Planning & Building Department
3675 Mt. Diablo Boulevard, Suite 210
Lafayette, CA 94549-1968
Tel. (925) 284-1976
www.ci.lafayette.ca.us

SIGN PERMIT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL

The City of Lafayette reviews the size, height, design, materials, construction, location, and illumination of signs within the city. The goal is to eliminate visual clutter and traffic hazards while creating a more attractive and healthy economic business climate.

Among other cases, a sign permit is not required if:

- The business sign is attached to a wall or painted directly on an existing awning on a principal business frontage, is not illuminated, and does not cause the total area of signs on the individual business to exceed 20 square feet.
- The business sign is on the surface of a window or visible through the window from the outside.
- The sign is a temporary new business sign that will remain no longer than 90 days, is the only sign on a principal business frontage, and does not cause the total sign area to exceed 30 square feet.
- The sign is a temporary realty or construction sign that does not exceed 32 square feet and complies with Section 6-2521, 6-2571 or 6-2572.
- The sign is a informational, safety, directional or convenience sign that does not exceed 2 square feet.

Generally, small community event signs, political signs, address identification signs, memorial signs, service club signs, and certain service station signs do not require sign permits. However, specific guidelines found in Section 6-2521 and other sections of the code do apply to these signs. National, state, or local government flags 15 square feet or less are also exempted from a sign permit when placed on a flagpole less than 25 feet in height.

Most other signs will require the review of the Zoning Administrator and/or Design Review Commission and the issuance of a sign permit.

PROCEDURE

Pre-application: Prior to application for a Sign Permit, the applicants should discuss their plans with the Planning Services Division staff to determine which, if any, regulations apply to the type of sign or signs they wish to install.

Study Session: For large and complex sign installations or master sign plans, the Design Review Commission (DRC) may conduct study sessions at the request of the applicant. A study session allows an applicant to get feedback from the DCR early in the design process, before becoming overly invested in a given design. If you would like to set up a study session, submit a request letter to staff. The letter should include the location of the project, a general description of the project, and the required fee.

Filing the Application: The applicant should carefully complete the application and be sure that all submittal requirements and fees are provided. The application must be signed by the current property **owner**. A staff planner will check the application for completeness. Once the staff has reviewed the plans (within 30 days), the applicant will be notified of any necessary alternations to the plans, any additional submittals required, and the number of sets or plans required for the review process. Once an application is deemed complete, the Sign Permit application will be scheduled for a public hearing before the appropriate hearing authority.

Hearing Authority: The Zoning Administrator will review all Sign Permit applications and will determine the hearing authority based on the scope of the proposed project. If the Zoning Administrator determines that the proposed project is beyond the purview of the Zoning Administrator, the application will be referred to the Design Review Commission for public hearing and determination. If applications are referred to the Design Review Commission, additional application fees may be required.

If required, a notice of public hearing will be mailed at least 10 calendar days before the hearing to all owners of property contiguous to the subject property and to owners of other property that, in the opinion of the Planning & Building Manager, is directly affected by the proposed project. The applicant or a representative should be present at the hearing to make a presentation and answer questions. Any interested party may submit oral or written testimony. After close of testimony, the Design Review Commission may approve the Sign Permit or deny it. The Design Review Commission may choose not to take action at the first hearing and continue the application to a future date.

In considering a permit, the hearing authority may impose conditions on the project to make the use more acceptable, to correct existing deficiencies, or to carry out the purpose and intent of Chapter 6-25, Signs.

Appeal of Decision: The applicant or any other aggrieved party may appeal in writing the action of the hearing body to the next level of hearing authority within fourteen (14) calendar days following action. If the action is not appealed, the action is effective on the fifteenth day. The fee for an appeal may be 50 to 100 percent of the application fee depending on the original fee. The same notification provided for the original hearing will be repeated. The applicant should be present and any interested persons may submit testimony. After close of testimony, the hearing authority for the appeal will make a decision on the proposed permit, or if necessary, continue the matter to a certain date for future action.

PROCESSING TIME

The total time for processing a Sign Permit application varies depending on the complexity and magnitude of the project. After an application has been deemed complete, it usually takes five to six weeks for the first meeting before the Hearing Authority.

TIME AND PLACE OF MEETINGS

The Zoning Administrator processes applications without public hearing as time allows. The Design Review Commission meets on the **second** and **fourth** Mondays of each month, commencing at 7:00 p.m. at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center, 3491 Mt. Diablo Boulevard in the Arts and Science Discovery Center.

