



HIGHLANDS RANCH
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

COMMERCIAL DESIGN & RESTRICTIONS (CDR'S)



The Commercial Design & Restrictions (CDR's) have been prepared by the Development Review Committee (DRC) and adopted by the Board of Directors of the Highlands Ranch Community Association. The Development Review Committee reserves the right to add to or modify these CDR's at its discretion. Please check the HRCA website for updates.

Adopted February 20, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction.....	2
II.	Applicability.....	2
III.	Submittal and Review Process.....	3
IV.	Review Fees.....	4
V.	Compliance.....	4
VI.	Appeals.....	5
VII.	Variances.....	5
VIII.	Guidelines for New and Existing Facilities.....	6
	A. Building Materials and Colors.....	6
	B. Drive-through lanes.....	8
	C. Equipment Storage/Service Areas	8
	D. Flag Poles.....	9
	E. Landscaping, Irrigation and Maintenance.....	10
	F. Lighting.....	14
	G. Parking.....	14
	H. Non-Traditional Parking Structures.....	15
	I. Public Spaces.....	16
	J. Shopping Carts.....	16
	K. Signage.....	17
	L. Streetside and Sidewalk Experience.....	25
	M. Trash Dumpsters.....	25

I. INTRODUCTION

Highlands Ranch has grown dramatically since our founding more than 40 years ago. Our planned development, once a suburban outpost on the southern edge of the Denver metropolitan area, is now a vibrant community of 100,000 residents and a myriad of businesses. The HRCA works to support the continuing success of our individual businesses and commercial centers.

Designs should consider the context and characteristics of the natural surroundings and previously approved development to ensure integration with the surrounding areas and complement existing construction while creating accessible, safe, and inviting environments at street level to promote pedestrian activity and minimizing heat island effects of paved areas. These CDR's are designed to provide guidance to support the success of both new and established businesses.

II. APPLICABILITY

- A. These CDR's apply to new development, redevelopment, and operating commercial facilities within the Highlands Ranch Planned Development. **Approval by the Development Review Committee is required for most projects involving new facilities, additions, and modifications including signage, painting, and any external additions such as telecommunication equipment. To determine if you are required to submit for a particular project, call 303-471-8821 or email commercialreview@hrcaonline.org.**
- B. The CDR's are not meant as an all-inclusive, one-size-fits-all document. Certain guidelines may be more applicable than others, depending on the context, scale and use of the project or unique circumstances.
- C. Projects are evaluated according to their planning and design merits and conformity to the intent of these Commercial Design and Restrictions as well as all other applicable authorities, including the Planned Development for Highlands Ranch. The DRC does not represent or warrant that its approval of any project complies with any applicable contractual or governmental land use restriction.

III. SUBMITTAL AND REVIEW PROCESS

- A. We are here to assist you. Contact HRCA early in the design process to identify key issues and address concerns for any project requiring DRC approval. In this preliminary stage, applicants may present design concepts through sketches, photographs, or other pertinent materials. Start the dialogue by emailing commercialreview@hrcaonline.org.
- B. Addressing issues early will enable a faster review process when the submittal proceeds to the Development Review Committee (DRC) for review and consideration. The review process time may vary depending on such factors as project scope, complexity, and location.
- C. To help reviewers understand the design concept, applicants are asked to submit a "Notice of Design" along with a proposed listing of materials. This is a narrative description (maximum two-pages), that outlines how the project is responsive to the CDR's. It is an opportunity to identify key aspects, unique features, or distinguishing characteristics of the design. It is also an opportunity to illustrate any project constraints that pose challenges to meeting key guidelines and how the design balances those challenges with HRCA standards.
- D. A Site Improvement Plan can typically be processed in thirty (30) days or less from the date the application is formally submitted to the DRC for final approval, provided that all pertinent material is properly submitted by the applicant and responses to staff inquiries are received in timely manner.
- E. The DRC meets the second Wednesday of every month. There are specific procedures involving the submittal of documents, deadlines, and fee schedules which all applicants must follow. Formal presentations to the DRC are encouraged.
- F. All required documents must be submitted no later than noon (12 p.m.) on the Tuesday three weeks prior to the next scheduled DRC meeting for the project to be placed on the monthly agenda.
- G. Project approval is contingent upon submittal of materials, presentations to the DRC, and payment of applicable fees. No improvements may be made without the prior written approval of the DRC.

- H. A notice from the DRC will be sent to each applicant within a maximum of thirty (30) days after the date of the DRC review. This notice will state whether the project has received approval or disapproval and outline any conditions associated.
- I. The DRC does not represent or warrant that its approval of any project complies with any applicable contractual or governmental land use restrictions.

