

**2023 CITY CODE AMENDMENTS PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT
CHAPTER 44 – ZONING
ARTICLE III. SIGN REGULATIONS
OCTOBER 8, 2023**

Section I. Chapter 44, Article II. Sign and Mural Regulations is hereby repealed in its entirety and replaced with the following:

ARTICLE II. SIGN AND MURAL REGULATIONS

Secs. 44-731. Purpose and intent.

- (1) The purpose of this article is to establish a comprehensive and impartial system of sign regulations that balances the needs for effective visual communication including business identification and the needs for a safe, well-maintained, and attractive community. It is intended through the provisions contained herein to:
- a. Promote signs which by their design and dimensions are integrated and harmonized with the surrounding environment and the buildings and sites they occupy.
 - b. Protect the public from damage or injury caused by signs that are poorly designed or maintained and from signs that cause distractions or hazards to motorists and pedestrians using the public streets, sidewalks, and public right-of-way.
 - c. Avoid excessive signage in order to give each business or use optimum visibility to passer-by traffic and prevent cluttering of the streetscape.

Secs. 44-732. Definitions. (see illustrations of sign types at the end of the draft regulations)

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Abandoned sign means a sign or sign structure that is located on a building or property that has been vacant or unoccupied for a period of three months or more, or a sign which pertains to a time, event, or purpose that no longer applies. Signs applicable to a business temporarily suspended because of a change in ownership or management of such business shall not be deemed abandoned unless the property remains vacant for a period of at least six months.

Administrator means the director of community development or other person charged with the administration and enforcement of this article.

Alteration, major means any major alteration to a sign, but shall not include routine maintenance, painting, or change of the sign face of an existing sign.

Alteration, minor means a change of sign copy, sign face, sign color, or modifications or repairs to an existing sign that are cosmetic in nature or include a replacement of parts. Expansion of an existing sign does not constitute a minor alteration.

Awning means a covering attached on the façade of a building which projects typically over a door, window, or sidewalk.

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Awning/canopy sign means a sign affixed flat to the surface of an awning or canopy which does not extend vertically or horizontally beyond the limits of such awning or canopy.

Banner sign means a temporary sign that is constructed of cloth, flexible plastic, or fabric of any kind which can be easily folded or rolled. This term does not include flags.

Billboard means a freestanding, off-site sign located adjacent to a principal arterial street.

Building sign means any sign affixed to a building or an appurtenance of a building including wall signs, projecting signs, window signs, and awning/canopy signs.

Changeable copy message board means a sign or portion of a sign which is characterized by interchangeable letters and figures. This definition shall not include dynamic display signs.

Commercial sign means any sign, display, or device designed, intended or used to encourage or promote purchase or use of goods or services.

Comprehensive sign or mural plan means a coordinated plan for all signs and/or murals located on a site or within a single development.

Community design review board means the body established in Section 2 of this Ordinance as a committee of the City Council which reviews site plans, building design, landscape plans, and signage.

Dynamic display sign means any sign designed for outdoor use that is capable of displaying a video signal, including, but not limited to, cathode-ray tubes (CRT), light-emitting diode (LED) displays, plasma displays, liquid-crystal displays (LCD), or other technologies used in commercially available televisions or computer monitors.

Flag means any device generally made of flexible materials, such as cloth, and designed to be attached to a flagpole on one edge only.

Flashing sign means an illuminated sign which contains flashing lights or exhibits with noticeable changes in light intensity.

Freestanding sign means a sign that is attached to, erected on, or supported by an architecturally-planned structure (such as a pole, mast, frame, or other structure) that is not itself an integral part of or attached to a building or other structure whose principal function is something other than the support of a sign. This definition includes pylon signs and monument signs.

Graffiti means unauthorized markings of paint, dye, or other similar substance that have been placed on real or personal property such as buildings, fences, transportation equipment, or

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other structures, or the unauthorized etching or scratching of the surfaces of such real or personal property, any of which markings, scratching, or etchings are visible from the site open to the public.

Ground banner sign means a sign constructed of cloth, canvas, or other similar light material which is affixed to the ground.

Ground grade means the elevation of the ground closest to the sign to which reference is made.

Illuminated sign means a sign that is illuminated internally by a light source inside the sign or externally by means of external light fixtures directed at the sign.

Institutional or public uses means uses such as public schools, fire stations, libraries, water system facilities, religious institutions, cemeteries, private schools, and other city, county, and state-used and owned properties.

Message display face means the surface of the sign where the sign's image or message is displayed.

Monument sign means a permanent, freestanding sign located directly at ground grade where the width dimension of the architecturally designed base is 50 percent or more of the greatest width of the sign face.

Multiple tenant building means a commercial building containing two or more tenants.

Mural means artwork on the exterior of a building, generally for the purpose of decoration or artistic expression, including, but not limited to, paintings, markings, and etchings. A mural is not intended or used to encourage or promote purchase or use of goods or services.

Noncommercial sign means a sign which expresses an opinion, point of view, or statement such as political, religious, or ideological sentiment, or support or opposition to a candidate or proposition for public election.

Nonconforming sign means a sign lawfully erected and maintained prior to the adoption of this article that does not conform to the requirements of this article.

Off-site sign means a sign located outside of the parcel lines or boundaries of the property or development for which the sign is constructed.

On-site sign means a sign located within the parcel lines or boundaries of the property or development for which the sign is constructed.

Painted wall sign means a sign painted or applied through adhesive tape directly on the exterior wall of a building or structure.

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Permanent sign means a sign permanently attached to a building, structure, or the ground which is constructed of durable materials and intended for long-term use.

Projecting sign means a sign, other than a wall sign, which is supported and projects from more than 18 inches at a right angle from the wall of a building.

Property Identification sign means a sign identifying the street address of a building for public safety reasons.

Pylon sign means a sign that is mounted on a narrow freestanding pole or other support structure so that the bottom edge of the sign face is at least six feet above the architecturally designed base.

Roof line means the uppermost line of the roof of a building or, in the case of an extended façade, the uppermost height of said façade.

Roof sign means a sign erected upon the roof of a building or extending above the roof line of the building to which it is attached, and which is wholly or partially supported by said building.