A calendar of adopted meeting dates is available at www.lovelafayette.org.

PERMIT EXPIRATION

A Sign Permit approval automatically expires if the use of action authorized is not started or construction incident thereto is not begun and or before the time limit specified in the permit and thereafter diligently pursued. If no time is specified, the permit expires 12 months after the date of approval. The Planning and Building Department Manager may grant one 12-month extension of time upon written request prior to the expiration date of the permit if the City has not made relevant changes to the Lafayette Municipal Code and the development is not changed.

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APPLICATION FOR SIGN PERMIT
SUBMITAL REQUIREMENTS

The following is a list of minimum submittal requirements. Additional materials may be required at the discretion of the Planning staff or City Commissions.

☐ 1. Completed application form, including the signature of the applicant and current property owner.

☐ 2. Processing fee (checks payable to **City of Lafayette**).

☐ 3. Conceptual building elevations showing the existing and proposed signage, scaled at ¼" = 1'

☐ 4. Scale drawings of the proposed signage showing the following:

- ☐ a. Dimensions
- ☐ b. Graphics
- ☐ c. Type face
- ☐ d. Colors and materials
- ☐ e. Illumination (if any) – specify type and wattage. No exposed source of illumination is allowed.
- ☐ f. Section showing the sign depth, projection from the building wall, and mounting details

☐ 5. Actual color chips and material types. Matte finish on plastic materials is preferred.

☐ 6. Photographs of the building where the sign is to be displayed

☐ 7. Site plan showing the following:

- ☐ a. North arrow and scale, clearly shown.
- ☐ b. All existing and proposed structures on the site.
- ☐ c. Location of existing sign(s).
- ☐ d. Location of proposed sign(s).
- ☐ e. Landscape (list species, quantity, and size to be planted) and schematic irrigation plan.[1]
- ☐ f. Names of owners of, and any nearby improvements on, adjacent property.
- ☐ g. All adjoining public or private streets.
- ☐ h. Vicinity map showing the following:
  (1) Location of the subject parcel in relationship to the immediate area,
  (2) Access to the subject property.

Applicant's Signature_____ Date: _____

I acknowledge that I have read the instructions on applying for a sign permit, and have submitted at least the minimum submittal requirements to the Planning Services Staff. I agree to submit more materials regarding my application, if requested to do so.

[1] Required for freestanding sign applications

PRINCIPAL BUSINESS FRONTAGE

Principal Business Frontage *means the horizontal distance of a building or portion of a building occupied by one tenant. It is measured along each wall having a customer entrance and facing a public open space or along each wall which includes a glass enclosed showroom facing the street.*

Frontage A ____linear feet Direction wall faces: _____
Total proposed and existing sign area on this frontage: _____

Frontage B ____linear feet adjacent to /opposite from *(circle one)* Frontage A Direction wall faces: _____
Total proposed and existing sign area on this frontage: _____

Frontage C ____linear feet adjacent to/opposite from *(circle one)* Frontage A Direction wall faces: _____
Total proposed and existing sign area on this frontage: _____

Total Sign Area Allowed (as per 6-2560)**: _____** sq. feet **Total Sign Area Used: ____** sq. feet

INVENTORY OF EXISTING SIGNS

Please assign each sign a number and use that number on submitted plans.
For additional signs, please copy or recreate on a separate sheet.

Existing Sign _____

a) To be removed / To remain *(circle one)*

b) Principal Frontage *(from above):* _____

c) Dimensions: _____ x _____ = _____ sq. feet

d) Type of illumination: _____

e) Type of sign *(see 6-2502)*: _____

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED SIGNS

Please assign each sign a number and use that number on submitted plans.
Begin assigned numbers where Existing Sign numbers leave off. *For additional signs, please copy or recreate on a separate sheet.*

Proposed Sign _____

a) Principal Frontage *(from above)*: ____

b) Dimensions: _____ x _____ = _____ sq. feet

c). Type of illumination:
_____

d) Type of sign *(see 6-2502)*: _____

e) Colors and Materials: _____
_____

f) In compliance with Master Sign Plan:
Yes / No / NA *(circle one)*

PROPERTY OWNER CONSENT CERTIFICATION

Property Owner Certification (to be signed by owner of premises, or agent)

The undersigned hereby certifies that on _____he is the lawful owner, or agent thereof, of property located at_____

As legal owner, I agree that this Master Sign Plan sets forth the details of signs to be permitted for this building that are not included in this plan and that do not substantially conform to the plan. I understand that the Maser Sign Plan is not a Sign Permit and that permits are required for the signs outlined in the plan.

