



Planning Services Division

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SIGNS

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Article 1. General Provisions

6-2501 Findings and purposes.

(a) It is the stated purpose of the city council to:

- (1) Promote and protect the health, safety and general welfare of the public by regulating the size, height, quantity, design, quality of materials, construction, location, illumination and maintenance of signs and sign structures within the city;
- (2) Promote the aesthetics, ambience, and character of its residential neighborhoods by eliminating visual clutter;
- (3) Create a more attractive and healthy economic business climate by recognizing signs as an effective means of communication, while at the same time eliminating visual clutter and preserving and enhancing the beauty of the city; and
- (4) Increase traffic safety by minimizing the distracting effect of signs on drivers through regulation of the size, type, quantity and location of signs.

(b) The establishment of a permit system for signs and the strict enforcement of its provisions and the abatement of illegal nonconforming signs will promote the purposes of this chapter.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2502 Definitions

In this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (1) "A-board sign" means a portable A-frame sign (see "Portable sign").
- (2) "Aggregate sign area" or "total sign allowance" means the total area of signs permitted on a single premises, building, site or parcel.
- (3) "Apartment and rooming house sign" means a sign which identifies the apartment complex or rooming house and its services.
- (4) "Banner sign" means a sign made of flexible materials and suspended from one edge or attached at the corners. A banner sign does not include a pennant or flag.
- (5) "Business sign" means an on-site sign which identifies the business entity located on the premises and having principal business frontage or advertises or informs about the business or products or services sold or rendered on the premises.
- (6) "Commercial message" means a message related to economic interests.
- (7) "Commercial sign" means a sign related to economic interests.
- (8) "Commercially zoned district" means business and commercial districts as further defined in Chapter 6-9 of the Lafayette Municipal Code.
- (9) "Construction sign" means an on-site sign identifying a construction project and the hours of construction and/or the architect, engineer, lender or contractor directly connected with construction which is in progress.
- (10) "Directory sign" means a pedestrian oriented on-site sign which identifies or lists the names and locations of all tenants at a site.

- (11) "Externally illuminated sign" means a sign that is illuminated by light reflecting on the sign from outside of the sign.
- (12) "Fence sign" means a sign placed on a fence.
- (13) "Flag" means a sign representing for example, but not limited to, any nation, association of nations, state, city, or other political, religious, charitable, educational, philanthropic, civic, professional, or like non-commercial organization and made of a flexible material and attached at one edge to a staff or pole or other support.
- (14) "Flashing sign" means an illuminated sign in which the artificial or reflected light is not intended to be maintained in a stationary or constant intensity.
- (15) "Freestanding sign" means a sign which is self-supporting in a fixed location and not attached to a building, fence or structure.
- (16) "Governmental sign" means a sign placed by a public utility or governmental agency for safety or information or to comply with a federal, state or local law.
- (17) "Hotel or motel sign" means a commercial sign that identifies the business of a hotel or motel.
- (18) "Illegal sign" means a sign placed without proper governmental approval or permits as required by this code at the time the sign was placed. "Illegal sign" also means a nonconforming sign which has been altered, enlarged or replaced without conformance with the provisions of this chapter.
- (19) "Inflated sign" means a sign that is filled with three cubic feet or more of air or gas and is tethered to a building or to an object on the property.
- (20) "Information, safety, directional sign" means a sign giving information such as hours of operation, telephone number, credit cards, memberships, location of toilets, delivery, or freights, parking information or directional words or signals such as "enter" designed to be viewed on-site by pedestrians and/or motorists.
- (21) "Institution sign" means a sign which identifies a public or quasi-public use, such as a library, public park, school, religious institution or fire station.
- (22) "Internally illuminated" means a sign whose source of illumination is within the sign structure.
- (23) "Mailbox or address identification sign" means a sign which identifies a house or apartment by number and is less than sixty (60) square inches in area unless legally required to be larger as provided in section 6-2521(d).
- (24) "Master identification sign" means a sign which identifies a center, complex or group of businesses under a single site name.
- (25) "Master sign plan" means a coordinated sign plan which includes details of all signs visible from a public open space which are or will be placed on a site.
- (26) "Mixed use building or mixed use complex" means a building or complex containing a combination of office space and retail or other commercial use.
- (27) "Mobile sign" means a sign attached to, leaning against or suspended from a vehicle which is not an integrated part of the vehicle other than a bumper sticker. A mobile sign also includes a sign mounted on any type of device movable or capable of being moved by a vehicle.
- (28) "Modify" means to change the copy, color, size, shape, illumination, position, location, construction or supporting structure of the sign.
- (29) "Monument sign" means a freestanding sign which rests on a solid base.
- (30) "Moving sign" means a sign which has an actual or apparent moving, revolving or rotating part actuated by electrical, mechanical or other device or by wind current. The term "moving sign" does not include a time or temperature recording device, nor a sign on a motor vehicle.

