

# Division 7. Sign Standards

## SECTION C-701. INTENT AND PURPOSE

The intent and purpose of this section is to establish specific standards for the Downtown District that implement Section 3-1801. General Principles, Section 3-1802. Purpose of the Sign Regulations as well as the following:

- A) Establish reasonable and improved sign standards for Downtown that encourages the use of a hierarchy of signs appropriately sized for a well-organized visual Downtown environment.
- B) Ensure that signs are complementary to the architectural design of Downtown.
- C) Ensure that signage is pedestrian oriented and appropriately scaled for the Downtown environment.
- D) Facilitate creative and innovative approaches to signs consistent with the intent and purpose of Section C-101 of the Downtown District.
- E) Encourage uniquely designed signs that exhibit a high degree of thoughtfulness, imagination and inventiveness.

## SECTION C-702. APPLICABILITY

No sign may be erected, or may thereafter be altered or otherwise modified, in the Downtown District except in accordance with the requirements of this section. Requirements not specifically addressed in Appendix C, Division 7 are subject to the signage requirements set forth in Article 3, Division 18 Signs and Article 4, Division 10 Sign Permit. If there are any conflicts between these regulations and those in Article 3, Division 18, these standards shall govern.

## SECTION C-703. GENERAL STANDARDS

- A) Exempt and prohibited sign provisions set forth in Sections 3-1803 and 3-1804 shall apply in the Downtown District.
- B) General provisions for signs set forth in Section 3-1805 shall apply unless otherwise superseded by regulations contained in this Appendix C, Division 7.

C) Temporary sign provisions set forth in Section 3-1806 shall apply in the Downtown District.

D) Properties in the Downtown District shall be eligible for the Comprehensive Sign Program as set forth in Section 3-1808.

## SECTION C-704. GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR SIGN PLANNING AND DESIGN STANDARDS

Vibrant, well designed signs promote business activity, provide visual interest and create an interesting environment that attracts people. To ensure signage has a positive impact consistent with the vision and guiding principles established in the Clearwater Downtown Redevelopment Plan, the following general principles and design standards shall apply in addition to those set forth in Section C-705. below.

### A) Hierarchy of Signs

Signs are the graphic representation of a business in the built environment, therefore, they should be designed in a concise manner to deliver essential information quickly, efficiently and at the point where it is needed. If more than one sign is erected on a single building/business façade a clear hierarchy should be used to ensure the important content is the most prominent. All signs shall be scaled in a clear hierarchy and shall address different viewer orientations and audiences. The most important information on a sign should be the most prominent and emphasized component of the sign. The more important the information, the higher its visibility should be with regard to sign size and placement. Layering information helps customers obtain the information they need while ensuring that every sign has an objective. Larger signs, which are intended to be viewed from farther distances should be strategically placed on the building façade over storefronts and entrances. Smaller signs can provide information at a smaller scale and be intended for view from shorter distances at the pedestrian level.



Figure 33. Hierarchy of Signs Example



Figure 34. Hierarchy of Signs Example



Figure 35. Hierarchy of Signs Example

## B) Location and Alignment

Signs shall comply with the following location and alignment standards in addition to any specific standards specified in Section C-705.D. Sign Types.

1. Signs shall be placed in a manner that is proportional to the space on which it is located. This includes building signs as well as freestanding signs.
2. Signs shall be positioned to emphasize or accent elements such as entrances or storefront openings.
3. Signs shall not obstruct important architectural features.
4. Signs shall not obstruct any window or door, except for window signs allowed pursuant to Section C-705.D.7.
5. Signs shall not extend above the roofline, parapet or above the eave line.
6. No portion of a sign shall extend beyond the ends of the wall to which it is attached, unless it is a projecting or shingle sign.
7. Signage for occupants located on the second floor and above shall be located on signage by the primary entrance to those floors, unless otherwise allowed in Section C-705.
8. Signage shall be integrated into signs bands if provided.

