



## MEMORANDUM

To: Development Services staff  
From: Matthew Seubert for Tina Axelrad, Zoning Administrator  
Date: May 24, 2018  
Re: **Code Clarification — Sign, Wall**

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### Summary

The types of signs and similar signs shown in the attached examples should be reviewed as wall signs, and permitted so long as they comply with the ‘Sign, Wall’ definitional requirement that they are attached to a fascia (fascia) that is attached to, or part of the wall, are parallel to the wall, project less than 24” from the wall, and extend not more than 8” from the fascia to which the sign is attached, provided that they also comply with sign, setback requirements and other form standards in the Denver Zoning Code (DZC). When a sign or associated fascia is attached to the side wall of a column or recessed entry/window area that is generally perpendicular to the adjacent exterior building wall (the wall of the building that faces outward towards the public realm), the sign may be considered to be parallel to the exterior building wall. This memo also clarifies that the term ‘parallel’ in the definitional phrase ‘parallel to... the wall to which it is attached’ need not be mathematically absolute. If the sign is more or less parallel to the wall, and meets the other requirements of the Sign, Wall definition, it can be considered a wall sign.

For example, the illustrated sign at 2100 Delgany Street is mounted on a canopy fascia that is attached to the side wall(s) of a recessed entry area and may be considered to be parallel to the exterior building wall. In this example, the sign may be no more than 24” forward of the plane of the adjacent exterior brick building wall and no more than 8” forward of the canopy fascia to which it is attached. The distance of the sign from the glass building wall at the rear of the recessed entry area is not relevant.

### Background

There have been questions from staff reviewers regarding the applicability of the ‘sign, wall’ definition and how it applies to certain signs which are neither projecting signs nor arcade signs, but do not neatly fit the ‘sign, wall’ definition. DZC does not define canopy signs. Arcade, roof, projecting, and marquee signs are defined, however, the attached examples do not meet these definitions.

DZC (13.3) defines ‘Sign, Wall’ as:

A sign attached to, painted on or erected against a wall, fascia, parapet wall or pitched roof of a building or structure, and no part of which sign projects above the Roof Line and whose display surface is parallel to and extends not more than 24” from the wall to which it is attached and extends not more than 8” from the fascia to which it is attached or, if attached to a pitched roof, the bottom of its display surface does not extend more than 6” vertically from the roof surface and the top of its display surface does not extend more than 48” horizontally from the roof surface.

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Using a broad definition of the term “fascia” (see below) – we can find that the pictured signs are “wall signs” as defined in 13.3. Please note that the signs are consistent with the definitional requirement that they are parallel to the wall. They are attached to or erected against a wall, or to a fascia attached to the wall. These signs also do not extend more than 24” from the exterior wall plane to which they are attached.

### Fascia (architecture)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



Roll formed metal fascias (the metallic silver horizontally oriented surface with two "lines" in it that is just below the corrugated roof edge, the corrugated roof edge overhangs the fascias by a few inches).

**Fascia** (/ˈfeɪʃə/) is an architectural term for a vertical frieze or band under a roof edge, or which forms the outer surface of a cornice, visible to an observer.

The word fascia derives from Latin "fascia" meaning "band, bandage, ribbon, swathe." The term is also used, although less commonly, for other such band-like surfaces like a wide, flat trim strip around a doorway, different and separate from the wall surface.

The horizontal "fascia board" which caps the end of rafters outside a building may be used to hold the rain gutter. The finished surface below the fascia and rafters is called the soffit or eave. In classical architecture, the fascia is the plain, wide band across the bottom of the entablature, directly above the columns.

Technical Team discussions determined that the sign located at 2100 Delgany St. was a wall sign because it is attached to a canopy fascia that is attached to the side walls of a recessed entry area and is parallel to and less than 24” from the adjacent exterior brick building wall behind (see example #1). 1550 Raleigh St. was also determined to be a wall sign, as it was attached at its top to a canopy fascia that is attached to the side walls of a recessed window area and is parallel to the adjacent exterior building wall (example #2). The 1701 Wynkoop St. sign was also determined to be a wall sign, again, as it is attached to the side walls of a recessed entry area, is parallel to the exterior building wall and projects less than 24” from said wall. In this case, the recessed entry area in which it is located and attached to is not considered an arcade, and the subject sign is thus not an arcade sign (see example #3). The signs at 1445 Larimer (the mounted sign at The Market – example #4), and 1440 Larimer (John Atencio – example #5) should also be considered wall signs using a similar line of reasoning as example #3.

This memo also clarifies that the term 'parallel' in the definitional phrase 'parallel to... the wall to which it is attached' in the definition of Sign, Wall (DZC 13.3) need not be mathematically absolute. If the sign is more or less parallel to the wall, and meets the other requirements of the Sign, Wall definition, it can be considered a wall sign. For example, the sign may be somewhat arced, as in examples #6 and 7, and still be considered a wall sign. The example of the sign on the Denver Civic Theater, example #8, could also be considered more or less parallel to the wall, and thus also considered a wall sign.



Example #1: The Casey - 2100 Delgany Street



Example #2: Alexan-Sloan's Lake - 1550 Raleigh Street



Example #3: Ultreia - 1701 Wynkoop St.



Example #4: The Market – 1445 Larimer St.  
Note: The awnings are not wall signs.



Example #5: John Atencio – 1440 Larimer St.

Example # 6: The Capital Grille – 1450 Larimer St.



Example # 6: The Capital Grille – 1450 Larimer St.



Example # 7: Starbucks – 1406 Larimer St.

Note: The coffee cup is an example of a projecting sign



Example #8: Denver Civic Theater – 721 Santa Fe Dr.

Photo: The Denver Post