

Article 9

SIGN STANDARDS

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SECTION 1 – PURPOSE

1. The purpose of this Article is to create a clear and uniform set of sign regulations to promote a positive city image with effective and visually pleasing signage. The goal is to strengthen the economic stability of Grand Prairie’s tax base and to avoid visual clutter, which is potentially harmful to automobile and pedestrian safety, property values, business opportunities, and community appearance. This article is also to ensure that the constitutionally guaranteed right to free speech is protected. Signs shall be regulated herein regardless of content or lack thereof. Sign faces without letters; pictures or words shall still be regulated as a sign.

SECTION 2 – OBJECTIVE

1. In addition to protecting the health, safety, welfare of the community, and the right to free speech, these standards are adopted in order to:
 - A. Recognize that most signs, by their nature, are designed and located to be seen by the driving public, and to ensure that they are sized, located, and otherwise regulated so as to maximize traffic safety and to enhance automobile and pedestrian safety;
 - B. Recognize that visual clutter leads to a decline in the community's appearance, a decline in property values, and a decline in the effectiveness of the signs;
 - C. Identify business, residential and public uses in a manner that produces aesthetic appeal to businesses and residents without creating confusion, unsightliness, or visual obscurity of adjacent business or other neighboring structures;
 - D. Encourage the integration of signs with the surrounding environment, including scale of development, landscaping, and building design;
 - E. Encourage a better aesthetic environment by enhancing the appearance of the City’s major corridors;
 - F. Develop and adopt policies to ensure that entrances are easily identifiable and minimize urban clutter;
2. These objectives and strategies are to be pursued in applying the specific standards of this Article. This Article is not intended to and does not restrict speech on the basis of its content, viewpoint, speaker, or message. Any classification of signs in this article that permits speech by reason of the type of sign, identity of the sign user, or otherwise, will also be interpreted to allow noncommercial speech on the sign. To the extent that any provision of this Chapter is ambiguous, the term will be interpreted not to regulate on the basis of the content or speaker of the message. Furthermore, the regulations herein are not intended to regulate religious or political speech or to impose restrictions on hand-held signs, or seasonal or religious decorations or symbols, nor are these regulations intended to restrict any legally-engaged first-amendment events or expressions.

SECTION 3 – APPLICABILITY

This Article applies to all advertising displays in the City.

1. The term "advertising displays" shall mean and include any letter, figure, character, mark, plane, point, marquee sign, design, poster, pictorial, picture, stroke, stripe, line, trademark, or reading material which shall be constructed, placed, attached, painted, erected, fastened, manufactured, or displayed in any manner whatsoever for the purpose of informing the public or for the purpose of advertising about the nature, type, or quality of goods, services, or activities available; or to advertise the name of any firm, corporation, business, or any other enterprise, or its nature, type or quality of goods, services, or activities; or to attract to or identify any of the aforementioned or by its nature, act to draw attention to a business. Every display shall be classified and shall conform to the requirements set forth in this Article.
2. Any change in use or external addition to an existing structure shall comply with this Article.
3. This Article shall not relate to building design, nor shall the Article regulate official traffic signs, gravestones, lighting, or displays of a seasonal or traditional nature which are not commercially-oriented, scoreboards on athletic fields, or any display or construction not defined herein as a sign.

SECTION 4 – ADMINISTRATION

1. PERMIT REQUIRED

Except as provided in this Article, no person shall erect, alter, renovate, or demolish any permanent sign or sign structure until a permit for such work has been issued by the City accordance with the requirements of all City codes. A permit is also required for any alteration to the copy face or lettering of any sign, other than EMCs or signs displaying gas prices.

2. PERMIT NOT REQUIRED

Signs listed Section 6 shall be exempt from sign permitting, but shall comply with other regulations contained in this Article or other law.

SECTION 5 - DEFINITIONS

1. **Abandoned Permanent Sign:** A sign permitted as a sign (other than a Temporary Sign or Billboard) and which is attached to a building or lease space which has become vacant, or a sign which sits on a lot or parcel having no building with a valid Certificate of Occupancy.
2. **Abandoned Temporary Sign:** A sign meeting the definition of Temporary Sign, which has been left in place for longer than 6 months.
3. **Animation/Full Motion:** Means a type of display achieved by the pre-recorded or live broadcast of messages, content or images appearing in fluid, continuous motion.

- 4. **Announcement/Directory/Bulletin Board Sign:** Signs not readily visible from a public street that provide public service information or any similar public interest information or related advertising for a general business located on the same premise.
- 5. **Attached Signs:**
 - A. **Balloon/Inflatable Device/Inflatable Character:** A non-porous, flexible envelope inflated with compressed, pressurized, or exhausted air through means of a device which exhausts air into the envelope, such as a fan or compressor, causing the envelope to expand. A Balloon or Inflatable shall not include or have attached to it any banner(s), attention-attracting device(s), or any other type of sign.
 - B. **Banner:** Signs made of flexible material that is firmly attached to a building at four or more points. An exception may be made to allow banners attached to permanent light poles or standards within parking lots or along drive aisles or dedicated streets, provided the pole or standard includes permanent mounting points that secure the banner on at least two sides.



Fig. 9-1
Allowed types of banners

- C. **Canopy Sign:** Signs that are structurally part of a canopy or the skin of a canopy.
- D. **Gasoline Pump Sign:** Signs not exceeding 12 square feet which are attached to gasoline pumps.
- E. **Gas Canister Rack Sign:** Signs not exceeding 12 square feet which are attached to vending racks or cages for fuel canisters.
- F. **Hanging Sign:** See “Projecting Sign”.
- G. **Mural:** An image or series of images or characters constituting artwork which is painted or affixed directly to a wall, ceiling, or window (See Section 8.10.)
- H. **Painted Sign:** Signs not meeting the definition of wall sign or mural that are painted directly to the exterior surface of a building.

- I. **Projecting Sign:** Signs with at least 8 feet of vertical clearance which are attached to any side of a building and which project outward or hang from the building or structure so that the main body or area of the sign is physically separate from the structure to which it is attached. Also includes “hanging signs” (See Section 8.5.)
 - J. **Roof Sign:** Signs placed above the prevailing horizontal plane of the parapet on a building with a flat roof, or the eaves of a pitched or mansard roof, as viewed from any elevation.
 - K. **Wall Sign:** Permanent signs constructed of a durable material such as metal, stone, acrylic, or other engineered product. Wall Signs are structurally attached to a building along a plane that is parallel to the building face to which it is attached. (See Section 8.2.)
 - L. **Window Sign:** Signs mounted, painted, or installed on a window pane or located within five feet of a window pane and facing toward the public outside of the building (See Section 8.9.)
6. **Attention Attracting Device:** Temporary, non-structural signs, objects, or devices which move, flicker, flap, flash, gyrate, or make noise through the utilization of air, wind, electrification, or other means, the primary function and purpose of which is to attract the attention of the public.

The following signs are examples of attention attracting devices:

- A. Air Dancers:



Fig. 9-2
Air Dancers

- B. Temporary Flags, including streamers, pendants, bow flags, pin flags, fin flags or similar devices, either tethered or attached to a permanent or temporary object or structure, or tethered to or placed upon or in the ground, earth, or pavement (does not include flags intended for residential or household use, or permanent flag pole):

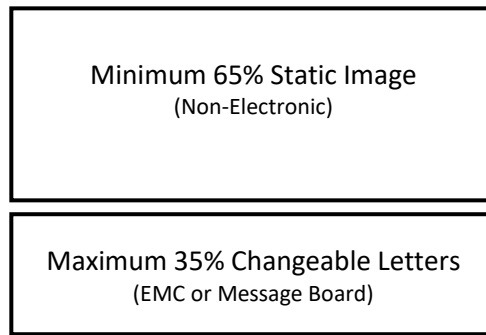


Fig. 9-3
Streamers



Fig. 9-4
Fin Flags

- C. Signs with a revolving beam, beacon of light and/or search lights.
 - D. Signs with a light resembling an emergency vehicle.
 - E. Signs resembling a traffic control signal, whether current traffic control signal or one of an older design.
 - F. Other signs or devices as determined by the Director or designee.
7. **Available Wall Area:** The continuous portion of a building between two terminating corners, not including doors/windows.
8. **Bandit or Snipe Sign:** Unauthorized signs posted on utility poles, street signs, traffic signals or signal supports, signal boxes, fences, barricades, trees, or other fixtures within the public right of way or public property. May also apply to signs on private property not meeting the definition of a Temporary Sign.
9. **Billboard:** A ground-mounted sign which exceeds the maximum height and size allowed for a monument sign, and which typically displays other characteristics not authorized by this code for permanent signage, including an exposed or wrapped support pole on which the sign structure is mounted, opaque vinyl or fabric copy, external lighting mounted to the sign structure, and a partially or fully exposed internal support structure behind or between the sign faces.
10. **Blinking:** Means a form of flashing where a pattern of sudden illumination changes occur with more than two (2) on-off cycles per second.
11. **Changeable Signs:**
- A. **Electronic Message Center (EMC):** A panel consisting of individual electronic elements such as Light Emitting Diodes (LED) which are stimulated by electricity to produce controlled light impulses to create a changeable message across a display area. The intention of this code is that an EMC will convey information in a static format with no movement or flashing that could potentially cause driver distraction. A maximum of 35% of a permitted monument sign face area is permitted for an EMC up to 50 square feet. *Electronic Message Center Signs maintained by the City of Grand Prairie are used for educational, informational, and public service messages and are therefore exempt from these regulations.*
 - B. **Message Board:** A panel consisting of a durable plastic or metal backing on which moveable characters may be arranged to create a message. A maximum of 35% of a permitted monument sign face area is permitted for a message board up to 50 square feet.
(See following page for diagram.)



