

6.4.8 Signage



Appropriate new signage on historic commercial structures.



Neon signage is appropriate to some historic structures.

PURPOSE AND INTENT

Signage can significantly impact the character of an historic commercial building. Appropriate signage can accent the design of the commercial building, punctuating its architectural features and overall design. Inappropriate signage can obscure architectural features and mask historic character. Some key elements of the design of signage for historic commercial structures include dimensions, the materials used in construction, the placement of the signage on the facade, the method of attachment of the signage, how the signage is illuminated, and the overall amount of signage to be placed on the facade.

GUIDELINES

- .1 Signage on historic structures should conform to all city signage regulations.
- .2 Signage along the front surfaces of awnings is generally appropriate.
- .3 Internally illuminated signage that is visible from the street is generally inappropriate.
- .4 Signage painted on windows is generally appropriate, if it does not significantly reduce (by more than 20%) the amount of transparent window surface in a storefront window.
- .5 Plastic banner signs are inappropriate.
- .6 Signage should be attached in a manner that does not damage historic building materials or features.
- .7 Signage should not obscure significant architectural features.
- .8 Significant historic signage should be maintained in place whenever possible.

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Notes on text:

Review these guidelines as you think about those appropriate for your HPOZ area. You may delete those that do not apply or rephrase/reverse them to meet your needs. Additional guidelines may be developed and listed here as well. As you think about appropriate guidelines, it may be helpful to make a separate list of areas of concern regarding work in this section, and then draft a guideline for each item. After doing so, compare your list with those to the left and remove/rephrase/delete/add as appropriate.

Clear and specific guidelines will help convey the expectations for specific types of projects within the HPOZ and provide certainty and predictability to the process for both the applicant and project reviewer.

When customizing guidelines in this section, please remember that a range of guidelines are listed on these pages to foster discussion and debate regarding the key points. A full assortment of topics and issues are listed, you may wish to cross many out, and add many more. You will find that some may not apply in your HPOZ, and others may be contradictory to those that do. Guidelines that do not apply may be deleted, reversed, or rephrased. General guidelines may be developed in more detail to suit the character of your HPOZ. You may find it helpful to make a list of topics you feel are important, and then draft guidelines to address each one.

Make use of a hierarchy of verbs and phrases to convey the general importance of each particular guideline. The use of the words 'are encouraged', 'are strongly discouraged', 'may', 'should', 'shall', etc. indicate how strongly the HPOZ board will, and the applicant should, adhere to a particular guideline. Each guideline listed on the left is only a draft concept, the verbs and phrases can be modified to meet local expectations.

Additional graphics:



6.4.8 Signage



Historic signage was located primarily in the band above the storefront windows.



Externally illuminated signage is appropriate in historic commercial areas.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

EXEMPTIONS

.1

WORK REVIEWED BY PLANNING STAFF

- .1 The review of ordinary maintenance and repair applications as defined in Section 12.20.3.G for work solely within this section shall be delegated to the Director of Planning.

GENERAL BACKGROUND AND ADVICE TO THE APPLICANT

Most historic commercial structures incorporate locations of signage into their architectural design. For instance, buildings with storefronts were traditionally designed with a blank band above the storefront windows that was intended for signage. In other styles of architecture, signage may have been intended to go above the main entry, be painted on the windows, attached via a hanging projecting sign, or located on window awnings. Look for places on the building facade that do not have architectural ornament, or ask your HPOZ board for a consultation to determine where signage should be located.

In determining signage size, it is important to design the signage in such a way that the important architectural features of the structure are not obscured. Signs that are too large, or many signs that, when taken together, cover a large portion of the facade or storefront glazing are inappropriate. Signage materials and illumination should also be taken into account. Internally illuminated "can lights" or other similar signs are almost universally inappropriate to historic commercial structures. Sensitive designed neon signage may be appropriate to some architectural styles.

Please refer to the Appendix for additional assistance and resources.

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Notes on text:

List specific types of sign projects, if any, that would benefit from being exempt from the HPOZ review process. This section will be linked to the Exemption section in Chapter III, Function of the Plan.

Routine, recurring, and/or simple cases that are easily and effectively governed by the guidelines may be delegated to staff for review and processing. This may create more time for the board to focus on significant projects and speed the review of certain types of projects. Boards may also wish to continue to review all applications. This section will be linked to the Delegation section in Chapter III - Function of the Plan.

Finish with any background information or advice that the reader might find useful, including information on particular types of signage that would be appropriate in your HPOZ. A reference section at the end of this document will identify other places to find preservation information.

You may wish to include general advice, recurring problems and locally unique solutions, and if desired, even explain the rationale behind a particularly controversial or complicated local preservation issue specific to your community.

There will be an opportunity to list preservation resources, contacts, and directories in the appendix. In this way, the appendix may be updated as appropriate without requiring resubmission of the entire document to the City Planning Commission for approval.

Additional graphics:



While these historic signs are different in design, they are all located on a signage band above the storefronts.