


**Mission Bay South
Signage Master Plan**

**Resolution No. 101-2000
Adopted June 27, 2000**



**Redevelopment Agency of the
City and County of San Francisco**

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The purpose of the Signage Master Plan is to provide a framework for the provision of visual information that assists, directs, informs, and identifies in order to serve residents, visitors, and tenants in the Mission Bay South Plan Area. This Signage Master Plan provides standards for the type, placement, size, height, and content for the signs in the South Plan Area.

The Redevelopment Agency (RDA) shall review and approve the schematic design/location of proposed private signs in conjunction with the schematic design plans for each individual project. This requirement is consistent with the Mission Bay South Design Review and Document Approval Procedure.

A comprehensive commercial signage program shall be submitted to the RDA for approval prior to installation of any signs. The intent of the comprehensive signage program is to encourage the use of materials and colors that compliment the building materials and scale while identifying the tenant.

Project proponents are encouraged to design signs of a unique and sophisticated nature, which will highlight their identity while contributing to an overall high quality appearance for Mission Bay. Signs should be artful and sculptural in form, and incorporate high quality materials that compliment the specific project. Signs that are unique, innovative, and compatible with the pedestrian experience are welcomed and encouraged.

Signs shall conform to the following standards:

- A. Standard regulatory or street signage shall be mounted to light standards or sign frames conforming to Department of Parking and traffic (DPT) and Department of Public Works (DWP) standards. The goal of this Master Plan is to consolidate public signage whenever possible.
- B. Signs shall be mounted with fasteners or bands conforming to the DPT and DPW standards.

A. Signs shall conform to the following standards

Signs for commercial industrial uses shall be limited to business identification (business sign). The maximum sign area allowed per parcel shall be 3 square feet for each linear foot of business frontage on a street or a maximum of 300 square feet whichever is less. The cumulative total signage area shall not exceed the above limitation.


B. Specific types of signs shall conform to the following standards:

1. **Wall signs.** The lowest edge of a wall sign shall be located above the ground floor windows or 15 feet above the sidewalk, whichever is greater. The upper edge of a wall sign shall not be higher than 50 percent of the base height of the building.

Wall signs more than 15 feet above the sidewalk shall be well integrated with the buildings architectural design and shall be located within 5 feet of changes in both the vertical and horizontal building wall planes. This requirement is established to ensure that the sign is not located in the middle of a flat wall plane.

The recommended maximum letter size shall not exceed 36 inches in height. No more than two wall signs are permitted per street frontage. Variations to deviate from this recommendation shall be evaluated at the schematic design stage based on overall building integration.

2. **Freestanding signs.** One freestanding signs is allowed where the building is set back from the street property line. Signs may be double-faced. The maximum area of each sign face, independent of the supporting structure shall be 40 square feet with a maximum of two faces at 80 square feet. The maximum height of the sign shall be 25 feet.

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3. **Fin signs.** The number of fin signs shall not exceed one per business on street frontage. This type of signage shall only be permitted when the design is intergrated with the building design. The lower edge of fin signs shall be not less than twelve feet above the sidewalk, the upper edge shall be no higher than the lower window sill of the first residential floor if within a residential district, otherwise may not exceed 50% of the height of the buildings, and shall not extend more than half the distance from the building to the curb or eight feet, whichever is less. The total area per face of each sign shall not exceed twenty-five square feet.
 4. **Awning signs.** Signs on awnings shall not exceed 50 percent of the area of the vertical face of the awning. Letters shall be no higher than 12 inches.
 5. **Nameplates.** Nameplates may not exceed 2 square feet per business.
 6. **Directional signage.** Signs for the purpose of directing vehicle traffic and pedestrian movement may be allowed at appropriate project access points. The number, size, height, and content of directional signs shall be subject to approval of SFRA on a case-by-case basis.

A. Signs shall conform to the following standards:

- 1 Residential uses shall be limited to residential identification signs only.
- 2 On 3rd and 4th Streets, each parcel is limited to a maximum of 20 square feet of sign area with no individual sign exceeding 10 square feet.
- 3 On other streets, each parcel shall be limited to a maximum of 15 square feet of sign area with no individual sign exceeding 5 square feet.

B. Specific types of signs shall conform to the following standards:

1. **Nameplates.** Nameplates shall be limited to the name and address of the building. Each address shall be allowed two plaques with a maximum of 5 square feet each.
2. **Wall signs.** Signs shall not be higher than the lowest windowsill on the first floor.
3. **Awning signs.** Sign area shall not exceed 50 percent of the area of the vertical face of the awning. Letters shall not exceed 12 inches in height.

