

Chapter 29 - SIGN REGULATIONS

[HISTORY: Adopted by the City Commission of the City of North Port 9-17-1990 by Ord. No. 90-28 (Section 5); amended in its entirety 12-20-1999 by Ord. No. 99-23; amended in its entirety 06-14-2010 by Ord. No. 2010-13. Subsequent amendments noted where applicable.]

GENERAL REFERENCES **Zoning Regulations — See. Ch. 53.**

Sec. 29-6. - General restrictions.

- A. *Abandoned signs.* Any sign now or hereafter existing which no longer advertises an existing business, or a product sold, shall be dismantled and removed by the owner, agent, or person having beneficial use of the building, structure, or land upon which such sign shall be found, within thirty (30) days after written notification by the Building Department. If the permittee or owner fails to remove the sign or replace the sign with a conforming sign within thirty (30) days after such notice, such sign shall be removed by the City at the expense of the entity or person having the right to use and possession of the property upon which the sign is located.
- (1) Abandoned sign designation does not apply to monuments signs on parcels where businesses are for sale or in the event of a change of occupancy.
- B. *Business districts.* Business districts shall encompass both sides of the roadway. Colors for banners used in each Business District shall be a single color scheme and shall not be duplicated by any other Business District. Business districts shall be as follows:
- (1) Ortiz to Biscayne.
- (2) Biscayne Boulevard to North Port Boulevard.
- (3) North Port Boulevard to Sumter Boulevard.
- (4) Sumter Boulevard to Cranberry Boulevard.
- C. *City parks.* Signs other than City authorized signs that are allowed in City Parks shall receive a Special Event or Temporary Use Permit and approved by City Manager or designee or City Commission.
- D. *Historic sign designation criteria.* Any site, building, structure, object or district which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places shall be nominated for designation.
- (1) In order for a site, building, structure, object, or district which is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places to be designated, it must convey an overall sense of past time and place by possessing at least three (3) of the following attributes of integrity; location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association, and one (1) or more of the following:
- (a) Be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, State or National history;
- (b) Be associated with the lives of persons significant in local, State or National history;
- (c) Embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master builder, architect or designer, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- (d) Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history;
- (e) Interior spaces shall not be designated unless the interiors have exceptional architectural, artistic, or historical importance, and are customarily open to the public.
- (2) Historic designation shall be approved by Commission.

- E. *Location of signs.* No sign shall be located in a required side or rear yard where the lot abuts or is separated only by a right-of-way from a residential use, except for nonresidential lots that abut I-75.
- F. *Maintenance.* All signs, together with all their supports, braces, guys and anchors, shall be maintained so as to present a neat, clean appearance. Painted areas shall be kept in good condition and illumination, if applicable, shall be maintained in good working order. The Building Department with written notice, may order the removal of any sign that is not maintained in accordance with the provisions of this paragraph. If such order is not complied with within thirty (30) days, the Building Department shall remove such sign at the expense of the owner or lessee thereof.
- G. *Mounting of signs.* No sign attached to a building shall project horizontally beyond the end of the wall or vertically above its roof or, in the case of a parapet wall, vertically above the top of the parapet wall.
- H. *Off-site sign.* Off-site signs shall not be permitted in an AG District.
- I. *Permits required.* Any sign, including exempt signs, requiring electric or concrete work shall require a building permit.
- J. *Public art.* Signs used to identify public art shall not be subtracted from allowable signage.
- K. *Public property.* No private sign, including an exempt sign, shall be erected, altered or maintained over or upon any public property or public right-of-way unless permitted by these regulations or by the City Commission after a recommendation by the City's Public Works Director.
- L. *Sight triangle and visibility.* The following area shall be designed and maintained to allow visibility between two and one-half (2½) feet and nine (9) feet above ground (tree trunks trimmed of foliage to nine (9) feet, and newly planted material with immature crown development allowing visibility are exempt):
 - (1) At the intersection of two (2) public rights-of-way, a sight triangle described by the intersection of the right-of-way lines extended, and a line joining points on those lines thirty-five (35) feet from said intersection.
 - (2) At the intersection of a private driveway and public right-of-way, a sight triangle described by the intersection of the edge of the driveway and the right-of-way, and a line joining points on those lines thirteen (13) feet from said intersection.
 - (3) Additional visibility requirements may be imposed by the department responsible for land development services where unusual topography or traffic patterns are needed to protect pedestrian or vehicular safety.
- M. *Unfinished side of signs.* No sign of any type or classification, including an exempt sign, shall be erected, altered or maintained in such a location or position so that an unfinished side may be visible from off the site.
- N. *Unlawful signs.* In case any sign shall be installed, erected or constructed in violation of any of the terms of these zoning regulations or the Florida Building Code, the Building Department shall notify the owner or lessee thereof to alter the sign so as to comply with these zoning regulations or the building code and to secure the required permits, or to remove the sign. If such order is not complied with within thirty (30) days, the Building Department shall remove such sign at the expense of the owner or lessee thereof.
- O. *Unsafe signs.* Should any sign become insecure, in danger of falling or otherwise unsafe in the opinion of the City Manager or designee, the owner thereof, or the person or firm maintaining the sign shall upon written notice of the Building Department, forthwith in the case of immediate danger and in any case within ten (10) days, remove such sign or secure the same in a manner approved by the Building Department, in conformity with the provisions of the Florida Building Code. If such order is not complied with within ten (10) days, the Building department shall remove such sign at the expense of the owner or lessee.
- P. *Utilities and infrastructure.* No sign shall be constructed or erected in the vicinity of any utility infrastructures without the prior authorization of the North Port Utilities Department or any affected utility company.