IV. REVIEW FEES

Review fees are required for all DRC submittals. Fees are determined based on the complexity of the project being submitted. Fees are required at the time of submittal; the Notice of Committee Action will not be issued until all fees are paid. If the DRC requires the applicant to attend additional meetings due to incomplete, inadequate, or improper submittals, the applicant may be responsible for additional review fees. No submittals will be processed until all appropriate fees have been paid.

V. COMPLIANCE

The Douglas County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code calls for projects to be “in conformance with the Commercial Design and Restrictions”. The DRC is responsible for reviewing plans for all development, including construction of any type, landscaping, lighting, signage, and all other exterior improvements. Projects are found to be in conformance with CDR’s when all concepts are responsive to the overall intent and vision embodied in the CDR’s, as adopted by the HRCA. Variations may be addressed by the DRC based on the unique characteristics and considerations of each project.

If, during the review/approval process, there are any questions as to the intent or meaning of any word, phrase, section, or chapter of the CDR’s, the final decision-making entity (the Design Review Committee and the Board of Directors, as applicable) shall render the official interpretation.

NON-COMPLIANCE/FINES

Fines are assessed when Notices of Violations are issued and not resolved in a timely manner. Please refer to www.hrcaonline.org for more information regarding our Non-Compliance violation process.

VI. APPEALS

In the event a property owner wishes to formally object to terms and conditions of a Development Review Committee Decision or Notice of Non-Compliance, the following process shall apply:

The appeal must:

- A. Be made in writing by either the property owner or legal counsel and addressed to the Development Review Committee.
- B. Be filed and postmarked seven (7) calendar days prior to Committee Decision expiration date or Notice of Non-Compliance resolution due date.
- C. Identify the specific term or condition being objected to along with justification for the appeal.
- D. Provide recommended alternative means of mitigation or resolution of the element of concern.
- E. Be accompanied by any required review fee (see Fee Schedule).

Appeals will be carefully considered according to the above criteria versus subjective preference or simply not adhering to established criteria.

Normally, the Committee will respond in writing to an appeal within 15 days of receipt. In the event a formal hearing with the Committee is requested, the hearing will be set within 30 days of the postmarked date of the Appeal, and the Committee will respond in writing within 15 days of that hearing.

VII. VARIANCES

The Development Review Committee, at its sole discretion, may authorize a variance from compliance with any guidelines when circumstances such as topography, natural obstructions, hardships (non-self-imposed), planning or environmental objectives may warrant. Variances must be specifically itemized, rationalized, and documented as such by a committee decision.

VIII. GUIDELINES FOR NEW AND EXISTING FACILITIES

A. BUILDING MATERIALS, COLORS

- i. A mix of contrasting textures, color and materials is optimal. Encouraged materials include masonry (stone, brick, architectural pre-cast concrete, cast stone, integrally colored (not painted) architectural concrete block, and prefabricated brick panels), cement fiber siding, metal, glass, and cement stucco.
- ii. Wood siding or wood elements should generally be limited to accent areas and must be of a composite or finished/treated wood that conveys high quality and longevity. Where wood fencing is installed abutting a street, park, school, or residential or commercial property it must be stained "Highlands Ranch Fence Brown," available at most hardware and paint stores within Highlands Ranch.
- iii. Shading devices such as awnings, canopies, trellises, sunshades, and other elements must be constructed of durable, high-quality materials such as tile, canvas, or metal in a matte finish.
- iv. Building materials that are not permitted include highly reflective glass curtain wall systems, unfinished/grey concrete masonry units, vinyl, or vinyl siding.
- v. Painting or staining of natural stone, brick or integral-colored blocks requires approval. See "Exterior Repainting" below.
- vi. The use of stucco or similar synthetic coating systems should be avoided at ground level or where there will be regular contact with people, maintenance equipment, irrigation systems, etc. to avoid damage or discoloration over time.
- vii. Color palettes should complement the architecture of the building and the character of the surrounding area.
 - a. Building colors should consist primarily of warm earth tone colors, including but not limited to browns, creams, warm grays, mossy greens, gold, terra cotta and some reds.
 - b. Colors should have low reflective characteristics.
 - c. Tone down or shade brighter hues and integrate them into the overall earth tone color palette. For example, rather than bright red, consider a deeper tone or shade.

- d. When beige, tan, cream, or similar colors are used the underlying hue should generally be of a more yellow shade rather than red to avoid the appearance of pink buildings in certain light.
- e. Brighter, bolder colors (including corporate branding colors) may be applied to areas or elements of the building where they are secondary in application compared to the main body or features of the building. Counteract stronger colors by integrating natural materials and textures into the overall design.

viii. Exterior Re-Painting

- a. Submission, review, and approval by the Development Review Committee is required for all exterior re-painting.
- b. The paint submittal must include manufacturer's paint chips or samples indicating a manufacturer's color number (or name) and the respective location the applicant would like to paint the color (e.g., Base: Sherwin Williams "Urban Putty" SW7532; Trim: Sherwin Williams "Pure White" SW7005; Accent: Sherwin Williams "Sun Dried Tomato" SW7585).
- c. Color selection must be muted and complimentary to the surrounds. Selected paint must be flat or low luster.
- d. Minimal use of "corporate colors" will be considered; however, if the "corporate colors" are not muted and/or complimentary to the surrounds, they must be limited to accent elements only. Additional consideration for approval on specific colors will include, but is not limited to:
 - The building architecture.
 - The color and type of any stone, brick, or other masonry type accents.
 - The roof color.
- e. The Highlands Ranch Community Association does not maintain an approved paint color list/book from which to choose. All paint schemes must be submitted for approval.

