

SIGNAGE

Planning & Development | Town of High River

This information sheet provides basic information on signage. The information is a simplification of the Town's [Land Use Bylaw](#). In the event of any discrepancy/omission, the Land Use Bylaw takes precedence.

Pre-application meetings are **required** for signage applications. If you would like to book a pre-application meeting or would like to speak with the Planning & Development Services Division before the meeting is organized, please contact us at planning@highriver.ca or at 403.652.2110 and we would be pleased to assist you.

Applicants must fill in the **Signage Application Form** (found at highriver.ca/development-permits) and submit all requirements (unless otherwise discussed with staff). **The Town does NOT accept incomplete applications.**

If any part of the application does not comply with the [Land Use Bylaw](#) (at the Town's discretion), you will be required to either revise the application or apply for a variance application (found at highriver.ca/development-permits) which costs \$175 as per the [Rate Bylaw](#).

The following general regulations apply to all signs:

- Signs should be appropriate and integrated with the building design and character of the neighbourhood.
- Signs shall be primarily oriented toward pedestrians in both scale and location. Signs oriented towards vehicles are considered secondary.
- Signs shall not obstruct pedestrian or vehicular visibility or circulation.
- Signs shall not project above the roofline of a Building.
- The message on the sign shall relate to the use of the site(s) on which it is located.
- Signs shall not exceed 20 percent of the building façade to which it is attached.
- Sign illumination shall be from the top of the sign and oriented downward and shall be designed to have no direct light emitted above the top of the sign and / or the signs support structure.
- The vertical clearance from the bottom of a sign to grade for a public space shall be:
 - Minimum 2.5 m for sidewalks;
 - Minimum 3.8 m for driveways, parking spaces and streets; and
 - Minimum 4.6 m for loading areas.

The following types of signs require a Development Permit:

- Canopy signs.
- Changeable message signs.
- Community identification signs.

Last updated July 7, 2020

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- Developer directional signs.
- Fascia signs.
- Freestanding signs.
- Projecting or hanging signs.
- Window signs.

See the [Land Use Bylaw](#) for specific regulations

The following types of signs are PROHIBITED in any location in High River:

- Inflatable signs.
- Searchlight or laser signs.
- Third party signs.
- Vehicle or Trailer on non-motorized vehicles signs.
- Portable signs (not including A-board signs).
- Roof signs.
- Obsolete signs.
- Moving, flashing, sound-emitting, or revolving signs.

The following types of signs do not require a permit and there is no Town review required:

- A-Board signs (can only be out during business hours).
- Existing signs when only the message area of the sign is being changed to reflect a change in the business name.
- A sign showing the name or address of a building that is sculpted or formed from the building material.
- Real estate signs with a maximum sign area of 1 sq. m and a maximum of 1 sign per lot frontage of the property for sale.
- A sign located inside a building and not visible from the outside.
- Murals or similar public art, providing that no third-party advertising is included.
- Construction signs located on site(s) where construction, renovation, or maintenance is occurring, which must be removed within 7 days following completion of work.

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- Temporary signs to advertise any community event, and with a maximum sign area of 6 sq. m.
 - A sign for a garage sale or similar event, posted for a maximum of 48 hours (can be on public property).
 - Election signs with a maximum sign area of 1.5 sq. m, and maximum height of 2 m, which are placed no sooner than 30 days prior to an election and removed 7 days following.
 - An official notice, sign, placard, or bulletin for Municipal, Provincial, or Federal purposes whether on public or private property.
 - A traffic sign or directional sign authorized by the Municipal, Provincial, or Federal Government(s).
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What does the Town look for during the review process?

- Firstly, the Town will review the application to ensure that it complies with all of the [Land Use Bylaw](#) regulations as well as the policies in the [Town Plan](#) and in any other applicable policy documents (Area Structure Plans, Area Redevelopment Plans, Neighbourhood Outline Plans, etc. found [here](#)).
- If there are aspects of your proposal that do not comply with the Town's regulations/policies, staff will go through options with you. Options could include applying for a variance or applying to amend the applicable policy document.

Guiding Principles for evaluating applications

The Town's Land Use Bylaw includes two guiding principles. These guiding principles are very critical and the Town will use them to evaluate the suitability of your application.