- C. **Marquee Signs:** Any hood or awning of permanent construction projecting from the wall of a building or other structure. Any marquee sign submitted for private use must be submitted as a Unified Signage Plan.
 - D. **Parking Lot Kiosk Sign:** Signs that are installed with a permanent, dedicated cabinet structure within a parking lot, that do not exceed 16 feet in overall height with a minimum 84 inches of vertical clearance, that do not encroach into or beyond the striped boundary of any parking space or landscaping island, that are set back at least 300 feet from any public street right-of-way, and that display a changeable message not readily visible from any public street right-of-way.
 - E. **Sandwich Board:** A movable, non-illuminated sign with a self-supporting frame typically made of a lightweight material such as wood, plastic, or aluminum, having one or two faces displaying a message not readily visible from the traffic lanes of a public street.
 - F. **Shopping Cart Return Sign:** Signs not exceeding 12 square feet which are attached to shopping cart returns or corrals.
12. **Character:** Individual alphabet letter or numeral.
 13. **City:** The City of Grand Prairie
 14. **Cutout:** Additional square footage allowance added to the maximum area of a rectangular sign face to allow projections from the face. The maximum area for a cutout is 20% of the surface area.
 15. **Directional Signs:**
 - A. **Traffic Signs:** Official signs erected as required by government for public safety purposes.
 - B. **Drive Entrance/Exit Signs:** Non-illuminated signs not exceeding 30 inches in height placed on private property at entrance points or along internal circulation routes.

- C. **Pavement Markings:** Directional markers applied directly to pavement or driving surfaces on private property and typically meeting the standards of the most-recently adopted *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

- 16. **Dissolve:** Means a type of display transition between static message displays that is achieved with varying light intensity and where the first message gradually appears to dissipate and lose legibility simultaneous to the gradual appearance and legibility of the subsequent message.

- 17. **Entryway Sign:** A sign used to identify the entrance to a commercial or residential development or subdivision. (See Section 8.6.)

- 18. **Erection/Construction/Installation:** The process whereby a sign is put in place.

- 19. **Fade:** Means a type of display transition between static message displays that is achieved with varying light intensity and where the first message gradually loses light intensity to the point of not being legible and the subsequent message gradually increases intensity to the point of legibility.

- 20. **Flag (Permanent Pole):** Means a piece of cloth or similar material, typically rectangular or square, attachable along no more than one side at two or more points to a permanent flag pole by means of a durable rope or cord and providing a minimum of 8 feet of clearance from the ground to the lowest point of the flag while at rest. A permanent flag pole shall be attached to the ground by means of a permanent footing, or to the roof or sides of a building. (For flags designed to be attached on more than one edge, including changeable or seasonal flags mounted on light poles or standards, see “Banner.” For flags not mounted to permanent flag poles, see “Attention-Attracting Device.”)



Fig. 9-5 Flags on Permanent Poles

- 21. **Freestanding Signs (See Section 8.3 and Section 8.4):**
 - A. **Monument Sign:** Signs which stand directly on the ground and are freestanding, which means they are structurally independent from any building or structure, having no clear space for the full width of the sign between the bottom of the sign and the surface of the ground.

- B. **Pole/Pylon Sign:** A sign placed upon one or more individual poles for support. See also “Billboard”.



Fig. 9-6 Pole/Pylon Signs

- 22. **Height of Signs:** Height of signs shall be considered measured from the grade at the base of the sign to its maximum height including any devices or accoutrements such as solar panels, antennas, or lighting rods.
- 23. **Illegal Signs:** Signs erected without a permit, without property owner permission, or signs, whether permitted or unpermitted, erected in a district without meeting the minimum requirements of that district. See “Non-Conforming Signs (Illegal)”.
- 24. **Illuminated Sign:** Directly lighted by any artificial light source, internal or external.
- 25. **Immediate:** Means a type of display transition that is achieved by the instantaneous changing from one message, content and/or image to another.
- 26. **Kiosk Sign Plaza:** Sign structures featuring a developer ID Panel at the top of each structure and located within, or immediately adjacent to, a subdivision or neighborhood and used for the purpose of directing traffic to the location of individual homebuilder communities. (See Section 8.3.)

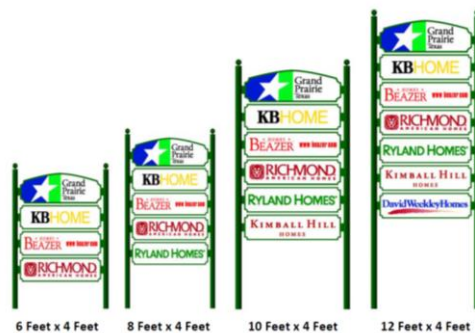


Fig. 9-7 Kiosk Sign Plaza

27. **Lease Space:** A portion of a multi-tenant building bounded by exterior walls and demised interior walls, including the ceiling.
28. **Licensee:** Means a person, persons, firm or corporation authorized by a license agreement to design, erect and maintain directional Sign Kiosk Plazas within the City.
29. **Moving Light:** Means the physical change in position of any visible illumination source while lighted or the simulation of movement achieved with a pattern of sequentially illuminating visible illumination sources within close proximity to each other.
30. **Multi-Sided Sign:** Signs mounted beyond a maximum allowable angle of 45 degrees to one another.
31. **Non-Conforming Signs (Legal):** Signs which were conforming to zoning codes in force at the time of construction but which do not comply with this Article.
32. **Non-Conforming Signs (Illegal):** Signs which were not conforming to codes in force at the time of construction and which do not comply with this Article. See “Illegal Signs”.
33. **Official Signs:** Signs erected or required by a governmental entity, more specifically defined in Section 6.
34. **Person:** An individual, firm, partnership, joint venture, association, corporation or any other group acting as an independent unit.
35. **Planning Director:** The Director of Development Services or designee.
36. **Prohibited Signs:** Signs not specifically allowed by this Unified Development Code or listed in Section 7 – Prohibited Signs.
37. **Scrolling:** Means a type of display during which the message, content and/or image is moved/shifted across the display area in a horizontal, vertical or diagonal motion (non-static).
38. **Searchlights:** Beacons of high-intensity light used to attract attention to a location.
39. **Signs (In General):** A visual representation of name, identification, symbol, message, description, display, or illustration which is printed, etched, routed, embossed, painted, written, or drawn upon a material or medium that is attached to or affixed to a building, structure, device, footing, or piece of land which directs attention to an object, product, place, area, organization, activity, institution, message, service, or business.
40. **Sign Area/Face:** Total possible display area of a sign, excluding open spaces or supports, unless they are designed to attract attention.

41. **Sign Locations:** Signs located along freeways or highways of limited access are to include those along Interstate Highway 20, Interstate Highway 30, State Highway 360 and State Highway 161. Signs located along highways not of limited access would include U.S. Highway 180, U.S. Highway 287 and State Highway 303 (Pioneer Parkway).
42. **Static:** Means a type of display during which a message, content and/or image display remains fixed and unchanging.
43. **Subdivision/Neighborhood Sign:** See: “Entryway Signs”.
44. **Temporary Signs:** A sign which is not a banner, attention-attracting device, or bandit sign, and which is intended to be used for a period of 6 months or less. Temporary signs have a solid, durable backing, are not illuminated, and are fastened into the ground such that the sign remains upright and does not deflect more than 3 degrees off of center in any direction. Temporary signs which are left standing longer than 6 months must be removed or modified so as to meet the standards of a permanent sign.
45. **Unified Signage Plan:** See Section 13 – Variances.
46. **Visibility Triangle, as defined by the City's Traffic Engineer or Department, or as “all of that portion of land lying within a triangular shaped area at each intersection of a public right-of-way within public right-of-way or curb cut within the City described by metes and bounds as follows:** Beginning at the precise corner of the intersection point of the curb of the street with the curb of a driveway or curb of another public right-of-way intersection forming each corner and extending thirty (30) feet along each such curb line from said curb intersection point, the third side being determined by the drawing of a straight line from the ends of each such thirty (30) foot extension (whether said land be privately owned or unpaved or untraveled street right-of-way property). Where no curbs are in existence at such intersections, said thirty (30) foot lines shall coincide with the central flow line of the ditch(es) paralleling such uncurbed street(s) as such central flow line shall be determined by the City Engineer.)”
47. **Whirling/Moving Signs:** Signs that are animated or physically revolve, move up, down, sideways or around.
48. **Wind-Driven Signs:** Any flag, spinner, pennant, streamer, hot air balloon or similar device that is intended to move freely in the wind.

