

GUIDELINES FOR SIGNAGE ON HERITAGE BUILDINGS

Signage on heritage buildings is governed by [Chapter 694, Signs, General](#), of the City of Toronto Municipal Code. All signs on heritage inventoried properties are subject to heritage review and approval, with designated properties also subject to all provisions of the **Ontario Heritage Act**. Third party signage is not permitted on heritage properties.

The following guidelines should be considered prior to preparation of a sign permit or sign variance application. Additional guidelines may apply within Heritage Conservation Districts or where a sign by-law amendment is contemplated.

1. Signage should respect the overall design and physical integrity of the property, the streetscape and/or the Heritage Conservation District (where applicable). It should be compatible with the character of the heritage property or district and should not detract from or obscure any important features. Signage should be subordinate with minimal visual impact to the property or district.
2. Signage should be located in areas of the building that have traditionally been used for signage – on store fronts, typically above the display window(s) and below the cornice. Efforts must be made to locate signage with regard to the heritage attributes of the property.
3. Clear and simple design provides for legibility and effectiveness while respecting the heritage values and attributes of the property. In general, individual letters mounted on a rail/carrier box or channel letters and logos are preferred where signage is to be affixed directly on a heritage building.
4. Materials used for signage should be high quality and compatible with the heritage property. Plastic or neon signs are generally not appropriate. Materials should be noted on any drawings submitted.
5. Signage lighting should come from an external source, although halo-lit may be appropriate. Digital display screens and sign boxes are discouraged. Lighting sources should be noted on any drawings submitted. Please note, Chapter 694 does not permit up-lighting.
6. Corporate signage should be adapted to be compatible with a heritage property and/or district.
7. Signage should not result in any direct or indirect harm to the building, including degradation, corrosion or decay. On masonry buildings, non-corrosive fasteners should be located in the mortar joints (preferably at the intersection of the joints). Anchors should not be inserted into the face of masonry units. All fastening details should be provided on permit drawings.

Revised March 2014

Jennifer Keesmaat
Chief Planner & Executive Director
City Planning Division

Harold Madi, Director
Urban Design

Mary L. MacDonald, Acting Manager
Heritage Preservation Services
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
17th Floor, East Tower
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Tel: (416) 392-1975
Fax: (416) 392-1973
For more information about Heritage Preservation Services, go to www.toronto.ca/heritage-preservation
For more information about Signs, go to www.toronto.ca/signbylawunit