## Section 6500. Signs

**(A) Purpose and Intent:**

It is the purpose of this Section to promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the City of Largo through reasonable, consistent and non-discriminatory sign standards. The sign regulations in this Section are not intended to censor speech or regulate viewpoints, but instead are intended to regulate the secondary effects of speech and especially insofar as those secondary effects may affect aesthetics and traffic line, visit, and do business, a pleasing, visually attractive environment is of the foremost importance. The regulation of signs within the City of Largo is a highly contributive means by which to achieve this desired end. These sign regulations have been prepared with the intent of enhancing the visual environment of the City of Largo and promoting its continued well-being and are intended to:

(1) Encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication in the City;

(2) Maintain and enhance the aesthetic environment and thereby the City's ability to attract sources of economic development and growth, including enhancing the tourism industry;

(3) Improve pedestrian and traffic safety;

(4) Minimize the possible adverse affect of signs on nearby public and private property;

(5) Foster the integration of signage with architectural and landscape designs;

(6) Lessen the visual clutter that may otherwise be caused by the proliferation, improper placement, illumination, animation, excessive height, and excessive size (area) of signs which compete for the attention of pedestrian and vehicular traffic;

(7) Allow signs that are compatible with their surroundings and aid orientation, while precluding the placement of signs that contribute to sign clutter or that conceal or obstruct adjacent land uses or signs;

(8) Encourage and allow signs that are appropriate to the zoning district in which they are located and consistent with the category of use and function to which they are located and consistent with the category of use and function to which they pertain;

(9) Curtail the size and number of signs to the minimum reasonable necessary to identify a residential or business location and the nature of any such business;

(10) Establish sign size in relationship to the scale of the lot and building on which the sign is to be placed or to which it pertains;

(11) Categorize signs based upon the function that they serve and tailor the regulation of signs based upon their function;

(12) Preclude signs from conflicting with the principle permitted use of the site and adjoining sites;

(13) Regulate signs in a manner so as to not interfere with, obstruct the vision of or distract motorists, bicyclists or pedestrians;

(14) Except to the extent expressly preempted by state or federal law, ensure that signs are constructed, installed and maintained in a safe and satisfactory manner, and protect the public from unsafe signs;

(15) Preserve, conserve, protect and enhance the aesthetic and scenic beauty of the City;

(16) Allow for traffic control devices consistent with national standards and whose purpose is to promote highway safety and efficiency by providing for the orderly movement of road users on streets and highways, and that notify road users of regulations and provide warning and guidance needed for the safe, uniform and efficient operation of all elements of the traffic stream;

(17) Protect property values by precluding to the maximum extent possible sign-types that create nuisance to the occupancy or use of other properties as a result of their size, height, illumination, brightness or movement;

(18) Protect property values by ensuring that sign-types, as well as the number of signs, are in harmony with buildings, neighborhoods and conforming signs in that area;

(19) Regulate the appearance and design of signs in a manner that promotes and enhances the beautification of the City and that compliments the natural surroundings in recognition of this City's reliance on its natural surroundings and beautification efforts in retaining economic advantage for its resort community, as well as for its major office and industrial parks;

(20) Streamline the approval process by requiring master signage plans, and

(21) Enable the fair and consistent enforcement of these sign regulations.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(B) Authority:** This Section implements the policies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan and the requirements of Florida Statue 163.3202(2)(f).

**(C) Applicability:**

(1) This Section applies to all new and existing development within the City.

(2) This Section applies to all permanent signs within the City, without regard to whether a sign contains commercial or noncommercial copy.

(3) The use of temporary signage is contrary to the objectives of the Section. Therefore, the use of temporary signage shall only be allowed when an overriding benefit to the public is derived by their limited use. Temporary signs containing only noncommercial copy are regulated to the extent necessary to accomplish the above-stated objectives without interfering with the right to free speech.

**Subsection 6501. Permitting Requirements.**

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(A) Development Permits (DP) required:** No person shall paint, erect, repair, alter, enlarge, extend, rebuild, relocate, or demolish, or cause to paint, erect, repair, alter, enlarge, extend, rebuild, relocate, or demolish any sign or its lighting source otherwise allowed under this Section and visible from a public right of way, whether permanent or temporary, unless a DP for such has been issued by the Building Official. The DP for a proposed sign shall be issued by the City Building Official only after a determination has been made that the proposed sign fully complies with all conditions of this Section.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(B) Building permits.** A building permit shall be obtained to erect those signs or sign structures subject to the Florida Building Code. The requirement of a building permit is separate and apart from the requirement of a development permit.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(C) Fees.** No permit shall be issued until the appropriate application has been filed with the City of Largo's Building Official and/or his or her designee, or such other person as may be designated by the Development Control Officer (DCO) and all permit fees as adopted by the City Commission have been paid.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(D) Exceptions:**

(1) No permit shall be required to change the copy on a sign which is specifically designed for the use of replaceable copy. This shall include the replacement of sign panels, provided it does not materially alter the sign structure.

NOTE: This provision does not exempt a property owner from the requirement to bring nonconforming signs into conformance when there is a change in occupancy or when any other circumstance requiring conformance occurs.

(2) Simple nonstructural maintenance of a sign shall not require a permit. Nonstructural maintenance shall include:

(a) Paint, stucco, or other similar treatments applied to the sign's structure to improve aesthetics and/or inhibit rust and deterioration; and

(b) Replacement of defective parts and expendable components (e.g., lighting elements).

(3) **Exempt signs:** Signs exempt from permit requirements are listed on Table 6508. It is the property owner's responsibility to ensure that exempt signs are:

(a) Adequately designed and installed to preserve public safety;

(b) Removed if necessary, to avoid injuries and/or property damage which may result from the sign being dislodged during inclement weather. Property owners should consult either a licensed contractor, structural engineer, or the Building Official about proper design and installation;

(c) Erected in compliance with the standards set forth in this Section.

**(E) Change in size or occupancy:** When property (land or structures) change in size or occupancy, all signs on the property shall be altered, if necessary, so that they do not exceed the applicable standards. Development permit(s) and master signage plan(s) shall be required for said alterations.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(F) Review procedures:** DP applications shall be reviewed for compliance with this Section and consistency with the approved master signage plan for the property.

**(G) Nonconforming signs present:** No DP application shall be approved for a property containing nonconforming signs, unless the nonconforming signs will be made conforming pursuant to conditions of the permit approval.

