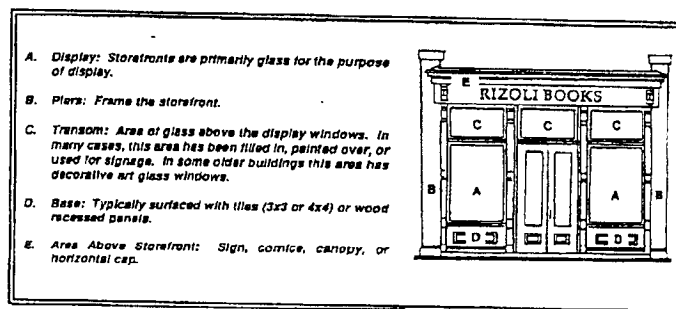


COMMERCIAL STOREFRONT AND FACADE REHABILITATION DESIGN GUIDELINES

Although the storefront is only one of the architectural features of the facade, it is the most important visual element. The storefront traditionally has experienced the greatest amount of change during a building's life and holds the most potential for creative alterations affecting both the character of the building and the streetscape. Once inappropriate additions are removed, the storefront's *original* design is the best guideline for any refurbishment or alteration. Historically, the traditional storefront has few decorative elements other than those details which are often repeated across the face of the building (e.g. structural bays containing window and door openings, continuous cornice line, transoms, bulkheads, etc.), integrating the storefront into the character of the entire facade. Emphasis is typically placed on the display windows and their contents. The rest of the storefront is designed in a simple manner, in order not to compete with the displayed items but rather to clearly project the product or service being offered inside.

Historically, the ground floor of the Main Street structure was designed to be what is now known as a "traditional" storefront and sales floor. Any upper floors commonly were used for office space, residential units or storage. Main Street storefront buildings can be small, individual or mid-block structures which accommodate a single business, or large buildings designed to provide space for two or more businesses, separated by masonry columns or piers forming distinct storefront structural bays. Usually Main Street storefront buildings in downtown Galt are continuous one to two story high structures. This building type is designed to be "read" as a whole unit, while the visual *emphasis* consistently is placed on the storefront area and its display windows, versus the upper story facade characterized by vertical windows, parapets or cornices.



- A. Display: Storefronts are primarily glass for the purpose of display.
- B. Piers: Frame the storefront.
- C. Transom: Area of glass above the display windows. In many cases, this area has been filled in, painted over, or used for signage. In some older buildings this area has decorative art glass windows.
- D. Base: Typically surfaced with tiles (3x3 or 4x4) or wood recessed panels.
- E. Area Above Storefront: Sign, cornice, canopy, or horizontal cap.

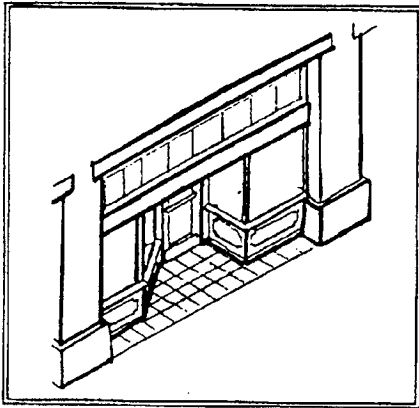
Traditional Storefront Elements

In an effort to promote quality design for new infill buildings, the following specific commercial storefront guidelines are presented:

Storefront Design Guidelines

Entries/Doorways

- Commercial storefront entries are typically recessed and/or sheltered by a covered arcade structure, canopy or awning. This provides more area for display space, a sheltered transition area to the interior of the store and emphasizes the entrance. Recessed entries should be retained and are *strongly* encouraged in *new* storefront construction.



