

---

# A GUIDE TO OLD TOWN BUSINESS SIGNAGE & DISPLAY

---





## USE OF BROCHURE

This brochure is intended to serve as a guide for business and property owners to better understand appropriate and permissible signage and outdoor display of merchandise in the Old Town (H-1) Historic Zone.

Presented are general regulations applicable to the H-1 Historic Old Town Zone, as regulated in the Zoning Code, R.O.A. 1994.



## QUESTIONS

The Albuquerque Planning Department appreciates the business community in Old Town and its role in making Old Town historic district a great Albuquerque tourist destination. Questions about existing and proposed signage for the Old Town area may be addressed through our Albuquerque Code Enforcement Division - Zoning Code at 924-3850 or our Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission at 924-3860.

Only signs that conform to the Zoning Code are eligible for Certificates of Appropriateness and Sign Permits. Any variation to the sign regulations specific to a location, number and size must be remedied through the Special Exception process prior to proceeding with any other application. Request for Special Exception - Variance applications are available at the Building Service Center #1 - (Ground Floor) - Plaza del Sol building, 600 Second St. NW.



## STEPS TO OBTAIN A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS AND A SIGN PERMIT IN THE H-1 ZONE

1. Make a application for a Certificate of Appropriateness with the City of Albuquerque Planning Department Service Center #2 - (Ground Floor) - Plaza Del Sol building, 600 2nd Street NW. You may contact the LUC staff at 924-3891 for assistance with the application.

Application requires an illustration drawing or photograph of existing or proposed sign(s) for the business and/or premise directory sign. The illustration must demonstrate the location of each sign; the type of each sign; total number of signs; the size (dimensions) of each sign; and the overall height of each sign with installation. Illustration must also specify material, illumination, lettering and coloring for each sign.

2. Upon approval of Certificate of Appropriateness for signs in H-1 Zone, you shall make an application for a Sign Permit with the City of Albuquerque Planning Department - Building Center #1 - (Ground Floor) - Plaza Del Sol building, 600 2nd Street NW.

Application for a Sign Permit requires a Certificate of Appropriateness with all approved illustrations. Building and Safety Division may require additional information for Sign Permit review with regard to installation.



## ZONING CODE DEFINITIONS

### CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Written authorization required for alteration; demolition, new construction or signage in certain zones as provided for in Chapter 14, Article 12, Landmarks and Urban Conservation.

### PORTABLE SIGN

An A-frame or sandwich board sign advertising a retail sales business. . . per Zoning Code, portable signs **are not permitted** in the H-1 Zone.

### BUSINESS

A legal entity operating an enterprise in a space separate from any other enterprise.

### PREMISE

Any lot or combination of contiguous lots held in single ownership, together with the development thereon; there may be multiple occupancy.

### SIGN

Any display to public view of letters, words, numerals, figures, statues, devices, emblems, pictures, or any parts or combinations thereof designed to inform or advertise or promote merchandise, services, or activities.

### CANOPY SIGN

A type of building-mounted sign mounted under and supported by a permanent canopy, arcade, or portal, the ceiling of which is no more than 14 feet above grade.

▷ See illustrations for examples

### FREE-STANDING SIGN

A sign attached to or supported from the ground and not attached to a building; signs on walls or fences which are not an integral part of a building are freestanding signs.

### WALL SIGN

A sign flush to the exterior surface of a building, applied directly on the building, in a window, or a signboard attached flush to the building, projecting no more than 18 inches from the building surface and not projecting above the roof. However, light sources aimed at the wall sign may extend farther.

### PROJECTING SIGN

A type of building-mounted sign, other than a wall sign or canopy sign, which projects from and is supported by a wall of a building.

### OFF-PREMISE SIGN

A sign, the content of which does not refer to a business or merchant doing business on the premises where the sign is displayed.

### ON-PREMISE SIGN

A sign, the content of which relates to the premises on which it is located, referring exclusively to the name, location, products, person, accommodations, services.