**(H) Failure to obtain a permit:** Any work performed without a DP when a DP is required, shall result in the entire sign being considered illegal and subject to immediate removal at the property owner's expense. Should it be determined that the sign is legally permissible, the property owner shall pay three times the normal application fee to obtain a DP to retain the sign on property.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**Subsection 6502. Development Permit (DP) Application Requirements.**

**(A) Form/content of application.** A development permit (DP) application for a permanent sign shall be made upon a form provided by the DCO. The development permit application is in addition to any building permit application required by the Florida Building Code. The development permit application shall be accompanied by plans and specifications drawn to scale, together with any site plan required by this Section or the DCO. The City may require additional information on such sketch or print to insure compliance with this Section. The applicant shall furnish the following information on or with the development permit application form:

(1) A legal survey of the real property where the sign is proposed to be located, showing the location and dimensions of all property lines, right of way lines, easements, and improvements within and

adjacent to the property;

(2) The land use designations for the real property on which the sign will be located;

(3) The name, mailing address and telephone number (where available) of the owner(s) of the real property where the sign is proposed to be located;

(4) A notarized statement of authorization signed by the owner(s) consenting to the placement of the proposed sign on the real property as well as a letter of "No Objection" from Progress Energy for any signs (with the exception of non conventional forms of advertisement) located within ten (10) feet of the right of way or of a utility easement;

(5) The name, mailing address and telephone number of the sign contractor;

(6) Type of proposed sign (e.g., wall sign, freestanding monument sign);

(7) The square footage of the surface area of the proposed sign;

(8) The setbacks for the proposed sign;

(9) The value of the proposed sign;

(10) If the proposed sign is a freestanding monument sign:

(11) The lot frontage on all adjacent rights-of-way.

(12) The height of the proposed freestanding monument sign.

(13) If the proposed sign is a wall or window sign, the building frontage for the building to which the attached sign shall be affixed;

(14) The number, type, location, and surface area for all existing signs on the same parcel and/or building on which the sign will be located; ~~and~~

(15) Whether the proposed sign will be an illuminated or non-illuminated sign; and

(16) If the proposed sign is to be located on a parcel immediately adjacent to US Highway 19 (excluding service and frontage roads) a legal boundary survey must be submitted for the subject parcel depicting the highest point of US Highway 19 (excluding service and frontage roads) adjacent to the subject parcel(s)' property line(s). The highest point of US Highway 19 adjacent to the subject parcel(s) (excluding service and frontage roads) shall be measured as provided in Subsection 6508.

(Ord. No. 2011-27, § 1, 09/06/11)

**(B) Submission of application.** An applicant shall deliver a development permit application to the City of Largo's Building Official and/or his or her designee, or such other person as may be designated by the City Manager, along with all applicable permit fees.

**(C) Review process.**

(1) Criteria: The development permit application shall be reviewed for a determination of whether the proposed sign meets the applicable requirements of this Section and any applicable provision of the CDC.

(2) Application review deadlines: the review of the development permit application shall be completed within fifteen (15) calendar days after the receipt by the Community Development Department of the completed application, and the application shall be granted or denied within that time frame. If the application is denied, the reasons for denial shall be set forth in writing and delivered to the applicant within the fifteen (15) calendar days. In the event that no decision is rendered with fifteen (15) calendar days following submission, the application is deemed denied and the applicant may appeal to the Planning Board in accordance with Subsection 6504.

**(D) Hardship relief and appeals.** See Subsection 6504.

**(E) Inspections.** The City of Largo Community Development Department may make or require any inspections to ascertain compliance with the provisions of this Section, the CDC, and other applicable laws and regulations.

**(F) Photographs of sign:** If the development permit application is granted, the permit holder shall furnish the City of Largo's Building Official and/or his designee, or such other person as may be designated by the City Manager, with photographs of the sign in place within thirty (30) days after the same is erected or constructed, and which shall show compliance with any and all height, size, setback, or other requirements of this Section.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**Subsection 6503. Conditions.**

**(A) Duration of permit.** If the work authorized under a development permit has not been completed within six (6) months after the date of issuance, the permit shall become null and void and a new application for a development permit shall be required. Issuance of a development permit shall in no way prevent the City from later declaring the sign to be nonconforming or unlawful if, upon further review of available information, the sign is found not to comply with the requirements of this Section.

**(B) Revocation of development permit.** If the work under any development permit is proceeding in violation of this Section, any other ordinance of the City, or should it be found that there has been any false statement or misrepresentation of a material fact in the application or plans on which the permit was based, the permit holder shall be notified of the violation. If the permit holder fails, refuses or is otherwise unable to make corrections within ten (10) days, it shall be the duty of the City of Largo Community Development Department to revoke such permit and serve notice upon such permit holder. Such notice shall be in writing and signed by the City of Largo Building Official and/or his or her designee. It shall be unlawful for any person to proceed with any part of the work after such notice is issued.

**(C) Maintenance of signs:** All visible portions of a sign and its supporting structure shall be maintained in a safe condition, so as not to be detrimental to public health and safety, and in neat appearance according to the following:

(1) If the sign is lighted, all lights shall be maintained in working order and functioning in a safe manner.

(2) If the sign is painted, the painted surface shall be kept in good condition.

(3) Every sign shall be kept in such manner as to constitute a complete or whole sign.

(4) No trash shall be allowed to accumulate in the area around a sign and all weeds shall be kept out.

**(D) Enforcement:** Any sign found to be in a state of disrepair shall be declared a nuisance and must be brought into compliance or removed within thirty (30) days of written notice to both the property owner and occupant of the property. Upon failure to comply, the City shall cause the sign to be removed at the property owner's expense. Abandoned or damaged signs shall comply with the requirements of Subsection 6507(B).

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**Subsection 6504. Hardship Relief and Appeals.**

**(A)** Determination of hardship relief and appeals decisions are vested in the Planning Board. The basis for hardship relief requests and appeals shall be as follows:

(1) Hardship relief requests. Hardship relief from the terms of this Section may be justified where, owing

to special conditions beyond the control of the owner of the affected property, a literal enforcement of the provisions of this Section will result in undue hardship, and so that the spirit of the requirements of this Section shall be observed, the public interest upheld, and substantial justice done.

(2) Appeals.

(a) Whenever it is alleged that there has been an error in any order, action, decision or determination by the City of Largo Community Development Department in the enforcement and application of any provision contained within this Section or any other provisions of the CDC pertaining to development permits for a sign pursuant to this Section (including any allegation that an administrative official has failed to act within applicable time frames), the aggrieved party may file a written appeal with the City of Largo Planning Board.

(b) The written appeal to the Planning Board shall be filed with the City of Largo Community Development Department within thirty (30) days of the date of the alleged error. The written appeal shall describe the alleged error and the applicable provisions of this Section or the City's CDC pertaining to the administrative official's order, action, decision, determination or failure to act.

**(B)** The application requirements of Section 11200(D) “Hardship Relief and Appeal Procedures Application Requirement “ of the CDC must be met.

**(C)** A fee must be submitted in the amount set forth in Section 4 of the City's Fee Ordinance.

**(D)** The Planning Board shall hold a hearing within forty five (45) days following receipt of the written hardship request or appeal. The criteria contained within Section 11200. “Hardship Relief and Appeal Procedures” of the CDC shall apply to the Planning Board's review of the hardship request or appeal.

**(E)** The Planning Board shall render a decision within ten (10) days following the close of the hearing.

**(F)** If the Planning Board does not render a decision within (10) days following the hearing, the hardship relief request or appeal shall be deemed denied as of that date.

**(G)** As provided for in Section 6.05 of the Largo City Charter, decisions of the Planning Board may be appealed to the City Commission by filing an application with the DCO within thirty (30) days of the decision of the Planning Board.

