



# DESIGN REVIEW

# SIGN / AWNING SUBMITTAL PACKAGE



# AWNINGS & SIGNS

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## Information About Awning & Sign Approval in the City of Berkeley

- **All awnings and signs in Berkeley require a Building Permit from the Building & Safety Division.**
- **All awnings and signs in Commercial or Industrial zoning districts also require Design Review approval**, as required by the Design Review Ordinance. This includes all types of new awnings, signs applied to awnings, and re-covering or changing existing awnings or signs.
- **Awnings and signs may not be installed until Design Review is completed and a Building Permit is issued.** The Building and Safety Division will issue a Building Permit only after Design Review approval.
- **Before you file or do extensive design work on your proposed awning or sign**, we recommend that you contact the Design Review Staff to discuss how the Design Review Ordinance applies to your proposed awning and/or sign. Please call 510-981-7410 and ask for a Design Review Planner.
- **File for Design Review approval:** File a complete application at the Land Use Division for Design Review. It is recommended that you wait for design approval before filing for a Building Permit with the Building and Safety Division, since your application may be modified during the design review process.
- **Fees:** Fees for Design Review and Building Permits are set by the City Council and are subject to change. Call 510-981-7500 for Building Permit fees. Call 510-981-7410 for Design Review fees or look at the Land Use Fee Schedule online:  
[http://www.cityofberkeley.info/Online\\_Service\\_Center/Home/Forms.aspx](http://www.cityofberkeley.info/Online_Service_Center/Home/Forms.aspx)
- **Timing:** The minimum processing time for awning or sign approval is typically six weeks, but can be eight to ten weeks depending on the workload

## Application Submittal Requirements

A complete application for design review should include the Design Review Application form, one set of 11x17" drawings (or larger drawings if smaller size is illegible), a pdf copy of all application materials being submitted, and the required fees. The drawings must include accurately scaled plans of the entire building façade and of the proposed awning and/or sign. Include the following information:

- Note all existing building elements such as doors, windows, signs, light fixtures and building materials on a scaled building elevation drawing (minimum scale 1/8" = 1'0").
- On the building elevation drawing show all proposed awnings, signs, graphics and logos. Illustrate the proposed awning(s) and/or signage exactly as they will be located on the building.
- Include a site plan, with a north arrow, showing the locations of all proposed awnings and/or signs and how far the awning or sign will project over the public right of way.
- Provide photographs of the building, showing all facades on which the proposed awning(s) and/or sign(s) will be located. In addition to existing photographs, photo simulations may be submitted. Photo simulations shall be to scale, including the building façade and building elements, and the proposed signage/awning. Photo simulations do not replace the requirement for scaled drawings (elevations, plans, sections). Photo simulations are encouraged, but not required.
- Include separate larger-scaled, detailed drawings of all proposed awnings and signs, with the size and style of lettering and/or logos drawn to scale. Indicate all colors and materials proposed for the awning(s) or sign(s); provide an actual fabric sample of the awning or sign material, in the color that is proposed.



# AWNINGS & SIGNS

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- If lighting is proposed, include exact specifications as to the location, number, and type of lamps including conduits, breakers, amps, and conductor sizes. If the awning or sign is proposed to be externally illuminated, provide a manufacturer's brochure of the light fixture(s).
- Include construction details showing how the awning(s) or sign(s) will be attached to the building, including a scaled drawing of the awning or sign frame.

**Submit** all application materials in both paper and electronic format, according to the requirements stated below.

## **Requirements:**

- Submission Format: All files must be submitted in PDF format
- Electronic documents (i.e., created using a computer program such as Microsoft Word, Excel, or AutoCAD) and digital photographs shall be converted to Adobe PDF format using "Save As PDF" or "Print As PDF" commands.
- Non-electronic (e.g., typewritten or handwritten) documents shall be converted to PDF format by scanning.
- Resolution:
  - Text documents: 100 to 150 DPI/PPI. (If converting electronic document to PDF, use "standard" setting in Adobe Acrobat, or 144 DPI setting in Cute PDF Writer.)
  - Plans, photos, and other graphics: 300 DPI/PPI. (To reduce file size, disable editing capabilities, "flatten" all layers<sup>1</sup>, and use "Reduced Size PDF" function when available.)
- Total Size:
  - Combine all documents into a single PDF file which does not exceed 20MB.
  - If total size exceeds 20 MB, submit documents as separate PDFs.
  - If you do not have access to software which allows multiple PDFs to be combined (e.g., Adobe Acrobat Pro), submit individual PDF files and City staff will combine them.

