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NAME OF THE PROJECT - COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLAN
COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLAN

Comprehensive Sign Plans (CSP) are a means to achieve a coordinated and balanced system of signs and street graphics. There are three types of CSPs:

a. Vital Sign
b. Large Facility
c. Supplemental Building

a. Vital Sign Plans

A vital sign plan is required in downtown zone districts and in Cheery Creek for all projecting or banner signs, or if a marquee or canopy sign is desired for uses without direct street access. The downtown zone districts include the following:

- Former Chapter 59: B-5, B-5-T, B-7, and B-8-A.

A vital sign plan is not required for projecting signs in the Golden Triangle (B-8-G, D-GT).

Vital sign plans are used in downtown zone districts to encourage urban, innovative signs and street graphics that help foster a unique downtown shopping and commercial area and facilitate simple, pleasant communication between people and their environment.

b. Large Facility Sign Plans

Large facility sign plans are used for facilities located in mixed-use commercial or non-residential zone districts that have at least 50,000 sq. ft. of ground-floor area or 100,000 sq. ft. of zone lot area (which can include contiguous zone lots).

Large facility sign plans allow for flexibility in the size, type, and location of signs in order to accommodate complex layouts of large facilities, while maintaining a coordinated program of high-quality signage.

c. Supplemental Building Sign Plans

Supplemental building sign plans are sign plans for specific buildings within a large facility comprehensive sign plan. These may be used for projects that add buildings over time and require a comprehensive and balanced system of signage for each new building, while meeting the standards, locations, and size allowances detailed in the overarching large facility comprehensive sign plan.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

**Vital Sign Plans**

- Is the project located in the Lower Downtown Historic District?
  - Review and recommendation by Lower Downtown Design Review Commission (LDDRC)
  - Zoning Administrator Final Approval

- Is the project located in a Historic District or an Individual Landmark?
  - Review and recommendation by the Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC)
  - Zoning Administrator Final Approval

- Is the project located in Cherry Creek North District?
  - Review and recommendation by the Cherry Creek North Advisory Board (CCNDAB)
  - Zoning Administrator Final Approval

- Is the project located in D-C or D-TD zone district?
  - Review and recommendation by the Design Review Committee (DRC)*
  - Zoning Administrator Final Approval

- Is the project located in any other Downtown Zone District?
  - Review and recommendation by Lower Downtown Design Review Commission (LDDRC)
  - Zoning Administrator Final Approval

**Large Facility Sign Plan and Supplemental Building Sign Plans**

- Is the project located in the Lower Downtown Historic District?
  - Review and recommendation by Lower Downtown Design Review Commission (LDDRC)
  - Planning Board Review and Recommendation
  - Zoning Administrator Final Approval

- Is the project located in a Historic District or an Individual Landmark?
  - Review and recommendation by Lower Downtown Design Review Commission (LDDRC)
  - Planning Board Review and Recommendation
  - Zoning Administrator Final Approval

- Is the project located in Cherry Creek North District?
  - Review and recommendation by the Cherry Creek North Advisory Board (CCNDAB)
  - Planning Board Review and Recommendation
  - Zoning Administrator Final Approval

- Is the project located in any other area in the City?
  - Review and recommendation by Lower Downtown Design Review Commission (LDDRC)
  - Planning Board Review and Recommendation
  - Zoning Administrator Final Approval

*Note: D-GT zone district does not require Vital Sign Plan for projecting signs.*
A. ORGANIZATION OF DOCUMENT

A Comprehensive Sign Plan (CSP) is organized into 3 parts. The first part is the Introduction, which states the document’s intent and identifies the Regulatory Framework — the language drawn from previous documents and criteria that form the basis of this CSP. The Introduction also identifies what is not regulated by this document.

The second part is the Approvals Process as outlined for each sign plan applicant.

The third part is the Building Signage Design Guidelines which applies to signs for building identification and all businesses operating within the boundaries of the project. This section describes the Design Principles, the different Sign Types allowed — their maximum size and quantity, and suggested materials and illumination.

B. DOCUMENT INTENT

This CSP is intended to support the creation of a unified, integrated and enhanced character for the project through signage rules and regulations that respond to the unique attributes of the area. This CSP is also intended to ensure that all signage will contribute to the vitality and interest of the project, creating a lively and provocative atmosphere.

An A CSP creates a policy for a comprehensive and balanced system of signs for the project. Standards are intended to set out a coordinated program for building ID/tenant signage. The Review Criteria were developed to aid tenants in the development of a design that emphasizes the merchandise, enhances the product or service, and reinforces the design quality of the building as a whole. Tenants should generate imaginative sign designs for their space with integral, creative graphics and quality merchandising. Tenants should express their own unique design statement within the parameters of the review criteria outlined in this CSP.

All signs must adhere to the review criteria and all applicable state and local sign and building codes. Tenants are encouraged to understand the criteria prior to beginning a sign design for their space. At that time, questions should be raised with the Landlord and the City and County of Denver to avoid delays later in the sign design review process.