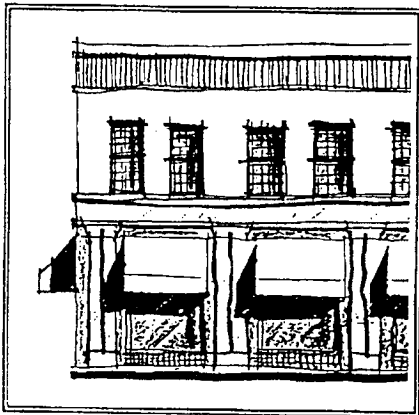
Recessed entries are encouraged.

Facade Color

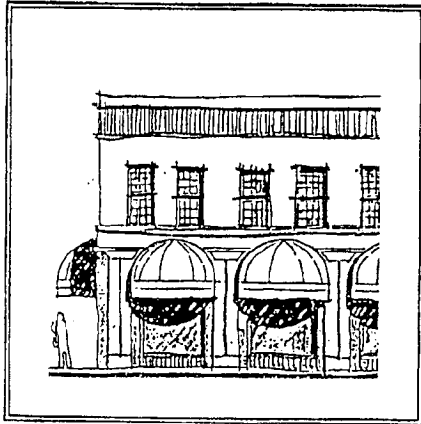
- The use of light, subdued or neutral colors and natural building materials, such as brick, are encouraged.
- Adjacent buildings should be painted different, but complementary, colors.
- One base color should be used for the entire facade. Different trim colors are encouraged, but should not exceed three different colors.
- Different window frame and sash colors are encouraged but should complement the main color of the building.

Awnings And Canopies

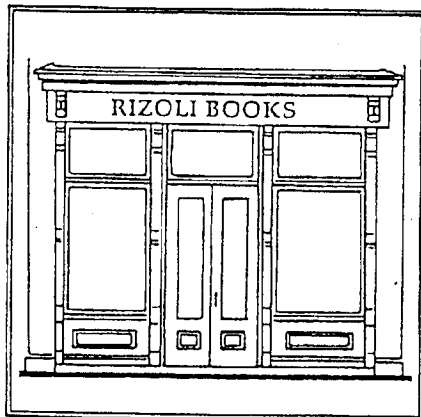
- Where the facade is divided into distinct structural bays (sections defined by vertical architectural elements, such as masonry piers), awnings should be placed within the vertical elements rather than overlapping them. The awning design should respond to the scale, proportion and rhythm created by these structural bay elements and "nestle" into the space created by the structural bay.
- Awnings are encouraged and should have a single color or two-color stripes. Lettering and trim, utilizing other colors is allowed but will be considered as sign area.
- Aluminum* awnings or canopies generally detract from the historic character of the Historic Business District and are *strongly* discouraged.



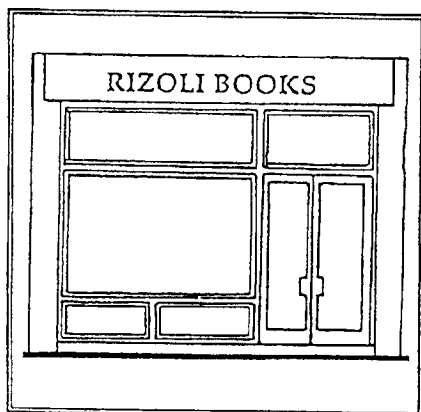
Awnings fit window shape.



Round awnings are not consistent with building and window shape.



Traditional storefront preferred.



Contemporary storefronts are acceptable if they utilize traditional design elements.

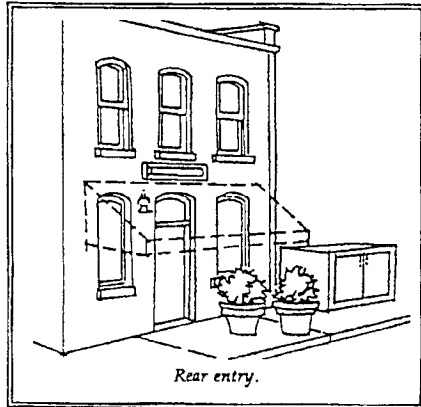
- Awning shape should relate to the window or door opening. Barrel shaped awnings should be used to complement *arched* windows while square awnings should be used on *rectangular* windows.
- All awnings should be well-maintained, washed regularly and replaced when faded or torn.
- When there are several businesses in one building, awnings of the same color should be used with simple signs on the valance flap that may vary in type style and color to differentiate the individual businesses within the building.

