

# Salem Sign Ordinance Worksheet

Property address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Disclaimer:** This handout is intended to provide a brief explanation of the major components of the Sign Ordinance. Due to space limitations, only selective portions of the ordinance have been included. Thus, this handout should not be relied upon as a source of final information. Always refer to the Salem Sign Ordinance for complete information regarding sign regulations.

**For further information, contact: Department of Planning and Community Development - (978) 619-5685**

**1**

## Determine property zoning category

Locate your property on the Salem Zoning Map, Local Historic Districts map and the Salem Redevelopment Authority Urban Renewal Area map to determine the zoning category and overlay districts the property is within.

Zoning category:  
(circle one)

Non-residential

Residential \*

\*Contact DPCD for more information

Overlay district category:  
(circle one if applicable)

Entry Corridor (Boston, Bridge, Canal, Goodhue, Lafayette and North Street, Highland and Loring Avenue)

Urban Renewal\*\*

Local Historic District\*\*

\*\*Requires additional design review, contact DPCD for more information

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## Gather property information

The following information will be used to calculate the area and number of signs permitted by the Salem Sign Ordinance.

2a. Number of businesses on the property : (circle) 2 or less 3 or more

2b. Lot frontage: \_\_\_\_\_ feet

Measure the edge of the lot adjacent to the street. If the property is on a corner, measure only edge of the lot which the main building entrance faces.

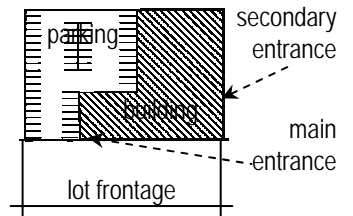


Diagram 1: Lot Frontage

2c. Building frontage: \_\_\_\_\_ feet

Measure the length of the building (or tenant space if multi-tenant) facing a street (A in Diagram 3). For buildings on corners, add the length of the two sides of the building facing streets (A plus B in Diagram 2).

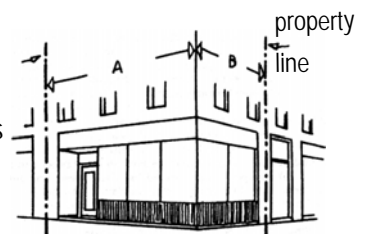


Diagram 2: Building Frontage

2d. Distance between the building and center of adjacent street(s)

Measure the distance between the front of the building and the adjacent street (B in Diagram 3). If the building is on a corner, average the distances. Contact DPCD for assistance with this calculation on streets with heavy traffic.

(circle) Less than 100 feet

100 to 399 feet

400 feet or more

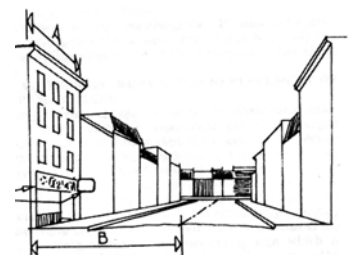


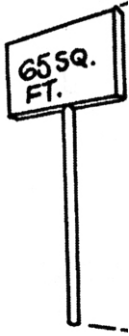
Diagram 3: Building Frontage (A) & Distance to Street Center (B)

# 3

## Freestanding sign allowance

Freestanding signs are **not** permitted in the Urban Renewal Area and Local Historic Districts. One and two sided freestanding signs are allowed in non-residential districts.

When calculating the area of a freestanding sign, only include one side of a two sided sign.



### Freestanding Signs: Maximum Number, Area and Height

Lot frontage	Less than 200 feet		More than 200 feet	
	Businesses on site	1 or 2	3 or more	1 or 2
Zoning Category	1 sign 65 sq ft 25 ft tall	1 sign 125 sq ft 30 ft tall	2 signs 65 sq ft each 25 ft tall	2 signs 125 sq ft each 30 ft tall
Non-residential				
Entry Corridor	1 sign 32.5 sq ft. 12.5 ft tall	1 sign 62.5 sq ft 15 ft tall	2 signs 32.5 sq ft each 12.5 ft tall	2 signs 62.5 sq ft each 15 ft tall

# 4

## Building sign allowance

Building signs are physically attached to the building, such as a wall or blade sign. The building frontage is used to calculate the **total** maximum building sign area. The area of all building signs must be equal or less than this total, including existing and new signs.

### 4a. Building Signs total maximum area formula

Building frontage x multiplier (see chart below) = total maximum area for all building signs

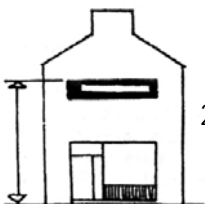
\_\_\_\_\_ feet x \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ square feet

### Total Maximum Area Multiplier

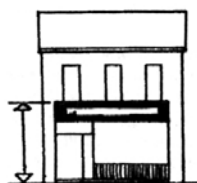
Zoning Category	Distance between building and street center		
	Less than 100 ft.	100-399 ft.	More than 399 ft.
Non-residential	2	2.5	3
Entry Corridor Urban Renewal	1	1.25	1.5

### 4b. Maximum building sign height

Ground floor signs - The top of building signs must be below the **lowest** of the following:



25 ft. above grade OR



The top of window sills at the first level of windows above the ground floor OR



The building line (where the roof meets the building)

Limited second floor signs are allowed in certain circumstances. Contact DPCD for more information.

