

**ARTICLE 9-18
SIGN REGULATIONS**

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**CHAPTER 9-18-1
PURPOSE AND DEFINITIONS**

Section 9-18-1-1.	Purpose.
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Section 9-18-1-1. Purpose.

In addition to the general purposes of this Unified Land Development Code, the purposes of these sign regulations are as follows:

- (a) To promote and protect the public health, safety and general welfare;
- (b) To balance the rights of individuals to convey their messages through signs and the right of the public to be protected against the unrestricted proliferation of signs;
- (c) To enhance the economy and the business and industry of the City by promoting the reasonable, orderly and effective display of signs, including the public being able to locate goods, services, and facilities in the City;
- (d) To maintain and enhance the aesthetics of the City by restricting signs and lights which increase clutter;
- (e) To maintain and improve traffic safety by preventing or restricting signs that due to their placement or appearance increase the probability of traffic accidents by obstructing vision or confusing motorists;
- (f) To promote signs which are compatible with their surroundings and which minimize potential adverse effects of signs on nearby property; and;
- (g) To insure proper maintenance of signs, for safety and structural soundness, as well as the appearance and attractiveness of signs.
- (h) To maintain the historic image of the City;
- (i) To ensure the fair and consistent enforcement of sign regulations.

Section 9-18-1-2. Definitions.

For the purposes of this Article, certain terms and words are hereby defined. As used in this Article, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following words and terms shall have the meaning ascribed to them:

Advertising device: Any structure or device erected or intended for the purpose of displaying advertising situated upon or attached to real property. For purposes of this Article, an advertising device is a “sign.”

Animated sign: A sign with action, motion, changing colors, flashing lights, or moving characters. Such signs may require electrical energy, but shall also include wind-activated devices including, but not limited to, spinners, aerial devices, and other attention-getting devices. This definition does not include rotating signs that revolve no faster than five (5) revolutions per minute or electronic message boards. Also included in this definition are signs that emit or utilize in any manner any sound capable of being detected on any traveled road or highway by a person with normal hearing and signs that emits smoke, vapor, particles, or odors.

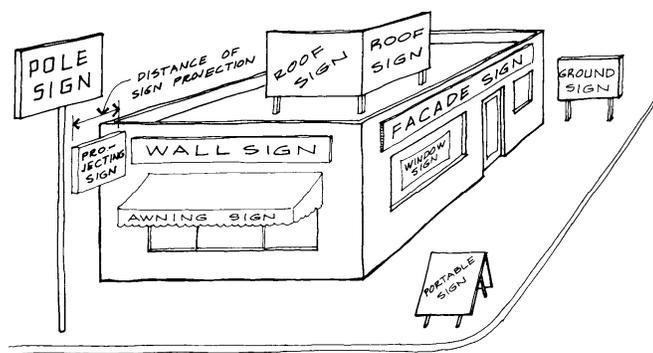
Awning: A roof-like cover that projects from the wall of a building for the purpose of shielding a doorway, walkway, or window from the elements. Awnings are often made of fabric or flexible plastic supported by a rigid frame, and may be retracted into the face of the building.

Awning or canopy sign: See “Building Sign.”

Banner: A sign other than an official flag, which is temporary in nature and made of paper, cloth, thin plastic, or similar lightweight material. A banner is not a streamer or pennant.

Billboard: A freestanding sign, distinguished from a real estate directional sign or semi-public directional sign, that carries a noncommercial message or commercial message not pertaining to use or activity on the site on which it is located.

Building sign: A sign that in any manner is fastened to, projects from, or is placed or painted upon the exterior wall, canopy, awning, window, door, or roof of a building. The term “building sign” includes but is not limited to the following:



SIGN TYPES

1. **Awning or canopy sign:** A sign imposed or painted upon or suspended beneath any awning or canopy (see illustration).
2. **Facade or wall sign:** A sign that is fastened directly to or is placed or painted directly upon the exterior wall of a building and extends from the surface of the wall no more than 18 inches (see illustration).

3. Incidental sign: An announcement or other display providing information about the occupancy or conduct of business permitted on a premises, such as logos of credit cards accepted on the premises, hours of operation, a “closed” or “open” sign, emergency contact person name and telephone number, street address, “help wanted,” “no loitering or solicitations,” security system notices, notices required by law, and similar information.
4. Projecting sign: A sign affixed to a wall and extending more than 18 inches from the surface of such wall, usually perpendicular to the wall surface (see illustration).
5. Roof sign: A sign that is mounted on, applied to, or otherwise structurally supported by the roof of a building; or any building sign that extends above the top edge of the parapet or eaves of a flat or shed roof; the ridge line of a gable, hip, or gambrel roof; or the deck line of a mansard roof (see illustration).
6. Window sign: A sign that is placed on or behind a window pane and intended to be viewed from outside the building (see illustration).

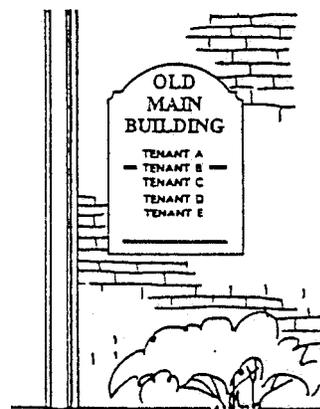
Construction sign: A sign identifying the contractors, engineers, architects or financial institutions involved in the building construction or development of a property.

Derelict sign: A sign that is dilapidated or in such condition as to create a hazard or nuisance, or to be unsafe or fail to comply with the Building or Electrical Codes of the City of Gainesville.

Discontinued sign: A freestanding or building sign that no longer is used by a business or establishment.

Directional sign: A sign designed to provide direction to pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Directory sign for multi-tenant development: A sign, distinguished from a project entrance sign, which is allowed on a premise with more than one tenant or occupants of a building, and which is necessary to find tenants within the development once a patron enters the property. It may be freestanding or a building (wall) sign. Such signs are not visible from the public street right-of-way of a development which provides initial access to the property, but rather are located within the development, along a driveway, access way, or parking aisle. These signs are distinguished from “project entrance” signs



Wall Directory Sign

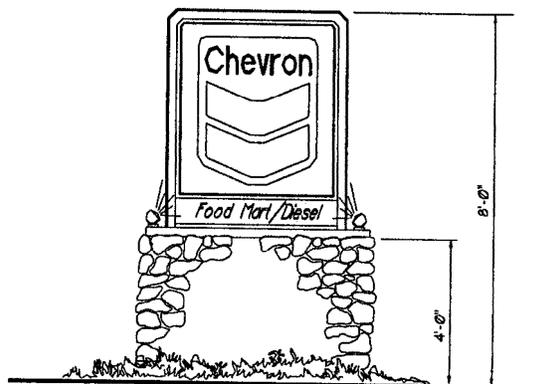
Electronic message board: A type of sign that utilizes computer-generated messages or some other electronic means of changing copy. These signs include displays using incandescent lamps, LEDs, LCDs or a flipper matrix.