## C) Materials

1. Signs shall be made of permanent, durable materials such as sealed wood, metals, metal composites, acrylic, polycarbonate, flexible face, brick, stucco, stone and other high-quality materials as approved by the Community Development Coordinator.
2. Prohibited materials include plexiglass, plywood, and vinyl unless located on windows.
3. Signs shall not incorporate reflective materials.
4. Neon paint is prohibited.
5. No paper or poster signs unless it is an allowable temporary sign pursuant to Section 3-1806.

## D) Illumination

All illuminated signs shall comply with the following standards. Certain sign types may have additional limitations set forth in Section C-705.D. Sign Types.

1. External light sources intended to illuminate the sign face shall be fully shielded and placed close to, and directed upon, the sign face.
2. Light fixtures and mounting devices shall complement the color and design of the sign.
3. Exposed neon tube may be used.
4. Illumination shall not cast excessive lighting on upper-floor residences or on adjacent properties.
5. Ground mounted uplighting shall be permitted provided light does not spill off of the sign face.
6. Transformer boxes shall not be visible on any façade facing a street.

## SECTION C-705. ALLOWABLE SIGN AREA, NUMBER AND TYPES OF SIGNS

### A) Sign Area and Number of Signs

The total maximum sign area and number of allowable signs shall be as determined in Table 5 below. For each cell in the table, there is a maximum allowed sign area that may be utilized with any combination and any number of signs associated with that cell, unless otherwise noted. The measurements for linear feet shall be at grade.

### B) Calculating Allowable Sign Area

The following figures illustrate how to determine street frontage for the purposes of calculating sign area and how to calculate and apply allowable signage.

**Table 5. Allowable Signage**

| SIGN TYPE                                                                       | MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SIGNS (Per Building or Establishment with Exterior Entrance or Parcel, whichever is applicable) | TOTAL ALLOWABLE SIGN AREA (Per Building or Establishment with Exterior Entrance or Parcel, whichever is applicable)                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Building Signs</b>                                                           |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Wall Signs<br>Awning Signs<br>Canopy Signs<br>Projecting Signs<br>Shingle Signs | No more than 3 per facade along a street frontage.                                                                | 1 square foot of sign area per 1 linear foot of building facade facing a street frontage or 24 square feet, whichever is greater. The total square footage of any combination of buildings signs shall not exceed 100 square feet. |
| Under Canopy Signs                                                              | 1 per facade along a street frontage                                                                              | 3 square feet                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Rear Entry Building Sign                                                        | 1 per establishment with public rear entrance facing parking lot or Clearwater Harbor                             | 16 square feet                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                                 |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Window Signs                                                                    | N/A                                                                                                               | 10% of each first floor window and glass door opening*                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                 |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Skyline Signs                                                                   | 1 per building facade along a street frontage                                                                     | 1 square foot per 1 foot of building height                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|                                                                                 |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Freestanding Signs                                                              | 1 sign per parcel fronting a street frontage with a building setback of at least 20 feet                          | 1 square foot per 1 liner foot of building frontage or 24 square feet, whichever is greater, but no more than 64 square feet.                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                 |                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Sidewalk Signs                                                                  | 1 sign per retail/restaurant use                                                                                  | Consistent with Table 3-1806.1.a Criteria and Limitations for Sidewalk Signs                                                                                                                                                       |

\* Does not include temporary signs pursuant to 3-1806.

