

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING

CITY OF DAVENPORT, IOWA

Monday, June 23, 2025; 5:00 PM

City Hall | 226 West 4th Street | Council Chambers

- I. Call to Order
- II. Secretary's Report
  1. Consideration of the March 24, 2025 meeting minutes.
- III. Old Business
- IV. New Business
  1. Case DR25-10: Request for Design Approval, C-D Downtown Zoning District; Installation of a Projecting Sign at 220 Emerson Place. Bray Associates Architects Inc., petitioner. [Ward 3]
- V. Public Comment
- VI. Adjournment
- VII. Next Meeting: July 28, 2025

City of Davenport

Department: Development & Neighborhood Services  
Contact Info: Matt Werderitch | 563-888-2221

**Action / Date**  
**6/23/2025**

Subject:  
Consideration of the March 24, 2025 meeting minutes.

Recommendation:  
Approve the minutes.

Background:  
The March 24, 2025 meeting minutes are attached.

Attachments:  
1. Meeting Minutes 3-24-25

**MINUTES**  
DESIGN REVIEW BOARD MEETING  
CITY OF DAVENPORT, IOWA  
MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2025; 5:00 PM  
CITY HALL | 226 WEST 4<sup>TH</sup> STREET | COUNCIL CHAMBERS

I. Call to Order

Present: Anderson, Rashid, Paone, Molacek, Stinocher, Hoff, Tebbitt, Tylka, Martin  
Staff: Koops

II. Secretary's Report

1. Consideration of the February 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes.

Motion by Tylka, second by Anderson, to approve the February 24, 2025 meeting minutes. Motion to approve was unanimous by voice vote (9-0).

III. Old Business

1. Case DR25-06: Request for Design Approval, C-D Downtown Zoning District; Exterior improvements to the Freight House at 401 West River Drive. City of Davenport, petitioner. [Ward 3]

Staff provided a summary of the improvements at the Freight House. Following the February Design Review Board meeting, city staff obtained a spectrum of gray paint swatches for the Board to review.

Staff recommended the Design Review Board select a paint color for the concrete columns and beams on the south/riverside elevation of the Freight House

After discussion, the Board agreed to a medium gray paint color.

Motion by Stinocher, second by Molacek, to paint the concrete façade on the southside of the Freight House "Dovetail". Motion was approved by a roll call vote (9-0).

IV. New Business

2. Case DR25-07: Request for Design Review, C-D Downtown Zoning District; Exterior improvements at 114 West 3rd Street. R3 Roofing & Exteriors, petitioner. [Ward 3]

Staff presented an overview of the design request. Based on the feedback from the Design Review Board at the January meeting, R3 Roofing and Exteriors submitted a revised request to paint the upper floors of 114 West 3rd Street. Rather than paint the lower-level gray to match the upper floors, the petitioner is seeking approval to paint the second and third floors Rugged Brown to complement the red brick masonry of the basement level and adjacent R3 storefront. In addition, the masonry column will be replicated on the lower level and painted a similar white color to better tie-in the facade.

Staff recommended Case DR25-07 be approved in accordance with the submitted work write-up and materials.

Matt Matthews, R3 Roofing and Exteriors, was in attendance to answer questions and explain the design intent.

Board members inquired about the portions of the façade being painted 'Rugged Brown'.

Motion by Hoff, second by Anderson, to approve Case DR25-07 in accordance with the submitted work write-up and materials. Motion was approved by a roll call vote (9-0).

3. Case DR25-08: Request for Design Review, C-V Village of East Davenport Zoning District; Facade improvements to The Village Theatre located at 2113 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street. Streamline Architects, petitioner, on behalf of Heights Holdings LLC. [Ward 5]

Staff summarized the following scope of work proposed at the Village Theatre:

1. Replace existing exterior siding with fiber cement siding. The current siding is vinyl.
2. Replace windows with black windows and trim.
3. Replace asphalt shingle roof with a charcoal standing seam metal roof.
4. Modify north elevation roof peak to be curved to match historic photo.
5. Replace north entrance canopy with new to match historic photo.
6. Add concrete terrace on south elevation at height of existing stage.
7. Add new door, sidelights and transom on south elevation to terrace.
8. Replace concrete south of new terrace to existing curb with stamped concrete to match brick pavement to the west.
9. Replace parapet at south entry door with curved parapet, add awning above door.

The footprint of the concrete terrace on the south elevation extends into property owned by the City of Davenport. Therefore, approval from City Council is required prior to any construction. If the applicant is unable to acquire the property or obtain approval from City Council, the applicant can return to the Board with a revised design for the south elevation.

Staff recommended Case DR25-08 be approved in accordance with the submitted work write-up and materials.

Andrew Dasso, Streamline Architects, was in attendance to answer questions. The applicant made a request to amend the siding color from 'Boothbay' to 'Garden Sage'. In addition, the owners requested an amendment to the roofing material to a black asphalt shingle, rather than the metal roof shown on the renderings.

Motion by Tylka, second by Hoff, to approve Case DR25-08 in accordance with the submitted materials and scope of work, subject to the following conditions:

1. The replacement siding and exterior color shall be revised to Garden Sage.
2. The roofing material shall be revised to a black asphalt architectural shingle.

Motion was approved by a roll call vote (8-0). Board Member Molacek abstained.

4. Case DR25-09: Request for Design Review, C-V Village of East Davenport Zoning District; Installation of a new fence for an outdoor patio area at 1113 Mound Street. Parker Cornwell, petitioner, on behalf of CAKS LLC. [Ward 5]

Staff outlined the design request to encompass the area along Mound Street with a black ornamental metal fence. The proposed fence will be four feet in height and extend from the building's façade to the edge of the sidewalk pavement. The property owner intends to establish an outdoor seating area along the storefront. City Council will have final authority over any fence placed within the public right-of-way via an encroachment agreement. The applicant will also have to amend their liquor license to allow for outdoor consumption. The purview of the Design Review Board is to review the overall aesthetics for compliance with design standards.

Parker Cornwell, applicant, was in attendance to answer questions.

Board Members questioned the practicality of installing a fence adjacent to the telephone pole. The applicant stated that there would be approximately 4 feet in width at this point. The balance of the storefront will have an outdoor space of 9 feet in width between the building and the sidewalk.

Staff recommended that Case DR25-09 be approved in accordance with the submitted work write-up and materials.

Motion by Tebbitt, second by Molacek, to approved Case DR25-09 in accordance with the submitted work write-up and materials. Motion was approved by a roll call vote (9-0).

#### V. General Discussion

#### VI. Public Comment

#### VII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:35 pm.

#### VIII. Next Board Meeting: April 28, 2025

City of Davenport

Department: Development & Neighborhood Services  
Contact Info: Matt Werderitch | 563-888-2221

**Action / Date**  
**6/23/2025**

**Subject:**

Case DR25-10: Request for Design Approval, C-D Downtown Zoning District; Installation of a Projecting Sign at 220 Emerson Place. Bray Associates Architects Inc., petitioner. [Ward 3]

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends Case DR25-10 be approved in accordance with the submitted work write-up and materials.

**Background:**

The proposed projecting sign is for Bray Architects, whose office is located downtown in the Crane Co. building. This is a unique structure with two front facades. The north elevation faces 2nd Street and serves as the entrance for the first floor commercial tenants, while the south elevation abuts Emerson Place and overlooks the riverfront.

Bray Architect's office is accessed through the south entrance. This often creates confusion for clients that park on 2nd Street. If unfamiliar with the building, clients do not know the only form of entry is through the opposite side of the building. The purpose of the sign is to not only identify the firm, but to direct clients towards Emerson Place. The applicant hopes the proposed projecting sign will help resolve these issues.

**Design Request:**

The projecting sign will be mounted to the north building elevation along 2nd Street. The sign will be installed on a blank section of brick adjacent to the northwest corner of the building. A minimum vertical clearance of 8 feet above the sidewalk is required per the Zoning Ordinance. The height of the projecting sign will be slightly above the first floor windows, even with the Blue Spruce projecting sign.

A black metal frame will encompass the aluminum sign panel, which will have a red background with white lettering. The sign will not be illuminated as clients and employees only visit the property during standard business hours.

The rectangular sign is 36.5 inches in height by 30.5 inches in width, totaling approximately 7.7 square feet. The sign is 3 inches in depth/thickness.

The proposed projecting sign complies with the standards outlined in Chapter 17.12 of the Zoning Ordinance.

**Downtown Design Guidelines:**

The Downtown Design Guidelines encourage projecting signs since they are very effective in reaching pedestrians. Historically, projecting signs were commonly used on older buildings. The use of a business logo creates a user-friendly downtown experience for visitors.

Attachments:

1. Application
2. Background Materials
3. Downtown Design Guidelines-Signage



**CITY OF DAVENPORT**  
 Development & Neighborhood  
 Services – Planning  
 1200 E. 46<sup>th</sup> St  
 Davenport, IA 52807

Office 563.326.6198  
 planning@davenportiowa.com

APPLICATION FOR  
**DESIGN REVIEW**  
 DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

REVIEW DISTRICT	SUBMITTAL DATE	MEETING DATE

SITE ADDRESS & PARCEL OR LOCATION DESCRIPTION

**APPLICANT INFORMATION**

Applicant Name | Company Name

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Address

---

City | State | Zip

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Phone

---

Secondary Phone

---

E-Mail Address

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BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT (not a scope of work)

APPLICABILITY (PRIOR TO ANY WORK, APPROVAL IS REQUIRED)

**Design Review Applications must be completed and approved PRIOR to the commencement of the following types of work:**

- New construction or an alteration to an exterior of a structure where changes are visible from the public right-of-way
- New parking lots, fencing/walls, landscaping, or alterations of
- Sign installation or alteration
- Streetscaping element installation within the public right-of-way

**Acceptance of Applicant**

I, the undersigned, certify that the information on this application to the best of my knowledge is true and correct. I further certify that I have a legal interest in the property in question, and/or that I am legally able to represent all other persons or entities with interest in this property, and acknowledge formal procedure and submittal requirements.

