

DOWNTOWN SIGN DESIGN TIPS

Downtown Sign Design Standards were developed in 2014 through a committee of LDDA and City staff, downtown stakeholders and members of the Downtown Placemaking Committee. The standards focus on sign design features to enhance the visual environment of the downtown, create a sense of interest and activity through creative signs, promote economic vitality and help boost property values. As part of the City of Longmont Land Development Code Update, the Downtown Sign Design Standards were updated in August 2018. Links and references to the Downtown Sign Design Standards and City of Longmont Municipal Code are provided to aid you as you review these Downtown Sign Design TIPS.

SIGN DESIGN PROCESS START TO FINISH

1. **RESEARCH.** Review the [Downtown Sign Design Standards](#), available at the LDDA office or website (www.downtownlongmont.com), AND the [City of Longmont Sign Code](#) on the City of Longmont website (www.longmontcolorado.gov). Signs on historic landmark properties have additional design compliance approvals.

Questions?

Downtown Longmont Sign Design Standards: contact the LDDA at (303) 651-8484 or [email \(ldda@longmontcolorado.gov\)](mailto:ldda@longmontcolorado.gov). City of Longmont Sign Code and Historic Landmarks: contact Planning and Development Services at (303) 651-8330 or [email \(longmont.planning@longmontcolorado.gov\)](mailto:longmont.planning@longmontcolorado.gov).

2. **DESIGN.** Make sure your sign company or designer has reviewed **both** the Downtown Sign Design Standards and City of Longmont Sign Code (see links above). Create architectural drawings and/or design renderings of your signage and how it would appear on the building. Include the following items.
 - dimensioned graphic plans of sign style
 - location on building
 - size (height/length/depth)
 - materials and colors
 - frames, brackets, and bases
 - details of sign lighting including brightness level
 - method of attachment to the building or ground as applicable

Buildings with multiple tenants/stories must provide a building sign plan that incorporates current/proposed sign design and placement for all existing and future tenants.

Want to brainstorm design ideas? The LDDA's Sign Design Advisory Committee, comprised of local individuals with expertise in design and sign design, can help you decide on the type of sign, brainstorm design ideas, or review your sign design concept. Contact (303) 651-8586 to make a request.

3. **REVIEW.** Submit your architectural drawings and/or design renderings to the LDDA for review and approval. This can be done before or concurrently with your sign permit application. If your design meets the Downtown Sign Design Standards, LDDA will e-mail you a Certificate of Compliance approving your design(s). This process should take approximately 14 days, unless your designs are marked for further clarification. **The certificate is required for your Sign Permit.**

LDDA Sign Grant can reimburse up to 25% of signage costs. The grant funds permanent signage that meet the Downtown Sign Design Standards. For more information, call (303) 651-8484 or [email \(ldda@longmontcolorado.gov\)](mailto:ldda@longmontcolorado.gov). You must apply for this grant BEFORE signs are installed. A Certificate of Compliance does not mean grant approval. This is a separate process.