- (31) "Neighborhood identification sign" means a sign identifying a neighborhood area.
- (32) "Noncommercial sign" means a sign not related to economic interests.
- (33) "Noncommercial message" means a message which is not related to economic interests.
- (34) "Nonconforming sign" means a sign which does not comply with this chapter. A legal nonconforming sign was lawful when placed.
- (35) "Obsolete sign" means a sign which advertises a service, product, activity, event or land use after the service, product, activity, event or use has been suspended, concluded, terminated or abandoned or a temporary sign that has been in place for more than ninety (90) days.
- (36) "Office" means a business space that has its entrance from an interior hallway.
- (37) "Office building" means a building consisting primarily of offices.
- (38) "Office use sign" is a sign identifying a specific office use.
- (39) "Off-site sign" means a commercial sign which advertises or informs about a business, goods, services or facilities not sold or located on the property or contiguous properties under the same ownership and use on which the sign is located.
- (40) "Open house sign" is a sign advertising property for sale and open for inspection.
- (41) "Painted sign" is a sign painted directly on a wall, fence or awning.
- (42) "Parking regulation sign" is a sign which defines the type of allowed parking, specifies a time limit for parking or otherwise defines parking stalls.
- (43) "Pennant" means a flag or banner that is suspended from two corners and which tapers to a point or swallowtail.
- (44) "Permanent commercial sign" is a commercial sign designed and intended to be used for a period of ninety (90) days or more.
- (45) "Permanent noncommercial sign" means a noncommercial sign intended to be used and in place for a period of ninety (90) days or more. Permanent noncommercial signs include, but are not limited to, signs indicating the location of a community service organization, public facility, or similar nonprofit institution and memorial plaques, historical tablets or other commemorative signs for a person, place or event.
- (46) To "place" and any of its variants includes erecting, constructing, posting, painting, printing, tacking, nailing, gluing, sticking, carving or otherwise fastening, affixing or making visible a sign. It does not include any of the foregoing activities when performed incident to the customary maintenance of a sign or to a change in the message on a reader board.
- (47) "Portable sign" means a sign which is designed to be moved and is not attached to the ground, building, structure or other thing.
- (48) "Principal business frontage" means the horizontal distance of a building or portion of the building occupied by one tenant and is measured along each wall having a customer entrance and facing a public open space or along each wall which includes a glass enclosed showroom facing the street.
- (49) "Projecting sign" means a sign other than a wall sign, which is suspended or supported by a building wall and which projects outward from the building, wall or overhang.
- (50) "Reader board" means a permanent structure upon which is displayed advertising material or copy of a temporary or changeable nature, such as a bulletin board or theater marquee.
- (51) "Realty sign" means a temporary commercial sign designed and intended to be used for less than ninety (90) days, which pertains to the sale, lease or rental of an existing lot, building or other facility.
- (52) "Residentially zoned district" means single-family residential districts and multi-family residential districts as further defined in Chapters 6-7 and 6-8 of the Lafayette Municipal Code.

- (53) "Roof sign" means a sign placed on a roof or above an overhang, canopy or fascia.
 - (54) "Service club shield" means a sign not exceeding two (2) square feet in area which identifies a particular service club and is placed on a service club sign.
 - (55) "Service club sign" means an off-site sign, usually free-standing, which is used to display service club shields.
 - (56) "Shingle sign" means a wooden sign projecting outward from the building to which it is attached.
 - (57) "Sign" means a medium for visual communication, including its structure and component parts, placed upon the ground, a bush, a tree, a rock, a wall, a post, a fence, a building or structure, which is used or intended to be used to convey a message or to identify, attract attention to, or advertise a product, place, activity, business, event, good, service or land use. A functional architectural feature of a building is not normally a sign. A sign under this chapter is one which is visible from any public place or is located on private property and exposed to the public or intended to be seen from a public open space or from a premises other than that on which the sign is placed.
 - (58) "Subdivision sign" means a sign which identifies a real estate subdivision development at which residential housing is offered for sale or for lease, or one which identifies a person or firm engaged in the promotion, design, construction or alteration of a real estate subdivision development and is removed upon the sale of the last lot or home.
 - (59) "Temporary commercial sign" means a commercial sign designed and intended to be used to identify a new business for a period of less than ninety (90) days while the new business is going through the process of applying for and installing its business sign and which complies with section 6-2563.
 - (60) "Temporary noncommercial sign" means a noncommercial sign intended to be used and in place for a period of less than ninety (90) days. Temporary noncommercial signs include, but are not limited to, a sign announcing a community-oriented event or charitable cause, and a sign designed for the purpose of advertising support of, or opposition to, a political party, candidate, proposition or cause.
 - (61) "Under-marquee sign" means a sign below a canopy, overhang or covered walkway which projects perpendicular to the building.
 - (62) "Use" means a purpose or activity for which the land or building is designed, arranged or intended, or for which it is occupied or maintained to function as a separate unit.
 - (63) "Wall sign" means a sign attached parallel to and flat against an exterior wall. It does not include a sign painted directly on a wall.
 - (64) "Window sign" means a sign on the surface of a window or visible through the window from outside.
- (Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2503 Permit system overview.

