



CITY OF ARCADIA

A RCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES **C** OMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL SIGNING

February 2002

Signing plays an important role in the success of any business by providing business identification. When signs are integrated into the building design they provide a personal quality that contributes to the ambiance of the commercial complex or streetscape, especially the more unique signs. Conversely signs may intrude upon pleasant surroundings when they are applied as an afterthought. The following guidelines are intended to balance the legitimate needs for business identification with the need to prevent visual clutter that detracts from a project's character.

General Sign Guidelines

1. A sign program should be submitted with plans for architectural design review. The sign program should coordinate with the building architecture including the use of internally consistent materials, colors and textures. Space for signage shall be designed into the building elevations that are adjacent to public streets. The sign program should coordinate with the building architecture including the use of internally consistent materials, colors and textures. Signage and graphics should be conceived as an integral part of the buildings architectural design, not applied as an afterthought.
2. Sign colors should complement the colors used on the structures and the project as a whole.
3. The total number of colors used in any one sign should be limited. Small

accents of several colors may make a sign unique and attractive, but the competition of large areas of many different colors decreases readability. Too many colors used simultaneously can confuse and negate the message of a sign. Even the most carefully planned sign may look unattractive due to poor color selection.

4. Faddish or bizarre typefaces should be avoided if they are difficult to read.
5. The number of lettering styles should be limited in order to increase legibility. A general rule is to limit the number of different letter types to no more than two for small signs and three for larger signs.
6. Letters and words should not be spaced too close together. Crowding of letters, words or lines will make a sign more difficult to read. Conversely, over-spacing these elements causes the viewer to reach each item individually, again obscuring the message. As a general rule, letters should not occupy more than 75% of the sign panel area.
7. Symbols and logos should be used in place of words whenever appropriate. Pictographic images will usually register more quickly in the viewer's mind than a written message.
8. The following materials are recommended for signs:

- Wood (carved, sandblasted, etched and properly sealed, primed and painted or stained).
 - Metal (formed, etched, cast, engraved and properly primed and painted or factory coated to protect against corrosion).
 - High-density pre-formed foam or similar materials. New materials may be very appropriate if properly designed in a manner consistent with these guidelines, and painted or otherwise finished to compliment the architecture.
 - Custom neon tubing in the form of graphics or lettering may be incorporated into the sign design.
 - Controlled background signs - a mounting base for individual sign characters.
9. Flat Plexiglas illuminated signs are discouraged. Plexiglas signs with “push through” letters may be considered if the letters only are illuminated and the background remains unlighted.
 10. Internally illuminated plastic-faced cabinet signs are discouraged.
 11. Individually mounted internally illuminated channel letter signs are appropriate. Reverse channel letter signs are preferred. Raceways shall be avoided where possible; and, if exposed, painted to match the color of the building.
 12. If it is possible to illuminate the sign by an indirect source of light, this is usually the best arrangement because the sign will appear to be better integrated with the building’s architecture. Light fixtures in front of the structure cast light on the sign and

generally a portion of the face of the structure as well. Indirect lighting emphasizes the continuity of the structure’s surface and signs become an integral part of the façade.

13. Backlit solid letters (reverse channel) are preferred to internally illuminated panel letter signs.
14. Signs that advertise the occupant business through the use of graphic or crafted symbols, such as shoes, keys, glasses or books are encouraged. Figurative signs may be incorporated into any of the allowable sign types.

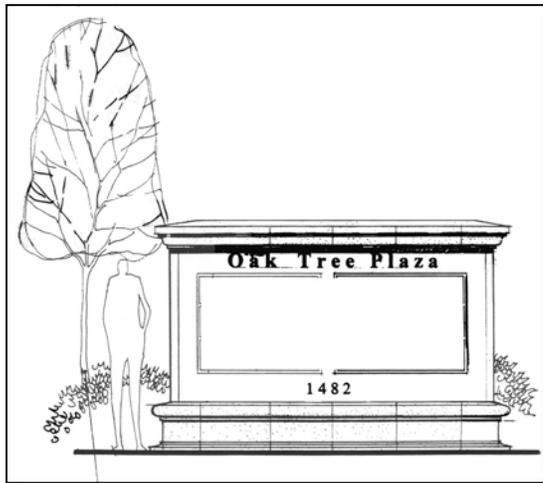
Pole/Monument Signs

1. Pole signs shall be discouraged for new construction and renovations.
2. Monument signs that are well articulated and well proportioned are preferred for project entries.