Flag, official: A flag of the United States of America, State government, County government, city government, or any sovereign nation or political subdivision that has been approved by the governing body of such government as the current official flag, or any previous flag that was so approved.

Flag, business, institutional, or personal: Any flag other than an official flag as defined in this Section that carries symbols, emblems, words, or numbers of an institution, organization, or business, or person.

Freestanding sign: A sign permanently attached to the ground which is wholly independent of any building or other structure. The term “freestanding sign” includes but is not limited to the following:

1. **Pole sign:** A sign that is mounted on a freestanding pole or similar support such that the bottom of the sign face is at least 6 feet above the ground (see illustration accompanying the definition of “building sign”).
2. **Ground sign:** A freestanding sign, other than a pole sign or monument sign, in which the bottom of the sign face is less than six (6) feet above the ground but not directly in contact with the ground (see illustration accompanying the definition of “building sign”), and which has supports constructed with brick, stone, and/or other material architecturally compatible with the principal building on the lot in which the sign is located.
3. **Monument sign:** A freestanding sign in which the entire bottom of the sign face is in contact with a solid and continuous structure which is attached to the ground and made of brick, stone, or other material architecturally compatible with the principal building on the lot to which it pertains.



Monument-Style Sign

Inflatable sign: A sign or advertising device that is intended to be expanded by air or other gas for its proper display or support.

Multi-faced sign: A sign structure that contains two or more sign face surfaces that are located on different sides of the structure and are separated from each other at their nearest point by no more than three feet.

Multi-tenant development: A single office, commercial or industrial property that is designed or intended for occupancy by two or more businesses, or a multi-family residential development.

Neon lighting or outlining: A sign, display, or installation outlining windows, doors, or other portions of the building which is composed of one or more discharge lamps in which the gas contains a large proportion of neon, giving it a fluorescent or extremely bright color.

Nonconforming sign: A nonconforming sign is a sign that was lawfully erected and maintained prior to the adoption, revision or amendment of this Unified Land Development Code, and which by reason of such adoption, revision or amendment fails to conform to all applicable regulations and restrictions of this Unified Land Development Code.

Official sign: Any sign placed by a governmental body, governmental agency, or public authority, such as a traffic sign, signal, or regulatory device or warning; official emblem, public notice, or official instrument; a sign of historical interest; a sign designating special events or areas of architectural or historic significance or gateways; or other similar sign or device, and which are erected and controlled by such governmental body or on its behalf, whether or not located within a public right-of-way.

Pennant: A small, triangular or rectangular flag or multiples thereof, made of lightweight plastic, fabric, or other material, individually supported or attached to each other by means of a string, rope, or other material and meant to be stretched across or fastened to buildings, or between poles and/or structures, and which is designed to move in the wind. For purposes of this Article, pennants are “signs.” This term does not include a “banner” or a flag as defined and regulated by this Article.

Political sign: A sign identifying or urging voter support for a particular election issue, political party, or candidate for public office.

Portable sign: A sign designed to be transported or easily relocated and not attached to the ground, such as but not limited to the following:

1. A sign designed to be temporarily placed upon the ground and not otherwise affixed to it (see illustration accompanying the definition of “building sign”).
2. A sign mounted or painted upon a vehicle or trailer, with or without wheels, which vehicle or trailer is designed or used for the primary purpose of acting as a sign.
3. An A-frame or sandwich board sign.
4. An umbrella used for advertising.
5. A sign mounted or painted upon a parked vehicle that is positioned for the primary purpose of acting as a sign exposed to the public and is not in use in the ordinary course of carrying out its transportation function.
6. Any sign mounted or painted upon a vehicle that projects or extends beyond the original manufactured body proper of the vehicle, except that a vehicle may have one sign not exceeding two (2) feet in width and not exceeding one (1) foot in height mounted temporarily or permanently on the roof of a vehicle.
7. A sign affixed to or carried by a person.

Principal freestanding sign: The main freestanding sign on a property, other than a billboard.

Project entrance sign: A sign located at a discernible entrance into a particular subdivision, multi-family residential development, or office or industrial park.

Projecting sign: See “Building sign.”

Real estate sign: A sign pertaining to the temporary lease, sale, or rental of a parcel of land, subdivision or unit of land, building or portion thereof, or housing unit.

Roof sign: See “Building sign.”

Sign: The term “sign” shall mean any structure, display, or device that is used to advertise, identify, direct, or attract attention to a business, institution, organization, person, idea, product, service, event, or location by any means, including words, letters, figures, design characteristics, symbols, logos, fixtures, colors, movement, or illumination. The term “sign” shall specifically include but not be limited to “banners,” “balloons,” “flags,” “pennants,” “streamers,” “windblown devices,” and “advertising devices.” Furthermore, the term “sign” includes the sign structure, supports, lighting system, and any attachments, ornaments, or other features used to draw the attention of the observers. The following elements are not considered to be signs, and are therefore not regulated by this Article:

1. Displays of goods available on a site, through windows or doors of a building or through the open air, where permitted.
2. Brand names or logos on products, product containers, or dispensers that are an integral part of the product or the product’s packaging.
3. Building designs, colors, or motifs that are associated with a particular establishment or organization but which convey no commercial message, but not including neon lighting and neon window outlining as regulated by this Article.

Sign face: That portion of the surface of a sign structure where words, letters, figures, symbols, logos, fixtures, colors, or other design elements are or may be located in order to convey the message, idea, or intent for which the sign has been erected or placed. The sign face may be composed of two or more modules on the same surface that are separated or surrounded by portions of a sign structure not intended to contain any advertising message or idea and are purely structural or decorative in nature.

Sign face module: Each portion or unit of a sign face that is clearly separable from other such units by virtue of the expression of a complete thought, message, logo, or idea.

Sign height: The vertical distance to the highest point of a sign structure, as measured from the average grade at the base of the structure or directly below a projecting structure.

Sign structure: All elements of a freestanding sign, including the sign face, background or decorative elements related to the presentation of the sign’s message, and the structural supports.

Streamer: A long narrow banner, pennant, or strip of fabric or other material.

Tenant: One who possesses or occupies land or buildings by title, under a lease, or through payment of rent; an occupant, inhabitant, or dweller of a place.

Uniform sign plan: Coordinated drawings and specifications that establish a unified design concept with regard to the location, materials, size, letter style, and color of all signs to be placed on a property or development.

Wall sign: See “Façade or wall sign” under “Building sign.”

