

ARTICLE ELEVEN

SIGN REGULATIONS (Ord No. 1242, 12/17/2019)

11-1 Applicability

Any sign erected, altered, or maintained in the City of Ralston after the effective date of this Ordinance shall conform to the following regulations.

11-2 Purpose & Intent

Signs perform an important function in identifying and promoting properties, businesses, services, residences, events, and other matters of interest to the public. The intent of this Article is to regulate all signs within the City of Ralston to ensure that they are appropriate for their respective uses, in keeping with the appearance of the surrounding built environment, and protective of the public health, safety, and general welfare by:

- A. Setting standards and providing uniform controls that strengthen the economy of Ralston by promoting the development of new and existing businesses.
- B. Encouraging signs that create a visually interesting streetscape while avoiding visual clutter and confusion.
- C. Promoting high-quality and compatible signage practices with respect to scale, design, placement and lighting.
- D. Ensuring that signs located in the TC district enhance the distinctive small-town and historic character of downtown Ralston.
- E. Promoting signs that reinforce the pedestrian-oriented character of downtown Ralston, while allowing signs that balance the needs of both pedestrians and drivers.
- F. Prohibiting the erection of signs in such numbers, sizes, designs, illumination, and locations as may create a hazard to pedestrians and motorists.

11-3 Definitions

Words and terms used in this ordinance shall have the meanings given in this Article. Unless expressly stated otherwise, any pertinent word or term not part of this listing but vital to the interpretation of this ordinance, shall be construed to have their legal definition, or in absence of a legal definition, their meaning as commonly accepted by practitioners including civil engineers, surveyors, architects, landscape architects, and planners.

Abandoned Sign: A sign which has not identified or advertised a current business, service, owner, product, or activity for a period of 90 days.

Address Sign: A sign that designates the street number and/or street name for identification purposes as designated by the United States Postal Service. (Also known as: nameplate sign)

Animated Sign: A sign depicting action, motion, or light or color changes through electrical or mechanical means.

Architectural Detail: Decorative elements of a building facade such as cornices, lintels, brackets, fish scale shingles, columns, fluting, and quoins that give the building its character.

Artisan Sign: A temporary sign giving the name or names of principal contractors responsible for painting or construction on the site where the sign is placed.

Awning: A canvas or other nonstructural covering that projects from a wall for the purpose of shielding a doorway or window. An awning is either permanently attached to a building or can be raised or retracted to a position against the building when not in use.

Awning Sign: Any sign painted on, or applied to, an awning.

Balloon Sign: A lighter-than-air, gas-filled balloon, tethered in a fixed location, which contains an advertisement message on its surface or attached to the balloon in any manner.

Banner: Any cloth, bunting, plastic, paper, or similar non-rigid material attached to any structure, staff, pole, rope, wire, or framing which is anchored on two or more edges or at all four corners. Banners are temporary in nature and do not include flags.

Beacon Lighting: Any source of electric light, whether portable or fixed, the primary purpose of which is to cast a concentrated beam of light generally skyward as a means of attracting attention to its location rather than to illuminate any particular sign, structure, or other object.

Building Frontage: The maximum linear width of a building measured in a single straight line parallel, or essentially parallel, with the abutting public street or parking lot.

Canopy: A structure other than an awning made of canvas or other material that is supported by columns or posts affixed to the ground and may also be connected to a building.

Canopy Sign: Any sign that is part of, or attached to a canopy.

Changeable Copy Sign: A sign or portion thereof on which the copy or symbols change either automatically through electrical or electronic means, or manually through placement of letters or symbols on a panel mounted in or on a track system. The two types of changeable-copy signs are manual, changeable copy signs and electronic changeable copy signs, which include: message center signs, digital displays, and Tri-Vision Boards.

Channel Letter Sign: A sign consisting of fabricated or formed three-dimensional letters, individually applied to a wall, which may accommodate a light source.

Civic Event Sign: A noncommercial temporary sign, posted to promote and advertise an activity sponsored by the city, school district, church, public agency, civic or charitable association or other similar noncommercial organization on the premises where the event is to be held.

Clearance: The distance above the walkway, or other surface if specified, to the bottom edge of a sign. This term can also refer to a horizontal distance between two objects.

Community Event Flyer. Flyers or posters advertising community events.

Development Sign: A temporary sign indicating that the premises is in the process of subdivision or development. May include architects, contractors and lending institutions.

Digital Display: The portion of a sign message made up of internally illuminated components capable of changing the message periodically. Digital displays may include but are not limited to LCD, LED, or plasma displays.

Directional Sign: An on-premises sign designed to guide vehicular and/or pedestrian traffic by using such words as "Entrance", "Exit", "Parking", "One-Way", or similar direction or instruction, but not including any advertising message. The name or logo of the business or use to which the sign is giving direction may also be included on the sign.

Directory Sign: A sign which identifies multiple uses in a planned development on a single sign; may be used for shopping centers, shopping streets or business campuses, and similar large complexes which have a variety of tenants and/or uses.

Electronic Sign: A sign capable of displaying text, graphics, video, symbols, or images that can be electronically or mechanically changed by remote or automatic means, and which directs attention to a business, activity, product, commodity, service, entertainment, or communication, which may or may not contain an electronic display screen or an electronic message center. The following shall not be considered electronic signs, digital display screens or an electronic message centers:

1. Signs utilized by the Police Department, other law enforcement personnel and/or emergency service providers.
2. Signs that indicate only the date, time and/or temperature, provided that the remainder of the sign remains static at all times.
3. Scoreboards for athletic events (indoor and outdoor), provided the use of the scoreboard is limited to only the time the athletic event is occurring.

