

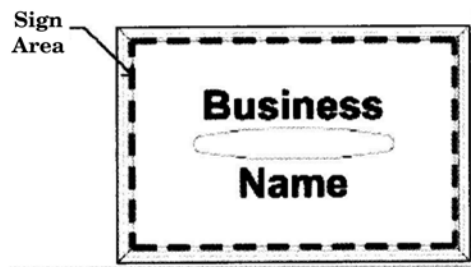
**Sec. 77-512. - Signs.**

- A. *Purpose.* The purpose of this section is to regulate the location, size, construction, erection, duration, use, and maintenance of all signs within the jurisdiction of the city and within its extraterritorial jurisdiction on a content-neutral basis. The specific objectives of this section are to:
- (1) Balance the rights of individuals and businesses to convey their messages through signs and the right of the public to be protected from potential harm;
  - (2) Promote the health, safety, welfare, convenience, and enjoyment of the public;
  - (3) Protect the public from damage or injury caused or attributable to distractions and destructions caused by improperly designed or located signs;
  - (4) Protect and promote property values;
  - (5) Promote community environmental setting and appearance, especially where scenic beauty is important, and avoid visual clutter; and
  - (6) Support the objectives of the individual zoning districts.
- B. *Applicability.* Signs may be erected placed, established, painted, created or maintained only in conformance with the standards, procedures, exemptions and other requirements of this section and other applicable city regulations. In the event of conflict between the regulations of this section and those of other local, state or federal regulations, the more restrictive regulation governs, to the extent allowed by law. In the event of conflict between this section and sign regulations for a specific area or district, the regulations for the specific area or district govern.
1. *Sign exceptions.* Except as otherwise provided in subpart D.4 of this section, the provisions of this section do not apply to the following:
    - (a) Government signs.
    - (b) Indoor signs that do not fall within the definition of window sign.
    - (c) Vehicular signs.
    - (d) Special event signs on or over public property, when permitted by the city manager or designee.
    - (e) Street number signs not exceeding one square foot in area.
    - (f) Signs approved in conjunction with a special event in accordance with the Rowlett Code of Ordinances.
    - (g) Signs approved in conjunction with a temporary use permit.
    - (h) Temporary signs on residential property not exceeding eight square feet in area.
    - (i) Signs in athletic fields oriented to the spectators and not to those outside the fields.
  2. *Permit exceptions.* No sign may be erected, maintained or displayed without a valid permit unless excepted or exempt. The following signs are exempt from permit requirements and fees but are subject to all other provisions of this section:
    - (a) State, national, local, institutional, or non-commercial flags attached to an approved flag pole.
    - (b) On-site directional signs.
    - (c) Political signs no more than 36 square feet in area and no more than eight feet in height when no illumination or moving elements are used.
    - (e) Copy change for signs otherwise allowed under this Code.
    - (f) Incidental signs.

- (g) Window signs.
- 3. *Prohibited signs.* Signs not explicitly allowed by this section or this Code are prohibited. Prohibited signs include but are not limited to:
  - (a) Searchlights.
  - (b) Flashing, coursing, rotating, moving or revolving signs and/or whirling devices; ribbons, streamers, spinners, and other similar types of attention-getting devices.
  - (c) Signs that emit audible sounds or visible matter such as smoke or steam.
  - (d) Signs that produce a three dimensional image.
  - (e) Billboards. Billboards are prohibited. A lot or tract of land on which a nonconforming billboard is located shall not be further subdivided until such billboard as been removed. Nonconforming billboards must be maintained in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to other applicable provisions of this Code and the Rowlett Code of Ordinances.
  - (f) Pole signs.

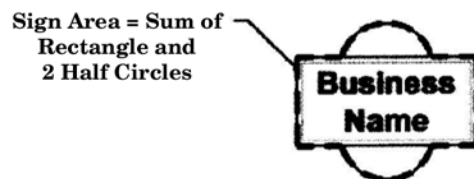
C. *Measurement standards.*

- 1. *Sign area.* For the purposes of this section, sign area shall be measured as follows:
  - (a) Square or rectangular signs shall be measure as the length times the height of the sign (Figure 5.12-1).



