitted in nonresidential zones shall be treated as Class 3 (decorative) lighting. Allowed neon signs shall not be included within the total outdoor light output limits of Section [10-50.70.050\(C\)](#).

Figure 10-50.100.050J



Neon Sign

- b. Neon lighting extending beyond the area considered to be the sign area (as defined in this division) shall comply with all provisions of Division [10-50.70](#), Outdoor Lighting Standards.

B. Downtown Historic District.

1. **Purpose.** This section establishes additional sign regulations for the Downtown Historic District. Refer to Division [10-30.30](#), Heritage Preservation.

2. **Applicability.**

- a. The Downtown Historic District applies to all properties located within the T6 transect zone (refer to Section [10-40.40.100](#), T6 Downtown (T6) Standards) and the area bounded by the east side of Humphreys Street to the west side of Verde Street, and by the north side of Route 66 to the south side of Cherry Avenue, including portions of Flagstaff Townsite and Railroad Addition Subdivisions. The Downtown Historic District is mapped on Map 10-90.30.030 (Downtown Historic District Overlay Zone Map), in Division [10-90.30](#) (Overlay Maps).

- b. The standards provided in this section for the Downtown Historic District shall be applied in addition to the standards and requirements otherwise established in this division.

3. **Permits.** All applications for sign permits for signs to be located in the Downtown Historic District shall follow the sign permitting requirements and procedures established in Section [10-20.40.120](#), Sign Permit – Permanent Signs, except that the Heritage Preservation Commission or Heritage Preservation Officer shall also review the sign permit application following the procedures established in Division [10-30.30](#), Heritage Preservation.

E. Individual Signs of Historic or Cultural Significance.

1. Signs which may be unusual, significant, or meaningful to the City streetscape and the City's history may be worthy of special recognition and may be designated as a landmark property in accordance with the provisions of this division if they meet the following criteria:

- a. The sign has been in continuous existence at its present location for not less than 50 years;
- b. The sign is of exemplary technology, craftsmanship or design for the period in which it was constructed; uses historic sign materials or means of illumination; and/or is unique in that it demonstrates extraordinary aesthetic quality, creativity, or innovation;
- c. The sign is structurally safe or is capable of being made so without substantially altering its historical character or significance;
- d. If the sign has been altered, it must be restorable to its historic function and appearance; and
- e. The sign complies with movement, bracing, and illumination requirements contained in Section [10-50.100.050\(D\)](#), Structure and Installation.

2. **Effect of Designation.** When a sign is found to be significant, designated as a landmark property (Section [10-30.30.040\(C\)](#)), and restored to its historic function and appearance, the sign shall not be subject to the provisions of Division [10-50.100](#), Sign Standards.

(Ord. 2016-07, Amended, 2/16/2016 (Res. 2016-02))