SECTION 6 - ALLOWED SIGNS NOT NEEDING PERMITS

The following signs shall not require a permit and shall be subject to the following:

1. ***Official Signs***, signs erected or required by a governmental entity, including but not limited to:
 - A. Traffic control signs authorized by any governmental agency.
 - B. Signs, notices, placards, certificates and official papers, authorized or required by any statute, government agency, public school or court.
 - C. Public utility warning and underground line identification signs.
 - D. Signs or markers used by a Public Utility holding a franchise from the City of Grand Prairie.
 - E. Historical markers/commemorative plaques or cornerstones.
2. ***Temporary Signs***, shall meet the following regulations:
 - A. Temporary signs are not intended to be used as a substitute for permanent signage;
 - B. All temporary signs shall have a solid, durable backing, and shall be fastened into the ground such that the sign remains upright and does not deflect more than three (3) degrees off of center in any direction;
 - C. Temporary signs shall not be illuminated;
 - D. No temporary sign shall remain on a property for longer than six (6) months;
 - E. One temporary sign is allowed per property for each 300 feet of street frontage;
 - F. On properties of less than one (1) acre, the maximum size of a single temporary sign shall not exceed eight (8) square feet;
 - G. On properties one (1) acre in size or greater, the maximum size of a single temporary sign shall not exceed 32 square feet;
 - H. Signs exceeding eight (8) square feet, or not located along a street classified by the City as a local street, shall not have any reflective surface;
 - I. Prior to placing a temporary sign on a property, any existing temporary sign along the same street frontage shall first be removed if the placement of the new sign will cause the number of temporary signs to exceed the number allowed on the property;
 - J. Temporary signs shall be driven firmly into the ground to prevent theft and loss due to wind;
 - K. Temporary signs shall be placed on private property only with the consent of the property owner. Any signs placed within easements, public right-of-way, or private

property without permission of the owner, are subject to removal without compensation;

- L. An exception to these regulations may be made for temporary signage approved through a Special Event Permit;
 - M. The Chief Building Official or a Code Enforcement Officer is authorized to require the removal of a temporary sign if, in his or her reasonable judgement, the temporary sign is or has become dilapidated, obsolete, or is a nuisance to the public. Such decision of the Building Official or Code Enforcement Officer may be appealed to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, provided that the sign has not already been in place longer than six (6) months and that the affirmative decision of the Board to authorize the request will not authorize a temporary sign to remain in place longer than six (6) months and that the affirmative decision of the Board will not authorize a sign that is not otherwise authorized by this Article;
 - N. The regulations herein are not intended to regulate religious or political speech or to impose restrictions on hand-held signs, seasonal or religious decorations or symbols, or to restrict any legally-held first-amendment events or expressions.
3. Building Directory or Bulletin Board Signs intended for pedestrians, provided such are not readily visible from a public street right-of-way;
 4. Sandwich Board signs not exceeding five (5) feet in height, provided that no Sandwich Board sign is set more than 20 feet from a building entrance and that the minimum required sidewalk width is maintained;
 5. Signs applied directly to a roof or top of a building in such a way that the sign cannot be seen except from a height that is greater than the highest point of the building;
 6. Changing the message of an Electronic Message Center (EMC) sign or manual Message Board;
 7. Signs located inside a building, decals or unlit placards within windows or doors, provided such decals or placards are not readily visible from a dedicated street. For businesses or storefronts which are accessible only by foot, signs which impose a structural load or which require electrification shall comply with the Construction Chapter of the Grand Prairie Code of Ordinances even if they are not visible from a dedicated street;
 8. A sign within or on railway property and placed or maintained in reference to the operation of such railway;
 9. Underground utility warning signs and other safety signs, including flags placed in the ground for the purpose of marking underground utilities;
 10. Permanent Flags; However, the City may require a building permit for the support structure;
 11. Shopping Cart Return Signs.

SECTION 7 – PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following signs are specifically prohibited. Other signage not meeting these definitions may be prohibited as warranted, based on a case-by-case review.

1. SIGNS IN PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

Signs are prohibited in the public right-of-way except for the following:

- A. An official sign posted or required by a governmental authority, including EMCs and message boards.
- B. A sign approved by the City under a right-of-way use agreement.
- C. Signs on vehicles or trailers while lawfully in operation on public rights-of-way, which includes the street;
- D. Sandwich Board signs not exceeding five (5) feet in height, provided that no Sandwich Board sign is set more than 20 feet from a building entrance and that the minimum required sidewalk width is maintained.

2. ATTENTION-ATTRACTING DEVICES**3. POLE SIGNS**

New pole signs are prohibited. Existing legally-permitted pole signs which become vacant or abandoned may not be returned to use but shall be removed.

4. MULTI-SIDED SIGNS

This section shall not prohibit triangular or cube-type signs or multiple-sided signs that form a total enclosure of any geometric shape. The total square footage of all sides of such signs may not exceed the total square footage allowed.

5. BILLBOARDS

The construction of new billboards is prohibited within the City of Grand Prairie, though existing billboards may be converted to a digital face in accordance with Section 9.

6. BANDIT SIGNS**7. TEMPORARY FLAGS**

Flags not meeting the definition of Permanent Flag are Attention-Attracting Devices.

8. PORTABLE SIGNS

Portable signs which do not meet the definition of a temporary sign are prohibited with the following exceptions:

- A. Sandwich Board signs not exceeding five (5) feet in height, provided that no Sandwich Board sign is set more than 20 feet from a building entrance and that the minimum required sidewalk width is maintained.

B. Hand held signs or signs worn on the body.

C. Signage on a licensed vehicle or trailer.

9. WHIRLING SIGNS, MOVING SIGNS, WIND-DRIVEN SIGNS

With the exception of permanent flags, signs which are designed to move through mechanical, electrical, or wind-driven power are prohibited. This prohibition includes signs in which the whole sign moves or in which a portion of the sign moves.

10. REFLECTIVE SIGNS

Reflective signs are prohibited, with the exception of governmental or public safety signs or signs meeting the definition of Temporary Sign which are no larger than eight (8) square feet and are placed directly adjacent to any street designated by the City as a Local street.

11. BALLOONS, INFLATABLE DEVICES OR INFLATABLE CHARACTERS

EXCEPTION: These may be permitted no more than two times per tenant within 12 months for a period of ten days each, provided that the inflatable device:

1. Is not placed within any yard or setback required for the zoning district in which the inflatable device is placed, as provided in Article 6 of the Unified Development Code;
2. Does not project higher than 15 feet above the maximum height allowed in zoning district in which the inflatable device is placed, as provided in Article 6 of the Unified Development Code;
3. Does not occupy or otherwise render unusable any required parking space.
4. Does not incorporate any other feature defined as an Attention-Attracting Device.

12. ABANDONED/VACANT PERMANENT SIGNS

If the Chief Building Official shall determine any sign is illegal, unsafe or insecure, has been vacant or abandoned, or presents a hazard to the public in any way, he/she shall direct written notice to the owner, agent, or person having the beneficial use of the land, building, or structure upon which the sign is located. If, within 15 days, the sign is not repaired, made conforming, or removed, the Chief Building Official is hereby authorized to cause removal of such sign, and any expense incident hereto shall be paid by the permit applicant, owner of the land, building, or structure to which such sign is attached or upon which it is erected. The Chief Building Official may cause any sign, which is determined to be an immediate hazard to the general public, to be removed summarily and without notice. Any Permanent Sign on a vacant lot or parcel, other than a legally-permitted Billboard, is considered abandoned and shall be removed upon notice from the City.

13. PERMANENT SIGNS IN SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS (INCLUDING DUPLEX AND 2F DISTRICTS)

Excludes monument signs, entryway signs, and directional signs so long as such signs are placed on commonly owned and maintained property or within a dedicated easement.

