

Walnut City Code							
Up	Previous	Next	Main	Collapse	Search	Print	No Frames
Title 6 PLANNING AND ZONING							

Chapter 6.92 SIGNS

6.92.010 Purpose of chapter.

The regulation and control of the location, size, type, number and aesthetics of signs permitted shall be governed by the provisions of this chapter. The purposes of this chapter shall be to safeguard and enhance property values; to protect public and private investments in buildings and open spaces; to preserve and improve the appearance of the City as a place in which to live and to work and as an attraction to nonresidents who come to visit or trade; to promote an uncluttered, aesthetically pleasing streetscape consistent with the rural environment of the City as encouraged by the General Plan; to encourage sound signing practices as an aid to business and for the information of the public, but to prevent excessive and confusing sign displays; to reduce hazards to motorists and pedestrians; and to promote the public health, safety and general welfare by regulating and controlling all matters relating to signs.

6.92.020 General provisions.

- A. Signs Affecting Traffic Safety. Signs or devices, which by color, wording, design or location resemble or conflict with any traffic control sign or device, or which, by reason of their size, location or manner of illumination, constitute a traffic hazard or a detriment to traffic safety by obstructing the vision of drivers or pedestrians are prohibited.
- B. Sign Illuminating. The approval of any illuminated sign shall not be final until 30 days after installation, during which period the Planning Commission may order the dimming of any illumination found to be excessively brilliant; and no sign permit shall be valid until such order has been carried out to an extent satisfactory to the Planning Commission. Illumination shall be considered excessive when it prevents normal perception of objects or buildings beyond or in the vicinity of the sign, or when it shines directly onto any residential zone.
- C. Prohibited Signs. The following types of signs are expressly prohibited:
1. Flashing signs, except time and temperature units at least 100 feet from any residential zone.
 2. Moving or rotating signs.
 3. Projecting signs.
 4. Roof signs.
 5. Portable signs.
 6. Billboard and outdoor advertising signs (except as provided in this chapter).
 7. Any sign affixed to any vehicle or trailer on a public right-of-way or public property, unless the vehicle or trailer is intended to be used in its normal business capacity and not for the sole purpose of attracting people to a place of business.
 8. Signs emitting audible sounds, odor or visible matter.
 9. Signs which purport to be, or are, an imitation of, or resemble, official traffic signs and attempt to govern traffic in public streets or rights-of-way. This does not include traffic or directional signs installed on the premises to control traffic within the premises.
 10. Cabinet signs or can signs, provided that such prohibition shall not include signage for churches, public schools, public colleges, and universities, and gasoline prices signs for gas stations.
- D. Location.
1. All signs, except directional and temporary signs, shall be erected upon the premises occupied by the persons or business sought to be identified by such signs.
 2. No sign shall be located upon or project over a public right-of-way, except banners announcing civic or charitable activities sponsored by civic or charitable organizations from within the City, subject to approval by

the Planning Commission.

3. No sign shall be attached in any way to a public utility pole or public property, except nonadvertising signs of public utility companies as may be required in their operations and providing service for the health and welfare of the general public, or as required by any law or regulations of the State, or any agency thereof.

4. No sign shall be placed in such a manner that visibility of signs on adjacent properties is obscured.

5. Signs shall not extend above the eave line or parapet of the buildings on which they are located, except where such signs form an integral part of the building.

6. No sign or sign structure shall be erected in such a manner that any portion of its surface or supports shall be closer than six feet horizontally of, or 12 feet vertically of overhead electric conductors which are energized in excess of 750 volts.

7. No sign will interfere with free use of any fire escape or exit.

E. Sign Identification. Every sign requiring a permit shall have the permit number placed on the exterior surface of the sign body in a location where such information will be legible.

F. Sign Maintenance. All signs and sign structures shall be kept in good repair including replacement of defective parts and illuminating fixtures, repainting, cleaning and otherwise maintained in a presentable condition such that they do not detract from the appearance of the surrounding area.

