



Signage Field Guide

CITY OF RIVERSIDE

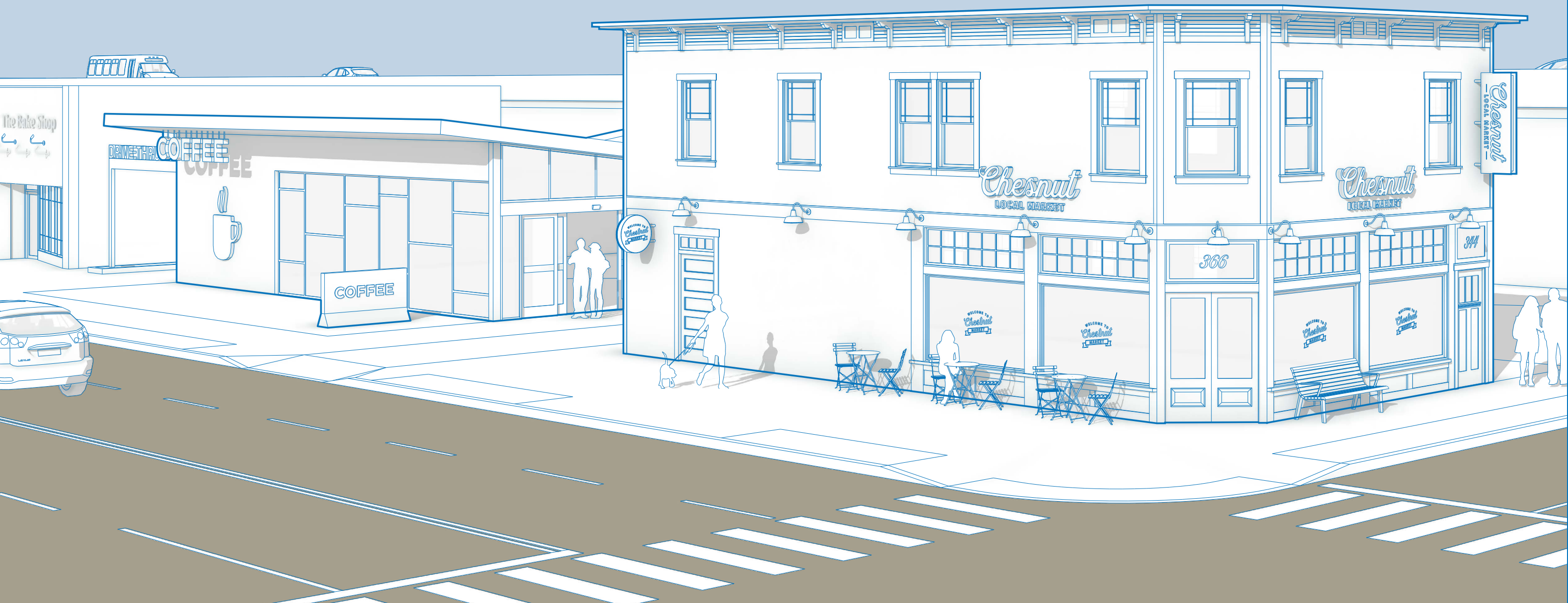


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Introduction

Welcome to Riverside’s Sign Guide! In a city as vibrant and diverse as ours, signs play an important role. They help people find their way, share information, and express creativity.

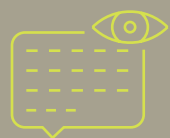
But when signs are installed without thoughtful design or upkeep, they can create clutter, distract drivers and pedestrians, and take away from the character that makes Riverside special.

That’s why the City has established clear, common-sense guidelines for how signs should be designed, placed, and maintained. These regulations help keep our neighborhoods and business districts looking their best, support a safe and comfortable experience for everyone, and ensure that signage continues to be a meaningful way for people to share their messages.

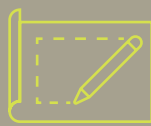
Think of this guide as a friendly companion to help you understand the basics of the sign ordinance. To view the complete sign ordinance, visit:



Sign Ordinance Goals



Support clear, effective communication for residents, businesses, and visitors—while keeping the city free of visual clutter that detracts from Riverside’s character.



Encourage well-designed signs that fit the look and feel of the community and help protect the quality and value of surrounding properties.

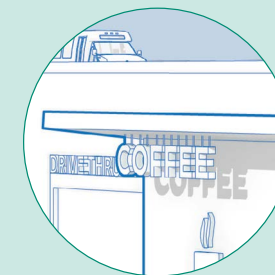


Promote public safety by ensuring signs are built, placed, and maintained to meet visibility and safety standards, reducing hazards and distractions for pedestrians and drivers.



Protect everyone’s right to free expression by allowing signage that respects constitutional free speech principles.

Minimum Criteria for Sign Design



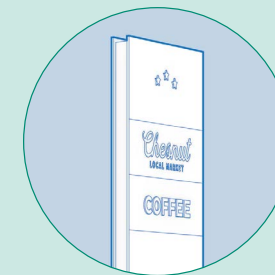
ARCHITECTURAL COMPATIBILITY

Signs should look like they belong on the building. That means matching the building’s style, colors, and scale, and not covering windows or important architectural features. Signs shouldn’t spill over natural edges or block upper floors.



CONSISTENCY WITH AREA CHARACTER

Signs should fit the overall look and feel of the district they’re in. Using similar materials or design themes helps keep things cohesive. If a sign is near homes, it should be designed and placed in a way that minimizes its impact on nearby residents.



LEGIBILITY

Sign text and symbols should be sized so people can read them from the distance and speed they’re traveling—smaller for pedestrians, larger for drivers. Colors should contrast clearly with the background to make the sign easy to read day or night.



READABILITY

The message on the sign should be clear and easy to understand at a glance. Keep it simple, straightforward, and free of confusion.



VISIBILITY

A sign should stand out enough from its surroundings that people can quickly notice it and get the information they need.

Prohibited Sign Types

Advertising Statuary

Three-dimensional free standing structures that identify, advertise, or otherwise direct attention to a product or business are not allowed.

Animated and Moving Signs

Signs that blink, move, or give the appearance of movement are generally not allowed.

Banners, Balloons, Streamers, & Pennants

Attention-grabbing banners, balloons, and similar items are not allowed except for approved temporary use.

Bench Signs

Advertising on benches or bus stops is restricted to public transportation agencies.

Commercial Mascots

People holding or wearing signs to advertise a business are not allowed.

Mobile Signs

Vehicles used mainly to display ads are not permitted.

Off-premises Advertising (Billboards)

Billboards advertising businesses or services not located on the property are not allowed.

Pole Signs

Pole signs are not allowed unless a specific plan or policy permits them.

Portable Signs

Portable or movable signs are not allowed unless specifically permitted.

Paper Signs and Placards

Paper signs meant to attract attention are not allowed unless they meet temporary sign rules (see page 55).

Roof Signs

Signs placed on rooftops are not allowed except in limited circumstances for certain historic properties.

Signs Creating Traffic Hazards

Signs that block views, confuse drivers, or sit too close to traffic features are not allowed.

Signs That Produce Emissions or Noise

Signs that release smoke, sounds, or particles are not allowed.

Signs for Prohibited or Unpermitted Uses

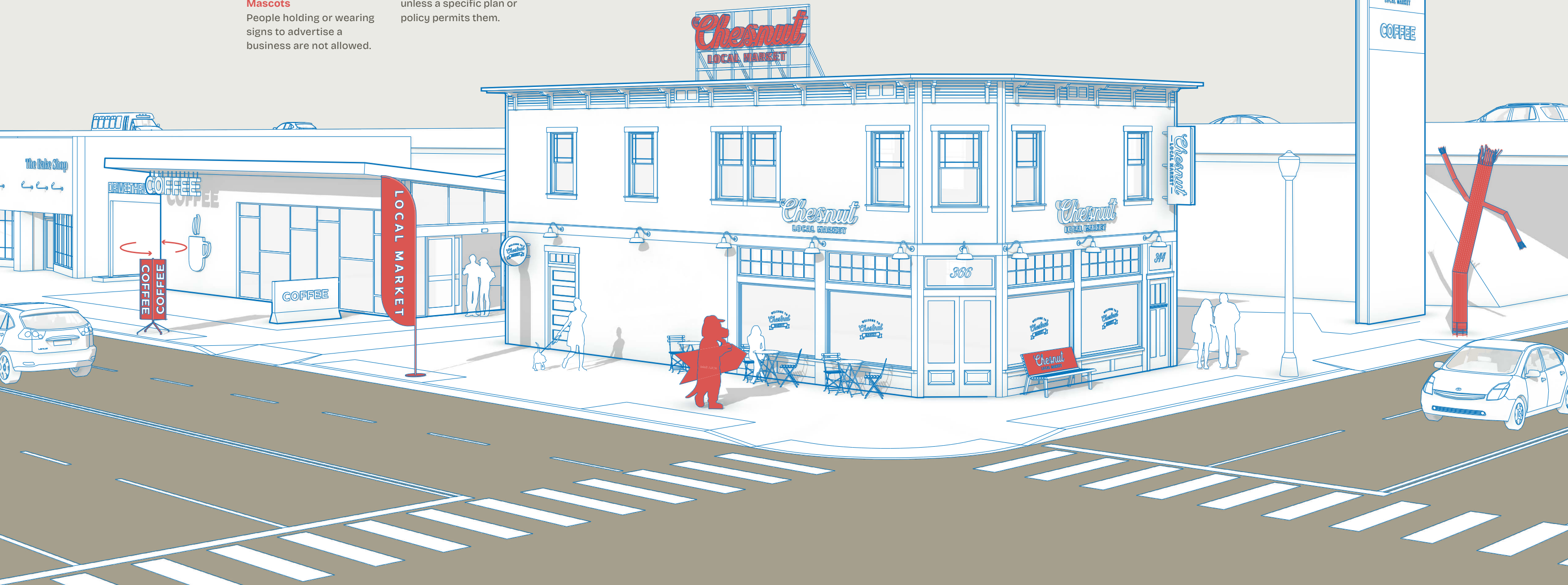
Signs promoting businesses that aren't allowed or haven't been approved are not permitted.

Signs on Public Property

Signs cannot be placed in the public right-of-way unless approved through an encroachment permit.