- (a) In general, a person may erect a wall sign on their principal business frontage provided that it is not illuminated, does not exceed 20 square feet in size or eight inches in thickness, and does not use iridescent or fluorescent colors, without a sign permit. (See Section 6-2521 for a description of signs which are exempt from the permit requirement.)
- (b) In general, a person desiring to erect an externally illuminated wall sign which does not exceed 20 square feet in size or eight inches in thickness, or use fluorescent or iridescent colors, may apply directly to the planning services manager for a permit and is not subject to design review or public hearing; carved wooden signs are preferred. (See Section 6-2522 for specific description of signs subject to planning services manager review, including certain subdivision, apartment and community event signs, and signs conforming to the master sign plan.)

(c) All other signs which are neither exempt from permit requirements (see Section 6-2521), nor prohibited entirely (see Section 6-2519) are subject to design review commission approval and the public hearing process. (See Section 6-2523 et seq.)

(d) A person may apply to the design review commission for a variance with respect to regulations relating to height, area, location or number of signs. (See Section 6-2527.)

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2504 Applicability.

(a) This chapter applies to all signs in the city except as provided in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) This chapter applies to each local agency performing governmental or proprietary functions and having limited boundaries to the extent that territory within the jurisdiction of the local agency is within the boundaries of the city. "Local agency" does not include the state of California, Contra Costa County, or the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District except as authorized by statute, including Public Utilities Code Section 28959.

(c) The regulations in this chapter are zoning ordinances as that term is used in Government Code Section 53091. To the extent that a local agency is subject to the zoning ordinances of the city by the virtue of Government Code Sections 53091 to 53095 inclusive, the regulations set forth in this chapter apply.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2505 Substitution clause.

In each instance and under the same conditions in which this chapter permits any sign, any noncommercial message may be substituted in lieu of other content.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007)

6-2506 Compliance with applicable codes.

Unless specifically allowed by this chapter, the general requirements, restrictions and prohibitions of this chapter shall apply to all signs.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

**Article 2. Prohibited Signs, Permit Requirements,
Exemptions, Reviewing Authorities and Procedures**

6-2519 Prohibited signs.

The following signs are prohibited:

(a) A sign which is unsafe, dilapidated or obsolete;

(b) A sign located less than the legal distance from a communication or electric facility or placed in a manner that conflicts with a rule, regulation or order of the California Public Utilities Commission;

(c) A sign on a tree, shrub or other natural object;

(d) A sign placed across or in the public right-of-way, utility easement or on public or publicly maintained property without an encroachment permit approved by the city council other than notices of public hearing placed on utility poles and city-owned banner signs placed on city-owned lampposts in the Redevelopment Project Area along Mount Diablo Boulevard;

- (e) A sign which violates a condition imposed as part of a sign permit;
 - (f) A flashing, internally or externally illuminated, moving, rotating, animated or inflated sign except as permitted in this chapter;
 - (g) A sign with flags, flyers, pennants, pinwheels or which utilizes two or more light bulbs on a wire string;
 - (h) A sign which causes an unsafe condition by interfering with the vision of a motorist or which interferes with the safe and convenient passage of pedestrians;
 - (i) A projecting sign, except for a shingle sign, under-marquee sign or projecting banner sign, which complies with Section 6-2552;
 - (j) A sign which extends higher than the upper roof line, ridge line or parapet of a building to which it is attached;
 - (k) A portable, mobile or A-board sign, except as permitted by Section 6-2568;
 - (l) An off-site commercial sign except as permitted by this chapter (e.g., Sections 6-2521(k), 6-2521(n), 6-2568, 6-2569, 6-2571);
 - (m) A residential business sign (see Section 6-327) or home occupation sign (see Section 6-347);
 - (n) A sign advertising tobacco products that is prohibited under Section 5-511.
 - (o) All other signs not permitted in this chapter.
- (Ord. 565 § 2, 2007)

6-2520 Permit required.

- (a) It is unlawful to install, place, move, alter, replace, suspend or attach a sign (except for maintenance purposes) without a sign permit unless the sign is exempt from permit requirements.
 - (b) No building permit may be issued for a sign until a sign permit is issued.
- (Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2521 Signs exempted from permit requirements.