14. ALL SIGNS NOT EXPRESSLY PERMITTED IN THIS ARTICLE

SECTION 8 – TYPES OF SIGNS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The following sign standards are intended to be comprehensive. Any interpretations of definitions or standards are at the sole discretion of the Planning Director or designee. The following standards will apply to all permitted sign types:

- A. A maximum of three (3) attached sign types are permitted per building or lease space, including wall sign, projecting sign, awning sign, canopy sign, hanging sign, roof sign, and marquee sign but not including ground signs, temporary signs, or window signs. For projecting signs which project from a corner of the building, 50% of the overall dimensions of the sign shall be counted against the signage allowance for each building face where the edges on each face form the corner from which the sign projects.
- B. To reduce sign clutter, use of individual types of signs shall be subject to the following limitations:
 - 1. The total number of wall signs, awning signs, hanging signs, or canopy signs along each building elevation shall be limited to three (3) per tenant, with building elevation defined as spanning from building corner to building corner;
 - 2. No more than one projecting sign or marquee sign shall be allowed per elevation spanning from building corner to building corner. A sign that projects from a building corner shall be counted as a projecting sign for each elevation which terminates at that corner;
 - 3. No more than one (1) roof sign shall be allowed per building and no more than two (2) roof signs shall be allowed per city block.
- C. Signs shall be kept in good repair and proper state of preservation.
- D. The cumulative size of attached signs shall not exceed a maximum of 15% of each building face, regardless of the type and number of attached signs.
- E. No attached sign, regardless of overall size, shall have a horizontal dimension that exceeds 75% of the width of the wall plane to which it is attached. The horizontal dimension is the distance between the furthest two horizontal points of a sign or any group of signs attached to a wall.
- F. Roof signs shall not exceed 15 feet in height or 25% of the building height, whichever is less.

- G. Window sign coverage is allowed at a maximum of 25% of building windows; excluding murals that are applied to the windows of an unoccupied building (see 8.2 Wall Signs - "Special Conditions".)
- H. Flashing, blinking or other attention attracting devices are not permitted. This also applies to signs/devices within five (5) feet of the inside face of a window or door.
- I. Permanent flags may be constructed in addition to monument signs allowed in this section, provided that no support structure for a permanent flag be constructed more than 15 feet higher than the maximum height for a building in the zoning district where the permanent flag is installed.
- J. Accent lighting shall not be considered a sign as long as the area of the lighting, together with the permitted signage, does not exceed 150% of the allowable signage area for each building elevation or wall.
- K. Where there is a conflict between a land use regulation and a structural regulation, or other conflict not otherwise addressed by this Article, the more restrictive will apply.
- L. Where the Code is silent or where the rules of this Code do not provide a basis for concluding that a sign is allowed, the sign in question will be prohibited.
- M. Signs shall be constructed in accordance with current building codes.
- N. This Article is not intended to and does not restrict speech on the basis of its content, viewpoint, speaker, or message. Any classification of signs in this Article that permits commercial speech by reason of the type of sign, identity of the sign user, or otherwise, will also be interpreted to allow noncommercial speech on the sign. To the extent that any provision of this Chapter is ambiguous, the term will be interpreted not to regulate on the basis of the content or speaker.
- O. If the Code enforcement Manager, Chief Building Official or designee determines any sign is illegal, unsafe, unsecured, vacant, abandoned, ill maintained or presents a hazard to the public in any way, he/she may provide written notice to correct any violations thereof to the owner, agent, or person having the beneficial use of the land, building, or structure upon which the sign is located. If the sign is not repaired, made compliant, or removed within the time period specified, then the city official is hereby authorized to take enforcement action as described in the Code of Ordinances Section 1-16. Furthermore, if the sign has not been made compliant, the sign may be brought to the Building Advisory and Appeals Board to cause removal of such sign, and any expense incident hereto shall be paid by the permit applicant, owner of the land, building, or structure to

which such sign is attached or upon which it is erected. If it is determined that the sign is an immediate hazard to the general public, the Chief Building Official may have the sign removed summarily and without notice.

8.2. WALL SIGNS

A. Description

Wall signs are permanent signs constructed of a durable material such as metal, stone, acrylic, or other engineered product. Wall signs are structurally attached to a building along a plane that is parallel to the building face to which the sign is attached.

Signs on windows, attached to windows, or viewed through windows are covered in section 8.9.

Figure 9-21: Acceptable



Figure 9-22: Not Acceptable



B. Street Type and Frontage	
Permitted on all street types.	
C. Sign Dimensions - Area	
Total wall area, max (%)	15% per wall
D. Sign Dimensions - Height	
Not to exceed height of structure	
E. Sign Dimensions - Width	
Associated tenant space, max (%)	75%
F. Number of Signs	
Signs per building max	NA
G. Setbacks and Spacing	
Setbacks	NA
H. Illumination	
Lighting may be: internal and external.	
I. Electronic Message Centers/Message Board	
EMCs and Message Boards are not allowed on a building face	

B. Special Conditions

1. Wall signs shall be constructed of a rigid, durable material such as metal or acrylic and shall be structurally mounted to face of a building.
2. Electrical componentry shall be concealed behind the sign or cabinet.
3. Multiple wall signs shall be permitted, provided that the cumulative area of all signs does not exceed the maximum permitted area and that the number of distinct attached sign types does not exceed three (3).
4. No wall sign, regardless of overall size, shall cover an area that exceeds 75% of the width of a single wall plane.
5. All wall sign installations shall preserve a clear area between the extreme edge of the sign and any terminating building corner, or between the extreme edge of the sign and the boundary of any demised space. The total clear area shall be equal to a minimum of 25% of the width of the wall or the demised space, whichever is less.



6. The distance between the inner edge of a wall sign and the outer face of the wall to which it is attached shall not exceed 18 inches.
7. Murals may be allowed only in the Central Area (CA) zoning district under the conditions described in Section 8.10.
8. For multi-family apartment buildings, a maximum of two wall signs shall be permitted per street front, provided that they are separated by a minimum

of 500 feet. Additionally, the maximum area of each wall sign shall not exceed 100 square feet.

9. Wall signs for internal lease spaces without external wall are permissible as long as the total area of wall signs for all lease spaces does not exceed 15% of the wall plane to which the signs are attached.

C. Banner Signs:

1. One banner sign is allowed per business or other establishment (i.e. churches, schools, etc.) in a non-residential zoning district as a temporary use for a maximum of 30 days, No more than two (2) permits shall be issued per year for each business location. The issuance of the second permit shall not occur until the first permit has been expired for at least 30 days. Banner signs advertising seasonal activities for churches, schools or non-profit organizations shall be allowed for a time period less than 30 days any time during a year provided that such banner signs are not displayed for more than a total of 60 days per calendar year. Such signs shall be firmly affixed to the main building on the site, and may not be strung between temporary poles, hung from a fence or otherwise detached from the main building on the site. Such banner signs must obtain a sign registration permit prior to placement. The sign registration permit from Code Enforcement shall be affixed to the banner (no fee).
2. The maximum size of a banner sign shall not exceed sixty (60) square feet.
3. Torn, frayed and faded banner signs shall be removed. Replacement banners will require a sign registration permit prior to placement.
4. Banner signs are allowed only in Multi-Family, Commercial, General Retail, and Industrial Zoning Districts.

8.3. SINGLE-TENANT MONUMENT SIGNS

A. Description

Single-Tenant Monument Signs stand directly on the ground and are freestanding, which means they are structurally independent from any building or structure, having no clear space for the full width of the sign between the bottom of the sign and the surface of the ground.

A maximum of one tenant may be included on a single sign structure. *(See 8.4 Multi-Tenant Monument Signs if two or more tenant panels are planned on a single sign structure.)*

Single-Tenant Monument Signs shall include the address block where the sign is situated, but the space required for the address block is not included in the sign dimension calculation.



Figure 9-32: Not Acceptable



B. Street Type and Frontage

Permitted on all street types.

C. Sign Dimensions - Area

Freeways and Arterial Streets	Area, max. (s.f.)
0-299 ft linear street frontage	50
300 + ft linear street frontage	100
Other Streets – Area, max. (s.f.)	
0-299 ft linear street frontage	35
300-499 ft linear street frontage	50
500 + ft linear street frontage	100

D. Sign Dimensions - Height

Height, max. (ft)	8
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E. Sign Dimensions - Width

Width, max. (ft)	15
------------------	----

F. Number of Signs Per Street Frontage

0-399 ft linear street frontage, max	1
400 + ft linear street frontage, max	2

G. Illumination

Lighting may be internal or external.