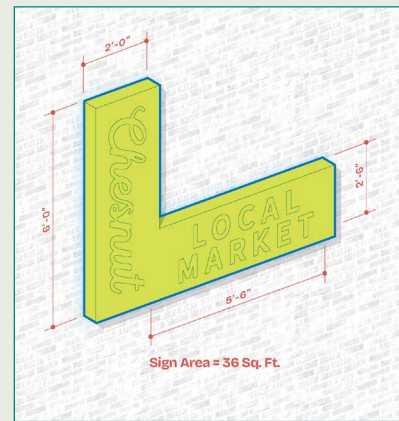
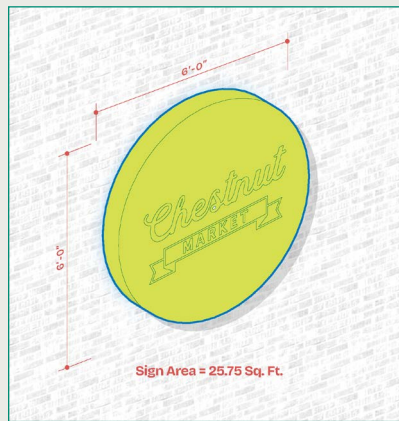
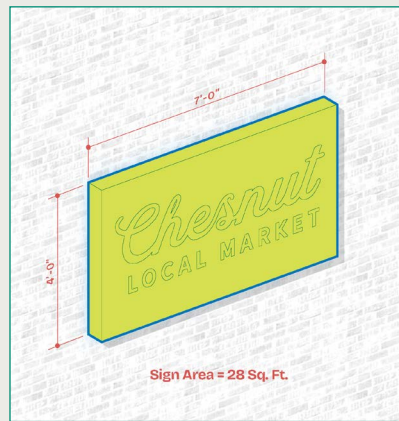
Cabinet or Panel Signs

New cabinet or panel signs are not allowed. Existing cabinet signs may continue to be used and maintained subject to Section 19.620.130 of the Riverside Municipal Code.



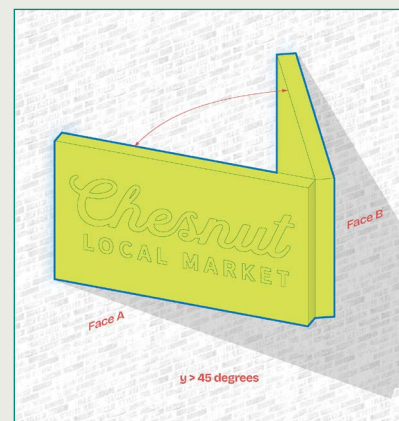
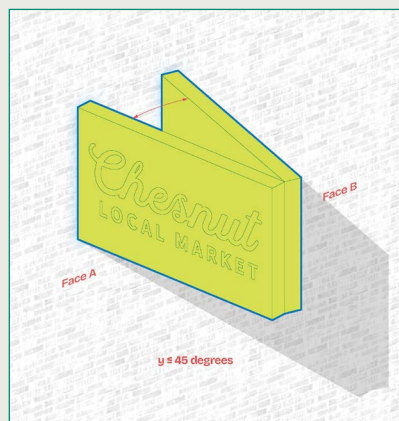
Calculating Sign Area

Sign area is measured based on the portion of the sign that actually displays words, images, or graphics. Elements like sign bases, columns, or supports are not included in the sign area—as long as they don't contain lettering or graphics (addresses and required tags are not counted towards the sign area). Different sign types are measured in slightly different ways.



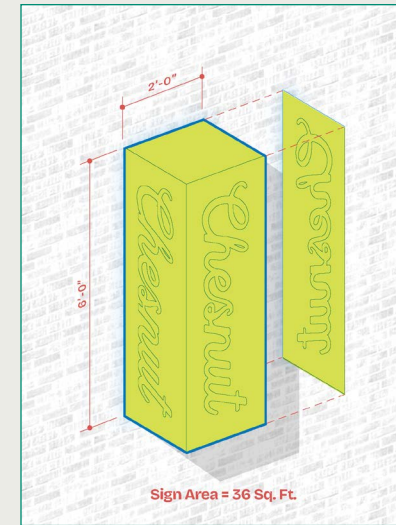
SINGLE-FACED SIGNS

If your sign has just one face with text or graphics, the sign area includes everything inside a single continuous outline that surrounds all of the sign elements. This outline can be made up of one or two rectangles, as long as they fully enclose the message.



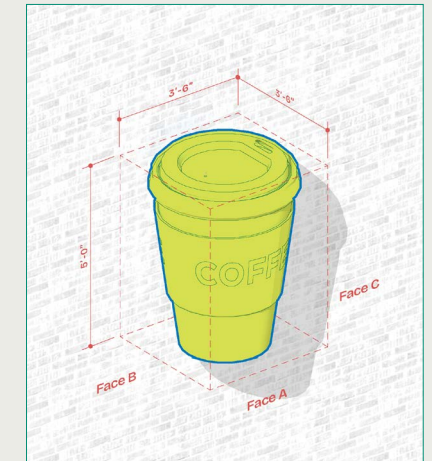
DOUBLE-FACED SIGNS

If a sign has two faces that are angled 45 degrees or less from each other, only one face counts toward the sign area. If the faces are different sizes, the larger one is used. If the two faces are angled more than 45 degrees apart, both faces are counted toward the total sign area.



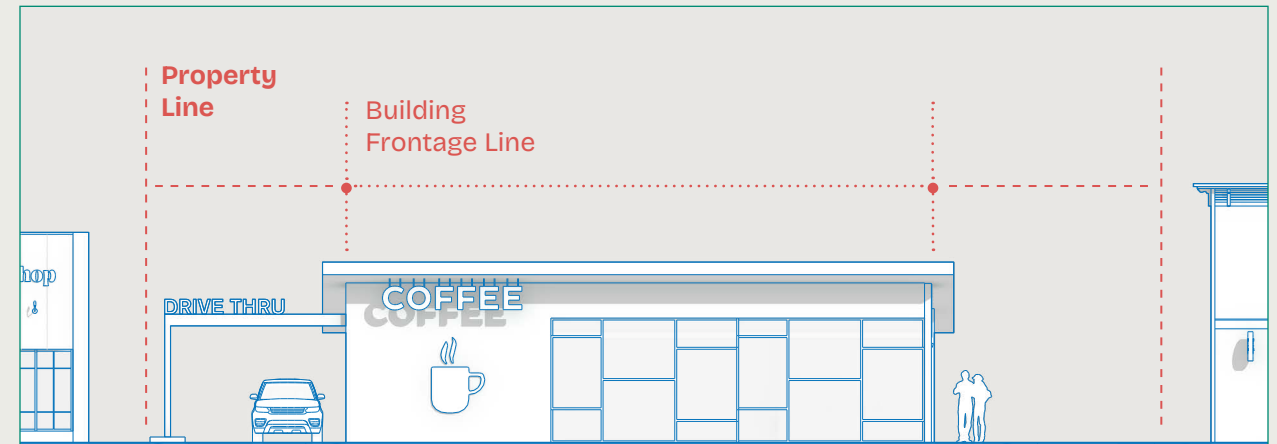
MULTI-FACED SIGNS

For signs with three or more faces, if any of the faces are angled 45 degrees or more from each other, the area of each face with text or graphics is added together to determine the total sign area.



THREE-DIMENSIONAL SIGNS

For signs made up of three-dimensional shapes—like sculptures, balls, cubes, or similar objects—the sign area is calculated by adding together the areas of the three visible vertical sides of the smallest box that could fully contain the sign.



Determining Street Frontage

Certain sign type locations and numbers are determined by Major and Secondary Street Frontage. If you are having trouble determining what your Major and/or Secondary street frontage is, please contact the Planning Division to confirm.

Measuring Frontage

Building frontage is often used to determine how many and how large different sign types can be. To calculate Building Frontage:

1. Stand in the front of the building and locate your tenant space
2. Identify the part of your tenant space that touches the street or parking lot. This is your “frontage” and typically includes the storefront, windows, and main entrance.
3. Measure the frontage straight across from one side of the tenant space to the other, following the building.
4. This measurement in feet is the building frontage.

Illumination

In most cases, signs can be either illuminated or non-illuminated. If you choose to illuminate your sign, whether from inside the sign or with an external light source, the lighting should be designed so it doesn't create glare or negatively affect nearby streets, homes, or businesses. To help ensure lighting stays safe, attractive, and neighbor-friendly, the standards on this spread apply to all illuminated signs.

DESIGN TIP

Signs made from high-quality materials like aluminum may not be transparent and may not be ideal for internal illumination. In these cases, consider halo (back-lit) illumination or external lighting that complements the surrounding architecture and enhances the overall sign design.



If you're using external lights, make sure they're aimed and shielded so they illuminate the sign—not everything around it.



Sign lighting shouldn't be so bright or glaring that it becomes a nuisance for nearby homes that can see it directly.



For extra rules about electronic message signs, check out Section 19.620.080.D.4 in the full sign ordinance.



Electrical parts like raceways and conduits should be hidden. If hiding them isn't possible or would damage important architectural features, keep them as small as you can and paint them to blend in.



Bright exposed bulbs over 40 watts, or bulbs with metal reflectors, aren't allowed.



Neon signs and architectural neon lighting are allowed in commercial and mixed-use areas, as long as they are not flashing, moving, or animated.



