

# Preliminary Application Form For WALL SIGNS

**What is a sign:** A sign is any writing (including letter, work, or numeral), pictorial representation (including illustration or decoration); emblem (including device, symbol or trademark); flag (including banner or pennant); inflatable structure; or any other figure of similar character, which is:

1. A structure or any part thereof, or is attached, to painted on, or in any other manner represented on building or other structure: and/or
2. Used to announce, direct attention to, or advise.

**When permits are required:** Except as otherwise provided in this article, no sign shall be constructed, installed, or altered without first obtaining a zoning permit, a building permit and all other applicable permits. Application shall be made by the owner of the property on which the sign is to be displayed or by the owner's legal representative. After construction of the sign is completed the person constructing the sign shall certify to the Department of Codes Administration that the sign was legally constructed and is within the Code. All signs shall display a permanent compliance tag, to be provided by the Department of Codes Administration, upon final approval of the permit.

**When permits are not required:** Zoning and building permits are not required for the following:

1. Exempt signs as defined by this title, **except** those signs which are regulated by size, height, setback, number, or duration of placement, which signs shall require a zoning permit.
2. Painting, repainting, or cleaning of sign structure or the changing of a copy on a sign designed for changeable copy.

## Metro Nashville Government of Nashville and Davidson County

Howard Office Building  
700 2nd Avenue, South  
Nashville, Tennessee 37210  
(615) 862-6500  
Business Hours 7:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.  
Monday through Friday

Visit our Website at [www.nashville.gov/codes](http://www.nashville.gov/codes)

**Non-conforming signs:** signs that were issued a permit prior to the adoption of the present sign ordinance, February 8, 1993, that do not comply with the present sign ordinance are considered non-conforming. Such signs shall be brought into compliance with this ordinance if at any time such signs are altered, repaired, restored or rebuilt, such that the cost of alteration or repair, including changes in the face, exceeds fifty percent of the replacement cost of the sign at the time of application for a permit for such alteration or repair, unless the alteration or repair is caused by involuntary damage or casualty or is desired by the owner of the business existing on the date of this amendment, in which case the fifty percent threshold will not apply and the signs may be altered or repaired to any extent. The same nonconforming sign will continue to be nonconforming if the activity type remains the same when a business changes ownership and the 50% percent threshold is not exceeded. (Example: McDonalds to Burger King, food service to food service.) For purposes of this subsection, all permits within any six consecutive calendar months shall be aggregated for purposes of measuring the fifty percent threshold herein.

**However**, it is important to note that a single tenant sign that is on a single tenant parcel must be brought into compliance with the sign ordinance if the business activity type changes. (Example: McDonalds to The Shoe Store, food service to retail.)

A **Use and Occupancy (U&O)** permit is required prior to the issuance of a sign permit for a change in activity type. (Example: food service to retail, etc.)

**Roof signs** are prohibited, however, portions of a sign may extend above a roof line or PARAPET WALL:

1. **No solid panel wall sign shall extend above the wall or parapet more than 25% of the height of such sign to a max of 18".**
2. **No individually mounted letter wall sign shall extend above the wall or parapet more than 50% of such individual mounted letters.**

**Tenants in multi-tenant buildings** may provide the dimensions for their tenant space only and receive a 15% maximum signage allocation with a letter from the property owner (see attached form).

## SIGN APPLICATION FORM NEW OR REPLACEMENT SIGNS

(FORM SHALL BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO THE  
ISSUANCE OF SIGN PERMIT)

Provide if available:

Map: \_\_\_\_\_

Parcel: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of property: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Owner of property: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Applicants name: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Proposed business activity type: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Previous business activity type: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contractor's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Metro GC #: \_\_\_\_\_

