

ARTICLE IV

SIGNS

6.00.00 PURPOSE AND INTENT

The purpose of this Article is to regulate the location, erection, maintenance and use of signs in all land use districts, regardless of type or size, and to insure that no sign shall constitute a safety hazard.

The intent of this Article is to create a balanced system of sign, control that accommodates both the needs for a well-maintained, safe and attractive community, and the need for effective business advertising, identification, and communication. This balance will assist in promoting the economic health of the community through increase tourism and property values. It is, furthermore, the intent of this Article to permit signs that are:

- A. Compatible with their surroundings;
- B. Designed, constructed, located, installed and maintained in a manner which does not endanger public safety or unduly distract motorists;
- C. Appropriate to the type of activity to which they pertain;
- D. Sized to convey sufficient information about the owner or occupants of a particular property, the products or services available on the property, or the activities conducted on the property without being obtrusive; and,
- E. Located so as not to conflict or interfere with regulatory or public informational, control, or directional signage.

6.00.01 Definitions

ANIMATED SIGN: A sign with action or motion, with moving characters, changing colors or blinking lights, which require electrical energy, but not including wind actuated elements, such as flags or banners. This definition does not include public service signs, such as time and temperature signs.

AREA OF SIGN: The area within a continuous perimeter enclosing the limits of writing, representation, emblem, or any figure of similar character, together with any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate such sign from the background against which it is placed, excluding the necessary supports or uprights on which such sign is placed. For projecting or double-face signs, only one display face shall be measured in computing sign area where the sign faces are back-to-back or where the interior angle formed by the faces is sixty (60) degrees or less. If the two faces of a double-face sign are of unequal area, the area of the sign shall be the area of the larger face. For painted or affixed signs on walls, the area shall be limited to twenty-five (25) percent of each wall in one (1) continuous area on each wall of the business.

BUSINESS SIGN: A sign which directs attention to a business, profession, product, service, activity or entertainment conducted, sold, or offered on the premises upon which the sign is located.

FLASHING SIGN: A sign, the illuminate of which is not kept constant in intensity at all times when in use, and which exhibits sudden marked changes in lighting effects. Illuminated signs which indicate the time, temperature, date or other public service information shall not be considered flashing signs.

FREE-STANDING SIGN: A sign which is supported by one or more columns, uprights, or braces in or upon the ground and is not attached to a building.

GENERAL ADVERTISING SIGN: A sign which directs attention to a business, product, service, activity or entertainment not conducted, sold or offered on the premises upon which the sign is located.

IDENTIFICATION SIGN: Any sign which indicates the name of a use, owner, activity, business or enterprise, but which does not advertise products, commodities or services offered, and which is located on the same property which is identified.

PROJECTING SIGN: A sign which is attached to the building wall and which extends more than eighteen (18) inches from the face of such wall.

SIGN: Any name, identification, description, display, illustration, or device which is affixed to or represented directly or indirectly upon a building, structure or land in view of the general public and which directs attention to a product, activity, person, institution or business.

WALL SIGN: A sign which is in any manner affixed to or painted on any exterior wall of a building or structure and which projects not more than eighteen (18) inches from the building or structure wall.

6.01.00 GENERAL REGULATIONS

All signs erected, replaced, reconstructed, expanded or relocated on any property within unincorporated Gulf County and the City of Wewahitchka shall conform to the provisions of this Article and with the Southern Standard Building Code. It shall be the responsibility of the developer/owner to repair and maintain all signs.

6.01.01 Permit Required

No sign shall be erected, replaced, reconstructed, expanded or relocated, except as provided for in 6.01.02, without securing a permit from the Building Inspector.

6.01.02 Exemptions

No building permit will be required for the following signs:

- A. A sign indicating the name or number of the owner and/or premises or the accessory use of a dwelling for a home occupation or for professional purposes, provided that such sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet in sign area.
- B. Signs that are not designed or located so as to be visible from any street or adjoining property.
- C. Traffic or other governmental signs, legal notices and official instruments, railroad crossing signs, danger or such temporary, emergency or non-advertising signs, as may be approved by the Building Inspector.
- D. Display signs not exceeding thirty-five (35) square feet in sign area and used in connection with political campaigns or with civic non-commercial health, safety and welfare campaigns, provided that all such signs shall exhibit the date of the conclusion of the campaign and shall be removed within fifteen (15) days following the conclusion of the campaign.
- E. Memorial signs or tablets, names of buildings and date of erection when cut into any masonry surface or when constructed of bronze or other incombustible materials.
- F. Temporary construction signs placed upon work under construction, alternation, or removal and not exceeding twenty-five (25) square feet in sign area.
- G. One (1) unlighted business sign advertising the sale, rental or lease of the premises or property upon which said sign is located. Such sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet in sign area, and shall be removed within seven (7) days after the property has been sold, rented, or leased.
- H. One (1) unlighted business sign advertising the sale, rental or lease of a subdivision. No such sign shall exceed one hundred (100) square feet in sign area. Such sign shall be removed within seven (7) days after the final parcel has been sold, rented or leased.
- I. Seasonal or holiday lights and decorations.
- J. Church directional signs, not exceeding five (5) square feet and not exceeding three (3) signs per church.
- K. Signs incorporated into machinery or equipment by a manufacturer or distributor, which identify or advertise only the product or service dispensed by the machine or equipment, such as signs customarily affixed to vending machines, newspaper racks, telephone booths and gasoline pumps.
- L. Advertising and identifying signs located on taxicabs, buses, trailers, trucks or vehicle bumpers.

6.01.03 Signs Not To Constitute A Traffic Hazard

No sign or revolving beam or beacon of light shall be erected at any location where by reason of the position, shape or color it may interfere with, obstruct the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal or device. No permits will be issued for signs deemed to be a safety hazard by the Building Inspector.

6.01.04 Special Exceptions

- A. A shopping center is permitted only one (1) free standing sign per street frontage.
- B. A wall sign may be erected without constituting an encroachment into a required yard(s) or street property line.
- C. Non-flashing, portable signs may be placed in such a location so as not to create a safety hazard.

6.01.05 Prohibited Signs

Twirling, sidewalk or curb signs and balloons or other air or gas-filled figures shall only be permitted for a new business in a commercial, mixed residential/commercial, or industrial district for a period of not more than thirty (30) days after the opening of such new business. At no other time shall such devices be permitted.

6.01.06 Height Of Signs

No free standing sign shall exceed thirty-five (35) feet above grade.

6.01.07 Illuminated, Rotating, or Flashing Signs

Illuminated, rotating, or flashing signs shall be focused directed and so arranged as to prevent glare and/or direct illumination of residential structures, or other hazardous or nuisance effects.

6.02.00 REGULATION BY LAND USE DISTRICTS

The following sections outline the types of signs permitted in the land use districts of Gulf County and the City of Wewahitchka.

6.02.01 Residential Districts

The following signs are permitted in low, medium and high density residential districts:

- A. Identification signs that are non-animated and not larger than two (2) square feet in sign area.

- B. Business signs, for sale or rent of the property on which the sign is located, not to exceed six (6) square feet.
- C. Churches, as allowed by use in residential districts (refer to Article III), may erect one (1) identification sign not to exceed a total of sixty-four (64) square feet. The height shall not exceed twenty (20) feet. Said signs shall be constructed so as not to constitute a safety hazard and shall conform with other requirements of the sign ordinance not in conflict herewith. Special exceptions may be granted on a case by-case basis by the Building Inspector.
- D. Apartment house projects and multiple-family dwelling projects may erect one identification sign, non-animated, not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area or fifteen (15) feet in height, and is located on property. Said signs shall be constructed so as not to constitute a safety hazard and shall conform with other requirements of the sign ordinance not in conflict herewith.
- E. Residential subdivision identification signs, not to exceed 160 square feet in area.

6.02.02 Mixed Commercial/Residential, Agricultural, and Mixed Agricultural/Residential Districts

The following signs are permitted as noted:

- A. Identification signs that are non-animated and are not larger than two (2) square feet in sign area.
- B. Business signs not exceeding 160 square feet in sign area, and thirty-five (35) in height above grade may be located at the property line but no portion of any sign, except wall signs, may extend over the property line and further provided that a clear height of nine (9) feet from grade to bottom of the sign be maintained in areas of pedestrian traffic and sixteen (26) feet clearance be maintained where vehicular traffic is permitted. The number of separate signs permitted per business shall be limited to the number of streets or roadways the building affronts.
- C. Churches, as allowed by use in residential districts (refer to Article III), may erect one (1) identification sign not to exceed a total of sixty-four (64) square feet. The height shall not exceed twenty (20) feet. Said signs shall be constructed so as not to constitute a safety hazard and shall conform with other requirements of the sign ordinance not in conflict herewith. Special exceptions to the number and size of signs allowed may be granted on a case-by-case basis.
- D. Apartment house projects and multiple-family dwelling projects may erect one identification sign, non-animated, not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area or fifteen (15) feet in height, and is located on property. Said signs shall be constructed so as not to constitute a safety hazard and shall conform with other requirements of the sign ordinance not in conflict herewith.