

## **3.60 Sign Regulations**

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### **3.60.010 Purpose**

- A. The purpose of this Section is to promote public safety and welfare by regulating signs in keeping with the following objectives:
  - 1. The design, construction, installation, repair and maintenance of signs will not interfere with traffic safety or otherwise endanger public safety;
  - 2. Regulations established by the City Council will provide reasonable protection to the visual environment by controlling the size, height, spacing, and location of signs;
  - 3. That residents, visitors, and sign users will benefit from signs having improved legibility, readability, and visibility; and
  - 4. Adequacy of message opportunities will be applicable to sign users without dominating the visual appearance of the area.

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### **3.60.020 Applicability**

- A. This Section applies to all signs including on-site signs, off-site signs, and temporary signs within the City.
- B. No person shall install, alter, or relocate any sign within the City without first meeting requirements of Section 3.60.050 (Application Requirements) unless otherwise exempt consistent with Section 3.60.030 (Exempt Signs).
- C. Nothing in this Section shall be construed to prohibit a person from holding a sign while picketing or protesting on City property and/or right-of-way that is open to the public, so long as the person holding the sign does not block ingress and egress from

buildings, create a safety hazard by impeding travel on sidewalks, in bike or vehicle lanes, or on trails, or violate any other reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions adopted by the City.

- D. This Section is not intended to, and does not, restrict speech on the basis of its content, viewpoint, or message. No part of this Section shall be construed to favor commercial speech over non-commercial speech.
- E. A non-commercial message may be substituted for any commercial message displayed on a sign, or the content of any non-commercial message displayed on a sign may be changed to a different non-commercial message, without the need for any approval or permit, provided that the size, and location of the sign is not altered. The purpose of this provision is to prevent any inadvertent favoring of commercial speech over non-commercial speech or favoring of any particular non-commercial message over any other non-commercial message. To the extent any provision of this Section is ambiguous, the term shall be interpreted not to regulate on the basis of the content of the message. This provision prevails over any more specific provisions to the contrary.
- F. Where a particular type of sign is proposed in a permit application, and the type is not expressly allowed, restricted, or prohibited by this Section, the Review Authority shall approve, conditionally approve, or deny the application based on the most similar sign type that is expressly regulated by this Section.
- G. Where a sign may be subject to multiple provisions of this Section 3.60 (Sign Regulations) because it may be considered to fall within more than one of the sign type definitions of Section 9.10.50 (Sign Regulation Definitions), the sign shall comply with the most restrictive requirements.

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### 3.60.030 Exempt Signs

- A. **Types of exempt signage.** The sign types listed below are exempt from the requirement of a Sign Permit, Registration, and Program, and any corresponding fees provided that the sign is consistent with the standards of Section 3.60 (Sign Regulations). The size and placement standards set forth in subsequent Sections shall be adhered to in order for such sign to qualify as exempt. However, any sign listed below that requires a Coastal Development Permit as provided in Section 3.60.060 (Signage within the Coastal Zone) shall not be exempt.
  1. Any sign, posting, notice, or similar signs placed, installed, or required by law by the City, local school districts, Federal, or State governmental agency.
  2. Official Government Flags.
  3. Flags. Flags displaying either a commercial or non-commercial message are permitted as follows: one flag not to exceed 10 square feet in size in residential zones, and one flag not to exceed 24 square feet in commercial and industrial zones.

4. Business information signs. Non-illuminated signs which provide business information including, but not limited to, credit card acceptance, business hours, open/closed, or menus provided signs do not exceed an aggregate six square feet in sign area.
5. Special event decorations that display non-commercial messages may be in place up to 45 days per event, except for signs listed in Section 3.60.040 (Prohibited Signs).
6. Signs affixed to a vehicle through magnets, vinyl application, or other forms of permanent adhesive. Such signage shall not be a banner, board, paper, wood material, or any temporary sign and shall not project or deviate above or from the vehicle profile.
7. Art murals displaying a non-commercial message and does not include any registered trademarks, logos, etc. that promotes a commercial product or service.
8. Temporary off-site directional signs for limited duration events, placed on private property with permission of the property owner, a maximum of two hours before and one hour after the conclusion of an event. Events are limited to a maximum of three events per week. Maximum sign area is five square feet.
9. Non-commercial message signage with a maximum aggregate of three-square feet for each residence or business in all zones, except in the OS zones.
10. Temporary yard signs.
11. Temporary projected image signs.
12. Temporary window signs.
13. Directory signs affixed to a building.

