



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

PLANNING DIVISION

PORTABLE SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

1000 Spring Street
Paso Robles, CA. 93446
Phone: (805) 237-3970
Fax: (805) 237-3904
planning@prcity.com

PURPOSE:

The City of Paso Robles is one of few Cities in the State which allows businesses to establish portable signs on public sidewalks. The purpose and intent of allowing portable (A-frame) signs is to improve the visibility of businesses, while maintaining a professional and historical flavor to the business area.

Key to maintaining a great looking business area is to assure that established signs are:

- a) Creative and pleasant in their use of graphics and color
- b) Professionally constructed and painted
- c) Appropriately placed to minimize appearance of clutter

The following Design Guidelines are intended to clarify the City's design expectations for portable signs.

DEFINITIONS AND CODE REQUIREMENTS:

Chapter 11.30 (Street Furniture) of the City's Municipal Code, provides specific requirements as to the size, placement, number of signs and design review process for portable signs. This section of the guidelines is intended to paraphrase those requirements, but not replace them. Where there is any discrepancy between these Guidelines and the Municipal Code, the Municipal Code shall apply.

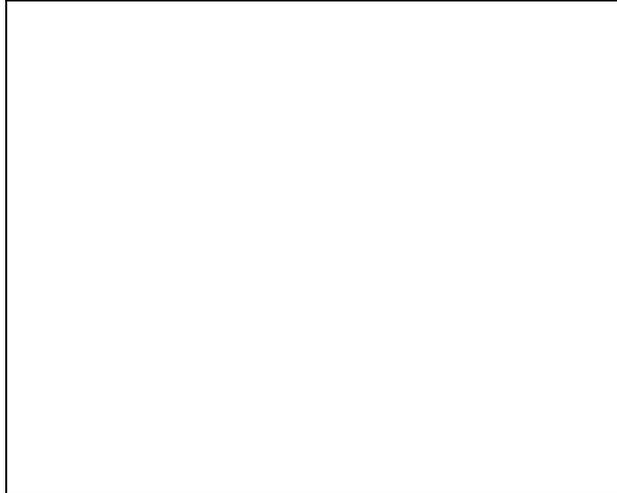
A portable sign can only be established when it meets the following criteria:

- a) The sign permit has been reviewed and approved by the City's Development Review Committee (DRC);
- b) The sign is placed on a public sidewalk which has a minimum width of 6 feet (portable signs are not permitted on private property or in landscape planters);
- c) Only one sign per adjacent street frontage (mixed use centers included);
- d) Maximum size of 12 square feet (for example: 3'x 4');
- e) The content is limited to businesses or advertised goods of a business immediately adjacent to sign;
- f) A minimum clearance width of 4 feet is maintained on the sidewalk at all times.

APPEARANCE CHARACTERISTICS:

Shape:

The shape of the sign need not be limited to square or rectangular. Creative shapes that reflect the theme of a business are encouraged. For example: An Ice Cream shop using a sign in the shape of an ice cream cone.



Materials:

A professional quality sign begins with professional quality materials. Common rough-cut plywood is generally not acceptable based on its tendency to split and peel. Products such as "Medex" and "Duraply" (smooth particular board and medium density overlay plywood) are smooth finished and specifically designed for receiving paint. These products are relatively inexpensive, and the sign's longevity will result in a good investment for the business owner.

All interior of signs are to be "finished" with a painted surface to blend with the rest of the sign design.

Colors:

While graphic enhancements (painted logos or images) may be appropriate to contain multiple colors, the written message of a sign should be limited to two, and generally no more than three, colors. This results in a clearer reading sign and avoids the sign appearing too "busy" in its message.

Colors that are combined on a sign should contain contrast for readability, but should not clash. Colors that "fight" with each other may be considered garish in appearance and would be inconsistent with City-wide goals for business signage.

Lettering:

The lettering on a sign are to be professionally painted or applied (such as vinyl cut-out lettering). A "Yard Sale" quality of look (hand drawn or paint stenciled) is not acceptable.

Lettering styles with dimension and shaded or contrasted accents are encouraged.

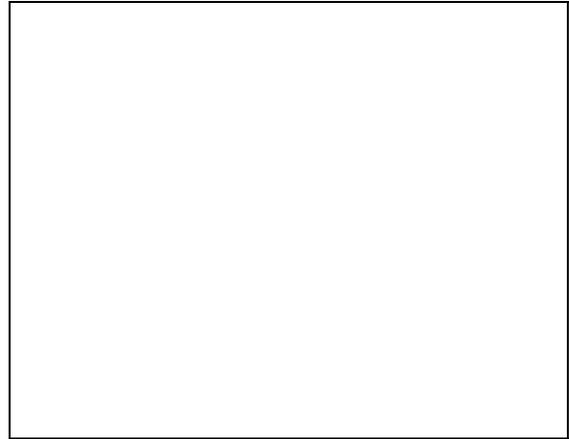


Limits to Message:

The written message on the sign should be kept to the minimum needed to communicate the name of a business or a special message of the business (slogan, open, hours of operation, sale). Phone numbers and price listings are considered extra information that unnecessarily clutters a sign, and are prohibited.

Use of Borders:

The use of borders to "frame" a sign are encouraged. The border can be a simple straight line, or more decorative in nature.



Use of Logos and Art Work:

Artistic enhancements and graphics which reflect the nature of the business are encouraged. For example: A sandwich shop displaying a "hero sandwich" graphic next to the business name.

Overall Composition:

Simplicity in message and composition is key for a sign to be easily read and a good advertising tool. Trying to say too much may work against the intended message of the sign.



GENERAL GUIDELINES:

Sign Clearance from Parking and Intersections:

Signs are not to be placed where they would in any way block the view of drivers of vehicles or pedestrians when approaching intersections. Signs should, where possible, be placed at least 18-inches from the edge of sidewalk to prevent injury to the sign or a vehicle while the vehicle is parking.

Display Hours:

Portable signs can be displayed on City sidewalks only when the company is "open for business." Signs must be moved out of sight within the business property when the business is closed.

Maintenance:

It is the business owner's responsibility to assure that once a sign is approved that it remains in good condition and repair (no peeling paint, tacked on notices or general unkempt appearance).

Enforcement:

Signs which are located on the City sidewalk which do not meet the code requirements for placement, or which have not obtained or are not in compliance with DRC sign permit approvals, or which have fallen into a state of disrepair, can be removed by the City. To avoid enforcement problems, obtain a permit before constructing and placing the sign, and keep that sign in good condition.

Sign Permit Process:

The following is a check list of requirements for a sign permit application:

- o Planning Application Form
- o Property Owner's Authorization to apply for the sign permit
- o \$20.00 Application Fee
- o Two (2) Copies of sign drawings, drawn to scale, which clearly show the following:
 - o Size and shape of the sign
 - o Size and shape (font) of the lettering, logos, borders and other designs
 - o Colors represented by actual samples (paint color samples or brochures)

When clear information is provided, it takes approximately 1-2 weeks to get a Sign Permit.