Sign means a communication device displaying graphics, symbols, or written copy visible from the public right-of-way and designed to attract the attention of the general public. This definition does not include murals or architectural lighting, such as neon that has no sign copy. For the purpose of removal, signs shall also include all sign structures.

Sign face means the surface of the sign including letters and background upon, against, or through which the message is displayed or illustrated.

Sign structure means the supports, braces, and framework of a sign.

Street means public or private thoroughfare for vehicular traffic which affords primary means of access to abutting property.

Street frontage means the lot line of a parcel abutting a street.

Street, collector means a street designated in the city's comprehensive plan which is designed to serve as a traffic way for a neighborhood or as a feeder to an arterial street.

Street, local means a street designated in the city's comprehensive plan which serves short trips at low speeds.

Street, minor arterial means a street designated in the city's comprehensive plan which connects sub-regions that are the closest routes parallel to the principal arterials and supplements and provides relief for traffic to the principal arterial.

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Street, principal arterial, means a street designated in the city's comprehensive plan which is designed to carry the highest volume of traffic, allows the highest speeds, and provides sub-regional, regional, and inter-community access.

Temporary sign means any sign or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric, cardboard, wallboard or other materials, with or without frames, intended to be displayed for a limited period of time only.

Wall sign means a flat sign which does not project more than 18 inches from the face or wall of the building upon which it is attached, running parallel for its whole length to the face or wall of the building, and which does not extend beyond the horizontal width of such building.

Wall surface of the building means the total horizontal surface area of the building face to which the sign is attached, including windows and door areas, measured to the extreme outer limits of such wall surface.

Window sign means a sign that is attached directly to a window with a type of film that adheres to the glass without damaging it. A window sign may not be etched, painted, or hung inside the window. This does not include merchandise on display in a window, seasonal displays of holiday pictures, lights, or signs which are legally required to be posted.

Secs. 44-733. Sign area and height computation.

- (1) The area of a sign is determined by the Administrator using actual dimensions where practical or approximate dimensions when irregularity of a sign shape warrants.
 - a. *Sign area*. Sign area shall be calculated by measuring the entire area within a continuous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of the sign message and background.
 - i. Where the sign is a separate panel, structure, or other material forming a single display, the area of the message display face shall constitute the area of the sign.
 - ii. Where the sign consists of any combination of individual letters, panels, numbers, figures, illustrations, or of a line or lines, to form a display or sign, the area of the sign shall be computed using the outside dimensions of the various words, figures, and illustrations composing the entire sign.
 - iii. In the case of a sign designed with more than one exterior surface, the area shall be computed as including only the maximum single display surface that is visible from any ground position at one time.
 - iv. The supports, uprights, bases, or structures on which any sign is supported shall not count towards the sign area unless the supports, uprights, bases, or structures are an integral part of the sign display.
 - b. *Sign height*. The height of a sign shall be measured by the vertical distance from the ground grade to the top of a sign and includes its support structures.

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Secs. 44-734. Prohibited signs.

- (1) The following signs are prohibited:
- a. Signs or sign structures attached or supported on balconies, fences, or other non-permanent structures.
 - b. Signs attached or supported on a permanently parked vehicle or semi-trailers. This shall not include signs painted directly on a parked vehicle or semi-trailer used in the business or facility or on site.
 - c. Signs on rocks, trees, or other natural features or public utility poles.
 - d. Permanent or temporary signs that have blinking, flashing, or fluttering lights, or that make noise.
 - e. Signs or sign structures that obstruct any part of a fire escape, doorway, standpipe, or opening intended to provide ingress or egress for any building structures.
 - f. Signs that by reason of location, color, or intensity create a hazard to the safe, efficient movement of vehicles or pedestrian traffic. No sign on private property shall contain words which might be construed as traffic controls such as "stop," "caution," "warning," etc., unless such sign is intended to direct traffic on the site.
 - g. Painted wall signs.
 - h. Roof signs.
 - i. Off-site signs except for where specifically permitted in this article.
 - j. Signs having features or incorporating parts of any sign prohibited in this article.

Secs. 44-735. General regulations and standards.

- (1) All signs shall be constructed in a manner and of such materials that they shall be safe and in compliance with the building ordinance. In addition, all signs containing electrical wiring shall be subject to the provisions of the current state electrical ordinance.
- a. *Maintenance.* All signs, together with all of their supports, braces, and anchors, shall be kept in repair and in proper state of preservation. The display surfaces of all signs shall be kept neatly painted or posted at all times. Banners shall be designed in such a way as to avoid becoming torn or weathered.
 - b. Every sign and the immediate surrounding site shall be maintained by the owner or person in charge thereof in a clean, sanitary, and inoffensive condition, and free and clear of all obnoxious substances, rubbish, and weeds.
 - c. *Attachment to buildings.* All signs attached to a building shall not obstruct any fire escape, exit, standpipe, or any window required for light or ventilation. The signs shall be placed flat against the building and project no further than 18 inches from the building except where specifically allowed in this article.
 - d. *Freestanding sign placement.*
 - i. All signs not attached to any building or structure shall maintain at least a ten-foot setback from any lot line and shall not be placed in a public right-of-way unless specifically stated otherwise in this article.
 - ii. No such sign shall project over a property line or a public right-of-way, except where allowed in this article, and all required clearances from overhead power and service lines must be maintained.
 - iii. Signs shall not block or obstruct the view of driveways.

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- iv. Signs placed near the corner of two intersecting streets shall comply with clear sight triangle requirements in Article VII Site Obstructions at Intersections of Chapter 32 – Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places.
- e. *Illumination.* All illuminated signs must be in compliance with the city's outdoor lighting requirements in section 44-20. In addition, illumination for all signs shall be constant and steady.
- f. *Abandoned signs.* Abandoned signs shall be removed by the owner of the site by removing the sign face, painting the sign face a neutral color or installing blank sign face panels. The inner components of the sign must not be exposed. If the sign face is not re-used after one year, the remaining sign structure must be removed unless the Administrator grants an extension subject to the owner submitting a statement of intent and a reasonable timeline for reuse of the sign structure.
- g. *Licensing.* All contractors installing permanent signs must first obtain a contractor's license prior to issuance of a sign permit or installation of a permanent sign as defined in the city contractor and subcontractor ordinance (see chapter, article VI, division 2).

