

**CITY OF GRANBURY**  
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*Historic Preservation*  
**DESIGN GUIDELINES**

## 8. SIGNS

### *Commentary:*

These guidelines apply to all signs within a City of Granbury historic district or signs on the property of a City of Granbury Historic Landmark.

A sign within a historic district or on the property of a historic landmark should be appropriate to the historic context of the particular building where the sign is being mounted.

Freestanding and hanging signs in a historic district should maintain a "family relationship", even though many of the buildings are from different historic eras. Within individual districts there should be consistency in the heights of the signs and in the size of lettering. Where possible free-standing signs, within all individual districts, should be of the same material and have a similar method of support.

All signs within historic districts or on the property of a historic landmark must receive a Certificate of Appropriateness by the City of Granbury Historic Preservation Commission.

### **Definitions**

- Sign*** Means, in addition to its usual definition, any object, device, display, structure or part thereof, situated outdoors, or visible from the street, that is erected for the purpose of advertising or attracting attention to any business, person, location, or activity by any means, including words, music, figures, designs, symbols, colors, illumination, beacons, banners, merchandise or projected images. *Signs* include window signs, flags (other than the U.S. flag or Texas flag), and flush messages in walking surfaces.
- Auxiliary Sign*** A sign indicating general information such as credit cards, pricing, official notices required by law, directions, shop hours, community services, occupant and profession, and realty information. Holiday decorations located on windows and doors are considered auxiliary signs.
- Awning Sign*** Any sign painted or applied to the face, valance, or side panels of an awning.
- Catenary*** The natural drape of a wire hanging in the air.
- Hanging Sign*** Any sign suspended from an awning or canopy or from a bracket off the face of the building.

<b>Mini-Mall</b>	Any two or more occupants of a building leasing or sub-leasing space for retail purposes.
<b>Moving Sign</b>	A sign where information within the frame of the sign moves.
<b>Mural Sign</b>	A sign painted on the side of a building.
<b>Portable Sign</b>	Any sign not permanently attached to any surrounding surface, or a sign that is designed to be moved from one location to another.
<b>Projecting Sign</b>	Means any sign attached to and placed perpendicular to a building façade.
<b>Real Estate Sign</b>	A sign that is advertising the sale or lease of the property.
<b>Sandwich Board</b>	A free-standing sign.
<b>Signboard</b>	Any flat sign or plaque mounted or applied to a building façade.
<b>Temporary Sign</b>	Any sign intended to be displayed for a limited period of time. Examples of temporary signs are: any sign banner, pennant, valance, or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric, cardboard, wallboard, plastic or other light materials, with or without frames. (This list is not intended to limit the types of temporary signs-there are other types of temporary signs.)
<b>Window Sign</b>	Any sign painted or applied to window glass or door glass or fixed parallel behind the glass.

## **Signs Prohibited and Other Sign Regulations**

### ***Prohibited:***

*Portable signs.*

*Occupants of mini-malls exhibiting individual signs. One sign may list the name of the occupants of the mini-mall.*

*Mural signs, except for restorations of signs 50 years or older. When restoring old mural signs, water-based paints are required, because they allow stone or brick to breathe. Paint on masonry can adversely affect a historic building. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required when restoring a mural sign.*

*Internally lit signs.*

*Signs that eclipse or obstruct significant architectural detail.*

*Off-premise signs.*

*Roof signs.*

*Temporary signs without a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Officer. Temporary signs may only be displayed for a limited period of time, not to exceed 30 consecutive days in any 90-day period.*

*Modern technology and signs like those on ATM machines and on telephone booths.*

*Wheel-mounted signs or signs placed on movable vehicles.*

*Detached pole signs, except signs erected by the City of Granbury for traffic control. The materials and shapes of support devices for these traffic control signs shall be reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission so they are compatible with the historic context of the applicable historic district.*

*Real estate signs larger than two-feet by two-feet in size. One real estate sign is allowed per property and it must be mounted inside the building's window.*

## **Sign Colors**

*Sign colors must coordinate with Color Palettes for Granbury's Town Square Historic District on display at City Hall in Granbury or be selected from online historic color palettes. Colors should be appropriate for the construction age of the building.*

### **Prohibited:**

- *Finishes imitating other materials, such as 1990s' "faux" finishes, on signs.*

## **Sign Lettering**

*The style of a sign's letters should be consistent with the historic period of the building. Classical serif lettering styles were generally used before World War I and different styles of Art Deco and other sans serif lettering styles were developed after World War I.*



*Wikipedia 2022, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sans-serif>*

## **Location of Signs**

- **Awning signs** are allowed when they are painted or applied flat against the surface of the awning tail.
- **Signs** may be hung below rigid awnings or porches.
- **Projecting and/or hanging signs** are allowed when they have a minimum clearance of seven feet from the sidewalk and do not extend beyond the awning or canopy projection.

### **Prohibited:**

- *Signs projecting above building façades.*
- *Signs on streets or sidewalk without a Certificate of Appropriateness.*
- *Signs mounted on top and at the edge of awnings or porches.*

## Size of Signs

- The maximum size for signage on the front of a historic building is based on the following guideline: *For every one linear foot of building primary or entrance frontage, two square feet of sign area are allowed.*
- Signs on secondary or side-street frontage should not exceed the size of signs on the primary or entrance frontage, with the exception of historic murals.
- **Window signs** should cover no more than 40 percent of the total glass area of the window on which they are placed. The sign coverage is determined by an imaginary square or rectangle that encompasses the window sign graphics.
- Each face of a **hanging sign** should be no more than 12 square feet in size.
- **Awning sign** size should not exceed the border surface of the awning tail.
- **Projecting signs** should be no more than 15 square feet in size, with a maximum sign height of three feet.
- **Auxiliary signs** should be no more than 4 square feet in size.
- **All signs** should be sized to make walking on sidewalks easily accessible and safe.

## Material

- Use of plastic on sign faces is restricted to signs that have an appearance compatible with the historic context of the building and are specifically approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.
- No fluorescent materials and/or paints are allowed (see lighting section for information on use of neon).
- No reflective materials and/or paints are allowed except for silver or gold leaf.

## Lighting

- The lighting of a sign should be consistent with the building's historic period.
- The following types of sign lighting are prohibited: quartz halogen, xenon, metal halide, mercury vapor, sodium vapor, Light-emitting Diode (LED), laser lights, projectors that project light onto a building, and all light sources that emit extremely high light intensity or color.
- Neon is considered a limited special use consideration only applicable to signs for use on buildings originally constructed when neon was in use in Granbury (1930s to 1949). If the predominance of neighboring buildings is of an earlier era, guidelines for the earlier era will be followed.

- Neon and LED signs are allowed in windows of businesses located in the Hood County Courthouse Historic District. One sign is allowed for each business and must not measure greater than 12 inches in height or width.

### **Sign Attachment**

- Sign attachments, including wires, rods, brackets and other hardware will be compatible to the historic context of the building. Catenaries are not allowed.
- No new holes will be made on or in a historic building for the purpose of hanging a sign.