



PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 5:30 PM

94 N. Washington Street, Sonora, CA 95370

(209) 532-3508

AGENDA

NOTICE: THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RALPH M. BROWN ACT (CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54950, ET SEQ.), AND THE FEDERAL AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT.

THIS MEETING WILL BE PHYSICALLY OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. ALL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE MEETING AND WILL BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT.

CALL TO ORDER

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL

MINUTES

- [1.](#) Approval of the August 8, 2022 Planning Commission Minutes

PUBLIC APPEARANCES

Per California State Law, matters raised by the public will be automatically referred to Staff or placed on the next meeting's Agenda. Anyone wishing to address the Commission at this time will be limited to three (3) minutes.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- [2.](#) Text amendment to Title 15, Zoning, of the Sonora Municipal Code, amending Chapter 15.28, Signs, by repealing it in its entirety and replacing it with a new Chapter 15.28, Signs.

CORRESPONDENCE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act, if you need assistance to participate in this meeting, contact the Community Development Director at (209) 532-3508; rkelllogg@sonoraca.com.

Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting (28CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II.)

Materials related to an item on this Agenda submitted to the Planning Commission after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection in the Community Development Department at 94 N. Washington Street, Sonora, CA 95370, during the normal business hours of Monday – Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF SONORA**

August 8, 2022

5:30 P.M.

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Sonora was scheduled on this date at 5:30 p.m. in the Sonora City Hall Council Chambers.

The following members were present: Chairman, Kevin Anderson, Vice-Chairman, Peter Ghiorso and Commissioners Bess Levine, and Nathan Morales. Absent was Commissioner Stephen Opie.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

MOTION: Motion by Bess Levine, to nominate Kevin Anderson as Chairman of the Planning Commission

VOTE: **AYES:** Levine, Anderson, Ghiorso and Morales (4)
 NOES: None (0)
 ABSTAIN: None (0)
 ABSENT: Opie (1)

MOTION: Motion by Nathan Morales, to nominate Peter Ghiorso as Vice-Chairman for the Planning Commission

VOTE: **AYES:** Morales, Levine, Anderson, and Ghiorso (4)
 NOES: None (0)
 ABSTAIN: None (0)
 ABSENT: Opie (1)

MINUTES:

MOTION: Motion by Kevin Anderson, seconded by Bess Levine, to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 9, 2022 Planning Commission, as mailed.

MOTION: Anderson **SECOND:** Levine
VOTE: **AYES:** Anderson, Levine, Ghiorso and Morales (4)
 NOES: None (0)
 ABSTAIN: None (0)
 ABSENT: Opie (1)

PUBLIC APPEARANCES: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1) Text Amendment to Title 17, Zoning, of the Sonora Municipal Code, amending Chapter 17.55, Second Dwelling Units on Residential Parcels, by repealing it in its entirety and replacing it with a new Chapter 17.55, Accessory Dwelling Units.

Community Development Director, Rachelle Kellogg, presented the staff report and explained the text amendments being proposed under the new Chapter 17.55 Accessory Dwelling Units Ordinance. She explained that the rewriting of the Chapter occurred due to changes in State law and mandates to local agencies. The Director and Commissioners discussed the proposed Ordinance No. 897 and she addressed questions from Commissioners.

There being no public in attendance, the Chairman dismissed with opening and closing the Public Hearing at 5:49 p.m.

MOTION: To recommend approval of Resolution 08-08-2022-A, recommending that the City Council adopt Ordinance No. 897, amending Title 17, Zoning Ordinance of the Sonora Municipal Code, repealing and replacing in its entirety, Chapter 17.55.060 (c) (1) and (b), Second Dwelling Units on residential parcels, and eliminating the 500 ft. restriction for airports if allowed under state law, subject to the findings below:

MOTION:	Anderson	SECOND:	Ghiroso
VOTE:	AYES:	Anderson, Ghiroso, Levine, and Morales (4)	
	NOES:	None (0)	
	ABSTAIN:	None (0)	
	ABSENT:	Opie (1)	

Findings for Resolution No. 08-08-2022-A, Second Dwelling Units:

The proposed text amendments:

- A. Are consistent with the objectives, policies, and general land uses and programs specified in the General Plan;
- B. Are in conformity with public convenience, general welfare, and good land use practice;
- C. Will not be detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare;
- D. Will not adversely affect the orderly development of property or the preservation of property values; and
- E. The project has been reviewed in compliance with CEQA and is exempt from further review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR’S REPORT:

Community Development Director, Rachelle Kellogg, advised Commissioners that staff anticipates presenting the draft Sign Ordinance as a discussion item at the September 12th, Planning Commission Meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 6:34 p.m. to the next Planning Commission Meeting on Monday, September 12, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,

Rachelle Kellogg,
Community Development Director



Community Development Department
PLANNING COMMISSION
Staff Report

MEETING DATE:	October 11, 2022	GENERAL PLAN:	Varies, City-Wide
TO:	Planning Commissioners	ZONING:	All Zoning Districts
APPLICANT / OWNER:	City		
PROJECT:	Title 15 Text Amendment – Chapter 15.28 Signs		
PROJECT DESCRIPTION:	Text amendment to Title 15, Zoning, of the Sonora Municipal Code, amending Chapter 15.28, Signs, by repealing it in its entirety and replacing it with a new Chapter 15.28, Signs.		

BACKGROUND:

City staff is proposing a comprehensive update to Chapter 15.28, Signs, of the Sonora Municipal Code which will replace the existing sign regulations. This update has been initiated by City staff. For the past several years the current Community Development Department staff have found the City's existing sign regulations difficult to implement, confusing to the public and over burdensome to the City's businesses. Updating a sign ordinance is not an easy process and it has taken several months to research, prepare and review the proposed text amendment.

The purpose of a sign ordinance is to regulate signage type, size, locations, and standards while still allowing businesses to direct the public's attention to the nature of their business and City residents' non-commercial signage. Signs play an essential role in a City's appearance and its appeal to both visitors and residents. Commercial signage should harmonize with the building, surrounding neighborhood and other signs in the area. Signage should not subject the public to excessive competition for their visual attention.

The proposed text amendment more clearly defines the requirements and processes required for signs within the City over what currently exists within the Municipal Code. While some requirements remain several changes have been made to allow for additional commercial signage and less regulation. These changes include:

- 1) The current regulations allow for a combination of no more than two sign types, freestanding, wall, or projecting. The proposed amendment allows all types to be combined as long as specific requirements and standards are maintained.
- 2) Standards are broken down by Zoning District to increase readability.
- 3) Prescriptive standards are included to remove ambiguous interpretation of the requirements.
- 4) Up to 25% of a business's window area within the Historic Area and 50% outside of the Historic Area can be used as signage area and no longer requires a Sign Permit.
- 5) A-frame signs meeting the required size and location criteria no longer requires a Sign Permit.

- 6) Wall signage continues to be 1 sf per lineal foot occupancy frontage but the maximum size has been increased from 90 sf to 150 sf and the minimum has been increased from 15 sf to 25 sf.
- 7) The maximum size for projecting signs is increased from 30 sf to 60 sf and is based on a formula of ½ sf per lineal foot of frontage.
- 8) Exemptions and prohibited signs will apply to the Historic Area as well and advisory review/comment will no longer be required, thus allowing staff to process sign permits within the Historic Area at a staff level without delay as is currently allowed in all other areas of the City. Currently staff has to send out advisory notices and wait 10 days to process their applications.
- 9) Grand opening temporary signage is now provided for.
- 10) All businesses would be allowed to have a pedestrian sign as described.
- 11) The proposed amendment requires the approval of a Master Sign Program for buildings or centers with 6 or more tenants. This is to provide opportunities for all businesses to have signage not limiting it to only those that have occupancy frontage.
- 12) For clarity purposes figures have been included.

Signs that are exempt from the City’s sign regulations and prohibited signs are clearly defined within the text amendment. The proposed language also includes a process for requesting exceptions to the Sign Ordinance where practical difficulties and unnecessary hardships exist and adds provisions for minor deviations which can be approved by the Community Development Director.

The revised regulations also set size, location and standards for signage within the City’s residential neighborhoods. It also establishes requirements for temporary signs/posters related to an event not associated with the business and requires that they be displayed within the building as we continue to see posters plastered all over the downtown area. Additionally, political signs will no longer be allowed to be placed on public property.

Staff feels that Chapter 15.28 as proposed provides more options and allowances for the City’s businesses while still assuring that the City’s streetscapes are aesthetically pleasing and maintaining its unique character. It also provides for increased freedom and reduces the complexity of the current permit process.

This item is being presented for discussion only to allow the public opportunity to comment on and ask questions related to the proposed text amendment. Staff will be noting all comments received, make appropriate changes and then will present for consideration Ordinance 887 to the City Council which will amend Chapter 15.28, Signs, by repealing it in its entirety and replacing it with a new Chapter 15.28, Signs.