Secs. 44-736. Exempt signs.

- (1) Any sign listed below shall be exempt from obtaining a sign permit but shall be required to meet any general standards identified in this chapter.
 - a. Any public notice or warning sign required to be maintained or posted by law or governmental order, rule, or regulation.
 - b. Flags and emblems that are political or ideological.
 - c. Any sign inside a building that is not attached to an exterior window or not legible from a distance of more than ten feet from outside the building.
 - d. Any sign located within a multi-tenant building, such as a mall or an office building, that is only viewable from inside the building.
 - e. Traffic control signs as defined by state law.
 - f. Property identification sign.
 - g. One wall sign of not more than two square feet for a residence with a permitted home occupation.
 - h. Temporary displays of lights and decorations.
 - i. Signs not exceeding nine square feet, located upon private property, and directed towards the prevention of trespassing.

Secs. 44-737. Temporary signs.

- (1) Unless specifically identified below, all temporary signs do not require a sign permit or a comprehensive sign plan, and shall not count towards the building or property permanent sign maximum signage allowed:
 - a. *Temporary Signs Allowed in Any District*
 - i. *On-site temporary signs*
 - 1. *Temporary freestanding sign.*
 - a. One nonilluminated temporary freestanding sign not exceeding three square feet in area and no more than three feet in height is

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permitted on private property for a period not to exceed 30 days, four times per year.

- b. No part of such sign shall be closer than five feet to the street pavement or one foot to a sidewalk or trail. Said sign shall not be located between the street and a sidewalk or trail.
2. *Temporary signs and displays under 12 square feet in area.*
 - a. One nonilluminated temporary sign or display under 12 square feet is allowed per property (except for single and double-dwelling properties) for a period not to exceed 30 days total per sign, four times per year.
 - b. For commercial buildings with multiple occupants, each separate tenant is permitted one such sign.
 - c. No more than three temporary signs under 12 square feet shall be allowed at a property at any one time.
 3. *Properties with open building permits.*
 - a. A property with an open building permit is permitted to have more than one temporary construction sign immediately prior to or during the construction of a development.
 - b. Each such sign shall not exceed 64 square feet in area and ten feet in height.
 - c. The sign shall be removed within 30 days after major construction has finished.
 4. *Properties that are for sale or rent.*
 - a. One temporary freestanding sign is permitted for each street upon which the property has frontage.
 - i. For single and double-dwelling lots, such sign shall not exceed nine square feet in area.
 - ii. For all other types of property, each sign shall not exceed a ratio of one square foot of sign area for each 1,000 square feet of lot area. In no case shall the area of any one sign exceed 64 square feet or ten feet in height.
 - b. All such signs shall be removed within seven calendar days of the close of the property or when 90 percent or more of the units on the property have been sold, leased, or rented.
 5. *Noncommercial signs.*
 - a. Any sign which meets MS § 211B.045.
 - b. One noncommercial sign which shall not be illuminated, exceed 16 square feet in area, and shall be no more than six feet in height. For multiple-unit developments, the sign shall be attached to the dwelling unit or placed in a location that clearly indicates ownership.
- ii. *Off-site temporary signs*
 1. Off-site signs on private property. An off-site sign not exceeding three square feet in area may be placed on private property. Such signs require a permit, shall not be located in the public right-of-way, and

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the sign owner/installer must supply written permission to the city from the property owner on which property the sign is installed. Each development is limited to one such sign.

2. *Off-site signs in the public right of way.* An off-site sign not exceeding three square feet in area and no more than three feet in height may be placed on the public right-of-way.
 - a. No part of such sign shall be closer than five feet to the street pavement or one foot to a sidewalk or trail. Said sign shall not be placed between the street and a sidewalk or trail.
 - b. Off-site signs may be placed in the public right-of-way for 30 days maximum.
 3. *Signs for nonprofit or civic businesses.* Off-site temporary signs for legally recognized nonprofit businesses (e.g., 501.c3 designations) as well as civic organizations (i.e. places of worship, parks, nature centers, historic sites, etc.) are allowed in the public right-of-way.
 - a. Said sign is limited to four square feet in area with a maximum of three signs per nonprofit or civic organization.
 - b. The location of off-site temporary signs must be approved by the city prior to installation.
- b. *Temporary Signs on Properties Designated Park in the Maplewood Comprehensive Plan.*
- i. Temporary signs located within a park and/or sports facility are allowed subject to the following standards:
 1. Banners. Banners may be displayed in parks for special events sponsored or approved by the city. No more than three banners may be displayed per park at any one time. Each banner shall not exceed 64 square feet. Banners shall be designed to be professional looking and prevented from becoming torn or weathered.
 2. Signs for baseball, softball, and hockey fields. Signs may be allowed with the approval of a comprehensive sign plan as described in section 44-742.
 - a. Number and size of signs shall be determined by an approved comprehensive sign plan.
 - b. No sign shall be illuminated except by the regular sports facility lighting during hours of use.
 - c. Signs are allowed to be installed for a period of one year during the baseball, softball, or hockey season.
 - d. Signs placed at baseball and softball fields shall be located on the outfield fences or the scoreboard, or both. Such signs shall be oriented toward the field of play.
 - e. Signs placed at hockey rinks shall be located on the interior sides of the hockey boards.
 3. The Maplewood Parks & Natural Resources Department will administer all temporary park and sports facility signs in accordance with the approved comprehensive sign plan.

