

# Public Hearing Draft of Proposed Sign Code Amendments May 2014

## Section 20.56.010 Purpose, scope and authority.

- A. The purposes of these sign regulations are:
  - 1. To encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication in the city; and
  - 2. To maintain and enhance the aesthetic environment and the city's ability to attract sources of economic development and growth; and
  - 3. To improve pedestrian and traffic safety; and
  - 4. To minimize the possible adverse effect of signs on nearby public and private property; and
  - 5. To balance the rights of businesses and individuals to convey messages through signs against the aesthetics and safety hazards that come from the proliferation of sign clutter.
  - 6. To enable the fair and consistent enforcement of these sign regulations.
- B. This chapter is adopted pursuant to the powers conferred to the city in Chapter 278 of Nevada Revised Statutes and the Sparks City Charter.

## Section 20.56.020 Applicability - Effect.

- A. It shall be unlawful to display, erect, place, establish, paint, or maintain a nonexempt sign in the city except in conformance with the standards, requirements, limitations and procedures of this ordinance.
- B. The effect of this ordinance as more specifically set forth herein, is:
  - 1. To prohibit all signs except as permitted by this ordinance;
  - 2. To allow a variety of types of signs in tourist commercial, commercial and industrial zones, and a limited variety of signs in other zones, subject to content neutral standards requirements and limitations;
  - 3. To allow certain signs that are appropriately sized and incidental to the principal use of the respective lots on which they are located, subject to the substantive requirements of this ordinance, but without a requirement for permits;
  - 4. To establish standards, requirements and limitations, and a permit system that honor constitutional rights and requirements; and
  - 5. To provide for the enforcement of the provisions of this ordinance.

## Section 20.56.030 Definitions.

"Adjacent" means abuts, is contiguous to or shares a common boundary.

"Administrator" includes the person defined in SMC 20.05.030~~560~~, and any person to whom he has delegated applicable powers and duties.

"Allowable sign area" means the total area permitted for all nonexempt signs on a site with certain exceptions expressed in this chapter.

~~"Allowable business frontage" means business frontage as defined below, except that if the occupant has frontage facing two or more streets or public areas, only the two largest frontages may be used in calculating allowable sign area or number limitations.~~

~~"Animated sign" means a temporary sign or display which uses moving parts or changes of lighting to depict action or create a special effect or sense of motion.~~

"**Arterial Roadway**" means a street designated as an arterial roadway in the Transportation Master Plan.

"**Banner**" means any sign of lightweight fabric, plastic or similar material that is permanently mounted to a pole, structure or a building by a frame at one or more edges.

"**Beacon**" means any light with one or more beams directed into the atmosphere or directed at one or more points not on the same site as the light source; also, any light with one or more beams that rotate or move.

"**Building**" is defined in SMC 20.05.0400710.

"**Building frontage**" means the length of the face or wall of a completely enclosed main and permanent building on a site which fronts directly on a public or private street or right of way.

"**Building ground floor area**" means the area of the ground floor enclosed within the walls of all buildings on the site.

"**Building identification sign**" means a sign that identifies the name, street address or ownership of the building, with no other text.

"**Building marker**" means a sign indicating the name of a building and date and incidental information about its construction, which sign is cut into masonry surface or made of bronze or other permanent material affixed to a building.

"**Building sign**" means any sign attached to or painted on any part of a building, as contrasted to fence, freestanding and or monument signs.

"**Bus Stop**" means a bench, shelter, kiosk, or pole sign or similar structure placed by the Regional Transportation Commission along an established public transportation route to mark an area for members of the general public to wait for and get on or off of public transportation.

"**Business frontage**" means the length of the face or wall of a completely enclosed and permanent building frontage occupied by an individual building occupant and contains a customer entrance. An occupant may have more than one business frontage if it occupies building frontage facing on two or more streets or public areas. If the building faces two or more streets or public areas, only the two frontages may be used in calculating allowable sign area.

"**Cabinet sign**" means a building sign which is an enclosed cabinet with copy on one or more sides and may enclose an integrated light source that can shine through the sides or face of the sign.

"**Canopy sign**" means any sign that is a part of or is attached to an awning, canopy, or other fabric, plastic, or structural protective cover over a door, entrance, window, or outdoor service area. A marquee is not a canopy.

~~"Changeable copy sign, manual" is a sign or portion thereof where copy can be changed or rearranged without altering the face or the surface of the sign (also known as readerboard). A sign on which the message changes more than eight times per day shall be considered an animated sign and not a changeable copy sign.~~ means a sign or portion thereof which has a reader board for the display of text information in which each alphanumeric character, graphic or symbol, and may be changed or re-arranged manually with characters, letters or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged without altering the face or surface of the sign.

"**Channel lettering**" means copy which is individually cut, raised, carved, or manufactured.

"**Civic display**" means a temporary display of banners, balloons, flags, lights or similar decorations erected on a public street or other public property in connection with a holiday, or civic event.

"**Commercial center**" means a group of contiguous lots organized into a shopping center, strip mall, business park, office condominium or similar grouping that share mutual access, ingress and egress easements.

“**Commercial message**” any sign wording, logo, or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names, advertises or calls attention to a business, product, service, or other commercial activity or is otherwise defined as “commercial speech” by the Nevada Supreme Court, the United States District Court for the District of Nevada, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, or the United States Supreme Court for purposes of interpreting the United States Constitution or Nevada constitution regarding freedom of expression or speech.

“**Community directory sign**” means a sign, or a group of signs designed as a single display, which gives information about local churches or civic organizations.

~~“**Computer-controlled variable message electronic sign**” means any building, freestanding or monument sign whose copy can be changed or altered by means of computer-driven electronic impulses.~~

“**Copy**” includes characters, letters, symbols (including logos and trademarks), illustrations and writings.

“**Co-tenancy**” is defined as a business which leases or rents space to tenant(s) or business(es) that are housed within their building though they operate as an independent business.

“**Department**” means the Community Development Services Department of the City.

“**Digital Sign**” means a sign or portion thereof that displays electronic, static images, static graphics, text information, or static pictures, with or without information, defined by a small number of matrix elements using combinations of light emitting diodes (LED), fiber optics, light bulbs, liquid crystal display (LCD) or other illumination devices within the display area. Digital Signs include computer programmable, microprocessor controlled electronic or digital displays.

“**Direct Lighting**” means the light fixture or bulbs are visible when looking at the light source or sign.

“**Directional sign**” means a permanent sign which that directs the flow of traffic or pedestrians and which may or may not contain a commercial message. Directional signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet. If the directional sign is considered a monument sign as defined herein, it shall not exceed four (4) in height.

“**Directory sign**” means a sign, or a group of signs designed as a single display, which gives information about the location of businesses, buildings or addresses within a residential, office, commercial or industrial complex, and no commercial message.

“**Fence sign**” is a sign that is mounted or painted on a fence or soundwall.

“**Flag**” means any fabric, banner, copy a piece of fabric varying in shape, color and design usually attached at one edge to a staff, pole or cord which contains a noncommercial message as defined herein.

~~“**Flashing sign**” means a sign which uses blinking, flashing or intermittent illumination.~~

“**Freestanding sign**” means a sign which exceeds six feet in height which is placed on or anchored to the ground or is supported by a sign structure that is placed on or anchored to the ground and is independent from any building or other structure. See section 20.56.170.C for definition of Special Freestanding Sign.

“**Frontage**” is a portion of a site that fronts directly on a public or private street or right of way. See “building frontage,” “business frontage” and “site frontage.”

“**Grade**” means (unless otherwise specified) the average of the highest and lowest elevations of the ground at the base of the sign.

“**Gross Floor Area**” means the sum of the square footage of all the floors of a structure or building.

“**Halo Illumination**” See Illumination

“**Height**” means (unless otherwise specified) the vertical distance from the topmost part of the sign cabinet or copy (whichever is higher) to grade.

“**Holiday decoration**” means any display commonly associated with a holiday as defined in NRS 336.015.

“**Illegal sign**” is a sign which was erected or put up after the effective date of this ordinance and does not comply with this ordinance. The term specifically includes a temporary or election period sign which is left up beyond the time allowed.

“**Illuminance**” means the amount of light that is incident to the surface of the sign. This is the method for describing ambient light levels or the amount of light that is projected onto a front-lit sign. This is typically measured in footcandles.

“**Illumination**” refers to the type and location of the light source for the sign:

“**All Types**” of illumination means any form of illumination light source including indirect, internal, exposed bulb including ~~(where the sign is made up of a matrix of bulbs or light sources that individually light up to form images)~~ and neon or other tubes of light.

“**Halo Illumination**” means a form of internal illumination where channel lettering is used and the light source is hidden behind and glows around the edges of letters or symbols giving the effect of a light halo.

“**Indirect illumination**” means illumination which is cast on a sign from a source outside the sign

“**Internal illumination**” means illumination produced by a light source contained within a sign and not directly visible from outside.

“**Liquid-Crystal Display (LCD)**” means a low-power, flat-panel display used in many digital devices to display numbers or images. It is made of liquid containing crystals that are affected by electric current, sandwiched between filtering layers of glass or plastic. LCDs do not produce light of their own; instead, when electric current is passed through the material, the molecules of the “liquid crystal” twist so that they either reflect or transmit light from an external source.

