



# Land Use Code 2021

Article 8.0 Signs | Adopted June 21, 2021



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# Article 8.0 Signs

## 8.1. General Provisions

### 8.1.1. Purpose and Interests

The purpose of this section is to:

- A. Promote and accomplish the vision and policies of the Larimer County Comprehensive Plan;
- B. Provide the public, property owners, and businesses with an opportunity for safe and effective means of communication;
- C. Recognize free speech rights by regulating signs in a content-neutral manner;
- D. Provide minimum standards in order to safeguard life, health, property and public welfare, and promote traffic safety by following the established standards, including construction, illumination, size, location and maintenance of sign and sign structures;
- E. Promote the free flow of traffic and protect pedestrians and motorists from injury and property damage caused by, or which may be fully or partially attributable to, cluttered, distracting and/or illegible signage;
- F. Coordinate the location and type of signage with the existing and proposed scale and type of development in a manner that that contributes to the character, environmental quality, and economic health of the County;
- G. Establish sign regulation standards and processes that allow the installation of signage that is generally consistent with the sign regulations of cities and towns in Larimer County to minimize the creation of nonconformities when properties are annexed;
- H. Reduce sign and visual clutter and protect and maintain the visual appearance and property values of the various character areas of the County;
- I. Maintain a high-quality aesthetic environment to enhance community pride and protect and enhance public investments in streets, sidewalks, trails, plazas, parks, open space, civic buildings, and landscaping;
- J. Preserve the County's residents and visitor's ability to enjoy Larimer County's scenic beauty; and
- K. Adopt clear and understandable regulations that enable the fair and consistent enforcement of this article.

### 8.1.2. Savings and Severability

If any clause, section, or other part of the application of these sign regulations shall be held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be unconstitutional or invalid, it is the intent of the County that such clause, section, or specific regulation be considered eliminated and not affecting the validity of the remaining clauses, sections, or specific regulations that shall remain in full force and effect.

### 8.1.3. Noncommercial Message Substitution

Noncommercial copy may be substituted for commercial copy or other noncommercial copy on any legal sign, notwithstanding any other provision of this section.

### 8.1.4. Enforcement

This Article 8.0 is enforceable through the provisions of Section 1.9, Enforcement.

## 8.2. Applicability

### 8.2.1. Applicability

The regulations of this Article 8 shall apply to all signs in all zoning districts including signs not requiring a sign permit. For the purposes of applying this provision, the term “sign” includes any sign type defined in this Code.

### 8.2.2. Sign Permit Required

- A. A sign permit is required for the construction of, installation of, or any repairs that also require a building permit to any signs within Larimer County, otherwise provided in this Article 8.
  - 1. A sign permit is required to convert a temporary sign to a permanent sign.
  - 2. A sign permit is required to convert a non-EMD sign to an EMD sign, including where the EMD is replacing part of an existing or proposed non-EMD sign.
- B. The following actions are exempt from this requirement:
  - 1. Changing or replacing sign copy without changes to the sign structure,
  - 2. Changes to copy on changeable copy signs and EMD signs, and
  - 3. Change or replacement of window signs.
  - 4. Changes in temporary signs that are allowed without a permit.
- C. Changes to nonconforming signs require a sign permit and are subject to Section 8.6, Nonconformities.
- D. When a sign permit is requested for a parcel where an illegal or prohibited sign(s) exists, the permit shall not be issued until all such signs are removed or brought into conformance with this code. This provision does not apply when the applicant can demonstrate that an existing sign is nonconforming.

### 8.2.3. Exemptions

#### A. Sign Permit Exemptions; Regulations Apply

Due to their small size, limited time duration, and limited aesthetic impact, the following signs may be erected without a sign permit (“exempt sign”) but shall meet all applicable standards of this Article 8 and any other applicable requirements of the County and the State of Colorado.

#### B. Exempt Sign Types

##### 1. Agricultural Signs

- a. Where retail agricultural sales are allowed, one associated freestanding sign may be displayed per frontage of the property on which the sale is held. The sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in sign area per sign.
- b. Where agricultural crop production areas are allowed, incidental signs no larger than 2 square feet per sign area may be displayed.

## 2. Flags and Insignia

All properties are permitted to display one United States flag and up to three additional flags per property. No single side of any flag shall exceed 48 square feet.