Figure 36. Building Frontage Determination

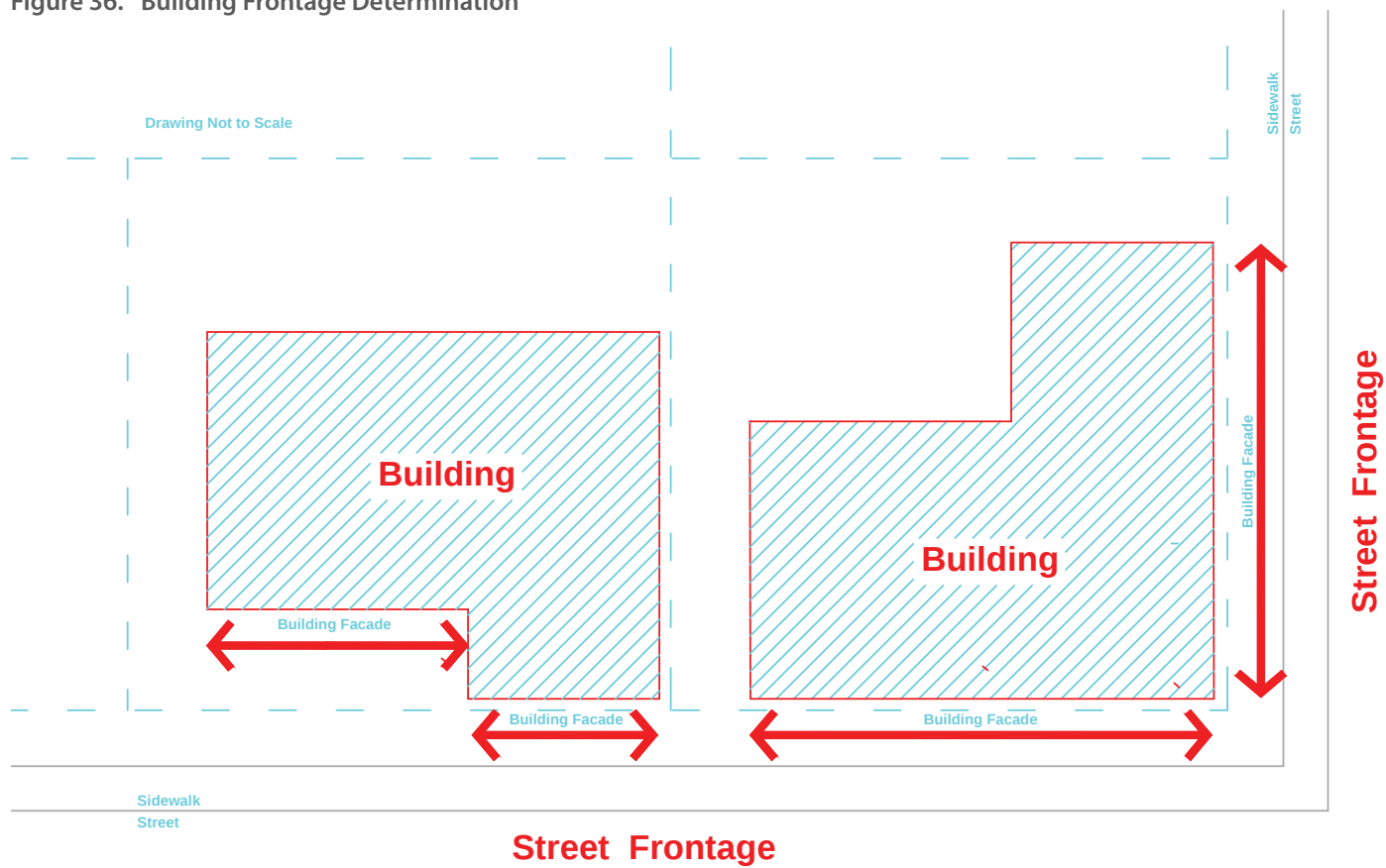