Windblown device: Any device not otherwise specifically defined in this Article, that is designed to inform or attract, whether or not such device carries a message, and which all or part of the device is set in motion by wind. For purposes of this Article, windblown devices are “signs.”

Window sign: See “Building Sign.”

CHAPTER 9-18-2 GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 9-18-2-1.	Applicability.
Section 9-18-2-2.	Display of Property Addresses.
Section 9-18-2-3.	Nonconforming Signs.
Section 9-18-2-4.	Sign Limitations When Nonconforming Sign Exists.
Section 9-18-2-5.	Prohibited Signs.
Section 9-18-2-6.	Exempt Signs.
Section 9-18-2-7.	Modifications According to Approved Uniform Sign Plans.

Section 9-18-2-1. Applicability.

The regulations and requirements of this Article apply to all signs that are or are intended to be viewed from a public right-of-way or from outdoor areas of public property. Such signs are allowed only in conformance with these sign regulations, or as otherwise provided for nonconforming signs under the terms of this Chapter.

Section 9-18-2-2. Display of Property Addresses.

The display of street addresses is permitted without compliance with this Article. Building identification numbers on multi-tenant buildings which are essential to the location of such buildings are also permitted without compliance with this Article.

Section 9-18-2-3. Nonconforming Signs.

A building or freestanding sign that is lawfully existed on the effective date of this Unified Land Development may continue to be used, except that the nonconforming sign:

- (a) Shall not be repaired, rebuilt, replaced or altered after damage or removal exceeding 50 percent of the sign structure.
- (b) Shall not be enlarged or altered in a way that increases its nonconformity.
- (c) Shall not be altered for a change in use, change in ownership or change in business name. Individual sign panels not exceeding 50 percent of the total sign face area of a multi-tenant freestanding sign shall be allowed to be replaced for a change in use or change in business name.

Section 9-18-2-4. Sign Limitations When Nonconforming Sign Exists.

No sign or advertising device shall be erected for the same establishment on the same lot with an existing nonconforming sign until the nonconforming sign has been removed or made to conform to the provisions of this Article.

Section 9-18-2-5. Prohibited Signs.

The following signs shall be prohibited within the City of Gainesville:

- (a) Animated signs, but not including rotating signs that revolve no faster than five (5) revolutions per minute.
- (b) Derelict signs.
- (c) Inflatable signs, except as permitted in association with a Special Temporary Outdoor Event approved under the provisions of Section 9-10-8-2 and 9-18-7-13 of this Unified Land Development Code.
- (d) Pennants, streamers, and wind-blown devices, except as permitted in association with a Special Temporary Outdoor Event approved under the provisions of Section 9-10-8-2 and 9-18-7-13 of this Unified Land Development Code.
- (e) Portable signs, except as permitted in association with a Special Temporary Outdoor Event approved under the provisions of Section 9-10-8-2 and 9-18-7-13 of this Unified Land Development Code. In addition, A-frame or sandwich board signs shall be allowed within the Central Business (C-B) district.
- (f) Roof signs.
- (g) Signs painted on or attached to a utility pole, or painted on or attached to tree, rock or other natural feature.
- (h) Signs lit with exposed neon, including neon lighting outlining of windows, doors, or other parts of a building or structure, but excluding incidental signs internal to an establishment.
- (i) Signs attached to freestanding walls (including retaining walls) or fences or poles.
- (j) Any flag for which there is no symbol, emblem, text, number, or copy whatsoever on the flag (i.e., colored flags with no message), except as permitted in association with a Special Temporary Outdoor Event approved under the provisions of Section 9-10-8-2 and 9-18-7-13 of this Unified Land Development Code.

Section 9-18-2-6. Exempt Signs.

The following types of signs are specifically exempted from compliance with this Article.

- (a) Official flags, plus no more than one (1) business, institutional, or personal flag, none of which may exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area, but only when designed and displayed in a way that allows for routine, daily raising and lowering of the flags; provided further, that the poles for such flags shall not exceed the maximum height permitted in the zoning district in which it is located. The official flag of the Unified States of America shall be flown in accordance with protocol established by the Congress of the Unified States for the Stars and Stripes.
- (b) Incidental signs within windows or doors of establishments in nonresidential zoning districts which do not exceed two (2) square feet of area, or four (4) square feet total per establishment.

- (c) Signs or stickers, not exceeding one (1) square feet each sign or sticker, which are designed to be read only from close range (i.e., five feet), attached to a device or structure more than twenty-five (25) feet from the right-of-way of a road. Examples include but are not limited to the following: lettering, credit card stickers, and inspection certificates on gasoline pumps; “flammable” signs on enclosures for fuel canisters, and similar information.
- (d) Building markers and integral decorative or architectural features or works of art such as statues and murals, so long as such features do not contain moving parts or lights. Statues and murals shall contain no advertisement for an individual business such as a business name, logo or product.
- (e) Directional signs along private streets and driveways, and in off-street parking lots, that are installed per the requirements of the City Engineer. Directional signs shall be a maximum of two and one-half (2.5) feet in height and four (4) square feet each. Directional signs shall contain no advertising or illumination.
- (f) Directory signs for residential or nonresidential multi-tenant developments, provided that no such sign shall be located within one hundred (100) feet of the project entrance. Directory signs shall be permitted at each driveway intersection where direction of travel to tenant spaces changes. Such signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet of area or a height of two and one-half (2.5) feet.
- (g) Holiday lights and decorations, including inflatable decorations, provided that they are removed within fifteen (15) days following the holiday to which they pertain.
- (h) Handicapped parking signs, when required per state law or this Unified Land Development Code.
- (i) Temporary signs for the purpose of charitable events recognized by proclamation of the Governing Body (e.g., National Child Abuse Month).

Section 9-18-2-7. Modifications According to Uniform Sign Plans.

A uniform sign plan is required for any multi-tenant nonresidential development, such as a shopping center, before any building signs or freestanding signs for the development or the development’s tenants may be erected on the property.

Modifications to the restrictions on signage for a specific property or development may be requested for administrative approval by submitting to the Planning Department a uniform sign plan for review and handling. Such intent of this Section is to provide for compatibility of all signs within a particular development so that they conform to certain physical characteristics such as color, font, design of sign face, sign face module, sign structure, etc. The uniform sign plan shall not be considered or used as an alternative to the strict regulations of this Article, except that building sign requirements may be modified pursuant to a uniform sign plan for good cause shown and greater visual coherence and coordination within the development.

Uniform sign plans shall at minimum consist of the following:

- (a) Drawings and specifications as may be required to clearly illustrate the location, materials, size, letter style, and color of all and every sign to be placed as freestanding and building signs within the development.
- (b) Design standards such that signs of a similar type and function within the development shall have a consistency of size, lettering style, color scheme, and construction materials so as to present a unified design concept while respecting the differences between tenant types and occupancies.

