

# 4.SIGNAGE



Courtesy Hammond Historic District Commission.

## INTRO TO CHAPTER 4

Signage is a prominent aspect of Hammond's historic district. Signs of all types have characterized the commercial space of downtown since its early days. One need only look to historic images for confirmation that a profusion of signage has precedent. Some buildings even possess signs of such age and distinction that they are considered historic landmarks in and of themselves. Thanks to new materials and technologies, options for new signage are ever increasing. Therefore, even with Hammond's history of abundant signage, not all new signage is in keeping with the historic character of downtown. The design guidelines for signage are intended to encourage the continued use of signage downtown while ensuring that the historic architecture does not become completely overwhelmed or damaged by new signage. Signage should not compete with the building architecture nor create a chaotic streetscape.

Please note that the COA process is only the FIRST STEP for signage approval. A building permit will likely also be required. Contact the Building Department of Hammond if you are unsure if your sign requires a permit. See also Article 13 of Hammond's Unified Development Code (UDC) #14-5364 for further signage regulations.

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## SIGN DEFINITIONS

Signs within the Hammond Historic District appeal to pedestrians as well as automobiles in size, shape and illumination. The following are some of the major sign types as they are defined for the purposes of these guidelines.

**Primary sign** - the central, most visually significant sign on a building. These might be mounted, painted, displayed in window sign, or printed on an awning.

**Hanging pedestrian sign** - a sign suspended by chains under the overhang of a building.

**Multiple Business Signs** - signs used for buildings with two or more occupants, where multiple listings of business names are necessary. These may be mounted on posts or on monument signs.

**Sign on post** - a sign that is supported on a post and is pedestrian in scale.

**Monument sign** - a ground-mounted freestanding structure used to display signs.

**Landmark (or Historic) sign** - signs that are of such age as to be regarded historic landmarks (50 years or older). As a result of passage of time and excellence in use of materials and design, some signs in Hammond have transcended the status of merely announcing the name of a business, to becoming widely known landmarks in their own right. Such "landmark" items, which include not only signs, but clocks, unusually shaped windows, rooflines, or other items displaying exceptional characteristics, add considerably to the individuality and character of the City of Hammond. For that reason, they merit special attention, and are exempt from restrictions as to size, placement and materials. Examples of such signs include The Toggery Shop sign and the Ritz sign.

**Temporary sign** - any easily removable signage that remains in place for no more than three consecutive months. This includes, but is not limited to paper signage hung on or within twelve (12) inches of a window or banner signs hung from awnings or canopies.

**Sandwich boards** - removable foldout signs appropriate for advertising specials, etc.

**Directional/information sign** - a discrete sign providing information such as "This Door Only" or store hours.

**Street signage** - a sign erected in a parking lot or vehicular way.

**Window Sign** - any signage applied directly on glass window or displayed within twelve (12) inches of the interior or exterior of a window. Signage is not allowed to be displayed in clerestory windows.

**Flag** - A waving flag attached to or freestanding from a building. Flags, with the exception of government flags, are not permitted in the district per section 13.1.10 of the UDC.

**Moving Signs** - signs with flashing, blinking, or traveling lights. Moving signs are prohibited within twenty (20) feet from the edge of the street pavement, per section 13.1.5 C of the UDC.

**IF ANYONE IS UNSURE OF THE NEED FOR A SIGN PERMIT, CALL THE BUILDING OFFICIAL'S OFFICE BEFORE INSTALLATION.**

## OVERALL GUIDELINES FOR SIGNAGE PER INDIVIDUAL BUILDING

Individual building signage shall be placed under such restrictions as will allow for design unity in the overall district. Individual expression is encouraged, but will be made more effective and meaningful when the signs of the area complement each other and the design of the building to which they are attached. The installation of any sign must be reversible without permanent damage to the building. Any anchors must be inserted into mortar joints, never into bricks or other masonry units. Mortar can be easily repaired; masonry units cannot.

a. Buildings with one occupant and no Landmark signs – are allowed the following:

- 1 primary sign on the building, window or awning per sign specific guidelines outlined in this section. Both a window, awning, and another type of primary sign may be used as long as the total sq. ft. of both fits into the maximum allowance. (Window signage is subject to 20% coverage limit)
- 1 hanging pedestrian sign
- Up to 20% of total first floor window area for window signage
- 1 decorative store name
- 1 open/hours sign and 1 numbered address sign

b. Buildings with historic or Landmark signs and having one or more occupant – The building name serves as the primary signage. The other allowances for each business are as follows:

- 1 hanging pedestrian sign at the entrance to each business

Note: In the case that one of the businesses is located on the second story, the preferred method for advertising a second story business is to display the sign on one window/door (as per the window signage guidelines). If the windows are protected by cloth awnings, the sign may be placed directly on the front face of the awning, or two smaller signs may be painted on each side of the awning.

Second story window signs and signs in clerestory windows are not permitted. The first floor tenant may have a sign on the awning in accordance with other guidelines.