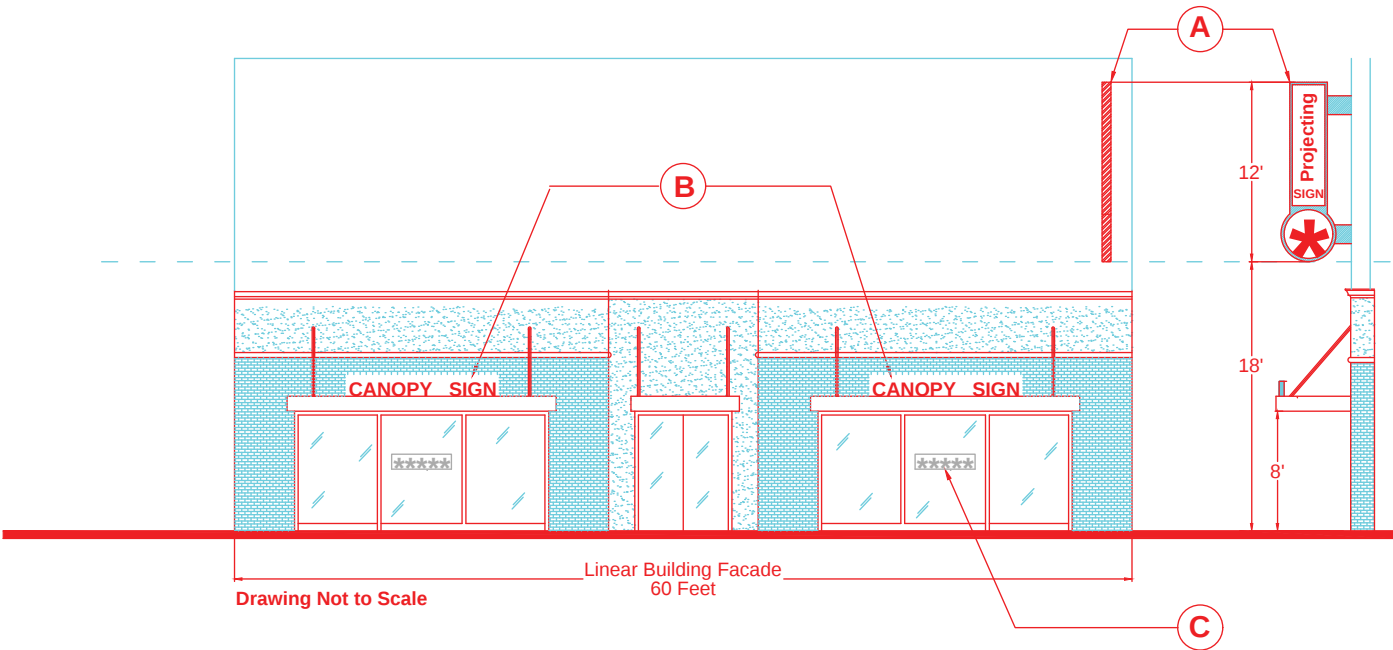
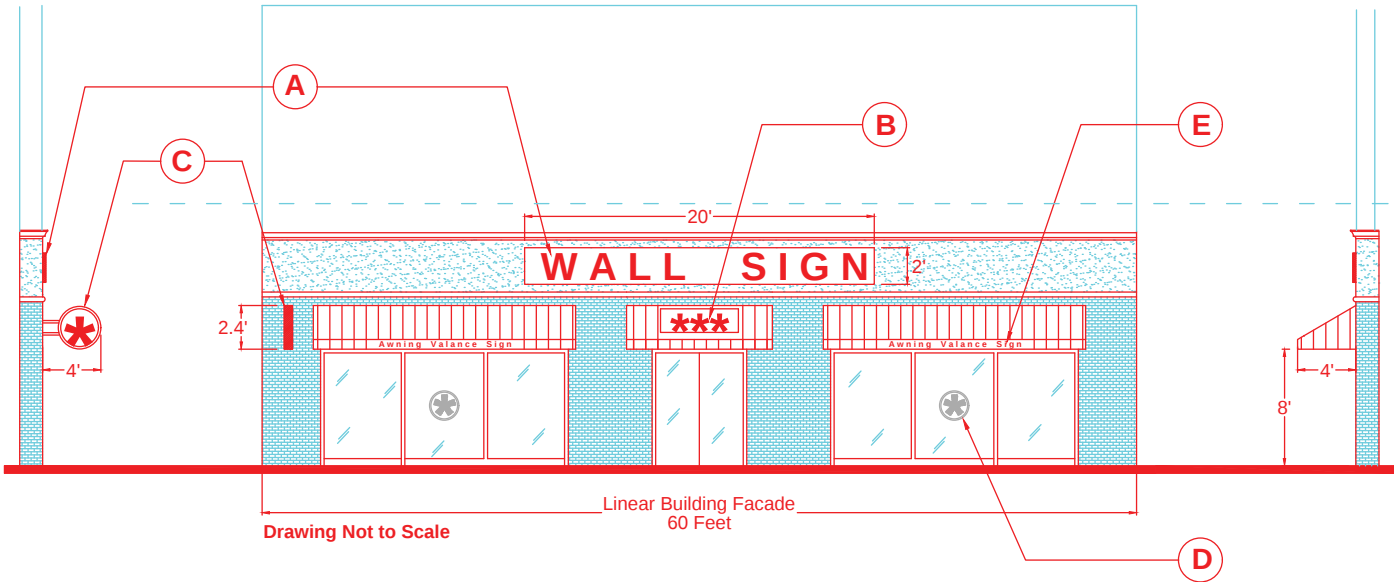


