

L. COMMERCIAL SIGNS

This section applies to permanent commercial business signs only. The City of Lancaster Zoning Ordinance shall be used to regulate all other signs (address markers, temporary signs, political signs, directional signs, special event signs, real estate signs, historic plaques, residential signs, etc).

The Planning Director has the authority to issue a sign permit in Downtown Lancaster if the sign is designed to comply with the applicable Design Regulations in this section. To allow for creative signing solutions, the Planning Commission may issue a permit for a sign that is not specifically permitted or prohibited by this regulating code. Examples of such signs may include a vertically oriented sign for a movie theater marquee or an electronic kiosk sign that shows stock market prices for a bank.

Existing signs that were established lawfully before this Specific Plan was adopted shall be considered legal non-conforming signs. Sections 17.32.830 thru 17.32.880 of the City of Lancaster Zoning Ordinance shall be used to regulate legal non-conforming signs.

DESIGN REGULATIONS

DR.L-1

In order to avoid sign clutter, signage shall only be allowed on facades that have building entrances.

DR.L-2

Signs shall not cover or obscure windows, doors, storefronts, building entrances, cornices, columns, or other architectural elements or details.

DR.L-3

The gross area of all signs that are mounted parallel to a facade shall not exceed 10% of the total area of the facade.

DR.L-4

The following types of signs are allowed in Downtown Lancaster

- ◆ Awning or marquee sign
- ◆ Storefront sign
- ◆ Primary Tenant Sign
- ◆ Window Signs
- ◆ Projecting signs
- ◆ Directory signs
- ◆ Monument signs

Design Regulations for these signs are provided below:

Inappropriate use of signage on facades:



CHAPTER 5

DR.L-5

Awning or Marquee Signs: A sign that is printed or mounted on an awning or marquee. The following standards apply to these signs:

- ◆ Awning and marquee signs are only allowed on Commercial Block, “Main Street Commercial Block, and Live-Work Loft buildings.
- ◆ Signs are only allowed on the front face or valance of the awning.
- ◆ Lettering shall not exceed the height of 8 inches.
- ◆ The width of the sign shall be limited to 80 percent of the width of the awning or marquee.
- ◆ Marquee signs may be illuminated by backlighting behind individually mounted letters or symbols, by neon tubing, or by the internal illumination of sign symbols and letters. Internally illuminated box signs that light the entire sign (letters, symbols, logos, and background) are prohibited.

Awning and Marquee Signs:



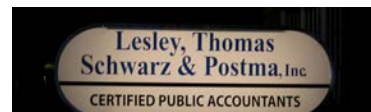
Backlighting behind individually mounted letters (Allowed):



Internal illumination of symbols and letters but not the sign background (Allowed):



Internally illuminated box sign (Prohibited):

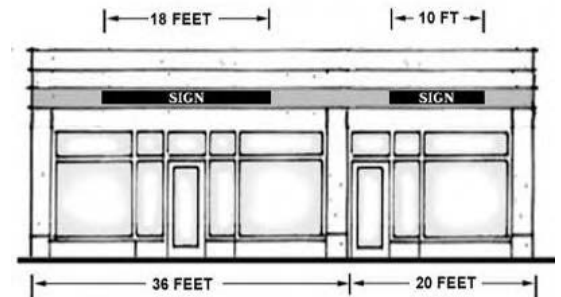


DR.L-6

Storefront Signs: A horizontally oriented sign that is mounted on the facade above the entrance to ground floor stores. The following standards apply these signs:

- ◆ Storefront signs are only allowed on Commercial Block and “Main Street Commercial Block Buildings.
- ◆ The distance between the lowest point and highest point of a storefront sign shall not exceed 36 inches.
- ◆ Storefront signs shall not project out from the facade more than 12 inches.
- ◆ Ground floor business within a building may have one or multiple storefront signs. However, the cumulative width of all storefront signs on a facade shall not exceed 50 percent of the facades width.
- ◆ Storefront signs shall be placed in an area that that is above the ground floor storefront windows and below the windows on the second floor.
- ◆ Storefront signs may be illuminated externally by lights mounted on the facade, by backlighting behind individually mounted letters or symbols, by neon tubes, or by the internal illumination of sign symbols and letters. Internally illuminated box signs that light the entire sign (letters, symbols, logos, and background) are prohibited.

Storefront Sign:



Externally illuminated sign (Allowed):



Backlighting behind individually mounted letters (Allowed):



Internally illuminated box sign (Prohibited):



Internal illumination of symbols and letters but not the sign background (Allowed):



DR.L-7

Building/Primary Tenant Sign: A horizontally oriented sign that is mounted above the windows of the top floor of the building. These signs are used to identify the name of the building or the primary tenant of the building. The following standards apply to these signs:

- ◆ Building/primary tenant signs are only allowed on Commercial Block and “Main Street Commercial Block Buildings.
- ◆ Only one of these signs is allowed per building.
- ◆ The distance between the lowest point and highest point of a building/primary tenant sign shall not exceed 36 inches.
- ◆ Building/primary tenant signs shall not project out from the facade more than 12 inches.
- ◆ Building/primary tenant signs may be illuminated externally by lights mounted on the facade, by backlighting behind individually mounted letters or symbols, or by the internal illumination of sign symbols and letters. Internally illuminated box signs that light the entire sign (letters, symbols, logos, and background) are prohibited.