- f. Painting over brick, stone, or other masonry material is discouraged and requires approval. Considerations for review include the amount of masonry, maintenance concerns, and application methods (e.g., limewash, staining, painting, etc.).

B. DRIVE-THROUGH LANES

Drive-through lanes generally should be avoided to promote more walkable, compact development patterns. If necessary, drive-through lanes should be located and screened to reduce the prominence of the canopy and its lighting, and to reduce the visibility of stacked cars from the street. Strategies may involve location, integrated design, landscaping, berms, and low walls. Canopies, menu boards, bollards and similar features related to drive-through areas should be coordinated with the design of the building and detailed on the Site Improvement Plan.

C. EQUIPMENT STORAGE/SERVICE AREAS

The visual impact of service, storage and mechanical areas should be minimized. ATM's and similar public functions may be designed in more prominent locations for safety.

Air conditioners, fans, vents, antennas, photovoltaic panel arrays and Air network dishes must be effectively screened from adjacent grade-level views. Mechanical rooftop equipment must be effectively screened. Here are examples:

- i. Units should be placed in the center of the roof area or away from prominent vantage points.
- ii. The parapet should be as high as or higher than the highest mechanical unit or vent.
- iii. Secondary roof screening systems should be as high or higher than the highest mechanical unit or vent.
- iv. Systems should enclose groups of units rather than each individual unit, using materials and colors compatible with the building.
- v. **Ground-mounted equipment and components** should be incorporated into the design of the building, located away from public areas, or screened from public view with landscaping and/or screen walls.

- a. Building drainage systems such as downspouts and pipes should be internal when/where possible and should be incorporated into the building design and screened or painted to be compatible with the building design.
- b. Electrical transformers, photovoltaic panel arrays and similar above-ground utility equipment should be located to minimize visibility and/or should be painted or screened to reduce visual impacts; outdoor generators, coolers, permanent storage, and similar functions should be located to minimize visibility and/or should be screened with masonry walls and/or landscaping that is compatible with the design of the project.

D. FLAG POLES

- i. A flagpole for the display of a flag, badge, or insignia of any governmental agency, or of a civic, charitable, religious, or fraternal organization is allowed. A flag designed to inform or attract the attention of people with the intention of advertisement is prohibited.
- ii. A flagpole must be ground mounted to an engineered footing and not attached in any way to any building or other structure.
- iii. A flagpole may not exceed 35 feet in height, must be commercial grade, and must be bronze, black, or silver in color.
- iv. The minimum setback of the flagpole from any property line shall be the height of the flagpole.
 - i. Flagpole(s) shall be depicted on an approved Site Improvement Plan. If not shown on the approved (and recorded at Douglas County) Site Improvement Plan, a Site Improvement Plan Modification may be required by Douglas County Planning.
- v. Illumination of a flagpole is permitted. Illumination may only be provided by a narrow-spread lamp that is aimed to only illuminate the top of the flagpole. The source of illuminance (lamp) must be shielded in a manner so as not to be visible from adjacent property.

E. LANDSCAPING, IRRIGATION and MAINTENANCE

- i. Submittal: All submitted plans for DRC review shall provide landscape plans, that as a minimum, conform to Douglas County Zoning Resolution, Chapter 2708 LANDSCAPE PLAN, [DCZR - Section 27 \(douglas.co.us\)](#).
- ii. Review: The DRC will review project landscapes that align with these Guidelines, the HRCA Metro District requirements, and Green initiatives in Forestry, as well as local resource and water conservation programs (these programs can be found at [www.hrcaonline.org](#)). In addition, and due to the unique nature of each project, the DRC may provide further guidance upon review of the submitted landscape plans.
- iii. Design Guidelines
 - a. Emphasize native and drought tolerant plants, best grouped by their water needs to ensure efficient irrigation.
 - b. Restrict evergreen trees along the southern or western edge of pedestrian pathways to mitigate ice buildup in their shadow. Plant material must not interfere with vehicle and pedestrian sight lines or reasonable surveillance of parking lots, entries, service areas, ATM's, and similar pedestrian uses. Thorny trees and shrubs at maturity should not encroach into walkways and other pedestrian areas.
 - c. Projects' Continuation (Phased): All phased projects visible to the public must ensure that perimeters will be finished with final landscaping, lighting and streetscape elements as approved in the SIP. Pad sites shall be graded and seeded with natural grasses along with temporary irrigation for timely establishment.