Sign Typologies



AWNING

PG 15



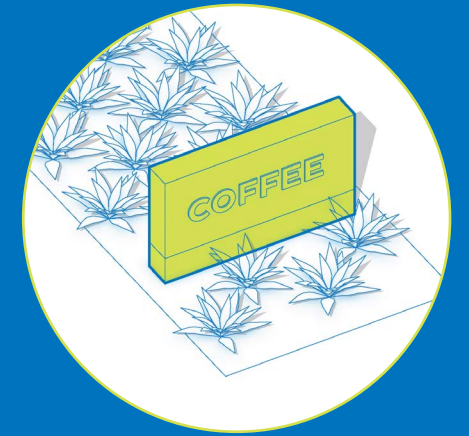
CANOPY

PG 19



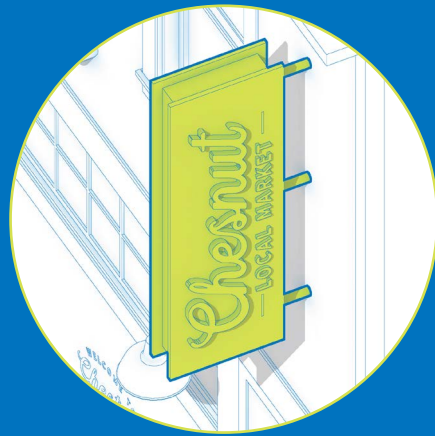
WINDOW

PG 23



MONUMENT

PG 27



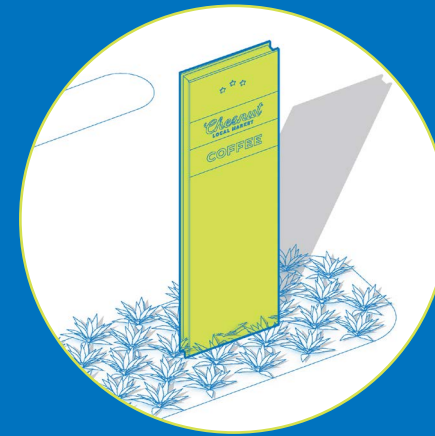
BLADE

PG 31



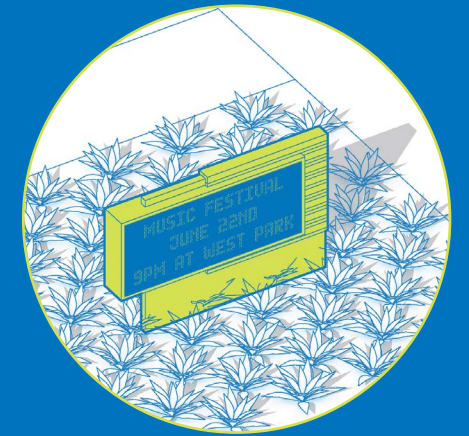
WALL

PG 35



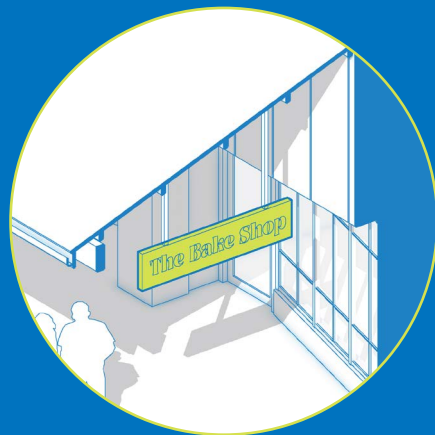
PYLON

PG 39



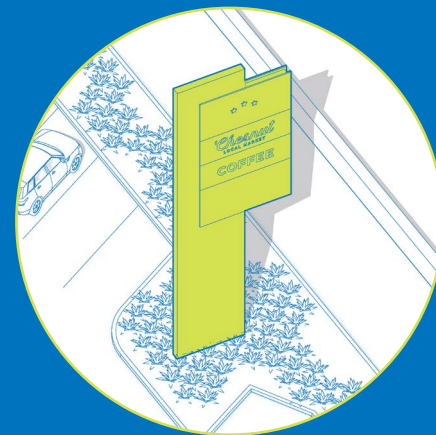
CHANGEABLE COPY

PG 43



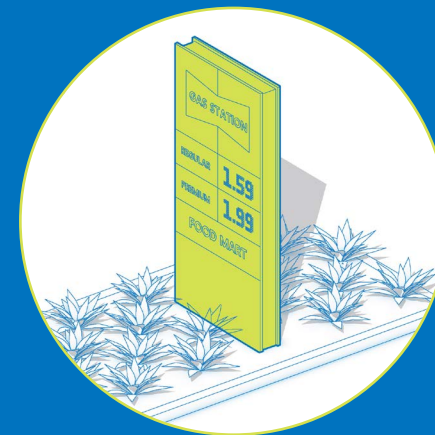
UNDER CANOPY

PG 47



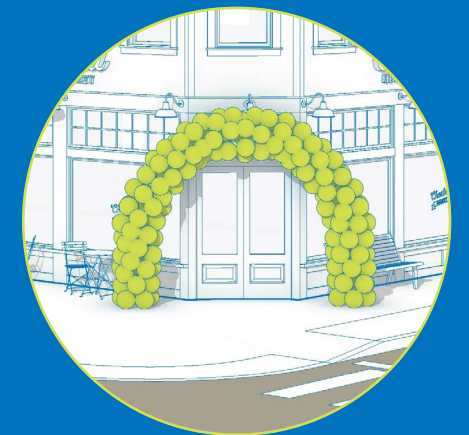
FREWAY ORIENTED

PG 51



VEHICLE FUEL

PG 53



TEMPORARY

PG 55

Awning Signs

Awning signs are printed on, painted on, or attached to an awning or canopy above a business entrance or window.

These signs are part of the awning itself and are designed to be seen by pedestrians while also providing shade, shelter, and visual character to a storefront.

Awning signs are integrated into the awning or canopy above storefront doors or windows, mounted high enough for pedestrian clearance, and sized so lettering does not overwhelm the structure.



Do

Mount awnings and canopies at least 8 feet above the sidewalk.

Limit lettering and logos to no more than 30% of the awning or canopy surface.

Don't

Don't extend awnings continuously across masonry piers, arches, or multiple storefront bays.

Don't use back-lit or internally illuminated awning graphics.

Don't use canopy signs in addition to other primary tenant identification signs (wall signs, blade signs, etc).

Awning Signs

Awning signs are integrated into the awning or canopy above storefront doors or windows, mounted high enough for pedestrian clearance, and sized so lettering does not overwhelm the structure.

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



Non-retractable, Fabric Awning Sign with Externally-Illuminated, Screen-Printed Business Name on Awning Main Cover and Valance



Non-retractable, Fabric Awning Sign with Non-Illuminated, Screen-Printed Business Name on Awning Valance



DESIGN TIP

Let the Awning Lead

Think of the awning as a design feature first and a sign second. Simple lettering, restrained graphics, and durable materials help awning signs add color and character without overpowering the storefront.



Non-retractable, Fabric Awning Sign with Non-Illuminated, Screen-Printed Business Name on Awning Valance and Main Cover



Non-retractable, Fabric Awning Sign with Non-Illuminated, Printed Business Name on Awning Main Cover

Canopy Signs

Canopy signs are signs mounted to or integrated into a fixed canopy structure that projects from a building.

Unlike awnings, canopies are rigid architectural elements, and the sign is applied to the canopy face or edge to identify a business or entrance while reinforcing the building's form and the pedestrian experience. For allowable size area, see Wall Signs section on page 35.



Do

Align graphics with canopy structure; keep proportions clean and integrated

Don't

Don't use both a canopy sign and wall sign on the same elevation

Canopy Signs

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



DESIGN TIP
Pedestrian-Focused Design
Canopy signs work best when designed for people on foot. Keep lettering clear and legible at close range, limit graphic clutter, and align canopies with storefront openings to support a welcoming, walkable streetscape.



Window Signs

A window sign is a sign placed on or just inside a window of a business or use.

Window signs must be located on the glass or within 24 inches inside the window and must face a public area such as a street, parking lot, driveway, alley, mall, or freeway.

Size	Placement
25 percent of the total window area	On the glass or within 24 inches inside the window



Do

Ensure the sign faces a public area such as a street, parking lot, or driveway.

Maintain transparency for at least 75% of the window area.

Don't

Place window signs deeper than 24 inches inside the building.

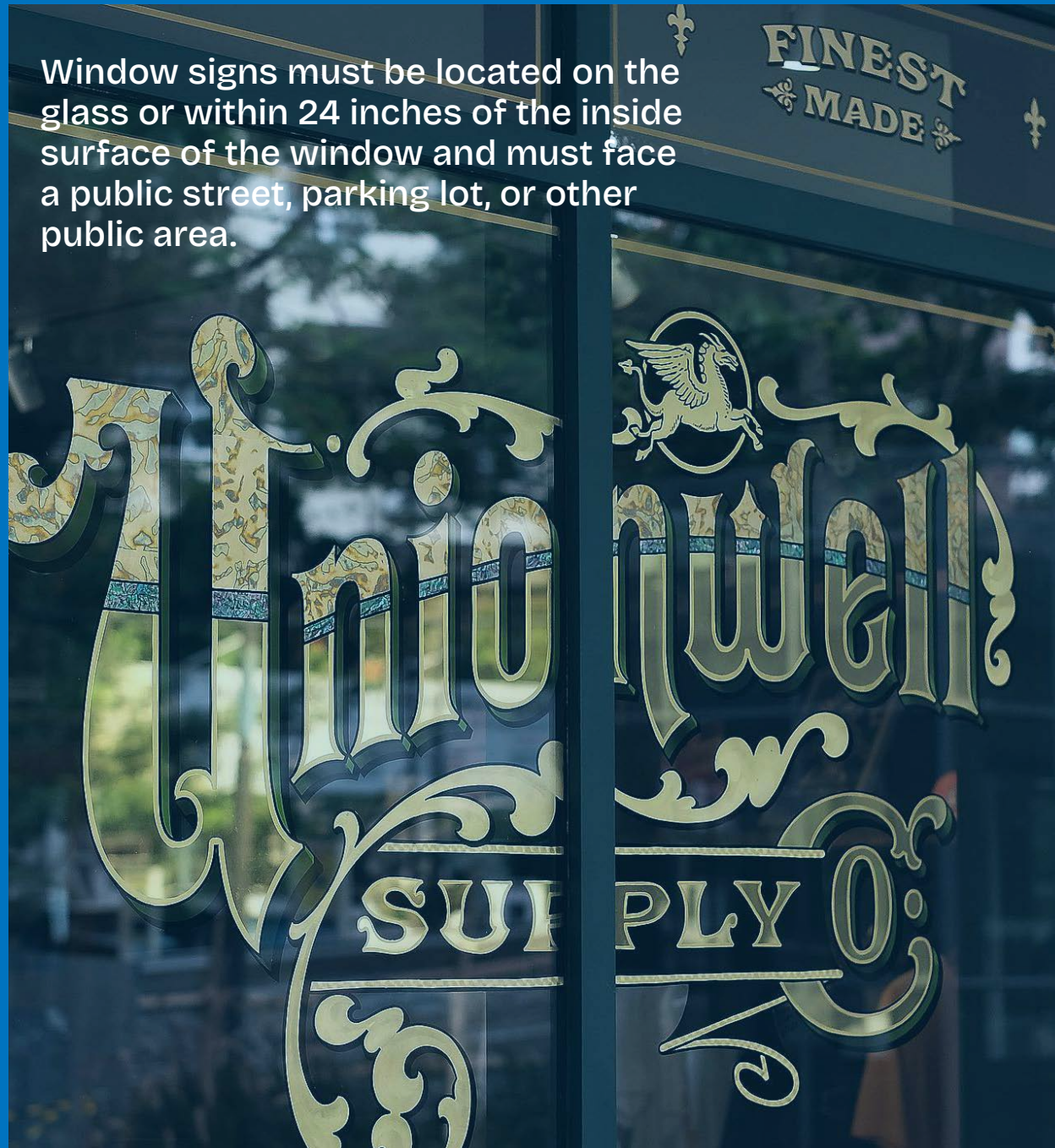
Install window signs that face only interior spaces.