Following approval by the Planning Department, the requirements of the uniform sign plan shall be recorded by the owner in the office of Clerk of Superior Court prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the development, and shall be included in any sale, lease, or other transfer of right of occupancy affecting any part of the development. Upon such approval, said uniform sign plan shall be binding on the owner, and any lessees, subtenants, purchasers, or other occupants, until or unless the uniform sign plan is replaced with another approved uniform sign plan or the recorded sign plan is lawfully repealed (and in such cases the strict terms of this Article shall apply).

CHAPTER 9-18-3 PERMITS AND PERMISSIONS

- Section 9-18-3-1. Building Permit and Conformance to Codes.
Section 9-18-3-2. Sign Approval in Historic Properties Overlay Zone.
Section 9-18-3-3. Zoning Verification Optional.

Section 9-18-3-1. Building Permit and Conformance to Codes.

Any freestanding or building sign that requires a building permit according to the Building Code shall be obtained prior to installation or placement of any such freestanding or building sign. All signs for which a building permit is required shall be constructed and maintained in conformance with all Building Code requirements. All electrical service to a sign shall be in compliance with the Electrical Code, and an electrical permit if required shall be obtained. If plans are required for issuance of a building permit for a sign, the plans shall be certified as to conformance with all structural and wind-load resistive standards of the Building Code by a structural engineer registered in the State of Georgia, or be prepared using standard drawings prepared by a structural engineer or other qualified professional meeting or exceeding all requirements of the Building Code.

In addition, whether or not required by the building code, a building permit shall be required and must be obtained from the Building Department prior to installation or placement of all principal freestanding signs.

Section 9-18-3-2. Sign Approval in Historic Preservation Overlay Zone.

Signs are external environmental features that can detract from historic character if not considered in the proper context. Signs located in the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone established by this Unified Land Development Code require a Certificate of Appropriateness to be issued pursuant to Chapter 9-23-3 of this Unified Land Development Code. Within the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (i.e., historic districts and properties designated in Chapter 9-8-8 of this Unified Land Development Code, no freestanding or building sign shall be erected or installed unless sign has been approved by the Gainesville Historic Preservation Commission, except as specifically provided otherwise in this Section.

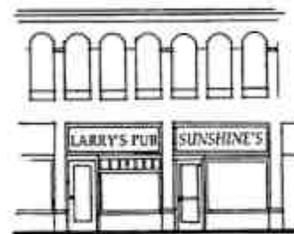
In acting on applications involving sign approvals, the Historic Preservation Commission shall consider the criteria established for the issuance of certificates of appropriateness, and adopted design guidelines for signs, if any. In addition, the Historic Preservation Commission may consider the following, which shall not be limiting, in issuing certificates of appropriateness for signs and may use these criteria in determining whether to approve, deny, or modify said signs:

- (a) The sign with its overall design makes a positive contribution to the general appearance of the street and area in which it is located.
- (b) The scale, size, and shape of the sign are proportional to the building on which they are placed or to which it pertains and the area in which it is located. To this end, the Historic Preservation Commission may find that a sign is out of character with the area or not proportional to the building, activity or use and may work with the applicant to reduce the scale, size or shape or placement of the sign or signs.

- (c) The sign does not obscure architectural features of the building, and the design of the sign is integrated with the design of the building.



These signs block building elements and create a chaotic image



These signs complement the building form and create a more orderly appearance

- (d) The sign is designed for and directed toward pedestrians rather than to vehicular traffic so that it can be easily and comfortably read standing adjacent to the business, activity, or use.

- (e) The proposed sign is composed of materials that are compatible with the materials of the face of the building façade where it is placed or to which it pertains.



Wall signs of consistent size and placement establish facade rhythm.

- (f) Signage, particularly freestanding principal signs, shall be simple in design and draw upon the architectural elements of the principal building.
1. If the sign proposed is a building sign, it must establish an appropriate rhythm to the façade.
 2. The proposed sign shall be composed of materials that are compatible with the materials of the face of the building façade where it is placed or to which it pertains.
 3. Design, lettering, and composition of the sign must be compatible with the building.
 4. Lighting shall be indirect only, unless otherwise approved as part of a Certificate of Appropriateness granted by the Historic Preservation Commission.

The Historic Preservation Commission may approve design guidelines and examples of appropriate signs. All such approved design guidelines and examples of appropriate signs shall be maintained on file with the Director of Planning and Development and be made available to applicants for signs in the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone. If such guidelines are examples are adopted, and a sign within the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone is found by the Director of Planning and Development to be consistent with said guidelines or examples of appropriate signs, the Director may issue approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness as a minor work project without the need for review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission. In acting on applications involving sign approvals, the Director of Planning and Development shall

consider the criteria established for the issuance of certificates of appropriateness, adopted design guidelines for signs, and the criteria established in this Section.

Section 9-18-3-3. Zoning Verification Optional.

Except for signs that require a building permit or a Certificate of Appropriateness under the terms of this Chapter, no additional approval shall be required to erect a sign. However, property owners who want to ensure compliance with the terms of this Article may apply for and subject to a reasonable fee as may be established from time to time by the Governing Body zoning verification by the Planning Department. Upon request and after a determination of compliance (within five (5) calendar days from the date of the request was received), a zoning verification shall be issued in writing to the applicant.

CHAPTER 9-18-4 MAINTENANCE AND REMOVAL

- Section 9-18-4-1. Sign Maintenance.
Section 9-18-4-2. Situations Where Maintenance is Required.
Section 9-18-4-3. Removal of Certain Signs.

Section 9-18-4-1. Sign Maintenance.

All signs, together with all their supports, braces, guys, and anchors shall be kept in good repair and, unless constructed of galvanized or noncorroding metal, shall be given a protective coating as necessary to maintain a clean appearance and safe condition.

Section 9-18-4-2. Situations Where Maintenance is Required.

Upon discovery of a sign in need of maintenance, the Director of Planning and Development, his or her designee, City Marshal or, or other administrative official responsible for administration shall give written notice to the owner of the sign or the owner of the property on which the sign is located if the owner of the sign itself cannot be determined. Said notice shall state the item or items requiring repair or maintenance. The owner shall have thirty (30) days in which to repair or maintain the sign before a citation is issued. If the owner has failed to make repairs or the necessary maintenance within that time, the enforcement officer shall initiate enforcement proceedings as required to cure violation of this Article. Situations constituting the need for maintenance include but are not limited to the following (other similar conditions of disrepair or lack of maintenance may be determined):

- (a) Lettering or other elements of the sign have become detached or have fallen off the sign or become misaligned.
- (b) Painted surfaces on the sign or sign structure have begun to peel, flake over a significant portion of the sign, or have faded or oxidized to an extent that the sign no longer displays the message as originally intended.
- (c) A significant number of the bricks, stones, or other materials on the structural base of a sign have become detached or have fallen off, or have become misaligned.

