

Sign Code Modernization Project Kickoff Meeting



**boston planning &
development agency**

Thursday, March 21, 2024

Zoom Controls to Listen to Interpreters

(EN) Look for the interpretation icon (**globe**) at the bottom of your screen and select the language you want to hear.

(Caboverdean) Djobe íkune di interpretason (**un globu**) na parti inferior di tela y sesiona bu língua ki bu kre skuta reunion.

(Kreyòl Ayisyen) Chèche ikòn entèpretasyon ki gen fòm (**glòb**) anba ekran ou an epi seleksyone lang ou vle tandè a.

(Español) Busque el ícono de la interpretación (**globo**) en el borde inferior de su pantalla y seleccione el idioma en el que desea escuchar.

(Tiếng Việt) Tìm biểu tượng phiên dịch (**hình quả địa cầu**) ở phía cuối màn hình của bạn và chọn ngôn ngữ bạn muốn nghe.

(简体中文) 查找屏幕底部的翻译图标(地球仪), 然后选择您想听到的语言。

(繁體中文) 查找屏幕底部的翻譯圖標(地球儀), 然後選擇您想听到的語言。

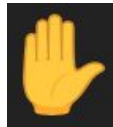


Zoom Meeting Info + Tips

- **The BPDA will be recording this meeting** and posting it on the BPDA's project webpage. If you do not wish to be recorded during the meeting, please turn off your microphone and camera.
- **Zoom controls are available at the bottom of your screen.** Clicking on these symbols activates different features.
- **Use raise hand function** (dial ***9** if joining by phone) **and wait to be called upon to unmute** (dial ***6** if joining by phone) before asking your question or providing comment.



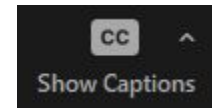
Mute/unmute



Raise hand to get in line to ask a question or provide comment



Turn video on/off



Turn on captions

Please Ask for Clarification!

Ask questions in the chat along the way!

Our staff are available to answer during the presentation.

Ask for us to clarify any terms or concepts we discuss!

We want to make sure that what we cover is accessible to everyone so you can all share your informed feedback.



Sign Code Modernization Team

Adam Johnson, Urban Designer

Cyrus Miceli, Zoning Reform Planning Assistant

Lizzie Turac, Urban Design Assistant

Kathleen Onufer, Deputy Director of Zoning

Astrid Walker-Stewart, Zoning Reform Planner



Agenda

Outline of tonight's Sign Code Modernization presentation:

1. Why Is Signage Important?
2. How Is Signage Regulated and Reviewed Currently?
3. What We've Learned
4. **What Do You Want To See? [interactive]**
5. Next Steps
6. **Questions and Comments**



Disclaimer

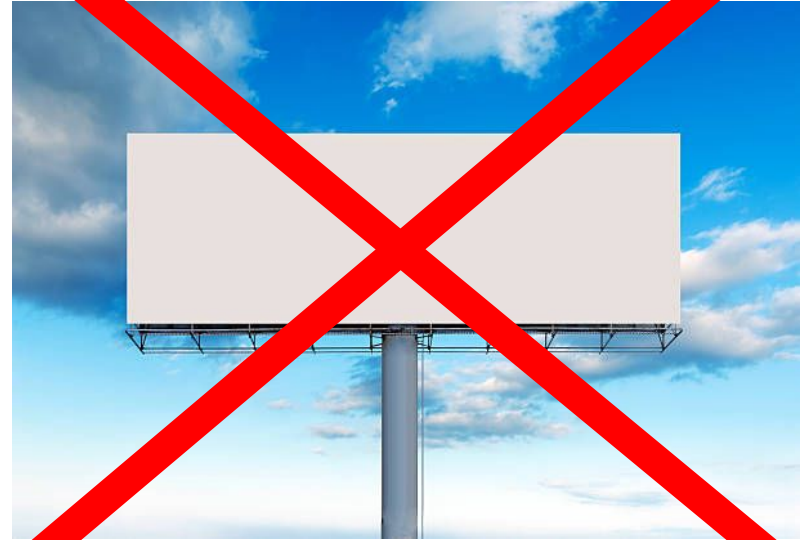
This project will focus on zoning for signage on private land.

This project **WILL NOT**:

- Allow billboards
- Allow electronic signage everywhere in the city
- Regulate public art

This project **CANNOT**:

- Change the size or location of MBTA or MassDOT signage





PARAMOUNT

RESIST NUMBNESS :: MICHAEL LORENZO DEAN :: BLACK LIVES MATTER

1. Why is signage important?

Wayfinding



Scale and Texture



Creativity and Cultural Expression



A photograph of a city street with various signs and buildings. The street is lined with multi-story buildings, some with ornate facades and others with modern glass windows. Signs for 'SAMS', 'Eddie Bauer OUTHLET', 'AMOU', 'OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE', 'WINE CELLAR', and 'GOLD POWER' are visible. Pedestrians are walking on the sidewalk, and cars are parked along the street. The text '2. How is signage regulated and reviewed currently?' is overlaid in the center of the image.

2. How is signage regulated and reviewed currently?

What IS regulated by zoning?

The majority of Boston's signage is regulated by the Zoning Code (Article 11 & Neighborhood Zoning Articles).

Things that CAN BE regulated by Zoning:

- The size of signs
- The location of individual signs
- Types of signs that are and are not allowed
- Illumination



What IS NOT regulated by zoning?

Things that ARE NOT regulated by Zoning:

- Content and design of individual signs
- Public art
- Traffic signs
- Landmarks review
- Signs erected by City, State, or Federal agencies/departments



Article 11 (Currently)

Article 11 is Boston's Sign Code:

- Written in the 1970s with almost no updates since
- Full of typos and contradictions; hard to read, no hierarchy, confusing structure
- Not a good tool for accommodating wayfinding, scale/texture, and cultural difference

Section 11-1. - Signs in Residential Districts.

In any residential district there shall not be any sign except as follows:

- (a) One sign, not exceeding two square feet in total area, attached to the lot, street number or name of the occupant or occupants of the lot, or both of [Section 8-7](#).
- (b) One bulletin or announcement board, name sign or entrance marker for an institution exceeds one hundred feet, one such sign for each hundred feet.
- (c) One "For Sale" or "For Rent" sign, not exceeding eight square feet in area.
- (d) One building contractor's or developer's sign, not exceeding thirty-two square feet.
- (e) One sign not exceeding twenty square feet per entrance to a tract of land.
- (f) One sign, accessory to a nonconforming use, which conforms with [Section 8-7](#) in residential districts under said section.

(As inserted on April 11, 1973)

- (g) Official public notices and notices posted by public officers in performance of their duties.
- (h) Government signs for the control of traffic and other regulatory purposes; and signs of public service companies indicating danger or accident.
- (i) Temporary display posters, without independent structural support, in which the posters are removed within 30 days following the conclusion of such campaign.
- (j) Legal display of flags, emblems and insignia of any nation or political subdivision.
- (k) Historical or scenic markers approved by a recognized historical or conservation commission.

(As inserted on February 20, 1975)

Neighborhood Sign Articles (Currently)

In addition to Article 11, each Neighborhood District (20 in total) has its own sign regulations.

- Most were written 20-30 years ago
- Small and often meaningless differences exist between Articles
- Provisions often end up referring to Article 11
- Hard to find and confusing to navigate
- Not a useful tool for allowing meaningful difference across areas

CLE 53 - EAST BOSTON NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICT
(As amended on May 9 and August 22, 1996.)

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Section 53-55. - Sign Regulations.

The provisions of this [Section 53-55](#) shall apply to all Proposed Project Review or Small Project Review, pursuant to Article 80

1. **Sign Regulations Applicable in Residential Subdistricts, Space Subdistricts.** In all Residential and Waterfront Res there shall not be any Sign except as provided in Article
2. **Sign Regulations Applicable in All Subdistricts Other th Subdistricts, and Open Space Subdistricts.** In all subdis Subdistricts, and Open Space Subdistricts, there shall no provided in this [Section 53-55](#). Notwithstanding any prov
 - (a) **Signs Parallel to Building Wall.** For Signs parallel to i

Many of Boston's most beloved signs would not be allowed under current zoning.

