

**CITY OF PITTSBURGH**  
**Art Commission,**  
**Department of City Planning,**  
**and**  
**Department of Public Works**

**OVER-THE-SIDEWALK BANNERS**  
**Policies and Procedures**  
**Effective January 1, 2002**  
**Amended October 22, 2013**

**I. Purpose**

Over-the-sidewalk banners are appropriate for the advancement of public art; the identification of neighborhoods, commercial districts or institutions; the recognition of local, historically significant sites, buildings, structures, objects, organizations, or persons; and the promotion of cultural and civic events of general public interest.

Over-the-sidewalk banners shall be permitted only in commercially zoned areas. Banners shall not be used for political, commercial or profit-making purposes. To that end, banners may not display corporate logos or similar endorsements.

**II. Procedures**

*Over-the-Sidewalk Banner Committee*

The City of Pittsburgh Over-the-Sidewalk Banner Committee is a deliberative body charged with evaluating the historical significance and/or appropriateness of persons, sites, buildings, structures, objects, or organizations proposed to be displayed on an over-the-sidewalk banner. The Over-the-Sidewalk Banner Committee shall consist of the Director of Public Works, the Director of City Planning, and the City Council person who represents the district in which the proposed banner(s) will be located.

*Size Requirements and Construction Methods*

Banners shall meet the requirements as outlined in the Department of City Planning's *Pittsburgh Streetscape Components Catalog* and by the Department of Public Works, as follows: The over-the-sidewalk banner that attaches to a single pole shall have a maximum size of six feet by four feet (6' x 4') wide and a minimum size of sixteen feet (16') from the bottom arm. Both the top and the bottom section shall each have a hemmed sleeve with a loop diameter of two and one-quarter inches (2 'A") to slip over the arms onto which they are to be installed. The banner shall have reinforced grommets, each with a three-eighths inch (3/8") hole in diameter, placed in the center of the sleeve, thirty-six inches (36") from center-to-center and two (2) per side, with a total of eight (8). The material shall be a heavy-duty cloth, or a vinyl material of thirteen-ounce (13oz.) minimum weight. The banner shall include at least two (2) wind slits, cut in a semicircle, at least four inches (4") wide, and spaced not more than four feet (4') apart.

Additional information regarding the City of Pittsburgh - Department of City Planning's *Pittsburgh Streetscape Components Catalog* is available by phoning (412) 255-8996 from

Monday through Thursday, from 9AM to 3PM.

**CITY OF PITTSBURGH**

**OVER-THE-SIDEWALK BANNERS — POLICIES/PROCEDURES**

Short-term and/or Event Banners

Community-based organizations, non-profit organizations and educational institutions may petition the Department of Public Works on a "first come, first serve" basis for a permit to display a maximum of thirty (30) over-the-sidewalk short-term and/or event banners for a cultural or civic event. Written approval from the Department of Public Works may allow up to 40 total. This permit request shall be submitted and received at least three (3) weeks prior to the opening date of the event or occasion for approval. Less than twenty (20) total banners is encouraged.

Applications for these banner permits are available at: City of Pittsburgh-Department of Public Works, 611 Second Avenue in downtown Pittsburgh, and shall contain the following:

- Name and contact information of the Permittee
- Name of the benefiting organization or event
- Name and description of the event and date(s)
- Name of the company installing the banners
- Number of banners to be installed
- Proposed banner locations, including street names and cross streets, with maps
- Duration of time for display of banners
- Detailed print-out and description of the banner design(s)
- Proof of insurance: Public liability of \$50,000 - \$100,000,  
Property damage of \$10,000

*(Note that the City of Pittsburgh must be named as additional insured.)*

The permit application shall be returned to the Permit Office at the Department of Public Works, located at 611 Second Avenue in downtown Pittsburgh.

Permittee cannot request a banner permit more than six (6) months in advance of the event. Over-the-sidewalk short-term and/or event banners shall be displayed for a maximum of thirty (30) days, including the two-week installation and two-day removal time periods. These banners shall be installed no more than two (2) weeks prior to the event and shall be removed no more than two (2) days after the event.

***Any over-the-sidewalk short-term and/or event banners installed more than two (2) weeks prior to and/or removed more than two (2) days after the event shall incur a citation of \$300.00 per day plus costs.***

The Department of Public Works will be responsible for the collection of fees for all banner permits. Details regarding these current fees and other banner information are available by phoning (412) 255-2737 or faxing (412) 255-2728 the Department of Public Works, from Monday through Friday, from 9AM to 3PM.

All event banners shall be installed and maintained by the Permittee. Banners shall not be installed that obstruct traffic signs or warning devices, such as, but not limited to, street name, parking limitations, speed limit, school, directional or route designations.