The requirements of this CSP are supplemented by City and County of Denver regulations and codes in all areas not addressed in this document. All City and County of Denver ordinances and regulations remain in full effect except as varied by the Comprehensive Sign Plan.

C. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This project is located in the _____________ Zone District as established by the Denver Zoning Code (DZC).

Zoning

In accordance with Denver Zoning Code, Division 10.10 shall govern and control the erection, remodeling, enlarging, moving, operation and maintenance of all signs by permitted uses within all zoning districts. Nothing in the CSP shall be deemed a waiver of the provisions of any other ordinance or regulation applicable to signs. Signs located in areas governed by several ordinances and/or applicable regulations shall comply with all such ordinances and regulations.

The criteria for reviewing proposed comprehensive sign plans are as follows “Section 10.10.3.3.C.4 DZC”.

1. The sign plan shall exhibit design excellence, inventiveness and sensitivity to the context.
2. Signs shall not be oriented or illuminated so that they adversely affect the surrounding area, particularly existing nearby residential uses or structures. Examples of adverse effects are glare from intense illumination, and large signs or structures which visually dominate and area.
3. Roof signs shall not be allowed. No flashing, blinking, fluctuating, animated or portable roof sign is allowed.
4. The comprehensive sign plan shall include design guidelines to ensure that all features of the proposed signage, including the illumination, support structure, color, lettering, height, an location, shall be designed so that it will be an attractive and complimentary feature of the building which it serves.
5. Sign design should reflect the existing or desired character of the area. As an example, in a district in which night-time entertainment is concentrated, the intent of this section 10.10.3.3 is to encourage exciting, iconographic, and inventively illuminated signage.
6. Signs shall be professionally designed and fabricated from quality, durable materials.
7. Signs for accessory uses, which are prohibited by other provisions of Division 10.10, are allowed as part of an approved sign plan.
**A. COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLAN APPROVAL**

The Comprehensive Sign Plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Zoning Administrator based upon the following criteria and the Criteria for Review listed on page 4 of this document:

1. How tenant signage allowances are allocated among all eligible building uses,
2. Approximate designated sign locations,
3. Allowable types of sign construction,
4. Illumination,
5. Indication of all sign types and locations.

**B. LANDMARK REVIEW**

Comprehensive Sign Plans in the Lower Downtown Historic District require review by the Lower Downtown Design Review Commission prior to recommendation of approval by staff and/or the Planning Board to the Zoning Administrator.

Comprehensive Sign Plans in other historic districts or individually landmarked structures require review by the Landmark Preservation Commission prior to recommendation of approval by staff and/or the Planning Board to the Zoning Administrator.

All signs in a historic district or individually landmarked structures are subject to design review for adherence to:
- Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures and Districts which was adopted by the Landmark Preservation Commission. Or
- Design Guidelines for Lower Downtown Historic District which was adopted by the Lower Downtown Design Review Commission.

All projecting signs require review and approval by the LPC or LDDRC.

**C. DESIGN ADVISORY BOARD APPROVAL**

All Comprehensive Sign Plans in the following Districts are subject to review for adherence to their adopted Design Standards & Guidelines: D-C, D-TD, D-LD, D-AS, C-CCN-3, C-CCN-4, C-CCN-5, C-CCN-7, C-CCN-12, B-5, B-5-T, B-7, B-8-A

Comprehensive Sign Plans in the D-C and D-TD Downtown Districts and Cherry Creek North District require review by their Advisory Boards prior to recommendation of approval by staff and/or the Planning Board to the Zoning Administrator.

After recommendations of approval by the corresponding board (if applicable) and the Planning Board (if applicable), the Zoning Administrator may approve this Comprehensive Sign Plan with immediate effect.

**D. REVIEW BY THE PLANNING BOARD**

All ‘Large Facility’ Comprehensive Sign Plans require review by the Planning Board

a. The Planning Board shall hold a meeting and shall require that notices be placed on the property by the applicant at least 15 days prior to the meeting. The Planning Board shall also send notice of the proposed plan to any Registered Neighborhood Organizations which are registered pursuant to the provisions of Article III, Chapter 12 of the Revised Municipal Code and whose boundaries are within 3,000 feet of the boundary line of the zone lot of the large facility with the proposed Comprehensive Sign Plan.

The Planning Board shall also send notices to the council members in whose district the large facility is located, and to the at-large council members. Such notices shall be sent at least 30 days prior to the hearing.

b. The Planning Board shall review the staff’s recommendation, the concerns of the public and the criteria for review, and shall provide a recommendation for approval, approval with conditions, or denial to the Zoning Administrator. The Planning Board recommendation shall be forwarded to the Zoning Administrator no later than 15 days following the date of the public meeting.

**E. CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER APPROVAL**

All Comprehensive Sign Plan submittals are subject to review for adherence to the Denver Zoning Code, and any applicable Design Standards & Guidelines as adopted by the Planning Board.

**F. AMENDMENTS TO THE PLAN**

Approval of amendments to the plan shall be by the same process as the original approval.
III - BUILDING SIGNAGE

A. DESIGN PRINCIPLES

BUILDING SIGNAGE INTENT

To integrate signage in a manner that facilitates commerce, enlivens the public realm, and respects the character of the project and surrounding area.

