PLACEHOLDER FOR FINAL HEADER PHOTOGRAPH

20-26. SIGNS

20-26.1. Purpose

This section provides standards for on-site and off-site signs to safeguard life, health, property, safety, and public welfare, while encouraging creativity, variety and compatibility, and enhancement of the city's image. The provisions of this chapter are intended to:

A. Reduce the distraction and confusion caused motorists and pedestrians by inappropriate signing and the hazards to which it may be attributed.

B. Encourage creative and well-designed signs that contribute in a positive manner to the city's visual environment, express local character, and help develop a distinctive image for the City.

C. Encourage signs that are responsive to the aesthetics and character of their particular location, adjacent buildings and uses, and the surrounding neighborhood. Signs should be compatible and integrated with the building's architectural design and with other signs on the property.

D. Recognize that signs are a necessary form of communication, and provide flexibility within the sign review and approval process to allow for unique circumstances and creativity.

E. Increase and encourage the preservation of visual open space which constitutes a primary public resource of economic, social and aesthetic value.

F. Establish a workable application and review process to ensure conformance and resolve questions of interpretation and application. (Ord. 84-08, A 26, § 2601)

20-26.2. Definitions

"*Accessory Sign*" shall mean a sign that is secondary in purpose and that provides specific information concerning the business which is not indicated on the primary identification sign(s). Accessory signs indicate such services as store hours, accepted credit cards, quality ratings or affiliations, vacancies, etc.

"*Architectural Features*" shall mean a prominent or characteristic part of a building. Examples of architectural features are windows, columns, awnings, marquee and fascia.

"*Attention-getting Devices*" shall mean any flags, streamer, spinner, light, balloon, blinking or similar device or ornamentation used for purposes of attracting attention for promotion.

"*Awning*" shall mean a shelter supported entirely from the exterior wall of a building and composed of nonrigid materials except for the supporting framework.

"*Billboard*" shall mean an off-premise sign which directs attention to a product, place, activity, person, institution, business or subject which is not related to the premises on which the sign is located.

"*Building Frontage*" shall mean the single longest building length or sum of building lengths facing either the street or the business parking lots and used for public approach. Typically, the primary public access point is located on the building frontage.

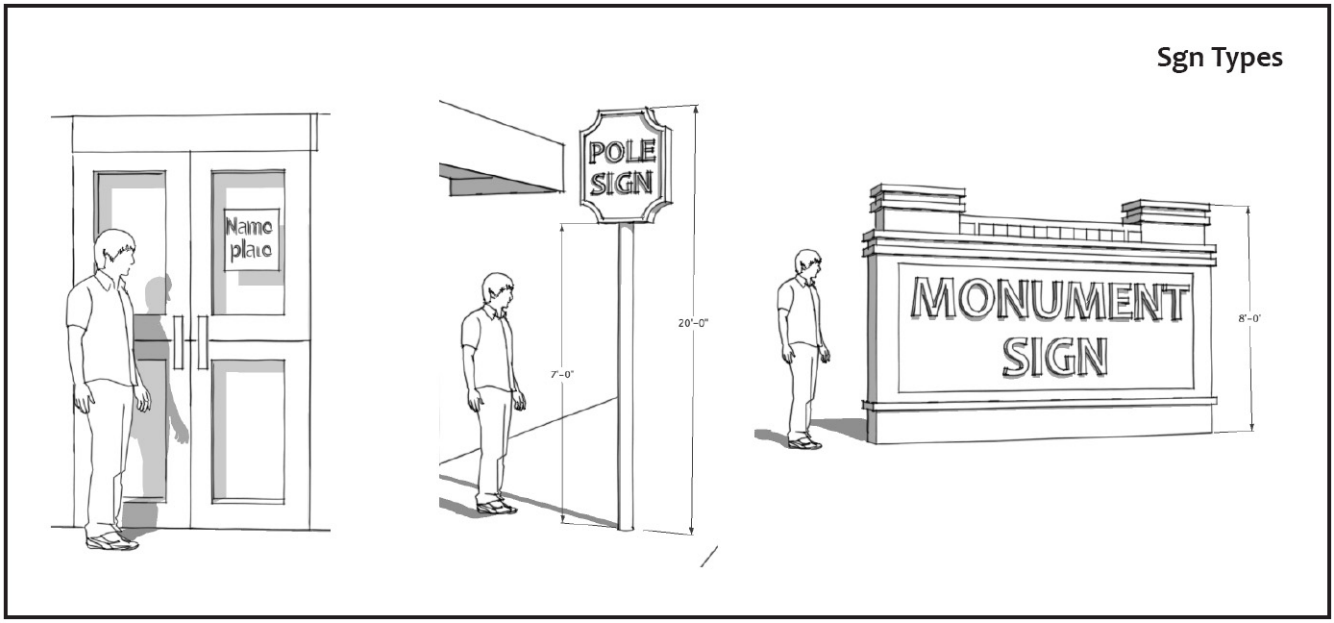
"*Canopy*" shall mean a permanent roof-like shelter, either freestanding or supported by a building typically composed of rigid materials.

"*Changeable Copy/Electronic Message Board Sign*" shall mean an announcement sign, bulletin board, or sign which makes provisions for frequent changing of individual letters and other copy. For the purposes of this code, time and temperature signs are considered changeable copy signs.

"*Conforming Sign*". A sign shall be said to conform when it meets all the standards and regulations established by this chapter and the Uniform Building Code, as adopted by the City of Ridgecrest.

"*Copy*" shall mean any graphic, letter, numeral, symbol, insignia, text, sample, model, device, or combination thereof which relates to advertising, identification or notification.

"*Directional Sign*" shall mean an on-site incidental sign designed to guide or direct pedestrian or vehicular traffic.



"*Illuminated Sign*" means a sign which is illuminated by an artificial light source provided for that function.

"*Maintenance*" shall mean the upkeep of signs and their support structures in a condition of good repair. This shall include the replacement or repainting of sign faces which have been damaged or have otherwise lost their ability to convey the message intended. Maintenance does not include the changing of location, orientation, size or height of a sign.

"*Marquee:*" shall mean the portion of a canopy, sign, or architectural element protruding from a building face that projects over the public street or sidewalk. Can be lighted, used for advertising of events, and is typically used by theaters.

"*Menu Board Sign*" shall mean an onsite sign displaying the bill of fare of a drive-through restaurant. For the purposes of this chapter, menus displayed near entryways for pedestrian use only, are not considered menu board signs and fall under the provision of accessory signs.

"*Monument Sign*" shall mean a freestanding sign with a solid base connected solidly to and arising from the ground, eight feet high and flush with the ground.

"*Multi-faced Sign*" A sign structure with more than two sign faces situated so that each sign face is facing a different direction.

"*Mural*" shall mean a very large image, such as a painting or enlarged photograph, applied directly to an exterior wall.

"*Nameplate*" shall mean a sign which displays only the name, address, and occupation of the occupant of the premises, is not illuminated and does not exceed four square feet in area. Nameplate signs are not included in calculating the aggregate sign area.