Door And Window Design

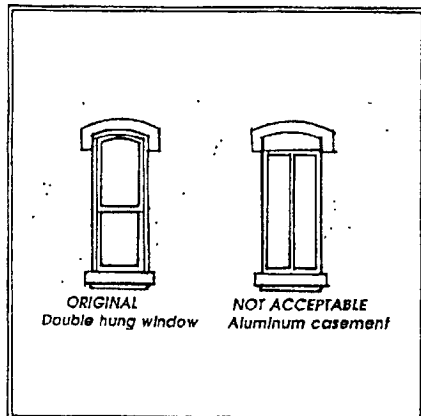
- Accentuate the door with simple details such as a handsome brass door pull, brass kickplate or an attractive painted sign.
- Doors to retail shops should contain a high percentage of glass in order to view the retail contents.
- When considering new window fenestration (window size, size of window panes, mullion type, window materials), it is important that the new design be sympathetic and compatible with the facade theme of the whole block (streetscape).
- Use of clear glass (88% light transmission) on the first floor is *strongly* recommended.
- Storefront windows should be as large as possible and no closer than 18" from the ground (bulkhead height). By limiting the bulkhead height, the visibility to the storefront displays and retail *interior* is maximized. *Maximum* bulkhead heights for new construction should be 36".
- Discourage introducing or changing the location or size of windows or other openings that alter the architectural rhythm, alignment or character of the original building.
- Air conditioning units placed in individual windows and window transom areas are *strongly* discouraged.
- Permanent, fixed security grates or grilles in front of windows are *strongly* discouraged. If security grilles are necessary, they should be placed inside the building behind the window display area.
- Where transom windows exist, every effort shall be made to retain this traditional storefront feature. If the ceiling *inside* the structure has been lowered, the ceiling should be sloped up to meet the transom so that light will penetrate the interior of the building.

Discouraged Storefront Materials

- See page V-9 for discouraged storefront materials.

Rear Entrances

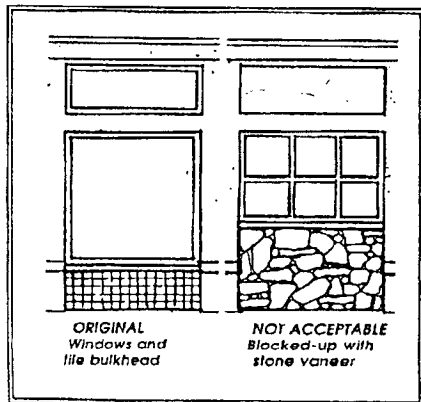
- Signs should be modestly scaled to fit the casual visual character of the alley or rear parking area.
- An awning can soften rear facades and provide a pleasant protected space.
- The rear entry door should be wood and glass similar to the front door. Special security glass (i.e. wire imbedded) is allowed.
- Security lighting should be modest and should focus on the rear entry door.
- Selective use of tree plantings, potted plants and other landscaping can subtly improve a rear facade.
- Refuse containers and service facilities should be screened from view by solid masonry walls with metal doors. Use landscaping (shrubs and vines) to screen walls and help deter graffiti.