To ensure that the signs of individual buildings and uses can express a unique identity, while not detracting from the more important wayfinding and identification signage.

To encourage creative sign design.

DESIGN STANDARDS

All signs shall conform to the Denver Zoning Code (and the Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures and Districts, the Design Guidelines for Lower Downtown Historic District and/or any Design Guidelines and Standards that might be applicable).

Buildings with ground floor uses shall provide a uniform approach for the application of signage on the ground floor.

All signs shall be measured in conformance with Article 10 General Design Standards Division 10.10 Signs of the Denver Zoning Code.

Signage areas shall be provided with electrical power to enable the installation of illuminated signs.

All signs shall be constructed of durable materials suited to the urban environment and climate of Denver.

All conduits, junction boxes, and other functional elements shall be completely hidden from view and safely concealed once the sign is installed.

No flashing, blinking or fluctuating signs shall be permitted.

Signs shall not be oriented or illuminated so that they adversely affect the surrounding area, particularly existing nearby residential uses or structures. Examples of adverse effects are glare from intense illumination, and large signs or structures which visually dominate an area.

Roof signs shall not be allowed. No flashing, blinking, fluctuating, animated or portable roof sign are allowed.

All exterior signage should address both the communicative functions of a sign and its aesthetic integration with the overall retail concept. The building’s architecture sets the tone for the signage program and the Landlord has established standards for identity signage as outlined in these criteria.

It is advised that the tenant engage an environmental graphic designer to work with the retail designer to assure a coordinated design program. Their knowledge of typography, materials, and fabrication contribute to design success. Experienced designers are aware of the interplay between aesthetics and function, and possess the skills necessary to achieve a synthesis of these conflicting factors.

National and regional “standard” storefront concepts and signage are respected; however, some concept modification may be necessary for compliance. Signs and related logo graphics located along the building’s perimeter should express a refined urban sophistication through the use of clean and contemporary shapes and forms. Signage should use similar architectural materials to create a seamless transition between the building and the tenant space.

All tenant signage should be appropriate to and expressive of the tenant business activity for which they communicate. Sign designs shall be compatible with and be an enhancement of the architectural character of the project’s building, expressing scale, color, materials and lighting levels.

Signage should take advantage of the opportunity to use unique two and three-dimensional forms/shapes, profiles and iconographic images that reflect both the personality of the tenant, product/service and the surrounding building architecture. The use of color, typography, pattern, texture and materials is encouraged to create a dynamic interface with the streetscape. Designs which simply maximize size and volume in rectangular form are not acceptable.

The Signage Design Criteria should act as a guide for the design of the tenant’s signage in conjunction with the provisions of the tenant’s lease with the Landlord.

All signage designed for exterior identification shall comply with the district guidelines building standards and be designed for total compatibility with building finishes, color scheme and lighting levels, in order to maintain a design standard throughout the building. All primary signage will be limited to trade names and shall not include specification of merchandise sold or services rendered, regardless of the tenant’s legal name. Corporate crests, logos or insignias may be acceptable pending the Landlord’s approval and provided they are part of the tenant’s name.

All signage outlined in this Comprehensive Sign Plan requires review by Community Planning and Development staff. Sign Permit applications submitted for a building or use located in a Historic Structure or District and/or a Design Review District are subject to additional review by Community Planning and Development staff before issuance of a Sign Permit.
B. SIGNAGE DEFINITION

PERMITTED SIGN TYPES

Permitted signs for projects within the District covered by this section of the CSP are:

- a. Wall Signs
- b. Projecting Signs
- c. Window Signs
- d. Canopy Signs
- e. Awning Signs
- f. Arcade Signs
- g. Ground Signs

ARTICLE 13. RULES OF MEASUREMENT AND DEFINITIONS

Sign: A sign is any object or device or part thereof situated outdoors or indoors which is used to advertise or identify an object, person, institution, organization, business, product, service, event or location by any means including words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, motion illumination or projected images. Signs do not include the following:

- a. Flags of nations, or an organization of nations, states and cities, fraternal, religious and civic organizations;
- b. Merchandise, pictures or models of products or services incorporated in a window display;
- c. Time and temperature devices not related to a product;
- d. National, state, religious, fraternal, professional and civic symbols or crests;
- e. Works of art which in no way identify a product.

CALCULATING SIGNAGE AREA

The area of a sign is determined by the sum of all areas or portion of each triangle, parallelogram, circle, ellipses or any combination thereof which creates the smallest single continuous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of the display surface or face of the sign including all frames, backing, face plates, non structural trim or other component parts not otherwise used for support.

For regular shaped signs the area of the sign will be computed by using standard mathematical formulas for regular geometric shapes, including, without limitation, triangles, parallelograms, circles, ellipses, or combinations thereof.

