



Blade Sign Grant Toolkit for Uptown Arts District Businesses

Prepared by Michigan City Mainstreet Association

Michigan City IN

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Introduction & Advice on Blade Signs

Introduction

In keeping with our mission of beautifying the district and driving traffic to local businesses, The Michigan City Mainstreet Association has created this document to assist the merchants and businesses in the Uptown Arts District to apply for a grant for a blade sign. In this document you will find design examples that reflect the quality of blade sign that would be appropriate for the Uptown Arts District. Examples reflect simple, yet thoughtful designs and more complex designs to enhance your retail or business brand.

This toolkit includes a grant application, City Sign Regulations, sign permit application and suggested sign contractors.

Advice on Blade Signs

Signage should be used as a positive tool to help identify a business, create an image and also to brand an identity and if used effectively, will drive traffic to your business.

Good signs should regard the placement, alignment and overall image of the streetscape. Effective signage will focus on the theme of the business and accentuate the positive features of the architecture.

Materials

There are a variety of materials available for blade signs such as acrylic, wood, and metal. On these substrates, it is possible to create your sign with digital printing applied to your sign or directly printed to the substrate. Depending on the complexity you desire, it's possible to enhance your sign with dimensional lettering or graphics created from similar materials. If appropriate for your business, hand carved wood panels are also an option.

Brackets

Brackets may be custom or stock. There are many options available for stock brackets. Stock brackets help to minimize the costs associated with a blade sign. However, durability must be considered due weather conditions in our region. We generally suggest not doing a "swinging" blade sign as it could pose a liability. Furthermore, reputable sign contractors dissuade from this type of sign. Instead of a swinging sign, it is recommended to weld the sign to the bracket. Not all brackets may withstand the wind forces in the winter. It's best to consult with your sign contractors of choice to ensure a pleasing yet durable and safe blade sign.

Qualifications for the Blade Sign Grant Applicant

Your business must:

- Be located within the boundaries of the Uptown Arts District
 - Refer to map [HERE](#).
- Provide written authorization from property owner.
- Provide a copy of your Indiana Retail Merchant Certificate.
- Complete and submit a grant application and all documents listed to the right to Michigan City Mainstreet Association.

As a reminder, please do not approve fabrication of a sign for your business until you have been approved by the Historic Board, your sign permit approved, permit fees paid and your grant has been approved by Michigan City Mainstreet Association.

Terms of the MCMA Blade Grant

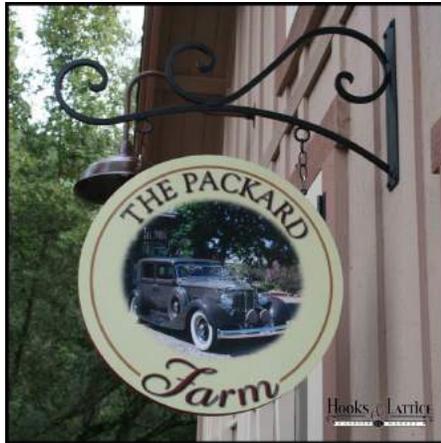
Your business must:

- Provide two itemized bids from licensed and insured sign contractors.
- MCMA will reimburse 50% up to a maximum of \$1,000 for the fabrication and installation of an approved blade sign.
- Excluded expenses from the grant are logo and design development for the sign.

Process

1. Review this Toolkit.
2. Work with a sign contractor to develop your sign design. Obtain drawing of proposed sign.
3. Obtain two bids for the fabrication and installation of your sign.
4. Go before the Historic Board with your sign design and Certificate of Appropriateness Application for approval on the fourth Monday of the month at 7pm in the Mayor’s Conference Room at City Hall.
5. Fill out Michigan City Sign Permit Application. Submit Sign Permit Application and proof of approval from the Historic Review Board to the Planning Department for final approval. Pay permit fees.
6. Once all approvals are in order. Release contract for fabrication and installation of your blade sign.
7. Provide MCMA with an itemized electronic paid invoice and supporting documents for reimbursement of 50% of sign cost and installation. include the following:
 - Two itemized bids for sign fabrication and installation.
 - Approved Michigan City Sign Permit Application.
 - Approved Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Review Board, if applicable.
 - Completed MCMA Blade Sign Grant Application.
 - Electronic version of Indiana Retail Merchant Certificate.
 - Paid Invoice from contracted sign fabricator.

Design Examples



Flat Blade Signs

Approx. 30" x 30" flat ¼" solid core alumetal panel with digitally printed artwork and standard bracket. Sign panels welded to bracket. Dbl-sided.
Approx. cost excl. installation \$280-\$550



Dimensional Blade Signs

Approx. 30" x 30" flat metal or wood panel with screened artwork or dimensional letters and custom bracket. Dbl-sided.
Approx. cost excl. installation \$1,000-\$1,800+



Design Examples



Dimensional Signs, Continued

Approx. 30" x 30" x 3" deep painted aluminum with 1/2" thk routed dimensional acrylic letters and motif. Dbl-sided. Welded steel mounting bracket.
Approx. cost excl. installation \$1,800-2,300.



Approx. 30" x 30" wood panel with hand cut and painted wood letters. Dbl-sided.
Approx. cost excl. installation and bracket \$750.



Dimensional Signs, Continued

Approx. 30" x 30" flat metal or wood panel with dimensional letters and custom bracket. Dbl-sided.
Approx. cost excl. installation \$1,800-\$2,300.