Attachments:

- 1 – New Chapter 15.28 Signs
- 2 – Standards Comparison Table

Chapter 15.28

Signs

- 15.28.01 Purpose
- 15.28.02 Permit required
- 15.28.03 Definitions
- 15.28.04 Exemptions
- 15.28.05 Prohibited Signs
- 15.28.06 Signs Area
- 15.28.07 Signs Permitted—Residential Zoning Districts
- 15.28.08 Signs Permitted—PD District
- 15.28.09 Historic Area Requirements
- 15.28.10 Signs Permitted—CO, C, CG, and ML Districts
- 15.28.11 Master Sign Programs
- 15.28.12 Design Guidelines and Requirements
- 15.28.13 Signage at Closed Businesses and/or Vacant Sites
- 15.28.14 Special Use Sign
- 15.28.15 Legal Nonconforming and Illegal Signs
- 15.28.16 Administration and Enforcement

15.28.01 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to establish procedures for regulating signs, including the type, size, location, and construction standards of signs by zone district. The objectives of this chapter include the following:

- A. To reinforce that signs should serve primarily to identify the general nature of an establishment or to direct attention to a project, activity, place, person, organization, or enterprise. The use of subordinate information in commercial signage such as telephone numbers, lists of products, pictures of products, etc., is discouraged.
- B. As identification devices, signs must not subject the public to excessive competition for their visual attention. As appropriate identification devices, signs should harmonize with the building, the neighborhood, and other signs in the area.
- C. The City intends to encourage the installation of signs that improve the appearance of the property and the neighborhood and enhance the economic effectiveness of signs.
- D. The provisions in this chapter provide standards to safeguard life, health, property, and public welfare in keeping with the character of the City by regulating the size, height, structural design, quality of materials, construction location, electrification, illumination, and maintenance of all types of signs and sign structures.
- E. The requirements and provisions set forth in this chapter shall apply to all signs erected, altered, relocated, repaired, or maintained within the City. No sign shall be erected, repaired, maintained, or relocated except as provided in this chapter.

15.28.02 Permit required

Any person desiring to erect, move, alter, or attach a sign or other improvement regulated by this chapter shall first obtain any necessary permit(s) to do so. All requests for approval shall be accompanied by the drawings and information necessary to demonstrate compliance with the applicable regulations of this chapter.

- A. Application. Applications for sign permits shall be made with a form provided by the Community Development Department which contains all information and documents deemed applicable by City staff. Applications not containing all applicable information shall be deemed incomplete and shall not be processed until deemed complete by the City staff.

- B. **Modification and Exceptions.** Where practical difficulties, unnecessary hardships, or results inconsistent with the general purpose of this chapter result from the strict application of this Chapter, an exception may be granted pursuant to Sonora Municipal Code Chapter 17.62, Use Permit and Variance Procedure.
- C. **Minor Deviations.** A minor deviation of up to ten (10) percent may be granted by the Community Development Director upon written request, subject to conditions imposed without any notice or appeal, if the following findings are made:
 - 1. Doing so would not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property and improvements in the area in which the property is located.
 - 2. There are exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions which apply to the property involved or the existing or intended use of the property which do not apply generally to other properties in the same zoning district.
 - 3. Granting of a minor deviation will not negatively impact the surrounding properties.
- D. **Expiration of Permit.** Expiration of sign permits shall be as prescribed in Sonora Municipal Code Section 15.10.100, Expiration.
- E. When a use permit is required for a specific use in any zone district, the use permit shall outline specific limitations and requirements for signage appurtenant to the use permitted.
- F. **Interpretation.** When conflicts arise in determining application of this Chapter and its requirements, the Community Development Director shall determine the intent of the Chapter and its application of standards as appropriate. If further conflict continues, the provisions of 15.28.16(D) shall apply.

15.28.03 Definitions

For the purposes of this chapter, certain words and forms are defined as follows.

- A. "A-frame sign" or "sandwich board" or "A-type sign" means a portable sign capable of standing without support or attachment.
- B. "Accessory sign," "business sign," or "on-premises sign" means any sign located on a place of business, enterprise, calling or property which is related to the products or services available to or within those premises.
- C. "Advertising structure" means a structure erected exclusively for advertising purposes upon which any poster, bill, printing, device, or other advertisement of any kind whatsoever may be placed, posted, printed, or fastened.
- D. "Anchor store" means having greater than twenty-five thousand square feet (25,000 sq. ft.) of gross leasable area.
- E. "Animated sign" means a sign, or any device designed to attract attention by visual means through the movement or semblance of movement of the whole or any part of the sign.
- F. "Awning sign" means any sign located on an awning or any movable structure attached to a building and projecting over a thoroughfare or sidewalk.
- G. "Balloon" means any inflatable sign or balloon intended to levitate above the ground regardless of size, that is designed to be used as an outdoor advertising device for any business or promotional event.
- H. "Building" means the structure on which a sign is located or attached but excluding an advertising structure.
- I. "Building area" means the total gross square footage of floor area of building used for commercial, office, industrial or quasi-public activities.
- J. "Building line" means a line established by ordinance beyond which no building may extend.
- K. "Building Official" or "City Building Inspector" means the individual designated by the City Administrator as the person authorized to serve as the City's Building Official for the purposes of

administering various building and property maintenance codes contained in the Sonora Municipal Code.

- L. "Bulletin board" means a permanent monument sign with changeable copy intended to announce meetings or other events.
- M. "Changeable message sign" means a sign whose informational content can be altered or changed by electric, electro-mechanical, electronic, or manual means. Changeable signs include the following types:
 - 1. Electrically activated. Signs whose alphabetic, pictographic, or symbolic informational content can be altered or changed on a fixed display surface composed of electrically illuminated or mechanically driven changeable segments. includes the following two (2) types:
 - a. Computer controlled variable message electronic signs. Signs whose informational content can be altered or changed by means of computer-driven electronic impulses.
 - b. Fixed message electronic signs. Signs whose basic informational content has been pre-programmed to include only certain types of information projection (e.g., predictable traffic conditions, temperature, time, or other events subject to prior programming).
 - 2. Manually activated. Signs whose alphabetic, pictographic, or symbolic informational content can be altered or changed by manual means.
- N. "Combination sign" means any sign incorporating any combination of features of freestanding sign, sign tower, projecting building sign or roof sign.
- O. "Commercial speech" means any message, the prevailing thrust of which is to propose a commercial transaction.
- P. "Community directional sign" means a sign placed in the interest of ensuring traffic safety to locate community facilities, such as schools, churches, public facilities of the city, county, state or federal agencies.
- Q. "Curb line" means the line at the face of the curb nearest to the street or roadway. In the absence of a curb, the curb line shall be established by the City Engineer.
- R. "Cut-out sign" means any sign or individual words, letters, figures, or characters which are self-supporting and not affixed to any sign surface, but which are erected to be approximately parallel to the face of the structure but need not be attached to the structure.
- S. "Directional sign" means any sign, other than a highway marker or any sign erected by public authority, which is for the purpose of directing persons to a place or activity not located on the same premises as the sign.
- T. "Directory sign" means a sign for listing the tenants and their suite numbers of a multi-tenant structure, building, or center.
- U. "Electric sign" means any sign containing electric wiring, but not including signs illuminated by an exterior light source.
- V. "Erect" means to build, construct, hang, place, suspend or affix, including the painting or otherwise applying of wall signs.
- W. "Face" means the surface of a sign on, against or through which the message or design is displayed or illustrated.
- X. "Face of structure" means the exposed side of a main wall of a structure, excluding structural projections facing a street, highway or thoroughfare.

- Y. “Feather sign” means a sign typically freestanding that is mounted on a pole, normally made of fabric and designed to blow in the wind.
- Z. “Fin sign” means any sign which is erected to combine the features of both a roof sign and a projecting sign.
- AA. “Flashing sign” means an illuminated sign in which the artificial light is not maintained in a stationary or constant intensity, including changeable message signs where the sign message or graphic is replaced/restored from one message or graphic to the next.
- BB. “Freestanding sign” means any sign which is self-supporting in a fixed location and not attached to any structure.
- CC. “Frontage” means the boundaries of property abutting a public street.
- DD. “Gross surface area of sign” or “aggregate surface area” means the area contained within a single continuous perimeter, enclosing all parts of the sign, but excluding any structural elements outside the limits of signs which are required for the support of the sign, most often measured in square feet.
- EE. “I-frame” signs are a type of portable sign, designed to stand on a solid base or base with four legs, supporting a vertical sign which may or may not be two-sided.
- FF. “Illuminated sign” means any sign illuminated by any light source on, within or attached to the sign or by a light source removed therefrom.
- GG. “Independent pad” means a separate building or pad in a shopping center located on the perimeter of the center adjacent to the streets or major access points, having single or multiple occupancies.
- HH. “Marquee” means a permanent roofed structure attached to and supported by the structure.
- II. “Marquee sign” means any sign attached to or supported by a marquee.
- JJ. “Mini-anchor store” means having ten thousand and one square feet (10,001 sq. ft.) to twenty-five thousand square feet (25,000 sq. ft.) of gross leasable area.
- KK. “Mobile sign” or “vehicular sign” means a sign attached to or suspended from any type of vehicle.
- LL. “Monument sign” means any low-profile sign located on the premises and advertising the use, business, service, or activity being conducted on the premises.
- MM. “Non-accessory sign” means any sign located on a place of business, enterprise, calling or property which is not reasonably related to the products or services available to or within those premises.
- NN. “Noncommercial sign” means a sign (typically temporary in nature) that contains a message or images displaying noncommercial speech. Such messages typically relate to debatable matters of public concern, such as, by way of example and not limitation, advocacy on politics, religion, arts, science, philosophy, commentary on governmental policy, and similar topics. Noncommercial signs do not include temporary advertising displayed in connection with an event. This definition shall be construed and interpreted in light of relevant court decisions concerning noncommercial speech.
- OO. “Legal nonconforming sign” means a sign which is validly installed under laws or ordinance in effect prior to the effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter, but which is in conflict with the provisions of this chapter.
- PP. “Occupancy frontage” means the length of a building frontage of an individual business. Occupancy frontage is used to determine the maximum permitted size of a wall sign.
- QQ. “Off-site/off-premises sign” means any sign identifying a facility, product, service, or use which is not located, manufactured, or sold on the same premises as the sign or which identifies a facility, product, service, or use by a brand name which, although manufactured or sold on the premises, does not constitute the principal item manufactured or sold on the premises.