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### **3.60.040 Prohibited Signs**

- A. **Prohibited Signs.** The following sign types are prohibited within the City.
1. Off-site signage unless expressly authorized by Section 3.60 (Sign Regulations).
  2. Abandoned signs.
  3. Signs that simulate in color or design any traffic sign or signal, or which makes use of words, symbols, or characters in such a manner to interfere with, mislead, or confuse pedestrian or vehicular traffic, including signage that is highly reflective.
  4. Digital display/LED messaging signs including animated, moving, flashing, blinking, reflecting, glaring, or revolving, or any other similar sign, except electronic message boards displaying time, temperature, or required prices of gasoline or similar fuels.

5. Backlit, translucent, semi-transparent and illuminated awnings from a light source under or within the awning.
6. Roof signs.
7. Snipe signs or any other sign attached to a tree, utility pole, fence post, etc.
8. Inflatable signs, including but not limited to air-activated graphics.
9. Feather flag signs.
10. Signs, including non-commercial signs that are placed or encroach into the right-of-way without a valid encroachment permit issued by the City Engineer.
11. Signs emitting audible sounds, odors or particulate matter.
12. People signs except human signs used as in-person protest picketing.
13. Mobile signs that utilize the parking of off-site mobile billboard advertising displays for the direct purpose of advertising a business off-site, as defined herein, either standing alone, or attached to a motor vehicle, upon any public street, City owned land, or on private property.
14. Billboards.
15. No sign shall be located within the sight triangle as defined in Section 3.10.030 (Height Limits and Exceptions).

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### **3.60.050 Application Requirements**

#### **A. Applicability.**

1. Sign Registration.
  - a. A Sign Registration is required for temporary A-frame and banner signs as specified in this Section and shall be submitted and approved by the Director prior to installation of the sign.
2. Sign Permit.
  - a. A Sign Permit is required for all signs unless otherwise specified in this Section and shall be submitted and approved by the Director prior to installation of the sign.
3. Sign Program.
  - a. A Sign Program is required as specified in this Section or modifications are requested for exceptions to the requirements of this Section. This can be approved in conjunction with other development applications.
  - b. A Sign Program shall require approval of a Use Permit consistent with Section 6.20.090 (Use Permit).

- c. As part of a Sign Program approval, exceptions may be granted to the standards of this Section if the findings can be made as required in Subsection C (Findings).

**B. Procedures.**

1. Application requirements. An application for a Sign Registration, Sign Permit, or Sign Program shall be filed on the form(s) provided by the Department, together with all required fees and all other information and materials specified by the application submittal requirements provided by the Department. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide evidence to support any required findings.
2. Other permits required. In addition to the requirements of this Section, all signs shall be in compliance with applicable requirements of the California Building Code and any additional permits or requirements.
3. Review authority. Table 3.6 identifies the Review Authority responsible for reviewing and making a decision on each type of sign approval.

Type of Action	Director	Commission	Council
Sign Registration	Decision	Appeal	Appeal
Sign Permit	Decision	Appeal	Appeal
Sign Program	Recommendation	Decision	Appeal

- C. Findings.** The Planning Commission may approve a Sign Program, only after making the following findings:

1. There are special circumstances applicable to the property including size, shape, topography, location, surroundings, building placement, public access or architectural style that warrant modified standards.
2. The sign is in substantial compliance with any applicable design guidelines and Sign Design Subsection 3.60.070.C (Sign design, materials, and illumination).
3. The sign's design or proposed construction will not threaten the public health, safety, or welfare.