I understand I am responsible for attendance at the meeting as shown on the design review board calendar. The City reserves the right to require further site studies as necessary.

By checking this box and typing my name below, I am electronically signing this application.

\_\_\_\_\_

Type Applicant's Name here to serve as a signature      Date

**ALL SUBMITTALS SHALL INCLUDE:** **SUBMITTED**

Full Scope of Work (SOW) attached as a .PDF  
 all work & materials shall be described & itemized/listed in detail

Digital photos of existing building/sign elevations/façades

Proposed color building/sign elevations to scale  
 rendering as proposed & depicted on existing building/signs

Material specifications: type, dimensions, & color

**MINOR & MAJOR ADDITIONS, SITE IMPROVEMENTS, & NEW BUILDINGS SHALL INCLUDE ADDITIONAL ITEMS\*:**

Dimensioned Site Plan (proposed & existing buildings/site items)

Landscape Plan

Grading Plan with 2 foot intervals (if needed)

Storage & Mechanical Screening shall be shown

\* Major Additions & New Buildings may require more extensive information

**DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

**Property Owner**

Address

---

Phone      Secondary Phone

---

E-Mail Address

---

**Formal Procedure** Application Fee: **NONE**

(1) Application:

- Prior to submission of the application, the applicant shall correspond with Planning staff to discuss the request, potential alternatives and the process.
- The submission of the application does not constitute official acceptance by the City of Davenport. Planning staff will review the application for completeness and notify the applicant that the application has been accepted or additional information is required. Inaccurate or incomplete applications may result in delay of required regularly scheduled meetings.

(2) Scope of Board's Consideration:

- Only work described in the application may be approved.
- If insufficient information exists to make a proper judgment on the application, the Board may continue the consideration a maximum of three regularly scheduled consecutive meetings, excluding applicant requested continuances.

(3) Post Board Ruling:

- If approved, design approval does not constitute a City permit or license and does vest against any other land development regulation or regulatory approval. Applicant must contact necessary development authorities.
- Design approval expires one year from the date of approval unless a building permit is obtained within such period. An applicant may apply in writing for an extension of time at any time prior to the date of expiration.
- Appeals to the Board's determinations are \$75 made to City Council and shall be in writing submitted to the Zoning Administrator within 30 calendar days of Board's decision.

**Project Manager/Other**

Address

---

Phone      Secondary Phone

---

E-Mail Address

---

Submit this form with attachments to: [planning@davenportiowa.com](mailto:planning@davenportiowa.com)

## SCOPE OF WORK

Installation of wall mounted sign, 30.5" W X 36.5" H, with Bray logo and words "Entrance on Emerson Pl" with Arrow. Sign to be mounted with wall mount bracket (custom blade sign frame).

## SIGN SPECIFICATIONS

Frame shall be metal with black finish.

Size: 36 ½" high x 30 ½" wide x 3" deep

Sign Frame: 3" square aluminum tubing with slot to accept the face

Face: 3mm Alu Panel. Sign will be red with white logo and lettering.

Mount: Aluminum plates and 3" square aluminum tubing

Finish: All sprayed black

Mount: Attached with the plates. Depending on the building structure, sway cables may be required at the top. The sign shall be installed at a minimum 8 feet from ground to bottom of sign.

# BRAYARCHITECTS

## EXISTING BUILDING IMAGES

South Elevation:



North Elevation:



**davenport**  
220 Emerson Place  
Suite 301  
Davenport, IA 52801  
T: 563.526.6050

**milwaukee**  
829 S. 1st Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
T: 414.226.0200

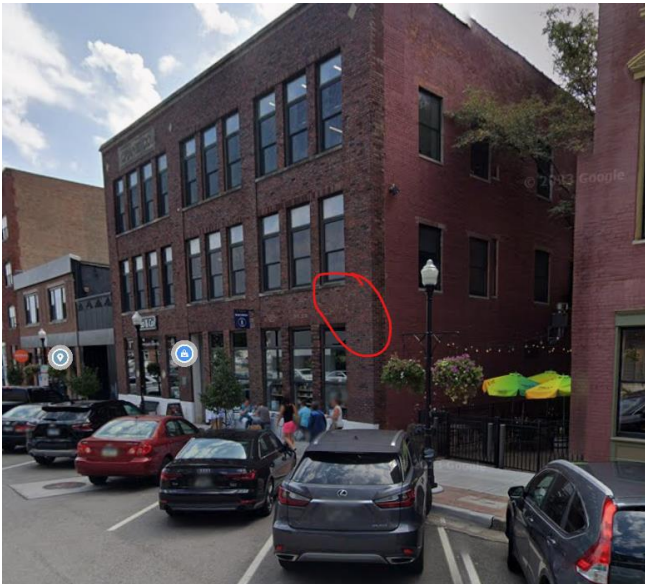
**saint paul**  
12 Long Lake Road  
Suite 17  
St. Paul, MN 55115  
T: 651.770.4442

**sheboygan**  
1227A N. 8th Street  
P.O. Box 955  
Sheboygan, WI 53082-0955  
T: 920.459.4200

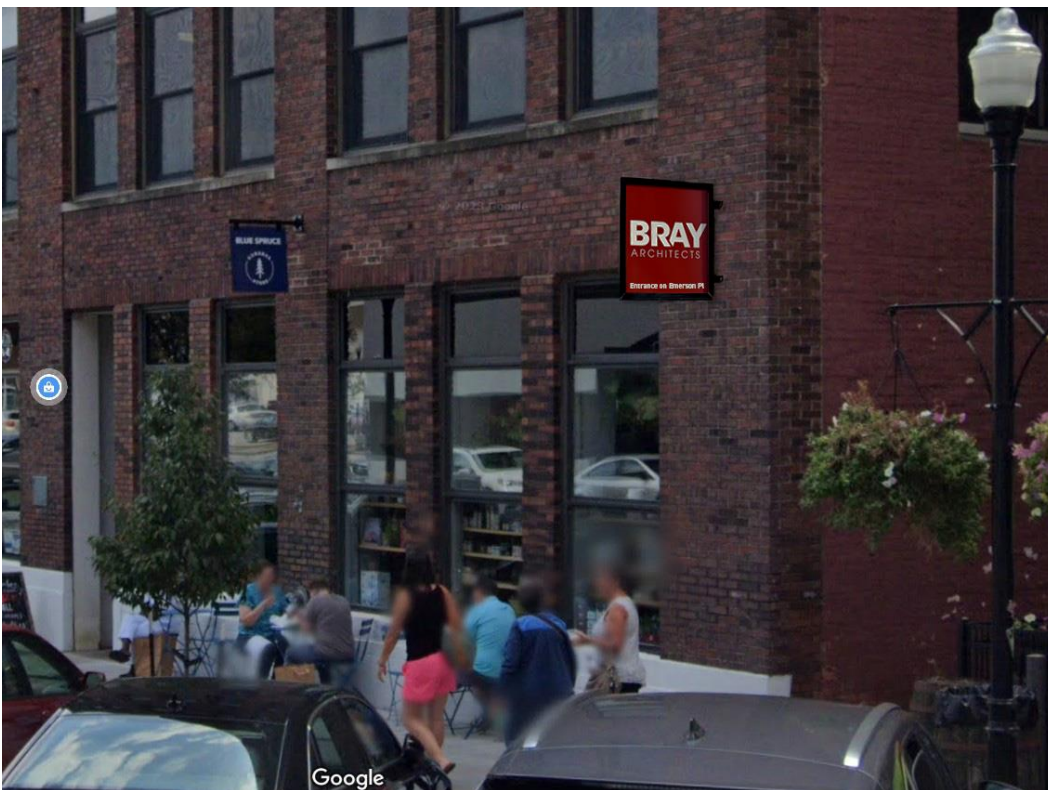
# BRAYARCHITECTS

## PROPOSED SIGN IMAGES

Proposed Sign Location (North Façade):



Proposed Sign to Scale (North Façade):



**davenport**  
220 Emerson Place  
Suite 301  
Davenport, IA 52801  
T: 563.526.6050

**milwaukee**  
829 S. 1st Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
T: 414.226.0200

**saint paul**  
12 Long Lake Road  
Suite 17  
St. Paul, MN 55115  
T: 651.770.4442

**sheboygan**  
1227A N. 8th Street  
P.O. Box 955  
Sheboygan, WI 53082-0955  
T: 920.459.4200

## PROPOSED SIGN

Sign panel without frame:



**davenport**  
220 Emerson Place  
Suite 301  
Davenport, IA 52801  
T: 563.526.6050

**milwaukee**  
829 S. 1st Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53204  
T: 414.226.0200

**saint paul**  
12 Long Lake Road  
Suite 17  
St Paul, MN 55115  
T: 651.770.4442

**sheboygan**  
1227A N. 8th Street  
P.O. Box 955  
Sheboygan, WI 53082-0955  
T: 920.459.4200

Bray Architects Office  
Milwaukee, WI

**BRAY**  
ARCHITECTS

829

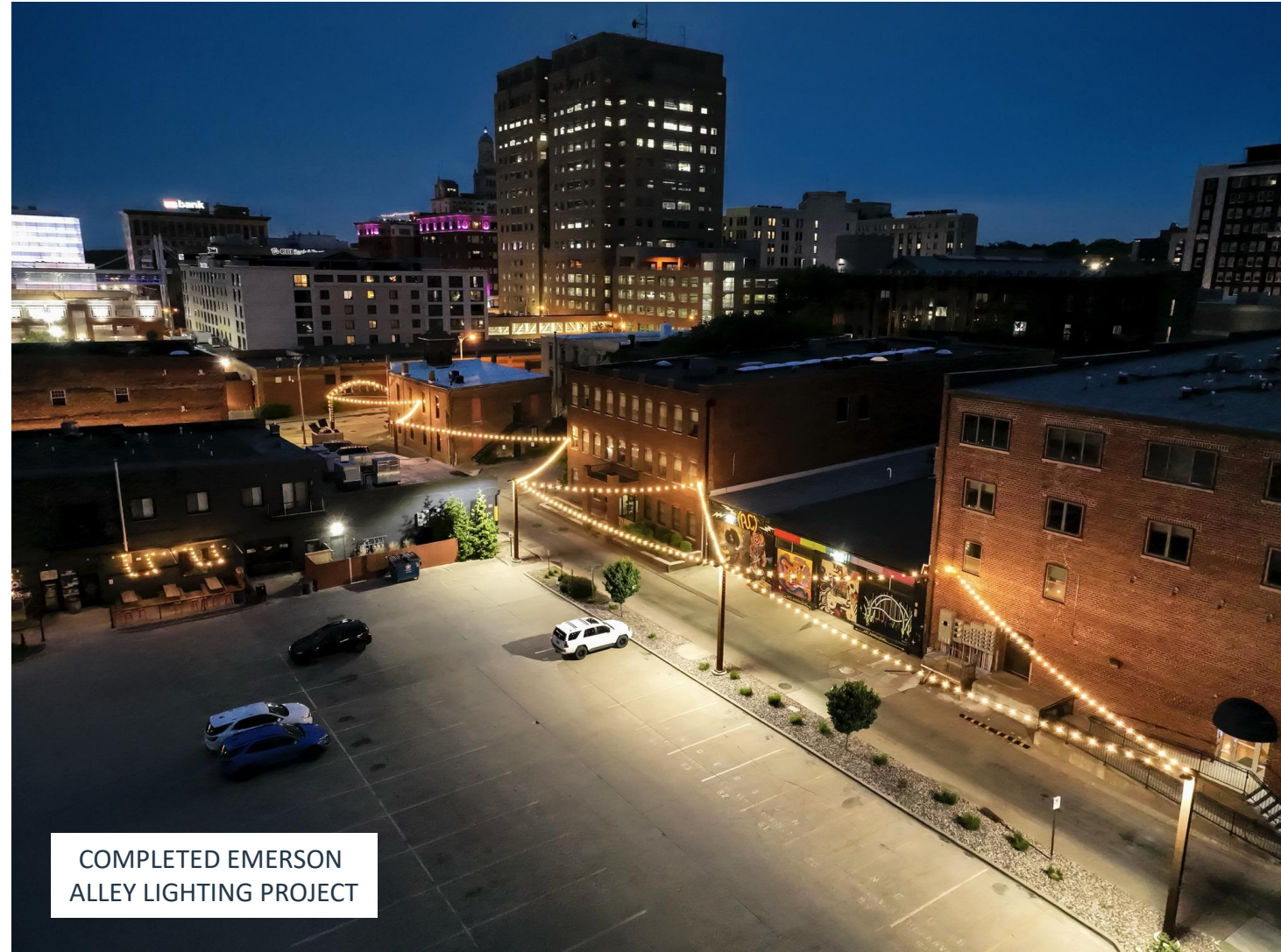
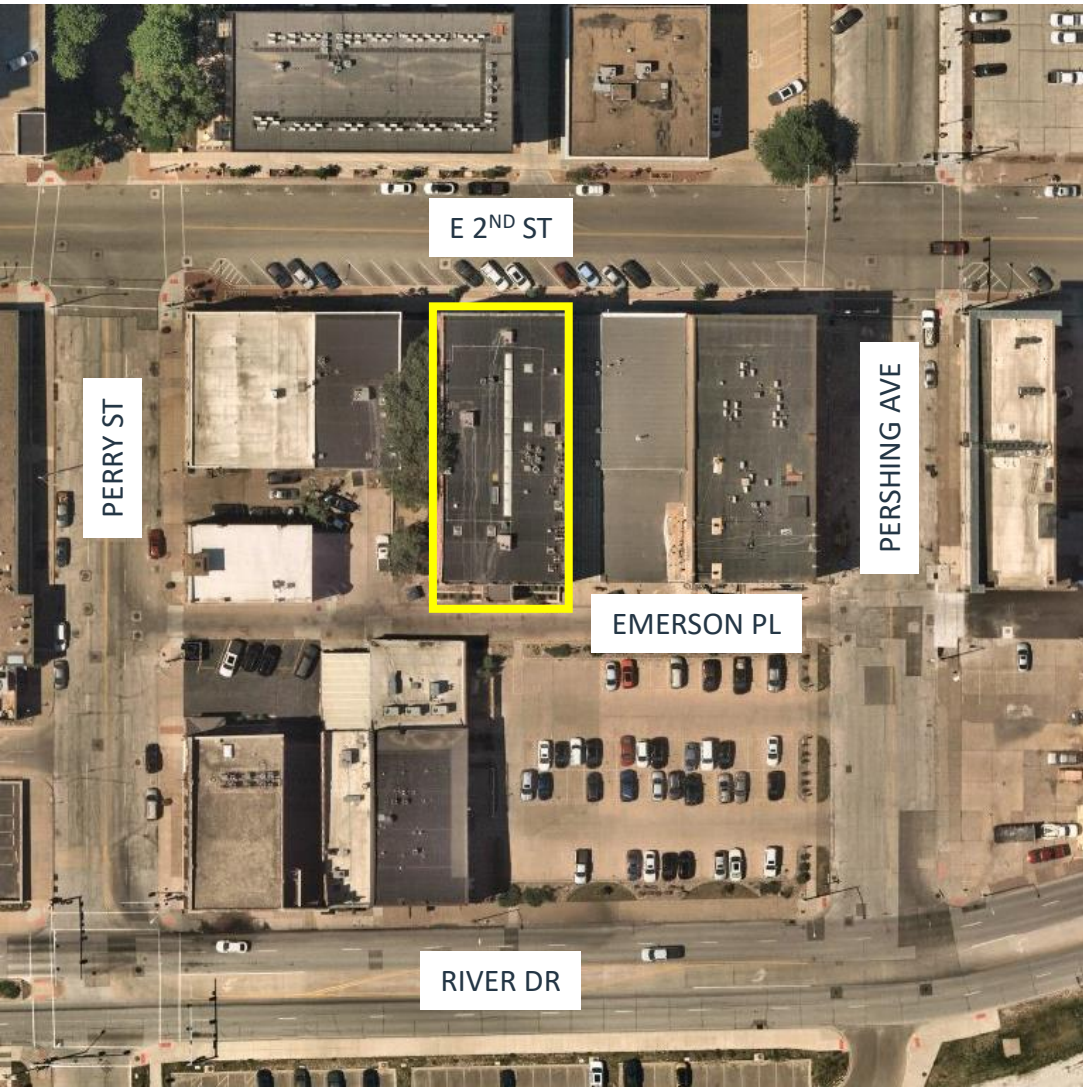
**BRAY**  
ARCHITECTS



# Bray Architects

## 220 Emerson Place

DAVENPORT  
IOWA | USA



# Crane Co. Building

DAVENPORT  
IOWA | USA



**North Elevation  
East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street**



**South Elevation - Emerson Place  
Entrance to Bray Architects Office**

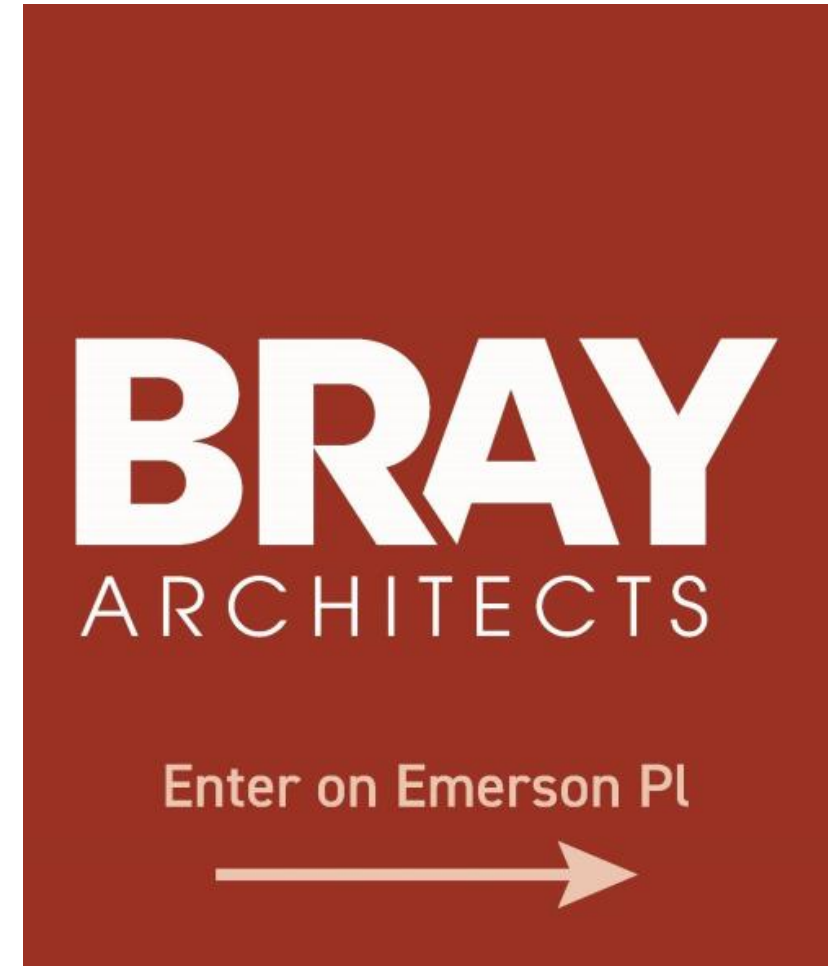
# Bray Architects

- **Request:** Install a projecting sign on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street.
- **Purpose:** Direct clients to the main office entrance on Emerson Place (southside of building).
- The proposal will replicate the sign at the Milwaukee, WI Office.