Figure 37. Calculations



|                                      |                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sign Calculation Illustration:       |                                                                                                                                                  |
| Total Allowable Building Sign Area:  | One (1) square foot of sign area per one (1) linear foot of building facade facing the street frontage, or 24 square feet, whichever is greater. |
| Maximum Buildings Signs Allowed:     | 3                                                                                                                                                |
| Linear Feet of Building Facade:      | 60 feet                                                                                                                                          |
| Total Building Signage Area Allowed: | 60 square feet.                                                                                                                                  |
| A. Projecting Sign: One              | 32 Sf. (8'x2.5'=20 Sf. Rectangular section) + (12 Sf. Circular Section Rad=2').                                                                  |
| B. Canopy Sign: Two                  | 28 Sf. ( Two signs - 14'x1.0 '= 14 Sf. Each).                                                                                                    |
| Total Building Sign Area:            | 60 Sf.                                                                                                                                           |
| Number of Building Sign:             | 3                                                                                                                                                |
| Additional Allowable Signage         |                                                                                                                                                  |
| C. Proposed Window Sign:             | 24 Sf. (Two signs - 12 Sf. Each).<br>10% of Window area.                                                                                         |
| Total Additional Signage:            | 24 Sf.                                                                                                                                           |
| Number of Additional Signs:          | 2                                                                                                                                                |
| TOTAL SIGN AREA:                     | 84 Sf.                                                                                                                                           |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF SIGNS:               | 5                                                                                                                                                |

Figure 38. Calculations



|                                      |                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sign Calculation Illustration:       |                                                                                                                                                  |
| Total Allowable Building Sign Area:  | One (1) square foot of sign area per one (1) linear foot of building facade facing the street frontage, or 24 square feet, whichever is greater. |
| Maximum Buildings Signs Allowed:     | 3                                                                                                                                                |
| Linear Feet of Building Facade:      | 60 feet                                                                                                                                          |
| Total Building Signage Area Allowed: | 60 Square Feet.                                                                                                                                  |
| A. Wall Sign:                        | 40 Sf. (2'x20')                                                                                                                                  |
| B. Awning Sign:                      | 9 Sf. (3'x3')                                                                                                                                    |
| C. Shingle Sign:                     | 6 Sf. (2.4'x2.4')                                                                                                                                |
| Total Building Sign Area:            | 55 Sf.                                                                                                                                           |
| Number of Building Sigs:             | 3                                                                                                                                                |
| Additional Allowable Signage         |                                                                                                                                                  |
| D. Proposed Window Sign:             | 24 Sf. (Two signs -12 Sf. Each).<br>10% of Total Window area.                                                                                    |
| E. Proposed Awning Valance Sign:     | 10 Sf. (Two signs - 5 Sf. Each - 160"x0.75=120"x6"= 5 Sf.).<br>Up to 75% of Valance Width.                                                       |
| Total Additional Sign Area:          | 34 Sf.                                                                                                                                           |
| Number of Additional Signs:          | 4                                                                                                                                                |
| TOTAL SIGN AREA:                     | 89 Sf.                                                                                                                                           |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF SIGNS:               | 7                                                                                                                                                |