6.92.030 Signs—Use of Roman alphabet, Arabic numerals and English language.

All signs in an alphabet other than the Roman alphabet, and/or any language other than the English language, shall meet the following criteria:

A. A sign in a foreign alphabet must also contain the same words in the Roman alphabet. To protect the public health, safety and welfare by assisting the easier location of premises, both by the reporting party and the responding agency in cases of emergency, the minimum size of letter height for Roman characters shall be as follows:

1. Six inches on monument signs.

2. Two inches on directory signs.

3. For wall signs less than or equal to 150 feet from the centerline of the nearest public street, five inches. For each additional 50 feet from the centerline of the street the height of the letters shall increase one inch.

B. All signs written in a language other than the English language shall also contain an English-language translation of the words written in the foreign language. To protect the public health, safety and welfare by assisting the easier location of premises, both by the reporting party and the responding agency in cases of emergency, the minimum size of letter height for the English translation shall be as follows:

1. Six inches on monument signs.

2. Two inches on directory signs.

3. For wall signs less than or equal to 150 feet from the centerline of the nearest public street, five inches. For each additional 50 feet from the centerline of the street the height of the letters shall increase one inch.

C. The following are exempted from the English-translation requirement of subsection B of this section:

1. Words which are proper names.

2. Words which do not describe a product, brand or service provided on the premises.

D. All street addresses written on signs shall be printed in Arabic numbers.

E. A sign application for a sign containing a foreign language or characters in an alphabet other than the Roman Alphabet, shall contain an English translation of the sign copy.

F. Existing premises with one or more lawfully erected signs shall have nine months from October 1, 1985, to comply with the requirements of this section.

6.92.040 Permits.

A. Required. No sign shall hereafter be erected, re-erected, constructed or altered (except as provided by this chapter) until a sign permit for the same has been issued by the City Clerk. Where proposed signs are to be

illuminated, a separate electrical permit shall be obtained. Where permanent freestanding signs in excess of six feet in height, or permanent wall signs in excess of 20 square feet, are to be constructed, a separate building permit shall be obtained.

B. Applications.

1. Application for sign permits shall be made to the Planning Director upon forms provided by the City Clerk and shall contain, or have attached thereto, the following information and material:
 - a. The name, address and telephone number of the owner of the property.
 - b. The name, address and telephone number of the applicant (owner of the sign).
 - c. The name, address and telephone number of the sign contract, if any.
 - d. The location of the building, structure or lot to which, or upon which, the sign or other advertising structure is to be attached or erected, drawn to scale.
 - e. Twenty copies of a plan and elevations showing:
 - i. Sign height, size, proposed colors, type style, elevation above final grade level, proposed location on the premises of sign and sign structure and its relationship to adjacent buildings or structures, its method of illumination and materials for the proposed sign.
 - ii. Location, size and height of all signs and structures existing on or within 100 feet of the premises at the time of making such application.
 - iii. Structural details and calculations signed by one competent and qualified to prepare such information.
 - f. Photographs showing the premises and surrounding property at the time of making the application.
 - g. Such other information as the superintendent of buildings shall deem responsible and necessary to ensure safety of construction and compliance with this chapter and all other ordinances of the City.

C. Review of Applications.

1. All signs which meet the limitations of this chapter shall be reviewed by the Planning Director. He or she shall recommend to the Planning Commission, approval with modifications, denial or any application subject to the criteria of this chapter.
2. After submission of an application to the Planning Commission by the Planning Director, the Planning Commission shall consider the application and approve, approve with modifications or conditions, or deny the application. Decisions of the Planning Commission may be appealed in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.80.170.
3. Review Criteria. The staff, Planning Commission and City Council shall apply all of the following criteria as the basis for any action:
 - a. Applicant's need for signing to protect his or her trade and property rights.
 - b. The consistency of each proposed sign with the purpose of this chapter.
 - c. The compatibility of the proposed sign with the public health, safety and welfare.
 - d. The effect of the proposed sign on surrounding property values. In determining the effect the following elements shall be considered:
 - i. Whether the proposed sign will be in harmony with its surroundings, based on the size, shape, height, color and placement.
 - ii. Whether the proposed sign will be legible under normal viewing conditions, based on its location and design of its visual elements.
 - iii. Whether the proposed sign will obscure from view or detract from existing signs, based on its location and size, shape, height, color and placement.
 - iv. Whether the proposed sign will be in harmony with adjacent property, based on the size, shape, height, color and placement, and its proximity to a residential district. A sign permit shall be issued only for those signs which comply with all of the above criteria.

