

Article 6 - Signs

- 6.0 Signs
- 6.1 Permitting
- 6.2 Definitions
- 6.3 Standards
- 6.4 Non-conforming signs and exceptions
- 6.5 Enforcement
- 6.6 Severability

6.0 Signs

The provisions of this section are intended to promote the city's economic well-being, traffic safety and visual environmental quality by creating the necessary legal framework to govern the number, location, and other characteristics of signs. It is the intent of this section to encourage the use of signs which are compatible with their surroundings and appropriate to the type of activity to which they pertain.

6.1 Permitting

Any sign exceeding six (6) square feet put in place within the City of Crescent City shall require a permit issued by the City. Upon payment and receipt of a completed sign permit application the City shall evaluate the application for conformance to the requirements of this Code and render a permit or denial within ten (10) business days of receipt, except that building mount projection signs shall require Planning and Zoning Commission approval prior to installation.

6.2 Definitions

A-frame signs, aka sidewalk or sandwich signs means a time limited sign not secured or attached to the ground or any building or structure and displayed for the benefit of pedestrian traffic.

Banner sign. Any sign possessing characters, letters, illustrations, or ornamentations applied to cloth, paper, or fabric of any kind, either with or without frame.

Building mount sign. Sign with the display area mounted parallel to the building façade on which it is mounted.

Building Projection sign. Sign with the display area mounted perpendicular to the building façade on which it is mounted. May project over the non-vehicular portion of public right of way, is only allowed in the Community Redevelopment Area with Planning and Zoning Commission approval.

Electronic Message enter (EMC) signs are signs that feature a display where words, symbols, and images can be digitally presented and changed via remote or automatically. EMC's shall not include flashing, flowing, alternating or blinking lights or animation. Time and date and public information signs may be included in this definition.

Free Standing Sign. A sign with the display face elevated off the ground by columns or posts, which is not physically connected to any structure.

Lot. A parcel of land occupied or intended for occupancy and having its principal frontage upon a legally constituted access.

Monument Sign. A sign with the display elevated not more than three (3) feet above grade and fixed to the ground with a base the width and length of the sign.

Off-Premises Sign. Outdoor advertising signs erected and maintained by an advertising business or service, or owner, upon which advertising matter may be displayed and which generally advertise firms and organizations that along with their goods and services, are not located on the same premises as the sign. Electronic Message Centers or EMC's are excluded from the definition of Off-Premises signs.

Portable sign. Any sign or sign structure that is or was designed to be easily moved. The immobilizing or removal of the portable element(s) of any sign shall not allow consideration of the sign as permanent.

Shopping center. A group of retail stores or service establishments planned and developed as a unit by one (1) operator, owner, organization, or corporation for sale or for lease upon the site on which they are built and sharing a common road access and parking area.

Sign. Any device or display, consisting of letters, numbers, symbols, pictures, illustrations, announcements, cut-outs, insignia, trademarks, or demonstrations, including all trim and borders, designed to advertise, inform, identify, or to attract the attention of persons not on the premises on which the device or display is located, and visible from any public way. A sign shall be construed to be a single display surface or device containing elements organized, related, and composed to form a single unit.

Sign Area. The total area of any display consisting of letters, numbers, symbols, pictures, illustrations, announcements, cut-outs, insignia, trademarks, or demonstrations, including all trim and borders, designed to advertise, inform, identify, or to attract the attention of persons not on the premises on which the device or display is located. In the case of double-sided signs, both display areas shall be calculated and added together for the total sign area of the sign. Sign area shall not include mounting hardware, brackets, frames or other structural support elements, provided these support elements are clearly subordinate to the attraction of the display element of the sign.

6.3 Standards

- A. The following signs are permitted in all zoning districts unless not allowed due to other provisions of this chapter:
1. Signs not visible from a street due to the location of a building, other structure, topographic features of the land, intensive year-round natural vegetation, or some other object or objects.
 2. Signs within enclosed structures.
 3. For each lot with semi-public use, religious, charitable, educational, or cultural signs not exceeding six (6) square feet in area which are used for not more than thirty (30) days.
 4. For each lot, one (1) historic marker not exceeding four (4) square feet in size.
 5. For each lot, temporary signs not exceeding six (6) square feet in size which advertise the sale, lease, or rental of property on which the signs are located and/or which state the name of a future site occupant and other information concerning a construction project underway on the lot.
 6. For each lot, political signs not more than thirty-two (32) square feet in area per sign, per political candidate, which are put in place no earlier than fifty (50) days prior to the election or referendum to which they pertain. These political signs must be removed within forty-eight (48) hours after the election or referendum to which the sign relates is over. The person or persons responsible for the placement of a political sign must be responsible for its removal.