(1) City Commission: shall then consider the appeal as well as the recommendations, if any, of the Planning Board within thirty (30) days after the appeal has been filed, but in no event later than ninety (90) days after the delivery of the development permit application to the City of Largo Community Development Department (even if the Planning Board has not reviewed the aforesaid application or has not made recommendations regarding the same). At that time, the City Commission shall consider whether the proposed sign and/or sign structure complies with these sign regulations, the criteria set forth in Section 11200 “Hardship Relief and Appeal Procedures” of the CDC and other applicable provisions set forth in the CDC, and the City Commission shall grant, grant with conditions, or deny the appeal within seven (7) days after such hearing. If the appeal is granted with conditions or if the appeal is denied, the conditions or the reasons for denial shall be set forth in writing and delivered to the appellant, within seven (7) days after such hearing.

(2) Reconsideration of appeal after presented to City Commission: If the City Commission fails to act within the aforesaid time limits, or fails to state the conditions or reasons for denial in writing, the applicant shall be entitled to make a written request for the City Commission to consider or reconsider the application. Such request shall be submitted by the applicant to the City Commission within ten (10) days after the City Commission's deadline for taking the described action, and the written request for reconsideration shall be heard by the City Commission within ten (10) days

thereafter. At that time, the City Commission shall, if appropriate, take up or again consider whether the proposed sign and/or sign structure complies with these sign regulations, the criteria set forth in Section 11200 "Hardship Relief and Appeal Procedures" of the CDC and other applicable provisions set forth in the CDC, and the City Commission shall grant, grant with conditions, or deny the appeal within seven (7) days after such hearing. If the appeal is granted with conditions or if the appeal is denied, the conditions or the reasons for denial shall be set forth in writing and delivered to the appellant. If the City Commission fails to take action, the appeal shall be deemed granted.

**(H)** Any person aggrieved by the decision of the City Commission pursuant to this Section shall have the right to seek judicial review by the Circuit Court or any other court of competent jurisdiction, within thirty (30) days of the decision by petition for writ of certiorari and shall file the same in accordance with the requirements of the law, seeking such appropriate remedy as may be available.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**Subsection 6505. Master Signage Plan.**

**(A) Objective:** To provide information about what signs already exist on a property when an application for a development permit is made; and, to eliminate the need to recompute the dimensions and location of each permitted sign when a sign administration or enforcement question arises.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(B) Applicability:** No Development Order (DO) or DP shall be issued unless either 1) a master signage plan is submitted and approved for the property, or 2) an approved master signage plan consistent with the standards of this Section is on file with the Community Development Department.

(1) A master signage plan shall be required under the following circumstances:

(a) All applications for a DP involving a sign or its light source;

(b) All applications for a DP involving exterior renovations to a building with attached signs; and

(c) All applications for a DO to develop or redevelop a property.

(2) A master signage plan may be amended by filing a new master signage plan.

**(C) Submission requirements:** The master signage plan for a property shall consist of the following:

(1) Master signage plan application form signed by the property owner or authorized designee, indicating the property owner's consent to the plan.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

(2) Current legal survey, or site plan, showing the location and dimensions of all property lines, right-of-way, easements, and improvements (buildings, driveways, etc.) within and adjacent to the property. The location of all existing and proposed freestanding signs must be indicated.

(3) Elevation drawings showing the location and dimensions of all existing and proposed signs attached to buildings, including but not limited to wall, canopy, and projecting signs. When a building is occupied by multiple tenants, the drawings shall also indicate each occupant's linear building frontage.

(4) Scale drawings showing the dimensions and construction of all existing and proposed sign structures. Drawings for new signs, or existing signs being altered, shall be signed and sealed by a registered engineer.

(5) Copy of any signage restrictions implemented by the property owner to promote a uniform

appearance within the development. Prior to the City approving a development permit application, the property owner must authorize the design and placement of each sign, which must be in compliance with development permit.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

(6) Applicants submitting a master signage plan that includes signage on any parcel immediately adjacent to US Highway 19 (excluding service and frontage roads) must submit a legal boundary survey for the subject parcel(s) depicting the highest point of US Highway 19 (excluding service and frontage roads) adjacent to the subject parcel(s)' property line(s). The highest point of US Highway 19 adjacent to the subject parcel(s) (excluding service and frontage roads) shall be measured as provided in Subsection 6508.

(Ord. No. 2011-27, § 2, 09/06/11)

**Subsection 6506. Illegal and prohibited signs.**

**(A) Objective:** To prevent the proliferation of uncontrolled signage that is detrimental to the welfare of the community.

**(B) Applicability:**

(1) **Illegal signs:** An illegal sign is any sign erected or altered without a permit, or erected in non-compliance with the Code as it existed at the time of the erection or alteration of the sign, unless specifically exempted from review as shown on Table 6508.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

(2) **Prohibited signs:** A prohibited sign is any sign not identified in this Section as an allowable sign. Examples of prohibited signs include, but are not limited to, bench signs, animated signs and attention getting devices (such as pennants, buntings, festoons, streamers, balloons, strobe lights, beacon lights and search lights), portable signs (such as snipe signs, bandit signs and signs on wheels, or portable structures), signs on vehicles used as an advertising platform, and signs that emit audible sound, odor, or gaseous matter such as smoke or steam.

**(C) Enforcement:** Due to the inexpensive nature of most illegal and prohibited signs and the administrative burden which would be imposed by elaborate procedural prerequisites prior to their removal, the City shall remove, or caused to be removed, illegal or prohibited signs in accordance with the following procedures:

(1) Any illegal or prohibited sign located on private property must be brought into compliance or removed within twenty-four (24) hours of written notice to the property owner and/or occupant of the property. Upon failure to comply, illegal or prohibited signs may be removed and impounded by the City.

(2) Any illegal or prohibited sign located on public property or right-of-way shall be considered abandoned and shall be removed and disposed of without prior notice.

(3) The sign's owner may secure the release of an impounded sign upon payment of the cost incurred in removing the sign, plus daily storage fees. Signs not reclaimed within thirty (30) days shall become property of the City and may be disposed of or used as deemed appropriate by the City. The City of Largo may remove non-permitted and illegal signs at the sign owner's expense, and the City of Largo shall not be held liable for damage or disposal of such sign.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**Subsection 6507. Nonconforming, Abandoned and Damaged Signs.**

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(A) Nonconforming signs**

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

(1) **Objective:** To have all previously permitted signs which no longer conform to the standards of this Code (legal, nonconforming signs) within the City of Largo removed in an expeditious manner, while minimizing the cost associated with removal.