In the case of an irregularly shaped sign or a sign with letters or symbols directly affixed or painted on the wall of a building, the area of the sign is the entire area within a single continuous rectilinear perimeter of not more than eight straight lines enclosing the extreme limits of any writing, representation, emblem, or any figure of similar character, together with any material or color forming an integral part or background of the display if used to differentiate such sign from the backdrop of structure against which it is placed, but if a freestanding sign structure is not a fence which functions as such, the sign area shall be the area of the entire structure.
C. SIGN ALLOWANCES

**INTENT**

For ground floor tenants: Working with your Landlord and using the attached Site Plan, identify the boundaries of your tenant space in the building. This will show you where your building frontage is. Verify with your Landlord the number of linear feet of frontage you occupy. If you occupy a corner suite, you will have more than one frontage. Measure each frontage separately.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERMITTED CONTENT</th>
<th>Identification by letter, numeral, symbol or design of the use-by-right by name and use, hours of operation, services and products offered, events &amp; prices of products &amp; services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERMITTED TYPES</td>
<td>Wall, Projecting, Arcade, Canopy, Awning, Window and Ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROHIBITED SIGN TYPES</td>
<td>Portable signs, sandwich boards, rooftop signs, signs that flash, blink, or fluctuate, or which are animated, signs advertising a business or product at an address other than the location where the sign is installed (off-site advertising), banners and signage mounted perpendicular to the wall, on upper floors or railings in public right-of-way, and commercial flags.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAXIMUM QUANTITY</td>
<td>Each use-by-right may have the greater number of the following: __ signs; or __ signs for each front line of the building frontage on which the use-by-right or conditional use is located. In no case shall there be more than __ signs applied to any street front per use. Tenants are allowed no more than one of the following signs per front line: a Wall Sign, a Projecting Sign, or a Canopy Sign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAXIMUM AREA</td>
<td>Ground level use-by-right with street or plaza frontage: Sign area shall be __ square feet of sign area for each linear foot of building frontage occupied by tenant for first ___ linear feet; and __ square foot of sign area for each linear foot above 200 linear feet of building frontage occupied by tenant. A. The total sign area of any use-by-right shall not exceed ___ square feet B. No single sign shall exceed ___ square feet C. All measurements shall be applied to each street/plaza frontage separately, then totaled for a cumulative sign area calculation D. No additional sign area is granted for tenants occupying multiple floors E. Max. area of panel/plaque sign: ___ sq. ft. F. Max. area of window signs: twenty percent (___%) of total ground level storefront window area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAXIMUM PROJECTION</td>
<td>A. Wall sign: ____ (<strong>) inches B. Upper story wall sign: ____ (</strong>) inches C. Projecting sign: ____ (__) inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAXIMUM HEIGHT ABOVE GRADE</td>
<td>A. Wall Signs: The roof line to which the sign is attached: _____ (<strong>) feet for Ground Floor Tenants B. Projecting Signs: ____ (</strong>) feet C. Window Signs: ____ (__) feet. Transom Signs: The top of the transom D. Canopy Signs: To be determined by canopy height and signage allotments E. Arcade Signs: To be determined by canopy height and signage allotments F. Awning Signs: To be determined by awning height and signage allotments E. Ground Signs: ____ feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MINIMUM HEIGHT ABOVE GRADE</td>
<td>A. Projecting Signs: Tenant, Projecting Signs: Project ID, Awning Signs, and Canopy Signs: ____ (<strong>) feet ____ (</strong>) inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>A. No setback is required from any boundary line of the building frontage. Projecting signs attached to walls which are adjacent to a street right-of-way line may project into the right-of-way in accordance with section 49-436 of the Denver Zoning Code. (Ord. No. 143-81, eff. 3-31-81) B. If multiple tenants share a single entry point, individual Plaque/Panel Signs or a Joint ID Wall or Ground sign may be used to provide a listing of those tenants. Multiple signs, of any type, at a single entry will not be permitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERMITTED ILLUMINATION</td>
<td>May be externally illuminated but shall not flash, blink or fluctuate. All signs shall not be oriented or illuminated so that they adversely affect the surrounding area, particularly existing nearby residential uses or structures. Examples of adverse effects are glare from intense illumination and large signs or structures which visually dominate an area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANIMATION</td>
<td>Shall not be animated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Please consult relevant Denver Zoning Code section for allowances
This is an example to illustrate how to label the sign locations and types. It is important to include the north arrow, and street labels. By color coding the different types of signs, and differentiating existing from proposed, the review and permitting of signs is easier.
*This is an example to illustrate how to label the sign locations and types. It is important to include street labels and basic measurements. By color coding the different types of signs, and differentiating existing from proposed the review and permitting of signs is easier.*
F. SIGN TYPES ALLOWED

a. Wall Signs

Intent: Wall signs are used to identify a tenant space or a project. These guidelines are intended to ensure wall sign designs enhance the architectural character of a building and its context.

Location: Wall signs are integrated with the building facades where available or above main entries of tenant lease spaces. These signs are mounted directly to the wall of the building; all connecting hardware should not be visible unless it is an integral part of the sign design. When using an existing sign band, keep signage flush to the wall surface. Do not design wall signs that project in front of adjacent architectural details, such as a wall band frame.