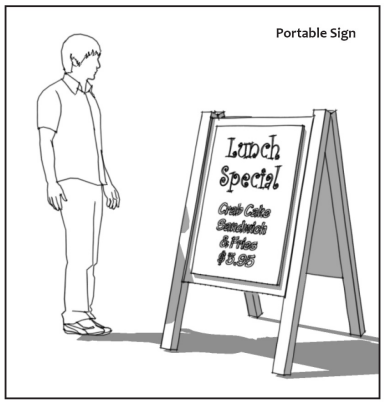
"*Nonconforming Sign*" shall mean any sign which was lawfully erected or maintained prior to time of adoption of this chapter or which does not conform to this chapter.

"*Off-Premises Sign*" shall mean a sign not located at the property for which it advertises such as a billboard.

"*On-site Temporary Real Estate Sign*" shall mean a sign offering real property, personal property or a business or any combination thereof, for sale, lease or exchange and includes signs pertinent to property management. It does not include merchandise sold in the usual course of business.

"*Permitted Sign Area*" shall mean the total area of all permanent primary signs on the premises. Accessory or incidental signs are not included in the calculation of permitted sign area.

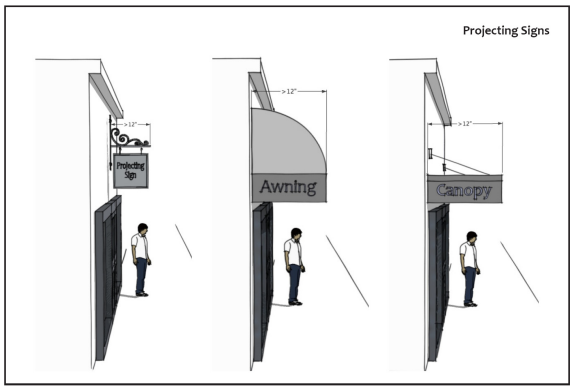
"*Pole Sign*" shall mean sign mounted on a free-standing pole or other support so that the bottom edge of the sign face is seven feet or more above finished grade.



"Portable Sign" shall mean a freestanding sign not intended to be permanently affixed in place.

"Premises" shall mean a defined contiguous area of real property occupied by a business, institution, use or group of uses.

"Projecting Sign" shall mean a sign which is attached to and projects 12" or more from the structure or building face, and is not parallel to the structure to which it is attached.

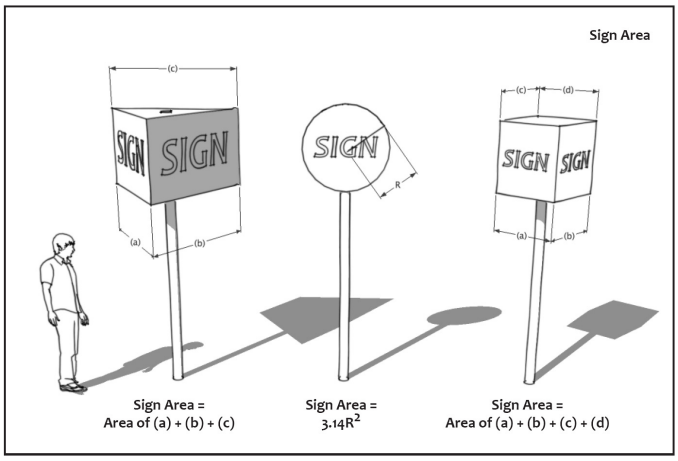


"Roof Line" shall mean the top edge of the roof or top of the parapet, whichever forms the top line of the building silhouette.

"Roof Sign" shall mean a sign erected upon a roof or parapet wall of the building.

"Sign" shall mean any structured name, identification, description, symbol, display, illustration, or device, including component parts and paint in view of the general public and which directs attention to a product, place, activity, person, institution or business. Murals are considered signs.

"Sign Area". In computing the maximum permissible sign area or display surface, all signs shall be included in computing background area in square feet except for accessory and incidental signs. Standard mathematical formulas for known or common shapes will be used. In the case of irregular shapes, straight lines drawn closest to the extremities of the shape will be used. The structure or structure covers supporting a sign are not included in determining the sign area, unless the structure or structure covers contain advertising copy. The area of multi-faced signs shall be the total sum of all display surfaces.



"Sign Height" shall mean the vertical distance measured from the grade of the nearest street curb, or street grade other than on elevated roadway, to the uppermost point of the sign or structure.

"Statuary Sign" shall mean any sign which is the modeled, outlined, or sculptured likeness of a living creature or inanimate object. Embossing which projects more than four inches beyond a sign face shall be considered modeling.

"*Street Front*" shall mean the portion of parcel facing a public street other than the side of a corner lot.

"*Temporary Sign*" shall mean any sign or advertising display intended to be displayed, unless otherwise specified by the Community Development Director, for a period of less than 30 days.

"*Temporary Directional*" shall mean a sign which directs persons to an event, business location, or offering, which is not permanent in nature, such as a new housing development, and placed on-site or off-site.

"*Time and Temperature Sign" see changeable copy/electronic message board signs*.

"*Useful Life*" shall mean the useful life of a permanent sign shall be 15 years. The useful life of a temporary sign shall be for the duration of the event for which a sign is placed, but in no case shall be considered more than one year.

"*Wall Sign*" shall mean any sign painted on or attached parallel to the wall facing of a building and projecting not more than twelve inches (12"). This shall include permanent window signs.

"*Window Sign*" shall mean any sign affixed to or within three feet (3') of the inside of a window in view of the general public. Window signs shall be considered part of the permitted sign area.

(Ord. No. 84-08, A 26, § 2602; Ord. No. 86-06, § 40; Ord. No. 87-16, § 3)

20-26.3. General Regulations

A. Permit Procedure

1. All signs except exempt signs and some temporary signs require Planning Department approval prior to being erected, altered, or moved.

2. Where a conditional use permit or sign use permit is required, it must be obtained from the Planning Commission prior to issuance of a building permit.

3. Temporary sign permits shall be issued by the Planning Director.

4. When an encroachment permit is required from the State Department of Transportation, it must be obtained prior to issuance of a building permit.

5. Three sets of sign plans shall be submitted to the Planning and Building Departments for approval. The sign plan shall contain:

    (a) Address of sign location.

    (b) Name and phone number of owner.

    (c) Name, address and phone number of contractor or erector.

    (d) Site plan showing location of signs.

(e) Elevation showing locations on a building or other structure including height of sign and any projection from building.

(f) Elevation of sign showing dimensions and materials.

(g) Construction details of typical sections for all applicable signs.

(h) Sign valuation and, for electric signs, the number of transformers.

(i) Lighting details.

6. Any other information necessary to determine compliance with this chapter. (Ord. No.84-08,A 26, § 2606;Ord.No. 86-06, § 43)

B. Basic Design

7. A sign shall not aesthetically obstruct or interrupt a major unique architectural feature of the building to which it is attached.

(j) Signs shall not be attached to trees or utility poles.

(k) Signs may be attached to a fence or freestanding wall only when a ground sign is not present in the development; however exempted signs less than six square feet may be attached.

(l) Signs shall not protrude above a wall or fence to which they are affixed.

(m) Product or trade names are permitted as a part of a permanent sign only when that product identified is integral to the use of the premises.

