

Select Excerpts from Cities Sign Codes

Materials

- **Faribault:** "All signs shall be constructed of wood, metal, stone, glass, masonry, or tile; or material with a similar appearance to the materials as listed herein."
- **Hastings:** "The style, colors, lettering, and materials of the sign should reflect the age of the building. Examples may be found in old photographs and surviving signs. Plastic, aluminum, and back lit signs are not usually appropriate on older buildings because of their materials, colors, size, and style of lettering. The content and logo of corporate and product signs can be transferred to more traditional materials and styles of sign. Projecting Signs: Must be wood and/or metal, Plastic signs are not permitted."
- **Red Wing:** "Allowed historic projecting signs shall be designed to be legible, related to the character of the property's use, and be constructed of compatible material to the Building or Structure such as wood, iron, or steel."
- **St Paul:** "Sign materials should complement the materials of the related building and/or the adjacent buildings. Surface design elements should not detract from or conflict with the related structure's age and design in terms of graphics, lettering, and related patterns or pictures. Materials used should be the same as those used for signs during the period of the building's construction, such as wood, wrought iron, steel, and metal grill work. Newer materials such as extruded aluminum and plastics may not be appropriate."
- **Stillwater:** "Signs shall generally be constructed of the traditional materials used during the primary development period of downtown Stillwater buildings. If modern materials, such as acrylic, vinyl, or plastic, are used for signs, they shall be painted and simulate the texture and depth of traditional downtown sign materials, such as wood and metal. The mounting bracket for a projecting sign shall be a black metal material"

Illumination

- **Faribault:** "External illumination of signs is permitted by incandescent or fluorescent light, but shall emit continuous white light that prevents direct light from shining onto the ground or street while in operation. The use of internally lit signs, such as but not limited to backlit plastic, is not permitted. Neon signs shall be prohibited, except upon proof of historic accuracy and appropriateness."
- **Hastings:** "Projecting signs may not be lit, internally or externally"
- **Red Wing:** "External illumination of signs is permitted. Illumination maybe incandescent or fluorescent but shall emit a continuous white light that prevents direct light from shining onto the street. Exposed neon lighted signs may be appropriate to the historic District provided they meet the other requirements of this Section. The use of internally lit sign such as but not limited to, backlit plastic, is not permitted. Exceptions to this guideline shall be allowed for the following: public service time and/or temperature signs; theater signage."
- **St Paul:** "Location of exterior lights should be appropriate to the structure. Signs should generally be lit from on the site. There should be no flashing, blinking, moving, or varying intensity lighting. Subdued lighting is preferred. Backlit fluorescent or exposed neon are generally inappropriate."

- **Stillwater:** “May not be backlit nor internally lit. May not contain changeable or movable letter or graphics.”

Colors

- **Faribault:** “Sign colors shall coordinate with the building facade to which the sign is attached. No more than three (3) colors, excluding shades and gradients, shall be used for sign letters. Fluorescent colors are prohibited.”
- **Hastings:** “The style, colors, lettering, and materials of the sign should reflect the age of the building. Examples may be found in old photographs and surviving signs.”
- **Red Wing:** “Sign colors shall blend with the Building or Structure façade to which the sign is attached and be compatible with the property's use. No more than two colors shall be used for sign lettering”
- **St Paul:** n/a
- **Stillwater:** n/a

Lettering/Message

- **Faribault:** “Individual raised or recessed letters set onto the sign area surface are required except as provided in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection. Lettering styles shall be legible. Each sign shall contain no more than two (2) lettering styles, and the lettering shall occupy no more than sixty (60) percent of the total sign area. Certain signs need not have raised or recessed lettering or a raised or recessed border when the sign is cut out in the shape of the business logo, or other ornate shape (not simply a rectangle, square, oval or circle) and the sign is designed to complement the building architecture. Such signs may be permitted with a painted border and painted lettering. A suitable alternative to paint may be approved for lettering or borders in accordance with paragraph (10) below. The sign shall be raised to create separation from the building wall by no less than one (1) inch but not to exceed six (6) inches to set the sign apart from the building surface.”
- **Hastings:** “The style, colors, lettering, and materials of the sign should reflect the age of the building. Examples may be found in old photographs and surviving signs. Signs must be advertising a specific business name, not a generic product.”
- **Red Wing:** “The sign message shall be legible and relate to the nature of the use. These requirements may be accomplished through the use of words, pictures, names, symbols, and logos. Lettering. Lettering styles shall be legible and relate to the character of the property's use. In addition, a sign shall contain no more than two lettering styles; and lettering shall occupy no more than 60 percent of the sign's total area and capital letters shall be no more than 75 percent of the height of the sign background.”
- **St Paul:** n/a
- **Stillwater:** “Three-dimensional letters/symbols, with at least one-quarter inch depth or reveal, are required unless an approved sign plan permits otherwise. .Sign shall be used to display the primary name of the business only. Use only one line of lettering, if possible. Only one sign containing the business name or graphic logo shall be permitted per street facing side. Projecting signs are allowed in addition to the one sign allowed facing the street. Use simple, bold lettering with sufficient contrast between the lettering and the background.”

Sign Shape

- **Faribault:** “Edges of signs shall include a raised or recessed border that sets the sign apart from the building surface or hanging space. Signs comprised of individually cut out letters and cut out logos set apart from the building surface shall not be required to have a border around the outer extent of the sign area.”
- **Hastings:** n/a
- **Red Wing:** n/a
- **St Paul:** n/a
- **Stillwater:** “Use simple sign shapes to complement the architecture of the building.”

See the City Code for complete language.

Note: Size, Placement, and Attachment Method were not included. Placement and Attachment Method language is generally uniform across cities and is consistent with Northfield’s current code. Size varies between cities, and is generally calculated based on the size of the building or is limited by sign type.

Links to Cities Codes

- [Faribault City Code](#)
- [Hastings City Code](#)
- [Red Wing City Code](#)
- [St Paul City Code](#)
- [Stillwater City Code](#)