

Article 26 Signs

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15-2601 Purpose

The purpose of this article is to regulate signs as an information system that expresses the character and environment of Fresno and implements the General Plan, consistent with State and federal law. These regulations recognize the importance of business activity to the economic vitality of the city as well as the need to protect the visual environment. Specifically, these regulations are intended to:

- A. Provide adequate opportunity for the exercise of the free speech rights, while balancing that opportunity with other community and public interests;
- B. Provide minimum standards to safeguard life, health, property, public welfare, and traffic safety by controlling the design, quality of materials, construction, illumination, size, location, and maintenance of signs and sign structures;
- C. Preserve and enhance the visual attractiveness of the city, for residents, businesses, and visitors;
- D. Protect and enhance property values and community appearance by encouraging signs that are compatible with the architectural style, character, and scale of the building to which they relate and with adjacent buildings and businesses;
- E. Restrict signs that may create visual clutter or a nuisance to nearby properties, violate privacy, or create hazards or unreasonable distractions for pedestrians and drivers;
- F. Ensure that commercial signs are accessory or auxiliary to a principal business or establishment on or near the same premises, rather than functioning as general advertising for hire; and

- G. Prohibit signs that may cause traffic or pedestrian safety hazards or interfere with ingress and egress.

15-2602 Applicability

This article regulates all signs on public and private property, except where expressly stated otherwise. No sign shall be erected or maintained anywhere in the city except in conformity with this article.

15-2603 Permits Required

Permits shall be required as follows, unless otherwise stated.

- A. **Building Permit Required.** No person shall erect, alter, repair, or relocate any sign without first obtaining any required building permit for such work from the Building Official. No permit shall be issued until the Building Department determines that such work is in accordance with the building or electrical codes of the City. Except as otherwise provided, permits required by this article will be issued pursuant to the same terms and according to the same fee schedule as all other building permits.
- B. **Zone Clearance Required.** Subject to Article 51, Zone Clearance, the Planning Division will review applications for building permits for signs and determine if the proposed signs are consistent with the requirements contained in this article.
- C. **Encroachment Permit.** Signs that project over a public street or sidewalk shall be subject to an Encroachment Permit approval by the Public Works Department pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 13 of the Municipal Code.
- D. **Master Sign Program.** A Master Sign Program is required for signage proposals as specified in Section 15-2612, Master Sign Program (MSP).

15-2604 Exempt Signs

The following signs are exempt from the permit requirements of this article and do not count toward the total sign area limit for a site, provided that they conform to applicable standards:

- A. **Address Signs and Name Plates.** Each residence and establishment may post one address sign and one name plate, with display faces per Article 62, Street Names & Addressing.
- B. **Barber Poles.** Barber poles less than 18 inches in height.
- C. **City Property / Bus Stop Signs.** Signs placed by the City on property or public right-of-way held by the City, subject to any applicable environmental review pursuant to CEQA.
- D. **Equipment Signs.** Signs incorporated into permitted displays, machinery, or equipment by a manufacturer, distributor, or vendor and identifying or advertising only the product or service dispensed by the machine or equipment, such as signs customarily fixed to automated teller machines (ATMs) and gasoline pumps.

- E. **Holiday Decorations.**
- F. **Interior Graphics or Signage.** Visual communicative devices that are located entirely within a building or other enclosed structure and are not visible from the exterior thereof, or located on the inside of a building and at least three feet from the window.
- G. **Official Notices.** Official and legal notices used by any court, public body, person, or officer in the performance of a public duty; any legal or official notices posted by a utility or other quasi-public agency; temporary or permanent signs erected and maintained by or required by the City, State, or federal government, or government transportation or transit agencies, for the purpose of providing official governmental information to the general public, including, but not limited to: traffic direction, city entrance, or for designation of direction to any school, hospital, historical site, or public service, property, or facility; public hearing or meeting notices; seismic warning signs; or other signs required or authorized by law.
- H. **Public Carrier Graphics.** Graphic images mounted on carrier vehicles such as buses, taxicabs, and limousines that legally pass through the city.
- I. **Operational Window Signs.** Window signs limited to the hours of operation, address, occupancy, and emergency information, subject to the following standards:
 - 1. **Limitations on Placement.** Operational window signs shall not be mounted or placed on windows higher than the second story.
 - 2. **Maximum Area.** The maximum area of exempt window signage shall not exceed three square feet in area.

15-2605 Prohibited Signs

Unless expressly allowed by another subsection of this article or other applicable law, the following sign types, locations, and materials are prohibited:

- A. **Animated Signs.** Animated, flashing, blinking, reflecting, revolving, or other similar signs, or signs with visibly moving or rotating parts or visible mechanical movement of any kind, rolling or running letters or message.
- B. **Outdoor Advertising Signs.** Billboards and any other off-premises outdoor advertising signs which convey a commercial message as their primary purpose. This provision, however, does not prohibit agreements to relocate presently existing, legal billboards, pursuant to Business and Professions Code Section 5412. The new billboards which replace existing billboards may be located on City-owned property and may feature electronic copy, at the discretion of the City Manager. Replacement billboards shall comply with all applicable federal, State, and local regulations.
- C. **Signs Blocking Doors or Windows.** Signs shall not be located or installed on any door, window, or fire escape in a manner that will prevent free ingress or egress.
- D. **Signs on Standpipes or Fire Escapes.** No sign shall be attached to any standpipe or fire escape, except those required by other codes.