H. Electronic Message Centers/Message Boards

See Special Conditions

B. Special Conditions

1. An Electronic Message Board or Message Center may be incorporated up to 35% of the sign area on each side of the sign, but shall not exceed 50 square feet in size on either side of the sign.
2. One Single-Tenant Monument Sign shall be permitted per lot, per street front, provided there are no pole signs on the lot. Two ground signs may be permitted along a single street frontage of 400 or more linear feet. The total area of both signs shall not exceed the maximum sign area permitted if a single sign were erected. The minimum separation between signs shall be at least 150 feet.
3. Single-Tenant Monument Signs shall be landscaped at the base of the sign in accordance with the following:
 - A. The landscaped area shall extend a minimum of three feet from the sign base on all sides; and
 - B. The minimum number of plants, including perennial flowers, shrubs, or native grasses shall be a minimum of 12 inches, number 10 per 50 square feet of required landscaped area and shall comply with the Landscaping and Screening Standards of Article 8 of the Unified Development Code.
4. The support structure shall be clad in materials that are similar to the materials of the primary building or buildings.
 - A. Concealment of the sign structure along with a minimum of 50% of the sign cabinet is required using masonry cladding, which shall consist of brick, stone, cast stone, cultured stone, rock, exterior portland cement plaster (stucco) with 3 coats over metal lath or wire fabric lath, or fiber cement siding. The masonry material shall be of similar appearance to the primary structure or structures on the same property. The masonry material shall extend a minimum of 3 inches from the edge of the sign face.
 - B. The following shall not be used on the exterior of a Single-Tenant Monument sign: unfinished metal, painted metal that is worn, chipped, faded, or damaged, PVC, EIFS, wood (other than engineered woods that have been approved for use on the primary building), or any material that would otherwise be prohibited in the Unified Development Code for use on a primary building.
5. **Directional Signs:** No more than two directional signs not exceeding 30 inches in height are allowed to be placed at entrance points or along internal

circulation routes. Directional signs require a building permit, shall not be illuminated, shall not be located within an easement or right-of-way, and shall be constructed with materials similar to those used for primary signage on the site or, if there are no uniform materials used for signs on the site, with materials similar to those required for the primary structure. This definition does not include directional markers applied directly to pavement or driving surfaces.

- 6. ***Kiosk Sign Plazas:*** New Kiosk Sign Plazas shall only be permitted upon approval and execution of a services contract between the City and the entity wishing to erect the sign or signs. The contract shall detail the terms of the design, installation, and maintenance of the signs, which shall generally conform to the design and dimensions seen below. The final terms of the contract, locations and appearance of the signs are subject to approval by City Council.

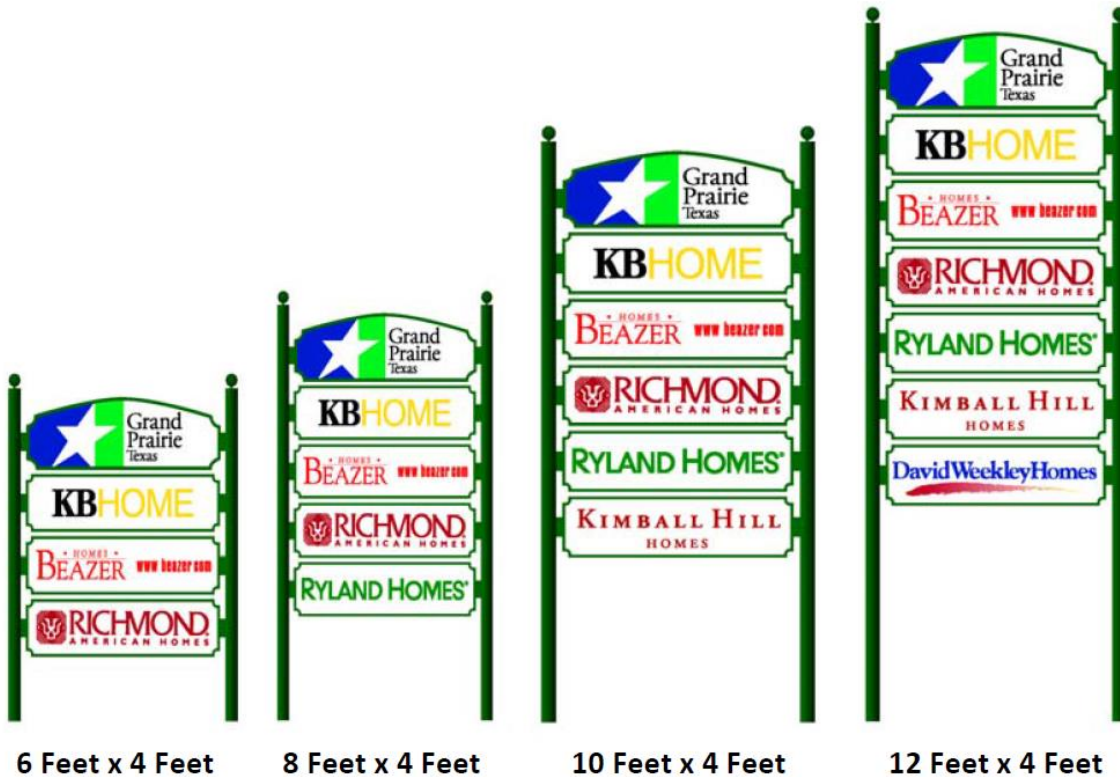


Figure 9-33: Kiosk Sign Plaza Acceptable Design and Dimensions

8.4. MULTI-TENANT MONUMENT SIGNS

A. Description

Multi-Tenant Monument Signs stand directly on the ground and are freestanding, which means they are structurally independent from any building or structure, having no clear space for the full width of the sign between the bottom of the sign and the surface of the ground.

Two or more tenants may be included on a single sign structure. The development as a whole shall not be considered a tenant.

Multi-Tenant Monument Signs must include the address block where the sign is situated, but the space required for the address block is not included in the sign dimension calculation.

Figure 9-41: Acceptable As To Design



Figure 9-42: Not Acceptable



B. Street Type and Frontage

Permitted on all street types EXCEPT local streets

C. Sign Dimensions - Area

Freeways and Arterial Streets – Area, max. (s.f.)

0-299 ft linear street frontage 100

300+ ft linear street frontage 200

Collector Streets – Area, max. (s.f.)

0-299 ft linear street frontage 75

300 + ft linear street frontage 100

D. Sign Dimensions - Height

Freeways and Arterials – max.(ft) 25

Collector – max. (ft) 15

E. Sign Dimensions - Width

All Street Types – max. (ft) 15

F. Number of Signs Per Street Frontage

0-399 ft linear street frontage, max. 1

400 + ft linear street frontage, max. 2

G. Setbacks and Spacing

Setback: 1 foot for each foot of height

H. Illumination

Lighting may be internal or external.

I. Electronic Message Centers/Message Boards

EMCs and Message Boards are not allowed

B. Special Conditions

1. One Multi-Tenant Monument Sign shall be permitted per lot, per street front, provided there are no other freestanding signs on the lot.
2. Two Multi-Tenant Monument Signs may be permitted along a single street frontage of 400 or more linear feet. The minimum separation between signs shall be at least 200 feet.
3. A Multi-Tenant Monument Sign shall not occupy the same platted lot as a Single-Tenant Monument Sign, unless the lot has multiple street frontages, in which case a Single-Tenant Monument Sign may be permitted on each additional street frontage.
4. The tenant panels shall be designed in accordance with the following:
 - A. The minimum area of each tenant panel shall be 8 square feet;
 - B. Panel design and material shall be consistent across all tenant panels;
 - C. Tenant panels shall not be constructed of unfinished wood, opaque vinyl, metal, paper, fabric, or corrugated plastic;
 - D. Vacant tenant panels or damaged panels which expose the interior of the sign shall be prohibited and must be repaired in a timely manner.
5. All Multi-Tenant Monument Signs require an address block. If there is more than one street number, the number range and street name shall be shown.
6. The support structure shall be clad in materials that are similar to the materials of the primary building or buildings.
 - A. Concealment of the sign structure along with a minimum of 100% of the sign cabinet is required using masonry cladding, which shall consist of brick, stone, cast stone, cultured stone, rock, exterior portland cement plaster (stucco) with 3 coats over metal lath or wire fabric lath, or fiber cement siding. The masonry material shall be of similar appearance to the primary structure or structures on the same property. The masonry material shall extend a minimum of 3 inches from the edge of the sign face.
 - B. The following shall not be used on the exterior of a Single-Tenant Monument sign: unfinished metal, painted metal that is worn, chipped, faded, or damaged, PVC, EIFS, wood (other than engineered woods that have been approved for use on the primary building), or any material that would otherwise be prohibited in the Unified Development Code for use on a primary building.