Cover more than 25% of the window area with opaque material, including window signage.

Window Signs

Window signs must be located on the glass or within 24 inches of the inside surface of the window and must face a public street, parking lot, or other public area.

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



Semi-permanent White Vinyl Adhesive Lettering



Semi-permanent White Vinyl Adhesive Lettering and decals

ADDITIONAL NOTE
The installation of window signs does not require a building permit. However, the Planning Division must review the proposed signage through the Temporary Sign Permit Application to ensure code compliance. Time limits do not apply to window signs.

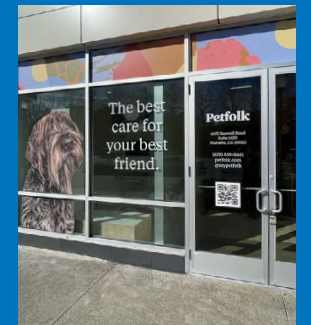


Semi-permanent Color Vinyl Adhesive Lettering

Semi-Permanent, Color Printed Adhesive Decals



Semi-permanent White Vinyl Adhesive Lettering and printed Vinyl Adhesive Decals



Monument Signs

A monument sign is a low-profile, freestanding sign that sits on the ground and is typically used to identify a business, building, or complex set back from the street.

These signs are supported by solid columns or a base, do not hang over public property, and are designed to visually match the architecture, materials, and character of the building or site they represent.



Do

- Enclose internal supports, poles, or pylons with decorative covers.
- Match materials, finishes, and colors to the primary structure.
- Illuminate using external fixtures, internal illumination, or back-lit illumination.
- Use shielded up-lighting integrated into landscaping.

Don't

- Place monument signs outside of landscaped areas.
- Use acrylic cabinets and/or panels.

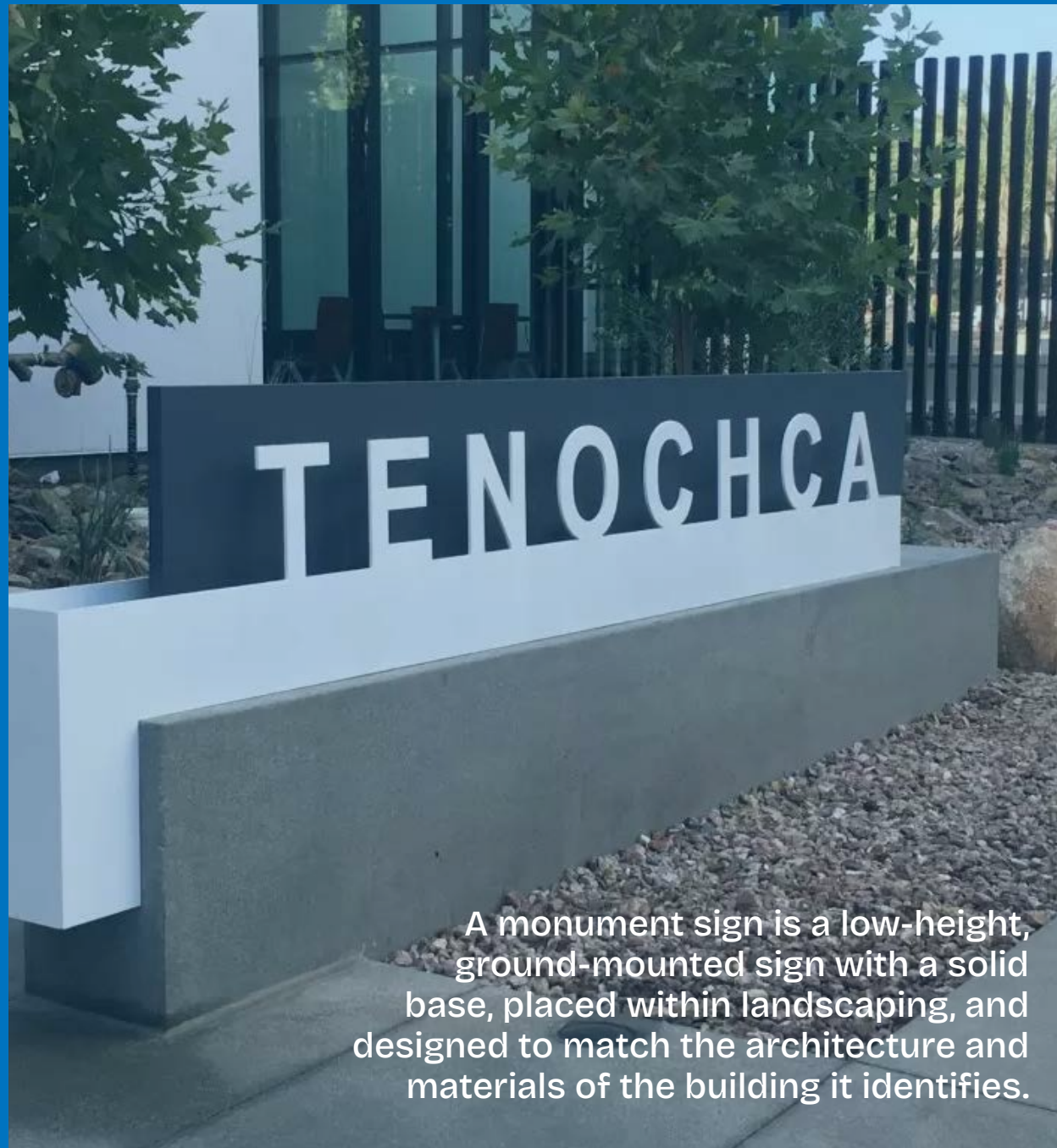
SIGN TYPOLOGIES

Allowances for businesses in Commercial Complexes in Commercial and Mixed Use Zones					
Acres	<1	1-2	2-6	6-10	10-25
Max. Number	1	Total 3 signs for site: 1 per street frontage	Total 3 signs for site: 1 on-premises sign per 200 lineal feet on major street frontage; 1 on-premises sign on secondary street frontage	Total 4 signs for site: 1 on-premises sign per 200 lineal feet on major street frontage; 1 on-premises sign on secondary street frontage	Total 5 signs for site: 1 on-premises sign per 200 lineal feet on major street frontage; 1 on-premises sign on secondary street frontage
Max. Area (sq ft)	30	40 per sign	50 on major street frontage; 40 on secondary street frontage	50 on major street frontage; 40 on secondary street frontage	50 on major street frontage; 40 on secondary street frontage
Max. Height (feet)	6	8	8 on major street frontage; 6 on secondary frontage	10 on major street frontage; 6 on secondary frontage	10 on major street frontage; 6 on secondary frontage
Placement	Oriented toward a parking lot, mall, street, driveway, or alley. Not allowed to overhang sidewalks, streets, or other public property. Must maintain safe corner site distance near driveways.				

Allowances for stand alone businesses (not in commercial complexes)				
	Stand alone uses in Commercial and Mixed Use Zones	Stand alone uses offices in the Office Zone	Uses in an Industrial Park (Industrial Zones)	Stand alone uses in Industrial Zones
Max. Number	1	1	1 (For each additional 300 feet beyond the first 300 feet of street frontage, 1 additional sign is allowed, up to a max. of 3 signs)	1
Max. Area (sq ft)	25	25	50	50
Max. Height (feet)	6	6	8	8

Monument Signs

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



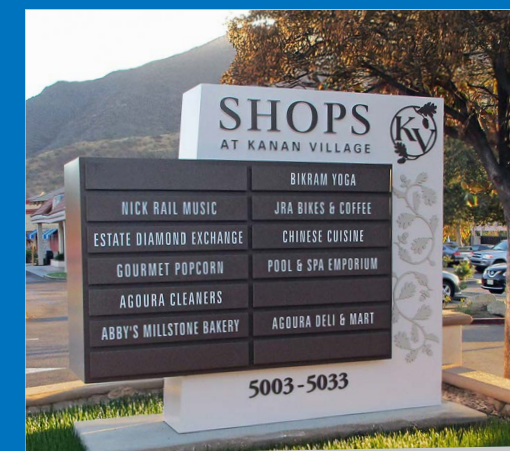
A monument sign is a low-height, ground-mounted sign with a solid base, placed within landscaping, and designed to match the architecture and materials of the building it identifies.



DESIGN TIP

Build It Into the Landscape

Monument signs look best when they feel like part of the site. Use materials, colors, and proportions that match the building and place the sign within landscaped areas so it feels grounded, permanent, and welcoming.