A Signs shall conform to the following standards:

Signs in the Mission Bay Hotel District shall be limited to hotel and retail identification, business and directional signs. The maximum sign area allowed for all signs shall be 3 square feet of street frontage not to exceed 800 square feet. The total area of signage on any single street shall not be more than four square feet per linear foot of street frontage not to exceed the total gross area as identified above.

B Specific types of signs

1. **Wall signs.** The lowest edge of a wall sign shall be located above the ground floor windows or 15 feet above the sidewalk, whichever is greater. The upper edge of a wall sign shall not be higher than 50 percent of the base height of the building.

Wall signs more than 15 feet above the sidewalk shall be well integrated with the buildings architectural design and shall be located within 5 feet of changes in both the vertical and horizontal building wall planes. This requirement is established to ensure that the sign is not located in the middle of a flat wall plane.

2. **Fin signs.** The number of fin signs shall not exceed one per business on street frontage. The lower edge of any fin sign shall not be less than 12 feet above the sidewalk. Signs shall not extend more than half the distance from the building to the adjacent street curb or 8 feet, whichever is less. The total area per face of each sign shall not exceed 50 square feet.
3. **Awning signs.** Sign area shall not exceed 50 percent of the area of the vertical face of the awning. Letters shall not exceed 12 inches in height.
4. **Freestanding signs.** One freestanding sign is allowed where the building is set back from the street property line. Signs may be double-faced. The maximum area of each sign face, independent of the supporting structure shall be 50 square feet for a total of 100 square feet. The maximum height of the sign shall not exceed 40 feet.

5. **Marquee signs.** Each face may not exceed 100 square feet. Letters may not exceed a height of 12 inches.
6. **Window signs.** The area of a window sign shall not exceed 30 percent of the window area in which the sign is located or 10 square feet, whichever is less.
7. **Nameplates.** Nameplates may not exceed 2 square feet per business.
8. **Directional signage.** Signs for the purpose of directing vehicle traffic and pedestrian movement may be allowed at appropriate project access points. The number, size, height, and content of directional signs shall be subject to approval of SFRA on a case-by-case basis.

C. Retail uses fronting on (P3) open space area

Signs for retail uses in the Mission Bay Hotel District that front on the adjacent public open space shall be limited to business signage. The maximum sign area allowed for each business shall be 1 square foot for each linear foot of business frontage on a public open space or 75 square feet whichever is less.

D. Specific types of signs shall conform to the following standards:


1. **Wall signs.** The lowest edge of a wall sign shall be above the ground floor storefront or 8 feet above the sidewalk, whichever is greater.


For business frontages up to 25 feet in width, wall signs shall be centered within the middle 75 percent of the frontage. For business frontages exceeding 25 feet in length, wall signs shall be centered within the middle 50 percent of the frontage.

2. **Fin signs.** The number of fin signs shall not exceed one per business on public open space frontage. The lower edge of any fin sign shall not be less than 8 feet above the sidewalk.


The upper edge shall be 25 feet, whichever is less. Signs shall not extend more than 3 feet from the building. The total area per face of each sign shall not exceed 20 square feet.


3. **Awning signs.** Signs on awnings shall not exceed 30 percent of the area of the vertical face of the awning. Letters shall be no higher than 12 inches.
4. **Window signs.** The area of a window sign shall not exceed 20 percent of the window area in which the sign is located or 6 square feet, whichever is less.
5. **Nameplates.** Nameplates may not exceed 2 square feet per business.

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- A. Signage for retail uses shall be limited to identification signage and business signage. The total area allowed for signage shall be the combined total of these types. However, the total gross area of all signage is limited to two square feet of signage per linear foot of street building frontage. Signage implementation shall be located by an area determined by the frontage of each use.
- B. Signage implementation shall conform to the following locations and area limitations.
1. **Window signs.** The total area of all window signs shall be not more than one-third the area of the window in which they are located, or not more than ten square feet, whichever is less.
 2. **Wall signs.** The lower edge of wall signs shall be above the ground floor storefront or ten feet above the sidewalk, whichever is greater and the upper edge of such signage shall be no higher than the lower windowsill of the first residential floor. Wall signs should not be continuous along a parcel; each individual business should have a separate sign. For business frontages up to 25 feet in length, wall signs are permitted for 100% of the frontage. For business frontage exceeding 25 feet in length, wall signs are permitted for up to 75% of the frontage.
 3. **Fin signs.** The number of fin signs shall not exceed one per business on street frontage. The lower edge of fin signs shall be not less than twelve feet above the sidewalk, the upper edge shall be no higher than the lower window sill of the first residential floor if within a residential district, otherwise may not exceed 50% of the height of the buildings, and shall not extend more than half the distance from the building to the curb or eight feet, whichever is less. The total area per face of each sign shall not exceed twenty-five feet.
 4. **Awning signage.** Signage shall be allowed on awnings not exceeding 50% of the area of the vertical face of the awning with no letters higher than 12".

