

7.1 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

7.2 MIDDLETOWN AREA

7.3 COYOTE VALLEY

# COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES



CALISTOGA STREET, MIDDLETOWN

Source: Alan Flora



# 7.0 DESIGN GUIDELINES

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This chapter should be utilized as a guide for development within the Middletown Community Area with an emphasis on establishing community identity. It is divided into two main categories; guidelines for commercial development within the Community Growth Boundaries of Middletown and Coyote Valley.

Design guidelines are a series of recommendations which will help each community retain its uniqueness and discourage incompatible construction. Guidelines will not, by themselves guarantee good design. An important goal of these Design Guidelines is to present positive solutions to design problems that developers may encounter. These guidelines should be viewed as a starting point for new construction or replacement buildings.

The 2008 General Plan update includes several individual policies focused on design. The outlined goal (Goal LU-7) is *"To preserve Lake County communities' character and scale, including their design heritage and historic character."* The Guidelines developed and outlined below have been created to implement the applicable policies in the Design section, specifically those of Historic Preservation, Contextual and Compatible Design, Distinctive Neighborhoods, Streetscape Continuity, Pedestrian and Bicycle-Friendly Streets (Complete Streets), Screening, Parking Location, etc. The public input compiled through the General Plan Update process and Middletown Area Plan Update have conceptualized and focused the communities' desires into this set of Guidelines.

## 7.1 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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### OVERVIEW

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The Middletown Planning Area is the gateway to Lake County from the Napa Valley and the greater Bay Area. Travelers descending the St. Helena Grade pass into the scenic Callayomi Valley before entering Middletown. Consequently, it is important that development provide a positive initial impression which complements the natural setting and predominately rural character of the area. Not only does this create a good aesthetic impression on travelers, but a well designed community increases community pride and economic viability.

Attractive buildings and landscaping reflect the values of a community, enhance its visual character, attract business activity and reinforce community pride. Retail and tourist trade in a community such as Middletown can be greatly enhanced by the projection of a positive community image to the traveler.

Typical problems such as "strip commercial" development, sign clutter, unscreened parking lots, deteriorated buildings, and unimaginative, stark building designs are alleviated by the design review process and guidelines for all commercial and industrial projects in the Middletown Planning Area.

Middletown and Coyote Valley can be expected to welcome well-designed projects, and County staff is ready to assist developers and builders in making them successful. This handbook was prepared to assist community members and builders with the design review process.

### THE REVIEW PROCESS

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The design review process is intended for commercial and industrial development located in community centers, along scenic transportation routes or where aesthetic standards are deemed desirable by

a developer or a substantial segment of the local population. These Design Guidelines are specifically drafted to address the General Plan and zoning issues identified during the preparation of the Middletown Area Plan.

Before drawing detailed plans, the developers or designers may wish to discuss their ideas with representatives of various County departments. While such a meeting is optional, Planning Department staff encourage having a pre-development meeting, especially on larger projects. Early consultation is also recommended to help explain the permitting process and hopefully avoid unnecessary delays and expenses. For example, projects involving interior or minor alterations often do not require design review.

Design review is only applicable on lands zoned to include the design review combining district or as a result of a use permit requirement for a specific commercial, industrial, apartment or condominium project.

## BASIC DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The design principles listed below should be consulted for general direction in planning new construction or renovations in all commercial zones and other districts requiring Design Review. These Principles should be used when considering the acceptability of unique proposals that vary from Specific Guidelines in one of the sections below.

- Projects should possess a “village” scale and character which is sensitive to the scale and livability of the adjacent residential areas.
- Commercial buildings should be designed with a small scale massing and complexity that is appropriate to the context of the transportation system of the area. The Local and Community Commercial zones should be oriented for low speed automobile traffic and a pedestrian nature.
- Street front functionality and visual continuity should be maintained, and all projects should be sympathetic in form, scale, and height to adjacent structures. Uniform front setbacks should be maintained as much as possible to create the ideal pedestrian corridor.
- Landscaping should be used to soften the appearance of buildings and to integrate new construction into the overall commercial/ residential neighborhood. Where space is inadequate for in-ground planting, use container or sidewalk plantings.
- The physical and visual impact of parking lots should be minimized.
- Structures over one-story should be designed to minimize their visual bulk, and to relate to the visual scale of pedestrians.
- Multi-tenant developments should be designed to emphasize an overall sense of project and place, rather than the prominence of individual tenants.

## 7.2 MIDDLETOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES

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The growth of commercial services in the downtown center of Middletown is expected and encouraged to continue over time. The community has developed a unique character and ambiance over more than a century of existence. The community's residential and commercial structures, combined with the natural setting of topography and landscape, have defined an overall character which is cherished by its residents and recognized by its visitors. The established character reflects a "western-style" design theme that has been continued intermittently through the years. A majority of development in the town's center will take the form of infill on vacant properties or replacement of existing structures. The current "core" of the downtown area has been defined as the blocks facing Highway 29/Calistoga Street from Wardlaw Street, south to Callayomi Street. The design principles should be applied to all commercial and industrial areas, but particularly to the downtown. The following design guidelines are a series of recommendations which are aimed at helping Middletown retain its uniqueness and discourage incompatible construction. The following elements are written to help the commercial areas with new infill, renovation and replacement projects.

These guidelines contain a statement of community expectations to assist property and business owners in understanding the commercial development features which assist in defining the overall ambiance and sense of place that contribute to the livability and continued economic vitality of Middletown. The guidelines are intended to establish a balance that preserves and enhances Middletown's uniqueness and livability while supporting the economic vitality that provides resources for community services. These design guidelines will be used by Planning Staff, the Planning Commission, and Middletown Design Review Board in evaluating changes to existing properties and new construction.

### APPLICABILITY

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These guidelines are applicable to all types of permits including sign permits, building permits and architecture and site improvements.

### PURPOSE

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The guidelines contained in this document are intended to accomplish the following:

- Provide guidance to property owners and their design professionals in planning and designing new buildings and remodeling existing structures.
- Provide a greater degree of project review and approval predictability.
- Ensure that new development reinforces and supports the special qualities of downtown Middletown.
- Establish a high level of design quality.
- Maintain a building scale that is consistent with downtown Middletown's small scale image.
- Provide information to allow for the adaptation of corporate and franchise designs to the unique character of Middletown.
- Reinforce the special qualities of Middletown's visual character, including the western style.
- Protect property owner investments by discouraging inappropriate adjacent development.
- Enhance the economic vitality of Middletown through quality design.
- Streamline the development review process by more clearly communicating community expectations to property owners and developers.
- Provide visual continuity along street frontages.

- Encourage signage which is in scale and harmony with the architecture and character of Middletown.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

### Building/Site Design

#### 1. Design to maintain and reinforce the unique scale and character of Middletown

- Design with respect for nearby historic buildings and unique neighborhoods of Middletown.
- Avoid design consisting largely of boxes with applied design elements.
- Avoid canvas or vinyl “awning architecture” where large awnings dominate the building frontages (see photo).
- Provide varied building and parapet heights except in locations where flat parapets are common.
- Place awnings and canopies at elevations that relate to the scale of pedestrians and provide a sense of shelter. Use awning appropriate to the building style.
- Break façade segments into modules that reflect those common along nearby building frontages. For facades along streets that include a number of single-family residences, break larger building elements into modules which are sympathetic to the smaller scale of those houses.



