

# Sign Design Guidelines-Legacy District

The adoption of the Oak Park Play Book Grant Prams provides the opportunity for existing and new businesses in the Legacy District to enhance the pedestrian experience of the downtown area and improve the aesthetic quality of the Village's business district. This program is intended to assist businesses wishing to remove nonconforming signage and add pedestrian oriented signage.

The intent of the Downtown Sign Grant Program is to encourage pedestrian oriented sign types – Projecting Signs, Window Signage, Wall Signs and Attached Signs (large scale projecting signs allowed on buildings 3 stories or greater). The use of these sign types positively impact the visual landscape and contribute to a unique sense of place that is unique to Downtown Tinley.

Unlike the Village's sign regulations which outline specific code requirements, these guidelines are intended to focus on preferred signage design and examples in order to achieve high quality signage that communicates its message in a clear fashion.

The Guidelines will assist property owners, business owners, Village staff, and Plan Commission in planning, designing, and reviewing requests for proposed signage by addressing placement, general sign composition, design, materials, color, content, lighting, and legibility.

In support of the Legacy Plan, the following objectives establish a framework for signs that will improve the street graphics and overall aesthetics of the downtown area.

1. Enhance the exterior curb appeal of businesses in the downtown and improve the visual landscape as viewed by pedestrians from the sidewalks/street.
2. Encourage human scale signage that is supportive of the Legacy Plan goal to "create a place where pedestrians come first."
3. Achieve a greater number of three-dimensional, symbolic, and projecting signs that exhibit appropriate scale and proportion to the site and building.
4. Support downtown's unique and historic architectural quality through the coordination of sign design, color and high quality materials.
5. Strengthen the economy of the downtown by introducing high quality and effective signage which will aid existing and new business in attracting customers by increasing their visibility at the pedestrian level.
6. Strengthen tourism efforts by adding to the historic character and quaintness of Downtown Tinley.
7. Advance consistency of signage in the downtown by removing signs that are non-conforming to the current signage regulations and incentivizing signage that conforms to signage ordinances.
8. Encourage signs that create visually interesting streetscapes while also avoiding visual clutter.

These downtown signage design guidelines generally apply to all new and altered signs, including awnings, in the downtown area. All signs are regulated by Section XII Legacy Code-Sign Regulations. Downtown signs have specific regulations established in Section 4.



## Guidelines

Historically, downtown signs were intended to be read by pedestrians rather than drivers in passing vehicles. The Legacy Plan prioritizes the pedestrian feel of the downtown and establishes a vision for a more pedestrian-friendly streetscape with attractive signage, sidewalks and landscaping.

Attractive signs, when appropriately placed, reinforce the historic character of the downtown while meeting the marketing needs of the business owners.

Applicants are encouraged to carefully consider each of the design guidelines relevant to their request and demonstrate their effort to achieve the design guideline.

These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the regulations outlined in the Village Sign Ordinance and related sections of the Legacy Code. This section provides guidance for the variety of sign types that are most appropriate for the unique character of downtown Tinley Park, including:

- Projecting Signs
- Wall signs, including flat signs and individually mounted letters
- Awning/canopy signs, including-under awning signs
- Window Signs

## Projecting Signs

A two-sided sign which projects perpendicular to a building or hangs from an awning, canopy, covered walkway, roof overhang, covered porch, or soffit. The sign is oriented to the pedestrian and intended as a wayfinding aid to bring customers into the business.

1. Projecting signs should be mounted as close to the entrance of the business it is advertising as possible. Projecting signs should be spaced a minimum of twelve (12) feet apart
2. The mounting bracket should be designed as a decorative element that is complementary of the sign and the building's architectural style. Do not mount directly onto the surface of the building. The mounting bracket should connect to the sign from above or below.
3. Maintain a minimum vertical clearance from the base elevation of 8' and projecting signs shall not extend past the second floor windows, or the bottom of the architectural cornice – generally not greater than 14' above the base elevation. (Per the Legacy Code)
4. Internally lighted projecting signs are highly discouraged. Decorative lighting such as goose neck lighting, would be recommended, shining from the top down, with lights focused downward and backward and designed to avoid glare.
5. Neon or other illuminated tubing is prohibited except when approved by the Plan Commission as an architectural enhancement during Site Plan Approval for new construction.
6. Signs should be made of durable materials that are compatible with the materials of the building or storefront.