iv. Plant Materials:

The following additional resource links are provided for reference and consideration:

- a. [Rabbit and Deer Resistant Plants, Flowers, Shrubs and Trees in Colorado](#)
- b. [Plant Select](#)
- c. [Sterling-Ranch-Recommended-Planting-List-2020-08-26-PDF \(sterlingranchcab.com\)](#)

v. Plant Location

- a. Locate canopy and other large trees no closer than four feet from the back of curbs or sidewalks, driveways, and other hard surfaces to buffer trees from stress caused by salt, snow piling, vehicle overhang and compacted soils, and to allow trees to mature without buckling hard surfaces.
- b. Locate trees, shrubs (specifically those that help bind sloped soil) and native grasses on slopes 3:1 or greater (use drip irrigation for trees and shrubs and temporary irrigation for native or drought-tolerant grasses).
- c. Plant location must not obstruct access to utility boxes, fire hydrants, and similar elements. Consult with utility providers for specific landscape standards.

vi. Other Landscape Materials:

- a. Mulches: An organic or inorganic mulch material is required on all exposed landscape areas without hardscape or plantings.
 1. Wood Mulch – Shredded wood mulch is the preferred organic wood mulch as it tends to “knit” together to hold it in position better than park or chipped wood.
 2. Depth of 3” (minimum) to help mitigate weeds and hold moisture in the ground.

3. Weed fabric is discouraged under wood mulch, especially on sloped planting beds, and is not allowed in perennial and annual specific beds.
 4. No shredded aspen or pine needles are allowed.
 5. Rock Mulch – Typically one or a combination of varying sizes of rock, pebbles, and gravel. Depth of 2” minimum.
 6. Weed fabric is required to separate rock mulch and soil. Weed fabric on slopes may require larger rock cobble. Cobble that is angular tends to be much more stable than round gravel or cobble. Larger rock that is angular should be considered for sloped surfaces.
 7. Rock and weed fabric are not suggested for annual planting beds. Perennials should have a saucer of wood mulch during the plant’s establishment period.
- b. Soil Amendment should be applied to planting areas, allowing for plant establishment and easier infiltration of surface water back into the soil. Appropriate soil amendment quantity and type can be determined by GeoTech reports of the site and through Colorado State University Soil Testing Lab at www.soiltestinglab.edu
- c. Edging: Typically, metal with stakes to secure to the ground to separate different landscape mediums.
1. Metal roll-top edging shall be 6” tall, minimum 7-gauge thickness (3/16”) and colored black or green for commercial applications, unless otherwise approved.
 2. Edging appearance should create consistently smooth arcs and straight lines. Edging should not be visible above the medium it is separating nor sit on top of grade.
 3. Composite plastic edging is not recommended for use in Highlands Ranch.

VII. Irrigation

- a. Automatic irrigation systems are generally required, but hand watering may be used for plantings in seasonal containers such as flowerpots and hanging baskets. Temporary irrigation may be used for the establishment of native grasses but must be removed once establishment is complete.

- b. Design irrigation based on slope aspect, sun/shade/wind micro-climates, and provide separate valve zones based on grouped plants that require similar water demand. Incorporate drip systems or other low-volume application systems and use smart controllers and rain sensors to conserve water. Spray heads must minimize over-spray to non-pervious areas including sidewalks, buildings, and roadways. Shrubs and trees should be irrigated by drip, bubbler, or low volume spray heads. Drip irrigation is suggested for annual, perennial, and ground cover areas. Above ground, fixed spray heads are only allowed for the temporary native grass establishment period.
- c. Outdoor irrigation is not allowed between the hours of 10 am and 6 pm from May 1st through September 30th, or with additional restrictions as specified by Centennial Water.
- d. Irrigation schedules should be set at night or early morning to minimize evaporative loss and when pedestrians are less likely to be present. Contact Centennial Water for additional resources on water use regulations and potential water wise rebates.

D. Maintenance

- a. Owners shall maintain all areas of their property, including the immediate replacement of dead and unhealthy plant materials including dead, diseased, and broken tree limbs.
- b. Remove tree limbs that obscure regulatory, parking, pedestrian, wayfinding and warning signs in rights-of-way and tree-lawns.
- c. Native grass areas should have an establishment plan along with scheduled mowing at least twice a year.
- d. Weeds shall be removed in a timely manner, especially in drainage swales.
- e. Volunteer plants that do not appear on the unapproved plant list are acceptable in open space naturalized areas.
- f. No exposed soil shall be acceptable on a site. The exception to this is user created pedestrian trails through public Open Space tracts and corridors. The surfaces within the property shall be covered completely with native grass (or provide proof of seed establishment program), hardscape, mulch, playground surfacing, sod, synthetic turf, or some other material as shown on the approved landscape plan.