A Pedestrian as the Universal Measure of Design:

- The Town of High River is to be designed based on a scale that is comfortable to people, encourages walking, accommodates a variety of functions, can change and adapt over time, and that will foster an environment that supports and reinforces the social aspects of the Town.

Stewardship through Sustainable Design:

- The Town, the community, and the development industry act as stewards for the High River of tomorrow. All development shall focus on long term quality over short term gains.

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The development permit process

The approximate timeline to issue a **Permitted Use** Development Permit is 2 weeks and the approximate timeline to issue a **Discretionary Use** Development Permit is 5 weeks.

PRE-APPLICATION

- Pre-application meetings are **required** for signage applications.
- Pre-application meetings are an opportunity to discuss the application with representatives from all relevant departments. They are an effective and efficient way to catch any “red flags” and generally result in a more efficient application processing time. We will also go through the Town’s Guiding Principles (noted above) with respect to your application.
- Please contact staff at 403.652.2110 or at planning@highriver.ca to book a pre-application meeting/discuss your proposal. Please give us 2-3 business days to set up the meeting.
- We will also go through the Town’s Guiding Principles (noted above) with respect to your application.

APPLICATION

- Application Fee: \$130 PLUS \$55 for each sign after (part of same application) or \$55 for Home Occupation signage (as per [Rate Bylaw](#)).
- Application form (found at highriver.ca/development-permits) and all required documentation as listed on form (unless otherwise discussed with staff).

APPLICATION COMPLETENESS MEETING

- If you had a pre-application meeting, please contact your file manager and let them know that you are ready to apply. They will set up a meeting with you to review the application before it is accepted to ensure no required elements are missing as the Town does not accept incomplete applications.
- If you did not have a pre-application meeting, please contact us at planning@highriver.ca or at 403.652.2110 to set up an application completeness meeting for you.

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TOWN REVIEW

- Planning staff circulate to internal departments for their comments. They are given 1 to 2 weeks to provide comments at the discretion of Planning & Development staff based on the complexity of the application. Staff also have the discretion to circulate external agencies (e.g. Alberta Transportation) if the change/intensification is major and is likely to have a significant impact on the area.
- You can see the progress being made on your application [here](#). This webpage shows the progress of all current applications and is updated every week.
- You will be provided with the comments received through a formally compiled letter after the circulation period is complete.
- If revisions are required, you will need to resubmit applicable drawings in the same size and format as you submitted them in your original application. These comments may become conditions of your permit.
- You will have the opportunity to review these conditions and let the Town know if you have any comments or concerns before the Town issues the decision/permit.
- These comments may include requests for revisions.

TOWN DECISION

- After receiving satisfactory revisions (if applicable), the Town issues its decision on the application, known as the “Notice of Decision” (support with conditions or refusal with reasons).
- If you disagree with the Town’s decision, you have the opportunity to file an appeal (see “Appeals by Applicant”) within 21 days from the date the Notice of Decision was issued.

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PUBLIC REVIEW

- If the use is **permitted**, there is no opportunity for public appeal.
- If the use is **discretionary** and the Town supports the application, the Town posts a notice on the property to notify the public of the application, the Town's decision, and conditions (if applicable) for 21 days.
- Any member of the public can appeal a decision on a **discretionary** use (see "Appeals by Public").

ISSUANCE (IF NO APPEAL)

- If there are no public appeals (in the case of a discretionary use application), the Town issues you the Development Permit.

APPEALS (BY APPLICANT)

- You can appeal the Town's decision on your application by submitting the [Notice of Appeal](#) through the Legislative Services Department via legislativeservices@highriver.ca. You must submit your appeal application within 21 days of the date that the Notice of Decision was issued.
- The appeal fee is \$300 (as per [Rate Bylaw](#)).

APPEALS (BY PUBLIC)

- The public can appeal the decision on a **discretionary** use by submitting the [Notice of Appeal](#) through the Legislative Services Department via legislativeservices@highriver.ca.
- The public appeal must be submitted within 21 days of the Notice of Decision.
- The appeal fee is \$300 (as per [Rate Bylaw](#)).
- The hearing will take place within 30 days of the appeal being filed. You will be notified in writing of the hearing date at least 5 days prior to the hearing date.