Feather Flag: Any sign printed or painted on cloth, plastic, canvas, or other like material with distinctive colors, patterns, or symbols attached to a pole or staff, anchored on two perpendicular edges, and mounted vertically. Feather Flags shall be a category separate and distinct from Flags.

Festoon Lighting: A type of illumination comprised of either: (a) a group of light bulbs hung or strung overhead or on a building or other structure, or (b) light bulbs not shaded or hooded or otherwise screened to prevent direct rays of light from shining on adjacent properties or rights-of-way.

Flag: Any sign printed or painted on cloth, plastic, canvas, or other like material with distinctive colors, patterns, or symbols attached to a pole or staff and anchored along only one edge or supported or anchored at only two corners.

Flashing Sign: A sign whose artificial illumination is not kept constant in intensity at all times when in use and which exhibits changes in light, color, direction, or animation. This definition does not include electronic message centers signs or digital displays that meet the requirements set forth herein.

Foot-candle: A unit of incident light (on a surface) stated in lumens per square foot and measurable with an illuminance meter, a.k.a. foot candle or light meter. One (1) foot candle is equal to one (1) lumen per square foot.

Freestanding Sign: A sign supported by structures or supports that are placed on, or anchored in, the ground; and that is independent and detached from any building or other structure. (See ground signs and pole signs)

Gas Station Canopy: A freestanding, open-air structure constructed for the purpose of shielding service station islands from the elements.

Gas Station Canopy Sign: Any sign that is part of, or attached to, the vertical sides of the gas station canopy roof structure. For the purposes of this ordinance, gas station canopy signs shall be considered wall signs.

General Purpose Sign: A sign that directs attention to a business, to a product sold, manufactured, or assembled, or to services or entertainment offered on the premises where the sign is displayed.

Government/Regulatory Sign: Any sign for the control of traffic or for identification purposes, street signs, warning signs, railroad crossing signs, and signs of public service companies indicating danger or construction, which are erected by or at the order of a public officer, employee or agent thereof, in the discharge of official duties.

Ground Sign: An on-premise, freestanding sign with the appearance of a solid base. The width of such base shall be at least 75% of the width of the sign; however, a sign with a base of at least six feet in width is deemed to be a monument sign. (Also known as *monument sign*)

Holiday Decorations. Signs or displays including lighting which are a non-permanent installation celebrating national, state, and local holidays, religious or cultural holidays, or other holiday seasons. (Also known as *seasonal decorations*)

Illumination: A source of any artificial or reflected light, either directly from a source of light incorporated in, or indirectly from an artificial source.

External Illumination: Artificial light, located away from the sign, which lights the sign, the source of which may or may not be visible to persons viewing the sign from any street, sidewalk, or adjacent property.

Internal Illumination: A light source that is concealed or contained within the sign and becomes visible in darkness through a translucent surface. Message center signs, digital displays, and signs incorporating neon lighting shall not be considered internal illumination for the purposes of this ordinance.

Halo Illumination: A sign using a 3-dimensional message, logo, etc., which is lit in such a way as to produce a halo effect. (Also known as *back-lit illumination*)

Illuminated Sign: A sign with electrical equipment installed for illumination, either internally illuminated through its sign face by a light source contained inside the sign or externally illuminated by a light source aimed at its surface.

Incidental Sign: A sign that displays general site information, instructions, directives, or restrictions that are primarily oriented to pedestrians and motor vehicle operators who have entered a property from a public street. These signs shall not contain any commercial advertising.

Incidental Window Sign: Signs displayed in the window displaying information such as the business' hours of operation, credit institutions accepted, commercial and civic affiliations, and similar information. These signs shall be informational only and shall not contain a commercial message.

Inflatable Sign: A sign that is an air-inflated object, which may be of various shapes, made of flexible fabric, resting on the ground or structure and equipped with a portable blower motor that provides a constant flow of air into the device.

Interactive Sign: An electronic or animated sign that reacts to the behavior or electronic signals of motor vehicle drivers.

Institutional: Schools, hospitals, churches and other community resources.

Legibility: The physical attributes of a sign that allow for an observer's differentiation of its letters, words, numbers, or graphics.

Mechanical Movement Sign: A sign having parts that physically move rather than merely appear to move as might be found in a digital display. The physical movement may be activated electronically or by another means, but shall not include wind-activated movement such as used for banners or flags. Mechanical movement signs do not include digital signs that have changeable, programmable displays.

Memorial Sign: A memorial plaque or tablet, including grave markers of persons or events, which is not used for a commercial message. Memorial signs of a temporary nature, including accumulations of flowers, photographs, and other remembrances, may be placed for up to ninety days.

Message Center: A type of illuminated, changeable copy sign that consists of electronically changing alphanumeric text often used for gas price display signs and athletic scoreboards.

Message Sequencing: The spreading of one message across more than one sign structure.

Neon Sign: A sign illuminated by a neon tube, or other visible light-emitting gas tube, that is bent to form letters, symbols, or other graphics.

Nonconforming Sign: A sign that was legally erected and maintained at the effective date of this Ordinance, or amendment thereto, that does not currently comply with sign regulations of the district in which it is located.

Off-Premises Sign: An outdoor sign whose message directs attention to a specific business, product, service, event or activity, or other commercial or noncommercial activity, or contains a non-commercial message about something that is not sold, produced, manufactured, furnished, or conducted on the premises upon which the sign is located. (Also known as a *third-party sign*, *billboard*, or *outdoor advertising*)

Official Traffic Sign: Official highway route number signs, street name signs, directional signs and other traffic signs erected and maintained on public highways and roads in the interest of public safety or for the regulation of traffic.