7. Multi-Tenant Monument Signs shall be landscaped at the base of the sign in accordance with the following:
 - A. The landscaped area shall extend a minimum of three feet from the sign base on all sides; and
 - B. The minimum number of plants, including perennial flowers, shrubs, or native grasses shall be a minimum of twelve (12) inches in height, shall number twenty (20) plants per fifty (50) square feet of required landscaped area, and shall comply with the Landscaping and Screening Standards of Article 8 of the Unified Development Code.

8.5. PROJECTING SIGNS

A. Description

Projecting Signs are generally attached perpendicular to the face of the building and extending outward.

Figure 9-51: Acceptable



Figure 9-52: Not Acceptable



B. Street Type and Frontage

Permitted on all street types except local streets.

C. Sign Dimensions - Area

Area, max. (s.f.)	36 sq ft per floor
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D. Sign Dimensions - Height

If attached to a single story building, the height of the top edge of the signboard shall not exceed the height of the wall from which the sign projects

If attached to a multi-story building, the height of the top edge of the sign board shall not exceed the height of the sill or bottom of any second story window.

E. Sign Dimensions - Width

All Street Types, max. (ft)	3
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F. Number of Signs

Signs per street front, max.	1
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G. Setbacks and Spacing

Setbacks	NA
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Vertical Clearance	8
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From grade min. (ft)	9
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If projecting over drive aisles; from grade, min. (ft)	14
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H. Illumination

Lighting may be internal only.

I. Electronic Message Centers/Message Boards

EMCs and Message Boards are not allowed

B. Special Conditions

1. Projecting sign support structures must be constructed of metal.
2. The depth of the sign cabinet shall not exceed six inches.
3. The maximum distance from the wall to the outer edge of the sign shall be four feet.
4. The maximum distance between the wall and the inner edge of the sign shall be 18 inches.
5. The sign may not project over the public right-of-way unless approval is granted through an easement or right of way use agreement.
6. All projecting signs shall be double-sided. Only one side of the sign shall count against the sign allowance for a building elevation, except in the case of signs projecting from corners.

8.6 ENTRYWAY SIGNS

A. Description

An entryway sign identifies the entryway to a commercial development, single-family or multi-family subdivision and serves to provide an identity for the community. These signs do not provide for changeable tenant panels, Electronic Message Boards, or Message Centers (see Section 8.3 “Single-Tenant Monument” and Section 8.4 “Multi-Tenant Monument”).

Figure 9-61: Acceptable



B. Street Type and Frontage

Permitted on all street types

C. Sign Dimensions - Area

Area, max. (s.f.) 50

D. Sign Dimensions - Height

Height, max. (ft) 8

E. Sign Dimensions - Width

Width, max. (ft) NA

F. Number of Signs

Per entry, max. 2

G. Setbacks and Spacing

May be placed on either or both sides of a street providing direct access to a subdivision.

H. Illumination

Lighting may be internal or external.

I. Electronic Message Centers/Message Boards

EMCs and Message Boards are not allowed

J. Additional Standards

1. Permitted only on platted lots in C, Commercial, GR, General Retail, LI, Light Industrial, and residential zoning districts.
2. Allowed on commercial developments of more than 10 acres.
3. Commercial entryway signs are allowed in addition to the allowed number of freestanding signs.
4. Entryway signs shall be landscaped at the base of the sign in accordance with the following:
 - a. The landscaping shall extend a minimum of three feet from the sign base.
 - b. The minimum number of plants shall be 10 per 50 square feet of the landscaped area. All plants, ornamental grasses, groundcovers, and vines shall be species identified on the plant list approved by the Director or his designee.

8.7 AWNING SIGNS

A. Description

An awning is generally a lightweight frame structure over which a covering is attached.

Figure 9-71: Acceptable



Figure 9-72: Not Acceptable



B. Street Type and Frontage

Permitted on all street types.

C. Sign Dimensions - Area

Sign Area, max. (s.f.) 16

D. Sign Dimensions - Height

Height, max. (ft) NA

E. Sign Dimensions - Width

Copy on awnings shall be limited to 75 percent of the awning width.

F. Number of Signs

Signs per building face, max. NA

G. Setbacks and Spacing

Setbacks NA

H. Illumination

None

I. Electronic Message Centers/Message Boards

EMCs and Message Boards are not allowed

J. Additional Standards

1. Vertical clearance of nine feet above grade from the bottom of the awning is required.
2. Awnings must be professionally constructed. The use of vinyl as a material is not permitted.
3. Sign shall consist of individual lettering or graphics applied directly to the surface of the awning.
4. Awning signs are permitted only on the first floor of the building.
5. Lettering and graphic is permitted on the front and side vertical panels only.
6. The maximum sign area is not to exceed 20 square feet.

8.8 CANOPY SIGNS

A. Description

Canopy signs may be used on freestanding canopies or canopies attached to buildings. Signs on the fascia will meet the same standards as Canopy Signs.

Figure 9-81: Acceptable – Primary Sign (on top of canopy)



Figure 9-82: Acceptable – Used in Combination with Wall Sign (on the fascia of canopy)



B. Street Type and Frontage

Permitted on all street types.

C. Sign Dimensions - Area

Area, max. (s.f.) 35

D. Sign Dimensions - Height

Height, max. (ft) 3

E. Sign Dimensions - Width

Width, max. (ft) NA

Copy on drive-through canopies shall be limited to 75 percent of the canopy width.

F. Number of Signs

Signs per tenant building face, max. 1

G. Setbacks and Spacing

Setbacks NA

H. Illumination

External illumination is not allowed

I. Electronic Message Centers/Message Boards

EMCs and Message Boards are not allowed

J. Additional Standards

1. Vertical clearance of nine feet above grade from the bottom of the canopy is required.
2. The area of canopy signs shall be counted towards the maximum wall sign area allowed for that elevation.
3. Individual letters or graphics may be internally illuminated, glow with a halo-illumination effect, or glow through the front faces.
4. Flashing lights, or exposed raceways, conduits, or transformers are prohibited.
5. Shall not extend above the second floor ceiling or the top of the roof, whichever is less.
6. Shall consist only of letters and/or geometric designs and not constructed as part of a sign can or cabinet.
7. Signage on freestanding canopies shall count against the signage allowance for the primary building face that most closely parallels the side of the canopy for which the sign is intended.

8.9 WINDOW SIGNS

A. Description

A window sign is generally affixed to a window for the purpose of being viewed from the exterior of a building.

Figure 9-91: Acceptable



Figure 9-92: Not Acceptable



Figure 9-93: Window Area Calculation



B. Street Type and Frontage	
Permitted on all street types except local streets.	
C. Sign Dimensions - Area	
Area, max. (% of total window area)	25
D. Sign Dimensions - Height	
Height, max. (ft)	NA
E. Sign Dimensions - Width	
Width, max. (ft)	NA
F. Number of Signs	
Only one window sign per tenant, per elevation is allowed.	
G. Setbacks and Spacing	
Setbacks	NA
H. Illumination	
Not allowed	
I. Electronic Message Centers/Message Boards	
EMCs shall meet the specification and performance criteria for freestanding EMCs	
J. Additional Standards	
1. Window signs should not obscure the visibility into a tenant space. Every effort shall be made to integrate window signs with store window displays.	
2. Flashing, scrolling, or moving signs that are readily visible from the public right of way are not permitted.	
3. No fluorescent colors or reflective material shall be used for window signs.	
4. Window signs are only permitted on the first story of the building.	
5. Mannequins and storefront displays of merchandise sold are not considered window signs.	

8.10 WALL MURALS

A. Description

An image or series of images or characters constituting artwork which is painted or affixed directly to a wall, ceiling, or window

Murals are permitted subject to the following conditions:

- A. Window murals are allowed to cover up to 100 percent of windows on an unoccupied building or lease space, provided the mural is removed prior to 12 months from the date of completion or prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the building or lease space on which the mural is installed. An extension may be granted by the Planning Director or designee if the mural is in good repair and a building permit has been issued for the building or lease space on which the mural is installed.
- B. Wall murals are allowed up to 100 percent of the wall area, not exceeding a height of 40 feet above grade.
- C. Lighting of a mural shall be external only.
- D. Only one wall mural per building is allowed in the CA, Central Area zoning district, subject to approval by the City of Grand Prairie and subject to the Texas Department of Transportation if the building has frontage on or if the wall is visible from Texas Highway 180 (Main St.)
- E. Murals outside the CA, Central Area zoning district are allowed only if approved by City Council.

B. Special Conditions

- A. Murals shall be applied with a weather-resistant substance that can be easily removed, peeled or scraped off.
- B. Should the mural become faded, peeled, illegible, or severely weathered in the opinion of the Planning Director or his designee, the owner, or the person or firm maintaining the same, shall, upon written notice, repair or remove the mural or repaint the wall on which mural is painted within 60 days, subject to the Visual Artists Rights Act.

