



City of North Port

ORDINANCE NO. 2014-42

(Amendments to Chapter 29, Sign Regulations of the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) Section 29-10 I. and adding provisions for changeable copy/electronic signs on billboards within the incorporated City limits)

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH PORT, FLORIDA; AMENDING CHAPTER 29 SIGN REGULATIONS OF THE UNIFIED LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE (ULDC), SECTION 29-10 I. AND ADDING PROVISIONS FOR CHANGEABLE COPY/ELECTRONIC SIGNS ON BILLBOARDS; PROVIDING FOR FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR ADOPTION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF NORTH PORT, FLORIDA:

SECTION 1- FINDINGS:

WHEREAS, Pursuant to Section 29-1 of the City of North Port Unified Land Development Code, Sign Regulations, Intent and Objectives, the intent of this chapter is to establish sign standards that will promote safety, protect and preserve the aesthetic and visual environment, character and quality of the city and the value of property; to create a more attractive economic and business climate; to reduce urban clutter; and to eliminate nuisance forms of advertising by ensuring that signs are compatible with surrounding land uses and, will not, by their type, size,

location, and construction or manner of display, endanger the public safety of individuals, confuse or mislead or obstruct the vision necessary for traffic safety of North Port; and

WHEREAS, signage is important to the exposure and advertisement of businesses located within the City of North Port; and

WHEREAS, amending the City's sign code is necessary to maintain and promote business friendly environment within the City of North Port; and

WHEREAS, the City of North Port Planning and Zoning Advisory Board has held a public hearing with due public notice to receive public comments on the revision of the Unified Land Development Code; and

WHEREAS, the North Port City Commission has held public hearings with due public notice to review the recommendations of the North Port Planning and Zoning Advisory Board, and to receive public comments on the revision of the Unified Land Development Code.

SECTION 2 -ADOPTION:

2.01 The North Port City Commission hereby approves and adopts the following amendments and additions in strikethrough and underline format to the City of North Port Unified Land Development Code, Chapters 29, Section 29-10 I. Sign Regulations, which is attached hereto, and incorporated herein, as Exhibit "A".

SECTION 3 – SEVERABILITY

3.01 If any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phase, or provision of this ordinance is for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such provisions shall be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision and such holding shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.

SECTION 4 – CONFLICTS

4.01 In the event of any conflict between the provisions of this Ordinance and any other City of North Port City Ordinance or portions thereof, the provisions of this Ordinance shall prevail to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 5 - EFFECTIVE DATE:

5.01 This Ordinance shall take effect immediately after adoption.

READ BY TITLE ONLY at first reading by the City Commission of the City of North Port, Florida in public session this ____ day of _____, 2015.

PASSED and DULY ADOPTED by the City Commission of the City of North Port, on the second and final reading in public session this ____ day of _____, 2015.

CITY OF NORTH PORT, FLORIDA

RHONDA Y. DIFRANCO
MAYOR

ATTEST:

HELEN RAIMBEAU, MMC
City Clerk

Approved as to form and correctness:

MARK MORIARTY
City Attorney

EXHIBIT “A”

I. Freestanding signs.

(1) Arterial or collector roadways. One (1) freestanding sign shall be allowed for each collector or arterial roadway on which the lot or parcel abuts.

(2) Changeable copy/electronic. A freestanding changeable copy sign is permitted only if incorporated in an otherwise permitted freestanding sign, as provided in subsection F(2) below, as follows:

(a) The sign copy shall only relate to events/products occurring or to occur within the structure or on the premises;

(b) Freehand lettering is permitted if sign cannot be read from roadway. If the sign can be read from the roadway, freehand lettering and chalk on chalkboard surfaces are prohibited;

(c) The sign face may be illuminated or non-illuminated; and each changeable electronic signs message shall be static text characters which may include graphics and not change at a rate greater than once every six (6) seconds be displayed for at least seven and one-half (7 1/2) seconds without a change of message. A and the change of message shall change completely within two (2) seconds be accomplished within two (2) seconds;

(d) The signage shall otherwise comply with the applicable total sign area regulations. The changeable copy portion of the freestanding sign shall be included in the total sign area calculations permitted and the electronic portion shall not measure greater than eight (8) square feet sixty (60%) percent of the permitted sign area.

(e) No video, animated, scrolling, flashing or otherwise moving changeable electronic message shall be permitted. Static Display with “Fade” or “Dissolve” transitions, or similar subtle transitions and frame effects that do not have the appearance of moving text or images are permitted.

(f) Minimum text character height for changeable copy in conjunction with a ground sign shall be six (6) inches where the posted speed limit is greater than 30 mph or four inches where the posted speed limit is 30 mph or less.

(g) Sign resolution. The pixel pitch shall be no greater than a maximum of 25mm. The pixel pitch is the space between the pixels in a display device which is measured in millimeters. The greater the spacing between pixels the less sharp the image.

(h) Signs with a changeable electronic variable message shall include an automatic dimmer control mechanism to account for varying natural light conditions; brightness not to exceed 0.3 footcandles above ambient light.

