

CITY OF GULF BREEZE

SIGN REGULATIONS

Subpart B - LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE

Chapter 23 SIGN REGULATIONS¹

Sec. 23-1. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Advertising sign means a sign or sign structure erected or intended for advertising purposes, with or without advertisement displayed thereon, situated upon or attached to real estate, upon which any poster, bill, printing, painting or device is fastened, affixed or displayed.

Animated sign means a sign which depicts action or motion or which changes color. An animated sign differs from a flashing sign in that it uses movement to create a special effect or scene, rather than as an attention-getting technique.

Attraction board means a sign upon which copy is manually changed periodically to advertise special sales or to otherwise convey a message to the public (also called a reader board).

Banner sign means a sign made of cloth, fabric, paper, nonrigid plastic or similar type of material.

Billboard means any sign which advertises a use, establishment, product, or service that is sold, produced, manufactured, or furnished at a place other than on the property on which said sign is located. (Also called an outdoor advertising sign or off-premises sign).

Construction project sign means a temporary sign identifying an active construction project.

Detached sign means a sign affixed to the ground, either flush or on poles, and not attached to any building for support, which may include a reader board (also called a ground, pole or freestanding sign).

Directional sign means:

- (1) A sign erected by an official government agency to denote the name of any thoroughfare; to point out the route to any city, educational institution, public building, historic place, or hospital, to direct and regulate traffic; and to denote bridge, or other transportation facility for the convenience and safety of the general public.
- (2) A sign giving directions to an establishment's vehicular use area, which may only include the words "enter," "exit," "parking" or a directional arrow or business logo. Such logo shall not exceed 50 percent of the total sign area.

Double-faced sign means a sign with two faces, back-to-back.

¹Editor's note(s)—This chapter was adopted by reference by ordinance number 11-92, § 3 as part of the land development code. Amendments to ordinance number 11-92 are indicated by parenthetical history notes following amended provisions. The absence of a history note indicates that the provision remains unchanged from ordinance number 11-92.

Cross reference(s)—Buildings and building regulations, ch. 5.

Electronic reader board (ERB) shall mean a programmable display that has the capability to present a large amount of text and/or symbolic imagery. Some ERBs present images in realistic motion and in a large variety of colors. ERB shall have the same meaning as changeable message sign (CMS), dynamic message sign (DMS), electronic billboards (EBB) and other similar type signs.

Facade sign means a sign erected parallel to the outside wall facade of any building, including flat, painted, individual letter, or cabinet signs. Mansard and marquee signs shall conform to wall sign provisions.

Flashing sign means any sign which contains a continually intermittent or sequential flashing light source.

Flat sign. See *Facade*.

Freestanding sign. See *Detached sign*.

Ground sign. See *Detached sign*.

Hanging sign means a sign that is secured to a structure which extends perpendicular from the wall of the building.

Illuminated sign means any sign designed to emit artificial light or designed to reflect light from one or more sources of artificial light.

Informational or instructional sign means representations on a sign informing the public of facts that are of a public interest or providing directions for public benefit.

Marquee means any hood, awning or canopy of permanent construction which projects from the wall face of a building.

Marquee sign means a sign which is attached to a marquee.

Message sign means a changeable sign upon which graphic displays, symbols or words can be varied upon the face or faces of the sign to display time, temperature, public service and commercial information.

Nameplate means a sign indicating the name or address of the occupant or resident of the dwelling unit to which it is attached.

On-premises sign means a sign which advertises or directs attention to a use or establishment located on-premises or a product or service available on-premises.

Off-premises sign. See *Billboard*.

Outdoor advertising sign. See *Billboard*.

Parapet means a false front or wall extension above the roof line.

Pedestrian sign means a sign which is attached to the underside of a cantilevered roof, portico or overhang that extends from the wall face of an establishment.

Pole sign means a ground sign which is supported by one or more poles, posts columns, pyramids or other extensions from grade level.

Portable sign means a movable sign not secured or permanently attached to the ground. (Also, a trailer, sidewalk or sandwich sign).