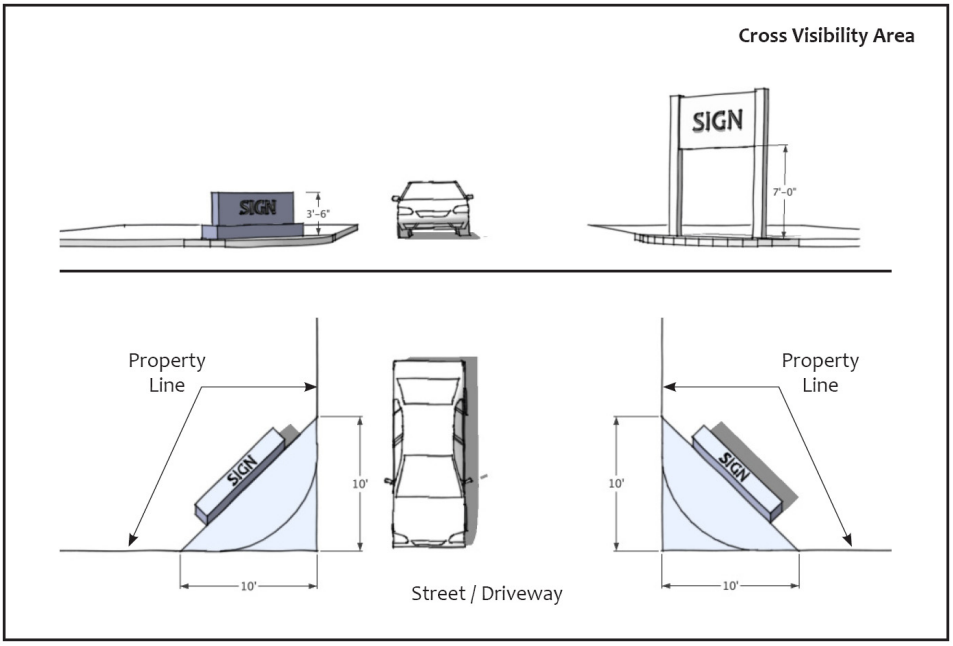
(n) Lighting shall be contained within or pointed at the sign. Lighting is not permitted to reflect into surrounding property, public streets, alleys, or highways. Gas discharge tube lighting may be used for advertising messages but not for outlining architectural features. Neon lighting, or any other form of lighting, shall not be used to outline a building or any portion there of. Exposed bulbs are prohibited except when used for security purposes, time and temperature signs, or electronic message boards.

(o) All framework shall be contained within the body of the sign or integrated into the design of the sign. Visible guy wires are prohibited.

(p) No sign shall be permitted, constructed or maintained which has less horizontal or vertical clearance from communications lines and energized electrical power lines than that prescribed by the laws of the State of California or rules and regulations duly promulgated by agencies thereof.

(q) No sign or its supports shall be erected that impede, obstruct, or distract the visibility of vehicles or persons traveling on regularly established public or private ways.

(r) No signs, materials or structural features except poles or pilasters shall extend into the cross-visibility area between three feet six inches and seven feet above the grade of the nearest street curb. The cross-visibility area for the intersection of driveways and property lines or two streets or driveways is defined as a triangle having two sides ten feet long and running along the driveway and property line, said length beginning at their intersection and the third side formed by a line connecting the two ends.

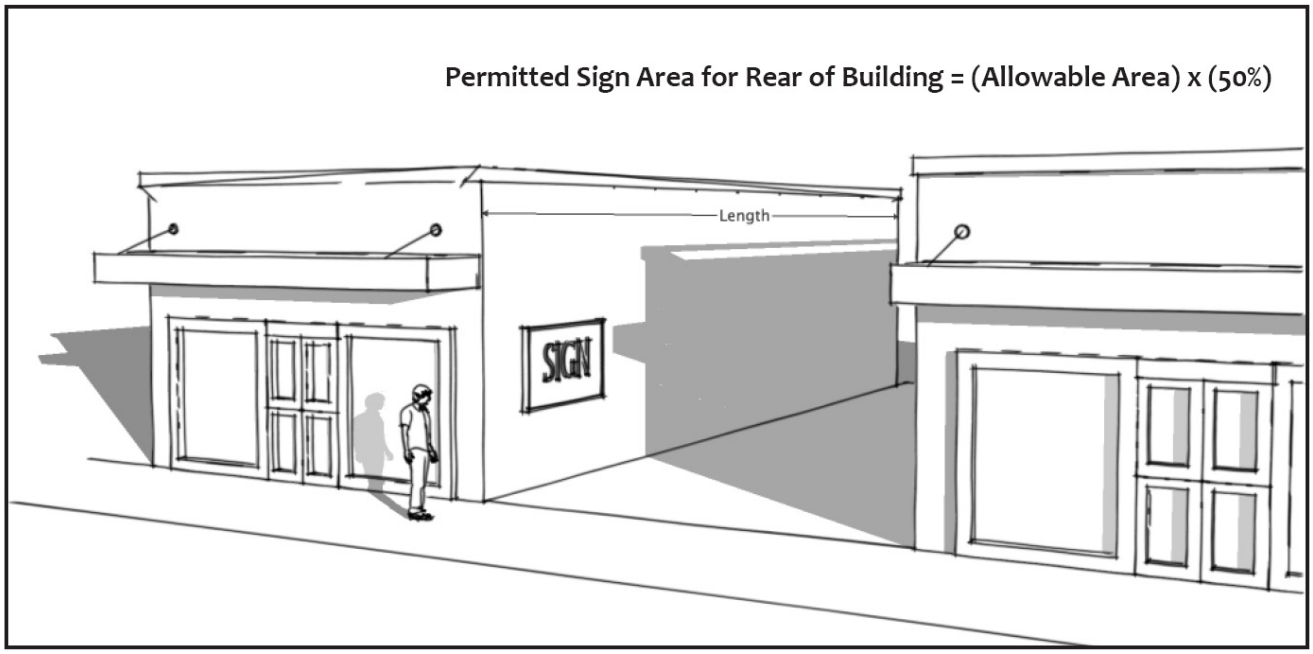


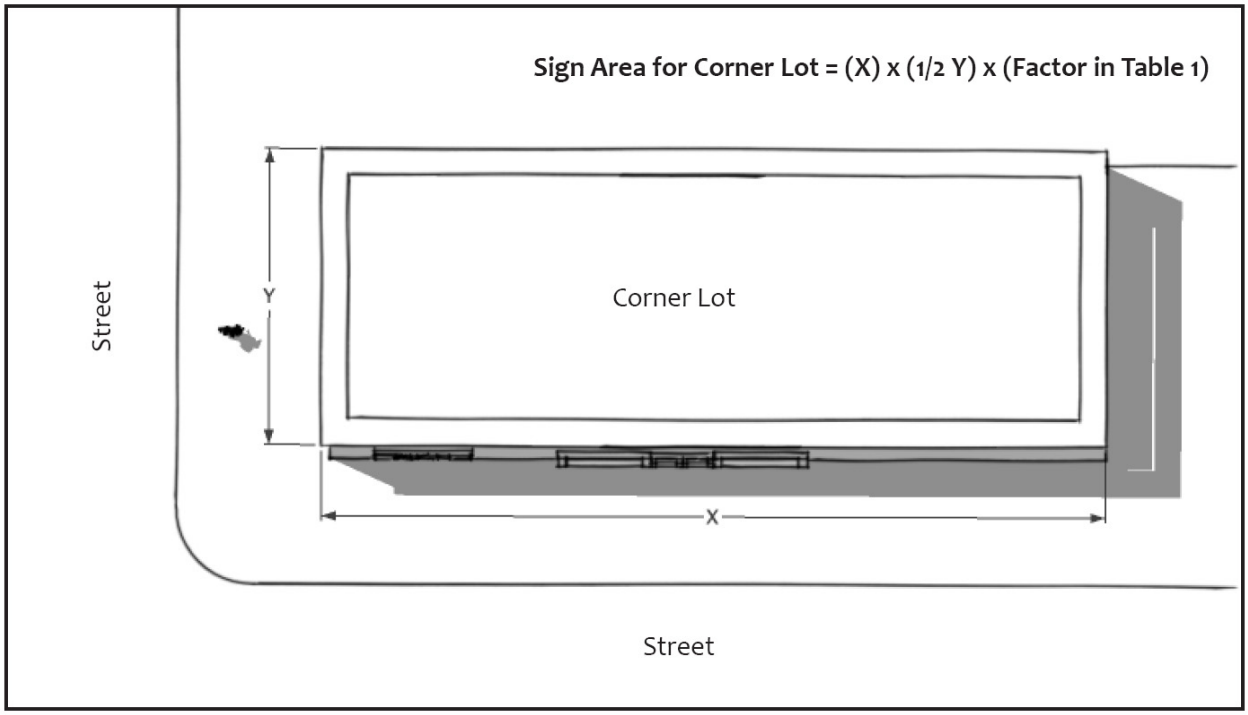
(s) Regulations regarding permitted sign area, maximum height and minimum setback are outlined in Table 1 for each zone.

