

Section 530

Signage

530.01. Findings, purpose and effect.

Subd. 1. Findings. The city council hereby finds as follows:

- (a) Exterior signs have a substantial impact on the character and quality of the environment;
- (b) Signs provide an important medium through which individuals may convey a variety of messages; and
- (c) Signs can create traffic hazards, aesthetic concerns and detriments to property values, thereby threatening the public health, safety and welfare.

Subd. 2. Purpose and intent. It is not the purpose or intent of this section to regulate the message displayed on any sign; nor is it the purpose or intent of this section to regulate any building design or any display not defined as a sign, or any sign which cannot be viewed from outside a building. The purpose and intent of this section is to:

- (a) Regulate the number, location, size, type, illumination and other physical characteristics of signs within the city in order to promote the public health, safety and welfare;
- (b) Maintain, enhance and improve the aesthetic environment of the city by preventing visual clutter that is harmful to the appearance of the community;
- (c) Improve the visual appearance of the city while providing for effective means of communication, consistent with constitutional guarantees and the city's goals of public safety and aesthetics; and
- (d) Provide for fair and consistent enforcement of the sign regulations set forth in this section.

530.03. General sign requirements.

Subd. 1. Permit required. Unless exempted as defined in this subsection 2 below, no sign shall be erected, altered, reconstructed, maintained, or moved in the city without first securing a permit from the city. The content of the sign shall not be reviewed or considered in determining whether to approve or deny a sign permit. Application for a permit shall be on a form provided by the city.

Subd. 2. Exemptions. The following signs shall not require a permit. These exemptions, however, shall not be construed as relieving the owner of the sign from the responsibility of its erection and maintenance, and its compliance with the provisions of this UDC or any other law or ordinance regulating the same.

- (a) The changing of the display surface on a painted or printed sign only. This exemption, however, shall apply only to poster replacement and/or on-site changes involving sign painting elsewhere than directly on a building.
- (b) Small signs.
- (c) Governmental signs.

Subd. 3. Prohibited signs. The following signs are prohibited:

- (a) Any sign, signal, marking or device which purports to be or is an imitation of or resembles any official traffic control device or railroad sign or signal, or emergency vehicle signal, or which attempts to direct the movement of traffic or which hides from view or interferes with the effectiveness of any official traffic-control device or any railroad sign or signal;
- (b) All off-premise signs;
- (c) Signs painted, attached or in any other manner affixed to trees, rocks, or similar natural surfaces, or attached to public utility poles, bridges, towers, or similar public structures;
- (d) Signs placed in the public right-of-way other than governmental signs and courtesy bench signs allowed with an obstruction permit as regulated by chapter VIII;
- (e) A sign, including unshielded display lighting, that obstructs or distracts the vision of drivers or pedestrians, or detracts from the visibility of any official traffic control device;

- (f) A sign that contains, imitates, interferes with, obscures or causes confusion with an official traffic sign or signal, except for private, on premise directional signs;
- (g) Abandoned signs;
- (h) Roof signs; and
- (i) Vehicle signs.

Subd. 4. Substitution clause. The owner of any sign which is otherwise allowed by these sign regulations may substitute noncommercial copy in lieu of any other commercial or non-commercial copy. This substitution of copy may be made without any additional approval or permitting. The purpose of this provision is to prevent any inadvertent favoring of commercial speech over non-commercial speech, or favoring of any particular non-commercial message over any other non-commercial message. This provision prevails over any more specific provision to the contrary.

530.05. Sign design standards.

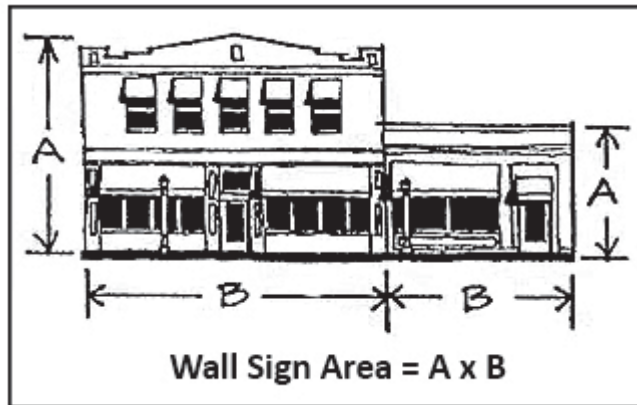
Subd. 1. Computations. The following principles shall control the computation of sign area and sign height:

- (a) The area of a sign face, which is also the sign area of a wall sign or other sign with only one face, shall be computed by means of the smallest square, circle, rectangle, triangle, or combination thereof that shall encompass the extreme limits of the writing, representation, emblem, or other display. This does not include any supporting framework, bracing, or decorative fence or wall when such fence or wall otherwise meets the regulations of this UDC and is clearly incidental to the display itself (See Figure 22);



**Figure 22:** Illustration of how sign area is calculated.

- (b) A wall façade shall be determined by multiplying the total building width by the height of the wall or surface area (see Figure 23);



**Figure 23:** Illustration of wall sign area calculation.

- (c) If a sign has two or more faces, the area of all faces shall be included in determining the total area of the sign, except that if two sign faces are placed back-to-back, and are at no point more than 30 inches from one another, the area of the sign shall be taken as the area of one face if the two faces are of equal area, or as the area of the larger face if the two faces are of unequal area; and
- (d) The height of a sign shall be computed as the distance from the base of the sign at normal grade to the top of the highest attached component of the sign.

Subd. 2. Electrical signs. Electrical signs must be installed in accordance with the current electrical code and a separate permit from the building official shall be obtained prior to placement.

Subd. 3. Height. The top of a sign, including its superstructure, if any, shall be no higher than the roof of the building to which such sign may be attached; except that the height of any changeable sign which is attached to or an integral part of a functional structure, such as a water tower, smoke stack, radio or TV transmitting tower, beacon or similar structure shall be no higher than such structure. Signs, including any superstructure standing or erected free of any building or other structure, shall not exceed an overall height of 25 feet from ground level and shall be located on land in an area which is landscaped or if such land is part of an approved parking area, it shall be surfaced or paved as required in this UDC.

Subd. 4. Illumination. External illumination for signs shall be so constructed and maintained that the source of light meets the requirements of the Crystal city code, subsection 520.07.

Subd. 5. Intersections. A sign or sign structure shall comply with the visibility requirements in the Crystal city code, chapter 8.

530.07. Maintenance and repair.

Subd. 1. Maintenance. Every sign shall be maintained in a safe, presentable and good structural condition at all times, including the replacement of defective parts, painting, repainting, cleaning and other acts required for the maintenance of the sign.

Subd. 2. Repairs.

- (a) Any sign located in the city which may now be or hereafter become out of order, rotten or unsafe, and every sign which shall hereafter be erected, altered, resurfaced, reconstructed or moved contrary to the provisions of this subsection, shall be removed or otherwise properly secured in accordance with the terms of this subsection by the owners thereof or by the owners of the grounds on which said sign shall stand, upon written notice by the city. No rotten or other unsafe sign shall be repaired or rebuilt except in accordance with the provisions of this section and upon a permit issued by the city.
- (b) In the event of the failure of the owner or person, company or corporation having control of any sign, or the owner of the ground on which the sign is located, to remove or repair said sign within 60 days after the use is terminated, a written notice shall be given and the sign may be removed by the city at the expense of the owner or manager of the sign, or the owner of the ground upon which the sign stands.

530.09. Allowed sign types.

- (a) Table 14 lists the sign types allowed within each zoning district. The symbols and headings used in the table are defined as follows:
- (1) A “P” in a cell indicates a sign type that is allowed in the zoning district with an approved sign permit application;
  - (2) An “A” in a cell indicates a sign type that is allowed in the zoning district, but is exempt from obtaining a sign permit;
  - (3) A cell with a “-“ indicates a sign type that is not allowed in the zoning district; and
  - (4) The “sign specific standards” column cross-references standards that are specific to an individual sign type and are applicable to that sign in all districts unless otherwise stated in the sign specific standards.