Allowance: The maximum allowable is ___ (%) tenant sign per each tenant exterior wall facade frontage. No more than ___ % of total wall area may be used, and no more than ___ square feet area.

Illumination: Static, unobtrusive illumination allowed. Back lit letters (halo), neon or a shielded lamp or goose-neck located at top of the sign is allowed.

Encouraged Approaches:

1. Tenant logo/logo type to be fabricated or flat cut-out and layered to achieve a three-dimensional form to the signage components. Depth limited to four inches.
2. Tenant logo/logo type should not fill the entire designated sign zone.
3. Paint and metal finishes that connect to the building facade should reflect the overall architectural color palette.
4. Sign/armature attachment to building facade with custom designed metal armature/brackets mounted into mortar joints when possible.
5. External illumination is encouraged.
6. All designs subject to review for scale and proportion relative to the building architectural context. Ensure signage is compatible with building architecture and do not design wall signs that project in front of adjacent architectural details.
7. Cut-out letters with fabricated returns and shapes encouraged.
8. Painted, individually lettered or solid background wall sign made of one or two durable materials are generally appropriate. Use permanent, durable materials such as metals, metal composites and other high quality materials. No plastic or acrylic sign faces.
9. Use wall signs in combination with a projecting sign or window signage.

* These are only examples, please consult relevant Denver Zoning Code section for allowances
b. Projecting Signs

**Intent:** Projecting signs should serve to enliven the pedestrian environment with unique, expressive and iconic three-dimensional objects which are iconic and sculptural.

Projecting signs should be:

- Compatible with and an enhancement of the character of the surrounding district and adjacent architecture when considered in terms of scale, color, materials, lighting levels, and adjoining uses.
- Compatible with and an enhancement of the architectural characteristics of the buildings on which they appear when considered in terms of scale, proportion, color, materials and lighting levels.

Appropriate to and expressive of the business or activity for which they are displayed.

Creative in the use of unique three (3) dimensional form, profile, and iconographic representation; employ exceptional lighting design and represent exceptional graphic design, including the outstanding use of color, pattern, typography and materials. Signage which simply maximizes allowable volume in rectangular form is strongly discouraged.

**Location:** A Tenant Projecting Sign is located at predetermined locations as indicated in the elevations and should be centered on columns or centered at locations on which they are placed. Locate projecting signs at or immediately above ground level, advertising uses with direct street level access (e.g., ground floor, garden level, etc.) No projecting sign shall project more than 48 inches over a public right-of-way. The bottom edge of the sign must maintain a clearance of at least (8) eight feet (6) six inches from the finish grade level below the sign. Sign must be at least 6" and no more than 1'-0" from the wall it is attached from.

Signs shall not be placed less than twenty-five (25) feet apart unless they meet the following criteria:

- The signs work together to make a unified and compatible design that is stronger as a group than it would be as a single sign or multiple signs widely separated.
- The sign group is compatible with the building architecture, reinforcing the design intent of a significant building feature such as a primary entry.

**Allowance:** One (1) Projecting sign per tenant frontage is allowed unless located on a corner in which case one projecting sign per frontage is permitted. Tenants on a corner may use one projecting sign at a 45° angle on a corner. Not to exceed 30 cubic feet in area. Projecting signs are limited to a rectangular sign boundary area of 12 square feet. No part of the sign shall encroach with a vertical plane measured two feet from the edge of the adjacent street pavement.

**Illumination:** Sign may have simple, unobtrusive external illumination. Back lit letters (halo), neon or a shielded lamp or goose-neck located at top of the sign is allowed. Exterior lighting should be integrated into armature and be from a shielded source. Do not install exposed conduit, races, or junction boxes on the primary elevation of the building. Illumination shall not flash, blink or fluctuate.

**Other:** Extraneous information, such as services provided by the business, telephone numbers, hours of operation, etc. is not permitted. Keep wording and logos to a minimum on a three-dimensional object, but ensure that any wording is readable.

**Encouraged Approaches:**

1. Iconographic or sculptural elements
2. Metal frame/hardware to reflect approved architectural material and color palettes.
3. Projecting signs that are three - dimensional abstracted, exaggerated or embellished interpretations of literal forms are preferred.
c. Window Signs

Intent: The function of this sign type is to identify the entrance and hours of operation, identify the tenant’s storefront and display windows and create visual interest for the tenant.

Location: If any window signs are located on a door they must meet the following design standards: Use door signage to identify business name, address, hours of operation and a possible logo if needed. Window graphics are typically located at eye level on doors or adjacent to entrances for door signs or in the lower 20% of storefront windows for window signs for each tenant. Patterns’ graphics may be installed at transoms, but shall not contain any text. Limit opaque and solid materials to no more than 10 percent of a window’s area, and place appropriately to avoid blocking visibility in and out of a window.

Allowance: Any element that is attached to or located within 36 inches of a window is considered to be a window sign. A window sign should not exceed 20% of the total window area with 10% allowed to be opaque or solid. All words or pictures located on a window or door shall be considered signs and shall meet all criteria for signage defined herein and shall be permitted as signs by the City and County of Denver.