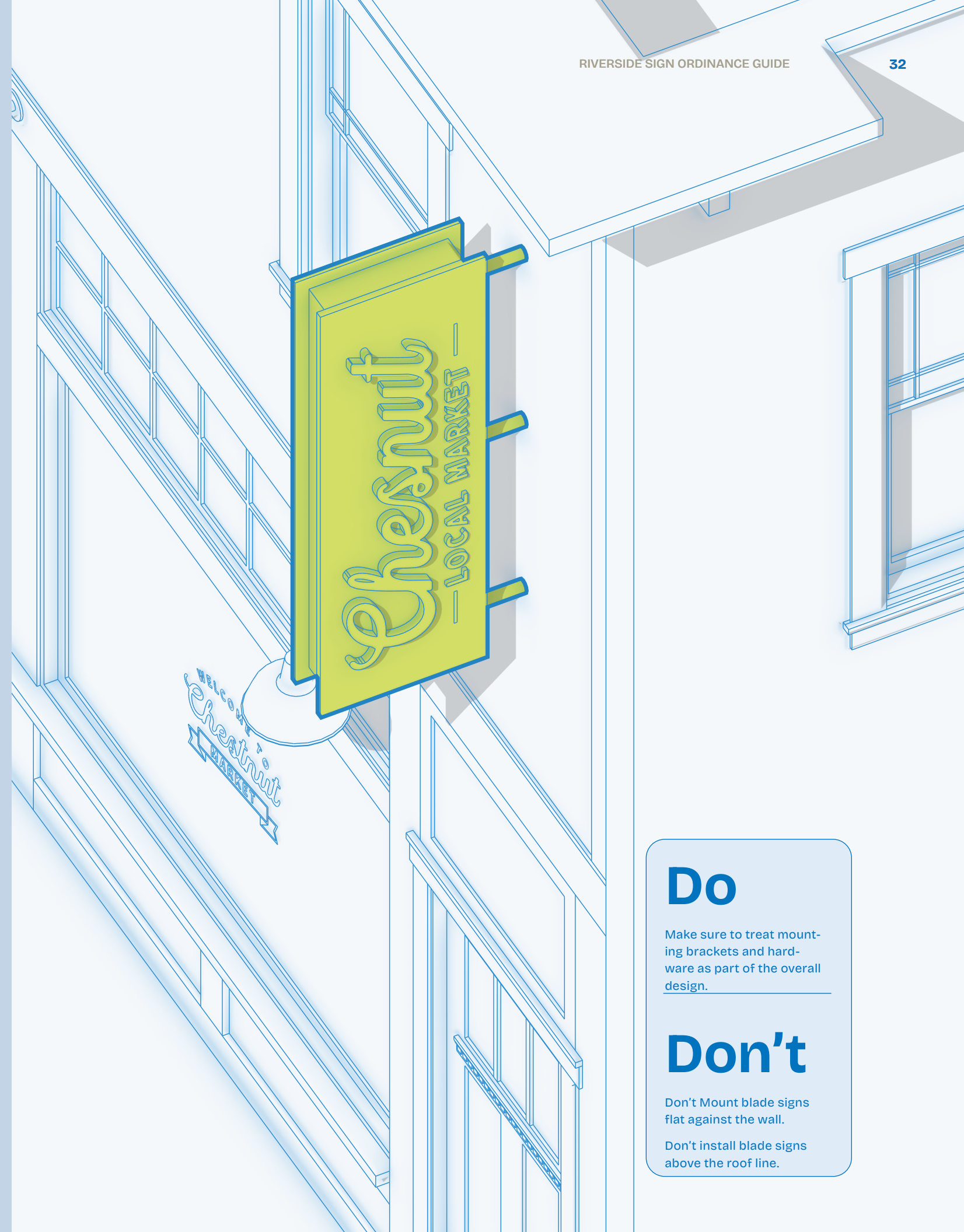
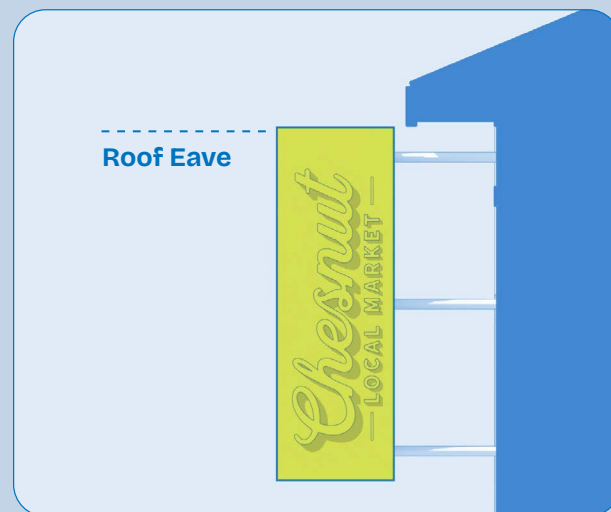
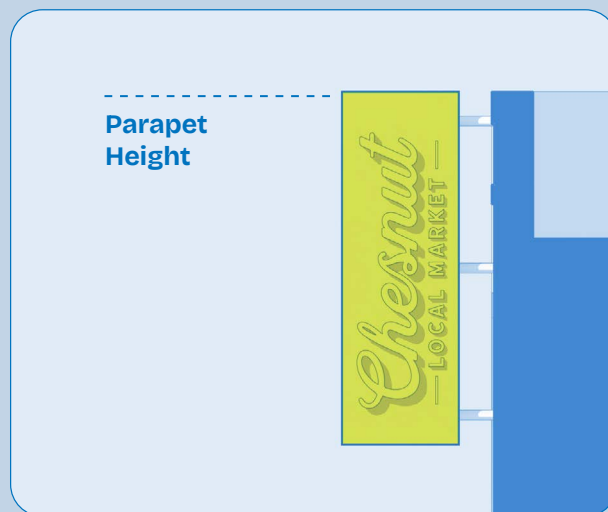
Blade Signs

A blade sign is a double-sided sign that is mounted to a building wall and projects outward, perpendicular to the building.

Blade signs are designed to be highly visible from the sidewalk and/or roadway.

SIGN TYPOLOGIES

Quantity	Size	Placement	Projection
1 blade sign per street frontage or parking lot frontage on an adjacent property.	Sign shall not exceed one square foot per linear foot of building frontage from which the sign projects.	All blade signs shall be attached to a building, not a pole or other structure. Provide at least 8 feet of vertical clearance above ground.	On the first or second story, no blade sign shall project more than four feet. Above the third story, no blade sign shall project more than six feet from the face of the building wall upon which the sign is mounted. If any blade sign projects into or over the public right-of-way, an encroachment permit must be obtained from the Department of Public Works.



Do

Make sure to treat mounting brackets and hardware as part of the overall design.

Don't

Don't Mount blade signs flat against the wall.

Don't install blade signs above the roof line.

Blade Signs

SIGN TYPOLOGIES

Blade signs are mounted perpendicular to the building wall, project outward over the sidewalk, remain small in scale, and maintain at least 8 feet of clearance above pedestrian areas.

Property Line

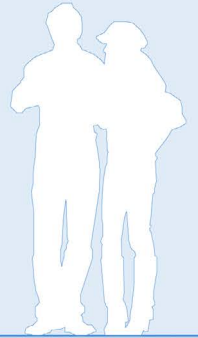
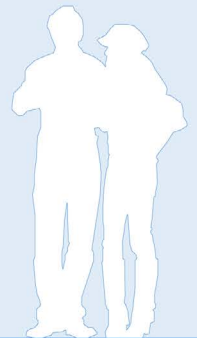
Pedestrian Right of Way

Encroachment Permit Needed

8 Foot Minimum

Projection from Building Face
4 Foot Maximum for 2 Stories;
6 Foot Maximum for 3+ Stories

DESIGN TIP
Make the Hardware Count
Mounting brackets are not just functional, they are part of the sign's visual character. Simple round pipe brackets or decorative metal brackets that match the building's style are encouraged and help create a cohesive, high-quality look.



Wall Signs

A wall sign is attached directly to a building wall and faces outward, running parallel to the wall surface.

Wall signs do not project more than 18 inches and are used to identify a business or tenant.

SIGN TYPOLOGIES

Do

Mount signs flat and keep width proportionate to the storefront.

Conceal all raceways and mechanics, either behind the building wall or camouflaged with the surrounding material.

Don't

Cover windows or architectural details.

Allow the sign to project more than 18 inches.

Create sign clutter with product or service listings.



Allowances						
Building Frontage in lineal feet		<80	80-200	200-350	350-500	500+
Commercial Zones: CR, CG & CRC Mixed Use Zones: MU-N, MU-V & MU-U	Number	1 wall sign per occupant building frontage	2 wall signs per occupant building frontage	3 wall signs per occupant building frontage	4 wall signs per occupant building frontage	5 wall signs per occupant building frontage
	Max. Area (sq ft)	1 sq ft of sign area per lineal foot of occupant building frontage	1 sq ft of sign area per lineal foot of occupant building frontage	1 sq ft of sign area per lineal foot of occupant building frontage (max. of 200 sq ft)	1 sq ft of sign area per lineal foot of occupant building frontage (max. of 400 sq ft)	1 sq ft of sign area per lineal foot of occupant building frontage (max. of 500 sq ft)
Commercial Zones: O	Number	1 wall sign per building frontage	2 wall signs per occupant building frontage			
	Max. Area (sq ft)	1 sq ft of sign area per lineal foot of occupant building frontage.	1 square-foot of sign area per lineal foot of occupant building frontage or 200 square feet for the entire building frontage, whichever is less.			
Industrial Zones: BMP, I, AI & AIR within an Industrial Complex	Number	1 wall sign per occupant or building on each building frontage	2 wall signs on each occupant building frontage oriented toward a parking lot, mall street, driveway, alley or freeway.			
	Max. Area (sq ft)	1 sq ft of sign area per lineal foot of occupant building frontage	1 square-foot of sign area per lineal foot of occupant building frontage not to exceed 200 square feet of total sign area.			

Buildings Over 3 Stories					
		4 Stories	5-6 Stories	7-10 Stories	10+ Stories
Building frontage less than 150 lineal feet	Number	1 sign per building frontage located at the top floor			
	Max. Area (sq ft)	100	150	200	250
Building frontage 150 lineal feet or more	Number	2 signs per building frontage located at the top floor			
	Max. Area (sq ft)	100 square feet per sign up to a total maximum of 150 square feet for the building frontage	150 square feet per sign up to a total maximum of 225 square feet for the building frontage	200 square feet per sign up to a total maximum of 300 square feet for the building frontage	250 square feet per sign up to a total maximum of 375 square feet for the building frontage