D. Fees.

1. Every applicant, before the granting of a permit, shall pay the building permit fees based upon the valuation of the proposed sign, in accordance with the Walnut Building Code.
2. Signs exceeding 100 square feet shall require a plan-checking fee payable at the time of plan submittal and equal to 60% of the building permit fee.

E. Signs Not Requiring Permits.

1. The following signs, if nonilluminated, no more than six square feet in size and are not located in any public right-of-way or on public property, are allowed in all zones with no permit required:
 - a. Nameplates.
 - b. Charitable, educational or cultural posters.
 - c. Governmental or other legally required posters, notices or signs.
 - d. Real estate “for sale,” “lease,” or “rent” signs.
 - e. Governmental flags or emblems or flags of nonprofit organizations.
 - f. Traffic, directional, warning or informational signs required or authorized by any public body.
 - g. Names of buildings and date of erection when cut into a masonry surface, or made of incombustible material, and similar memorial signs and markers.
 - h. Signs erected in or near the City boundary which sign contains the name of the City and name of, or any other information regarding, civic, fraternal or religious organizations located thereto.
 - i. Political campaign signs supporting, opposing, or regarding any candidate or issue are allowed subject to the following:
 - (1) The signs must be located on private property with the consent of the property owner.
 - (2) No signs are allowed on any public right-of-way or on public property.
 - (3) Signs shall not be located on utility poles, including light standards.
 - (4) All signs shall be removed by the owner of the signs or the owner of the property on which the signs are located within seven days after the date of the primary election, election or the event which the signs concern. Signs on public property, and signs on private property for which permission to enter the property has been obtained, which are not removed within the seven-day period may be removed by City of Walnut personnel or their designated representatives. Such signs shall be held by the City for a period of 30 days after giving notice to the owner, if the owner can be reasonably ascertained. The notice to the owner shall state that the owner may repossess the signs within 30 days after paying all costs of removal and storage incurred by the City. The City may not charge in excess of its actual costs of removal and storage of the signs.
 - (5) Any signs which are not claimed by their owners, agents or representatives within 30 days shall be destroyed or disposed of by the City. The owner and/or person who posted the sign shall be responsible for all costs of removal, storage and disposition.
2. Permits shall also not be required for the following situations:
 - a. The changing of advertising copy or messages on bulletin boards and similar signs specifically designed for the use of replaceable or changeable copy, unless electrical alterations are made.
 - b. Repainting and cleaning of an advertising structure, unless a change in structure size, height, color or locations is made.

F. Temporary Sign Permits. A temporary sign permit may be issued by the Planning Department subject to the provisions of the application requirements for the following uses:

Temporary Sixty-Day Signs. A temporary sign permit may be issued for special signs and advertising devices such as flags, pennants, banners and spinners, and business or commodity identification signs for business of a seasonal nature for a period of time not exceeding 60 days from the installation of the device. Such permits may not be granted to the same business or location more than two times during any one year. Special signs or banners mounted on the exterior wall of a building or structure shall not occupy more than 10% of the total outside wall area.