- E. **Snipe Signs.** All off-site signs, tacked, nailed, posted, pasted, glued, or otherwise attached to trees, poles, stakes, fences, trailers, temporary construction barriers, or other supporting structures.
- F. **Signs in the Public Rights-of-Way.** Unless otherwise noted, no sign shall be affixed within median strips or islands, on sidewalks, trees, retaining walls, bridges, benches, traffic signals, public fences, poles or utility equipment, street lighting, utility poles, traffic signs, or traffic sign posts, supporting structures, anchor wires, or guy wires. This provision, however, does not prohibit subdivision monument signs, which shall be permitted at the discretion of the City Engineer.
- G. **Signs That Produce Noise or Emissions.** Signs that produce noise or sounds that can be heard at the property line, excluding voice units at menu boards, and signs that emit visible smoke, vapor, particles, or odors.
- H. **Signs Creating a Traffic Hazard or Affecting Pedestrian Safety.** Signs placed or located in such a manner as to constitute a safety hazard or to impede the public use of the public right-of-way.
 - 1. ***Exits and Entrances.*** No sign shall be placed, mounted, erected, or installed in any manner that obstructs the use of any door, window, or fire escape.
 - 2. ***Sidewalks.*** No sign shall be mounted or displayed in such a manner that it blocks or impedes the normal pedestrian use of public sidewalks.
 - 3. ***Intersections.*** No sign shall be erected or maintained at or near any street intersection that will obstruct the free and clear vision of drivers and pedestrians. Other than traffic control signals, no sign shall be installed in the visibility triangle at intersections pursuant to Section 15-2018, Intersection Visibility.

15-2606 Rules for Sign Measurement

- A. **Calculation of Sign Area.** The area of an individual sign shall be calculated as follows.
 - 1. ***Single-Faced Signs.*** Sign area shall include the entire area within a single continuous perimeter composed of squares or rectangles (consisting of horizontal and vertical lines and no more than 12 corners) that enclose the extreme limits of all sign elements, including, but not limited to, sign structures or borders, written copy, logos, symbols, illustrations, and color. Supporting structures such as sign bases and columns are not included in the sign area provided that they contain no lettering or graphics except for addresses or required tags. The calculation of sign area for various types of single-faced signs is illustrated in Figure 15-2606-A.1.



FIGURE 15-2606-A.1: MEASURING SIGN AREA

2. **Double-Faced Signs.** Where two faces of a double-faced sign are parallel, or less than an interior angle of 45 degrees or less from one another, the sign area shall be computed as the area of one face. Where the two faces are not equal in size, the larger sign face shall be used. Where two faces of a double-faced sign are located more than 45 degrees from one another, both sign faces shall be counted toward sign area.
3. **Multi-Faced Signs.** On a three-faced sign, where at least one interior angle is 45 degrees or less, the area of two faces (the largest and smallest face) shall be summed to determine sign area. In all other situations involving a sign with three or more sides, sign area shall be calculated as the sum of all faces.

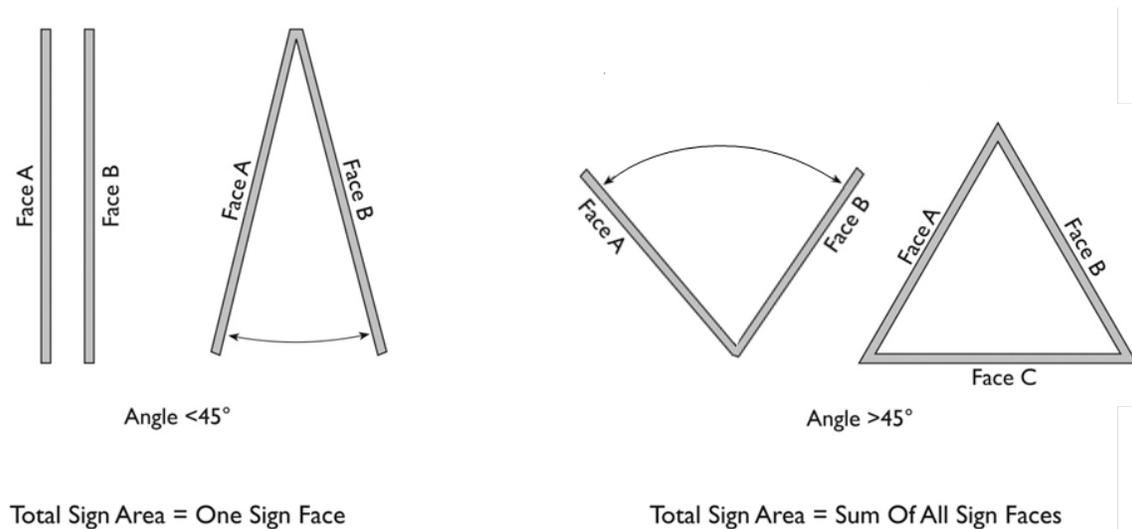


FIGURE 15-2606-A.3: DOUBLE AND MULTI-FACED SIGNS

4. **Three-Dimensional Signs.** Signs that consist of, or have attached to them, one or more three-dimensional objects (i.e., balls, cubes, clusters of objects, sculpture, or statue-like trademarks), shall have a sign area of the sum of two adjacent sides of the smallest cuboid that will encompass the sign.