Section 9-18-4-3. Removal of Certain Signs.

- (a) Unlawful signs. If any sign is installed, erected, or constructed in violation of this Article, the owner or person or firm maintaining the sign shall, upon notice either written or verbal from the Director of Planning and Development, his or her designee, City Marshal, or other enforcement officer, to remove prohibited signs immediately. If the sign will require additional time period because of its structure or size then a reasonable time frame will be given in which the sign is to be removed. Any such sign not removed or properly altered within the time period allotted from the written notice, it then may be removed by the City and all costs charged to the owner, agent, or person having beneficial interest of the building or premises upon which such sign was located, or in the sign itself.

- (b) Derelict signs. Should any sign become insecure or in danger of falling or otherwise unsafe in the opinion of the Director of Planning and Development, Building Official, City Marshal, or other code enforcement officer, the owner or person or firm maintaining the sign shall, upon written notice from said enforcement officer, forthwith in the case of immediate danger and in any case within ten (10) days, remove such sign or secure it in a manner approved by the enforcement officer. Any such sign not removed or secured within ten (10) days from the written notice may be removed by the City and all costs charged to the owner, agent, or person having beneficial interest of the building or premises upon which such sign was located, or in the sign itself.
- (c) Signs of a temporary or quasi-temporary nature. Pennants, streamers, banners, wind-blown devices, real estate signs, real estate directional signs, semi-public use directional signs, political signs and construction signs that do not conform to the provisions of this Article upon its adoption or amendment shall be removed within thirty (30) days. Pennants, wind blown devices, and streamers which are unlawful by design shall be removed in accordance with subsection (a) of this section.
- (d) Nonconforming signs that cannot be made to conform to this Article. A nonconforming freestanding or building sign shall not be reused for a new business or establishment and shall be removed within ninety (90) days after the business or establishment to which the sign initially pertained ceases to operate at the subject location. This includes, for example, a prohibition against the replacement of a sign face module for a new business on a sign or sign structure that exceeds the maximum area or height requirements established by this Article. This paragraph does not apply to billboards.
- (e) Change or removal of discontinued signs. When a property owner has a lawful and conforming freestanding or building sign that no longer is used by a business or establishment, and the owner desires to retain said sign, this section shall apply in order to retain said freestanding sign as a lawful sign. If the discontinued freestanding sign or building sign contains a sign face that is in the form of a removable sign face module, the removable sign face module containing advertising shall be removed and replaced with a panel of like or similar appearance without advertising until another use is lawfully established. If a discontinued freestanding sign or building sign contains a sign copy area that is not removable, then the said sign shall be removed or the copy area shall be painted over to conceal the advertising.

**CHAPTER 9-18-5
LOCATION AND PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

- Section 9-18-5-1. Prohibitions.
Section 9-18-5-2. Relationship to Landscaping; Additional Requirements.
Section 9-18-5-3. Setback.
Section 9-18-5-4. Clearance for and Placement of Suspended Signs.

Section 9-18-5-1. Prohibitions.

No sign shall be placed or located in a manner inconsistent with this Section.

- (a) Location in right-of-way prohibited. No part of any sign shall be located in, over, or project into a public right-of-way except for awning signs, canopy signs, or projecting signs in the C-B zoning district.
- (b) Obstructions of buildings and roadways prohibited. No sign shall be erected, located, or maintained in such a manner as to interfere with safe and free ingress and egress of any door, emergency exit, driveway, street, or roadway.
- (c) Obstruction of utilities prohibited. No sign shall interfere with such utilities as water mains and hydrants, sanitary sewerage, gas, electricity, and communications equipment or lines, nor interfere with natural or manmade storm water drainage facilities.
- (d) Obstructions of views and confusion with traffic controls. No sign shall be erected or maintained where, by reason of its position, wording, illumination, size, shape or color, it may obstruct the view of oncoming vehicles or impair, obscure, interfere with the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic control sign, signal, or device. No sign shall contain or be an imitation of an official governmental traffic control sign, signal, or emergency vehicle device.
- (e) Damage to trees. No sign shall be located in a manner that poses a threat to the critical root zone of an existing tree.

Section 9-18-5-2. Relationship to Landscaping; Additional Requirements.

- (a) At the time of permitting or zoning verification, the Planning Department will review freestanding signs and their locations for their impacts on the front landscape strip required for the property on which the freestanding sign is proposed to be located, and on any landscaping or tree protection plans approved or proposed on said property.
- (b) The Planning Department may require modification of the approved tree plan if the proposed location of the freestanding sign would require the removal of landscaping. If the freestanding sign would be placed in a way that would reduce required landscaping or detract from the purpose of the front landscape strip, the Department may require that the property owner to revise the tree plans so that compliance with landscaping requirements of this Unified Land Development Code are maintained and assured.

- (c) As a guide to compliance with this section, any freestanding sign should have a minimum of 25 square feet of landscaped area, exclusive of the sign structure, surrounding the base of each principal freestanding sign. Landscaping should consist of ground covers, flowers, or low-lying shrubs that will not obscure the visibility of the sign as vegetation matures. The amount of landscaping recommended in this Section may be reduced upon approval by the Planning Department if existing site conditions so warrant.

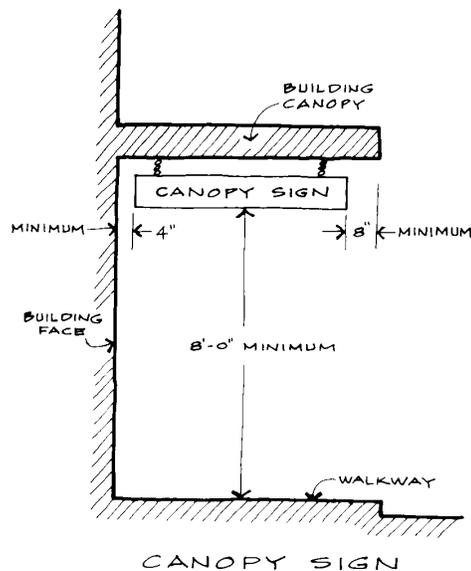
Section 9-18-5-3. Setback.

There shall be a minimum of five (5) feet between any street right-of-way/front property line and the nearest edge of a freestanding sign.

Section 9-18-5-4. Clearance and Placement of Suspended Signs.

Signs suspended from canopies shall be placed with at least eight (8) feet of clearance above the ground when erected over pedestrian walkways on private property. In addition, such signs shall be at least four (4) inches from the building face and at least eight (8) inches from the edge of the canopy (see "canopy sign" in illustration).