SIGNED_____**DATE**_____

MASTER SIGN PLAN

1. Name of Owner (or Owner's Agent): _____Phone:_____

   Mailing Address:_____

   (Street) (*City)* *(State)* *(Zip)*

2. Building Address(s):_____

3. Description of each tenant (business) in the building:

ADDRESS OR OTHER ID *(Suite No., Bldg.)*	**PREMISES FRONTAGE** *(linear feet)*	**MAXIMUM SQUARE FOOTAGE ALLOWED***
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

(*See Chart Sec. 6-2512)

4. Give frontage of building (in ft.): _____

5. Number of stories having premises to be signed:_____

6. **DESCRIPTION OF TENANT PROTOTYPE SIGNS**

   SIGN #____

   a) Type of sign:_____b) Dimensions: _____

   c) Square footage:_____d) Type of illumination:_____

   e) Location: _____

f) Other (may include materials, colors, letter type and size, frame or other details):

_____

_____

_____

SIGN #_____

a) Type of sign:_____b) Dimensions: _____

c) Square footage:_____d) Type of illumination:_____

e) Location: _____

f) Other (may include materials, colors, letter type and size, frame or other details):

_____

_____

_____

SIGN #_____

a) Type of sign:_____b) Dimensions: _____

c) Square footage:_____d) Type of illumination:_____

e) Location: _____

f) Other (may include materials, colors, letter type and size, frame or other details:

_____

_____

7. Brief description of Project, Directory, Exempt or Other Signs to be used in connection with the building (details to be supplied with application for a Sign Permit).

Type of Sign	Location	Illumination	Dimensions

8. **Property Owner Certification** (to be signed by owner of premises, or agent)
The undersigned hereby certifies that on _____he is the lawful owner, or agent thereof, of property located at_____
As legal owner, I agree that this Master Sign Plan sets forth the details of signs to be permitted for this building that are not included in this plan and that do not substantially conform to the plan. I understand that the Maser Sign Plan is not a Sign Permit and that permits are required for the signs outlined in the plan.

SIGNED_____**DATE**_____

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APPLICATION FOR A SIGN PERMIT
RESPONSE TO FINDINGS

Project Description - On a separate sheet, please briefly describe the scope of the proposed sign. Include a description of the proposed materials and colors for each sign requested.

Response to Findings - Repeat and respond to each of the findings listed below which must be made for the hearing body to approve a new sign permit. Your responses should address each sign that you are requesting. Print or type using blue or black ink. These findings can be found on the City of Lafayette web site to facilitate copy/paste into word processing software.

§6-2526 Design Criteria of the Sign Ordinance

As required by Section 6-2526 of the Lafayette Municipal Code, the Design Review Commission shall apply the following design criteria in reviewing each sign application:

1. Architectural Compatibility. The sign shall be compatible in size, character and quality of design with the exterior architecture of the premises and other structures in the immediate area.
2. Simplicity. To the extent feasible, the sign should be graphic and with limited use of words, with the design emphasis on simplicity of style. A simple design or abstract graphic design is preferred. Similarly, a simple sign frame and supporting structure is preferred.
3. Identification. A commercial sign should be designed for the primary purpose of identifying a business or office.
4. Fewer Signs. In the use of the total sign allowance at a particular premise, the use of a minimum number of signs is preferred to the use of many signs so that a cluttered effect is avoided.
5. Shape, Size and Orientation. The shape of a sign should not conflict with the architectural lines of its setting. Signs should be directed toward the passing motorist and the pedestrian. No sign should be designed to be readable from the freeway or to attract motorists from a great distance.
6. Illumination and Colors. A sign must not overpower its surroundings through hue, saturation and brilliance or close combination of incompatible colors. Sources of illumination should be screened from public view and should be designed to avoid glare onto a street or adjacent property.
7. Landscaping. A sign should be placed with consideration for existing and future growth of trees and other landscaping. A freestanding sign must be placed in a landscaped area or planter, with landscaping maintained in a thriving manner.
8. Compatibility with Adjacent Uses. The design and location of a sign should not impair the visibility or the design quality of existing conforming signs.