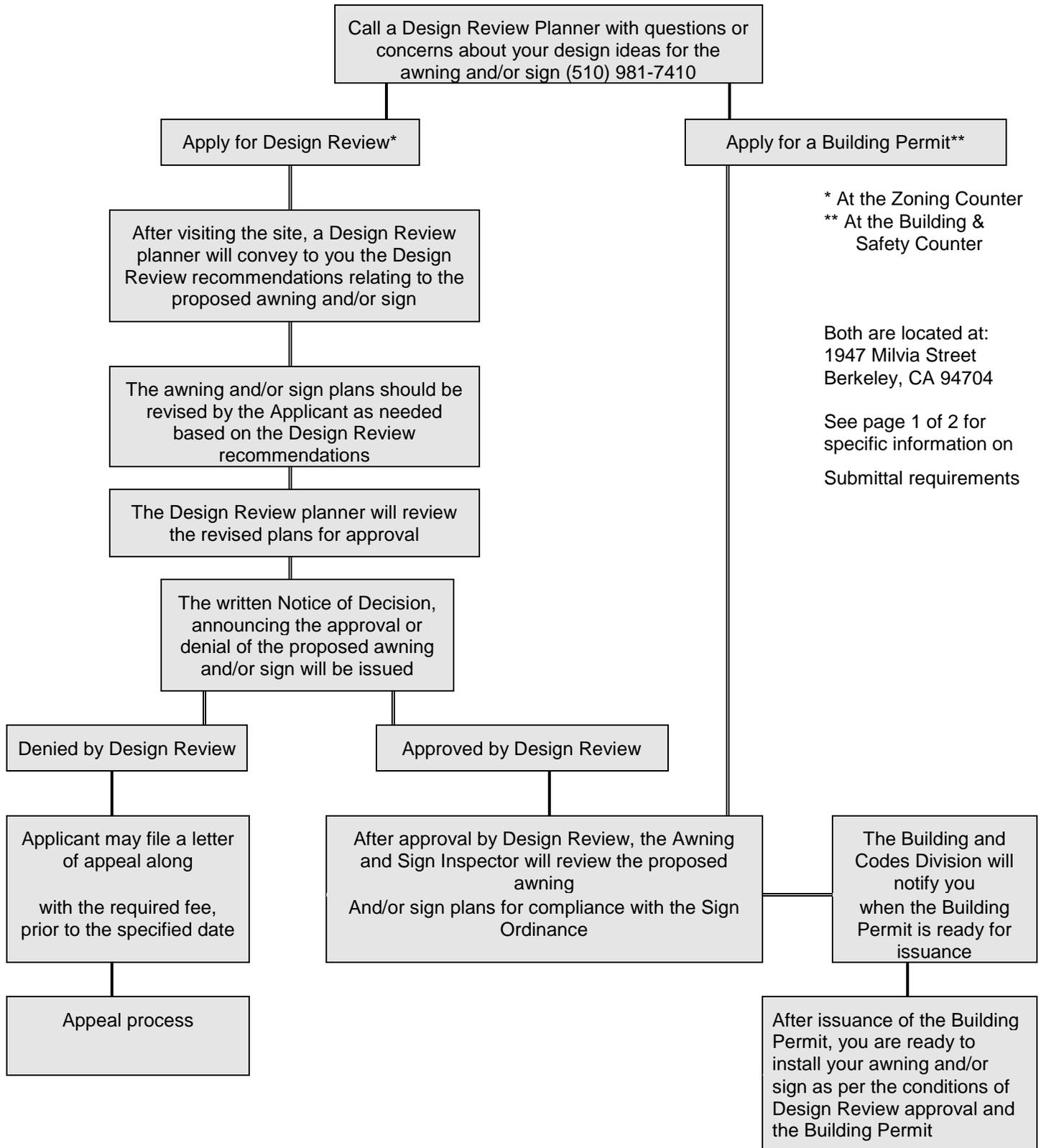
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<sup>1</sup> "Flattening" the files means the individual "layers" that often comprise large architectural and engineering plan sets are reduced down to one layer. As a result, the PDF file becomes much smaller and therefore more easily managed. For more information on PDF "flattening", please visit <http://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/kb/printing-complex-pdfs-acrobat.html>.