Building/Primary Tenant Signs:



DR.L-8

Window signs: A temporary or permanent sign that is placed on or within 18 inches of a window (including windows on doors). Window signs include posters for advertisements and sales, product merchandise posters, open and closed signs, and painted or etched business names and logos. The following standards apply to these signs:

- ◆ Window signs are only allowed on the windows of non-residential uses.
- ◆ Window signs shall not occupy more than 25% of a window.
- ◆ Permanent window signs shall be created with permanent, fade resistant paint, gold-leaf lettering, or glass etching.
- ◆ In store lighting or an externally mounted light shall be used to illuminate window signs. The use of neon tubing shall be limited to “open and closed” signs.

Window Signs:



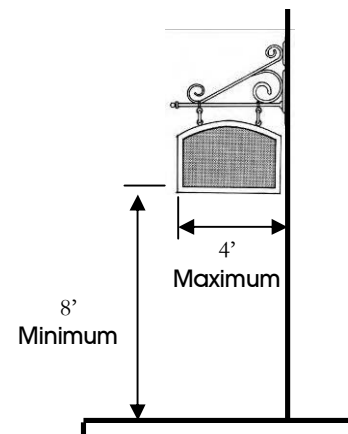
DR.L-9

Projecting Signs: A double-sided sign that projects perpendicular to the building facade and hangs from a mounted wall brace or from the ceiling of a balcony or arcade. The following standards apply to these signs:

- ◆ Projecting signs are only allowed on Commercial Block, “Main Street Commercial Block, and Live-Work Loft buildings.
- ◆ Projecting signs may project up to four feet from a facade.
- ◆ Projecting signs that hang from the ceiling of a balcony or arcade shall not exceed a width of four feet and shall be centered within the balcony or arcade
- ◆ At least eight feet of vertical clearance shall be provided from the lowest point of the sign and the sidewalk.
- ◆ The maximum area of a projecting sign shall not exceed 10 square feet
- ◆ Projecting signs shall be mounted near storefront entrances.
- ◆ The top of a projecting signs shall be located below the windows on the second floor of the building.
- ◆ A maximum of one projecting sign is allowed for every storefront entrance on the facade.
- ◆ Projecting signs shall be externally illuminated by a light mounted on the facade or by neon tubing used to illuminate letters, symbols, and accent frames.



Design Regulations for Projecting Signs:



DR.L-10

Directory Sign: A small sign that is attached flat against the facade at the eye level of pedestrians. Directory signs are either used to identify an individual business within a storefront or to identify multiple tenants that are accessible by a shared entrance or lobby. The following standards apply to these signs:

- ◆ Directory signs are only allowed near entrances to non-residential uses.
- ◆ Directory signs shall not exceed an area of six square feet.
- ◆ Only one directory sign is allowed for each storefront or lobby entrance.
- ◆ Directory signs shall be externally illuminated. Internal illumination and neon lighting is prohibited.

Directory Sign:

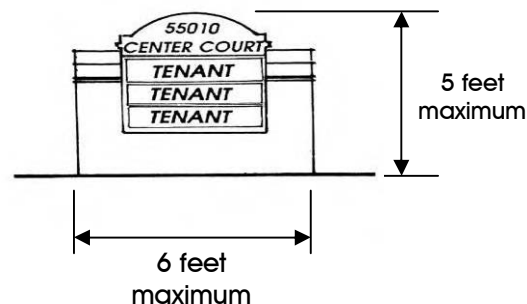


DR.L-11

Monument signs: A sign that is located on the ground within the front yard of a property. The following standards apply to these signs:

- ◆ Monument signs are only allowed for non-residential uses within buildings that are setback from the front property line.
- ◆ Only one monument sign is allowed per building.
- ◆ Monument signs shall not exceed a height of five feet from the ground surface.
- ◆ The maximum width of a monument sign shall be 6 feet.
- ◆ Monument signs shall be designed with materials, colors, and details that are compatible with the design of the building on the site.
- ◆ The area surrounding the monument sign shall be landscaped.
- ◆ Monument signs shall be externally illuminated. Internal illumination and neon lighting is prohibited.

Monument Signs:



CHAPTER 5

DR.L-11

The following types of signs are prohibited in Downtown Lancaster:

- ◆ Pole mounted or lollipop signs
- ◆ Billboards
- ◆ Inflatable or windblown signs
- ◆ Signs that produce smoke or sound
- ◆ Signs with animated or moving characters
- ◆ Changeable letter marquee signs (except for theaters or concert venues)
- ◆ Window signs that occupy more than 25% of the window's area
- ◆ Roof mounted signs
- ◆ Permanent sidewalk signs

Examples of prohibited signs:



Examples of prohibited signs:



DESIGN GUIDELINES

DG.L-1

Signs should be constructed of durable and weatherproof materials so that they will not discolor, fade, crack, rust, or erode.

DG.L-2

Simple and easy-to-read typefaces should be used on signs. Hard-to-read and intricate typefaces should be avoided.

DG.L-3

Signs that have symbols, characters, or graphics are encouraged. The symbol, character, or graphic should relate to the products sold in the business or to the name of the business.

DG.L-4

Signs that show depth and cast shadows are encouraged. Depth and shadows can be created by mounting individually cut letters and symbols on the sign base or carving letters and symbols into the base of the sign.

DG.L-5

Sign materials and colors should compliment the building façade. Basic and simple color applications are encouraged and vibrant and fluorescent colors should be avoided.

DG.L-6

The color of letters and symbols should contrast the base or background color of the sign to maximize readability.

DG.L-7

Sign lighting should be directed and shielded to illuminate the sign and not to spill over to other parts of the building or site.



Easy-to-read fonts should be used and hard to read fonts should be avoided.



Signs that symbolize what is sold in the store are encouraged