- RR. “Outdoor advertising structure (billboard)” means any sign, other than a directional sign, having a gross area of fifty square feet (50 sq. ft.) or more, if single faced; or one hundred square feet (100 sq. ft.) or more if double faced, which advertises a business, product, service, or activity made available elsewhere than upon where the sign is located.
- SS. “Pedestrian sign” means a sign typically above a sidewalk affixed to an awning or arcade meant to be viewed by pedestrians.
- TT. “Pennants” are long, narrow flags that may be used individually or strung together and are most often used to designate car sales or other outdoor sales or events.
- UU. “Permanent sign” means any sign which is intended for continuous display for a period of time greater than thirty calendar days (30-days).
- VV. “Portable sign” means any sign designed to be easily transportable or movable, and which can stand without support or attachment, including but not limited to an A-board, movable freestanding, tire stack or wind sign.
- WW. “Primary tenant” means the tenant which has greater lineal occupancy frontage.
- XX. “Projecting sign” means any sign other than a wall sign which is attached to the face of a structure and projects more than eighteen inches from the face of the structure.
- YY. “Real estate sign” means any sign used exclusively for advertising a parcel of property or a structure for sale, lease or rent.
- ZZ. “Roof sign” means any sign located on a roof or above the parapet of a building or having its major structural supports attached to a roof.
- AAA. “Sandwich Board” refers to definition of “A-frame sign.”
- BBB. “Shops tenant” means having zero to ten thousand square feet (0-10,000 sq. ft.) of gross leasable area.
- CCC. “Shopping center” means a group of retail, restaurant, commercial service and recreation uses that are planned, constructed and managed as a total entity.
- DDD. “Sign” means any advertisement, announcement, display (including electronic display), illustration, banner, insignia or mechanism which is affixed to, painted on or otherwise represented on a building, structure or site, on any vegetation, rock, wall, post, fence or any other object, and which is used to advertise or promote the interests of any person on the sale, use or consumption of any service, commodity, article or thing.

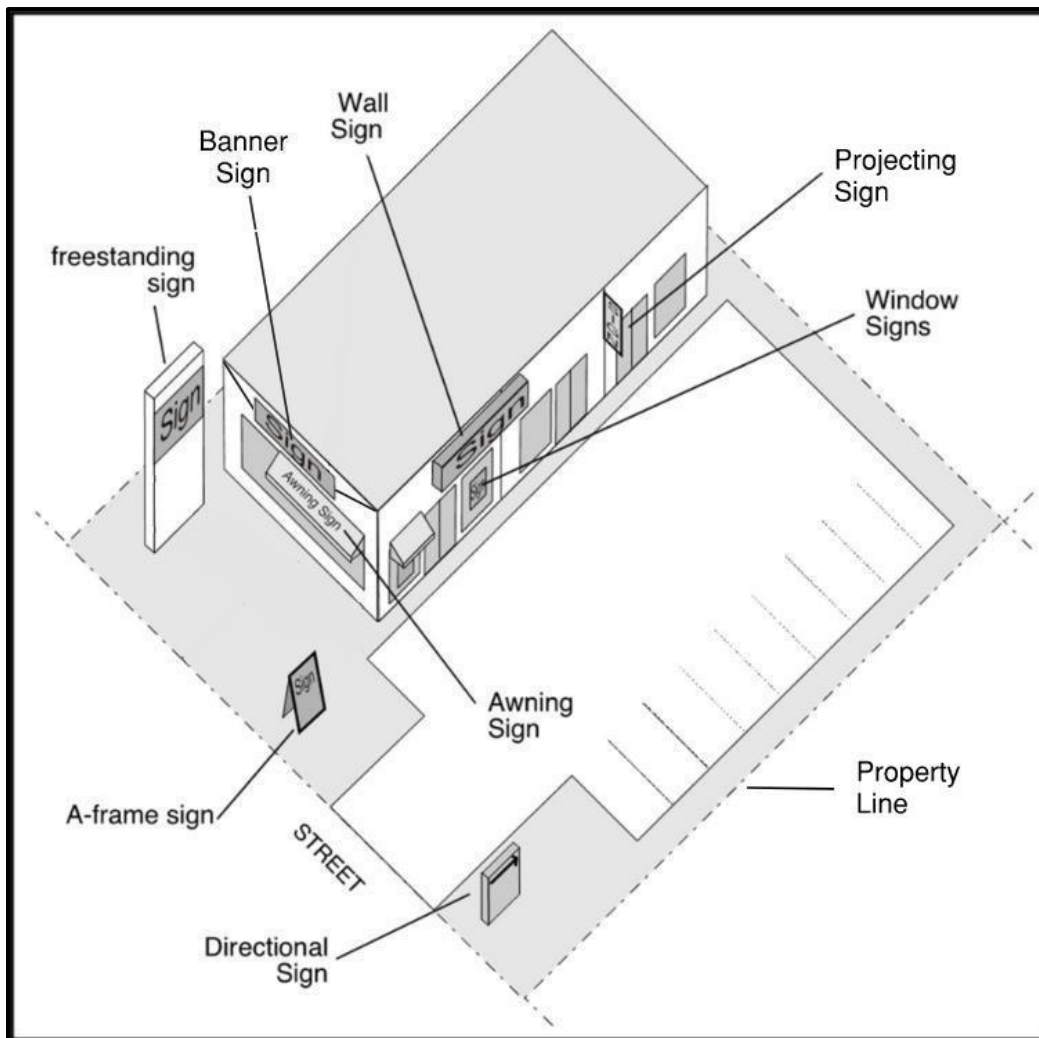
For the purpose of this chapter the term “sign” shall not include the following:

1. Advertising media located entirely within an enclosed building;
 2. Traffic highway markers, parking directional signs not greater than three square feet (3 sq. ft.) in area and railroad crossing or danger signals;
 3. The display of official court or public office notices;
 4. Any sign erected or maintained by public authority; or
 5. Signs used for the safety, welfare, or convenience of the public by utility companies.
- EEE. “Sign structure” means the structure supporting a sign including uprights, braces and framework but excluding any portion of the sign structure which meets the definition of a “sign.”
- FFF. “Snipe sign” means a type of temporary sign used for commercial purposes, typically small, made of plastic or paper that is attached to a wire frame that is stuck into the ground. Snipe signs are also sometimes attached to other objects such as telephone poles, trees, fences, etc.
- GGG. “Streamer” means a long, narrow banner, flag, or pennant.
- HHH. “Street frontage of a lot” means all lot frontages abutting a street.

- III. "Temporary sign" means any sign which is intended for continuous display for a short period of time, such as advertisement for events, and may consist of commercial or noncommercial speech. Removal of a temporary sign after thirty calendar days (30-days), only to then redisplay the sign for another thirty calendar days (30-days), is inconsistent with the intent of this definition, and the sign would be considered a permanent sign.
- JJJ. "Time and temperature device" means any mechanism that displays only the time and/or temperature.
- KKK. "Trompe l'oeil" means an art technique involving realistic imagery in order to trick the eye into perceiving a painted detail as a three-dimensional (3-D) object.
- LLL. "Wall sign" means any sign painted, affixed or attached on a building wall or of solid construction located as to be approximately parallel with the face of a structure, including a "V" type sign which does not extend more than eighteen inches from the face of the structure.
- MMM. "Window sign" means any sign painted on or attached to a window.
- NNN. "Wind sign" means a flag, pennant, whirligig, or any device which is designed to wave, flutter, rotate or display other movement under the influence of wind.

Figure 1, below, illustrates the various types of signs.

Figure 1: Various Sign Types



15.28.04 Exemptions

The following signs may be erected without obtaining a sign permit:

- A. Temporary Signs, as follows:
 - 1. Christmas Tree Sales and Similar Uses. Temporary A-frame and I-frame signs may be used. Total number of signs per street frontage shall be one sign, not to exceed twelve square feet (12 sq. ft.) in area or six feet (6') in height.
 - 2. Grand opening signs, including banners, pennants, and streamers, are allowed temporarily for a period no longer than thirty calendar days (30-days) from the conclusion of the event. Grand opening signs as defined in Section 15.28.12 (C) of this chapter, shall not exceed fifteen square feet (15 sq. ft.) within the Historic Area and thirty square feet (30 sq. ft.) in area outside of the Historic Area.
- B. Real estate signs not exceeding sixteen square feet (16 sq. ft.) in area and having a vertical dimension of not more than four feet (4') pertaining to the sale, lease, or rental of the property, as follows:
 - 1. Not more than one (1) such sign shall be allowed upon each 100 feet (100') of street frontage in the Agricultural/Residential Zone (AR), Residential Estates Zone (RE), and Commercial Zone (C) districts;
 - 2. Not more than one (1) such sign shall be allowed no matter the size of the parcel when located in any Single-Family Residential Zone (R-1), Limited Multifamily Residential Zone (R-2), and Multifamily Residential Zone (R-3);
 - 3. Signs advertising the sale of lots within a subdivision shall be permitted on the subdivision property for a period of twenty-four (24) months from the date of beginning construction; provided, that when seventy-five percent (75%) of the lots in the subdivision have been built, all such signs shall be removed within thirty calendar days (30-days).
- C. Signs for the purpose of directing traffic to a residential property for sale, not including new subdivisions, shall have an area on any face not greater than three square feet (3 sq. ft.) and limited to two (2) signs to any property and displayed only during the hours between eight a.m. and five p.m. (8:00a.m. – 5:00p.m.).
- D. Street number and/or name signs not exceeding two square feet (2 sq. ft.) per sign for single-family or duplex structures and three-square feet (3 sq. ft.) per sign for all other uses. One (1) sign per street frontage and private parking lot shall be allowed.
- E. Signs not exceeding twelve square feet (12 sq. ft.) in area and five feet (5 ft) in height, when placed upon work and during construction; provided, that not more than one (1) such sign shall be erected on the site. Such signs shall be erected for not longer than six months (6-months) and shall be removed thirty calendar days (30-days) after obtaining an occupancy permit for the structure.
- F. Signs used exclusively for the posting or display of official notices by a public agency or official, or by a person giving legal notice.
- G. Signs erected or maintained by a public agency or official or required by law to be displayed by a public utility for directional, warning, or information purposes.
- H. Garage/yard sales signs, maximum of two (2) signs per property not exceeding three square feet (3 sq. ft.) in area, each posted consistent with Section 15.28.05 (B). All signs are required to be removed immediately after the completion of the sale or end of day, whichever is first.
- I. Signs bearing no advertising message and located on the site may be temporarily erected when necessary to facilitate circulation within the site or facilitate egress and ingress during a permitted special event or occasion.
- J. Flags of any nation, political subdivision, or fraternal or religious organization, provided the pole height does not exceed twenty-four feet (24'), does not interfere with any overhead utility lines, and the vertical height of the flag is not more than one-fourth (1/4) the height of the pole. A sign application may be submitted for a flagpole higher than twenty-four feet (24') or a flag which exceeds one-fourth (1/4) the

height of the pole where the applicant can show that the proposed flag and/or pole is consistent with the intent and purpose of this chapter.