#### 2. Orient building fronts toward primary corridors.

- Building frontages should be focused toward the main roadway/sidewalk.
- Parking should be avoided between building fronts and roadways.
- Sidewalks or other pedestrian improvements should be added along all street frontages.
- Emphasis should be placed on creating a safe, accessible pedestrian environment and a “town center” style of commercial area as opposed to “strip mall” style commercial areas.



The photo on the left is an example of the recommended “town center” style development. The second photo shows a “strip mall” style development. The strip mall incorporates many elements of recommended design, but the side design still fails to create a pedestrian-oriented atmosphere.

#### 3. Break larger building facades into smaller segments

- Treat commercial street-facing facades which exceed fifty feet in length as though they were constructed no wider than fifty feet.
- For projects located on corner lots, special attention should be given to the following:
  - Breaking building forms into modules that are similar to those seen in residential neighborhoods.
  - Providing landscaping and landscape elements (e.g., fencing) that would be consistent with those

used in neighboring areas (particularly residential areas).

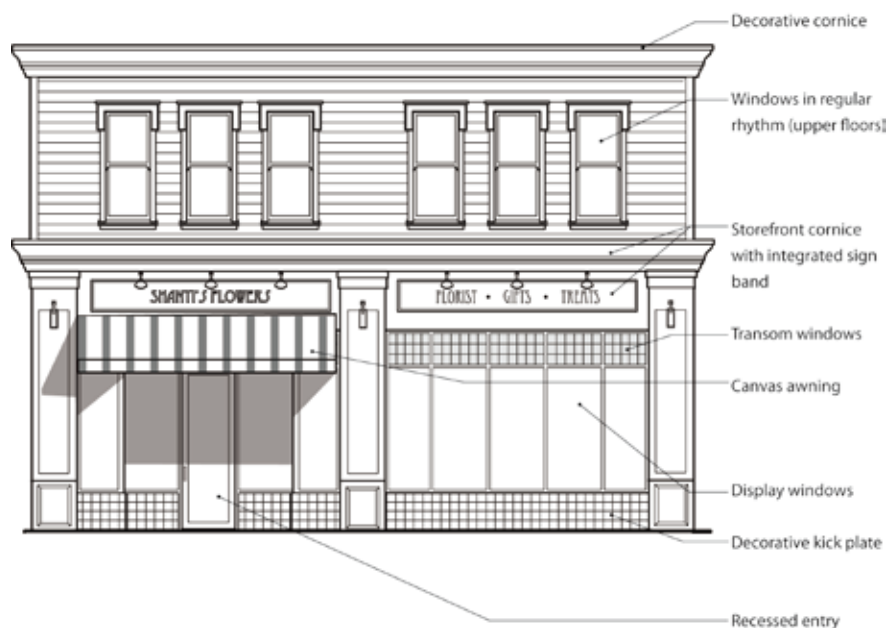
- Screening any parking areas with low walls and landscaping.

#### 4. Avoid visually bulky buildings

- Provide horizontal wall plane changes along street frontages and areas easily viewed from residential properties to provide some building articulation.
- Inset windows as much as possible from wall faces to provide some visual depth to facades. Where interior uses make this difficult, provide exterior trim around windows to achieve some façade depth.
- For any structure over two stories in height, set back upper floors by a minimum of fifteen feet from the lower floor facades to minimize scale and bulk changes that would stand out significantly from the norm along the adjacent streetscape.
- Use a mix of materials that have a smaller scale (e.g., stone, brick, wood siding, and shingles). Avoid concrete block and metal siding or panels.



Street facade scaling example



Building design example

**5. Provide a unified design around all sides of buildings**

- Maintain continuity of design, materials, color, form and architectural detail for all elevations of a building that are visible from public areas or adjacent residences.
- Where continuity of design is difficult to achieve, substantial landscaping should be provided to screen the area.

**6. Avoid blank walls and service areas which are visible from adjacent streets and projects**

- Orient buildings to avoid blank walls and service areas which are visible to the public.
- When blank walls are unavoidable, add pilasters, trellises, and/or lattices along with landscaping to make facades more attractive.

**7. Utilize solid building forms with “punched” window openings**

- Avoid ribbon windows and other types of large window areas.
- Limit the amount of typical commercial storefront treatment in favor of smaller window openings.

**8. Provide architectural elements, detailing an ornament to add richness and variety to building facades**

- Design with a scale consistent with neighboring character, particularly when neighboring residential uses.

**9. Provide a richness of architectural façade depth and detail**

- Express columns and beams on the buildings exterior.
- Provide a number of façade layers (e.g., front of columns or pilasters, wall plan, window frame, window glass).
- Finish wall tops with overhangs, projecting cornices, and column caps that provide a strong visual terminus to the structure.
- Use applied and integrated design elements (e.g., exposed rafter tails on sloped roofs, cornice moldings, applied medallions).

**10. Utilize high quality building materials and details**

- The use of exposed concrete block is strongly discouraged in favor of wood, stucco, stone or brick.
- Avoid plywood wall facings.
- Avoid plastic or reflective metal materials and finishes.

**11. Utilize colors that are appropriate to the use and the surrounding area**

- Muted tones are generally preferred with stronger accent colors limited to smaller areas of trim. Thoughtful consideration should be given to the selection of color hues. Consider muted tones of blues, yellows, tans, grays and other hues rather than selecting non-distinctive beiges and browns.
- In most cases, a range of analogous or complementary colors is preferred over painting all wall surfaces with the same paint color and shade.
- Strong building colors that are used for branding or advertising purposes may not be approved.
- Uses which might make a case for stronger colors will be evaluated on a case-by-case based on the design and the context of surrounding buildings and uses.
- Creativity and individual identity are encouraged as long as the colors and style does not

detract from the surrounding area as a whole.

## 12. Maintain a high degree of transparency at all window areas

- Avoid dark or highly reflective glazing.

## 13. Respect the privacy of neighboring residents

- Avoid windows which would provide views into residential private yard spaces.
- Keep window sizes smaller on facades facing residences where windows can be seen to minimize lighting intrusion
- Provide shielding for any exterior lighting visible from neighboring residential uses.

## Pedestrian Corridor

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### 1. Enhance front sidewalk and plaza paving

- The use of brick banding along with concrete is encouraged for the commercial street sidewalks.
- A change of pattern and/or material for paved areas within the front setback is strongly encouraged to set them apart from the sidewalks.
- Where paved plaza areas or outdoor dining areas are located adjacent to sidewalks, provide a positive separation between the two with landscaping, walls and/or raised planters.
- A “western-style” boardwalk or concrete faux boardwalk could be supported in the downtown area in appropriate locations.