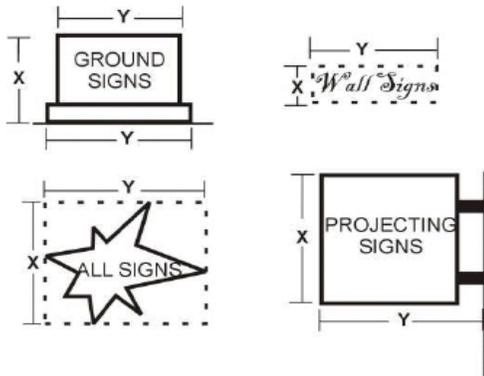


City Sign Guidelines and Ordinance

Michigan City Sign Ordinance Synopsis*

Per the Michigan City Sign Regulations, the requirements for any blade sign for a business establishment are summarized as follows:

1. The sign must not exceed 8.5 square feet per one side of the sign.
2. Signs may be double sided.
3. The bottom of the sign must be 10"-0" above the side walk or right of way.
4. The sign must not project more than 42" from the storefront façade including the bracket.
5. Applicable guidelines from Article 19.01 below highlighted in yellow.
6. Signs may not be internally illuminated.



*MCMA does not claim accuracy of the sign standards represented herein. It is your responsibility to verify current sign ordinances and that your sign meets the criteria for current ordinances.

Blade	3 ft.	8.5 sq. ft.	1 per façade facing a street or public right-of-way	(13)
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section 19.07.

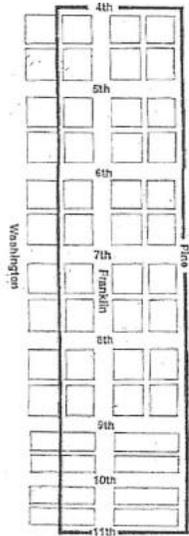
(13) **Blade.** A blade sign shall not extend more than 42 inches perpendicular to the surface of the building wall area upon which it is painted, erected, or fastened. Such signs may extend over a public sidewalk, provided they have a minimum 10-foot clearance from the sidewalk to the bottom of the sign. Blade signs shall not be internally illuminated. Cabinet or box style Blade signs shall not be permitted. The blade sign structure, including any bracket, shall not exceed 8.5 sq. feet on one side and shall not exceed 6" in depth. The display may be on both sides.

(Ord. No. 4328, §§ 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 6-16-2015)

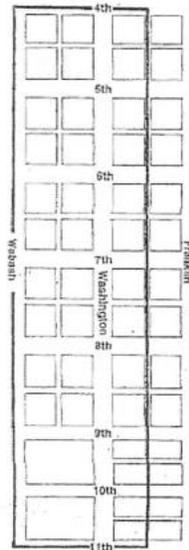
To review the full sign ordinance, visit this [PAGE](#).
For Assistance with the Michigan City Planning Department, go this [link](#).

Historic Districts

Some businesses located in the Uptown Arts District are also within the Franklin Square Historic District and Wabash Street Historic District, as designated by the Historic Review Board. As such, blade signs must be approved by this board in addition to the City and MCMA.



The Franklin Square Historic District is bordered by 4th Street to the north; the alleyway between Washington and Franklin Streets to the west; Pine Street to the east; and 11th Street to the south.



The Wabash Street Historic District is bordered by 4th Street to the north; Wabash Street to the west; alleyway between Washington and Franklin Streets to the east; and 11th Street to the south.

Sample of Certificate of Appropriateness Application

HISTORIC REVIEW BOARD OF MICHIGAN CITY INDIANA
CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPLICATE

(To be completed by Applicant)

PROJECT ADDRESS _____ Year Built _____

Owner's Name _____ Phone # _____

Owner's Address _____

e-mail address _____

Existing Use of Structure _____
Proposed Use of Structure _____
Description of Project _____

Documentation to submit:
 Site Survey Elevation drawings Building Plans Photographs
 Drawings & Sketches of: _____

(Signature of owner) _____ (Date) _____

(To be completed by Historic Review Board)

Decision of Historic Review Board _____

Authorized Commission

(Signature) _____	(Title) _____	(Date) _____
(Signature) _____	(Title) _____	(Date) _____
(Signature) _____	(Title) _____	(Date) _____

On-Site Certificate of Appropriateness Regular Meeting Certificate of Appropriateness
 Special Meeting Certificate of Appropriateness

The actual application may be found [HERE](#).
For additional assistance, please contact the Michigan City Historic Board.
[Link to Michigan City Historic Review Board](#)

Suggested Sign Contractors

Steindler Signs

Andrew Porter
Wanatah IN
219.733.2551

andrew@steindlersigns.com

Installation \$420 +/- plus MC Sign Permit Fees
Sign Design with existing logo \$60 flat fee
Logo design \$60 p/hr

Infinite Painting & Design

Chris Oliver
Michigan City IN
219.221.0581
infinitepaintingdesign@hotmail.com

Simko Signs

Mike Moreth
Valparaiso IN
219.308.6000

simkosigns@gmail.com

Installation \$450 +/- including MC Sign Permit Fees
Sign Design with existing logo no charge if logo doesn't require cleanup and client intends to place order
Includes attending Historic Review Board Meeting
Logo design \$50 p/hr

Other Sign Contractors

You may submit bids from sign contractors not on this list.