Each of the following signs is permitted without a sign permit if it otherwise complies with the applicable requirements and restrictions of this chapter. Unless otherwise provided, and with the exception of temporary light bulbs on a string (Section 6-2521(j)), exempt signs are included in calculating the aggregate sign area allowance (see Sections 6-2560 and 6-2565). Unless otherwise provided no exempt sign shall exceed six (6) feet in height.

- (a) A flag not exceeding twenty (20) square feet in area and attached to a pole not exceeding twenty-five (25) feet in height;
- (b) Governmental sign not exceeding fifteen (15) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height;
- (c) Information, safety, directional or convenience sign (see Section 6-2502(20)) not exceeding two (2) square feet in area;
- (d) Mailbox or address identification sign not exceeding sixty (60) square inches in area unless regulations;
- (e) One official state inspection sign for each type of inspection service offered on a site, located flat against a building and not exceeding four (4) square feet in area;
- (f) A permanent non-commercial sign not exceeding three (3) square feet in area;
- (g) Service club shield, two (2) square feet in area or less when placed on a service club sign (see Section 6-2502(54));

- (h) Service club sign (see Section 6-2502(55));
 - (i) Service station price, information, safety, directional, convenience or island identification sign which complies with Section 6-2570;
 - (j) Temporary light bulbs on a wire string;
 - (k) Temporary construction sign which complies with Section 6-2571;
 - (l) Temporary commercial sign which complies with Section 6-2563;
 - (m) Temporary noncommercial sign less than six (6) square feet in area or less than twelve (12) square feet in area which complies with Section 6-2565;
 - (n) Temporary realty sign which complies with Section 6-2568 or 6-2569;
 - (o) Window sign (see Section 6-2502(64));
 - (p) A commercial sign attached to a wall, or sign painted directly on an existing awning provided that:
 - (1) The sign is on a principal business frontage, and
 - (2) The sign is not internally or externally illuminated, and
 - (3) The total area of this sign and any other permitted sign does not exceed twenty (20) square feet;
 - (q) City-owned banner signs placed on city-owned lampposts.
- (Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2522 Permits subject to planning services manager approval.

The planning services manager may approve a permit for each of the following signs without design review commission approval and without a public hearing:

- (a) Externally illuminated attached wall sign for a single land use which complies with other applicable size limitations in this chapter, provided that the combined total area of all signs, excluding exempt signs, does not exceed 20 square feet in area:
- (b) Carved wooden wall sign with a nominal thickness of two inches or greater which meets the following specifications:
 - (1) The sign is constructed entirely of wood which is at least two inches in thickness,
 - (2) The letters and design features are carved or sandblasted and each design addition is doweled and glued,
 - (3) The size of the sign complies with other applicable limitations in this chapter, e.g., Section 6-2560,
 - (4) Colors are not iridescent or fluorescent (gold lettering is permissible),
 - (5) If external illumination is used, the source of light is shielded from public view;
- (c) Sign for a building conforming to an approved master sign plan;
- (d) With the exception of a temporary noncommercial sign which complies with Section 6-2565, a temporary non-commercial sign more than six (6) square feet in area, which conforms to Section 6-2526, Criteria for design review.;
- (e) Subdivision sign, which conforms to Section 6-2568(e);
- (f) Apartment and rooming house sign, which complies with Section 6-2564;
- (g) Projecting banner or under-marquee signs 7.5 square feet or less in area and which conform to Section 6-2526, Criteria for design review, and Section 6-2552, Projecting signs.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 492 § 1, 1998; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2523 Permits subject to design review commission approval

Except as provided in Sections 6-2521 (signs exempt from permit requirements) and 6-2522 (signs which the planning services manager may approve) and 6-2519 (signs which are unconditionally prohibited), each of the following signs requires design review commission approval for a permit:

- (a) Banner (see Section 6-2502(4));
- (b) Business sign which does not comply with Section 6-2521 or 6-2522;
- (c) Freestanding or monument (see Sections 6-2502(15) and (29) and 6-2554);
- (d) Hotel and motel (see Section 6-2502(17));
- (e) Institution (see Section 6-2502(21));
- (f) Neighborhood identification (see Section 6-2502(31));
- (g) Painted sign (i.e., painted directly on a wall, fence or awning) (see Section 6-2502(41));
- (h) Projecting 6 shingle and under-marquee, and projecting banner (see Sections 6-2502(49) and 6-2552, except as may be permitted under Section 6-2522 above);
- (i) Roof (see Section 6-2502(53));
- (j) Service station sign which complies with Section 6-2570.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord 492 § 2, 1998; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2524 Permit application requirements.