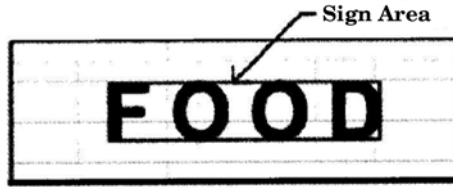
**Figure 5.12-1**

- (b) Irregular shaped signs shall be measured as the sum of the areas of rectangles, triangles, circles, or combination thereof necessary to enclose the sign face (Figure 5.12-2).



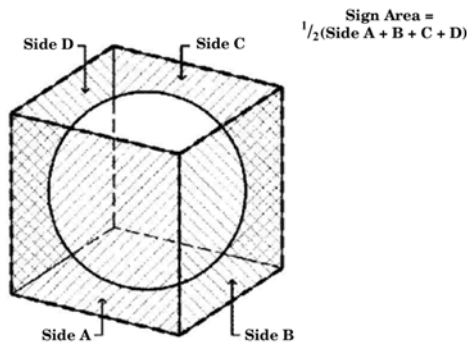
**Figure 5.12-2**

- (c) Signs composed of individual cutout letters or figures shall be measured as the sum of areas of rectangles, triangles, circles, or combination thereof necessary to enclose the letters or figures (Figure 5.12-3).



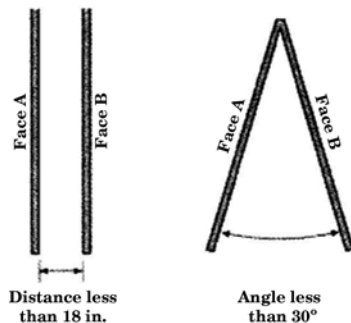
**Figure 5.12-3**

- (d) Three dimensional signs shall be measured based on the rectangle or square shape that can be used to form a cube around the sign. The sign area shall be the sum of the four sides perpendicular to the ground divided by two (Figure 5.12-4).



**Figure 5.12-4**

- (e) For double-faced signs with less than 18 inches between faces, and less than a 30-degree interior angle between faces, only one side shall be counted as the total area. Where the faces are not equal in size, the larger sign face shall be used as the basis for calculating sign area (Figure 5.12-5).



**Figure 5.12-5**

2. *Sign height.* Sign height shall be measured as follows:
  - (a) When measuring sign height, the height of the entire structure, including decorative and structural elements must be included. Monument and freestanding signs shall be measured from the base of the sign. Wall and attached signs will be measured from the lowest point of the sign or its supporting structures to the highest point of the sign or its supporting structures.

- (b) Berming or increasing the ground height to increase sign height is not permitted. Height measurement shall be from average grade if berms are used.
- (c) Clearance for a projecting sign is measured from the base of the building, or sidewalk passing under the sign to the lowest point of the sign or its supporting structure.

3. *Distance.*

- (a) Whenever a minimum distance between signs is indicated, it means the horizontal distance measured from the closest points of each sign as if each sign's closest point touched the ground.
- (b) Whenever a minimum setback distance is indicated, it means the horizontal distance measured from the closest two points as if the sign's closest point touched the ground.

D. *General standards.*

1. *Signs displaying noncommercial messages.*

- (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, any sign may display a noncommercial message, either in place of or in addition to the commercial message, so long as the sign complies with other requirements of this section or other ordinances that do not pertain to the content of the message displayed.
- (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section or other ordinance, any sign that may display one type of commercial message may also display any other type of commercial message, so long as the sign complies with other requirements of this Code or other ordinances that do not pertain to the content of the message displayed.

2. *Location.*

- (a) *Location on public property.* No person shall place, erect or maintain, or cause the placement, erection or maintenance, of any sign upon any public right-of-way, utility easement, or public area, except as allowed by this section and the city engineer.
- (b) *Attachment to tree or public utility pole or public structure.* No person shall attach or maintain any sign upon any tree or public utility pole or public structure.
- (c) *Location with respect to utility lines and streetlight standards.* Signs located near utility lines and streetlights must comply with the distance clearance requirements of the most recent edition of the National Electric Code adopted by the city and the local utility standards. No variances or special exceptions may be granted.

3. *Electrical signs.* Electrical signs must comply with the requirements of the city's electrical code. In addition, all illuminated signs must be built to comply with Underwriters' Laboratory requirements and standards and shall bear the Underwriters' Laboratory label. Electrical devices or signs must be protected by wire glass, safety glass, a locked box of metal or wood or other materials approved by the building official.