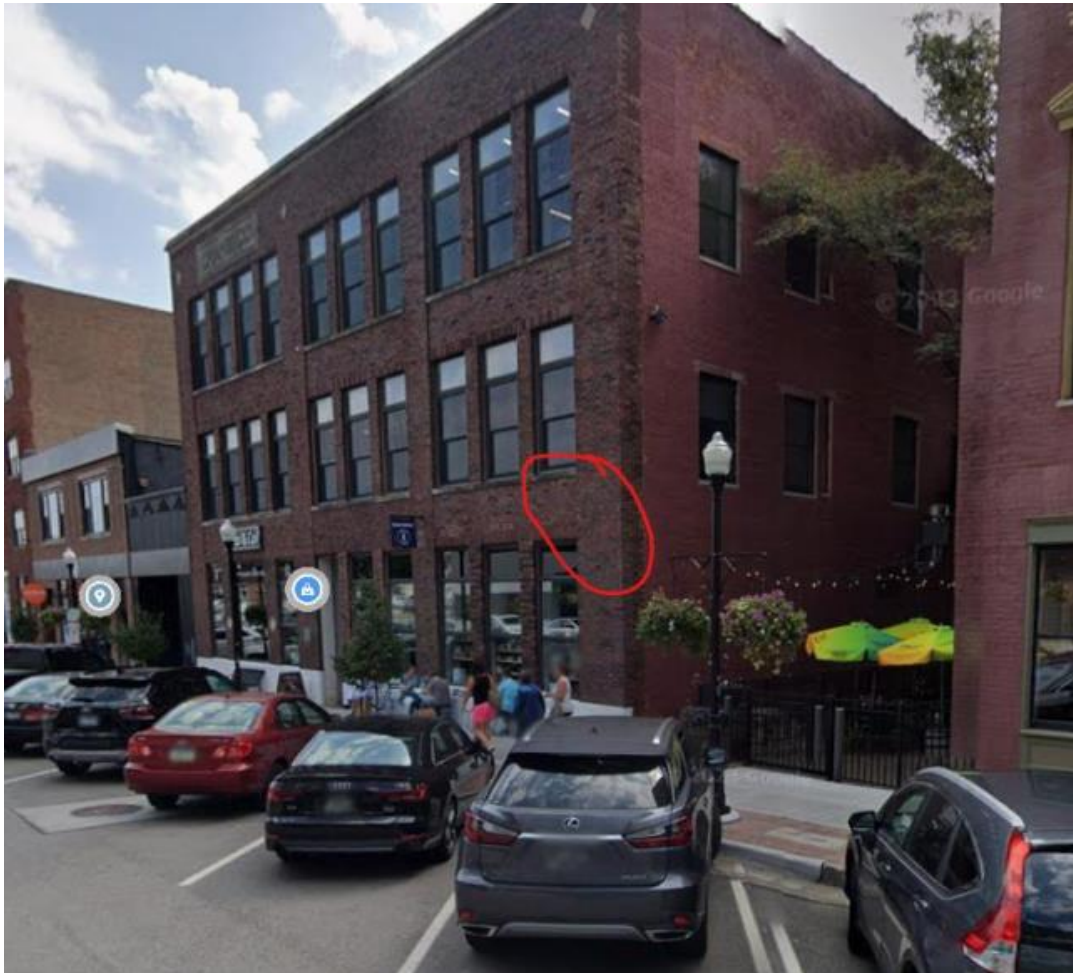
# Bray Architects

- Size: 36.5" high x 30.5" wide x 3" deep
- Frame: 3" square aluminum tubing
- Face: Aluminum panel
- Mount: Aluminum plates
- Finish: Sprayed Black
- Mount: Attached with plates a minimum of 8 feet above the sidewalk grade.



# Sign Placement

DAVENPORT  
IOWA | USA



# Signage

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## Design Objective:

### Reinforce the unique character of downtown Davenport

Signs shall be designed as an integral part of the site and architectural design of proposed projects rather than as afterthoughts.

## Discussion:

The economic health of any downtown depends, in part, on the quality of its retailing, promotional activities, marketing and management. Underlying the success or failure of these factors, however, is the physical appearance of the downtown business district. Because first impressions can be lasting, it is important that a commercial district present an appealing image to potential customers, tenants and investors. New and rehabilitated buildings, attractive landscaping and public places, welcoming storefronts, enticing window displays, and clean streets and sidewalks all help to create an inviting environment where people want to work, shop and spend time.

Signs play a particularly important role in the appearance of traditional commercial areas. The prominent locations and design characteristics of signs strongly influence people's perceptions of the downtown and its individual businesses. Signs, if well designed and properly maintained, enhance the unique image of a downtown. However, when designed without regard for the surrounding architecture, and haphazardly placed, signs can detract from the downtown's overall appearance.

In many communities, the visual distinction between traditional business districts and outlying commercial strips has become blurred. Sign manufacturers and designers have encouraged businesses to adopt the large scale signs used on commercial highways. This is unfortunate as downtowns were designed to accommodate pedestrians strolling down sidewalks and vehicles traveling at relatively low speeds. A pace of this nature allows people to take in more of their surroundings, including signs. Signs in this situation can, and should, be scaled more appropriately for a pedestrian environment.



Along the strip, businesses in relatively nondescript buildings compete for attention with large, flashy signs. In contrast, downtown offers an exciting variety of building types, architectural styles, materials and well crafted details that form a distinctive context for individual businesses. Thus, large signs are not only out of scale in traditional commercial districts, they also can overwhelm the very architectural features that make downtown different from its competitors.

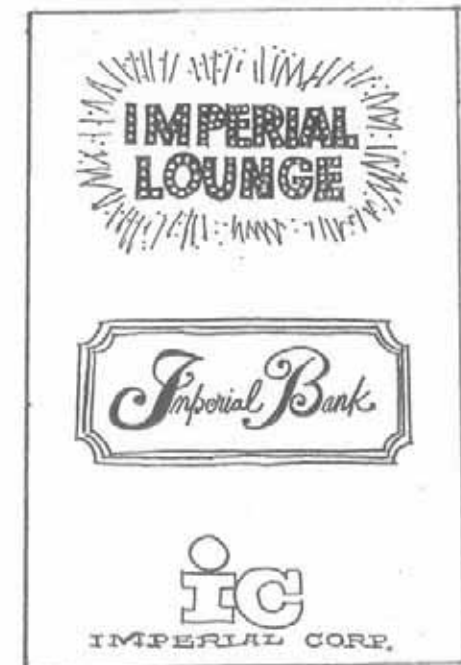
The purpose of these guidelines is to provide information on the design, construction and placement of signs that will enhance and reinforce the distinctiveness of downtown Davenport.

In general, signs should relate in placement and size with the other architectural features of the building. They should not obscure building elements such as windows, cornices, or decorative details. Sign materials should complement building facades. Individual shop signs in a single storefront should relate to each other in design, size, color, lettering style and placement on the building. Franchises and chain stores should adapt their graphics to meet local guidelines and ordinances. This will contribute to a downtown that effectively orients visitors, while supporting an attractive, pedestrian-friendly experience.

It should be noted that within the Downtown Design Overlay District the City is taking something of a different direction with regards to sign regulation. In other zoning districts signs are controlled by restricting their number and size. What signs look like is largely ignored. In the Downtown Design Overlay District, the city, while not ignoring sign numbers, size, etc., is searching for quality by focusing very much on sign design and materials. Given this greater design control, the city may, at its discretion, allow sign types that may not be legal in other districts (projecting signs and sandwich board signs, for example), and approve a larger total number of signs (if they are part of a tasteful and creative sign package) than might otherwise be the case.

## General Sign Guidelines

- Creating a network of quality, well-designed signs, clearly announcing the types of services offered makes the downtown an attractive, friendly experience for the downtown visitor. This experience is further enhanced when building signage indicates the names of businesses and reflects the activities that occur within buildings
- Merchants are encouraged to create their own unique signs, symbolic of their personal business.
- The use of lighter letters against a darker background makes signage more legible for viewers and is encouraged. Dark colors have a tendency to recede while lighter or brighter colors stand out.
- Avoid the placement of signs at locations that hide architectural details. Most buildings, both historic and contemporary, were designed with logical places to locate signs that do not negatively impact the architectural design.
- Maintaining a minimum clearance above the public right-of-way for signs that project from buildings helps prevent accidents and promotes pedestrian safety.
- Locating flush-mounted wall signs on a historic storefront along the first floor belt course, at the clerestory, above any awning or on transom windows helps maintain the architectural identity of the building.



Sign design in many ways establishes a business' identity.

- Create simple signs with strong graphics.
- Avoid using too many words on signs. If the information provided is more than someone can take in with a glance they will simply turn their attention elsewhere.
- Avoid complex color schemes and garish colors and lighting. Use simple designs that provide a clear contrast between any lettering and/or graphics and the sign background.
- Avoid typefaces that are difficult to read. This often will include signs written in script.
- Avoid complex signs broken into numerous planes (individual boxes or shaped signs).
- As a general rule, signs provided by national distributors are not appropriate. They often appear to be “add ons”.
- Quality workmanship, materials and construction are essential when creating attractive and long-lasting signage.