(2) **Applicability:** Removal of all signs nonconforming with the Section shall be required when a period of ten (10) years has passed since the date of the passage and adoption of this Section on June 5, 2007 by the Largo City Commission (amortization period). Sale of the property shall not relieve subsequent owners of the requirement to come into compliance within this amortization period. Removal of all nonconforming signs shall also be required when one or more of the following circumstances apply to a property containing nonconforming signs: Allowable signage for developed properties shall be based on the underlying land use designation for the property. No freestanding signs shall be permitted on undeveloped property. The type, number, and dimensional standards for allowable signage shall be shown in Table 6508 and elaborated upon in this Section.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

(a) A DP is required for work on a new or existing sign or its light source;

(b) A DP is required for exterior renovations to a building with attached signs;

(c) A DO is required for development or (re)development of the property (e.g., increasing a building's square footage);

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

(d) The property (land or structures) is changed in size or occupancy. Changes include, but are not limited to, subdividing or combining parcels, or the subdividing or combining of tenant space within a multi-tenant structure;

(e) An occupational license is discontinued for a use on the property; or

(f) An occupational license is required for a use on the property (excluding the renewal of existing licenses).

(3) **Removing nonconforming signs:** Property owners may enter into an agreement with the City of Largo to systematically remove any nonconforming signs on their property prior to the conclusion of the required amortization period in Subsection 6507(2). above. Subsequent to entering into an agreement and the approval of a new master signage plan, development permits may be issued for the property. Nonconforming signs shall be brought into conformance within ninety (90) days after entering into the agreement.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(B) Abandoned and/or damaged signs**

(1) **Objective:** To have all abandoned or damaged signs within the City of Largo removed in an expeditious manner, while minimizing the cost associated with removal.

(2) **Applicability:** Removal of all signs that are abandoned or damaged as of the date of the adoption of this Section shall be required within a period of ninety (90) days from the date of the passage and adoption of this Section by the Largo City Commission. Sale of the property shall to relieve subsequent owners of the requirement to come into compliance within this requirement.

Subsequent to this initial ninety (90) day period, any abandoned or damaged sign must be removed by the owner of the property within thirty (30) days after written notification from the City of Largo.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07

**Subsection 6508. General Standards.**

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(A) Objective:** To systematically regulate the use of signs in a manner consistent with the purposes set forth in this Section.

**(B) Applicability:** Allowable signage for developed properties shall be based on the underlying land use designation for the property. No freestanding signs shall be permitted on undeveloped property. The type, number, and dimensional standards for allowable signage shall be as shown in Table 6508 and elaborated upon in this Subsection.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(C) Integration of changeable copy:** Property owners may integrate manual or electronic message centers, poster panels or cabinets, and similar displays into the design of freestanding and wall signs on the property. The use of changeable copy provides a convenient and cost effective means of providing information to the public without the use of prohibited or illegal signs. Changeable copy on freestanding signs shall be at least four (4) inches in height, six (6) inches or larger is preferable. Electronic message boards shall not be programmed to flash, travel(scroll messages horizontally), or simulate moving text or objects, nor shall messages be changed more than once every five (5) seconds.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**(D) Sign area and height calculations (see Figure 6501).**

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

(1) When a sign has more than one (1) display face, all areas which can be viewed from rights-of-way shall be included in the calculation of the sign face area. When two (2) display faces touch back-to-back, only one (1) side shall be included in the calculation of the sign face area.

(2) When a sign's message is fabricated together with, or is surrounded by, a background which borders or frames that message, sign face area shall be calculated as the smallest geometric shape which can encompass the outermost dimensions of each frame cabinet.

(3) When a sign's message is fabricated of individual raised elements, such as channel letters applied to a background which provides no border or frame, sign face area shall be calculated as the smallest regular geometric shape which can encompass each word, figure or emblem.

(4) Wall, canopy, and projecting sign face area shall be determined by total square footage of all individual signs added together. Maximum sign face area shall be based on the length of building wall(s) facing right-of-way; however signs may be distributed on any of the building's walls (See Figure 6504).

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

NOTE: In lieu of the above-stated method for calculating sign face area, multiple occupancy properties may have sign face area calculated based on each occupant's portion of the building frontage oriented toward the means of customer access (regardless of the building's orientation toward the street). For these purposes, building frontage shall be measured as the distance from fire-wall separation to fire-wall separation or exterior wall. Occupants which are interior to the building or another occupant's space shall not be allocated separate signage. In order to use this method, the property owner must establish standards requiring all occupants to use signs of similar design and general appearance.

Said standards shall be made part of the approved master signage plan for the property.

(5) Sign height shall be measured from the topmost portion of the sign, to the ground at the base of the sign (See Figure 6504).

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

(6) The minimum clearance of a projecting sign or canopy shall be measured from the base of the sign or canopy to the ground below. A minimum of eight (8) feet of clearance is required over pedestrian areas. A minimum of fourteen (14) feet is required over vehicular use areas (See Figure 6504).

(7) Parcels which are immediately adjacent to US Highway 19 are permitted one (1) freestanding monument sign or pole sign located adjacent to US Highway 19, up to a maximum of fourteen (14) feet in height above the crown of the road, excluding any service or frontage roads. The crown of the road is measured as the highest point of the driving surface of the road, excluding any sidewalls, "jersey barriers," etc. as depicted in Figure 6509. The sign face area allowable on a parcel immediately adjacent to US Highway 19 shall be determined based on the land use designation applicable to the subject parcel where the sign is to be located and in accordance with Table 6508 below. Sign face area for freestanding signs constructed pursuant to this Subsection may be increased by up to an additional twenty five percent (25%). Any increase in sign face square footage granted pursuant to the Subsection is not transferable to any other sign located on the subject parcel or any other parcel.

(Ord. No. 2011-27, § 3, 09/06/11)

**(E) Locational criteria.**

(1) No sign shall be erected on or allowed to project over public property, rights-of-way, or easements (except signs erected by duly authorized government agencies and/or public utility providers). Political signs may be erected at a polling place on the day of an election where the polling place is located on public property so long as the signs are contained to an area designed by the City and do not impede, obstruct, or interfere with voter access to the polling place and so long as said signs are removed within three (3) days of the election.

(2) A letter of no objection fro Florida Power Corporation shall be required for any sign located within ten (10) feet of right-of-way or a utility easement (with the exception of non conventional forms of advertisement).

(3) Permission of the easement holder shall be required to erect a sign within a private easement.

(4) No sign shall be permitted that will obstruct vision between three (3) and eight (8) feet above grade within a clear sight triangle.

(5) No sign shall be permitted that will obstruct or otherwise interfere with visibility of a directional, warning, regulatory, or governmental sign, signal or device.

(6) No sign shall be attached to a tree, shrub, or any public utility pole, light standard, or other public infrastructure (except signs erected by duly authorized government agencies and/or public utility providers).

(7) No freestanding sign shall be permitted that will obscure more than ten (10) percent of an existing conforming freestanding sign that is within one hundred (100) feet of the proposed sign, when viewed from the same side of the right-of-way at a distance of two hundred (200) feet. Measurements shall be made on the right-of-way/property line (See Figure 6505).

(8) The top of a wall, canopy, or projecting sign shall be no higher than eighteen (18) inches above the highest point of the roof or building wall, whichever is highest. Inflatables shall not be displayed on a rooftop or within a required landscape buffer, nor shall an inflatable be allowed to displace any required parking on a property.