6.92.050 Signs permitted in any zone.

- A. One nonilluminated temporary sign may be displayed for each residential, manufacturing or commercial development; provided that:
1. It shall not exceed six feet in overall height.
 2. It shall not exceed 10 square feet in area.
 3. It shall be placed a minimum of five feet inside the property line.
 4. It shall be displayed after the issuance of a building permit and until final inspection or one year, whichever is less.
 5. A \$100.00 cash deposit shall be posted with the City Treasurer to guarantee removal of such sign, including a right-of-entry permit.
- B. One nonilluminated temporary sign may be displayed for the identification of a future development proposed on the site; provided that:
1. It shall not exceed 10 feet in overall height.
 2. It shall not exceed 32 square feet in area.
 3. It shall be located a minimum 10 feet inside the property line.
 4. The maximum duration of such sign shall be six months. Such time may be extended by the Planning Commission upon showing of need in writing.
 5. Such sign shall be a minimum of 50 feet from any existing residential structure.
 6. A \$100.00 cash deposit shall be posted with the City Treasurer to guarantee removal of such sign, including a right-of-entry permit.
- C. One temporary, nonilluminated sign, attached to the main building, not to exceed eight square feet in area may be displayed, pertaining only to the sale, lease or rental of the particular building, property or premises upon which displayed, for a period of time not to exceed six months, or until such earlier time as the sale, lease or rental of the development is accomplished.
- D. The Planning Commission may grant approval of a sign in any zone which varies with the regulations contained in this chapter if the Planning Commission determines that special conditions exist which deny the applicant the opportunity to display signage which is the same or similar to the opportunity afforded other similarly situated and zoned properties in the same vicinity. In order to grant an exception to the provisions of this chapter, the Planning Commission must specifically find:
1. The special conditions peculiar to the applicant's property create a hardship for the applicant.
 2. The applicant has not created the hardship.
 3. The granting of the application will not provide a privilege to the applicant which is not enjoyed by similarly situated properties.
 4. The granting of the application will not present a hardship to other property in the area, and will not cause a devaluation of other property in the area.

In reviewing an application for an exemption allowed by this subsection, the Planning Commission shall additionally apply the criteria contained in Sections 6.92.040(C)(3) and 6.84.050. The application shall be processed as a site plan and architectural review case in accordance with Sections 6.84.010 and following, except public notice shall be given as required for a conditional use permit.

6.92.060 Subdivision signs.

Subdivision signs shall be considered by the Planning Commission as part of a master sign program for proposed subdivisions. The master sign program shall be processed by way of a sign review application, where material, size, color, lighting, attachment, placement, etc. shall be reviewed for all proposed signage.

6.92.070 Signs in residential zones.

- A. Sale, Lease or Exchange of Signs. During the period of time when realty is offered for sale, lease or exchange, one sign so indicating may be located on the property by the owner or his or her authorized agent, subject to the following provisions:
1. The size of the sign shall not exceed six square feet.
 2. The sign may be double-faced.
 3. The overall height of the installed sign shall not exceed six feet from the ground.
 4. The information displayed on the sign shall be limited to showing the following:
 - a. That the property is for sale, lease or exchange by the owner or his or her agent;
 - b. The owner's or agent's name; and
 - c. The owner's or agent's address and telephone number.
- B. Open House Signs. In lieu of, but not in addition to, the above real estate exchange sign, one "open house" sign may be permitted only during the time an owner or owner's agent is on the premises, subject to the following provisions:
1. The size of the sign shall not exceed two square feet.
 2. The sign may be double-faced.
 3. The overall height of the installed sign shall not exceed three feet from the ground.
 4. The information displayed on the sign shall be limited to the words, "Open House."
- C. The location and design of any sale, lease or exchange sign shall be subject to the approval of the Planning Director.
- D. No other signs shall be erected or maintained in any residential zone except for those signs specifically authorized by the Planning Commission. Any such signs so authorized shall be necessary to preserve a legal right or serve an economic need, and shall not be deemed likely to cause undue detriment to surrounding uses or the economic values of surrounding properties. Signs so authorized shall be located and erected in a manner satisfactory to the Planning Commission.
- E. With regard to signs allowed per subsections A and B of this section, no permit for the same shall be required, provided that the Planning Director shall continue to have the authority and duty to immediately remove any sign maintained or placed in violation of the restrictions in this section.
- F. In R-3 zones only, one sign per street frontage designating "Manager" or "Office," is permitted, provided that each sign does not exceed one square foot in area.
- G. In R-3 zones only, one lighted or unlighted attached sign for the purpose of identification which contains the name and address, or both, of the development only is permitted. Such sign shall not exceed 10 square feet in area.