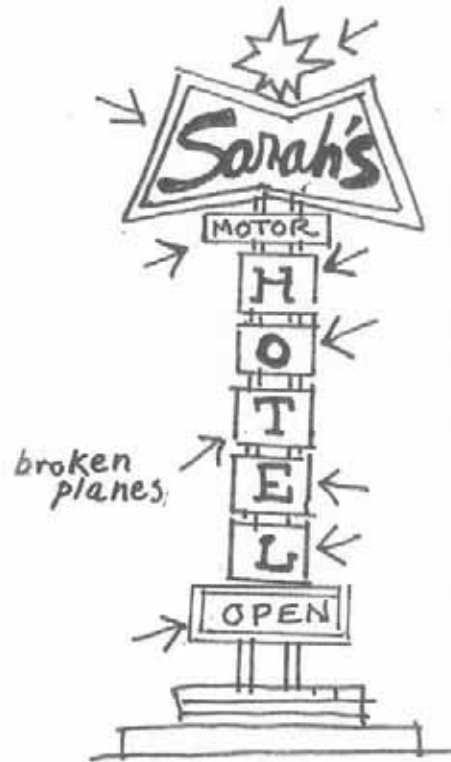


- Centering signs within storefront bays and not extending beyond the limits of the storefront or over elements such as columns, pilasters or transoms and decorative ornament prevents signage from being detrimental to the architectural character of the façade.
- Die-cut letters should be constructed of materials that are consistent with the age of the building, plastic die-cut letters being more appropriate on a contemporary structure rather than a historic one.
- Allowing signs to protrude above rooflines, eaves or parapets creates unsightly facades and detracts from the architectural quality of the building. (The Kahl Building – Capitol Theatre signs is an exception due to its historic significance).
- Firmly anchor signs that project from the building to the building façade with attractive, non-corrosive hardware that will not damage the façade of the building. This prevents accidents and enhances pedestrian safety.
- In the case of large buildings with multiple tenants use signage that relates in terms of height, proportion, color and background value. Maintaining uniformity among these characteristics reinforces the building's façade composition, while still retaining each business' identity.





A simple sign with strong graphics is always better than a busy, complicated sign. Avoid having too many words. Best results are usually achieved when the color scheme is limited to no more than three colors. If possible pick up colors in the architecture of the building. In particular, avoid garish, day-glo colors and gaudy lighting techniques.



To the left is a sign that does everything wrong. The pole sign design is more appropriate for a suburban commercial strip than a downtown setting. Second, its complexity creates confusion. The design forces the eye to focus on 18 items of information in a series of uninteresting internally illuminated boxes. There are 9 separate pieces of copy and 9 broken planes. Sign graphics work best when they are kept simple.

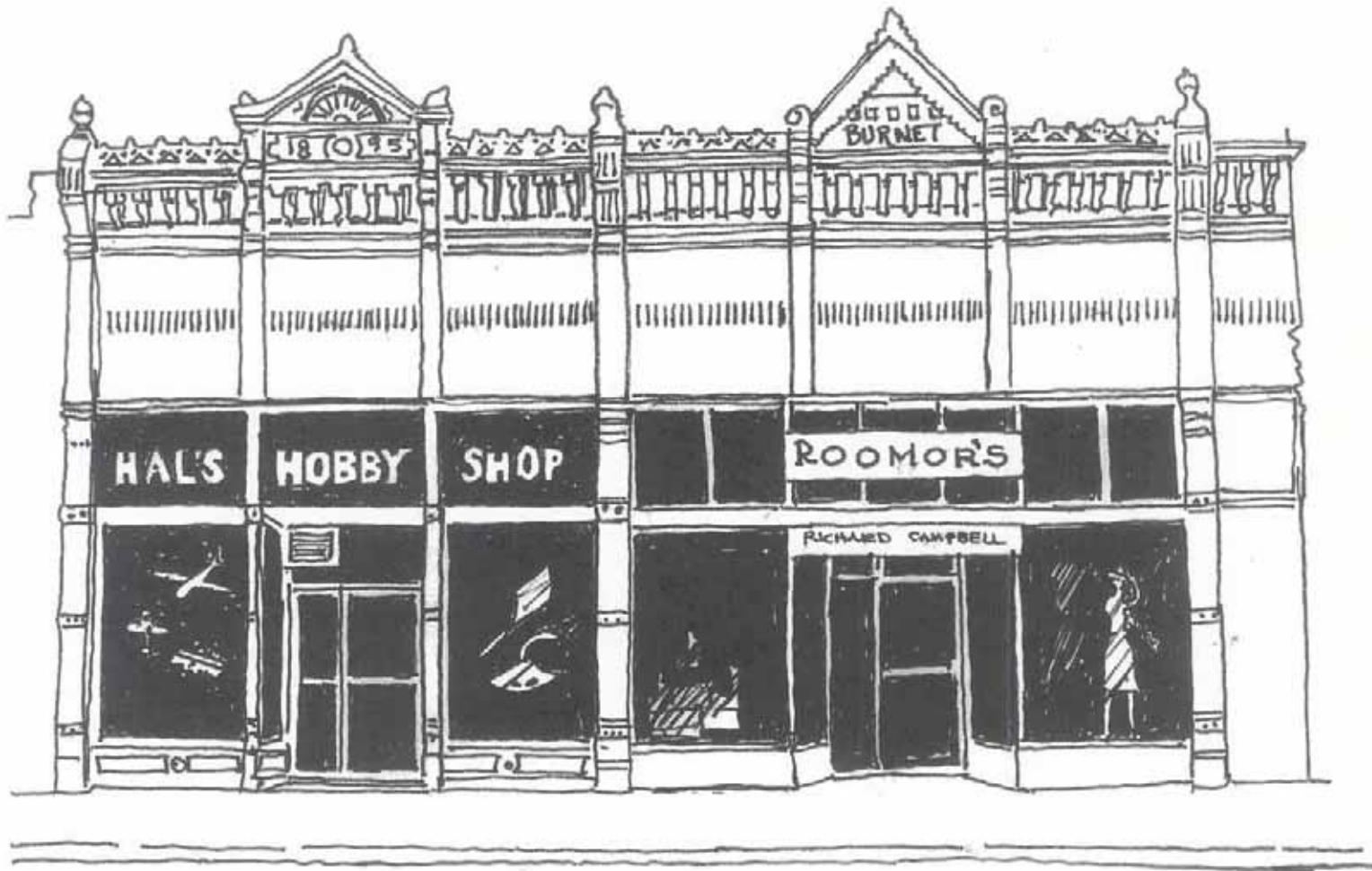


Two possible signs for Amy Jo's Donuts: The sign, above left, uses poor lettering that does not contrast well with the sign's background. By including a selling slogan the sign has more words than is necessary. The sign, to the right above, works better. It has good contrast, legible lettering and a simple graphic design.

***Boflics***

Avoid unusual type faces that are difficult to read.

## SIGN PROBLEMS



The above illustration suggests two locations for signage on an older commercial structure with architectural integrity. Both the “Hal’s Hobby Shop” and “Roomor’s” signs are shown utilizing the clerestory of the building. Another location is suggested by the “Richard Campbell” sign, which is located at the building entry’s transom. Note that neither of these locations hide or cover important architectural features.

## Wall Signs

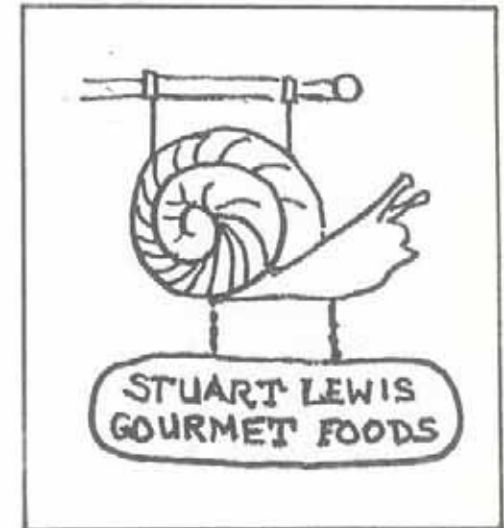
Flush mounted wall signs are signboards or individual die-cut letters placed on the face of a building. Often there will be a horizontal molded board on buildings that was designed to accommodate a flush mounted sign.

- Sizing signs to fit within the proportions of the building façade maintains the architectural quality of the building design.

## Projecting Signs

Projecting signs (also sometimes called hanging signs or blade signs) mounted on buildings, perpendicular to the sidewalk are very effective in reaching pedestrians as they are placed only a little higher than eye level. They are also easily visible for drivers and passengers in vehicles given they are also perpendicular to the street. Finally, they are a sign type that historically has been commonly used on older buildings.

- Maintaining a minimum clearance above the sidewalk enhances public safety (minimum clearance 8 feet).
- Designing projecting signs with a sign area of more than three feet makes them obtrusive and unsightly.
- Encouraging projecting signs that use logos, business icons and symbols, creates a user friendly downtown experience for visitors.



## Window Signs

Signs etched or painted directly onto glass storefront display windows and entrances were popular in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Painted signs were often used as they are low in cost; the highest quality were gilded, a thin layer of gold burnished onto the glass. Gold leaf window signs are still popular today, as are signs of enamel or acrylic paints and those using thin vinyl letters affixed directly to the window.