**(F) Sign illumination:** Sign illumination systems shall be designed to not emit or cause the reflection of glaring or flashing light onto adjacent properties and rights-of-way. Lighting elements shall be shielded so that they do not distract or inhibit the vision of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

**(G) Aesthetic standards:**

(1) Freestanding monument signs shall include at least one (1) color from the building color scheme.

(2) Freestanding monument signs shall be integrated with the design and materials of the building. For example, the base of the sign may be made of the same materials as the building and may echo the style of the building facade.

(3) Freestanding signs permitted along the US Highway 19 roadway in accordance with Subsection 6508(D)(7) shall have a minimum 200 square foot landscaped area located at the base of the sign, excluding the area occupied by the base of the sign, designed in accordance with the landscaping design standards of Subsection 6405. The landscaping shall consist of shrubs planted three (3) feet on center and shall include a minimum of one (1) understory tree selected from the Approved Species List contained in Figure 6405-C. The landscaped area shall be irrigated in accordance with Subsection 6406.

(Ord. No. 2011-27, § 4, 09/06/11)

**Table 6508. Sign Standards**

| Type | Development Permit Required (Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | Standards by Land Use Designation (All figures are for maximum allowed unless stated otherwise) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **CG, R/OS** | **ROR, R/OG, I, CN, R/OL** (Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | **IL, IG** | **RM, RLM, RU, RL, RS, RE, RR** | **CRD** |
| Signs containing no commercial content<br><br>(e.g., political signs, protest signs, etc.) | No | 1 sign @ 32 sq. ft., 8 ft. high ( or may be displayed in a window)<br>(Several smaller signs may be used in lieu of 1 larger sign, up to the max. sq. ft. allowed, but all signs must be placed within a distance spanning no more than 20 ft. across in order to minimize sign clutter.)<br><br>This requirement shall in no way preclude nor hinder the placement of noncommercial content on any legally permitted freestanding or wall sign. | | | | |
| Freestanding Signs (monument only) | Yes | Aggregate Sign Area:<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)<br><br>Maximum area allowed for the aggregate of all sign area for all signs shall be calculated as the less of: 2.5 sq. ft per 1 linear foot of building frontage along major arterials, 2 sq. ft. per 1 linear foot of building frontage along all other streets, up to the max. sq. ft. shown below.<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)<br><br>**Freestanding Signs:** (all freestanding signs shall be monument style signs as described below (See Figure 6506) except for parcels which are located immediately adjacent to the US Highway 19 roadway (excluding service and frontage roads) (see Subsection 6508(D)).<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)<br>(Ord. No. 2011-27, §5, 09/06/11<br><br>**Residential Uses:** To promote community pride and identity, residential developments may install one (1) monument sign at each of up to three (3) entrances into the development in lieu of using the standards shown below. The following provisions shall apply:<br>(a) may be installed on any road classification;<br>(b) each sign shall not exceed 50 sq. ft. and 8 ft. height;<br>(c) this provision does not apply to Assisted Living Facilities with less than 14 clients.<br><br>Freestanding signs are not allowed on individual residential lots.<br><br>**Institutional Uses:** To promote visibility, institutions may install one (1) monument sign on each of up to two (2) street frontages in lieu of using the standards shown below. The following provisions shall apply:<br>(a) may be installed on any road classification; | | | | |

| | | |
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| | | (b) each sign shall not exceed 60 sq. ft. in total area and 8 ft. in height.<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)<br><br>**Commercial Uses:** See Table below.<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) |

**Commercial Uses:**
(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

| | | | | | | |
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| | | When there is less than five hundred (500) feet of property frontage on one (1) right-of-way: | | | | See Chapter 9 for standards in the CRDs. |
| | | 1 sign @ 120 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | 1 sign @ 100 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | 1 sign @ 75 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | 1 sign @50 sq. ft., 8 ft. high | |
| | | When there is a total of five hundred (500) feet or more of property frontage is on one (1) or more right-of-ways:<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | | | | |
| | | 2 signs @ 75 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(300 ft. min. separation)<br>OR<br>1 sign @ 150 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | 2 signs @ 60 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(300 ft. min. separation)<br>OR<br>1 sign @ 120 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | 2 signs @ 50 sq. ft., 8 ft. high (300 ft. min. separation)<br>OR<br>1 sign @ 100 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | 2 signs @ 50 sq. ft., 8 ft. high (300 ft. min. separation or less at the discretion of the DCO)<br>OR<br>1 sign @ 100 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | |
| (Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | | | | | | |
| Wall signs (wall, canopy, and/or projecting) | Yes | **Wall Signs:**<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)<br><br>Maximum area allowed for wall signs shall be calculated as the lesser of the Aggregate Sign Area defined above,or the max. sq. ft. shown below.<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)<br><br>(See Subsection 6508(D) for additional standards related to multiple occupancy properties.)<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)<br><br>Wall signs are not allowed on individual residential lots. | | | | |

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| | | 150 sq. ft. | 100 sq. ft. (Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | 50 sq. ft. | 50 sq. ft. | See Chapter 9 for standards in the CRDs. |
| | | For buildings over three stories in height additional wall sign area shall be permitted above the third floor of the building. The additional allowable sign area shall be 3.0 square feet per each vertical foot of building height (excluding antennas and other attachments) up to a maximum of 300 square feet. The additional sign area allowed for buildings over three (3) stories cannot be transferred to projecting signs, monument signs, or signs located below the third (3rd) story.<br>(Ord. No. 2010-02, § 1, 10/20/09) | | | | |
| Window Signs (Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | No, but electrical permit may be required (Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | **Window Signs:**<br><br>25% of glass area, 100 sq. ft. max.<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | | | Not allowed (Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | 25% of glass area, 100 sq. ft. max.<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) |
| Address/ Occupant Identification Signs | No | Required on all buildings and freestanding signs (see Subsection 6506 for standards).<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | | | | |
| Occupant Directories/ Locator Maps | No | Numerals/letters shall not exceed two (2) inches in height and signs must be located along pedestrian walkways or at other locations for use by pedestrians. | | | | |
| (Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | | | | | | |
| Signs for products displayed outdoors | No | 4 sq. ft. each<br>(Signs must be displayed in the immediate proximity to the product(s) to which they pertain and must be removed when no longer applicable.) | | | | |
| Flags | No | Flags of the United States and other governments may be displayed in accordance with the U.S. Flag Code (Title 36, U.S.C., Chapter 10) on flag pole(s) not to exceed 35 ft. in height.<br><br>One flag containing commercial content (written and/or graphically represented messages/emblems) may be displayed on a flag pole not to exceed 25 ft. in height. Additional flags may be displayed; however, a permit will be required, and their area will be subtracted from the total sign area allowed on the property.<br><br>Flags must be set back at least 15 ft. from right-of-way/property lines. This requirement does not apply to individual residential lots. | | | | |
| Temporary signs, non | Yes | Temporary signs, non conventional forms of advertisement (to include but not be limited to persons dressed as characters or products) and/or inflatables may | | | | |