### 2. Encourage porches/awnings which utilize a “western-style” theme and stretch from the building front to the street edge of the sidewalk

### 3. Pedestrian amenities are encouraged in front setback areas.

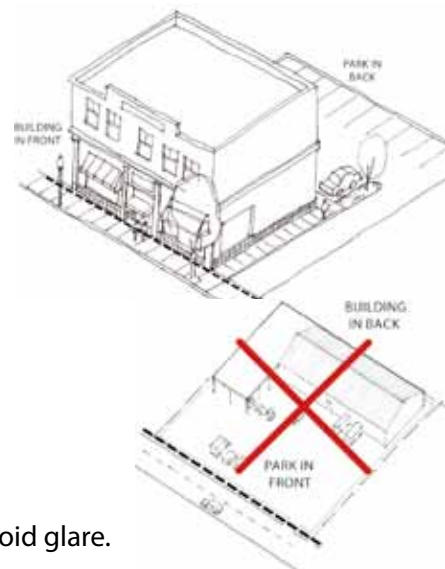
- Benches
- Planters and other landscaping
- Trash receptacles
- Street Trees

## Parking

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### 1. Place parking behind buildings whenever possible

- If placement behind buildings is not possible or practical, the preferred parking placement is adjacent to the structures in order to maintain the presence of active uses and greatest density along the street frontage (particularly Calistoga St./ Highway 29).
- If the only possible parking location is between the buildings, parking along frontages should be screened and landscaped.
- For any parking which fronts along a public street, provide low walls or hedges along with landscaping to soften the impact of the parking lot on the pedestrian experience.



### 2. Minimize the visual impact of parking lot lighting

- Limit light pole height to decrease light pollution.
- Use luminaries with shielding to direct light downward and avoid glare.



### 3. Subordinate parking to the buildings

- Avoid parking lots in locations that interrupt retail and/or structural continuity near front property lines.
- Divide larger parking areas into smaller segments with blocks of landscaping.
- Provide low walls and landscaping at parking lot edges adjacent to public streets.

### 4. Restricted parking lots should be discouraged

- Business should be encouraged to allow open or shared parking in lots to promote a “park once” environment which allows customers to park and utilize the walkability of the area and visit other businesses.



## Landscaping

### 1. All projects should be well landscaped

- Landscaping should relate to existing landscape treatments along the adjacent street fronts.
- Smaller landscaping (e.g., planter pots, window boxes) are used often within the downtown to create a smaller, pedestrian scale and should be included within commercial projects whenever possible.
- Landscaping should have form and substance to define edges and paths, to provide visual focal points and to buffer less desirable views (e.g., less finished facades facing public ways or residences.)

### 2. Provide substantial landscaping along street frontages (particularly Calistoga St./Highway 29).

- Avoid large amounts of paving between structures and the street sidewalk. If there is a substantial setback, and the area is not used for outdoor dining, over 50% of the front setback should be devoted to green landscaping.
- Flowering annual plants are strongly encouraged.

### 3. Provide greater landscape buffering adjacent to residential parcels.

- Trees and other landscaping should be used increasingly as the density changes from Community Commercial to Local Commercial and then to Residential Districts as a way to soften the noise and activity of the more intense uses.

## Peripherals (solar panels, mechanical equipment, etc.)

### 1. Provide visual buffering of on-site utility elements

- Locate transformers, valves and similar elements where they will be least visible from the public rights-of-way. If not possible, these elements should be placed underground or, at a minimum, screened from view with walls and landscaping that relate to the remainder of the project.
- Utilize landscaping and/or walls to screen transformers and other utility elements if they must be located in close proximity to the public right-of-way.
- Applicants will be required to submit a site plan at the time of submittal for review and approval to show the location, type and size, including height, of all utility elements to be located on the parcel.

## **2. Integrate the screening for all trash and service areas into the design of the buildings.**

- Avoid walls that appear to be tacked onto the main structure in favor of walls that integrate the service walls into the overall design of the building complex.
- Match wall materials to that of the building.
- Where screen walls are prominently visible, provide additional detail appropriate to the design of the main structure (e.g., wall caps similar to those on a primary structure).
- In many cases, the use of a lattice work with dense, flowering vines may be used. In those cases, a lesser building material (e.g., concrete block) may be used if the lattice work will provide a strong texture while the landscaping is growing to maturity, and if it can be demonstrated that the landscaping selected will provide a green screening of the walls within two years of installation.

## **3. Screen all roof equipment**

- All roof equipment must be screened to minimize its visual impact on views from public rights-of-way.
- Locate equipment in recessed roof wells or hide equipment behind parapet walls so that it cannot be seen.
- Roof screens should be constructed from materials as similar to the building walls as possible, and should be designed to appear as an architecturally integrated part of the building rather than an added-on element.
  - In cases where mechanical wells or parapets of sufficient height to screen equipment are not possible, equipment should be clustered and placed as far as possible from building edges. The visible equipment should be painted a color that will blend the equipment visually with the backdrop (e.g., pale blue for objects seen against the sky.)
  - Submit a roof plan at the time of submittal for review and approval. The plan should show the location, type and size, including height, of all roof mounted equipment. The application elevation and section drawings should show the location and size of all roof mounted equipment.

## **4. Solar Panels**

- Seek to minimize any negative visual impacts on downtown character. A less than optimal efficiency slope for the panels may be required to minimize their visual impact if such a condition would not decrease the efficiency of the panels by more than 20%. Alternatively, other visually neutral methods to achieve similar energy efficiencies may be required (e.g., insulation, efficient windows, solar screening of windows, energy efficient HVAC systems, etc.).
- Hide solar panels, if possible, or integrate panels into the architectural forms and character of the building if it is not possible to hide them.
- Avoid a “tacked on” look.
- Operable windows are encouraged in recognition of the area’s temperate climate and the typically small scale of commercial structures.

# **SIGNAGE GUIDELINES**

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## **1. Prohibited signage types**

- Lighted signs that flash on and off, fluctuate or appear to move.
- Moving signs that rotate or move in any fashion except barber poles.
- Attraction Boards and Movable Letter signs (except for churches, cinemas, performing arts facilities or similar uses that have frequently changing events or showings).
- Off-site signs.
- Electronic signs.
- Projected light signs which are flashed or projected onto walls or other structures by means of a

- projector or other device.
  - Roof-mounted signs (except where other types of signage cannot be effectively used).
  - Billboards.
  - Cloth, paper or fabric signs hung from the building or placed in windows except for temporary signs allowed under the Zoning Ordinance.
  - Any signs not specifically allowed by the Zoning Ordinance.
- 2. Avoid excessive wording and advertising messages**
- Signs are most effective when their messages can be grasped quickly. Too many words or images compete for attention and reduce the readability of the sign.
- 3. Use no more than two letter font types per sign**
- The primary purpose of a sign is to quickly convey information to passing pedestrians and motorists. More than two letter styles make readability more difficult. A simple logo with an additional type style may also be considered.
- 4. Keep the size of letters and graphics in proportion to overall sign area**
- Text and graphics are difficult to read if they crowd the borders of the sign. Smaller letters with space around them will have more impact than larger letters with limited space around them.
  - Generally limit the width and height of lettering and graphics to 85% of the overall sign width and 65% of the height of the sign area. Information, such as graphic logos, may be closer to borders if a significant amount of background is provided for the sign as a whole. A good rule of thumb is to limit the amount of sign information to no more than 50-55% of the overall sign area.
- 5. Use high quality materials**
- Appropriate materials include finished wood, metal, and for projecting banner signs, woven fabric. Plastic sign materials and signs painted directly onto building surfaces should not be allowed.
  - The sign materials and design should be related to those of the building on which it is mounted, and all sign edges must be cleanly defined and finished.
- 6. Use simple and symmetrical sign shapes**
- Geometric shapes such as rectangles, squares, circles, ovals and triangles are visually stable shapes which help focus attention on the sign message. These should be used in most cases. Combinations of geometric shapes will also generally produce a good sign shape.
- 7. Relate sign colors to building colors**
- Select wall sign colors to blend with the building and storefront colors. Select from color ranges which are analogous and complementary to them.
  - Corporate branding colors will be considered, but will not be automatically approved if they are considered out of place with the building or the surrounding environment. The use of tone-down colors in the same hue family may be required in place of brighter standard corporate colors.

