

# COMMERCIAL CITYWIDE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Pedestrian-Oriented/Commercial & Mixed-Use Projects  
Objective 6: Improve the Streetscape by Reducing Visual Clutter



Los Angeles  
Department  
of City Planning

## OBJECTIVE 6:

### Improve the Streetscape by Reducing Visual Clutter

#### Building Signage Placement

- 1 In general, a maximum of one business identification wall sign should be installed per business frontage on a public street. Rarely should more than one business identification wall sign be utilized per storefront.
- 2 Locate signs where architectural features or details suggest a location, size, or shape for the sign. Place signs so they do not dominate or obscure the architectural elements of the building or window areas.
- 3 Include signage at a height and of a size that is visible to pedestrians and facilitates access to the building entrance.
- 4 In commercial and mixed-use buildings with multiple tenants, develop a coordinated sign program establishing uniform sign requirements that identify appropriate sign size, placement, and materials.

#### RECOMMENDED



✓  
Sign location and size is suggested by architectural features of the building

#### NOT RECOMMENDED



! Redundant Signage



! Competition of colors for text and background

! Oversized sign obscures building architecture and window area

## Building Signage Materials

- 1 At large retail developments, provide maps and signs in public spaces showing connections, destinations, and locations of public facilities such as nearby transit stops.
- 2 Limit the total number of colors used in any one sign. Small accents of several colors make a sign unique and attractive, but competition of many different colors reduces readability.
- 3 Limit text on signs to convey the business name or logo. Eliminate words that do not contribute to the basic message of the sign.
- 4 Select sign materials that are durable and compatible with the design of the façade on which they are placed.
- 5 Illuminate signs only to the minimum level required for nighttime readability.

## RECOMMENDED



✓ Quality sign materials

- ✓ Minimum level lighting to illuminate sign only

- ✓ Acceptable internally-illuminated signage

**NOT RECOMMENDED**



Building facade is cluttered with excessive signage that lacks compatibility in colors and materials with the building and within the building facade

## Haphazard sign placement



## Lighting and Security

- 1 Use ornamental lighting to highlight pedestrian paths and entrances to contribute to providing for a comfortable nighttime strolling experience while providing security by including **after-hours lighting** for storefronts.
- 2 Install **lighting fixtures** to accent and complement architectural details. Shielded wall sconces and angled uplighting can be used at night to establish a façade pattern and animate a building's architectural features.
- 3 Utilize adequate, uniform, and glare-free lighting, such as **dark-sky compliant fixtures**, to avoid uneven light distribution, harsh shadows, and light spillage onto adjacent properties.

### RECOMMENDED

✓  
Ornamental lighting provides for a comfortable and safe nighttime pedestrian experience



✓  
Lighting is subtle and contributes to building features



## Utilities

- 1 Place **utilities** in landscaped areas and out of the line-of-sight from crosswalks or sidewalks. Utilities such as power lines, transformers, and wireless facilities should be placed underground or on rooftops when appropriately screened by a parapet; otherwise, any mechanical or electrical equipment should be buffered by planting materials in a manner that contributes to the quality of the existing landscaping on the property and the public streetscape.
- 2 Screen views of rooftop equipment such as air conditioning units, mechanical equipment, and vents from view from the public right-of-way.

### RECOMMENDED



Rooftop equipment screened by parapet

### NOT RECOMMENDED



Electrical/utility boxes located in plain view from public streets and sidewalks

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- 3 Hide trash enclosures within parking garages so that they are not visible to passersby. Screen outdoor stand alone trash enclosures using walls consistent with the architectural character of the main building, and locate them so that they are out of the line-of-sight from crosswalks or sidewalks.

**RECOMMENDED**



Trash enclosure incorporating architectural features consistent with main building and landscaping

**NOT RECOMMENDED**



Unscreened stand-alone trash enclosure



Exposed rooftop equipment visible from street level