Projecting sign means a sign which is affixed to and extends from the outside wall or facade of a building.

Pylon sign means a sign attached to or painted on the face of a vertical or horizontal extension of any face of a building constituting an integral part of the building structure.

Reader board. See *Attraction board*.

Real estate sign means a temporary sign indicating that the property on which the sign is located, or any building or structure located thereon, is for sale, rent or lease.

Roof sign means any sign erected over or on the roof of a building.

Sidewalk or sandwich sign. See *Portable sign*.

Sign means any exterior identification, description, illustration or device which directs attention to a product, service, place, activity, person, establishment, institution or business; or any emblem, painting, banner, pennant, placard or temporary sign designed to advertise, identify or convey information.

Sign areas means:

- (1) Ground and projecting signs: The entire area within and enclosed by the exterior perimeter of all cabinets or modules within a single, continuous geometric figure, including but not limited to, all written copy, logos, symbols, decorative embellishment, and border or roof treatments. This shall not include any open areas within said perimeters and any space separating the cabinets or modules.
- (2) Wall signs: The entire area within a single continuous perimeter composed of squares, rectangles or other geometric figures which enclose the extreme limits of all sign elements affixed to the wall, including but not limited to, cabinet structures, written copy, logos, symbols, and illustrations.

Sign assembly means a permanent nonmovable structure which supports a freestanding sign as defined in section 23-16(3).

Sign face means the part of a sign that is or may be used for advertising purposes.

Snipe sign means a small sign of any material including but not limited to: paper, cardboard, wood or metal, when such sign is tacked, nailed, posted, pasted, glued or otherwise attached to trees, poles, fences or other objects, and the advertising matter appearing hereon is not applicable to the premises upon which the sign is located.

Special event sign means a sign which calls attention to a business grand opening, civic event or meeting, or other similar activity of a temporary nature.

Temporary sign means a sign which advertises for a limited period of time political candidates, parties or issues; active construction projects; real estate for sale, rent or lease; and business grand openings.

Trailer sign means an advertising structure mounted on skids, wheel or wheels, constructed for the sole purpose of advertising.

Tri-faced sign means a sign with three faces, oriented back-to-back so as to form a triangle or pyramid.

Vehicular sign means a sign affixed to a vehicle or trailer for the purpose of advertising.

Wall face means the entire building front; including the parapet.

Wall sign. See *Facade*.

Window sign means a sign which is painted on or displayed within a storefront window or door.

(Ord. No. 04-06, § 1, 4-3-06)

Sec. 23-2. Intent.

This chapter establishes a uniformity of signs within each zoning district compatible with the intent of the land development code applicable to the districts, taking into account the economic, aesthetic and traffic factors that are reasonably consistent with the exercise of the police powers vested in this city. This is done so that there will be a minimum of conflict in relation to the need for traffic control, visual compatibility, and economic growth in order to promote the city's interest in maintaining and enhancing property values and the attractive appearance of the city.

Only advertising signs designating business areas or sections or pertaining to the business carried on within the building and on the premises shall be permitted. No signs shall be erected in a right-of-way, except official state, county or city signs erected by the respective governing agency.

Sec. 23-3. Prohibited signs.

The following signs are prohibited:

- (1) Signs located off the premises of the business which the sign advertises or identifies. Relocation notices, however, may be posted for a period of 60 days.
 - (2) Signs that project beyond the property line or which encroach on or over public property or rights-of-way.
 - (3) Signs that contain statements, words or pictures of an obscene, indecent, or immoral character, such as will offend public morals or decency.
 - (4) Signs that contain or are an imitation of an official traffic sign or signal or contain the words "stop," "go slow," "caution," "danger," "warning" or similar words.
 - (5) Banner signs, except for special events and for a period of time not to exceed three weeks in any one given calendar year.
 - (6) Beacon, strobe or billboard signs.
 - (7) Roof signs.
 - (8) Sandwich signs.
 - (9) Snipe signs except for political candidates. In the case of snipe signs advertising political candidates, the signs shall not exceed 32 square feet. Political signs must be removed by the candidate within one week after the election.
 - (10) Trailer signs except for grand openings or other similar special events. As used herein, a special event shall not mean a political campaign or election.
 - (11) Within public property, including right-of-way, only instructional, directional and informational signs shall be allowed and must be approved by the city manager. All other signs are prohibited on public property.
 - (12) Signs which convey the appearance of movement or animation in any form shall not be permitted, scrolling or flashing shall not be permitted.
 - (13) Signs which obstruct the visibility constituting a hazard to vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
 - (14) Electronic reader board signs, except as provided for in section 23-5, and section 23-15.
- (Ord. No. 04-06, § 2, 4-3-06; Ord. No. 13-11, § 1, 9-20-11; Ord. No. 13-2019, § 2, 8-19-19)