“**Light-emitting Diodes (LED) Lighting**” means a type of solid state lighting that utilizes light-emitting diodes (LED) as a source of illumination rather than electrical filaments or gas. If the sign is made up of matrix of bulbs or light source that individually light up to form images, it will be considered a digital sign and shall comply with Section 20.56.170F.

“**Neon**” means a type of illumination that is produced by neon lights or by lamps containing similar gases such as helium, carbon dioxide, argon or krypton usually electrifying glass tubes or bulbs.

“**Incidental sign**” means a sign posted on private property by the owner of the property which is generally informational, contains no commercial message, and has a purpose secondary to the use of the site on which it is located, such as traffic control signs, parking or loading control signs, signs indicating the location of telephones or emergency equipment, and other similar signs. Official signs are not incidental signs.

“**Indirect illumination**” See “Illumination”

“**Internal illumination**” See “Illumination”

“**Interactive Sign**” means a digital sign that changes the sign message based on a passing vehicle or person. Radar speed signs or other traffic control signs are exempted from this definition.

“**LED sign**” means a sign that is lit by use of light-emitting diodes (LED) lighting visible from the outside. Refer to Digital Sign for regulations.

“**Lot**” is defined in Section 20.05-2901070 of the Sparks Municipal Code.

“**Luminance**” is the physical measurement of brightness or illumination leaving a surface in a particular direction, or reflected off that surface, and can be thought as measuring the brightness of a surface as seen by the eye. It is measured in candelas per square meters (cd/m<sup>2</sup>) or nits (one nit = one cd/m<sup>2</sup>).

“**Marquee**” means any permanent roof-like structure projecting beyond a building or extending along and projecting beyond the wall of the building, generally designated and constructed to provide protection from the weather.

“**Modes of operation**” refers to the types of visual display:

1. “**Static**” Signs which include no animation or effects simulating animation.
2. “**Fade**” Signs where static messages are changed by means of varying light intensity, where the first message gradually reduces intensity to the point of not being legible and the subsequent message gradually increases intensity to the point of legibility.
3. “**Dissolve**” Signs where static messages are changed by means of varying light intensity or pattern, where the first message gradually appears to dissolve and lose legibility simultaneous to the gradual appearance and legibility of subsequent message.
4. “**Flashing sign**” means a sign which uses blinking, ~~flashing~~ or intermittent illumination.
5. “**Message Sequencing**” Signs where a single thought, idea, concept, message or advertisement for a product or service that is divided into segments and presented over two or more successive display phases of a single dynamic sign or across two or more individual dynamic signs.
6. “**Travel**” Signs where the message is changed by the apparent horizontal movement of the letters or graphic elements of the message.
7. “**Scrolling**” Signs where the message is changed by the apparent vertical movement of the letters or graphic element of the message.
8. “**Video Display**” Signs that change its message or background in a manner or method of display characterized by motion or pictorial imagery, which may or may not include text and depicts action or special effect to imitate movement, the presentation of pictorials or graphics displayed in a progression of frames which give the illusion of motion, including moving objects, moving patterns or bands of light or expanding or contracting shapes.

“**Monument sign**” means a sign which is equal to or less than six feet in height and is attached directly to the ground or is supported by a sign structure that is placed on or anchored in the ground and is independent from any building or other structure. See Section 20.56.170.D for definition of Special Monument Sign.

“**Moving sign**” means a sign where the sign, sign structure, or any part of the sign or sign structure physically moves or rotates by mechanical means. For example, a trivision sign is a moving sign. If the only moving part of a sign is a clock, the sign shall not be considered as a moving sign.

“**Neighborhood bulletin board**” means any surface outside a building provided specifically to allow the posting of notices.

“**Noncommercial message**” means any sign copy that is not a commercial message as defined above, and includes any definition of “noncommercial speech” by the Nevada Supreme Court, the United States District Court for the District of Nevada, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, or the United States Supreme Court for purposes of interpreting the United States Constitution or Nevada constitution regarding freedom of expression or speech.

“**Nonconforming sign**” means any sign which was lawfully erected prior to the adoption of an ordinance codified in this chapter, or amendments thereto, which would not be permitted under the ordinance or amendment. This definition shall include signs which were erected without a permit and which would require a permit under the current provisions of this chapter.

“**Official sign**” means any sign owned by, or erected by or at the direction of the City in furtherance of the official duties of the City or another governmental agency, including, but not limited to, traffic control signs, directional signs, street identification signs, warning signs,

parking control signs, area identification signs, and signs prohibiting or controlling access to property.

“**Parcel**” of land is defined in Section 20.05.330~~1190~~ of Sparks Municipal Code.

“**Pennant**” means any lightweight plastic, fabric, or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind, suspended from a rope, wire, or string, usually in series, designed to move in the wind.

“**Person**” is defined in Sparks Municipal Code Section 20.05.333~~1240~~.

“**Portable sign**” means a movable sign that is not permanently attached to a structure or the ground, and includes: A-frame, portable reader boards and similar signs. This definition does not include any signs on trailers, vehicles or digital.

“**Projecting sign**” means any sign affixed to a building or wall in such a manner that its face is not parallel to the wall. A marquee is not considered a projecting sign.

“**Residential sign**” means a monument sign on a site located in a district zoned for agriculture or single family housing.

“**Roof**” means a horizontal or sloping surface of a building which serves as a cover for the building or its entry, portico or other appurtenances. This definition shall include any part of a building which resembles a roof in form or function.

“**Roof sign**” means a sign painted on, supported by or attached to the roof or roof structure of a building. This definition shall not include a sign attached flat against the wall of a penthouse; painted flat on the roof and only visible from the air; attached to a mansard roof or parapet as long as the sign does not project above the roofline and there is no other viable location on the building. ~~or other integral part of a building, which projects above the main roof.~~

“**Sign**” means any marking, device, fixture, placard, or structure that uses any graphics, illumination, symbol, or writing to draw the attention of the public, or advertise, announce the purpose of, or identify the purpose of a person or entity, or to communicate information of any kind to the public. This definition shall include all parts of such a device, including its structure and supports and shall also include balloons, pennants, streamers or other devices which are used to attract the attention of the public, whether or not they contain copy. This definition does not include hand held devices, fixtures or placards.

“**Sign area**” is the area of the sign computed in accordance with Section 20.56.250.B~~110~~ below.

“**Sign structure**” means a structure designed to support one or more signs in place.

“**Site**” means (i) a lot or parcel owned by a person unless the lot or parcel is part of a combination or commercial center as defined herein; or (ii) a combination of lots or parcels which are contiguous, are owned in fee as a matter of record by the same person or entity, have the same zoning classification, and are designated by the owner to be a site for purposes of this chapter; (iii) a commercial center as defined above; or (iv) a Bus Stop if the property on which the Bus Stop is located is leased or licensed to the Regional Transportation Commission.

“**Site area**” means the total square footage of the land area of the entire site

“**Site frontage**” means the linear dimension of a site abutting on a public or private street right-of-way.

“**Stacked sign**” means two or more signs affixed to the same sign structure and which vary in height from the ground.

“**Suspended sign**” means a sign supported from, and below, a building soffit or permanent canopy.

“**Temporary sign**” means a sign that is used only temporarily and is not permanently mounted to a structure or ground, and includes portable and mobile signs, banners, pennants and inflatables.

“**Time and temperature sign**” means a sign or portion of a sign which displays only the current time and/or temperature, and/or news of current events and carries no other copy. A time

and temperature sign shall not be considered a flashing or animated sign and shall not exceed ten (10) square feet.

“**Tri-Vision Sign**” means a sign composed in whole or in part of a series of vertical or horizontal slats or cylinders that are capable of being rotated at intervals so that partial rotation of the group of slats or cylinders produces a different image and when properly functioning allows on a single sign structure the display at any given time one of two or more images.

“**V-type sign**” means two or three signs in the shape of the letter "v" or of a triangle, when viewed from above, and supported by integral structures with their faces oriented in different directions.

“**Wall sign**” means a sign which is attached parallel, but within six inches of, a wall, painted on the wall surface of, or erected and confined within the limits of an outside wall or roof of any building or structure, which is supported by such wall or building, and which displays only one sign surface. Included in this definition is a sign attached to the wall of a penthouse or other vertical structure on the top of a roof.

“**Window sign**” means any sign that is placed inside a window or upon the window panes of glass and is visible from the exterior of the window.