- Well-designed window signs identify the corresponding uses/activities that occur on the premises while preserving a majority of the display area for pedestrian window shopping.
- Exceeding 20% of the total area of the window with signs generally makes the window seem too cluttered for the viewer.
- Window signs that use high quality materials such as paint or gold leaf, or that are etched into glass create an attractive and visually pleasing façade for the viewer.
- The City of Davenport does not regulate signage or displays on the inside of windows. Nevertheless, businesses should consider the use of icons, symbols and product displays that are lively and changing. Window displays can be very effective signage.





Window displays are an integral part of any retail business. An attractive display contributes to

- The character and success of each store;
- The character of the street; and
- The character of the downtown business district as a whole.

The window display featuring an elk, to the left, grabs the eye while more effectively informing passers-by that the business sells outdoor products than the large sign placed immediately below the window.

Think of the window display as a composition; as if it were a sculpture or an oil painting. In effect, it is a large picture framed by a storefront. The building and window should create a single unit that is complemented by the display in both color and proportion. It is best to let products speak for themselves. Displays that exhibit actual products provide immediate communication without words. If words are part of the display, they should be kept to a minimum. Type face for any signage should be simple and easy to read and be in colors that will not conflict with the colors in display merchandise.

Consideration should also be given to lighting. An attractive, well-lit display can entice window shoppers to return during business hours. A well-lit window display also improves public safety by lighting the sidewalk and allowing police to see into the store at night.

## Icon, Symbol or Graphic Signs

Icon, symbol or graphic signs illustrate by their shape the nature of the business within. For example, a hanging sign in the shape of a guitar, eye glasses, or a shoe quickly conveys the business' products and services. There are also symbols (such as a striped barber's pole or a mortar and pestle) that have come over time to represent certain types of businesses. When designed well, symbol signs convey their messages quickly and effectively because they are immediately recognizable as bold graphic descriptions of the goods and services offered.

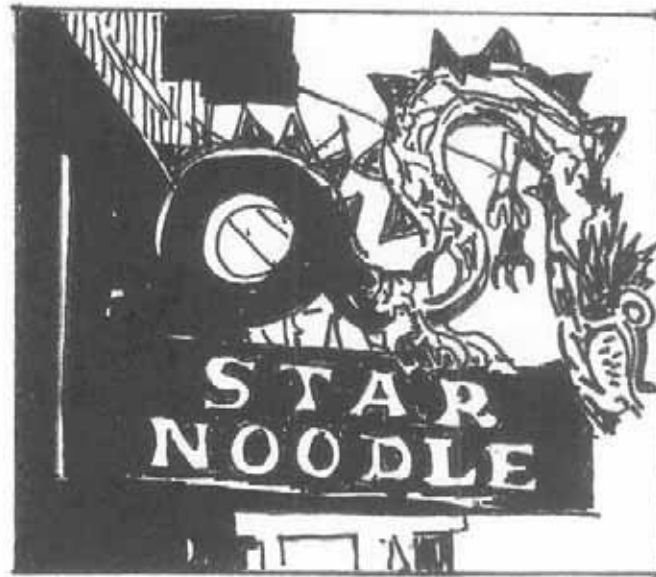
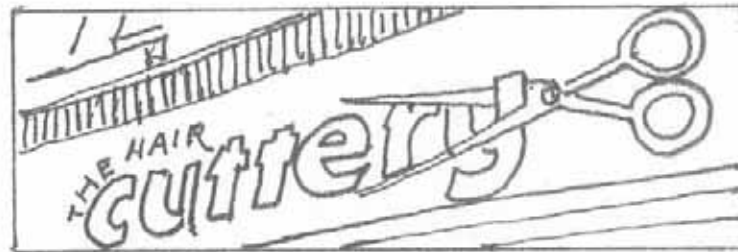
- Encouraging graphic imagery with subservient text makes for an attractive and informative visual experience.

## Painted Wall Signs

From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, signs painted directly on buildings were a popular form of advertising. Painted signs do require a sign permit and do fall within the purview of these design regulations.

- Painted wall signs may in some circumstances be appropriate. As a general rule new painted signs are more appropriate on an older building than a newer one.
- Painted signs often are found on the side or upper floors of older buildings advertising past businesses that may no longer exist, at least at that location. Usually, faded with age, they are known as ghost or phantom signs. Painted wall signs can be important reminders of a community's commercial history and heritage. There may be occasions when they need to be painted over. However, as a general rule, they should be left exposed for the enjoyment of future generations.

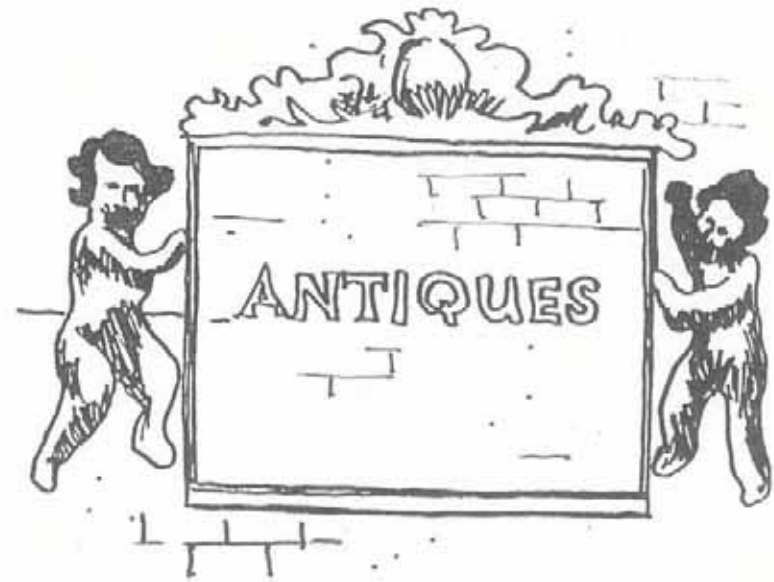




While the barber's striped pole and the drug store's mortar and pestle are perhaps the best known of the symbols that serve as signage, there are many others. The cigar store Indian was once a common symbol or icon for a store that sold tobacco products and it may still be used in that fashion today. In modern times, however, it can also be used as a symbol that says "antiques are sold here." A pair of scissors has perhaps become a more ubiquitous symbol for cutting hair than the barber's pole while adding the information that women or perhaps even both sexes, are welcome here. Oriental dragons or pagodas are often used as symbols for an oriental, particularly Chinese, restaurant. The "Star Noodle" sign above is not just a symbol for a certain type of restaurant but also is a superb, and rare, example of neon lighting (although this cannot be determined simply by examining the drawing).



Ghost or phantom signs, painted signs advertising businesses from the mid 1800's through the early 1900's exist at various locations within the Downtown Design District. Also occasionally, a "new" historic sign will emerge when an adjoining building is demolished exposing a long hidden facade. These reminders of downtown Davenport's commercial past should be left to slowly fade with time when possible.



Painted signs, signs painted directly onto the brick surface of a building, were very common in the 1800's and early 1900's. Given it is a historic sign style, painted signs are more appropriate, if used today, on a historic building. In particular, a painted sign might be appropriate at a bar or an antique store attempting to create a historic ambiance. The style does not lend itself nearly as well for use on more contemporary structures.

## Changing Signs

Changing signs are signs where the copy changes such as on an electronically controlled time and temperature sign.

- Changing signs are limited to displaying public information such as the time and temperature and the advertisement of on site services or products or information associated with a business on the premises. A newspaper, for example, may provide newspaper headlines or a stockbroker may provide the Dow Jones averages. Similarly, a retail store could have a reader board advertising on site products and sales.

