

REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

For redevelopment districts or parts of redevelopment districts for which specific guidelines related to signage have not been developed as part of urban design guidelines for the area, the respective Design Review Committees shall use the following guidelines to interpret “in Harmony with the improvements upon the building site and surrounding development,” language appearing in the redevelopment plans regarding the appropriate design of signage.

Amount, Size, and Dimensions

- No more than one (1) pole or pylon-mounted sign shall be placed on a parcel. The height of the top of pole or pylon-mounted signs shall be limited to fifteen (15) feet or a height not to exceed the top of the tallest building on the same parcel of property irrespective of site topography, whichever is shorter. *Note: Pole and pylon-mounted signage is generally inappropriate – see “Placement” below.*
- The number of monument signs on a parcel shall be limited to the number of public streets on which the parcel has frontage. The height of monument signs shall be limited to six (6) feet.
- The size of a building-mounted sign shall be reasonably determined on the basis of the sign’s proposed placement and the scale of site improvements. The size of signs may be restricted further than the size allowed under codes requirements.
- At a maximum, projecting signs shall not project more than seven (7) feet from any building face. The width of projecting sign cabinets shall not exceed twelve (12) inches.
- *Note: The size and number of freestanding signs may be further limited per the language of the respective redevelopment plan.*
- *Note: At the discretion of the committee, appropriately designed banner signage or flags may not be counted against the allowable number of signs on a site. Banners are defined as signs that are constructed of a flexible material and are designed to be easily interchangeable.*
- *Note: Logos are considered signage and will be counted against the allowable number of signs permitted on a site when they are mounted substantially separate from other signage.*

Single-tenant Buildings

- The number of advertising signs permitted on a parcel shall be limited to the number of public streets on which the parcel has frontage plus one (1).
- The number of flush, wall-mounted sign faces shall be limited to one (1) per building elevation.

Multi-tenant Buildings

- A single sign face may advertise multiple tenants.
- The number of signs permitted on a parcel shall be limited to the number of primary building entrances on the parcel plus one (1) for each public street on which the parcel has frontage.

Materials

- Plastics are generally inappropriate for signage, except in the case of appropriately designed channel letter signs. Signs with a single plastic face are not permitted.
- Painted or finished metal signage, wood signs, and signs fabricated of durable synthetic materials are generally appropriate.
- Wall-painted signs are generally appropriate.
- Exposed neon signage is generally appropriate when used sparingly and judiciously.
- Vinyl mesh and other flexible material is generally appropriate for banner signage that is designed to be routinely changed, but is not appropriate for permanent signage designs.
- Canvas material is appropriate for signage placed on canopies or awnings and shall be maintained. Vinyl or stretched plastic may be appropriate for canopies and awnings on buildings that are not listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or located in National Register Districts.

Lighting

- Externally lit signage using uplighting, downlighting, or backlighting techniques is generally appropriate. External lighting fixtures shall be designed so as to be invisible or to compliment the design of the site improvements.
- Internal lighting is inappropriate for cabinet signage, including readerboards. Internal lighting is only appropriate for channel letter and neon signs.
- Transformers and other mechanical equipment related to sign illumination should be located inside the building or otherwise concealed from public view. Wall-mounted signs should not be mounted on raceways.
- To avoid unnecessary light pollution, external lighting fixtures shall be placed so as to illuminate the signage only.
- Advertising signs shall not flash or appear to be in motion.
- LCDs, marquee, or similar displays, such as those allowing for scrolling letters or animated images, shall only be permitted for venues designed for large-scale conference or entertainment uses, e.g. arenas, stadiums, and convention centers.

Placement

- Signage shall not obscure architectural details of site improvements including, but not limited to, fenestration details, doors, cornices, and other architectural articulations, particularly on historic structures. Signage shall be oriented to public rights-of-way. Signage shall not be oriented to an alley unless a primary building entrance is located in the alley.
- Generally, advertising signage should not be placed above the ground floor level. Skyline signage is generally appropriate on highrise structures. No more than one skyline sign shall be permitted per building face. *Note: Skyline signs shall not counted against the allowable number of signs on the site.* At the discretion of the Design Review Committee, blade or projecting signage oriented to pedestrians may be placed above the first floor.

- Signage mounted on poles or pylons is discouraged when opportunities exist to appropriately design and place monument or building-mounted signage.
- Ground-mounted signs may only be permitted when a building face is set back from the public right-of-way a distance of at least twenty (20) feet.

Warranted exceptions to the foregoing may be made at the discretion of the Design Review Committee. Special exceptions may be warranted in the case of extraordinary design concepts, unusual building scale or design, unusual physical constraints, or to compliment broader urban design themes in a particular area.

While sign styles are not regulated by these guidelines, creative artisan-designed signage is strongly encouraged. Signs can be unique hallmarks of buildings or districts. They can be forms of public art displayed for private purposes.

Particular attention shall be given to signage proposed in National Register Historic Districts or on property listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places to ensure that the design of new signage does not adversely affect the historic integrity of the property or district.

These guidelines attempt to recognize that redevelopment districts generally attempt to foster urban rather than suburban-style development and pedestrian rather than auto-oriented urban design. However, they also attempt to recognize that situations may exist in redevelopment districts in which it is unreasonable to design advertising signage exclusively for a pedestrian audience.

The approval of signage plans by MDHA's design review committee does not supercede the application and enforcement of other codes or guidelines administered by other governmental entities or applicable covenants.