Illumination: Shall not be illuminated.

Attachment Details: Install directly inside to tenant glass.

Encouraged Approaches:
1. Maximum graphic image area not to exceed 20% of total window area.
2. Message height is recommended to be at eye level for door signs or in the lower 20% of storefront windows. See elevations for more specific location guidance.
3. This is digitally cut vinyl or hand painted graphics applied to the interior (second surface if single paned glass, fourth surface if double paned glass) surface of the window.
4. Avoid repeating business wording and logos in every window when this information already exists on other signage.
5. Provide secondary information on products, services, etc. not available on other signs.
6. Plan window signage to draw the pedestrian’s eye into a business and to create additional interest.
7. Use door signage to identify business name, address, hours of operation and a possible logo if needed.
d. Canopy Signs

**Intent:** Canopy Signs are defined by their association with architectural entry canopies. Colors, finishes and materials used for Canopy Signs shall be complementary to the tenant facade and an integral part of the canopy or architectural element.

**Location:** These signs are mounted above the canopy structure to accent entries. When adding signage to canopies, keep signage above canopy.

**Allowance:** Only the graphics including lettering and logos shall be used in calculating total allowable sign area. Canopy signs are permitted for all building entries with permitted architectural canopies.

**Illumination:** Static, unobtrusive illumination is allowed as outlined in Encouraged Approaches to the right.

**Attachment Details:** Lettering/Logo to be attached to top of canopy with concealed fasteners (see drawing).

**Encouraged Approaches:**

1. Dimensional letters and logo forms fabricated from metal materials that have a painted, gilded or metal finish. These letters should be illuminated with edge or external, point source, bracket mounted light fixtures that accentuate the form of the letter and logo forms. Lamps used in these fixtures should be of a warm color temperature.

2. Letter and logo forms painted, gilded or screen printed onto continuous or individual metal or glass fascia panels. Panels may be layered to give the sign more visual interest and a three-dimensional quality.

3. These panel signs can employ external illumination, edge illumination, or internal illumination. Edge illumination may be at the rear 1/3 of the lettering only and the front 2/3 of the lettering edge must be solid. The limited area of internal illumination may be no more than 25% of the total sign area.

4. Open pan channel letters and logos with exposed neon illumination are encouraged for, but not limited to, entertainment and food & beverage oriented establishments.

5. Do not cover or remove architectural details when mounting signage to a historic canopy.

6. Use canopy signs as primary or secondary signage.

*These are only examples, please consult relevant Denver Zoning Code section for allowances*
e. Arcade Signs

Intent: Arcade Signs are distinguished from Projecting Signs in that these are signs attached to the underside of a roof or to the columns of an arcade, projecting canopy or building entry and are totally contained within the outside limits of the structural surfaces which delineate the arcade. The details and materials used for Arcade Signs should convey the personality and display the unique character of each individual tenant. A standardized bracket or connection to the arcade must be used for all signs under the same structure. Because of their proximity to the viewer, special care and attention must be made to their craft and finish.

Location: Arcade Signs are suspended from an arcade, architectural canopy or between the columns of a building entry, positioned perpendicular, parallel or diagonally to the building facade. Arcade signs must maintain a minimum clearance of eight feet (8'-0") above the sidewalk.

Allowance: Arcade signs are limited to the Landlord or Tenants whose entry includes an arcade or canopy structure context, or those who have limited wall surface at their storefront. Each tenants are allowed one (1) Arcade Sign.

Illumination: Static, unobtrusive illumination allowed. Back lit graphics (halo), shielded, concealed or external, shielded, downward facing fixtures are allowed.

Attachment details: In masonry, signs to be mounted into mortar joints only. When mounted between cast-iron storefront columns, signs to be attached using collars.

Arcade sign area calculation: This sign type typically has two faces but only the area of one face is to be included in a tenant’s total sign area calculation.

Encouraged Approaches:

1. Artistic, three-dimensional object signs of logo or primary sales product(s) fabricated/sculpted from high quality materials.
2. Router-cut or dimensional letters/logos attached to sign panels or framed cabinet construction boxes. These can be illuminated by unobtrusive, indirect lighting built into the assembly.
3. Painted, screen printed or gilded sign panels or cabinet construction boxes illuminated by external, cantilevered spotlight fixtures.
4. Arcade signs are encouraged to employ external, point source, bracket mounted light fixtures that accentuate the form of the letter and logo forms. Lamps used in these fixtures should be of a incandescent warm color temperature, between 2,500 and 3,000 degrees Kelvin.
5. Exposed neon letters, logos or graphics mounted to a thin-profile fabricated cabinet.
6. Opaque faced reverse pan channel letterforms or logos with halo illumination mounted to a sign panel or framed cabinet.
f. Awning Signs

**Intent:** Awning Signs add to the overall identity of the project’s facade through the use of the awnings, which are often repeated over all windows, between columns, the entire length of the storefront. Awnings may be fabric or rigid, fixed or operable. Awnings must be integrated with the architecture upon which they are mounted. Because of their proximity to the viewer, special care and attention must be made to their craft and finish. Care must be taken to ensure that the fabric, a shorter life-span material, is refreshed/replaced on a regular basis to maintain a high quality product.