6.92.080 Signs permitted in commercial zones.

- A. For any individual licensed business the following shall apply:
1. Maximum of one wall sign facing each street frontage or common parking area may be attached to a building not to exceed a total of one and one-half square feet in area for each lineal foot of business frontage not to exceed 80% of lineal business frontage.
 2. One unlighted sign per use not to exceed two square feet in area shall be placed on the rear of the building for service and delivery identification. For all new signs, and upon change of business ownership, such sign shall include the business premises address.
 3. All faces of attached signs shall be parallel to the face of the building upon which such sign is located.
 4. One monument sign may be allowed on each street frontage provided that the licensed business has at least 50 feet of street frontage per street frontage. Maximum height shall be six feet and the maximum width shall be six feet.
- B. Shopping Centers. A shopping center containing five or more licensed businesses shall be allowed the following:

1. One monument sign identifying the center per street frontage not to exceed 36 square feet per face or 72 square feet total.
 2. In addition to the 36 square feet, the monument sign may include the name of the shopping center and/or a directory of establishments located within the shopping center, provided that the individual business listed in the Directory does not exceed six square feet per face. Maximum height and width of the monument sign shall be eight feet. For shopping centers with more than 50,000 square feet of floor area, an additional monument sign per street frontage shall be permitted with a maximum area of 50 square feet. For shopping centers with 90,000 or more square feet of floor area a third monument sign per street frontage, limited to a directory type sign, shall be permitted with a maximum area of 50 square feet, with a minimum of 150 feet between signs.
 3. For each individual business within a shopping center a maximum of one wall sign, on each wall facing a street or the common parking area, parallel to the face of the building shall be allowed provided the sign does not exceed one square foot for each lineal foot of business frontage.
 4. For each individual business within a shopping center with a canopy, an under canopy sign is permitted with a maximum area of six square feet.
 5. Each individual business within a shopping center on a separate lot with a street frontage of at least 75 feet may have one monument sign not to exceed 20 square feet in area and not to exceed four feet in height.
 6. One unlighted sign per use not to exceed two square feet in area may be placed on the rear of the building for service and delivery identification.
 7. Parking Areas. Entry, exit and directional signs shall be permitted as necessary, with permits, to facilitate the safe movement of vehicles served by the parking area; provided, that review of all such signs is accomplished by the City Engineer.
- C. Service Stations. In addition to the signs permitted in subsection A of this section, service stations may have additional price information signs of sufficient size to meet state law.
- D. One temporary, nonilluminated sign, attached to the main building, not to exceed eight square feet in area, pertaining only to the sale, lease or rental of the particular building, property or premises upon which displayed, for a period of time not to exceed six months, or until such earlier time as the sale, lease or rental of the development is accomplished is permitted.
- E. Neighborhood Retail Districts. One large or multiple smaller business centers, as determined by the City, shall be allowed marquee monument signs in accordance with the City sign and image enhancement program. Program guidelines shall be adopted and amended separately by resolution of the Planning Commission.

6.92.090 Signs permitted in manufacturing zones.

- A. One wall sign may be attached to the front of a building not exceeding an area equal to one square foot per one lineal foot of building frontage.
- B. One identifying sign attached to a side of the building, not to exceed one square foot in area for every three lineal feet of building frontage, up to a maximum of 20 square feet, located on the side or rear of the building when such side or rear faces a public parking area or street.
- C. One attached directory nameplate, not exceeding three square feet in area for every six occupants located at the main entrance to the building, containing the names and addresses of the occupants of the buildings.
- D. All such signs may be illuminated.
- E. Parking Areas. Entry, exit and directional signs shall be permitted as necessary, with permits, to facilitate the safe movement of vehicles served by the parking area; provided, that review of all such signs is accomplished by the City Engineer.
- F. One temporary, nonilluminated sign, attached to the main building, not to exceed eight square feet in area, pertaining only to the sale, lease or rental of that particular building, property or premises upon which displayed, for a period of time not to exceed six months, or until such earlier time as the sale, lease or rental of the development is accomplished.