**Facade Rehabilitation Guidelines****Window Replacement**

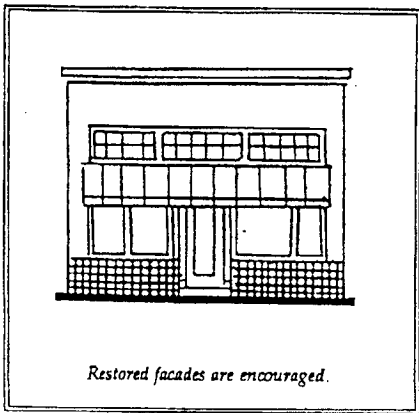
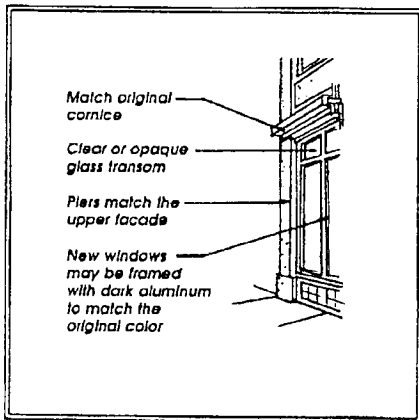
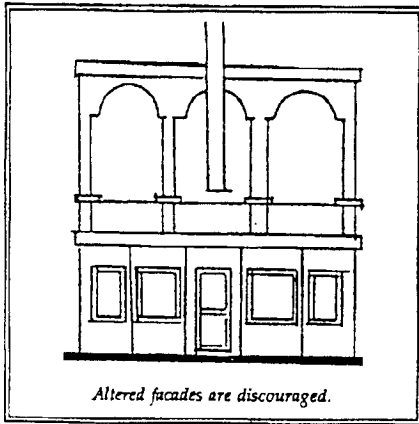
- If a window has deteriorated beyond repair or is missing, the replacement should match the original window in terms of design and materials. Replacement windows should always fill the *entire* existing opening and duplicate the original window pattern. For example, a double hung sash window should not be replaced by a single fixed pane of glass.
- Avoid the use of windows and shutters that are not in keeping with the original style of the building.

Door Replacement

- Every effort should be made to maintain and repair an original door, if possible.

Removal Of Existing Canopies And Metal Awnings

- Metal aluminum canopies have a thin, unsubstantial and "tacked on" appearance which is inconsistent with the desirable design concept for the Historic Business District. Existing metal canopies should be removed and, if appropriate, replaced with fabric awnings, consistent with the architectural style of the building.



Removal Of Elements Inconsistent With Original Facade

- Existing building elements incompatible with the original facade design of the building should be removed. These include: overdone exterior embellishments and "modernized" elements such as metal grilles or rusticated materials.
- The facade should be remodeled or restored to reflect its original appearance. The remodeling/restoration process should stress the conservation of the unique stylistic features of the original building. The Galt Historical Society is a good source for photographs of original buildings.

Preserve Traditional Decoration

- All existing historic decoration should be preserved. It reinforces the traditional character of the downtown and adds a richness of detail which is often irreplaceable at today's costs. At the same time, the details of the decoration lend a unique character to individual buildings and to the downtown as a whole.
- Many times in the remodeling of storefronts, original decorative details are intact as visual "leftovers" or simply covered up with new construction. If the building is to be refurbished, these forgotten details should not be wasted. If enough of them remain, they can be restored as part of the original design. If only a few remain, they can be incorporated as design features in a new storefront. In either case, the design of any improvements should grow out of the remaining traditional details and create a harmonious background which emphasizes them.

Selection Of Building Materials

- Some contemporary materials are often used to apply "shopping mall" style facades over the rich character of traditional downtown buildings. Materials such as cedar shakes, textured plywood, stone veneer, stucco veneer and plastic are not appropriate for use on traditional facades in Galt.

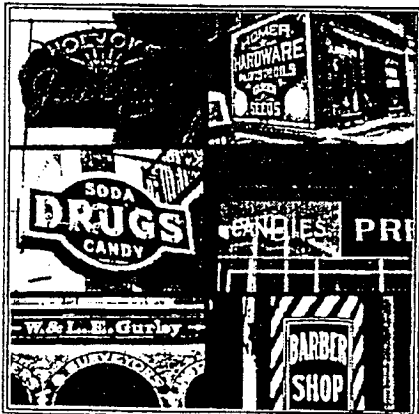
For an extensive list of encouraged and discouraged building materials, see page V-9, Building Material Palette.

SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

Introduction

In many American small towns like Galt, the visual distinction between the traditional downtown business district and outlying general commercial strips has become blurred. Sign manufacturers and designers have encouraged businesses downtown to adopt large-scale signs typically used on strips or along commercial highways. In those locations, signs need to be larger to attract the attention of motorists whizzing past. But established downtown pedestrian oriented commercial areas, such as the Historic Business District, were designed to accommodate shoppers strolling along sidewalks and motorists driving at slower speeds. Such a pace allows people to take in more of their surroundings at a glance, including signs scaled more appropriately to the pedestrian's environment.

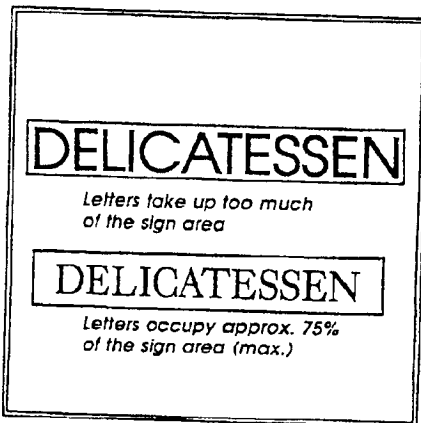
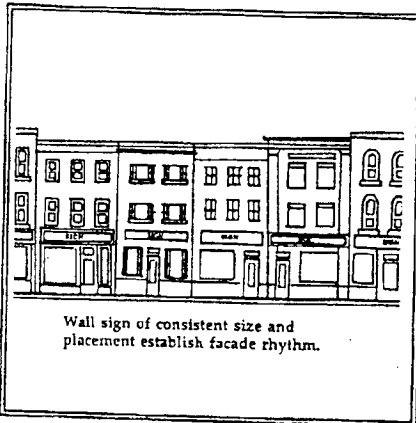
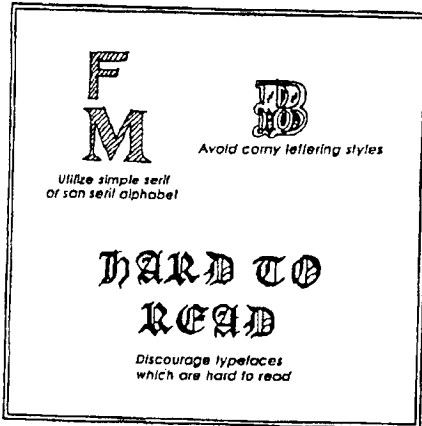
Along automobile oriented commercial strips, businesses in relatively nondescript buildings may utilize larger signs to help identify their location. In contrast, the Historic Business District offers a variety of building types, architectural styles, materials and details that form a distinctive, memorable context for individual businesses. Thus, large signs that may be appropriate for the Commercial District are not only out of scale here, they also overwhelm the very architectural features that make the Historic Business District special.



General Sign Guidelines

The following "general" guidelines should be considered prior to designing signs for any development in *both* the Commercial and Historic Business Districts.