Wall Signs

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



DESIGN TIP

Let the Building Lead

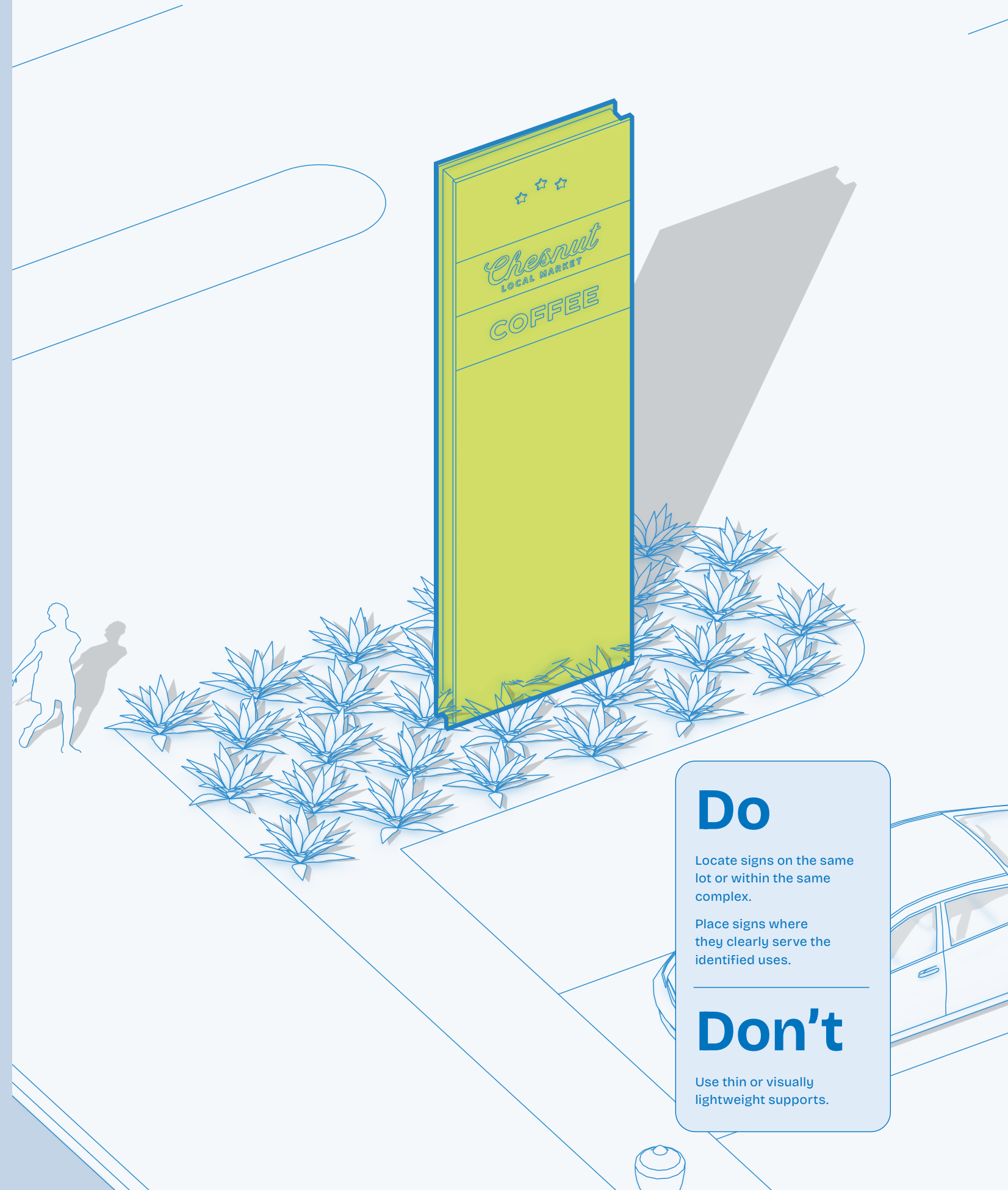
Align signs with architectural elements and use compatible materials so the sign enhances rather than competes with the building.

Pylon Signs

A pylon sign is a freestanding sign supported by one or more solid vertical structures and mounted directly on the ground.

These signs are only allowed in commercial complexes at least 10 acres in size.

Allowances		
Commercial Complexes in Commercial and Mixed Use Zones		
Acres	10-25	25+
Max. Number	1 Pylon Sign on Major Street frontage only	2 Pylon Signs on Major Street frontage only with minimum 600 feet of frontage
Max. Area (sq ft)	110	
Max. Height (feet)	25	



Do

Locate signs on the same lot or within the same complex.

Place signs where they clearly serve the identified uses.

Don't

Use thin or visually lightweight supports.

Pylon Signs

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



Pylon signs are tall, ground-mounted signs supported by solid columns and oriented toward streets, parking lots, or other public areas.



DESIGN TIP

Keep It Solid and Simple

Strong proportions, durable materials, and clear lettering help pylon signs remain readable without overwhelming their surroundings.



Changeable Copy Signs

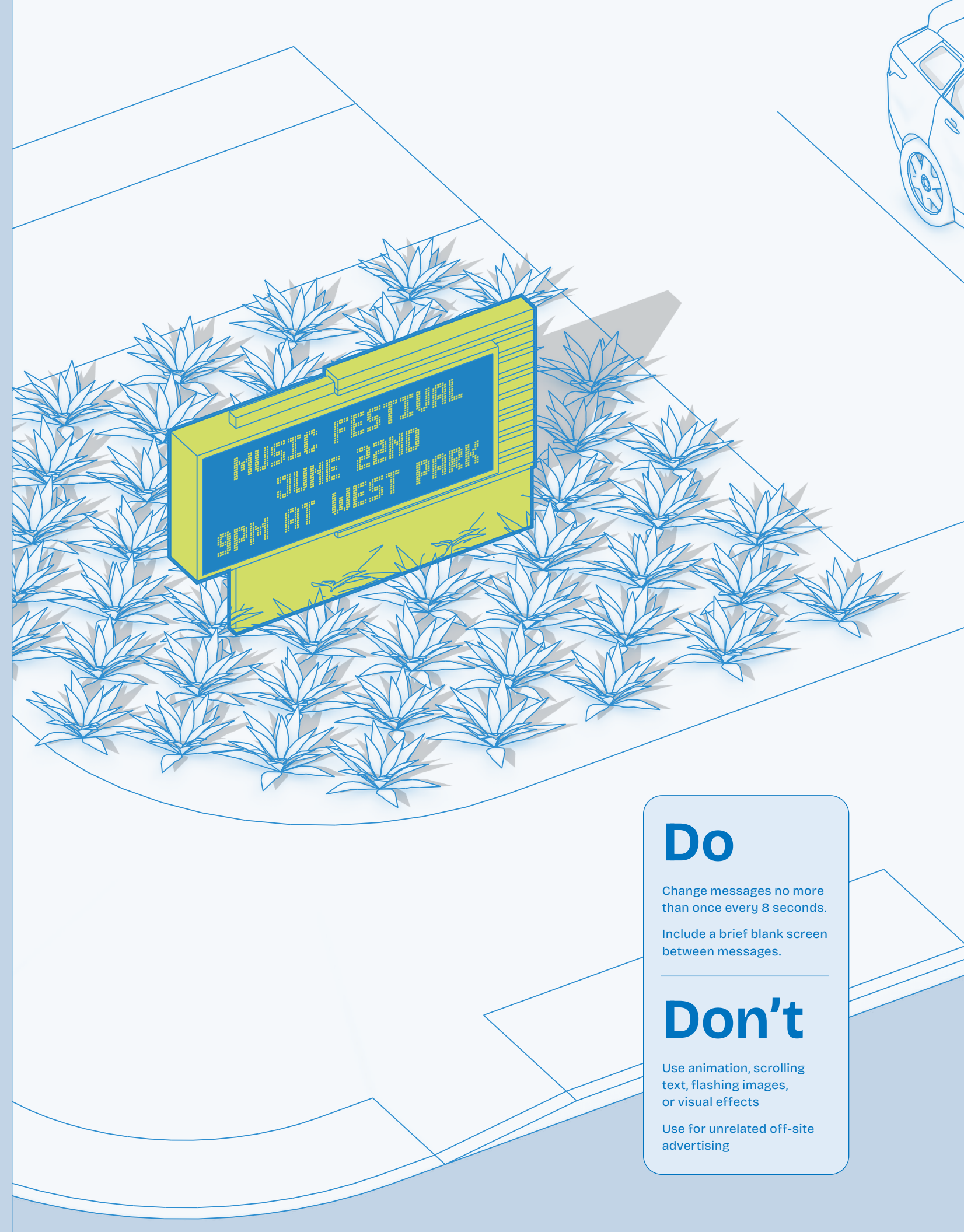
A changeable copy sign is a sign that lets you update the message either manually or electronically.

Changeable copy signs are most often associated with schools, movie theaters, places of worship, etc. These signs are used to display up to date informational messages and typically do not include graphics, color, or animation.

Changeable Copy Sign standards may vary depending on the site's use and size. Contact Planning Staff for a full list of standards for a changeable copy sign on your site.

SIGN TYPOLOGIES

All Changeable Copy Signs	Messages on changeable copy signs may change no more frequently than once every 8 seconds.	
Movie Theaters	One manual or digital changeable copy marquee up to 60 square feet in area.	
Elementary, Middle and High Schools	Sites less than 15 acres: One changeable copy sign up to 40 square feet in area. The sign may be mounted to the building or free standing (up to 6 feet in overall height). Sites greater than 15 acres: One changeable copy sign up to 65 square feet in area. The sign may be mounted to the building or free standing (up to 15 feet in overall height).	
Churches and Places of Worship	Churches and places of worship are permitted one freestanding changeable copy sign (in lieu of a permitted monument sign) or one building mounted changeable copy sign (in lieu of a permitted building sign). See the standards for changeable copy signs for Places of Worship below:	
	Site Size	Changeable Copy Building Sign
	Less than 1 acre	Up to 24 square feet in area
	Between 1-15 acres	Up to 40 square feet in area
	Greater than 15 acres	Up to 65 square feet in area
		Changeable Copy Freestanding sign
		Up to 15 square feet in area and up to 6 feet in height
		Up to 40 square feet in area and up to 6 feet in height
		Up to 65 square feet in area and up to 15 feet in height.



Do

Change messages no more than once every 8 seconds.

Include a brief blank screen between messages.

Don't

Use animation, scrolling text, flashing images, or visual effects

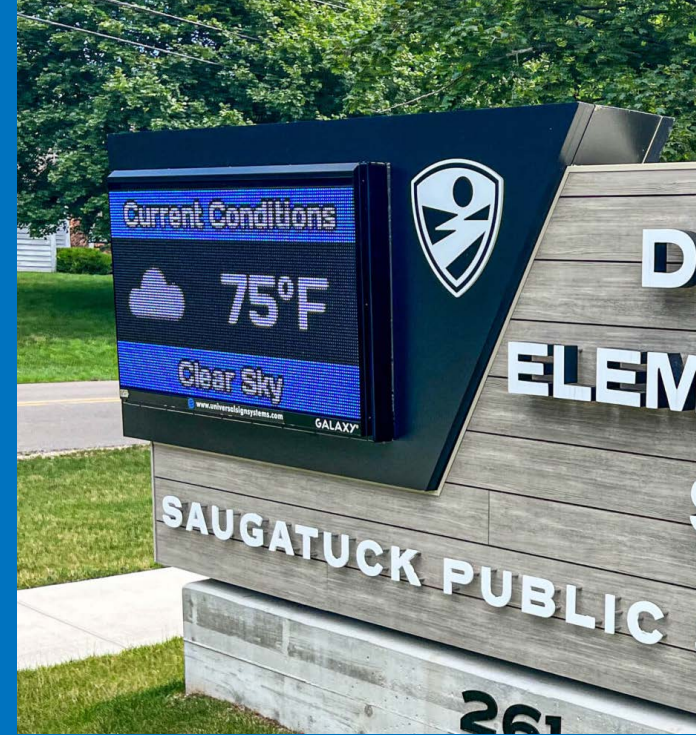
Use for unrelated off-site advertising

Changeable Copy Signs

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



Changeable copy signs feature interchangeable text panels used to display updated messages, often found at businesses, schools, or community facilities.



