

ARTICLE XI
SIGNS

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ARTICLE XI SIGNS

DIVISION 1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 11-101 Purpose

A. Appearance. To protect the natural aesthetic character and scenic beauty of the community.

B. Identification. To enable places of residential development and of commerce to be easily identified and allow the communication of information necessary and appropriate to the conduct of business.

C. Compatibility. To permit signs that are compatible with their surroundings, but preclude placement in a manner that conflicts with the principal uses of the site, adjacent land uses or adjacent signs, or that interferes with or distracts or obstructs the vision of motorists, bicyclists or pedestrians.

D. Prevent Hazards. To prevent hazardous situations, confusion and visual clutter caused by unrestricted proliferation of signs and by improper placement or installation, improper illumination, animation, and excessive height, area and bulk of signs.

E. Safety. To promote public health, safety and general welfare by prohibiting signs that have not been constructed, installed or maintained in a safe manner.

Section 11-102 Applicability. The regulatory provisions of this Article shall apply to the display, construction, erection, alteration, use, maintenance and location of all signs within the unincorporated areas of Garfield County.

Section 11-103 Sign Permit Required. Unless specifically exempted by provisions of these Regulations, all signs require a Sign Permit, issued by the Chief Building Official, prior to installation or placement. Modification or deviation from the terms or conditions of an approved Sign Permit is prohibited without approval of the Building Inspector.

Section 11-104 Temporary Signs

A. Temporary Signs Exempt From Permit Requirements. The following temporary signs and advertising devices are allowed in all zone districts and do not require a sign permit. Temporary signs shall be subject to compliance with the restrictions set forth in Section 11-106, *Prohibited Signs*.

1. **Construction Sign.** On building construction sites, individual signage for the participating building contractors, subcontractors, participating professional firms, participating lending institution and property owners on the construction site. The total square footage of all signs on a site shall not exceed 32 square feet. All signs shall be removed no later than seven (7) days after the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy for the project.
2. **Temporary Political Campaign Signs.** Signs announcing candidates seeking public office, with pertinent data, and signs relating to ballot issues, with pertinent data, subject to the following limitations:
 - a. Political campaign signs in any residential district shall not exceed five-(5) square feet per sign face or ten (10) square feet total area of signage.
 - b. Political campaign signs in commercial zone districts shall not exceed a maximum sign area of thirty-two (32) square feet for each sign face.
 - c. Political campaign signs shall be setback a minimum of eight (8) feet from the nearest pavement edge.
 - d. Political campaign signs shall be removed no later than seven (7) days after the election for which they are intended.
3. **Real Estate Signs.** One (1) real estate sign on the lot being offered for sale, rent or lease. The real estate sign shall be removed no later than seven (7) days after the closing of the real estate conveyance.
4. **Garage Sale Signs.** One (1) garage sale sign not exceeding six (6) square feet of sign area for all sign faces, which is installed on the lot or series of contiguous lots under the same ownership on which the garage sale is located, and which is installed not more than seven (7) days prior to the garage sale. Garage sale signs shall be removed no later than two (2) days after the garage sale.
5. **Community Event and Non-Profit Fund Raising Signs.** Signs announcing any public, charitable, educational, or religious event or function, with a total sign area of not more than twenty (20) square feet for all sign faces, and installed for a period of not more than twenty-one (21) days prior to the event. These signs shall be removed not later than seven (7) days after the event.

- 6. Temporary Decorations and Displays.** Temporary decoration or displays which are clearly incidental to and are customarily associated with any national, local or religious holiday or celebration.
- B. No Illumination.** Temporary signs shall not be illuminated.
- C. Restricted Location.** Unless otherwise permitted by these Regulations, temporary signs must be placed only on private property, located outside any right-of-way or easement, and placed to avoid any sight obstruction for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.
- D. Removal.** Unless otherwise permitted by these Regulations, temporary signs shall be removed within two (2) days of the activity or event for which the temporary sign was posted.
- E. County Right-of-Way.** Any signs located in a County right-of-way shall comply with the Garfield County Road and Right-of-way Regulations.