Signs suspended from canopies over a sidewalk along a public street, where permitted, shall be placed with at least nine (9) feet of clearance above the ground. In addition, such signs shall extend not more than within eighteen (18) inches of the back of curb.



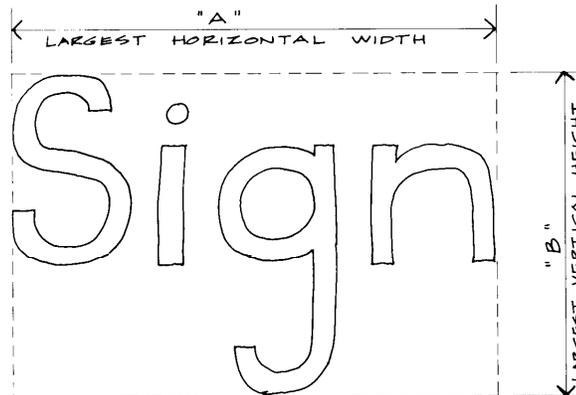
**CHAPTER 9-18-6
 NUMBER, SIZE AND HEIGHT LIMITATIONS**

- Section 9-18-6-1. Computation of Sign Face and Sign Structure Areas.
- Section 9-18-6-2. Regulation by Zoning District.
- Section 9-18-6-3. Signs in Planned Unit Developments.

Section 9-18-6-1. Computation of Sign Face and Sign Structure Areas.

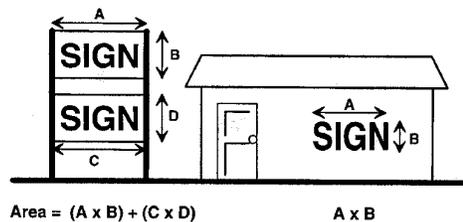
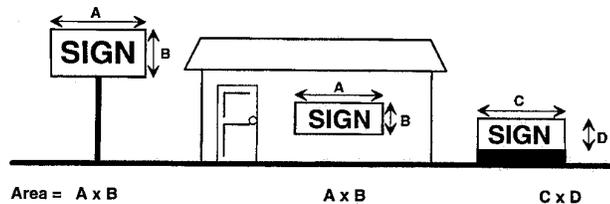
The area of a sign face and sign structure shall be computed as follows:

- (a) The area of a "sign face" shall be computed as the area within the smallest rectangle enclosing the limits of a sign face, or the combination of the areas of all such rectangles delimiting each sign face module, together with any material, texture, or color forming an integral part of the sign face or used to differentiate the sign face from the structure upon which it is placed.



MEASUREMENT OF WALL SIGN AREA WHERE THERE IS NO DEFINED SIGN BACKGROUND
 "A" x "B" = SIGN AREA

- (b) The computation of the area of a sign face shall not include the structure, supports or uprights on which the sign face is placed or any portions of a sign structure that are not intended to contain any message or idea and are purely structural or decorative in nature, other than those portions contained within the rectangle that delimits the sign face or a sign face module.

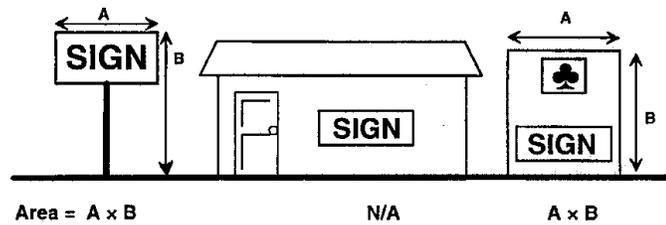


Examples of Sign Face Area Measurements

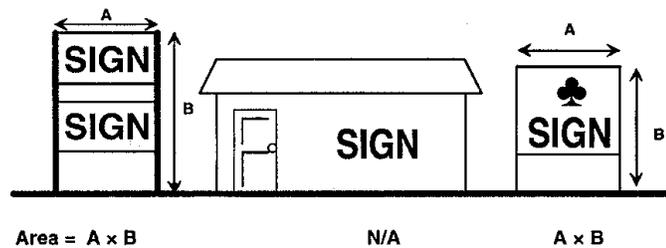
- (c) Any sign on which the words, letters, figures, symbols, logos, fixtures, colors, or other design elements routinely change or are intended to be changed from time to time, the sign face area shall include the entire area within which any words, letters,

figures, symbols, logos, fixtures, colors, or other design elements may be placed, together with any material, texture, or color forming an integral part of the sign face or used to differentiate the sign face from the freestanding structure or building face upon which it is placed.

- (d) The area of a sign structure of a freestanding sign shall be computed as the area within the sign face plus all portions of the sign structure and all open or solid areas within the total area of the sign structure (i.e., tallest height x widest width).



- (e) For multi-faced signs, when the sign face surfaces are parallel (back-to-back), or where the interior angle formed by the faces is 45 degrees or less, the area of the sign shall be taken as the area on the largest side. For all other multi-faced signs, the area of the sign shall be the total area on all sides that can be viewed at one time from any angle.



Examples of Sign Structure Area Measurements

Section 9-18-6-2. Regulation by Zoning District.

Table 9-18-6-1 establishes the maximum number, size, height, and illumination restrictions relating to specific signage that are permitted by right in each zoning district.

- (a) The “Principal Freestanding Sign—Individual Use” category applies to a lot where there is only one single or two-family dwelling, or one business occupant.
- (b) The “Principal Freestanding Sign—Multi-Tenant” category applies to a single office, commercial or industrial property that is designed or intended for occupancy by two or more separate businesses.
- (c) All building signs attached to a particular wall and its awnings and canopies, including signs that project from the wall, shall collectively not exceed the total square footage of sign face area allowed for the particular wall as shown in Table 9-18-6-1.
- (d) For building signs in the office, commercial and industrial zoning districts, the following shall apply:

1. For single-occupant buildings, the total sign face area for building signs on each side of a building shall be calculated on the basis of the horizontal length of the wall along that side of the building. Each side of the building shall be calculated separately; provided, however, that building (wall) sign permissions shall not be granted when the angle of intersecting building walls is less than 60 degrees.
2. For multi-tenant nonresidential developments (such as shopping centers), the total sign face area per wall for each tenant shall be distributed on the basis of the horizontal length of the wall along each tenant's occupied space. The maximum sign face area on a particular wall for each tenant shall be calculated separately.

Section 9-18-6-3. Signs in Planned Unit Developments.

For signs in the PUD zoning district each development shall conform to the sign regulations established as part of the zoning approval for the Planned Development (including previously established P-R-D, P-O-D, P-C-D and P-I-D Planned Development Districts). If no such regulations exist, each portion of a Planned Development existing on the effective date of this Unified Land Development Code shall conform to the regulations of this Article for the zoning district most comparable to that portion of the Planned Development, as determined by the Director of Planning and Development.