The Department of Public Works reserves the right to fine and/or remove banners on display for the following reasons:

- banners which endanger public welfare, safety or property
- the permit has expired or is void
- no permit for the installation has been issued

**CITY OF PITTSBURGH**  
**OVER-THE-SIDEWALK BANNERS — POLICIES/PROCEDURES**

Long-term Banners

Community-based organizations, non-profit organizations and educational institutions may petition the Art Commission for approval to display all banners to be displayed as identification of neighborhoods, commercial districts or institutions; recognition of local, historically significant sites, buildings, structures, objects, organizations, or persons; and/or public art for neighborhoods, districts or institutions.

Each petition shall be submitted and received at least thirty (30) days prior to each monthly Art Commission meeting in order to allow the Art Commission to review the proposed banner application. Any petition proposing a banner seeking recognition of local, historically significant sites, buildings, structures, objects, organizations, or persons shall be referred to the Over-the-Sidewalk Banner Committee. The Over-the-Sidewalk Banner Committee shall render a determination on historical significance and transmit it to the applicant and the Art Commission prior to the next meeting of the Art Commission. Said determination shall be binding on the Art Commission as to historical significance, but shall not otherwise affect its consideration of other criteria as set forth below. Initially, the Art Commission shall grant preliminary approval to those petitions with sufficient rationale, banner placement, and visual design concept(s). After an appropriate review process during subsequent meeting(s), the Art Commission shall grant final approval based upon the criteria described below.

Applicants are encouraged to present preliminary banner programs to the Art Commission prior to formally applying.

***Note: the Art Commission meets on the final Wednesday of every month.***

The Over-the-Sidewalk Banner Committee's determination of historical significance shall be based upon a finding that the site, building, structure, object, organization, or person which or who is the subject of the proposed banner:

1. has significant character, interest, or value associated with the development, heritage, or cultural characteristics of the City of Pittsburgh; or
2. is associated with, or is the site or location of, a notable local event that is considered to have had a significant effect on the City of Pittsburgh or is considered to have made a significant contribution to the City of Pittsburgh's history; or
3. is an example of the cultural, political, economic, social, or historical heritage of the City of Pittsburgh; or
4. is of exceptional importance to the City of Pittsburgh's heritage;

and, has achieved such historical significance more than fifty (50) years prior to the date of the banner application.

Applications to the Art Commission may be procured through the City's website or by calling The Public Art Manager at (412)-255-8996

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Applications must be submitted in written letter/form to:

City of Pittsburgh  
Department of City Planning, c/o Public Art-Banners  
200 Ross Street, 4th floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Petitions shall contain the following information:

Name and contact information of the Petitioner  
Name of benefiting neighborhood, district, or organization  
Rationale for banners, i.e. how the banners satisfy said **Purpose(s)**, as set forth above  
Name of the company installing the banners  
Number of banners to be installed  
Proposed banner locations, including street names and cross streets, with maps and rationale for proposed locations  
Duration of time for display of banners  
Detailed print-out and description of the banner design(s)  
Budget for banner design, installation and maintenance  
Ongoing maintenance plan  
Proof of insurance: Public liability of \$50,000-\$100,00  
Private damage of \$10,000

*(Note that the City of Pittsburgh must be named as additional insured.)*

The Art Commission shall maintain the following criteria in its review of all banner petitions:  
Rationale for the banners satisfies one or more of said **Purpose(s)**, as set forth above  
Banner placement is consistent and suitable for the proposed locations  
Banners add to the aesthetic quality of the proposed locations  
Deference will be granted to those designs which embody the nature of artistic/architectural expression of said community or organization  
Petitioner has a clear and realistic strategy for installation and maintenance of banners

Approval by the Art Commission automatically waives the permit fee.  
The Department of Public Works shall issue permits on behalf of the Art Commission.

The Department of Public Works shall assess the condition of the poles every six (6) months. The Department of City Planning shall assess the condition of the banners every six (6) months. Re-certification of permits shall occur after two (2) years. At that time, the Art Commission shall reevaluate the banners pursuant to the aforementioned criteria.

All permanent banners shall be installed and maintained by the Permittee.

Banners shall not be installed that obstruct traffic signs or warning devices, such as, but not limited to, street name, parking limitations, speed limit, school, directional or route designations.

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The Department of Public Works reserves the right to fine and/or remove banners on display for the following reasons:

- banners which endanger public welfare, safety or property
- the permit has expired or is void
- no permit for the installation has been issued

Any questions regarding the above may be directed to the City of Pittsburgh - Department of City Planning, c/o Public Art, by phoning (412) 255-8996 from Monday through Thursday, from 9AM to 3PM.

***Please include all of the following materials with this permit application for approval:***

***Map of proposed banner placement sites***

***One (1) copy of the final design(s) and dimensions of banners***

***One (1) copy of the proposed budget for the banner program***

***One (1) copy of the proposed maintenance plan***

***One (1) copy of permits from utility companies (if applicable)***

***One (1) copy of proof of insurance***