Section 11-105 Permanent Signs That Are Exempt from Permit Requirements

A. Exemptions. The following permanent signs and advertising devices are exempt from the sign permit requirements. Signs exempt from permit requirements shall be subject to compliance with the restrictions set forth in Section 11-106, *Prohibited Signs*.

1. Government Signs and Notices.

- a.** Government signs for local, state and federal agencies, including "Neighborhood Watch" signs.
- b.** Official government notices posted by government officers in the performance of their duties or by a landowner required to post a notice by government officials.

2. Signage for Hazardous or Dangerous Conditions.

- a.** Temporary or permanent signs erected by a public utility company or construction company to warn of dangerous or hazardous conditions.
- b.** Warning signs such as "No Trespassing," "Danger," and "Do Not Enter."

3. **Building Identification and Commemorative Signs.** Building name, date of erection, monumental citations and commemorative tablets when carved into stone, concrete or similar material or made of bronze, aluminum or other permanent-type construction and located as an integral part of the structure.
4. **Structural Maintenance and Changes to Advertising Copy.** Painting, repairing and cleaning of an advertising structure or changing the advertising copy or message on an advertising structure, unless a structural change is made.
5. **Residential Signs.** Personal identifications signs for places of residence, provided that there is a maximum of one (1) per residence and the sign does not exceed a maximum sign area of two (2) square feet.
6. **Vehicle Signs and Advertising Devices.** Signs permanently affixed to a vehicle, such as advertisements painted on trucks and cars, unless the vehicle is parked specifically for advertising purposes.
7. **Gasoline Pump Signs.** Signs over gas pumps which indicate gas prices, provided that these signs shall be limited to one (1) per pump island and shall be no larger than four (4) square feet per sign face, with a maximum of two (2) sign faces per pump island.
8. **Art Displays.** Works of fine art which do not serve to identify a product or business and which are not displayed in conjunction with a commercial enterprise that may benefit or realize direct commercial gain from the display.
9. **Directional Traffic Signs.** Directional traffic signs which do not exceed four (4) square feet per sign face, do not exceed six (6) feet in height above ground level, and which do not carry any commercial messages or advertisements.
10. **Signs Identifying a Place of Religious Assembly.** Signs identifying a building as a place of religious assembly or as a religious institution, provided that:
 - a. The sign is not larger than 90 square feet of total sign area in a residential or agricultural zone district, or 150 square feet of total sign area in a commercial or industrial zone district.

b. The sign otherwise complies with restrictions and conditions set forth in these Regulations.

11. **Ideological Sign.** A sign expressing philosophical concepts, including religious and political signs.

Section 11-106 Prohibited Signs. The following signs and advertising devices are prohibited in all zone districts.

A. Structurally Unsafe Signs. Signs that are structurally unsafe or hazardous.

B. Signs Blocking Ingress or Egress. Signs that prevent free ingress or egress from any door, window or fire escape. No sign shall be attached to a standpipe or fire escape, except those signs that may be required by other codes, regulations, or ordinances for public safety.

C. Signs Obstructing Visibility. Signs that obstruct or interfere with traffic signs or signals, or that impair visibility in the public right-of-way, or that are located within a clear vision area.

1. A freestanding sign shall not be placed at the intersection of two (2) streets within the triangular area defined by a line extending from the point thirty (30) feet from the intersection of curb-lines along one (1) street to a point thirty (30) feet from the intersection along the other curb-line.

D. Displays With Open Light Bulbs. External displays, other than temporary decorative holiday lighting, that consist of unshielded or open light bulbs.

E. Signs Without Adequate Clearance from Power Lines. Signs that have been constructed or maintained with less horizontal or vertical clearance from authorized communication or energized electrical power lines than that prescribed by state law or required by the utility provider.

F. Off-Premises Signs. Signs not located upon the property or business identified or advertised by the sign, and signs located in the public right-of-way or easement, unless the Board of Adjustment determines that an off-site sign conforms to the district regulation in which the sign is located and is necessary to promote the interests of the use to which it relates.