7. For each dwelling unit, one (1) sign no larger than two (2) square feet in area which contains the name of the occupant, profession of the occupant and/or the house number.
 8. For each occupant of commercial or semi-public use, one (1) sign no more than two (2) square feet in area which contains the name and profession of the occupant.
 9. Governmental or other legally required posters, notices, or other signs.
 10. Parking or directional signs not over two (2) square feet in area with no advertising matter.
- B. The following signs are prohibited in all zoning districts:
1. Signs which incorporate in any manner any flashing, moving, or intermittent lighting, or animation. This does not include time and temperature units utilized to announce governmental services.
 2. Signs which by reason of their position, working, illumination, size, shape, or color may obstruct, impair, obscure, or interfere with the view of, or be confused with, any authorized traffic control sign, signal, or device.
 3. Signs which by reason of their position, size, or shape obstruct any sign previously erected.
 4. Signs for whatever purpose that are obscene, lewd, indecent, immoral, or lascivious.
 5. Signs that create a safety hazard by obstructing the view of pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
 6. Signs which are located all or partially on or over a street, alley, or public property, other than sidewalks unless specifically approved as a projection sign within the Community Redevelopment Area.
 7. Signs on public utility posts or poles, unless required by law or authorized by the City Commission as a governmental usage.
 8. Portable signs.
 9. No sign shall physically project beyond the property line over any public street, right-of-way, walk or alley unless specifically approved as a projection sign within the Community Redevelopment Area.
- C. The following signs are permitted in residential zoning districts unless not allowed due to other provisions of this article:
1. The Planning and Zoning Commission may allow up to two (2) ground or wall signs identifying a residential neighborhood. The sign may be a single sign with two (2) faces of equal size or may be two (2) single-faced structures of equal size located on each side of the entrance. No face of the sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in size and may be illuminated in a steady light only.
 2. Multi-family housing developments may have one (1) identification sign per street frontage. These signs may be ground or wall signs. The only form of artificial illumination allowed is indirect illumination. Identification signs shall be limited to one (1) square foot of area per dwelling unit up to a maximum of thirty (30) square feet.
 3. The Planning and Zoning Commission may allow non-residential special exceptions to have non-illuminated signs no larger than twenty-four (24) square feet in area. No off-site sign bearing a commercial message shall be allowed in a residential zoning district.
- D. The following signs are permitted in commercial zoning districts unless not allowed due to other provisions of this chapter:
1. The total surface area of all signs for the site shall not exceed two hundred fifty (250) square feet.
 2. Signs serving or incidental to a special exception subject to approval by the City Commission.
 3. Small incidental signs such as those necessary to control or direct traffic, parking, or access shall be permitted in addition to those allowed above, provided no such sign shall exceed two (2) square feet in area on one (1) side.

4. Window advertisements not exceeding twenty (20) percent of total window space and shall be counted toward total surface area of signage for the business.
5. Banners, portable signs, or other temporary wall signs shall be permitted under the following conditions:
 - a) In addition to signage permitted under subsection (D)(1) above, for Grand Opening Celebrations one (1) time only once a year, to be allowed for a time period of up to one-hundred and twenty (120) days, per business entity.
 - b) For sidewalk sales and other outdoor sales events except yard/garage sales.
 - c) Maximum sign area shall be thirty-two (32) square feet.
 - d) Banner signs and other temporary wall signs permitted by this section shall require the approval of a sign permit application but shall be exempt from permit fees.
 - e) Banners under fifteen (15) square feet in the commercial district may be allowed as long as maintained in good condition.
6. A-frame signs that meet the following conditions:
 - a) Only one (1) A-frame sign per business.
 - b) A-frame signs shall not exceed four (4) feet in height and twelve (12) feet in area.
 - c) A-frame signs shall have permanent lettering and must be of a professional quality and maintained in good condition.
 - d) A-frame signs must be placed within (5) five feet of store entryway or adjacent to the business frontage in a manner that does not impede pedestrian traffic. No sign shall be placed in the state or county maintained rights-of-way.
 - e) A-frame signs shall be removed at the end of each business day.
 - f) Any business placing an A-frame sign does so at its risk and will hold harmless the City of Crescent City.
7. Off-Premises signs
 - a) Off-premises signs must be ground signs only. Off-premises wall and roof signs are prohibited. Off-premises signs shall only be allowed in commercial zoning districts.
 - b) Off-premises signs shall have no more than two (2) faces. Each face of an off-premises sign may have a maximum area of one hundred (100) square feet and be no more than twenty (20) feet high.
 - c) Off-premises signs shall not be digitized, animated or have electrical service or be an EMC type sign.
 - d) Off-premises sign applicants must provide evidence of the landowner's consent. Only one (1) off-premises sign is allowed per lot.
8. Electronic Message Center (EMC)
 - a) Only one (1) EMC is allowed per business or parcel. All EMC's must be on premises and meet Section 6.3.
 - b) The display screen of an EMC shall not be oriented towards a residential zoning district or create a traffic hazard.
 - c) The conversion of any existing permitted sign to an electronic message center or new message center shall require the approval of a new sign permit.
 - d) EMC's must not change copy more than once every thirty (30) seconds.
 - e) The face of the electronic variable message sign shall have only one (1) advertising message per duration of the display and shall not flash, strobe or make noise during sequencing.
 - f) Any messaging conveyed on an EMC shall be instantaneous.
 - g) In the event of an EMC malfunction, the responsible entity of the EMC shall turn to a dark screen until the malfunction is corrected.