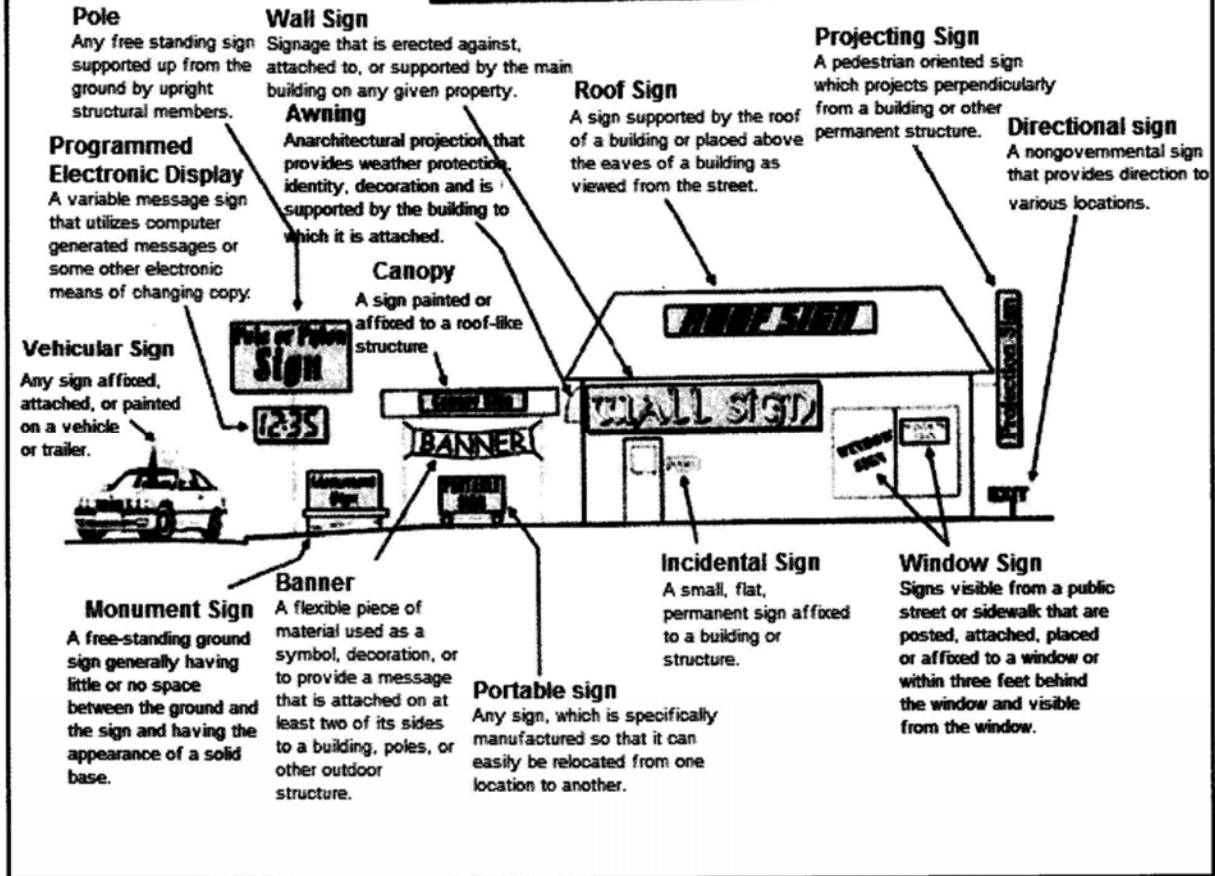
- (a) *Lighting.* In no case shall lighting spill over one foot candle onto public streets or 0.03 foot candles onto adjacent residential property.
- (b) *Programmed electronic display.* Programmed electronic display is allowed on one sign per street frontage per business. Electronic display and/or messaging are not allowed on any billboard. Animation, video, or scrolling is not allowed. An eight second hold time is required with transition time not to exceed one second. Electronic displays shall have automatic dimmers and brightness shall not exceed 0.3 foot candles above ambient light conditions.

4. *Safety.*

- (a) *Obstruction of exits, windows, or other exits.* No sign may be erected or maintained in such a manner that any portion of its surface or supports will obstruct or interfere in any way with the free use of any fire escape, fire equipment, required ventilator, stairway, door, window, or other exit.