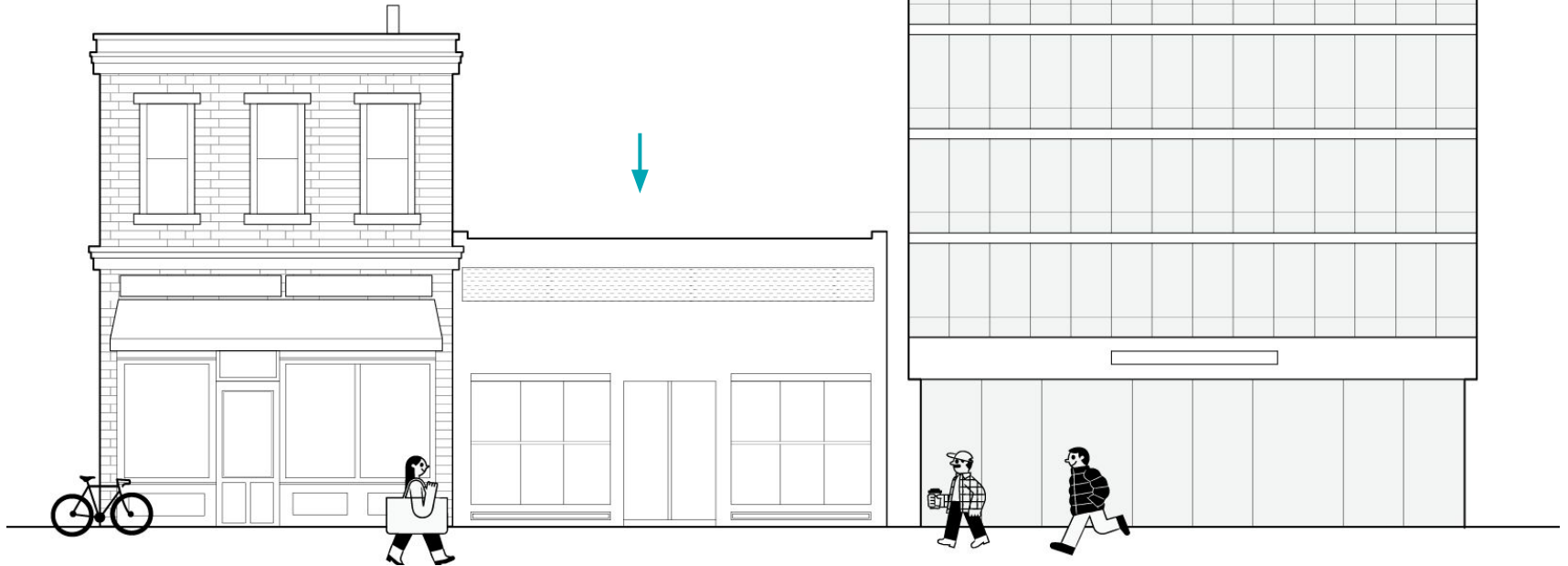


Above: Regina's Pizza, North End; Steaming Tea Kettle, Downtown
Below: City Feed & Supply, Jamaica Plain

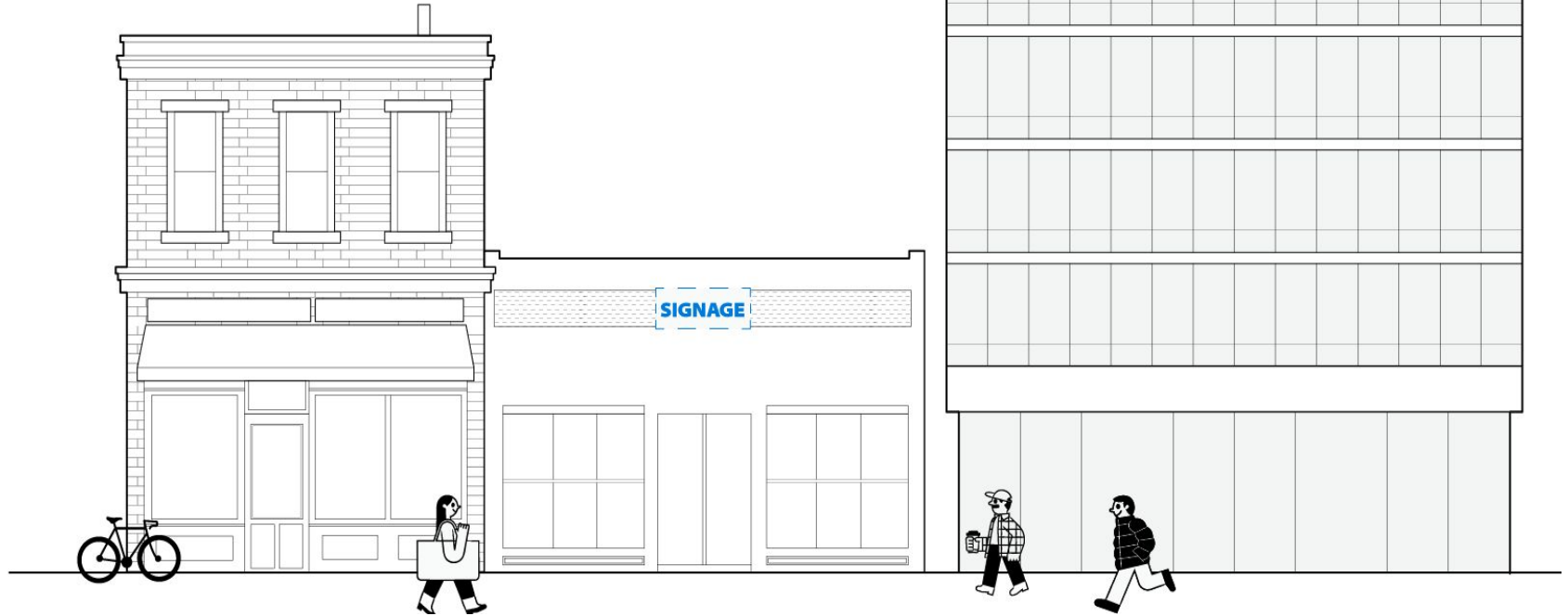


**What do you do if you
need to put up a sign?**

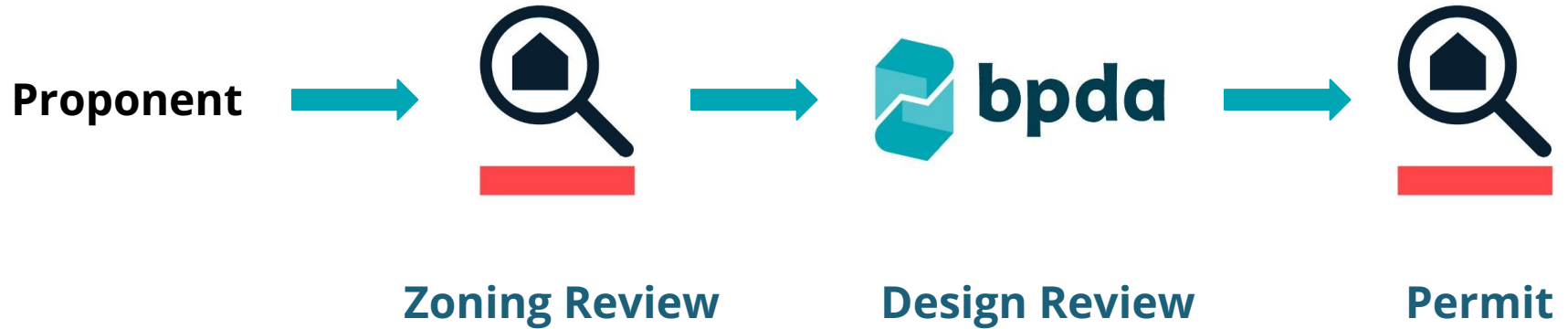
Let's say you.... opened a new business!



And you'd like to... propose a sign!



Review Process (Theoretical)



Article 80E says that any application for a sign requires design review by the BPDA.

Article 80E-2:

“The Comprehensive Sign Design Component of Small Project Review shall apply to any application for approval of a comprehensive sign design, pursuant to Section 11-2.”

Article 80E-3:

“A proposed comprehensive sign design shall achieve a complementary and harmonious synthesis of signs and architectural features, as required by Section 11-2.”