**Location:** Logos, letters, pattern and graphics are to be integral to the awning material, not fastened onto the material. Graphics may be digitally printed, silk screened, masked and painted and then sized with restraint and located only on bottom horizontal band of awning of front face of awning (not on side returns).

**Allowance:** Awnings may be used over an entry or storefront glazing. Triangular shaped awning structures, with open ends are allowed, arched or bubble shaped awnings are not. Awnings must be a minimum of 3’ in depth in order to provide a traditional appearance and adequate shade. Do not use plastic or shiny material. Awning Signs may be placed on multiple awnings so long as the area of each is limited to 4 sq. ft. or less. Graphics applied to a Tenant’s awnings under these restrictions count as one (1) sign type in a Tenant’s sign program.

**Illumination:** Awnings shall not be illuminated

**Attachment details:** Awnings must respond to the entry or storefront glazing over which it is located. Awnings may be used over an entry or storefront glazing. Awnings shall not be illuminated

**Required Awning Types:**

1. Stretched high quality canvas fabric over a metal frame. Surfaces should be taught and crisp. Assemblies may be limited to one vertical/ sloping surface or may include a vertical valence at their forward edge. Assemblies can be open or closed at their ends.

2. Rigid glass, metal or composite material panels secured by a metal frame over windows. Panels must be sloped to provide shade.

3. High quality operable rigid or fabric assemblies that are able to extend away from and contract back to the building facade.

* These are only examples, please consult relevant Denver Zoning Code section for allowances
g. Ground Signs

**Intent:** Ground signs are for the purpose of identifying the Project as well as the tenants occupying space within it and is used for wayfinding.

**Location:** Locate in a high traffic area out of the public right of way.

**Allowance:** Only ___ sign will be allowed for the project.

Ground signs for the complex may have a maximum height of ____ ft above finished grade.

**Illumination:** Shall not be illuminated.

**Encouraged Approaches:**

1. Signs must be consistent with or complement the building, hardscape and existing signage material palettes.

2. Use permanent, durable materials such as metals, metal composites, and other high quality materials. Do not use signs with plastic or acrylic faces.

* These are only examples, please consult relevant Denver Zoning Code section for allowances
G. MATERIAL AND PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

In keeping with the high standards of design being applied to the overall project, all signage must utilize the highest quality materials and fabrication methods. The following minimum quality standards shall apply to all signs:

GENERAL

The environmental graphic designers and their project teams shall be responsible for verifying and ensuring compliance of the signage with all ADA, OSHA, MUTCD, environmental regulations and all other applicable governing code requirements.

Should there be a conflict between these documents and federal, state or local code requirements, code shall take precedence unless a specific agreement has been established with the City of Denver providing a variance to the local codes.

FABRICATION & INSTALLATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Structural Requirements

The designer shall follow this document for exterior visual appearance. The internal structure, engineered connections, mounting assemblies and foundations shall be developed by the sign fabricator as required for each sign type. The structural design shall utilize self-supportive framing and prevent irregularities in exposed surfaces.

B. Electrical Requirements

All transformers and electrical hardware shall be concealed (i.e. non-audible and non-visible to vehicular and pedestrian traffic) but easily accessible for maintenance and servicing. All connections must be in compliance with the requirements of the NEC and all other applicable governing code requirements. All necessary electrical components and assemblies are to be UL listed, or approved by a nationally recognized testing lab and shall be warranted by the manufacturer against failure for at least ninety days.

C. Lighting

All lighting components must be easily accessible for maintenance and servicing.

All lighting components shall be constructed per recognized national standards, and/or specific manufacturer’s recommendations. It is strongly encouraged that all illumination shall be provided by light sources for longevity, ease of maintenance and life-cycle cost purposes. Direct lighting toward a sign from an external shielded lamp if possible. Use halo, LED or exposed neon for lighting signs when externally focused lighting is not possible. Use warm temperature of light, similar to daylight. Unless otherwise noted, the interior of all illuminated enclosures shall be painted bright white to increase reflectivity. Should exposed neon components be used, they shall be warranted against failure for at least three years, and all other lighting components shall be warranted for at least ninety days.

D. Labeling

Manufacturer’s or testing laboratory labels shall clearly appear on all completed elements, as required by code but shall be located on concealed surfaces.

MATERIAL & WORKMANSHIP STANDARDS

When selecting final materials to be used for the wayfinding signage, the design must bear in mind the unsecured, urban environment in which these signs will be installed and the high potential for their abuse. Furthermore, these signs will likely be in place for an extended period of time; materials should be selected for longevity.