- K. Temporary signs and display posters in connection with an event may be displayed on the interior of a window with occupant or owner's permission. Such posters shall be removed within ten calendar days (10 days) after the conclusion of the event and no larger than eleven inches by seventeen inches (11" x 17") and cumulatively cover no more than fifty percent (50%) (twenty five percent (25%) in Historic Area) of the window.
- L. The removal and replacement of only the sign copy without increasing the area of conforming signs. The sign container, including the structural and electrical connections, shall remain unchanged.
- M. Holiday greetings, decorations and displays, excluding advertising signs disguised as seasonal decorations.
- N. Noncommercial signs, subject to the following:
 - 1. Signs shall be attached to a support structure.
 - 2. Signs shall not be located in any areas set forth in Section 15.28.05 (J) of this Chapter.
 - 3. The placement of signs on private property without the owners' permission is prohibited.
 - 4. Temporary noncommercial signs also comply with applicable Department of Transportation requirements.
 - 5. General Commercial Zone (CG), C, and Limited Manufacturing Zone (ML) districts. Not to exceed sixteen square feet (16 sq. ft.) in area, six feet (6') in height, and no more than one (1) sign everyone hundred lineal feet (100 LF) of property frontage.
 - 6. Tourist and Administrative Zone (CO) and R zone districts (R-1, R-2, R-3). Up to two (2) signs, each sign not exceeding three square feet (3 sq. ft.) in area and four feet (4') in height.
 - 7. AR and RE zone district. Not more than one (1) sign not to exceed six square feet (6 sq. ft.) in area and six feet (6') in height.
- O. Window Signs, up to fifty percent (50%) (twenty five percent (25%) in Historic Area) of the area of each individual window may be covered with a window sign or graphic.
- P. A-frame Signs during business hours. Subject to the following:
 - 1. Maximum dimensions and area: three feet (3') wide and four feet (4') in height, maximum twelve square feet (12 sq. ft).
 - 2. Number per business: one (1).
 - 3. Location. May be placed in front of the business if conflicts with vehicle safety are not caused and compliance with the American with Disabilities Act is maintained.

15.28.05 Prohibited Signs





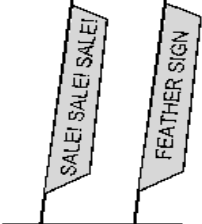
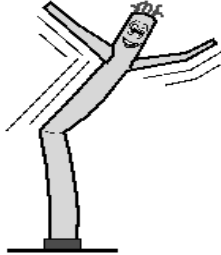
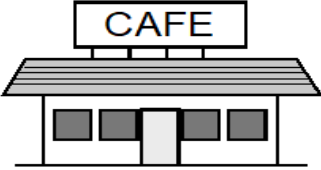


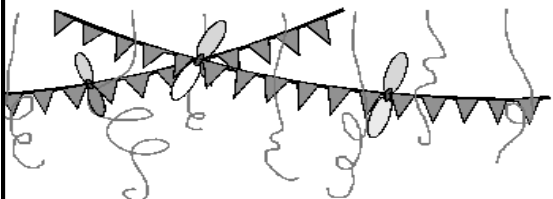

Unless otherwise provided in this Chapter, the following types of signs are expressly prohibited and subject to the following requirements:

- A. Off-site signs, including billboards, outdoor advertising structures, and directional signs except those provided in 15.28.04 (A)(4).
- B. Signs including animation characterized by varying intensity of color, patterns, illumination, spinning, glaring, rotating, and flashing lights, including illuminated window signs, except the following:
 - 1. On-premises barber pole, not to exceed thirty inches (30") in length, operated during business hours.
- C. Feather signs, snipe signs, streamers, pennants, spinners, ribbons, and inflatable signs except those provided in 15.28.04 (A).
- D. Signs advertising rooms available for transient stay at a residence.
- E. Signs having one (1) or a combination of the following characteristics:
 - 1. Obscene or Offensive to Morals. Any sign displaying obscene, indecent, or immoral matter as defined under the California Penal Code;

2. Imitative of Official Signs. Signs (other than when used for traffic direction) which contain or are an imitation of an official traffic sign or signal, public notices, such as zoning violations, building permits, business licenses and the like;
 3. Natural Despoliation. Signs which are cut, burned, limed, painted or otherwise marked on a field, tree, rock or other natural item.
- F. Unless otherwise provided for in this code, no person shall park any vehicle or trailer on a public right-of-way, or in a location on private property which is visible from a public right-of-way, which has attached thereto or suspended therefrom any sign, except a sign painted directly upon, magnetically affixed to or permanently affixed to the body or other integral part of a vehicle or trailer that is utilized for daily operations of the business and not solely for the purpose of advertisement.
- G. Roof signs.
- H. Changeable message signs, as defined in this chapter.
- I. No sign shall be designed or used for the purpose of emitting sound.
- J. No person (except a duly authorized public official permitted by the City for specific locations) may on public property, or a public right-of-way, erect, paint, print, nail or otherwise fasten any banner, sign, advertisement or notice of any kind on any lamp, pole, utility pole, bench, hydrant, bridge, wall, tree, landscape, sidewalk or structure in, upon or across any public street, alley or public property except as may be required, permitted by law or as otherwise regulated in this chapter.
- K. Excepting non-commercial signage, no sign shall be maintained on any fence, or be affixed to any trees or shrubs.
- L. Obstruction of Fire Escape and Fire Access. No sign shall be erected, relocated, or maintained so as to prevent free ingress to or egress from any door, window or fire escape. No sign of any kind shall be attached to a standpipe or fire escape or impede fire access to the roof.
- M. Traffic Hazard. No sign shall be erected at or near a street, driveway, or alley in such a manner as to obstruct clear vision, or at any location where the position, shape or color may obstruct the view of, or be confused with, any authorized traffic sign, signal, or device, or which uses any word, phrase, symbol, or character in such manner as to interfere with or confuse traffic. Signs shall have a set back at least ten feet (10') from the property line at an intersection of two (2) streets or the intersection of streets and alleys and streets and driveways.
- N. Utility Lines and Easements. No sign or outdoor advertising structure shall be located within a utility easement or erected or located in a manner which will reduce the vertical or horizontal clearance from communication or energized electric power lines as required by laws, rules, and regulations of the state of California and agencies thereof.

Figure 2 illustrates prohibited sign types

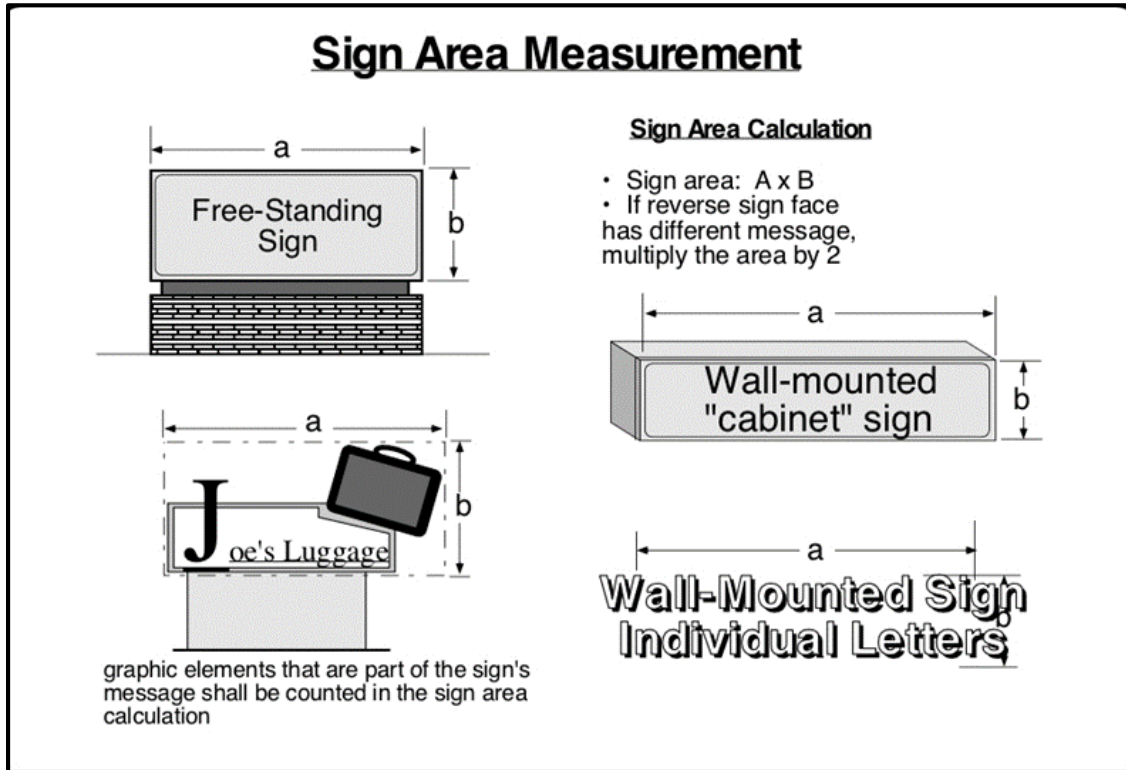
Figure 2: Prohibited Sign Types

 <p>Snipe signs</p>	 <p>Off-site signs, billboards, etc.</p>	 <p>Vehicles parked on street for purpose of advertising</p>
 <p>Signs with flashing lights/glaring elements, etc.</p>	 <p>Feather signs</p>	 <p>Animated signs</p>
 <p>Roof-mounted signs</p>	 <p>Inflatable signs</p>	 <p>Signs attached to trees, fences, light and telephone poles, etc.</p>
 <p>Pennants, streamers, spinners, ribbons, etc.</p>	 <p>Signs that imitate official traffic signs and signals</p>	