**(check one)**

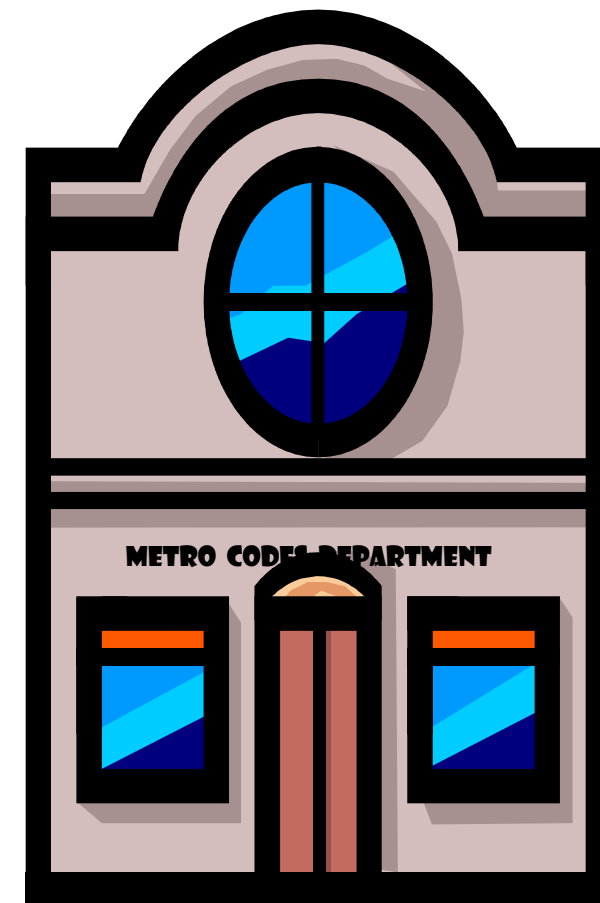
Illuminated: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-illuminated: \_\_\_\_\_

If illuminated please provide UL #'s: \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Total value of sign** including improvements, installation and electrical if applicable  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_

# PERMITTING A WALL SIGN



**METROPOLITAN  
NASHVILLE & DAVIDSON  
COUNTY  
CODES DEPARTMENT**

**BILL PURCELL, MAYOR**

**WALL SIGN DO'S:**

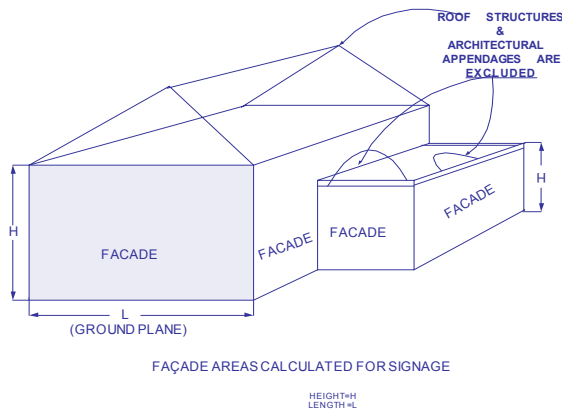
1. If the sign permit request involves a multi-tenant occupancy, the owner of the property must sign a form stating they will not request more signage than this 15% of facade (wall) area for any tenant without providing a completed common signage plan allocating the 15% in some other method.
2. Provide site plan.
3. Provide elevation drawing of each wall proposed.
4. If sign is illuminated the UL (underwriter laboratory) numbers will be required with this form and the **electrical permit will be required to be obtained at same time sign permit is obtained** by a licensed equipment installer or electrical contractor. Sign contractor and electrical contractor must be the same contractor.
5. Bring in a picture of your sign , whenever possible, when it is a face change.

**WALL SIGN DONT'S:**

1. Signs cannot project over public right-of-way (R/W) unless approved by Metropolitan Council.

**BUILDING SIGNS:**

- Q.** What is a facade (wall)?  
**A.** See illustration of a facade.



- Q.** How do you calculate maximum building signage?  
**A.** Multiply height X length = total square footage of facade X 15% = maximum signage permitted.  
 See example below: 10 X 30 = 300 sq ft X 15% = 45 sq ft max signage permitted.

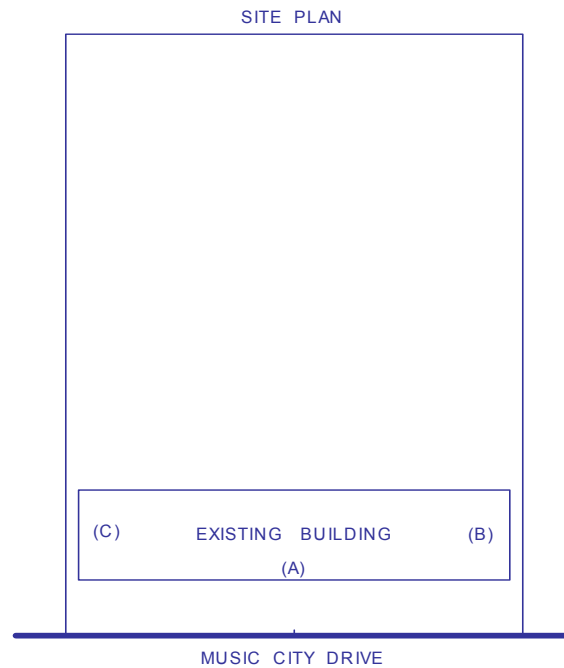
(When plans are not provided it shall be assumed that the height of the façade of the first floor is twelve feet and that the height of the façade of all stories above the first floor is ten feet per floor.)

