

Sign Design Guidelines Analysis

Current Standard Guidelines	Nore' Winter's Draft	Staff Suggestions
SG1 Design signs to complement their surroundings. Signs should be integrated into the architectural design of the building and should not dominate the façade or interfere with adjacent buildings. Installation must comply with all other applicable city sign regulations.	SG.5 Install a sign in a manner that does not damage or obscure architectural features of the historic building. • Minimize the number of sign anchor points. • Use an existing sign bracket if possible. • Design a sign to integrate with the architectural features of the historic building. • Do not penetrate brick when attaching a sign to a masonry building.	
SG2 Keep sign designs simple and easy to read. Use a limited number of lettering styles and colors, which reflect the character or the business and/or the building.	SG.7 Use a simple, context-specific design. • Use styles and colors that reflect the character of the business and/or the building. • When designing a window sign, use a style and color that contrasts with the interior space and does not obscure the display area. • Limit the amount of lettering styles and colors. • Design lettering on flush-mounted signs to be between 8" and 18" high and to occupy no more than about 65% of the sign board.	
SG3 Design storefront-level signs that are primarily oriented to pedestrians and scaled appropriately.	SG.3 Limit the total area of a sign. • Design a storefront-level sign that is oriented to pedestrians and that is scaled appropriately to pedestrians. • Construct a flush-mounted sign to be under 2.5' in height. • Design a projecting sign to project no more than 5' or half the width of the sidewalk, whichever is less.	

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SG4 Consider the following issues when installing a sign; its size, shape, and materials; where it will be positioned on the building; if and how it will be illuminated; and what typeface will be used.	SG.6 Place a sign to be compatible with those in the preservation district. • Place attached wall signs over the unadorned frieze of a cornice or along the top of the storefront below the sill of the second-story windows. • For historic residential buildings, attach a sign near a doorway or on a porch. • Consult the Department of Public Works to determine whether a portable sign will be approved. • Do not install a free-standing sign where an attached sign will accomplish the same goal. A free-standing sign should be low to the ground and appropriately landscaped. • Do not install a marquee on any building other than an operating theater or hotel or another use that traditionally used a marquee. • Do not install a roof-top sign or billboard.	
SG5 Place attached wall signs over the unadorned frieze of a cornice or along the top of the storefront below the sill of the second-story windows. For residences, attach signs near doorways or on porches, where such features exist.	**Incorporated in SG.6**	
SG6 Keep flush-mounted signs under 2.5 feet in height. They should be installed above the display windows and below the second-story window sills. Lettering should be between 8 and 18 inches high and occupy around 65 percent of the sign board.	**Incorporated in SG.3**	
SG7 Install window signs in such a way that lettering does not obscure the display area. The	**Incorporated in SG.7**	

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color of the letters should contrast with the interior space.		
SG8 Generally, signs should project no more than 5 feet or half the width of the sidewalk, whichever is less. Consult the Department of Public Works for any licensing requirements for projecting signs.	**Incorporated in SG.3**	
SG9 Generally, do not install more than two signs on any storefront.	SG.4 Limit the number of signs installed on each storefront. • Generally, do not install more than two signs on any storefront.	
SG10 Do not install roof-top signs.	**Incorporated in SG.6**	
SG11 Use appropriate materials for signage, including painted or carved wood signs, painted wall signs, signs applied to canvas awnings, smooth-surface sheet metal signs, and lettering applied to glass using gold leaf, paint, or etching.	SG.8 Use a sign material that is compatible with the character and materials of the building and district. • Use a permanent, durable material that reflects Louisville's context. • Consider using a painted or carved wood sign, painted wall sign, sign applied to canvas awning, smooth-surface sheet metal sign, or lettering applied to glass using gold leaf, paint, or etching.	
SG12 Do not install plastic, over-scaled, or back-lit or internally-lit fluorescent signs or awnings. Individual lettering and small logos may be illuminated within an opaque background. Signs that flash, move, or have inappropriately-scaled graphics should not be use. Reader boards are generally not appropriate.	SG.10 Where necessary, use a compatible, shielded light source to illuminate a sign. • Use concealed incandescent lighting where possible. • Use neon sparingly. • Do not use a reader board in most cases. Consult with the Louisville Metro Government Planning and Design Services Office with questions regarding reader boards. • Do not use an internally-lit, plastic box sign, bare spot light, or high wattage metal halide light.	

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	Do not use a sign that flashes, moves, or has inappropriately-scaled graphics.	
SG13 When using neon, use it sparingly and judiciously.	**Incorporated in SG.10**	
SG14 Do not install a free-standing sign where an attached sign will accomplish the same end. They should be low to the ground and appropriately landscaped.	**Incorporated in SG.6**	
SG15 Do not install billboards within a historic district.	**Incorporated in SG.6**	
SG16 Use of portable signs may be approved with certain restrictions; however, such a sign is subject to a licensing agreement from the Department of Public Works	**Incorporated in SG.6**	
SG17 Do not install marquees on any building other than an operating theater or hotel.	**Incorporated in SG.6**	
SG18 Do not light signs in a harsh manner. Lighting should enable the sign to be easily read, but should not be overdone. Concealed incandescent lighting is recommended. Internally-lit, plastic box signs, bare spot lights, or high-wattage metal halide lights are inappropriate and should not be used.	**Incorporated in SG.10**	
SG19 Place signage in a location that benefits from existing interior lighting and street lighting.	SG.9 Place signage in a location that benefits from existing interior lighting and street lighting.	
Previously not Incorporated	SG.1 Consider history, context, and design when determining whether to retain a historic sign. Retaining a historic sign is especially important when the sign is: - Associated with a historic figure, event, or place. - Significant to the building or preservation district, or as evidence of the history of the product, business, or service advertised.	

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	• Characteristic of a specific historic period. • Integral to the building's design or physical fabric. • Attached in a way that removal could harm the integrity of a historic property's design or damage its materials. • An outstanding example of the sign maker's art because of its craftsmanship, use of materials, or design. • Recognized as a popular focal point in the community.	
Previously not Incorporated	SG.2 Maintain a historic wall sign whenever possible. • Leave a historic painted wall sign, or "ghost sign," exposed wherever possible. • Do not over-restore a historic wall sign to the point that it no longer provides evidence of a building's age and original function.	