15.28.06 Sign Area

Sign Area. The area of individual signs shall be measured in accordance with Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 - Sign Area Measurement



- A. Sign Faces Counted. Where a sign has two (2) faces containing sign copy, which are oriented back-to-back and separated by not more than twenty-four inches (24") at any point, the area of the sign shall be measured using one (1) sign face only.
- B. Wall-Mounted Letters. Where a sign is composed of letters individually mounted or painted on a building wall, without a border or decorative enclosure, the sign area is that of the smallest area within which all letters and words can be enclosed.
- C. Three-Dimensional Signs. Where a sign consists of one (1) or more 3-D objects such as balls, cubes, clusters of objects, or sculptural or statue-type trademarks, the sign area shall be measured as the area of the smallest rectangle within which the object(s) can be enclosed, when viewed from a point where the largest area of the object(s) can be seen.

15.28.07 Signs Permitted—Residential Zoning Districts

- A. AR.
 - 1. For uses allowed under the City of Sonora Municipal Code Section 17.12.020, a single sign not to exceed sixty square feet (60 sq. ft.) in area.
- B. RE, R-1, R-2, and R-3.
 - 1. Not more than one (1) sign identifying an entire subdivision, provided that the sign shall be located on subdivision property and in accordance with Table 1 below.
 - 2. For multiple-family residences, one (1) monument sign per street frontage of lot, not to exceed six feet (6') high, thirty-five square feet (35 sq. ft.) of sign area. Monument is not

to exceed five feet (5') inside the property line nor closer than one hundred feet (100') from another freestanding sign on the same parcel.

Table 1: Signs Permitted in the R Districts

Advertising Relating to:	Maximum Area (Square Feet)	Maximum Height above Grade (Feet)
Buildings or structures	32	8
Subdivisions of fewer than 5 acres	48	12
Subdivision of 5 or more acres	65	12

15.28.08 Signs Permitted--- PD Zoning Districts

- A. Signs in the Planned Development Zone (PD) district shall be approved with the development plan according to the City of Sonora Municipal Code Section 17.30.080. If the development plan approved does not outline specific requirements for signage, the requirements of the zone district in which the use would be permitted will apply.

15.28.09 Historic Area Requirements

- A. The purpose of this section is to provide guidance to applicants in the design, construction, and placement of signs located in the Historic Area. The application of this section to the Historic Area is in addition to the other sections contained in this Chapter and their requirements. If conflicts arise between this section and others in this Code, the more restrictive applies. It is intended that signs should protect and enhance the historic atmosphere of the downtown commercial area.
- B. Signage in the Historic Area shall not obscure significant features, damage, or take away the overall architectural characteristics of any building or neighboring buildings in the Historic Area.
- C. Signs within the Historic Area, bounded on the north by Elkin Street, on the south by Church Street, on the east by the centerline of Stewart Street and on the west by the centerline of Green Street, shall be designed and regulated as follows.
 1. Wood is the preferred material for construction. Metal or combination of materials are allowed such that they work with the building's period and style. Plastic signage is not permitted in the Historic Area.
 2. Non-illuminated or exterior illuminated signs are permissible. Exterior illuminated signs are permissible with a minimum opaque area of sixty-five percent (65%) of the sign face.
 3. Interior illuminated signs of any type or size are not allowed.
 4. Lighting for exterior illuminated signs shall be so arranged that it will not create a hazardous glare for pedestrians or vehicles in a public street or on any private premises.
 5. Each sign shall be designed so that illumination does not exceed ten (10) candlepower at a distance of ten feet (10') from the sign.
 6. Banner signs are permitted as temporary signs only, provided:
 - a. No larger than 16 square feet (16 sq. ft.) in size and related to the business occupying the building they are located on.
 - b. Limited to one (1) time only not to exceed thirty calendar days (30-days). For signs displaying the business name, a single thirty calendar days (30-days) extension may be granted if the applicant is timely pursuing development, processing, construction or installation of permanent signage.
 7. Up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the area of each individual window may be covered with a window sign or graphic.

15.28.10 Signs Permitted—CO, C, CG, and ML Zoning Districts

The following signs are permitted for each business in commercial and industrial districts. For multi-tenant shopping centers or office parks containing six (6) or more individual tenants, Section 15.28.11 of this chapter shall apply. For an illustration of standards for selected sign types please refer to Figure 1.

A. Wall Signs.

1. Number of Signs per Business:
 - a. One (1) primary wall sign where the primary public entrance to the business is located. For businesses with more than one (1) public entrance, only one (1) shall be counted as the primary public entrance.
 - b. One (1) secondary wall sign where the site abuts a street, parking lot, or alley and the primary wall sign is on a wall not facing the street, parking lot, or alley.
2. Calculation of Wall Sign Area.
 - a. For a primary wall sign, one square foot (1 sq. ft.) of sign area is permitted for each foot of linear occupancy frontage, as shown in Figure 4, up to a maximum of one hundred fifty square feet (150 sq. ft.) of sign area, whichever is less. Notwithstanding this regulation, all businesses with occupancy frontage shall be permitted a minimum of twenty-five square feet (25 sq. ft.) of primary wall sign.
 - b. Where a secondary wall sign is permitted, the maximum sign area shall be one-half (1/2) the permitted sign area of a primary sign.
 - c. For multi-story buildings, each primary tenant shall be permitted one (1) sign mounted on the wall with the primary entrance, except for corner units which may be permitted a primary wall sign and a secondary wall sign.
 - i. Second floor primary tenants are allowed the same wall sign area as ground primary floor tenants in a separate sign area not to extend above the roofline.
 - d. Maximum Height. Not to exceed the top of the vertical wall surface on which the sign is mounted.

For an illustration of the calculations for wall signage, see Figure 4 on the following page.

B. Freestanding Signs.

1. Size and height. The sign area of each face and the sign height shall not exceed those areas and heights identified in the tables below, as applicable to the type of sign.
2. Pole Signs. Not subject to the tables below, a single pole sign per parcel shall be allowed at a height no greater than twenty feet (20') and with a sign face area not to exceed 32 square feet (32 sq. ft.) on each side. When a pole sign is utilized as primary signage for the property and/or business, secondary signs shall not be permitted.
3. Shopping centers with a street frontage of seven hundred lineal feet (700 LF) or greater shall be allowed secondary tenant freestanding identification signs.
 - a. Number. Not to exceed one (1) for each main drive approach for a maximum of two (2) signs.
 - b. Sign area and height. Not to exceed thirty square feet (30 sq. ft.) each, with individual panels of no more than ten square feet (10 sq. ft.). Identification signs shall not exceed a maximum height of ten feet (10').
 - c. The signs shall be granted for minor tenants within the center, located more than one hundred fifty feet (150') from the street the business intends to serve.
4. Sign Design. Freestanding signs shall be designed as a monument sign with a solid base extending at least one-half (1/2) the width of the sign face.
5. Setbacks. A freestanding sign shall be set back a minimum of five feet (5') from any property line.

6. In conjunction with businesses providing motor fuels for sale, an additional sign area allowance for pricing signs shall be sixteen square feet (16 sq. ft.) per side.

Figure 4: Calculation of Permitted Wall Sign Area

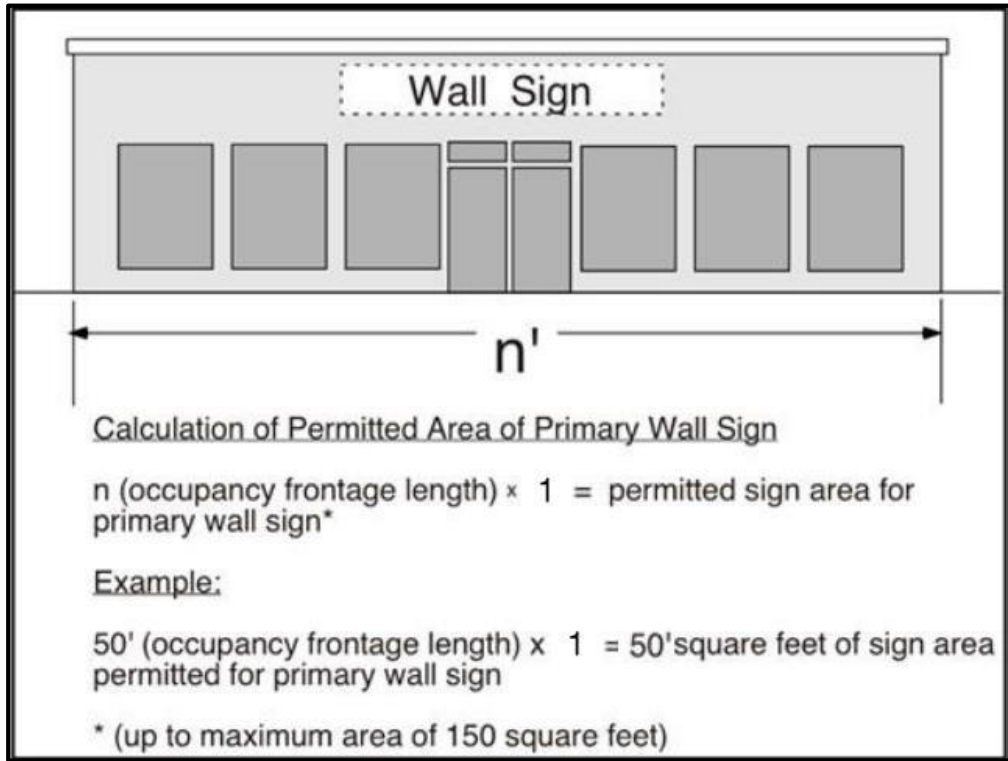


Table 2: Monument Signs (one freestanding sign per street frontage)