### Section 20.56.040 Exemptions

A. Unless specifically provided otherwise, the following types of signs and displays are not subject to the provisions of this chapter and are not counted in any aggregate area or number of sign computations:

1. Official signs.
2. Holiday decorations that (i) do not include a commercial message and (ii) are removed within thirty days after the holiday.
3. Incidental signs whose size is not greater than the larger of (i) 2 square feet or (ii) as specified for the particular type of sign in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control devices published by the United States Department of Transportation incorporated by reference in 23 CFR Part 655, Subpart F.
4. Handicap parking signs. See SMC 20.49.010.
5. Signs posted on or near easements held by public utilities warning or informing the public about the easements or location of public utilities.
6. Building address identification signs which show only the street address and/or building number ~~/name of a building~~.
7. Nameplates appearing on residences or mailboxes.
8. Civic displays.
9. Flags not to exceed four in number and a cumulative total size of 216 square feet.
10. Signs which are located within a structure and are not visible from a public street, sidewalk or alley.
11. Building markers that do not exceed four square feet in size.
12. Signs or copy permanently embroidered, screened, dyed, stenciled or painted into the fabric of umbrellas which are set up in sidewalk cafes.
13. Signs painted on or integral to vending machines, fuel dispensing pumps or fuel storage tanks.
14. Signs painted on the flat surface of the roof and only visible from the air.
15. Murals.

B. In the event that a sign fails to meet any criteria, condition or qualification established above for exemption, the sign shall be subject to and governed by all of the requirements of this Chapter.

**20.56.050 Prohibited signs.**

- A. The following types of signs are prohibited within the city:
  - 1. Signs not specifically permitted in or which violate any provision in this chapter.
  - 2. Signs attached to (i) official signs and their sign structures, (ii) trees or poles or standards which are used for a purpose other than sign structures, or (iii) utility structures.
  - 3. Roof signs.
  - 4. Any display or sign that imitates or resembles an official traffic signal, sign device or other official warning signs.
  - 5. Interactive signs.
  - 6. Signs on wind machines, cellular towers or other equipment except for logos and not exceed eight square inches.

**Section 20.56.070 Prohibited sign location.**

- A. **General.** Notwithstanding any provision in or right established in this chapter, no sign shall be permitted in any of the following locations.
- B. **Drains, ditches, flood channels.** Except for Official Signs, no sign shall be placed in any ditch, storm drain facility or flood channel, except for signs displayed by a utility regarding any easements or dangers that lie within the drain, ditch or flood channel.
- C. **Truckee River greenbelt**
  - 1. Except as provided in this subsection, no signs are permitted within three hundred feet of (i) the centerline of the Truckee River or (ii) the outer boundary of any area designated as the Truckee River Greenbelt, whichever is greater.
  - 2. Exceptions to the foregoing are:
    - a. Residential signs
    - b. Building signs which are not visible from the river.
    - c. Official Signs.
- D. **Signs in the public right of way or on public property.**
  - 1. No sign shall be displayed in any right of way or on public property except:
    - a. Official signs.
    - b. Building markers and building address signs.
    - c. Directional signs owned by the City or with a permit.
    - d. Community directory signs owned by the City or with a permit.
    - e. Signs or copy permanently embroidered, screened, dyed, stenciled or painted into the fabric of umbrellas which are set up in sidewalk cafes in the right of way, provided that the café is operating under an outdoor dining and encroachment permit under Chapter 5.77 of Sparks Municipal Code.
    - f. Signs located on a Bus Stop that is leased or licensed to the Regional Transportation Commission

**Section 20.56.090 Standards, limitation & requirements for all signs.**

- A. **Consent of owner.** No sign shall be placed on any lot without the express permission of the owner of the lot.
- B. **No resemblance or interference with official or warning signs.** No sign may resemble, simulate or conflict with the proper functioning of any official sign, or use yellow or red blinking or intermittent lights resembling danger or warning signals;

- C. **No sound or emissions.** Signs which produce odor, sound, smoke, flame or other emissions are prohibited.
- D. **No obstruction or interference.** No sign shall:
  1. obstruct or impair access to a public sidewalk, public or private street or driveway, traffic control sign, bus stop, fire hydrant, or any other type of street furniture;
  2. block the light and ventilation of any residence on any adjoining property which is zoned for residential use; or
  3. mislead or confuse users of the roadway.
- E. **Stacked signs.** Stacked signs are allowed if (i) the other requirements of this chapter are satisfied and (ii) the sign is integrated with the structure, and (iii) all signs on the same structure are similar in shape and material with one another, except for channel lettering.
- F. **Compliance with codes.** All signs shall comply with applicable provisions of all codes adopted pursuant to Title 15 of the Sparks Municipal Code, and with all other ordinances and provisions of Sparks Municipal Code.
- G. **Permanent.** Except for residential signs, election period signs, two-day signs, ten-day temporary signs, window signs, and special monument signs, all signs shall be permanently attached to the ground, a building, or another structure by direct attachment to a rigid wall, frame, or structure.
- H. **Maintenance, Repair and appearance.** All signs and sign structures shall be maintained in good, safe, structural condition and repair. All signs and display surfaces shall be neat in appearance, and neatly painted or posted, and not ripped, tattered or faded. Premises immediately surrounding free standing signs shall be kept clean and free of rubbish, weeds and debris.
- I. Illumination standards.**
  1. ~~Types of illumination allowed.~~ The following types of illumination are allowed in the following zoning districts.

**Table 56.090-1  
Illumination types allowed**

<b>Zone &amp; use</b>	<b>Illumination type allowed*</b>
A-5 Agriculture	Indirect only
A-40 Agriculture	Indirect only
R-1 (all) Residential	Indirect only
R2-R5 Multifamily	Indirect, internal and Halo only
R5 Nonresidential	Indirect, internal and Halo only

<del>Bus Stop in any zoning district</del>	<del>No illumination allowed in or adjacent to R-1 or R-2 except if the sign is located within 20 feet of an arterial roadway. Elsewhere, only internal illumination is allowed. Safety lighting for a shelter is not considered illumination.</del>
<del>PO Office</del>	<del>All types</del>
<del>PF Public Facility</del>	<del>All types</del>
<del>C1 Commercial</del>	<del>All types</del>
<del>C2 Commercial</del>	<del>All types</del>
<del>TC Commercial</del>	<del>All types</del>
<del>I Industrial</del>	<del>All types</del>
<del>PD Planned Development</del>	<del>As provided in approving ordinance. If approving ordinance does not make provisions, each site shall be governed by this table as if it were zoned in accordance with its actual use. If there is more than one use in the site, the more restrictive zone classification shall be used.</del>

\* See definitions under “Illumination” in Section 20.56.030 above.

**2. Illumination standards.**

- a1. **Direction of light** The light source for all indirect illumination signs shall be effectively shielded to prevent beams or rays from being directed at any roadway or abutting property.
- b2. **Intensity.** The intensity and brilliance of light shall not be so great as to interfere with the effectiveness of any official sign, or impair the vision of or distract any person on any roadway.
- e 3. **Prohibited light sources.** No sign shall use a beacon, strobe light, racing/traveling or (in an exposed bulb sign) an exposed individual light bulb source (excluding LED and neon) which exceeds seventy five watts.
- d. ~~**Freestanding signs.** See subsection 20.56.170.E.8 for special standards for internally lit freestanding signs.~~
- F4. **Digital signs.** See subsection 20.56.170.F for special standards.

**20.56.110 Maximum allowable sign area per site Computations.**

**A. Signs not included in computations.**

- 1. If the following types of signs comply with all other requirements of this chapter, they need not be included in any allowance computations for area or number of signs:
  - a. Building identification signs
  - b. Building markers
  - c. Incidental signs

- d. Directional Signs
- e. Directory signs
- f. Temporary signs as provided in Section 20.56.210
- g. Election period signs as provided in Section 20.56.230
- h. Window signs as provided in Section 20.56.150(D)
- i. Signs exempted under Section 20.56.040
- j. Special freestanding signs
- k. Special monument signs
- l. Projected/Suspended signs per Section 20.56.150.B-D
- m. As specifically provided in other provisions in this chapter.
- n. Murals

- B. Computation of sign area of individual signs.** ~~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 the sum of the measurable areas of all of the display units in the sign. “Measurable area” means the smallest square, circle, rectangle, triangle, or combination thereof that will encompass the extreme limits of the display unit. “Display unit” means (i) a cabinet, (ii) a line of text, (iii) a symbol, logo, picture, emblem or other distinguishable unit of copy, and (iv) background, including any material forming an integral part of the background of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the backdrop or structure against which is placed, but not including any supporting framework, bracing, or decorative fence or wall when such fence or wall otherwise meets zoning ordinance regulations and is clearly incidental to the display itself.~~ **The allowable sign area shall apply to the maximum geometric area of all sign faces. The area of a sign comprised of individual letters or elements attached to a building wall, which are without an integrated background and are not enclosed in a frame or cabinet, the area of the letter can be calculated as long as the distance between the letters and / or elements is less than the largest dimension of the largest sign letter. If such a display consists of more than one line or component, the area of each line or component may be calculated separately. Where a display is enclosed in a frame or cabinet, or has an integrated background, the entire area within the frame, cabinet or background must be included in the calculation.**
- C. Computation of area of multifaced signs.** The sign area for a sign with more than one face shall be computed by adding together the area of all sign faces visible from any one point. When two sign faces are placed back to back, so that both faces cannot be viewed from any point at the same time, and when such sign faces are part of the same sign structure and are not more than 25 degrees apart, the sign area shall be computed by the measurement of one of the faces.
- D. Computation of number of signs.**
1. All signs contained within a single frame, structure, cabinet or integrated background shall be counted as one sign. If a display is not so contained, a single message or business name shall be counted as one sign. A business name combined with a brief slogan may be counted as one sign if the elements are visually integrated.
  2. In determining the number of signs:
    - (i) Pennants or streamers shall be considered one sign
    - (ii) One banner shall be considered one sign
    - (iii) One large balloon or one bunch or string of small balloons shall be considered one sign.
- ~~A. Except as specifically provided otherwise in this chapter, no sign shall be constructed or maintained on a site if the sign, together with all other nonexempt~~

signs on the site (including all freestanding and building signs), exceeds the following maximum allowable sign area. See Sections 20.56.170 and 20.56.250 to determine what signs are excluded from these computations and how the sign areas are calculated.