Sec. 23-4. Special event signs; permit required.

The director of public services or the city manager may, for special events, grant permits for special event signs to be erected on the premises of an establishment having a special event. The sign shall be a maximum of 36 square feet and shall be allowed, provided a permit is obtained, for a period not to exceed a total of three weeks in any one given calendar year.

Sec. 23-5. Existing signs.

- (a) Any sign destroyed or damaged, or improved or modified, by more than 50 percent of its replacement value shall be brought into compliance with current code requirements.
 - (b) The "Pensacola Beach Fish Sign" located at the junction of State Road 399 and U.S. Highway 98 shall be exempted from this requirement provided the following conditions are met:
 - (1) The location of the sign shall not change,
 - (2) The dimensions and shape of the sign shall not change,
 - (3) The artistic design and color scheme shall not change, and
 - (4) The sign shall be perpetually maintained and kept in good repair.
 - (c) Existing electronic reader board signs shall be exempted for this requirement provided the following conditions are met:
 - (1) The location of the sign shall not change,
 - (2) The dimensions and shape of the sign shall not change,
 - (3) The sign shall be perpetually maintained and kept in good repair.
- (Ord. No. 8-98, § 1, 8-3-98; Ord. No. 13-11, § 2, 9-20-11; Ord. No. 03-2021, § 2.B, 5-3-21)

Sec. 23-6. Compliance with building code.

All signs permitted in this chapter shall comply with the relevant sections of the Standard Building Code.

Sec. 23-7. Construction permit required.

Any owner, authorized agent or contractor who desires to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move or demolish a sign of any description, the installation of which is regulated by this land development code, or to cause any such work to be done, shall first make application to the city manager, and obtain the required permit therefor.

Sec. 23-8. Violation constitutes nuisance; procedure for abatement.

Any sign which is erected, used or maintained in violation of this chapter is hereby declared to be a public and private nuisance and shall be forthwith removed, obliterated or abated by the city manager. For such purpose the director of public services or the city manager may enter upon private property without incurring any liability therefor. However, if any such signs bear the name of the owner thereof, and the owner holds an unexpired permit issued under this section, the owner shall be given written notice of violation in accordance with the provision of section 23-10 and the cost of removal assessed as a lien in accordance with the provisions of section 23-11.

Sec. 23-9. Removal—Authorization.

- (a) *Vacant premises.* A sign shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises when the establishment which it advertises is no longer active. If the owner or lessee fails to remove said sign, the city manager shall give the owner 30 days' written notice to remove it. Upon failure to comply with the notice, the city manager shall authorize removal of the sign in accordance with the notice requirement of section 23-10 and the cost of removal assessed as a lien in accordance with the provision of section 23-11.