Sign Area = Sum of Two Adjacent Sides

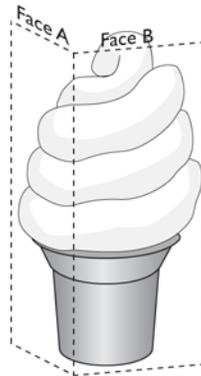


FIGURE 15-2606-A.4: THREE DIMENSIONAL SIGNS

- B. **Measuring Sign Height.** The height of a sign is the vertical distance measured from the ground level directly beneath the sign to the highest point at the top of the sign
- C. **Measuring Sign Clearance.** Sign clearance shall be measured as the smallest vertical distance between finished grade and the lowest point of the sign, including any framework or other embellishments.
- D. **Building Frontage.** Building frontage is the building facade that directly abuts a public street, private street, parking lot driveway, or parking spaces. For buildings with two or more frontages, the length of the wall and allowable sign area shall be calculated separately for each building frontage.

15-2607 General Standards

- A. **Identification Decal.** Every sign for which a permit is issued shall be plainly marked with the corresponding permit number issued for the sign. Tags may be displayed on signs or at the base of a structure in a visible location. Tags for freestanding or monument signs must be located on the structure between one and three feet above grade.
- B. **Visibility Triangles.** No sign, permanent or temporary, flag, flagpole, etc. may be erected within the visibility triangle per Section 15-2018, Intersection Visibility.
- C. **Residential and Non-Residential Interface.** Signs and flags on commercial and industrial zoned property shall be set back a minimum distance of 45 feet from a residential district.
- D. **Materials and Mounting Required.**
 - 1. **Materials.** Signs shall be made of sturdy, durable materials. Paper, cardboard, and other materials subject to rapid deterioration may only be used for temporary signs.
 - 2. **Mounting Required.** All permanent signs shall be firmly anchored, shall comply with all requirements for public safety, and shall satisfy all applicable safety codes and all other applicable governmental enactments, rules, regulations, or policies.

- E. **Message Substitution.** A non-commercial message of any type may be substituted, in whole or in part, for any duly permitted commercial message, and any on-site commercial message may be substituted, in whole or in part, for any other on-site commercial message.
1. ***No Additional Approval.*** Such substitution of message may be made without any additional approval, permitting, registration or notice to the City.
 2. ***Limitations.*** This message substitution provision does not: 1) create a right to increase the total amount of signage on a parcel, lot, or land use; 2) affect the requirement that a sign structure or mounting device be properly permitted; 3) allow a change in the physical structure of a sign or its mounting device; or 4) authorize the substitution of an off-site commercial message in place of an on-site commercial message or in place of a non-commercial message.
- F. **Changeable Copy.** Non-electronic changeable copy shall cover no more than 20 percent of the total sign area, except for the following uses which are allowed up to 75 percent of the maximum sign area to be changeable copy: all public and semi-public uses, indoor theaters, and fuel price signs. Copy shall not be changed more than once every 24 hours.
- G. **Illumination.** The illumination of signs shall be designed, installed, and maintained to avoid negative impacts on surrounding right-of-ways and properties. The following standards shall apply to all illuminated signs:
1. ***Shielding Required.*** To the extent feasible, and at the discretion of the Review Authority, light sources shall be concealed or shielded to prevent or minimize light spillage, glare, momentary blindness, or other annoyance, disability, or discomfort to persons within the view of such light sources.
 2. ***Colored Lights.*** Colored lights shall not be used at a location or in a manner so as to be confused or construed as traffic control devices.
 3. ***Light Sources Adjacent to Residential Areas.*** Illuminated signs located adjacent to any residential area shall be controlled by a rheostat or other acceptable method to reduce glare that will create a nuisance for residential buildings in a direct line of sight to the sign.
- H. **Concealed Electrical Systems.** External conduits, boxes, and other connections related to the function of a sign and associated lighting shall not be exposed. A switch disconnecting each circuit shall be placed in plain sight and near the inspection opening.

15-2608 Permitted Sign Types by District

The following table establishes the types of signs allowed by district.

TABLE 15-2608: PERMITTED SIGN TYPES BY ZONING DISTRICT						
<i>Zoning District (Frontage)</i>	<i>Permitted Sign Types</i>					
	<i>Awning</i>	<i>Monument</i>	<i>Pole</i>	<i>Projecting</i>	<i>Wall</i>	<i>Window</i>
Buffer, Residential, and Public and Semi-Public Districts						
All Districts	See Section 15-2609, Signage Allowances for Specific Uses					
Downtown Districts						
(Reserved)						
Mixed-Use Districts						
NMX	Permitted	-	-	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
CMX	Permitted	Permitted	-	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
RMX	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Commercial Districts						
CMS	Permitted	-	-	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
CC	Permitted	Permitted	-	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
CR	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
CG	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
CH	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
CRC	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Employment Districts						
O	Permitted	Permitted	-	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
BP	Permitted	Permitted	-	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
RBP	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
IL	Permitted	Permitted	-	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
IH	Permitted	Permitted	-	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted

15-2609 Signage Allowances for Specific Uses

This section establishes signage allowances for specific uses. These signs are allowed in addition to the signs allowed by Zoning District in Section 15-2608, Standards for Signs by District and in Section 15-2609, Total Maximum Sign Area.

- A. **Agricultural Operations.** Signs for agricultural operations conducted on parcels 20 acres or more in size may be erected subject to the following standards:
 1. **Maximum Number of Signs.** One sign per street frontage.
 2. **Location.** Shall be setback back a minimum of five feet from the public right-of-way.
 3. **Maximum Sign Area per Sign.** 100 square feet in area.
 4. **Maximum Sign Height.** 20 feet.