F. LIGHTING

- i. Main building entries and canopies should have the highest illumination levels on the site, followed by pedestrian spaces and routes.
- ii. Parking lot and decorative pedestrian light poles and fixtures should complement the building and surrounding areas in design and color. Generally, black and silver colors are permitted.
- iii. Limit overall site lighting to a low-level intensity and provide cut-off and powder coated finishes on shielded fixtures. The use of energy efficient fixtures is required, and yellow lights should be avoided. Color specifications must be noted in project submittals.
- iv. Lighting must be directed, shielded, and cut off so as not to cause light trespass, glare, or off-site impacts. Lighting under entry canopies, gas/service stations and similar applications should be flush-mounted.
- v. The safety and security of the building and surrounding area should be enhanced through lighting design.
- vi. Commercial buildings may be decorated for the holidays. A cohesive, unified look should be applied between all buildings within a shopping center or retail area. Holiday lighting should be removed within 30 days after the holiday.

G. PARKING

- i. Surface parking should reduce the visual prominence of vehicles, including landscaped parking islands and pedestrian routes.
- ii. Projects proposing significantly more parking than the County's minimum requirements may require a parking variance and be required to construct parking structures to minimize the land area devoted to parking.
- iii. Sidewalks, separated pathways, designated crosswalks and similar features should guide pedestrians and enhance routes with landscaping, low walls, signage, lighting, or special paving.
- iv. Provisions must be made for snow storage on site. Pushing snow into streets, sidewalks, and median areas is not permitted. Site owners are responsible for timely snow removal.

H. NON-TRADITIONAL PARKING STRUCTURES (canopies)

The use of “Canopies” may be allowed, but only if specifically approved as part of a Site Improvement Plan (or Revision, or Modification). A “Canopy” is defined as an accessory structure consisting of a rigid support system (one or two post cantilevered design) and rigid or flexible canopy constructed for the sole purpose of protecting vehicles from adverse weather conditions. Canopies are subject to the following design standards:

- i. Structure Placement. Canopies shall not be placed over the first 25 feet of the paved parking area that is generally parallel to the primary street frontage. In addition, Canopies shall meet all required minimum building setbacks.
- ii. Height. The height of a Canopy shall not exceed 15 feet to the peak of the Canopy.
- iii. Coverage. Canopies shall be generally restricted to a maximum coverage of 15 percent of the onsite parking spaces. Coverage greater than 15 percent requires variance approval by the DRC.
- iv. Structure Design. Canopies shall be of a cantilevered design with one or two posts.
- v. Structure Durability and Maintenance. Canopies shall be constructed of durable, high-quality materials comparable to and including high density polyethylene mesh (HDPE) or steel. Canopies shall be maintained in a structurally sound, safe, rust-free, and good or better condition. Minor repairs must not result in an unsightly “patchwork” or “quilt-like” appearance. Peeling, dented, or faded materials or finishes, and worn or torn canopies shall be promptly repaired or replaced within a reasonable time.
- vi. Cover and Structure Color. Canopies shall only incorporate covers of a solid color and tone. Approval of the color and tone is required and must fit or complement the colors in the general surrounds of the proposed installation. All support structures shall be solid black. In addition, all Canopies on the same property shall be of the same color and design.
- vii. Solar Reflectivity Index. Canopy materials shall maintain a Solar Reflectivity Index (SRI) rating of no more than 40 measured in accordance with professionally accepted practices of the American Society for Testing & Materials (ASTM) or other methodology reasonably comparable to ASTM-accepted practices.
- viii. Signage and Attachments. No signage (either permanent or temporary) shall be attached, mounted to, or permitted on Canopies. In addition, no materials or items shall be permitted to be attached to the Canopy including but not limited to the attachment of lights (except as permitted in subsection ix, Lighting below), panels, flags, balloons, banners, or any other device.

- ix. Lighting. Canopies shall not cause existing on-site lighting to fail to conform with the existing approved site plan, photometric plan, or the lighting regulations of Douglas County. Any lighting integrated within a Canopy shall be designed to direct light in a downcast manner only.
- x. Landscape Improvements. Any site that installs Canopies, which is also adjacent to residential property, shall provide a 20 percent opacity landscaped buffer yard to screen the site from the residential properties. If existing landscaping is used to meet the buffer yard requirement, the Applicant shall demonstrate how the existing landscaping meets the screening requirement.

I. PUBLIC SPACES

Parks, courtyards, pedestrian corridors, sidewalk cafes, outdoor seating, plazas, and similar spaces are highly encouraged in all project designs.