G. Vehicle Signs. Signs placed on vehicles or trailers whose sole purpose is for advertising, that are parked or located for the apparent purpose of advertising

a product, service or activity or to direct people to a business or activity located on the premises or nearby

H. Obsolete Signs. Signs that are located on property that becomes vacant and unoccupied for a period of six months or more, or signs that pertain to a time, event or purpose that no longer applies. The sign face of an obsolete sign shall be removed by the owner of the sign or the owner of the property. A sign that is not so removed by the owner may be removed by the Chief Building Official, as authorized in this Code, provided however, that the following types of signs shall be excepted from these provisions:

1. **Exception for Change of Ownership.** Signs displayed on a business temporarily suspended because of a change of ownership or management of the business shall not be construed to be obsolete unless the property remains vacant or the business is closed for a period of twelve (12) months or more.
2. **Exception for Seasonal Business.** Permanent signs displayed on a business that is open only on a seasonal basis shall not be construed to be obsolete unless the property remains vacant or the business is closed for a period of twelve (12) months or more.

I. Signs Imitating or That May Be Construed To Be Traffic Signals.

1. Signs which imitate an official traffic sign or signal or which contain the words "stop," "slow" or other similar words.
2. Signs which are of a size, location, movement, content, coloring or manner of illumination that may be confused with or construed as a traffic-control device.

J. Signs of Obscene Character. Signs or pictures of an obscene, indecent or immoral character that will offend public morals or decency, based upon constitutional standards.

K. More than One Sign Per Lot. More than one sign per lot, unless otherwise permitted by these Regulations.

Section 11-107 Development Identification Signs, Industrial and Commercial, PUD or Subdivision Signs.

A. New Development. A sign proposed to identify a development, and signage proposals for industrial and commercial uses located in a commercial and industrial PUD or subdivision, are subject to review and approval by the

Board of County Commissioners as part of the PUD or subdivision review and approval process. An approved plan establishing the regulatory provisions and restrictions for signage in the commercial or industrial PUD or subdivision shall be required for final plat approval, and recorded with the final plat.

B. Existing Development. Existing commercial and industrial uses that are legally platted as PUDs or subdivisions under previous Garfield County land use regulations shall be allowed one (1) freestanding sign per development and one (1) identification sign for each business located in the development. The sign height and area of the sign face shall be in compliance with the sign code provisions applicable to the underlying zone district. A plan establishing the regulatory provisions and restrictions for signage in the PUD or subdivision development shall be approved by the Board of County Commissioners and recorded with the County Clerk and Recorder.

Section 11-108 Public Airport Zone District Signs. In the Public Airport Zone District (PA), a wall sign shall be allowed on the runway side of the building and at the public access side of each building.

Section 11-109 Nonconforming Signs

A. Legally Nonconforming Signs. Signs legally erected prior to adoption of these Regulations and lawfully maintained in accordance with the provisions of prior regulations, but which do not conform with the provisions of these Regulations, shall be allowed to continue as a legally nonconforming sign for a period of eight (8) years from the effective date of these regulations, under the following conditions:

1. **Sign May Not be Changed.** The nonconforming sign shall be structurally altered in any manner that increases the nonconformity of such sign.
2. **Sign May Not Be Relocated or Replaced.** The nonconforming sign shall not be relocated or replaced in manner that continues the nonconformity.
3. **Burden Rests Upon Owner.** The burden of establishing a sign to be a legally nonconforming sign under these Regulations shall rest entirely upon the owner.
4. **Removal after Eight Years.** The nonconforming sign shall be removed or brought into compliance with these Regulations at the end of the eight-year period.

B. Termination of Legally Nonconforming Signs.

1. **Abandonment.** Legally nonconforming signs pertaining to activities or occupants that are no longer using a property shall be removed from the premises within six months after the associated activity or occupant has vacated the premises. Any such sign not removed within the required period shall constitute a violation of this Code and shall be subject to removal by action of the County.
2. **Destruction, Damage or Obsolescence.** The right to maintain any legally nonconforming sign shall terminate whenever the sign sustains damage in excess of fifty (50) percent of its replacement cost, or becomes obsolete or substandard to the extent that the sign becomes a hazard.
3. **Failure to Maintain.** The right to continue use of a legally nonconforming sign shall terminate if the sign is not maintained in compliance with the maintenance requirements set forth in Section 11-303, *Maintenance*.
4. **Violations.** Any violation of these Regulations or the prior regulations under which a legally nonconforming sign has been permitted shall immediately terminate the right to continue use of the nonconforming sign. The Board of County Commissioners may choose to condemn a legally nonconforming sign found to be in violation of these Regulations. Recommendations for condemnation shall be made by the Chief Building Official to the Board of County Commissioners in compliance with the procedures set forth in this Code.