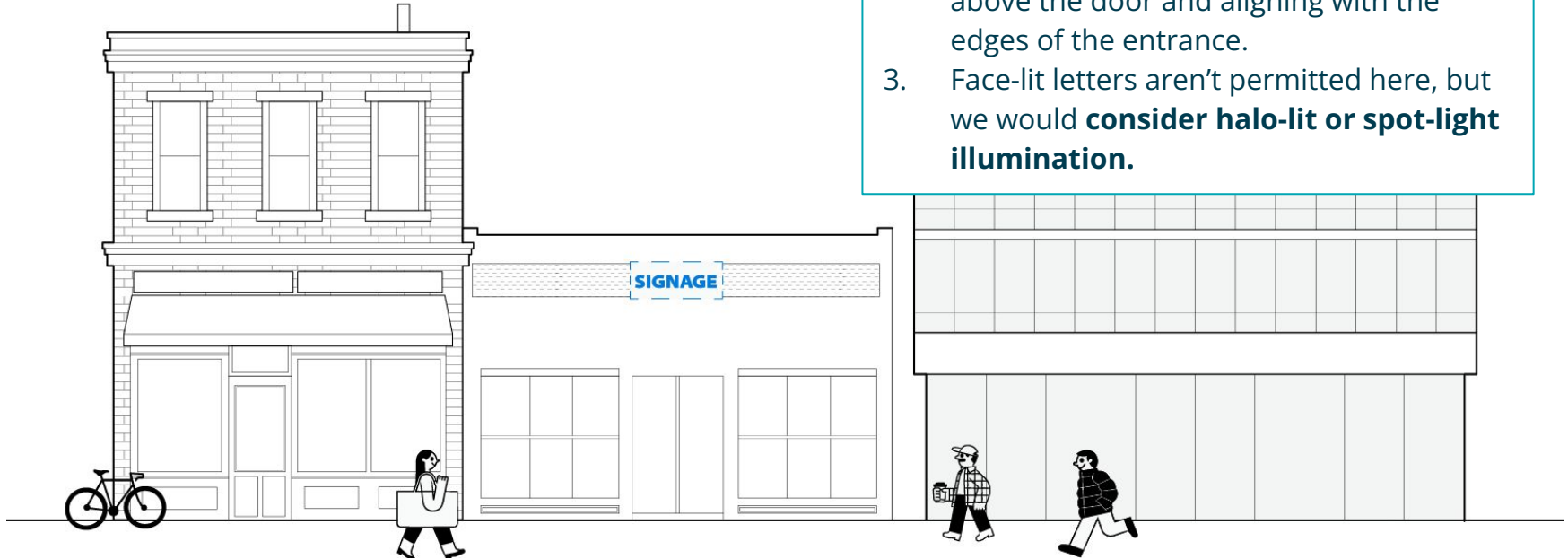
Article 11 allows the BPDA to approve signs that do not comply with zoning, if architecturally appropriate.

Article 11-2:

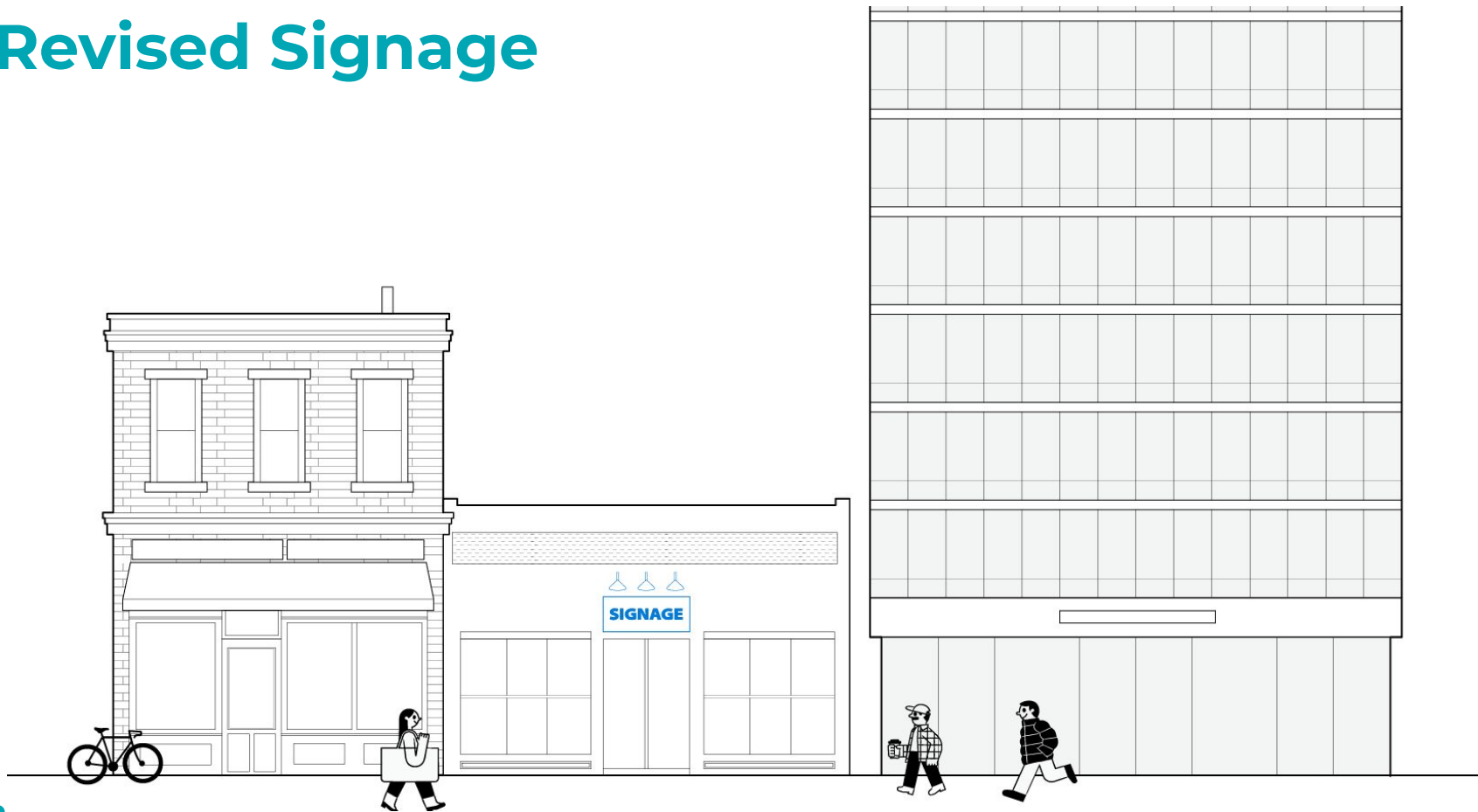
“The height and area of signs on a sign frontage may exceed the limits established by this section, provided that a comprehensive sign design, as defined by “Sign, area of,” (c) of Section 2-1, for said sign frontage is certified by the Urban Design Department of the Boston Redevelopment Authority to be a complementary and harmonious synthesis of signs and architectural features.”

BPDA Feedback

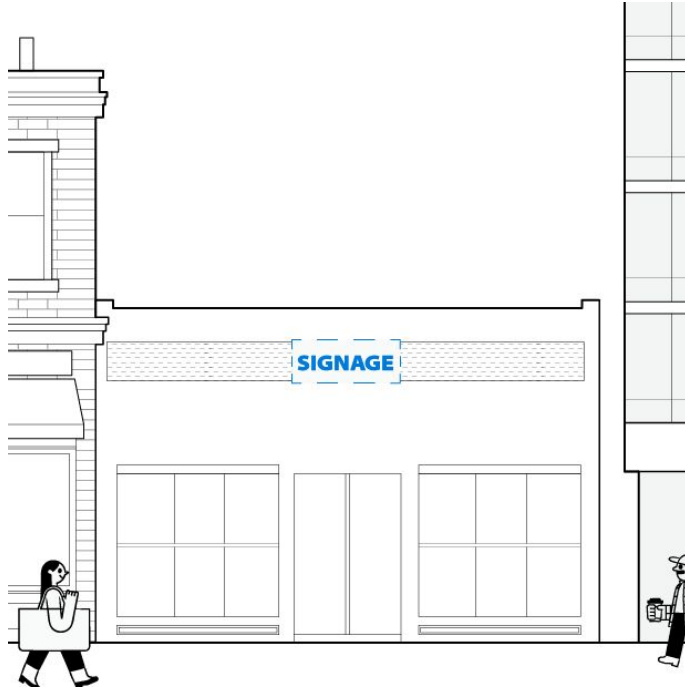
1. Unfortunately, the **proposed signage covers key architectural details**, please relocate to not block this.
2. Conventionally, signage should be **close to main entrance to aid in wayfinding**. We'd recommend centering the sign above the door and aligning with the edges of the entrance.
3. Face-lit letters aren't permitted here, but we would **consider halo-lit or spot-light illumination**.