On-Premises Sign: A sign whose message and design relate to an individual business, profession, product, service, event, point of view, or other commercial or non-commercial activity sold, offered, or conducted on the same property where the sign is located.

Pennant: a triangular or irregular piece of fabric or other material, commonly attached in strings or strands, or supported on small poles intended to flap in the wind.

Personal Expression Sign: An on-premises sign or flag that expresses an opinion, interest, position, support for a political candidate, governing unit or entity (i.e. country, state or city), sports team, educational institution, religious organization, charity, holiday or other non-commercial message.

Pole Sign: A freestanding sign that is supported in a fixed location by a structure of one or more poles, posts, uprights, or braces from the ground and not supported by a building or a base structure, with a clearance of greater than three feet from the ground and where the support encompasses less than 75% of the width of the sign.

Portable Sign: A sign designed to be transported or moved and not permanently attached to the ground, building, or other structure.

Sandwich Board Sign: A type of freestanding, portable, temporary sign consisting of two faces connected and hinged at the top and whose message is targeted to pedestrians (Also known as an A-frame sign).

Vehicular Sign: A sign affixed to a vehicle in such a manner that the sign is used primarily as a stationary advertisement for the business on which the vehicle sits or is otherwise not incidental to the vehicle's primary purpose.

Private Drive Sign: A sign indicating a street or drive which is not publicly owned and maintained and used only for access by the occupants of the development and their guests.

Projecting Sign: A building-mounted, double-sided sign with the two faces generally perpendicular to the building wall, not to include signs located on a canopy, awning, or marquee. (Also known as *blade sign*)

Public Sign: A sign erected or required by government agencies or utilities, including traffic, utility, safety, railroad crossing, and identification signs for public facilities.

Real Estate Sign: A non-permanent sign erected for the purpose of advertising a property for rent or sale.

Reflective Sign: A sign containing any material or device which has the effect of intensifying reflected light.

Revolving Sign: A sign which revolves in a circular motion; rather than remaining stationary on its supporting structure.

Roof Sign: A building-mounted sign erected upon, against, or over the roof of a building.

Security Sign: An on-premises sign regulating the use of the premises, such as a “no trespassing,” “no hunting,” or “no soliciting” sign. (Also known as *warning sign*)

Sight Triangle: A vision clearance area defined by a triangle with legs of thirty feet from the point at which the curbs or edges of two intersecting streets, private ways, or courts; or an intersecting street, private way or court and driveway meet.

Sign: Any device, structure, fixture, painting, emblem, or visual that uses words, graphics, colors, illumination, symbols, numbers, or letters for the purpose of communicating a message. Sign includes the sign faces as well as any sign supporting structure.

Sign Area: The total dimensions of a sign surface used to display information, messages, advertising, logos, or symbols. See §6.C. for standards for measuring sign area.

Sign Face: The part of the sign that is or can be used for the sign area. The sign area could be smaller than the sign face.

Sign Height: The vertical dimension of a sign as measured using the standards in §6.D.

Sign Supporting Structure: Poles, posts, walls, frames, brackets, or other supports holding a sign in place.

Snipe Sign: A sign tacked, nailed, posted, pasted, glued, or otherwise attached to trees, rocks, poles, stakes, fences, public benches, streetlights, or other objects, or placed on any public property or in the public right-of-way or on any private property without the permission of the property owner. (Also known as a *bandit sign*)

Storefront: The exterior facade of a building housing a commercial use visible from a street, sidewalk, or other pedestrian way accessible to the public and containing the primary entrance to the commercial establishment.

Streamers: A display made of lightweight, flexible materials, consisting of long, narrow, wavy strips hung individually or in a series, with or without a logo or advertising message printed or painted on them and typically designed to move in the wind.

Street Frontage: The side or sides of a lot abutting on a public street or right-of-way.

Street Pole Banner: A banner suspended above a public sidewalk and attached to a single street pole. These signs shall not contain any commercial advertising.

Temporary Sign: A type of non-permanent sign that can be displayed for no more than 60 consecutive days at one time. Temporary signs shall conform to dimensional requirements of this ordinance.

Tri-Vision Boards: An outdoor unit with a slatted face that allows three different copy messages to revolve at intermittent intervals.

Wall Sign: A building-mounted sign which is either attached to, displayed on, or painted on an exterior wall in a manner parallel with the wall surface. A sign installed on a false or mansard roof is also considered a wall sign. (Also known as: *fascia sign*, *parallel wall sign*, or *band sign*)

Window Sign: Any sign that is applied, painted, or affixed to a window, or placed inside a window, within three (3) feet of the glass, facing the outside of the building, and easily seen from the outside. Customary displays of merchandise or objects and material without lettering behind a store window are not considered signs.

11-4 Prohibited Signs

The following signs are unlawful and prohibited:

- A. Abandoned signs.
- B. Snipe signs. Snipe signs may be immediately removed by the City.
- C. Banners, except as otherwise permitted by Section 11-5.R. of this ordinance.
- D. Pennant strings and streamers.
- E. Animated signs, flashing signs, or signs that scroll or flash any text or graphics, other than the word "Open".
- F. Inflatable devices or balloon signs, with the exception of inflatable devices and balloons used in temporary situations, which must be removed within ten days of installation.
- G. Any signs that imitate, resemble, interfere with, or obstruct official traffic lights, signs, or signals or create a safety hazard for pedestrians and vehicles.
- H. Signs which emit smoke, visible vapors, particulate matter, sound, odor or contain open flames.