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4. Sponsorships collected for such signs will be used to help fund recreational facilities within the park in which they are installed.
- c. *Temporary Signs in Residential Districts.*
- i. In addition to the temporary signs allowed for all zoning districts, the following temporary signs shall be allowed in any residential zoning district unless specifically stated:
 1. *Temporary banners.*
 - a. Temporary banners may be displayed without a permit for residential subdivisions and multiple-unit developments and for all legal nonresidential uses excluding home occupation businesses for a period not to exceed 60 days per year, per property.
 - b. No more than one banner may be displayed per property at any one time.
 - c. Each banner shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and must be attached to a building or other permanent structure.
 2. *Temporary signs and displays over 12 square feet.*
 - a. One temporary sign or display over 12 square feet is permitted by sign permit for up to 30 days per year, per property. The city shall consider a sign displayed for part of a day as having been up for an entire day.
 - b. All signs require a sign permit unless otherwise noted. The permit fee shall not be charged for temporary signs and displays erected by civic organizations, religious organizations, or other nonprofit organizations.
 - c. In no case shall the area of the sign exceed 32 square feet in area or eight feet in height.
 3. *Ground banner signs.*
 - a. Public or institutional uses in any residential district shall be allowed one ground banner sign per every 150 feet of street frontage.
 - b. Townhouse and apartment developments in the R-3 district shall be allowed one ground banner sign per every 150 feet of street frontage.
 - c. The sign shall not exceed 32 square feet in size.
 - d. All ground banner signs shall be removed after 60 days.
- d. *Temporary Signs in Non-Residential Districts.*
- i. In addition to the temporary signs allowed for all zoning districts, the following temporary signs shall be allowed in any non-residential zoning district:
 1. *Temporary banners.*
 - a. For single-tenant buildings, temporary banners may be displayed without a sign permit for a period not to exceed 60 days total per year. No more than one banner may be displayed per property at any one time.

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- b. For multiple-tenant buildings, each separate tenant may display temporary banners without a sign permit for a period not to exceed 60 days total per year. No more than one banner may be displayed per separate tenant at any one time.
- c. Each banner shall be attached to a building or other permanent structure.
- d. Maximum size.
 - i. In the LBC (limited business commercial), CO (commercial office), SC (shopping center), and NC (neighborhood commercial) zoning districts each banner shall not exceed 32 square feet in size.
 - ii. In the BC (business commercial), BC(M) (business commercial modified), M-1 (light manufacturing), and M-2 (heavy manufacturing) zoning districts, each banner shall not exceed 64 square feet in size.
- ii. *Temporary window signs.*
 - 1. Temporary window signs are allowed without a permit.
 - 2. Temporary window signs shall be attached to the surface of a window, but shall cover no more than 30 percent of the total area of the window.
- iii. *Temporary signs and displays over 12 square feet.*
 - 1. One temporary sign or display over 12 square feet is permitted for up to 30 days per year, per business. The time period may be extended to 60 days during the first year of operation of a new business and 90 days for a temporary seasonal business. The city shall consider a sign displayed for part of a day as having been up for an entire day.
 - 2. All signs require a sign permit unless otherwise noted. The permit fee shall not be charged for temporary signs and displays erected by civic organizations, religious organizations, or other nonprofit organizations or groups.
 - 3. Maximum size.
 - a. In the LBC (limited business commercial), CO (commercial office), SC (shopping center), and NC (neighborhood commercial) zoning districts each sign or display shall not exceed 32 square feet in size.
 - b. In the BC (business commercial), BC-M (business commercial modified), M-1 (light manufacturing), and M-2 (heavy manufacturing) zoning districts, each sign or display shall not exceed 64 square feet in size.
 - c. No sign or display shall exceed eight feet in height.
- iv. *Ground banner signs.*
 - 1. One ground banner sign shall be allowed per every 150 feet of street frontage.
 - 2. The sign shall not exceed 32 square feet in size.
 - 3. All ground banner signs shall be removed after 60 days.

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- e. *Temporary Signs in Mixed-Use Districts.*
 - i. In addition to the temporary signs allowed for all zoning districts, the following temporary signs shall be allowed in the Mixed-Use (MU) and North End (NE) zoning districts:
 - 1. *Temporary banners.*
 - a. For single tenant buildings, temporary banners may be displayed without a sign permit for a period not to exceed 60 days total per year. No more than one banner may be displayed per property at any one time.
 - b. For multiple-tenant buildings, each separate tenant may display temporary banners without a sign permit for a period not to exceed 60 days total per year. No more than one banner may be displayed per separate tenant at any one time.
 - c. Each banner shall be attached to a building or other permanent structure.
 - d. No banner shall exceed 32 square feet in area.
 - 2. *Temporary window signs.*
 - a. Temporary window signs are allowed without a permit in any building or portion of a building occupied by a nonresidential use.
 - b. Temporary window signs shall be attached to the surface of a window, but shall cover no more than 30 percent of the total area of the window.
 - 3. *Temporary signs and displays over 12 square feet.*
 - a. One temporary sign or display over 12 square feet is permitted by sign permit for up to 30 days per year. The time period may be extended to 60 days during the first year of operation of a new business and 90 days for a temporary seasonal business. The city shall consider a sign displayed for part of a day as having been up for an entire day.
 - b. All signs require a sign permit unless otherwise noted. The permit fee shall not be charged for temporary signs and displays erected by civic organizations, religious organizations, or other nonprofit organizations.
 - c. In no case shall the area of the sign exceed 32 square feet in area or eight feet in height.
 - 4. *Ground banner signs.*
 - a. One ground banner sign shall be allowed per every 150 feet of street frontage.
 - b. The sign shall not exceed 32 square feet in size.
 - c. All ground banner signs shall be removed after 60 days.
- f. *Exemptions.*
 - i. Temporary window and banner signs which exceed the size, number, or time display limits as specified in this Section may apply for an exemption as described below:
 - 1. *Short-term exemption (up to three months).*

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- a. Applicant shall submit a temporary sign permit application and fee to the Administrator.
 - b. The Administrator shall approve the short-term exemption if the applicant shows that there are unusual circumstances with the request.
 - c. The Administrator may attach conditions to the approval to assure that the sign will be compatible with surrounding properties.
2. *Long-term exemption (longer than three months).*
- a. Applicant shall submit a comprehensive sign plan as specified in section 44-742 and fee to the city.
 - b. The community design review board shall approve the long-term exemption if the applicant shows that there are unusual circumstances with the request.
 - c. The community design review board may attach conditions to the approval to assure that the sign will be compatible with surrounding properties.

Secs. 44-738. Permanent signs.