(t) Sign area, in square feet, is determined where applicable by multiplying the length of one building frontage or street front as noted by the factor in parentheses, in Table I.

(u) On lots abutting more than one public right of way, sign area is determined by multiplying the length of the longest building frontage plus one half (1/2) of the shorter building frontage, multiplied by the factor in parentheses in Table I. No more that 65% of the total permitted sign area can be placed on either building frontage on a corner lot. Businesses with frontage and primary auto access on parallel streets are permitted to consider each frontage separately when determining maximum sign area. The area for each frontage is not transferable to the opposite frontage.

(v) Businesses with direct alley access are permitted additional wall sign area equal to one-half (1/2) of the allowable sign area for signs facing the alley. The sign area for the alley frontage is not transferable to any other street frontage or building side and shall not be used for either a monument or ground sign.


Permitted Sign Area for Rear of Building = (Allowable Area) x (50%)
Length
SIGN


Sign Area for Corner Lot = (X) x (1/2 Y) x (Factor in Table 1)
Street
Y
Corner Lot
X
Street

(w) Conditional uses shall meet the sign requirements of the zone in which the use is permitted. Conditional uses are encouraged to develop a comprehensive sign plan as outlined in section 20.26.10 of this chapter.

8. Exempted Signs. The following types of signs are permitted in all districts unless otherwise noted, and shall neither require a building permit nor be erected and maintained in accordance with the provisions of this chapter unless otherwise provided.

Exempt Signs	Notes
Nameplate	
"Open/Closed" Sign	Not to exceed 2 sq/ft
Private Information	Not to exceed 1 sq/ft
Traffic/Municipal Signs	
On-Premise Traffic Direction Signs	Not to exceed 6 sq/ft each
Memorial Signs / Historic Signs	
Flags	Includes: country, state, school, corporation, non-profit org.
Utility Location Signs	
Accessory Signs	Not to exceed 6 sq/ft in total area
Temporary Holiday Graphics	
Directional or Warning Signs Issued by a Federal, State, or Municipal Authority	
Signs on Buses	
Signs Internal to Development	Cannot be viewed by from the public right-of-way.

20-26.4. Prohibited Signs

The following types of signs are prohibited in all districts unless otherwise noted:

Prohibited Signs	Notes
Sign that Move or Simulate Motion	Includes flashing, blinking, animated, rotating
Signs installed with out a permit	
Signs that emit audible sounds, odor or visible matter	
Attention-getting devices	
Portable Signs	Special event signs are limited to a time period not to exceed 10 days if the event it sponsored by a religious, charitable, or civic organization
Signs which create a traffic hazard	Includes: Signs interfering with traffic sight distances Signs blocking the name or address of a nearby business Signs that imitate a traffic sign or signal Sings in the public right-or-way
Signs with obscene, untruthful or misleading statements	
Motorized or non-motorized signs which are attached to a portable vehicle (See example below)	This is not intended to prohibit typical reasonable business identification on a motor vehicle
Roof signs which project above the roofline	
Off-premises signs	
Marquee signs	

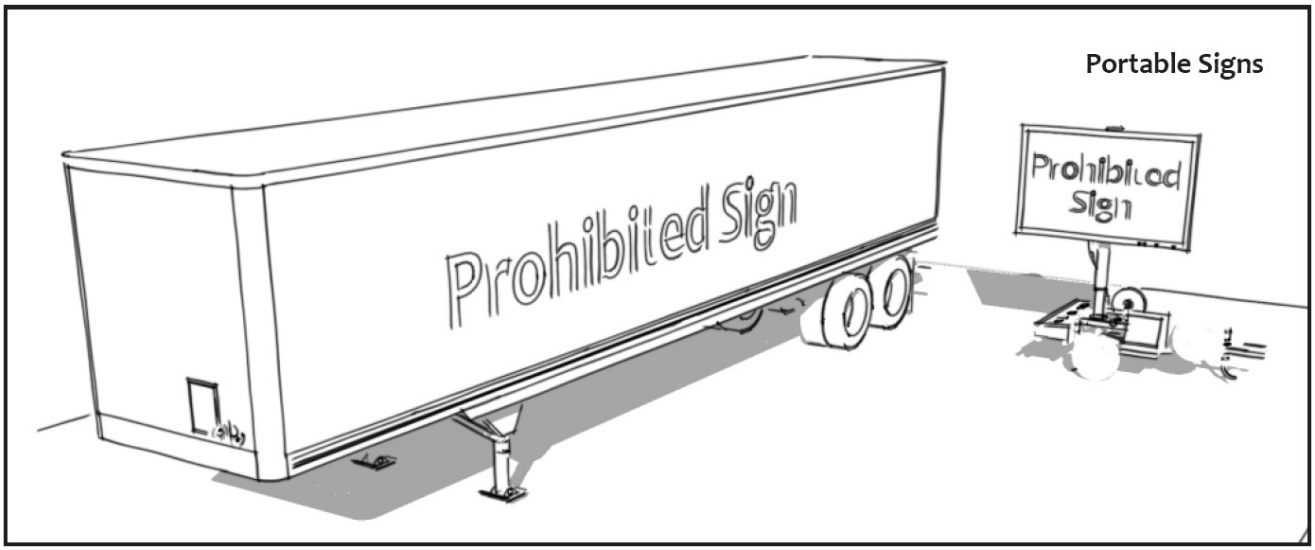

Portable Signs
Prohibited Sign
Prohibited Sign

Table 20-26-1. Regulations Regarding Permitted Sign Area, Maximum Height, and Minimum Setback

Maximum Height					
Zone	**Maximum Height of Monument Signs**	**Maximum Height of Pole Signs**	**Permitted Area of Wall, Roof & Win. Signs**	**Minimum setback of Monument and Pole**	**Permitted Sign Area Total for All Permanent Signs (square feet)**
Single-Family Residential	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Uses such as Conditional Use Permits					(2.0) x length of street frontage
Multi-Family	8’	N/A	20’	None	(.33) x length of street frontage
Neighborhood Commercial	8'	20'	30'	5'	(2.0) x length of building frontage
Professional Office	8'	20'	30'	5'	(2.0) x length of building frontage
General Commercial, Recreation, Schools, & Public Use	8'	20’	60'	5'	(2.0) x length of building frontage
Service Commercial	8'	20'	60'	5'	(2.0) x length of building frontage
Light Industrial	8'	20'	40'	5'	(2.0) x length of building frontage
Heavy Industrial	8'	20'	40'	5'	(2.0) x length of building frontage
Total Permitted Area of All Signs Shall not exceed 100 sq/ft in any district.					