Signs that use digital display technology, often LED, to display changing images, colorful graphics, and dynamic messaging are considered Electronic Message Centers (EMC). EMC's are subject to a Conditional Use Permit and only permitted commercial properties 10 acres or larger along Arterial Streets. Contact the Planning Division for more information on where EMC's are allowed and the applicable standards

DESIGN TIP

Keep It Simple

One clear message at a time with high contrast and restrained brightness improves readability and minimizes distraction.

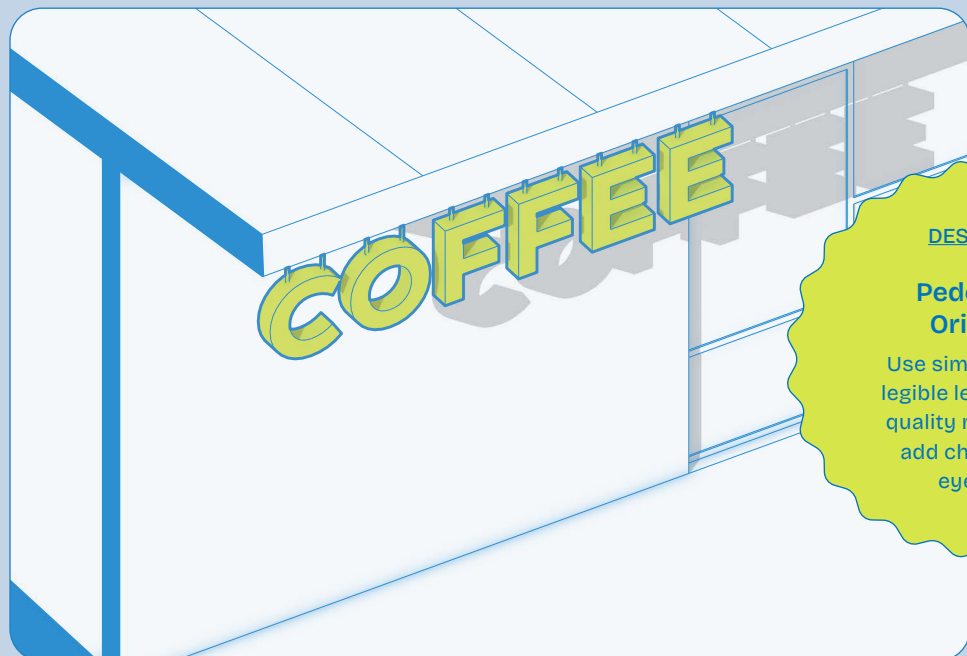


Under-Canopy & Shingle Signs

Under-canopy and shingle signs hang below a pedestrian canopy or projecting support near a storefront.

These signs face perpendicular to the building and are intended for pedestrian visibility.

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



DESIGN TIP

Pedestrian Oriented

Use simple shapes, legible lettering, and quality materials to add character at eye level.



Do

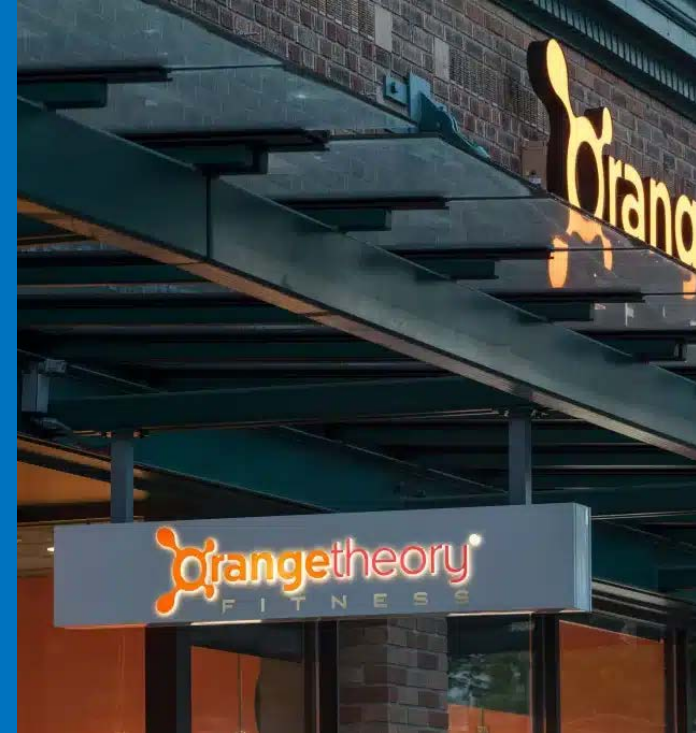
Maintain at least 7 feet of clearance, or 8 feet over public right-of-way.

Don't

Overcrowd or use oversize signage that disrupts scale or creates a potential hazard for pedestrians underneath.

Under-Canopy and Shingle Signs

Under-canopy and shingle signs hang beneath a canopy or support, face perpendicular to the storefront, and maintain safe pedestrian clearance.



DESIGN TIP
Keep It Simple
One clear message at a time with high contrast and restrained brightness improves readability and minimizes distraction.

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



Freeway-Oriented Signs

A freeway-oriented sign is a freestanding sign designed primarily to identify major businesses or sites near freeway corridors. Freeway-oriented signs are only allowed on commercial complexes at least 9 acres in size.

Allowances		
	Commercial Complexes in Commercial and Mixed Use Zones	
Acres	9–25	25+
Max. Number	1	1
Max. Area (sq ft)	225	500
Max. Height (feet)	40 ft ²	60 ft ²

DESIGN TIP

Visibility Without Visual Clutter

Use simple layouts, strong contrast, and minimal messaging so information can be read quickly at freeway speeds.



Do

Ensure the sign does not block views of important natural or built features.

Obtain a Minor Conditional Use Permit by the Planning Commission.

Don't

Use for off-site or general advertising.

Place within 500 feet of a city boundary.

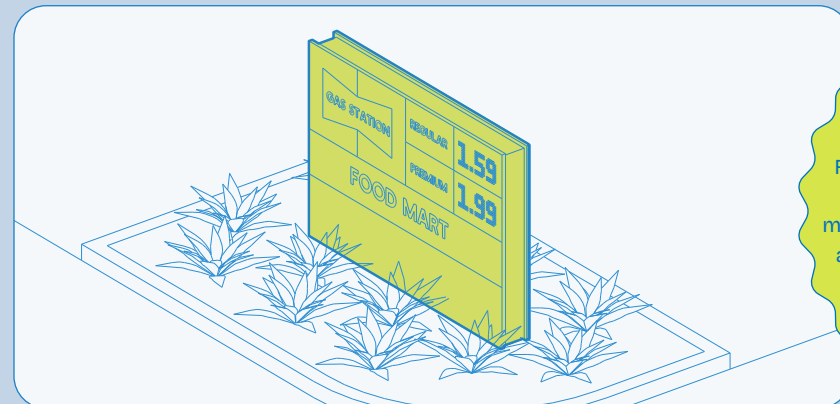
Vehicle Fuel Signs

Vehicle Fuel (gas) stations often require a signage package that addresses not only Tenant Identification, but also pricing, secondary retail tenants, and signage on pump islands.

Because of their unique needs, vehicle fuel stations have their own signage standards:

	Maximum Number	Maximum Area (sq ft)	Maximum Height (ft)
Freeway oriented pylon sign	1	100	45
Price/monument sign	1 (on major street frontage)	50 (price portion ≤ 30 sq ft)	8
Secondary price sign	1 (on secondary street frontage)	15	6
Wall signs, Primary Use	Refer to the wall signs Typology		
Wall signs, Secondary Use	+1 for each use, up to 5 total	10 each	
Gas Canopy Signs	2 per canopy	15 each	
Pump Island Signs	2 per pump	4 per sign	

SIGN TYPOLOGIES



DESIGN TIP

Keep it Minimal

Fuel pricing signs are limited to: the brand or trade name, method of sale, grade designation and price per gallon of gasoline or other motor vehicle fuel offered for sale on the business premises



Do

Design fuel station signs to complement the architecture, materials, and overall branding of the building and canopy.

Don't

Place signs where they obstruct pedestrian pathways, drive aisles, or visibility at intersections.

Temporary Signs

Temporary Signs are signs intended for short-term display to communicate time-limited information such as promotions, events, sales, real estate listings, construction activity, or protected non-commercial messages.

These signs are not permanently affixed to a building or site and are designed to be installed and removed within a defined duration.

Temporary signs may include banners, portable signs, window signs, balloons or balloon arches, real estate signs, construction signs, subdivision signs, directional open house signs, and protected non-commercial political or free speech signs.

	Banners	Portable Signs	Balloon Arches
Number	1 per street frontage	1 per establishment	1 per establishment
Location	Exterior building walls or windows, below height of building roof line. Must be securely fastened flat against surface.	Avoid the public right of way or any location where they will interfere with pedestrian or vehicular traffic.	Securely fastened to permanent structures and set back from all driveways and the public right of way.
Size	Up to 25% of the area of the building wall or window it is displayed on.	Up to six square feet in area and 36 inches in height.	Individual balloons can not exceed 24 inches in diameter. The overall arch shall not exceed the height of the building.
Duration	Temporary Signs can be displayed for a period of 30 consecutive days twice a year, not to exceed 60 days a year. Temporary signs can be displayed longer than ³⁰ consecutive days during the holidays, starting one week before Thanksgiving and ending one week after New Year's Day.		

SIGN TYPOLOGIES

DESIGN TIP
Temporary Signs
 Temporary signs do not count toward a site's total permanent sign area and are subject to specific standards based on sign type, location, duration, and use.



Do

- Obtain a Temporary Sign Permit prior to installation.
- Maintain clear pedestrian access and visibility.
- Remove signage at the end of the approved display period.

Don't

- Obstruct pedestrian or vehicle traffic.
- Exceed size or time limitations.

Permit Process

The Sign Permit Application process is made up of four main stages: Submittal, Planning Division Review, Building Division Review, and Permit Issuance. If you have any questions on the process, One Stop Shop Staff are always available to help you out.