# AWNINGS & SIGNS

## Process for Awning & Sign Approval





# AWNINGS & CANOPIES

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- GENERAL
- AWNINGS
- CANOPIES
- MARQUEES

# AWNINGS & CANOPIES

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**Awnings and canopies provide sun and rain protection to pedestrians, provide a sense of enclosure at sidewalk level, are good locations for pedestrian-related signs, and shield window displays from the sun. awnings and canopies must respect the architectural integrity of the façade on which they are placed, the context of their location, and the historic character of Downtown.**

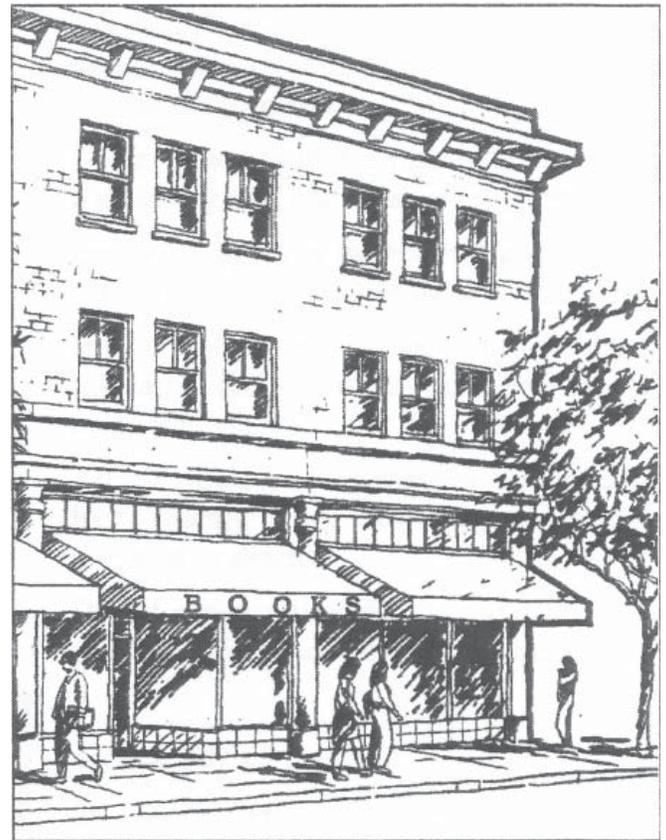
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## GENERAL

- 1 Work which involves the installation or repair of any awning, canopy, or marquee must secure design approval and the required permits prior to fabrication or construction.
- 2 Respect the architectural integrity of the façade on which these attachments are placed, the context of the building's location, and the historic character of Downtown.

## AWNINGS

- 1 Fit awnings within enframed storefronts.
- 2 Awning shape, size, material and color should be considered with the architectural style and character of the building.
- 3 Awnings should be compatible with other awnings nearby, particularly those on the same building, when these awnings complement the architectural character of the building.
- 4 New awnings should be compatible with adjacent Landmark and Significant buildings.
- 5 The height of awnings should provide pedestrian scale to the building and meet code requirements. Locate the structural components of awnings at least 8 feet above the sidewalk. Unrestricted valances or returns should be at least 7 feet above the sidewalk, and may project no more than 2/3 of the width of the sidewalk.
- 6 Awning shape, size, and height should be proportional to the façade on which it is placed. Awnings should not be dominant or overwhelming elements.



*Figure 29: Awnings should be designed as integral parts of the façade; they should complement the architectural style of the building and fit within enframed storefronts.*

- 7 Use matte canvas fabric for awnings; not vinyl, fiberglass, plastic, wood or other unsuitable materials. Glass and metal awnings may be appropriate for some buildings, but must be consistent with the architectural style of the building and the historic character of Downtown.

# AWNINGS & CANOPIES (CONTINUED)



INAPPROPRIATE

APPROPRIATE

*Figure 30: The awning at right fits within the enframed storefront and exposes the transom. The awning at left is over scaled for its storefront, and obscures the cornice and transom.*

- 8 Attach awnings in a manner which does not harm historic fabric nor obscure architectural elements or details.
- 9 On Landmark and Significant buildings, operable awnings and preferred over stationary awnings because they are more historically accurate.
- 10 The shape, profile, materials, and location of awnings for Landmark and Significant buildings should be based on historic evidence or should be of a style which is consistent with the historic style of the building.
- 11 Because of solar orientation, architectural style, or detailing, some buildings are not adaptable to awnings; don't force awnings on these buildings.
- 12 Backlighting so that light shines through the awning material, and awning soffits which cover the bottom of the awning are discouraged.
- 13 Open sides on awnings are encouraged.
- 14 Awnings with large flat valances are strongly discouraged.