8.11 DRIVE-THRU/WALK-UP SIGNS

A. Description

A sign displaying the restaurant menu, generally located adjacent to a drive aisle for a drive-through window. For each three (3) square feet of sign, freestanding drive-thru signs shall provide one plant a minimum of three (3) gallons in size within three (3) feet of its base.

Figure 9-111: Acceptable – Drive-through



Figure 9-112: Acceptable – Pedestrian-Oriented



B. Street Type and Frontage	
Permitted on all street types	
C. Sign Dimensions - Area	
Area, max. (s.f.)	36
D. Sign Dimensions - Height	
Height, max. (ft)	8
E. Sign Dimensions - Width	
Width, max. (ft)	NA
F. Number of Signs	
Max.	3
G. Setbacks and Spacing	
Setbacks (ft)	10
H. Illumination	
Lighting may be internal or external.	
I. Electronic Message Centers	
EMCs are not allowed unless they are shielded from the public Right of Way	
J. Additional Standards	
Restaurants and cafes shall be permitted three wall-mounted displays or freestanding display boards per business featuring the actual menu as used at the dining table, to be contained within a shallow case, and clearly visible through a glass front. The display case shall be attached to the building wall next to the main entrance, or freestanding, as long as it does not block pedestrian movement.	

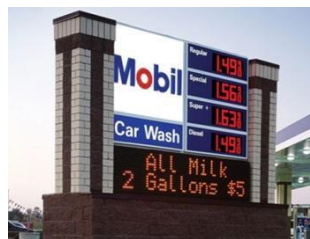
8.12 GASOLINE PRICE SIGNS

A. Description

Monument Signs, Canopy Signs, and Wall Signs used in part or in whole as Gasoline Price Signs shall be subject to the following:

- A. Gasoline Price Signs may be incorporated into Monument Signs, provided the maximum area and height for a Monument Sign is not exceeded.
- B. Gasoline Price Signs may be incorporated into Wall Signs, provided the maximum area and height for a Wall Sign is not exceeded.
- C. Gasoline Price Signs may be incorporated into Canopy Signs, provided the maximum height and area for a Wall Sign along the building face most parallel to the edge of the canopy on which the Gasoline Price Sign is attached is not exceeded.
- D. Along local streets, gasoline prices may be incorporated into a wall sign provided the area used for advertising gasoline prices does not exceed 20 square feet per street front.
- E. The posting of gasoline prices by digital means is not considered an Electronic Message Center.
- F. The use of gasoline pumps for static or video messaging are not signs for the purpose of this section, provided the signage or video display is not readily visible from a public right of way.
- G. Electronic Message Centers and Message Boards meeting the same conditions for approval on a Single-Tenant Monument sign are permissible.

Figure 9-121: Acceptable



Ground Sign with EMC and Gasoline Price

Figure 9-122: Not Acceptable



SECTION 9 – DIGITAL BILLBOARDS AND SIGNS

An existing legal non-conforming off-premise billboard sign may be converted to a digital billboard sign under the following conditions:

1. Display Standards:
 - A. Static display time interval: Eight (8) seconds minimum
 - B. Transition display time interval: One (1) second maximum
 - C. No display shall include animation/full motion, blinking, flashing, dissolving, fading, moving light and/or scrolling messages, content and/or images, nor shall it project a static image upon a stationary object.
 - D. Transitions between the display of a message, content and/or image shall be immediate only and shall occur simultaneously on the entire display area.
 - E. The display of message, content and/or image shall be visible only from one direction of traffic travel per sign. This provision shall not preclude the conversion of existing billboards with two sign faces that have been designed to be viewed in opposite directions of travel, provided each face would read to only one direction of travel.
 - F. No portion of a digital billboard shall project into a dedicated utility easement or be closer than five (5) feet to a right-of-way (row) line.
 - G. A minimum linear spacing of one-thousand five-hundred (1,500) feet shall be required between one digital billboard and any other digital billboard on the same side of the roadway.
 - H. A digital billboard shall incorporate systems/devices that will automatically freeze (remain static) a single message, content and/or image on the display should a billboard malfunction or be damaged.
 - I. A digital billboard shall incorporate systems/devices necessary to automatically adjust the brightness/intensity of the display according to ambient (natural or otherwise) light conditions.
 - J. The owner of a digital billboard shall coordinate with the City to display emergency information critical to the traveling public, such as AMBER ALERTS from a National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) authorized source, and other alerts involving terrorist attacks, natural disasters. Emergency messages are to remain in the display's rotation according to the designated issuing agency's protocols.
 - K. If the City determines that a digital billboard causes glare or otherwise impairs the vision of the driver of a motor vehicle or otherwise interferes with the operation of a motor vehicle, the owner of the digital billboard, within twelve (12) hours of a request by the City, shall reduce the intensity of the display to a level specified by this Code, or to an alternative setting that satisfactorily mitigates the specific impairment to the driver as determined by the City.

- L. The owner of a digital billboard shall provide the City contact information for a person who is available to be contacted at any time and who is able to turn off the display promptly should a billboard malfunction or damage occur. Such contact information shall be resubmitted to the City every six (6) months.
- M. The illumination intensity of the display of a digital billboard shall not exceed 0.3-foot candles above ambient light conditions.
- N. A digital billboard or its message, content and/or image shall not be configured to resemble a warning or danger signal or cause a driver to mistake the digital billboard or its message, content and/or image for a warning or danger signal.
- O. A digital billboard or its message, content and/or image shall not resemble or simulate any lights or official signage used to control traffic in accordance with the currently adopted edition of the TXDOT Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- P. A newly constructed digital billboard shall not:
 - a. Exceed 672 square feet in total display area.
 - b. Exceed 50 feet in height above grade at the centerline of the main traveled way closest to the structure.
 - c. Be located within 200 feet of a residential zoning line. Measurement is linear on the same side of the roadway.
 - d. Be located within 500 feet of the point of intersection of a limited access thoroughfare interchange.
 - e. Be located within 1,500 feet of a park or playground.
 - f. Be provided electrical service via overhead utility lines.
- Q. Two (2) square feet of existing conventional billboard display shall be removed within the city limits and the city's extraterritorial jurisdiction by an owner for each one (1) square foot of digital billboard display area, either newly constructed or installed as a modification and/or conversion of an existing conventional billboard, requested by the owner. The two (2) square feet removed must be from physically completed conventional billboards with complete sign faces. No partially erected/completed signs may be used to qualify for the requirement.

Example: On a legally permitted structure of one of the faces measuring 672 square feet. The owner of this structure would have to do the following to convert this face from a conventional to a digital:

- a. Surrender the use of the existing conventional face.
- b. Take down an additional 672 sq. ft. of conventional billboard face within the city limits or ETJ.

- c. The additional 672 sq. ft. can be accumulated by the surrendering of smaller face sizes with less square footage as long as the aggregate amount of total conventional face square footage surrendered, including the existing structure, is twice the digital square footage applied for.
 - d. The owner may choose which specific billboards will be removed within the City in exchange for the modification/conversion of an existing conventional billboard to a digital billboard.
- R. A document certifying compliance with the requirements of this ordinance, based upon an inspection of the billboards at the owner's expense, must be submitted annually to the City by the owners of digital billboards within the City.
- S. When an existing legal non-conforming off-premise advertising billboard sign is converted to a digital billboard sign, the converted digital billboard sign location shall retain its legal non-conforming status as an off-premise advertising billboard sign.
- T. The conversion of existing legal non-conforming off-premise advertising billboard signs to digital billboards, or the construction and operation of new digital billboard signs, shall only be allowed on lots with frontage on the below limited access thoroughfares located within the City limits and the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction.
 - a. Interstate Highway 20
 - b. Interstate Highway 30
 - c. State Highway 360
 - d. U.S. Highway 287
- U. A digital billboard shall not be permitted either by conversion or new construction to occur on a roadway classified as a local thoroughfare as specified by the City Master Transportation Plan.
- V. A digital billboard shall not be permitted either by conversion or new construction to occur on a roadway classified as a collector thoroughfare as specified by the City Master Transportation Plan.
- W. All requests for permits for either the conversion of an existing conventional billboard to a digital billboard or the construction of a new digital billboard shall be processed in the following sequential manner:
 - a. If the applicant satisfies the requirements of this Section, the City will issue a preliminary permit granting permission for the digital billboard, subject to the granting of a permit by the Texas Department of Transportation, where applicable.
 - b. The applicant shall obtain a permit from the Texas Department of Transportation allowing the requested new construction or conversion; and shall present a true copy of that permit to the City, not later than 12 months following the issuance of the preliminary permit. The preliminary permit shall

expire 12 months after its issuance, without further action from the City, if no final sign permit has been issued in that time.

