

# DOWNTOWN COLUMBIA COMMERCIAL DISTRICT GUIDELINES

- 1) A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces and spatial relationships.
- 2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- 3) Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties will not be undertaken.
- 4) Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
- 5) Distinctive materials, features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- 6) Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- 7) Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- 8) Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
- 9) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- 10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SIGNS AND AWNINGS COLUMBIA DOWNTOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT**

The following are a set of guidelines authored by the Historic Zoning Commission for the sake of guiding design of signs, awnings, and the review of all such proposals within the Downtown Historic District. Unless otherwise specified, exceptions to these guidelines can be provided on a case-by-case basis when evidence of hardship, precedent, or practical difficulty is present.

- Wall signs shall not exceed the height of the building cornice.
- Permanent signs and display ads shall not exceed 40 square per building though exceptions may be made by the Commission on a case-by-case basis.
- Wall signs should be placed in traditional locations in order to fit with-in architectural features, for example:
  - above transoms
  - on cornice fascia boards
  - below cornices
- Brackets for projecting signs should be located under the second floor windowsills or a maximum of 15 feet from the street level. Projecting signs shall be no larger than 20 square feet.
- The use of sign symbols, logos, and cut-outs, particularly in projecting signs, is encouraged.
- Ground-mounted signs are permitted, where City sidewalk zoning allows, to a height of 8 feet. Ground mounted signs shall not exceed 40 square feet. If proposed sign's height must be altered to accommodate City safety regulations for visibility, the sign may extend to minimum height requirements as defined by City codes. These cases must be approved by the Historic Zoning Commission.
- Permanent signage on glass is encouraged with a maximum of 20 square feet per tenant with a 40 square feet maximum of signage per building. (A tenant is defined as an individual lessee, with a separate lease from any other lessee with a separate lease contract with a minimum of 200 square feet of space leased. Example: A copier sales store with multi-lines for sale cannot claim multi-tenants).
- Signage shall be compatible with the architecture of the building.
- Temporary signs are allowed on a thirty day basis but are to be limited to a total of ten square feet per building.

- No exterior temporary sign may be placed above the first floor of a building or at a height greater than eight feet.
- The use of neon is prohibited. Neon may be used in building interiors but not as exterior signage or window signage unless original to the building.
- Spot lighting to draw attention to signs and architectural details is encouraged. Light spillage on adjacent properties is prohibited.
- Fabric awnings are encouraged. Awnings shall fit storefront openings or individual window openings. If possible, top edges of awnings shall be mounted to align with the top of the transom or with the framing above the main display window.
- The use of awning valances for signs is encouraged.
- Pedestal, sidewalk sandwich board and pole-mounted signs are to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- The use of the following are prohibited in the Downtown District:
  - Internally lit and/or plastic awnings, with or without signs
  - Internally lit signs
  - Flashing signs
  - Mass-produced blow molded plastic signs
  - Billboards of all types and sizes and whether attached to buildings or free standing
  - Portable trailer signs
  - Historically incompatible canopies, awnings, and imitation mansard roofs made of metal, rough-sawn wood, plastic, shakes, or asphalt roofing.

All sign permits in the Downtown Columbia Historic District are subject to review and final approval by the Historic Zoning Commission.

**Accessory Structures** – Garages, storage buildings and outbuildings visible from the public right of way shall be visually subordinate to the principal structure in terms of height, massing, and form. The character of the accessory structure shall implement the use of complementary materials and simplified architectural details.

**Severability** – If any part or provision of these regulations or applications thereof to any person or circumstances is adjusted invalid by any court or competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall be confined in its operation to the part, provision, or application directly involved in the controversy in which judgment shall have been rendered and shall not affect or impair the validity of the remainder of these regulations or the application thereof to other persons or circumstances. The Historic Zoning Commission hereby declares that it would have enacted the remainder of these regulations without any such part, provision, or application.