A. Paints & Finishes

Given the potential for abuse, painted finishes should be used sparingly or located at a height less susceptible to abuse. All pretreats, primers, coatings, and finishes shall be applied in strict accordance with the paint manufacturer’s specifications to provide the highest level of ultraviolet light resistance, weatherability and overall longevity for both the materials indicated and the environmental conditions of the Denver region. Unless specifically designed otherwise as a feature element, digital prints shall have a minimum resolution of 200 dpi. Printed products shall be warranted against color fading, UV damage, delamination and peeling for a period of five years.

B. Metals

Metals shall be the best commercial quality for the purposes specified and free from defects impairing strength, durability or appearance. Unless specifically designed otherwise as a feature element, all visible seams are to be continuously welded, filled and ground smooth. All sheet metal shall have brake formed edges with radii not greater than sheet thickness. All metals must be treated to prevent corrosion and staining of other finishes.

C. Fasteners

Unless specifically designed otherwise as a feature element, all exposed fasteners shall be tamper-proof, resistant to oxidation and other corrosion and of a finish to match adjacent surfaces. Concealed fasteners must be resistant to oxidation and corrosion to prevent staining of other finishes. Special considerations should be taken for historic structures. For example, fasteners should be set in mortar rather than damage brick.

D. Vinyl

All vinyl products shall be specified and installed in strict accordance with the manufacturer’s recommendations to provide the highest level of ultraviolet light resistance, weatherability and overall longevity for both the materials indicated and the environmental conditions of the final installation locations. All vinyl material shall be warranted against color fading, UV damage, delamination and peeling for a period of five years.

E. Digital Prints

Technological advances in digital printing make this medium ideal for easily updatable content. As such, this material must be periodically refreshed, whether the content has changed or not. All digital prints must provide the highest level of ultraviolet light resistance, weatherability and overall longevity for both the materials indicated and the environmental conditions of the Denver region. Unless specifically designed otherwise as a feature element, digital prints shall have a minimum resolution of 200 dpi. Printed products shall be warranted against color fading, UV damage, delamination or peeling for a minimum of five years.

F. General Assembly

Unless otherwise stated above, all installed elements shall be warranted against manufacturer defects for a minimum of one year and all installed elements shall be warranted against defects in installation or workmanship for a minimum of three years.

G. Newly Created Materials

Newly created materials meeting the intent of the CSP may be considered for approval based upon the guidelines set forth in this document.
Selected materials should reflect their use and the anticipated longevity of the sign. Materials should be urban in character, durable, easily maintained and of the highest quality.

Elements such as wood should be used selectively and their location should be considered to minimize the potential for damage. The materials used for all freestanding signage shall be designed and constructed to be durable enough to withstand the equipment to be used for snow removal and other maintenance.

H. ACCEPTABLE BUILDING SIGN MATERIAL EXAMPLES

- Weathered finish metal letters for a vintage look
- Cast stone particulate letters
- Rolled / formed metal letters
- Metal construction employing a pegboard design
- Metal letters with enamel and gilded finishes
- Edge-lit acrylic or glass elements
I. ACCEPTABLE SIGN ILLUMINATION EXAMPLES

Signage illumination should be chosen based upon the purpose of the sign, the required legibility and visibility, the anticipated ambient lighting and the competing signage elements in the area(s) in which the signs will be located. All illuminated signs must be controlled by a central timer or photosensitive switch (photo cell) to regulate the hours of operation.

It is additionally encouraged that the controls for the lighting allow for dimming during the late night/early morning hours.

Locate and design sign illumination to minimize impacts on the building and its surrounding context.

Standards and Guidelines for Signs in the Lower Downtown Historic District (if applicable)

Do not use an internally-lit plastic or glowing box. Locate the power source for signs so that it is not visible on a building façade.

Do not install exposed conduit, races or junction boxes on the primary elevation of a building.

Do not cast light on adjacent properties or upper-floor residences.

Direct lighting toward a sign from an external shielded lamp if possible.

Use simply designed unobtrusive lamps, such as goose-neck lamps or simple contemporary fixtures, for external lighting sources.

Use halo, LED or exposed neon for lighting signs when externally focused lighting is not possible.

Use a warm temperature of light, similar to daylight.

Ensure lighting type, design, size and numbers correspond with signage and building design.

Exposed neon

Push-through graphics with internal edge

Halo illumination

Edge illumination with acrylic or glass

Exterior armature illumination
In order to maintain a high level of quality and a character appropriate to the project, the sign types and fabrication methods described below will not be permitted for any businesses or developments within its limits. All signs are subject to the review and approval of the City and County of Denver Zoning Administration and Landmark Preservation (if applicable).

The following identity sign types are prohibited:

1. Internally illuminated awnings.
2. Signs with individual changeable plastic letters.
3. Internally illuminated signs with vacuum formed plastic faces.
4. Signs with exposed raceways.
5. Sign boards using explicitly inexpensive materials.
6. Internally illuminated box signs with exposed acrylic or stretched vinyl sheet faces without additional materiality and layering.
7. Off the shelf portable signs that do not reflect the quality demanded of this district.
8. Painted or printed window graphics which cover more than twenty (20) percent of a tenant’s glazing area.
9. Inflatable signs
10. Parked motor vehicles and/or trailers intentionally located so as to serve as a sign or advertising device.