### ILLUMINATED SIGN

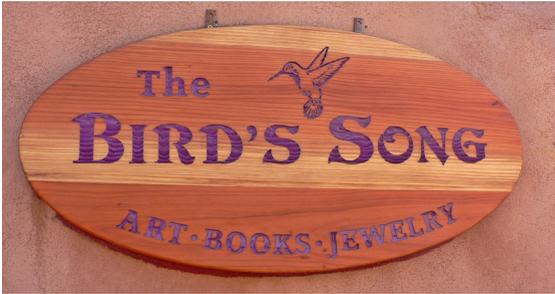
Any sign which is directly lighted by any on-premise electrical light source, internal or external, except light sources specifically and clearly operated for the purpose of lighting the general area in which the sign is located rather than upon the sign itself.



## ZONING CODE REGULATIONS

Signs on the premise must conform to the City's general sign regulations in §14-16-3-6 of the Zoning Code and further provided:

### WALL SIGNS



### FREE STANDING SIGNS



### CANOPY SIGN



### PROJECTING SIGN



## SIGN TYPE AND LOCATION

- All signs attached to a structure fronting on Old Town Plaza or within a 150 foot radius of the exterior boundaries of the Plaza Park shall be wall signs or canopy signs.
- Businesses not fronting on Old Town Plaza and not within a 150 foot radius of the exte-

rior boundaries of the Plaza Park may have freestanding or projecting signs, provided the Planning Director finds such sign type and plan reasonable and necessary for visibility.



## NUMBER

- No more than two signs are permitted for any one business except that
- A business having frontage on two or more streets (a corner) will be allowed a total of three signs.
- A composite group of small signs integrated into one framed unit shall be considered as one sign.



## SIZE AND HEIGHT

- No wall sign's area shall exceed 8 square feet except that
- A wall sign sign on a facade abutting an arterial or collector street or a wall sign on a front facade that is wholly visible from an arterial street shall not exceed 16 square feet.
- No non-wall sign's area shall exceed three square feet on each of one or two sides.
- No sign shall exceed the height of the nearest facade, eaves, or fire wall of a building (whichever is lower.) Variance to this regulation may be approved by the LUCC in special circumstances.



## MOTION & ILLUMINATION

- No sign that flashes or blinks shall be permitted. No visible bulbs, neon tubing, luminous paints, or plastics (with the exception of vinyl lettering) shall be permitted as part of any sign. No sign shall move. No streamers are permitted.



- No sign in the H-1 zone shall refer to the serving of alcoholic liquor except by the use of the word "drinks."

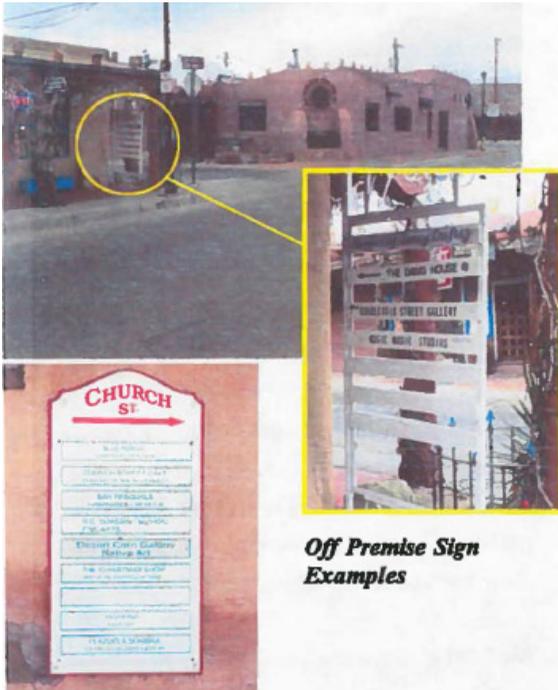


**ZONING CODE REGULATIONS:**

Signs located off of the business premise must conform to the City's general sign regulations in §14-16-3-6 of the Zoning Code and further provided:

**LOCATION:**

No farther than 20 feet from the intersection point of the public right-of-way lines of two streets (a corner) or alleys; or



**Off Premise Sign Examples**

The Intersection of public right-of-way and a parking lot with over 20 automobile and light truck parking spaces (a street and a parking lot)

Off-premise signs may not be located in the public right-of-way.

**AREA**

The sign area relating to any one business shall not exceed one-half square foot

**HEIGHT**

Sign height shall not exceed ten feet.

**ILLUMINATION**

No sign that flashes or blinks shall be permitted. No visible bulbs, neon tubing, luminous paint, or plastics (with the exception of vinyl lettering) shall be permitted as part of any sign.