- (1) Unless specifically identified below, all permanent signs require a sign permit and shall count towards the building or property maximum signage allowed:
- a. *Permanent Signs on Properties Designated Park in the Maplewood Comprehensive Plan.*
 - i. Wall signs. One wall sign up to 24 square feet per street frontage shall be allowed for each park building. The sign may be affixed to the wall of the building or an overhanging canopy or awning.
 - ii. Monument signs. One monument sign up to 32 square feet per street frontage shall be allowed to identify each park. Said sign shall be a maximum of six feet in height. The sign shall be designed to be architecturally compatible with the park structures and buildings with the base of the sign consisting of colors and materials compatible to the structures or buildings.
 - b. *Permanent Signs in Residential Districts.*
 - i. Wall sign. One wall sign up to 24 square feet per street frontage shall be allowed for residential subdivisions, townhomes, live-work buildings, apartments, and for all legal nonresidential uses excluding home occupation businesses. The sign may be affixed to the wall of the main building or an overhanging canopy or awning.
 - ii. Window signs. No window signs are allowed.
 - iii. Monument sign. One monument sign up to 32 square feet per street frontage shall be allowed by sign permit for residential subdivisions and multiple-unit developments and for all legal nonresidential uses excluding home occupation businesses. Said sign shall be a maximum of six feet in height. The sign shall be designed to be architecturally compatible with the building or project with the base of the sign consisting of colors and materials compatible to the building or project.

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- iv. Changeable copy message boards. Changeable copy message boards are permitted as part of a permanent freestanding monument sign or wall sign for all legal nonresidential uses excluding home occupation businesses. The message board shall not comprise more than 70 percent of the total square footage of said sign.
- v. On-site dynamic display signs for permitted institutional or public uses. (Refer to section 44-739 - dynamic display signs).
- c. *Permanent Signs in Non-Residential Districts.*
 - i. LBC (limited business commercial), CO (commercial office), SC (shopping center), and NC (neighborhood commercial) zoning districts:
 - 1. Wall signs.
 - a. For each occupant of a building, one wall sign is allowed for each street upon which the property has frontage. The total number of wall signs may be increased by one for each clearly differentiated department of a business or enterprise.
 - b. The total area of any one wall sign shall not cover more than 20 percent of the wall surface to which the sign is attached or 32 square feet, whichever is greater. As an alternative, a wall sign may be placed on an overhanging awning or canopy as long as the wall sign does not exceed 50 percent of the face of the awning or canopy, or 32 square feet, whichever is less.
 - c. For multiple tenant buildings, the wall surface for each tenant or user shall include only the surface area of the exterior façade of the site occupied by such tenant or user.
 - d. A window sign may be substituted for all or a portion of the allowable wall signage area as long as the window sign, which includes all pieces that convey the commercial brand, does not cover more than 1/3 of the window or door in which the sign is placed.
 - 2. Freestanding signs.
 - a. One freestanding sign up to 64 square feet in area and ten feet in height is permitted for each street upon which the property has frontage.
 - b. For buildings or developments with multiple street frontages, each additional freestanding sign must be located on a different street. Each freestanding sign must be separated by more than 100 feet measured in a straight line between the signs.
 - c. The sign shall be designed to be architecturally compatible with the building or project with the base of the sign consisting of colors and materials compatible to the building or project.
 - d. The area around the base of the sign shall also be landscaped including the bottom of a pylon sign.
 - 3. Changeable copy message boards. Changeable copy message boards are permitted as part of a permanent freestanding sign or wall

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sign but shall comprise no more than 70 percent of the total square footage of said sign.

4. On-site dynamic display signs for permitted institutional or public uses. (Refer to section 44-739 - dynamic display signs).
- ii. BC (business commercial), BC-M (business commercial modified), M-1 (light manufacturing), and M-2 (heavy manufacturing) zoning districts:
1. Signage requirements for specific uses, including gas station canopies, auto dealerships, and drive-throughs are listed in sections 44-351 and 44-352 principal and accessory use-specific standards.
 2. Wall signs.
 - a. For each occupant of a building, one wall sign is allowed for each street upon which the property has frontage. The total number of wall signs may be increased by one for each clearly differentiated department of a business or enterprise.
 - b. The total size of all wall signage for single-tenant buildings is determined by the gross square footage of the principal structure on the property. The total coverage area of each wall sign, including each differentiated business, shall be based on the wall surface to which the sign is attached. The following table indicates maximum signage permitted for single-tenant buildings:

Principal Structure Gross Square Feet of Floor Area	Maximum Size and Coverage Area of Each Sign
Less than 10,000 sq. ft	80 sq. ft. or 20% of wall face, whichever is less
10,000 to 20,000 sq. ft.	100 sq. ft. or 20% of wall face, whichever is less
20,000 to 100,000 sq. ft.	150 sq. ft. or 15% of wall face, whichever is less
Greater than 100,000 sq. ft	200 sq. ft. or 10% of wall face, whichever is less

- c. The total coverage area of each wall sign for multiple-tenant buildings is ten percent of the surface area of the exterior façade of the site occupied by such tenant, or 32 square feet, whichever is more.
 - d. A wall sign may be attached to an overhanging awning or canopy, instead of the façade of the building, as long as the wall sign does not exceed 50 percent of the face of the awning or canopy, or the maximum size specified above, whichever is less.
 - e. A window sign may be substituted for all or a portion of the allowable wall signage area as long as the window sign, which includes all pieces that convey the commercial brand, does not cover more than 1/3 of the window or door in which the sign is placed.
3. Freestanding signs.

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- a. One freestanding sign is permitted for each street upon which the property has frontage. For properties with multiple street frontages, each additional freestanding sign must be located on a different street and each sign must be separated by more than 100 feet measured in a straight line between signs, excluding auto dealerships.
- b. The total size and maximum height of each freestanding sign is determined by the street classification (as designated in the Maplewood Comprehensive Plan) of the closest street to which each freestanding sign is located. In the case of signs located at an intersection, the higher ranking street classification should be used to determine the maximum height and size allowable for a freestanding sign. Businesses that are located on a frontage road designed to provide safe access to minor arterials and principal arterials shall be permitted to erect a freestanding sign up to the determined maximum height and size allowable for a freestanding sign on said minor arterial or principal arterial road to which it is adjacent.
- c. The following table lists the maximum size and heights permitted for freestanding signs:

Classification of Street Abutting Property	Maximum Sign Size (sq. ft.)	Maximum Height of Pylon Sign (feet)	Maximum Height of Monument Sign (feet)
Principal Arterial	180	25	12
Minor Arterial	140	20	12
Collector Street	100	15	10
Local Street	80	12	10