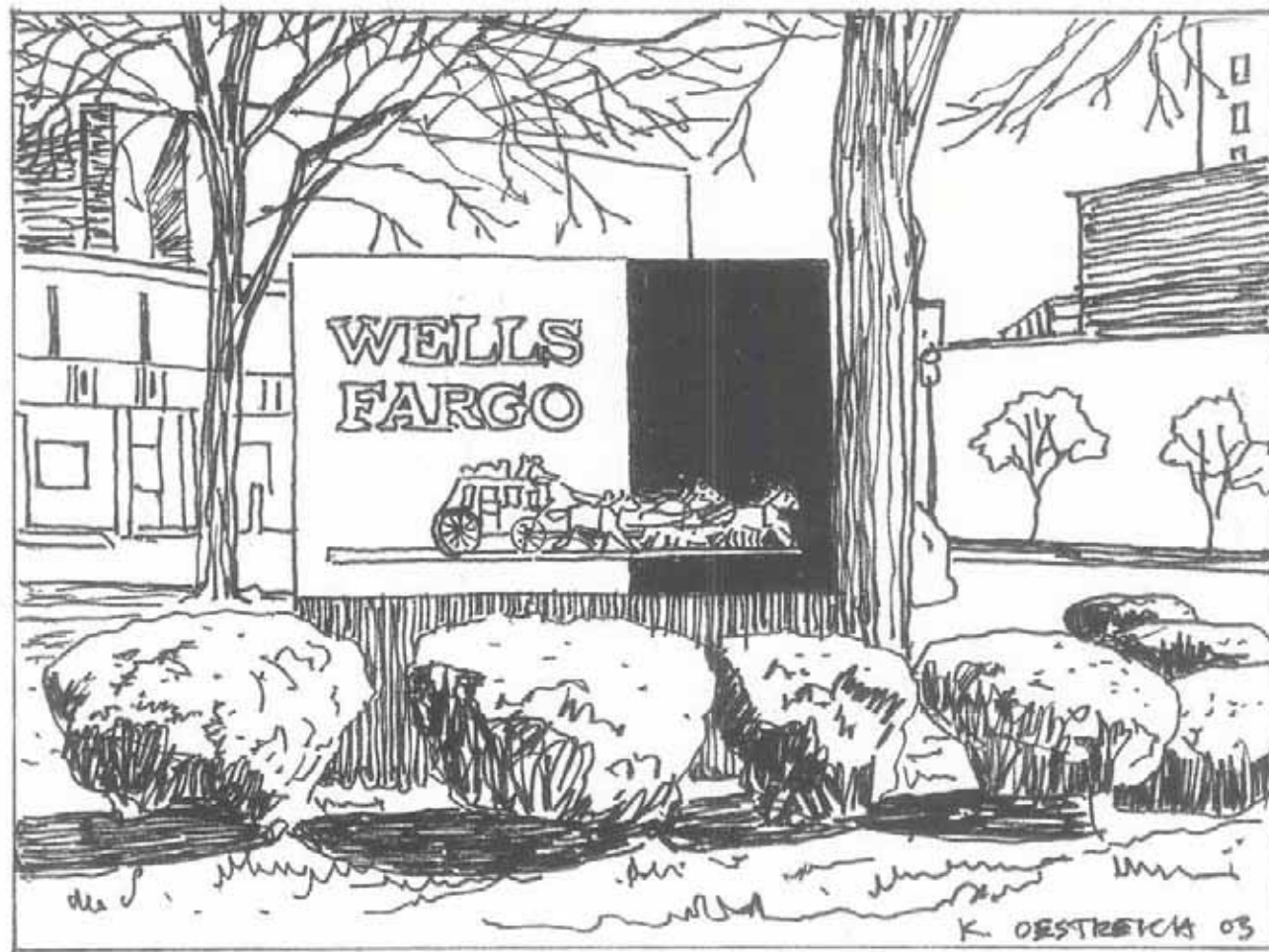
## Monument or Ground Signs

Monument or ground signs are signs, often on a masonry base, placed directly on the ground. Monument signs are limited to 48 inches and ground signs to 15 feet.

- Monument or ground signs can be effective signage. They, however, need room and are only appropriate where building setbacks are sufficient to create an appropriate space.
- Monument or ground signs should, when possible, be placed in a landscaped base and repeat materials and colors used on the building it is advertising.



The Wells Fargo Bank drive-through facility at Third and Main Street provides an example of a monument sign that has a number of positive design elements. To begin with, the scale of the sign fits well with both the site and the building. In designing the sign, the bank has resisted the axiom that "the bigger the sign the better." Also the sign has been set within a landscaped base of evergreen shrubbery and has been placed at a location where there is enough room for a sign of this nature. Monument signs need space. Another feature of interest is the Wells Fargo logo itself, a picture of a stagecoach being pulled by a team of horses. At a glance the logo tells the viewer that this is an old and venerable company with a colorful history closely tied with America's own history.



## Signs on Awnings

Painting signs on the valance (vertical flap) of an awning is an inexpensive and simple method of creating signage.

- Individual letters painted directly on the valance of an awning facing the street makes for a distinguished and informative sign.
- Limiting signage on the sloping surface of an awning to small graphic symbols or logos unique to a particular business helps prevent the information on the signage from getting too cluttered for the viewer.
- Traditional awnings generally are more appropriate on older buildings than modern “bubble” type designs.
- Consider down lighting awnings (if they are lighted), particularly on older buildings, rather than using internal illumination.
- Some colors work better as awnings than others. The colors should not be too abrupt or jarring.

## Freestanding Pole Sign

A freestanding pole sign is a sign mounted on one or more poles, uprights, or braces mounted in the ground and not attached to any structure other than the poles, uprights, or braces.

- The freestanding pole sign is the signage type most closely associated with suburban strip commercial development. These signs are typically large and flashy being directed at capturing attention of drivers moving at fairly high speeds on suburban roads. As a general rule, this type of signage is inappropriate in the downtown.
- One type of pole sign that may be appropriate are smaller signs on double posts. Like monument or ground signs, these freestanding signs need space and look best if they are set in landscaping.

## Neon and Bare Bulb Signs

Signs illuminated by electrified gas in slender glass tubes first appeared in the 1920's and became popular in the following two decades. Although various gases are used in these signs, over time, they have come to be called "neon" signs.

Although neon and bare bulb signs are becoming increasingly rare, they can add to the historic quality and uniqueness of the downtown.

- Continuing the use and maintenance of neon and bare bulb signs helps in maintaining the historic character of downtown.
- The use of neon and bare bulb signs in areas such as bars, restaurants, dance clubs, and other entertainment related businesses, is consistent with the traditional uses of such signs.

## Banner Signs

Banner signs may be used for special events in the downtown.

- Decorative banner signs can be used to add color and create a festive atmosphere for special events, holidays and seasonal events.
- Banners may be attached to light standards (with an encroachment permit if they are on the public right-of-way) or project from building facades.
- Banners should be removed or replaced when they show signs of fading or unattractive wear.





Banners are a relatively inexpensive way to add color and create a festival atmosphere in the downtown. Banners can have words and graphics intended to inform the public about special events at retailers, the convention center, libraries and museums. Alternatively, banners can be there just to add color and do not have to say anything.

Note that the design and placement of any banners must be approved by the Downtown Design Review Board. Designs must be attractive (in the opinion of the Board) and must be constructed of quality materials. Be aware that the plastic pennants sometimes used at car dealerships and suburban grand openings would not be appropriate downtown and would not be allowed under the banner provisions of these guidelines.

## Lighted Signs

Both internally or externally lit signs are appropriate in the downtown area. Internally illuminated signs, however, are more appropriate in some situations than others.

- Plastic is a modern material and generally fits better on more modern buildings rather than older ones.
- White internally illuminated boxes are particularly unappealing. Shaped plastic or cut plastic letters generally look better.
- Light letters on a dark black or colored background tend to be more legible from a distance.
- On older buildings, matte finishes generally are more appropriate than shiny finishes.
- Orienting and shielding spotlights such that the source of light is not directly visible focuses the attention of the viewer.



## **Directional Signage for Parking Lots**

- Directional signs marking entries and exits to parking lots are to have no more than one commercial image, logo or message, which shall be subservient to text identifying the parking lots as “customer parking” makes the direction signage easily comprehensible.
- Limiting each driveway to no more than one directional sign, located on private property, near the sidewalk makes the signage more user friendly.

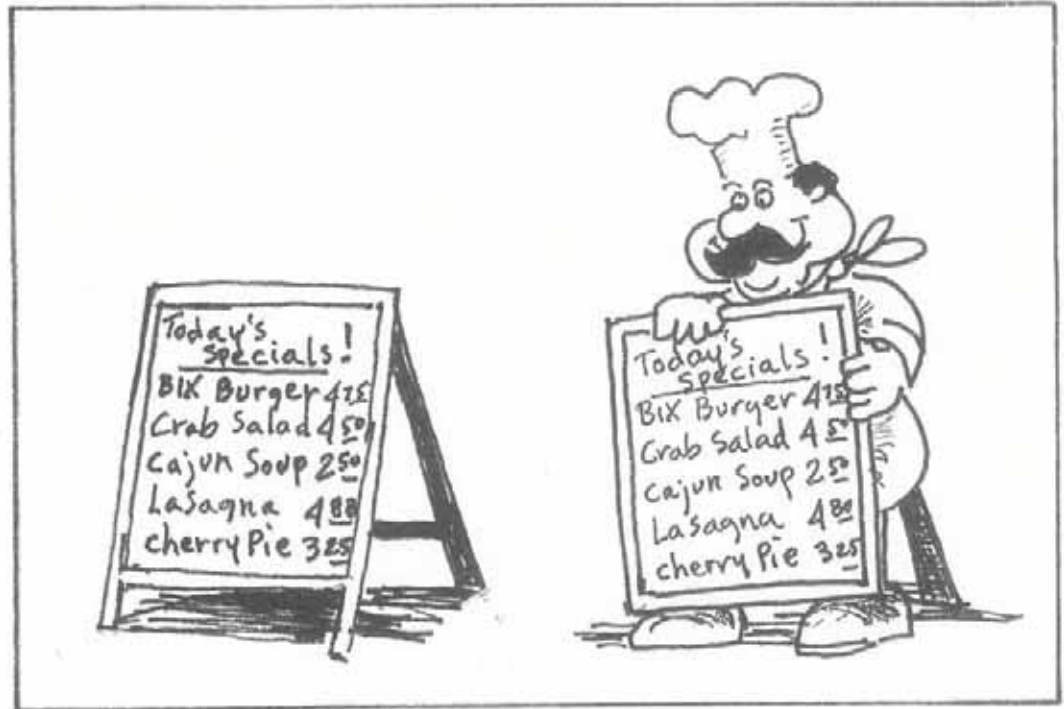
## **Sandwich Board Signs**

Sandwich board or “A-frame” signs may, at the City’s discretion, be placed on city sidewalks listing restaurant menus or advertising special sales or events if the City approves an “encroachment permit.”

- Sandwich board signs will only be allowed where sidewalk width allows signage without interference with pedestrian or wheelchair access.
- Signs of this nature are encouraged to be attractive and creative adding to the ambiance and character of the downtown.
- Sandwich board signs should be on City sidewalks only during business hours, being removed at the end of each day.