- (a) The application for a sign permit shall be on a form provided by the city and shall contain the following information:
 - (1) An accurate plan with complete dimensions and a map or plot plan to scale showing the location, size, colors, shape, materials, type of illumination, size and style of lettering, copy design and the proposed manner of installation;
 - (2) The size and location of every existing sign on the premises;
 - (3) Whether a variance is requested and the factual basis to support the granting of a variance under Section 6-2527;
 - (4) The signature of the property owner, his agent or the property tenant where the sign will be placed;
 - (5) If a master sign plan was approved by the city, an applicant whose sign conforms to that plan may refer to it in his application and may omit detailed drawings unless specifically requested to provide them; and
 - (6) Other information reasonably requested by the city.
- (b) An application may relate to only one property but may include more than one sign.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2525 Application review and approval.

- (a) The applicant shall file a sign application with the planning services division.
- (b) Staff shall review the application for completeness within 14 working days of filing. Unless the applicant is notified that the application is incomplete, an application is considered complete 14 working days after it is filed.

- (c) The planning services manager shall grant or deny a permit for those signs described in Section 6-2522 within 30 calendar days after the application is considered complete.
- (d) If design review commission approval is required, the matter shall be set for a public hearing before it. The meeting shall be scheduled for the next available regular meeting after the application is considered complete and for which adequate notice can be given unless the applicant agrees to an extension of time. The public hearing shall be held after giving notice to the applicant and to each person requesting notice of the hearing by mailing written notice of the time and place of the hearing at least ten days before the date set for the hearing.
- (e) In approving a sign permit, the design review commission may impose conditions related to the design criteria described in Section 6-2526.
- (f) If an application is approved, conditionally approved or denied, the planning services manager or design review commission shall inform the applicant in writing and make written findings setting forth the reasons.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2526 Criteria for design review.

The design review commission shall apply the following design criteria in reviewing each sign application:

- (a) Architectural Compatibility. The sign shall be compatible in size, character and quality of design with the exterior architecture of the premises and other structures in the immediate area.
- (b) Simplicity. To the extent feasible, the sign should be graphic and with limited use of words, with the design emphasis on simplicity of style. A simple design or abstract graphic design is preferred. Similarly, a simple sign frame and supporting structure is preferred.
- (c) Identification. A commercial sign should be designed for the primary purpose of identifying a business or office.
- (d) Fewer Signs. In the use of the total sign allowance at a particular premises, the use of a minimum number of signs is preferred to the use of many signs so that a cluttered effect is avoided.
- (e) Shape, Size and Orientation. The shape of a sign should not conflict with the architectural lines of its setting. Signs should be directed toward the passing motorist and the pedestrian. No sign should be designed to be readable from the freeway or to attract motorists from a great distance.
- (f) Illumination and Colors. A sign must not overpower its surroundings through hue, saturation and brilliance or close combination of incompatible colors. Sources of illumination should be screened from public view and should be designed to avoid glare onto a street or adjacent property.
- (g) Landscaping. A sign should be placed with consideration for existing and future growth of trees and other landscaping. A freestanding sign must be placed in a landscaped area or planter, with landscaping maintained in a thriving manner.
- (h) Compatibility with Adjacent Uses. The design and location of a sign should not impair the visibility or the design quality of existing conforming signs.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2527 Variance.

- (a) When practical difficulty, unnecessary hardship or a result which is inconsistent with the purpose and intent of this chapter occurs from the strict application of this chapter, the design review commission may grant a variance with respect to the regulations in this chapter relating to the height, area, location or number of signs allowed if it finds that all of the following conditions exist:

- (1) Because of special circumstances concerning the subject property, including size, shape, topography, location or surroundings, the strict application of this chapter would deprive the applicant of privileges enjoyed at other properties in the vicinity and in the same land use district;
 - (2) The variance would not constitute a grant of special privilege which is not generally available to other property in the vicinity and in the same land use district;
 - (3) The special conditions or unique characteristics of the property were not created by the applicant, property owner, tenant, lessee or any party otherwise in control of the property.
- (b) The procedure for the application, notice and hearing, grant, conditional grant or denial and for administration of a variance after it is granted, is that prescribed in Section 6-201 *et seq.* of the Municipal Code.
- (Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2528 Appeal procedure.

- (a) A person aggrieved by an action of the planning services manager or the design review commission may appeal the action to the city council.
 - (b) The city council shall set the fee for an appeal by resolution.
 - (c) The procedure for taking an appeal, giving notice to interested parties, holding the hearing, and making the decision is that prescribed in Section 6-233 of the Municipal Code.
- (Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1(part), 1996)

6-2529 Fees.