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- (b) *Prohibited, unlawful and nonconforming signs.* All signs which are in violation of this land development code shall be removed by the city manager in accordance with the notice requirement of section 23-10 and the cost of removal assessed as a lien in accordance with the provisions of section 23-11. All unlawful and prohibited signs shall be removed within 48 hours of notification.
 - (c) *Required maintenance.*
 - (1) Maintenance of any sign shall be the responsibility of the respective property owners and if the sign is not kept in good repair, it shall be deemed as unsafe and ordered removed by the city. All visible portions of a sign and its supporting structure shall be maintained in safe condition and neat appearance. If a lighted sign, all lights shall be maintained in working order and functioning in a safe manner; if a painted sign, the paint shall be kept in good condition; all signs shall be kept in such a manner as to constitute a complete sign at all times. The area immediately surrounding ground signs shall be kept clear of all unsightly vegetation or debris.
 - (2) All signs and advertising structures regulated by this land development code shall be maintained so as not to violate any of the provisions of this chapter. The owner or lessee of any sign that is unsightly because of a deterioration or lack of maintenance shall be notified in writing and allowed 30 days to correct the violations. Upon failure to comply with the notice, the manager shall authorize removal of the sign in accordance with the notice requirement of section 23-10 and the cost of removal assessed as a lien in accordance with the provision of section 23-11.

Sec. 23-10. Same—Notice required.

- (a) The city manager shall not remove or order the removal of any sign erected and maintained on private property in violation of this chapter, except in emergency cases, without written notice delivered personally to the establishment associated with the sign or by registered or certified mail to the property owner of record according to the current tax rolls. The notice shall be addressed to the current owner (according to the current tax roll) of the property on which the sign is located and to the owner or lessees of the sign, if their names and addresses are shown upon the records of the building and zoning department. If such notice is to be served by a law enforcement officer, it shall be served on the owner of the property on which the sign is located or upon any agent of the owner thereof. If the personal service upon the occupant of the property or upon any agent of the owner thereof cannot be performed after reasonable search and inquiry by such officer, notice shall be accomplished by physical posting on the sign, where possible, or in a conspicuous place upon the property where the sign is located.
- (b) The notice shall inform the owner or lessee of:
 - (1) The nature of the violation of this chapter.
 - (2) The requirements necessary to be fulfilled in order to comply with this chapter.
 - (3) The time period during which the alteration, repair or removal or other action shall be made to the sign in order to comply with this chapter.
 - (4) The fact that failure to comply will cause the owner or lessee to become liable for the cost of remedying the violation and that such cost, including advertising costs and other expenses will be imposed as a lien on the property on which the sign is located if not otherwise paid within 30 days after receipt of billing.
 - (5) The right to appeal the decision or order of the city manager to the board of adjustment by the owner or lessee within 30 days of receipt of the order. Such notice of appeal shall be in writing and delivered to the city manager.

Sec. 23-11. Same—Cost to be assessed as lien.

If the owner or lessee fails to comply with the notice provided in section 23-10, within ten days thereafter, the city manager shall cause such sign to be brought into compliance or removed (as the facts may warrant) and shall assess the cost of such compliance or removal to be charged as a lien against the land on which the sign existed. After causing the condition to be remedied, the city manager shall certify to the director of finance, the expense incurred in remedying the condition and shall include a copy of the notice described in section 23-10 and a copy of the decision of the board of adjustment, if any, whereupon such expense shall become payable within 30 days. Thirty days after this certification, a lien charge will be made upon the property, which shall be payable at the rate of eight percent per annum from the date of such certification until paid. Upon such payment, the director of finance shall duly evidence the satisfaction and cancellation of such lien upon the record thereof. Notice of such lien, and satisfaction, shall be filed in the office of the clerk of the circuit court and recorded in the official records of the county, at the cost of the property owner.

Sec. 23-12. Emergency removal.

In cases where it appears that there is imminent danger to life or safety of any person unless a sign located on public or private property is immediately altered, repaired or removed, the city manager or director of public services shall document such facts with photographs and written reports and shall cause the immediate repair or removal of such sign. In such cases, the decision of the city manager or director of public services shall be final. For this purpose, the city manager or director of public services may at once enter such place where such sign is located, with such assistance and at such costs as the city manager or director of public services deem necessary. The cost of such emergency repair or removal of such sign shall be collected in the same manner as provided in section 23-11.

Sec. 23-13. Interpretations.

In any application of this chapter where a question of interpretation arises, the interpretation which most effectively accomplishes the intent stated in section 23-2 shall prevail.

Sec. 23-14. Appeals.