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5. **Freestanding signage.** One freestanding sign is permitted within the Commercial/Industrial/Retail designation where the building is set back from the property line. Freestanding signs may consist of graphics on a tower where the area of graphics independent of the supporting structure shall be no more than twenty square feet, and the tower may be no more than forty feet high.
 6. **Nameplates** not to exceed two (2) square feet per business shall be permitted.

Temporary Signs Within Any Land Use District

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- A. Temporary signs shall conform to the following standards: Temporary signs may be used to identify; 1) buildings under construction, 2) future tenants/businesses, 3) the initial marketing/sale/leasing of buildings and tenant spaces, and 4) the overall marketing of the Mission Bay project. Given the complexities of the timing typically associated with the signage types identified under B1, 2, 3, it is encouraged that consolidation of a signage be considered on each development site.
- B. Specific types of signs shall conform to the following
1. **Building constructions signs:** Temporary construction signs providing the names of the architects, engineers, and contractors working on the site are allowed subject to the following:
 - a. One sign per street frontage not to exceed 100 square feet with a maximum height of 15 feet.
 - b. Signs shall be removed upon first occupancy of the property.
 2. **Future tenant/business signs:** Temporary future tenant/business identification signs that provide information about the future use of a property are allowed subject to the following:
 - a. One sign per business per street frontage
 - b. Signs shall not exceed a maximum of 50 square feet and 10 feet in height.
 - c. Signs shall be removed upon occupancy of the property or tenant space.

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3. **Initial marketing/sale/leasing signs:** Temporary signs regarding the initial marketing, sale, or lease of a property or tenant space are allowed subject to the following.
 - a. One sign per business or tenant space per street frontage.
 - b. Signs shall not exceed a maximum of 50 square feet and 10 feet in height.
 - c. Signs shall be removed upon sale, lease, or occupancy of the property or tenant space.
 4. **Mission Bay project marketing signs:** Temporary signs providing general and marketing information regarding the overall Mission Bay project are allowed subject to the following:
 - a. Up to 3 signs may be allowed at each major access point to the project area. A maximum of 12 signs may be allowed at one time.
 - b. Three signs may be allowed with a maximum area of 200 square feet each and a height of 20 feet. Nine signs may be allowed with a maximum area of 100 square feet each and a height of 15 feet.
 - c. Specific locations of signs and the time periods for which they may be displayed shall be subject to the approval of a Marketing Sign Program which may be amended from time to time to accommodate necessary changes as the overall project proceeds through various phases.

The following signs are not allowed in any land use district:

- A. Animated and moving signs.
- B. Billboards and other general advertising signs
- C. Inflatable signs.
- D. Portable signs.
- E. Roof signs.
- F. Miscellaneous signage mediums, including balloons, high intensity beam lights, ribbons, tinsel, small flags, pennants, streamers, spinners, metal disks, pinwheels, wind signs, or other similar devices designed to move in the wind.
- G. Flashing signs
- H. Signs in the public right-of-way except as integrated in MUNI or Department of Public Works (DPW) street furnishings.

Area (of a sign)

A. All Signs Except on Windows, Awnings and Marquees

The area of a sign shall be the area within a single continuous rectangular perimeter formed by extending lines around the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblem, or any figure of similar character, including any frame, material, or color form used either as an integral part of the display or to differentiate such sign from the background against which it is placed. This area excludes the necessary supports or uprights on which such sign is placed and any sign tower. Where a sign has two or more faces, the area of each face shall be deemed separate in determining the area of the sign. In such cases, the area of the sign is defined by the area of one face.

B. Windows

The area of a sign displayed in or on a window shall be the area within a single continuous rectangular perimeter formed by extending lines around the extreme limits of writing, representation, or any figure of similar character depicted on the surface of the window.

