

Note: Anyone wishing to speak at any Planning Commission meeting is encouraged to do so. If you wish to speak, please rise and, after you have been recognized by the Chair, give your name and complete address for the record. You will then be allowed to speak. Please note that the public testimony may be limited by the Chair and normally is not allowed after the Public Hearing is closed.

**ASHLAND PLANNING COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING  
FEBRUARY 24, 2009  
AGENDA**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**: 7:00 PM, Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 E. Main Street
  
- II. **ANNOUNCEMENTS**
  
- III. **PUBLIC FORUM**
  
- IV. **TYPE III PUBLIC HEARING**
  - A. **PLANNING ACTION: 2008-02013**  
**APPLICANT: City of Ashland**  
**DESCRIPTION:** Public Hearing regarding Ordinance Amendments to the Sign Regulation Chapter (18.96) of the Ashland Land Use Ordinance, relating to changes in the type, size, number and materials of signage allowed within residential and commercial zones.  
***This is a continuation from the February 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Public Hearing is closed and the Planning Commission is in deliberations.***
  
- V. **ADJOURNMENT**

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In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Community Development office at 541-488-5305 (TTY phone is 1-800-735-2900). Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title 1).

# Planning Commission Communication

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**Date:** February 24, 2009  
**Re:** Sign Code Amendments  
**Submitted By:** Brandon Goldman, Senior Planner

## Sign Code Materials

A revised copy of the draft sign code is attached for your consideration and recommendation. Please refer to the Planning Commission February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009, packet, for the full Staff Report and addendum (dated 2/10/2009), Downtown Task Force Summary Report (dated 8/21/2008), Public Arts Commission Memo (dated 11/2008), Council and Commission minutes, and letters which were previously submitted into the public record for Planning Action 2008-02013.

Staff received a new letter from the Public Arts Commission following the hearing on February 10<sup>th</sup> which is included as an attachment. All information previously considered submitted into the public record will be forwarded to the City Council for their consideration of the sign ordinance amendments.

This Planning Commission Communication aims to respond to items raised during the Planning Commission's February 10<sup>th</sup> meeting to assist the Commission in its final deliberations.

## **Wall Graphics**

Wall graphics (signs painted directly upon the wall) are currently prohibited by ordinance. If this prohibition were removed such wall graphics would still be considered a sign they would remain subject to the area and other limitations within the ordinance. Staff had initially suggested that such a prohibition be removed, however in consideration of testimony provided at the Public Hearing on February 10, 2009 before the Commission, Staff recognizes that wall graphics could potentially have adverse impacts on historic resources when located on contributing historic buildings. Of particular concern is the somewhat permanent nature of painted signs of raw materials such as brick or stone, and the difficulty of removal at the change of a building's occupant business. In light of these concerns Staff now recommends retaining the current prohibition against wall graphics

Given the scope of the proposed changes to the ordinance are largely supportive of specific changes recommended by the Downtown Task Force, and they did not review the issue of removing the prohibition of wall graphics, it may be appropriate to at this time retain the prohibition. The Downtown Task Force had recommended review of the sign ordinance within 2 years of the adoption of any amendments. Should the Planning Commission and Council wish to evaluate the issue of wall graphics and potential



impacts and opportunities more comprehensively before allowing them such a review could be completed at that time.

### **Three Dimensional Signs**

The Historic Commission was generally favorable to allowing small three cubic foot signs within the downtown and other Historic Districts. Concern was raised by staff regarding the location of 3-D signs to be explicitly on private property as initially proposed would preclude their installation as hanging marquee signs or attached to the face of a building. To address this Staff is now presenting modified language that would allow 3-D signs in these circumstances provided they retain sufficient vertical clearance (8' when attached to a building – as currently required in 18.96.080(4)c, and 7'6" when attached to a marquee as currently required per 18.96.080(3)d).

A question regarding the establishment of a maximum height for the proposed 20cu.ft. signs was raised at the public hearing on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The maximum height was derived in part in consideration that permanent ground signs can only be 5' above grade and as such 3-D signs should be comparable. It was recognized that a specific 3-D sign that was the impetus behind the proposed change ('Alfredo' at Wiley's World Pasta) was taller than five feet and thus the five foot maximum height would need to be increased to accommodate such 3-D signs. As the Building Code requires that a structural building permit be obtained for construction of any structure, or fence, greater than six feet in height to ensure that footings are of adequate design to resist wind loads, Staff has presented six feet as an appropriate to limit the maximum height for freestanding 3-D signs.

A question was also raised as to whether fiberglass would be an allowable material for 3-D signs. Although Staff stated that it would not be seen as prohibited as is plastic, to clarify this issue staff has now inserted "fiberglass" as an allowable durable material for consideration in the proposed amendments as attached (18.96.080.B5(f) and 18.98.090.B4(f)).

### **Portable Signs**

At the Planning Commission meeting on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 the location of portable signs was briefly discussed. Concern was raised that allowing such signs on private property, even when far removed from a business entrance, could allow for the proliferation of sandwich boards adjacent to major arterial streets used extensively to attract motorist attention. The ordinance amendments as originally proposed address this concern in part by limiting the placement of portable signs to only be on those lots that do not contain a permanent ground sign. This is further clarified in the current revision by expanding this limitation to include shopping centers and business complexes (18.96.080.B6(a) and 18.98.090.B5(a)). Permanently installed ground signs should function to advertise a business location to passing motorists. As the intention of portable signs was to enable businesses to better communicate to pedestrians passing a business frontage staff has also inserted new language on placement to limit the location of portable signs to within ten feet of the business entrance (18.96.080.B6(d) and 18.98.090.B5(d)).



## Flags

During the public hearing the issue of flags was raised by a business owner that has been precluded from locating Tibetan prayer flags in front of his business, SoundPeace, due to the prohibition currently in the sign ordinance. Wind Signs by definition include banners, flags, balloons, and other objects fastened in such a manner as to move upon being subject to pressure by wind or devise. This movement by wind is essential to the symbolic function of Tibetan Prayer flags. Such movement is also a means of attracting attention beyond that provided by static sign display. Elimination of visual clutter to promote a more pleasing environment was precisely the purpose of the prohibitions enacted in 1982 and 1989 (Ord 2440) which precluded wind signs, movable copy, flashing signs, and animated signs.

Should the Commission and Council ultimately wish to allow for wind signs Staff recommends specific limitations that would regulate height, location and size of such signs be included in the ordinance. To this end, by allowing wind signs as “portable signs” within the ordinance amendments as attached ((18.96.080.B6(a) and 18.98.090.B5(a)), such flags would be held to the maximum area allowed for portable signs (4 sq.ft.). The allowable area used by such wind signs or flags would also be deducted from the allowable exempt incidental sign allowance currently proposed. Placement limitations for portable signs would also apply (on private property and within 10’ or the business entrance) and they would have to be removed at the daily close of business. A new provision limiting the height of a freestanding wind signs (such as flags on a pole) to be no more than five feet above the ground on which it is placed is intended to ensure that such portable signs do not exceed the height allowance otherwise permitted for permanent ground signs.

In the event the Commission and Council do not include such provisions in a final ordinance, given SoundPeace sells such flags, the display of the specific flags that raised the issue could be considered the outdoor display of merchandise and allowable only if approved through a Conditional Use Permit Process.

## Public Art

As discussed in the February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 Staff Report, Staff believes that addressing the impacts upon exterior changes to contributing historic properties, including Public Art permanently affixed to a building, is appropriately addressed through the site review process rather than the sign code. The preservation of Historic Resources and the promotion of Public Art are both valued contributions to the sense of place Ashland has fostered over many years. Both Public Art and historic resources are cultural resources that provide attractions that can draw people to and enhance public perception of an area. Each priority can be accommodated provided there is a considered review which is sensitive to the integrity of historic resources while recognizing the social and cultural significance of proposed public art.

Should the Planning Commission recommend in favor of removing Public Art from regulation per the provisions of the sign code, staff recommends the Site Design Review applicability criteria be simultaneously changed as follows:



**Potential Code Amendments:**

**18.72.030 Site Design Review**

Applicability. The following development is subject to Site Design Review:

1. Commercial, Industrial, Non-Residential and Mixed uses:

g. Any exterior change to a structure which ~~requires a building permit, and is~~ listed on the National Register of Historic Places or to a contributing property within an Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places **that requires a building permit, or includes the installation of Public Art.**

2. Residential uses:

d) Any exterior change to a structure ~~which requires a building permit and is~~ individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places **that requires a building permit, o or includes the installation of Public Art.**



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CHAPTER 18.96  
**SIGN REGULATIONS**

**SECTIONS:**

18.96.010	Purpose.
18.96.020	Definitions Relating to Signs.
18.96.030	Exempted Signs.
18.96.040	Prohibited Signs.
18.96.050	Sign Permits.
18.96.060	General Sign Regulations.
18.96.070	Residential and North Mountain Sign Regulations.
18.96.080	Commercial-Downtown Overlay District (C-1-D).
18.96.090	Commercial, Industrial and Employment Districts.
18.96.100	Freeway Sign Zone.
18.96.110	Abatement of Nuisance Signs.
18.96.120	Construction and Maintenance Standards.
18.96.130	Nonconforming Signs.
18.96.140	Enforcement.
18.96.150	Governmental Signs.
18.96.160	Historic Signs.

