

ORDINANCE NO. 968

14-409. Signs, billboards, and other advertising structures. These conditions are established as a reasonable and impartial method of regulating advertising structures in order to insure light, air, and open space, to reduce hazards at intersections, and to protect property values of the entire community. The regulations for signs, billboards, and other advertising structures are: (1) Definitions. (a) “Animated or moving sign.” Any sign or part of a sign that changes physical position or light intensity by any movement or rotation or that gives the visual impression of such movement.

(b) “Billboard.” A sign that directs attention to a business, commodity, service, or entertainment conducted, sold, or offered at a location other than the premises of which the sign is located. It is intended for periodic message rotation and is often sold or leased as advertising space.

(c) “Campaign sign.” See “Political sign”.

(d) “Canopy sign.” A sign that is part of or attached to an awning, canopy, etc., or structural protective cover over a door, window, or outdoor service area.

(e) “Changeable electronic message/changeable copy sign.” An electrically activated changeable sign upon which the message changes more than two (2) times in a twenty-four (24) hour period, and except when the message is changed, the message shall remain stationary. For the purposes of this ordinance, any wall sign, ground sign, or pole sign can be a changeable electronic message/changeable copy sign.

(f) “Digital sign.” A sign that is digital in nature and uses exclusively liquid-crystal display (LCD) light-emitting diode (LED), or similar electronic technology for providing content to the sign or billboard.

(g) “Directional sign.” A government owned sign that is located on public property as approved by the board of commissioners, which provides direction to a definable area, business area, or community.

(h) “Ground sign and pole sign,” Any sign erected on a free-standing frame, pole(s), or post(s) and not attached to any building.

(i) “Mural.” A work of art that is historic, community, or site based affixed to or painted on a building wall.

(j) “One-time event sign.” A temporary sign which notified or advertises an event, such as an election, property sale, merchandise sale, revival, grand opening, yard sale, or other similar short-term, temporary events.

(k) “Pole sign.” See “ground sign and pole sign”.

(l) “Political sign.” A one-time event sign announcing or supporting political candidates, issues, or subject in connection with any national, state, or local election.

(m) "Projecting sign." A sign attached perpendicular to a building or the wall of a structure and overhanging a sidewalk.

(n) "Sign." Any object, device, display, or structure, or part thereof, situated outdoors, which is used to advertise, identify, display, direct, or attract attention to an object, person, institution, organization, business, product, service, event, or location by any means, including words, letters, figures, design, symbols, fixtures, colors, illumination, or projected images.

(o) "Sign administrator." The city building official or his/her designated agent.

(p) "Sign area." The entire face of a sign, including the advertising surface and any framing, trim, or molding but not including the supporting structure.

(q) "Sign face." The area or display surface used for the message.

(r) "Temporary sign." A one-time event sign designed and intended to be displayed for a short period of time.

(s) "Wall sign." Any sign that is attached to, painted on, or in some other way uses a wall of a building in such a manner that the wall becomes the supporting structure for the sign. No such sign shall extend above the top edge of a building wall or project more than twelve (12) inches from the wall of the building.

(2) General Provisions. All signs and billboards erected, replaced, reconstructed, expanded, or relocated on any property within the city shall conform with the provisions of this section.

(a) All signs erected, constructed, or placed in any district shall conform to the adopted building codes and if serviced by electrical power, shall conform to the National Electrical Code. Electrical materials and devices used on such signs shall bear the U.L. Label.

(b) No Sign shall be erected or maintained where by reason of its position, wording, illumination, size shape, or color may obstruct, impair, obscure, interfere with the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic control sign, signal, or device.

(c) With the exception of One-Time event signs, all signs shall obtain a sign permit from the City of Sweetwater.

(d) With the exception of billboards, no off-premise signs are permitted.

(e) The sign area for all wall and canopy signs shall be measured by drawing an imaginary single, regular geometric shape of a rectangle, circle, or equilateral triangle around the sign. The text and other associated graphics do not have to be physically connected.

(f) The sign area for all pole, ground, projecting, and One-Time Event signs shall be the entire face of the sign, including the advertising surface and any framing, trim, or molding but not including the supporting structures. The area of each sign face shall be counted toward the total allowed sign area. For example, on a two-sided sign, both sides shall be counted toward the total allowed sign area.