Table 56.110-1  
Maximum allowable sign area per site.

Zone & Use	Maximum allowable sign area per site
A-5 Agriculture	<p>— 9 sq ft on each site frontage</p>
A-40 Agriculture	
R1 (all) Residential	
R2-R4 Multifamily	<p>— 32 sq ft</p>
R5 Multifamily	
Bus Stops in any zoning district	<p>Only official signs are allowed in or adjacent to R-1 or R-2 except for signs located within 20 feet of an arterial roadway. In all other zones, one sq ft for each sq ft of the footprint of the bench or shelter, up to a maximum of 64 sq ft. If the Bus Stop is leased or licensed to the Regional Transportation Commission, signs in the Bus Stop are not to be counted toward the maximum sign area for the site in which the bus stop is located.</p>
R5 Nonresidential	<p>— 1% of ground floor area of building</p>
PO Office	
PF Public Facility	
C1 Commercial	<p>Larger of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— • 2 sq ft for each foot of allowable business frontage</li> <li>— or</li> <li>— • 1 sq ft for each foot of site frontage</li> </ul>

<p><del>C2</del> Commercial</p>	<p>Larger of:  <del>— • 2.5 sq ft for each foot of allowable business frontage</del>  <del>— or</del>  <del>— • 1 sq ft for each foot of site frontage</del></p>
<p><del>TC</del> Commercial</p>	<p>Larger of:  <del>— • 8 sq ft for each foot of allowable business frontage</del>  <del>— or</del>  <del>— • 1 sq ft for each foot of site frontage.</del></p>
<p><del>I</del> Industrial</p>	<p>Larger of:  <del>— • 1 sq ft for each foot of site frontage up to 128 sq ft.</del>  <del>— or</del>  <del>— • sum of</del>  <del>— • 1% of the first 20,000 sq ft of building ground floor area plus</del>  <del>— • .5% of next 30,000 sq ft of building ground floor area</del>  <del>— • .25 % of all sq ft over 50,000 sq ft ground floor area</del>  <del>— or</del>  <del>— • May utilize C1 standards for maximum allowable sign area as listed above if, the property shares a common property line with the Right of Way of: S. McCarran Blvd., from Interstate 80, south to the city limits; Rock Blvd., from Interstate 80, south to the city limits; Glendale Ave., from the western city limits to S. McCarran Blvd.; and Greg St., from the western city limits to S. McCarran Blvd.</del></p>
<p><del>PD</del> Planned Development</p>	<p><del>As provided in approving ordinance. If approving ordinance does not provide for maximum allowable sign area, then the provisions of this table apply to each site as if it were zoned in accordance with its actual use. If there is more than one use in the site, the more restrictive zone classification shall be used.</del></p>

**20.56.150 Building signs.**

- A. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, it shall be unlawful to construct or maintain a building sign in violation of the specifications and requirements of this section.
- B. **Specifications by zoning district**

**Table 56.150-1  
Building sign limitations**

<b>Zoning &amp; Use</b>	<b>Maximum allowable building sign area</b>	<b>Maximum number of signs allowed [1]</b>	<b>Allowance and area limits for projecting and suspended signs</b>	<b>Type of illumination</b>
A-5 Agriculture	9 sq. ft.	1	Not allowed	Indirect only
A-40 Agriculture	9 sq. ft.	1	Not allowed	Indirect only
R-1 (all) Residential	None	None	Not allowed	None
R2 - R4 Multifamily	None	None	Not allowed	None
R5 Multifamily	None	None	Not allowed	None
Bus Stops in any zoning district	<p>Only official signs are allowed in or adjacent to R1 or R2 except for signs located within twenty (20) feet of an arterial roadway. In all other zones, one (1) sq. ft. for each square foot of the footprint of the bench or shelter, up to maximum of 64 sq. ft. If the bus stop is leased or licensed to the Regional Transportation Commission, signs in the bus stop are not to be counted toward the maximum sign area for the site in which the bus stop is located.</p> <p>No illumination allowed in or adjacent to R-1 or R-2 except if the sign is located within 20 feet of an arterial roadway. Elsewhere, only internal illumination is allowed. Safety lighting for a shelter is not considered illumination.</p>			
R5 Nonresidential	<del>32 sq. ft</del> 1.0% (0.01) of Gross Floor Area (GFA) of business	<del>2 per business frontage</del> No limit	Not allowed	Indirect, internal and halo only
PO Professional Office	<del>1% of ground floor area of building</del> 1.0% (0.01) of Gross Floor Area (GFA) of business	<del>2 per business frontage</del> No limit	Not allowed	Indirect, internal and halo only

PF Public Facility	<del>1% of ground floor area of building</del> 10 square feet / Acre	<del>2 per business frontage</del> No limit	Not allowed	All types; none facing residential zoned properties
C1 Commercial	1.0 <del>2</del> sq. ft. for each foot of allowable business frontage (no more than 2 business frontages) <del>or</del> 1 sq. ft. for each foot of site area Minimum Sign Area – 40 sq. ft. Maximum Sign Area – 300 sq. ft.	<del>2 per business frontage</del> No limit	6 sq. ft. (max 1) Minimum clearance – 7 feet	All types
C2 Commercial	1.0 <del>2.5</del> sq. ft. for each foot of allowable business frontage <del>or</del> 1 sq. ft. for each foot of frontage [2] (no more than 2 business frontages) Minimum Sign Area – 40 sq. ft. Maximum Sign Area – 500 sq. ft.	<del>2 per business frontage</del> No limit	6 sq. ft. (max 1) Minimum clearance – 7 feet	All types

<p>TC Tourist Commercial</p>	<p>2.5% (0.025) of gross floor area</p> <p>8 sq. ft. for each foot of allowable business frontage or</p> <p>1 sq. ft. for each foot of site frontage</p> <p>No Limit</p>	<p>No limit</p>	<p>6 sq. ft. (max 1) Minimum clearance – 7 feet</p>	<p>All types</p>
<p>I Industrial</p>	<p>1 sq. ft. for each foot of site frontage up to 128 ft.</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Sum of</p> <p>1% of first 20,000 sq. ft. of building ground floor plus</p> <p>0.5% of next 30,000 sq. ft. of building floor area</p> <p>0.25% of all sq. ft. over 50,000 sq. ft. ground floor area</p> <p>1 sq. ft. for each foot of business frontage</p> <p>(no more than 2 business frontages)</p> <p>Minimum Sign Area – 40 sq. ft.</p> <p>Maximum Sign Area – 250 sq. ft.</p>	<p>No limit</p>	<p>6 sq. ft. (max 1) Minimum clearance – 7 feet</p>	<p>All types</p>
<p>PD Planned Development/ NUD New Urban District</p>	<p>As provided in approving ordinance. Per the standards in the approved Planned Development Standards Handbook. If approved ordinance Planned Development Handbook does not provide guidelines or restrictions for building signs, then the provisions of this table apply to each site as if it were zoned in accordance with its actual use. If there is more than one use in the site, the more restrictive zone classification shall be used.</p>			

[1] Suspended signs located perpendicular to the front of the building and not exceeding six square feet in area will not be included in calculating the number of signs.

**C. Specifications applicable to all building signs.**

- ~~1. Fifty percent (50%) of the display surface must be opaque on all internally lit cabinet signs outside the TC zone except signs located in Bus Stops where 25% of the display surface on all internally illuminated signs must be opaque.~~
- ~~2. If a sign includes channel letters and a logo cabinet, no more than 30% of the sign area may be a logo cabinet.~~
1. Building signs within 300 feet of and directly facing a residentially zoned district shall be non-illuminated.
2. Signs for co-tenancy shall be calculated as part of the maximum allowable building sign area for the GFA of the building or business it leases or rents from.

**D. Specifications by sign type.**

1. **Wall signs.** Wall signs may not extend above or beyond the wall or roof line.
2. **Canopy signs.** Only one canopy sign will be permitted per business on each frontage and it cannot exceed 25% of the vertical surface of the canopy.
3. **Building Identification Signs.** Only one building identification sign is permitted per building.
4. **Marquee signs.** Only one is permitted per building.
5. **Projecting/Suspended signs.** Projecting signs located on private property shall not extend beyond the property line into adjacent lots and, except in any redevelopment area, shall not extend into the right of way.
6. **Roof signs.** — Roof signs are prohibited.
7. **Suspended signs.** — Only one suspended sign is permitted per entrance to each business frontage. Suspended signs not exceeding six square feet in area will not be included in calculating the number of signs, but will be included in maximum sign area calculations.
86. **Window signs.** The total area of all window signs in a business frontage may not exceed 25% of the total area of all windows for that business in the building. Permits are not required for any window signs, and window signs are not governed by or counted against sign area or number limitations. Window signs must, however, conform to other standards, requirements and limitations in this chapter. The maximum size for digital signs shall be three (3) square feet.

