

Checklist for Wall Signs & Projecting Signs in the Downtown Historic District (H-O District) and Heritage Preservation sites

This checklist is not a part of the official application process. It is intended to be used as an aid to applicants in their planning wall signs only. These checklist factors are an important part of the approval decision of the Heritage Preservation Commission.

If you're unsure how any of the following regulations apply in your case, please consult early in the process with the Planning Division.

The Planning Division looks forward to working with you on your application! Please contact the Planning Division with any questions, clarifications or help with the application.

A certificate of appropriateness application is required for all signs, unless otherwise exempt, in the H-O District and Heritage Preservation Sites.

General regulations

General regulations in LDC 6.10 (F) that apply to all sign types include the following:

- Signage shall be designed to enhance and complement the historic character of buildings within the downtown district.
- All sign permits for the property within the H-O District [Historical District] shall comply with both the C1 [downtown commercial area] and H-O District requirements of this section.

Sign types

LDC 6.10 (F)(6) Sign Types

- (a) Wall Signs. These are signs mounted flush against the building or painted directly on the building.
- (b) Projecting Signs. These are signs that protrude from the building's surface. They include perpendicular signs that hang out over the sidewalk, marquee signs, and other variations.
- (c) Ground Signs. These are signs that are not attached to the building.
- (d) Window Signs.¹ These are signs either painted or hung on the windows visible to the public from the exterior.
- (e) Upper Story Window Signs.¹ These are signs either painted or hung on windows visible to the public from the exterior.
- (f) Awning Signs. A sign printed on an awning along the valance or skirt.

See Northfield Land Development Code 6.10 for complete regulation language and for other sign types (ground, window, sidewalk, awning); list based on Ordinance 1006 LDC amendments effective August 30, 2019.

¹ Signs that are painted or attached to the inside of a window that do not cover more than 50 percent of the window shall be exempt.

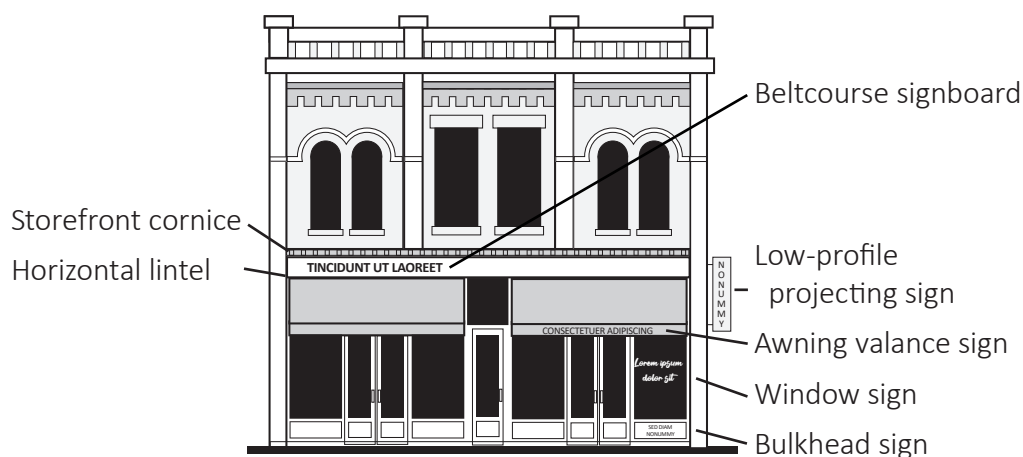


Figure 6-3. Illustration of where signs are historically attached to buildings in the downtown historic district.



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More information can be found in the Northfield Land Development Code 6.10 (F): ci.northfield.mn.us/code

Wall Sign Regulations

Does the sign plan include the following?		Yes
1. Size		
a. Does not exceed 1.5 square feet for each lineal foot of building frontage		
b. For multiple frontages, does not exceed 2.5 square feet per lineal foot of frontages or 100 square feet ¹		
2. Placement		
a. Does not obscure any architectural details (e.g., decorative brickwork, stone arches)		
b. Is consistent with historical placement (see Figure 6-3 on page 1)		
3. Shape		
a. Is rectangular		
b. Has a raised rectangular border		
4. Colors		
a. Color coordinates with the building façade		
b. Uses soft/neutral shades and dark/rich shades ^{2 3}		
5. Material		
a. Made of wood, metal or weather proof material (no appearance of plastic)		
6. Message		
a. Legible and relates to nature of business ⁴		
b. Lettering and any logo/images, etc. do not occupy more than 60% of sign area		
c. Lettering and any logos/images, etc. do not extend outside the borders		
d. Telephone numbers and websites (if included)		
i. Are secondary to primary message		
ii. Occupy no more than 20% of the total sign area allotted to lettering		
7. Lettering		
a. Uses individual raised lettering		
b. Uses no more than two colors of sign lettering		
c. Uses serif font		
d. Uses no more than two lettering styles		
e. Made of wood, metal or weather proof material		
8. Illumination (complete this section only if illumination is used)		
a. External illumination of signs		
i. Uses incandescent, LED or fluorescent shining onto sign		
ii. Does not shine onto ground or adjacent buildings		
iii. Is continuous white light (not rotating/flashing/intermittent unless for public service, time/temperature and theater signs)		
iv. Fixtures complement historic character of district		
v. Is not internally illuminated.		

¹ The Planning Division will assist in this calculation, please reference Section 6.10 (C) for further details.

² Language reads: "A combination of soft/neutral shades and dark/rich shades will best reflect the historical time period"

³ Many paint companies have historic color palettes. This is a good starting point when picking out colors.

⁴ Language reads: "These requirements may be accomplished through the use of words, pictures, names, symbols and logos."

Projecting Sign Regulations

Does the sign plan include the following?	Yes
1. Size	
a. Does not project not more than 36 inches beyond the face of the building	
b. Does not exceed allotted sign area ¹	
2. Placement	
a. Has a minimum clearance of 8 feet above a sidewalk and 15 feet above driveways or alleys	
b. Does not obscure any architectural details (e.g., decorative brickwork, stone arches)	
3. Shape	
a. Is fabricated in a variety of shapes appropriate to the building or business	
4. Colors	
a. Color coordinates with the building façade	
b. Uses soft/neutral shades and dark/rich shades ^{2 3}	
5. Material	
a. Made of wood, metal or weather proof material (no appearance of plastic)	
b. Brackets	
i. Made of iron or other painted metal	
ii. Secured at the top of the sign	
iii. Anchored into the mortar, not the masonry	
6. Message	
a. Legible and relates to nature of business ⁴	
7. Lettering	
a. Lettering style is legible	
b. Telephone numbers and websites (if included)	
i. Are secondary to primary message	
ii. Occupy no more than 20% of the total sign area allotted to lettering	
8. Illumination (complete this section only if illumination is used)	
a. External illumination of signs	
i. Uses incandescent, LED or fluorescent shining onto sign	
ii. Does not shine onto ground or adjacent buildings	
iii. Is continuous white light (not rotating/flashing/intermittent unless for public service, time/temperature and theater signs)	
iv. Fixtures complement historic character of district	

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