**SECTION 18.96.010 Purpose.**

This Chapter shall hereafter be known and designated as the "Sign Ordinance of the City of Ashland", and is adopted in recognition of the important function of signs and the need to safeguard and enhance the economic and aesthetic values in the City of Ashland through regulation of such factors as size, number, location, illumination, construction, and maintenance of signs; and thereby safeguard public health, safety and general welfare.

**SECTION 18.96.020 Definitions Relating to Signs.**

1. Alteration  
Any change excluding content, and including but not limited to the size, shape, method of illumination, position, location, materials, construction, or supporting structure of a sign.
2. Area  
The area included within the outer dimensions of a sign.  
**The entire area within circles, triangles or rectangles which enclose the extreme limits of lettering, logo, trademark, or other graphic representation, together with any frame or structural trim forming an integral part of the display used to differentiate the sign from the background against which it is placed.** In the case of a multi-faced sign, the area of each face shall be included in determining sign area, excepting double-faced signs placed no more than 24 inches back-to-back.
3. Awning  
A temporary or movable shelter supported entirely from the exterior wall of a building and composed of non-rigid materials except for the supporting framework.
4. Building Face of Wall  
All window and wall area of a building in one plane or elevation.

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5. Bulletin Board or Reader Board  
A sign of a permanent nature, but which accommodates changeable copy.
6. Business  
A commercial or industrial enterprise.
7. Business Frontage  
A lineal front footage of a building or portion thereof devoted to a specific business or enterprise, and having an a pedestrian entrance/exit open to the general public during all business hours .
8. Business Premises  
A parcel of property or that portion thereof occupied by one tenant.
9. Canopy  
A non-movable roof-like structure attached to a building.
- 10. Construction sign**  
**A temporary sign erected on the premises where construction is taking place during the period of construction, indicating the names individuals or firms having a role or interest with respect to the structure or project.**
40. 11. Direct Illumination  
A source of illumination on the surface of a sign or from within a sign.
41. ~~12.~~Election  
The time designated by law for voter to cast ballots for candidates and measures.
42. ~~13.~~Flashing Sign  
A sign incorporating intermittent electrical impulses to a source of illumination or revolving or moving in a manner which creates the illusion of flashing, or which changes color or intensity of illumination. This definition is to include electronic time, date and temperature signs.
13. Frontage  
A single wall surface of a building facing a given direction.
14. Ground Sign  
A sign erected on a free-standing frame, mast or pole and not attached to any building. Also known as a "free-standing sign".
15. Indirect Illumination  
A source of illumination directed toward a sign so that the beam of light falls upon the exterior surface of the sign.
16. Illegal Sign  
A sign which is erected in violation of the Ashland Sign Code (18.96).
17. Marquee Sign  
A sign which is painted on, attached to, or supported by a marquee, awning or canopy.
18. Marquee  
A non-movable roof-like structure which is self-draining.
19. Non-conforming Sign  
An existing sign, lawful at the time of enactment of this Ordinance, which does not conform to the requirements of this Code.
20. Projecting Signs  
Signs other than wall signs, which are attached to and project from a structure or building face, usually perpendicular to the building face.
- 21. Portable Sign**  
**A permitted sign not permanently attached to the ground or other permanent structure including sandwich boards, pedestal signs, 'A' Frame signs, flags, and wind signs (not including flags of national, state or city governments).**

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**22. Public Art**

**Public Art defined, approved, and installed in accordance with section 2.17 of the Ashland Municipal Code shall not be regulated as a sign per the provisions of this Chapter.**

~~21.~~ **23. Roof Sign**

Any sign erected upon, against, or directly above a roof or top of or above the parapet of a building.

~~22.~~ **24. Shopping Center or Business Complex**

Any business or group of businesses which are in a building or group of buildings, on one or more lots which are contiguous or which are separated by a public right-of-way or a privately owned flag drive used for access and not greater than 35 feet in width, which are constructed and/or managed as a single entity, and share ownership and/or function.

~~23.~~ **25. Sign**

Any identification, description, illustration, symbol or device which is placed or affixed directly or indirectly upon a building, structure, or land, Interior illuminated panels, fascia strips, bands, columns, or other interior illuminated decorative features located on or off a structure, visible from the public right-of-way, and with or without lettering or graphics shall also be considered a sign and included in the overall sign area of the site. **Public Art shall not be considered a sign.**

~~24.~~ **26. Sign, Public**

A sign erected by a public officer or employee in the performance of a public duty which shall include, but not be limited to, motorist informational signs and warning lights.

~~25.~~ **27. Street Frontage**

The lineal dimension in feet that the property upon which a structure is built abuts a public street or streets.

**28. Real Estate Sign**

**A sign pertaining to the sale or lease of the premises, or portion of the premises, on which the sign is located**

**29. Replacement Sign**

**A change in the size or materials of a sign in a location where a permitted sign had previously existed prior to the proposed installation**

~~26.~~ **30. Temporary Sign**

A sign which is not permanently affixed. All devices such as banners, pennants, flags, (not including flags of national, state or city governments), searchlights, sandwich boards, sidewalk signs, curb signs, balloons or other air or gas-filled balloons.

**31. Three-Dimensional Sign**

**A sign which has a depth or relief on its surface greater than six inches exclusive of the supporting sign structure and not to include projecting wall signs.**

**32. Vehicle Sign**

**A sign mounted on a vehicle, bicycle, trailer or boat, or fixed or attached to a device for the purpose of transporting from site-to-site.**

~~27.~~ **33. Wall Graphics**

Including but not limited to any mosaic, mural or painting or graphic art technique or combination or grouping of mosaics, murals, or paintings or graphic art techniques applied, implanted or placed directly onto a wall or fence.

~~28.~~ **34. Wall Sign**

A sign attached to or erected against the wall of a building with the face in a parallel plane of the building wall.

~~29.~~ **35. Wind Sign or Device**

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Any sign or device in the nature of banners, flags, balloons, or other objects fastened in such a manner as to move upon being subject to pressures by wind or breeze.

**SECTION 18.96.030 Exempted Signs.**

The following signs and devices shall not be subject to the provisions of this chapter except for **18.96.040 and 18.96.140**

- A. Informational signs placed by the City of Ashland, or by the State or Oregon in the publicly owned right-of-way. **Collective identification or directory signs placed by the City of Ashland showing the types and locations of various civic, business, recreation, historic interest areas, or other similar uses, when such signs are located on publically owned right-of-way or on City of Ashland property.**
- B. Memorial tablets, cornerstones, or similar plaques not exceeding six square feet in size.
- C. Flags of national, state or local governments.
- D. Signs within a building provided they are not visible to persons outside the building.
- E. Temporary signs not exceeding four square feet, provided the signs are erected no more than 45 days prior to and removed within seven days following an election. (Ord 2844; S1 1999)
- F. Temporary, non-illuminated real estate ~~(not more than one per tax lot) or construction~~ signs not exceeding six square feet in residential areas or twelve square feet in commercial and industrial areas, provided said signs are removed within fifteen days from the sale, lease or rental of the property ~~or within seven days of completion of the project.~~ **Such signs shall be limited to one sign per lot. Freestanding temporary real estate signs shall be no greater than five feet above grade.**
- G. **Temporary non-illuminated construction signs on a lot with an aggregate area not exceeding sixteen (16) square feet in residential areas or thirty-two (32) square feet in commercial and industrial areas, provided said signs are removed within seven days of completion of the project. Such signs shall be limited to no more than four signs per lot. Freestanding temporary construction signs shall be no greater than five feet above grade.**
- H. Small incidental signs provided said signs do not exceed two square feet in area per sign, not more than two in number on any parcel or two per ~~street~~ **business** frontage, whichever is greater. **Within the Downtown Design Standards Zone, three incidental signs with a total area of seven square feet, provided no single incidental sign exceeds three square feet in area, are allowable per business frontage.**
- H. ~~I.~~ **I.** Temporary signs painted or placed upon a window in a non-residential zone, when such signs do not obscure more than twenty percent of such window area, and are maintained for a period not exceeding seven days. Signs which remain longer than seven days will be considered permanent and must comply with the provisions of the Ashland Sign Code (18.96).
- I. ~~J.~~ **J.** Any sign which is not visible to motorists or pedestrians on any public highway, sidewalk, street or alley.
- J. ~~K.~~ **K.** Strings of Lights. Strings of ~~incandescent~~ lights in non-residential zones where the lights do not exceed 5 watts per bulb, ~~the bulbs are placed no closer than 6" apart~~ and do not flash or blink in any way. Strings of lights in residential zones are not regulated. (Ord. 2660, 1991)
- K. ~~L.~~ **L.** Temporary non-illuminated signs not exceeding 16 square feet for charitable fundraising events placed by non-profit and charitable organizations. Such signs shall not be placed more than seven days prior to the event and must be removed within two days following the event. No more than two such events may be advertised in this manner per lot per year.

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(Ord. 2323, 1984)

All of the foregoing exempted signs shall be subject to the other regulations contained in this Chapter 18.96 relative to the size, lighting or spacing of such sign.