CREATIVE SIGN PERMIT

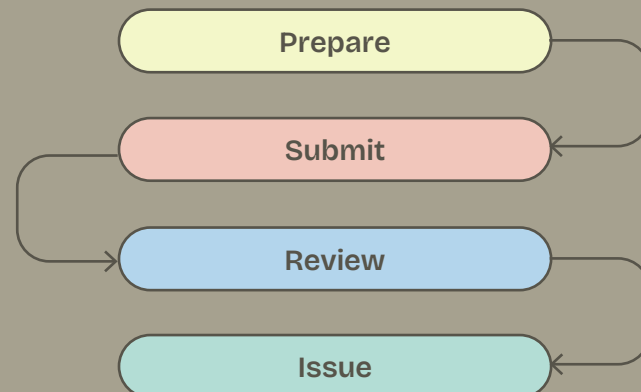
Creative Sign Permits may be obtained for signs that do not quite fit all the zoning code standards. The Creative Sign Permit process is meant to encourage and permit signs that exhibit a high degree of creativity, design, and construction. If you are interested in this process, please contact the Planning Division for more information.

SIGN PROGRAMS

Sign programs establish cohesion and consistency amongst all signage within a shopping center or multitenant site. They may offer some flexibility in size and location standards, and help maintain effective tenant identification.

Sign programs are required for any center or site that has 3 or more lease spaces. For more information on the sign program process, please contact the Planning Division.

To download a permit application and learn more information, visit:



I want to apply for a sign permit!

Great! Download the sign permit application from the City website or request one from the Planning Division.

Now you need to prepare your plan set.

1 SIGN DESIGN

Sign design and specifications. Include dimensions, materials, lighting, and mounting.

2 SITE

Site plan showing location of the sign. For free standing signs, show the setback from any property lines.

3 ELEVATIONS

Building elevations showing placement, dimensions, and frontage. For free standing signs, include elevation of sign showing overall dimensions including any structural bases.

I want to submit online

Upload your completed application and digital plans to the Public Permit Portal under Planning Approvals.

I want to submit in person

Bring your completed application, 3 plan sets, and applicable fees to the One Stop Shop (City Hall, 3rd Floor)

Planning staff will review the application for completeness and zoning compliance. Online submittals: reviewed within 3 business days. In-person submittals: reviewed during the same visit.

If revisions are needed

The Planning Division will provide comments and corrections. Update plans accordingly and resubmit for review.

If approved

The application and plan set are complete and demonstrate compliance with the zoning code and design guidelines. Planning will stamp your plans for approval.

Submit to Building Division

I want to submit online

Upload to the Public Permit Portal under Building Permits and Include 1 stamped plan set and 1 unstamped plan set.

I want to submit in person

Bring your Planning-approved application and plans to the Building Counter.

Building & Safety staff review the application for building and life-safety code compliance. Typical review time is 3 business days.

If revisions are needed

Update plans based on The Building Division feedback and resubmit.

If approved

Plans move forward to permit issuance.

Congratulations! The Building Division prepares your permit and will contact you when it is ready for issuance. You will be notified if additional fees or documentation are required.

What to Include in Your Submittal Drawings

To help your application move smoothly through review, your drawing set should clearly show the key details of your proposed sign. Providing complete and accurate drawings upfront can help avoid delays or revision requests. Here's what should be included:

A SITE PLAN

Provide a site plan that shows where the sign will be located on the property. Include property lines, nearby buildings, streets, driveways, and any relevant features. This helps staff confirm placement, visibility, and compliance with setback and safety requirements.

B LINEAL FRONTAGE

Show the building's lineal frontage on your elevation drawings and clearly label it. This helps staff verify how much sign area is allowed for your property.

C SIGN PLAN WITH DIMENSIONS

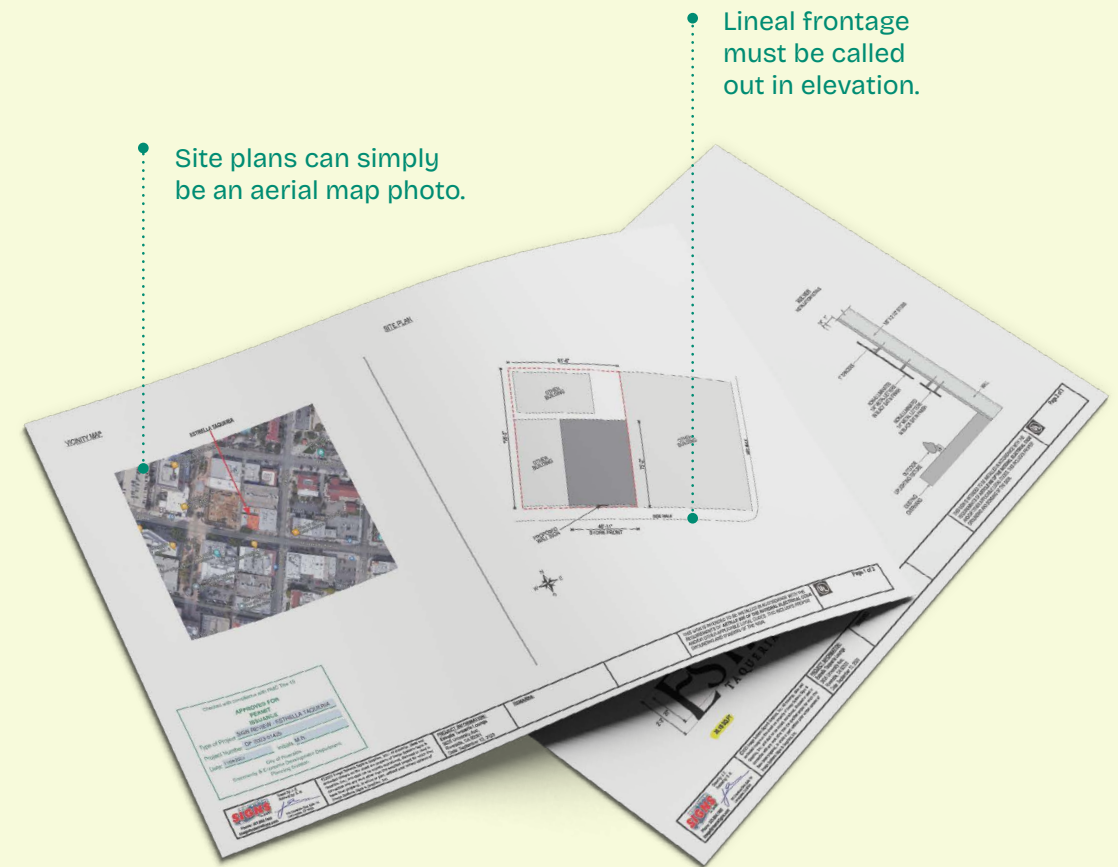
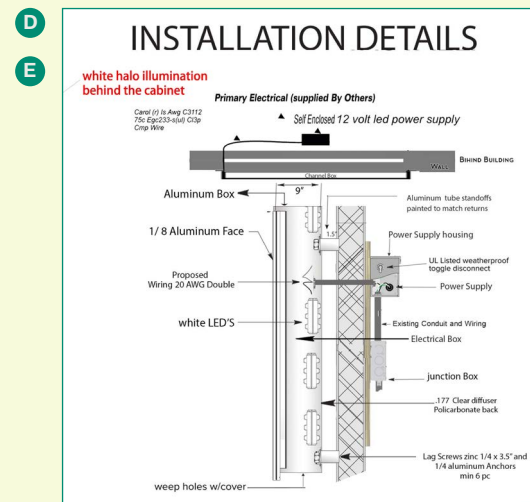
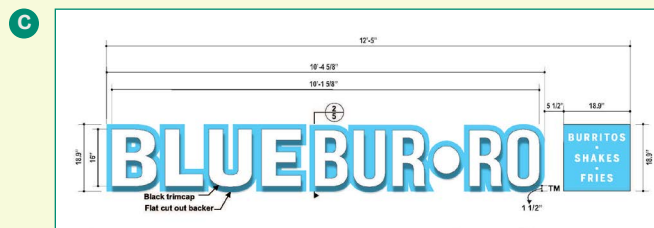
Include a scaled sign plan that shows the exact height and width of the proposed sign. Be sure to clearly label all dimensions so reviewers can quickly confirm compliance.

D CROSS-SECTION DETAILS

Provide cross-section drawings that show how the sign will be constructed and mounted to the building or structure. This helps confirm materials, depth, attachment methods, and overall design.

E ILLUMINATION SPECIFICATIONS

If the sign will be illuminated, include lighting details. Show whether the lighting is internal or external, how fixtures are shielded or directed, and provide basic specs to demonstrate that the sign meets illumination standards.



Site plans can simply be an aerial map photo.

Lineal frontage must be called out in elevation.

Sign plan should include height and length measurements.

Cross section details and illumination specs should also be detailed.





Glossary

BUILDING FRONTAGE

The linear measurement of exterior walls enclosing interior spaces which are oriented to and most nearly parallel to public streets, public alleys, parking lots, malls or freeways (see page 10 for information).

CHANGEABLE COPY SIGN

Sign displaying a message that is changed manually (by means of moveable letters or slats) or digitally. Changeable copy signs only include messaging and do not depict colorful images, animated graphics, or dynamic messaging.

CHANNEL LETTERS

Channel letters means three-dimensional individual letters or figures that are affixed to a building or to a freestanding sign structure by sliding the letters into channels.

DIRECTIONAL SIGN

Directional sign means an exterior on-site sign that directs or guides pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Examples include handicapped parking, one-way, exit, entrance, rest rooms, emergency room, garage, and such similar functions.

ELECTRONIC MESSAGE CENTER SIGN

A sign that uses digital display method (e.g. LED, LCD, plasma, etc), to depict variable messaging and colorful graphics.

MAJOR STREET FRONTAGE

Major street frontage means the major street frontage from which the majority of the pedestrian or vehicular traffic is drawn or toward which the building or buildings are oriented for primary visual impact (see page 10 for information).

OFF-SITE SIGN

Off-site sign means a sign that advertises commercial products, accommodations, services or activities not provided in or on the property or premises upon which it is located.

ON-SITE SIGN

On-site sign (also: on-premises sign) means a sign that advertises the commercial business, establishment, accommodation, services or activities provided on the premises on which the sign is located, or is expected to be provided in the near future [i.e., “coming soon” movie posters]. All establishments within a shopping center are on-site as to any sign(s) also located within that shopping center. Where such center is subject to master sign program, all establishments subject to the program are considered on-site whenever located within any location subject to the program. As to construction site signs, “on-site” includes all parties involved in the specific construction project.

SECONDARY STREET FRONTAGE

Secondary street frontage means any street frontage other than a major street frontage (see page 10 for information).

SIGN FACE

Sign face means an exterior display surface of a sign including non-structural trim exclusive of the supporting structure. The area of a sign that is available for mounting and public display of the visually communicative image.

TENANT SIGN

Tenant sign means a sign that identifies a tenant, occupant, or establishment whether residential or commercial and provides no other advertisements or product identification.

