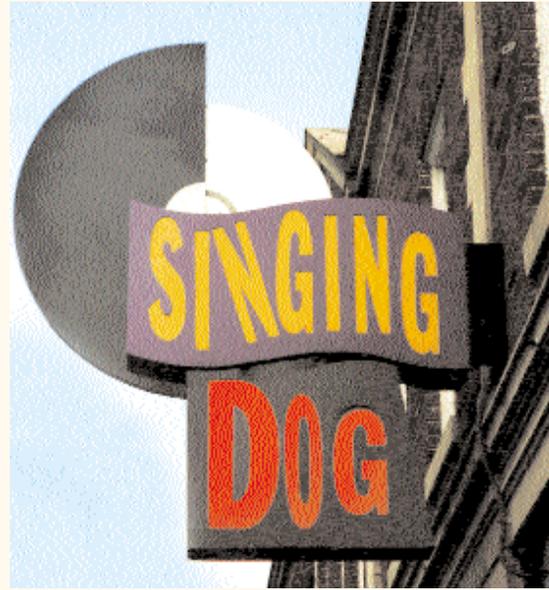


7 Graphics

Signage is an integral and very noticeable part of a commercial use. Collectively, signage influences a street's character. Signs should be compatible with their building, neighboring buildings and the character of High Street as a whole. They are one of the least expensive and most effective ways to enhance a storefront. With imagination and high quality design, signs can add a new level of visual excitement to the streetscape.

Signs should present a clear message about the business they identify. The sign alone should not attempt to convey the entire story a merchant wants to relay. Too many different signs overwhelm viewers and consequently none of the messages are conveyed. It is the careful combination of sign, building storefront, and window display working together that has the greatest impact.

- **Choose a sign that is consistent and harmonious with the architectural style of the property and the surrounding district.**
- **Convey the message of the sign with simplicity.**
- **Restrict copy to the name, address, function and logo of the establishment. Do not post rates and advertising of commodities and ancillary services.**
- **Install one primary and, if necessary, one secondary sign.**



- **The size and style of the graphic, its scale, proportion, design, material and texture, as well as the size and style of the lettering, must relate to the building to which it is attached, with the property, and with the district that surrounds it.**
- **The graphic must be attached to the building or otherwise supported on the premises in a manner that respects the spirit as well as the letter of these guidelines.**
- **The graphic must be located appropriately on the building or premises and avoid obscuring significant architectural features.**
- **Signs for a row of storefronts in the same building should be of similar size, material, proportion and location on the building. While it is not necessary for them to be all the same color or design, they should look like a family—reinforcing rather than competing with each other.**
- **Maintain signs regularly and remove unused sign supports. Broken, faded signage and empty sign supports suggest a vacant or inactive business.**

Ground and Roof Signs

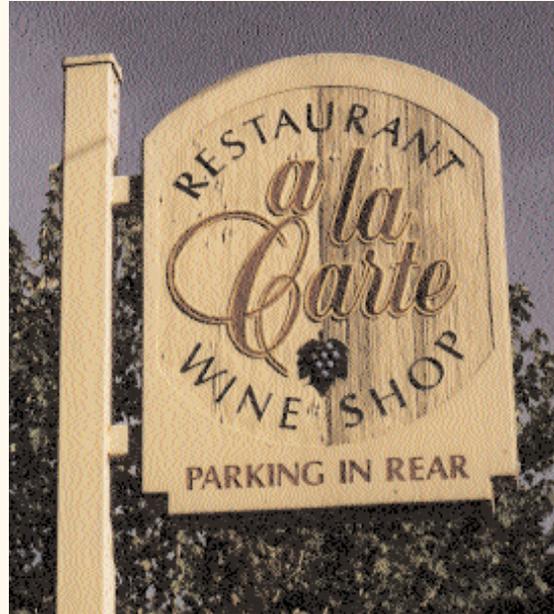
Freestanding or ground signs are seen from furthest away, often from automobiles. They should be used for businesses occupying residential buildings, which typically have no sign band or display window, and for businesses or spaces, such as rear parking lots, not visible from the street.