## CANOPIES

- 1 Use canopies only on ground-floor facades, and design them to fit within enframed storefronts or over main entries.
- 2 Design canopies that complement and reinforce the architectural character of buildings.
- 3 Locate canopies at least 8 feet above the sidewalk, and at least 1.5 feet from the curb line.
- 4 For Landmark and Significant buildings, base the design and materials of canopies on historic evidence.
- 5 Attach canopies in a manner which does not harm historic fabric nor obscure architectural elements or details.
- 6 Direct canopy lighting toward the display windows or downward onto the sidewalk.

## MARQUEES

- 1 Retain and restore marquees which are architectural assets to the building, including neon lettering and other interesting details.
- 2 Design new marquees only for entries to theatres, concert and recital halls (this does not include night clubs or restaurants). Marquees should be compatible with the character and scale of the building, and should comply with the guidelines for Marquee signs.
- 3 Marquees may contain internally lit areas to illuminate changeable venue lettering only.

# SIGNS & GRAPHICS

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- ALL SIGNS
- WALL SIGNS  
*Single-faced signs affixed directly to a building*
- PROJECTING SIGNS  
*Signs which project from and are supported by a building, usually at a perpendicular angle*
- WINDOW SIGNS  
*Signs on or behind windows*
- AWNING, CANOPY, OR MARQUEE SIGNS
- MURALS
- SIGN BANNERS
- SIGNS ON TALLER BUILDINGS

# SIGNS & GRAPHICS

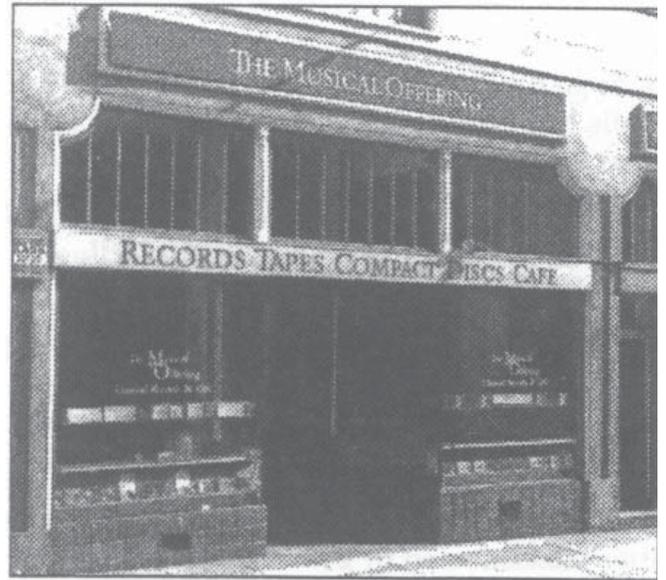
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Signs are an extremely visible part of the streetscape, and should reflect the quality of goods and services being offered Downtown. They should communicate an image of excellence, distinctive craftsmanship, and creativity, and should reinforce the unique and historic character to Downtown.

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## ALL SIGNS

- 1 Sign design and permit approval must be obtained prior to fabrication and installation of the sign.
- 2 Signs should reflect the character of the building and its use. When the building has little or no architectural character, it is imperative that the sign design adds interest and beauty to the façade.
- 3 Respect the immediate context of the building's location, and the historic character of Downtown.
- 4 The architecture of the building often identifies specific locations for signs, and these locations should be used.
- 5 Signs should be an integral part of the design of storefront alterations and new construction. Signs should not obscure architectural elements such as transoms or columns, nor appear cluttered.
- 6 The size of signs and sign letters should be in scale and proportional to the space in which they are located, with letters typically between 6 and 16 inches high.
- 7 Sign letter and materials should be professionally designed and fabricated.
- 8 Primary signs should contain only the name of the business and/or its logo. Secondary text which identifies products should be located in a secondary location.
- 9 Locate signs for ground floor tenants at storefront level. Signs on the upper façade should be building identification signs only.
- 10 Construct signs using high-quality materials such as metal, stone, wood, gold leaf, and exposed



*Figure 31: Wall signs should be an integral part of storefront designs, and should fit within or just above the enframed storefront. In both the above examples, the size and placement of the signs not only respect the composition of the building, but are also at a suitable scale for a pedestrian-oriented district.*

## SIGNS & GRAPHICS (CONTINUED)

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neon. Signs should be a matte finish so as to not cause glare. Internally lit plastic letters or signs are strongly discouraged.