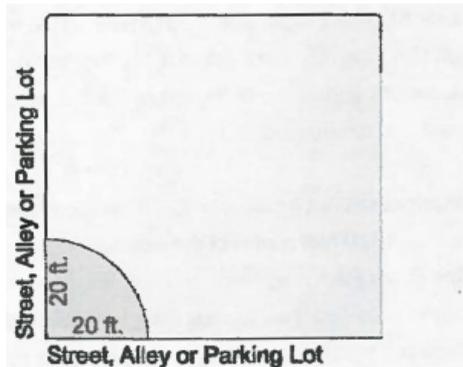
▷ See the definition of illuminated sign.

**MOTION**

No sign shall move. No streamers shall be permitted.

**LETTERING**

No business sign shall have more than one style of lettering. An off-premise sign should not have more than two colors, but the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission may approve a sign with additional colors. No character shall be over 1.5 inches high.





## EXCEPTIONS

( Other signs that are allowed)

Standard copyrighted signs offering Information on incidental services e.g., AAA or Visa, are permitted In addition to normal sign allowances, provided that they are displayed inside a window and do not exceed 16 square inches. Signs indicating Open and Closed are permitted in addition to normal sign allowances if they are less than 1.5 square feet In area and are not internally lit (such as neon, LED and electronic).



## RESTAURANTS



Restaurants serving food prepared on premises for consumption on or off premises are permitted an additional wall sign of up to six square feet displaying a restaurant menu and indicating the name and hours of operation of the restaurant.



## GENERAL INFORMATION SIGNS

The City may place general information signs that describe the availability of certain amenities such as shopping, dining, parking, snacking and restrooms. Such signs shall not have any direct reference to any business. Such signs may be placed at various strategic places around Old Town on City owned property.

Directory signs



## DIRECTORY SIGNS

Premises with two or more buildings, at least one of which does not front directly on public right-of-way, are permitted an additional sign indicating the name and address of the complex and listing individual businesses located within the complex.

Sign height shall not exceed ten feet above grade. The sign area relating to any one business shall not exceed one-half square foot (12 sq. in.), plus 20% of the area of the sign relating to individual businesses may be used for the name and address of the general premises. The total sign area shall In no case exceed 20 square feet. Only wall signs or free-standing signs are permitted; freestanding signs cannot be located closer than 150 feet to the exterior boundaries of the Plaza Park.

Additional signs In this category may be approved by the Landmarks and Urban Conservation Commission for premises with more than one entry from the public right-of-way or adjacent property where the Commission determines that there is not reasonable public notice of businesses on the premises without such additional signs. ( On-premise signs performing the function described here may be allowed with less restrictions if they are one of the two or three signs that each business is allowed In all cases.)





## DISPLAY OF RETAIL GOODS OUTDOORS



Some limited display of items that are for sale within a business is permitted subject to limitations.

The regulations are intended to allow for the incidental decoration of individual buildings with items that may also be sold within the store. The regulations are intend-

ed to prevent the appearance of an outdoor market in Old Town.

- The display of retail goods on tables, cases, racks, kiosks, boards, or blankets is prohibited.
- Display of retail goods on second story railings is prohibited.
- The area of any one surface of an individual item displayed shall not be smaller than six inches by six inches.
- The area of any one surface of an individual item or a group of items together shall not be greater than 15 sq. feet.
- Any alteration to a building for the purpose of outdoor display requires a Certificate of Appropriateness.
- The display of chili ristras (a string or cord on which natural, unadorned chili peppers are threaded or tied) is not restricted by the Zoning Code.

Appropriate outdoor display

## OUTDOOR DEMONSTRATION

An outdoor demonstration is considered to be a person demonstrating the creation of retail goods that are handcrafted along with the use of tables or other functional items associated with the demonstration and the display of items created on the day of the demonstration. Such demonstrations are limited to an outdoor area on the private premises of the business space and no demonstration shall be conducted on or obstruct the public right-of-way.

- A demonstration shall not obstruct any entrance to a business space.
- All sales shall be conducted entirely indoors within the business space.
- A demonstration of retail goods is limited to one demonstration on a premises at any given time.
- A demonstration may include a sign noting the name of the demonstrator and is not to exceed three square feet in size.