Revised Signage



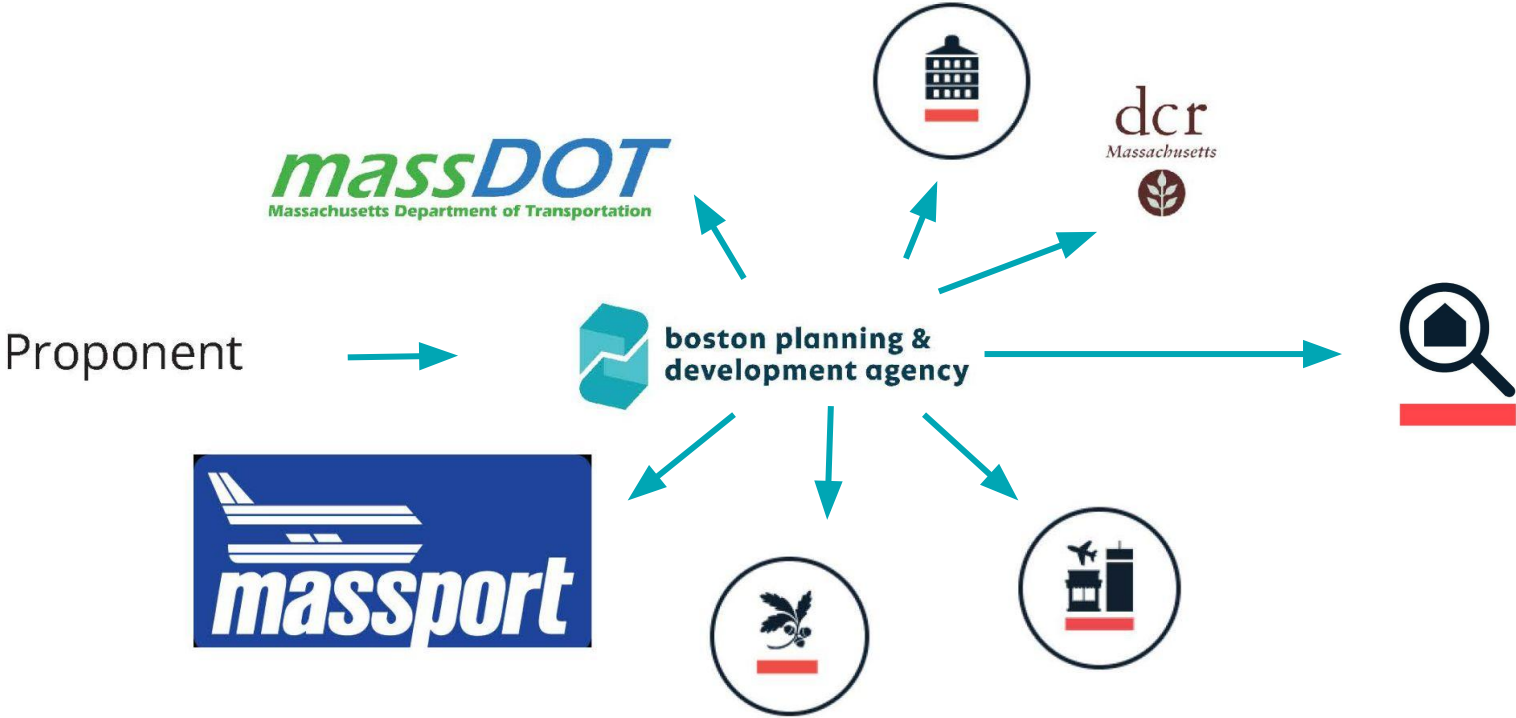
Before BPDA signage review



After BPDA signage review



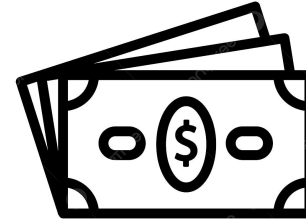
Review Process (Actual)



Summary: The Problem

Getting a sign approved in Boston can be confusing, frustrating, arbitrary, and time-consuming for everyone involved.

- The process for getting a sign approved is long and obscure - costing time and money for small businesses
- Discretionary sign review takes up extensive staff time, taking valuable resources away from other projects
- The Sign Code is out-of-date and vague, and doesn't have clear answers for common questions that proponents and internal reviewers have



Sign Code Modernization is needed to rethink how signs are regulated and reviewed in Boston!

Reminder

This project will focus on zoning for signage on private land.

This project **WILL NOT**:

- Allow billboards
- Allow electronic signage everywhere in the city
- Regulate public art

This project **CANNOT**:

- Change the size or location of MBTA or MassDOT signage



A Quick Pause for [Clarifying] Questions!

 D'ORO BARBERSHOP

 Dot
Breakfast • Lunch
617.43

3. What We've Learned



Overview

1. Outreach

- Interdepartmental Coordination
- Surveys

2. Research & Analysis

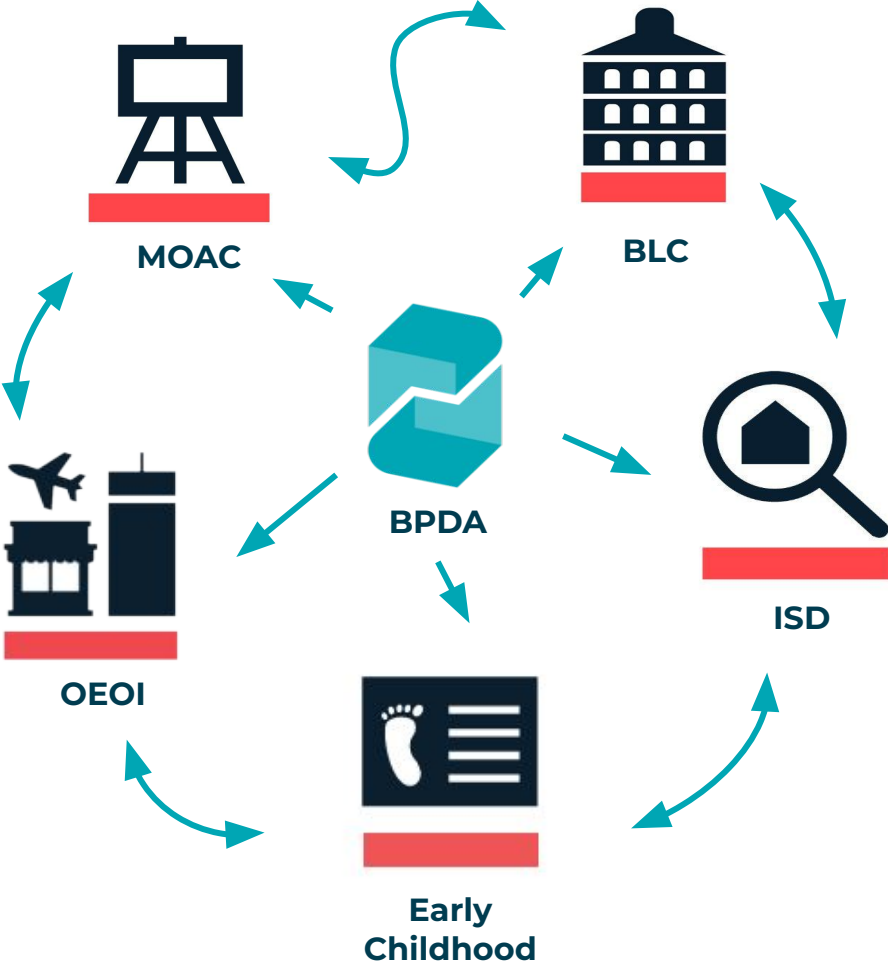
- Peer City Sign Code Analysis
- Sign Research / Publications

3. Takeaways



Interdepartmental Coordination

Other Departments involved in sign regulation and review have voiced support for reform!



Surveys

The BPDA has sent surveys to sign vendors to gather feedback on existing sign regulations and processes.

- 95% of respondents believed sign permitting was at least moderately hard to understand
- 100% of respondents felt other cities had clearer zoning regulations for signs

Awaiting small business survey results.

