

SIGNAGE

Signage is a necessary feature to assist residents and visitors in locating goods and services within the community, and it is critical to the economic viability of individual businesses as well as to the Town as a whole. This importance must be balanced with the goals of providing a strong sense of community, and using the design of signage to reinforce the special character and ambiance of the Town of Los Gatos.

Applicants should refer to Division 3 of the Town of Los Gatos Zoning Ordinance which contains relevant definitions and the basic standards which will be applied to commercial signage. The guidelines in this chapter supplement the Sign Ordinance, and are intended to provide more detail in regard to good signage design principles and community expectations. In some cases, these guidelines are more restrictive than the maximums established in the ordinance.

The sign examples shown are drawn from the Town of Los Gatos and other communities. They are for the purpose of illustrating specific guidelines only, and might not be appropriate for all locations. Each sign will be reviewed in the context of the proposed project buildings and the surrounding area.

6.1 GENERAL GUIDELINES

6.1.1 Allowed signage types

Signs will be limited to the following types which are illustrated below and described on the following pages.

- Wall Signs
- Awning Signs
- Window Signs
- Projecting Signs
- Hanging Signs
- Plaque Signs
- Ground Signs
- Freestanding Signs

INTENT OF THE SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

- Reinforce the high quality character and image of the Town of Los Gatos
- Assist businesses within the community to inform residents and visitors of their presence
- Assist residents and visitors in finding businesses and services located within the community
- Design signage which is appropriate to the special characteristics of the district in which it is located
- Encourage commercial signage that communicates more effectively to potential customers
- Avoid the visual chaos of excessive or inappropriate signage

SIGNAGE PROGRAMS

Projects with multiple tenants will be required to prepare a Master Signage Program for review and approval. The program will establish the specific location and design for major project signs (e.g., Ground Signs)

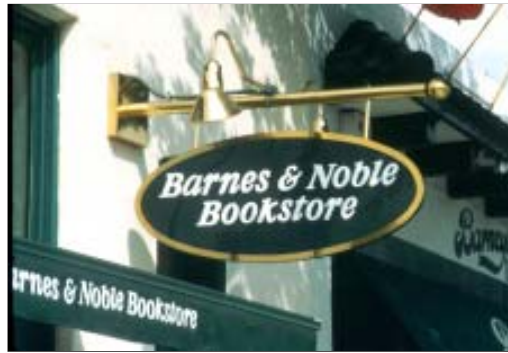
Property owners are encouraged to upgrade signage to conform to these design guidelines. However, when tenants change within a project with a previously approved Signage Program, new signs should be fabricated to meet the standards of the approved program.

SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

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Wall Sign



Projecting Sign



Awning Sign



Hanging Sign



Plaque Sign



Window Sign



Ground Sign



Freestanding Sign

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6.1.2 Prohibited signage types

- Flags (except for the American flag and other related flags as described in the Town's Zoning Ordinance)
- Lighted signs that flash on and off, fluctuate or appear to move
- Moving signs that rotate or move in any fashion, except barber poles
- Attraction Boards and Movable Letter Signs (except for churches, cinemas, performing arts facilities or similar uses that have frequently changing events or showings)
- A-Frame Signs
- Off-premises Signs
- Electronic Signs
- Projected Light Signs which are flashed or projected onto walls or other structures by means of a projector or other device
- Roof-mounted Signs (except where other types of signage cannot be effectively employed)
- Billboards
- Cloth, paper or fabric signs hung from the building or placed in windows except for Temporary Signs allowed under the Sign Ordinance
- Any signs not specifically authorized by the Sign Ordinance

6.1.3 Maximum allowed sign area

One (1) square foot for each linear foot of primary business frontage plus one (1) square foot for each linear foot of secondary business frontage up to fifty percent (50%) of the amount allowed by the primary business frontage.

Los Gatos Boulevard Auto Dealerships

Signage quantity will be evaluated under the review and approval of a master signage program based upon the following criteria:

- *Signage compatibility with the scale and character of Los Gatos Boulevard*
- *Signage sizes needed for readability from reasonable viewing distances*
- *Limitation of text content to the minimum necessary to convey ownership and brand recognition*
- *Compatibility of the signage and supporting structures to the architecture of the dealership*

SIGN AREA

Sign area is the total area of the face or faces of a sign. Each face is measured by determining the smallest area within a single perimeter composed of not more than eight (8) straight lines drawn by the applicant enclosing the extreme limits of the face.

For the purposes of measurement, a six-inch margin around all words and symbols will be included in the perimeter composed of not more than eight (8) straight lines.

For more information on what constitutes a sign face, consult Division 3: Signs of the Town of Los Gatos Zoning Ordinance.