- B. **Public and Semi-Public Uses.** Signs for Public and Semi-Public Uses located in Residential Districts may be erected subject to the following standards:
1. **Maximum Number of Signs.** One freestanding sign per street frontage plus one wall sign.
 2. **Maximum Sign Area per Signs.** Freestanding signs shall not be more than 32 square feet in area. Wall signs shall not be more than 10 square feet in area.
 3. **Height Limit, Freestanding Signs.** Five feet when located within a required front or street-side setback, eight feet otherwise.
 4. **Illumination.** Signs may be internally illuminated.
- C. **Residential Subdivisions.** Permanent entrance signs for residential areas with more than 10 residential parcels shall be permitted for the purpose of identifying a development subject to the following standards:
1. **Maximum Number of Signs.** Two signs per entrance from a public street plus one sign per street frontage with no entrance from a public street.
 2. **Maximum Sign Area per Sign.** 32 square feet. In the case of a ~~master-planned development with a~~ CUP, this area can be increased at the discretion of the Review Authority.
 3. **Height Limit.** Eight feet when located within a required front or street side setback, 10 feet otherwise. In the case of a subdivision with a CUP, this height can be increased at the discretion of the Review Authority.”
 4. **Illumination.** Signs shall not be internally illuminated.
- D. **Menu Display Boards.**
1. Menu displays, not exceeding two square feet in area mounted on a wall or in a window near the main entrance of establishments serving food to customers who eat on the premises. For free standing menu display boards, refer to Section 15-2728, Drive-In and Drive-Through Facilities.
- E. **Service Stations.**
1. Signs on service station canopies are not to exceed 50 square feet on each side.
 2. Freestanding or monument signs may provide electronic fuel prices. A freestanding and/or monument sign that is to be converted to an electronic fuel price sign shall comply with the size requirements and setbacks required by the Development Code.
 3. Fuel prices shall be static and shall not be blinking, flashing, continuously changing colors, etc.
 4. Prices shall not change more than once in a 24 hour period.
 5. Only one electronic fuel price sign is permitted per site.
 6. Electronic numbers shall not exceed 24 inches in height.

F. **Theaters.**

1. Developments containing theaters are allowed one additional pole or monument sign with changeable copy. The maximum height is 20 feet and the maximum size is 80 square feet.
2. Theatres may provide additional walls signs. Said signs shall not exceed 200 square feet. Show times may be displayed electronically.

G. **Outdoor Scoreboards.** Outdoor scoreboards are allowed in public or private athletic complexes. Size and location shall consider safety and sensitivity to nearby uses (e.g. residential).

15-2610 Standards for Specific Sign Types

This section establishes location and other general standards for specific sign types that apply to all areas where such signs are permitted. Additional standards applicable to these signs in specific zoning districts or associated with specific uses are located in Sections 15-2608, Standards for Signs by District, and 15-2609, Signage Allowances for Specific Uses.

A. **Awning Signs.** Signs painted on awnings, canopies, arcades, or similar features or structures are subject to the following standards:

1. **Location.** Awnings shall be located on the ground floor of buildings.
2. **Maximum Sign Area Per Sign.** 10 square feet or 25 percent of the surface area of the awning, whichever is less.
3. **Minimum Sign Clearance.** Eight feet.

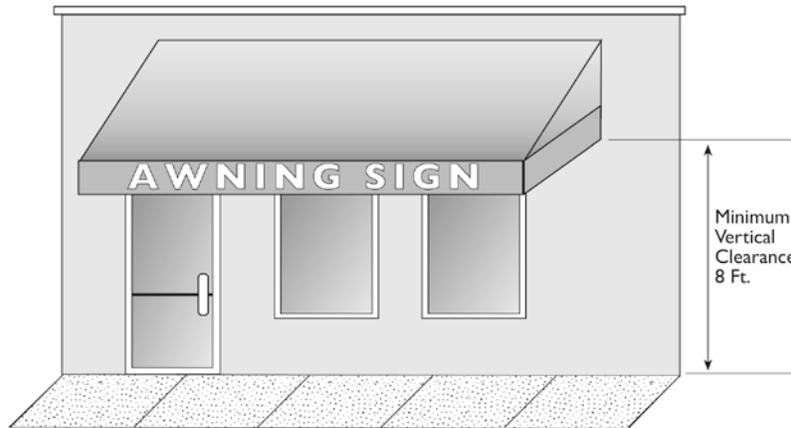


FIGURE 15-2610-A: AWNING SIGN

B. **Pole Signs.** Pole signs are subject to the following standards:

1. **Maximum Number.** One per 600 feet of street frontage.
2. **Maximum Sign Area per Sign.** The sign area shall not exceed 80 square feet. In cases in which a pole sign of more than 20 feet in height is permitted per the table in

subsection B-4 below, the maximum sign area shall be determined at the discretion of the Review Authority.

3. **Minimum Separation.** Pole signs shall have a minimum separation of 75 feet from any other pole sign.
4. **Required Setback.** Signs shall be setback back a minimum of ten feet from the property line. No pole sign is permitted within 660 feet of the nearest edge of any travel lane of Freeway 41, Freeway 180, Freeway 168, or any future freeway which may be opened to public travel, if any said sign is visible from any part of such travel lane.
5. **Maximum Height.** Maximum height of pole signs shall be based on the gross floor area of the habitable, enclosed, non-residential structures on the subject parcel and the classification of the adjacent or nearest street as follows:

<i>Gross square footage</i>	<i>Classification of Street</i>		
	<i>Freeway</i>	<i>Arterial</i>	<i>Collector / Other</i>
300,000 or more	90 feet	75 feet	50 feet
100,000 to 299,999	60 feet	40 feet	25 feet
Less than 100,000	40 feet	20 feet	20 feet