- I. Reflective signs or signs containing mirrors, with the exception of official government traffic regulation signs.
- J. Interactive signs.
- K. Signs incorporating beacon or festoon lighting.
- L. Roof signs.
- M. Signs that exhibit statements, words, or pictures of obscene or pornographic subjects as determined by the City of Ralston.
- N. Any sign that promotes illegal activity.
- O. Tri-vision boards
- P. Portable signs, not to include:
 - 1. Signs placed in private parking areas temporarily to advise drivers of parking or traffic restrictions.
 - 2. On-premises sandwich boards, provided that such signs are only displayed while the premises is open to the general public and do not obstruct a public right of way.
- Q. Revolving and mechanical movement signs.
- R. Off-premises signs.
- S. Signs painted directly on building surfaces except on historic buildings when appropriate. Sign design and execution should complement the building façade in the same way as structural signs as provided in this ordinance.
- T. Signs on the public right-of-way; 13-foot set-back from curb line required for all free-standing signs.
- U. Pole Signs.
- V. Feather flags except as otherwise permitted by section 11-5.S. of this ordinance.

11-5 Signs Exempt from Permit Requirements

The following signs shall be allowed without a sign permit and shall not be included in the determination of the type, number, or area of permanent signs allowed within a zoning district, provided such signs comply with the regulations in this section, if any.

- A. Official traffic signs that comply with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- B. Government/regulatory signs.
- C. Signs inside a building, or other enclosed facility, which are not meant to be viewed from the outside, and are located greater than three (3) feet from the window.

- D. Holiday and seasonal decorations. Holiday decorations must be removed or disabled within 21 days of the celebration of the holiday.
- E. Personal expression signs of any sign type, including flags, provided that they do not exceed sixteen (16) sq. ft. in area per side, are non-commercial in nature, and not illuminated.
- F. Address signs
- G. Public signs - Signs erected or required by government agencies or utilities, including traffic, utility, safety, railroad crossing, and identification or directional signs for public facilities.
- H. Private drive signs - One (1) sign per driveway entrance, not to exceed two (2) sq. ft. in area.
- I. Security and warning signs - These limitations shall not apply to the posting of conventional "no trespassing" signs in accordance with state law.
 - 1. *Residential districts*. Signs not to exceed four (4) sq. ft. in area.
 - 2. *Non-residential districts*. Maximum of one (1) large sign per property, not to exceed five (5) sq. ft. in area. All other posted security and warning signs may not exceed two (2) sq. ft. in area.
- J. Legal notices.
- K. Memorial signs
- L. Signs which are a permanent architectural feature of a building or structure, existing at the time of adoption of this ordinance.
- M. Incidental and security signs, including incidental window signs.
- N. Directional signs, provided they do not contain any commercial messaging.
- O. Real estate signs for up to six (6) months provided that the maximum size of such signs are limited to four (4) sq. ft. in residential districts and thirty-two (32) sq. ft. in all other districts.
- P. Community Event Flyers. Flyers or posters advertising community events may be displayed on the inside of windows of businesses, provided the owner of the business approves of the placement of such posters, for up to thirty (30) days prior to an event, and must be removed within forty-eight (48) hours after the event.
- Q. Barbershop Poles.

- R. Temporary banners on premises, displayed parallel to the building façade and limited to only one per facade, provided that:
1. Banners shall not be used in lieu of permanent signs.
 2. No individual banner may be displayed for more than 30 consecutive days, except as provided herein, and no individual banner may be displayed for more than two such 30 day periods per year. Two 30 day periods may be used consecutively, for a total of 60 continuous days to display an individual banner, but shall then constitute the yearly limit for display of such banner.
 3. No combination of banners may be displayed on any premises in excess of six such 30 day periods per year, for a cumulative total of 180 days per year.
 4. Banners shall not be affixed or displayed form public property or fixtures.
- S. Feather Flags on premises provided that only one feather flag may be displayed per lot and shall not encroach on a public right of way.
- T. Flags with a maximum area of no greater than 16 square feet, provided that such flags meet all other requirements of this ordinance.
- U. Sandwich Boards with a maximum height no greater than 48 inches and a maximum width no greater than 26 inches.

11-6 General Regulations

- A. Sign location.
1. No sign shall be placed in such a position as to endanger pedestrians, bicyclists, or traffic on a street by obscuring the view or by interfering with official street signs or signals by virtue of position or color.
 2. No sign may occupy a sight triangle.
 3. Signs and their supporting structures shall maintain clearance and noninterference with all surface and underground utility and communications lines or equipment.
 4. Signs shall be designed and located on the building or on the premises in a manner that is compatible with the mass and scale of the building to which the sign applies. Signs shall not obscure architectural details of the building or cover doors, windows, or other integral elements of the facade.
- B. Sign Materials & Construction: Every permanent sign shall be constructed of durable materials, using noncorrosive fastenings; shall be structurally safe and erected or installed in strict accordance with applicable city codes; and shall be maintained in safe condition and good repair at all times so that all elements of the sign, including logos, artwork, bracing and support structures are not deteriorated and the information presented on the sign is clearly legible. Signs and associated lights, bracing and support

structures shall be constructed of materials that complement the associated building. Sign materials shall be compatible with the character of the building façade.