*"Nearly every town/city I have worked with will have a permit issued within **30 days** of submission - we tell our customers that permitting **in Boston can take 3-6 months.**"*

*"[Compared to other cities' sign processes], Boston is much **more time consuming & less clear** as to what is allowed neighborhood to neighborhood. Seemingly **unnecessarily restrictive** in some commercially vibrant areas."*

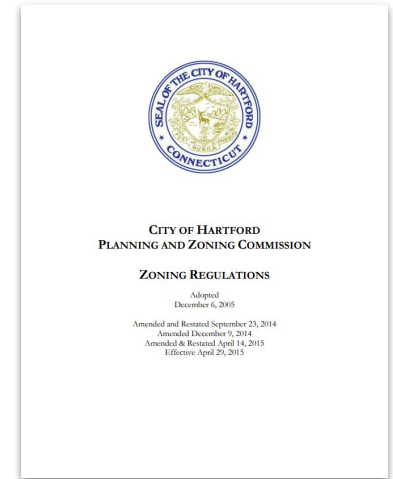
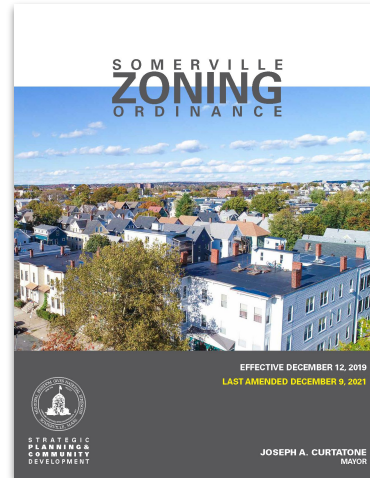
*"In Boston, I **do not even look at zoning requirements**, just at other signs in the areas..."*

*"Technology has changed tremendously since the 70's and **it's time for the BPDA to revise their information** to fit the times."*

Peer City Sign Code Analysis

BPDA Staff reviewed the sign codes of 12 different geographic, cultural, and size peers to understand how other cities regulate signage. These peers included:

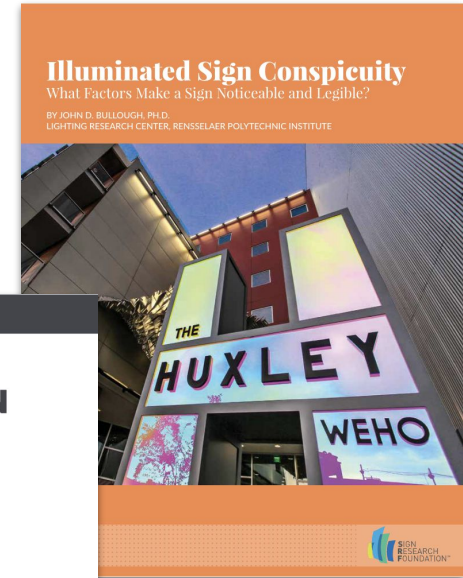
- Brookline
- Cambridge
- Hartford
- Portland, ME
- Providence
- Somerville
- Austin
- Charlotte
- Chicago
- Nashville
- Seattle
- Washington, DC



Sign Research / Publications

Organizations such as the International Sign Association and the Sign Research Foundation publish academic research and hands-on case studies to guide municipalities in regulating signs, particularly:

- Illumination standards
- Temporary signs
- Content-neutral regulations



How Boston's Sign Code is Unique

CURRENT STRUCTURE

“**One-size-fits-all**” approach to commercial signage, assuming all commercial areas need the same types of signs

Includes very **little process-related information** and no administrative language.

Omits design guidelines and general sign standards from text altogether.

Provides **blanket dimensional regulations** for signs that do not vary between sign-types

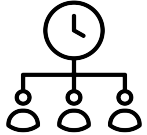
11-1	Signs in Residential Districts
11-2	On-Premise Signs in all Other Districts
11-3	Signs in Licensed Parking Lots.
11-4	Signs on Parking Garages.
11-5	Alteration, Repair and Replacement of On-Premise Signs
11-6	Signs Subject to Other Regulations
11-7	Electronic Signs
11-8	Signs in Urban Renewal Project Areas
11-9	Conditional Sign Permits

Takeaways: What comes next?

Sign Code Modernization GOALS



1. Update zoning regulations for signs to reflect the conditions we want (and don't want) to see in Boston.



2. Reform review processes to create more consistent approach and reduce time/cost burden for staff and proponents



3. Simplify language, embed visual aides, and create a "how-to guide" to make sign regulations easier to understand.



4. Embrace and affirm the creativity and expression that is possible through signage

Important Caveats

This project can / will...

Update zoning for signs

Clarify signage permitting process

Embed design elements and standards (including for illumination) into regulation

Create “how-to guide” to make sign regulations and process more accessible

This project cannot / will not...

Regulate the content of signs

Allow billboards

Permit electronic signs to be developed everywhere

Change how traffic/MBTA signs look or where they're located

Improved Structure and Hierarchy

An improved sign code would have a clear organizational structure and:

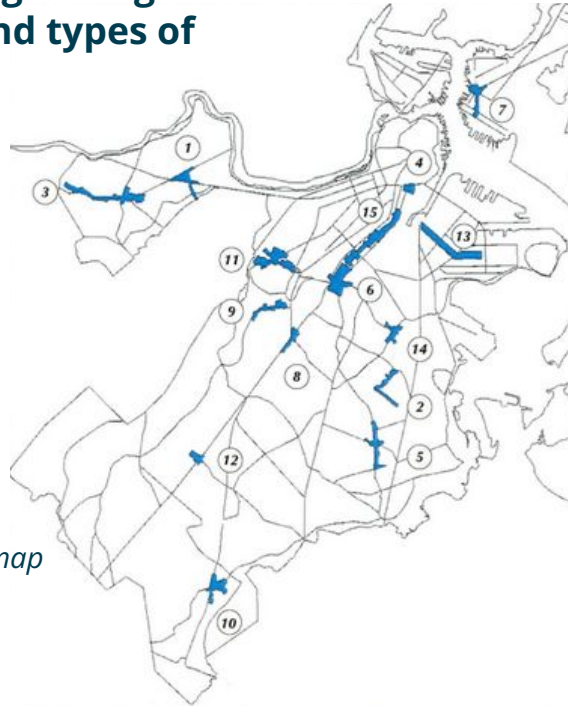
- Be clearly organized, so that non-experts can read and understand it
- Consolidate all sign-related regulations in one place, not spread across the zoning code
- Include process-related content

Example Structure:

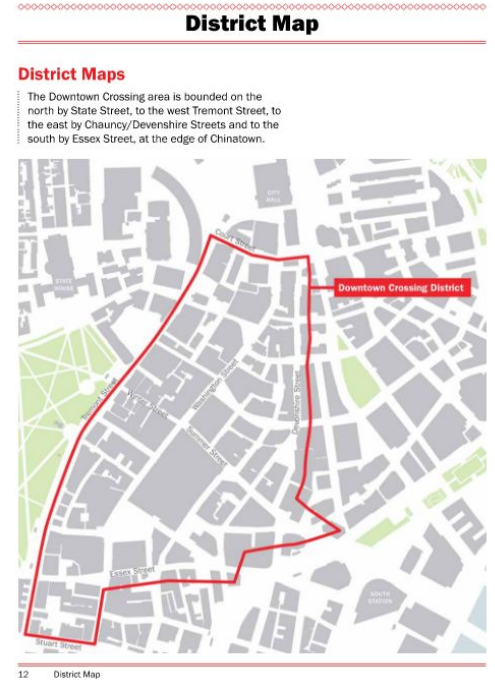
1. Administrative
2. Process & Procedure
3. Geographic
4. Signs in Specific Locations/Uses
5. Specific Sign Types
6. Design, Sizing, and Material Restrictions
7. General Standards for All Signs

Geographic Differentiation

Instead of relying on the sign codes in the existing neighborhood articles, geographic “sign districts” tied to underlying zoning could allow for different intensities and types of signs where appropriate.



Example: 1998 Main Streets Commercial Sign Guidelines map



Example: Downtown Crossing sign area map from Downtown Crossing Sign Guidelines

Embed Design in the Code

Where legally feasible, design could be written into the code, eliminating the uncertain and arbitrary nature of design review for signs.

- Design Standards can help guide the sizing of signs, and provide specific regulations for specific types of signs
- Location Standards regulate where signs can and cannot be located, such as how high they are over the sidewalk or whether or not they obstruct significant architectural features
- Illumination Standards control the brightness, lighting strategy, and operating time of a sign



Halo Illumination
Projected light from behind individual letters or symbols gives a halo effect.



External Illumination
Light projected onto the face of a sign from an outside source, such as a gooseneck or spot.



Internal Illumination
Light is projected from a source inside an enclosed sign.



Channel Neon Tube
Light is emitted by neon tubes mounted inside channels, creating a glow effect.



Exposed Neon Tube
Light is emitted by neon tubes mounted directly to the face of a sign.



Exposed Incandescent
Exposed bulbs mounted to the face of a sign create the illumination.