20-26.5. Sign Design Guidelines.

A. *Applicability.* The following guidelines should be considered in the design of all signs within the city. These guidelines are intended to complement other requirements within this section.

B. *Design Compatibility.*

1. Creative design encouraged: Signs should make a positive contribution to the general appearance of the area in which they are located. A well-designed sign can be a major asset to a building. The city encourages imaginative and innovative sign design.

2. Proportion, size, and scale: The scale of signs should be appropriate for the building on which they are placed and the area in which they are located. The size and shape of a sign should be proportionate with the scale of the structure.

3. Integrate signs with the building: Signs should not obscure architectural features. Their design should be integrated with the design of the building. A well-designed building façade or storefront is created by the careful coordination of sign and architectural design and overall color scheme. Signs in multiple tenant buildings should be designed to complement or enhance the other signs in the building.

These signs block elements and create a chaotic image.

These signs compliment the building creating a more orderly appearance.

4. Reduce sign impact: Because residential and commercial uses generally exist in close proximity, signs should be designed and located so that they have little or no impact on adjacent residential neighborhoods.

5. Sign placement: Place wall signs to establish façade rhythm, scale and proportion where façade rhythm does not otherwise exist. On buildings that have a monolithic or plain façade, signs can establish or continue appropriate design rhythm, scale and proportion.

6. Pedestrian-oriented signs are encouraged: It is desirable and encouraged to include a pedestrian-oriented sign as one of the permitted signs for a business. Pedestrian-oriented signs are signs that are designed for and directed toward pedestrians so that they can easily and comfortably read the sign as they stand adjacent to the business.

7. Use individual letters. As an alternative to an attached sign, lettering may be painted directly on the building façade. However, signs should not be painted directly over ornamental and architectural features or over brick and stone surfaces of buildings.

C. *Color.*

1. Select colors carefully: Color is one of the most important aspects of visual communication. It can be used to catch the eye or to communicate ideas or feelings. Colors should be selected to contribute to legibility and design integrity. Even the most carefully thought out sign may be unattractive and a poor communicator because of poor color selection. Too many colors used thoughtlessly can confuse and negate the message of a sign.

2. Use contrasting colors: Contrast is an important influence on the legibility of signs. A substantial contrast should be provided between the color and material of the background and the letters and symbols to make the sign easier to read in both day and night. Light letters on a dark background or dark letters on a light background are most legible.

3. Avoid using too many colors: Colors or color combinations that interfere with legibility of the sign copy or that interfere with viewer identification of other signs should be avoided. Small accents of several colors may make a sign unique and attractive, but the competition of large areas of many different colors often decreases readability.

D. *Materials.*

1. Sign materials: The following sign materials are recommended:

   (a) Wood (carved, sandblasted, etched, and properly sealed, primed and painted, or stained).

   (b) Metal (formed, etched, cast, engraved, and properly primed and painted or factory-coated to protect against corrosion).

   (c) High density pre-formed foam or similar material. New materials may be very appropriate if properly designed in a manner consistent with these guidelines, and painted or otherwise finished to compliment the architecture.

   (d) Custom neon tubing, in the form of graphics or lettering, may be incorporated into several allowed sign types.

2. Compatibility of materials: Sign materials should be compatible with the design of the face of the facade where they are placed. The selected materials should contribute to the legibility of the sign. For example, glossy finishes are often difficult to read because of glare and reflections.

3. Appropriate materials: Paper and cloth signs are not suitable for exterior use (except on awnings) because they deteriorate quickly. Paper and cloth signs are appropriate for interior temporary use only. The use of interior signs on paper or cloth should be the result of careful thinking about readability and the image of the business.

E. *Sign Legibility*: An effective sign should do more than attract attention, it should communicate a message. Usually, this is a question of the readability of words and phrases. The most significant influence on legibility is lettering.

1. Pedestrian-oriented signs: Make signs smaller if they are oriented to pedestrians. The closer a sign's viewing distance, the smaller that sign need be.

2. Use a brief message: A brief message should be used whenever possible. The fewer the words, the more effective the sign.

3. Space letters and words carefully: Letters and words should not be spaced too closely. As a general rule, letters should not occupy more than 75 percent of sign panel area.

4. Use symbols and logos: Symbols and logos can be used in place of words wherever appropriate. Pictographic images will usually register more quickly with viewers than a written message.

5. Limit the number of letter styles: The number of lettering styles should be limited in order to increase legibility. Intricate typefaces and symbols that are difficult to read reduce the sign's ability to communicate.

F. *Sign Illumination*: Illumination of a sign should be carefully considered. Like color, illumination can provide effective visual communication, or can confuse the message. Imaginative and innovative lighting techniques for signs are encouraged.

1. Use illumination only if necessary: Consider if the sign needs to be lit at all. Lights in the window display may be sufficient to identify the business. This is particularly true if good window graphics are used. Often, nearby street lights provide ample illumination of a sign after dark.

2. Use a direct light source: If the sign can be illuminated by a direct source of light (e.g., spotlight), this is usually the best arrangement because the sign will appear to be better integrated with the building's architecture. Light fixtures supported in front of the structure cast light on the sign and generally a portion of the face of the structure as well.

3. Shield the light source: Whenever direct lighting fixtures are used (fluorescent or incandescent), care should be taken to properly shield the light source to prevent glare from spilling over into residential areas and any public right-of-way. Signs should be lit only to the minimum level required for nighttime readability.

4. Back-lit signs: Back-lit, solid letters are encouraged. Signs consisting of opaque individually cut letters mounted directly on a structure (push through letters) can often use a distinctive element of the structure's facade as a backdrop, thereby providing a better integration of the sign with the structure.

20-26.6. Specific Regulations

A. Wall and Permanent Window Signs

1. Wall and permanent window signs shall not be placed above the window sill of the second floor of the building unless the business is conducted above the first floor. If business is conducted above the first floow the sign shall not be placed above the window sill of the third floor nor above the maximum height allowed for the zone.

2. Murals and wall graphics shall be approved by the Planning Commission. Any written message shall be counted as part of the permitted sign area. Murals require a sign use permit and are only permitted if submitted as part of a comprehensive sign plan as specified in section 20-26.10. In granting or denying approval, the Planning Commission shall consider the extent to which the proposal achieves the following:

   (a) The mural or graphic shall demonstrate artistic quality or theme as opposed to direct or indirect illustrative advertising.

   (b) The colors and materials used shall be reasonably harmonious with those in the area and shall not be used for the exclusive purpose of calling attention to the mural or graphic.

   (c) The subject matter shall not be calculated to deride any person, group of persons, or activity.