**20.56.170 Freestanding and monument signs**

- A. Except as otherwise specifically provided in this chapter, and subject to the maximum sign allowances set forth in this section 20.56.110, it shall be unlawful to construct a free standing or monument sign or sign structure in violation of the specifications and requirements of this section.
- B. **Limitations by zoning district**

**Table 56.170-1  
Freestanding and Monument Sign Limitations.**

Zoning	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Height of Each Sign [2]	Maximum Number of Monument Sign Structures per Site	Illumination
A-5 Agriculture	9 sq. ft. on each site frontage	6 feet	1 per site frontage, not to exceed 2	Indirect only
A-40 Agriculture	9 sq. ft. on each site frontage	6 feet	1 per site frontage, not to exceed 2	Indirect only
R-1 (all) Residential	9 sq. ft. on each site frontage	6 feet	1 per site frontage, not to exceed 2	Indirect only
R2 – R5 Multifamily	32 sq. ft. on each site frontage (excluding directory sign(s))	6 feet	1 per site frontage, not to exceed 2 Plus 1 special monument sign see Section 20.56.170D	Indirect, internal and Halo
Bus Stops in any zoning district	Only official signs are allowed in or adjacent to R1 or R2 except for signs located within twenty (20) feet of an arterial roadway. In all other zones, one (1) sq. ft. for each square foot of the footprint of the bench or shelter, up to maximum of 64 sq. ft. If the bus stop is leased or licensed to the Regional Transportation Commission, signs in the bus stop are not to be counted toward the maximum sign area for the site in which the bus stop is located.			
R5 Nonresidential	32 sq. ft.	6 feet	1 per site frontage, not to exceed 2 Plus 1 special monument sign see Section 20.56.170D	Indirect, internal and Halo
PO Professional Office	32 sq. ft.	6 feet	1 per parcel. See Section 20.56.170D special monument sign.	All types
PF Public Facility	32 sq. ft.	6 feet	1 per parcel. See Section 20.56.170D special monument sign.	All types
C1 Commercial	32 sq. ft.	6 feet	1 per parcel. See Section 20.56.170D special monument sign.[1]	All types

C2 Commercial	32 sq. ft.	6 feet	1 per parcel. See Section 20.56.170D special monument sign.[1]	All types
TC Tourist Commercial	32 sq. ft.	6 feet	1 per parcel. See Section 20.56.170D special monument sign.[1]	All types
I Industrial	32 sq. ft.	6 feet	1 per parcel. See Section 20.56.170D special monument sign.[1]	All types
PD Planned Development/ NUD New Urban District	As provided in approving ordinance. Per the standards in the approved Planned Development Standards Handbook. If approved ordinance Planned Development Handbook does not provide guidelines or restrictions for building signs, then the provisions of this table apply to each site as if it were zoned in accordance with its actual use. If there is more than one use in the site, the more restrictive zone classification shall be used.			

[1] Drive through businesses may have an additional maximum of two (2) monument signs, not to exceed a combined sixty-four (64) square feet in addition to the thirty-two square (32) feet in Table 56.170-1 and must be oriented to be visible to the vehicles within the drive through lane. If the drive-through use ceases or is abandoned, the sign are no longer permissible and shall be removed.

[2] The sign structure may extend above the sign by 10% of the height of a monument sign if (i) the sign structure is separately constructed from the cabinet or face of the sign; (ii) the portion above the cabinet or face does not contain any copy and (iii) the extension adds architectural embellishments to the sign.

**Table 56.170-2  
Freestanding and Monument Sign Limitations.**

Zoning	Maximum Sign Area [1]	Maximum Height of Each Sign [2] [3]	Maximum Number of Freestanding Sign Structures per Site	Illumination
A-5 Agriculture	Not allowed	Not allowed	None	None
A-40 Agriculture	Not allowed	Not allowed	None	None
R-1 (all) Residential	Not allowed	Not allowed	None	None
R2 – R5 Multifamily	Not allowed	Not allowed	None	None

Bus Stops in any zoning district	Only official signs are allowed in or adjacent to R1 or R2 except for signs located within twenty (20) feet of an arterial roadway. In all other zones, one (1) sq. ft. for each square foot of the footprint of the bench or shelter, up to maximum of 64 sq. ft. If the bus stop is leased or licensed to the Regional Transportation Commission, signs in the bus stop are not to be counted toward the maximum sign area for the site in which the bus stop is located.			
R5 Nonresidential	Not allowed	Not allowed	None	None
PO Professional Office	Not allowed	Not allowed	None	None
PF Public Facility	1 sq. ft. for each foot of individual site frontage up to 200 sq. ft.	16 feet	1 per site frontage up to a maximum of 2	All types Indirect, internal and halo only except on sites equal to or greater than 10 acres then all types.
C1 Commercial	25% (0.25) for each foot of individual site frontage(s) – maximum of 2 site frontages Maximum – Not to exceed a combined of 250 sq. ft.	30 feet	1 per site frontage up to maximum of 2	All types
C2 Commercial	35% (0.35) for each foot of individual site frontage(s) – maximum of 2 site frontages Maximum – Not to exceed a combined of 500 sq. ft.	30 feet	1 per site frontage up to maximum of 2	All types
TC Tourist Commercial	50% (0.5) for each foot of individual site frontage(s) – maximum of 2 site frontages Maximum - unlimited	30 feet See Section 20.56.170G regarding gateway signs	1 per site frontage up to maximum of 2	All types
I Industrial	25% (0.25) for each foot of individual site frontage(s) – maximum of 2 site frontages Maximum – Not to exceed a combined of 250 sq. ft.	30 feet 40 feet for special freestanding sign	1 per site frontage up to maximum of 2 Plus 1 special freestanding sign See Section 20.56.170D	All types

PD Planned Development/ NUD New Urban District	<del>As provided in approving ordinance.</del> Per the standards in the approved Planned Development Standards Handbook. If approved ordinance Planned Development Handbook does not provide guidelines or restrictions for building signs, then the provisions of this table apply to each site as if it were zoned in accordance with its actual use. If there is more than one use in the site, the more restrictive zone classification shall be used.
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Notes:

[1] The calculation for the freestanding signs maximum area shall be the sign area including centers name and tenant panels excluding the architectural embellishments to the sign.

[2] The sign structure may extend above the sign by 20% of the height of a freestanding sign or 10% of the height of a monument sign if (i) the sign structure is separately constructed from the cabinet or face of the sign, (ii) the portion above the cabinet or face does not contain any copy, and (iii) the extension adds architectural embellishment to the sign.

[3] The height of the sign may be measured from the elevation of the centerline of the nearest travel lane of the street or highway to which the sign is oriented rather than from “grade”.

**C. Special freestanding signs.**

In addition to other allowances, one special freestanding sign shall be permitted on each site in the I zoning districts under the following circumstances.

1. When applying for the sign permit, the applicant will designate the proposed sign as its special freestanding sign hereunder, and the sign will be specially marked in accordance with instructions from the Department to indicate it is a special freestanding sign.
2. The special freestanding sign area may not exceed 672 square feet. The sign is not counted against the maximum allowable sign area. If the actual size of the sign is less than 672 sq ft, the difference is ~~is~~ cannot be added to allowable sign area.
3. Rather than from “grade” as defined above, the height of the sign may be measured from the elevation of the centerline of the nearest travel lane of the street or highway to which the sign is oriented.
4. Otherwise, each special freestanding sign is subject to and must comply with all other provisions of this Chapter, applicable to a freestanding sign except as otherwise indicated.
5. If the sign is digital sign or uses other method of illumination with LED or similar illumination, the special freestanding sign must comply with Section 20.56.170(F).
6. For moving or trivision signs, the minimum exposure time for each panel is ten (10) seconds and maximum twirl time is two (2) seconds.

**D. Special Monument Signs.**

In addition to other allowances, one special monument sign shall be permitted for each entrance of each site in all zoning districts specified in Section §-20.56.170(B) above under the following circumstances and subject to the following conditions and requirements.

1. No special monument sign area may exceed 32 square feet. The area of the sign shall not be counted against the maximum allowable sign area for the site, and if the sign is smaller than 32 square feet, the difference shall not be added to the maximum allowable sign area for the site.
2. ~~A permit is not required for special monument signs, but they shall be specially marked as required by the Administrator.~~

23. Special monument signs are subject to and must comply with all other requirements of this Chapter applicable to monument signs, except:
- a. They may not be illuminated, and may not be ~~computer-controlled variable~~ digital signs.
  - ~~b. The minimum lettering requirement in §20.56.170.E.6 does not apply.~~
  - b.** e. The architectural requirement in **Section** §20.56.170(E)(7) does not apply.