3. Monument signs should be well proportioned and accented with

landscaping. The signs should be in scale with adjacent buildings and landscape areas.



4. Monument signs shall incorporate complimentary colors, materials and lettering fonts. Said colors and materials shall be consistent with the building materials. More than one material for the monument structure is recommended.

5. Project signs shall be discouraged from having any type of signing other than center identification and the address.

6. Freestanding monument signs should be placed perpendicular to the street.

7. Freestanding monument signs should be placed so that vehicular sight distances at entry driveways are not negatively affected.

8. Solid architectural sign bases and sides are highly desirable. Each sign should incorporate a base that is a minimum of 12 inches high. The materials should match an architectural element of the commercial development it serves.

9. Each monument sign should be surrounded by a landscape planter that extends a minimum of 2 feet in all directions beyond the base of the sign.

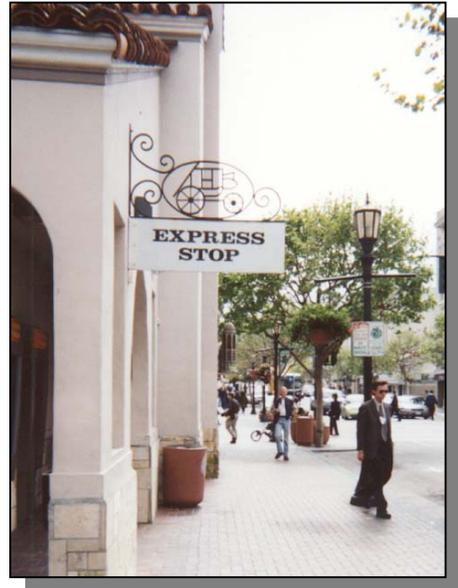
Projecting Signs/Hanging Signs

1. Handcrafted, wall mounted and hanging signs are a recommended way to provide clear and direct guidance for pedestrians. These signs

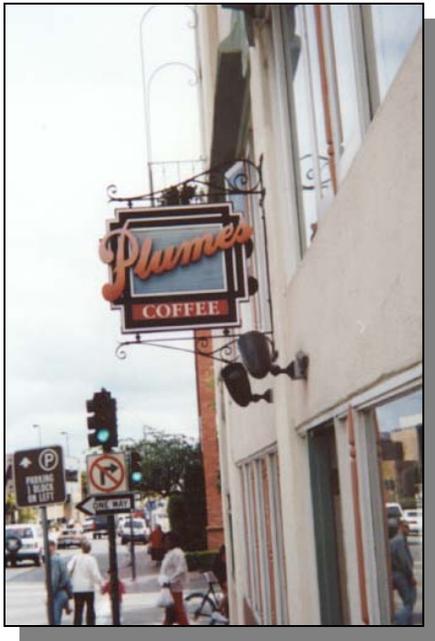
are encouraged to be unique and convey a business image.



3. Projecting signs shall be hung at a 90° angle from the face of the building.
4. On a multi-storied building, the sign should be suspended between the bottom of the second story windowsills and the top of the doors or windows of the first story. On a one-story building, the top of the sign should be suspended in line with the lowest point of the roof.
5. The bottom of the sign should maintain at least a 10' pedestrian clearance from the sidewalk level.
6. Decorative iron and wood brackets that support projecting signs are encouraged.



2. The number of projecting signs per business shall be limited to one. The distance between projecting signs on a building shall be at least 50 feet for maximum visibility.