- **Use ground signs no more than 12 square feet in area and no more than 12' in height, in front of residences that have been converted to commercial uses or to identify businesses in buildings not visible from the street.**
- **Use ground signs of no more than 4' in height to mark parking areas.**
- **Do not install roof signs.**

Sign Bands

It is not necessary to create a sign band when one doesn't exist. Back-lit letters on a brick facade, for example, can be very effective in both announcing a business and highlighting its building. But where multiple storefronts share the same building, it may be desirable to establish uniform location and style. If a sign band does not exist in such cases, one can be created by a change in color, material, or relief. The sign band can be articulated or divided so that each section clearly relates to an individual store.

- **In multiple-storefront buildings, use signs of similar size, proportion and materials for each store.**
- **Coordinate colors in continuous sign bands or among contiguous signs.**
- **Vary the color of individual signs within a coordinated range.**



Free-standing signs at a pedestrian scale are most appropriate where commercial uses are housed in formerly residential buildings.

Wall Signs

Often viewed from across the street, wall signs should be legible from that distance. They should contain simple information such as the name of the store and the type of business. Wall signs should be carefully sized to fit in with the building's facade design and should avoid obscuring important architectural features.

- **Locate wall signs within a sign band when one exists, usually above the transom.**
- **Where a sign band doesn't exist, locate the wall sign between the first floor transom and the second floor windowsill or below the eaves/cornice on a one-story building.**

- Use the wall sign as the primary business sign.
- Install no more than two signs, one primary, one secondary.
- Limit the size to a maximum width of two-thirds of the width of the building front and a maximum height of one-third of the height of the space between the first floor transom and the second floor windowsill or eaves/cornice on one-story buildings.
- Rear signs should be no larger than 9 square feet.
- Locate signs so as not to obstruct display areas.
- Locate flush-mounted signs above the storefront display windows or transoms and below the second-story windowsills.
- Use lettering 8" to 16" high and which occupies no more than 65% of the board.
- Do not use internally illuminated box signs.

Types

Board signs use a background board, generally rectangular in shape, that contains the letters, graphic image and logo, where applicable. Individual letters mounted directly on a building can also create appealing signs. Carefully sized and designed micro-tube neon signs can add an element of excitement to the streetscape at night.



The message is best remembered when simple and direct: the apostrophe tells what's sold inside.



Wall signs range from the classical to the bold.

Size and Placement

The size of a wall sign, within the allowable maximum, depends on the width of the street as well as the size of the business. Locate the sign within the sign band where one exists. Do not cover up important architectural details such as cornices, piers and pilasters, doorway pediments and upper-floor windowsills.

Lettering

Signs on main facades should generally use letters within the guideline; however, smaller letters for smaller stores and larger letters for larger stores are possible. Internally illuminated individual letters are not encouraged, but back-lit letters are.

Projecting Signs

High quality projecting signs can add a special character to the streetscape. These signs should be small and unique in character. Viewed from medium to short range, projecting signs can highlight the storefront and attract pedestrians' attention as they walk along the sidewalk.

guidelines : graphics



Projecting signs are most distinctive when their shape reflects the nature of the business.

- **A projecting sign may complement or replace the principal wall sign. In a building with multiple storefronts, coordinate with other business owners for a uniform approach to either one or both types of signs.**
- **Locate projecting signs above the storefront display windows or transoms and below the second-story windowsills.**
- **Space projecting signs along storefronts so that they do not obstruct each other in the pedestrian's line of vision.**
- **Use an area of 6 square feet and lettering 4" to 10" high.**

Types

A three-dimensional object or special shape often makes the most effective projecting sign. Merchants can use these signs to express what is unique about their merchandise or their business; for example, a hammer-shaped sign for a hardware store, or an eyeglasses-shaped sign for an optometrist. Projecting signs are not usually considered the predominant sign for any business. Internally illuminated projecting sign boxes tend to look heavy and are strongly discourage



Projecting signs should be spaced far enough apart so as to not obscure each other.