Table 14: Signs allowed by zoning district							
Sign Type	Zoning District						Sign Specific Standards
	R-1	R-2	R-3	C	I	AP	
Canopy, Marquee, and Fixed Awnings	P	P	P	P	P	P	530.11, subdivision 1
Electronically controlled readerboard	P	P	P	P	P	P	530.11, subdivision 2
Electric	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Freestanding	-	-	-	P	P	P	530.11, subdivision 3
Governmental	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Monument	P	P	P	P	P	P	530.11, subdivision 4
Multi-Tenant	-	-	-	P	P	-	530.11, subdivision 6
Off-Premise	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Projecting	-	-	-	P	P	P	530.11, subdivision 5
Roof	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Rotating	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Shimmering	-	-	-	P	P	P	
Temporary	P	P	P	P	P	P	530.11, subdivision 7
Small	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Wall	P	P	P	P	P	P	530.11, subdivision 8

530.11. Sign specific standards. The following requirements for specific sign types apply in addition to those requirements found in Table 14.

Subd. 1. Canopies, marquees and fixed awnings. Signs are allowed on canopies, marquees and fixed awnings, which are an integral part of the structure to which they are attached. Within the residential districts, these signs are only allowed for multiple family dwellings, or institutional or commercial uses, but are allowed for all building types in the commercial and industrial districts. Canopy, marquee, and fixed awning signs are subject to the following standards:

- (a) An awning, canopy or marquee may not project into the public right-of-way nearer than 30 inches to the street curb or curb line;
- (b) The bottom of awning signs shall be no less than eight feet above the sidewalk or grade at any point;
- (c) Awnings, canopy or marquees projecting into the required yards may not be enclosed except with a transparent material permitting through vision;
- (d) Awnings, canopies or marquees built over the public right-of-way must be included in a liability insurance policy holding the city free of all responsibility; and
- (e) Canopies and marquees are a part of the building structure but the area of canopies and marquees may not be used in the computation of total wall area.

Subd. 2. Electronically or electrically controlled readerboards. Electronically or electrically controlled readerboards are permitted provided that the sign:

- (a) Displays a given copy or graphic image for a minimum of three seconds within the readerboard frame if having lamps of a single color, or for a minimum of two minutes if having lamps of more than one color;
- (b) Is included in an otherwise permitted and conforming wall, free-standing or monument sign, and the area of the readerboard may not exceed 50% of the total area of the sign in which it is integrated, or 50 square feet, whichever is less, and only one readerboard per premise is allowed;
- (c) Displays a static message with no fade, dissolve, scrolling, spinning or zooming action; and
- (d) Does not cast light on any public street in excess of one foot candle at the lot line along said street, or in excess of 0.4 foot candle at the lot line of any residential property.



Subd. 3. Freestanding or pylon signs. Freestanding or pylon signs are subject to the following standards:

- (a) Freestanding or pylon signs shall meet the requirements in Table 15.
- (b) An electronically controlled reader board is allowed as part of a freestanding or pylon sign.

<b>Table: 15: Freestanding or Pylon Signs</b>						
<b>Sign Type</b>	<b>Number Allowed</b>	<b>Maximum Height</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Minimum Street Frontage</b>	<b>Setback From Lot Line</b>	<b>Setback From Right-of-Way</b>
Freestanding or pylon sign	1 [1]	25 feet	1 square foot of sign per linear foot of frontage [2]	50 feet	10 feet, and 50 feet from residential district, park, school, library, church or similar land use [3]	10 feet
<p>Notes:</p> <p>1. A property abutting more than one street may have one additional freestanding sign on one of the additional street rights-of-way provided that such right-of-way is on an arterial or collector street and such sign is more than 50 feet distant from any other freestanding sign on the property.</p> <p>2. The area of a sign may not exceed the following square footages based on the street the sign abuts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Principal arterial - 200 square feet</li> <li>2. Minor arterial or major collector – 150 square feet</li> <li>3. Minor collector – 100 square feet</li> <li>4. Local – 50 square feet</li> </ul> <p>3. All parts of a freestanding sign (supports, structure, display, or trim) shall meet this setback requirement.</p>						

Subd. 4. Monument signs. Monument signs are subject to the following standards:

- (a) In the residential districts, monument signs are only allowed for multiple family dwellings or institutional or commercial uses.
- (b) Monument signs shall meet the requirements in Table 16.
- (c) An electronically controlled reader board is allowed as part of a monument sign.