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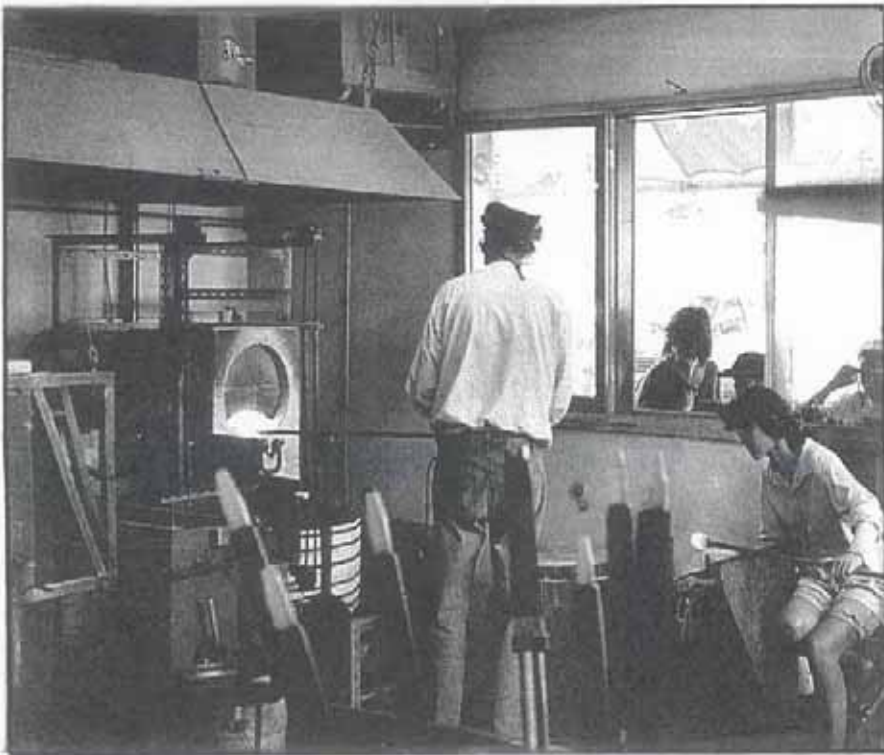


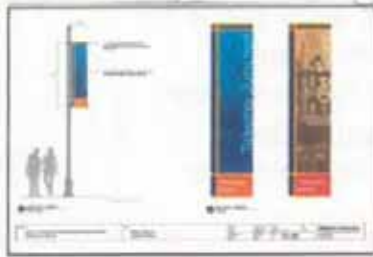
Sandwich board or A-frame signs are allowed on city sidewalks in the Downtown Design District at the city's discretion with an encroachment permit (assuming the location does not overly restrict pedestrian or wheelchair movements). Consider this an opportunity to be a little whimsical or creative. Of the two examples directly above, staff would suggest that the sign on the right would draw more attention than the sign on the left while making the downtown just a little more interesting. The sign on the far left at Trash Can Annie's Antique Clothing on Brady Street is an excellent existing sandwich board sign with considerable design merit.



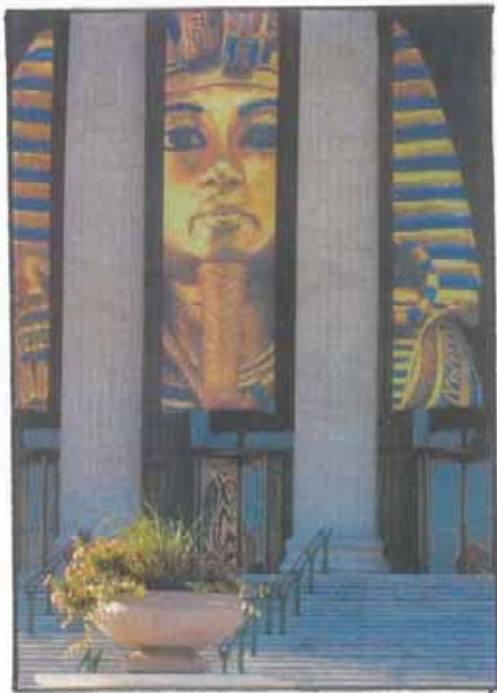
Left: A vibrant shop window enlivens the streetscape while clearly advertising the types of merchandise sold within this retail shop. The neon sign in the interior further colorfully identifies the business. (The City of Davenport does not regulate signage located on the inside of a building).

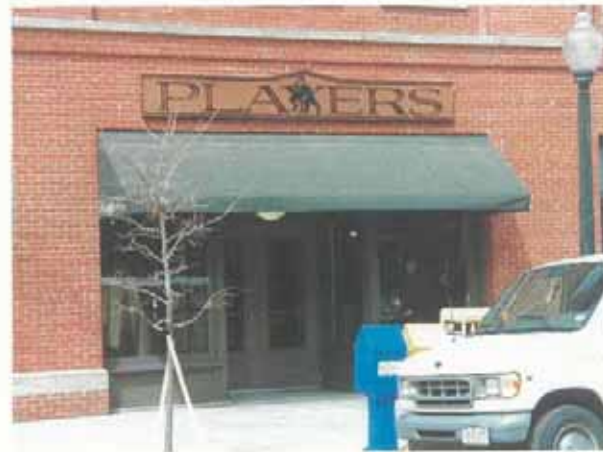
Below: An even more interesting way to use a store front window as signage is to allow the public to actually watch the work taking place inside. There are few things more engaging than to watch other people work, especially when the worker is skilled and the work is intriguing and involving. In this case, the glass blowing shop allows the public to see the creation of a glass object from raw material to finished product.





The Design Review Board may at its discretion allow banners and signs advertising events of a civic or cultural nature. This would include museum shows and theatrical events and/or public festivals. Community special event banners and signs shall not be considered to be billboards and may be located "off premises". The Board may allow banner poles in the public right-of-way with an encroachment permit but only in locations that the Board deems appropriate.





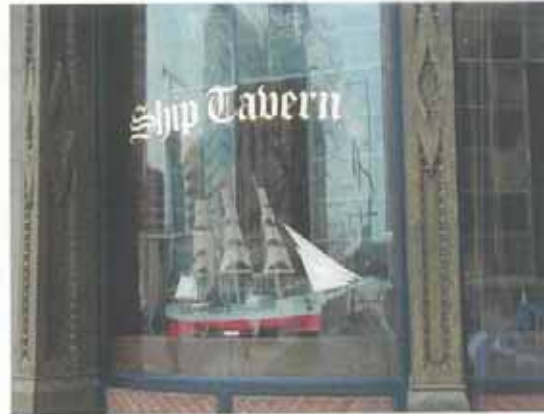
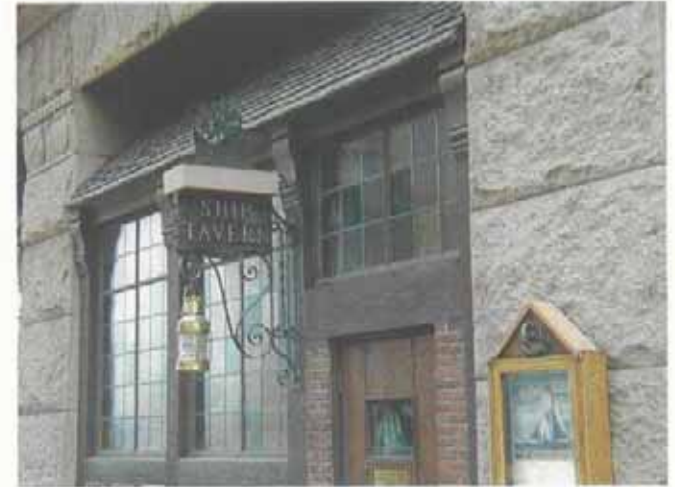
Signage: various forms of attractive signage meeting the guidelines



**Signage:** various forms of attractive signage consistent with the guidelines

## The Ship Tavern:

The Ship Tavern, a restaurant in another city, provides a good example of a well thought out signage plan. The signage is creative and works on many levels. It uses every opportunity to create an appealing identity for the restaurant and while doing so it makes its downtown neighborhood just a little more interesting. Among its various signs is a plastic, molded “shaped sign” in the form of a shield back lighting the form of a sailing ship. The words “Ship Tavern” are also spelled out in “cut letters.” These signs are oriented to passing automobiles. Note they do not hide any of the building’s architectural features. A second, more intimate, projecting sign oriented to pedestrians marks the restaurant’s entry. The sign includes, once more, the restaurant’s name coupled with a unique wrought iron sailing ship in silhouette and a ship’s sea lantern. On the window, a painted window sign once more tastefully repeats the restaurant’s name. Visible through the glass is a model of a clipper ship that helps grab the eye. Not shown are other windows which also feature model ships. Finally, a menu board placed by the door repeats the restaurant’s sailing motif. Of course, not every business has this much to work with. Every business, however, should use every opportunity to create a unique image for itself.



## SIGNAGE PLANS

## Sign Types Not in Keeping with the Urban Character of the Downtown

- Building signs advertising products and vendors rather than business types and services.
- Flashing, animated, blinking, rotating, reflecting or revolving signs.
- Standard product and logo signs provided by national distributors (merchants are encouraged to create their own unique signs, symbolic of their personal business).
- Pennants and balloons (other than as holiday decorations).
- Signs using fluorescent material.
- Signs using a graffiti art style.
- Advertising signs, other than graphic symbols or logos unique to a business, located on the sloping surface of awnings.
- Chalkboards or blackboards, other than for use as a restaurant or café menu board.
- Large freestanding pole signs on a single pole.
- Signs on privately owned benches.
- Any sign, except a menu board of a drive through restaurant, emitting sound other than the normal for their internal operation.
- Signs of such brightness that they constitute a hazard to pedestrians, vehicles or aircraft.



- Signs which are affixed to trees, utility poles, fire hydrants, fire escapes, bus stop shelters, or other structures in a public right-of-way except signs permitted by these standards with all of the appropriate permits.
- Any signs listed as prohibited by Section 17.45.030 of the Zoning Ordinance entitled "Prohibited Signs" unless specifically listed as allowable in the Downtown Design District by these standards.