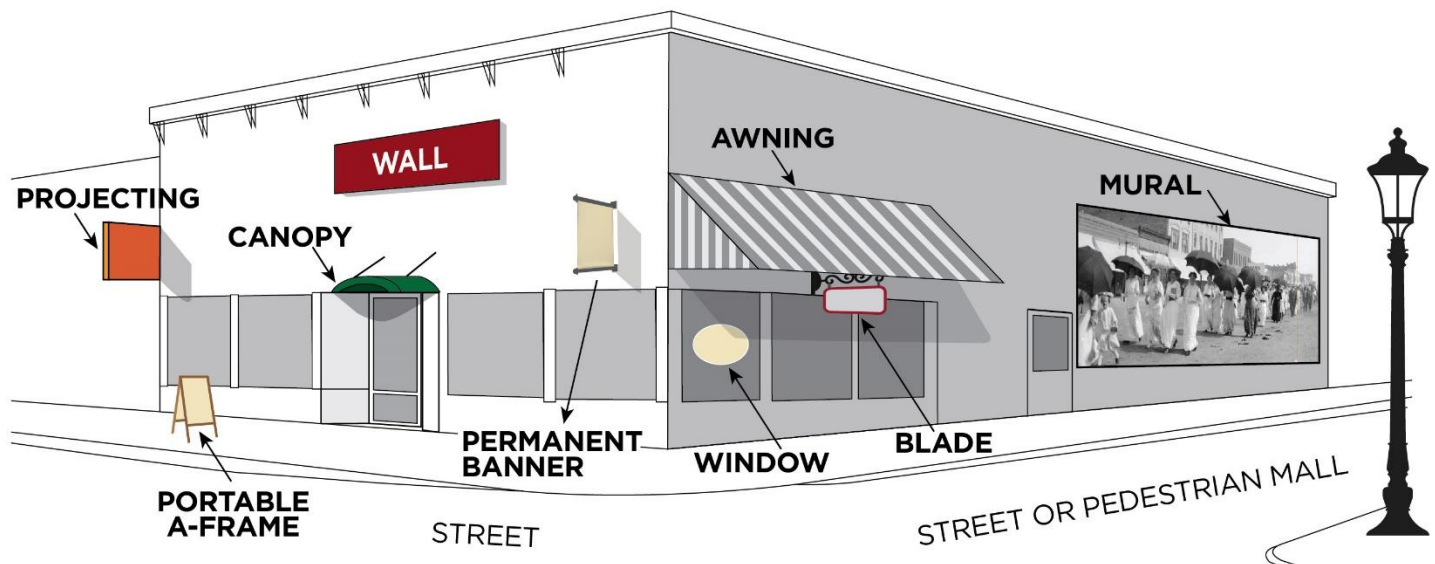
4. **PERMIT.** Before you install, apply for a City of Longmont Sign Permit. Completed sign permit applications require architectural drawings and/or design renderings and the LDDA's Certificate of Compliance, and a permit fee (based on the cost of the sign). Applications should be submitted at the City of Longmont Development Services Center at 385 Kimbark St. Sign applications are available on the City website at www.longmontcolorado.gov (Look for "Signs" at the bottom of the list.)

If you own the building, you or your licensed sign contractor must apply for the sign permit from the City of Longmont. If you are a renter, your licensed sign contractor must apply for the sign permit.

Signs that project over public property (such as the sidewalk or breezeway) will most likely also require a [Use of Public Places Permit](#) from the City.

5. **INSTALL.** Once you have received a Certificate of Compliance from the LDDA AND a City of Longmont Sign Permit, you are allowed to install your signage.

SIGN TYPES



PERMITTED SIGN TYPES FOR DOWNTOWN DISTRICT BUSINESSES

See [Downtown Design Standards](#) for a complete list of sign types. Page numbers below refer to the page in the Standards.

- Projecting signs (pg 11)
- Blade signs (pg 12)
- Wall signs (pg 13)
- Awning/canopy signs (pg 14)
- Permanent banner signs (pg 15)
- Window signs (pg 16)
- Monument signs (pg 18)
- Portable/a-frame signs (pg 22)

PROHIBITED SIGN TYPES FOR DOWNTOWN DISTRICT BUSINESSES

- Cabinet signs
- Free standing pole or pylon signs
- Off-premise signs (e.g., billboards)
- Wind signs
- Signs attached to any element within a public right-of-way (e.g. light fixtures)
- Animated signs
- All other signs prohibited by City Sign Code

THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA APPLY TO ALL DOWNTOWN SIGNAGE

See [Downtown Design Standards](#) for a complete list. Page #'s below refer to the page in the Standards.