Examples shown below represent approximately eighty-five percent (85%) of the sign permits issued by the Department of Codes Administrations and apply to the following districts:

**On-premises building signs CL, CS, CA, CF, SCC, SCR, IWD, IR AND IG Districts.**

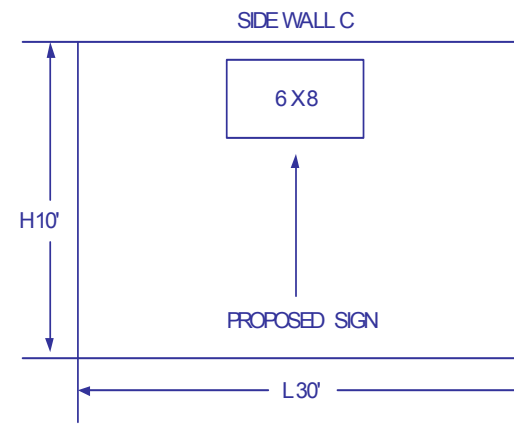
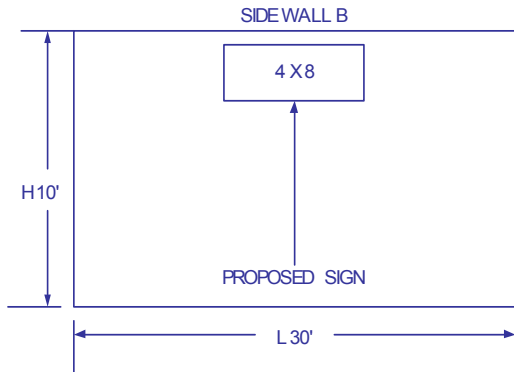
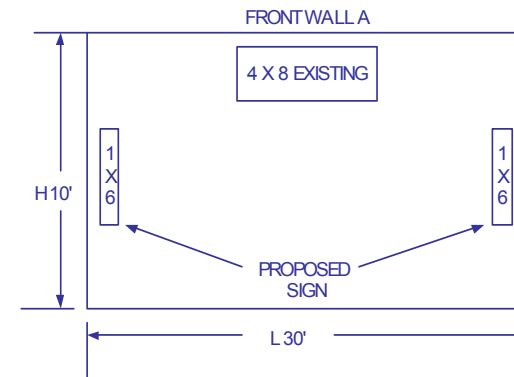
1. Each facade of a principal building shall be restricted to a maximum on-premises building signage of fifteen percent of the area of the facade.
2. This area may be increased by transferring all or part of the permitted on-premises ground sign area to on-premises building signage. A twenty percent bonus of the amount transferred may also be applied to the total on-premises building signage.

**EXAMPLE OF SITE PLAN**



\* The site plan is an ariel view of the property.

**EXAMPLE OF WAL SIGN(S):**



**Multi-tenant occupants shall have owner of property complete 15% allocation form below or provide common signage plan.**

**15% SIGNAGE ALLOCATION FORM FOR MULTI-TENANT BUILDINGS**

(To be signed by owner - accepted in lieu of common sign plan)

DEVELOPMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

OWNER OF RECORD: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MAP: \_\_\_\_\_

PARCEL: \_\_\_\_\_

As owner of the referenced property, I hereby authorize and request the Department of Codes Administration to issue wall sign permits not to exceed 15% of the facade area of the building occupied by each tenant in our development.

I will not in the future request more signage than this 15% of facade area for any tenant **without providing** a completed common signage plan upon request for a permit that will exceed 15% of a particular tenant's facade area or for signage on the property other than at the tenant's entrance.

Owner's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For clarification of information in this pamphlet or additional information concerning signage in other zoning districts, call a zoning examiner 862-6500.**