Street Frontage (in feet)	Maximum Height (in feet)	Maximum Face Area (in square feet)
0 – 100	Not to Exceed 8	Not to Exceed 40
101 – 200	Not to Exceed 12	Not to Exceed 50
201 – 400	Not to Exceed 15	Not to Exceed 75
401 – Plus	Not to Exceed 20	Not to Exceed 100

Table 3: Multi-Business Monument Signs (one freestanding sign per street frontage)

Street Frontage of Development (in feet)	Maximum Height (in feet)	Maximum Face Area (in square feet)
0 – 100	Not to Exceed 8	Not to Exceed 45
101 – 200	Not to Exceed 12	Not to Exceed 55
201 – 400	Not to Exceed 15	Not to Exceed 75
401 – Plus	Not to Exceed 20	Not to Exceed 100

Table 4: Shopping Center Monument Signs (one freestanding sign per street frontage)

Street Frontage of Center (in feet)	Maximum Height (in feet)	Maximum Face Area (in square feet)
0 – 200	Not to Exceed 14	Not to Exceed 60
201 – 400	Not to Exceed 16	Not to Exceed 75
401 – 500	Not to Exceed 20	Not to Exceed 85
501 – Plus	Not to Exceed 20	Not to Exceed 100

C. On-site Directional Signs.

1. Maximum height: four feet (4’).
2. Maximum area: six square feet (6 sq. ft.).
3. Number per site: one (1) per each side of a driveway from a public street.
4. Location. Directional signs shall be placed within five feet (5’) of a driveway that accesses the site from a public street.

D. Directory Signs.

1. Number per site: one (1) per public vehicle and/or pedestrian entrance when there are three (3) or more tenants on site.
2. Maximum area: two (2) square feet per tenant, not to exceed thirty-five square feet (35 sq. ft.) total.
3. Maximum height (if freestanding): six feet (6’).
4. Location. No directory sign which is a freestanding sign may locate closer than three feet (3’) to any point of ingress/egress.

E. Portable Signs.

1. Banners.
 - a. Number of Signs. One (1) banner sign viewable from the right-of-way is permitted per business, no limit on number of banner signs not viewable from the right-of-way.
 - b. Maximum Height. Not to exceed roof line. Banner signs shall not be attached to existing freestanding signs.
 - c. Maximum area: thirty-two square feet (32 sq. ft.), including allowable wall sign area.

F. Projecting Signs.

1. Maximum Height and Projection. Not to exceed roof line of attachment structure and may project over public rights-of-way not to exceed two-thirds (2/3) the distance from attachment structure to curb of sidewalk, maximum of six feet (6’) with two feet (2’) of clearance from sign to curb. (Note: Bottom of sign shall be a minimum of eight feet (8’) from ground to provide proper clearance.)
2. Number per Business. One (1) per business occupancy frontage. Permitted only where a wall sign is not used on the same wall.
3. Area. One-half square foot (1/2 sq. ft.) of sign area for each lineal foot of occupancy frontage, maximum of sixty square feet (60 sq. ft.).

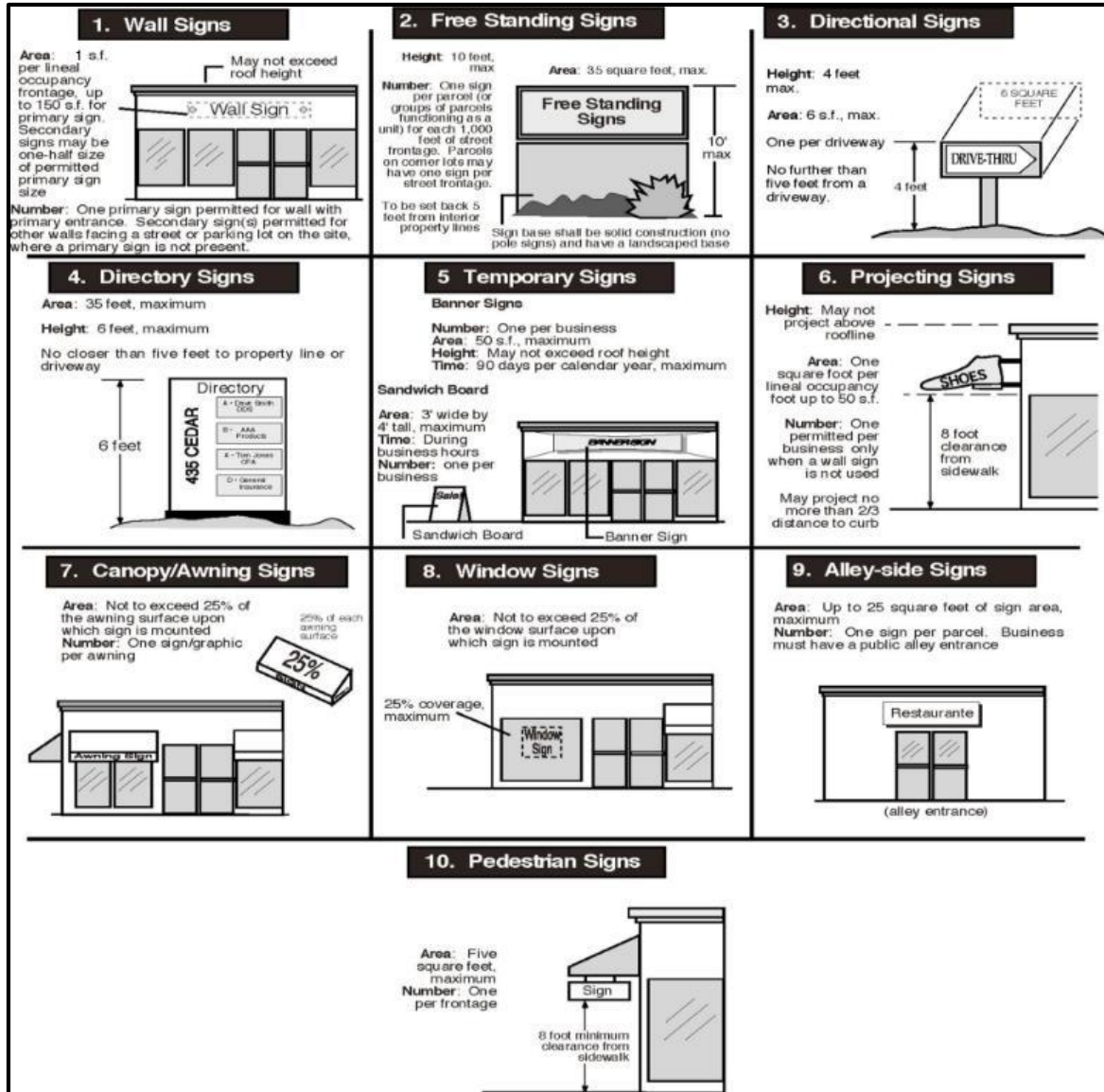
G. Awning/Canopy Signs.

1. Number of Signs. Where an awning is present, one (1) sign may be applied to the awning.
2. Maximum Area. Not to exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the area of the individual surface on each awning/canopy, inclusive of wall sign area. .
3. Location. Awning signs shall be made of removable materials such as individual cut-out letters and/or symbols attached, stenciled or otherwise placed on the canopy surface, and may be located on exterior surfaces of a canopy.

H. Pedestrian Signs.

1. Number of Signs. One (1) pedestrian-oriented sign per tenant that projects or hangs above a sidewalk on each side of a building.
2. Size. Each sign may be a maximum of five square feet (5 sq. ft.) in size and may hang or be suspended no lower than eight feet (8') above grade level.

Figure 5: Selected Commercial and Industrial Sign Standards



15.28.11 Master Sign Programs

The purpose of Master Sign Programs is to harmonize the appearance of signs, in a manner allowing creativity in design and commercial identification, while avoiding extremes of size, color and shape. A Master Sign Program is also used to distribute allowable sign area for multi-tenant buildings and complexes. Master Sign Programs existing at the time of the adoption of this chapter may continue in effect, until modified.

- A. Applicability. A Master Sign Program is required in new non-residential developments of six (6) or more separate tenant spaces that will share either the same parcel or structure and use common access or parking facilities.