6. **Minimum Sign Clearance.** Eight feet.
 7. **Landscaping Required.** All pole signs shall require landscaping at the base equivalent to two times the area of the sign copy.
 8. **Lighting.** Lighting systems shall not exceed 100 foot Lamberts (FT-L) when adjacent to streets which have an average light intensity of less than 2.0 horizontal foot candles. When adjacent to streets with a greater average light intensity, systems shall not exceed 500 FT-L.
- C. **Monument Signs.** Monument signs are subject to the following standards:
1. **Maximum Number.** One per 600 feet of street frontage.
 2. **Maximum Sign Area per Sign.**
 - a. RMX, CR, CG, CH, and RBP districts: 60 square feet.
 - b. Other permitted districts: 32 square feet.
 3. **Minimum Separation.** Monument signs shall have a minimum separation of 50 feet from any other monument sign.
 4. **Required Setback.**
 - a. Five feet from the property line.

- b. No monument sign is permitted within 660 feet of the nearest edge of any travel lane of Freeway 41 or any future freeway which may be opened to public travel, if any said sign is visible from any part of such travel lane.
 - 5. **Height Limit.** Eight feet .
 - 6. **Lighting.** Lighting systems shall not exceed 100 foot Lamberts (FT-L) when adjacent to streets which have an average light intensity of less than 2.0 horizontal foot candles. When adjacent to streets with a greater average light intensity, systems shall not exceed 500 FT-L.
- D. **Projecting Signs.** Signs under canopies or covers in conjunction with pedestrian walkways, or signs projecting from buildings are allowed, subject to the following additional standards:
- 1. **Maximum Number.** One per building or tenant space.
 - 2. **Maximum Sign Area Per Sign.**
 - a. *Projecting Signs.* 12 square feet.
 - b. *Under Canopy or Awning Signs.* Eight square feet.
 - 3. **Height Limit.** 12 feet.
 - 4. **Minimum Sign Clearance.** Eight feet.
 - 5. **Projection Allowed.** A projecting sign cannot extend more than four feet from the building to which it is attached and shall be designed and located so as to cause no harm to street trees.
 - 6. **Illumination.** No internal illumination is permitted.

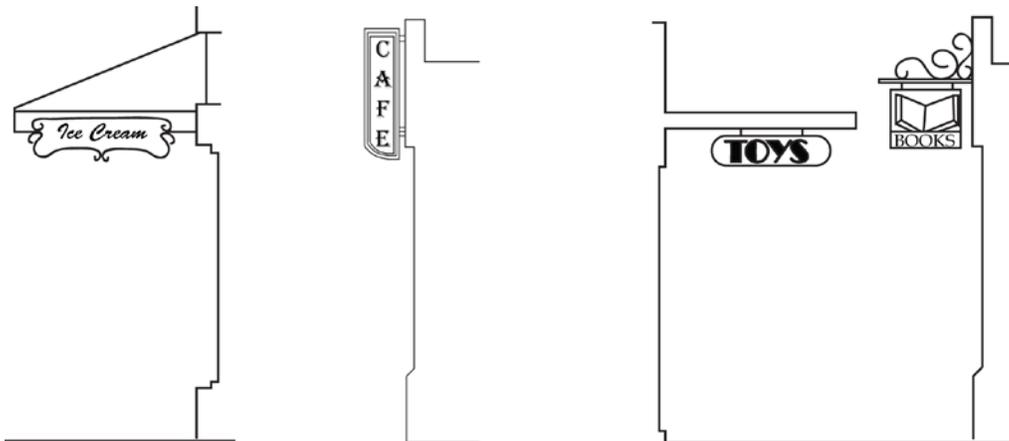


FIGURE 15-2610-D: PROJECTING SIGNS

- E. **Wall Signs.** Wall signs are subject to the following standards:

1. **Maximum Number.** One per building frontage or tenant space plus one building identification sign per building frontage located on the uppermost story of a building with four or more stories.
2. **Maximum Sign Area Per Sign.** Five percent of the wall area or 100 square feet, whichever is less.
3. **Height Limit.**
 - a. *Buildings Which Include Residential Uses* 20 feet or the height of the wall of the building to which the sign is attached, whichever is lower. Building identification signs located on the uppermost story of a building shall be no higher than the wall of the building to which the sign is attached.
 - b. *Buildings Which Do Not Include Residential Uses* The height of the wall of the building to which the sign is attached
4. **Projection Allowed.** Wall signs shall not extend more than 12 inches beyond the face of the wall to which they are attached.
5. **Placement.** No wall sign may cover, wholly or partially, any wall opening. Wall signs shall not occupy more than 80% of any architectural element that they occupy (frieze, pilaster, etc.).
6. **Orientation.** Unless a different orientation is specifically authorized, each wall-mounted sign shall be placed flat against the wall of the building.



FIGURE 15-2610-E: WALL SIGN

- F. **Window Signs.** Window signs are subject to the following standards:
1. **Maximum Number.** One per window.
 2. **Location.** Ground floor window area.
 3. **Window Transparency.** A minimum 75 percent of the window shall be transparent and free of signage features. Signage inside the building is not allowed within three feet of the window.

- G. **Roof Signs.** Roof signs are subject to the following standards:
1. **Maximum Number.** One per building.
 2. **Maximum Sign Area Per Sign.**
 - a. *Buildings Less than Five Stories in Height.* 300 square feet.
 - b. *Buildings Five Stories in Height or Taller.* 500 square feet.
 3. **Maximum Height.**
 - a. *Buildings Less than Five Stories in Height.* 10 feet.
 - b. *Buildings Five Stories in Height or Taller.* 20 feet.
 4. **Projection Allowed.** Roof signs shall not project beyond the face of the building.
 5. **Placement.** No roof sign may cover, wholly or partially, any wall opening.