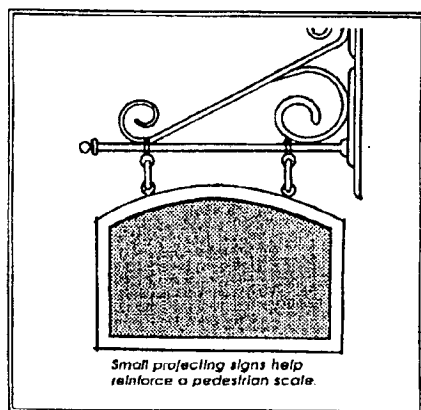
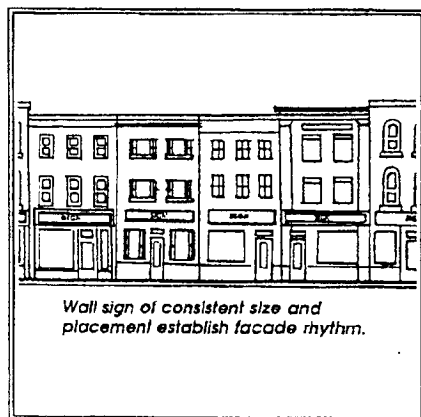
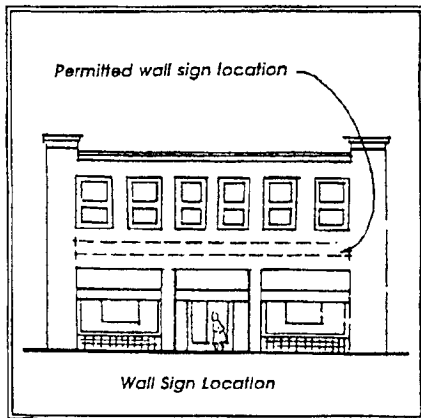
- Use a brief message. The fewer the words, the more effective the sign. A sign with a brief, succinct message is simpler and faster to read, looks cleaner and is more attractive.
- Avoid hard-to-read, overly intricate typefaces. These typefaces are difficult to read and reduce the sign's ability to communicate.
- Avoid faddish and bizarre typefaces. Such typefaces may look good today, but soon go out of style. The image conveyed may quickly become that of a dated and unfashionable business.
- Sign colors and materials. Colors should be selected to contribute to legibility and design integrity. Even the most carefully thought out sign may be unattractive and a poor communicator because of poor color selection.



- Use significant contrast between the background and letter or symbol colors. If there is little contrast between the brightness or hue of the message of a sign and its background, it will be difficult to read. If a sign is to be illuminated, light lettering on a dark background usually works best. If the sign will not be illuminated, dark lettering on a light background is appropriate.
- Limit colors to three on a single sign. Too many colors overwhelm the basic function of communication. The colors should not compete for the viewer's attention. Limited use of the accent colors can increase legibility, while large areas of competing colors tend to confuse and disturb.
- Place signs to indicate the location and access to a business. Signs should be placed at or near the entrance to a building to indicate the most direct access to the business.
- Use widely recognized logo's rather than print/text whenever possible.
- Avoid signs with strange shapes. Signs that are unnecessarily narrow or oddly shaped can restrict the legibility of the message. If an unusual shape is not symbolic, it is probably confusing.
- Carefully consider the proportion of letter area to overall sign background area. If letters take up too much sign, they may be harder to read. Large letters are not necessarily more legible than smaller ones.
- Make signs smaller if they are oriented to pedestrians. The pedestrian-oriented sign (associated with the HBD) is usually read from a distance of fifteen to twenty feet; the vehicle-oriented sign (associated with the C District) is viewed from a much greater distance. The closer a sign's viewing distance, the smaller that sign need be.
- Design the sign to be appropriate to the building on which it is placed. The sign is an integral part of the building facade. The style of a sign should be appropriate to the style of a building's architecture.

Wall Mounted Sign Guidelines

- Sign colors should be compatible with all other signs on that building.
- The use of backlit individually cut letter signs is allowed and strongly encouraged.
- The identification of each building or store's address in six inch high numbers over the main entry doorway (transom) is recommended.



Historic Business District Sign Guidelines

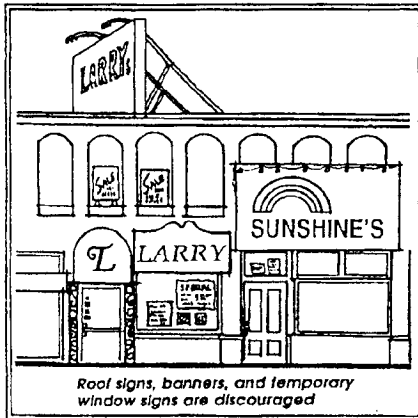
All signs within the boundaries of the Historic Business District are to be designed utilizing these *Design Guidelines*. These guidelines supplement the Galt Sign Ordinance standards.