(Ord. 2221, 1982)

**SECTION 18.96.040 Prohibited Signs.**

- A. No sign, unless exempted or allowed pursuant to this Chapter, shall be permitted except as may be provided in Section 18.96.030.  
(Ord. 2221, 1982)
- B. No movable sign, temporary sign or bench sign shall be permitted except as may be provided in Section 18.96.030.
- C. No wind sign, device, or captive balloon shall be permitted except as may be provided in Section 18.96.030 **and 18.96.080(B)6**  
(Ord. 2221, 1982; Ord. 2440, 1988)
- D. No flashing signs shall be permitted.
- E. No sign shall have or consist of any moving, rotating, or otherwise animated part.
- F. No three-dimensional statue, caricature or representation of persons, animals or merchandise shall be used as a sign or incorporated into a sign structure **except as may be provided in Sections 18.96.080(B)5, and 18.96.090(B)4**
- G. No public address system or sound devices shall be used in conjunction with any sign or advertising device.
- H. No roof signs or signs which project above the roof shall be permitted.
- I. No exposed sources of illumination shall be permitted on any sign, or for the decoration of any building, including, but not limited to, neon or fluorescent tubing and flashing incandescent bulbs, except when the source of illumination is within a building, and at least ten (10) feet from a window which allows visibility from the public right-of-way, or when a sign is internally illuminated or the source of light is fully shielded from the public view.
- J. No signs which use plastic as part of the exterior visual effects or are internally illuminated in the Historic District, as identified in the Ashland Comprehensive Plan, or in any residential districts shall be permitted.
- K. No bulletin boards or signs with changeable copy shall be permitted, except as allowed in Section 18.96.060(D).
- L. No wall graphics shall be permitted.
- M. No unofficial sign which purports to be, is an imitation of, or resembles an official traffic sign or signal, or which attempts to direct the movement of traffic, or which hides from view any official traffic sign or signal shall be permitted.
- N. Vehicle signs used as static displays such that the primary purpose of the vehicle is the display of the sign, placed or parked where visible from off-premises or the public right-of-way for a continuous period of 2 days or more. Vehicles and equipment regularly used in the conduct of the business such as delivery vehicles, construction vehicles, fleet vehicles, or similar uses, shall not be subjected to this prohibition.**

**SECTION 18.96.050 Sign Permits.**

- A. Sign Permit Required. A sign permit is required in each of the following instances:
  - 1. Upon the erection of any new sign except exempted signs.
  - 2. To make alteration to an existing sign, including a change in the size or materials. Permits shall not be required for minor maintenance and repairs to existing signs or for changes in sign copy for conforming signs.

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3. To alter an existing non-conforming sign, subject to Section 18.96.150.
  4. To erect a temporary sign for a new business subject to Section 18.96.050(D).
- B. Required Information for a Sign Permit. For the purposes of review by the Staff Advisor and Building Official, a drawing to scale shall be submitted which indicates fully the material, color, texture, dimensions, shape, relation and attachment to building and other structures, structural elements of the proposed sign, and the size and dimensions of any other signs located on the applicant's building or property.
- C. Temporary Signs for New Businesses. The Staff Advisor or his/her designate can issue a permit for a temporary sign for new businesses for a period not to exceed seven days. A permit is required for these signs but the permit fee is waived.
- D. Unsafe or Illegal Signs.
1. If the Staff Advisor or Building Official shall find that any sign is unsafe or insecure, or any sign erected or established under a sign permit has been carried out in violation of said permit or this chapter, he/she shall give written notice to the permittee or owner thereof to remove or alter such sign within seven days.
  2. The Staff Advisor or Building Official may cause any sign which is an immediate peril to persons or property, or sign erected without a permit, to be removed immediately, and said sign shall not be re-established until a valid permit has been issued. Failure to remove or alter said signs as directed shall subject the permittee or owner to the penalties prescribed in this Title.
  3. Any person who erects, constructs, prints, paints or otherwise makes a sign for which a sign permit or approval is required under Chapter 18.96 without first having determined a permit has been obtained for such sign, has committed an infraction, and upon conviction thereof is punishable as prescribed in section 1.08.020 of the Ashland Municipal Code. It shall not be a defense to this section that such person erected, constructed, printed, painted or otherwise made the sign for another.  
(amended Ord. 2754, 1995)
- E. Sign Permit Record Required. The Planning Department shall keep a copy and permanent record of each sign permit issued.
- F. Sign Permit Fee. The fee for a sign permit shall be as set forth in Resolution No. 88-01, as adopted by the City Council. The fee for any sign which is erected without a sign permit shall be double the regular sign fee.

**SECTION 18.96.060 General Sign Regulations.**

The following general provisions shall govern all signs in addition to all other applicable provisions of this chapter.

- A. Variances. The following regulations pertaining to signs are not subject to the variance section of this Code:
1. Section 18.96.040 - Prohibited signs.
  2. Section 18.96.110 - Abatement of nuisance signs.
  3. Section 18.96.120 - Construction and maintenance standards.
  4. The size, height and number of constraints of Sections 18.96.070, 18.96.080, 18.96.090 and 18.96.100, except as may be allowed in 18.96.130.
- B. Obstruction by Signs. No sign or portion thereof shall be placed so that it obstructs any fire escape, stairway or standpipe; interferes with human exit through any window of any room located above the first floor of any building; obstructs any door or required exit from any building; or obstructs any required light or ventilation.
- C. Bulletin Board or Reader Board. Twenty (20) percent of permitted sign area may be allowed

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as a bulletin board or reader board.

D. Placement of Signs.

1. Near residential.

No sign shall be located in a commercial or industrial district so that it is primarily visible only from a residential district.

2. Near street intersections.

No signs in excess of two and one-half feet in height shall be placed in the vision clearance area. The vision clearance area is the triangle formed by a line connecting points twenty-five feet from the intersection of property lines. In the case of an intersection involving an alley and a street, the triangle is formed by a line connecting points ten feet along the alley and twenty-five feet along the street. When the angle of intersection between the street and the alley is less than 30 degrees, the distance shall be twenty-five feet. This provision shall apply to all zones.

3. Near driveways.

No sign or portion of thereof shall be erected within ten feet of driveways unless the same is less than two and one-half feet in height.

4. Future street right-of-way.

No sign or portion thereof shall be erected within future street right-of-ways, as depicted upon the Master Street Plan, unless and until an agreement is recorded stipulating that the sign will be removed or relocated upon street improvements at no expense to the City.

**SECTION 18.96.070 Residential and North Mountain Sign Regulations.**

Signs in the residential (R) and North Mountain (NM)\_districts shall conform to the following regulations:

A. Special Provisions:

1. No sign or portion thereof shall extend beyond any property line of the premises on which such sign is located.
2. Internally illuminated signs shall not be permitted.
3. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as permitting any type of sign in conjunction with a commercial use allowed as a home occupation, as no signs are allowed in conjunction with a home occupation. Signs in residential areas are only permitted in conjunction with a Conditional Use.

B. Type of Signs Permitted.

1. Neighborhood identification signs. One sign shall be permitted at each entry point to residential developments not exceeding an area of six square feet per sign with lettering not over nine inches in height, located not over three feet above grade.
2. Conditional Uses. Uses authorized in accordance with the Chapter on Conditional Use Permits may be permitted one ground sign not exceeding an overall height of five feet and an area of fifteen square feet, set back at least ten feet from property lines; or one wall sign in lieu of a ground sign. Such signs shall be approved in conjunction with the issuance of such conditional use permit. Said signs shall not use plastic as part of the exterior visual effect and shall not be internally illuminated.
3. Retail commercial uses allowed as a conditional use in the Railroad District and traveler's accommodations in residential zones shall be allowed one wall sign or one ground sign which meets the following criteria:
  - a. The total size of the sign is limited to six square feet.
  - b. The maximum height of any ground sign is to be three feet above grade.

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- c. The sign must be constructed of wood and cannot be internally illuminated.
4. North Mountain Signs. Signs for approved non-residential uses within the NM-R15, NM-C and NM Civic zones shall be permitted one ground sign not exceeding an overall height of five feet and an area of fifteen square feet, set back at least ten feet from property lines; or one wall or awning sign in lieu of a ground sign. Said signs shall not use plastic as part of the exterior visual effect and shall not be internally illuminated.  
(ORD 2951, amended, 07/01/2008)

**SECTION 18.96.080 Commercial-Downtown Overlay District (C-1-D).**

Signs in the Commercial-Downtown Overlay District shall conform to the following regulations:

**A. Special Provisions.**

1. Frontage.  
The number and use of signs allowed by virtue of a given business frontage shall be placed only upon such business frontage. ~~and no building shall be credited with more than two business frontages.~~
2. Aggregate number of signs.  
The aggregate number of signs for each business shall be two signs for each business frontage ~~(a frontage with an entrance/exit open to the general public).~~
3. Material.  
No sign in the Commercial-Downtown Overlay District shall use plastic as part of the exterior visual effects of the sign.
4. Aggregate area of signs.  
The aggregate area of all signs established by and located on a given street frontage shall not exceed an area equal to one square foot for each lineal foot of street frontage. Aggregate area shall not include nameplates, and real estate and construction signs.