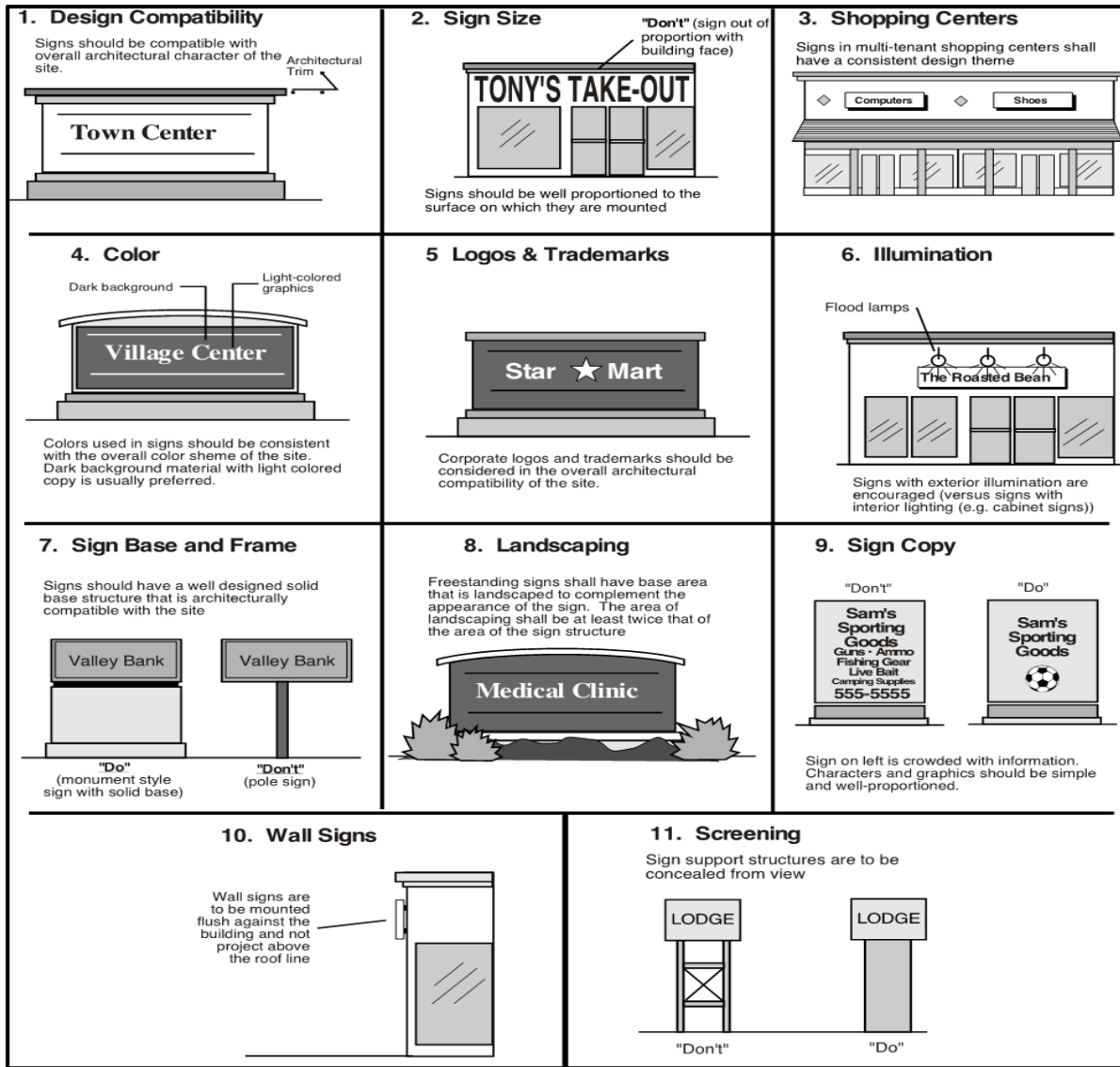
- B. Allowable Modifications. A Master Sign Program may provide for exceptions from the standards of this chapter, subject to Sonora Municipal Code Chapter 17.62.
- C. Review Authority. All Master Sign Programs are reviewed with a use permit and subject to approval by the Planning Commission, as per the City of Sonora Municipal Code Section 17.62.
- D. Required Findings. In order to approve a Master Sign Program, the following findings must be met, in addition to other applicable regulations in this section:
 - 1. The proposed signs are compatible in architectural style and character with any building to which the signs are to be attached, any surrounding structures and any adjoining signage on the site;
 - 2. Future tenants will be provided with adequate opportunities to construct, erect, or maintain a sign for identification; and
 - 3. Directional signage and building addressing is adequate for pedestrian and vehicular circulation and emergency vehicle access.
- E. Revisions to Master Sign Programs. The Community Development Director may approve minor revisions to an approved Master Sign Program with a sign permit.

15.28.12 Design Guidelines and Requirements

All signage in commercial and industrial zones should incorporate attractive design elements consistent with the following, as applicable. For illustrations of selected design guidelines, see Figure 6.

- A. Size. Notwithstanding applicable sign standards elsewhere in this chapter, sign size shall be proportionate to the size and scale of the site and/or building upon which the sign is proposed. Sign dimensions as specified in this chapter are maximum allowable dimensions; it may be necessary that signs be smaller than the maximum allowed, in order to be proportionate in size and scale to achieve the design objectives of this section.
- B. Color. Colors should be used in coordinated groupings and should be compatible with those colors used in the building or project design. For cabinet-style signs, a dark sign background is preferred with light colored copy (characters/graphics).
- C. Lighting Intensity. The light emitted or reflected by a sign, or emitted by a light source, shall be of reasonable intensity and compatible with the architecture of the building and the immediate vicinity. Artificial light sources shall be shielded to prevent light spillage, glare or annoyance to persons on or inside adjoining properties or to public or private rights-of-way.
- D. Sign Bases and Frames. Freestanding signs shall be either housed in a frame, or set onto a base, presenting a solid, attractive, and well-proportioned appearance. The size and shape of the frame or base shall be proportionate to the size and mass of the sign and be low profile in design. Guy wires, angle irons, braces and other support or construction elements shall be screened or hidden from view.
- E. Sign Copy. Sign copy should be simple and concise without excessive description of services or products. On freestanding signs, sign copy should be designed to contribute to the design of the structure on which it is displayed. In all cases, freestanding sign design and sign copy shall be coordinated to provide an attractively designed freestanding element which identifies the development or project.
- F. Maintenance. All signs and their supporting components must be kept in good repair and always maintained in good structural condition. It is unlawful to permit vegetation, rubbish, or flammable material to accumulate within ten feet (10') of any sign.
- G. Design Quality. All signs should be professionally designed and manufactured. Signs that utilize hand-made lettering or elements must meet professional standards.

Figure 6: Selected Sign Design Guidelines



15.28.13 Signage at Closed Businesses and/or Vacant Sites

- A. Closed Business. When a business vacates and/or closes for a period of over ninety calendar days (90-days), the following shall apply:
 - 1. Within ninety calendar days (90-days), the property owner shall ensure removal of the following:
 - a. All on-site signs faces, as well as any individual words, letters, figures or characters on the building and other structures on the property.
 - b. The sign face of freestanding and monument signs.
 - 2. Any awning, structure or facade left exposed after sign, sign face, or sign structure removal shall be repaired to a customary finished appearance.
- B. Vacant Buildings and Sites. When a site contains no buildings or contains no occupied buildings, it is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure the following:

1. No sign or structure that is not exempt by Section 15.28.04 of this chapter shall be constructed, erected, or displayed on a vacant site or on a site with no occupied buildings.
2. No temporary sign shall be constructed, erected or displayed, except that noncommercial signs may be erected and displayed in conformance with this chapter.

15.28.14 Special Use Signs

Certain uses, because of their special sign needs or their allowance in several districts, have been specifically listed in this section. Where such uses are approved, the sign standards allowed for such uses shall be as follows:

- A. Auto/RV Sales (New Auto Sales Only with Incidental Used Vehicle Sales).
 1. One (1) freestanding sign may be provided per separate new car showroom. The minimum distance between freestanding signs shall be fifty feet (50’).
 2. Freestanding signs for incidental used car sales shall be no higher than ten feet (10’) nor contain more than thirty-five square feet (35 sq. ft.) of area.
- B. Drive-In or Drive-Up Uses. In addition to the sign area normally allowed, drive-up restaurants shall be allowed one menu board at the drive-through per drive aisle, not to exceed twenty square feet (25 sq. ft.) area nor six feet (6’) in height each.
- C. Movie Theaters. In addition to the sign area normally allowed, a single cabinet or display box is allowed per screen, not to exceed fifteen square feet (16 sq. ft.) in area each. Electronic reader boards may be used for movie listings and show times.

15.28.15 Legal Nonconforming and Illegal Signs

- A. Illegal Signs. Every sign in existence at the time the ordinance codified in this title became effective and which was prohibited or illegal at the time of installation, and which does not conform to the provisions of this chapter, shall be an illegal sign. Such signs shall be removed immediately upon notification of illegality or brought to compliance with the standards of this chapter. Signs that are not constructed, maintained, or displayed pursuant to the requirements of this chapter and that are nonconforming shall be illegal.
- B. Legal Nonconforming Signs. Every sign in existence at the time the ordinance codified in this title became effective and which sign was legal at the time of installation but that does not conform to the provisions of this chapter shall be a legal nonconforming sign. A change of copy or sign face shall not be deemed a discontinuance of use. Any structural alteration to any part of the sign shall be deemed a discontinuance of use. A nonconforming sign shall be made to conform immediately to the provisions of this chapter if:
 1. The owner remodels a nonconforming sign display, or expands or enlarges the structure or land use upon which the advertising display is located;
 2. The owner relocates a sign to another area of the existing site;
 3. The sign is destroyed.

15.28.16 Administration and Enforcement

- A. Signs and other advertising structures regulated in this chapter, when found by the building official to be unsafe or a menace to the public or erected in violation of the provisions of this chapter, shall be and constitute a public nuisance and shall be subject to enforcement under the provisions of Chapter 1.08 of the Sonora Municipal Code, General Penalties and Code Enforcement.
- B. Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 1.08 of the Sonora Municipal Code, any person, firm, corporation, or organization found in violation of any provisions of this chapter shall be notified and cited in accordance with policies established by the Community Development Department and approved by the City Council.
- C. Any sign or sign structure erected, altered, relocated, repaired, or maintained contrary to the provisions of this chapter is declared to be unlawful and a public nuisance. The City may immediately commence action or proceedings for the abatement, removal, and enjoinder thereof in the manner provided by law and may apply to courts to grant such relief as will abate and remove such sign or structure. The City may seek the recovery of all costs and fees, including attorneys’ fees, associated with the abatement of any sign or other advertising structure regulated in this chapter.

