



A GENERAL GUIDE TO THE SIGN PERMIT PROCESS

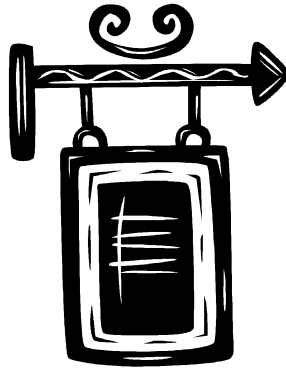


Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
1.0 PURPOSE.....	3
2.0 WHEN IS A SIGN PERMIT REQUIRED?.....	3
3.0 HOW IS THE PROCESS INITIATED?.....	3
4.0 WHAT IS THE PROCESS?	4
5.0 SIGN PERMIT (WHAT IS NEEDED)?.....	4
6.0 SIGN PERMIT – NEXT STEPS?.....	6
7.0 WHO MAKES THE DECISION ON AN APPLICATION?	6
8.0 HOW LONG DOES A DECISION TAKE?.....	6
9.0 WHAT IF MY APPLICATION IS REFUSED OR IT IS APPEALED?.....	7

1.0 PURPOSE

This pamphlet has been designed to assist in applying for a sign permit in the Town of Didsbury. Its intent is to complement information contained in applicable provincial legislation, specifically the *Municipal Government Act*, the *Town of Didsbury Municipal Development Plan*, *Land Use Bylaw* and *Central Core Heritage Plan* if applicable.

2.0 WHEN IS A SIGN PERMIT REQUIRED?

A sign permit is very similar to a development permit in that it constitutes approval from the Town to place one or more of a variety of signs on a property. Section 640 (4) (m) of the *Municipal Government Act* provides the ability for a municipality to control the construction and placement of signage, including height, size, and character.

Before any type of sign can be located on a site, an application must be provided to the Development Officer for a **Sign Permit**. This ensures that the proposed sign conforms to the applicable regulations outlined in the Land Use Bylaw or Central Core Heritage Plan for signage and the applicable land use district of the subject site. Most Land Use Bylaws treat signs as a development; therefore, their regulation is similar to a development permit.

The Development Officer may refer any sign permit application to the Municipal Planning Commission which in his/her opinion should be decided upon by the Commission.



3.0 HOW IS THE PROCESS INITIATED?

Potential applicants are requested to discuss their signage requirements with the Town Planning and Infrastructure staff prior to making application. Note that this meeting is beneficial and can improve the speed at which your permit is approved. To arrange such a meeting, please call 403.335.3391. For this meeting, an applicant should have the legal description of the subject property and should be prepared to discuss the intent of the application.

4.0 WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

The process from pre-application to decision is summarized in the chart, on the following page.

5.0 SIGN PERMIT (WHAT IS NEEDED)?

The Town can provide a Sign Permit Checklist. The applicant should start compiling the following information to initiate the application (note that a comprehensive list is provided on the checklist):

- Completed Sign Permit Application Form. **Note that incomplete applications will not be accepted by the Town administration, and will be returned to the applicant;**
- Application fee, payable to the Town of Didsbury;
- Letter of Authorization signed by the landowner (if application is submitted by a person other than the registered landowner);
- Current certificate of title of subject lands (no older than 30 days);
- One copy of a site plan showing the following:
 - the legal description and municipal address of the site;
 - the scale and a North arrow;
 - dimensions of the parcel, including total parcel area;
 - the perpendicular distance measured from adjacent front, rear, and side property lines to the proposed sign and each corner of the foundation/walls and eaves of any buildings;
 - the distance between the proposed sign and any building on the site;
 - location of access and egress points to the site; and
 - location of any registered utility rights-of-way (including plan number)
- One copy of a sign plan including the following:
 - mock-up of sign;
 - dimensions of sign;
 - means of supporting sign (fascia signs) – eg. guy wires, brackets, etc.;
 - elevation drawing of the building façade on which the sign is mounted showing: doors, window, eave line, roofline of the building, and location of proposed sign and any existing signs;
 - overall height of sign (above grade);
 - colours and material of sign;
 - colours and material of sign structure (freestanding sign); and
 - details of illumination
- A statement of uses on the site;
- Current zoning of the site;
- Any additional information, studies, or materials as may be required by the Development Officer.



Sign Permit Process



6.0 SIGN PERMIT – NEXT STEPS?

Application Review and Circulation:

Application Review

An application for a sign permit must be provided to the Development Officer for review. This review will include an analysis of how the proposed use or development complies with the related regulations in the applicable land use district, and any other related regulations in the Land Use Bylaw. The review will also consider the impact, if any, of a proposed development on surrounding properties. The Development Officer may provide copies of the application to other Town administrative staff or other agencies for feedback on issues such as traffic and access, utility requirements, etc.

7.0 WHO MAKES THE DECISION ON MY APPLICATION?

Development Officer or Municipal Planning Commission:

Applications for signs in residential districts will be referred to the Municipal Planning Commission by the Development Officer for consideration. The Development Officer may also refer any sign permit application to the Municipal Planning Commission which in their opinion, should be decided upon by the Commission.

8.0 HOW LONG DOES A DECISION TAKE?

A decision on a sign permit application is to be rendered within 40 days after a complete application has been accepted by the Development Officer. If a decision is not rendered within the above time limits, an applicant may either file an appeal (called a deemed refusal) or enter into an agreement with the development authority to extend the time for the decision. The appeal is to be made within 14 days of the expiration of the time of the decision. A time extension extends the time of decision through a signed agreement (sometimes referred to as a Development Permit Time Extension Agreement) between the applicant and the Town prior to the expiration of the 40 day period. The time extension ensures a thorough review can be completed if circumstances require more time for circulation. This form can be requested from the Town office. Note that the time extension can be requested by the applicant or by Town administration.

If approved, the development authority will give notice of the decision by advertisement in a local newspaper, on the Town website and in writing to the applicant and property owner (if different than the applicant).

If refused, the development authority will give notice of the decision to the applicant only.

Conditional Approval

If an application for a sign permit is approved by the Development Officer or Municipal Planning Commission, a letter outlining the conditions of the approval is provided to the applicant. All decisions on a sign permit application by the Development Authority are subject to a 14 day appeal period, commencing on the date of the decision.

An owner/applicant must act on the sign permit within 12 months of the issue date, or the permit will be deemed invalid. After this period, a new sign permit application will be required. The Town of Didsbury Land Use Bylaw indicates that once development has started it must be carried on with reasonable diligence and if not, the permit is lapsed. The Land Use Bylaw can extend this time period or a new permit must be requested to renew the original application.

9.0 WHAT IF MY APPLICATION IS REFUSED OR IT IS APPEALED?

If an application for a sign permit is refused by the Development Officer or Municipal Planning Commission, a letter outlining the reasons for the refusal is provided to the applicant. The applicant then has the opportunity to file an appeal against the decision to refuse the application. An appeal may also be filed against a specific condition of approval of a sign permit application, if the applicant does not agree with a requirement identified by the Development Officer or Commission. Any appeal must be filed with the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board within 14 days of receipt of the written decision of the Development Officer or Commission.