# TYPES OF SIGNAGE

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## Wall Signs

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Wall signs are panels or individual letters mounted flat against and parallel to a building wall or roof fascia.

### 1. Limit sign information

- Generally, limit sign information to the business name. Graphic logos, date of building construction, address, and other elements may be allowed at the discretion of the Design Review Board.

### 2. Place signs within a clean *Signable Area*

- The *Signable Area* should:
  - Be relatively flat
  - Not contain doors or windows
  - Not include projecting molding or trim
  - Be in reasonable proportion to the overall façade (The *Signable Area* should not exceed 15% of the building façade)
- If a building does not have a good location for a wall sign, use other allowed types such as an awning, window or projecting signs.



### 3. Use Sign materials which project slightly from the face of the building

- Use either individually applied letters to the face of the wall, or apply sign letters to a board or panel mounted on the face.
- Avoid painted signs directly on wall surfaces.

### 4. Provide sign illumination appropriate to the area

- Interior illuminated can signs which include multiple letters within a single sign enclosure will not be allowed for any wall sign
- Interior illuminated individual letters may be used.
- Exterior illumination with shielded spot lights can be used for wall signs
- Neon wall signs may be allowed, but will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- All sign and sign lighting raceways and electrical connections should be concealed.

## Awning Signs

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Awning signs consist of letters and graphics applied directly to the face or valance of awnings. Awning signs are often used effectively in combination with window signs.

### 1. Place signs for easy visibility

- Apply signs to awning front valences (i.e., the flat vertical surface of awnings) or to sloped awning faces with a slope of at least 2 to 1.

### 2. Limit the signage information on awnings

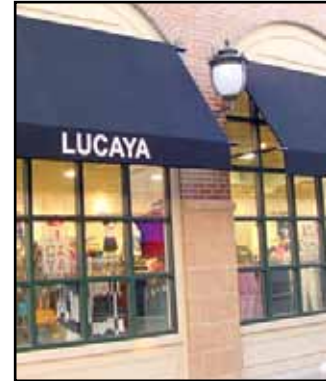
- Since awning signs will often be viewed from passing vehicles, the amount of information which can be effectively conveyed is limited. Keeping sign text short will allow viewers to better comprehend and remember the message.
  - Generally limit awning signs to the business name, business logo, services or type of business (e.g., French

Cuisine), and/or the business address number.

- Limit the size of logos or text placed on awning sloped faces to a maximum of 15% of the sloped surface areas.
- Limit sign width on awning valences to a maximum of 85% of the awning width. Limit the letter height to a maximum of 80% of the valance height.

### 3. Avoid interior illuminated awnings

- Backlight awnings that make the entire awning a large sign should not be allowed. Signage on the awning's sloped face may be illuminated by shielded and attractive directional spot lights



## Window Signs

Window signs are primarily oriented to passing pedestrians, and are generally applied to the inside of display windows.

### 1. Limit the amount of signage used

- Window signs should be limited to a maximum of 25% of any individual window, and an aggregate area of no more than 10% of all ground floor windows on any building face.

### 2. Limit the size of the lettering

- The maximum height of letters should be 10 inches. Exceptions can be granted for the leading capital letter of text.

### 3. Consider the use of logos and creative sign type

- Graphic logos and images along with special text formats can add personality and interest to window signs.

### 4. Use high quality materials and application methods

- Limit window sign materials to the following:
  - Paint or vinyl film applied directly to the inside face of the window.
  - Tubular neon suspended behind the window glass
  - Wood or metal panels with applied lettering
  - Paper signs placed in windows are not allowed.



## Projecting Signs

Projecting signs are relatively flat, two-sided solid panels attached to the brackets which are mounted perpendicular to the face of buildings and storefronts. They often include graphic images in addition to text, and express the unique personality of an individual business.

### 1. Use high quality materials

- Use wood, metal or non-glossy fabrics. Avoid plastics.

### 2. Limit the number and size of projecting signs

- Use no more than one projecting sign per business frontage.
- Limit the size of any projecting sign to five square feet.

- Project signs no more than 36 inches from the building face, and provide at least 6 inches between the inside edge of the sign and the building.

### 3. Relate the design of projecting signs and supports to the character of the building

- Simple round or square horizontal supports with capped ends, painted black or white are generally acceptable. However, more decorative approaches may be desirable when appropriate to the sign and/or architectural character of the building.



### 4. Position Projecting signs to complement the building's architectural details

- Locate solid panel signs below the first floor ceiling line, or no more than 14 feet above the sidewalk, whichever is less. Provide at least 9 feet from the bottom of projecting signs to the ground in pedestrian areas and 14 feet in areas with vehicular traffic.

### 5. Provide sign lighting only with shielded spotlights

- Utilize high quality fixtures such as cylinder spots or decorative fixtures. Avoid expose standard spot and flood bulbs.
- Design light supports to complement the design of the sign and building façade.

## Hanging Signs

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Hanging signs are relatively flat panels, generally two-sided, which are similar to projecting signs, but are smaller and suspended below awnings, bay windows, balconies, and similar projections. They are intended primarily for business identification to pedestrians passing on the sidewalk. They are commonly used as a type of western-style signage.

### 1. Use high quality materials

- Use wood or metal and avoid shiny plastic or fabric. Finish all exposed edges. Suspend signs with metal rods, small scale chain, cable or hooks.

### 2. Limit the number and size of hanging signs

- Use no more than one hanging sign per business. Limit the maximum sign size to 3 square feet. Mount signs to provide a minimum of 9 feet clearance between the sign and the sidewalk.

### 3. Orient hanging signs to pedestrian traffic

- Mount signs under awnings, bay windows or other projections with their orientation perpendicular to the building face so that they will be visible to pedestrians passing on the sidewalk. If multiple hanging signs are placed along a business frontage, they should all be mounted with their bottom edge the same distance above the sidewalk, and should be of similar size and shape.



## Plaque Signs

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Plaque signs are pedestrian-oriented flat panels mounted to wall surfaces near the entry to a business. They include signs that identify a specific business, directory signs for multiple businesses, and menu boxed for restaurants.

## 1. Limit the location and size of plaque signs

- Locate signs on wall surfaces adjacent to tenant entries or entry passageways to off-street courtyards. Signs identifying a single business should be limited to an area of 4 square feet. Directory signs for the identification of multiple second floor or courtyard tenants may be larger, but no more than 8 square feet.



## 2. Use plaque signs for the display of restaurant menus

- A restaurant district is enhanced when a variety of restaurants share the area and customers are able to walk from one to the next to compare menus and prices. Attractive menu signs or boxes should not exceed 6 square feet in area and should have internal indirect lighting (e.g., bulbs located in the frame to cast direct light over the menu surface) or direct lighting using decorative fixtures.

## Ground Signs

Primary Ground Signs are low signs that assist motorists in finding business along auto-oriented streets where businesses are separated from the street front by parking or large landscaped setbacks. Informational and Directional Ground Signs are smaller signs that assist motorists in safely existing from moving traffic lanes to on-site uses in projects with multiple lanes.

