

City and County of Denver Mural Permitting Process

Applicants can start with the Zoning Office or Denver Arts & Venues. If the applicant starts at Zoning and represents its proposal as a mural, Zoning sends them to Denver Arts & Venues for review.

Zoning Administration
Tina Axelrad
Wellington E. Webb Building
Denver, CO 80202
(720) 865-2937
tina.axelrad@denvergov.org

Denver Arts & Venues
Mary Valdez, Public Art Administrator
144 W. Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80202
(720) 865-5564
mary.valdez@denvergov.org

If the applicant starts at Denver Arts & Venues, they are given the mural review criteria and an initial review of the proposal can be done at that time.

Applicants with conforming mural proposals will be given a letter stating that the proposal is considered a work of art and not advertising. Applicants can then proceed to zoning for a permit.

If a mural proposal appears to not conform to the mural review criteria, it will be presented to the Public Art Committee for review. Proposals referred to the Public Art Committee may take 45 days for a response as the Committee meets monthly. Conforming proposals can be approved within one week and sometimes as quickly as one day based on staff availability.

Non-conforming applicants can make revisions to their proposal and re-submit for review or Denver Arts & Venues can provide a letter explaining the non-conforming issues and the applicant can return to zoning for review under Zoning's signage code.

Mural Review Criteria

All murals must adhere to the Denver Revised Municipal Code and all City ordinances.

Prior to approval from Denver Arts & Venues, the applicant is strongly encouraged to submit full color renderings of the proposal to one or more neighborhood groups and request a signed letter of support for the mural. If the mural is to be placed inside of the boundaries of a Business Improvement District (BID) then the BID is encouraged to provide a similar letter.

Full color scale renderings, where the mural will be displayed and any letters of support for the proposal should be submitted to Denver Arts & Venues Public Art Program Director.

Murals must be a “one-of-a-kind” work of art and must not appear in any other public form including but not limited to advertising, logos, and trademarks and including publications where the mural is used to promote or identify the sponsor in any form.

Identification of mural sponsorship as indicated in ordinance # 460, series of 1993 is allowed, however, overt use of logs or trademarks may lead to a determination that the proposal is advertising in nature and thus subject to signage code provisions concerning advertising and “off-site advertising.”

If the Mural proposal is viewed as a work of fine art, the applicant is given a letter of acceptance from Denver Arts & Venues and directed to Tina Axelrad in Zoning Administration to complete and an application for a sign as a work of art permit. **The Zoning Administration makes final determinations for permits.**

If a determination is made by Denver Arts & Venues that a proposal does not qualify as a one-of-a-kind work of art, the applicant will be given a letter from Arts & Venues stating that the proposal does not qualify as primarily a work of art in nature. The applicant will be directed to the Zoning Administration to complete an application for a sign permit. The Zoning Administration makes final determination for permits.

- (9) Inflatable and balloons and/or streamers/pennants shall be allowed as a promotion of

a special event only (advertising of a product or service by this manner shall not be allowed except as a part of the promotion of the special event). Inflatables and balloons may be shaped/formed as a product and may have commercial copy; streamers/pennants shall not have any commercial logos or copy; and shall meet the following conditions:

- a. Shall be limited in placement to five (5) days;
- b. Shall be placed on the zone lot as determined by the zoning administrator;
- c. The zone lot shall be allowed no more than one (1) permit per quarter; and
- d. Streamers and/or pennants shall not exceed in measurement two (2) times the zone lot front line measured in linear feet (the property address front line shall be used for this calculation); and shall be counted as part of the maximum allowed temporary sign area at a ratio of one (1) linear foot to one (1) square foot of temporary signage allowed.

The zoning administrator shall issue a summons and complaint for inflatables, balloons, streamers and/or pennants emplaced without a permit and shall not issue a permit for said location for the next event application.

(Ord. No. 852-92, eff. 11-27-92)

- (10) Signs which are works of art as defined by section 20-86 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code. Such signs shall be primarily artistic in nature, but up to five (5) percent of the sign may be the name or logo of a sponsoring organization. The percentage of the sign devoted to the sponsoring organization may be increased up to ten (10) percent of the sign if the zoning administrator, with input from the director of the mayor's office of art, culture and film, determines the portion of the sign devoted to the sponsor does not detract from the artistic quality of the sign.

(Ord. No. 460-93, eff. 6-25-93)

- (11) Off-premises identification sign. A sign identifying a public facility which is located on a different zone lot than that containing the sign. The number, location, height, size and illumination of such signs shall be approved by the director of planning and the zoning administrator or their designated representatives; however, in no case shall such sign exceed ten (10) feet in height or forty (40) square feet in area. A decision to approve such signs must be based on a favorable evaluation of their compatibility with nearby structures and signs. The installation of such identification signs shall not reduce the size or number of other signs permitted on a specific site by other provisions of article V.