



# **Sign Text Amendments Historic-Overlay District**

**City Council – September 3, 2024**

**Jake Reilly, Community Development Director**

# Sign Shape Changes



- **Physical relief required**

- May be 1 of the following: letters, atypical 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

# 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 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 of colors and the applicability of any definitions of colors make this regulation overly burdensome to interpret and enforce.

# 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;
  - Staff Recommendation: Staff recommend 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.
  - HPC, PC and staff all agree on this recommendation.

# 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.
  - HPC, PC and staff all agree on this recommendation.

# Ghost Sign & Moving of Signs Changes



- Owners of properties with “Ghost Signs” on them will be required to maintain the sign.
  - 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 HPC retaining control of review and approval of signs, so long as the color maximum is removed as a compromise. 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