(g) All signs shall be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from all property lines. Signs shall be placed so as not to restrict sight distance for entering, exiting, or passing vehicles.

(h) Wall, canopy, and projecting signs shall only be permitted on walls facing a public street and/or an on-site parking lot.

(i) Unless provided for elsewhere in this ordinance, a total one (1) pole or ground sign is allowed per parcel.

(j) Animated or moving signs and digital signs are prohibited.

(k) Unless provided for elsewhere in this ordinance, if a sign is illuminated, it shall be internally illuminated.

(l) When an entity is no longer in operation, the associated sign(s) shall be removed.

(m) Projecting signs erected and overhanging any sidewalk shall be placed at least seven (7) feet and six (6) inches above the sidewalk. Such sign may extend over the sidewalk a distance equal to two-thirds (2/3) the width of the sidewalk, but in no case exceeding ten (10) feet.

(n) No sign shall be erected or otherwise affixed to any pole, tree, stone, fence, or any other object within the right-of-way of any street. No sign shall be suspended across public streets or any other public places.

(3) General Agricultural District. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of this section, all signs within the A-1 General Agricultural District shall conform with the following provision.

(a) Any activity lawfully conducted on the premises shall be permitted one (1) non-illuminated sign up to two (2) square feet in area.

(b) Uses Permitted on Review shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign up to sixty-four (64) square feet in area with a maximum of thirty-two (32) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed ten (10) feet in height.

(c) Uses Permitted on Review shall be permitted any number of wall signs. The total square footage allowed for all the wall signs combined shall be based on the length of the wall on which the signs are mounted. The total area of such wall signs shall be one-half (1/2) square feet of sign area per each linear foot of building wall on which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(d) Flashing or intermittent illumination of signs, including scrolling reader boards, are prohibited.

(4) Residential Districts. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of this section, all signs within the R-1 Low Density Residential District, the R-2 High Density Residential District, the R-3 High Density Downtown Residential District, and the TND Traditional Neighborhood Development District shall conform with the following provisions.

(a) Any activity lawfully conducted on the premises shall be permitted one (1) non-illuminated sign up to two (2) square feet in area.

(b) Uses Permitted on Review shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign up to sixty-four (64) square feet in area with a maximum of thirty-two (32) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed ten (10) feet in height.

(c) Uses Permitted on Review shall be permitted any number of wall sign. The total square footage allowed for all the wall signs combined shall be based on the length of the wall on which the signs are mounted. The total area of such wall signs shall be one-half (1/2) square feet of sign area per each linear foot of building wall on which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(d) Residential neighborhoods shall be permitted one (1) non-illuminated ground or pole sign per neighborhood entrance. Such sign may be up to fifty (50) square feet in area with a maximum of twenty-five (25) square feet per sign face shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.

(e) If a parcel/lot is also located within the designated Sweetwater Historic District, the advertising standards and guidelines adopted by the historic zoning commission shall also apply.

(f) Flashing or intermittent illumination of signs, including scrolling reader boards, are prohibited.

(5) Professional and Civic District. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of this section, all signs within the P-1 Professional and Civic District shall conform with the following provisions.

(a) The same regulations apply to residential uses in the P-1 Professional and Civic District as applied in the Residential Districts as outlined above.

(b) Freestanding entities shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to fifty (50) square feet in area with a maximum of twenty-five (25) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.

(c) Multiple use buildings shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to fifty (50) square feet in area with a maximum of twenty-five (25) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.

(d) Freestanding entities shall be permitted any number of wall signs and canopy signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the wall on which the signs are mounted. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall on which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(e) Tenants within a multiple use building shall be permitted any number of wall signs, canopy signs, and projecting signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the building wall of the tenant space. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall of tenant space upon which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(f) If a parcel/lot is also located within the designated Sweetwater Historic District, the advertising standards and guidelines adopted by the historic zoning commission shall also apply.

(g) Flashing or intermittent illumination of signs, including scrolling reader boards, are prohibited.

(6) Central Business District. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of the section, all signs within the C-2 Central Business District shall conform with the following provisions.

(a) Freestanding entities shall be permitted any number of wall signs, canopy signs, or projecting signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the wall on which the signs are mounted. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall on which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(b) Tenants within a multiple use building shall be permitted any number of wall signs, canopy signs, or projecting signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the building wall of the tenant space. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall of tenant space upon which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(c) No ground/pole signs are permitted.