# 4

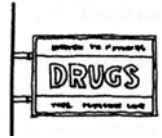
## 4c. Types of building signs allowed

The types of building signs described below are permitted. Specific guidelines are included in the Sign Code regarding each type of building sign.



### Wall sign

- Hangs parallel to the building
- Maximum projection from the building: 15 inches



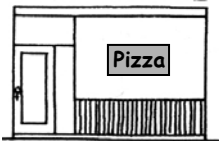
### Blade sign

- Hangs at a right angle to the building
- Maximum projection from the building: 5 feet
- Maximum area: 24 square feet per side (2 sides maximum)
- The bottom of the sign must be at least 10 ft. above grade in non-residential areas or 8 feet above grade in the Urban Renewal district.



### Awning and canopy sign

- Painted on or attached to an awning or canopy
- May hang below an awning or canopy
- Area of signage is equal to the area of the smallest rectangle that would enclose the letters



### Window Sign

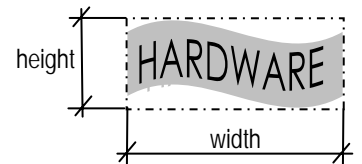
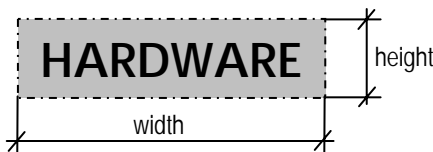
- Located inside window glass
- May not be illuminated
- Maximum area of window glass covered by window signs is equal to 20% of glass in the Urban Renewal district and 30% of glass in other non-residential areas

## 4d. Calculating sign area

Sign height x Sign width = Sign area

\_\_\_\_\_ feet x \_\_\_\_\_ feet = \_\_\_\_\_ square feet

Include all background material in the sign height and width measurement. If the sign is not rectangular, draw the smallest rectangle that encloses all the letters and any background material. Use the height and width of this rectangle in the formula above.

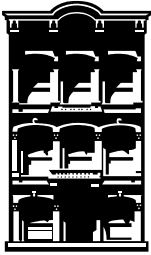


# 5

## Prohibited signs

The Salem Sign Ordinance prohibits the following types of signs:

- Signs that move or consist of pennants or streamers that move
- Signs that blink, flash, change color, or light intensity
- Portable A-frame signs
- Signs attached to utility poles, trees, or fences
- Signs advertising a business that has been closed for over 90 days
- Off premise signs (signs located on one business but advertising another business) unless the sign meets the requirements for billboards outlined in the Sign Ordinance



## City of Salem Storefront Improvement Program

The City of Salem Storefront Improvement Program is funded by the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) as part of the Mayor's goal to revitalize commercial areas in Salem. The Storefront Improvement Program is administered by DPCD.

If you would like further information or would like to apply, please contact the Department of Planning and Community Development (978) 619-5685.

### Storefront Improvement Program Frequently Asked Questions

#### What type of assistance is available?

The Storefront Improvement Program offers two types of assistance to eligible businesses and property owners—Design Assistance and Construction Grants. Applicants can apply for both programs.

#### Design Assistance

The Salem DPCD provides Design Assistance for qualified businesses at no cost to the applicant. Design Assistance consists of an on-site meeting with the business owner, a schematic design for the proposed improvements, a budget estimate and a written description of the proposed work.

#### Construction Grant (up to \$5,000)

Eligible businesses can apply for up to \$5,000 for exterior improvements to their storefront. (For multi-storefront buildings, each storefront can receive up to \$5,000 match with a maximum of \$15,000 for the entire building.) The program requires a match of funds by the applicant; every dollar paid by the City must be matched by a dollar from the applicant.

#### Who can apply?

Any Salem business owner or property owner. A business owner that is leasing space must have lease authority or obtain authorization from the building owner to make improvements to the property.

#### What types of projects are eligible?

The program can only fund exterior improvements to your storefront. Only work approved by DPCD is eligible for the program; work completed prior to receiving a commitment letter from the city is *not* eligible for funding.

The following types of improvements are eligible for funding:

- Installation of new signs or improvements to existing ones
- Installation, repair or replacement of awnings
- Restoration of exterior façade
- Exterior painting
- Removal of inappropriate or incompatible exterior finishes and materials
- Reconfiguration of existing doors and entrances
- Repair or replacement of existing storefront windows
- Installation of exterior building, sign or display area lighting
- Removal of security window bars, roll-down grates and grate boxes (installation of electronic security systems to replace grates is allowable)
- Other improvements may be allowed on a case-by-case basis

City of Salem reserves the right to make changes in the conditions of the Storefront Improvement Program as warranted.