**TABLE 9-18-6-1
 SIGN REGULATIONS BY ZONING DISTRICT**

Note: For signs located within the Overlay Zones, additional restrictions apply or may be applied. See Article 9-8 and Section 9-18-3-2 of this Article. See also Chapter 9-18-7 of this Article for additional sign allowances for specific types of signs.

Principal Freestanding Sign - Individual Use						
	R-I-A, R-I, N-C, R-II**	R-O**	O-I, N-B	R-B, G-B	C-B	L-I, H-I
Maximum number	1	1	1 per street frontage	1 per 200 feet of street frontage, maximum 2 per site	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage
Maximum face area (square feet)	8	32	64	80	40	80
Maximum structure area (square feet)	8	60	96	120	120	120
Maximum height (feet)	8	8	10	10	10	10
Illumination*	Indirect	Indirect	Indirect	Internal or indirect	Internal or indirect	Internal or indirect
Principal Freestanding Sign - Multi-Tenant						
	R-I-A, R-I, N-C, R-II	R-O	O-I, N-B	R-B, G-B	C-B	L-I, H-I
Maximum number	N/A	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per 200' of street frontage, maximum 3 per site.	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage
Maximum face area (square feet)	N/A	32	120	140	80	140
Maximum structure area (square feet)	N/A	60	160	240	120	240
Maximum height (feet)	N/A	8	15	15	15	15
Illumination*	Indirect	Indirect	Indirect	Internal or indirect	Internal or indirect	Internal or indirect
Note: Street frontage is defined as being a street "from which access may be directly gained."						

Building Sign: Wall signs and awning, canopy, Projecting (excludes incidental & window signs)						
	R-I-A, R-I, R-II, N-C***	R-O ***	O-I, N-B	R-B, G-B	C-B	L-I, H-I
Maximum Number per building frontage (signs on more than two building frontages is not permitted)	N/A	N/A	2	2	2	2
Total sign face area of all signs per wall (square feet)****	N/A	N/A	1 square feet for each foot of wall length	1 square feet for each foot of wall length	1 square feet for each foot of wall length	1 square foot for each foot of wall length
Maximum sign face area of largest sign per wall****	N/A	N/A	1 sq. foot for each foot of wall length	1 sq. feet for each foot of wall length	1 sq. feet for each foot of wall length	1 sq. foot for each foot of wall length
Illumination*	N/A	N/A	Indirect	Internal or indirect	Internal or indirect	Internal or indirect

* See also the provisions of Section 9-18-3-2, "Sign Approval in Historic Preservation Overlay Zone."

** These sign allowances (principal freestanding sign – individual use) are for non-single-family residential uses that are permitted outright or as a special use in these residential zoning districts. Examples include commercial recreational facilities and model homes. Where a non-profit club or lodge or a religious institution is a permitted use, the maximum face and maximum structure size area shall be a maximum of thirty-two (32) square feet (the maximum height of eight feet shall be observed).

*** Where a non-profit club or lodge or a religious institution is a permitted use, the following building signage shall be permitted: a maximum of two signs, not exceeding a total sign face area of sixteen (16) square feet, with no individual building sign larger than eight (8) square feet. No such wall signs shall be illuminated.

****In addition to the total sign face area for building signs calculated within Table 9-18-6-1, one additional square foot of sign face area shall be allowed on a wall facing a public street for each additional 40-feet the building is setback beyond the minimum principal building front yard setback not to exceed 3 square feet for each foot of wall length.

**CHAPTER 9-18-7
ADDITIONAL ALLOWANCES FOR
SPECIFIC TYPES OF SIGNS**

Section 9-18-7-1.	Generally.
Section 9-18-7-2.	Awning or Canopy Signs.
Section 9-18-7-3.	Banners.
Section 9-18-7-4.	Billboards.
Section 9-18-7-5.	Construction Signs.
Section 9-18-7-6.	Electronic Message Board Signs.
Section 9-18-7-7.	Political Signs.
Section 9-18-7-8.	Principal Freestanding Signs.
Section 9-18-7-9.	Project Entrance Signs.
Section 9-18-7-10.	Real Estate (On-site) Signs.
Section 9-18-7-11.	Real Estate Directional Signs.
Section 9-18-7-12.	Semi-public Use Directional Signs.
Section 9-18-7-13.	Special Temporary Outdoor Event Signage.
Section 9-18-7-14.	Window Signs.

Section 9-18-7-1. Generally.

In addition to the specific signs permitted in each zoning district, as provided in Chapter 9-18-5 and Table 9-18-6-1, the following signs shall be allowed in all zoning districts (or in the zoning districts as indicated) under the conditions noted for each type of sign.

Section 9-18-7-2. Awning or Canopy Signs.

Awning or canopy signs shall be limited to no more than one (1) per tenant on a property, and each tenant shall have no more than one (1) awning or canopy sign (which may project below the awning or canopy), except that one awning or canopy sign may be placed on each of three sides of a freestanding or attached canopy that covers and protects pumps that dispense gasoline or diesel fuels for retail customers.

Section 9-18-7-3. Banners.

Unless specifically provided otherwise pursuant to approval of a special temporary outdoor event (see Section 9-10-8-2 and Section 9-18-7-13 of this Unified Land Development Code), a banner shall be allowed only as wall or window signage (building signs), and shall be placed flush upon the wall or window to which it is attached. In cases where a building is not visible from the road, a banner may be allowed to be attached to an existing principal freestanding sign or securely mounted to the ground no closer than 5-feet from the right-of-way so as to not impede the visibility of motorist. A banner shall not be hung as a canopy sign, flown as a flag, attached to a fence or wall (freestanding or retaining) or used as any other form of sign.

Section 9-18-7-4. Billboards.

A billboard is a freestanding sign that exceeds the maximum sign face or sign structure area permitted by right on a property under the provisions of this Article. A billboard may be allowed individually or as an additional freestanding sign on a property under the following conditions:

- (a) The sign must be located in G-B, L-I, or H-I zoning districts within 300 feet of a State, U.S. or Interstate numbered highway.
- (b) In the G-B district, the area of the sign face shall not exceed 80 square feet. In the L-I and H-I districts, the area of the sign face shall not exceed 240 square feet. In each of the districts, the height of the sign shall not exceed 25 feet.
- (c) All portions of the billboard shall be located in accordance with the principal building setback requirements of the zoning district in which it is located.
- (d) The billboard shall not be located within 1,000 feet of any other billboard or within 500 feet of a residential zoning district. Distance measurements shall be made horizontally in all directions from the nearest edge of the sign face.
- (e) The billboard may not be located on or over any building.
- (f) Billboards located near expressway interchanges shall be limited as follows:
 - 1. No more than one (1) billboard may be located in each quadrant of the interchange.
 - 2. Such billboards shall be restricted to an area in each quadrant 1,200 feet long beginning 500 feet from the road that crosses the expressway or 500 feet beyond the point where the pavement begins to widen on the main travelway of the expressway to accommodate an exit or entrance ramp, whichever is farther from the interchange.
- (g) All billboards visible from or within 660 feet of a U.S. or State numbered highway shall comply with all requirements of the State of Georgia.