In addition to the above findings if your sign application requires a variance a written response to the following findings is also required. Your responses should address each variance that you are requesting. Print or type using blue or black ink. These findings can be found on the City of Lafayette web site to facilitate copy/paste into word processing software.

§6-2527 Required Findings for Sign Permit Variance

When practical difficulty, unnecessary hardship or a result which is inconsistent with the purpose and intent of this chapter occurs from the strict application of this chapter, the design review commission may grant a variance with respect to the regulations in this chapter relating to the height, area, location or number of signs if it finds that all of the following conditions exist:

1. Because of a special circumstance concerning the subject property, including size, shape, topography, location or surroundings, the strict application of this chapter would deprive the applicant of privileges enjoyed at other properties in the vicinity and in the same land use district;
2. The variance would not constitute a grant of special privilege which is not generally available to other property in the vicinity and in the same land use district;
3. The variance substantially complies with the intent and purposes of this chapter;
4. The variance does not adversely affect the orderly development of property and the preservation of property values in the vicinity; and
5. The special conditions or unique characteristics of the property were not created by the applicant.

Additional Comments - Provide any additional comments on a separate sheet

City of Lafayette
Planning & Building Department

AGREEMENT TO PAY FOR CITY SERVICES

Complete and submit this form with the development application.

In consideration for the City providing the services described in this Agreement, the undersigned agrees as follows:

1. The City services requested relate to development application number _____, property in the City of Lafayette located at _____, assessor's parcel number _____.

2. This Agreement is for services and fees that are in addition to the planning fees paid upon the filing of the referenced development application. I agree to pay for the additional charges imposed by the City for staff time spent processing the application based upon an hourly rate established by resolution of the City Council. These services include but are not limited to City staff time spent for engineering and other City administrative services regarding the application. In addition, I agree to pay for services of consultants retained by the City and required by it in connection with the development application at the hourly rate charged by each consultant to the City. These services include but are not limited to legal, landscaping, traffic engineering and environmental services.

3. The City will bill for the services performed under this Agreement upon a monthly or other periodic basis. If at any time the balance due exceeds $500.00, the City may cease processing the application, prepare a recommendation for taking action on the application and present the application to the appropriate hearing body for final action.

4. The development application account will remain open until it is paid in full. Final payment in full is due as follows:
   a. In the case of a subdivision, upon release of the final improvement bond or when conditions of approval are satisfied, which ever is later in time;
   b. In the case of all other applications, when the City authorizes Contra Costa County to issue final building inspection clearance or when work for which a permit is issued is completed;
   c. If an application is denied, upon expiration of the appeal period or upon a final decision on appeal;
   d. If an application is withdrawn, when all remaining staff work on the application is completed;
   e. Upon the expiration of 12 consecutive months during which there was no activity on the application.

5. The undersigned is responsible for the payment of the costs and charges involved with the application even though the property or project is sold or assigned to another party. If the undersigned desires to transfer payment responsibility to another, it is the undersigned's responsibility to have this Agreement replaced by a new agreement with the responsible party. Any outstanding balance must be paid before the City will accept a replacement agreement.

6. The undersigned agrees to advise the City in writing of any change to their billing address and represents that (s)he is the party responsible for payment of the costs or any other obligations incurred under this Agreement.

7. The undersigned agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless the City, its agents, officers, officials, and employees from all claims, demands, lawsuits, writs of mandamus, and other actions or proceedings (collectively "Actions") brought against the City or its departments, commissions, agents, officers, officials, or employees to challenge, attack seek to modify, set aside, void or annul any City decision made in connection with this application or Agreement. In the event the City becomes aware of any such Actions, the City shall promptly notify the undersigned and shall cooperate fully in the defense. It is expressly agreed that the City shall have the right to approve, which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld, the legal counsel providing the City's defense, and the undersigned shall reimburse City for any attorney's fees, costs and expenses, including any plaintiff's or other third party's attorneys' fees, costs and expenses, directly and necessarily incurred by the City in the course of the defense.

PRINT NAME: _____ TELEPHONE: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____ DATE _____

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS NOT TRANSFERABLE • ORIGINAL TO FINANCE • ☐ COPY TO APPLICANT • ☐ COPY TO APPLICATION FILE

APPLICATION NO._____ FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY ACCOUNT NO._____

Agreement for City Services

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