**B. Types of Signs Permitted.**

1. **Wall Signs.**
  - a. Number.  
Two signs per building frontage shall be permitted for each business, or one sign per frontage for a group of businesses occupying a single common space or suite.
  - b. Area.  
~~Total sign area shall not be more than one square foot of sign area for one lineal foot of legal business frontage. This area shall not exceed sixty square feet.~~  
**Buildings with two or less business frontages shall be permitted one square foot of sign area for each lineal foot of business frontage. Building frontages of three or more, on a single building, shall be permitted one square foot of sign area for every two lineal feet of business frontage. The maximum sign area on any single business frontage shall not exceed sixty (60) square feet. Business frontages of three or more, on a single building, shall comply with the following criteria established within the City's Site Design and Use Standards:**
    - i. A pedestrian entrance designed to be attractive and functional, and open to the public during all business hours**
    - ii. The pedestrian entrance shall be accessed from a walkway connected to a public sidewalk.**
- c. Projection.

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Signs may project a maximum of ~~eighteen inches~~ **two feet** from the face of the building to which they are attached, provided the lowest portion of the sign is at least eight feet above grade. Any portion lower than eight feet may only project four inches.

- d. Extension above roof line.  
Signs may not project above the roof or eave line of the building.

**2. Ground Signs.**

- a. Number.  
One sign, in lieu of a wall sign, shall be permitted for each lot with a street frontage in excess of fifty lineal feet. Corner lots can count one street frontage. Two or more parcels of less than fifty feet may be combined for purposes of meeting the foregoing standard.
- b. Area.  
Signs shall not exceed an area of one square foot for each two lineal feet of street frontage, with a maximum area of sixty square feet per sign.
- c. Placement.  
Signs shall be placed so that no sign or portion thereof shall extend beyond any property line of the premises on which such sign is located. Signs on corner properties shall also comply with the vision clearance provisions of Section 18.96.060(F).
- d. Height.  
No ground sign shall be in excess of five feet above grade.

**3. Marquee or Awning Signs.**

- a. Number.  
A maximum of two signs shall be permitted for each business frontage in lieu of wall signs.
- b. Area. Signs shall not exceed the permitted aggregate sign area not taken up by a wall sign.
- c. Projection.  
Signs may not project beyond the face of the marquee if suspended, or above the face of the marquee if attached to and parallel to the face of the marquee.
- d. Height.  
Signs shall have a maximum face height of nine inches if placed below the marquee.
- e. Clearance above grade.  
The lowest portion of a sign attached to a marquee shall not be less than seven feet, six inches above grade.
- f. Signs painted on a marquee.  
Signs can be painted on the marquee in lieu of wall signs provided the signs do not exceed the permitted aggregate sign area not taken up by wall signs.

**4. Projection Signs.**

- a. Number.  
One sign shall be permitted for each business or group of businesses occupying a single common space or suite in lieu of a wall sign.
- b. Area.  
Except for marquee or awning signs, a projecting sign shall not exceed an area of one square foot for each two feet of lineal business frontage that is not already

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utilized by a wall sign. The maximum area of any projecting sign shall be 15 square feet.

- c. Projection.  
Signs may project from the face of the building to which they are attached a maximum of two feet if located eight feet above grade, or three feet if located nine feet above grade or more.
- d. Height and extension above roof line.  
Signs shall not extend above the roofline, eave or parapet wall of the building to which they are attached, or be lower than eight feet above grade.
- e. Limitation on placement.  
No projecting sign shall be placed on any frontage on an arterial street as designated in the Ashland Comprehensive Plan.

**5. Three-Dimensional Signs.**

- a. Number.  
**One three-dimensional sign shall be permitted for each lot in lieu of one three square foot incidental sign otherwise allowed per 18.96.030H.**
- b. Surface Area.  
**Flat surfaces in excess of two square feet shall count toward the total aggregate sign area per 18.96.080(A)4.**
- c. Placement.  
**The three-dimensional sign shall be located so that no sign or portion thereof is within a public pedestrian easement or extends beyond any property line of the premises on which such sign is located into the public right-of-way unless the sign is attached to the face of the building and located eight feet above grade, or the sign is attached to a marquee with the lowest portion of the sign not less than seven feet, six inches above grade not projecting beyond, or above, the face of the marquee.**
- d. Dimensions.  
**No three-dimensional sign shall have a height, width, or depth in excess of three feet.**
- e. Volume.  
**The volume of the three-dimensional sign shall be calculated as the entire volume within a rectangular cube enclosing the extreme limits of all parts of the sign and shall not exceed three (3) cubic feet. For the purposes of calculating volume the minimum dimension for height, width, or depth shall be considered one foot.**
- f. Materials  
**The three-dimensional signs shall be constructed of metal, wood, bronze, concrete, stone, glass, clay, fiberglass, or other durable material, all of which are treated to prevent corrosion or reflective glare. Three dimensional signs shall not be constructed of plastic. Three dimensional signs shall not be internally illuminated or contain any electrical component.**

**6 Portable Business Signs**

- a. Number  
**One portable business sign, limited to sandwich boards, pedestal signs, 'A' frame signs, flags, and wind signs, shall be allowed on each lot excepting that**

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buildings, businesses, shopping centers, and business complexes with permanent ground signs shall not be permitted to have portable signs.

**b. Area.**

Sign area shall be deducted from the aggregate sign allowed for exempt incidental signs established in 18.96.030(H). Signs shall not exceed an area of four (4) square feet per face including any border or trim, and there shall be no more than two (2) faces.

**c. Height.**

Sandwich board signs and 'A' frame signs shall not extend more than three (3) feet above the ground on which it is placed. Pedestal signs shall not extend more than four (4) feet above the ground on which it is placed. A freestanding wind sign shall not extend more than five (5) feet above the ground on which it is placed.

**d. Placement.**

Signs shall be placed so that no sign or portion thereof shall extend beyond any property line of the premises on which such sign is located. Portable signs shall be located within ten feet of the business entrance and shall not be placed on public right-of-way. No portable business sign shall be constructed and placed so as to interfere with pedestrian ingress and egress as regulated within the Ashland Municipal Code.

**e. General Limitations**

Signs shall be anchored, supported, or designed as to prevent tipping over, which reasonably prevents the possibility of signs becoming hazards to public health and safety. Signs shall not be constructed of plastic, illuminated or contain any electrical component. No objects shall be attached to a portable sign such as but not limited to balloons, banners, merchandise, and electrical devices. Portable business signs shall be removed at the daily close of business. These signs are prohibited while the business is closed.

**SECTION 18.96.090 Commercial, Industrial and Employment Districts.**

Signs in commercial, industrial and employment districts, excepting the Downtown-Commercial Overlay District and the Freeway Overlay District, shall conform to the following regulations:

**A. Special Provisions.**

**1. Frontage.**

The number and use of signs allowed by virtue of a given business frontage shall be placed only upon such business frontage. ~~and no building shall be credited with more than two business frontages.~~

**2. Aggregate number of signs.**

The aggregate number of signs for each business shall be two signs for each business frontage.

**3. Aggregate area of signs.**

The aggregate area of all signs established by and located on a given street frontage, shall not exceed an area equal to one square foot of sign area for each lineal foot of street frontage. Aggregate area shall not include nameplates, and temporary real estate and construction signs.

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**B. Types of Signs Permitted.**

**1. Wall Signs.**

a. Number.

Two signs per building frontage shall be permitted for each business, or one sign per frontage for a group of businesses occupying a single common space or suite.

b. Area.

~~Total sign area shall not be more than one square foot of sign area for one lineal foot of legal business frontage. This area shall not exceed sixty square feet.~~

**Buildings with two or less business frontages shall be permitted one square foot of sign area for each lineal foot of business frontage. Building frontages of three or more, on a single building, shall be permitted one square foot of sign area for every two lineal feet of business frontage. The maximum sign area on any single business frontage shall not exceed sixty (60) square feet.**

**Business frontages of three or more, on a single building, shall comply with the following criteria established within the City's Site Design and Use Standards:**

**i. A pedestrian entrance designed to be attractive and functional, and open to the public during all business hours**

**ii. The pedestrian entrance shall be accessed from a walkway connected to a public sidewalk.**

c. Projection.

Except for marquee or awning signs, a projecting sign may project a maximum of ~~eighteen inches~~ **two feet** from the face of the building to which they are attached, provided the lowest portion of the sign is at least eight feet above grade. Any portion lower than eight feet can only project four inches.

d. Extension above roof line.

Signs may not project above the roof or eave line of the building.

**2. Ground Signs.**

a. Number.

One sign shall be permitted for each lot with a street frontage in excess of fifty lineal feet. Corner lots can count both street frontages in determining the lineal feet of the street frontage but only one ground sign is permitted on corner lots. Two or more parcels of less than fifty feet may be combined for purposes of meeting the foregoing standard.

b. Area.

Signs shall not exceed an area of one square foot for each two lineal feet of street frontage, with a maximum area of sixty square feet per sign.

c. Placement.