**E. Other standards, limitations and requirements for freestanding or monument signs.**

1. Sign separation distance.
  - a. **Definitions.** For purposes of this subsection, “radius distance” means that no part of a sign may be within the specified distance from any part of any other sign, and “linear distance” means that no part of a sign may be within the specified distance of any part of any other sign which is on the same side of the street to which the first sign is oriented.
  - b. **Monument signs.** No monument sign (including a special monument sign) may be within twenty feet radius distance of any other monument sign.
  - c. **Freestanding signs.** Except for special freestanding signs:
    - i.** No freestanding sign may be within 100 feet linear distance of any other freestanding sign.
    - ii.** If the freestanding sign includes a digital sign, the radial distance to another digital sign is 200 feet.
  - d. **Special Freestanding Signs.** A special freestanding sign may be placed within 1500 linear feet distance of a freestanding sign (except an “outdoor advertising structure” as defined in Section 20.56.320(A)), but no special freestanding sign may be placed within 1500 linear feet distance of any other special freestanding sign or an “outdoor advertising structure” as defined in Section 20.56.320(A). **If the special freestanding sign is a digital sign, the minimum distance to another digital sign is 3,000 feet lineal feet.**
2. **Extension over property lines.** All freestanding or monument signs must be located on one site only and shall not extend over the property line to another site.
3. **Extension into right of way.** All freestanding or monument signs, except for signs displayed in the Town Center Redevelopment Area of the city, shall not extend into any public right of way.
4. **Minimum setback for safe siting standards.**
  - a. Except as provided in subsection (b) below, all freestanding and monument signs (including special freestanding and monument signs) must be located outside of the control area defined below and shall be located in accordance with the most recent edition of American Association State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) “Roadside Design Guide” and stamped by registered engineer.
    - i.** **For intersections of public streets with residential, collector, or arterial streets where the travel lane is a minimum of five feet from the edge of pavement:** The control area is that area

between the property lines and a line drawn between a point 15 feet back from the point of curvature of the intersection as measured at the property side of the sidewalk on each leg of the intersection. If no sidewalk exists, the measurement will be along the curb line.

- ii. **For intersections of private driveways with residential, collector, or arterial streets where the travel lane is a minimum of five feet from the edge of pavement:** The control area is that area between the property line and a line drawn between a point 10 feet back from the intersection of the driveway and the sidewalk as measured at the property side of the sidewalk and a line drawn to the point 10 feet back from the intersection of the driveway and the sidewalk as measured on the driveway. If no sidewalk exists, the measurement will be from the intersection of the driveway and the curb.
  - iii. **For intersections of public streets with arterial streets where the travel lane is at the edge of pavement:** The control area is that area between the property lines and a line drawn between a point 15 feet back from the point of curvature of the intersection as measured at the property side of the sidewalk on the minor leg of the intersection and a point 50 feet back from the point of curvature of the intersection as measured at the property side of the sidewalk on the major leg of the intersection. If no sidewalk exists, the measurement will be along the curb line.
  - iv. **For intersections of private driveways with arterial streets where the travel lane is at the edge of pavement:** The control area is that area between the property line and a line drawn between a point 15 feet back from the intersection of the driveway and the sidewalk as measured at the property side of the sidewalk and a line drawn to the point 15 feet back from the intersection of the driveway and the sidewalk as measured on the driveway. If no sidewalk exists, the measurement will be from the intersection of the driveway and the curb.
- b. All freestanding and monument signs (including special freestanding and monument signs) to be located within the control area shall be in conformance with the safe siting standards set forth in the current edition of A Policy on Geometric Design of Highway and Streets, published by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, and as established by an analysis sealed by a professional engineer licensed in Nevada opining that the sign does not violate those safe siting standards.
  - c. If a permanent building extends into a control area as described above, freestanding, monument and special monument signs may be placed parallel to and within six inches of the walls of the building that extend into the control area, provided that the signs do not block any windows and do not extend beyond or wrap around the corner or edge of the walls. If it is impossible to locate a sign as specified herein because the building abuts the property line, a building sign may be placed on the wall that extends into the control area notwithstanding the limitation of the number of building signs set forth in Section 20.56.150.B, provided: (1) the sign is not a projecting sign, (2) the sign does not extend beyond or

wrap around the corner or edge of any projecting sign, (3) the sign does not cover any windows, and (4) if the building sign is erected in lieu of a special monument sign, a building permit is obtained under Title 15 of the Sparks Municipal Code, if required.

5. **Residential.** Permits are not required for residential signs.
6. **Minimum lettering size.** ~~Each letter and number on all freestanding signs shall be at least 9 inches in height, except for any sign for which a permit is not required (e.g. residential signs, 2 day temporary signs, election period signs etc).~~
7. **Architecture.** All freestanding and monument signs and sign structures must ~~be integrated into the architecture and~~ contain similar architecture elements and materials visually compatible with buildings on the site. All poles used as a part of freestanding or monument sign structures shall be covered.
8. **Internal Lighting** ~~If any portion of a freestanding sign is internally lit, then a minimum of twenty five percent (25%) of the area of the sign that is internally lit shall be opaque.~~

F. ~~Computer controlled variable message electronic and animated signs~~ **Digital signs.**

In addition to all of the other limitations, standards and requirements for monument or freestanding signs; ~~computer controlled variable message electronic and animated signs~~ **digital signs** are subject to the following limitations, standards and requirements:

1. ~~They~~ **Digital signs** shall be allowed only in TC (Tourist Commercial), C2 (General Commercial), and I (Industrial) zoning districts.
2. **Digital signs shall be allowed in PF (Public Facilities) sites that are over 10 acres.**
3. **One digital sign per site frontage, maximum of two (2) digital signs per site.**
4. ~~If located in a C2 zoning district,~~ **They must contain a minimum constant display of no less than two minutes eight (8) seconds, including special freestanding signs. Maximum time allowed for messages to change is one (1) second.**
3. ~~The readerboard illumination must be less than 30,000 lumens measured at a distance of three feet from the front of the sign.~~
5. **The digital sign portion shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the total allowed sign area for freestanding signs in C2 and I zoning districts. In TC zoning district, the digital sign portion shall not exceed seventy-five Percent (75%) of the total allowed sign area. For monument and special freestanding signs, the entire sign may be a digital sign.**
6. **Digital displays shall not operate at brightness levels of more than 0.3 foot candles above ambient light, as measured using a foot-candle meter at a pre-set distance. The pre-set distances to measure the foot-candles is calculated using the following formula:**  
$$\text{Measurement Distance} = \sqrt{\text{Area of Sign} \times 100}$$
**The measurement distance can be rounded to the nearest whole number.**
7. **Digital signs shall be sited in a manner that the intensity or brilliance does not interfere with the effectiveness of an official traffic sign, device or signal.**
8. **The digital sign shall include photo-sensors to provide automatic intensity adjustment based on ambient lighting conditions.**
9. **Signs with a digital component shall consist of one unit.**
10. **The use of fade, dissolve, travel, message sequencing or scrolling is prohibited for signs over thirty-two (32) square feet, except for properties zoned Tourist**

Commercial (TC). The use of video display, flashing or blinking is prohibited for any digital sign.

11. The distance separation for digital signs, refer to Section 20.56.170(E).

G. **Gateway Signs.** A "gateway sign" is one freestanding sign per lot that meets all of the following criteria and which may have an elevation that is 30 feet above the "Interstate 80 elevation" as defined below, provided that it meets all other criterion for freestanding signs and;

1. If any portion of a lot is located within 500 feet from the intersection of a gateway street as described by the GIS coordinates in 2 of this section a gateway sign may be erected anywhere on the lot if the lot:
  - a. is located in the TC zoning district; and
  - b. is at least one acre in size.

2.

Gateway Street	GIS Coordinates*	
	X coordinate	Y coordinate
McCarran Boulevard	2298834.55004527	14866893.56576840
Rock Boulevard	2291251.23756496	14867221.46275700
Vista Boulevard	2309524.43934199	14864209.64130800
Sparks Boulevard	2305435.41268704	14864930.23447220
Kietzke Lane	2288271.25795990	14867453.99376530
Pyramid Way	2294819.45760579	14867198.51685780
Prater Way	2287519.53185396	14867820.11018970

\* Projected Coordinate System:

Name: NAD\_1983\_StatePlane\_Nevada\_West\_FIPS\_2703\_Feet

Geographic Coordinate System:

Name: GCS\_North\_American\_1983

3. The sign must be oriented toward Interstate 80.
4. The elevation of the top of the sign (subject to Note [1] to Table 56.170-1) must not exceed 30 feet over the Interstate 80 elevation, which is the elevation of the highest point of any improvement (except for any traffic signals or signs) that is within the Interstate 80 right of way and is within a lineal distance (as defined in subparagraph 20.56.170(E)(1) of 1,500 feet from the sign.
5. Applications for sign permits for signs to be erected under this section shall be accompanied by a certificate of a licensed surveyor indicating that the base of the sign meets the restrictions of subparagraph 1 above and the height of the sign does not exceed the height requirements of subparagraph 4.
6. Except for the height allowance set forth herein, the sign must otherwise comply with all provisions in this code.