Example: Illumination types from Downtown Crossing Sign Guidelines

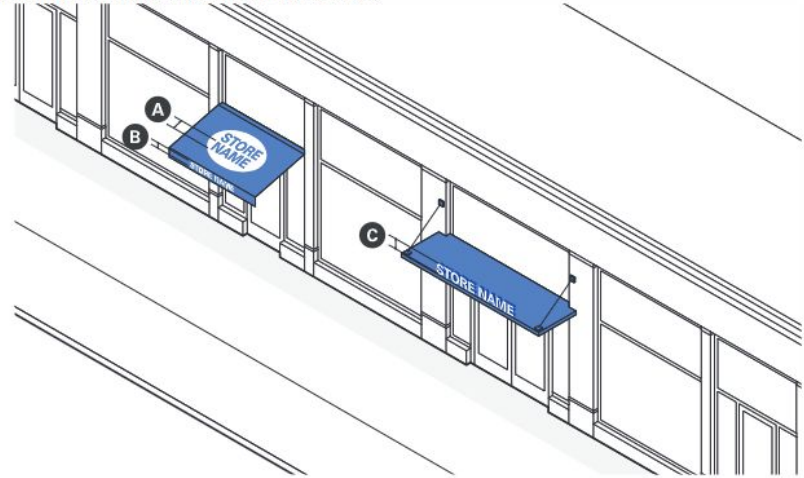
Use of Graphics

- Clear “Language”
- Connection to the Code
- Combining Graphics with Charts



13. Awning or Canopy Sign

- a. A SIGN that is painted, screen printed, sewn, or adhered onto the surface of an awning or attached above, below, or to the face of an entry canopy that identifies a commercial establishment. Awning/canopy signs are intended to be viewed by pedestrians on the OPPOSITE SIDE OF STREET.



Size	
Area	–
Located on Valance (max)	50% coverage
Located on Awning Slope (max)	25% coverage
Projecting from Canopy (max)	1 sf. per width of canopy

Lettering	
Height	–
Valance (max)	8 in
Awning Slope (max)	18 in
Projecting from Canopy (max)	12 in

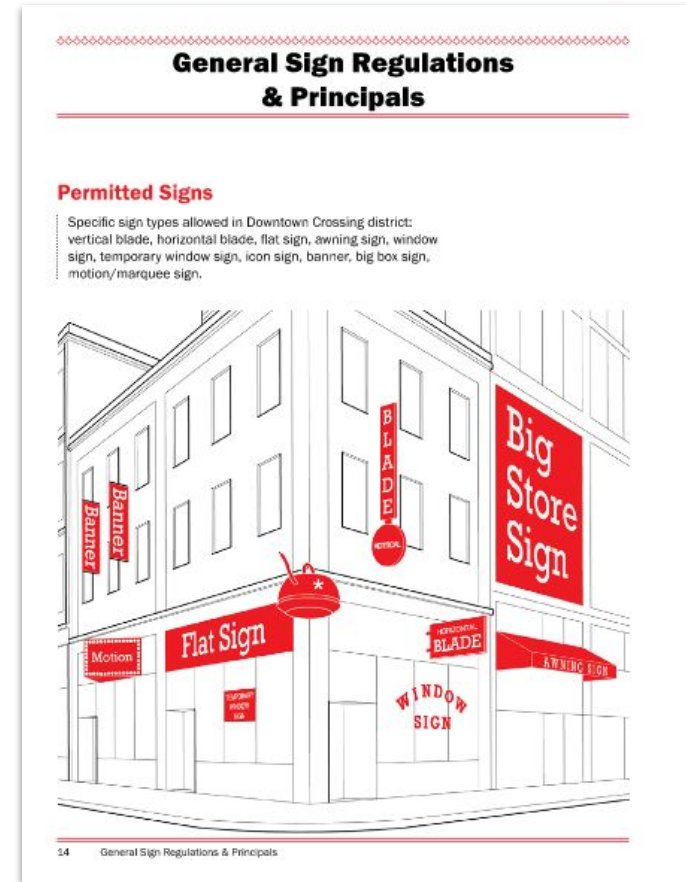
b. Standards

- Signs are not permitted on awnings or canopies that do not conform to the provisions for each type of BUILDING component. See §3.D. BUILDING COMPONENTS for more information.
- Signage located on the sloping portion of an awning is only permitted for storefronts where the typical area for a wall sign is missing.
- Signage is prohibited on UPPER STORY awnings and on the side of awnings with closed ends.
- Information type is limited to business name, logo, and address. Additional information is prohibited.

How-to Guide

A How-to Guide could be a useful tool to accompany zoning updates to the sign code. It could be used to:

- Provide additional design guidelines for signage, beyond what zoning can provide.
- Examine updated sign regulations through the lens of existing precedents in Boston.
- Map out and explain sign permitting processes in a clearer and more in-depth manner.



Example: Diagram from Downtown Crossing Sign Guidelines

THE LENANE BUILDING

home.stead
bakery & café
since 2015

4. What Do You Want To See?

1448

See?



Overview

1. Poll Activity

- Which signscape do you prefer?

2. Breakout Rooms

- Poll Activity Reflections
- Sign Sentiments

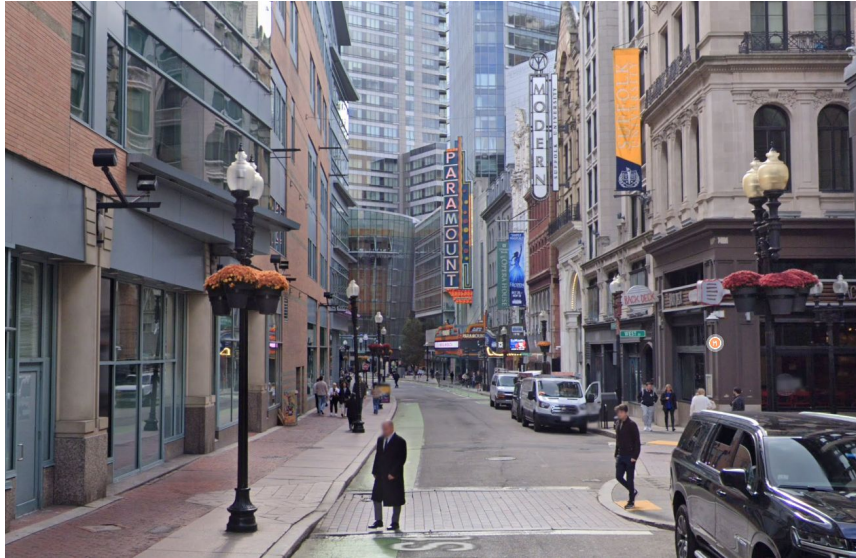
3. Share Out





Which Signscape Do
YOU Prefer?

Poll #1



Washington Street, Boston (2023)



Washington Street, Boston (2010)

Poll #2



Centre Street, Boston, MA



Tremont Street, Boston, MA

Poll #3



Tremont Street, Boston, MA



Centre Street, Boston, MA



Breakout Rooms!

[Breakout Room Questions]

- **Poll Reflection**

- What did you like? Why?
- What didn't you like? Why?

- **Sign Sentiments**

- What kinds of signs do you like?
- What makes a sign stand out?
- What is a really good sign in Boston? Why is it good?
- What is a really bad sign in Boston? Why is it bad?
- Other thoughts?



Share Out!

Breakout Room 1 - Adam

Poll Reflection

- What did you like? Why?
 - Good signs didn't clash with architectural elements
 - Good signs are easy to read
 - Good storefronts had cohesive colors
 - Signs that stood out more were easier to read
- What didn't you like? Why?
 -

Sign Sentiments

- What kinds of signs do you like?
 -
- What makes a sign stand out?
 -
- What is a really good sign in Boston? Why is it good?
 - Allston on Comm Ave - very individual signs became blander
 - Fenway MGM Music Hall signs - historic look, not overwhelming
- What is a really bad sign in Boston? Why is it bad?
 - Signs that fall down
 - Signs that take up the windows of storefront
 - Multiple signs that advertise
- Other thoughts?
 - When times are good, lots of signs – Washington street example

Breakout Room 2 - Lizzie

Poll Reflection

- What did you like? Why?
 - The uniqueness of the signs (Aurora), enjoy signage which represents the different ethnicities in the city of Boston, like a city that's completely uniform
 - Vibrant, bright signs like in JP (George)
 - Enjoy the diverse, signage, enjoyed presentation (Marc)
- What didn't you like? Why?
 - Busy, a lot of lighting/should not be responsibility of business for lighting but city for safety, lack-of safety specifically in areas with lots of foot-traffic (George)
 - Felt boring without culturally reflect the city (Aurora)
 - Signs that feel like fighting and overpowering each other (Marc)

Sign Sentiments

- What kinds of signs do you like?
 -
- What makes a sign stand out?
 -
- What is a really good sign in Boston? Why is it good?
 -
- What is a really bad sign in Boston? Why is it bad?
 -
- Other thoughts?
 - "One-stop-shop" and understanding how to work with ISD, etc. combining this into this to help with the barriers preventing businesses. How-to-Guide