### 1. Ground Signs are not generally encouraged in the Downtown Middletown Area, but may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### 2. Limit the information on each sign

- Ground signs should generally be limited to the following information:
  - Project or primary business identification name and/or logo.
  - Address number (strongly encouraged)
- Multi-tenant ground signs are strongly discouraged. However, the display of up to three tenants may be considered for small ground signs so long as the sign and background color is common throughout, and the type style and logo colors of each tenant are the same.
- The inclusion of services and products offered should not be included on ground signs.



### 3. Locate signs for easy visibility from passing vehicles

- Locate signs within 10 feet of the front property line
- Avoid blocking any vehicular or pedestrian sight lines which might result in safety problems.

### 4. Limit the number, type and size of ground signs

- Only one project or tenant identification sign is allowed for each development parcel street frontage.
- The height and sign area per face for Primary Ground Signs should be appropriate to the surrounding environment.
- Directional Signs are limited to a maximum area of 6 square feet, and only allowed on arterial streets. One per entrance or exit will be allowed.

## **5. Lighting**

- Lighting for ground signs must be by direct spotlight illumination from fixtures mounted either at the top of the sign or on the ground below the sign. Fixtures must be shielded to avoid direct view of the bulbs.

## **6. Material**

- All ground signs, including price signs for service stations, should be constructed of matte finish non-reflective materials.

## **Freestanding Signs**

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Freestanding signs are ground-mounted signs that emphasize business brand identity.

### **1. Use Limitations**

- Freestanding signs should be strongly discouraged in the Downtown Middletown area

## **Billboard Signs**

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Billboard signs are freestanding, outdoor advertising signs that are larger than 32 sq. ft.

### **1. Use Limitations**

- Billboard signs should not be allowed in the Middletown Planning Area.
- Existing Billboard signs in the Planning Area should not be approved for Use Permit extensions.

## **Flag Signs**

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Flags, pennants, banners, streamers and similar signs are temporary advertising devices used to designate special events or vehicle entry/pedestrian entry.

### **1. Use Limitations**

- Should not be allowed as permanent signage (with the exception of the American flag and other related flags as described in the Lake County Zoning Ordinance).
- Appropriate for designation of vehicle or pedestrian entryways for wineries and other similar uses during special events.

### **2. Material**

- All flags, pennants, banners, streamers, etc. should be constructed of matte finish and non-reflective materials.



## 7.3 COYOTE VALLEY DESIGN GUIDELINES

Coyote Valley has developed without a concentrated downtown commercial area. A number of “strip mall” type developments have been created, but have failed to create a centralized business district. The Coyote Valley Special Study Area attempts to address this deficiency. A large tract of land north of Hartman Road and from Highway 29 to Hardester’s Market on Coyote Valley Road has been zoned Community Commercial. The intent behind this land use decision is to encourage a future concentrated town center in this area. The plan would ideally include a new street north of Hartman Road that serves as the primary frontage for the town center. The commercial and industrial development that stretches along Highway 29 should be encouraged to create a walkable corridor along the highway. These concepts are further described in Chapter 6 Special Study Areas.

The current commercial areas in Coyote Valley and in Hidden Valley Lake subdivision contain some common design themes, but are not similar enough to form a consistent style. These guidelines are tools to create and maintain a consistent design style that is unique to the area. The similar themes are pitched roofs with wide, sweeping eaves; large windows; large canopy trees providing a rural shaded atmosphere; and a variety of color tones ranging from burnt reds to muted greens to soft tans. The guidelines are intended to establish a balance that preserves and enhances Coyote Valley’s uniqueness and livability while supporting the economic vitality that provides resources for community services. These design guidelines will be used by Planning Staff, the Planning Commission, and Coyote Valley Design Review Board in evaluating changes to existing properties and new construction.

### APPLICABILITY

These guidelines are applicable to all types of permits including sign permits, building permits and architecture and site improvements.

### PURPOSE

The guidelines contained in this document are intended to accomplish the following:

- Provide guidance to property owners and their design professionals in planning and designing new buildings and remodeling existing structures.
- Provide a greater degree of project review and approval predictability.
- Ensure that new development reinforces and supports the special qualities of Coyote Valley.
- Establish a high level of design quality.
- Maintain a building scale that is consistent with Coyote Valley’s rural image.
- Provide information to allow for the adaptation of corporate and franchise designs to the unique character of Coyote Valley.
- Reinforce the special qualities of Coyote Valley’s visual character.
- Protect property owner investments by discouraging inappropriate adjacent development.
- Enhance the economic vitality of Coyote Valley through quality design.
- Streamline the development review process by more clearly communicating community expectations to property owners and developers.
- Provide visual continuity along street frontages.

- Encourage signage which is in scale and harmony with the architecture and character of Coyote Valley.

## DESIGN GUIDELINES

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### Building/Site Design

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#### 1. Design to maintain and reinforce the unique scale and character of Coyote Valley

- Design with respect for the rural character and unique neighborhoods of Coyote Valley.
- Avoid design with consists largely of boxes with applied design elements
- Avoid canvas or vinyl “awning architecture” where large awnings dominate the building frontages (see photo).
- Provide varied building and parapet heights except in locations where flat parapets are common.
- Place awnings and canopies at elevations that relate to the scale of pedestrians and provide a sense of shelter. Use awning appropriate to the building style.
- Break façade segments into modules that reflect those common along nearby building frontages. For facades along streets that are closely related to nearby residences, break larger building elements into modules what are sympathetic to the smaller scale of those houses.
- Encourage pitched roofs with large overhangs to create a relaxed, “prairie-style” character.



#### 2. Orient building fronts toward primary corridors.

- Building frontages should be focused toward the main roadway/sidewalk
- Parking should not be allowed between building fronts and roadways
- Sidewalks or other pedestrian improvements should be added along all street frontages
- Emphasis should be placed on creating a safe accessible pedestrian environment and a “town center” style of commercial area as opposed to “strip mall” style commercial areas.



The photo on the left is an example of the recommended “town center” style development. The second photo shows a “strip mall” style development. The strip mall incorporates many elements of recommended design, but the side design still fails to create a pedestrian-oriented atmosphere.

#### 3. Break larger building facades into smaller segments

- Treat commercial street-facing facades which exceed fifty feet in length as though they were constructed no wider than fifty feet.
- For projects located on corner lots, special attention should be given to the following:
  - Breaking building forms into modules that are similar to those in the residential neighborhoods.