Sec. 29-7. - Prohibited signs.

The following shall be prohibited:

- A. *State requirements.* Any sign prohibited under Chapter 479, Florida Statutes, pertaining to outdoor advertising.
- B. *Gateway (Activity Center #3).* In the area shown as Activity Center No. 3 on the Future Land Use Map in the City of North Port Comprehensive Plan, off-site signs shall not be permitted.
- C. *Blank temporary signs.* Any non-permanent sign without sign copy.
- D. *Bench signs.* Any sign which is attached or painted to any type of bench/seat.
- E. *Bus shelters signs/advertising.*
- F. *Changeable copy signs.* Stand alone changing message devices, except those displaying time and temperature or as provided in this chapter.
- G. *Expressed permission.* Any sign that is not expressly permitted by right in this Unified Land Development Code or after the grant of a special exception permit.
- H. *Ingress and egress.* Any sign preventing free ingress or egress from any door, window, fire escape or other entrance or exit to any building, sidewalk, or roadway or any sign attached to a standpipe or fire escape. No sign shall be attached to a standpipe or fire escape except as required by the City.
- I. *Motion signs.* Any signs which are portable illuminated signs, revolving or whirling signs, animated signs or wind signs, as defined by these regulations, and except as provided elsewhere in this chapter.
- J. *Non-relevant signs.* Any sign advertising an establishment no longer in business or a product no longer available. Such signs shall have the facing(s) removed or be razed completely within thirty (30) days after the establishment is no longer in business or the product is no longer available.
- K. *Obscene signs.* Signs containing language or images that are obscene as defined in section 847.001(a0), Florida Statutes.
- L. *Paper or cardboard signs.* Any sign made from paper or cardboard that is not expressly permitted in these regulations.
- M. *Pole signs.* Unless specified in the Urban Design Standards Pattern Book, pole signs are not permitted.
- N. *Public nuisance signs.* Any sign that constitutes a public nuisance, as determined by the City Manager or designee.
- O. *Public property.* Signs erected on the right-of-way of any street, roadway or public right-of-way, or signs overhanging or infringing upon the right-of-way of any public street, roadway, or public right-of-way except only:
 - (1) Signs erected on public property other than signs erected by public authority for public purposes are prohibited, except those signs authorized in writing by action of the City Commission or erected by a governmental agency or required to be erected by a governmental agency.
 - (2) Signs as specifically provided in the Unified Land Development Code.
- P. *Roof signs.* Any sign erected, constructed and maintained wholly upon the roof or above the roof or roofline of any building.
- Q. *Serial signs.* Any two (2) or more signs placed in a line generally parallel to the roadway or in a similar fashion and displaying words or a message, part of which is contained on each sign.

- R. *Snipe signs*. Any sign, generally of a temporary nature, made of any material, when such sign is tacked, nailed, pasted, glued or otherwise attached to trees, poles, stakes, fences or other objects.
- S. *Traffic hazards*. Any sign that constitutes a traffic hazard or a detriment to traffic safety by reason of its size, location, movement, coloring or method of illumination, or by obstructing the vision of drivers, or by obstructing or detracting from the visibility of any official traffic control device by diverting or tending to divert the attention of drivers of moving vehicles from traffic movement on streets, roads, intersections or access facilities, nor shall any signs be erected in such a manner as to obstruct the vision of pedestrians.
- T. *Waterbodies*. Signs may be located in waterbodies only when authorized by the U.S. Coast Guard and all other applicable Federal, State and local agencies, including the Sarasota County Water & Navigation Control Authority, for the purpose of improving navigation, waterway management, or for environmental protection.
- U. *Vehicle signs*. Any sign that is attached, painted or placed onto or inside a parked vehicle that is used primarily for advertising any matter other than the sale or rental of the vehicle itself. This is not intended to prohibit vehicle signs on a truck, bus, trailer, taxi or other vehicle parked on its own premises while in the course of business, provided that:
- (1) The primary use of the vehicle is not for the purpose of advertisement.
 - (2) The delivery and service vehicles or trailers used on a daily basis in conjunction with an on-site business are not parked in right-of-way or along local streets except in the course of business. These vehicles shall not be parked in a manner to position advertising matter to be visible from off-site, except when no practicable safe parking is available.
 - (3) A vehicle with advertising may be permitted to be parked in residential zoning districts, if the parking of the vehicle does not violate other sections of the Unified Land Development Code or City Code.
- V. *Visible matter*. Signs that emit audible sound, odor or visible matter, such as smoke or steam.
- City Commission.