Size and Placement

Projecting signs should be small and eye-catching; but should not block visibility of neighboring signs. Signs should not project more than six feet from the facade of the building, or half the width of the sidewalk, whichever is less. The underside of a projecting sign over the sidewalk should be at least eight feet above grade.

Other Considerations

The information on a projecting sign need not duplicate the information on the wall sign; it should augment the primary sign by describing the business in a different, more visual way. The design should be carefully coordinated with the building, the storefront and the design of the primary wall sign. The bracket from which the sign hangs is part of the overall sign design. If several stores within a building are to have projecting signs, their design and placement should be considered together, and in general they should be hung at the same height.



Oversize, internally-lit box signs are inappropriate on High Street.



The use of multiple simple logos can be more effective than a single, larger sign.

Window Signs

Window signs are seen from short range, in front of the store.

- **Use window signs to provide information that is more detailed and to complement the window display. Signs painted on storefront glass are a traditional and effective way to present this information.**
- **Use small stenciled letters, addresses or logos for window signs; do not paint large areas of glass.**
- **Use colors and lighting appropriate to the building and neighborhood.**
- **Do not use internally-illuminated signs. Illuminate painted signs with exterior lighting.**
- **Use neon signs for business names and accent borders. Mount neon signs on a clear backing, such as glass or plexiglass. Neon tubes may also be used on larger signs to accent a letter or logo, and to outline significant building features.**
- **Use lettering 1/2" to 8" high.**

Types

Lettering may be hand painted directly on glass, etched in glass or applied with vinyl, die-cut letters. White, light colors or gold leaf are most legible for graphics on glass. Signs taped to the glass or painting a temporary sign on the glass in neon colors is not desirable. Temporary signs should be hung a foot or more behind the glass, fixed to a rigid backing board and highlighted with display spotlights. Neon window signs work best if they occupy a minimum amount of the display window.

Size and Placement

Signs painted on second-floor windows are seen from a greater distance than those on first floor windows, and the letter size and amount of information must be adjusted accordingly.

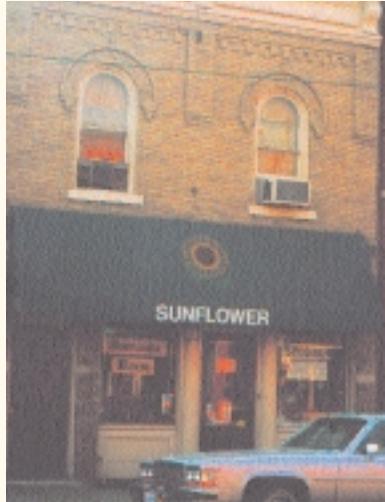
Lettering

Lettering on first-floor windows should cover no more than 20% of the glass area. Lettering on second floor windows should cover no more than 25% of the glass area. The amount of information to convey, the importance of the information, the design of the display area and the design of the storefront should all be considered in determining the height of the letters.

Awning/Canopy Signs

Signs on awnings or canopies can complement or become the primary wall sign. When a single business occupies several bays of a storefront, a small wall sign at each bay, or a sign on each awning or canopy, can be very effective in discreetly repeating the name of the business. More numerous, smaller signs also contribute to a fine-grain pedestrian experience along the sidewalk.

Awning signs can be as visible and attractive as wall or projecting signs.



- **Restrict the size of the sign to 25% of the area of the awning or canopy. In many cases the sign should be limited to the skirt panel.**
- **Use lettering 6" to 8" high.**
- **Use the maximum allowable area for signage to create more, smaller signs on each awning, canopy or bay width.**

Banners

Banners can be a lively way to announce a special event or seasonal theme. They are most effective when using a bold design and brightly colored shapes or letters.