Breakout Room 3 - Cyrus

Poll Reflection

- What did you like? Why?
 - People drawn to color
 - Architectural coherence is important
 - Like the Boing sign as well as the tea kettle
 - Character is important within certain limits
- What didn't you like? Why?
 - Some signs seemed a bit busy, signs need to be clear and concise
 - The lack of any signage on the 2023 Washington street image created a dark scene
 - Want to avoid bland, homogenous signage

Sign Sentiments

- What kinds of signs do you like?
 - Blade signs are good because they project and you can see from a distance
 - MBTA bus signs are helpful
- What makes a sign stand out?
 - The view angle of a sign for someone walking down a street should be considered in design
 - It needs to be big enough to see while moving down a street at different speeds
 - Need to allow for differentiation by neighborhood, different places want different things
 - Legibility is critically important
 - Some buildings may need multiple signs, but should be balanced
 - Craftsmanship (ex. hand lettering)
- What is a really good sign in Boston? Why is it good?
 - Well maintained classic signs
- What is a really bad sign in Boston? Why is it bad?
 - Cheap awning signs are not good - want a sign to be and look durable
- Other thoughts?
 - Keep the rules clear, flexible, and uniform
 - Potential for 20 year sign redesign/maintenance



5. Next Steps

Sign Code Modernization Tentative Timeline

PHASE 1: Analysis, Engagement, & Drafting (*March - April*)

- Kickoff Public Meeting
- Surveys to Sign Vendors & Small Businesses
- Office Hours

PHASE 2: Draft Release, Public Comment, & Revisions (*Spring*)

- Draft Release Public Meeting
- Public Comment Period
- Office Hours

PHASE 3: Closeout Meeting, BDPA Board, & Zoning Commission (*Summer*)

- Closeout Public Meeting
- BPDA Board for Approval
- Zoning Commission for Adoption



Questions and Comments

Thank you!

For more information: bit.ly/SignCodeModernization

*Questions? Email us:
SignCodeModernization@boston.gov*

Zoning Notices & Updates Newsletter

Sign up at: <https://www.bostonplans.org/about-us/get-involved>

boston planning & development agency

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Neighborhoods | Zoning | Planning | Urban Design | Development | Housing | Research | 3D Data & Maps | Work with Us

About The BPDA

Who We Are
Mayor Wu's Vision for the BPDA
Leadership
BPDA Board
Departments
Careers at the BPDA
BRA History
BPDA Achievements
Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park
Glossary
Get Involved
Model Room
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Public Records Request
Press Kit
Credits
Copyright and Disclaimer

Get Involved

If you do not speak English and wish to sign up for communications, please email bpdowncenter@boston.gov.

Email: * Confirm Email: *

First Name: Last Name:

Street Address: Address Line 2:

City: State:

Zip: Phone:

Affiliation:

I want information emailed to me on:

Neighborhoods:
Sign up for email updates and notifications by selecting a Neighborhood below:

Citywide (Check all)

<input type="checkbox"/> Allston	<input type="checkbox"/> Back Bay	<input type="checkbox"/> Bay Village	<input type="checkbox"/> Beacon Hill
<input type="checkbox"/> Brighton	<input type="checkbox"/> Charlestown	<input type="checkbox"/> Chinatown	<input type="checkbox"/> Dorchester
<input type="checkbox"/> Downtown	<input type="checkbox"/> East Boston	<input type="checkbox"/> Fenway	<input type="checkbox"/> Hyde Park
<input type="checkbox"/> Jamaica Plain	<input type="checkbox"/> Leather District	<input type="checkbox"/> Longwood Medical Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Mattapan
<input type="checkbox"/> Mission Hill	<input type="checkbox"/> North End	<input type="checkbox"/> Roslindale	<input type="checkbox"/> Roxbury
<input type="checkbox"/> South Boston	<input type="checkbox"/> South Boston Waterfront	<input type="checkbox"/> South End	<input type="checkbox"/> West End
<input type="checkbox"/> West Roxbury			

I'm interested in: (optional)

Development Projects Institutional Planning Urban Renewal

Downtown & Neighborhood Planning

Climate Change Planning & Sustainable Development

Zoning Notices & Updates

Research Publications
Sign up for email updates and notifications by selecting a Research Publications below:



I'm interested in: (optional)

Development Projects Institutional Planning Urban Renewal

Downtown & Neighborhood Planning

Climate Change Planning & Sustainable Development

Zoning Notices & Updates

How is Boston's signage reviewed?

Many entities are involved in the review of signage, including:

- Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA)
- Inspectional Services Department (ISD)
- Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC)
- Public Improvements Commission (PIC)

... and several others!

Department	Purpose
BPDA	Zoning & Design Review
ISD	Permitting & Approvals
Landmarks	Design Review for Landmarked Signs, Sites, and Districts
PIC	Design Review for Signs in Public Right of Way
Parks	Design Review for Signs in Public Open Space

Stay Involved in Zoning Reform (2024's version)

- ADU Pattern Book and Citywide **Zoning for ADUs** - *launching this month, continuing through the year*
- **Zero Net Carbon** Zoning (Art 37) - *releasing draft in March*
- New Zoning to Implement **PLAN: Downtown** - *Spring*
- Comprehensive Updates to Article 23 for **Greening Parking Design & Standards**
- Modernize the **Sign Code** (Art 11) - *Summer*
- Comprehensive modernization of **Dimensional Definitions** - *Summer*

Use of Graphics in Codes

14+ Peer Codes

Also referred to Downtown Crossing Signage Guidelines, Master Sign Plans, and a few more

Some of our favorites:

- *Hartford*
- *Portland*
- *Somerville*
- *Chicago*

Hartford: What did we like?

Clear “Language”

- Set of slightly alternating iterations, but consistent backgrounds
- Emphasis on signage in each diagram

Figure 8.5-B Examples of Projecting Marquee Signs

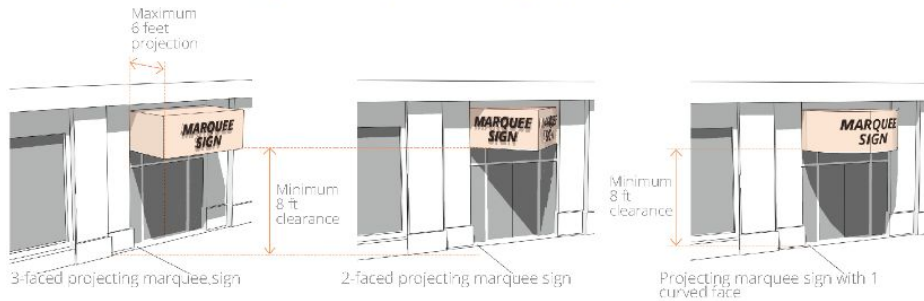


Figure 8.4-B Example of Projecting Sign



Figure 8.4-C Area Calculation for Projecting Sign

Hartford: What did we like?

Figure 8.10-B Example of Monument Sign

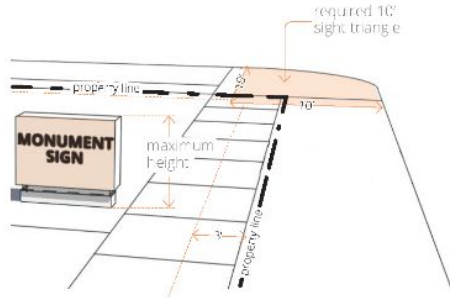


Figure 8.10-C Area Calculation for Monument Sign

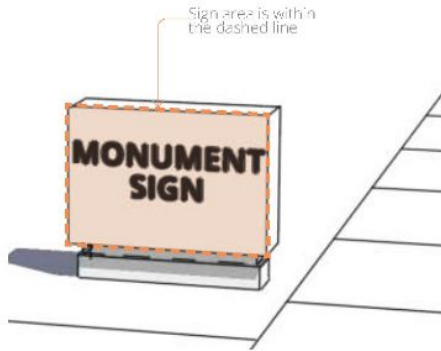
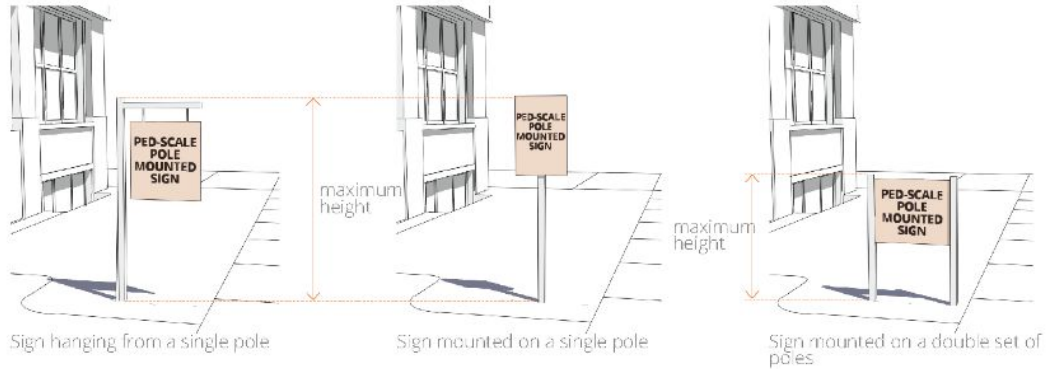