### ***Do...***

*Be creative! Projecting signs can reflect the nature of your business. Use silhouette images and mimetic symbols that convey information without words.*

7. Use pictographs, silhouettes or mimetic symbols where possible to reflect the nature of the business the sign is advertising without the use of words. Symbols and logos will usually register quicker in the viewer's mind than a written message.
8. Keep it simple when designing signs. Type styles should enhance readability of the sign and provide information in a clear and legible fashion. There should be no more than two lines of text with no more than two lettering styles on any one sign. Information on signs should be limited to advertising the business name and its main goods and services. The advertisement of national brand names and logos is discouraged.
9. National branding colors should be avoided especially if they are inconsistent with the building or storefront. Limit the number of different colors on any one sign to two or three (not counting black or white).

## Wall Signs

A Wall sign may be a Board Sign, Band Sign, Pin-Mounted Sign or Attached Letter Sign, securely affixed to a wall and not projecting beyond the Building Face fronting on a street, public way or parking lot.

1. Wall signs should be centered above the store or building entrance. For multi-story buildings, a wall sign should be located below the sills of second-story windows and employ a consistent sign pattern.
2. A wall sign should be placed and sized so that it does not obscure building architectural features and fits the scale of the building.
3. Signs should be made of durable materials that are compatible with the materials of the building or storefront.
4. A wall sign shall not project more than 8" from wall not extend within 2' of the edge of a wall.
5. Due to the pedestrian nature of the Downtown, projecting raceways are not permitted. Channel letters may be flush-mounted to the building.
7. Internally illuminated cabinet/canister signs and internally illuminated/front lit channel letters are not appropriate sign types.
8. Keep it simple when designing signs. Type styles should enhance readability of the sign and provide information in a clear and legible fashion. There should be no more than two lines of text with no more than two lettering styles on any one sign. Information on signs should be limited to advertising the business name and its main goods and services. The advertisement of national brand names and logos is discouraged.
9. National branding colors should be avoided especially if they are inconsistent with the building or storefront. Limit the number of different colors on any one sign to two or three (not counting black or white).



## Awning Signs

Awning signs are signs that are applied to the face of an awning that projects over a window or door opening.

1. Awnings should be mounted on the frame of a window or door opening rather than the wall surrounding the opening. Awnings with a front valance or skirt, which hangs down from the awning's front edge, are preferred. Retractable awnings are strongly encouraged.
2. Awnings should fit with the size of each window and should never cover decorative architectural features. A standard awning hangs approximately 8 feet off the street and projects 4 to 7 feet from the building. Up to a 12 inch flap hanging from the end of the awning is acceptable.
3. Only canvas or cloth awnings are allowed. Vinyl, metal, glass and shiny materials are generally not appropriate.
4. The style and color of an awning should be complementary with awning on buildings on the same block face. Awnings with stripes or patterns may be appropriate if there is not signage on the awning and the pattern is complimentary with surrounding awnings on the same block face.
5. Awning signage shall be permitted for first floor businesses only and shall be limited to text. Lettering shall not exceed five (5) inches in height and shall be placed on the valance only. No sign or awning shall include the telephone number, email or web address of a business. Signage under an awning is appropriate as secondary signage if 8 sq. ft., two-sided, and complimentary with the awning's character and colors.



## Window Signs

Window signs are signs that are either applied to the surface (interior or exterior) of a storefront window or hung inside the window for viewing from the exterior of the building.

1. Window signs should consist predominately of lettering with a transparent background.
2. Signs should not cover more than 25% of the total window area to prevent obscuring visibility into storefront windows.
3. Sign lettering and images should be oriented to be visible by pedestrians
4. Neon cabinet/canister and flashing neon signs are not appropriate for downtown window signs.