Any person aggrieved by a decision of the city manager or the director of public services in regard to the interpretation or enforcement of this chapter may, within 30 days of the decision, apply to the board of adjustments of the city for appropriate relief. After hearing and decision by the board of adjustments, the aggrieved person shall have exhausted his administrative remedies.

Sec. 23-15. Permitted signs—R-1-AA, R-1-A, R-ES, R-1, TH, R-C, C-2 and P districts.

The following signs shall be permitted in the R-1-AA, R-1-A, R-ES, R-1, TH, R-C, C-2 and P districts:

- (1) Not more than two nonilluminated signs advertising the sale, lease or rental of the lot or building not exceeding six square feet in area per sign on any one lot.
- (2) One nonilluminated sign advertising a recorded subdivision or development not to exceed 50 square feet in area. The sign must be placed only within the platted area of the subdivision or development so advertised or within an area designated as M or C-1. Such a sign shall require a building permit and the sign shall be authorized for a period not to exceed two years. The two-year period will commence upon official acceptance of a subdivision by the city, or the beginning of construction of any multifamily or commercial building development, whichever comes first. Any continued use of the sign beyond the initial two-year period shall require a variance. Upon expiration of such approval, the sign shall be

removed by the developer, or by the city in the event of his failure to do so, and the developer and his successor do consent to the removal by acceptance of the original permit.

- (3) Two signs per lot for churches, nonpublic schools (except those located in commercial {C-1} zones), libraries and community centers and historic sites serving as identification and/or bulletin boards not to exceed 12 square feet in area per sign. The signs may be placed flat against the wall of the building or may be freestanding provided that it not be closer to any property line than ten feet. Such signs may be illuminated providing the source of light shall not be visible beyond the property line of the lot on which the sign is located.

Public schools and community centers may have one freestanding sign to serve as identification and/or serve as a reader board for the display of school related or community type activities or messages. The combination sign and/or reader board shall not exceed 50 square feet per side. Public schools and community centers shall be allowed to use an electronic reader board sign provided that it does not display animated images and scrolling or flashing text. Lighting for the sign may be internal or external, but shall be done so as not to create a safety hazard for passing vehicles or pedestrians. No other freestanding signs are permitted on site, except for the safe direction of traffic and pedestrians. No sign for a public school authorized by this section may be used for any commercial or income producing purpose.

- (4) Not more than two nonilluminated signs not to exceed 32 square feet in area per sign in connection with new construction work and displayed only during such time as the actual construction is in progress.
- (5) One nonilluminated name plate not more than one square foot in area.
- (6) One nonilluminated flat sign placed against the wall of the building identifying an apartment development, such sign not to exceed 12 square feet in area.
- (7) Entrance monuments of a permanent character may be placed at one or two of the main entries into a recorded subdivision, apartment, condominium or townhouse complex. The name of the subdivision, apartment, condominium or townhouse complex may be shown on the monuments; this nameplate or lettering shall not be considered as a sign within the meaning of this chapter. One monument may be placed on either side of the main street entries. The monuments may be placed no closer than 20 feet to the intersection of the street right-of-way lines and no closer than two feet to the street right-of-way lines and may not exceed eight feet in height. Prior to the installation of these monuments, the subdivider or developer shall secure a building permit, and the application for the permit shall be accompanied by a sketch of the proposed monuments and their locations.

Maintaining such monuments shall be the responsibility of the owners. All visible portions of a monument shall be maintained in safe condition and neat appearance. If a lighted monument, all lights shall be maintained in working order and functioning in a safe manner; if a painted monument, the paint shall be kept in good condition; all monuments will be kept in such manner as to constitute a complete monument at all times. The area immediately surrounding ground monuments shall be kept clear of all unsightly vegetation or debris.

(Ord. No. 1-97, 2-17-97; Ord. No. 2-98, § 1, 3-2-98; Ord. No. 13-2019, § 3, 8-19-19)

Sec. 23-16. Same—C-1 and M districts.