(d) Buildings may be permitted a mural as approved by the Historic Zoning Commission.

(e) If a parcel/lot is also located within the designated Sweetwater Historic District, the advertising standards and guidelines adopted by the historic zoning commission shall also apply.

(f) Flashing or intermittent illumination of signs, including scrolling reader boards, are prohibited.

(7) General Commercial District. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of this section, all signs within the C-3 General Commercial District shall conform with the following provisions.

(a) If fronting on Highway 68, freestanding entities shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to four hundred (400) square feet in area with a maximum of two hundred (200) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed thirty-two (32) feet in height.

(b) If fronting on Highway 68, multiple use buildings shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to four hundred (400) square feet in area with a maximum of two hundred (200) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed thirty-two (32) feet in height.

(c) If not fronting on Highway 68, freestanding entities shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to two hundred (200) square feet in area with a maximum of one hundred (100) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed twenty (20) feet in height.

(d) If not fronting on Highway 68, multiple use buildings shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to two hundred (200) square feet in area with a maximum of one hundred (100) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed twenty (20) feet in height.

(e) Freestanding entities shall be permitted any number of wall signs and canopy signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the wall on which the signs are mounted the total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall on which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(f) Tenants within a multiple use building shall be permitted any number of wall signs, canopy signs, and projecting signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the building wall of the tenant space. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall of tenant space upon which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(g) If a parcel/lot is also located within the designated Sweetwater Historic District, the advertising standards and guidelines adopted by the historic zoning commission shall also apply.

(h) If fronting on Highway 68, flashing or intermittent illumination of signs, including scrolling reader boards, are permitted.

(i) If not fronting on Highway 68, flashing or intermittent illumination of signs, including scrolling reader boards, are prohibited.

(8) Local General Commercial District. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of this section, all signs within the C-4 Local General commercial District shall conform with the following provisions.

(a) Freestanding entities shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to fifty (50) square feet in area with a maximum of twenty-five (25) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.

(b) Multiple use buildings shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to fifty (50) square feet in area with a maximum of twenty-five (25) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed eight feet in height.

(c) Freestanding entities shall be permitted any number of wall signs and canopy signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the wall on which the signs are mounted. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall on which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(d) Tenants within a multiple use building shall be permitted any number of wall signs, canopy signs, and projecting signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the building wall of the tenant space. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall of tenant space upon which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(e) If a parcel/lot is also located within the designated Sweetwater Historic District, the advertising standards and guidelines adopted by the historic zoning commission shall also apply.

(f) Flashing or intermittent illumination of signs, including scrolling reader boards, are prohibited.

(9) Interstate/Interchange District. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of this section, all signs within the C-5 Interstate/Interchange District shall conform with the following provisions.

(a) Freestanding entities shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to four hundred (400) square feet in area with a maximum of two hundred (200) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed sixty (60) feet in height above adjacent road grade.

(b) Multiple Use buildings shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to four hundred (400) square feet in area with a maximum of two hundred (200) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed sixty (60) feet in height above adjacent road grade.

(c) Freestanding entities shall be permitted any number of wall signs and canopy signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the wall on which the signs are mounted. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall on which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(d) Tenants within a multiple use building shall be permitted any number of wall signs, canopy signs, and projecting signs. The total square footage allowed for all the signs combined shall be based on the length of the building wall of the tenant space. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall of tenant space upon which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(e) Flashing or intermittent illumination of signs including scrolling reader boards, are permitted.

(10) Industrial Zoning Districts. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of this section, all signs within the M-1 Industrial Zoning District and the M-2 Heavy Industrial District shall conform with the following provisions.

(a) Entities shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign. Such sign may be up to two hundred (200) square feet in area with a maximum of two (2) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed three (3) feet in height.

(b) Entities shall be permitted one (1) sign per driveway entering the premises. Such sign(s) may be up to four (4) square feet in area with a maximum of two (2) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed three (3) feet in height.

(c) Buildings shall be permitted any number of wall signs. The total square footage allowed for all the wall signs combined shall be based on the length of the wall on which the signs are mounted. The total area of such signs shall be one (1) square foot of sign area per each linear foot of building wall on which the sign(s) is/are mounted.