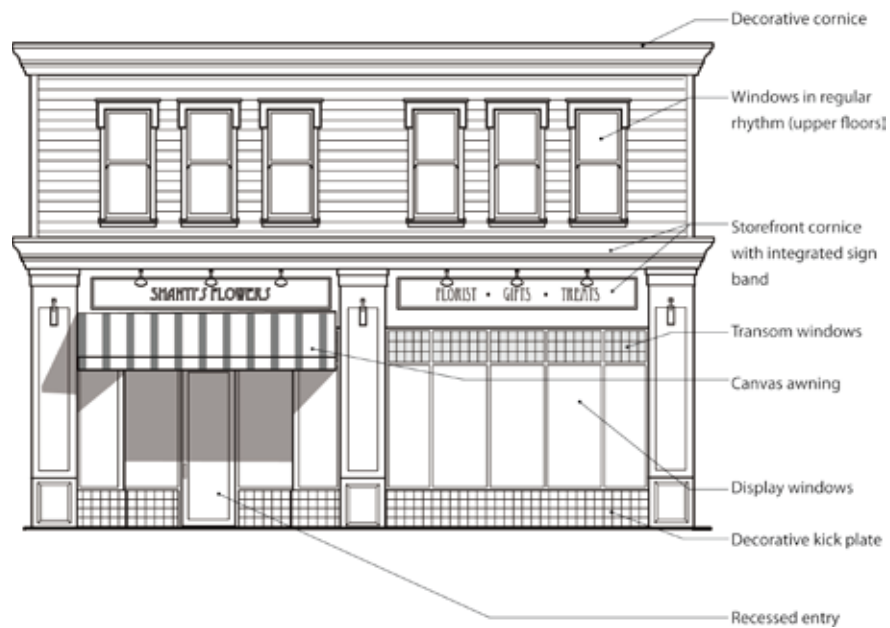
- Providing landscaping and landscape elements (e.g., fencing) that would be consistent with those used in neighboring areas (particularly residential areas).
- Screening any parking areas with low walls and landscaping.

#### 4. Avoid visually bulky buildings

- Provide horizontal wall plane changes along street frontages and areas easily viewed from residential properties to provide some building articulation.
- Inset windows as much as possible from wall faces to provide some visual depth to facades. Where interior uses make this difficult, provide exterior trim around windows to achieve some façade depth.
- For any structure over two stories in height, set back upper floors by a minimum of fifteen feet from the lower floor facades to minimize scale and bulk changes that would stand out significantly from the norm along the adjacent streetscape.
- Use a mix of materials that have a smaller scale (e.g., stone, brick, wood siding, and shingles). Avoid concrete block and metal siding or panels.



Street facade scaling example



Building design example

## **5. Provide a unified design around all sides of buildings**

- Maintain continuity of design, materials, color, form and architectural detail for all elevations of a building that are visible from public areas or adjacent residences.
- Where continuity of design is difficult to achieve, substantial landscaping should be provided to screen the area.

## **6. Avoid blank walls and service areas which are visible from adjacent streets and projects**

- Orient buildings to avoid blank walls and service areas which are visible.
- When blank walls are unavoidable, add pilasters, trellises, and/or lattices along with landscaping to make facades more attractive.

## **7. Utilize solid building forms with “punched” window openings**

- Avoid ribbon windows and other types of large window areas.
- Limit the amount of typical commercial storefront treatment in favor of smaller window openings.

## **8. Provide architectural elements, detailing and ornament to add richness and variety to building facades**

- Design with a scale consistent with neighboring character, particularly when neighboring residential uses.

## **9. Provide a richness of architectural façade depth and detail**

- Express columns and beams on the buildings exterior.
- Provide a number of façade layers (e.g., front of columns or pilasters, wall plan, window frame, window glass).
- Finish wall tops with overhangs, projecting cornices, and column caps that provide a strong visual terminus to the structure.
- Use applied and integrated design elements (e.g., exposed rafter tails on sloped roofs, cornice moldings, applied medallions).

## **10. Utilize high quality building materials and details**

- The use of exposed concrete block is strongly discouraged in favor of wood, stucco, stone or brick. Use of “dry stack” stone similar to the existing structure on Coyote Valley Road, and as shown to the right, should be encouraged.
- Avoid plywood wall facings.
- Avoid plastic or reflective metal materials and finishes.

## **11. Utilize colors that are appropriate to the use and the surrounding area**

- Muted tones are generally preferred with stronger accent colors limited to smaller areas of trim. Thoughtful consideration should be given to the selection of color hues. Consider muted tones of reds, greens, tans, grays and other hues rather than selecting non-distinctive beiges and browns.
- In most cases, a range of analogous or complementary colors is preferred over painting all wall surfaces with the same paint color and shade.
- Strong building colors that are used for branding or advertising purposes may not be approved.
- Uses which might make a case for stronger colors will be evaluated on a case-by-case based on the design and the context of surrounding buildings and uses.
- Creativity and individual identity are encouraged as long as the colors and style does not detract from the surrounding area as a whole.

## 12. Maintain a high degree of transparency at all window areas

- Avoid dark or highly reflective glazing.

## 13. Respect the privacy of neighboring residents

- Avoid windows which would provide views into residential private yard spaces.
- Keep window sizes smaller on facades facing residences where windows can be seen to minimize lighting intrusion
- Provide shielding for any exterior lighting visible from neighboring residential uses.

## Pedestrian Corridor

### 1. Enhance front sidewalk and plaza paving

- The use of brick banding along with concrete is encouraged for the commercial street sidewalks.
- A change of pattern and/or material for paved areas within the front setback is strongly encouraged to set them apart from the sidewalks.
- Where paved plaza areas or outdoor dining areas are located adjacent to sidewalks, provide a positive separation between the two with landscaping, walls and/or raised planters.
- A “western-style” boardwalk or concrete faux boardwalk should be encouraged in the downtown area if applicable.

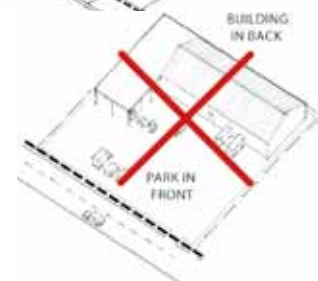
### 2. Pedestrian amenities are encouraged in front setback areas.

- Benches
- Planters and other landscaping (the growth of large canopy trees should be encouraged to accentuate a rural, prairie style, particularly in developments not facing a primary street frontage.)
- Trash receptacles
- Street Trees

## Parking

### 1. Place parking behind buildings whenever possible

- If placement behind buildings is not possible or practical, the preferred parking placement is adjacent to the structures in order to maintain the presence of active uses and greatest density along the primary street frontage.
- If the only possible parking location is between the buildings, parking along frontages should be screened and landscaped.
- For any parking which fronts along a public street, provide low walls or hedges along with landscaping to soften the impact of the parking lot on the pedestrian experience.



### 2. Minimize the visual impact of parking lot lighting

- Limit light pole height to decrease light pollution.
- Use luminaries with shielding to direct light downward and avoid glare.

### 3. Subordinate parking to the buildings

- Avoid parking lots in locations that interrupt retail and/or structural continuity near front property lines.
- Divide larger parking areas into smaller segments with blocks of landscaping.
- Provide low walls and landscaping at parking lot edges adjacent to public streets.



### 4. Restricted parking lots should be discouraged

- Business should be encouraged to allow open or shared parking in lots to promote a “park once” environment which allows customers to park and utilize the walkability of the area and visit other businesses.

## Landscaping

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### 1. All projects should be well landscaped

- Landscaping should relate to existing landscape treatments along the adjacent street fronts.
- Smaller landscaping (e.g., planter pots, window boxes) are used often within the downtown to create a smaller, pedestrian scale and should be included within commercial projects whenever possible.
- Landscaping should have form and substance to define edges and paths, to provide visual focal points and to buffer less desirable views (e.g., less finished facades facing public ways or residences.)

### 2. Provide substantial landscaping along street frontages (particularly Highway 29 and any future developed streets north of Hartman Road).

- Avoid large amounts of paving between structures and the street sidewalk. If there is a substantial setback, and the area is not used for outdoor dining, over 50% of the front setback should be devoted to green landscaping.
- Flowering annual plants are strongly encouraged.