## 20.56.190 Fence signs.

- A. **Residential zoning districts.** Fence signs in residential zoning districts R1- R5 shall be regulated as monument signs under Section 20.56.170.
- B. **All other areas.** Fence signs in all other zoning districts shall be regulated as building signs under Section 20.56.150, and shall comply with the safe siting requirements set forth in subsection 20.56.170(E)(4).

## 20.56.210 Temporary signs.

### A. ~~“Two day” temporary signs~~ **Portable Signs.**

1. One **portable sign which is six square feet or less in size** may be displayed ~~on a site~~ **per business (licensee)** without any sign permit ~~for a period not to exceed two consecutive days.~~ Such signs are not to be counted in the maximum allowable sign area or number of signs limitations. **Portable signs must comply with the following standards:**
  - a. **Maximum size of eight (8) feet square with maximum height of four (4) feet**
  - b. **Can only be displayed during business hours**
  - c. ~~a.~~ **Portable signs** ~~They need~~ cannot be permanently affixed to the property as required by **§ Section 20.56.090(G).**
  - d. ~~b.~~ **Portable signs** ~~They may not be illuminated. as provided in or computer controlled as provided in § 20.56.170.F.~~
  - e. **Portable signs shall be located within twenty (20) feet of the business (licensee) public entrance.**
  - f. **Portable signs shall not be located in public right-of-way, roadway, on-site drive aisle, designated parking area or landscape area and shall be located outside of the visibility triangle of the driveway and/or street.**
  - f. **Portable signs shall not obstruct vehicular or pedestrian traffic.**
  - g. **Portable signs shall not be attached to any structure or vegetation such as utility structures, traffic signs/poles, trees or similar items.**
2. They must otherwise comply with all other limitations, standards and requirements the limitations in this chapter except and subject to:
  - e. a. The distance requirements in **§ Section 20.56.170(E)(1)** do not apply.
  - d. ~~The lettering size requirements in § 20.56.170.E.6 do not apply.~~
  - e. b. The architectural requirements in **§ Section 20.56.170(E)7(6)** do not apply.

### B. ~~Other Temporary signs.~~

1. **Permit Required; Duration.** **At the discretion of the property owner and with the issuance of** a temporary sign permit, each ~~occupant of a building or the owner of a vacant site~~ may display up to two (2) signs ~~on a site for:~~ **per public street entrance, not to exceed eight (8) signs and restricted to a period as designated or specified on the Temporary Sign Permit application. Display of temporary signs shall be based on a calendar year between January to December and must be reapplied for annually. If the site has any digital signs, the number of allowed temporary signs shall be reduced by two (2) for each digital sign.**
  - (i) ~~10 calendar days followed by a 90 day waiting period, or~~
  - (ii) ~~20 calendar days followed by a 180 day waiting period.~~

~~A temporary sign permit will be issued for the maximum number of days (10 or 20) and the waiting period starts from the last day on the permit even if the sign is actually displayed for fewer days.~~

2. **Standards, requirements and limitations:**

- a. ~~No more than two temporary signs in any combination shall be allowed for each site at any one time.~~ The temporary sign permit application must be approved / signed by the site owner/manager. If a site has more than one occupant who wishes to put up signs at the same time, the site owner or manager must determine who can display the signs.
- b. Temporary signs may not be placed in a prohibited sign area (Section 20.56.070).
- c. Any temporary sign shall be located on private property and setback at a minimum of one (1) foot for every foot of height from the nearest travel lane. No temporary sign shall be higher than roof or parapet of the building.
- d. The maximum size of a temporary sign shall be eighteen (18) square feet. Any sign over this size will require a sign permit and must comply with Sections 20.56.150 and/or 20.56.170 of this Chapter.
- e. Temporary signs shall be kept neat, clean and in good repair. Signs which are faded, torn, damaged or otherwise unsightly or in a state of disrepair shall be immediately repaired or removed.
- ef. Each temporary sign must meet the standards and limitations for all signs set out in Section 20.56.090, except:
  - i. They ~~need~~ can not be affixed permanently to the ground or building.
  - ii. They may not be illuminated per § Section 20.56.090~~K-(I)~~, nor computer controlled variable digital per Section 20.56.170(F)
  - iii. The distance requirements in Section 20.56.170(E)(1) do not apply.
  - iv. Temporary signs shall not be attached to any structure or vegetation such as utility structures, traffic signs/poles, trees or similar items.
- dg. Permitted temporary signs do not count against the maximum allowable sign area, ~~per Section 20.56.110 or maximum number of signs.~~

3. **Exceptions:** Each owner of a vacant building may display a temporary sign affixed to the building not to exceed eighty (80) square feet and does not require a temporary sign permit.

**20.56.230 Additional signs during election periods.**

- A. **Election period.** An election period begins the first day of filing before and ends ten days after any election conducted under federal, state, county, or city laws or ordinances in which residents of Sparks are entitled to vote, including elections or votes regarding selection or recall of any federal, state, county or city officials, any ballot questions, referendum or advisory vote.
- B. **Additional signs during election period.** Additional signs containing any message may be displayed on any site during an election period, subject to the following limitations, standards and requirements.
  - 1. **Number and size.** There is no limitation on the number or size of additional signs. Signs which comply with this subsection do not count against the

maximum allowable sign area, ~~per Section 20.56.110~~, or the maximum number of signs allowed under Sections 20.56.150 or 20.56.170.

2. **No sign permit required.** A sign permit is not required for any election period sign which otherwise complies with this section. However, building permits may be required under Section 15.08 of the Sparks Municipal Code depending on the size and nature of the sign.
3. **Standards, requirements and limitations.**
  - a. Election period signs may not be placed in a prohibited sign area (Section 20.56.070).
  - b. Each election period sign must meet the standards and limitations for all signs set out in Section 20.56.090, with the following exceptions:
    - i. They need not be affixed permanently to the ground or building
    - ii. They may not be illuminated, or ~~computer-controlled variable~~ **digital** signs.
    - iii. The distance requirements in Section 20.56.170(E)(1) do not apply.
    - iv. The minimum lettering requirements in Section 20.56.170(E)(6) do not apply.
    - v. The architectural requirements in Section 20.56.170(E)(76) do not apply.

not

#### **20.56.250 — Computations.**

##### **A. ~~Signs not included in computations.~~**

1. ~~If the following types of signs comply with all other requirements of this chapter, they need not be included in any allowance computations for area or number of signs:~~

- ~~a. Building identification signs~~
- ~~b. Building markers~~
- ~~c. Incidental signs~~
- ~~d. Directional Signs~~
- ~~e. Directory signs~~
- ~~f. Temporary signs as provided in Section 20.56.210~~
- ~~g. Election period signs as provided in Section 20.56.230~~
- ~~h. Window signs~~
- ~~I. Signs exempted under Section 20.56.040~~
- ~~J. Special freestanding signs~~
- ~~k. Special monument signs~~
- ~~l. Suspended signs per Section 20.56.150.B~~
- ~~m. As specifically provided in other provisions in this chapter.~~

- B. **Computation of sign area of individual signs.** 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 the sum of the measurable areas of all of the display units in the sign. “Measurable area” means the smallest square, circle, rectangle, triangle, or combination thereof that will encompass the extreme limits of the display unit. “Display unit” means (i) a cabinet, (ii) a line of text, (iii) a symbol, logo, picture, emblem or other distinguishable unit of copy, and (iv) background, including any material forming an integral part of the background of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the backdrop or structure against which is placed, but not including any supporting framework, bracing, or decorative fence or wall

~~when such fence or wall otherwise meets zoning ordinance regulations and is clearly incidental to the display itself.~~

~~C. **Computation of area of multifaced signs.** The sign area for a sign with more than one face shall be computed by adding together the area of all sign faces visible from any one point. When two sign faces are placed back to back, so that both faces cannot be viewed from any point at the same time, and when such sign faces are part of the same sign structure and are not more than 25 degrees apart, the sign area shall be computed by the measurement of one of the faces.~~

~~D. **Computation of number of signs.**~~

~~1. All signs contained within a single frame, structure, cabinet or integrated background shall be counted as one sign. If a display is not so contained, a single message or business name shall be counted as one sign. A business name combined with a brief slogan may be counted as one sign if the elements are visually integrated.~~

~~2. In determining the number of signs:~~

~~(i) Pennants or streamers shall be considered one sign~~

~~(ii) One banner shall be considered one sign~~

~~(iii) One large balloon or one bunch or string of small balloons shall be considered one sign.~~

### **20.56.300 Sign permits.**

A. **Requirement.** Sign permits are required for all signs except:

1. Exempt signs, **Section 20.56.040.**

2. As specifically provided in this chapter provided that such signs comply with all of the standards, limitations and requirements in the section regulating them; including, but not limited to:

ai. Residential signs

bii. Special Monument Signs per Section 20.56.170(D)

iii. Two day signs per Section 20.56.210..A

c iv. Election Period signs per Section 20.56.230.