- (a) The fee for a sign permit shall be established by the city council by resolution.
 - (b) The applicant shall pay the fee at the time of filing the application. The fee is nonrefundable.
 - (c) If installation work begins or a sign is installed, moved, altered, replaced, repaired, suspended or attached without a permit, staff shall conduct an inspection and the applicant shall pay a fee equivalent to double the usual fee whether or not a permit is subsequently issued.
- (Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

Article 3. Master Sign Plan

6-2540 Master sign plan.

Each building, addition or complex which contains two or more business or office uses may have an approved master sign plan applicable to each sign in the building complex.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2541 Procedure for review.

- (a) An application for a master sign plan is subject to review by the design review commission.
- (b) The owner of a building or his agent may apply for approval of a master sign plan. The procedures set forth in Article 2 apply.
- (c) A master sign plan may be approved only if it meets the applicable sign requirements of this chapter, including but not limited to the design review criteria in Section 6-2526.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2542 Sign permit application requirements under master sign plan.

Each sign included in a master sign plan is subject to permit requirements in this chapter. The applicant for a sign permit may file a simplified permit application under Section 6-2524(a)(5) and need not obtain separate design review commission approval.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

Article 4. General Sign Limitations

6-2550 Applicability of Article 4.

Except as otherwise specifically provided in Article 5, the regulations in this article apply to each sign in every zoning district.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996).

6-2551 Method of calculating sign area and sign height.

- (a) Sign area shall be calculated by computing the square footage of each sign face (but not the supporting sign structure unless it forms part of the display or background for the display). The area of an irregular shaped sign shall be the area within a single continuous perimeter composed of squares, rectangles, or other geometric shapes, which enclose the extreme limits of the sign. When calculating for purposes of measuring the aggregate sign area allowed on the premises, all sign faces are counted.
- (b) Sign height shall be calculated by measuring the vertical distance from the uppermost point used in measuring the area of a sign to the ground immediately below such point or the level of the upper surface to the nearest curb of the street upon which the sign fronts, whichever measurement is less.
- (c) Every sign, except an exempt window sign and except as otherwise specifically provided in this chapter, is counted toward the total sign allowance.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2552 Projecting signs – Shingle, projecting banner, and under-marquee.

A projecting sign allowable under Section 6-2523(h) must meet the following requirements:

- (a) The sign shall provide at least 7.5 feet clearance above grade where it is over a pedestrian area and shall not be higher than the elevation of the eaves of the building to which it is attached.
- (b) The sign may not be internally illuminated.
- (c) A commercial projecting sign may be used only to display a nonverbal design or to announce the name of the business and the principal classification of goods sold or service offered on the premises.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 492 § 3, 1998; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2553 Wall signs.

A wall sign may not extend beyond the wall of the premises and may not exceed eight inches in thickness.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2554 Freestanding signs.

A freestanding sign allowable under Section 6-2523(c) must meet the following requirements:

- (a) There may be only one freestanding sign per street frontage.
- (b) The height of the sign may not exceed eight feet from the ground.
- (c) The sign may not exceed 25 square feet in area per side unless otherwise permitted in this chapter.
- (d) A freestanding sign is only allowed when it is reasonably necessary. For example, a freestanding sign may be reasonably necessary when:
 - (1) The building in which the business is conducted is set back from the street or obscured from view by an adjacent structure or vegetation in such a manner that adequate identification cannot be obtained from signs attached to the building; or
 - (2) The architectural style, materials or elements of construction are such that a sign attached to the building would be in conflict with the design or character of the building.
- (e) A freestanding sign may be used only to announce the name of the business or site, the address, and the principal classification of goods sold or service offered on the premises.
- (f) The sign must be placed in a landscaped area or planter and the landscaping must be continuously maintained.
- (g) A freestanding sign requires design review approval before a permit may be granted.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2555 Compliance with applicable codes.

Each sign shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with applicable provisions of the Uniform Building Code and Electrical Code.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

Article 5. Requirements and Limitation on Special Uses

6-2560 Maximum area for business signs.

- (a) Except as otherwise provided in this article, for a particular use, the maximum total sign allowance for a ground floor principal business frontage is indicated in the table below and is based upon application of the principal business frontage rules (see subsection (b) below):

Maximum Allowed Signage for a Principal Business Frontage

Principal Business Frontage (Linear Feet)	Total Sign Allowance (Square Feet)
24 or fewer	20
24.1 to 26	23
26.1 to 28	29
28.1 to 30	34
30.1 to 32	39
32.1 to 34	44
34.1 to 36	49
36.1 to 38	53

38.1 to 40	57
40.1 to 42	61
42.1 to 44	65
44.1 to 46	68
46.1 to 48	71
48.1 to 50	75
50.1 to 52	78
52.1 to 54	81
54.1 to 56	83
56.1 to 58	86
58.1 to 60	89
60.1 to 62	91
62.1 to 64	94
64.1 to 66	96
66.1 to 68	98
70 or more	100