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### **3.60.060 Signage within the Coastal Zone**

Within the Coastal Zone, new signs shall be of a size, location, and appearance so as not to detract from scenic areas or views from public roads and other public viewing points. A Coastal Development Permit is required for any sign that could impact public recreational access, including parking opportunities near beach access points or parklands, including any changes in parking timing and availability, and any signage indicating no public parking, no trespassing, and/or no public coastal access allowed. Coastal Development Permits for signs shall be consistent with all applicable Local Coastal Program standards.

**3.60.070 Requirements for All Signage**

**A. Sign Message.**

1. Allowed signage may contain commercial or non-commercial message, provided that the sign complies with the size, height, area, location, and other requirements of this Section.

**B. Sign Measurement Criteria.** The measurement of sign area and height shall be regulated as follows:

1. Sign area. The area of a sign is calculated by enclosing the extreme limits of all framing, emblem, logo, representation, writing, or other display composed of squares or rectangles with no more than eight (8) lines as shown in Figure 3.20.

**Example of Individual Letter Surface Area Calculation**

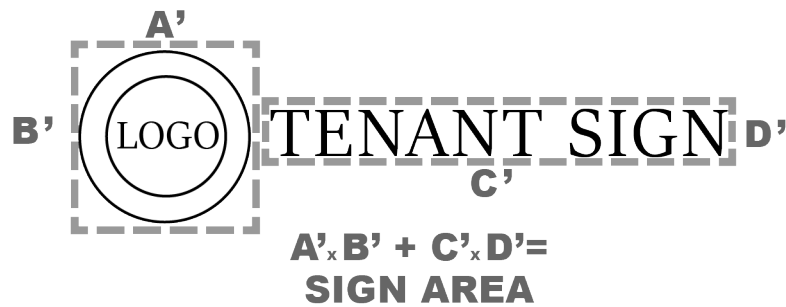


**Example of Surface Area Calculation Limits of Framing**



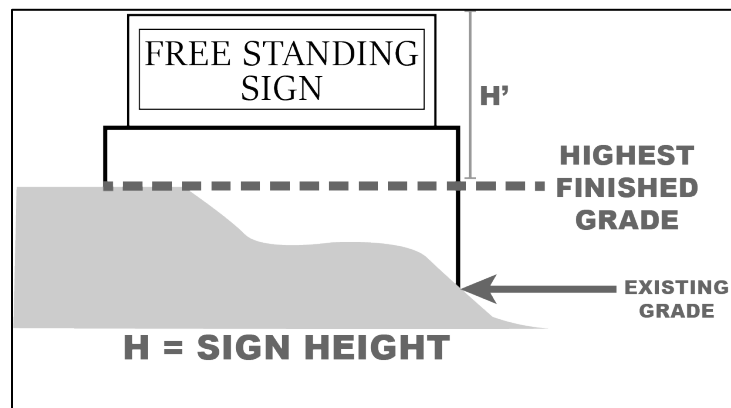
**Figure 3.20 – Sign Area Calculations**

2. Sign structure. Supporting sign frame and support structures that are incidental to the display itself shall not be computed as sign area.
3. Double-sided signs. The area of a double-sided sign that has no more than 24 inches separating the outer surfaces of the sign’s two parallel planes shall be computed by multiplying the total height by the total length of only one side of the sign area.
4. Three-dimensional objects. Where a sign consists of one or more three dimensional objects (e.g., balls, cubes, clusters of objects, sculpture, or statue-like trademarks), the sign area is measured at their maximum projection upon a vertical plane.
5. Multiple objects. When signs are composed of individual elements, the area of all sign elements, which together convey a single complete message, are considered a single sign as shown in Figure 3.21.