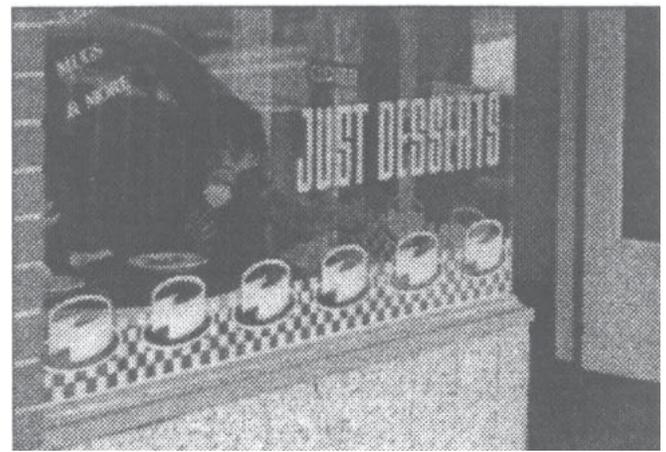
- 11 Firmly anchor the sign to the building in a way that does not damage the surface, and allows for easy removal to accommodate the changing tenants.
- 12 Coordinate the design and alignment of signs on multiple use buildings in order to achieve a unified appearance rather than visual confusion.
- 13 Retain historic signs and inscriptions, and do not remove or replant historic ghost signs. If it is necessary to remove or relocate historic signs, store them on the premises for future reuse.
- 14 On Landmark buildings, signs should be designed and located to be consistent with the character of the building and the era in which the building was constructed.
- 15 Modify historic signs for new use only to the extent that the changes are compatible with the original sign. Modifications should have the ability to be removed without affecting original elements, in anticipation of future restoration.
- 16 Modify corporate logo signs to conform to these guidelines, if necessary.
- 17 Cabinet signs are strongly discouraged; if used on existing, permitted signs, illuminate only the individual lettering or symbols, not the entire sign face.
- 18 Sign lighting, if any, should utilize spot-lighting, halo lighting, or exposed neon. Spot lighting should be inconspicuous or an integral design feature of the sign, and should not cause glare for pedestrians or motorists. Do not use sign lighting which blinks or flashes.
- 19 In addition to these guidelines, all signs must conform to the City of Berkeley Sign Ordinance. Design approval and sign permit must be obtained prior to sign fabrication.
- 20 Temporary signs should use high-quality graphics and must be removed within 30 days.



*Figure 32: Exposed neon is encouraged as a means of sign illumination.*



*Figure 33: Symbol or icon signs provide added visual interest.*



*Figure 34: Window sign allowing clear visibility into store.*

## WALL SIGNS

- 1 Locate wall signs on the upper portion of the storefront, within or just above the enframed storefront opening. The length of the sign should not exceed the width of the enframed storefront.
- 2 Design signs which are compatible with the storefront in scale, proportions, and color.
- 3 Cabinet signs are strongly discouraged.
- 4 Maximum heights should generally not exceed 2 feet, with characters between 6 and 16 inches high. Signs should project no more than 9 inches from the building's face.

## PROJECTING SIGNS

- 1 Design and locate signs which are compatible in scale, proportion and design with the façade. Rectangular signs should typically be vertically oriented and of minimal size (under 12 square feet per face)
- 2 Symbol or icon signs are preferable to worded projecting signs because they add visual interest to the street.
- 3 Do not locate projecting signs on the upper façade unless clear historical evidence of their use exists.

Locate projecting signs over pedestrian rights-of-way, not public streets.

- 4 Mount projecting business signs perpendicular to the façade of the building, and at least 8 feet above the sidewalk. The outside edge must be at least 1.5 feet from the curb line, and no more than 5 feet from the face of the building.
- 5 Mounting hardware should be an attractive and integral part of the sign design.

