

Article XIX. Central Business District Design Standards.

Sec. 44-241. Sign regulations.

(a) General requirements for all signs.

- (1) Sign drawing. A sign drawing must be submitted to the Director of Community Development for approval prior to the installation of any sign. The drawing shall include the proposed sign dimensions, colors, type, style, materials, elevation above final grade level, and the method of illumination. The proposed sign shall be superimposed on a photograph of the proposed sign location. Creative signs as allowed by Section 44-241 are additionally subject to review and approval from the Development Review Board, pursuant to Sections 44-210 through 44-215 of the Paramount Municipal Code. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (2) Approval criteria. Approval criteria for a sign shall include, but not be limited to, letter type, logos, and colors. A proposed sign shall not detract from the character of a historic landmark; shall not be located so as to have a negative impact on adjacent property; shall not detract from the pedestrian quality of street or area; and shall not add to an overproliferation of signs on a particular property. A proposed sign shall not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular lines of sight. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (3) Sign design. All permanent signs shall be designed by professionals, including architects, building designers, landscape architects, interior designers, or those whose principal business is the design, manufacture, or sale of signs, or others who are capable of producing professional results. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (4) Permits. All necessary permits shall be obtained prior to the installation of any sign. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (5) Location. Signs shall not obscure windows, grillework, columns, pilasters, vents, or ornamental features. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (6) Sign copy. The sign shall display only the established trade name or basic product name, or a combination thereof. Information such as telephone numbers, websites, and product lists is not permitted. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (7) Permitted sign types. Permitted sign types shall include window, wall, plaque, undercanopy, suspended, address, monument, pylon, awning, projecting, and portable signs. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (8) Prohibited signs. The following sign types shall be prohibited:

Signs constituting a pedestrian or vehicular traffic hazard; unlawful advertising; off-premise signs; mobile billboards; vehicle signs attached to motor vehicles that are parked on or adjacent to property for more than 24 consecutive hours, the principal purpose of which is to attract attention to a product sold, service offered, or business located on the property; pole signs; light bulb strings and exposed tubing; banners, pennants, flags, and balloons used as permanent signs; signs in proximity to utility lines; signs on public property or public rights-of-way; can (cabinet) style wall signs; painted wall signs; flat, unframed metal/wood/acrylic "panel" signs; roof mounted signs; vinyl awnings; obscene or offensive signs containing statements, words, or pictures of an obscene or indecent character which appeal to the prurient interest in sex, or which are patently offensive and do not have serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value; signs advertising home occupations; signs erected in a manner that a portion of their surface or supports will interfere with the free use of a fire escape, exit or standpipe, or obstruct a required ventilator, door, stairway, or window above the first floor, or create other hazards; signs not in compliance with the provisions of this chapter. All off-premise signs of any type whatsoever shall be prohibited. (Ord. Nos. 882, 1036)

- (9) Restricted signs. The following sign types are generally inconsistent with the purposes and standards of this chapter but may be allowed through separate approvals:
- a. Temporary signs, including feather flags, banners, pennants, balloons, and inflated signs, may be allowed pursuant to Section 44-104.7 of the Paramount Municipal Code.
  - b. Animated, moving, flashing, blinking, reflecting, revolving, or other similar signs or signs that incorporate one or more of these elements are prohibited unless approved as a creative sign.
  - c. Exposed neon tubing wall signs or signs that incorporate this element are prohibited unless approved as a creative sign.
  - d. Roof signs extending above the roof of a structure are prohibited unless approved as a creative sign.
  - e. Signs emitting visible matter are prohibited unless approved as a creative sign.

(Ord. No. 1036)

- (10) Sign fabrication and installation. All permanent signs shall be fabricated and installed by persons whose principal business is building construction or a related building construction or a related trade including sign manufacturing and installation businesses, or others capable of producing professional results. (Ord. No. 1036)

- (11) Sign maintenance.

- a. Each sign and supporting hardware, including temporary signs, shall be maintained in good repair and functioning properly at all times. Defective or missing sign parts shall be replaced, and signs shall be maintained in a presentable condition such that they do not detract from the appearance of the surrounding area.
- b. Any repair to a sign shall be of materials and design of equal or enhanced quality as the original sign.
- c. A sign that is not properly maintained and is dilapidated shall be deemed a public nuisance, and may be abated in compliance with the Municipal Code.