Signs shall be placed so that no sign or portion thereof shall extend beyond any property line of the premises on which such sign is located. Signs on corner properties shall also comply with the vision clearance provisions of Section 18.96.060(F).

d. Height.

No ground sign shall be in excess of five feet above grade.

**3. Awning or Marquee Signs.**

a. Number.

Two signs shall be permitted for each business frontage in lieu of wall signs.

b. Area.

Signs shall not exceed the permitted aggregate sign area not taken up by a wall sign.

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- c. Projection.  
Signs may not project beyond the face of the marquee if suspended, or above or below the face of the marquee if attached to and parallel to the face of the marquee.
- d. Height.  
Signs shall have a maximum face height of nine inches if attached to the marquee.
- e. Clearance above grade.  
The lowest portion of a sign attached to a marquee shall not be less than seven feet, six inches above grade.
- f. Signs painted on a marquee.  
Signs can be painted on the marquee in lieu of wall sign provided the signs do not exceed the permitted aggregate sign area not taken up by wall signs.

**4. Three-Dimensional Signs.**

- a. Number.  
**One three-dimensional sign shall be permitted for each lot with a street frontage in excess of 50 lineal feet. This is in addition to the limitations established in this section on number of wall, ground, awning or marquee signs.**
- b. Surface Area.  
**Flat surfaces in excess of two square feet shall count toward the total aggregate sign area per 18.96.080(A)4.**
- c. Placement.  
**The three-dimensional sign shall be located a minimum of ten feet from a property line and no sign or portion thereof shall be located within a public pedestrian easement.**
- d. Dimensions.  
**No three-dimensional sign shall have a height, width, or depth in excess of six feet.**
- e. Volume.  
**The volume of the three-dimensional sign shall be calculated as the entire volume within a rectangular cube enclosing the extreme limits of all parts of the sign and shall not exceed 20 cubic feet. For the purposes of calculating volume the minimum dimension for height, width, or depth shall be considered one foot.**
- f. Materials  
**The three-dimensional signs shall be constructed of metal, wood, bronze, concrete, stone, glass, clay, fiberglass, or other durable material, all of which are treated to prevent corrosion or reflective glare. Three dimensional signs shall not be constructed of plastic. Three dimensional signs shall not be internally illuminated or contain any electrical component.**
- g. Three dimensional signs located in a Historic District shall be limited to the requirements of 18.96.080(B)5.

**5. Portable Business Signs**

- a. Number  
**One portable business sign, limited to sandwich boards, pedestal signs, 'A' frame signs, flags, and wind signs, shall be allowed on each lot excepting that buildings, businesses, shopping centers, and business complexes with permanent ground signs shall not be permitted to have portable signs.**

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**b. Area.**

**Sign area shall be deducted from the aggregate sign allowed for exempt incidental signs established in 18.96.030(H). Signs shall not exceed an area of four (4) square feet per face including any border or trim, and there shall be no more than two (2) faces.**

**c. Height.**

**Sandwich board signs and 'A' frame signs shall not extend more than three (3) feet above the ground on which it is placed. Pedestal signs shall not extend more than four (4) feet above the ground on which it is placed. A freestanding wind sign shall not extend more than five (5) feet above the ground on which it is placed.**

**d. Placement.**

**Signs shall be placed so that no sign or portion thereof shall extend beyond any property line of the premises on which such sign is located. Portable signs shall be located within ten feet of the business entrance and shall not be placed on public right-of-way. No portable business sign shall be constructed and placed so as to interfere with pedestrian ingress and egress as regulated within the Ashland Municipal Code.**

**e. General Limitations**

**Signs shall be anchored, supported, or designed as to prevent tipping over, which reasonably prevents the possibility of signs becoming hazards to public health and safety. Signs shall not be constructed of plastic, illuminated or contain any electrical component. No objects shall be attached to a portable sign such as but not limited to balloons, banners, merchandise, and electrical devices. Portable business signs shall be removed at the daily close of business. These signs are prohibited while the business is closed.**

**SECTION 18.96.100 Freeway Sign Zone.**

- A. **Purpose.** This special overlay zone is intended to provide for and regulate certain ground signs which identify businesses in commercial districts located at freeway interchanges.
- B. **Establishment and Location of Freeway Sign Zones.** Freeway sign zones shall be depicted on the official zoning map of the City and identified as the Freeway Overlay District.
- C. **Freeway Overlay Sign Regulations.** All signs in this district shall comply with Section 18.96.090, except for ground signs, which shall comply with the provisions of Section 18.96.100(D), ground sign regulations.
- D. **Ground Sign Regulations.**
1. **Number.**  
One freeway sign shall be permitted for each lot in addition to the signs allowed by 18.96.090 of this Chapter.  
(Ord. 2290, 1984)
  2. **Area.**  
Signs shall not exceed an area of one hundred (100) square feet per sign.
  3. **Height.**  
Signs shall not exceed a height of 2028 feet above mean sea level.

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**SECTION 18.96.110 Abatement of Nuisance Signs.**

The following signs are hereby declared a public nuisance and shall be removed or the nuisance abated:

- A. Flashing sign visible from a public street or highway.
- B. Temporary, or movable signs or **portable signs located on the publically owned right-of-way.**
- C. Illegal signs.
- D. Signs in obvious disrepair which are not maintained according to the standards set forth in 18.96.120(C).

**SECTION 18.96.120 Construction and Maintenance Standards.**

**A. Materials of construction.**

1. Single and multi-family residential districts.  
All signs and their supporting member may be constructed of any material subject to the provisions of this Chapter.
2. Commercial and industrial districts.  
All signs and their supporting members shall be constructed of non-combustible materials or fire-retardant treated wood which maintains its fire-resistive qualities when tested in accordance with the rain and weathering tests of the U.B.C. Standards No.32-37, unless otherwise provided in this Section.
3. Non-treated signs.  
All wall, ground, marquee and projecting signs of twenty square feet or less may be constructed of non-treated wood.
4. Real estate and construction signs.  
All signs may be constructed of compressed wood particle board or other material of similar fire resistivity.
5. Directly illuminated signs.  
All signs illuminated from within may be faced with plastics approved by the Building Code.
6. Glass.  
All glass used in signs shall be shatter-resistant, or covered by a shatter-resistant material.
7. Wood.  
Wood in contact with the ground shall be foundation-grade redwood, foundation-grade cedar, all heartwood cypress, or any species of wood which has been pressure-treated with an approved preservative. Trim and backing strips may be constructed of wood.

**B. Construction Methods.**

1. All signs shall be constructed of such materials or treated in such manner that normal weathering will not harm, deface or otherwise affect the sign.
2. All letters, figure and similar message elements shall be safely and securely attached to the sign structure.
3. All signs shall be designed and constructed to resist the applicable wind loads set forth in the Building Code.

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- C. **Maintenance.** All signs shall be maintained at all times in a state of good repair, and no person shall maintain or permit to be maintained on any premises owned or controlled by him/her, any sign which is in a sagging, leaning, fallen, decayed, deteriorated or other dilapidated or unsafe condition.

**SECTION 18.96.130 Nonconforming Signs.**

- A. Any sign which does not conform with a provision of the Ashland Sign Code, and has been in existence for more than five years, is subject to this Section.
- B. Alteration of any existing nonconforming sign. It is unlawful to alter any existing nonconforming sign. The sign must be brought into conformance with this Title upon any physical alteration. Acts of God or vandalism which damage these nonconforming signs shall be exempt from this Section, if the cost of the repair is less than 50% of the cost of replacing the sign with a conforming sign. However, the signs must be restored to their original design and a permit with a \$10.00 fee will be required prior to the repair work.
- C. Any nonconforming sign used by a business, shopping center, or business complex must be brought into conformance prior to any expansion or change in use which requires a Site Review or Conditional Use Permit. All nonconforming signs must be brought into conformance with the same provisions as are required for new signs. No building permits for new construction may be issued until this provision is complied with.
- D. Variances can be granted using the variance procedure of this Title to alleviate unusual hardships or extraordinary circumstances which exist in bringing nonconforming signs into conformity. The variance granted shall be the minimum required to alleviate the hardship or extraordinary circumstance.

(Ord. 2357, 1985)

**SECTION 18.96.140 Enforcement.**

The portions of this Chapter relating to the structural characteristics and safety of signs shall be enforced by the Building Official or his/her designate; all other portions shall be enforced by the Staff Advisory or designate.

(Ord. 2176, 1982)

**SECTION 18.96.150 Governmental Signs.**

Governmental agencies may apply for a Conditional Use to place a sign that does not conform to this Code when it is determined that, in addition to the criteria for a conditional use, the sign is necessary to further that agency's public purpose.