- 1 decorative store name
- Up to 20% of total window area of first floor of window signage
- 1 open/hours sign and 1 numbered address sign

c. Buildings with two or more occupants and no Landmark signs – are allowed the following:

- 1 business sign for each business, mounted from the same post or monument. Signs must be uniform in size. (See definition)
- 1 hanging pedestrian sign at the entrance to each business
- 1 decorative store name on the door for each business
- Up to 20% of total first floor window area for window signage
- 1 open/hours sign and 1 numbered address sign

Businesses no longer located in the building – When a business relocates or closes for business, the building owner has 1 month to remove the existing signage. **This does not apply to signage regarded as a Landmark or otherwise considered historic by virtue of being 50 years or older or otherwise representative of a stand-out period of the building's history.**

# EXAMPLES

Primary sign mounted on building

Hanging pedestrian sign



Landmark sign

Hanging pedestrian signs  
for two businesses





## GUIDELINES FOR EACH TYPE OF SIGN

The following guidelines for each type of sign must be adhered to in combination with the Guidelines for Overall Treatment of Signage per Building.

**Primary Signs** – The primary sign for a building should complement the lines of the building upon which it is placed. The major sign may also appear on a cloth awning. Large signs that project above the parapet, or roofline when no parapet is present, are prohibited.

### Size of Primary Signs –

For single-faced signs attached flat against the wall of the building there shall be allowed a MAXIMUM of one square foot of sign surface per linear foot of building frontage. However, each sign shall be considered according to the particular circumstances, and shall be placed so as not to obscure or obstruct any architectural features of the building.

For double-faced signs, suspended by brackets or arms perpendicularly from the wall of the building there shall be also be allowed a MAXIMUM of one square feet of sign surface per linear foot of building frontage. The surface of such a double-faced sign shall be taken to mean the sum total of the areas of each face. However, each sign shall be considered according to the particular circumstances. The sign shall be placed so as not to obscure or obstruct any architectural feature of the building.

Placement and Number of primary Signs on Buildings having entrances facing Two Streets - Storefront businesses in such situations may have two primary signs, one on each exposed façade. Each sign should be placed on the surface of the building so as not to obstruct the view of any architectural feature of the building.

**Projection of Primary Signs** – Any primary signs projecting out from the building should have a vertical clearance from the sidewalk of seven feet, and project from the face of the building by no more than five feet, however, each sign shall be considered according to the particular circumstances. The signs may not project above the parapet or roofline of the building when no parapet is present. They should be hung at least six inches from the face of the building. Hardware used in hanging signs should keep in character of the sign.

**Materials of Primary Signs** – The allowed materials for the primary signs are wood, metal, MDO plywood, plexi-glass, neon or a combination of the above. Each sign shall be considered according to the particular circumstances. NO BACKLIT SIGNS ARE ALLOWED. (A Backlit sign is defined here as a sign where light permeates through the face of the design. This includes translucent awnings.)

**Primary Signs as Window Signs** – if either applied directly to the window or hanging within twelve (12) inches of it, primary signage displayed in windows must be within a 20% of total first floor window area.

**Primary Signs Painted Directly on Building Walls** – Graphics may be painted directly on the wall surface if the wall is already painted. (Unpainted brick must not be painted.) The sign should be located so as to respect any architectural details of the wall surfaces.

**Primary Signs on Awnings** – Signs may be printed directly on each side of a canvas awning that is suspended from over the storefront (each sign should be no more than 2 square feet in size) or the sign may be printed across the front as long as size restrictions are honored.

**Hanging Pedestrian Signs** – Buildings that have overhangs such as awnings or canopies may use a sign suspended by chains from the bottom surface of the overhang. It should be mounted perpendicular to the street. The maximum allowable size is 2'X 3' and the bottom of sign must hang no less than 7' from the sidewalk surface.

**Business Signs** – Signs used for buildings with two or more occupants, where multiple listings of business names are necessary. Each sign shall be uniform in size and shall be mounted in accordance with the guidelines.

**Signs on Posts** – There is historical precedence for three-dimensional pedestrian scale signs, mounted on posts and placed in front of commercial buildings. These signs advertised the name of the establishment and a sampling of the products sold on the premises. They were sometimes topped off by a clock. A reconstruction of one of these signs may be used as a secondary sign in place of other types available. Also, three-dimensional signs such as barber poles are historically correct and are encouraged. Signs mounted on posts shall be

## GUIDELINES FOR EACH TYPE OF SIGN (continued)

**Monument Signs** – Freestanding structure used to mount business signage. Each sign displayed on this structure should be uniform in size. Monument signs shall not exceed 6 ft. in height measured from grade to the highest point of the sign. Such signs are generally appropriate only in front of buildings that are set back from the street by a yard, parking lot, or landscaping. The sign shall not block or overwhelm the historic building, adjacent building, or views. Each sign shall be considered according to the particular circumstances.

**Temporary Signs** – Temporary signs play an important part in contributing to the day-to-day vitality of a commercial area, and should be encouraged. Temporary signs must not cause any harm to the buildings where they are displayed. Banners

a. Definition of “temporary” – Temporary signs should be displayed no longer than three months within a 12 month period.

b. Materials – The signs should be made of materials that reflect their temporary nature.