1. Approved Materials

- a. Aluminum: Framing and panels
- b. PVC: Tube or flat stock
- c. Acrylic: Plexiglas
- d. HDU: High Density Urethane
- e. ACP: Aluminum Composite Paneling – DI-Bond, Max Metal, Econo Board
- f. EIFS: Exterior Insulation Finishing System – Stucco
- g. Steel: Copper, stainless, others
- h. Wood or lumber composites
- i. Coated EPS Foams
- j. Exterior stone or tile
- k. Cloth, plastic or canvas as otherwise allowed by this ordinance in the construction of a flag or a canopy or awning sign.

C. Sign Area.

1. The area of a sign shall mean the area of all lettering, wording, and accompanying designs, logos, and symbols. The area of a sign shall not include any supporting framework, bracing or trim which is incidental to the display, provided that it does not contain any lettering, wording, or symbols.
2. Where the sign consists of individual letters, designs, or symbols attached to a building, awning, wall, or window, the area shall be that of the smallest rectangle which encompasses all of the letters, designs, and symbols.
3. Signs may be double-sided.
 - a. Only one (1) side shall be considered when determining the sign area, provided that the faces are equal in size, the interior angle formed by the faces is less than 25 degrees, and the two faces are not more than 18 inches apart.
 - b. Where the faces are not equal in size, but the interior angle formed by the faces is less than 25 degrees and the two faces are not more than 18 inches apart, the larger sign face shall be used as the basis for calculating sign area.
 - c. When the interior angle formed by the faces is greater than 25 degrees, or the faces are greater than 18 inches apart, all sides of such sign shall be considered in calculating the sign area.
4. If elements of a sign are movable or flexible, such as a banner, the measurement is taken when the elements are fully extended and parallel to the plane of view.

D. Sign Height.

1. Sign height shall be measured as the distance from the highest portion of the sign to the mean finished grade of the public right-of-way closest to the sign. In the case of a sign located greater than 50 feet from a public street, height shall be measured to the mean grade at the base of the sign. (Specific height restrictions can be found in Appendix 1.)
2. Clearance for freestanding and projecting signs shall be measured as the smallest vertical distance between finished grade and the lowest point of the sign, including any framework or other structural elements.

E. Sign Illumination.

Internally illuminated signs (with the exception of neon) are not permitted in the Town Center and adjacent GI and R4 zones. Where permitted, signs shall be illuminated only in accordance with the following regulations:

1. Light sources shall be shielded from all adjacent properties and streets and shall not be of such intensity as to cause glare hazardous to pedestrians or motorists.
2. Intensity of illumination shall be static.
3. There shall be no changing colors.
4. In the case of external illumination, the light source shall be stationary and directed solely at the sign. Light fixtures shall have a simple design and not obscure the visibility of the sign or architectural details of the building. Limited sign lighting recessed in the building soffit is permissible, provided the light is directed to the ground and complies with all other requirements of this section.
5. Electrical Standards.
 - a. Permits for illuminated signs will not be issued without an approved electrical permit.
 - b. All work shall be completed in full compliance with applicable City of Ralston codes.
 - c. The electrical supply to all exterior signs, whether to the sign itself or to lighting fixtures positioned to illuminate the sign, shall be provided by means of concealed electrical cables. Electrical supply to freestanding signs shall be provided by means of underground cables.

11-7 Regulations by Sign Type

A. Wall Signs.

1. No portion of a wall sign shall be mounted less than eight (8) feet above the finished grade or extend out more than twelve (12) inches from the building wall on which it is affixed. If the wall sign projects less than three (3) inches from the building wall on which it is affixed, the eight-foot height requirement need not be met. Signs may not project above the roof or eave line of the building.
2. Wall signs shall not extend beyond the corner of the wall to which they are attached.
3. Wall signs shall fit the scale of the building.
4. Wall signs shall be located above the street-level windows/door. For multi-story buildings, a wall sign shall be located below the sills of second-story windows.
5. Wall signs shall not be located so as to obscure the architectural details of the building.

B. Canopy or Awning Signs.

1. A canopy or awning without lettering or other advertising shall not be regulated as a sign.
2. Canopy or awning signs must be centered within or over architectural elements such as windows or doors.
3. Sign Placement.
 - a. Letters or numerals shall be located only on the front face (valance) of the awning or canopy.
 - b. Logos or emblems are permitted on the top or angled portion of the awning or canopy up to a maximum of three (3) square feet. No more than one emblem or logo is permitted on any one awning or canopy.
 - c. Sign placement shall be centered on the awning.
4. Sign Height: The lowest edge of the canopy or awning sign shall be at least eight (8) feet above the finished grade.
5. Multi-tenant Buildings. If the awning or canopy sign is mounted on a multi-tenant building, all awning or canopy signs shall be similar in terms of height, projection, and style across all tenants in the building.
6. Illumination: External illumination, lit from above, required. No internal or back lighting.
7. In the TC zone, traditional shed-style awnings are permitted. Other styles are prohibited. In all zones, canopies and awnings shall be constructed of canvas, canvas blend, and acrylics that resemble canvas. Vinyl, metal, glass, and shiny materials are prohibited.

C. Projecting or "Blade" Signs.

1. Projecting signs shall be located near the building entrance, just above the door or to the side of the door. Projecting signs shall be located below the sills of the second floor windows, if applicable.
2. No portion of a projecting signs shall project more than four (4) feet from the face of the building over a sidewalk less than twelve (12) feet wide or more than five (5) feet over a sidewalk twelve (12) feet wide or wider. Under no circumstances shall a projecting sign project past the curb line.
3. Sign Height. The lowest edge of a projecting sign shall be at least eight (8) feet above the finished grade.
4. Illumination: The following illumination types shall be permitted subject to the regulations in Section 6.F. Sign Illumination.
 - a. External illumination, lit from above, required.
5. Projecting signs shall have a visible mounting bracket that projects out from the building façade with the sign hanging below rather than the sign itself being attached directly to the building.