General Sign Guidelines

- Place signs consistent with the proportions of scale of building elements within the facade. Within a building facade, the sign may be placed in different areas. A particular sign may fit well on a plain wall area, but would overpower the finer scale and proportion of the lower storefront. A sign appropriate near the building entry may look tiny and out of place above the ground level.
- Place wall signs to establish facade rhythm, scale and proportion where facade rhythm doesn't exist. In many buildings that have a monolithic or plain facade, signs can establish or continue an appropriate design rhythm, scale, and proportion.
- Consider interior neon signs. Neon signs lend themselves to creative and exciting artistic expression. The use of neon signs inside (approx. twelve inches back from display window) a storefront can be used to attract attention and create a special ambience for a business.

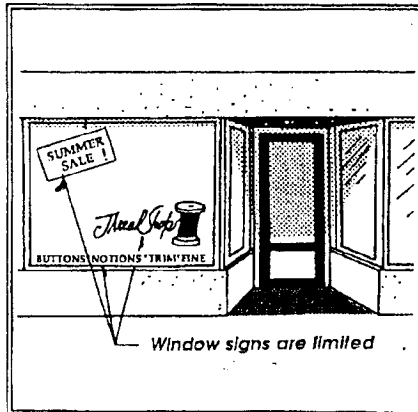
Preferred Sign Types

- Under canopy signs
- Business wall mounted identification signs located within a sign board area at the upper portion of the first story
- Awning signs
- Blade or projecting signs
- Building address numbers
- Permanent painted window signs
- Building signs containing the name of the business at rear entrances used by customers



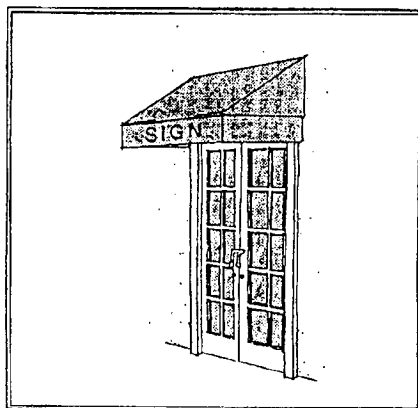
Discouraged Sign Types

- Any signs above the first story (except windows)
- Roof mounted signs
- Animated signs
- Signs emitting smoke, noise, fluids, etc.
- Rotating, moving or flashing signs (except barber poles)
- Light bulb strings—except holiday decorations
- Paper, cloth or plastic streamers and bunting, except holiday decorations
- Portable signs (sidewalk sandwich boards)
- Statues used for advertising
- Traffic sign replicas
- Vehicle signs, attached to vehicles parked to advertise a nearby business
- Inflatable signs (balloon or "blimp" signs)
- String pennants
- Formed/molded plastic internally illuminated signs



Window Sign Guidelines

- **Use individually cut letters** — Permanent window signs are limited to individual letters placed on the *interior* surface of the window and intended to be viewed from *outside*. White or gold leaf paint are the recommended colors. Glass-mounted graphic logos may be applied by silk screening or prespaced vinyl die-cut forms.
- **Limit text** — The text or sign copy of a window sign should be limited to the business name, proprietor's name and brief messages identifying the type of product or service (e.g., "maternity wear" or "attorney") or pertinent information (e.g., "se habla Espanol" or "reservations required").



Awning Sign Guidelines

- **Sign placement** - Awning signs are limited to fabric awnings covering the main or rear entrance on a street or parking lot.
- **Limit text** - The text copy is limited to the name of the business only.
- **Placement and color** - The text should be located only on the fabric valance flap of the awning itself. Letter color should be compatible with the awning and the building color scheme.
- **Coordinate design and color** - The shape, design, and color of fabric awnings should be carefully designed to coordinate with, and not dominate, the architectural style of the building. Where other fabric awnings are used on the building, the design and color of the sign awnings and all other awnings should be coordinated.