### C) Sign Design and Styles

1. Allowable sign styles/designs include flat cut out letters, shoebox cabinet signs, contour cabinet signs, capsule signs, push-through signs, signs sewn to or screen printed on awnings, open face channel letters, back-lit/halo channel letters, or other designs/styles that produce a high-quality appearance as approved by the Community Development Coordinator.
2. In addition to those prohibited signs set forth in Section 3-1804, the following sign designs and types shall not be permitted in the Downtown District.
  - a. Standard cabinet signs
  - b. Back-lit awning signs
  - c. Internally illuminated channel letters/front-lit letters
  - d. Signs painted on buildings
  - e. Raceways and wireways, unless designed as an integral part of the sign design
  - f. Paper/poster/etc. unless allowed pursuant to Section 3-1806 Temporary Signs

### D) Sign Types

The following sign types are permitted in the Downtown District subject to the requirements below.



Figure 39. Wall Sign Diagram



Figure 40. Wall Sign Example



Figure 41. Wall Sign Example

## 1. Wall Signs

a. Description: A sign attached parallel to and placed either directly on or attached to the exterior wall of a building.

b. Number of Signs: No more than 3 per establishment facing a street frontage.

c. Dimensional Requirements

1. The width of a wall sign shall not exceed 75% of the length of the façade along a street.

2. Wall signs shall not project more than 12 inches from the building façade.

d. Standards

1. Wall signs shall be located on the upper portion of the storefront, within or just above the storefront opening.

2. One main wall sign is permitted per facade facing a street. Smaller wall signs are permitted in compliance with Section C-705, Table 5.

3. Wall signs may be externally or internally illuminated in accordance with Sections C-704.D and Section C-705.C.

4. No wall sign may extend above the top of the first floor or the finished floor line of the second floor, unless otherwise approved by the Community Development Coordinator.



Figure 42. Projecting Sign Diagram



Figure 43. Projecting Sign Example



Figure 44. Projecting Sign Example

## 2. Projecting Signs

- a. Description: A two-sided sign that is attached to and projects outward from the building. It is generally vertical in orientation and projects perpendicular to the building.
- b. Number of Signs: No more than 1 projecting sign per building.
- c. Dimensional Requirements
  1. The width of a projecting sign shall not exceed 4 feet.
  2. Sign brackets shall not extend more than 18 inches from the building wall.
  3. Projecting signs shall be setback 5 feet from the curb line.
- d. Standards
  1. A projecting sign shall be located a minimum of 30 feet from another projecting sign.
  2. Projecting signs shall be located between the finished floor of the 2nd and 3rd story or between the 2nd story and roof.
  3. A projecting sign may be located on a building corner and may incorporate sign area from both frontages provided the remaining allowable sign area is split proportionally among the two frontages.
  4. Projecting signs may be externally or internally illuminated in accordance with Sections C-704.D and Section C-705.C.

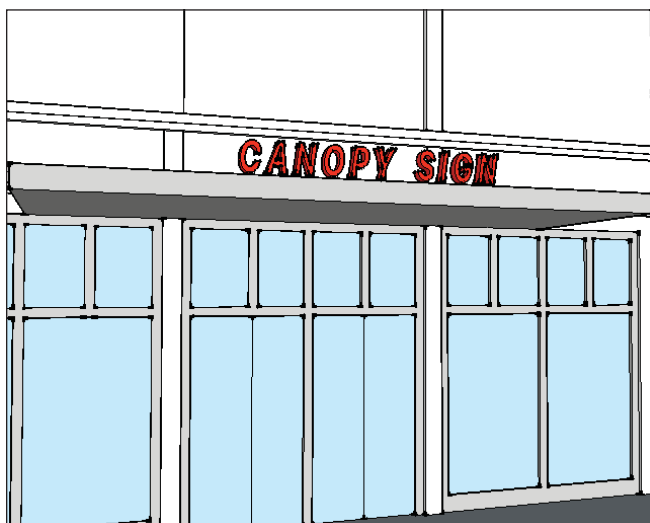


Figure 45. Canopy Sign Diagram



Figure 46. Canopy Sign Example



Figure 47. Canopy Sign Example

### 3. Canopy Signs

a. Description: A sign that is attached to, applied to or affixed to the visible surface of an attached canopy.

b. Number of Signs: No more than 2 canopy signs per establishment facing a street frontage.