B. Monument and Pole Signs.

1. Each parcel or development is permitted one monument sign or one pole sign structure. Additional signs are permitted only under the following conditions:

   (a) One monument or pole sign is permitted for each separate street frontage.

   (b) Gasoline service stations are permitted one separate nonilluminated price sign not to exceed 40 square feet in area or six feet in height. Price signs can take the form of a portable sign.

   (c) Menu board signs shall be limited to two per drive through lane not to exceed 50 square feet.

2. Accessory signs shall not be attached to monument or pole sign structures.

3. Each premise in any commercial or industrial zone shall not place more than one-half their permitted sign area on a monument or pole sign.

4. Signs that display multiple nameplates shall be considered single signs regardless of the number of nameplates attached.

5. Monument signs shall not exceed 8 feet in height.

6. Pole signs must have a minimum 7 foot clearance and shall not exceed 20 feet in height.

7. The maximum permitted area for monument and pole signs is 100 square feet.

C. Changeable copy/electronic message board signs: Changeable copy and electronic message board signs are permitted subject to the following:

1. The light intensity, color, and brightness do not change.

2. Signs shall not appear to, flash, undulate, pulse, or portray explosions, fireworks, flashes of light, or blinking or chasing lights; the display shall not appear to move toward or away from the viewer, expand or contract, bounce, rotate, spin, twist or otherwise portray movement or animation as it comes onto, is displayed on, or leaves the sign board.

3. Message or copy shall not change more than twice per minute.

4. All signs shall have installed ambient light monitors and shall at all times allow adjustments to the brightness level.

5. Maximum brightness levels for electronic signs shall not exceed eight thousand (8,000) nits (candelas per square meter) when measured from the sign's face at its maximum brightness, during daylight hours and five hundred (500) nits (candelas per square meter) when measured from the sign's face at its maximum brightness between dusk and dawn.

6. At no time shall the sign be operated at a brightness level greater than the manufacturer's recommended levels.

7. Electronic displays in or adjacent to residential zones shall be turned off between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

8. Electronic signs shall not be allowed within any dwelling or home occupation in any residential zone.

9. Electronic sign permit applications must include a copy of the manufacturer's operating manual, which includes the manufacturer's recommended standards for brightness, scrolling or traveling speed, and other display operations.

10. Changeable copy/electronic message board signs shall be considered as part of the permitted signs area of the premises.

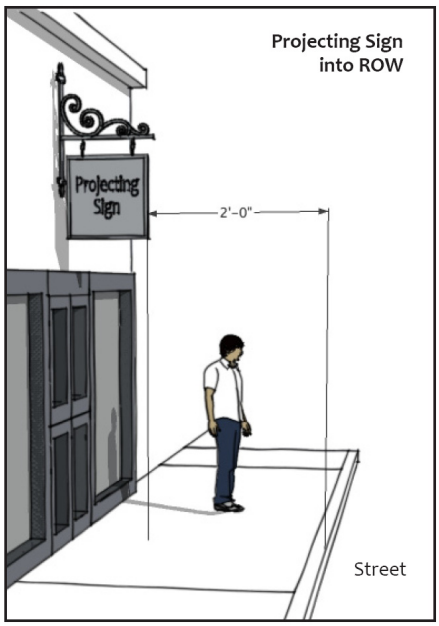
D. Projecting Signs

1. When neither a monument sign, pole sign, or a roof sign is present in the development, one projecting sign will be permitted.

2. Projecting signs are subject to the limitations specified in the Uniform Sign Code.

3. Projecting signs may project into the public right-of-way, not to include alleys, if they conform to all other provisions of this Code and as may be further provided by the Uniform Sign Code.

4. Signs may not project within two feet of the curb lines.

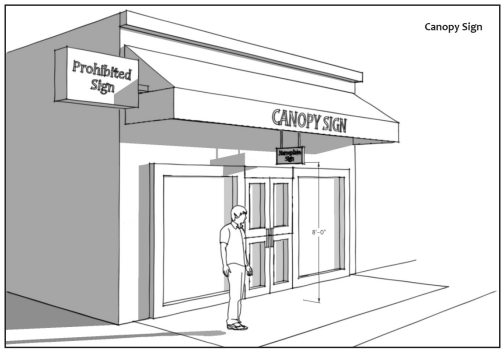


5. Projecting signs may not exceed the maximum height limits permitted for the zone. They may not extend vertically above the second floor window sill.When there is no second floor, they may not extend above the parapet, eave, or roof line.

E. Canopy Signs.

1. Awnings and canopies extending into the public right-of-way may have only individual cutout letters and/or symbols attached, painted, stenciled or otherwise placed on their faces.

2. Awnings and canopies may have a nameplate suspended beneath without being considered a projecting sign. The bottom of nameplates must be at least eight feet above the sidewalk and cannot extend beyond the canopy or within two feet of the curb line.



3. Signs attached above awnings and canopies that are connected to buildings shall not extend beyond the maximum projections specified in the Uniform Sign Code. Projecting signs shall not be placed directly on canopies.

4. Signs shall not be attached above freestanding canopies.

F. Roof Signs

1. One roof sign is permitted below the lowest roof peak for each building in commercial and industrial zones.

2. Signs are not permitted above the roof peak or parapet wall nor above the maximum eight allowed for the zone.

3. The bottom of roof signs shall be mounted flush with the surface of the roof and shall not interrupt roof lines or other major architectural features.

G. Temporary Signs

1. Unless specified, a temporary sign permit is required for all temporary signs as defined in this chapter.

2. No fee shall be charged for temporary sign permits.

3. Temporary signs are not counted as part of the permitted area for permanent signs. However, the total area of temporary signs shall not exceed the total permitted for permanent signs.

4. No single temporary sign shall exceed 100 square feet in area.

5. Temporary signs shall not be attached to ground, projecting, or roof signs.

6. Attention-getting devices are permitted for special events such as grand opening celebrations, holidays, sales, and promotions subject to Planning Department approval, and limited to a period of no more than ten days. No more than three special events shall be permitted in one calendar year.

7. One nonilluminated sign denoting the intended use of the building, architect, engineer, contractor, builder, realtor, and financial backer may be permitted upon premises during construction. This sign shall not exceed 64 square feet in area and ten feet in height. Such signs shall be removed prior to the final inspection of the project.

8. One temporary real estate sign for a subdivision may be permitted on each arterial or collector street within that subdivision. When there are no arterial or collector streets within that subdivision, one such sign may be permitted on a local street within the subdivision. It shall not exceed 32 square feet on a side nor more than 64 square feet total, nor be more than ten feet in height. Such signs shall be nonilluminated. Such signs shall be removed after completion of sales activities on the property or subdivision by the builder or within 18 months, whichever occurs first.

9. One onsite temporary real estate sign for each parallel street frontage of a lot pertaining to the lease, sale, financing or construction of a building or property is permitted. It shall not exceed the following size and height limitations and is not illuminated. Temporary real estate signs do not require a permit.

Table 20-26-2. Temporary Directional Signs

Zone	Aggregate Maximum Area	Ground Sign Maximum Height
Single-Family Residential	16 sq. ft. per side 32 sq. ft. total 32 sq. ft total	8 ft.
Multi-Family Residential	32 sq. ft	8 ft.
Office & Commercial	64 sq. ft	10 ft.
Industrial	100 sq. ft	10 ft.