**Figure 3.21\_– Multiple Objects**

6. Height. Sign height is measured as the vertical distance from the highest elevation of the finished grade below or surrounding the base of the sign to the top of the highest element of the sign. In cases where substantial fill is proposed, “finished grade” shall be established by the Director, consistent with properties in the immediate vicinity, and shall not be artificially raised to gain additional sign height. If highest finished grade surrounding the sign is lower than the grade of an adjacent street, the height of the sign shall be measured from the top of curb elevation nearest to the sign as shown in Figure 3.22.



**Figure 3.22 – Sign Height**

- C. **Sign design, materials, and illumination.** All signs shall be designed and constructed in compliance with the following standards:
1. Design and construction.
    - a. Signs shall be in compliance with all applicable Council adopted design guidelines and standards.

- b. The size of the structural elements (e.g., columns, crossbeams, and braces) shall be proportional to the sign type they are supporting.
- c. Signage shall be designed so that it is integrated with the design of a building.
- d. Signs shall be securely attached to a building, structure or ground.
- e. Freestanding signs utilizing bases shall be a minimum of one foot in height with a maximum height of three feet. Bases shall be decorative and located in a landscape planter.

2. Materials.

- a. Sign materials including framing, supports, and base, shall be compatible with the type and scale of materials used in the building's design.
- b. Sign materials shall be durable and capable of withstanding weathering over the life of the sign with reasonable maintenance.
- c. Use of raceways to place signage shall be painted to match the building color.

3. Illumination.

- a. Lighting for signs shall not create a hazardous glare for pedestrians or vehicles.
- b. The light source shall be shielded from view, except for diffused exposed neon.
- c. Externally illuminated signs shall utilize focused light fixtures that are directed towards the sign.
- d. Signs shall be designed so that illumination does not exceed 10 foot candles (100 lumens) measured at a distance of 10 feet from the sign.
- e. Signs in commercial and industrial zones with building elevations that directly face adjacent residential zones shall not be illuminated.

D. **Sign Maintenance.** All signs shall be continuously maintained in compliance with the following standards:

- 1. Each sign and supporting hardware shall be maintained in good repair so that it is able to function properly at all times. This includes the replacement of burned out or broken light bulbs, and repair or replacement of faded, peeled, cracked, or otherwise damaged parts of a sign.
- 2. Any repair to a sign shall be of materials and design of equal or better quality as the original sign.
- 3. Signs that have been physically damaged by weather or physical impact shall be repaired.
- 4. When an existing sign is replaced, all brackets, poles, and other supports that are no longer required shall be removed.



### 3.60.080 Temporary Signs

- A. **Purpose.** The purpose of these regulations is to ensure that temporary signs do not create a distraction to the traveling public or cause visual blight to the aesthetic environment.