**Sandwich Boards** - showing specials are recommended and preferred. The A-frame sign can be a maximum of 2' wide on the face and 5' high. The size must also allow for at least 36" for pedestrian right of way.

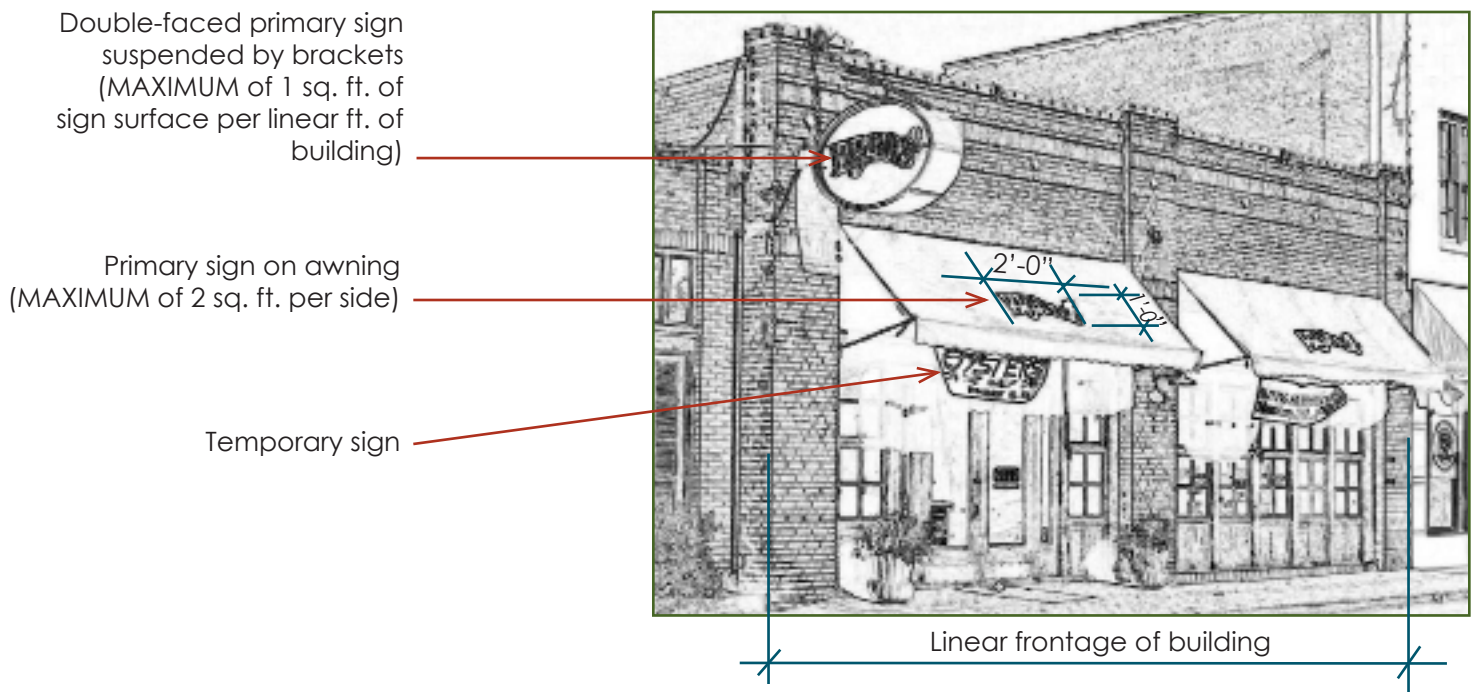
**Directional/Information Signs** - gives information such as “This Door Only” and store hours should be displayed in the confined area of the storefront. The graphics should be simple and bold to be most effective.

**Street Signage** – erected by the city or individual should be uniform in style and color. Graphics should be simple and bold. The signs must not obscure the view of surrounding buildings and views, and must be no larger than 2 square feet in size. Only 1 sign per parking lot is allowed.

**Window Signage** – should take up a maximum of 20% of first floor window area (not including clerestory window area). **This includes all signage affixed within 12” on the interior of the window.** Avoid the same information repeated in multiple windows where possible. If a logo must be repeated, opt for a simplified, smaller version on the second installation. Any simple lettering should not exceed 12”. No window should be rendered fully opaque.

**Lighting of Signs** – Lighting of signs is encouraged, although backlit, rolling lettering, and flashing signs are prohibited. No movement of letters is allowed on signage. TVs, Flat-panel displays, and other similar devices are considered moving signs and are prohibited; placement of these devices must be beyond three (3) feet of any window and must face the interior. Lighting of signs should be subdued and indirect. If possible, the light source should otherwise be hidden from view, or designed so as to blend with the lines of the building.

**Color of Signs** – Color choices of signage are up to the discretion of the owner, but hues sympathetic to the historic palette of the district are encouraged. Brighter colors may be used as accents in signage. The number of colors used on a sign should be kept to a minimum for maximum effectiveness.



Whenever signage requires anchoring into a masonry wall,  
always insert anchors into the mortar joints, NEVER into the bricks.