- d. When an existing sign is removed or replaced, all brackets, poles, and other supports that are no longer required shall be removed.

(Ord. No. 1036)

- (12) Sign removal. When a business, activity, or entity that is the subject of an on-site sign leaves the site, the sign shall be removed within 30 days thereafter. Affected building surfaces shall be restored to match the adjacent portion of the structure. (Ord. No. 1036)

- (b) Window signs. Specific design criteria for window signs shall be as follows:

- (1) Window signs shall be allowed on windows facing streets and windows facing interior areas of a shopping center. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (2) Exposed neon tubing signs shall be allowed in windows facing streets and windows facing interior areas of a shopping center. Neon sign area shall be included in the calculation of the allowable sign area for single or individually framed panes of glass as set out in subsection (c) below. Neon sign area shall be calculated using the dimensions of the sign frame. Where no frame exists total neon sign area shall be calculated using the dimensions of a frame that would enclose the neon sign. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (3) Sign area shall be limited to forty percent of each single or individually framed pane of glass on each street frontage, or forty percent of each single or individually framed pane of glass facing the interior of a shopping center. Sign area shall be limited to forty percent of each door consisting of glass. (Ord. Nos. 755, 1036)

No more than 33 percent of the square footage of a single or individually framed pane of glass and clear doors of an establishment that sells alcohol for off-site consumption shall bear advertising or signs of any sort, and all advertising and signage shall be placed and maintained in a manner that ensures that law enforcement personnel have a clear and unobstructed view of the interior of the premises, including the area in which the cash registers are maintained, from the exterior public sidewalk or entrance to the premises. Window signs advertising alcohol and tobacco shall be placed a minimum of forty-two (42) inches above the interior floor. (Ord. Nos. 909, 1036)

- (c) Wall signs. Specific design criteria for wall signs shall be as follows:

- (1) One sign space shall be allowed for each occupant, except:
- a. Businesses occupying corner units, which shall be allowed one wall sign per building side, up to a maximum of two wall signs for each business; and
  - b. Businesses occupying single unit buildings, which shall be allowed one wall sign per building side, up to a maximum of four wall signs per building.
  - c. No more than one wall sign may be placed on each separate building side.

(Ord. No. 1036)

- (2) The occupant shall verify the sign location and size with the city prior to installation or fabrication. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (3) At multi-tenant properties, wall signs shall be compatible in terms of color, size, and font with the existing and proposed wall signs on the same property. (Ord. No. 1036)

- (4) No more than two rows of letters are permitted. (Ord. No. 1036)
  - (5) Maximum sign area shall be one and one-half feet of sign area per one lineal foot of building frontage. (Ord. No. 1036)
  - (6) Maximum sign width shall not exceed sixty percent of the building width. (Ord. No. 1036)
  - (7) Individual letters shall be mounted directly on a building wall. All conduits, exposed electrical raceways, transformers, junction boxes, and openings in the building surface shall be concealed. (Ord. No. 1036)
  - (8) Lettering shall be individual channel letters with trim caps and returns of an appropriate design as approved by the Director of Community Development. (Ord. Nos. 882, 1036)
  - (9) Creative wall signs may be approved by the Development Review Board pursuant to the creative sign provisions of the Paramount Municipal Code. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (d) Plaque or directory signs. Specific design criteria for plaque or directory signs shall be as follows:
- (1) One sign space shall be allowed for each occupant. The occupant shall verify the sign location and size with the city prior to installation or fabrication.
  - (2) No more than two rows of letters are permitted.
- (Ord. No. 1036)
- (e) Undercanopy and suspended signs. Specific design criteria for undercanopy and suspended signs shall be as follows:
- (1) One sign space shall be allowed for each occupant. The occupant shall verify the sign location and size with the city prior to installation or fabrication.
  - (2) An undercanopy or suspended sign shall have a minimum vertical clearance of eight feet from the sidewalk to the bottom of the undercanopy or suspended sign.
  - (3) The sign and the copy shall be perpendicular to the wall of the building to which it is attached.
  - (4) The area of an undercanopy or suspended sign shall not exceed six square feet.
  - (5) No more than two rows of letters are permitted.
- (Ord. No. 1036)
- (f) Address signs. Specific design criteria for address signs shall be as follows:
- (1) Each occupant shall be allowed to place upon each primary entrance not more than one hundred forty-four square inches of gold leaf or decal application lettering not to exceed two inches in height indicating hours of business, emergency telephone, etc. Type face shall be subject to approval by the Director of Community Development.
  - (2) Premises numbers shall be placed on a wall facing the street on which the number is assigned, and shall be permanent in character and of contrasting color so as to be easily readable.
- (Ord. No. 1036)