## WINDOW SIGNS

- 1 Storefront window signs encourage pedestrian interest. Window signs should not exceed 15% of the window area so that visibility into and out of the window is not obstructed.
- 2 Use high-quality materials and techniques such as paint, gold-leaf, neon, and sandblasted or etched glass.
- 3 Apply window signs directly to the interior face of the glazing, or hang signs inside the window. Cancel all mounting of hardware and equipment.
- 4 Use high-quality graphics for temporary wall signs and advertisements. These must be removed after 30 days.

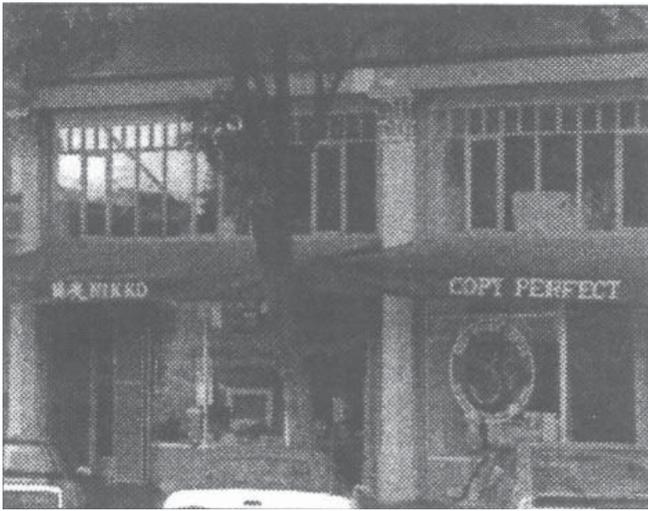


Figure 35: Awning signs should be limited to vertical surfaces.

## AWNING, CANOPY OR MARQUEE SIGNS

- 1 Locate signs only on the vertical surfaces of awnings and canopies. The height of the characters should be less than 65% of the height of these vertical surfaces. On some canopies, it may be appropriate to locate letters above the top edge.
- 2 Product signs are not allowed on the front of the valance or canopy. Secondary text should be reserved for awning returns and canopy ends.
- 3 Install new marquee signs only on buildings occupied by theatres (film and live), concert and recital halls.

## MURALS

- 1 Locate murals only on blank walls, security doors, or temporary areas such as construction fencing.
- 2 Murals which contain advertising are prohibited.
- 3 Mural subjects should not be threatening or intimidating to people.

## SIGN BANNERS

- 1 Cloth banners can help to add interest and color to blank facades and special buildings. They should typically be vertically oriented and compatible with the overall character and color of the building.
- 2 Banners should look like architectural elements of the building, not flags, and should be attached at the top and bottom.
- 3 Banners which include text are also signs, and guidelines for All Signs and Projecting Signs also apply.
- 4 Banners should be at least 8 feet above the sidewalk, at least 1.5 feet from the curb line, and should project no more than 3 feet from the building façade.
- 5 Use canvas rather than vinyl, plastic, metal or other materials.
- 6 Temporary signs should use high-quality graphics and must be removed within 30 days.

## SIGNS ON TALLER BUILDINGS

Architecture, not advertising, should define the upper elevations of buildings, especially those visible from beyond the Downtown. Commercial signage, advertising signage (including emblems or logos) or building name signage should be avoided on adjacent to the roofs of buildings in Downtown.

NOTE: DRC considered whether signage should be limited to below a certain height to avoid the "commercialization of Berkeley's skyline." No recommendation was made.



# DESIGN REVIEW APPLICATION

For: <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Design Review (PDR)	<input type="checkbox"/> Signs and Awnings
<input type="checkbox"/> Final Design Review (FDR)	<input type="checkbox"/> Modification: PDR or FDR
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Level Design Review (DRSL)	
Intake Planner _____	

Project Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zone: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Building Permit/Sign Permit/Use Permit or Zoning Permit was applied for: \_\_\_\_\_

Associated Use Permit number: \_\_\_\_\_

For exterior changes to existing buildings, other than signs and awnings, the estimated construction cost is \$ \_\_\_\_\_

• **Property Owner Name (Print)** \_\_\_\_\_

Owner's Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

• **Applicant Name (Print)  SAME as Above:** \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*Under penalties of perjury, I certify that the information above and in any attachments hereto, is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.*

**Applicant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Owner's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_