- (b) *Not to constitute a traffic hazard.* No person may erect or maintain any fluttering, undulating, swinging or rotating beacons, or strobe lights with lighting interruptions of less than five second intervals. No sign may be erected or maintained in such a manner as to be likely to interfere with, obstruct the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal, or device. No person may erect or maintain any sign that obstructs a safe visibility triangle at an intersection, as determined by the city engineer.
  - (c) The safety regulations contained herein apply to all signs, including those classified as excepted from this section.
- 5. *Construction standards.* All signs shall conform to the city's building standards specifications and the city's building codes for building materials and design.
  - (a) All supporting hardware shall be concealed from view or integrated into the sign design.
  - (b) Supporting structures of permanent signs shall employ the same material, colors, and textures as the associated primary structures.
  - (c) All commercial signs must be printed and professional in appearance. No handwritten or spray painted commercial signs are allowed, save and except window signs painted or applied directly to the window using paints or similar media.
- 6. *Maintenance.*
  - (a) Each sign shall be maintained in good condition to prevent deterioration, oxidation, rust, discoloration, or other unsightly conditions and in a safe condition free from all hazards including but not limited to faulty wiring and loose fastenings so as not to be detrimental to public health and safety. Maintenance includes the replacement of defective parts and other acts required for the maintenance of such sign, without altering the basic copy, design, or structure of the sign. The building official shall require compliance or removal of any sign determined to be in violation of this Code in accordance with the enforcement provisions herein.
  - (b) No person shall maintain or permit to be maintained on any premises owned or controlled by him any sign which is in a dilapidated or deteriorated condition as defined herein. Upon notice of violation, any such sign shall be promptly removed or repaired by the owner of the sign or the owner of the premises upon which the sign is located.
  - (c) All sign copy relating to an activity, service, use or product no longer available for use or purchase by the public and all sign copy relating to a business which is closed or has vacated the premises must be removed. Painted wall signs must be painted over with a color that resembles or matches the wall. If the owner, occupant, or person in control of the premises, or person responsible for the sign, fails to remove or paint over the sign, the owner of the premises shall be responsible and the work shall be completed within 30 days following the date of notification from the city.
- E. *Signage regulations by type.* Specific regulations for each sign type and its corresponding permissible zoning district are outlined in the tables below.

# SIGN TYPES



This graphic intended for illustrative purposes only.

**Figure 5.12-6**

TABLE 5.12-1: SPECIFIC SIGN REGULATIONS					
	Number Allowed	Max. Area	Max. Height	Max. Width	Other Restrictions
<b>ATTACHED SIGNS</b>					
Window	N/A	40% of the window area	N/A	N/A	The 40 percent is measured per façade of the premise or lease space and applies only between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. No window signage is allowed above the first floor except in multi-level facilities that have direct exterior entries.
Wall	N/A	The greater of 10% of the façade or 60 sq. ft. combined	Equal to 1/3 height of façade up to 10 ft.	75% of façade width	Shall not project more than 30 inches from the wall.
Awning	N/A	The greater of 10 % of the façade or 60 sq. ft. combined	Equal to 1/3 height of façade up to 10 ft.	75% of façade width	If wall and awning signs are to be used on the same façade, the combined area shall not exceed the area permissible by a wall sign.
Incidental	1 per structure or façade	70 sq. in.	N/A	N/A	None

Projecting	1 per premise	12 sq. ft.	N/A	May project horizontally four ft.	Eight ft. of clearance is required if projecting more than one ft. Shall not be closer than two feet from the back of the curb nor encroach in TXDOT Right-of-Way. If wall or awning and projection signs are to be used on the same façade, the combined area shall not exceed the area permissible by a wall sign.
Marquee	1 per premise	100 sq. ft.	Equal to 2/3 the building height	N/A	Fourteen ft. of clearance required. Shall not be closer than two feet from the back of the curb nor encroach in TXDOT Right-of-Way.
Blade	1 per building	60 sq. ft.	Equal to 2/3 the building height	N/A	Eight ft. of clearance is required. Shall not be closer than two feet from the back of the curb nor encroach in TXDOT Right-of-Way.
Hanging	1 per premise	8 sq. ft.	N/A	N/A	Eight ft. of clearance required.
Roof	1 per premise	The greater of 10 % of the façade or 60 sq. ft.	Equal to 1/3 the distance from the eave to the ridge line	75% of roof width	Only permitted on sloped or eave roof and as a substitution for a wall sign. If roof <i>and</i> wall or awning signs are to be used on the same façade, the combined area shall not exceed the area permissible by a roof sign.