(i) The owner of a changeable copy sign with electronic message capability shall post clearly on the sign any relevant permit contact information in the event the sign malfunctions and should need to be powered off for public safety purposes. If the building official or designee determines that a changeable copy sign with electronic message has malfunctioned or constitutes a threat to public safety, the owner of the sign shall correct the circumstance or power off the sign within 12 hours of a request by the building official or designee.

(j) The sign must default to a dark screen when not displaying message.

(k) Electronic signs shall be permitted only in the Commercial General (CG), Light Industrial and Warehousing (ILW), Government Use (GU), Office, Professional, Institutional District (OPI) and Planned Community Development (PCD) Zoning Districts.

(l) No changeable copy/electronic sign shall be permitted that is oriented towards any abutting Residential, Agricultural, and Neighborhood Commercial Zoning Districts.

(3) Changeable copy or electronic signs in theater or cinema. Changeable copy sign incorporated in the freestanding sign for a theater or cinema as follows:

(a) Changeable copy/electronic signage is limited to a maximum of eight (8) square feet per auditorium or screen with multiple auditoriums or screens to a building, a maximum of eighty (80) square feet per building;

(b) The sign copy shall only relate to events occurring or to occur within the theater or cinema or on the premises;

(c) All types of freehand lettering and chalk on chalkboard surfaces are prohibited;

(d) The sign face may be illuminated or non-illuminated; and electronic signs shall not change at a rate greater than once every ~~six (6) seconds~~ seven and one-half (7 1/2) seconds and the message shall change completely within two (2) seconds;

(e) The signage shall otherwise comply with the applicable total sign area regulations.

(4) Changeable copy/electronic signs on billboards. Changeable copy/electronic signs incorporated on billboard signs shall be as follows:

(a) Changeable copy/electronic signage on billboards is permitted at one-hundred (100%) percent of total allowable signage area.

(b) The sign face shall not change at a rate greater than once every sixty (60) seconds and the message shall change completely within two (2) seconds.

(c) No video, animated, scrolling, flashing or otherwise moving changeable electronic variable message shall be permitted.

(d) Sign resolution. The pixel pitch shall be no greater than a maximum of 35mm. The pixel pitch is the space between the pixels in a display device which is measured in millimeters. The greater the spacing between pixels the less sharp the image.

(e) Signs with a changeable electronic variable message shall include an automatic dimmer control mechanism to account for varying natural light conditions; brightness not to exceed 0.3 footcandles above ambient light.

(f) The owner of a changeable copy sign with electronic variable message capability shall post clearly on the sign any relevant permit contact information in the event the sign malfunctions and should need to be powered off for public safety purposes. If the building official or designee determines that a changeable copy sign with electronic variable message has malfunctioned or constitutes a threat to public safety, the owner of the sign shall correct the circumstance or power off the sign within 12 hours of a request by the building official or designee.

(g) The sign must default to a dark screen when not displaying message.

~~(4)~~ (5) Community entry sign. Community identification/entry sign not exceeding one hundred (100) square feet, excluding wall(s) area for entry feature(s).

(a) The height of the sign shall be no greater than eight (8) feet in height and shall be regulated by the limits listed for each Activity Center or zoning district in this Unified Land Development Code, whichever is the more restrictive.

(b) A community sign shall only contain the community name, logo, City and/or salutation.

(c) Shall not contain any advertising matter.

~~(5)~~(6) Monument ground signs. Freestanding signs (monument signs/ground signs shall include street numbers six (6) inches in height located at the top of all faces of the sign, which shall not be subtracted from the total allowable sign area. A separation of fifty (50) feet from all other signs shall be maintained.

~~(6)~~ (7) Neighborhood institutional signs in residential districts. One (1) identification sign, which may also include changeable copy, but not electronic, for educational, charitable, or other similar institutional uses not exceeding twelve (12) square feet each face, not more than six (6) feet high in a residential zoning district.

[Amended 11-24-2003 by Ord. No. 2002-56]

~~(7)~~ (8) Religious uses identification signs. One (1) identification sign, which may also include changeable copy, for religious uses not exceeding twenty-four (24) square feet each face.

- (a) The structure shall not be more than six (6) feet high in a residential zoning district.
- (b) If the sign is less than twenty-four (24) square feet, special exception review, if applicable, is not required. [Amended 11-24-2003 by Ord. No. 2002-56]
- ~~(8)~~ (9) Subdivision entry signs. The entrance sign giving the name of a subdivision, provided that:
 - (a) A sign shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet.
 - (b) A sign shall be located at the main entrances only.
 - (c) A sign shall contain no other advertising.
- ~~(9)~~ (10) Trott Circle. In the area of Trott Circle, the individual occupants may designate a common area on the frontage where a lot within the industrial area abuts a roadway to place a freestanding sign to allow businesses located within the Trott Circle Industrial area to advertise as follows:
 - (a) The sign shall contain only the business names or logos.
 - (b) The sign shall not exceed fifteen (15) feet in height.
 - (c) The sign area shall not exceed one hundred twenty (120) square feet.