#### c. Dimensional Requirements

1. No more than 75% of the width of the canopy may be occupied by signage.

2. Letters attached to and projecting above the canopy shall be limited to 2 feet in height.

3. The vertical clearance from the sidewalk to the lowest point of the canopy shall be 8 feet.

4. The canopy shall be setback 5 feet from the curb line.

#### d. Standards

1. Signs may be located on the face of the canopy or extend above it.

2. A raceway may be used to attach a canopy sign erected above a canopy provided it is concealed from view behind the canopy.

3. Canopy signs may be illuminated in accordance with Section C-704.D and Section C-705.C.



Figure 48. Awning Sign Diagram



Figure 49. Awning Sign Example



Figure 50. Awning Sign Example

#### 4. Awning Signs

a. Description: A sign that is affixed flat to the valance or the shed of an awning. Such sign may be screen printed or applied to the awning.

b. Number of Signs: No more than 1 awning sign shall be allowed on each awning shed and valance.

##### c. Dimensional Requirements

1. No more than 30% of the shed area (sloping plane) of the awning may be occupied by signage.

2. Signs on awning valances 10 inches or less in height are exempt from the maximum allowable sign area and maximum number of permitted signs.

3. No more than 75% of the awning valance may be used for signage.

4. The vertical clearance from sidewalk to the lowest point of awning shall be 8 feet.

5. The awning shall be setback 5 feet from the curb line.

##### d. Standards

1. Awning signs shall only be allowed on awnings erected over ground floor doors and/or windows.

2. Awning signs shall only be externally illuminated.

3. Signage is only allowed on the shed or valance of the awning along a street frontage.



Figure 51. Shingle Sign Diagram



Figure 52. Shingle Sign Example



Figure 53. Shingle Sign Example

## 5. Shingle Signs

- a. Description: A small projecting sign that extends outward at a 90 degree angle and may either hang from brackets or be mounted with brackets to the building façade.
- b. Number of Signs: No more than 1 shingle sign per establishment along a street frontage.
- c. Dimensional Requirements
  1. Shingle signs shall not exceed 6 square feet in area.
  2. Shingle signs, including sign brackets, shall not extend more than 4 feet from the building wall.
  3. The vertical clearance from the sidewalk to the lowest point of the shingle sign shall be 8 feet.
  4. Shingle signs shall be setback 5 feet from curb line.
- d. Standards
  1. A shingle sign shall be located a minimum of 15 feet from a projecting sign or another shingle sign.
  2. Shingle signs shall be located below the finished floor level of the second story.



Figure 54. Under Canopy Sign Example



Figure 55. Under Canopy Sign Example



Figure 56. Under Canopy Sign Example

## 6. Under Canopy Signs

- a. Description: A sign that is suspended from, and located entirely under a covered porch, covered walkway or canopy supported by a building.
- b. Number of Signs: No more than 1 per establishment facing a street frontage.
- c. Dimensional Requirements
  1. Under canopy signs shall not project beyond the limitations of the covered porch or canopy.
  2. The vertical clearance from the sidewalk to the lowest point of the under canopy sign shall be 7 feet.
  3. Under canopy signs shall be setback 5 feet from the curb line.
- d. Standards
  1. Under canopy signs shall be used only at ground floor locations except for upper floor businesses with covered entry porches or balconies.
  2. Under canopy signs shall not be illuminated.
  3. Under canopy signs shall be securely fixed to the underside of the canopy or porch.