C. On Awnings or Sign Marquees

The area of a sign displayed on an awning or sign marquee shall be the area within a rectangular perimeter formed by extending lines around the extreme limits of writing, representation, or any figure of similar character depicted on the surface of the face of the awning or marquee.

Awning

A light roof-like structure supported entirely by the exterior wall of a building, consisting of a fixed removable frame covered with cloth, plastic, glass, or metal, extending over doors, windows, or show windows with the purpose of providing protection from the sun and rain and/or embellishment of the facade.



Building Constructions Sign

A sign which states the name of the developer and contractor(s) working on the site and any related engineering, architectural, or financial firms involved with the project.

Business Sign

A sign that directs attention to a business, commodity, service, industry or other activity which is sold, offered, or conducted, other than incidentally, on the premises upon which such sign is located, or to which it is affixed. Where a number of commodities with different brand names or symbols are sold on the premises, up to one third of the area of a business sign, may be devoted to the advertising of one or more of those commodities by brand name or symbol as an accessory function of the business sign, provided that such advertising is integrated with the remainder of the business sign.

Fin Sign

A sign that is perpendicular to the wall to which it is attached

Freestanding Sign

A sign which is in no part supported by a building

Future tenant/business sign

A temporary sign that identifies the names of future businesses that will occupy a site or structure.

Height (of a sign)

The vertical distance from the uppermost point used in measuring the area of a sign, as defined above, to the ground immediately below such point.

Marquee

A permanent structure attached to and supported entirely by a building, including any object or decoration attached to or part of the marquee.

Nameplate

A sign affixed flat against a wall of a building and serving to designate only the name or the name and professional occupation of a person or persons residing in or occupying space in such building.

Projecting Sign

A sign which extends beyond a street property line or building setback line

Projection

The horizontal distance by which the furthestmost point used in measuring the area of a sign, as defined herein, extends beyond a street property line or a building setback line. A sign placed flat against a wall of a building parallel to a street or alley shall not be deemed to project for purposes of this definition. A sign on an awning, canopy or marquee shall be deemed to project to the extent that such sign extends beyond a street property line or a building setback line.

Property Line

A line separating private property from public rights-of-way and from adjacent property.

Roofline

The upper edge of any building wall or parapet, exclusive of any sign tower.

Roof Sign

A sign or any portion thereof erected or painted on or over the roof covering any portion of a building, either supported by the roof, an independent structural frame or a sign tower. Also included are any signs located on the roof of a penthouse, roof tank, roof shed, elevator housing or other roof structure.

Sign

A structure, part thereof, device, or inscription which is located upon, attached to, painted, projected, or represented on any land or right-of-way, or on the outside of any building or structure including an awning, canopy, marquee or similar appendage. Also, any structure affixed to or visible through the glass on the outside or inside of a window so as to be seen from the outside of the building, and which displays or includes any numeral, letter, work, model, banner, emblem, insignia, symbol, device, light, trademark, used as an announcement, advertisement, attention-arrester, direction, warning, or designation by or of any person, firm, group, organization, place, commodity, product, service, business, profession, enterprise or industry. A "sign" is composed of those elements included in the area of the sign as defined herein, exclusive of the supports, uprights and framework of the display. Two or more faces shall be deemed to be a single sign if such faces are contiguous in the same plane. Also, on awnings or marquees, two or more faces shall be deemed to be a single sign if such faces are on the same awning or marquee structure.

Sign Tower

A tower, whether attached to a building, freestanding, or an integral part of a building, which is erected for the primary purpose of incorporating a sign, or having a sign attached thereto.

Street Frontage

Frontage shall be calculated based on public street frontage; however in the case where a lot/parcel has frontage on a private street, then signage area calculations shall be based upon private street frontage. No circumstance shall a lot/parcel calculate signage area from both frontage on both public and private streets.

Wall Sign

A sign painted directly on the wall or placed flat against a building wall with its copy parallel to the wall to which it is attached and not protruding more than the thickness of the sign cabinet.



Wind Sign

A sign composed of two or more banners, flags, or other objects, mounted serially and fastened in such a manner as to move upon being subjected to pressure by wind or breeze.

Window Sign

A sign painted directly on the surface of a window glass or placed in front of or directly behind the surface of a window glass.

Temporary Sign

An identification sign used for the purpose of construction and leasing. To be removed at the completion of work and leasing of premise.