(d) Industrial parks shall be permitted one (1) ground or pole sign per industrial park entrance. Such sign may be up to four hundred (400) square feet in area with a maximum of two hundred (200) square feet per sign face and shall not exceed thirty-two (32) feet in height.

(e) If a parcel/lot is also located within the designated Sweetwater Historic District, the advertising standards and guidelines adopted by the historic zoning commission shall also apply.

(f) Flashing or intermittent illumination of signs, including scrolling reader boards, are prohibited.

(11) One-Time Event Signs. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of this section, all one-time event signs shall conform with the following provisions.

(a) One-time event signs are permitted in all zoning districts, on developed land, and on vacant land.

(b) Such signs shall be a maximum of sixty-four (64) square feet with a maximum of thirty-two (32) square feet per sign face shall not exceed six (6) feet in height, shall be non-illuminated, and shall be affixed to the ground or a building. Within the C-2 Central Business District, such signs shall be affixed to a building.

(c) For the purposes of this ordinance, political and campaign signs shall be considered one-time event signs, however, one (1) one-time event signs per candidate, issue, or subject shall be permitted per parcel/lot (T.C.A. 2-7-143).

(d) One-time event signs shall be removed promptly after the completion of the event.

(12) Billboards. In addition to meeting the General Provisions of this section, all billboards shall conform with the following provisions.

(a) Billboards existing at the time of the adoption of this ordinance and located within the A-1 Agricultural District, the C-2 Central Business District, and the C-3 General Commercial District shall be considered permitted and allowed use. Such billboards shall not be permitted to increase in size, width, or height, change locations on the premises, or add changing sign faces. Such billboards shall also not be permitted to add flashing intermitted illumination, including scrolling reader boards. An inventory of these sixteen (16) existing billboards is included on Ordinance Attachments A, B, and C.

(b) Billboards are permitted within the C-5 Interstate/Interchange District. Billboards shall not exceed one thousand two hundred (1,200) square feet with a maximum of six hundred (600) square feet in area per sign face. A billboard shall have a maximum of two (2) parallel sign faces.

(c) Billboards shall not exceed sixty (60) feet in height above adjacent road grade, shall not exceed fifty (50) feet in length, and the bottom of the billboard shall be a minimum of ten (10) feet above the adjacent ground level.

(d) No billboard shall be erected within a five hundred (500) foot radius, determined by a straight line and not street distance, from any other billboard.

(e) Billboards shall meet the minimum building setbacks of the zoning district.

(f) Flashing or intermittent illumination and changing sign faces of billboards, including scrolling reader boards, are prohibited. Billboards may be internally or externally illumined, however such lighting shall not shine or glare directly onto adjacent properties, right-of-ways, access easements, or driveways. For the purposes of this ordinance, glare shall be defined as any brightness within the field of vision of such a character as to cause annoyance, discomfort, interference with vision, or loss in visual performance and visibility.

(13) In the historic zoning district, the following regulations shall apply:

(a) Advertising messages serve to promote business and therefore should be compatible with the business type or service being promoted.

(b) Advertising of all kinds should be compatible with the style and historic period of the building, as well as the business.

(c) Signs and other forms of advertising must relate to, rather than obscure, clutter or disrupt historical and architectural design features of the buildings or parts of buildings to which they are attached or applied.

(d) The installation of advertising materials must not physically or irreversibly alter or damage building or part of buildings.

(e) Advertising designs and techniques should reflect the rich diversity of style and the continuum of history seen in Sweetwater's street scape. Originality, creativity, and diversification should be encouraged.

(f) While satisfying the legitimate needs of commerce, advertising should not clutter the street scape nor interfere with the views of building or other signs.

(g) Portable signs, sample products, and services offered outside a building must not obstruct the safe and orderly passage of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

(h) All advertising messages and signs must conform to the ordinance comprising this section, ¹ of the Sweetwater Municipal Code, unless specified otherwise in the Standards and Guidelines of the Historic Zoning Commission.

(i) Size, placement, and number of signs.

(A) The size and position of each sign must relate well to the size of the building and the scale of its individual features including but not necessarily limited to openings for windows and doors, wall panels, cornices and other ornaments, and columns and other support structures. Even through a proposed sign may be consistent with other size requirements in these guidelines, the commission reserves the right to deny approval of any sign which, in the judgment of a majority of the commissioners in any duly convened meeting, is too large for the particular related building, building feature, or adjacent building.