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| conventional forms of advertisement and/or inflatables (Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) | | be displayed for a maximum of 15 days during grand opening, going-out-of-business, and special events of limited duration only.<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)<br><br>Temporary signs and inflatables must be set back at least 15 ft. for right-of-way/property lines.<br><br>1 temporary sign per property frontage, plus 1 per each additional 300 ft. of frontage @ 32 sq. ft., 8 ft. high each, 300 ft. min. separation between signs.<br><br>Non conventional forms of advertisement shall be regulated as above according to duration of event but not according to size. They shall also be located on private property and set back from right-of-way lines such that they do not obstruct required sight triangles.<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)<br><br>1 inflatable @ 25 ft. high. Must be ground mounted. The use of copy on an inflatable shall be in lieu of, and subject to the standards for, allowable temporary sign area. |
| Real Estate Signs (For Sale/ Lease/Rent and/or Open House) | No | 1 sign per property frontage, plus 1 per each additional 300 ft. of frontage @ 16 sq. ft. (6 sq. ft. on individual residential lots), 8 ft. high each, 300 ft. min. separation between signs.<br><br>(Must be removed when no longer applicable.) |
| Construction Signs (During construction on private property.) | No | Only allowed during the duration of construction activity (from DP issuance to final inspection/Certificate of Occupancy).<br><br>1 freestanding sign @ 100 sq. ft., 8 ft. high<br>(Several smaller signs may be used in lieu of 1 larger sign, up to the max. sq. ft. allowed, but all signs must be placed within a distance spanning no more than 20 ft. across in order to minimize sign clutter.)<br><br>1 temporary wall sign (vinyl banner, plywood sign, etc) @ 32 sq. ft.<br>(May be used as a temporary replacement for wall signs removed pursuant to construction work. Must be removed upon completion of construction or when permanent wall signs are installed, whichever occurs first.) |
| Construction Signs (During construction on adjacent public rights-of-way.) | Yes | The Development Control Officer (DCO) or his designee shall make a determination when temporary signage is required to overcome decreased visibility resulting from construction projects lasting one month or longer in duration. The DCO or his designee shall notify the occupants of each affected property of their eligibility for said signage, including the standards for design, placement, and the duration of time it may be used.<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) |

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| Directional, Warning, and other Regulatory/ Information Signs | No, but other approvals may be required | 4 sq. ft., 3 ft. high<br>(Larger/higher signs may be used when required pursuant to Department of Transportation or other regulatory agency requirements. Height restriction does not apply to signs mounted flush against principle structures.) The location and design of signs not mounted flush against principle structures must be approved by both the Building Official and the City Engineer.<br><br>One additional 25 sq. ft., 5 ft. high freestanding monument directory sign is permitted for each street frontage for multi-tenant commercial or industrial sites with 75,000 sq. ft. or more of building area. Such sign(s) shall be located only on internal drives for the purpose of directing traffic within the site itself and are exempt from sign area calculations (Figure 6507).<br>(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07) |
| Billboards (existing) | Yes | Regulated pursuant to the Development Outdoor Advertising/Billboard Agreements, adopted by City Commission on May 4, 2010, between CBS Outdoor, Inc. and ClearChannel Outdoor, Inc., and the City of Largo.<br>(Ord. No. 2010-64, § 1, 08/03/10) |
| Billboards (new) | N/A | No new billboards shall be permitted within the City of Largo except as permitted by a written agreement between the City of Largo and the company proposing to construct the new billboard.<br>(Ord. No. 2010-64, § 1, 08/03/10) |

**Subsection 6509. Address/occupant identification signs.**

**(A) Objective:** To maintain and improve public safety by establishing standards that assist emergency vehicle drivers and other motorists to identify the location of property within the City.

**(B) Applicability:**

(1) **On or near each entrance (required):** All properties in the City are required to have the assigned street address displayed conspicuously on each building entrance. Each occupant of a multiple occupancy property shall display it's address on it's entrance (front and rear). The address shall be displayed either on or within five (5) feet of the door using numerals/letters that are at least three (3) inches in height.

Occupant identification signs displayed adjacent to the address shall be exempted from calculation as sign face area, provided that the sign face area does not exceed four (4) square feet.

(2) **On freestanding signs (required):** All freestanding signs shall display the street address/address range assigned to occupants of the property. Address numerals/letters shall be at least six (6) inches high and shall provide sufficient contrast in color to be legible to vehicular traffic on the adjacent right-of-way. Decorative accoutrements containing only property addresses are exempt from calculation as sign face area, provided that the accoutrement does not increase the sign's area by more than twenty (20) percent. Addresses incorporated into the sign face shall be calculated as part of the sign area. Figure 6506 illustrates acceptable locations for the placement of addresses on freestanding signs.

(3) **On canopies or awnings (optional):** Address and/or occupant identification signs integrated into the fringe or leading edge of a canopy or awning shall be exempt from calculation as sign face area, provided the numerals/letters do not exceed six (6) inches in height (See Figure 6508).

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

(4) **Suspended under canopies (optional):** Address and/or occupant identification signs suspended from canopies covering pedestrian walkways shall be exempt from calculation as sign face area, provided that the sign does not exceed four (4) square feet. The sign shall be placed perpendicular to the face of the building and the bottom of the sign shall be at least eight (8) feet above grade.

(Ord. No. 2011-27, § 6, 09/06/11)

**Subsection 6510. Severability.**

**(A) Generally:** If any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term, or word of Section 6500 is declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, the declaration of such unconstitutionality shall not affect any other part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term, or word of this Section.

**(B) Severabiltiy where less speech results:** Without diminishing or limiting in any way the declaration of severability set forth above in subsection (A), above, or elsewhere in this Section, the CDC, or any adopting ordinance, if any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term, or word of this Section is declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, the declaration of such unconstitutionality shall not affect any other part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term, or word of this Section, even if such severability would result in a situation where there would be less speech, whether by subjecting previously exempt signs to permitting or otherwise.

**(C) Severability of provisions pertaining to prohibited signs:** Without diminishing or limiting in any way the declaration of severability set forth above in Subsection (A), above, or elsewhere in this Section, the CDC, or any adopting ordinance, if any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term, or word of this Section or any other law is declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, the declaration of such unconstitutionality shall not effect any other part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term, or word of this Section that pertains to prohibited signs, including specifically those signs and sign-types prohibited and not allowed under Subsection 6503~~6~~6 of this Section. Furthermore, if any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, phrase, clause, term, or word of Subsection 6506 is declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, the declaration of such unconstitutionality shall not affect any other part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, phrase, clause, term, or word of Subsection 6506, thereby ensuring that as many prohibited sign-types as may be constitutionally prohibited continue to be prohibited.

**(D) Severability of prohibition on billboards:** If any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, phrase, clause, term, or word of this Section and/or any other code provision and/or laws are declared invalid or unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, the declaration of such unconstitutionality shall not affect the prohibition on new billboards as contained in this Section or the CDC.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)

**Subsection 6511. General Provisions**

**(A) Substitution of noncommercial speech for commercial speech.** Notwithstanding anything contained in this Section or the CDC to the contrary, any sign erected pursuant to the provisions of this Section or

the CDC or otherwise lawfully existing with a commercial message may, at the option of the owner, contain a noncommercial message unrelated to the business located on the premises where the sign is erected in lieu of a commercial message. The noncommercial message may occupy the entire sign face or any portion thereof.