A site plan prepared by a registered land surveyor, architect or engineer shall be submitted with all billboard applications. The site plan shall include a boundary survey of the property, the exact location of the proposed billboard, and certification that all dimensional and distance requirements of this chapter are met.

Section 9-18-7-5. Construction Signs.

One construction sign per street frontage may be placed on a property upon the commencement of construction and shall be removed upon issuance of a final certificate of occupancy for the construction or development project to which it refers, if each sign complies with all of the following.

- (a) Six (6) square feet in sign face area and a maximum height of four (4) feet in single-family residential zoning districts.
- (b) 32 square feet and a maximum height of eight (8) feet in multi-family or nonresidential zoning districts.
- (c) No illumination shall be permitted.

- (d) Such a sign shall not be permitted if a temporary on-site real estate sign exists on the property; or, alternatively, construction information and on-site real estate information may be combined into one sign that is up to six (6) square feet in sign face area and a maximum height of four (4) feet in a single-family residential zoning district or up to thirty-two (32) square feet in sign face area and a maximum height of eight (8) feet in multi-family or nonresidential zoning districts.

Section 9-18-7-6. Electronic Message Board Signs.

Electronic Message Board Signs shall be limited to one such sign per property and shall be incorporated into a monument style sign only. Electronic Message Board Signs shall be a maximum of twenty (20) square feet in size with amber lighting only. Any messages of said board shall consist of text which may change but shall not flash or scroll across the screen.

Section 9-18-7-7. Political Signs.

Political signs shall be limited to one per property frontage, non-illuminated, with a maximum area of six (6) square feet and maximum height of four (4) feet in residential zoning districts and twenty-four (24) square feet and eight (8) feet in height in all other zoning districts.

Section 9-18-7-8. Principal Freestanding Signs.

Principal freestanding signs shall be monument signs and ground signs only in all zoning districts. Materials used in the structure of the monument sign and any other ground signs should be architecturally compatible with the principle building or structure on the lot. An administrative variance may be granted by the Director of Planning and Development for a decorative post-style sign in lieu of a monument sign if this requirement for a monument sign presents sight line or safety issues, or when located within the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone is determined by the Historic Preservation Commission to be more appropriate within that overlay zone.

Section 9-18-7-9 Project Entrance Signs.

Two one-sided monument signs or one two-sided monument signs may be located at each entrance into a residential subdivision, multi-family development or into an office or industrial park consisting of two or more buildings. Each project entrance sign shall not exceed:

- (a) 32 square feet in sign face area. If not integrated into a wall, the sign structure area shall not exceed 96 square feet.
- (b) 2½ feet in height if located within a sight visibility easement (see Chapter 9-17-4 of this Unified Land Development Code) or eight (8) feet otherwise.
- (c) Signs shall not be internally illuminated.
- (d) Project entrance signs are limited to freestanding monument signs.
- (e) If the establishment is a multi-family development, this sign allowance shall be in substitution for but not in addition to the allowance for a principal freestanding sign for said property as permitted by the zoning district in which it is located.

Section 9-18-7-10 Real Estate (On-site) Signs.

One real estate sign for each 500 feet of street frontage of the property or premises, may be placed on a site until the property or premises to which the sign refers is sold or leased. Such signs shall be limited as follows:

- (a) Single-Family residential zoning districts: maximum six (6) square feet in area, four (4) feet in height, non-illuminated.
- (b) Multi-Family, commercial and office zoning districts: maximum thirty-two (32) square feet in area and ten (10) feet in height, non-illuminated.
- (c) Industrial zoning districts: maximum sixty-four (64) square feet in area and fifteen (15) feet in height, non-illuminated.

Section 9-18-7-11 Real Estate Directional Signs.

A sign that conveys directions to a specific property for sale or lease, such as a real estate development, residential subdivision, apartment or condominium project, home for sale, apartment for rent, or any other real estate property for sale or lease, is permitted in all zoning districts, subject to compliance with all of the following:

- (a) It (any such sign) may not contain any commercial message or advertisement other than the phrase "home (or "house") for sale," but may contain the name, trademark or trade symbol of the development or property to which directions are being provided and/or the real estate company offering the property.
- (b) It shall be erected and maintained only with the permission of the owner of the property upon which the sign is erected.
- (c) It shall not exceed a maximum size of four (4) square feet.
- (d) It shall not be illuminated.
- (e) It shall be removed within five (5) days of the consummation of the sale or lease of the property to which directions are provided.
- (f) There may be no more than four (4) real estate directional signs providing directions to any one residential, commercial, or industrial development or site.

Section 9-18-7-12 Semi-public Use Directional Sign.

A sign that conveys directions to a specific use owned or operated by a non-profit, religious or eleemosynary institution for the purpose of providing educational, cultural, recreational, religious or social services to the general public, is permitted if it complies with all of the following:

- (a) It shall be erected and maintained only with the permission of the owner of the property upon which the sign is erected.
- (b) It shall not exceed a maximum size of six (6) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height.

- (c) It shall not be lighted.
- (d) It shall be no more than four (4) semi-public use directional signs providing directions to any one semi-public use.
- (e) It shall be erected on supports provided specifically for that purpose and no more than one (1) such support may be erected at any street corner.

Section 9-18-7-13 Special Temporary Outdoor Event Signage.

The following sign allowance shall be permitted in conjunction with a special temporary outdoor event permitted pursuant to Section 9-10-8-2 of this Unified Land Development Code. A total of one additional sign per street frontage, which may be either of the following shall be allowed for the duration of the event:

- (a) One non-illuminated temporary sign, flag or banner announcing the event, not exceeding six (6) square feet in area nor four (4) feet in height in a single-family residential zoning district and not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in area nor twelve (12) feet in height in a multi-family or nonresidential zoning district; or
- (b) One non-illuminated inflatable sign attracting attention to the event, which may be placed on a building roof, but regardless of location, shall be installed in accordance with all requirements of the Building Code. Such inflatable sign shall not contain an inflatable area in cubic feet that is greater than the square footage area of the sign structure for the principal freestanding sign on the property as determined by the Director of Planning and Development.
- (c) Signage shall be limited to a total of 60 days a calendar year for the same business or organization.

Section 9-18-7-14 Window Signs.

Signs within windows and doors, except incidental signs exempt from the requirements of this Article, shall be permitted in nonresidential zoning districts, not to exceed twenty (20) percent of any individual window and fifty (50) percent of glass panes of any doors.