(ORD 2951, amended, 07/01/2008)

**SECTION 18.96.160 Historic Signs.**

- A. Historic Sign Inventory. The inventory of historically significant signs shall be established by resolution of the City Council.
- B. Criteria for designation of historic signs. All signs for which designation as a Historic Sign are requested shall be substantially in existence at the time of the application; shall be displayed in their original location; shall be in association with an important event, person, group, or business in the history of the City of Ashland; shall follow a guideline of being in existence for approximately 40 years; and shall meet one of the following criteria:

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1. The sign is exemplary of technology, craftsmanship or design of the period when it was constructed, uses historic sign materials or means of illumination, and is not significantly altered from its historic period. If the sign has been altered, it must be restorable to its historic appearance.
  2. The sign is integrated into the architecture of the building and is exemplary of a historically significant architectural style.
- C. The owner of any sign may request that said sign be reviewed for significance in the Historic Sign Inventory upon written application to the City Council. Application fees shall be the same as for Type I applications. Applications shall include written findings addressing the criteria for designation of historic signs, and current and historic photographs of the sign, if available.
1. The Council shall refer all requests for inclusion on the Historic Sign Inventory to the Historic Commission for review and recommendation to the Council within 30 days of the request. Notice of the Historic Commission meeting shall be mailed to all affected property owners within 100' of the subject property. If a recommendation is not made within 30 days, the request shall be forwarded to the Council without a recommendation.
  2. The Council shall, after receiving the recommendation of the Historic Commission or after 30 days, provide notice to all affected property owners within 100' of the subject property of a public hearing before the City Council.
  3. The Council shall decide, based on the criteria above and the recommendation of the Historic Commission, whether to approve the request to include the sign on the inventory.
  4. Inclusion on the Historic Sign Inventory shall be by resolution of the Council.
  5. The burden of proof shall be on the applicant.
- D. Signs on the Historic Sign Inventory in any zoning district shall be exempt from the requirements of this Section except Sections 18.96.110 and 18.96.120(D). Also, that the sign area of the historic sign is exempted from the total allowable sign area, as defined in this Section, except as modified by Council conditions in E. below.
- E. The City Council shall have the authority to impose conditions regulating area, maintenance, etc. on the signs included in the Historic Sign Inventory to further the purpose and intent of this ordinance.
- F. Removal or demolition of a Historic Sign shall be done under permit and approval of the Staff Advisor. The Historic Commission shall review the permit at their next regularly scheduled meeting and shall have the authority to delay issuance for 30 days from the date of their review meeting. Such delay shall be to allow the Commission the opportunity to discuss alternate plans for the sign with the applicant.
- G. Signs on the Historic Sign Inventory, which have been destroyed or damaged by fire or other calamity, by act of God or by public enemy to an extent greater than 50%, may be reconstructed in an historically accurate manner. Such reconstruction shall be authorized by the City Council, only after determination that the reconstruction will be an accurate duplication of the historic sign, based on review of photographic or other documentary evidence specifying the historic design. The Historic Commission shall review and make recommendations to the City Council on all such reconstructions.
- H. Maintenance and Modification of Historic Signs.
1. All parts of the historic sign, including but not limited to neon tubes, incandescent lights and shields, and sign faces, shall be maintained in a functioning condition as historically intended for the sign. Replacement of original visible components with substitutes to retain the original appearance shall be permitted provided such replacements accurately reproduce the size, shape, color and finish of the original. Failure to maintain the sign in

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accord with this section shall be grounds for review of the historic sign designation by the City Council.

2. Modifications of a historic sign may be allowed, after review by the Historic Commission and approval by the City Council, only if such modifications do not substantially change the historic style, scale, height, type of material or dimensions of the historic sign, and does not result in a sign which does not meet the criteria for designation as a historic sign.
3. Changes in the location of a historic sign may be allowed, after review by the Historic Commission and approval by the City Council, only if such locational change does not result in the sign no longer meeting the criteria for designation as a historic sign.

(Ord. 2598, 1990)

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# Letter Submitted by the Public Arts Commission regarding proposed sign code changes and 3-D signs

Submitted by Dana Bussell, Received 2/13/2009

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In response to the Planning Commission's desire for more information on the position of the Public Art Commission regarding 3-D signs, I am providing the following:

1. As stated in the Draft Amendments presented by City Staff on February 10, 2009, "One three-dimensional sign shall be permitted for each lot with a street frontage in excess of 50 lineal feet. **This is in addition to the limitations established in this section on number of wall, ground, awning or marquee signs.**"

Our biggest concern is the opportunity for additional signs of significant size (20 cubic feet) which could have blatant commercial messages even though that was not the case with the 3-D object that was the source of the proposed change (the waiter in front of Wiley's World on Ashland Street).

2. The Draft Amendments of February 10, 2009, state, "No three-dimensional sign shall have a height, width, or depth in excess of 6 feet.  
The volume of the three-dimensional sign shall be calculated as the entire volume within a rectangular cube enclosing the extreme limits of all parts of the sign and shall not exceed 20 cubic feet.  
Three dimensional signs shall not be constructed of plastic."

The Downtown Task Force, of which I was a member, intended to have this change in the sign code bring the waiter at Wiley's World into compliance. It was the only object outside the Downtown and Historic Districts to be so effected. **Ironically, with these sign code changes, the waiter will still be out of compliance. It is 6 feet two inches tall and will not fit into a 20 cubic foot rectangle. It is made of plastic embedded with glass fibers.**

3. With the proposed changes, the following could be allowed:  
Mass produced objects  
Objects intended for the mass audience (Bugs Bunny has been cast in bronze)  
Objects that are purely informational in nature with no esthetic content  
Signs that are just fat letters  
Signs that have the sole purpose of attracting attention as opposed to fitting the character of Ashland.
4. The waiter at Wiley's presents a unique situation that is difficult to address with a blanket ordinance. The Public Art Process however is designed to deal with unique situations.



# Downtown Davis Sign Design Guidelines

## Central Commercial & Mixed Use



### Guidelines

#### General Guidelines For All Signs In the C-C and MU Districts

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## Applicability

The standards and guidelines set forth in this manual apply to all properties within the central commercial (CC) district and the mixed use (MU) district of Downtown Davis as indicated on the map at the end of this document.

- All proposed signs consistent with the guidelines stated herein shall require approval of a Minor Improvement Application, pursuant to Resolution #5710 & #5711.



- Signs not consistent with the guidelines stated herein, shall be subject to the Design Review approval process, pursuant to §40.31.040 (j).
- Signs may not be changed or installed until the Planning and Building Department has approved the design and a building permit (if applicable) has been issued.
- Many non-conforming signs will exist within the commercial core of Downtown Davis after the guidelines are implemented. The intent of the Planning Department is to improve the Downtown shopping experience for everyone. Therefore, voluntary compliance with these guidelines is highly encouraged for businesses with existing signage.

## Purpose

The intent of the sign design guidelines is to accomplish the following:

- Establish reasonable and improved standards for business identification
- Assist property owners and business owners in understanding city expectations
- Reduce the time and fees for processing sign approvals
- Encourage creative and innovative approaches to signage within an established framework
- Promote economic vitality in the downtown



- Enhance overall property values and the visual environment in the city by discouraging signs which contribute to the visual clutter of the streetscape
- Ensure that commercial signs are designed for the purpose of identifying a business in an attractive and functional manner, rather than to serve primarily as general advertising for business
- Ensure signs on the façade of buildings reinforce the existing character and are integrated into the architectural scheme of the building



- Promote a quality visual environment by allowing signs that are compatible with their surroundings and which effectively communicate their message.

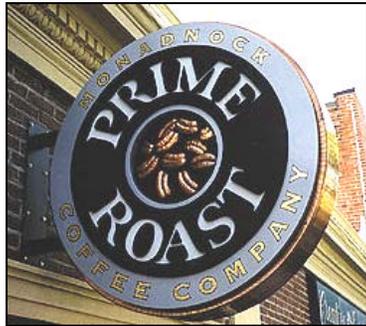
## Permitted Signs

The following sign types are permitted in the Downtown Davis Commercial Core:

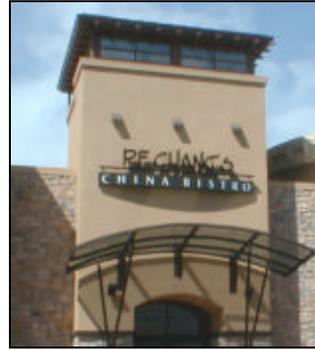
- Wall Signs
- Awning & Canopy Signs
- Projecting Signs
- Hanging Signs
- Window Signs
- Plaque Signs
- Restaurant Menu Signs
- Low Profile & Monument Signs
- Tenant Directory Signs
- A-Frame Signs
- Permanent Banner Signs
- Temporary Signs
- Fraternity & Sorority Signs

## Sign Overview

- All signs should be architecturally integrated with their surroundings in terms of size, shape, color texture, and lighting so that they are complementary to the overall design of the buildings.
- Signs should reflect the character of the building and its use.
- Signs should respect the immediate context of the building's location and the overall character of Downtown.
- Signs should enhance the primary design elements or unique architectural features of buildings.



- Signs should be designed with the purpose of promoting retail and street activity while enhancing the pedestrian experience.
- The size of signs and its letters should be located in logical "signable areas" which relate to the pattern of the facade.
- The number of signs per building façade should be limited to the fewest necessary to clearly identify businesses located within.
- Signs are not permitted to cover or obscure architectural features of buildings.
- Consider the layout and shape of the architectural features of the building when determining the size and location of a sign.
- Design elements such as window patterns (vertical and horizontal rectangles, arches, squares, etc.) will help determine the sign shape that will suit the building.