SIGN DESIGN AND PLACEMENT (pg 7)

- Signs shall be designed and made by a licensed professional sign company or other qualified entity.
- Signs shall be compatible with the building architecture in terms of size, shape, color, materials and lighting.
- Signs shall not be attached flush to a building wall, but should be offset from the building to add dimension.
- Sign placement shall complement and proportionally fit the building architecture.
- Signs shall incorporate unique shapes and designs whenever possible.
- Signs shall be legible and uncluttered. Historic colors are encouraged when creating contrast between background and text/logo colors.
- Cabinet signs and signs more than 5" deep are prohibited. This includes strip-mall scaled signs.

MATERIALS (pg 8)

- Signs shall be constructed using durable, high-quality architectural materials, including treated wood, metal, stone such as slate, marble, sandstone, brick or gilded or sandblasted glass.
- Sign colors shall blend with the building and storefront colors by selecting from complementary color ranges. Historic colors are encouraged.
- Fluorescent or neon colors or over-scaled letters shall not be used.
- The design and alignment of signs on multiple use buildings shall complement each other.

SIGN LIGHTING (pg 8)

- Back-lit, halo-lit illumination, or reverse channel letters with halo illumination are recommended for lighting purposes. Suggest use of a warm light, similar to sunlight.
- Signs that use blinking, scrolling, or flashing lights are prohibited.
- Projecting light fixtures used for externally illuminated signs should be simple, unobtrusive, and should not obscure the graphics of the sign.
- Lighting shall come from shielded light sources integrated into the overall design of the building.
- Lighting of signs shall avoid creating glare or adverse light distribution.

MODIFICATION REQUESTS

Modifications may be granted on sign types that deviate from the Sign Design Standards. The application is available from the LDDA. This can be discussed during the LDDA's Design/Review process.

Permitted Sign Examples



370 Main St. Cutout dibond logo text provide dimension and accent gooseneck lighting illuminates the sign.



505 Main St. Artful wall sign made with metal material and creative text/graphics identifying nature of the business.



526 Main St. Projecting sign using reclaimed wood and cutout image complements historic building and business name.



522 4th Ave. Individual awnings over windows break up long store front and color compliments façade and logo.



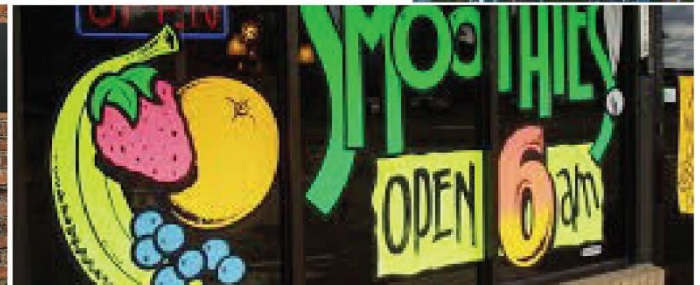
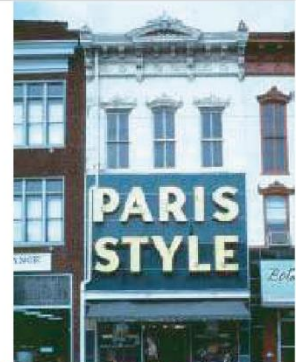
600 Longs Peak Ave. Artistic projecting sign with accented rope lighting, push through letters, and cut out structure emphasizing logo.

Prohibited Sign Examples



Cabinet signs (internally lit or non lit)

Oversized sign in relation to size of the building. City Sign Code limits square footage (SF) of sign space to no more than the linear feet (LF) of the building. (i.e. 25 LF = no more than 25 SF of sign space)



Painted window signs covering more than 25% of window opening. They obscure visibility inside and out.



Internally lit awning signs.

Questions?

Downtown Sign Design Standards
Longmont Downtown Development Authority
320 Main St., Longmont, CO 80501
(303) 651-8484 / ldda@longmontcolorado.gov

City of Longmont Sign Code
City of Longmont Planning and Development
385 Kimbark St., Longmont, CO 80501
(303) 651-8330