## 3. Internal, Incidental, and Integral Signs

Internal, incidental, and integral signs may be displayed as follows:

- a. Internal signs that are directed in a manner to be viewed internally from within a site and that are not readily legible from the public right-of-way or adjacent residential, public, or civic districts or uses.
- b. Internal signs on fences and structures within an arena, County park, recreational complex, or athletic field, provided such signs face inward to the arena, park, recreational complex, or athletic field.
- c. Integral signs that are carved into stone or similar material that are integral to the building. Integral signs shall not exceed six square feet in area.
- d. Incidental signs that are less than one square foot in area that are affixed to machines, equipment, fences, gates, walls, gasoline pumps, or utility cabinets.

## 4. Home Occupation and Accessory Rural Occupation Signs

Properties with an allowed home occupation or accessory rural occupation may display one additional sign per property as follows:

- a. The sign shall be located on the same lot as the home occupation or accessory rural occupation.
- b. Where the use is a home occupation, the additional sign shall not exceed four square feet in area per face and six feet in height.
- c. Where the use is a rural occupation, the additional sign shall not exceed 16 square feet in area per face and six feet in height.

## 5. Property Signs

Property signs may be displayed as follows:

- a. Entryway signs: one sign located at an entryway that does not exceed a total of two square feet in area, per street frontage.
- b. Rural property access point signs:
  - i. One sign per primary driveway entrance to the property and located at that entrance, not exceeding six square feet of total sign area for properties that are less than ten acres and 32 square feet of total sign area for properties that are ten acres or greater.
  - ii. Rural property access point signs located on entryway arches over private driveways are exempt from individual zoning district sign height limitations but shall have a minimum clearance of 20 feet for emergency vehicles and equipment.
- c. One engraved building sign, tablet, or plaque per property, not exceeding a total of two square feet in sign face area.

## 6. Vehicle Signs

- a. All vehicle signs shall be permanently affixed, painted, magnetically applied, or otherwise mounted upon a vehicle.

- b. The primary purpose of any vehicle upon which a vehicle sign is affixed must be to serve a useful, current function in the transportation or conveyance of persons or commodities from one place to another, including transportation to and from work, and such intermittent delays and stops as are customary in the routine conduct of the business or activity for which the transportation or conveyance occurs. The vehicle shall be operable and legally registered in the State of Colorado.
- c. During any period of inactivity exceeding seven consecutive days, such vehicle or equipment is not so parked or placed that the signs thereon are displayed to the public. Vehicles and equipment engaged in active construction projects, the storage of equipment, and vehicles offered to the general public for rent or lease (such as rental trucks and cars) are exempt from this prohibition.
- d. Signage attached to inoperable vehicles or vehicle equipment that has been separated from a vehicle cab or motor shall comply with Section 8.5, Standards for Temporary Signs, as applied to the parcel on which the vehicle or equipment is located.

### C. Sign Regulation Exemptions

The following sign types are not subject to any standards in this Article 8 and may be installed or displayed without a sign permit.

#### 1. Government and Required Signs

- a. Regulatory signs, including official public signs approved by a governmental body with jurisdiction over issues such as traffic safety, pedestrian safety, schools, railroads, or public notice, as well as signs required by the Manual of Uniform Traffic Controls.
- b. Signs and notices required to be displayed, maintained, or posted by law or by any court or governmental order, rule, or regulation.
- c. Safety and warning signs located at the perimeter of a property that are no more than two square feet in sign area.

#### 2. Seasonal Displays

Seasonal displays located on private property, limited to a period of 60 days before and 10 days after a seasonal event.

#### 3. Window Signs

Window signs.

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## 8.2.4. Prohibited Signs and Sign Locations

### A. Prohibited Signs, Sign Structures, and Elements

The following signs are not allowed in any zoning district.

#### 1. Distracting, Interfering, or Confusing Signs

- a. Signs which contain any flashing, rotating, animated or otherwise moving features.
- b. Wind-driven signs, except as allowed in Section 8.2.3.C.2, Flags and Insignia.
- c. Inflatable signs such as blimps, animals, inflatable representations of a product for sale and other inflatable devices used for the purposes of advertising or attracting attention, but not including ordinary balloons with a diameter of two feet or less that are used for temporary displays.

#### 2. External Movement and Light Projecting Signs

Searchlights, whether stationary or revolving, beacons, light projecting signs, or other similar devices used for the purpose of attracting attention to a property.