- i. All public spaces must offer safe and convenient access for wheelchairs, meeting ADA standards.
- ii. Materials should be durable, including stone, brick, integrally colored concrete and powder-coated/factory finished metals, as well as anti-graffiti coated elements, and other materials that resist chipping and fading. Patio umbrellas and awnings should be made of durable fabrics or other materials fitting the design character of the project.
- iii. Water features should conserve and recycle water. Excepting interactive spray fountains designed for children's play areas, fountain sprays should be avoided due to evaporative loss.

J. SHOPPING CARTS

- iv. Shopping carts must have designated areas for short and long-term storage and returns.
- v. When exterior cart storage is located near an entry, it should be screened behind a masonry wall that matches the building materials and colors.
- vi. Cart returns in parking lots should relate to the design of the building or center they serve. Materials should be durable, resistant to chipping or fading and convey a sense of quality and permanence. Signage attached to cart returns must be of professional quality with messaging relating to products and services of the business for which the parking is provided.

K. SIGNAGE

Professionally designed commercial signs coordinated with building architecture promote Highlands Ranch as a great place to conduct business. They provide the following benefits:

- Enhance the appearance and economic value of the community.
- Promote safety by limiting distractions and confusion for drivers and pedestrians.
- Avoid sign clutter that detracts from the character and quality of commercial areas.
- Preserve the right of free speech and expression.

An application must be submitted to the HRCA prior to submitting it to Douglas County for any installation permit. All signage must meet the general “spirit and intent” of these guidelines, as well as criteria set forth in the Highlands Ranch Planned Development Guide.

Commercial centers often have their own set of sign guidelines for businesses. Tenants should check with their property managers or owners to determine if there are restrictions on signs and advertising in addition to those in this document.

General guidelines for installation of commercial signs are outlined below. For answers to questions about guidelines, email commercialreview@hrcaonline.org

- i. **Wall Signs** (Permanent signs identifying a business, erected against the wall of a building where the display surface is parallel to the face of the building to which it is attached.)
 - a. Sign length may be no longer than 70% of the linear sign band/fascia for each tenant. If a sign is restricted to a portion of the tenant's sign band, then the 70% rule will not apply to that specific area but the sign will still have to comply with other requirements noted below.
 - b. All signs shall maintain a minimum distance of one-half the letter height from all architectural features, parapets and building corners, etc.
 - c. Illuminated signs are required to be done in individual letter types.

- d. Signage must be approved by property manager/landlord prior to review by HRCA.
- e. No exposed raceways, crossovers, ballasts, or conduit will be permitted unless existing or specific approval from the Property Manager, Landlord, or Building Owner is given and the HRCA approves an Administrative Variance.
- f. All signs shall be limited to individual Pan Channel letters, no more than 5" deep, which will be centered horizontally and vertically on the respective fascia (unless otherwise approved).
- g. Cabinet signs are not allowed outside of Town Center South unless as a part of a registered trademark or logo.
 - Logo may not exceed 24" in height.
 - Business name and logo must be as is registered with the Secretary of State or other authority (Proof of registration of business name/logo may be required).
- h. No single letter may exceed 20" in height; overall stack height cannot exceed 26" in height.
- i. Illumination of signage shall comply with Section 30-Lighting Standards of the Douglas County Zoning Resolution.
- j. A Tenant shall be permitted to place upon its entrance gold leaf or white decal lettering not to exceed 2" in height and no more than 144 square inches, indicating hours of business, emergency telephone numbers, etc.
- k. Per §XV Signs of the Highlands Ranch Planned Development Guide, latest edition, signs, and sign structures shall be always maintained in a state of reasonably good repair, with all braces, bolts, clips, supporting frame and fastenings reasonably free from deterioration, insect infestation, rot, rust or loosening. Signs shall be able to withstand anticipated wind pressures for the area in which they are located.
- l. Certain business or commercial areas are subject to additional signage criteria. Email commercialreview@hrcaonline.org with questions regarding specific areas.

- vii. **Monument signs:** (Permanent, free-standing signs allowed on a case-by-case basis to identify a shopping center or public facility.)
 - a. Monument Signs are allowed per site on a case-by-case basis. A shopping center will be allowed a sign per street and no more than one sign per entrance.
 - b. No monument sign shall exceed 6' in height or 12' in width, including the base or side columns. All signs must have a base, and the base and any additional architectural feature must match the building's material/color.
 - c. Monument signs may not utilize LED (light emitting diode) or LCD (liquid crystal display) to display a changing image, either in a series of still images or full motion animation, or any combination of them.

- viii. **Directional Signs** on the interior of a shopping center or pad site directing traffic to a tenant or access way, providing information such as "exit" or "entrance."
 - a. Directional signs are allowed on the interior of a shopping center or pad site to guide traffic. There may be no more than four (4) directional signs per site.
 - b. These signs can be no taller than 4' high by 3' wide and must have a base and color that matches the building.
 - c. Directional signs are for the purpose of directing traffic to a tenant or in a direction and can give information such as "exit" or "entrance". Directional signs may not contain signage for a business that has color, logo, or verbiage specific to that business.
 - d. All designs must be approved.