### 3. Provide greater landscape buffering adjacent to residential parcels.

- Trees and other landscaping should be used increasingly as the density changes from Community Commercial to Local Commercial and then to Residential Districts as a way to soften the noise and activity of the more intense uses.

## Peripherals (solar panels, mechanical equipment, etc.)

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### 1. Provide visual buffering of on-site utility elements

- Locate transformers, valves and similar elements where they will be least visible from the public rights-of-way. If not possible, these elements should be placed underground or, at a minimum, screened from view with walls and landscaping that relate to the remainder of the project.
- Utilize landscaping and/or walls to screen transformers and other utility elements if they must be located in close proximity to the public right-of-way.
- Applicants will be required to submit a site plan at the time of submittal for review and approval to show the location, type and size, including height, of all utility elements to be located on the parcel.

### 2. Integrate the screening for all trash and service areas into the design of the buildings

- Avoid walls that appear to be tacked onto the main structure in favor of walls that integrate the service walls into the overall design of the building complex.

- Match wall materials to that of the building.
- Where screen walls are prominently visible, provide additional detail appropriate to the design of the main structure (e.g., wall caps similar to those on a primary structure).
- In many cases, the use of a lattice work with dense, flowering vines may be used. In those cases, a lesser building material (e.g., concrete block) may be used if the lattice work will provide a strong texture while the landscaping is growing to maturity, and if it can be demonstrated that the landscaping selected will provide a green screening of the walls within two years of installation.

### 3. Screen all roof equipment

- All roof equipment must be screened to minimize its visual impact on views from public rights-of-way.
- Locate equipment in recessed roof wells or hide equipment behind parapet walls so that it cannot be seen.
- Roof screens should be constructed from materials as similar to the building walls as possible, and should be designed to appear as an architecturally integrated part of the building rather than an added-on element.
  - In cases where mechanical wells or parapets of sufficient height to screen equipment are not possible, equipment should be clustered and placed as far as possible from building edges. The visible equipment should be painted a color that will blend the equipment visually with the backdrop (e.g., pale blue for objects seen against the sky.)
  - Submit a roof plan at the time of submittal for review and approval. The plan should show the location, type and size, including height, of all roof mounted equipment. The application elevation and section drawings should show the location and size of all roof mounted equipment.

### 4. Solar Panels

- Seek to minimize any negative visual impacts on downtown character. A less than optimal efficiency slope for the panels may be required to minimize their visual impact if such a condition would not decrease the efficiency of the panels by more than 20%. Alternatively, other visually neutral methods to achieve similar energy efficiencies may be required (e.g., insulation, efficient windows, solar screening of windows, energy efficient HVAC systems, etc.).
- Hide solar panels, if possible, or integrate panels into the architectural forms and character of the building if it is not possible to hide them.
- Avoid a “tacked on” look.
- Operable windows are encouraged in recognition of the area’s temperate climate and the typically small scale of commercial structures.

## SIGNAGE GUIDELINES

### 1. Prohibited signage types

- Lighted signs that flash on and off, fluctuate or appear to move.
- Moving signs that rotate or move in any fashion except barber poles
- Attraction Boards and Movable Letter signs (except for churches, cinemas, performing arts facilities or similar uses that have frequently changing events or showings)
- Off-site signs
- Electronic signs
- Projected light signs which are flashed or projected onto walls or other structures by means of a projector or other device
- Roof-mounted signs (except where other types of signage cannot be effectively used)

- Billboards
- Cloth, paper or fabric signs hung from the building or placed in windows except for temporary signs allowed under the Zoning Ordinance
- Any signs not specifically allowed by the Zoning Ordinance

## **2. Avoid excessive wording and advertising messages**

- Signs are most effective when their messages can be grasped quickly. Too many words or images compete for attention and reduce the readability of the sign.

## **3. Use no more than two letter font types per sign**

- The primary purpose of a sign is to quickly convey information to passing pedestrians and motorists. More than two letter styles make readability more difficult. A simple logo with an additional type style may also be considered.

## **4. Keep the size of letters and graphics in proportion to overall sign area**

- Text and graphics are difficult to read if they crowd the borders of the sign. Smaller letters with space around them will have more impact than larger letters with limited space around them.
- Generally limit the width and height of lettering and graphics to 85% of the overall sign width and 65% of the height of the sign area. Information, such as graphic logos, may be closer to borders if a significant amount of background is provided for the sign as a whole. A good rule of thumb is to limit the amount of sign information to no more than 50-55% of the overall sign area.

## **5. Use high quality materials**

- Appropriate materials include finished wood, metal, and for projecting banner signs, woven fabric. Plastic sign materials and signs painted directly onto building surfaces will not be allowed.
- The sign materials and design should be related to those of the building on which it is mounted, and all sign edges must be cleanly defined and finished.

## **6. Use simple and symmetrical sign shapes**

- Geometric shapes such as rectangles, squares, circles, ovals and triangles are visually stable shapes which help focus attention on the sign message. These should be used in most cases. Combinations of geometric shapes will also generally produce a good sign shape.

## **7. Relate sign colors to building colors**

- Select wall sign colors to blend with the building and storefront colors. Select from color ranges which are analogous and complementary to them.
- Corporate branding colors will be considered, but will not be automatically approved if they are considered out of place with the building or the surrounding environment. The use of tone-down colors in the same hue family may be required in place of brighter standard corporate colors.

# **TYPES OF SIGNAGE**

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## **Wall Signs**

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Wall signs are panels or individual letters mounted flat against and parallel to a building wall or roof fascia.

### **1. Limit sign information**

- Generally, limit sign information to the business name. Graphic logos, date of building construction,



address, and other elements may be allowed at the discretion of the Design Review Board.

## 2. Place signs within a clean *Signable Area*

- The *Signable Area* should:
  - Be relatively flat
  - Not contain doors or windows
  - Not include projecting molding or trim
  - Be in reasonable proportion to the overall façade (The *Signable Area* should not exceed 15% of the building façade)
- If a building does not have a good location for a wall sign, use other allowed types such as an awning, window or projecting signs.



## 3. Use Sign materials which project slightly from the face of the building

- Use either individually applied letters to the face of the wall, or apply sign letters to a board or panel mounted on the face.
- Do not paint signs directly on wall surfaces.

## 4. Provide sign illumination appropriate to the area

- Interior illuminated can signs which include multiple letters within a single sign enclosure will not be allowed for any wall sign
- Interior illuminated individual letters may be used.
- Exterior illumination with shielded spot lights can be used for wall signs
- Neon wall signs may be allowed, but will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- All sign and sign lighting raceways and electrical connections should be concealed.

## Awning Signs

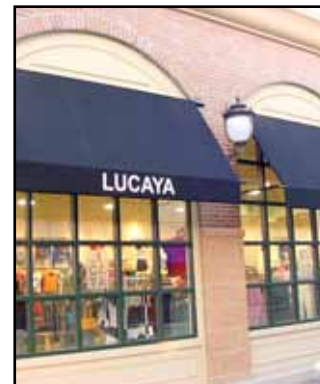
Awning signs consist of letters and graphics applied directly to the face or valance of awnings. Awning signs are often used effectively in combination with window signs.

### 1. Place signs for easy visibility

- Apply signs to awning front valences (i.e., the flat vertical surface of awnings) or to sloped awning faces with a slope of at least 2 to 1.