- All signs are to be maintained properly such that they are always in clean, working condition and the copy is not obscured or damaged.
- Signs that encroach or project over the public-right-of-way shall be subject to approval of an encroachment permit.
- New signs proposed for existing buildings shall provide a compatible appearance with the existing signage of other tenants. Signs should attempt to unify the business with its nearest neighboring tenants.

## Sign Programs

- Sign programs shall be required for new multiple-tenant buildings and are encouraged to be developed for existing buildings.
- Sign programs serve to create a coordinated project theme of uniform design elements such as color, lettering style, and placement.
- In the event that the requirements in the sign ordinance and/or sign design guidelines conflict with an approved sign program, the requirements set forth in the sign program shall prevail.



## Permitted Sign Area

The tables below apply to the following types of signs: wall, awning & canopy, window, plaque, tenant directory, permanent banner, and temporary signs. Permitted sign area for all other signage is addressed individually in the specific guidelines' section throughout the remainder of this document.

The allowable square footage of sign area in the **Central Commercial (C-C) District** shall be computed based upon amount of frontage as indicated in the following table.

Central Commercial District	
Premises Frontage (Feet)	Maximum Permitted Sign Area (Square Feet)
5	15
10	30
20	42
40	64
60	86
73	100
Above 73	100

The allowable square footage of sign area in the **Mixed-Use (MU) District** shall be computed based upon amount of frontage as indicated in the following table:

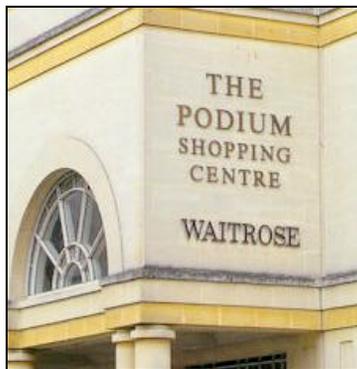
Mixed Use District	
Premises Frontage (Feet)	Maximum Permitted Sign Area (Square Feet)
5	15
10	30
20	42
30	50
Above 30	50

## Placement

- The architecture of the building often identifies specific locations for signs, and these locations should be used.



- The size of signs shall be in proportion to the size of their location.
- Repetitious signage information on the same building frontage should be avoided, regardless of the sign area square frontage allowed in the zoning code.
- To minimize irreversible damage to masonry, all mounting and supports should be inserted into mortar joints and not into the face of the masonry. This technique does not damage the surface and allows for easy removal.
- Signs that are replaced on stucco exteriors can result in unattractive "patched" areas. These potential maintenance problems shall be addressed during the approval process for the sign replacement.



## Multi-Storied Buildings

- Ground floor tenants should place signs at the storefront level.
- Window signs and permanent banner signs are permitted on upper portions (see guidelines for qualifying signs).
- Signs on the upper façade of multistoried buildings may be permitted for ground floor tenants.
- Upper story tenant signs shall be window signs not exceeding 15% of the window area.
- Window signs for upper story tenants are permitted if the tenant has an entrance at the sidewalk and a directory sign is located at the ground floor.

## Design & Materials

- Exterior materials, finishes, and colors should be the same or similar to those of the building or structures on site.



- Signs should be professionally constructed using high-quality materials such as metal, stone, hard wood, brass-plated, and exposed neon.
- Internally lit plastic letters or plastic box signs are prohibited.
- The colors and lettering styles should compliment the building façade and harmonize with neighboring businesses.
- Excessively bright colors or over-scaled letters shall not be used as a means to attract attention.



- Exposed neon tubing may be used in conjunction with other types of materials to artistically emphasize the business name and/or logo.



- The design and alignment of signs on multiple use buildings should compliment each other such that a unified appearance is achieved.



- Signs shall respect the zoning district's dominant characteristics. Low profile type signs are more appropriate in the MU district, whereas wall signs are more appropriately located in the CC district.

## Sign Message

- Primary signs contain only the name of the business and/or its logo. Secondary text identifies products and should be located in a secondary location.



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- Signage that contains advertising is not permitted. However, signs may include information describing the products sold or services provided.
- Sign message must be designed to fit properly into the sign location.
- Modifications to logos and corporate identifiers may be required to fit attractively in the space provided.
- Sign fonts shall be selected to provide both clarity and artistic integrity.



## Sign Lighting

- Arrange any external spot or flood lighting such that the light source is directed away from passersby. The light source must be directed against the sign such that it does not shine into adjacent property or cause glare for motorists and pedestrians.



- Back-lit, halo-lit illumination, or reverse channel letters with halo illumination are highly encouraged for lighting purposes. Such signs convey a subtle and attractive appearance and are very legible under moderate ambient lighting conditions.



- Signs that use blinking or flashing lights are not permitted.
- Visible raceways and transformers for individual letters are prohibited. Sign installation details

shall indicate the location of the transformer and other mechanical equipment.

- Projecting light fixtures used for externally illuminated signs should be simple and unobtrusive in appearance. They should not obscure the graphics of the sign.



- Where individual letter signs face near-by residential areas, a low level of brightness shall be maintained with the use of halo-lit letters or down lighting (i.e., gooseneck fixtures).



**Wall Signs** are to be mounted flush and fixed securely to a building wall, projecting no more than 12 inches from the face of a building wall, and not extending sideways beyond the building face or above the highest line of the building to which it is attached.

- Wall signs should be located on the upper portion of the storefront, within or just above the enframed storefront opening. The length of the sign should not exceed the width of the enframed storefront.
- Wall signs shall be placed within a clear signable area. Signable areas are defined as an architecturally continuous wall surface uninterrupted by doors, windows or architectural detail.
- Wall signs shall not exceed 15% of the building façade (the exterior walls of a building exposed to public view).



- Wall signs shall be mounted in locations that respect the design of a building, including the arrangement of bays and openings.
- Signs should not obscure windows, grillework, piers, pilasters, and ornamental features. Typically, wall signs should be centered on horizontal surfaces (i.e., over a storefront opening).



- Wall signs shall be designed to be compatible with the storefront in scale, proportions, and color.



- Signs should be designed to create a clearly defined edge, provide shadow relief, and a substantial appearance. This effect is generally difficult to achieve by painting the sign directly on the building. For this reason, painted signs are discouraged.

## Awning & Canopy Signs

are signs that are printed on, painted on, or attached to an awning or canopy above a business door or window. They generally serve to bring color to the shopping environment and are oriented toward pedestrians from the opposite side of the street.

- Sign lettering and/or logo shall comprise no more than 30% of the total exterior surface of an awning or canopy.
- Awnings and canopies must be permanently attached to buildings.
- The minimum height of awnings shall be 8 feet from the lowest point to the sidewalk.
- Open-ended awnings are preferred.

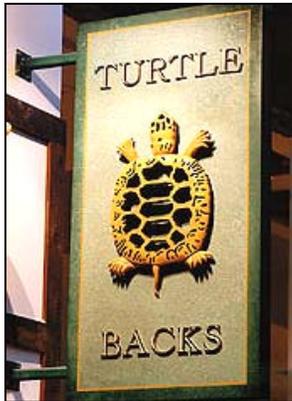


- Awnings and canopies shall be mounted on the horizontal framing element separating the storefront window from the transom (a crosspiece separating a doorway from a window).
- Awnings shall be designed to project over individual window and door openings and not project as a single continuous feature extending over masonry piers or arches.
- Awnings shall be mounted on the wood or metal framing within a door or window opening, not on the wall surrounding the opening.



- Awnings with back-lit graphics or other kinds of interior illumination are not permitted.
- Matte finish canvas, glass, or metal are appropriate materials for awnings or canopies.
- Awnings with a solid color are preferred. Striped awnings may be appropriate for some buildings without ornamental facades. Striped awnings with highly contrasting, bright colors may be visually blaring and inappropriate.

**Projecting Signs** are affixed to the face of a building or structure and project in a perpendicular manner more than 12 inches from the wall surface of that portion of the building or structure to which it is mounted. Projecting signs are strongly encouraged and should be carefully designed to reflect the character of each building and business as well as fitting comfortably with other adjacent signage.



- Projecting signs should not be mounted above the second floor window-sill in multi-storied buildings.
- The design of the sign should consider visually interesting elements such as square or rectangular shapes with painted or applied letters, two or three dimensional symbols or icons, irregular outlines, and/or internal cut-outs.
- Projecting signs shall be small in scale and provide a vertical clearance of 8 feet along pedestrian areas.



- Projecting signs shall be oriented to pedestrians passing on the sidewalk in front of the buildings rather than to automobiles or pedestrians on the far side of the street. This can be achieved by providing a minimum clearance of 12 inches between the building face and sign and maintaining a projection of 36 inches.
- Projecting signs should fit within an imaginary rectangle with a maximum area of 5 square feet.



- Mounting hardware should be an attractive and integral part of the sign design. Simple round pipe brackets with plugged ends or added decorative end elements are generally appropriate for signs. However, metal brackets of a more decorative and complex shape are encouraged where appropriate to add to the character of the building.