- ix. **Window Signs** (Signs attached to the interior of a window, which can be seen from the exterior of the building).
 - a. Window signage is allowed for use on pad sites and in-line retail tenants. A window sign is any sign affixed to or otherwise placed within 18 inches of a street-facing window or transparent door in a manner such that the sign is visible from the outside of the building.

- b. Window sign design should be simple and clean and cover a limited area of window glazing. High visibility in and out of businesses should be maintained to ensure safety and reflect the vibrancy of businesses to passersby. Open sight lines are recommended to enable law enforcement professionals to view the interior of stores they may have to enter.
- c. Window signs should provide supplemental information on products, services, and atmosphere.
- d. Total window coverage in all cases must not exceed 25% of the total window surface.
- e. Up to three window signs are allowed for each business if the building face at the main entrance is equal to or less than 50 lineal feet in length. Up to 6 window signs are allowed if the building face at the main entrance is greater than 50 lineal feet and equal to or less than 300 lineal feet in length. Six window signs plus one additional window sign per additional 50 lineal feet are allowed if the building face exceeds 300 lineal feet.
- f. Signs of six square feet in area or less (such as 2' by 3') meeting the criteria below are exempt from HRCA approval. Regardless of sign sizes, it is required that 75% of the available window space remains open.
- g. In addition to signs with solid backing and measuring 6 square feet or less, businesses may apply non-backed white lettering to windows without committee approval for the purpose of advertising products and services. (Example: a dry cleaner has script lettering on front window indicating that "comforters", "bridal dresses", and "carpets" are among the items they service). Total cumulative window coverage by all signs must not exceed 25%.
- h. All signs must be professionally made. Use of bright and neon colors should be limited. No signage may be attached to the outside of the window surface. Window painting requires special review; please contact commercialreview@hrca.org for more information about window painting.
- i. Full coverage window graphics ("decals") are prohibited as they may prevent visual access into the interior of businesses to the disadvantage of law enforcement officials who may need to enter the business. Opaque window covers also create a "closed" appearance by shielding the visibility of activity within businesses regardless of the quality of the graphics.

x. Illuminated Window Signs

Certain internally illuminated window signs, listed below, are permitted for use in commercial locations. All illuminated signs must comply with the following:

- a. All internally illuminated window signs excepting X.d below, "Open" signs, must be submitted to the Development Review Committee for approval prior to installation.
- b. Illuminated signs must not be directly visible to adjacent residential areas, nor may they be placed in a location as determined by the DRC to be a potential distraction to traffic.
- c. Illuminated signs must be included in the calculation of total allowed window sign coverage of 25% of window surface.
- d. All illuminated signs must be turned off at the end of daily business and remain turned off until the commencement of business the following day. Verification of the ability to control the signage lighting shall be required as part of the sign permit application. Permitted internally illuminated signs include those indicated below:
 - "Open" signs – one professionally made non-flashing "Open" sign is allowed in a storefront window.
 - Neon signs - non-flashing neon signs are permitted for advertising of products and/or services available at business locations. One such sign is allowed per 20 square feet of window area.
- e. Electronic message displays - Businesses may employ screen displays on window-facing monitors for promotion of their products and/or services, subject to the following:
 - Video screens must be parallel to the window and recessed at least four (4) inches back from the window surface.
 - Devices must not be placed in a location such that they may distract vehicle traffic, thereby endangering drivers and pedestrians.
 - One screen display is permitted per business.
 - Screens must be no larger than six (6) square feet.

xi. **Temporary Signage** for leasing, sales, and new tenants

- a. "For lease or sale." Freestanding temporary signs may be used on a pad site for the purpose of advertising "For Lease", "For Sale", and the arrival of a new business. If you are a medical/office type building, you may have a freestanding sign for the building, but not for individual tenants. The following guidelines apply:

- Sign board may be no larger than four feet high by 8 feet wide.
- Overall height cannot exceed 6'.
- Sign board must be installed on two 4" by 4" posts.
- Sign board must be professionally made and may not use neon colors; and
- You must maintain the sign until it is removed (i.e. repaint, or make sure it is standing
- Submit for approval to:

Commercial Improvements
Highlands Ranch Community Association
Highlands Ranch, CO 80126
9568 University Blvd.,
Phone: 303-471-8821
Email: commercialreview@hrcaonline.org

- b. "Coming Soon:" Non-illuminated temporary signage to announce "Coming Soon" followed by the name of the business, up to six (6) square-feet in area may be posted on the inside window of the store frontage for up to four weeks after date of approval by the landlord and the Highlands Ranch Community Association.
- c. "Opening/Reopening:" Non-illuminated temporary signage, of a size no greater than what the permanent signage would allow, announcing the name of the business opening/re-opening may be placed in the location that the permanent signage will be located for a maximum period of four (4) weeks after date of approval by the landlord and the Highlands Ranch Community Association. This non-illuminated temporary signage must be constructed of weather resistant material and be kept in good condition. It must be removed when the permanent signage is installed or after four weeks, whichever occurs first.