### 2. Limit the signage information on awnings

- Since awning signs will often be viewed from passing vehicles, the amount of information which can be effectively conveyed is limited. Keeping sign text short will allow viewers to better comprehend and remember the message.
  - Generally limit awning signs to the business name, business logo, services or type of business (e.g., French Cuisine), and/or the business address number.
  - Limit the size of logos or text placed on awning sloped faces to a maximum of 15% of the sloped surface areas.
  - Limit sign width on awning valences to a maximum of 85% of the awning width. Limit the letter height to a maximum of 80% of the valance height.



### 3. Avoid interior illuminated awnings

- Backlight awnings that make the entire awning a large sign will not be allowed. Signage on the awning's sloped face may be illuminated by shielded and attractive directional spot lights

## Window Signs

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Window signs are primarily oriented to passing pedestrians, and are generally applied to the inside of display windows.

### 1. Limit the amount of signage used

- Window signs should be limited to a maximum of 25% of any individual window, and an aggregate area of no more than 10% of all ground floor windows on any building face.

### 2. Limit the size of the lettering

- The maximum height of letters should be 10 inches. Exceptions can be granted for the leading capital letter of text.

### 3. Consider the use of logos and creative sign type

- Graphic logos and images along with special text formats can add personality and interest to window signs.

### 4. Use high quality materials and application methods

- Limit window sign materials to the following
  - Paint or vinyl film applied directly to the inside face of the window.
  - Tubular neon suspended behind the window glass
  - Wood or metal panels with applied lettering
  - Paper signs placed in windows are not allowed.



## Projecting Signs

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Projecting signs are relatively flat, two-sided solid panels attached to the brackets which are mounted perpendicular to the face of buildings and storefronts. They often include graphic images in addition to text, and express the unique personality of an individual business.

### 1. Use high quality materials

- Use wood, metal or non-glossy fabrics. Avoid plastics.

### 2. Limit the number and size of projecting signs

- Use no more than one projecting sign per business frontage.
- Limit the size of any projecting sign to five square feet.
- Project signs no more than 36 inches from the building face, and provide at least 6 inches between the inside edge of the sign and the building.

### 3. Relate the design of projecting signs and supports to the character of the building

- Simple round or square horizontal supports with capped ends, painted black or white are generally acceptable. However, more decorative approaches may be desirable when appropriate to the



sign and/or architectural character of the building.

#### 4. Position Projecting signs to complement the building's architectural details

- Locate solid panel signs below the first floor ceiling line, or no more than 14 feet above the sidewalk, which ever is less. Provide at least 9 feet from the bottom of projecting signs to the ground in pedestrian areas and 14 feet in areas with vehicular traffic.

#### 5. Provide sign lighting only with shielded spotlights

- Utilize high quality fixtures such as cylinder spots or decorative fixtures. Avoid expose standard spot and flood bulbs.
- Design light supports to complement the design of the sign and building façade.

### Hanging Signs

Hanging signs are relatively flat panels, generally two-sided, which are similar to projecting signs, but are smaller and suspended below awnings, bay windows, balconies, and similar projections. They are intended primarily for business identification to pedestrians passing on the sidewalk. They are commonly used as a type of western-style signage.

#### 1. Use high quality materials

- Use wood or metal and avoid shiny plastic or fabric. Finish all exposed edges. Suspend signs with metal rods, small scale chain, cable or hooks.

#### 2. Limit the number and size of hanging signs

- Use no more than one hanging sign per business. Limit the maximum sign size to 3 square feet. Mount signs to provide a minimum of 9 feet clearance between the sign and the sidewalk.

#### 3. Orient hanging signs to pedestrian traffic

- Mount signs under awnings, bay windows or other projections with their orientation perpendicular to the building face so that they will be visible to pedestrians passing on the sidewalk. If multiple hanging signs are placed along a business frontage, they should all be mounted with their bottom edge the same distance above the sidewalk, and should be of similar size and shape.



### Plaque Signs

Plaque signs are pedestrian-oriented flat panels mounted to wall surfaces near the entry to a business. They include signs that identify a specific business, directory signs for multiple businesses, and menu boxed for restaurants.

#### 1. Limit the location and size of plaque signs

- Locate signs on wall surfaces adjacent to tenant entries or entry passageways to off-street courtyards. Signs identifying a single business should be limited to an area of 4 square feet. Directory signs for the identification of multiple second floor or courtyard tenants may be larger, but no more than 8 square feet.



## 2. Use plaque signs for the display of restaurant menus

- A restaurant district is enhanced when a variety of restaurants share the area and customers are able to walk from one to the next to compare menus and prices. Attractive menu signs or boxes should not exceed 6 square feet in area and should have internal indirect lighting (e.g., bulbs located in the frame to cast direct light over the menu surface) or direct lighting using decorative fixtures.

## Ground Signs

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Primary Ground Signs are low signs that assist motorists in finding business along auto-oriented streets where businesses are separated from the street front by parking or large landscaped setbacks. Informational and Directional Ground Signs are smaller signs that assist motorists in safely existing from moving traffic lanes to on-site uses in projects with multiple lanes.

### 1. Ground Signs are not generally encouraged in the Downtown Coyote Valley Area, but may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### 2. Limit the information on each sign

- Ground signs should generally be limited to the following information:
  - Project or primary business identification name and/or logo.
  - Address number (strongly encouraged)
- Multi-tenant ground signs are strongly discouraged. However, the display of up to three tenants may be considered for small ground signs so long as the sign and background color is common throughout, and the type style and logo colors of each tenant are the same.
- The inclusion of services and products offered should not be included on ground signs.



### 3. Locate signs for easy visibility from passing vehicles

- Locate signs within 10 feet of the front property line
- Avoid blocking any vehicular or pedestrian sight lines which might result in safety problems.

### 4. Limit the number, type and size of ground signs

- Only one project or tenant identification sign is allowed for each development parcel street frontage.
- The height and sign area per face for Primary Ground Signs should be appropriate to the surrounding environment.
- Directional Signs are limited to a maximum area of 6 square feet, and only allowed on arterial streets. One per entrance or exit will be allowed.

### 5. Lighting

- Lighting for ground signs must be by direct spotlight illumination from fixtures mounted either at the top of the sign or on the ground below the sign. Fixtures must be shielded to avoid direct view of the bulbs.

### 6. Material

- All ground signs, including price signs for service stations, should be constructed of matte finish non-reflective materials.

## Freestanding Signs

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Freestanding signs are ground-mounted signs that emphasize business brand identity.

### 1. Use Limitations

- Freestanding signs should be strongly discouraged in the Coyote Valley area

## Billboard Signs

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Billboard signs are freestanding, outdoor advertising signs that are larger than 32 sq. ft.

### 1. Use Limitations

- Billboard signs should not be allowed in the Middletown Planning Area.
- Existing Billboard signs in the Planning Area should not be approved for Use Permit extensions.

## Flag Signs

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Flags, pennants, banners, streamers and similar signs are temporary advertising devices used to designate special events or vehicle entry/pedestrian entry

### 1. Use Limitations

- Should not be allowed as permanent signage (with the exception of the American flag and other related flags as described in the Lake County Zoning Ordinance).
- Appropriate for designation of vehicle or pedestrian entryways for wineries and other similar uses during special events.

### 2. Material

- All flags, pennants, banners, streamers, etc. should be constructed of matte finish and non-reflective materials.