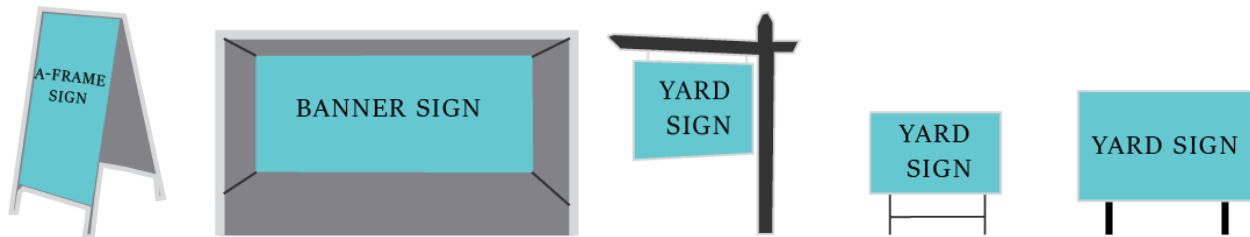


Figure 3.23 – Temporary Signs

- B. **Temporary signs allowed.** The following temporary signs are allowed:
1. A-Frame signs.
    - a. Zones allowed. Allowed in commercial zones, industrial zones, Recreational, Education, and Public uses in the Public Facilities zone as defined in Section 2.50.020, and Urban Reserve zone.
    - b. Maximum sign area. Six square feet.
    - c. Number of signs. One per business.
    - d. Sign height. Minimum sign height of two feet. Maximum sign height of five feet.
    - e. Location. A-frame signs shall be placed on private property and cannot interfere with pedestrian ingress or egress as required by the Building Code. Exception: An A-frame sign may be located in the right-of-way with an approved encroachment permit if the building is less than five feet from the City's right-of-way and there is no other feasible location to place the sign on privately owned property outside of the City's right-of-way.
    - f. Time of display. A-frame signs shall only be displayed during the hours of business operations.
  2. Banner signs.
    - a. Zones allowed. Allowed in commercial zones, industrial zones, Recreational, Education, and Public uses in the Public Facilities zone as defined in Section 2.50.020, Recreational, Education, and Public uses in residential zones as defined in Section 2.20.030, and Urban Reserve zone.

- b. Maximum sign area. 24 square feet.
  - c. Number of signs. One per business.
  - d. Location. Shall not be located above a first story or located on roof.
  - e. Time of display. May be in place a maximum of 30 consecutive days. Once removed, a minimum of 30 consecutive days must pass before installing a new banner sign.
3. Projected image signs.
    - a. Zones allowed. Allowed in commercial zones and industrial zones.
    - b. Number of signs. One projected image sign per business.
    - c. Projected image signs may be in place a maximum of 30 days. A minimum of 30 consecutive days must pass before installing a new projected image sign.
    - d. Time of display. Only be displayed during the hours of business operation.
  4. Window signs. Window signage is considered graphics, lettering, or perforated window film on windows visible from the right-of-way.
    - a. Zones allowed. Allowed in commercial zones, industrial zones, Recreational, Education, and Public uses in the Public Facilities zone as defined in Section 2.50.020, and Urban Reserve zone.
    - b. Maximum sign area. Window signs shall not exceed 50 percent of window area, except for properties in the CVS, VS, CB and CBO zones, where window signs shall not exceed 33 percent of window area.
    - c. Location. Shall not be located above a first story window.
    - d. Time of display. May be in place a maximum of 180 consecutive days. Once removed, a minimum of 30 consecutive days must pass before installing a new temporary window sign.
  5. Yard Signs in residential zones.
    - a. Maximum sign area. Three square feet.
    - b. Number of signs. One per property or residential unit when multiple units are located on one common lot. Residential developments with a common lot are allowed a maximum of one yard sign per unit during an event on the common lot, with permission of the common lot ownership.
    - c. Maximum height. Six feet as measured from average natural grade.
    - d. Location. May be located within the front and street side setback, behind the back of sidewalk or curb if no sidewalk is present. In no instance may a yard sign be placed on a sidewalk, public or private street.
    - e. Time of display. All yard signs shall be temporary and only placed during an event subject to the following:



identify, and provide information on a business or commercial activity located on the premise.