## Marquee Signs

- Marquee signs are projecting signs attached to or supported by a permanent canopy often made of metal and glass. Marquee signs are to be installed only on buildings occupied by theaters, cinemas, performing arts facilities, or parking structures.
- The sign copy of marquee signs shall be limited to include only the facility's name and changeable copy related to current and future attractions.
- The facility name portion of the sign shall not exceed 40 percent of the total sign area and the changeable copy portions of the sign shall not exceed 80 percent of the total sign area.

**Hanging Signs** are similar to Projecting Signs except that they are suspended below a marquee or under a canopy. Hanging signs are generally smaller than Projecting Signs due to their lower mounting height.

- Hanging signs shall be used only at ground floor locations except for upper floor businesses with covered entry porches and balconies.



- Hanging signs shall be treated similar to but smaller than projecting signs.
- Hanging signs, excluding supporting rods, chains or similar hangers, shall fit within an imaginary rectangle with a maximum area of 4 square feet.
- Signs shall be oriented toward the pedestrian and impart a sense of creativity in its design.

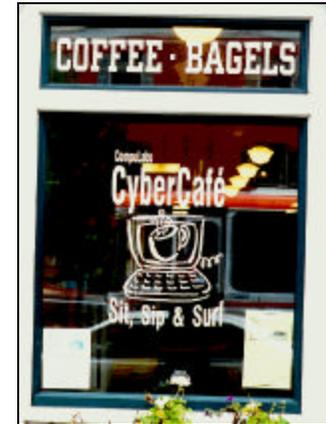


**Window Signs** are signs that are painted, posted, displayed, or etched on an interior translucent or transparent surface, including windows or doors. This type of signage generally contains only text but in some circumstances can express a special business personality through graphic logos or images combined with color.

- Window signs shall not exceed 15% of the window area so that visibility into and out of the window is not obscured.
- Sign copy shall not exceed 8 inches in height.
- Window sign copy shall be applied directly to glazed area.



- Window signs should be created from high-quality materials such as paint, gold-leaf, or neon. Appropriate techniques for window signs include sandblasting or etched glass.



- Window signs should be applied directly to the interior face of the glazing or hung inside the window thereby concealing all mounting hardware and equipment.
- Well-designed window graphics shall be used in the construction of the sign to attract attention but still allow pedestrians to view store interiors.

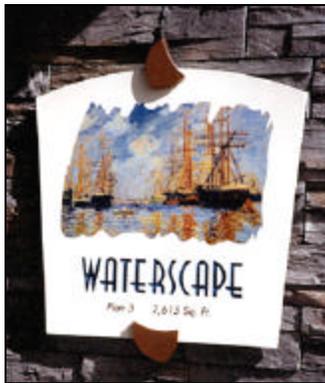


**Plaque Signs** are small versions of Wall Signs that are attached to surfaces adjacent to shop front entries.

- Plaque signs are to be located only on wall surfaces adjacent to tenant entries.
- Plaque signs are to fit within an imaginary rectangle with a maximum area of 2 square feet.



- Limit plaque sign projections from wall surfaces to a maximum of 2 inches.
- Signs are to include the business name and a business logo.
- Plaque signs are encouraged to include unique designs or other visually stimulating decorations and may be irregular in outline shape.



## Restaurant Menu Signs

are signs that incorporate a menu containing a listing of products and prices offered by the business. Such signs facilitate the customer in locating a restaurant in which to patronize. Therefore, prominently displayed menus with prices and other important information can help the customer in making this decision.

- Restaurant menu signs should be located in a permanently mounted display box on the surface of the building adjacent to the entry. Taping a menu to a box is not an appropriate menu sign.



- For special circumstances in which restaurants occupy a considerable amount of window space, menus are to be decoratively displayed in the window adjacent to the entry.
- Restaurant menu signs shall be provided for all restaurants with table service.
- High quality materials and artistic designs shall be used in the construction of menu signs.



- Restaurant menu signs are not included in the calculation of maximum sign area.
- The allowable area for restaurant menu signs shall be a maximum of 6 square feet.
- Restaurant menu signs shall be appropriate in size, location, and design to the character and architectural detail of the building as well as to the character of the restaurant.

**Low Profile or Monument Signs** are free-standing signs with a lower height configuration. Such signs are usually used for building complexes that are separated from adjacent streets by substantial setbacks.

- Low profile or monument signs do not overhang public property and are supported by two columns, uprights, or have a solid footing in or upon the ground.
- Low profile signs should be constructed out of materials that compliment the building structure and its use.

- Architectural lines which compliment that of the building shall be incorporated, especially with respect to the top of the sign.
- The design of the sign structure and the text should express high quality construction.
- Low profile or monument signs shall be composed of individual lettering that is consistent with the image of the business and the surrounding architectural style.



- Letter heights should not exceed 12 inches.
- Low profile signs must be illuminated either by external fixtures designed to complement the appearance of the sign or halo-lit illumination.
- Internal illumination may be permitted and shall be designed such that only text and logos illuminate. Opaque backgrounds are required and shall be of a non-reflective material.
- Sign text should be limited to the building or project name, logos, and the business address.
- The maximum sign height, including the sign base, is not to exceed 6 feet in the mixed-use (MU) district and 8 feet in the central commercial (CC) district.
- Low profile or monument signs should only be used when other alternative types of signage would not provide adequate identification.

## Tenant Directory Signs

are used to identify multi-tenant buildings and businesses that do not have direct frontage on a public street. Tenant directory signs shall be

constructed and oriented to the pedestrian.

- Tenant Directory signs shall be mounted flat against a solid wall or incorporated into a freestanding sign located on the property on which the tenants are located.
- The maximum sign height, including the sign base, is not to exceed 6 feet in the mixed-use (MU) district and 8 feet in the central commercial (CC) district.
- The sign copy may include the following: building or project name, project logo, address, business tenant names, and suite numbers or letters.



- The letter size of the building name, project name, or logo shall not exceed 4 inches in height. All other copy shall not exceed 2 inches in height.
- Tenant Directory signs should be constructed out of materials that compliment both the building structure and its use.

## A-Frame Signs

are designed to stand on their own either on public or private property. Such signs are portable and are usually placed along public sidewalks

to attract pedestrians into shopping areas.

- A-Frame signs are permitted in the **C-C (Central Commercial) district** only.
- A-frame signs must be constructed using one of the following durable materials: wooden or metal signs suspended from a wire frame, wooden A-Frame signs with open bases, or shaped silhouette signs made of plywood, metal, or similar wood-like material that can withstand various weather conditions.
- Glass, breakable materials, paper, laminated paper, vinyl, plastic, PVC pipe frames, or illumination are not permitted materials for A-Frame Signs.
- A-Frame sign designs shall be uncluttered, with a minimum of text. Logos and graphics are encouraged.



- A-Frame signs must not be permanently affixed to any object, structure, or the ground.
- The maximum sign area per A-Frame sign is 8 square feet. Sign area is calculated on one side only.
- A-Frame signs may contain one area not larger than one square foot in size, with small text. The remainder of the sign lettering shall be between 2-4 inches high.
- The maximum size for rectangular A-Frame signs is 4 feet in height and 2 feet in width. Rectangular signs are required to have an open base, either with wooden cut-outs or legs.
- The maximum size for shaped silhouette A-Frame signs is 5 feet in height and 3 feet in width, provided the maximum sign area is not exceeded.
- Ground floor, street frontage tenants shall receive approval for an a-frame sign for a period of 4 days per calendar year.

## Permanent Banner Signs

often help to add interest and color to blank facades and special buildings. They are to be vertically oriented, and compatible with the overall character and color of the building.



- When permitted, permanent banner signs shall look like architectural elements of the building and shall hang from projecting metal brackets of a size and design appropriate to the banner and the architectural character of the building.



- Banner signs shall be mounted perpendicular to the face of the facade at both the top and bottom.
- Freestanding banners are not permitted. Banner signs may contain a business name and logo but they are not to contain any other written message.
- Banner projections from the face of buildings shall be limited to 36 inches at a sidewalk.

## Temporary Signs

can take the form of banners, window graphics, or as cards integrated with a window display. Temporary signs may contain written messages and should use a simple font that is easy to read.

- Temporary signs shall not cover more than 10% of the total window and door sign area visible from the exterior.
- Temporary signs are to be allowed on the interior of the business establishment only.
- Temporary signs are permitted to contain no more than 5 square feet of text and shall not exceed 10 square feet in size.
- Temporary signs should be made of durable materials and shall not incorporate fluorescent or intensely bright colors.
- Temporary signs should be carefully designed and constructed, as they reflect on the quality of the business.
- Temporary signs are to be displayed for no more than thirty days in a calendar year.

## Fraternity & Sorority Signs

are signs that identify a house or dwelling as a fraternity or sorority.

- Fraternity and sorority signs should consist of a wall mounted sign using individual letters.
- The letters must be constructed using high-quality materials such as metal, stone, wood, or gold leaf.



- Fraternity and sorority signs shall not exceed a total of 6 square feet.
- The location of fraternity and sorority signs shall be in a logical signable area and consistent with the architecture of the building to which it is attached.

\*Photos courtesy of Signs of the Times  
<http://www.signweb.com/>

### CENTRAL COMMERCIAL & MIXED USE DISTRICTS OF DOWNTOWN DAVIS