<b>DETACHED SIGNS</b>					
A-Frame	1 per premise	8 sq. ft.	4 ft.	N/A	Shall allow at least four feet of clear sidewalk for pedestrian movement. The sign must be stored inside and may only be placed outside during business hours.
Monument	1 per building. Additional monument signs are allowed if the frontage exceeds 300 feet and the signs are 150 feet from the closest monument sign.	48 sq. ft., 80 sq. ft. including frame	10 ft.	N/A	Setback 10 feet from property line. Monument base shall not be less than two feet high. Minimum base width is one foot. Bases shall be landscaped.
Single Tenant					
Multi-Tenant		100 sq. ft., 150 sq. ft. including frame	15 ft.	N/A	
Multi-Tenant (shopping center over 75,000 sq. ft.)			30 ft.	N/A	
Residential Subdivision	2 per subdivision entrance	80 sq. ft.	10 ft.	N/A	Bases shall be landscaped.
Menu Boards	2 per drive thru lane or 1 per order box (drive-in dining only)	35 sq. ft.	7 ft.	N/A	None
Directional	N/A	4½ sq. ft.	3 ft.	N/A	No closer than 3 feet to the edge of the pavement.

Flags	3 per premise	150 sq. ft.	35 ft.	N/A	Setback 15 feet from property line. Extra flags are permitted for federal holidays
Canopy	N/A	The greater of 25 sq. ft. or 50% of the face of the canopy	N/A	N/A	The canopy must conform to accessory structure regulations in section 77-303 of this Code.
<b>TEMPORARY SIGNS</b>					
Banner signs	1 per façade viewable from a public street, parking area, or other public space.	32 sq. ft.	N/A	N/A	Limited to a two-week period six times per calendar year per premise. Signs must be kept on the business premise defined as the lease space or lot. Signs larger than eight square feet must be setback 10 feet from the property line.
Development Ground Signs	1 per premise. Additional signs allowed for each additional 150 feet of frontage.	32 sq. ft.	15 ft.	N/A	Signs larger than eight square feet must be setback 10 feet from the property line. All others must be setback three feet from the Right-of-Way. Distance between signs shall be 150 feet. On developed sites this counts to the two-week period six times per calendar year. On undeveloped or developing sites the

					sign may be posted until the site is developed and achieved 80% occupancy.
Off-Site Directional Signs	N/A	1 sq. ft.	3 ft.	N/A	Sign must be at least three feet back from the curb and not in City Right-of-Way. Signs may not be placed earlier than noon on Friday and must come down no later than noon on Monday. If a holiday falls on Monday or Friday the sign may be extended an extra day. Signs may not be illuminated. Placers of signs shall have operating appropriate flashing lights and reflective tape on the vehicle and trailer when placing such signs.
Balloon or inflatable	1 per premise	96 sq. ft. <sup>1</sup>	20 ft.	N/A	Limited to a seven-day period that counts toward the six times per year two-week limit on temporary signage. Balloons or inflatable signs are allowed once per year.
Human Signs	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Must be at least five feet from the curb line and are prohibited from standing in street medians.

<sup>1</sup>See section 77-512.B. for measurement standards.

1. *Signs allowed in specific zoning districts.* The type of signs allowed in specific zoning districts are described in this section. It is unlawful for any person to erect or maintain any sign in a zoning district mentioned in this section unless such sign is of a type specifically allowed in such district. Table 5.12-2 below lists the signs allowed by zoning district.

TABLE 5.12-2: TABLE OF SIGNS PERMITTED BY DISTRICT																	
A = Allowed Sign	Residential							Non-Residential							Mixed Use		
	SF-40	SF-20, -15, -10, -9, -8, -7	SF-5	MF-2F	MF-TH	MF-S	MF-U	IU	O-1	O-2	C-1	C-2	C-3	M-1	M-2	MU-WF	MU-NS
<b>Attached Signs</b>																	
Window	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Wall						A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Awning	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Incidental	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Projecting								A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Marquee								A								A	A
Blade																A	A
Hanging								A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Roof									A	A	A	A				A	A
<b>Detached Signs</b>																	
A-Frame																A	A

Monument Sign																	
Single Tenant								A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Multi-Tenant								A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Multi-Tenant (>75,000 sq. ft.)								A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Residential Subdivision	A	A	A	A	A	A	A										
Menu Boards								A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Directional	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Flags	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Canopy	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
<b>Temporary Signs</b>																	
Banner	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Ground	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Off-site Directional	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Balloon or Inflatable	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Human						A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

F. *District signage.* District signage is permanent or temporary signage intended to provide a public service by allowing off-site signs within a larger development or special district. The city council on recommendation of the planning and zoning commission must approve district directional sign plans.