- G. One monument sign on any lot with a street frontage of at least 100 feet at front setback line. The monument sign shall have a maximum height of six feet and a maximum width of six feet.
- H. Industrial Centers. An industrial center containing five or more installed units shall be allowed the following:
1. One monument sign identifying the center per street frontage not to exceed 36 square feet per face or 72 square feet total.
 2. In addition to the 36 square feet, one monument sign may include the name of the industrial center and/or a directory of establishments located within the industrial center provided that the individual business listed in the directory does not exceed six square feet per face. Maximum height and width of the monument sign shall be eight feet.
 3. In addition to the above-mentioned monument sign, an industrial center with a minimum of 500 feet of street frontage may have an additional monument sign not to exceed 50 square feet in area per street frontage.
 4. One unlighted sign per use not to exceed two square feet in area may be placed on the rear of the building for service and delivery identification.
- I. Neighborhood Retail Districts. One large or multiple smaller business centers shall be allowed marquee monument signs that conform to the City sign and image enhancement program. Program guidelines shall be adopted and amended separately by resolution of the Planning Commission.

6.92.100 Nonconforming signs.

- A. Every legal conforming sign in existence on the effective date of this chapter which does not conform to this chapter, shall be exempt from the operation of this chapter.
- B. Signs which do not conform to the provisions of this chapter shall be removed or reconstructed to conform to the provisions of this chapter when the business for which the sign was intended to advertise has ceased to be in operation for four consecutive months.
- C. No nonconforming sign which is destroyed or which is damaged to an extent in excess of 50% of its replacement cost shall be replaced, except by a sign which conforms to the provisions of this chapter. The determination of what constitutes replacement cost shall be made by the building official.
- D. Manner of Abatement. Abatement of nonconforming signs shall be accomplished in the following manner:
1. Signs Painted on Buildings, Walls or Fences. By removal of the material constituting the sign or by permanently painting over it in such a way that the sign shall not thereafter become visible.
 2. Other Signs. By removal of the sign, including its structures and supports, or by alteration and modifications in conformity with the provisions of this chapter.

6.92.110 Parking areas.

Entry, exit and directional signs shall be permitted as necessary, with permits, to facilitate the safe movement of vehicles served by the parking area; provided, that review of all such signs is accomplished by the City Engineer.

6.92.120 Removal of unauthorized signs.

Any unauthorized, illegal or unpermitted sign may be removed by the City in accordance with the following provisions:

- A. Public Property. Any unauthorized, illegal, or unpermitted sign located on public property shall be summarily removed by the City. The sign shall be stored by the City for a period of 60 days. Within 10 days of the removal of the sign, the City shall give written notice by mail to the owner of the sign that the sign may be reclaimed by the owner provided the owner pays the cost of removal to the City prior to redelivery of the sign. If the identity of the owner of the sign cannot be ascertained, the same notice shall be given to the owner of the property as shown on the assessor's records. After the 60-day period the City may demolish or discard the sign.
- B. Unauthorized, illegal or unpermitted signs on private property shall be removed in accordance with the nuisance abatement procedures provided in Chapter 3.36 or by court action except as herein specifically otherwise

provided.

1. A sign on private property may be removed by the City with the prior written consent of the owner of the sign and the owner of the real property in which the sign is located.
2. A sign on private property may be removed by the City through a written agreement with the property owner approved by the City Attorney, which contains the following minimum requirements:
 - a. A statement that the property owner has not consented to the placement of the sign on his or her property.
 - b. A provision that the property owner will hold harmless, indemnify and defend the City from any claim by any party for damage to the sign.
 - c. A waiver and hold harmless provision for any damage to the real property or premises (other than the sign) incurred in the removal of the sign.

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