**3. Sign Types**

- a. Rooftop signs, except as provided in Section 8.4.2, Signs in Rural Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial Districts.
- b. Billboards

**B. Prohibited Sign Locations**

Neither allowed nor exempt signs may be installed in the following locations or manners:

**1. Improper Location**

- a. Signs may not be placed on or over Larimer County public roads or rights-of-way unless approval from the Road and Bridge Director has been given. Signs may not be placed in road or access easements, except for utility warning signs. On private property, signs can be placed in private utility easements. Signs may not be placed in CDOT rights-of-way without CDOT approval.
- b. Signs shall not be mounted on or to natural features such as landscaping, trees, or rocks; traffic signage; utility and light poles; or other similar structures.

**2. Creation of Hazardous Conditions**

- a. No sign shall be located to impair traffic visibility or the health, safety, or welfare of the public.
  - i. No sign shall be erected so as to obstruct the vision of vehicular traffic, or at any location where it may interfere with, or be confused with, any traffic signal or device.
  - ii. No sign shall constitute a traffic hazard or detriment to traffic safety because of size, location, movement, or method of illumination.
  - iii. No sign shall obstruct the vision of drivers or detract from the visibility of any official traffic control device or divert or tend to divert the attention of drivers of moving vehicles away from traffic movement on streets, roads, intersections, or access facilities.
  - iv. No sign shall be erected so that it obstructs the vision of pedestrians, or which by its glare or by its method of illumination constitutes a hazard to traffic.
- b. Sign installation shall comply with the sight triangle standards for signs contained in the Larimer County Rural Area Road Standards and the Larimer County Urban Area Street Standards.

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**8.2.5. Prohibited Content**

No sign shall be approved or disapproved based on the content or message it displays, except that the following content, without reference to the viewpoint of the speaker, shall not be displayed on signs:

- A. Text or graphics that are harmful to minors as defined by state or federal law;
- B. Text or graphics that are obscene, fighting words, defamation, incitement to imminent lawless action, or true threats, as such words and phrases are defined by controlling law;
- C. Text or graphics that present a clear and present danger due to their potential to interfere with, mislead, or confuse the steady and safe flow of traffic; or



- D. Signs that provide false information related to public safety (e.g., signs that use the words "stop" or "caution" or comparable words, phrases, symbols, or characters) or that seek to imitate public safety signs that are presented in a manner as to confuse or imply a safety hazard that does not exist.

## 8.3. Standards for Permanent Signs

### 8.3.1. Attached Signs

The sample sign images provided in this section are not intended to be regulatory and are provided for illustrative purposes only.

#### A. Awning Sign

##### 1. Definition

A sign that is mounted on a temporary shelter supported entirely from the exterior wall of the building.

##### 2. Generally Applicable Standards

- Awning signs must be installed over a window or building entrance.
- Awning signs shall not be allowed above the first story of a building.
- No awning sign shall project above the top of an awning on which it is mounted.
- No awning sign shall project from the face of an awning.
- The maximum amount of sign area allowed on an awning per street frontage shall be 50 square feet, unless otherwise specified in Section 8.4.
- When extended over either a public or private sidewalk, the minimum clearance from the lowest point of the awning to the top of pavement shall be eight feet.
- No awning sign shall be allowed to project over a private or public vehicular way.

##### 3. Measurement and Sample Sign Image

Awning signs measurements are made in the locations described in Figure 8-1.



Figure 8-1 : Awning Signs

## B. Canopy Sign

### 1. Definition

A sign that is mounted on a permanently-roofed shelter covering a sidewalk, driveway or other similar area, which shelter may be wholly supported by a building or may be partially supported by columns, poles or braces extended from the ground. Signs on detached, freestanding canopies are regulated in 8.3.3.D, Structural Canopy.

### 2. Generally Applicable Standards

- No canopy sign shall project above the top of the canopy upon which it is mounted.
- No canopy sign shall project from the face of a canopy.
- Under-canopy signs which are perpendicular to the face of the building shall be deemed to be projecting signs.
- Under canopy signs which are parallel to the face of the building shall be deemed flush wall signs and shall have a minimum of clearance of eight feet above grade.

### 3. Measurement and Sample Sign Image

Canopy sign measurements are made in the locations described in Figure 8-2.



Figure 8-2: Canopy Signs

## C. Projecting Sign

### 1. Definition

A sign that is wall-mounted perpendicular to the building that may extend upwards and above the facade and/or outwards and over the walkway or parking area.

### 2. Generally Applicable Standards

- No sign may project over a public right-of-way except as allowed with an encroachment permit.
- Signs may not project more than six feet from the face of the building or into the minimum required building setback for the zone district in which they are located.
- Signs shall not exceed 15 square feet per face and must have a minimum clearance of eight feet above grade.