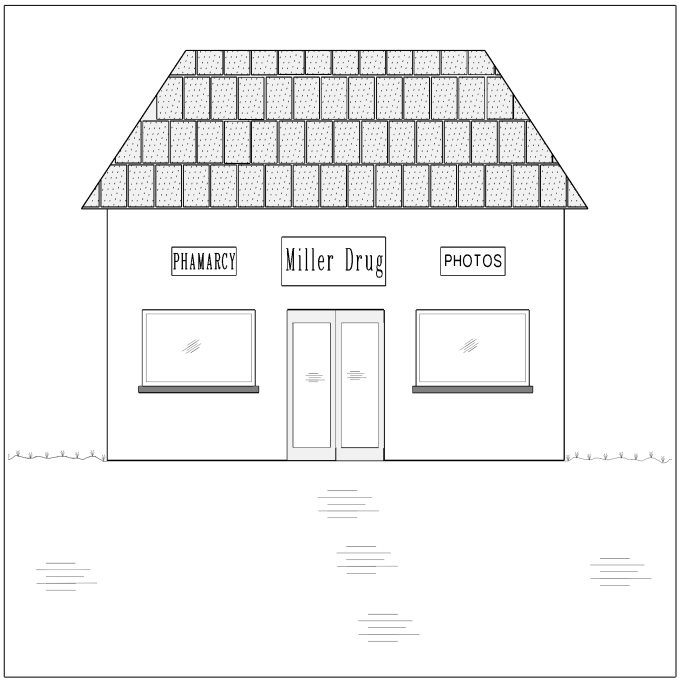
**(B) Content neutrality as to sign message (viewpoint).** Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Section, no sign or sign structure shall be subject to any limitation based upon the content (viewpoint) of the message contained on such sign or displayed on such sign structure.

**(C) Prior Restraint.** Notwithstanding anything contained in this Section or Code to the contrary, the requirements of this Section are not intended to either censor speech or create any regulation that might fail a prior restraint analysis.

(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 6/5/07)

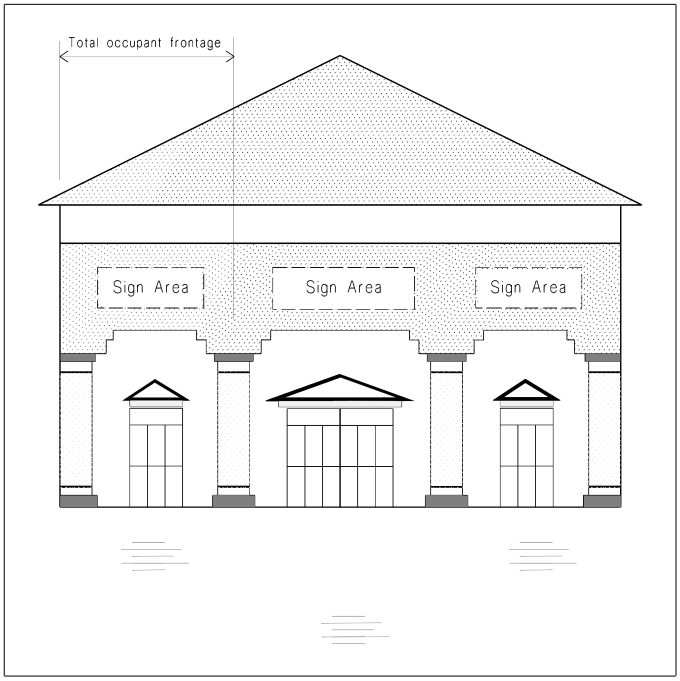
**Figure 6501: Calculating sign face area**

