



Sign Text Amendments
Historic-Overlay District

City Council - October 1, 2024

Jake Reilly, Community Development
Director

Sign Shape Changes



- Physical relief required
 - May be 1 of the following: letters, a-typical sign shape, or a raised border
 - Minimum and maximum relief established 1/4" - 6"
 - Sculptural elements may project up to 12"
- Projecting signs
 - Projections over 12" will be considered projecting signs
- HPC, PC and staff all agree on this

Color Changes



- Initial draft language included increasing the text colors from 2 to 4, and allows shades and gradients to be counted as one color
 - HPC Recommendation: The HPC recommend the increase as a compromise from the existing code to allow more flexibility
 - PC Recommendation: The PC recommend no limit on the number of colors used for text on a sign and removed the prohibition on fluorescent colors. The difficulty and subjectivity involved in determining the appropriateness

Color Changes (continued from prior page)



- Staff Color Recommendation: Staff recommend same as PC Recommendation no limit on the number of colors used for text on a sign and removed the prohibition on fluorescent colors
 - This requirement is one of the most frequently identified as overly-restrictive by business owners with no exemptions for commercial purposes

Coordination of Colors & Font Changes



- Eliminates requirement to coordinate sign colors and building colors
 - This requirement is difficult to administer and enforce, especially where business owners and building owners differ, in multi-tenant buildings, and where wordmarks or other branding may not conform to the building's color scheme

Coordination of Colors & Font Changes



- Eliminates the limit on fonts and type styles (previously only 2 allowed, only serif fonts allowed);
 - This requirement is also overly restrictive, with no exemptions for legitimate commercial purposes.
 - HPC, PC and staff all agree on this recommendation.

Physical Relief Changes



- Clarification and changes to physical relief requirements, alternative shapes, and more flexibility allowed;
 - Previously a raised rectangular border was required this was overly restrictive, limiting the creative variation in signage that reflects a vibrant and dynamic downtown commercial district. The new regulations require “physical relief” but allow flexibility in meeting that requirement, either with a raised border, raised letters, or a uniquely shaped sign.

Ghost Sign & Moving of Signs Changes



- Owners of properties with “Ghost Signs” on them will be required to maintain the sign.
 - A “ghost sign” is a hand painted advertisement or sign that has been preserved on a building for a long time, often on brick
 - Ghost signs may develop historic significance in their own right
 - HPC, PC and staff all agree on this recommendation

Ghost Sign & Moving of Signs Changes



- Moving previously approved signs within the district (i.e. from one building to another) is considered “minor work” and may be approved by city staff.
 - This is a relatively rare occurrence, but the consensus is that when it has occurred, requiring a new COA was not a prudent use of staff or HPC time and resources.
 - HPC, PC and staff all agree on this recommendation.

Major Work vs. Minor Work Changes



- Change sign application reviews from “Major Work” (HPC Review & Approval) to “Minor Work” (Staff Review & Approval).
 - HPC Recommendation: HPC concluded they wanted to retain the ability to review and approve signs. The HPC favors taking an incremental approach to allow an increase in colors from 2 to 4, preferring to see how that change is received/works in practice and then potentially allowing more colors and/or staff review and approval in the future.

Major Work vs. Minor Work Changes



- Change sign application reviews from “Major Work” (HPC Review & Approval) to “Minor Work” (Staff Review & Approval).
 - PC Recommendation: PC made this recommendation at their meeting. The group noted the changes proposed offered clarity and flexibility, allowing staff the ability to execute and offer a faster turn around time for business owners.

Major Work vs. Minor Work Changes



- Change sign application reviews from “Major Work” (HPC Review & Approval) to “Minor Work” (Staff Review & Approval).
 - Staff Recommendation: Staff supports the change from Major work to Minor work - the same as PC - this would reduce the amount of staff and commission time spent on analyzing colors and approving signs, which are ultimately temporary.

Questions?

- City Council can make amendments or changes to any of the proposed ordinances
- City Council has the final authority on the text amendments
- Staff recommends Alternative 1 - removal of sign text color limitation and changing the approval process to "Minor work" = staff review and approval