Figure 57. Window Sign Example



Figure 58. Window Sign Example



Figure 59. Window Sign Example

## 7. Window Signs

a. Description: A sign that is affixed or attached to the inside of a window facing the street.

b. Number of Signs: N/A

c. Dimensional Requirements

1. Window signs shall not exceed 10% of any window or glass door opening.

2. The total area of window signs erected along a street frontage shall not exceed 50 square feet.

d. Standards

1. Window signs shall be limited to windows and doors on the ground floor.

2. Window signs should be applied directly to the interior face of the glazing or hung inside the window, thereby concealing all mounting hardware and equipment

3. Window signs shall not obscure views into a business.

4. Window signs should complement the merchandise display without obscuring it.

5. Window signs should be scaled to the pedestrian instead of vehicular traffic.



Figure 60. Skyline Sign Diagram



Figure 61. Skyline Sign Example



Figure 62. Skyline Sign Example

## 8. Skyline Signs

- a. Description: A building sign that is attached to the exterior wall of the upper band of a building.
- b. Number of Signs: No more than 1 sign per façade along a street frontage.
- c. Dimensional Requirements: The maximum height of a skyline signs shall not exceed an average of 4 feet.
- d. Standards
  1. Skyline signs may be oriented horizontally or vertically.
  2. Skyline signs shall not be externally illuminated. Internally illuminated signs are permitted provided the sign is in compliance with Sections C-704.D and C-705.B.
  3. An allowable skyline sign may be located on any side of the building.
  4. The design of a skyline sign shall be complementary and not compete with or detract from any sculpted roof design.

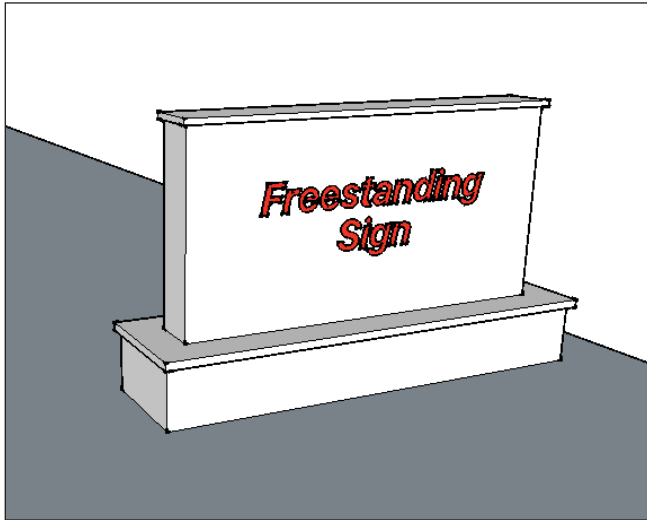


Figure 63. Freestanding Sign Diagram



Figure 64. Freestanding Sign Example



Figure 65. Freestanding Sign Example

## 9. Freestanding Sign

a. Description: A sign supported by a structure or supports that are permanently placed on or anchored in the ground that are independent of any building.

b. Number of Signs: No more than 1 freestanding sign per parcel.

c. Dimensional Requirements

1. Freestanding signs shall not exceed 6 feet height.

2. Freestanding signs shall be located in a landscaped area consisting of shrubs and/or ground cover at least 3 feet in width around the entire sign base.

3. Freestanding signs shall be setback 5 feet from any property line.

d. Standards

1. Freestanding signs shall be designed with a distinctive design that is complementary to the building or with an architectural element used on the building such as an arch, capstone, pediment, distinctive roof form/material, etc. defining materials, textures and colors used on the building; or a shape, form or motif that portrays the business.

2. Freestanding signs shall be consistent with or complementary to the overall design, colors, materials and font style of the building signage.

3. Freestanding signs may be externally illuminated. Internally illuminated signs may be permitted only if the letters and graphics on the sign are illuminated.

4. The base and/or supports of freestanding signs shall be of a width that creates proportionality to the overall sign design.

5. No more than 25% of sign face area may contain two lines of zip track for manual changeable area. Such area and letters shall be coordinated with the color of the sign.



Figure 66. Sidewalk Sign Example



Figure 67. Sidewalk Sign Example



Figure 68. Sidewalk Sign Example

## 10. Sidewalk Signs

- a. Description: A freestanding sign which placed upon the ground and that is portable and readily moved from place to place.
- b. Number of Signs: The allowable number of signs is set forth in Table 3-1806.1.a.
- c. Dimensional Requirements: Sidewalk signs shall comply with the dimensional requirements set forth in Table 3-1806.1.a.
- d. Standards: Sidewalk signs shall comply with the design standards set forth in Table 3-1806.1.a.