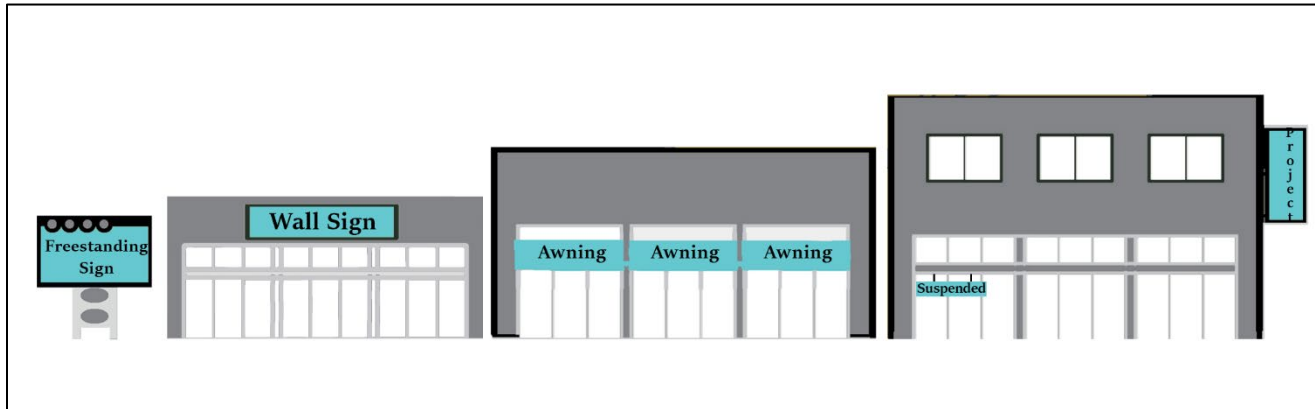


Figure 3. 24 – Typical Building Sign Types

A. **Permanent Sign Standards.** As listed in Table 3.57, signs shall comply with the following standards applicable to the specific sign type.

Table 3.7 Sign Type Performance Standards					
Sign Type	Zones Allowed	Max. Sign Area <sup>1</sup>	Number of sign(s) permitted	Max. Height <sup>2</sup>	Special Requirements
1. Awning	Commercial zones, Industrial zones, PF zone, and UR zone	One square foot per one lineal foot of awning canopy, not to exceed 50% coverage of the awning	One per business or tenant	Not above first story	(a) Minimum vertical clearance from the ground of eight feet. (b) May project a maximum of five feet into the right-of-way with approved encroachment permit. (c) Valance limited to 75% maximum coverage.
2. Free Standing	Commercial zones, Industrial zones PF zone, and UR zone	36 s.f.	One per property	Six feet	(a) New cabinet type signs shall be prohibited in the CVS, VS, CB, and CBO zones. (b) A singular pole, whether circular or rectangular is prohibited. (c) In the CVS and RC zones properties with frontage along El Camino Real are allowed one freeway oriented free-standing monument sign as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximum height shall not exceed 40-feet for freestanding monument signage.</li> <li>• Total sign area shall not exceed 100 square feet.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.7 Sign Type Performance Standards**

<b>Sign Type</b>	<b>Zones Allowed</b>	<b>Max. Sign Area<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Number of sign(s) permitted</b>	<b>Max. Height<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Special Requirements</b>
3. Projecting	Commercial zones, Industrial zones, PF zone, and UR zone	15 s.f.	One per public street frontage	20 feet above finished grade	(a) May encroach up to two feet within the right-of-way with issuance of an encroachment permit. (b) Sign shall be perpendicular to the building or wall. (c) Sign may be at an angle if located at the corner of a building located on a corner lot.
4. Suspended	Commercial zones, Industrial zones, PF zone, and UR zone	10 s.f.	One per business or tenant	Not above first story	
5. Wall	Commercial zones, Industrial zones PF zone, and UR zone	One square foot per lineal foot of business/ building frontage	One per public street frontage	Based on building height	(a) Business frontage is the lineal front of owned or leased space. (b) Wall signs shall be located below the top of the parapet or roofline on single story buildings and below the second-floor sill on multi-story buildings. (c) Cabinet type signs shall be prohibited in the CVS, VS, CB, and CBO zones. (d) An additional wall sign may be permitted for a business that has an additional building face visible from the right-of-way. (e) The sign's size shall be in scale and proportion to the building.
6. Permanent Window Signs/ Lettering	Commercial zones, Industrial zones PF zone, and UR zone	50 percent of window area, except CVS, VS, CB and CBO zones 33 percent of window area in CVS, VS, CB, and CBO zones	One per business or tenant	Not above first story	(a) Limited to lettering, graphics, and perforated window film. (b) Window area is aggregate of both temporary and permanent signage.

**Notes:**

1. Maximum sign area measured in square feet (s.f.).
2. Maximum height measured in feet (ft) and from finished grade for all sign types.