D. Storefront Window Signs.

1. Area. The area of a window sign, as determined pursuant to Section 6.C., on any storefront window adjacent to a primary entrance, shall not exceed 50% of the total window area of the window upon which the sign is applied, painted, affixed to, or placed within three (3) feet of the glass as defined in Section 3, Window Signs. An additional 10% of the total window area may be used for a temporary sign. Temporary window signs must be removed after 60 days of display.
2. Illumination: Exposed neon or LED signs, either individual neon letters or neon tubing script shall be permitted subject to the regulations in Section 6.F. Sign Illumination, and Section 4.E. Prohibited Signs

E. Electronic Signs.

The purpose of this subsection is to regulate the use of electronic signs within the City to minimize the impact of such signs that may distract drivers and be detrimental to neighboring properties, and to limit the aesthetic impact that a proliferation of electronic signs could have on city properties.

Where permitted, all electronic signs shall comply with the following requirements:

1. Message display:
 - a. Each message displayed on an electronic sign must be static or depicted for a minimum of 10 seconds.

- b. Where text is displayed on a background, the text shall be brighter than the background, i.e., dark text shall not be displayed on a bright background.
- c. Each complete message must fit onto one screen, i.e., no scrolling or incomplete messages permitted.
- d. Electronic signs may not contain animation or any flashing, scrolling, or moving lights, text or graphics or any type of video.
- e. One message/display may be brighter than another, but each individual message/display must be static in intensity.
- f. The electronic sign shall contain a default design which shall freeze the sign message in one position if a malfunction should occur.

2. Illumination.

- a. Lighting from the sign must not exceed an intensity of 0.5 foot-candle of light at the property line, as measured with a portable hand-held light sensor.
- b. Each electronic sign shall be equipped with automatic day/night dimming software (using photocell technology), to reduce the illumination intensity of the sign as ambient lighting conditions change.
- c. The sign may not display light of such intensity or brilliance to cause glare, impair the vision of an ordinary driver, or constitute a nuisance.

3. Content.

- a. The display of electronic signs may only be used to advertise goods and services sold on the premises, time and temperature, and public service announcements.
- b. No more than one electronic sign is permitted per premises, regardless of number of other signs permitted or the number of uses on the premises.
- c. Electronic signs shall comply with other applicable sign regulations.
- d. Sign Spacing. No electronic sign shall be closer than 500 feet from any other electronic sign.

F. Flags:

- 1. Location. No portion of any flag or flagpole may encroach on or over a public right of way below a minimum height of seven feet above the surface of such right of way.

2. Height. Flagpoles shall have a maximum height of 30 feet in commercial zoning districts and 25 feet in residential zoning districts.
3. Number. No more than two (2) flags per lot in residential districts; no more than three (3) flags per lot in all other districts.
4. Size. Maximum flag size is 16 square feet. No flag shall be permitted which is of such size and location as to obstruct the view of any pedestrian or operator of a motor vehicle to pass by such flag safely or which otherwise creates any undue risk to any person or property.

11-8 Deteriorated, Unsafe, Unlawful, and Abandoned Signs

A. Deteriorated, Unsafe, and Unlawful Signs.

1. It is the obligation of the owner of every sign erected to maintain the sign at all times. It shall constitute a violation of this ordinance when the sign exhibits conditions of deterioration, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Peeling, chipping or other deterioration of any portion of the sign face.
 - b. Faded colors.
 - c. Rust on any sign component, including supporting structures.
 - d. Broken or missing sign elements, including supporting structures.
 - e. The sign is no longer legible.

Upon discovery of a sign in need of maintenance, the City of Ralston shall give written notice to the owner, person or firm responsible for maintaining the sign. This notice shall state the item or items requiring repair or maintenance. The owner shall have thirty (30) days in which to abate the violation before a citation is issued.

2. Upon written notice by the City of Ralston, the owner, person, or firm maintaining a sign shall remove the sign when it becomes unsafe, is in danger of falling, or is unlawfully erected in violation of any of the provisions of this Article. The owner shall have thirty (30) days in which to repair the sign before a citation is issued.
3. Signs declared non-conforming pursuant to Ordinance #938, including without limitation pole signs, continue to be subject to Section 11-13 of said ordinance and are therefore illegal. Such signs shall be removed or shall conform upon thirty (30) days of demand by the City of Ralston.
4. The City of Ralston may remove or cause to be removed the sign at the expense of the owner in the event of the owner, person or firm maintaining the sign has not complied with the terms of the notice within thirty (30) days of the date of the notice. In the event of immediate danger, the City of Ralston may remove the sign immediately upon posting written notice on the property and providing subsequent written notice to the owner, person, or firm maintaining the sign.
5. The City of Ralston may immediately remove or cause to be removed illegal signs on public property, including but not limited to snipe signs, temporary freestanding

signs, and banners, without providing notice to the owner thereof. Any such sign constructed on non-permanent materials such as paper or cardboard may be immediately disposed of by the City. All other signs shall be retained by the City for 30 days, during which time the owner thereof may make a written demand for the return of such sign. Any sign for which no such demand has been received by the City within 30 days may thereafter be permanently disposed of.