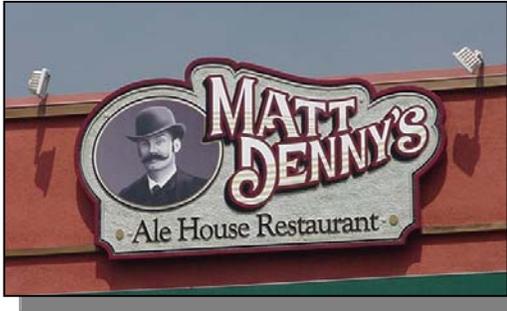
7. The lines of the brackets should harmonize with the shape of the sign. The most important feature of a bracket should be its ability to hold up the sign.
8. To avoid damaging brick and stonework, brackets should be designed so that they can be bolted into masonry joints when possible.

Wall Signs

1. The following types of walls signs are recommended:
 - Dimensional letter forms with seamless edge treatments
 - Reverse channel lettering with halo lighting
 - Cut or fabricated steel, painted or unfinished

- Polished metal
- Etched metal or glass, sandblasted glass
- Dimension, shapes and forms of metal, hardwoods, glass or other material with a permanent appearance.
- Halo or exposed channel neon
- Silhouette illumination
- Front lighted signs.
- Dimensional geometric shapes and three-dimensional forms

2. The following signs are discouraged:
 - Conventional plastic faced box or cabinet signs
 - Internally illuminated signs, except backlit signs where only the lettering is illuminated
3. Internally illuminated letters with “halo effect”.
4. Wall signs should be integrated into the building design, compliment the architecture and be compatible with the building colors and materials.
5. Signs proposed to be located on buildings having an existing sign, shall be designed (size, location, colors, lighting, materials, etc.), and considered in relationship to other signs on the building, and compatible with the architecture of the building.
6. Use a brief message; the fewer the words, the more effective the sign. Words should be used to convey primary information only. The text of permanent storefront signs should be limited to the name of the business; address and/or generic type of goods or services offered.



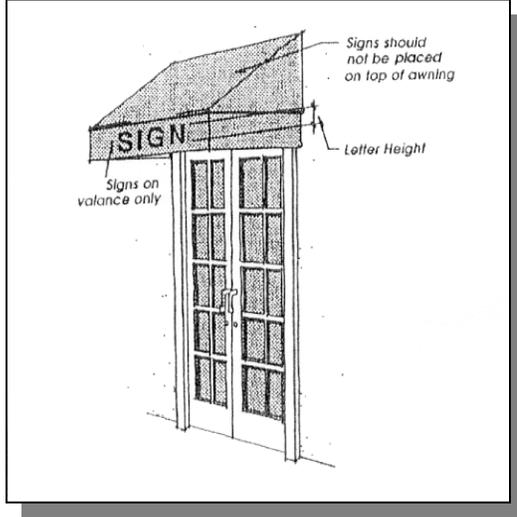
Awning Signs

1. Quality building and awning signs of appropriate size and scale with the building face are encouraged.
2. The text should be located only on the fabric valance flap of the awning. The letter color should be compatible with the awning and the building color scheme.



7. All signs should fit comfortably into their storefront architecture leaving sufficient margins and negative space on all sides. Thickness, height and colors of sign lettering and graphics should be visually balanced and in proportion to other signs on the building.
8. Internally illuminated plastic-faced cabinet signs are discouraged.

3. Text copy should be limited to the name of the business only.



4. When initially installed, awnings should be provided with removable valances and end panels to accommodate future changes in sign copy. Painting cloth awnings in order to change sign copy is strongly discouraged as this will decrease the fire resistant/retardant properties of the treated canvas.
5. The shape, design and color of fabric awnings should be carefully designed to coordinate with and not dominate the architectural style of the building. Where other fabric awnings are used on the building, the design and color

of the sign awnings and all other awnings should be coordinated.

6. Internally illuminated awnings with or without signage are discouraged.

Window Signs

1. Window signs shall not cover more than 25% of the area of each window. Illuminated signs shall not exceed 10% of the window area.
2. Window signs should be limited to individual letters placed on the interior surface of the window and intended to be viewed from outside.
3. The text or sign copy of a window sign should be limited to the business name and brief messages identifying the type of product or service.
4. Window signs should be grouped to minimize blocking views into the stores.
5. Temporary window signs advertising specific products are prohibited.