10. A noncommercial sign expressing the opinion of the owner or occupant regarding political, religious, social, or economic topics of public interest shall be permitted so long as the message remains noncommercial in nature.

    (a) Such signs shall not be placed on fences, trees, utility poles, street furniture, or in the public right-of-way.

    (b) Only one such sign, not exceeding an aggregate of 32 square feet may be displayed per premise until it is no longer pertinent.

(c) Signs advocating a position regarding a specific candidate or proposition shall be removed no later than five days after the election.

(d) Political signs shall not require a permit.

11. Temporary directional signs subject to approval by the Planning Director. (See subsection 20-26.5.g.2.)

12. Banners, flags and streamers are prohibited except when attached to an object that is attached to the building above the roof line, and may not exceed 50 square feet in size.

13. Inflatable Signs are permitted subject to the following design standards:

(a) Inflatable signs shall not be illuminated

(b) Inflatable signs shall only be used for special events or promotions

(c) Inflatable signs are subject to a temporary sign permit

(d) No more that one inflatable sign shall be permitted at any given time.

(e) Inflatable signs shall not be permitted for longer than 10 days

14. Temporary directional signs are permitted for up to 60 days. No more than four temporary directional signs shall be permitted in a one year period. Where signs are to be displayed for longer periods of time, a Use Permit is required. All temporary directional signs must meet the following conditions:

(a) The location of the directional sign applied for is consistent with the purposes of the sign regulations of this chapter as set forth in subsection 20-26.1.

(b) The sign shall display only the name and directions to the event, location, or offering.

(c) The sign shall be nonilluminated.

(d) The sign shall not exceed the size and height limitations in Table II.

(e) The sign is to be placed only at points where a turning movement is to be made.

(f) The sign shall not impair the visibility of another sign.

(g) The sign shall be removed after completion of activities on the property or subdivision or as specified in the conditions of the Use Permit.

(h) A cash deposit to cover the removal of the sign is required before the sign is erected, which is refundable upon proof that the sign has been removed. Fees required shall be as established by Council resolution.

15. Guide Signs

    (a) Guide signs are intended to direct individuals to locations which are difficult to locate and are placed as a public service, not for promotional purposes.

    (b) The maximum size of a guide sign is 25 square feet.

    (c) The Planning Commission shall approve the erection and maintenance of all guide signs when special circumstances, such as a special event, holiday celebrations, construction, or other event where pedestrian or vehicular traffic is anticipated, warrant such construction. (Ord. No. 84-08, A 26, § 2604; Ord. No. 86-06, § 42; Ord. No. 87-16, § 3)

16. Nameplates

    Business without direct public access to the street parking, such as when one building is developed into several shops or offices, shall be permitted to display one nameplate per building entrance only.

17. Development Identification
    Shopping centers are permitted one sign which identifies the development. The area of this sign shall not exceed the maximum allowable area for the largest business sign permitted in the development and shall not exceed 100 square feet. Where the development identification is placed on a ground sign, subsection 20-26.3 is applicable.

18. Sign in Approach Departure Corridor

Where development takes place in the approach/departure corridor for NAWS China Lake, signs shall comply with the following additional standards:

(a) Inflatable signs, including temporary inflatable signs, are prohibited.

(b) Lighting used in conjunction with signs shall be arranged and operated in such a manner that it is not dangerous or misleading to aircraft.

(c) Moving message board signs and time and temperature signs shall not exceed six feet in height.

(d) Signs made of highly reflective materials or materials which can cause glare are prohibited

(e) Large and multi tenant developments are strongly encouraged to submit a comprehensive sign plan pursuant to section 20.26.10 of this chapter.

20-26.7. Comprehensive Sign Plans

A. Purpose: A comprehensive sign plan is intended to:

1. Integrate the design of the signs proposed for a development project within the design of the structures, into a unified architectural statement: and

2. Provide a means for defining common sign regulations for multi-tenant projects, to encourage maximum incentive and latitude in the design and display of multiple signs, and to achieve, not circumvent, the intent of this section.

B. Applicability: The approval of a comprehensive sign plan shall be required whenever any of the following circumstances exist, or whenever an applicant requests the approval of a comprehensive sign plan:

1. Two or more separate tenant spaces are to be created on the same parcel;

2. A new project is proposed with five or more non-exempt signs;

3. Two or more new signs are proposed during any 12-month period at an existing business with five or more non-exempt signs;

4. A mural is being proposed;

5. Theater Signage: A comprehensive sign plan for a theater or cinema use may authorize signs that deviate from the standards of this Chapter. The comprehensive sign plan may allow marquee signs, brighter lights, and design features not otherwise authorized by this Chapter if the sign is generally consistent with the adopted sign design guidelines and the purposes of this Chapter. Approval shall not be based on message content.

6. The Planning Director determines that a comprehensive sign program is needed because of special project characteristics (e.g., the size of proposed signs, limited site visibility, a business within a business, the location of the site relative to major transportation routes).

C. Review Process: Application for approval of new and amended comprehensive sign plans will be subject to review and approval by the Planning director. Each comprehensive sign plan shall designate the number, size, location, design, color and materials for each type of sign on the property. All comprehensive sign plans that do not violate this chapter's regulations shall be approved by the planning director. Those plans that would violate this chapter's regulations may be approved by the Planning Commission if the plan conforms with the intent of this chapter. Actions by the Planning Commission for comprehensive sign plans shall be governed by Section 20-21 (Conditional Use Permits).

D. Standards: A comprehensive sign plan shall comply with the following standards:

1. The proposed signs shall enhance the overall development, be in harmony with, and relate visually to other signs included in the comprehensive sign plan, to structures and/or developments they identify, and to surrounding development when applicable.

2. The comprehensive sign plan shall address all signs, including permanent, temporary, and exempt signs.

3. The comprehensive sign plan shall accommodate future revisions that may be required because of changes in use or tenants.

4. The comprehensive sign plan shall comply with the standards of this chapter, except that deviations are allowed with regard to sign area, total number, location, and/or height of signs to the extent that the comprehensive sign plan will enhance the overall development and will more fully accomplish the purposes and intent of this chapter.

5. Approval of a comprehensive sign plan shall not authorize the use of signs prohibited by this chapter.

6. Approval of a comprehensive sign plan shall not consider the signs' proposed message content.

E. Comprehensive Sign Plan Binding Effect: Upon approval of a comprehensive sign plan, no signs shall be erected, placed, painted or maintained on the subject property except in conformance with the approved plan. Approval of a master sign program does not waive the permit requirements for any individual sign.

20-26.8. Nonconforming Signs.

A. Nonconforming Signs -- Termination Date.

1. All legal nonconforming signs in existence prior to the effective date of this chapter shall be permitted to remain in existence as long as they were in conformance in compliance with all then applicable statutes and ordinances at the time they were constructed. Thereafter, all such signs, billboards, or other sign structures shall be in violation of this chapter, and subject to removal as in the case of any other illegal structure or use. This provision does not apply to existing signs which are subject to a written agreement stating the timeframe for which they were permitted.

2. All legally constructed existing signs on property annexed to the City after the effective date of this chapter shall be permitted to continue as nonconforming signs for the period stated in paragraph b. of this subsection, effective as of the date of the annexation. Any changes to the signs or their will require that all signs and their structures be brought into conformance with this chapter.