B. Abandoned Signs.

1. It shall be the responsibility of the owner of any property upon which an abandoned sign is located to remove such sign within 90 days of the sign becoming abandoned. Removal of an abandoned sign shall include the removal of the entire sign including the sign face, supporting structure, and structural trim.
2. Where the owner of the property on which an abandoned sign is located fails to remove such sign within 90 days, the City of Ralston may remove such sign. Any expense directly incurred in the removal of such sign shall be charged to the owner of the property. Where the owner fails to pay, the City of Ralston may file a lien upon the property for the purpose of recovering all reasonable costs associated with the removal of the sign.

11-9 Permits & Applications

- A. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, or corporation to erect, alter, repair, or relocate any sign within the City of Ralston without first obtaining a sign permit, unless the sign is specifically exempt from the permit requirements as outlined in Section 5. Exempt Signs.
- B. In order to apply for a sign permit, the applicant must provide the following information, in writing, to the City of Ralston:
 1. Name of owner and location.
 2. Name, address, and telephone number of the property owner, and the signature of the property owner or duly authorized agent for the owner.
 3. Contact person and contact information.
 4. Description of the activities occurring on the site where the sign will be installed.
 5. Description of any existing signage that will remain on the site.
 6. Identification of the type of sign(s) to be erected by the applicant.
 7. Site plan depicting the locations of proposed signage and existing remaining signage.
 8. A plan drawn to scale depicting:
 - a. Lot dimensions, building frontage, and existing streets/alleys, rights-of-way and driveways.
 - b. The design of each sign face and sign structure, including dimensions, total area, sign height, depth, color scheme, structural details, materials, lighting scheme and proposed location.
 - c. Current photographs of the building showing existing signs on the premises.
 - d. A computer-based rendering of the proposed sign, including a depiction of its placement on the building.

9. A permit fee, to be established from time to time by resolution of the City of Ralston shall be paid.
- C. Permit applications that do not require review by the City of Ralston Planning Commission shall be issued ten business days following receipt of a complete application, provided the sign complies with the regulations contained herein. Applications that are for a sign permit alone, and not as part of a larger building permit application, shall not be considered a use requiring Site Plan review by the Planning Commission under the provisions of Chapter 11, Article 12-2c of the Ralston Municipal Code.
- D. An application for a sign permit may be denied by the City of Ralston if the application fails to comply with the standards contained herein. The City of Ralston shall inform the applicant of the reasons for denying the application for sign permit by mail.
- E. Upon denial of an application for a sign permit, the applicant shall have 30 business days to revise and resubmit the application for review by the City of Ralston. In the alternative, the applicant may also appeal the decision to the city council within the 30 business day time period. At its next regularly scheduled meeting, the city council shall review the denial of the application.
- F. These permits shall not expire provided that such signs are not abandoned or destroyed. In the instance that substantial repair or replacement becomes necessary (*i.e.*, repairs that costs more than 50% of the replacement cost of the damaged sign); the owner must apply for a new sign permit, and pay an additional fee.

11-10 Nonconforming Signs

- A. Signs legally in existence at the time of the adoption of this Ordinance, which do not conform to the requirements of this Ordinance, shall be considered nonconforming signs.
- B. All permanent signs and sign structures shall be brought into conformance with the sign regulations when and if the following occurs:
 1. The sign is removed, relocated, or significantly altered. Significant alterations include changes in the size or dimension of the sign. Changes to the sign copy or the replacement of a sign face on a nonconforming sign shall not be considered a significant alteration.
 2. If more than 50% of the sign area is damaged, it shall be repaired to conform to this Ordinance.
 3. An alteration in the structure of a sign support.
 4. A change in the mechanical facilities or type of illumination.
 5. A change in the material of the sign face.

6. Upon application and approval of a site plan or site plan amendment requiring a public hearing.
- C. Notwithstanding the requirements of Section 11-10.B, nonconforming signs may be repainted or repaired up to 50% of the sign area, the sign copy may be changed, and sign faces may be replaced provided that these actions do not increase the dimensions of the existing sign, and do not in any way increase the extent of the sign's non-conformity.
 - D. Nonconforming signs shall be exempt from the provisions of Section 11-10.B. under the following conditions:
 1. The nonconforming sign possesses historic value as determined by the City of Ralston.
 2. When a nonconforming sign is required to be moved because of public right-of-way improvements.
 - E. All nonconforming temporary signs, portable signs, and banners must be permanently removed within 90 days of the effective date of this Article, unless specific approval is granted as provided for herein.

Appendix 1. Sign Uses and Restrictions

How to use this chart: Starting with the first column on the left, determine what zone your premises is located in; then determine the use of the premises (i.e., single-family, retail or direct service); determine the type of sign you wish to erect (see the definitions in the sign ordinance); then select the form of the sign allowed in that district that you want to use; and finally look to the last column for the restrictions associated with that sign. Some signs forms have special regulations; please see the ordinance. Please see the ordinance for details.

Zone	Use of Premises	Sign Type	Form	Restrictions and Guidelines
All Zones	All Uses	Artisan and Development	Freestanding, Wall	Maximum area: 16 square feet. Maximum height, freestanding: 6 feet. Maximum 1 sign for each street the premises faces. May not be erected until work begins and must be removed immediately when work ends. No illumination.
All Zones	All Uses	Directional Sign	Freestanding - ground	Maximum area: 6 square feet; Maximum height: 4 feet.
All Zones	All Uses	Memorial Sign	Freestanding - ground; Wall	Maximum area: 24 square feet. Maximum height: 7 feet.
All Zones	All Uses	Personal Expression	Wall, Freestanding - ground , Window	Maximum 2 signs per premises. Maximum area: 6 square feet. In the case of political signs, may not be erected more than 2 months prior to election and must be removed within 7 days after election. No illumination. Maximum height: 6 feet.
All Zones	All Single-Family Residential Neighborhoods	Address Sign	Wall, Projecting; Freestanding-ground	Maximum area: 2 square feet. Maximum 2 signs per premises.
All Zones	Multi-Family and Non-Residential Areas	Address Sign	Awning , Canopy, Freestanding - ground, Projecting, Wall	Maximum area: 10 square feet; Maximum height, freestanding sign: 6 feet. Maximum 2 signs per premises.