**Figure 6502: Determining building frontage**




**Single occupancy building**

**Figure 6503: Determining building frontage**




**Multiple occupancy building**

**Figure 6504: Sign height – clearance**

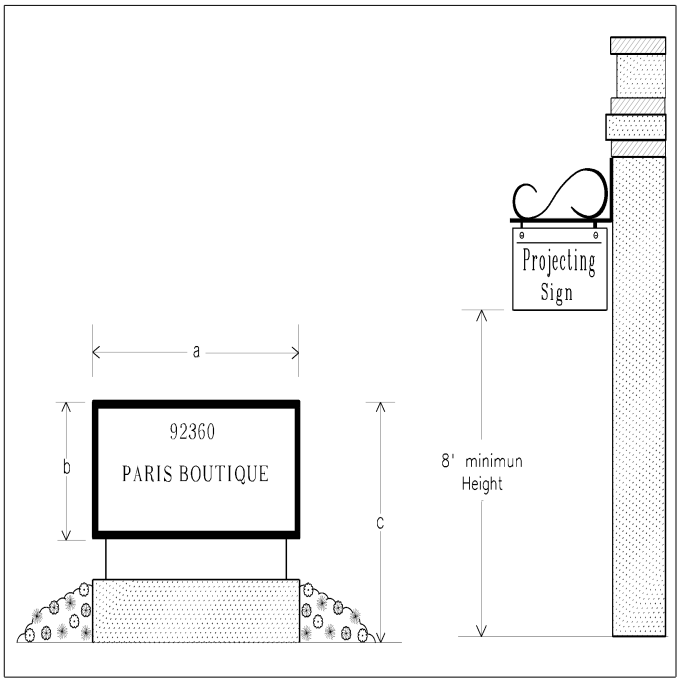


**Figure 6505: Obscuring existing signs**

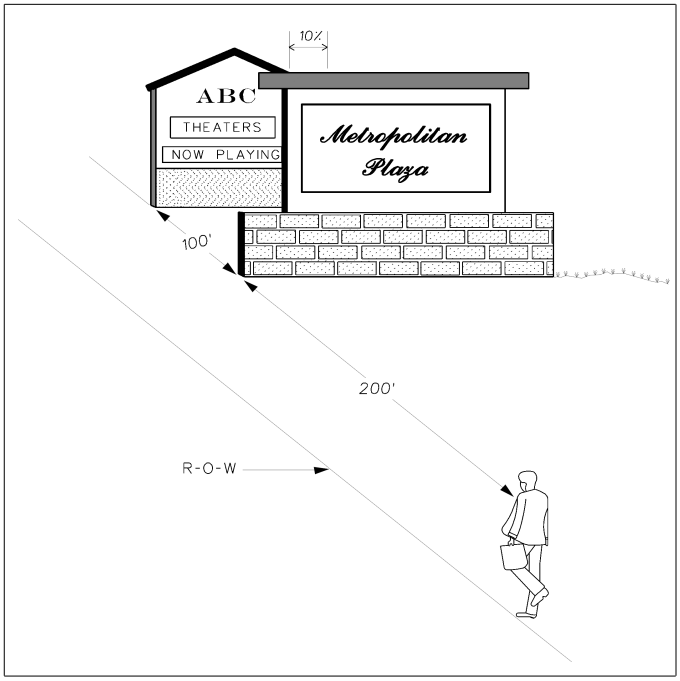



**Figure 6506: Monument sign with address location**

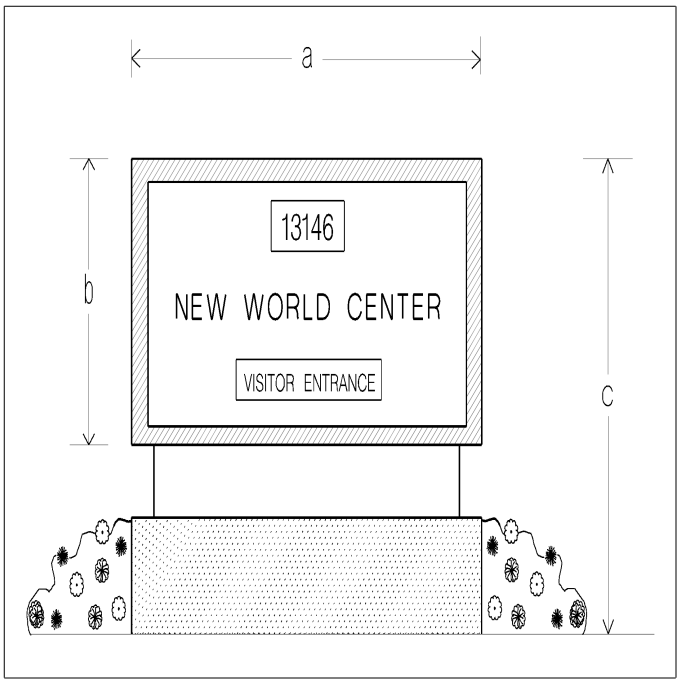


**Figure 6507: Directory sign**

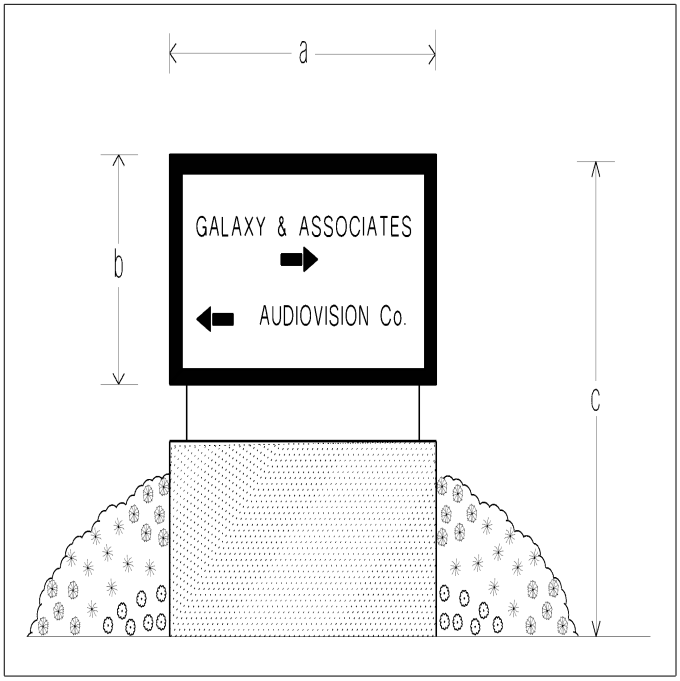



**Figure 6508: Displaying address/occupant identification on canopy**

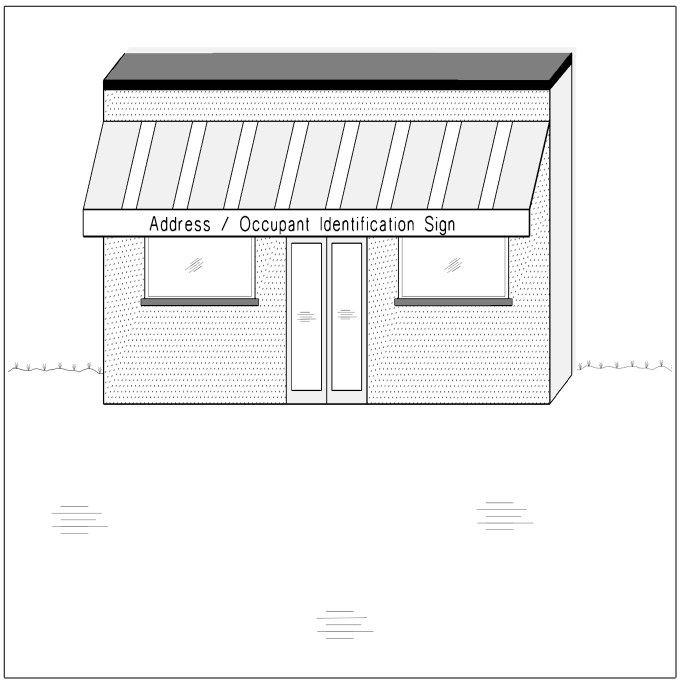
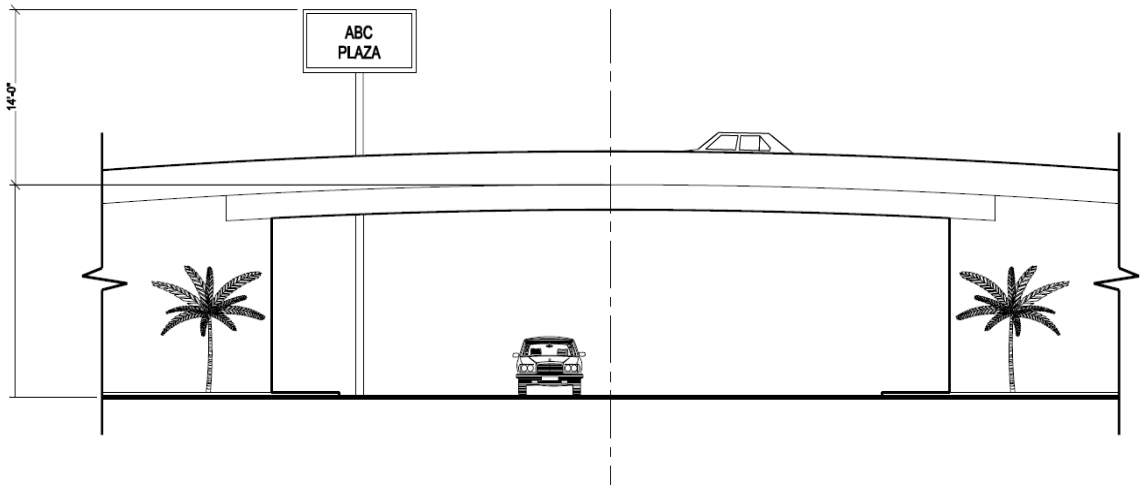


Figure 6509: Sign Height for Parcels Adjacent to US Highway 19




(Ord. No. 2007-27, § 2, 06/05/07)