- D. Appeal from Decision. Any person having record or title of legal interest in the building may submit a written appeal of any notice of violation or any action of the Community Development Department under this Code, as follows:
- a. File a notice of appeal in writing, along with a one-hundred dollar appeals fee, prior to the close of the 15th day following the action of the Community Development Department;
 - b. Any notice of appeal shall set forth specific grounds upon which the appeal is taken and shall be signed by the person or persons appealing;
 - c. Upon filing of such appeal, the City Clerk shall place the appeal on the agenda of the next regular meeting of the City Council;
 - d. At the time set for the meeting, the City Council shall proceed to hear and determine the same. The hearing may be continued, at the discretion of the City Council, in order to obtain further facts or hear further witnesses. Any determination by the City Council shall be final and conclusive and not subject to further appeal.

Current Standards		Proposed Standards																																													
Window signs																																															
	No more than 25% of window area, considered part of allowable sign area.	No permits required, up to 50% of the area of each individual window (25% in historic area)																																													
A-Frame																																															
	Permit required 16 sf max 4' max height	Exempt, no permit required. 12 sf max Max dimensions: 3' x 4'																																													
Canopy Signs																																															
	Allowable canopy sign area included in total allowable wall sign area.	A canopy sign is allowed on each canopy, covering no more than 25% of the surface. Included in allowable wall sign area.																																													
Free standing signs																																															
	<p>Up to 5 ft in height</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - C, CO, CG, PD, and ML - 32 sf max - RE, R1, R2, R3 - 10 sf max <p>Greater than 5 ft in height</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - C, CO, CG, PD, and ML - 32 sf max <p>One per frontage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shopping centers/multiple occupancies - One per street frontage, 40 sf max. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional 15/100 of one percent of the gross leasable area of the center, not to exceed 300 sf to serve other tenants as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual tenants not to exceed 32 sf each, no smaller than 16 sf each. - Minimum letter size 5 inches. - Independent pad within shopping center may have one separate freestanding sign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 32 sf max - 12' max height - May use shopping center sign in lieu of independent freestanding sign. 	<p>Freestanding sign allowable height and area according to tables below.</p> <p>Table 2: Monument Signs (one freestanding sign per street frontage)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Street Frontage (in feet)</th> <th>Maximum Height (in feet)</th> <th>Maximum Face Area (in square feet)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0 – 100</td> <td>Not to Exceed 8</td> <td>Not to Exceed 40</td> </tr> <tr> <td>101 – 200</td> <td>Not to Exceed 12</td> <td>Not to Exceed 50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>201 – 400</td> <td>Not to Exceed 15</td> <td>Not to Exceed 75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>401 – Plus</td> <td>Not to Exceed 20</td> <td>Not to Exceed 100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Table 3: Multi-Business Monument Signs (one freestanding sign per street frontage)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Street Frontage of Development (in feet)</th> <th>Maximum Height (in feet)</th> <th>Maximum Face Area (in square feet)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0 – 100</td> <td>Not to Exceed 8</td> <td>Not to Exceed 45</td> </tr> <tr> <td>101 – 200</td> <td>Not to Exceed 12</td> <td>Not to Exceed 55</td> </tr> <tr> <td>201 – 400</td> <td>Not to Exceed 15</td> <td>Not to Exceed 75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>401 – Plus</td> <td>Not to Exceed 20</td> <td>Not to Exceed 100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Table 4: Shopping Center Monument Signs (one freestanding sign per street frontage)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Street Frontage of Center (in feet)</th> <th>Maximum Height (in feet)</th> <th>Maximum Face Area (in square feet)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0 – 200</td> <td>Not to Exceed 14</td> <td>Not to Exceed 60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>201 – 400</td> <td>Not to Exceed 16</td> <td>Not to Exceed 75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>401 – 500</td> <td>Not to Exceed 20</td> <td>Not to Exceed 85</td> </tr> <tr> <td>501 – Plus</td> <td>Not to Exceed 20</td> <td>Not to Exceed 100</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Street Frontage (in feet)	Maximum Height (in feet)	Maximum Face Area (in square feet)	0 – 100	Not to Exceed 8	Not to Exceed 40	101 – 200	Not to Exceed 12	Not to Exceed 50	201 – 400	Not to Exceed 15	Not to Exceed 75	401 – Plus	Not to Exceed 20	Not to Exceed 100	Street Frontage of Development (in feet)	Maximum Height (in feet)	Maximum Face Area (in square feet)	0 – 100	Not to Exceed 8	Not to Exceed 45	101 – 200	Not to Exceed 12	Not to Exceed 55	201 – 400	Not to Exceed 15	Not to Exceed 75	401 – Plus	Not to Exceed 20	Not to Exceed 100	Street Frontage of Center (in feet)	Maximum Height (in feet)	Maximum Face Area (in square feet)	0 – 200	Not to Exceed 14	Not to Exceed 60	201 – 400	Not to Exceed 16	Not to Exceed 75	401 – 500	Not to Exceed 20	Not to Exceed 85	501 – Plus	Not to Exceed 20	Not to Exceed 100
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Master Sign Programs		
	Not required or specified.	Master sign program required for 6 or more tenants sharing a structure or center.
PD Zone and Use Permits		
	No language provided on signage permitted within the PD zone district or with a use permit.	The Development Plan for developing in a PD zone district will outline the standards and approvals for signage. A use of land subject to a use permit will also outline sign standards for the use.
Wall signs		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - C, CO, CG, PD, and ML – 20 percent of the total frontage wall area, 90 sf max. - Multi-story buildings - proportionate to occupant share of wall area. - Business within a single building with a single frontage - 1 sf per lineal foot, minimum 15 sf and max 30 sf per occupant. - Shopping centers (major anchor stores) - no more than 3 percent of total wall frontage area. - As many wall signs are needed are allowed, not to exceed total allowable area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One primary sign on the wall of the primary entrance to the business. - A secondary wall sign permitted on wall without primary sign if site abuts alley, parking lot, or street. - 1 sf per lineal foot of occupancy frontage, max of 150 sf and min of 25 sf per occupant. - Secondary wall signs, allowed half of primary sign area. - Multi-story buildings – primary tenants allowed a sign on the wall with the primary entrance. Corner units may have a secondary sign. - Second floor primary tenants allowed the same wall sign area as ground floor, not to exceed roofline.
Projecting signs		
	C, CO, CG, PD, and ML - 30 sf max	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One per business, allowed where wall sign is not used - 1/2 sf per lineal foot of frontage, max 60 sf
Directory signs		
	Group occupancies in office buildings - 4 sf plus 1 sf per name of office occupant, 16 sf max	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One per vehicle/pedestrian entrance when there are 3 or more tenants on site. - 2 sf per tenant, maximum 35 sf.
Construction project sign		
	6 sf max 5' max height Must be removed before final release by Building Official.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Max 12 sf, one per construction site. - 5' max height - Removed after 6 months or 30 days after obtaining occupancy.
Directional signs		
	Allows 2 on-site directional signs per drive approach, 6 sf max.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Max 4' in height, 6 sf area - One permitted on each side of a driveway from a public street.

Noncommercial signs														
	Allowed in all zones, conform to chapter, temporary only.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GC, C, and ML zone districts – 16 sf and 6’ max height, one sign every 100 lineal feet of property frontage. - CO and R zone districts – Two allowed per site, 3 sf and 4’ max height each. - AR and RE zone districts – One allowed per site, 6 sf and 6’ max height. 												
Nameplates														
	1 per dwelling 1 sf max	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 sf max for single-family or duplexes. - 3 sf max for all other uses. 												
Historical marker														
	4 sf max	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 sf max for single or duplexes - 3 sf for all other uses 												
Subdivision signs														
	2 signs per subdivision 10 sf max	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One sign per subdivision, per table. <p>Table 1: Signs Permitted in the R Districts</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Advertising Relating to:</th> <th>Maximum Area (Square Feet)</th> <th>Maximum Height above Grade (Feet)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Buildings or structures</td> <td>32</td> <td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Subdivisions of fewer than 5 acres</td> <td>48</td> <td>12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Subdivision of 5 or more acres</td> <td>65</td> <td>12</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Advertising Relating to:	Maximum Area (Square Feet)	Maximum Height above Grade (Feet)	Buildings or structures	32	8	Subdivisions of fewer than 5 acres	48	12	Subdivision of 5 or more acres	65	12
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Special service signs (gas station)														
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Businesses offering fuel, food, and lodging - additional sign area, 10 sf max. - Fuel sales pricing signs - additional sign area each side, 16 sf max for each brand and condition of sale as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - May have one freestanding sign each street frontage. - May be added to existing freestanding sign. - May be at the ends and each side of each fuel island or aisle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Additional condition of sale sign, 6 sf max. 	Businesses providing motor fuel sales are allowed an additional 16 sf per side.												

Theater signs		
	Changeable or electronic reader board, 32 sf max for each screen or stage.	In addition to already allowed sign areas, a single display cabinet or box not to exceed 16 sf in area may be used for each stage or screen.

Historic Ara

	Current Standards	Proposed Standards
Permit Required		
	All signs within Historic Area.	Exemptions in ordinance apply to historic area as well, including specific standards of each zone district.
Temporary signs		
	May be permitted no longer than 30 days. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One extension of 30 days allowed. - Banners allowed as temporary signage only. 	Same, with the following modifications. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Banner signs can be no larger than 16 sf and must be related to the business occupying the building. - Banners and pennants allowed temporarily for grand opening events for no longer than 30 days from start of event, limited to 16 square feet in size and fastened to the building.
Advisory notice		
	City staff shall provide advisory agencies notification of applications for sign permits within the historic area.	Removed.
Window signs		
	Maximum of 25 percent of window area and counted toward allowable sign area.	Same, with the exception that it no longer counts towards allowable sign area and no permit is required.