(B) The size and position of each sign must be appropriate for reasonable legibility (assuming normal visual acuity) relative to the position and/or movement of intended viewer.

(C) In business zones, building-mounted signs shall not exceed one (1) square foot per lineal foot of store front. Free standing signs shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square

feet. Projecting signs shall not project more than four feet zero inches (4'-0") from face of building.

(D) In residential zones, one (1) sign not exceeding eight (8) square feet per face in area shall be permitted for each building in which a business or office is also located if there is more than one (1) business at any location, the total area per face for all signs or for a composite sign is not to exceed ten (10) square feet.

(E) The lowest part of any projecting or freestanding sign can be no lower than seven feet six inches (7'6") above a walkway or ten feet zero inches (10'-0") above a driveway or alley. The highest part of any projecting sign can be no higher than the top of the highest opening in the wall on which the sign is to be mounted. The highest part of any sign can be no higher than the tip of the highest opening on the ground floor of the related building, but in no case higher than fourteen feet zero inches (14'-0").

(F) A maximum of one (1) sign shall be permitted in each display area, with the exception of a historical detailed painted side wall building sign. In no event will a sign be permitted to cover a total or more than fifty percent (50%) of any one (1) display window, in which case no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the window can be covered.

(G) A maximum of two (2) signs shall be permitted per primary public entrance. If more than two (2) tenants use the same public entrance, a composite sign shall be permitted for proper listing and identification of the tenants or occupants.

(H) The historic zoning commission reserves the right to limit the total number of signs on any particular building as necessary consistent with proper presentation of historic and architectural features.

(i) Duplicated signs or signs with duplicated messages shall not be permitted unless needed for specific purposes such as the identification of more than one (1) entrance, display window, or elevation of the same business or building, or to achieve balance on a single building elevation.

(J) Free standing and projecting, or portable signs painted or decorated on two (2) or more sides are not considered duplicated unless two (2) faces are simultaneously visible from any one (1) position of the viewer.

(K) The cluttering of individual signs is to be discouraged. A single contiguous sign containing two (2) or more distinctly different messages shall be considered as two (2) or more signs. The historic zoning commission reserves the right to limit the number of words used in any particular sign.

(L) Portable signs must not obstruct the safe and orderly movement of pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Signs may be brought out at opening of business and must be taken in at close of business.

(M) Obsolete signs shall be removed as soon as they become obsolete unless specifically designated by the historic zoning commission as contribution to the character of the particular property or of the historic zone, in such case they shall be retained and preserved consistent with the corresponding guidelines.

(ii) Lettering, accessories, and colors.

(A) Historic spelling, lettering, fonts, and wording must be consistent with the guidelines set forth by the historic zoning commission.

- (B) The historic zoning commission will not approve words that are misspelled for commercial purposes.
 - (C) The historic zoning commission will not approve words in any duly convened meeting, misrepresent the business, are misleading, or are offensive to significant numbers of people in the general population.
 - (D) Signs accessories are considered parts of signs and must be approved by the historic zoning commission.
 - (E) Sign accessories may be included in the overall size of the sign for purposes of calculating the size of a sign, as well as the visual impact of the sign on adjacent structures and the surrounding neighborhood.
 - (F) Any sign accessories symbolizing history must be consistent with the documented authentic history of Sweetwater.
 - (G) Colors should be compatible with the period of style related to the building.
 - (H) Florescent or day-glow paints and colors will not be approved for use in a historic zone.
- (iii) Materials, mounting and quality.
- (A) Materials selected for the construction of signs must be compatible with the building materials to which a sign is to be attached.
 - (B) Sign construction materials exposed to public view must be visually consistent with the style and historic period of the related building.
 - (C) The sign construction materials selected should also enhance both the purpose and the message of the particular business or service.
 - (1) Compositional, boards (MDF) are acceptable when completely covered with paint which substantially hides the identity of the material. No particle board will be allowed.
 - (2) Decal letters which have the appearance of painted letters are permitted.
 - (3) Exterior grade plywood is permitted, but for older building its edges must always be covered with framing material so as to hide laminations.
 - (4) Plastics may be approved when the use is compatible with the period and appearance of the building on which it is used.
 - (5) Unpainted aluminum shall not be permitted
 - (6) Other materials such as, but not necessarily limited to, copper, brass, bronze, may be approved for use on buildings built during a period in which such materials were in common use or on buildings showing dominant architectural features of the period in which such materials were in common use.
 - (D) Materials must always be of sufficiently high quality to be durable for the anticipated life of the sign. The historic zoning commission reserves the right to terminate approval of any deteriorating sign and require its removal.
 - (E) A sign must always be erected in such a way that there is no danger of it falling under ordinary circumstances.