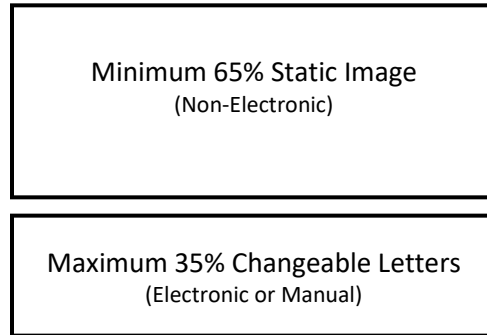
- c. If the applicant and the Texas Department of Transportation permit satisfy the requirements of this Section, the City shall issue a final sign permit for the digital billboard.

2. The following section pertains to digital signs, otherwise known as Electronic Message Centers, or EMCs, that are incorporated into monument signs;

- A. All EMCs shall conform to the display standards set forth in Section 9.
- B. No EMC shall project into a dedicated utility easement or be closer than five (5) feet to a right-of-way line.
- C. An EMC shall incorporate systems/devices that will automatically freeze (remain static) a single message, content and/or image on the display should a digital sign malfunction or be damaged.
- D. An EMC shall incorporate systems/devices necessary to automatically adjust the brightness/intensity of the display according to ambient (natural or otherwise) light conditions.
- E. If the City determines that a digital sign causes glare or otherwise impairs the vision of the driver of a motor vehicle or otherwise interferes with the operation of a motor vehicle, the owner of the digital sign within twelve (12) hours of a request by the City, shall reduce the intensity of the display to a level acceptable to the City.
- F. An EMC shall not be permitted either by conversion or new construction to occur on a roadway classified as a collector as determined by the City.
- G. An EMC shall not be permitted either by conversion or new construction to occur on a roadway classified as a local as determined by the City.
- H. An EMC or its message, content and/or image shall not be configured to resemble a warning or danger signal or cause a driver to mistake the digital sign or its message, content and/or image for a warning or danger signal.
- I. An EMC or its message, content and/or image shall not resemble or simulate any lights or official signage used to control traffic in accordance with the currently adopted edition of the TXDOT Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- J. A new EMC shall not:
 - a. Be located within 200 feet of a residential zoning line.
 - b. Be located within 1,500 feet of a park, playground or other public open space locations at the discretion of the City.
 - c. Be provided electrical service via overhead utility lines.

- K. EMCs shall be permitted for monument signs that are on commercially zoned parcels and are in conformance with **Section 9** of Article 9, Sign Standards. A maximum of 35% of the overall sign face area shall be permitted for an electronic, digital image, up to 50 square feet. A minimum of 100 feet of linear frontage along a street right-of-way is required for a digital monument or multi-tenant sign.

- L. EMC conversions shall not be permitted. A maximum of 35% of the overall sign face area shall be permitted for an electronic, digital image, up to 50 square feet.



Digital Sign diagram (Not to scale)

SECTION 10 - REGISTRATION OF SIGN OPERATORS**1. Sign Operators - Registration:**

No operator shall engage in the business of erecting, installing, servicing or maintaining signs for rental or leasing purposes until such person shall have registered with the Chief Building Official for registration to conduct such business and shall deposit with the Department of Building Inspection an annual license fee.

2. Registration Non-Transferable:

No registration shall be transferable and no holder of any license issued under this Article shall allow his name or his company's name to be used by any other party, either for the purpose of doing work or obtaining a permit, under the penalty of forfeiting his license in addition to any fine levied. The Chief Building Official or his representative is authorized to refuse to issue permits to the holder of any registration violating this provision.

3. Expiration and Renewal of Registration:

All registrations shall be for the calendar year and shall expire at midnight on the 31st day of December and shall be renewed upon application of the holder, and payment of the required fee, where such is required, at any time within thirty (30) days before the date of such expiration, unless such registration has been revoked or canceled for cause as provided in this ordinance.

4. Revocation of Registration:

The Chief Building Official may revoke any registration granted under the provisions of this Article, if the holder of such registration violates any provision of this Chapter. When a registration is revoked a new registration shall not be granted to the same person or company for a period of at least thirty (30) days.

5. Registration Required to Obtain a Permit for Sign:

No permit for the erection or alteration of a sign shall be issued to any person unless such person is registered as provided in this Article. It shall be unlawful for the holder of a registration to apply for, procure, or obtain any sign permit on behalf of other persons who are not so registered.

SECTION 11 - PERMIT ISSUED ON CONDITION THAT IT MAY BE WITHDRAWN

All permits for the erection or alternation of any sign over any sidewalk, alley, or other public property shall be subject to cancellation at any time. If such permit is canceled, the owner thereof shall remove it immediately.

SECTION 12- DISPOSITION OF RECOVERIES

All sums collected as provided within this Article shall be paid into the treasury of the City as directed by the City.

SECTION 13 - VARIANCES TO SIGN ORDINANCE

1. Variances to this ordinance may be considered in two ways: (1) Through a Unified Signage Plan, or (2) through an individual variance request. A Unified Signage Plan shall be considered in accordance with the following:
 - a. If the request involves signage to be constructed for new development or redevelopment requiring approval of a Site Plan, or if the request involves more than one sign, the applicant shall submit a Unified Signage Plan to the Development Review Committee (DRC) in accordance with the published development schedule.
 - b. Submittal requirements for a Unified Signage Plan include a site plan with proposed sign locations; indication of the size and materials to be used for all signs; and provide building elevations showing location and type of wall mounted signage. The proposed plan should demonstrate how the applicant will employ unique treatments, materials, and design, and, if approved, will take precedence over the signage requirements addressed in this Article.
 - c. The DRC will review and forward the request with a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Planning and Zoning Commission will review and forward the request with a recommendation to City Council for decision.
 - d. The City Council may approve the request, approve with conditions, or deny the request. The decision of the City Council shall be final.
 - e. If the City Council denies the request, a subsequent request for a Unified Signage Plan on the same property shall only be considered if the subsequent request modifies the proposed signage in such a way that as to be of a lesser size, height, number, intensity, or visual impact.
 - f. A request for one or more Parking Lot Kiosk Signs in a new or existing development shall be heard by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council. The Council shall have final authority to approve the request, approve with any conditions the City Council deems necessary to ensure traffic safety within and outside the development and to prevent unreasonable visual obstructions, or to deny the request.
2. The Zoning Board of Adjustments and Appeals is hereby authorized to grant variances from the terms of this ordinance for individual signs upon the application of a sign owner or his agent, when strict application of spacing, size, lighting, or height provisions would result in unnecessary hardship.

SECTION 14 - ENFORCEMENT**1. Violations:**

Wherever by the provisions of this Chapter the performance of any act is required or the performance of any act is prohibited, or wherever any regulation, dimension or limitation is imposed on the use or change of use, or upon any land or on the erection or alteration of any

structure or the use or change of use of any structure, a failure to comply with the provisions of this Article shall constitute a violation of this Article. Each day in which a violation exists shall constitute a separate violation and a separate offense.

2. Penalties:

Any person who violates any provision of this Article shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punishable in accordance with Section 1-8 of the City of Grand Prairie Code of Ordinances.

3. Removal or Repair of Unsafe/Vacant Signs:

If the Code enforcement Manager, Chief Building Official or designee determines any sign is illegal, unsafe, unsecured, vacant, abandoned, ill maintained or presents a hazard to the public in any way, he/she may provide written notice to correct any violations thereof to the owner, agent, or person having the beneficial use of the land, building, or structure upon which the sign is located. If the sign is not repaired, made compliant, or removed within the time period specified, then the city official is hereby authorized to take enforcement action as described in the Code of Ordinances Section 1-16. Furthermore, if the sign has not been made compliant, the sign may be brought to the Building Advisory and Appeals Board to cause removal of such sign, and any expense incident hereto shall be paid by the permit applicant, owner of the land, building, or structure to which such sign is attached or upon which it is erected. If it is determined that the sign is an immediate hazard to the general public, the Chief Building Official may have the sign removed summarily and without notice.

4. Time Limit:

All sign permits for the erection of a new sign will have an expiration date six (6) months from the date of issuance, unless otherwise stated or unless determined void previous to the expiration. After six (6) months, if the sign has not been erected pursuant to a permit, a new permit will be required to erect a sign on the same property.

SECTION 15 - SEVERABILITY

If any article, section, subsection, sentence, clause or phrase of these regulations is, for any reason, held unconstitutional or invalid by a Court of competent jurisdiction, then such invalidity shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the remainder of this Ordinance