3. Changes in copy of signs **or plexiglass panel** for which a valid permit exists so long as nothing else is changed in the sign. **Any changes affecting the structure or the electricity of the sign including a change to digital sign requires issuance of a sign permit.**

If a sign permit is required, the permit must be obtained from the **Department City** before construction or installation is started. If a building permit is required under Chapter 15.08 (“Sign Code”) of this code, it will be included as a part of the sign permit.

B. **General provisions applicable to all permits.**

1. **Application and fees.** Applicants shall use forms and provide information as required by the department, and shall submit fees in the amounts provided by resolution or ordinance, and shall submit the fees at the times required by the department. Fees are nonrefundable, even if a sign permit is denied.

2. **Application Date.** The application date is the date that the department receives at its counter an application on the form provided by the department. An application which contains blanks where information is required to be filled in, or which does not include all the attachments required, or is not accompanied by any fees which must be submitted with the application may be rejected at the

counter and is not deemed “received.” Otherwise, the application is deemed received.

3. **Incomplete applications.** Applications which do not contain all the information necessary, in the opinion of the administrator, to determine compliance with this Chapter shall be denied. If convenient to department personnel, an applicant may be contacted to bring in additional information and the application may be held pending receipt of information, but if the information is not received by the action deadline, the application is deemed denied. If an application is denied for being incomplete, fees will not be refunded.
4. **Processing.** The application will be simultaneously processed by the Building Official, who shall determine compliance with the requirements of Title 15 of Sparks Municipal Code, and the administrator, who shall determine compliance with this chapter and any other applicable provision.
5. **Standards.** The Building official shall make his decision based on compliance with the requirements of Chapter 15.08 of this Code. The administrator shall make his decision based on compliance with this chapter and with any other applicable chapter of the Sparks Municipal Code. A denial of a permit must be based on a determination that, if approved, the sign described in the permit would violate an identifiable standard in Sparks Municipal Code.
6. **Conditional approvals.** Conditions related to the application and enforcement of this Chapter may be imposed as a part of an approval of a permit. If any condition is not satisfied when due, it shall be treated as a violation of the permit.
7. **Effect of denial; judicial relief.** In addition to any rights available to an aggrieved applicant under NRS 278.0233 and 278.0235, if an application is denied, the applicant may file or cause to be filed in the district court a petition for judicial examination of the validity of the denial as provided by NRS 34.185.
8. **Effect of approval of permit.** Approval of a permit means that the sign described in the permit may be built subject to the terms and conditions stated in the permit, provided that the sign is constructed and continuously maintained in accordance with the provisions of this chapter even if the application describes a sign which does not comply with the provisions of this chapter.

#### C. **Sign permits**

1. **Action deadline; failure to reject by deadline waives permit requirements.** For sign permits (except temporary sign permits), the “action deadline” is close of business on the thirtieth calendar day (starting with the first business day following the application date) following the application date. If the “action deadline” falls on a weekend or holiday, it is extended to close of business on the first business day following the weekend or holiday. By the action deadline, both the Building Official and the administrator shall either approve or deny the application. The application is deemed denied if either the Building Official or the administrator denies it even if the other approves it. If the application is neither approved or denied by the action deadline, the applicant shall have a right to construct the sign in accordance with the provisions of this Title and Title 15 of the Sparks Municipal Code except for the requirement of a permit.
2. **Notice of denial.** If an application is denied, a written notice shall be prepared and mailed or hand delivered to the applicant, first class mail, at the address indicated on the application, within five working days following the denial. The written notice of denial shall include the reason for the denial. If the denial is for an incomplete application, the notice shall specify what information needs to be submitted if the application is resubmitted. The deadline for filing for any

judicial relief does not commence until this written notice is mailed or hand delivered to the applicant.

**D. Temporary sign permits.**

1. **Expedited permit process; Action deadline.** The administrator shall establish an expedited application and approval process for temporary signs, including a simplified application form which could be approved or disapproved over the counter (i) under ordinary circumstances, (ii) if every blank is correctly and completely filled in and (iii) ~~no outside approval or inspection is required.~~ The ~~“action deadline” is noon of the fifth business day following (and not counting) the application date. If the application is neither approved or denied by the action deadline, the applicant shall have a right to display the sign for the period specified in the application and in accordance with the provisions of this Title and Title 15 of the Sparks Municipal Code except for the requirement of a permit.~~ If an approval of another official is required (such as approval of the airport authority for signs using searchlights), the permit may be approved subject to the condition that the applicant obtain such approval and the permit shall not be valid until that condition is met.
2. **Notification.** Notification of approval or disapproval shall be in person, or by telephone, e-mail, fax or other expeditious form of communication.

**E. Suspension and revocation of sign permits.** Any permit issued in error, or in reliance on an application which contains false, misleading, or incomplete information that was material to the administrator’s decision may be suspended and revoked by the administrator. The applicant shall be given the notice required by subsection 5 of this section and shall have the right to judicial review as provided in subsection 6 of this section as if the suspension or revocation were a denial of an application.

**F. Violation of permit.** It is unlawful to build or alter a sign in such a way that it does not strictly conform to the permit or any condition in the permit, the application for the permit, or the standards and requirements of this chapter.

**20.56.320 Nonconforming signs.**

**A. Nonconforming outdoor advertising structures.** If a nonconforming sign is a “nonconforming outdoor advertising structure,” as defined in state law (see 2001 Statutes of Nevada, chapter 451 or SB 265 of the 2001 legislature), the following provisions apply:

1. Neither the sign nor supporting structure may be increased in size or height, nor may there be an addition or enhancement to the structure that increases the visual effect or increases the impact on the use of the site, **including conversion to digital sign.**
2. The nonconforming outdoor advertising structure shall be removed on the earlier of:
  - a. In excess of 50 percent of the material structural value of the sign is damaged or destroyed as a result of a natural disaster, including, without limitation, a fire, flood, earthquake, windstorm, rainstorm and snowstorm.
  - b. A resolution of the City Council (not related to the development or redevelopment of the site) orders removal of the sign which resolution provides for just compensation or relocation rights as required by state law. The City Council shall give written notice to the owner of the site in accordance with Chapter 241 of Nevada Revised Statutes (the open

meeting law), and shall hold a public hearing prior to considering such a resolution.

- c. Upon the termination of any lease or rental agreement which governs the location of the sign on the site.
3. Until an event enumerated in the subsection next above occurs, the nonconforming outdoor advertising structure may remain on the site, and may be given routine maintenance.

B. **Other nonconforming signs.** The following provisions apply to nonconforming signs which are not “nonconforming outdoor advertising structure,” as defined in state law (see 2001 Statutes of Nevada, chapter 451 or SB 265 of the 2001 legislature).

1. **Height and Size:** Neither the sign nor supporting structure may be increased in size or height, nor may there be an addition or enhancement to the structure that increases the visual effect or increases the impact on the use of the site, including conversion to digital sign.

~~2.~~ **2. Right to maintain and continue use.** A nonconforming sign may be maintained and continued in use, provided that:

- a. It is not altered, enlarged or relocated without a sign permit (but see subsection 20.56.320.B.3 below);
- b. It is maintained in good repair and does not become unsightly or hazardous.

~~3.~~ **3. Termination of right to nonconforming sign.**

- a. Any nonconforming sign which is a safety hazard shall be removed or repaired within ten days of notice to the owner of the site.
- b. Any nonconforming sign which requires repairs costing in excess of fifty percent of its replacement value shall be removed or made to comply with the provisions of this chapter.

~~4.~~ **4. Alteration, enlargement or relocation.** No sign permit shall be issued for the alteration, enlargement or relocation of a nonconforming sign unless the changes will increase the level of conformance with the provisions of this chapter. An existing nonconforming sign cannot be converted to digital unless it is brought into conformance with this code. An existing nonconforming digital sign may be replaced or enhanced as long as the changes will increase the level of conformance with the provisions of this chapter.

### 20.56.330 Abandoned signs.

A. **Criteria for establishing abandonment.** A sign or sign structure shall be considered abandoned when any of the following occurs:

1. Any business advertised thereon is no longer in business and has not been in business anywhere for more than 90 days;
2. Any product or service advertised thereon is no longer offered and has not been offered for the past 90 days;
3. The structure no longer supports a sign for a period of 90 days;
4. The sign, structure or advertising display is visibly damaged or partially missing.
5. Internal or halo illumination is partially or wholly burned out or inoperative.

B. **Removal of abandoned signs.** Any sign or sign structure which has been abandoned shall be removed or restored to use within thirty days after a notice of abandonment is issued to the owner of the site. Notice shall be given by the administrator using certified mail. The administrator may allow an abandoned sign or sign structure to remain in place

provided that the sign or sign structure is maintained in good condition, and that there is a reasonable possibility that the sign can be restored to use within a one-year period.

**20.56.350 Variances and minor deviations.**

- A. Variances under Chapter 20.16 may not be granted from the provisions of this chapter.
- B. Minor deviations, as provided in Section 20.07.020, may not be granted under this chapter.

**20.56.360 Enforcement and Penalties.**

- A. To the extent not inconsistent with this chapter, the provisions of Chapter 20.07 and 20.11 shall apply to enforcement of this chapter.
- B. Illegal signs may be removed by City officials.