<b>Table: 16: Monument Signs</b>					
<b>Sign Type</b>	<b>Number Allowed</b>	<b>Maximum Height</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Setback From Any Property Line</b>	<b>Setback From Right-of-Way</b>
Monument	1 [1]	6 feet	Maximum 75 square feet	10 feet	10 feet
<p>Note:</p> <p>1. A property abutting more than one street may have one additional monument sign on one of the additional street rights-of-way provided that such right-of-way is on an arterial or major collector street.</p>					

Subd. 5. Projecting signs. Projecting signs are subject to the following standards:

(1) Projecting signs shall meet the requirements in Table 17.

<b>Table: 17: Projecting Signs</b>					
<b>Sign Type</b>	<b>Number Allowed</b>	<b>Maximum Height</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Setback From Any Property Line</b>	<b>Setback From Right-of-Way</b>
Projecting	Maximum of 2 wall or projecting signs per wall [1]	Minimum 10 feet clearance above grade and may not be higher than roofline	Up to 10% of the wall area to which it is affixed when combined with wall signs	10 feet, but sign may be equidistant between the side property lines if the property is less than 20 feet in width	10 feet
<p>Note:</p> <p>1. A property abutting more than one street may have one additional projecting sign on one of the additional street rights-of-way provided that such right-of-way is on an arterial or collector street and such sign is more than 50 feet distant from any other projecting sign on the property.</p>					

- (2) Buildings exceeding 80,000 square feet in size on lots of over 20,000 square feet are permitted to have wall/projecting signage of up to 250 square feet.

Subd. 6. Multi-tenant. The following provisions shall apply to multi-tenant buildings within the commercial and industrial districts.

- (a) Wall signs. Each tenant in a multi-tenant building may have a flat wall sign in compliance with the wall sign requirements in Table 18. In addition, the multi-tenant building may have wall signage on common walls of the building as long as no more than ten percent of that wall is occupied by signage.
- (b) Freestanding signs. One freestanding sign shall be permitted for each multi-tenant building.
- (c) Canopies and awnings. The design of canopies shall be in keeping with the overall building design in terms of location, size, and color. No canopies with visible wall hangers shall be permitted. Signage on canopies may be substituted for allowed building signage and shall be limited to 25% of the canopy area.

Subd. 7. Temporary signs. The temporary use of banners, pennants, balloon signs, portable signs and similar devices requires a permit. The permit is valid for seven consecutive days. Not more than six permits for each property may be granted in a 12-month period. The permit must be prominently displayed at the principal use in the same manner required for building permits. Temporary signs shall conform to the same location and dimension requirements as permanent signs.

- (a) Non-commercial speech signs. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these sign requirements, all signs of any size containing non-commercial speech may be posted from August 1 in any general election year until ten days following the general election and 13 weeks prior to any special election until ten days following the special election.

Subd. 8. Wall signs.

- (a) Wall signs in residential districts. In the residential districts, wall signs are allowed for multiple family dwellings, or institutional or commercial uses, subject to the following standards:

- (1) Wall signs are only permitted on walls fronting on a public street or facing other property used for institutional, commercial or industrial purposes.
  - (2) No more than one sign is permitted on each wall.
  - (3) No wall sign shall exceed 10% of the wall area or 75 square feet in area, whichever is less.
  - (4) Wall signs for home business are allowed according to the requirements in the Crystal city code, subsection 515.23.
- (b) Wall signs in commercial and industrial districts. In the commercial and industrial districts, wall signs are subject to the following standards:
- (1) Wall signs shall meet the requirements in Table 18.

<b>Table: 18: Wall Signs</b>		
<b>Sign Type</b>	<b>Number Allowed</b>	<b>Area</b>
Wall	Maximum of 2 wall or projecting signs per wall	Up to 10% of the wall area to which it is affixed when combined with projecting signs

- (2) Buildings exceeding 80,000 square feet in size on lots of over 20,000 square feet are permitted to have wall/projecting signage of up to 250 square feet.
- (3) A wall sign may be displayed on the side or rear of a building facing a yard not abutting on a street under the following conditions:

- (i) The sign is visible from a public roadway on which the building abuts.
- (ii) The side or rear yard on the side of the building to be signed must meet district setback requirements.
- (iii) The sign(s) may not be larger in area than the largest sign permitted elsewhere on the building.
- (iv) If the side or rear yard on the side of the building to be signed abuts a park property or a residential use, any lighting of sign must be shielded in accordance with the Crystal city code, subsection 520.07.