

Design Guidelines - Signs

Sg1 Historically significant signs should be retained and repaired.

Sg2 A business should not have more than two signs – one primary and one secondary. A primary sign typically has the name of the business, while secondary signs would inform the customer of products sold, services rendered, or phone numbers. Secondary signs should be no more than half of the primary sign's dimensions.



This signboard on Pearl Street lists all the building's tenants in an attractive, easy to read format.

Sg3 In buildings that contain multiple businesses, signage should be unified. Consider designating a 'tenant area' for signs, where all tenants would be listed in a uniform format.

Sg4 Signs should not cover architectural elements or obscure the display area. They should be attached in a manner that does not damage the building materials.

Sg5 Signs should complement and fit in with the building façade in color, composition and materials.

Sg6 Acceptable sign types include flush-mounted wall signs; painted wall signs; projecting signs; and window, door or transom signs.

Sg7 Flush-mounted wall signs should be attached directly to the face of an exterior wall, parallel to the building.

Sg8 The length of flush-mounted wall signs shall be no greater than 2/3 the width of the building storefront. The height of the sign should be no more than three feet or 50% of the sign width, whichever is less. Wider or longer signs shall be considered on a case-by-case basis, particularly when warranted by architectural features.

Sg9 The length of a painted wall sign shall be no greater than 1/3 the length of the wall on which it will be painted. The height of the sign should be no

more than three feet or 50% of the sign width, whichever is less.



Historically, signs were often located in the storefront cornice area, as seen on this Pearl Street building.

- Sg10** Projecting signs shall be of a scale appropriate to the building, but generally should not exceed twelve square feet in combined area (both sides).
- Sg11** Projecting signs should be mounted at least 8½ feet above the sidewalk and should not project more than 4 feet out over the public right-of-way. On Main Street, INDOT regulations require projecting signs to be mounted at least 14 ½ feet above the sidewalk. Any sign that projects over the right-of-way requires approval from the Board of Public Works and Safety.
- Sg12** Painted or gold leaf window signs may be up to twenty percent of the window area.
- Sg13** Painted or gold leaf door glass signs may be up to fifty percent of the door glass area.

Sg14 Painted or gold leaf transom signs may be up to fifty percent of the transom glass area.

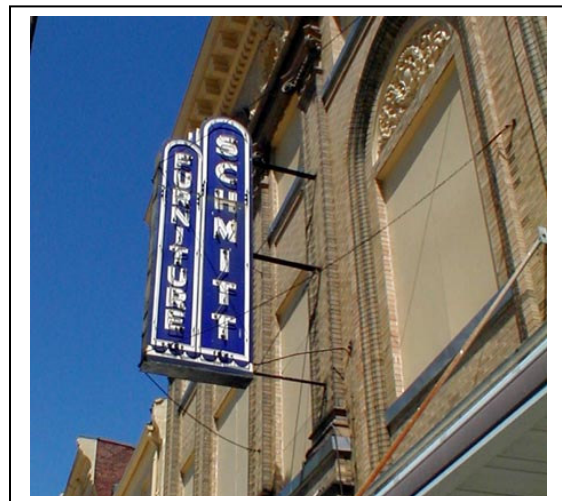
Sg15 Free-standing ground signs, if approved by the commission, shall be no more than sixteen square feet in combined area (both sides).

Sg16 Temporary signage announcing special events may not exceed sixteen square feet. These signs shall be removed when the event is completed or after three months, whichever is less. Temporary signs should not be illuminated.

Sg17 Lighted signs shall use an indirect lighting method such as overhead or gooseneck lights. Internally lit signs, fluorescent lighting or spotlights are not appropriate for use in the district.

Sg18 In general murals are discouraged, but may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Sg19 Historic neon signs should be maintained and preserved. New neon signs will be considered on a case-by-case basis.



Sg20 A sign should express a direct, easy-to-read message. Keep it simple.

Sg21 A letter style should be chosen that is easy to read. Because the contrast between lettering and background greatly influences legibility, light colored letters on a dark background are preferred. Letter should occupy only about 60% of a signboard.

Sg22 Use appropriate materials for signage, including painted or carved wooden signs, signs applied to canvas awnings, smooth-surface metal signs, and lettering applied to glass using gold leaf, paint or etching. Plastic is generally not acceptable as a sign material in the historic district.

Sg23 Design storefront-level signs that are primarily oriented to pedestrians and are scaled accordingly.

Sg24 Preserve and maintain historic ‘ghost signs,’ as they enrich the character of the historic district.

Sg25 A Certificate of Appropriateness is not required for the installation of National Register plaques or state-approved historic markers. Plaques and markers are encouraged and should be installed in a manner that does not damage historic fabric or obscure architectural details.



This ‘ghost sign’ for a longtime business located on East Market Street is an important part of the history of the downtown.

Creative, attractive signs, like this one on East Third Street, help call positive attention to a business.



Painted window sign on Pearl Street.



Painted door sign on East Spring Street.

Painted wall sign on West First Street.



Projecting sign on Bank Street.