15-2611 Other Signs

- A. **Sidewalk Signs.** Sidewalk signs shall comply with the standards below. A permit is not required.
1. **Quantity.** A maximum of one sidewalk sign per business is allowed.
 2. **Locations.**
 - a. Sidewalk signs shall be located away from important paths of pedestrian travel. A five foot wide travel path shall be maintained for through pedestrian traffic, for travel from crosswalks to the primary path of through pedestrian traffic, and for travel into and out of the establishment.
 - b. Sidewalk signs shall not be located less than 18 inches from a curb.
 - c. Sidewalk signs shall not be located in front of another commercial establishment.
 - d. Sidewalk signs shall not be located more than 50 feet from the establishment for which it is advertising.
 3. **Design:**
 - a. Sidewalk signs shall have no more than two sides.
 - b. The height of sidewalk signs shall be no less than 18 inches and no more than 36 inches.
 - c. The width of sidewalk signs shall be no less than 18 inches and no more than 24 inches.
 - d. Sidewalk signs shall not be illuminated except by ambient sources.
- B. **Banners, Streamers, Moving Signs, and Inflatables.** Banners, streamers, moving signs, and inflatables (including air dancers, balloons, and similar objects) are allowed subject to

Temporary Use Permit approval for establishments within Non-Residential Districts, subject to the following standards. Signs of this type do not count towards total maximum sign area.

1. **Maximum Number.** A maximum of one type of sign is allowed per Major Street frontage.
2. **Maximum Height.** If a banner is on a freestanding pole, the pole height shall not exceed 20 feet; all other signs shall not be located above the roofline.
3. **Maximum Size.** The maximum total sign area is 60 square feet.
4. **Minimum Separation.** Air-inflated signs shall have a minimum separation of one-half mile from other air-inflated signs on abutting parcels or adjacent to a Buffer or Residential Zoning District. Air inflated signs shall not exceed 20 feet in height.
5. **Duration.** No sign per this section shall be displayed for more than 30 days, and a period of 30 days must lapse before displaying another sign. Signs shall not be displayed for more than 60 total days during a calendar year.
6. **Removal.** Signs shall be removed within 24 hours of completion of the event.

C. **Temporary Subdivision Signs.**

1. **On-Site.** Temporary real estate signs advertising real property which has been subdivided for purposes of sale or lease shall be permitted, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. **Maximum Number.** Four per site.
 - b. **Maximum Total Sign Area.** 320 square feet plus 20 square feet for every 20 acres over 60 acres of site area.
 - c. **Maximum Sign Area per Sign.** 80 square feet for sites 20 acres or less in size. 160 square feet for sites more than 20 acres in size.
 - d. **Height Limit.** 16 feet.
 - e. **Duration.** The sign shall remain only as long as some portion of the property advertised for sale remains unsold, or for a period of two years, whichever period is shorter. The two year period shall begin on a date determined by the Director. The Director may extend this period, but not it shall not exceed one year.
2. **Off-Site.** Temporary real estate signs directing prospective purchasers to a subdivision having lots or houses for sale may be erected and maintained on private property, with the owner's permission, provided said signs do not adversely affect the use or appearance of existing buildings or landscaping and do not create hazardous traffic conditions.
 - a. **Maximum Number.** Four per subdivision.
 - b. **Maximum Sign Area Per Sign.** 32 square feet.
 - c. **Required Setback.** Five feet from the property line.
 - d. **Location.** Within one mile of the exterior boundary of the subdivision.

- e. *Height Limit.* 12 feet.
 - f. *Duration.* The sign shall remain only as long as some portion of the property advertised for sale remains unsold, or for a period of two years, whichever period is shorter. The two year period shall begin on a date determined by the Director. The Director may provide a one-time extension, but the extended period shall not exceed one year.
3. ***Subdivision Flags.*** Any residential subdivision with lots for sale may display decorative flags pursuant to the following conditions:
- a. *Number and Spacing.*
 - i. One flag every 60 linear feet of subdivision property along a major street (freeway, expressway, arterial, collector).
 - ii. One flag every 30 linear feet of subdivision property within 660 feet of the main subdivision entrance.
 - iii. One flag every 20 linear feet of the main entryway into the subdivision.
 - iv. Two flags for each model home lot. These model home flags are allowed in addition to the number of flags determined by the above linear footage measurements.
 - b. *Height Limit.* The maximum height of a flag pole shall be 20 feet.
 - c. *Maximum Sign Area per Sign.* The maximum area of a flag shall be 24 square feet. No single dimension shall exceed eight feet.
 - d. *Duration.* All pole structures and flags must be removed no later than five days after sales activity in the subdivision ceases.
 - e. *Building Permit Required.* Residential subdivision flagpoles shall not be installed without issuance of a building permit, and must conform to the above listed regulations.
 - f. *Standard Subdivisions.* The number, location, height, and size of flags for a standard subdivision shall be determined through Development Permit approval.
 - g. *Planned Unit Developments.* The number, location, height, and size of flags for a subdivision created as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) shall be determined through the processing of a Conditional Use Permit for the PUD.
- D. **Real Estate Signs.** Real estate signs are subject to the regulations below. A permit is not required. Real estate signs advertising real property for sale after being subdivided shall not be subject to this subsection, but shall be subject to Section 15-2612-C.
- 1. ***On-Site Real Estate Signs.*** On-premises signs conveying information about the sale, rental, or lease of the lot, premises, dwelling, or structure on which they are located, provided that they comply with the following standards:

- a. No more than one real estate sign per lot in residential districts, or one real estate sign per street frontage per lot in non-residential districts, is displayed at any one time;
 - b. The sign or signs do not exceed an aggregate area of six square feet in residential districts or 32 square feet in non-residential districts;
 - c. Wall signs shall not be higher than seven feet above grade in residential districts or fifteen feet in non-residential districts. Freestanding signs shall not exceed six feet in height in residential districts or eight feet in height in non-residential districts.
 - d. The sign or signs are not illuminated; and
 - e. The sign or signs are removed within 15 days after the sale, lease, or rental of the property has been completed.
2. ***Directional Signs for Open Houses.*** Up to three off-site signs directing the public to “open house” events for the viewing of lots, premises, dwellings, or structures that are for sale, lease, or rent, are permitted on public or private land, provided that they comply with the following standards:
- a. No sign or signs shall exceed six square feet in area, or three feet in height from finished grade.
 - b. The sign or signs may not be placed more than 12 hours before the start or remain more than 12 hours after the conclusion of the open house event.
 - c. Signs shall not inhibit circulation nor be within the visibility triangle per Section 15-2018, Intersection Visibility.
- E. **Signs Associated with Projects Under Construction.** Signs located on project sites that are under construction are subject to compliance with the regulations below. A permit is not required.
1. One sign per street frontage except for projects having an excess of 500 lineal feet of street frontage, one additional sign may be allowed.
 2. Signs shall be limited to a maximum of 80 square feet in area and 10 feet in height.
 3. Signs shall be removed before occupancy of the site.
- F. **Flags.** Free standing flagpoles or decorative flags on light posts may be installed in accordance with the following standards:
1. ***Location.*** Flagpoles shall not be located within any required front yard, street side or side yard setbacks. Flagpoles shall be located outside of the visibility triangle. Refer to Section 15-2018, Intersection Visibility.
 2. ***Maximum Flagpole Height.*** The pole height shall not exceed 25 feet.
 3. ***Maximum Size.*** The maximum total flag area is 24 square feet.
 4. ***Decorative Flags.*** Flags may be for non-commercial purposes. Permitted flags include, but are not limited to, countries, counties, cities, etc., or decorative flags that do not contain a commercial message.

G. **Yard Signs**

1. **Maximum Size.** Signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in area.
2. **Maximum Height.** Signs shall not exceed 10 feet in height.
3. **Location.** Signs shall not be attached to any utility pole and such sign, or portion thereof, is not placed in any public right-of-way or on any property owned by the City. Such signs may be placed on private property with the permission of the property owner or may be attached to an existing sign on private property with the permission of the sign owner or lessee.
4. **Shall Not Obstruct.** Such signs shall not be erected in such a manner that they will, or reasonably may be expected to, interfere with, obstruct, confuse, or mislead traffic.
5. **Maintenance.** Signs not erected or maintained in accordance with the provisions of this subsection shall be the responsibility of the owner of the property upon which the sign is located, shall be deemed a public nuisance, and may be abated by such property owner, the candidate or person advocating the vote described on the sign (if applicable), or the Director. The cost of removal incurred by the Director shall be assessed against the property owner and/or, if applicable, the candidate and/or the person advocating the vote described on the sign.

15-2612 Master Sign Program (MSP)

A. **Projects Requiring a Master Sign Program.** A Master Sign Program is required for the following types of projects:

1. **Multi-Family Residential.** Developments of 50 or more units.
2. **Non-Residential or Mixed-Use Projects.** All new non-residential or mixed-use projects of two or more separate non-residential tenants.
3. **Multiple Signs.** Proposals for five or more signs on the same building or site with two or more separate tenants.
4. **Planned Development District.** Any project in a PD District or using the Planned Development provisions of this Code.
5. **Pole Signs.** Proposals to erect a pole sign.
6. **Electronic Signs.** Signs with electronic copy.
7. **Exceptions.** Projects within Downtown Districts shall not require a Master Sign Program.

B. **Required Submittals.** An application for approval of a Master Sign Program shall contain the following information:

1. A site plan showing the location of buildings, parking lots, driveways, and landscaped areas;
2. Computation of the maximum area for individual signs, the height of signs, and the number of freestanding signs allowed;

3. An accurate indication on the site plan of the proposed location of each proposed sign and existing sign which is to remain;
 4. Color schemes, lettering, and graphic styles (if tenants are not known, generic styles may be presented);
 5. Lighting and sign construction materials; and
 6. Sign dimensions (if tenants are not known, generic dimensions may be presented).
- C. **Review Authority.** A Master Sign Program shall be reviewed and acted upon by the Development Director. In the case of projects that require other approvals from the Planning Commission or City Council, the decision-making authority for the other approval shall be the decision-making authority for the Master Sign Program.
- D. **Required Findings.** A Master Sign Program may be approved only if the following findings are made:
1. The proposed signs are compatible in style and character with any building to which the signs are to be attached, any surrounding structures, and any adjoining signage on the site;
 2. Future tenants will be provided with adequate opportunities to construct, erect, or maintain a sign for identification; and
 3. Directional signage and building addressing is adequate for pedestrian and vehicular circulation and emergency vehicle access.
 4. Light and glare will not negatively affect nearby residential uses.
- E. **Conditions.** Reasonable conditions of approval may be imposed by the Review Authority to achieve the purposes of this section and ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses and signage.
- F. **Post-Approval Procedures.** After approval of a Master Sign Program, no signs shall be erected, placed, painted, or maintained, except in conformance with such program, and such program may be enforced in the same way as any provision in this section.
1. ***Lease Agreements.*** The Master Sign Program and all conditions of approval shall be attached to the lease agreements for all leasable space within a project.
 2. ***Individual Signs.*** Any sign that conforms to an approved Master Sign Program may be approved by the Director; however, approval of a Master Sign Program does not waive the permit requirements for individual signs.
 3. ***Amendments.*** The Director may approve minor amendments to a Master Sign Program that are in substantial conformance with the original approval. All other amendments, including amendments to conditions of approval shall be processed as a new application.