- (a) All district directional signage must have approval by the city council following recommendation by the planning and zoning commission. Fees for district directional signs shall be as set forth in the city's master fee schedule.
- (b) Placement and installation of district signage must be in accordance with a site plan and must be submitted to the planning department for review and approval. District directional signs may be approved as part of a planned development application.
- (c) District directional signs may be approved only for single developments or cohesive districts at least five acres in size or larger.
- (d) District directional signs shall not obstruct the use of sidewalks and walkways, and shall not obstruct visibility triangles for vehicles, pedestrians or traffic control signs.
- (e) District directional signs shall be limited in size to no more than 32 square feet in area.
- (f) The maximum height for a district directional sign is ten feet.
- (g) District directional signs shall be located on private property provided written permission is obtained from the property owner.
- (h) District directional signs may be illuminated provided they follow all regulations regarding illuminated signage.
- (i) No additional signs, pennants, flags or other devices for visual attention or other appurtenances may be placed on a district directional sign.
- (j) In each district, district directional signs must have uniform design including color schemes, typefaces and fonts, and materials to promote sense of place or identify within the district.
- (k) The base and supporting materials for a district directional sign must be similar in type to materials used for construction of buildings in the development or district. The base and supporting materials may be metal, stone, brick, stucco or other durable and aesthetic product.

G. *Sign review procedures.*

1. *Permit.*

- (a) *Application.* To obtain a sign permit for all on-site permanent and temporary signs, the applicant shall first file a written application for permit on a form furnished by the building inspections department. Every such application shall contain the following information:
  - (1) Dimensioned drawing illustrating the location and design of the sign, the height, base, frame materials, color schemes, and letter size to be contained within the sign.
  - (2) Site plan showing the location of the sign.
  - (3) If the sign is an electrical sign, electrical plans and specifications.
  - (4) If a temporary sign is proposed, the time period the sign will be installed.
  - (5) When requested by the building official or his/her designee, more detailed plans may be required and such plans may be required to be prepared by a registered professional engineer or architect.
- (b) *Review.* The building official or his/her designee shall have ten business days to approve or deny the permit once the submittal has been deemed complete.
- (c) *Fee.* Fees shall be as required by the city's master fee schedule.
- (d) *Expiration.* A permit for a sign shall expire if the work is not started within 60 days after the permit is issued, or not completed within 120 days after work is commenced.
- (e) *Void permits.* A permit issued under this section for a sign which conflicts with any provision of this Code is void.
- (f) *Required inspections.* All signs for which a permit is required shall be inspected.

2. *Special exceptions.*

- (a) The board of adjustment may grant a special exception from the provisions of this section if it appears that the application of a provision of this section would work a manifest injustice.
- (b) In considering a request for a special exception to the requirements of this section, the board of adjustment shall consider, but not be limited to, the type of sign, existence of signs in the general area, the degree of change requested, the reason for the exception request, the location of the exception request, the duration of the requested variance, the effect on public safety, protection of neighborhood and neighboring property, the degree of hardship or injustice involved, the effect of the exception on the general regulation of signs within the city, and such other factors as the board deems pertinent.
- (c) No special exception shall be granted by the board of adjustment if the exception sought conflicts with the spirit of this Code, and may be contrary to this section's intent to provide public safety, adequate lighting, open space and air, conservation of land, protection of property values, and encourage the appropriate use of land.

(Ord. No. 025-06, § 1(Exh. A), 6-6-2006; Ord. No. 019-08, § 4, 7-15-2008; Ord. No. 016-09, § 22, 6-2-2009; Ord. No. 004-10, § 1, 3-2-2010; Ord. No. 012-12, § 1, 5-15-2012; Ord. No. 013-13, §§ 14, 15, 5-21-2013)