- Pad site owners may use a professionally made 4' x 8' wooden sign on two 4"x4" posts.
- All businesses may use a banner announcing, "Now Open", "Grand Opening" or "Open" containing no other advertising, no larger than 3' x 12' for 30 days after the business is open on the front of the building at the entrance area. The fascia may not be penetrated unless approved by the property owner.

xii. **Freestanding Temporary Signage**

- a. Portable Signs – one (1) non-illuminated portable "sidewalk" sign (also known as an "a-frame" sign) of up to eight square feet (i.e. 24" by 48") may be displayed on the sidewalk by each business or tenant. Sidewalk signs:
 - Must be placed within 20 feet of business entry while leaving at least 5" clearance for pedestrian passage along sidewalk and into business entry.
 - Must have a finished appearance.
 - Must not have a highly luminescent, reflective, or "day-glo" surface.
 - Must be removed at the end of each business day.
- b. Temporary banners - for messaging pertaining directly to the operation of businesses, temporary banners may be approved by the committee. Examples: "On-line ordering and delivery now available," or "Hiring now." The committee will review applications for this signage on a case-by-case basis with consideration given to the neighboring businesses and economic conditions as they impact retail activity in Highlands Ranch. Banners are permitted for up to 90 days, after which a new approval is required.

ix. **Prohibited Signage**

- a. Signs and banners attached to any of the following:

- Building walls and roofs, other than described in Section 1, “Wall Signs” and Section 6, “Temporary banners.”
 - Adjacent fences.

 - Live trees and landscaping.

 - Light poles, excepting holiday decorations approved by Design Review Committee.
- b. Painting on the exterior of building walls.
- c. animated, moving, rotating or sound-emitting signs, including “air dancer” or “tube man signs” activated by electronic or mechanical means; inflatable signs and figures; balloons; streamers; as well as any flag, banner or other device (“feather” flags, for example) designed to wave, flap, or otherwise move with the wind (excepting any flag or emblem of any government or governmental agency or any civil, charitable, religious, or fraternal organization).
- d. Billboards
- e. Benches utilized for signage.
- g. Vehicles (delivery or otherwise) utilized for de facto site signage, as opposed to those regularly used during daily business with current registration and tags. Such vehicles may not be parked in areas adjacent to street frontages, and/off the premises of the businesses they serve.
- h. “Going out of Business”/ “Moving” signage displayed for more than 30 days.
- i. Off-premises signs.
- j. Roadway median signage.
- k. Any sign which could be mistaken or confused with a traffic control sign, signal, or device.
- l. Portable plastic (“coroplast”) or cardboard signs and banners attached to ground surface or landscaping, other than “Garage Sale” signs and real estate and vendor signs approved by the Development Review Committee.

x. **Submitting for Sign Approval**

Provide the following information with your submittal: - A drawing of the sign including dimensions, letter style, layout, colors; - Location where sign is to be installed. Submit to the following:

Commercial Improvements
Highlands Ranch Community Association
9568 University Blvd., Highlands Ranch, CO 80126
Phone: 303-471-8821
Email: commercialreview@hrcaonline.org

Commercial improvement and sign applications can be submitted on-line. To view or submit an on-line application form, go to: hrcaonline.org/property-owners/commercial/commercial-improvement-application

L. STREETSIDE AND SIDEWALK EXPERIENCE

- i. Weather protection should include elements such as awnings, canopies and shade trees to protect pedestrians from rain, snow or sun at places of concentrated activity, i.e. entries, transit stops or retail corridors.
- ii. Awnings, arcades, dining areas and galleries may encroach into the public sidewalk to within 5 feet of the curb, provided that structures clear the sidewalk vertically by at least 8 feet.
- iii. If safety bollards are necessary in highly visible areas, they should be designed and colored to coordinate with the design of the project. Bollards painted with bright colors are not acceptable except in less visible service areas.

M. TRASH DUMPSTERS

Trash dumpsters must be enclosed with an approved enclosure design consistent with the materials and colors of the building. Enclosure walls should include a cap or ledge along the tops. The enclosure must have a solid (or perforated) metal gate system that effectively screens the view of dumpsters and is powder coated or factory-finished in a complementary color to the project. The enclosure must be at least 20" higher than the dumpster or the enclosure shall have an approved cover.

The Board of Directors will use whatever means necessary and available to enforce these guidelines, including filing legal action, recording a Notice of Non-Compliance and/or Notice of Violation and assessing fines pursuant to Section 5.17 of the Community Declaration.