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**3.60.0100 Special Consideration Signs**

- A. **Signs with special consideration.** This Section applies to permanent signs that are unique, or for sites located in specific locations, or based on size of sites.
1. Changeable copy signs.
    - a. Zones allowed. Commercial zones, industrial zones, and Recreational, Education, and Public uses in residential zones as defined in Section 2.20.030 (Residential Zones Allowable Land Uses and Permit Requirements).
    - b. Number of signs. One per property.
    - c. Maximum height. Six feet.
    - d. Design standards. Signs shall comply with design standards in Section 3.60.070.C (Sign design, materials, and illumination).
    - e. Permit requirements. A Sign Program shall be approved by the Planning Commission.
  2. Site Directional/Wayfinding signs.
    - a. Zones allowed. Commercial and Industrial zones.
    - b. Maximum height. Five feet.
    - c. Design standards. Signs shall comply with design standards in Section 3.60.070.C (Sign design, materials, and illumination).
    - d. Permit requirements. A Sign Program shall be approved by the Planning Commission.
  3. Residential Identification Signs.
    - a. Zones allowed. All residential zones.
    - b. Maximum sign area. 24 square feet.
    - c. Maximum sign height. Six feet.
    - d. Number of signs. One per street frontage.
    - e. Minimum number of units. A minimum of five units are required for installation of residential identification signs.
    - f. Design standards. Signs shall comply with design standards in Section 3.60.070.C (Sign design, materials, and illumination).
    - g. Permit requirements. A Sign Permit shall be approved by the Director.
  4. Free Standing Monument Sign Exception. In the RC zone east of 14<sup>th</sup> Street with frontage along West Grand Avenue exceptions to Section 3.60.090 (Permanent Signs) are allowed as follows:

- a. Properties less than 20,000 square feet with more than three tenants. One free standing monument sign per street frontage with a maximum height of 10 feet not exceeding 60 square feet is permitted.
- b. Properties greater than 20,000 square feet. One free standing monument sign per street frontage with a maximum height of 15 feet not exceeding 120 square feet is permitted.
- c. Permit requirements. A Sign Program shall be approved by the Planning Commission.

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### 3.60.0110 Nonconforming Signs

- A. **Applicability.** This Section applies to any permanent sign, including its physical structure and supporting elements, which was lawfully erected and maintained in compliance with all applicable laws in effect at the time of original installation, but which does not currently comply with the provisions of this Section.
- B. **Allowed modifications to nonconforming signs.** The following modifications to nonconforming signs are allowed:
  1. The use of a nonconforming sign may continue and shall be maintained in good condition as required by this Section, unless provided otherwise.
  2. Sign copy and sign face changes, non-structural modifications, and non-structural maintenance (e.g., painting and rust removal) are allowed if there is no alteration to the physical structure or support elements of the sign.
  3. A non-conforming sign may be restored to its original condition if less than 50 percent of the sign is damaged, provided that the restoration is started within 90 days of the damage occurring and diligently completed. A nonconforming sign is deemed to be more than 50 percent damaged, if the estimated cost of reconstruction or repair exceeds 50 percent of the replacement cost as determined by the Director based on an appraisal prepared by the owner.
- C. **Prohibited modifications to nonconforming signs.** A nonconforming sign shall not be:
  1. Changed to another nonconforming sign;
  2. Structurally altered to extend its useful life;
  3. Altered unless required by law or unless the alteration results in the elimination of the nonconformity;
  4. Enlarged; or
  5. Moved or replaced.
- D. **Nonconforming Sign.** A nonconforming sign shall be removed or modified to comply with this Section if the following occurs:

1. Any modifications prohibited by Subsection 3.60.0110.C (Prohibited modifications to nonconforming signs) are made to the sign;
2. The sign is temporary; or
3. The sign is or may become a danger to the public or is unsafe.

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**3.60.0120 Signs on City Property**

- A. **Signs on City Property.** Any sign placed on property owned by the City, or within the right-of-way of a dedicated public street without the permission of the City may be removed by the City without prior notice.