DIVISION 2 SIGN PERMIT APPLICATION, REVIEW, AND APPROVAL

Section 11-201 Process

A. Application Materials. Any application for a sign permit shall include the following materials. The Chief Building Official may require additional materials or information as deemed necessary to properly evaluate the proposed sign.

1. **Application Form and Fees.** The application for a sign permit shall be made by the owner of the property on which the sign is to be located, or the owner's authorized agent. The permit fee shall be established by resolution of the Board of County Commissioners and the fee schedule provided to the applicant by the Chief Building

Official. Application shall be made on forms provided by the Chief Building Official and shall include the following information.

- a. The name, address and phone number of the applicant.
- b. The physical address of the property.
- c. Zoning of the property.
- d. The nature of the principal use to be identified by the proposed sign.

2. **Scale Drawing of the Sign.** A scale drawing of the proposed sign, that includes exact dimensions and area calculations, text, and color and materials proposed for the sign.

3. **Plat Plan.** A plat plan, drawn to scale, showing the proposed location and orientation of the sign. The plat plan shall include all easements and rights-of-way of record that may affect or be affected by the location of the proposed sign.

4. **Description of Sign Illumination.** A detailed description of the sign illumination. This may be shown on the scale drawing of the proposed sign. Description of illumination shall include target illumination levels, hours of operation, control methods, lamp and luminaire information, and manufacturer description.

B. Review and Approval.

1. **Completeness Determination.** Within three (3) working days of receiving an application for Sign Permit, the Chief Building Official shall determine whether the application is complete, based upon the requirements for application materials set forth in Section 11-201(A).

2. **Evaluation.** Upon determination of completeness, the Chief Building Official shall review the application and approve, approve with conditions or deny the Sign Permit based upon compliance with Section 11-203, *Sign Permit Review Criteria*.

3. **Written Notice of Action by Chief Building Official.** The Chief Building Official shall provide written notice to the applicant stating approval, conditions of approval, or denial and the specific review criteria that were not met. The Chief Building Official's decision

may be appealed to the Board of County Commissioners. The process for application, review and approval of an appeal of the Director's decision is set forth in Section 4-104(C) of Article IV, *Determination of Completeness*.

Section 11-202 Variance. The applicant for a sign permit may apply to the Board of Adjustment for a variance from provisions of these Regulations. The process for application and review of a variance request is set forth in Section 4-301 of Article IV, *Application and Review Procedures*.

Section 11-203 Sign Permit Review Criteria

A. On-Premises Advertising. The sign identifies or advertises the legally established principal use of the lot on which the sign is located.

B. Dimensions. The size and height of the sign complies with standards set forth in the Sign Table, Section 11-302.

1. Where a sign has two display faces, the area of one side shall be considered the total area of signage for that sign.

C. Changeable Message. Signs with a changeable message must remain motionless for no less than five (5) seconds.

D. Illumination

1. **No Impact to Neighboring Property.** Illuminated signs shall not cause glare or otherwise adversely impact residential areas.
2. **No Impact to Traffic.** Neither the direct or reflected light from any light source illuminating the sign shall create a traffic hazard to operators of motor vehicles on public thoroughfares or approaches to public thoroughfares. Colored lights will not be used at any location or in a manner so as to be confused with or construed as a traffic control device.

E. Location. The sign is entirely located on private property. The sign does not create an obstruction for traffic or create any hazard for motorists, cyclist or pedestrians.