(g) Monument signs. Specific design criteria for monument signs shall be as follows:

- (1) Where the site area equals fifteen thousand square feet or more, monument signs shall not exceed six feet in height, inclusive of a minimum of a two-foot high decorative brick or stone base or an equivalent surface area of decorative material. Where the site area is less than fifteen thousand square feet, monument signs shall not exceed four feet in height, inclusive of a minimum of a one-foot high decorative brick or stone base or an equivalent surface area of decorative material.
- (2) Monument signs shall be placed in a landscaped planter area which shall include a minimum of two hundred square feet.
- (3) One monument sign shall be allowed per one hundred fifty lineal feet of street frontage.
- (4) No more than two rows of letters for each tenant are permitted.
- (5) Monument signs shall display only the project title or tenant names.
- (6) A maximum of six tenants shall be displayed on a monument sign with a height equal to six feet. A maximum of four tenants shall be displayed on a monument sign with a height less than six feet.
- (7) The letters on a monument sign shall be raised or routed. Flat panel signs without decorative lettering are prohibited.
- (8) Maximum sign area shall be one-half foot of sign area per one lineal foot of street frontage not to exceed one hundred square feet.
- (9) Materials and design for monument signs shall be complementary to the materials and design of the buildings for the related development.
- (10) Creative monument signs may be approved by the Development Review Board pursuant to the creative sign provisions of the Paramount Municipal Code.

(Ord. No. 1036)

(h) Pylon signs. Specific design criteria for pylon signs shall be as follows:

- (1) Pylon signs shall be allowed where the site area equals two acres or more.
- (2) Pylon signs shall be maintained a minimum of two hundred lineal feet apart.
- (3) Maximum sign area shall be limited to one square foot of sign area per one lineal foot of street frontage, with a maximum area limited to two hundred square feet. Net sign area shall include structural supports and/or architectural features.
- (4) No more than two rows of letters are permitted, provided their maximum total height does not exceed the height of the net sign area.
- (5) Maximum height shall not exceed twenty-five feet.
- (6) One marquee shall be permitted, if incorporated into the pylon sign, with the maximum sign area limited to one-fourth the aggregate sign area of the pylon sign. Marquee signs shall not be permitted atop or attached to buildings.

- (7) Reader boards or "change copy" signs shall not be allowed on pylon signs, unless approved by the Development Review Board.
- (8) Creative pylon signs may be approved by the Development Review Board pursuant to the creative sign provisions of the Paramount Municipal Code.

(Ord. No. 1036)

(i) Church monument signs. For churches, a free-standing monument sign with manually changeable copy is permitted subject to the following criteria:

- (1) The design, logos, and colors shall be submitted to the City for written approval prior to fabrication. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (2) Signs shall be placed in a landscaped planter area which contains not less than 100 square feet. Exact placement of the sign is subject to approval. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (3) The total height of the sign shall not exceed 6 feet and shall include a decorative base. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (4) The total area of the sign shall not exceed 60 square feet per side. The changeable copy area shall not exceed 1/2 of the total sign area. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (5) The sign structure and housing shall be decorative with a textured finish with no exposed metal nuts or bolts. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (6) One manually changeable copy sign is allowed per property. The sign may be two sided. (Ord. No. 1036)
- (7) Monument signs shall be located at least 10 feet from any vehicle access point. (Ord. Nos. 843, 1036)
- (8) Creative church monument signs may be approved by the Development Review Board pursuant to the creative sign provisions of the Paramount Municipal Code. (Ord. No. 1036)

(j) Awning signs. Specific design criteria for awning signs shall be as follows:

- (1) The design, logos, and colors shall be submitted to the City for written approval prior to fabrication.
- (2) Awnings shall be fabricated of woven fabric or architecturally decorative metal. Prohibited awning material includes, but is not limited to, vinyl and plastic.
- (3) Awnings should have simple horizontal valences instead of scalloped or decorative valences.
- (4) Awnings shall not conceal architectural features of the building.
- (5) Awnings shall be designed to project over individual window and door openings.
- (6) Signs on awnings shall be limited to ground-level occupancies only.
- (7) A logo on the exterior surface of a shed of an awning shall be limited to a maximum area of 30 percent of the total exterior surface of the shed of an awning. A logo is not permitted on the valance of an awning.