15-2613 Historic Signs

- A. **Designation.** The Council may designate historic signs following a duly-noticed public hearing and a recommendation from the Historic Preservation Commission.

- B. **Criteria.** Historic signs must meet defined criteria, including, but not limited to, the fact that the sign is 50 or more years old and has significance to the Fresno community because it is associated with a significant historical event or it is associated with a historic business.
- C. **Allowances for Historic Signs.**
 - 1. **Structural Improvements.** Historic signs may have structural improvements completed in order to extend the life of the sign.
 - 2. **Damage Repairs.** If the sign is damaged, it may be repaired and replaced with the original sign area and original height, even if the sign does not conform to the standards of this article.

15-2614 Electronic Copy

Electronic copy is subject to approval of a Master Sign Program and the following standards:

- A. **Display Duration.** Copy display is limited to a minimum duration of eight seconds and shall have an unlighted interval between copy displays of one second or more.
- B. **Light Intensity.** The intensity of the sign lighting shall not exceed 100 foot Lamberts (FT-L) when adjacent to streets which have an average light intensity of less than 2.0 horizontal footcandles and shall not exceed 500 FT-L when adjacent to streets which have an average light intensity of 2.0 horizontal footcandles or greater. No change of lighting intensity may occur during a display or between displays except to respond to a change in ambient lighting conditions.

15-2615 Non-Conforming Signs

All permanent signs which were erected and in existence prior to the effective date of this section or prior to annexation to the city, and which were at the time of such erection or establishment in compliance with all applicable statutes and ordinances, are non-conforming signs and subject to the provisions of Article 4, Non-Conforming Uses, Structures, Site Features, and Lots, and the following:

- A. **Continuance and Maintenance.** Non-conforming signs that were legal when first installed, and which have not been modified so as to become illegal, may be continued, except as otherwise provided for in this subsection.
 - 1. Routine maintenance and repairs may be performed on signs that are non-conforming.
 - 2. A sign that did not conform to law existing at the time of its erection shall be deemed an illegal sign and shall not be a non-conforming sign. The passage of time shall not cure illegality from the outset.
- B. **Alterations and Additions to Non-Conforming Signs.** No non-conforming sign shall be moved, altered, or enlarged unless required by law or unless the moving, alteration or enlargement will result in the elimination of the nonconformity.
- C. **Restoration of a Damaged Sign.** Whenever a non-conforming sign is destroyed by fire or other calamity to the extent of 50 percent or less, the sign may be restored to display the pre-existing sign area and the non-conforming use of the sign may be resumed, provided that

restoration is started within one year and diligently pursued to completion and the height of the restored sign conforms to the standards of this article.

1. Whenever a non-conforming sign is destroyed by fire or other calamity to a greater extent than 50 percent, or is voluntarily razed or shall be required by law to be razed, the sign shall not be restored except in full conformity with this article.

- D. **Signs Rendered Non-Conforming by Annexation.** Any sign that becomes non-conforming subsequent to the effective date of this Code by reason of annexation to the city of the territory upon which the sign is located, shall be subject to the provisions of this article.

15-2616 Maintenance of Signs

All signs and associated supporting structures shall be maintained in good condition, without rips, tears, and similar damage.

- A. **Deteriorated Signs.** Any sign or sign structure that is sagging, leaning, fallen, decayed, broken, deteriorated, or in an otherwise dilapidated condition shall be promptly repaired, to the satisfaction of the City, or removed.
- B. **Graffiti.** Graffiti on a sign shall be removed within 48 hours of notice of its placement on such sign.
- C. **Maintenance Standards.** All parts, portions, units, and materials composing a sign, together with the frame, background, surface, support, or enclosure shall be maintained in a safe condition, painted, and adequately protected from weathering with all braces, bolts, and structural parts, supporting frames, and fastenings reasonably free from deterioration, rot, rust, and loosening so that they do not create a hazard to persons, or property or constitute a nuisance.
- D. **Summary Removal of Hazards.** Whenever any sign, by virtue of its physical nature and condition, poses an immediate and serious threat to the public safety, it may be removed by City personnel, or have its physical deficiency cured, to the extent necessary to protect the public safety. The cost of such removal or repair shall be assessed against the sign owner.

15-2617 Removal of Signs

- A. **Signs That Have Been Abandoned.** An on-site sign that identifies a business, lessor, or owner whose use of the premises has ceased for a period of not less than 60 days shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located. Any sign and, if applicable, its supporting structure (e.g. pole) not removed within the required period shall constitute a nuisance and shall be removed.
- B. **Demolition or Clearance of the Site.** Should a site be cleared, signs, including poles, foundations, etc., shall be removed. This includes sites that are cleared for redevelopment.
- C. **Non-Conforming Sign Removal.** See Section 15-2615, Non-Conforming Signs.