### 3. Measurement and Sample Sign Image

Projecting sign measurements are made in the locations described in Figure 8-3.



Figure 8-3: Projecting Signs

#### D. Wall Sign

##### 1. Definition

A sign attached to, painted on, or erected against the wall of a building or structure in such a manner that the wall is the supporting structure for, or forms the background surface of, the sign.

##### 2. Generally Applicable Standards

- a. A wall sign may not extend above the top of the wall or parapet wall of the building to which the wall sign is attached.
- b. Signs may not project more than 12 inches horizontally from the face of the building on which they are erected.
- c. Signs that are mounted on mansards or similar architectural features may not project more than 12 inches horizontally, measured at the bottom of the sign, from the surface to which they are mounted.

##### 3. Measurement and Sample Sign Image

Wall sign measurements are made in the locations described in Figure 8-4.



Figure 8-4: Wall Signs

**8.3.2. Electronic Message Display (EMD) Signs****A. Display**

1. Signs shall contain static messages only and shall not have movement or the appearance or optical illusion of movement during the static display period of any part of the sign.
2. Each static message shall not include flashing or the varying of light intensity and shall not scroll.
3. The sign shall be programmed to display a blank screen if a malfunction occurs.
4. The sign shall not include audio, pyrotechnic, bluecasting (bluetooth advertising), or other similar components.

**B. Display Time and Transitions**

1. Display change shall be limited the following:
  - a. Rural districts: Once every 5 minutes
  - b. Urban districts: Once every 1.5 minutes
2. Display change shall be completed in the following timeframes:
  - a. Rural districts: Within 2 seconds
  - b. Urban districts: Within 1 second
3. There shall be a direct change from one message to the next. All transition effects, such as motion, animation, fading, scrolling, or dissolving are prohibited except as provided below. Ambient light increase of the following amount is permitted during display change:
  - a. Rural districts: 0.1 footcandle
  - b. Urban districts: 0.3 footcandles

**C. Sign Animation**

Sign animation is not permitted unless administrative approval is granted for the following exception:

1. Animation of up to five seconds per minute for a maximum of 50 percent of the sign face may be permitted when the primary use on a subject property/parcel is one of the following: Indoor entertainment or recreation facility; Performing arts or cultural arts facilities; Public museums; Entertainment venues.
2. Animation may be used during the following timeframes:
  - a. Rural districts: Between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m.
  - b. Urban districts: Any time

**D. Display Brightness**

1. Sign luminance shall not exceed 0.3 footcandles over ambient lighting, with a maximum nighttime luminance not to exceed 300 nits. Unless otherwise defined in this article, nighttime shall mean between the periods of sunset to sunrise as calculated by the United States Naval Observatory.
  - a. The intensity of the light source shall not produce glare, the effect of which constitutes a traffic hazard or is otherwise detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare.
  - b. Each application for electronic message display approval shall include the manufacturer's specifications programmed to meet this requirement, along with a description of the proposed dimming method.

2. EMD signs shall have an illumination curfew as follows, except for signs situated on nonresidential lots that are open 24 hours:
  - a. Rural districts: 30 minutes beyond operating hours, or at a minimum between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m.
  - b. Urban districts: 1 hour beyond operating hours, or at a minimum between 12 a.m. and 5 a.m.

**E. Display Technology**

The technology currently being deployed for EMDs is LED (light emitting diode), but there may be alternate, preferred, and superior technology available in the future. Any other technology that operates under the brightness limits above shall not require an ordinance change for approval.

**B. Incorporation in Monument, Pole, or Attached Signage**

EMDs are only permitted as an integral element of a monument, pole, or attached sign, which enclose the message center component on all sides with a finish of brick, stone, stucco, powder coated, painted, or comparable finished metal, or the surface of the sign face. The enclosure shall extend not less than six inches from the electronic message center in any direction.

**C. Sign Permit Conditions**

The following conditions apply to all EMD sign permits. Failure to comply shall result in a requirement that the sign cease operation until compliance occurs.

1. That the sign shall at all times be operated in accordance with County codes and that the owner or operator shall provide proof of such conformance within 24-hours of a request by the County;
2. That a County inspector may access the property upon 24 hours' notice to the owner, operator or permittee so that the County may verify that the EMD has the automatic image dimming capability engaged. In the event of a citizen complaint regarding the EMD brightness, the owner, operator or permittee may be required by the County inspector to manually reduce the brightness to a lower setting;
3. That whether the sign is programmed from the site or from a remote location, the computer interface that programs the sign and the sign's operation manual shall be available to County staff upon 24 hours' notice to the owner, operator, or permittee; and
4. Sign permit applications to install an EMD must include a certification from the owner or operator that the sign shall at all times be operated in compliance with the conditions set out in County code. The owner, operator or permittee shall immediately provide proof of such conformance upon request of the County.