Figure 8.11-C Examples of Ped-Scale Pole-Mounted Signs



8.11 Ped-Scale Pole-Mounted Sign

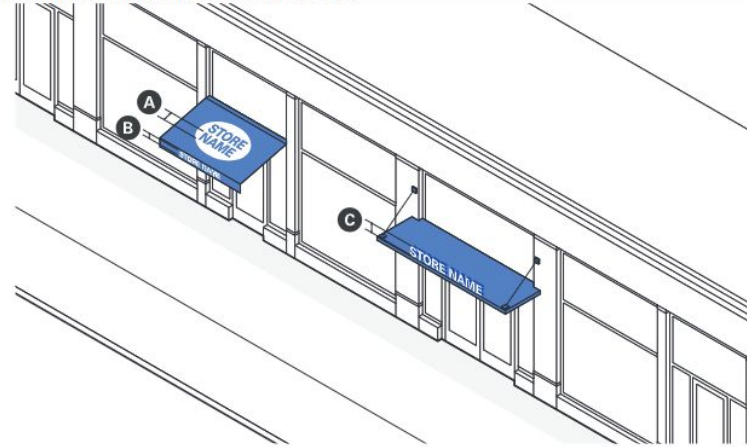
Somerville: What did we like?

Connection to the Code

- Utilized one diagram to demonstrate multiple elements
- Connection of text to images with letter labeling system

13. Awning or Canopy Sign

- a. A SIGN that is painted, screen printed, sewn, or adhered onto the surface of a awning or attached above, below, or to the face of an entry canopy that identifies a commercial establishment. Awning/canopy signs are intended to be viewed by pedestrians on the OPPOSITE SIDE OF STREET.



Size	
Area	--
Located on Valance (max)	50% coverage
Located on Awning Slope (max)	25% coverage
Projecting from Canopy (max)	1 sf. per width of canopy

Lettering	
Height	--
Valance (max)	8 in
Awning Slope (max)	18 in
Projecting from Canopy (max)	12 in

b. Standards

- SIGNS are not permitted on awnings or canopies that do not conform to the provisions for each type of BUILDING component. See §3.D. BUILDING COMPONENTS for more information.
- SIGNAGE located on the sloping portion of an awning is only permitted for storefronts where the typical area for a wall SIGN is missing.
- SIGNAGE is prohibited on UPPER STORY awnings and on the side of awnings with closed ends.
- Information type is limited to business name, logo, and address. Additional information is prohibited.

Portland: What did we like?

Combining Graphics with Charts

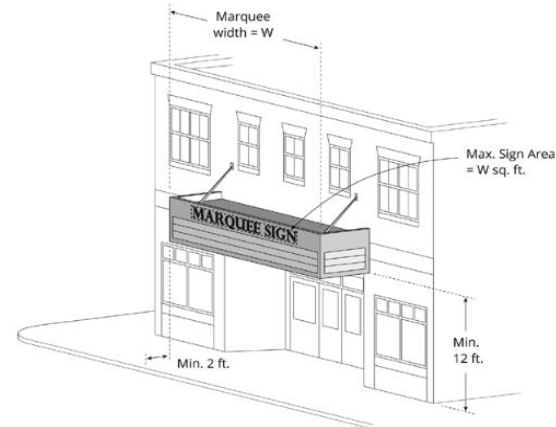
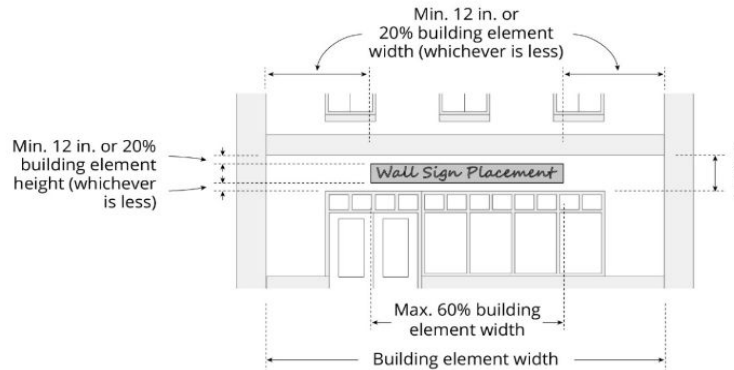
- Call-outs with specific dimensioning details

TABLE 20-P: STANDARDS FOR WALL SIGNS

Standard	Requirements
Sign area (max.)	As provided in Table 20-G
Number of signs (max.)	As provided in Table 20-G
Illumination	External illumination, direct illumination, internal illumination, or neon
Special provisions	Painted wall signs are allowed on any exterior building wall of an individual tenant space or building. The allowable area for painted wall signs shall be increased by 10% over normal allowable sign dimensions for the zone.

TABLE 20-M: STANDARDS FOR MARQUEE SIGNS

Standard	Requirements
Sign area (max.)	1 SF to 1 linear foot of marquee width
Mounting height	12 ft. min. from the bottom of the marquee to the nearest grade or sidewalk
Number of signs (max.)	1 per business
Sign placement	May project into public right-of-way with permit approval.
Horizontal distance from back of curb (min.)	2 ft.
Illumination	Direct illumination or internal illumination



Review Process (Actual)

Proponent



Zoning Review
Design Review

Permit

No signage or poor signage can make a streetscape feel sterile, cavernous, or empty.



Above: High Street, Downtown - Below: Milk Street, Downtown



Too much signage
can produce visual
clutter, overwhelm
traffic signs, and
create unsafe
street conditions



*Scollay Square, Boston
(1860s)*

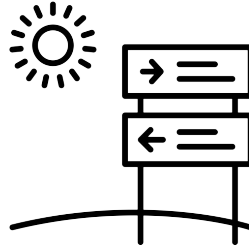
*Old State House, Boston
(1875)*



Why is signage important?

Signs play an important role in the city. They...

1. Function as wayfinding tools



2. Create human scale + texture in a large urban context

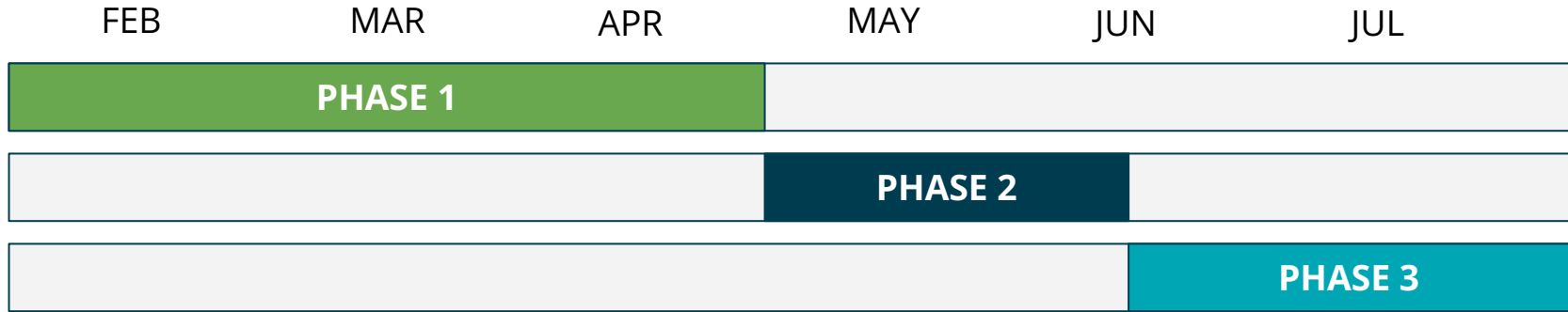


3. Provide opportunities for cultural expression



Sign Code Modernization Tentative Timeline

2024



PHASE 1: Analysis, Engagement, & Drafting



PHASE 2: Draft Release, Public Comment, & Revisions



PHASE 3: Closeout Meeting, BDPA Board, & Zoning Commission