- (8) Lettering on the valance of an awning shall be limited to a maximum height of eight inches and a maximum length of 60 percent of the length of the valance. Lettering is not permitted on the shed of an awning. Lettering shall be limited to one line.
- (9) Any signage on awnings shall be printed directly onto the awning material. Banners shall not be affixed to awnings.
- (10) Following review and approval of an encroachment permit by the Public Works Department, awnings may extend a maximum of 3.5 feet into the public right-of-way provided a minimum of eight feet is clear from the top of the sidewalk to the underside of an awning or canopy.
- (11) Awning signs shall be regularly cleaned and kept free of dust and visible defects.

(Ord. No. 1036)

(k) Projecting signs. Specific design criteria for projecting signs shall be as follows:

- (1) The design, logos, and colors shall be submitted to the City for written approval prior to fabrication.
- (2) Consideration for projecting signs shall be provided to existing signs on adjoining businesses to ensure that visibility is not inhibited.
- (3) Projecting signs shall be double-faced and constructed of well-crafted, durable finish materials.
- (4) Sign supports and brackets shall be compatible with the design and scale of the sign.
- (5) No more than one projecting sign shall be permitted for each business. No more than one projecting sign shall be permitted for each suite.
- (6) No more than two rows of letters are permitted.
- (7) Projecting signs shall project no more than 52 inches from a building surface.
- (8) The maximum area of a projecting sign is six square feet.
- (9) All conduits, exposed electrical raceways, transformers, junction boxes, and openings in the building surface shall be concealed.
- (10) Projecting signs shall be located near the front entry of a business. They shall not be located above the second floor window sill in multi-storied buildings.
- (11) Following review and approval of an encroachment permit by the Public Works Department, projecting signs may extend a maximum of 3.5 feet into the public right-of-way provided a minimum of eight feet is clear from the top of the ground to the underside of an awning or canopy.

(Ord. No. 1036)

(l) Portable signs. Specific design criteria for portable signs shall be as follows:

- (1) Definition. A portable sign is a sign or advertising device that rests on the ground and is not designed to be permanently attached to a building or permanently anchored to the ground. Portable sign types include A-frame or sandwich board signs, but do not include temporary banners, posters, flags, feather flags, streamers, balloons, pennants, and similar signs made of nonpermanent materials.
  - (2) Submittal. Prior to the installation of a portable sign, a portable sign permit shall be obtained from the Director of Community Development. The applicant shall submit the proposed design, logos, colors, and a site plan indicating the proposed location for a portable sign to the Director of Community Development for written approval prior to installation.
  - (3) Maximum. A maximum of one portable sign for each business suite is allowed.
  - (4) Location.
    - a. Portable signs may be located on private property, provided they do not interfere with pedestrian movement or disabled access. Approval criteria includes, but is not limited to, a determination that the proposed portable sign will not contribute to an overproliferation of portable signs at the site, and vehicular and pedestrian safety will be maintained. A minimum access width of four feet shall be maintained along all walkways and building entrances accessible to the public.
    - b. Portable signs shall be separated by distance to avoid overproliferation.
    - c. Portable signs shall not be placed over any utility box, or within 36 inches of a fire hydrant. Portable signs shall not inhibit walkway access or interfere with vehicular safety.
  - (5) Materials. Portable signs shall be constructed of wood or other well-crafted, durable, weather-resistant material and metal hardware, and all surfaces shall be coated with paint, varnish, or other durable finish. All portable sign copy shall be neat and legible. Portable signs shall have no electric, mechanical, or fixed attachments, including objects that move with the wind.
  - (6) Content. Portable signs shall not advertise products or services not available at the location of the sign.
  - (7) Display. A portable sign may be displayed only during the hours that the business being advertised is open to the public, and shall be removed from public view at all other times.
  - (8) Size. The maximum height of a portable sign shall be four feet. The total sign face area shall not exceed 10 square feet per side.
  - (9) Maintenance. Portable signs shall be maintained in a neat, orderly fashion so as not to constitute an unsightly appearance or a public nuisance. If such signs are not properly maintained, the property owner or business owner shall remove them immediately upon notice by the Director of Community Development.
- (Ord. No. 1036)
- (m) Creative signs.