F. Safety. The sign will be constructed in a manner that does not present a hazard situation.

1. **Wind Load.** Signs over ten (10) feet in height and/or forty (40) square feet in surface area shall be engineered to withstand a wind loading of a minimum of thirty (30) pounds per square foot of sign area without failure of the face retention system or sign structure.
2. **Electrical Wiring.** Electrical wiring for the sign shall be underground in the case of freestanding signs, and behind the sign cabinet in the case of wall or projecting signs.
3. **Support.** Roof signs, signs mounted on marquees, or projecting signs shall be engineered in such a manner that no guy wires are needed for support, other than for the sign structure itself.
4. **Protection of Anchors and Supports.** Anchors and supports shall be protected when near driveways, parking lots or similar locations where they could be damaged by moving vehicles. Signs attached to masonry, concrete or steel shall be safely and securely fastened thereto by means of metal anchors, bolts or approved expansion screws of sufficient size and anchorage to safely support the loads applied. No anchor or support of any sign, except flat wall signs, shall be connected to or supported by a parapet wall that is not braced.

DIVISION 3 USE RESTRICTIONS, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

Section 11-301 Incorporation of the Uniform Sign Code. The Uniform Sign Code, 1979 Edition, of the International Conference of Chief Building Officials, including all appendices, is hereby adopted by the County to provide minimum standards to safeguard life, health, property and public welfare by regulating and controlling the design, quality of materials, construction, location, size, electrification and maintenance of all sign structures not located in a building. Section 303.3 of the Uniform Sign Code, 1979 Edition, is hereby deleted. In the event of conflict between the regulatory provisions of the Uniform Sign Code and the Land Use Code, the more restrictive provisions shall control.

Section 11-302 Sign Table

A. The Sign Table details the regulatory provisions for signs in each zone district.

1. **Abbreviations.** Zone Districts are represented by the following abbreviations:

RS	Residential Suburban
RU	Residential Urban
CB	Commercial - Business

CG	Commercial - General
CL	Commercial - Limited
RLG	Resource Lands – Gentle Slope
RLT	Resource Lands – Talus Slopes
RLE	Resource Lands – Escarpment
FLP	Resource Lands - Plateau
PL	Public Lands
R	Rural
PA	Public Airport

2. **Definition of Types of Signs and Structural Types of Signs.**
Definition of the terms identifying types of signs and structural types of signs is set forth in Article XVI, *Definitions*.

Zone District	Types of Signs Allowed	Structural Types of Signs Allowed	Maximum Height	Maximum Total Sign Area Per Face
RS & RU	Construction Identification	FREESTANDING (for the purpose of subdivision identification)	4'	30 square feet
	Real Estate	WALL	N/A	2.5 square feet
	Political Ideological Garage Sale	TEMPORARY	4'	6 square feet, unless otherwise allowed under Section 11-104, <i>Temporary Signs</i>
CB, CG & CL	Business Construction Identification	FREESTANDING	30'	150 square feet
		WALL	NA	2 square feet per lineal foot of building, not to exceed 60 square feet.
		PROJECTING	NA	
		SUSPENDED	NA	
	Joint Identification	ROOF	not to exceed roof peak	
	Real Estate Political Ideological Garage Sale	TEMPORARY	10'	30 square feet, unless otherwise allowed under Section 11-104, <i>Temporary Signs</i>
RLG	Business Construction Identification	FREESTANDING	20'	90 square feet
		WALL	N/A	2 square feet per lineal foot of building, not to exceed 30 square feet
		PROJECTING	NA	
		SUSPENDED	NA	
	Real Estate	ROOF	NA	
	Political Ideological Garage Sale	TEMPORARY	10'	30 square feet, unless otherwise allowed under Section 11-104, <i>Temporary Signs</i>