The following signs shall be permitted in the C-1 and M districts: provided, however, signs within the CRA shall also comply with the provisions of chapter 26 of the land development code and in the event of conflict between the provisions of this chapter 23 and those set forth in chapter 26, the provisions of chapter 26 shall control and be adhered to within the CRA:

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- (1) Any sign permitted in this chapter.
 - (2) Any sign or signs may be displayed if they pertain exclusively to the business carried on within the building or on the premises of the business which designates a business area or section. Signs attached to a building shall not be greater in total area than ten percent of the frontage area of the first floor of the building with an additional five percent being available for use by commercial businesses for a sign of the readerboard type. No illuminated sign shall be placed on the side of a building that is within 150 feet of and facing a residential district except when such residential district is separated from the commercial district by a platted street. Such signs shall not exceed a total of 200 square feet.
 - (3) Each individual business establishment shall have no more than 50 square feet of total freestanding sign area (100 square feet including both sides of sign), with an additional 25 square feet (50 square feet including both sides) for use by that business for a sign of the readerboard type. If a readerboard is utilized, the readerboard sign shall be attached to the same pole as the principal freestanding sign. If the readerboard sign is placed parallel or at an angle of not more than 45 degrees to the street, a maximum of two signs, each of not more than 25 square feet, may be utilized as readerboard signs, and the reverse side toward the business shall be blank. All freestanding signs must be supported on a single pole or sign assembly and limited to a single business. Signs which are normally an integral part of equipment such as gasoline pumps or other dispensing or servicing devices shall be permitted, provided, they do not exceed 25 percent of the area of such equipment and are a part of, and not detached from, the equipment. The latter signs need not be included in the overall 50 square foot limitation on sign area.
 - (4) a. Each unified group of stores may have one freestanding sign of an area equal to ten square feet per 20 lineal feet of building frontage up to a maximum sign area of 200 square feet (400 square feet including both sides of signs). In addition, each individual store in such a group may have one projecting or hanging sign of three square feet extending no more than three feet from the wall of the building.
 - b. Each unified group of stores may have one additional freestanding sign. For unified groups of stores located on corners, the additional freestanding sign may be located on the side street or front street and the area shall be limited to 25 percent of the area of the main freestanding sign that faces the front street. For unified groups of stores that are not located on a corner, the aggregate size of two freestanding signs shall be limited to an area equal to ten square feet per 20 lineal feet of building frontage up to a maximum sign area of 200 square feet (400 square feet including both sides of signs).
 - c. Any business operating a motion picture theater or theaters within a unified group of stores, and having obtained an occupational license pursuant to section 11-19, as may be amended for operation of motion picture theaters shall be permitted an additional sign to those detailed in this section to display changeable copy. Each screening area must have an individual seating capacity of at least 100 people. The maximum total sign area permitted is 50 square feet (100 square feet, including both signs of sign). The changeable copy or readerboard section of the sign may contain the following information: Title of the movie(s), rating(s), and/or starting time(s) for each movie title.
 - d. A theater which operations cease or discontinue for a period of six consecutive months or longer shall be deemed no longer active pursuant to subsection 23-9(a).
 - (5) No sign shall extend more than 35 feet above grade. No signs shall be erected in the right-of-way, except official state, county or city signs erected by the respective governing agency. Buildings situated 15 feet or less from a right-of-way or property line may have one projecting or hanging sign of six square feet extending no more than three feet from the wall of the building. The bottom of the sign shall have a minimum eight-foot clearance above the walkway.
 - (6) Churches and civic organizations are permitted no more than two common signs with locations, size and design as agreed to by the city council for the purpose of identifying those churches and civic

organizations in the city. In addition, each church may erect one nonilluminated sign not more than three square feet in area adjacent to U.S. Highway 98 for the purpose of indicating direction to the church.

(Ord. No. 1-93, § 1, 2-13-93; Ord. No. 04-06, § 3, 4-3-06; Ord. No. 02-07, § 1, 3-19-07; Ord. No. 08-07, § 1, 7-16-07; Ord. No. 13-11, § 3, 9-20-11; Ord. No. 03-2021, § 2.C, 5-3-21)