3. Zone Changes: Signs that are made nonconforming due to a change in zoning shall be permitted to remain in existence for the period stated in paragraph b. of this subsection, starting the effective date of the zone change.

B. Removal

1. The Planning Director or Public Works Director may order the removal without compensation of any nonconforming sign, billboard or sign structure meeting any of the following criteria.

(a) Any advertising display erected without first complying with all ordinances and regulations in effect at the time of its construction and erection or use.

(b) Any advertising display which was lawfully erected but whose use has ceased, or the structure upon which the display has been, for a period of no less than 90 days. Temporary signs shall be deemed to be abandoned after the sale, event or campaign which they advertise has been completed.

(c) Any advertising display which has been more than 50 percent destroyed, and the display cannot be repaired within 30 days of the date of its destruction.

(d) Any advertising display which is temporary.

(e) Any advertising display which is or may become a danger to the public or is unsafe.

(f) Any advertising display which constitutes a traffic hazard not created by relocation of streets or highways or by acts of any City of County.

(g) Any advertising display which has been altered or maintained in violation of any ordinance or regulation.

Except where stated elsewhere in this chapter, the Planning Director or Public Works Director shall give 30 days written notice to the owner of the building, structure or lot on which the sign is located to remove the sign or bring it into full compliance. The Planning Director or Public Works Director may order the immediate removal of any sign billboard or sign structure if in his opinion the condition of the sign constitutes an immediate threat to the safety of the public.

2. Any nonconforming onsite advertising structure, for which there has been a prior agreement between the City and the owner of the sign calling for the removal of such structure, shall be removed as of the date set out in the agreement, and no compensation shall be provided.

3. Nonconforming onsite advertising structures not meeting paragraphs 1. and 2. above which were located within an area shown as residential on the General Plan and zoned for residential use on the date on which the advertising structure was erected shall be removed within 15 years of the date of adoption of this ordinance. Removal prior to the 15-year period may be required by the City Council pursuant to paragraph c. of this subsection. Except where provided elsewhere, compensation for such prior removal shall be paid on the basis of one-fifteenth of the duplication cost of construction of the display being removed multiplied by the number of years remaining before the expiration of the 15-year period.

4. Removal of all other nonconforming onsite advertising structures may be required at any time by the Planning Director, the Public Works Director, Planning Commission or the City Council. Except as provided elsewhere, compensation for such removal shall be paid on the basis of the greater of "fair market value" or "fair and just compensation".

5. Council may require the removal of any nonconforming off-site advertising structure not located in a residential area which was in existence on November 6, 1978 or was erected after that date and which complied with all regulations in effect at the time. Compensation for such removal shall be paid as defined in the Eminent Domain Law (Title 3 of part 3 of the Civil Procedure).

6. Removal without compensation of any nonconforming off-site advertising structure located in a residential zone district may be required by Council pursuant to paragraph c. of this subsection. In such cases, the subject off-site advertising structure shall be allowed to remain in existence for the time periods represented in the following chart. Following the expiration of said time periods, the structure shall be removed.

Fair Market Value on Date of Notice of Removal Requirement	Minimum Years Allowed
Under $1,999.00.	2
$2,000.00 to $3,999.00.	3
$4,000.00 to $5,999.00	4
$6,000.00 to $7,999.00	5
$8,000.00 to $9,999.00	6
$10,000.00 and over	7

The amounts provided in this section shall be adjusted each January 1 after January 1, 1983, in accordance with the changes in building costs, as indicated in the United States Department of Commerce Composite Cost Index for Construction Costs.

7. The Planning Director shall order the removal of any moving, flashing, rotating or motion simulating sign features not otherwise permitted in this chapter. Written notice shall be provided and all such features shall be deactivated within 30 days of such notice of nonconformity and no compensation shall be provided for any costs thereof.

C. Procedure

1. The Planning Department of the City of Ridgecrest shall provide notice to the owner of any nonconforming sign structure proposed to be removed pursuant to subsections 20-26.7, paragraphs b. 3, 4 and 6 above.

   Such notice shall be sent by certified mail, signed receipt requested, to the owners of each premise or site on which the nonconforming sign structure is maintained. Such notice shall state when the sign is to be removed and shall cite the portion of this Code under which such removal is ordered.

2. Such notice shall also inform the owner of his hearing rights as follows:

   (a) Notice to be deemed given upon receipt of signature card within 30 days. Any owner who believes that the sign, billboard, or other sign structure is, because of some unusual circumstances, entitled to a longer period of time may appeal the notice and apply for an

extension of nonconforming use. The request shall be in writing and signed by the owner or his authorized agent. The request shall describe the premises and the nonconforming sign, billboard, or other sign structure, and state why an extension is needed. The appeal shall be filed with the City Clerk. Any owner failing to make such appeal and application within the 30 day period waives any right which he otherwise might have for an extension of time for the nonconforming use.

(b) The appeal and application shall be heard by the Council at a public hearing, and notice given the appellant-applicant at least ten days prior to the hearing. Council may consider all evidence relevant to the value, depreciation, and obsolescence of the sign, billboard, or other structure in question, including such depreciation schedule as may have been allowed or approved by the Internal Revenue Service.

(c) At the conclusion of the hearing, the Council may deny the appeal and application or grant such extension of time for the continuation of nonconforming use as the Council finds justified by the evidence.

(d) General. Any nonconforming sign, billboard or advertising structure which is remodeled, enlarged, relocated or otherwise reoriented, outside of a change of copy, shall only be remodeled, enlarged, relocated or otherwise reoriented in a manner which brings the sign, billboard or advertising structure into full conformance with this Code or removed from the site or structure.

20-26.9. Administration and Enforcement

A. *Administration.* This section shall be administered by the Planning Director, who is authorized and directed to enforce all provisions of this section. The Planning Director is authorized to promulgate procedures consistent with the purpose of this chapter and is further empowered to delegate the duties and powers granted to and imposed upon him under this chapter.

B. *Inspection.* Construction of all signs and their attachment is governed by the regulations of the Uniform Building Code, the Uniform Sign Code, and this chapter as adopted by the City of Ridgecrest, and shall be inspected and approved by the Building Department.

C. *Maintenance.* All signs and supporting structures shall be kept in repair and in proper state of preservation. The display surfaces of all signs shall be kept neatly painted and clean. The immediate surrounding premises shall be maintained free of weeds and rubbish. The Planning Director is authorized to order the painting, cleaning, or repair of signs which become dilapidated and the cleaning of the immediate premises. Such maintenance shall be completed within 30 days of receiving written notice.

D. Any Conditional Use Permit granted for a sign or signs shall become void if the sign is altered or relocated in any way which makes the sign in violation of the requirements of this section or the conditions imposed upon the Use Permit when it was authorized.

E. *Penalties.* Failure to comply with the provisions of this section shall subject the owner to the penalties provided for in infractions as otherwise provided in this Code.

F. *Appeals.* Any persons aggrieved by any decision or order of the Planning Director or Public Works Director may appeal to the Planning Commission unless such denial is based on violations of the Uniform Building Code, the Uniform Sign Code or the National Electrical Code. Denial for these reasons must be appealed to the Board of Building Appeals. Appeals shall be in writing and must be filed in the Planning Department within ten days of the date of the decision or order which is being appealed.

Please see next page.