Zone	Use of Premises	Sign Type	Form	Restrictions and Guidelines
All Zones	Nonresidential	Civic Event Sign	Banner, Window, Freestanding - ground	Maximum area and height: 18 square feet; 11 feet high. May not be erected more than 30 days before event and must be removed within 72 hours after event.
R-1, R-2, R-3	Institutional	General Purpose	Awning, Canopy	Maximum area: 24 square feet.
R-1, R-2, R-3	Institutional	General Purpose	Freestanding - ground	Maximum area: 32 square feet. Maximum height: 8 feet.
R-1, R-2, R-3	Institutional	General Purpose	Projecting	Maximum area: 15 square feet.
R-1, R-2, R-3	Institutional	General Purpose	Wall	Maximum 32 square feet.
R-3, R-4	Multi-Family	General Purpose	Awning/Canopy	Maximum area: 24 square feet.
R-3, R-4	Multi-Family	General Purpose	Freestanding - ground	Maximum area: 24 square feet; Maximum height: 6 feet.
R-3, R-4	Multi-Family	General Purpose	Wall	Maximum area: 24 square feet.
R-3, R-4	Institutional	General Purpose	Awning, Canopy	Maximum area: 24 square feet.
R-3, R-4	Institutional	General Purpose	Freestanding - ground	Maximum area: 32 square feet. Maximum height: 6 feet.
R-3, R-4	Institutional	General Purpose	Projecting	Maximum area: 15 square feet.
R-3, R-4	Institutional	General Purpose	Wall	Maximum 32 square feet.

Zone	Use of Premises	Sign Type	Form	Restrictions and Guidelines
TC (Maximum 3 signs; maximum area of all signs combined: 2 square feet for each 1 linear foot of street frontage, up to a maximum of 100 square feet. Windows and directory signs are excluded from maximum number of signs and area limitation.)	Retail and Direct Service Stores, Multi-Family	General Purpose	Awning, Canopy	Maximum area: 24 square feet.
TC	Retail and Direct Service Stores, Multi-Family	General Purpose	Banner	Maximum area: 15 square feet.
TC	Retail and Direct Service Stores, Multi-Family	General Purpose	Freestanding- ground	Maximum area: 32 square feet. Maximum height: 10 feet.
TC	Retail and Direct Service Stores, Multi-Family	General Purpose	Projecting sign	Maximum area: 15 square feet. Minimum clearance: 8 feet.
TC	Retail and Direct Service Stores, Multi-Family	General Purpose	Wall sign	Maximum area: 32 square feet.
TC	Retail and Direct Service Stores, Multi-Family	General Purpose	Window sign	May not exceed 30% of glass area.

Zone	Use of Premises	Sign Type	Form	Restrictions and Guidelines
TC	Shopping center, office park with more than one use on premises	Directory	Freestanding-ground	Maximum area: 1 square foot for each 2 feet of street frontage up to a maximum of 350 square feet. Maximum height: 20 feet. Maximum 1 sign per premises.
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI (Maximum 3 signs; maximum area of three signs combined: 150 square feet. Window signs are excluded from maximum number of signs and area limitation. Shopping center directory sign not included in limitation of number of signs or area.)	All permitted uses		Electronic sign	Up to 30% or 24 square feet of the total sign area (whichever is less) of a new or conforming existing sign may be an electronic message center or digital display screen.
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	Shopping Center, industrial park with more than one use on premises	Directory	Freestanding - ground	Maximum area: 1 square foot for each 2 feet of street frontage up to a maximum of 350 square feet. Maximum height: 20 feet. Maximum 1 sign per premises.
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	Individual business within shopping center or industrial park	General Purpose	Awning, Canopy	Maximum Area: 24 square feet.
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	Individual business within shopping center or industrial park	General Purpose	Banner	Maximum area: 32 square feet

Zone	Use of Premises	Sign Type	Form	Restrictions and Guidelines
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	Individual business within shopping center or industrial park	General Purpose	Freestanding - ground sign	Maximum area: 1 square foot for each 2 feet of street frontage. Maximum height: 15 feet
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	Individual business within shopping center or industrial park	General Purpose	Wall	Maximum area: 50 square feet
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	Individual business within shopping center or industrial park	General Purpose	Window sign	May not exceed 30% of glass area.
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	All other uses except sexually-oriented	General Purpose	Awning, Canopy	Maximum area: 24 square feet.
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	All other uses except sexually-oriented	General Purpose	Banner	Maximum area: 32 square feet
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	All other uses except sexually-oriented	General Purpose	Freestanding - ground	Maximum Area: 1 sq. ft. for every 2 feet of linear street front. Maximum height: 15 feet
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	All other uses except sexually-oriented	General Purpose	Wall	Maximum area: 50 square feet
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	All other uses except sexually-oriented	General Purpose	Window sign	May not exceed 30% of glass area.
GC, LC, LO, GI, LI	Sexually-oriented	General Purpose	Freestanding - ground, Wall sign	1 sign per premises. Sign may only identify name of business and hours of operation. Maximum area: 32 square feet. Maximum height: 10 feet.