- d. The freestanding sign shall be designed to be architecturally compatible with the building or project, with the base of the sign, including pylon sign poles, consisting of materials and colors compatible to the building or project.
- 4. Changeable copy message boards. Changeable copy message boards are permitted as part of a permanent freestanding sign or wall sign but are limited to comprising no more than 70 percent of the total square footage of said sign.
- 5. On-site and off-site dynamic display signs. (Refer to section 44-739 - dynamic display signs).
- 6. Billboards.
 - a. Off-site billboards shall only be permitted with a conditional use permit and may only be located adjacent to a principal arterial street in the SC (shopping center), BC (business commercial), M-1 (light manufacturing), and M-2 (heavy manufacturing) districts.
 - b. Spacing. No billboard shall be located within 2,300 feet of another billboard on the same side of the street, within 100 feet to a commercial, industrial, institutional building, or an on-site sign, within 250 feet of a residential district, or within 800 feet of a

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residence. Billboards shall maintain a setback of 50 feet from any property line, 500 feet to a local park, and 300 feet from the nearest intersecting street corner of two public roads.

- c. Size. The maximum area of the sign face of a billboard shall not exceed 450 square feet, including border and trim, but excluding base, apron supports, and other structural members. The maximum size limitation shall apply to each side of a sign structure.
 - d. The maximum height for billboards shall be 35 feet.
 - e. A billboard may only display one message at a time on any sign face.
 - f. Signs may be placed back-to-back or in a V-type arrangement if there are no more than two sign faces, provided that the open end separation shall not exceed 15 feet.
- d. *Permanent Signs in Mixed-Use and North End Districts.*
- i. The following signs shall be allowed in the Mixed-Use (MU) and North End (NE) zoning districts:
 - 1. Signage requirements for minor motor vehicle stations are listed in sections 44-351 and 44-352 principal and accessory use-specific standards.
 - 2. Building signs.
 - a. Building signage in the MU and NE districts may include wall, projecting, window, or awning/canopy signage.
 - b. Total allowable area of all building signage for each establishment is one and one-half square feet of signage per lineal foot of building or frontage on a road, public open space or private parking area, or 32 square feet, whichever is greater.
 - c. Each wall shall be calculated individually and sign area may not be transferred to another side of the building.
 - d. Wall signs shall not cover windows or architectural trim and detail.
 - e. No part of a building sign shall be placed higher than the sills of the second-story window of a multi-story building.
 - f. Additional standards for projecting signs.
 - i. Projecting signs may not extend more than four feet over a public right-of-way, private road, or sidewalk/trail, and must not project out further than the sign's height.
 - ii. Projecting signs shall have a minimum clearance of eight feet above ground level, unless projecting over a vehicular right-of-way, in which case minimum clearance shall be 14 feet. Projecting signs shall be no larger than 20 square feet per sign face.
 - g. Window signs. A window sign, which includes all pieces that convey the commercial brand, shall not cover more than 1/3 of the window or door in which the sign is placed.

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- h. Awning/canopy signs. Signs on street-level awnings/canopies are permitted if the sign on each awning/canopy is either less than seven square feet in size or eight inches in height, is located on the face of the awning/canopy (valance or skirt), and is parallel to the building façade. Where there are multiple awnings on a building, all awning signs shall have a consistent size and location on the awnings.
- 3. Monument signs. One monument sign for each establishment is allowed if the building is set back at least 20 feet from the front property line. Monument signs must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Limited to six feet in height and 40 square feet.
 - b. Maintain a five-foot setback from any side or rear property line, but can be constructed up to the front property line.
 - c. Must consist of a base constructed of materials and design features similar to those of the front façade of the building or development.
 - d. Must be landscaped with flowers or shrubbery or integrated into a plaza area.
- 4. Lighting. Signage lighting in the MU or NE districts is permitted as long as it does not cast illumination on residential units and meets one of the following standards of external or internal illumination:
 - a. External illumination.
 - i. The light source shall be a separate fixture directed onto the sign face; or
 - ii. A halo effect/reverse illumination is used, which is an external light source behind the sign face or individual letters.
 - b. Internal illumination.
 - i. An internal light source shall be permitted only for a sign that is less than 200 square inches in size that is made of exposed neon or LED that has the appearance of exposed neon.

Secs. 44-739. Dynamic display signs.

- (1) Dynamic displays are allowed as stated in this article with significant controls to minimize their proliferation and their potential threats to public health, safety, and welfare.
 - a. *General Standards.* All dynamic display signs shall meet the following standards:
 - i. The images and messages displayed shall be static. Unless otherwise specified, each display shall be maintained for a minimum of 15 seconds.
 - ii. The transition from one display to another shall be instantaneous without any special effects. Motion, animation and video images are prohibited on dynamic LED sign displays. No portion of the images may flash, scroll, twirl, change color, or in any manner imitate movement.
 - iii. The images and messages displayed shall be complete in themselves, without continuation in content to the next image or message or to any other sign.
 - iv. Only one, contiguous dynamic display area is allowed on a sign face.

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- v. Audio speakers or any audio component is prohibited. The sign shall not emit any sound.
- vi. Every line of copy and graphics in a dynamic display shall be at least seven inches in height on a road with a speed limit of 25 to 34 miles per hour, nine inches on a road with a speed limit of 35 to 44 miles per hour, 12 inches on a road with a speed limit of 45 to 54 miles per hour, and 15 inches on a road with a speed limit of 55 miles per hour or more.
- vii. Dynamic display signs must be designed and equipped to freeze the device in one position if a malfunction occurs. The displays must also be equipped with a means to immediately discontinue the display if it malfunctions, and the sign owner must stop the dynamic display within one hour of being notified by the city that it is not meeting the standards of this article.
- viii. Brightness standards.
 - 1. The following brightness standards are required for all dynamic display signs:
 - a. No sign shall be brighter than is necessary for clear and adequate visibility.
 - b. No sign shall be of such intensity or brilliance as to impair the vision of a motor vehicle driver with average eyesight or to otherwise interfere with the driver's operation of a motor vehicle.
 - c. No sign may be of such intensity or brilliance that it interferes with the effectiveness of an official traffic sign, device or signal.
 - 2. The person owning or controlling the sign must adjust the sign to meet the brightness standards in accordance with the city's instructions. The adjustment must be made within one hour upon notice of noncompliance from the city.
 - 3. All dynamic display signs installed after August of 2008 must be equipped with a mechanism that automatically adjusts the brightness in response to ambient conditions. These signs must also be equipped with a means to immediately turn off the display or lighting if the sign malfunctions, and the sign owner or operator must turn off the sign or lighting within one hour after being notified by the city that it is not meeting the standards of this section.
 - 4. Dynamic displays must have an automatic dimmer control to produce a distinct illumination change from a higher illumination level to a lower level for the time period between a ½-hour before sunset and a ½-hour after sunrise.
 - 5. In addition to the brightness standards required above, dynamic display signs shall meet the city's outdoor lighting requirements (subsection 44-20(1)).
- ix. Reduction of sign surfaces for off-site dynamic display signs.
 - 1. A person or sign operator may obtain a permit for a dynamic display sign on one surface of an existing off-site sign if the following requirements are met:

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- a. The applicant agrees in writing to reduce its off-site sign surfaces by one by permanently removing, within 15 days after issuance of the permit, one surface of an off-site sign in the city that is owned or leased by the applicant, which sign surface must satisfy the criteria of part b. of this subsection. This removal must include the complete removal of the structure and foundation supporting each removed sign surface. The applicant must agree that the city may remove the sign surface if the applicant does not do so, and the application must identify the sign surface to be removed and be accompanied by a cash deposit or letter of credit acceptable to the city attorney sufficient to pay the city's costs for that removal. The applicant must also agree that it is removing the sign surface voluntarily and that it has no right to compensation for the removed sign surface under any law. Replacement of an existing sign surface of an off-site sign with a dynamic display sign does not constitute a removal of a sign surface.
 - b. If the removed sign surface is one that a state permit is required by state law, the applicant must surrender its permit to the state upon removal of the sign surface. The sign that is the subject of the dynamic display sign permit cannot begin to operate until the sign owner or operator provides proof to the city that the state permit has been surrendered.
2. If the applicant meets the permit requirements noted above, the city shall issue a dynamic display sign permit for the designated off-site sign. This permit will allow a dynamic display to occupy 100 percent of the potential copy and graphic area and to change no more frequently than once every 15 seconds. The designated sign must meet all other requirements of this article.
- x. *Licensing.* No person shall operate any dynamic display sign in the city without first obtaining a yearly license as defined in the city licensing ordinance (article II).
 - xi. *Public safety.* If city staff determines that a dynamic display sign is not being operated pursuant to this section due to its location or display capabilities, city staff may require that the sign be moved, removed, or modified after notice to the property owner.
- b. *Zoning District Standards.* In addition to the general standards above, dynamic display signs shall adhere to the following district-specific requirements:
 - i. On-site dynamic display signs in conjunction with a permitted institutional or public use in the residential, LBC, CO, SC, and NC zoning districts are permitted subject to the following conditions:
 1. Dynamic display signs require approval of a comprehensive sign plan.
 2. All properties within 350 feet of a proposed dynamic display sign shall be notified of the application for a comprehensive sign plan.
 3. Dynamic display signs are only permitted on monument signs. The area around the base of the sign shall be landscaped.

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4. One dynamic display sign as part of a monument sign is permitted for each property. The entire monument sign shall not exceed eight feet in height and 50 square feet in size.
 5. The digital display portion of the sign shall not comprise more than 50 percent of the sign area. The remainder of the sign shall not have the capability to have a dynamic display.
 6. All monument signs with a digital display shall maintain at least a ten-foot setback from any lot line and shall not be placed in a public right-of-way. This setback shall be increased to 20 feet if the adjacent property is used or shown on the city's land use plan for residential use.
 7. The dynamic display shall not be illuminated between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- ii. On-site dynamic display signs located in the Mixed use (MU) or North End (NE) zoning districts are allowed subject to the following conditions:
1. Dynamic display signs require approval of a comprehensive sign plan.
 2. One dynamic display sign as part of a monument sign is permitted for each property.
 3. The entire monument sign shall not exceed eight feet in height and 50 square feet in size.
 - a. The area around the base of the sign shall be landscaped.
 - b. The digital display portion of the sign shall not comprise more than 50 percent of the sign area. The remainder of the sign shall not have the capability to have a dynamic display.
 4. The monument sign with a digital display shall maintain at least a ten-foot setback from any lot line and shall not be placed in a public right-of-way. This setback shall be increased to 20 feet if the adjacent property is outside of the MU or NE districts and used or shown on the city's land use plan for residential use.
 5. The dynamic display shall not be illuminated between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- iii. On-site dynamic display signs located in the business commercial (BC) or heavy or light industrial (M-2 and M-1) zoning districts:
1. Are allowed as part of a permanent freestanding sign, provided that the sign comprises no more than 50 percent of the total square footage of said sign face.
 2. Must be located at least 200 feet from any property where there are structures used for residential purposes or from any park or open space land use district.
 3. Must be located at least 100 feet from any side property line.
 4. Displays shall be maintained for a minimum of 15 seconds.

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Secs. 44-740. Murals.

- (1) Murals shall only be permitted within non-residential districts. A comprehensive mural plan is required for approval following the requirements of section 44-742 and shall meet the following standards:
- a. Murals shall be maintained in good repair, free from peeling paint or damage to age, weather, or vandalism. Removal of a mural must be accomplished by physical removal from a wall and/or by covering the mural completely with paint. The mural must be rendered completely invisible while maintaining the structural and architectural integrity of the structure.
 - b. Murals shall be composed of permanent materials and applied only to permanent surfaces. Murals may not be applied to any fabric or temporary surface.
 - c. Murals shall be allowed only on building facades that face a side or rear property line.
 - d. Murals with the following features shall not be allowed:
 - i. Moving parts, including solar-, wind-, or water-driven devices.
 - ii. Projections from the wall surface
 - iii. Words (in any language), symbols, or representations that are obscene, offensive, of a political nature, or are derogatory.
 - iv. Representations that imitate or appear to imitate any official traffic sign or device to direct the movement of traffic.
 - v. Colors that are predominantly fluorescent, metallic, or reflective.

Secs. 44-741. Sign permits.