- (1) Purpose. The purposes of the creative sign program are to encourage signs of unique design, that exhibit an exceptionally high degree of thoughtfulness, imagination, inventiveness, and spirit; and provide a process for the application of sign regulations in ways that will allow creatively designed signs that make a positive visual contribution to the property, zone, and overall image of the City, while mitigating the impacts of large or unusually designed signs.
- (2) Applicability. An applicant may request approval of a sign permit for a creative sign to authorize on-site signs that employ standards that differ from the other provisions of this chapter but comply with the provisions of this section.
- (3) Authority. Creative signs are subject to review and approval by the Development Review Board, pursuant to Sections 44-210 through 44-215 of the Paramount Municipal Code.
- (4) Design criteria.
  - a. Design quality. The sign shall constitute a substantial aesthetic improvement to the site and shall have a positive visual impact on the surrounding area; be of unique design, and exhibit an exceptionally high degree of thoughtfulness, imagination, inventiveness, and spirit; and provide strong graphic character through the imaginative use of graphics, color, texture, quality materials, scale, and proportion.
  - b. Contextual criteria. The sign shall contain at least one contextual design element, including a creative image reflecting the current or historic character of the City; or a substantially inventive representation of the use, name, or logo of the structure or business.
  - c. Architectural criteria. The sign shall utilize or enhance the architectural elements of the building and be placed in a logical location in relation to the overall composition of the building's façade and not cover any key architectural features and details of the façade.
  - d. Site criteria. The sign shall be sensitive to elements of the site, including but not limited to mature trees and existing signs advertising neighboring businesses.
  - e. Safety. The sign shall not interfere with pedestrian or traffic safety or otherwise endanger public safety.

(Ord. No. 1036)

(n) Sign program – Multi-tenant (three or more separate tenant spaces) developments.

- (1) Purpose. The purpose of the sign program requirements is to integrate a project's signs, including project identification signs, with the structure's design into a unified architectural statement.
- (2) Applicability. The approval of a sign program shall be required whenever any of the following circumstances exist.
  - a. All existing or proposed developments, whenever three or more separate tenant spaces are existing, created, or proposed on the same lot, including commercial, office, and industrial development, shall adopt a sign program to encourage creativity and ensure high quality in the design and display of multiple permanent signs.

- b. The adoption of a sign program shall be required at the time of the initial construction of a new project or at the time a new sign is proposed for an existing development without an approved sign program.
- (3) Application requirements. On any commercial, office or industrial site, or building requiring a sign program, the owner shall submit to the Director a sign program application containing the following:
- a. An accurate plot plan of the site showing the location of buildings, parking lots, driveways, and landscaped areas on the lot, at such scale as the Director may reasonably require;
- b. Computation of the proposed maximum total sign area, the proposed maximum area of individual signs, allowed maximum total sign area, allowed maximum area of individual signs, the height of signs and the number of monument signs; and
- c. Specifications with regard to sign type, lighting, location of each sign on the buildings, materials, sign proportions, and any other pertinent information as required by the Director.
- (4) Findings. The Director of Community Development may approve a sign program if the following findings are made:
- a. The sign program complies with the purpose of this Chapter.
- b. Proposed signs are in harmony with the structures they identify, other signage on the site, and the surrounding development.
- c. The sign program contains provisions to accommodate future revisions that may be required because of changes in use or tenants.
- (5) Revisions. Revisions to an approved sign program may be approved by the Director with a standard sign permit if the intent of the original approval is not affected. Revisions that would substantially deviate from the original approval shall require the approval of a new comprehensive sign program.
- (6) Minor modifications. Minor modifications to the sign program requirements may be permitted, provided that the proposed sign program meets the following criteria:
- a. Special circumstances, unique to the site and building locations, exist that require a modification from the sign program standards.
- b. Provides high quality graphic character through the imaginative use of color, graphics, proportion, quality materials, scale, and texture.

(Ord. No. 1036)

(Ord. Nos. 748, 755, 843, 882, 909, 1036)