- h) The applicant for an EMC sign must demonstrate that the EMC sign will not exceed 0.3 footcandles over ambient lighting conditions when measured at the recommended distance and that the proposed sign has automatic dimming capabilities and can be adjusted to a level that is visible and readable.
 - i) EMCs are prohibited in the historic district except for government purposes.
9. Feather signs
- a) Feather signs may be used for Grand Opening Events and sidewalks pursuant to Section 6.3(d).
 - b) A feather sign may be used by licensed mobile vendors with a sign application and fee.
 - c) The feather sign must be of professional quality and durability and maintained in good condition.
 - d) A feather sign is a time-limited sign which must be removed each day.
 - e) Only three (3) feather signs per business. A Special Event may have one (1) feather sign at each public entrance.

E. Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, the City Commission may permit a special event signing program for an annual and recurring event as follows: 1) up to six (6) days prior for monthly events and 2) up to thirty (30) days in a year for any use or combination of uses of any type when it has made the following findings:

1. The event is a festive occasion which would be enhanced by the use of signage not already allowed.
2. All segments of the city's population may attend the event.
3. The event is appropriate for the location where it is being held. Such a location must conform to zoning requirements.
4. The event is being undertaken for the purpose of advertising or otherwise promoting a public-oriented use or uses.

F. Other sign provisions:

1. No sign shall exceed twenty (20) feet in height without specific approval of the City Commission.
2. No illuminated sign shall be so located as to face directly, shine, or reflect glare into a dwelling home situated in the vicinity of such sign.
3. All signs together with any supports, braces, guys, and anchors shall be kept in good repair and shall be constructed in compliance with the Florida Building Code.

G. The following sign types and standards shall be utilized for advertisement signage:

1. Monument sign - shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height, one-hundred fifty (150) square feet in area and must include architectural elements of the building or facility it is advertising.
2. Free Standing Sign - shall not exceed twenty (20) feet in height; one hundred (100) square feet in area, with the bottom of the sign face not less than eight (8) feet above finished grade. Freestanding signs shall feature architecturally embellished supports and sign panel framing of a material complementary to the building or facility it is advertising.
3. Building Mount Sign - shall not exceed one hundred (100) square feet in area and must be of a complementary architectural design to the building which it is mounted.
4. Building Projection Sign – allowed only in the Community Redevelopment Area; shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet in area with the bottom of the sign face not less than twelve (12) feet above finished grade and must be approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
5. Multiple tenant developments must use a single sign design theme throughout the development.
6. Signage is permitted on awnings and canopies, provided it is not backlit or illuminated.

7. Sign display and structural support materials shall be of a clean and neat nature presenting quality workmanship and shall be maintained as such.

6.4 Non-conforming signs and exceptions

- A. Non-conforming signs are declared by this section to be incompatible with permitted sign usage in the zoning districts involved.
- B. Signs which are non-conforming or become non-conforming through zoning changes shall be removed or made to conform with this Code within the following specified time periods, whichever is shorter:
 1. After the end of the seventh year the sign has become non-conforming.
 2. Flashing signs, which are non-conforming, must be removed or brought into conformity.
 3. Deteriorated signs or signs which have not been maintained in good repair in accordance with the requirements of this section must be removed or brought into conformity within one (1) year from the enactment of this code.
 4. In the case of hardship caused by an Act of God, the City Manager shall have the power to grant a temporary portable sign permit for a period of up to sixty (60) days.
- C. Whenever a non-conforming use of a sign, or portion thereof has been discontinued, as evidenced by non-operation of a business, or building vacancy for a period of six (6) months, such non-conforming sign shall not thereafter be re-established or continued, and any future sign shall be in conformity with the requirements of this section.
- D. Any sign that has been damaged by any means to an extent more than sixty (60) percent of its value immediately prior to damage, shall not be restored except in conformity with the requirements of this section.
- E. To avoid undue hardship, nothing within in this section shall be deemed to require a change in the plans or construction of a sign for which a permit has been issued prior to adoption of this section, provided construction of the sign occurs within three (3) months of permit issuance.

6.5 Enforcement

The City Manager or designee is vested with the authority to administer, interpret, and enforce the provisions of this section. The City Manager or designee shall issue a STOP WORK ORDER, if in their determination, a sign is being erected contrary to the requirements of this section. The Code Enforcement official or designee shall also have the authority to issue a class 4 citation for failure to comply with the requirements of this section.

6.6 Severability

If any section, sentence, phrase, word, or portion of this section proves to be invalid, unlawful or unconstitutional, it shall not be held to impair the validity of the ordinance or effect of another action or part of this section.