## Free Standing-Hanging

1. Signs shall be a maximum of 4' tall and 3 sq. ft in sign area.
2. Signs should be made of durable materials that are compatible with the materials of the building or storefront.
3. Use pictographs, silhouettes or mimetic symbols where possible to reflect the nature of the business the sign is advertising without the use of words. Symbols and logos will usually register quicker in the viewer's mind than a written message.
4. Keep it simple when designing signs. Type styles should enhance readability of the sign and provide information in a clear and legible fashion. There should be no more than two lines of text with no more than two lettering styles on any one sign. Information on signs should be limited to advertising the

business name and its main goods and services. The advertisement of national brand names and logos is discouraged.

5. The style and color be complementary the main building.

### Free Standing-Monument

1. Freestanding signs should only be used for residential buildings that are converted to a commercial use or other buildings that are set back from the sidewalk to enable easier viewing of the sign by people walking on the sidewalk and drivers on the street.
2. Maximum height should be 8' in Downtown Core, Downtown Flex, and Downtown Neighborhood and 10' in all other areas. The display area shall be 1 sq. ft. for each lineal foot of frontage along a front line but a maximum area of 32 sq. ft.
3. Bases should be constructed with masonry
4. Freestanding signs should be placed near the sidewalk.
5. Free standing signs should be oriented perpendicular to the sidewalk so that they are easily viewed as people pass by the sign.

### Temporary signage & temporary window signs

Temporary signs and attention-getting devices, such as banners, pennants, valances, decorative lighting, or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, light, fabric, cardboard, wall board or other light material. They may be permitted in the Legacy Code Area for promoting special community activities, special promotional sales, special events, or activities subject to the following provisions:

1. One Temporary Sandwich Boards is allowed per business in a freestanding building, or per tenant in a multi-tenant building. These are allowed on a temporary basis and are counted towards the total number of signs permitted. Signs should be no greater than 7.s.f. in size per side nor taller than 3'6". The sign shall be located within 15' of the tenant's entrance and cannot be displayed outdoors while the business is closed.
2. Seasonal (winter holiday) signs and decorative lighting is allowed from November 1st to January 15th, with other seasonal holiday signage allowed 30 days before and 10 days after the holidays.
3. Special Sale Signs may be displayed for 30 days. After 30 days, a different temporary sales sign may be displayed, provided at least 30 days intervenes between the displays of such temporary signs for differing special sales.
4. Special Event Signs may be displayed for 30 days. After 30 days, a different temporary sales sign may be displayed, provided at least 30 days intervenes between the displays of such temporary signs for differing special sales. However, if such signs are located in the public right-of-way, then a permit for such sign shall be obtained from the Village of Tinley Park.

### Absolute prohibitions

Village code prohibits use of these materials and sign types:

1. Projecting signs are not allowed in conjunction with ground signs.
2. Temporary inflatable signage and other attention getting devices
3. Roof Signs
4. Writing or logo anywhere on an awning except the valance
5. Any string of lights outlining property lines, sales areas, doors, windows or wall edges of a building
6. Flashing or intermittent lighting of signage and buildings

7. Neon or other illuminated tubing except when approved by the Plan Commission as an architectural enhancement during Site Plan Approval for new construction.
8. Paper products as a permanent sign (paper, cardboard, poster board, and construction paper)
9. Murals on buildings
10. Freestanding Pole signs

### **Landscape to support signage**

1. Landscaping is not required in conjunction of the installation of projecting signs or window signs.
2. Landscaping is required in conjunction with monument and freestanding hanging signs at an amount equal to ½ of the square footage of one side of the sign.

### **Maintenance and General Provisions**

3. Maintenance is required of all installed signage, awnings, building facades, and landscaping.
4. As outlined in greater detail within Section IX.C of the Village Zoning Ordinance, all signage:
5. shall meet wind pressure and dead load requirements
6. shall not conflict with traffic signs
7. shall not obstruct doors, windows, or fire escapes.
8. Obsolete signs shall be removed.

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