- (F) Consistent with requirements of safety, stability, and strength, flat signs and projecting signs must be attached to a building with a minimum number of fasteners inserted with the least amount of damage possible to building materials.
 - (G) On masonry surfaces, all penetrating points of attachment must be in mortar joints. No drilling, chipping, hammering, or penetrating of bricks, terra cotta or stone shall be permitted.
 - (H) The mounting of signs on ornamental architectural masonry, metal, or wood or on metal roofing materials shall not be permitted.
 - (i) Mounting materials must not be subject to rust or corrosion, which may over time, damage or deface any part of the building. The historic zoning commission reserves the right to terminate approval of any sign constructed of, or mounted with materials found to be damaging the building or staining or defacing the building. This includes but is not necessarily limited to the destructive effects of the expansion of resting iron imbedded in building material.
 - (I) All signs must be of professional quality. The historic zoning commission reserves the right to rescind approval of any sign within sixty (60) days of its installation, if in the judgment of the majority of the commissioners; the sign does not meet the acceptable professional standards of quality. This is not intended to discourage individual artwork and careful craftsmanship on the part of people who do not necessarily make a living building signs.
 - (iv) Lighting.
 - (A) In most locations in downtown Sweetwater signs are well lit by street lights and individual sign illumination is unnecessary and shall not be approved.
 - (B) External illumination may be approved when natural or street lighting does not provide sufficient light for reading a sign.
 - (C) Internally illuminated signs shall not be permitted even for modern building in the H-1 Zone.
 - (D) The effect of any sign illumination on adjacent or neighboring buildings must be carefully considered prior to approval by the historic zoning commission.
- (14) No sign shall be erected in the city unless a building sign permit is obtained as in the case of new construction, and the fee paid therefore. Each person erecting, replacing, expanding, or relocating a sign shall make application for a sign permit. A permit shall be required for each sign, except where specifically exempted in this ordinance. A sign permit shall be in addition to a building permit.
- (a) Applicants for a sign permit shall submit a construction plan and site plan with each application for a permit. The plans shall show the location of the proposed signs in relationship to property lines, right-of-way, flood hazard area and similar features, county tax map location, and specifications identifying the type and design of any sign.

(b) For signs related to new building and uses which require site plan review by the planning commission, the sign site plan shall be included as part of the general site plan, but will not exempt the applicant from submitting sign construction plans to the building official prior to issuance of a sign permit.

(c) The signs administrator may issue permits for signs meeting the provisions for this section and any city building and electrical codes in force, except that, the sign administrator shall not issue permits for signs within a public right-of-way, as set out in this section.

(d) The sign administrator shall inspect, at any time he/she deems necessary, each sign regulated by the section to insure that such sign conforms to this section and all other ordinances of the city.

(e) Signs existing on the effective date of this amendment shall be issued a sign permit within three (3) months of such date by the building inspector. Sign permits shall be displayed on the premises in a location that is easily visible to the building inspector.

(f) Every sign shall be constructed, maintained, and located in a manner that meets acceptable safety standards. The building official, using national, state or other recommended and documented standards shall determine safety compliance.

(15) Approval. It shall be unlawful for any person to erect any sign requiring a permit without first complying with all the following requirements, unless hereafter accepted.

(a) Completion of the sign permit application.

(b) Site plan approval from the planning commission if part of a general site plan.

(c) Approval of the sign administrator.

(d) Issuance of a sign permit shall be kept on display on the premises.

(e) A sign permit shall become expired if erection is not commenced within one hundred eighty (180) days of issuance.

(16) Fees. In order to recoup the administrative costs associated with the processing, approval and issuance of a sign permit and inspecting the signs permitted under this section, except for pole signs, a minimum fee in the amount of twenty five dollars (\$25.00) for each permit shall be paid to the city for each sign up to twenty-five (25) square feet in area and one dollar (\$1.00) for each additional square foot for each permit issued.