- (b) If a business has more than one side which qualifies as a principal frontage, the following rules apply:
- (1) When the principal business frontages are on opposite sides of the building, the total sign area calculated for each frontage may be placed on that frontage.
 - (2) When the principal business frontage are on adjacent sides of the building, only one frontage may be used for a principal frontage calculation, but the sign allowance may be distributed in any manner on the two sides.
 - (3) If three or more walls of a building qualify as principal business frontage, both of the above rules apply. However, in distributing the total sign allowance, the sign area on any two adjacent sides may not exceed the area permitted on the largest principal business frontage use.
 - (4) A business may distribute to the frontage along the street which provides its official Post Office address, the signage which would be permitted on its largest principal business frontage.
- (c) A business whose principal frontage is not on the ground floor and which has an independent exterior customer entrance is allowed a maximum of 20 square feet of signage.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2561 Sign Copy for business signs.

The copy of a business sign is limited to: (1) the name of the business, (2) the address, and (3) the principal classification of goods sold or services offered.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2562 Sign for office, mixed use buildings and mixed use office complexes.

- (a) The regulations in this section apply to each office building, mixed use building or mixed use office complex.

- (b) An office or mixed use building or mixed use complex is limited to the following allowable signs:
- (1) One master identification sign, not exceeding 25 square feet in area, at each adjacent street containing the name and address of the building or complex; and
 - (2) A directory sign which identifies each tenant of the building or complex. The directory sign may not exceed 25 square feet in area; and
 - (3) Individual office signs not exceeding two square feet per tenant; and
 - (4) A ground floor business having direct customer entry from a public open space may have a sign which meets the specifications in Section 6-2560; and
 - (5) A business whose principal frontage is not on the ground floor and which has an independent exterior customer entrance, may have a sign up to a maximum of 20 square feet.
- (Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2563 Temporary commercial signs.

An on-premises temporary commercial sign is allowed for a business established at a new location after July 10, 1996 without a sign permit provided it complies with Section 6-2561 and:

- (a) The aggregate sign area of all signs does not exceed thirty (30) square feet; and
 - (b) Each allowed sign may remain in place only while the new business is going through the necessary administrative procedure to obtain and install its permanent business sign. In no event shall a temporary commercial sign be in place for longer than ninety (90) days; and
 - (c) No more than one sign is allowed on each principal frontage.
- (Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2564 Apartment and rooming house signs.

The total sign allowance for the identification of an apartment building or a rooming house is computed on the basis of one square foot for each rentable unit. The maximum area allowed is 12 square feet.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2565 Residential Signs.

This section shall apply to signs on property that contains a residential use or is located in a residentially zoned district.

- (a) A sign, including an exempt sign, shall not:
 - (1) Be located on a roof or, with the exception of a flag (Section 6-2502(13)), extend above the ground floor of the residence;
 - (2) Be internally illuminated, or externally illuminated with a spot light or other source of light specifically designed for the sign with the exception of a mailbox or address identification sign (Section 6-2502(23)) and a neighborhood identification sign (Sections 6-2520(31); 6-2567);
 - (3) Exceed six (6) feet in height, with the exception of a flag (Sections 6-2502(13) and 6-2521(a)).
- (b) The total aggregate area of all signs, including exempt signs, shall not exceed eighty (80) square feet per parcel, of which only thirty-two (32) square feet may be permanent.
- (c) In addition to the aggregate area allowed under (b), each parcel may contain an additional one hundred eighty (180) square feet of temporary noncommercial signage for a total of forty-five (45) days or less in a calendar

year, and notwithstanding the requirements of this Chapter, each temporary noncommercial sign may be as large as twelve (12) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height. This forty-five (45) day period is in addition to the ninety (90) day period otherwise allowed for temporary noncommercial signs.

- (d) Notwithstanding Section 6-2527(b), a property owner or a tenant may apply for a variance under Section 6-2527 for noncommercial signs.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2566 Institution signs.

An institution sign identifying the institutional use shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet in area.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2567 Neighborhood identification signs.

A neighborhood identification sign may not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet in area. A neighborhood identification sign may be placed only at each main entrance to a neighborhood.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2568 Temporary residential realty signs.