Zone District	Types of Signs Allowed	Structural Types of Signs Allowed	Maximum Height	Maximum Total Sign Area Per Face
RLP	Construction Identification Real Estate Political Ideological Garage Sale	FREESTANDING	15'	50 square feet
		WALL	NA	2 square feet per lineal feet of building frontage not to exceed 30 square feet
		PROJECTING	NA	
		SUSPENDED	NA	
		ROOF	NA	
TEMPORARY	5'	30 square feet, unless otherwise allowed under Section 11-104, <i>Temporary Signs</i>		
R	Business Construction Identification Real Estate Political Ideological Garage Sale	FREESTANDING	20'	90 square feet
		WALL	NA	2 square feet per lineal feet of building frontage not to exceed 30 square feet
		PROJECTING	NA	
		SUSPENDED	NA	
		ROOF	not to exceed roof peak	
		TEMPORARY	10'	30 square feet, unless otherwise allowed under Section 11-104, <i>Temporary Signs</i>
TEMPORARY	4'	6 square feet, unless otherwise allowed under Section 11-104, <i>Temporary Signs</i>		
PA	Business Construction Identification Joint Identification Real Estate Political Ideological Garage Sale	FREESTANDING	30'	150 square feet
		WALL	NA	2 square feet per lineal foot of building frontage, not to exceed 180 square feet
		PROJECTING	NA	
		TEMPORARY	Subject to Airport Manager approval and not to exceed 32 square feet	

Zone District	Types of Signs Allowed	Structural Types of Signs Allowed	Maximum Height	Maximum Total Sign Area Per Face
<p>TABLE NOTES:</p> <p>1. Multiple Property Frontage. If the lot on which a building is located has multiple property frontage, then the sign limitation for that zone district shall apply to all districts.</p> <p>2. Air Space Requirement for Freestanding Signs. Freestanding signs shall maintain free air space between a height of forty-two (42) inches and a height of seventy-two (72) inches above the adjacent street.</p>				

Section 11-303 Maintenance. Signs and sign structures shall be maintained at all times in a state of good repair, with all braces, bolts, clips, supporting frame and fastenings free from deterioration, insect infestation, rot, rust or loosening. All signs shall be kept neatly finished, including all metal parts and supports that are not galvanized or constructed of rust resistant metals.

DIVISION 4 INSPECTION, REMEDIES AND ENFORCEMENT OF SIGN PERMIT REGULATIONS

Section 11-401 Inspection and Order to Repair.

A. Inspection and Authority for Order to Repair. The Chief Building Official shall inspect and shall have the authority to order the repair, alteration, painting or removal, at the owner's expense, of any sign that constitutes a hazard to safety, health or public welfare by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation or obsolescence.

B. Written Order. When the Chief Building Official finds that a violation of these Regulations exists, he shall issue a written order to the alleged violator.

1. The order shall be served on both the property owner and the owner of the sign, if different, personally, or by certified mail, return receipt requested.
2. The order shall specify the regulatory provisions that the individual may be in violation of, and shall state that the individual has ten (10) days from the date of receipt of the order in which to correct the alleged violation or to file an appeal with the Board of County Commissioners.

Section 11-402 Remedies

A. Removal of Abandoned or Obsolete Sign. If, upon inspection, the Chief Building Official finds that a sign has been abandoned, a written order shall be issued to the owner of the sign and/or owner or occupant of the premises stating the violation and requiring that the sign be removed within ten (10) days of receipt of the order. In cases of emergency, the Chief Building Official may cause the immediate removal of any sign that endangers the public or is structurally, materially, electrically or otherwise defective, without notice, at the expense of the owner of the sign or premises.

B. Removal of Prohibited Sign. In the case of a prohibited sign, the sign owner or owner of the premises shall be required to remove the offending sign(s) within two (2) days of receipt of written notification served on the sign owner or property owner personally or by certified mail, return receipt requested. If the sign is not removed in compliance with the order, the County may remove the offending sign(s) and recover the costs from the owner of the sign(s) or the property owner.

C. Revocation of Sign Permit. If the Chief Building Official finds that the sign under any permit issued does not comply with the information supplied in the permit application and/or is in violation of these Regulations, or finds that there has been any misrepresentation in connection with the application for the permit, he shall notify the sign owner of such findings and notify the sign owner that the violation must be corrected within five (5) working days. The sign owner shall have five (5) working days in which to reply to such notification. If such correction is not made within the five (5) working day period, the Chief Building Official shall revoke the permit and shall serve written notice thereof upon the sign owner. Any County empowered official may remove a sign in the County right-of-way.

Section 11-403 Enforcement and Penalties. Violations of the regulatory provisions in this Article XI are subject to the applicable enforcement and penalty provisions set forth in Article XII, *Enforcement, Violation and Penalties*.