- (1) If a sign requires a permit, the property owner shall secure the sign permit prior to the construction or major alteration of such a sign. No sign permit shall be issued for an existing or proposed sign unless such sign is in compliance with the requirements of this article.
- a. *Application.* The application to erect or alter any sign shall be in writing, using a current sign permit application, and signed by the owner or occupant of the building. The application shall specify the location, height, dimensions of the sign and, where applicable, the dimensions of the wall surface of the building to which it is to be attached and total square footage of the building. Applications shall be accompanied by the permit fee, a sketch of the sign, and any other facts the city requires for full information of the nature and safety of the proposal. An electrical permit is also required for all signs containing electrical wiring.
 - b. *Fees.* The city council shall set all sign permit fees annually.
 - c. *Time limits.*
 - i. All permits for the erection or alteration of signs shall be issued for the useful life of the sign. Minor alterations to an existing sign, including routine maintenance, painting, or refacing the copy, do not require a new sign permit.
 - ii. A sign permit shall become null and void if the work for which the permit was issued has not been completed within one year of the issuance or renewal.

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- d. *Appeals.* When a sign permit under this article is denied, the administrator shall give notice to the applicant within 30 days of denial, together with reasons for denial. Appeals from the decisions of the administrator under the provisions of this article shall be made to the city council. Denial shall be based on noncompliance with this article.

Secs. 44-742. Comprehensive sign or mural plan.

- (1) A comprehensive sign or mural plan shall be provided for the following:
- a. Any non-residential property with five or more tenants on the site or any multiple-story buildings with two or more tenants in the building.
 - b. All permitted institutional or public uses.
 - c. All developments approved as a planned unit development.
 - d. Large campuses consisting of buildings and land of ten or more acres.
 - e. Shared signs that serve both the parcel on which they are placed and an adjacent parcel.
 - f. Murals.
 - g. Dynamic display wall signs (also refer to section 44-739 - dynamic display signs).
 - h. Long-term exemptions to temporary window and banner signs (also refer to section 44-737 - signs exempt from regulations in this section).
 - i. Temporary signs on park designated land in the Maplewood Comprehensive Plan (also refer to sections 44-737 and 44-738).
- (2) A comprehensive sign or mural plan request shall include the location, size, height, color, lighting, and orientation of all signs and/or murals. Requests for a comprehensive mural plan shall also include a design sketch and photos of the proposed site. Exceptions to the regulations of this article may be permitted as follows:
- a. For sign areas, densities, and dynamic display changeover rates for the plan as a whole if the signs are in conformity with the intent of this article
 - b. If the exception results in an improved relationship between the various parts of the plan,
 - c. If it encourages and promotes the removal of nonconforming signs through the use of shared signs,
 - d. If for long-term exemptions to temporary window and banner signs, the comprehensive sign plan shows that there are unusual circumstances with the request.
- (3) Comprehensive sign or mural plans shall be reviewed by the community design review board. The applicant, staff, and city council may appeal the community design review board's decision. An appeal shall be presented to the administrator within 15 days of the community design review board's decision to be considered by the city council.

Secs. 44-743. Nonconforming signs.

- (1) *Nonconforming permanent signs.* Nonconforming permanent signs lawfully existing on the effective date of this article shall be allowed to continue in use, but shall not be rebuilt, relocated or altered, other than minor alterations including routine maintenance, painting, or refacing the sign copy, without being brought into compliance with this

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article. After a nonconforming sign has been removed, it shall not be replaced by another nonconforming sign.

Secs. 44-744. Enforcement procedures.

- (1) *Temporary signs.* The city shall send a notice to the owner of any illegal temporary sign or temporary sign in violation of this article and allow seven days for the owner to correct all ordinance violations or remove the sign. If the sign is not a safety hazard, the city shall allow 30 days for the owner to correct the violation. If the sign is a safety hazard the city shall take immediate action to end the hazard.
- (2) *Permanent signs.* The city shall send a notice to the owner of any permanent sign in violation of the provisions of this article. The notice shall require that the owner to correct all ordinance violations. If the sign is not a safety hazard, the city shall allow 30 days for the owner to correct the violation. If the sign is a safety hazard the city shall take immediate action to end the hazard.
- (3) *Abandoned signs.* The city shall send notice to the owner of the property on which any abandoned sign exists that violates the provisions of this article. The notice shall require that the owner correct all ordinance violations. If the sign is not a safety hazard, the city shall allow 30 days for the owner to correct the violation. If the sign is a safety hazard the city shall take immediate action to end the hazard.
- (4) *Removal of signs.* If the sign owner does not obey the city's orders, the city may remove or alter the sign at the owner's expense under the procedures of sections 18-36 through 18-38 (notice to abate). The city may remove illegal signs on a public right-of-way without notice. If the city removes a sign the city may sell or dispose of it if the owner does not reclaim the sign and pay any removal costs within 30 days of the sign's removal.
- (5) *Murals.* The city shall send a notice to the owner of any mural that is in violation with the provisions of this article. The article shall require the owner to correct all ordinance violations. The city shall allow 60 days for the owner to correct the violation. If the mural is failed to be removed and/or maintained, the city may cause the removal of the mural. The owner shall pay all expenses under the procedures of sections 18-36 through 18-38 incurred by the city for the removal.

Secs. 44-745—44-1050. Reserved.

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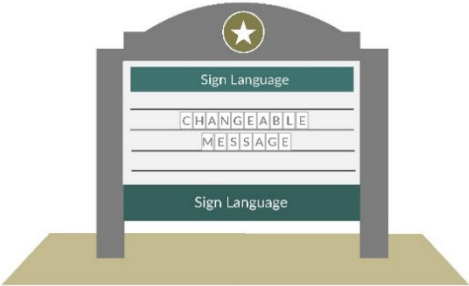
ILLUSTRATIONS OF SIGN TYPES



Awning/Canopy Sign



Banner Sign



Changeable Copy Message Board



Dynamic Display Sign

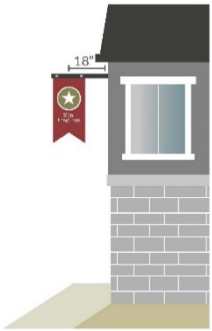


Ground Banner Sign



Monument Sign

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Projecting Sign



Pylon Signs



Pylon Signs



Property Identification Sign



Wall Sign



Window Sign