This section is intended to complement Civil Code Sections 712 and 713. A real property owner or his agent may display on the owner's real property and on real property owned by others, with the other's consent, one sign each which is reasonably located, in plain view of the public, and which does not adversely affect public safety, including traffic safety, provided the sign meets the requirements of this section:

- (a) The sign may advertise that the property is for sale, for lease or for exchange. It may include directions to the property, the owner's or agent's name, and the owner's or agent's address and telephone number.
- (b) The sign shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area.
- (c) An off-site open house real estate sign that complies with Sections 6-2568 (a) and (b) is permitted and may be placed only on the day and during the hours that the property is available for public showing and may be a portable or A-board sign. For each parcel there may be only one sign per intersection and no sign may be located farther from the property than the closest main thoroughfare intersection. The sign must be removed after each day of showing.
- (d) On an unimproved lot that is capable of being subdivided, a for sale, for lease or for exchange sign shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area.
- (e) For a recorded subdivision, no more than one on-site subdivision sign and one off-site subdivision sign on real property owned by another with the other's consent is allowed. A subdivision sign shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area or eight (8) feet in height and shall not be placed within one hundred (100) feet of an occupied residence.
- (f) A temporary residential realty sign may not be internally or externally illuminated.
- (g) A temporary residential realty sign shall be removed either: (1) no more than ninety (90) days after placement; or (2) ten (10) days after the sale of the property to which it relates, whichever is earlier.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2569 Temporary commercial realty signs.

A commercial property owner or his agent may display on the owner's commercial property and on commercial property owned by another, with the other's consent, one sign each which is reasonably located, in plain view of the public, and which does not adversely affect public safety, including traffic safety, provided the sign meets the requirements of this section:

- (a) A for sale, for lease, or for exchange sign that is placed on commercial property shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and shall not be internally or externally illuminated.
- (b) No more than one temporary commercial realty sign is allowed per site.
- (c) The copy shall be limited to the name of the seller or agent, address and telephone number, directions to the property and whether the property is for sale, lease or exchange.
- (d) The sign shall be removed either: (1) no more than ninety (90) days after placement; or (2) ten (10) days after the sale of the property to which it relates, whichever is earlier.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007)

6-2570 Service station signs.

- (a) The total area allowance for all signs at a service station is 70 square feet, not including exempt signs.
- (b) An individual sign face may not exceed 25 square feet in area unless a specific limitation is imposed by this section.
- (c) A roof sign is prohibited.
- (d) A price sign may be placed without a permit if it complies with this subsection and with Sections 13530 et seq. of the Business and Professions Code, and:
 - (1) The sign does not exceed 15 square feet in area;
 - (2) A price sign may not be attached to another sign. It must be either a wall sign or a sign suspended from or mounted on the supporting structure of a canopy. It may not be a freestanding sign;
 - (3) A price sign required by the Business and Professions Code, but not in compliance with this section, requires a permit. A permit for a noncomplying sign may be issued only if the finding is made that it is not feasible for the required sign to conform to this section.
- (e) Each of the following signs does not require a permit and is not included in the total sign allowance of subsection (a) of this section:
 - (1) An information, safety, direction or convenience sign two square feet or less in area;
 - (2) A sign intended solely to identify an island as full service, mini-serve or self-serve. The sign may not exceed four square feet in area and must be attached to the supporting structure of the canopy. There may be no more than two such signs per island. The sign may not be internally illuminated.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2571 Temporary construction signs.

- (a) A temporary construction sign is limited to one (1) sign per street frontage of the project and shall not be internally or externally illuminated.
- (b) A temporary construction sign placed in a commercially zoned district shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height.
- (c) A temporary construction sign placed in a residentially zoned district shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height.
- (d) The sign shall be removed either: (1) no more than ninety (90) days after placement; or (2) ten (10) days after

the construction to which it relates has been suspended, terminated, abandoned or otherwise concluded, whichever is earlier.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007)

Article 6. Enforcement

6-2580 Violation.

A violation of chapter 6-25 may be subject to enforcement in accordance with chapter 1-and/or chapter 8-21 of this municipal code.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 560 § 7, 2006)

6-2581 Lawfully erected nonconforming signs.

A lawfully erected nonconforming sign is not subject to the new requirements of this chapter. Alteration, enlargement or replacement of a lawfully erected nonconforming sign makes the sign illegal and requires conformity with the provisions of this chapter.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 434 § 1 (part), 1996)

6-2582 Abatement of illegal signs.

- (a) If the code enforcement officer determines that an illegal sign poses an immediate danger to the general welfare, health and safety, the sign may be abated without the necessity for prior notice or hearing.
- (b) If an illegal sign is located in the public right-of-way, the code enforcement officer may remove such signage without prior notice of hearing. The officer shall notify the sign's owner or sponsor of the removal and give thirty (30) days notice for retrieval of the sign. If the owner or sponsor does not retrieve the sign within thirty (30) days, the officer may dispose of the sign as it sees fit without further liability to the owner or sponsor for this action.
- (c) Any other illegal signs may be subject to abatement in accordance with Chapter 8-21 of this code.
- (d) The owner or sponsor of an abated sign shall be responsible for all the city's abatement and associated administrative costs.

(Ord. 565 § 2, 2007; Ord. 560 § 7, 2006)