**SIGN LOCATIONS**

Applicants should choose proposed sign types as well as their location and mounting heights to avoid blockage by street tree foliage, taking into account the possibility that the trees may continue to grow and be larger in the future.

SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

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TYPE STYLE EXAMPLES

Below are examples of type styles which would generally be considered acceptable. All letters are shown at the same point size which gives an indication of the amount of relative space that each will require.

Arial**Book Antiqua***Book Antiqua Italic**Brush Script***Calisto****Century Schoolbook****ENGRAVERS****Footlight****Garamond****Goudy Old Style****Helvetica****Humanist 521 BT****Lucida Bright****Lucida Sans***Monotype Corsiva***Perpetua****Souvenir Lt BT****Times New Roman***Viner Hand ITC***Zaph Humanist BT****6.1.4 Avoid excessive wording and advertising messages**

Signs are most effective when their messages can be grasped quickly. Too many words or images compete for attention and reduce the readability of the sign.

6.1.5 Use no more than two letter font types per sign

The primary purpose of a sign is to quickly convey information to passing pedestrians and motorists. More than two letter styles make readability more difficult. A simple logo with an additional type style may be considered.

6.1.6 Keep the size of letters and graphics in proportion to overall sign area

Text and graphics are difficult to read if they crowd the borders of the sign. Smaller letters with space around them will have more impact than larger letters with limited space around them.

Generally limit the width and height of lettering and graphics to 85% of the overall sign width and 65% of the height of the sign area. Information, such as graphic logos, may be closer to borders if a significant amount of background is provided for the sign as a whole. A good rule of thumb is to limit the amount of sign information to no more than 50 to 55% of the overall sign area.

**6.1.7 Use high quality materials**

Appropriate materials include finished wood, metal, and for projecting banner signs, woven fabric. Plastic sign materials and signs painted directly onto building surfaces will not be allowed.

The sign materials and design should be related to those of the building on which it is mounted, and all sign edges must be cleanly finished.

6.1.8 Use simple and symmetrical sign shapes

Geometrical shapes such as rectangles, squares, circles, ovals and triangles are visually stable shapes which help focus attention on the sign message. These should be used in almost all cases. Combinations of geometric shapes will also generally produce a good sign shape.

6.1.9 Use relatively slender type styles

Slender letter styles are encouraged over fat or block styles to improve readability, and avoid a cumbersome appearance. Some examples of readable letter styles are shown in the side bar on the previous page.

6.2 WALL SIGNS

Wall signs are panels or individual letters mounted flat against and parallel to a building wall or roof fascia

6.2.1 Limit sign information

Generally, limit sign information to the business name. Graphic logos, date of building construction, address, and other elements may be allowed at the discretion of the Town.

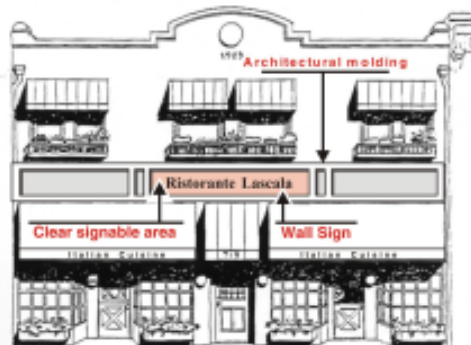
6.2.2 Place signs within a clean Signable Area

- a) The *Signable Area* should:
 - Be relatively flat
 - Not contain doors or windows
 - Not include projecting molding or trim
 - Be in reasonable proportion to the overall facade

The Signable area should generally not exceed 15% of the building facade

- b) If a building does not have a good location for a wall sign, use other allowed types such as awning, window, or projecting signs.

- c) Sign dimensions and coverage within the Signable Area should conform to Guideline 6.1.8



Signable Area

SIGN LETTER SIZE

The messages of effective signs need to be easily read and understood by passing motorists and pedestrians. A number of factors including distance from the sign, speed of travel, letter-to-background contrast, and the number and nature of nearby competing signs contribute to the "readability" of a sign.

The signage industry generally recognizes a standard of 1 inch of letter height for every 40 feet to 50 feet of viewing distance. This size factor may be increased by up to 10% for higher speed streets where businesses are strongly auto oriented.

Maximum letter heights are included in these guidelines for each sign type. In some cases, the maximum letter height may be too large for the surrounding environment and existing signs. In other special circumstances, the maximum letter size may not provide adequate business signage.

For the purpose of evaluating appropriate sign size, the Town will consider the normal sign viewing distances, the general nature of the street (e.g., width and traffic speed), and the size of other existing signs in the area,

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