- **Use a banner not larger than 16 square feet in area.**
- **Use a banner as an on-premises temporary sign for a period not to exceed 30 days.**

Materials

Wood

Wood can be used for backing or lettering and is highly useful for a sign that has carved, recessed or dimensional lettering or decoration. Use wood that allows the grain to contribute to the design. Large pieces of wood can crack or check as they age—exterior plywood with protected edges can help solve this problem.

Metal

Metal can be used for backing or lettering. Copper, bronze, brass and stainless steel offer richness and durability. Gold and silver leaf, properly applied, can last for 50 years or more.

Glass

The transparency of glass allows graphics or lettering painted on its surface to float in place, while also allowing a view beyond. Glass can be etched or sand-blasted and lit from the bottom edge for dramatic effects. The area of glass used for the sign may also be entirely back-painted with a solid color after lettering has been applied.

Plastic

Plastic is most successful when used for individual letters. Large areas of plastic can look flimsy and cheap. If used as a backing, it should be made rigid or placed in a frame. Avoid vacuum-formed plastic faces in metal frames.



Metal can give signs a striking texture.

Color

Coordination

Coordinate sign and building colors so that the entire face of the building works together to look attractive and draw attention. Too many colors used together on a sign (or on adjacent signs) tend to overwhelm the viewer. It is best to limit the number of colors on a sign to three or four. Any additional colors should be used sparingly as accents.

Contrast

Make sure that there is enough contrast between lettering and background colors. In general, lighter letters on a dark background are more legible than dark letters on a light background. This applies to signage on glass or on board backing. If a building contains a number of shops, it is best if all signs have dark backgrounds and light letters, or vice versa. Lack of this basic uniformity destroys the rhythm of a building's facade.

Lighting

Well-lit signs are particularly important for stores that stay open at night. Even after hours, lighted signs, displays, and facades contribute to the safety, enjoyment and visual interest of the

streetscape. Illuminated signs attract attention after-hours and lend warmth to a commercial district. Exterior lights can be controlled by timers or photoelectric cells.

If a building has multiple storefronts, the lighting for their signs should be coordinated. If all storefronts have signs lit externally with hooded fluorescent lights, for example, all the lamp colors should be the same (i.e., all warm white, all cool white, and so on).

- **Attached to the building and spaced at intervals, use incandescent spot or flood lights to illuminate the full area of a sign.**
- **Use fluorescent lights, properly shielded with hoods, to light signs more uniformly than incandescent spots.**
- **Provide a valence to conceal fluorescent light fixtures used on historic building facades.**
- **Use microfluorescent tubes or neon to back-light solid letters or signs.**

Incandescent Light

Spots or floodlights attached to the building facade and spaced at intervals can usually illuminate the full area of a sign. There are a variety of exterior fixtures that can be used as decorative elements—from simple housings to elaborate, fluted, gooseneck fixtures.



Micro neon tubes can form the entire sign (left) or outline letters on a sign (Long's Bookstore, right) and enliven the street at night.

Fluorescent Light

Properly shielded with hoods, a series of fluorescent fixtures can light signs more uniformly than incandescent spots. They are typically cooler in color, but new tube types can closely match the quality and color range of incandescent lights, which many people still prefer. Fluorescent fixtures typically look more utilitarian than incandescent ones and blend less easily with historic building facades; therefore, the provision of a valence to conceal the fixture is appropriate.

Backlit Signs/Letters and Neon Light

Micro-fluorescent tubes or neon behind solid letters or signs can highlight a building's textured surface as well as provide a pleasant glow around an establishments name. Neon signs and accent lighting are appropriate to the University/High Street corridor, particularly to enliven and advertise evening entertainment uses that give it its unique identity.

Up/Down-Lighting

Although lighting signs from below is dramatic and allows fixtures to be more easily hidden, mounting fixtures above signs and lighting down avoids many weather and water-related problems.

Glare

Glare from unshielded lights makes adjacent signs or displays difficult to see. Bare bulbs are prohibited on all buildings. Overly bright signs, especially at night, can actually cause passers-by to look away rather than toward the sign and storefront.