

INFORMATIONAL LETTER 0017-2008
Scenic or Historic Districts
Effective Immediately
December 17, 2008

Section 4611 (c) Residential rights-of-way, Scenic and Historical Rights-of-ways and Districts. All on-premise signs on residential rights-of-way and scenic and historical rights-of-way and districts shall conform in all respects to the requirements set forth . . . ”.

All historic districts, rights-of-way (ROW), buildings, and/or premises, are enforced regarding signs. Signs within or upon these districts, ROW, buildings, and/or premises have the same size allowances and limits as signs within a scenic district. In addition, the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) may make recommendations about the proposed signage in keeping with the exterior façade of the building.

When our office relied solely on the Planning Department to lock down the address in the computer database, that wasn't absolute, due to HPO not always being informed when new addresses were created. Technological improvements now provide tools for greater awareness of these areas, and compliance with the Sign Code.

Signs proposed within designated historic boundaries require a Certificate (or Letter) of Appropriateness (COA, LOA) prior to making application for a sign permit.

It is our understanding the following requirements must be submitted to the Planning Department/Historical Preservation Office:

- HPO application
- Recent photo of subject site
- Copy of plans and specifications required to obtain a permit
- A drawing of the exterior of the structure showing proposed changes
- A description of the proposed alterations and a list of materials that will be used

If the HPO application is approved, a Certificate (or Letter) of Appropriateness is issued by the Planning Department. Copies of the COA/LOA, & HPO stamped plans, must be included in a sign permit application packet. If the HPO application is denied, there is an appeal process through the Planning Commission. For all HPO questions, or to request additional information, please call 832-393-6556, or e-mail historicpreservation@houstontx.gov. Sign Administration cannot assist with, or answer, any HPO questions.

Scenic Right-of-Way Maps are linked on the Sign Administration web portal for reference.
<https://www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/building-code-enforcement/sign-administration#agency-links-1766>

Historic Districts Maps:
https://www.houstontx.gov/planning/HistoricPres/HistoricPreservationManual/hist_dist.html

Protected (aka Historic) Landmarks: <https://www.houstontx.gov/planning/HistoricPres/landmarks.html>