### 8.3.3. Freestanding Signs

The sample sign images provided in this section are not intended to be regulatory and are provided for illustrative purposes only.

#### A. Access Point Signs

##### 1. Definition

A sign located at a vehicular access point to a property.

##### 2. Generally Applicable Standards

- a. Access point signs that are visible from the public right-of-way shall be permanently anchored or fastened.
- b. Access point signs are for vehicular access, not pedestrian access.

##### 3. Measurement and Sample Sign Image

Access point sign measurements are made in the locations described in Figure 8-5.



Figure 8-5: Access Point Signs

#### 4. Subdivision Entry Sign

##### a. Definition

An access point sign located at a vehicular entrance to a subdivision or neighborhood.

##### b. Generally Applicable Standards

- i. Subdivision entry signs may be either freestanding or attached to an entry wall.
- ii. Entrance identification signs located on both sides of the street at any one entrance are measured as one identification sign unless otherwise specified in Section 8.4, Permanent Sign Regulations by Zone District.
- iii. When placed on subdivision entry wall structures, only the sign face shall be used to calculate the size of the sign.

## B. Monument Sign

### 1. Definition

A freestanding sign where the base of the sign structure is on the ground.

### 2. Generally Applicable Standards

- The base of the sign structure shall be on the ground or a maximum of 12 inches above the adjacent grade.
- The width of the top of the sign structure can be no more than 120 percent of the width of the base.

### 3. Measurement and Sample Sign Image

Monument sign measurements are made in the locations described in Figure 8-6.



Figure 8-6: Monument Signs

**C. Pole Sign****1. Definition**

A self-supported sign permanently attached directly to the ground supported by upright poles or posts or braces placed on or in the ground.

**2. Measurement and Sample Sign Image**

Pole sign measurements are made in the locations described in Figure 8-7.

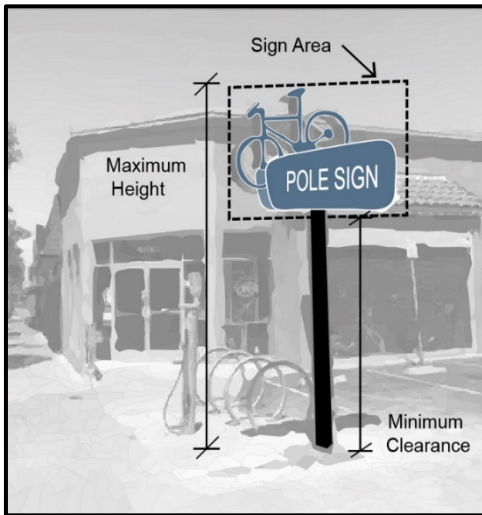


Figure 8-7: Pole Signs

**D. Structural Canopy (Detached Canopy)****1. Definition**

A sign attached to a permanent, freestanding canopy, such as a service station or ATM canopy.

**2. Measurement and Sample Sign Image**

Structural canopy sign measurements are made in the locations described in Figure 8-8.

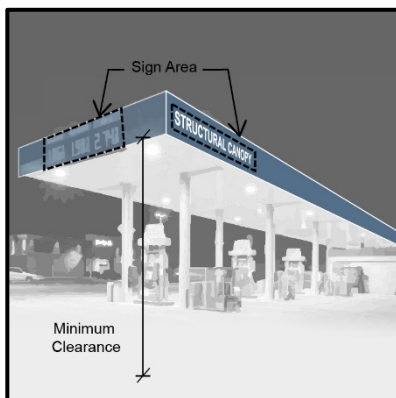


Figure 8-8: Structural Canopy Signs

**8.3.4. Illumination for Non-Electronic Message Display Signs**

Any light used to illuminate a sign must comply with Sec. 4.10, Exterior Lighting.



## 8.4. Permanent Sign Regulations by Zone District

### 8.4.1. Rural Residential Districts

#### A. Applicability

1. The standards in this section shall apply to the following zoning districts: Natural Resources (NR), Forestry (FO), Agriculture (A), Rural Residential 1 (RR-1), Rural Residential 2 (RR-2), Open (O), and Interface Residential (IR).
2. Uses and structures identified in the Use or Structure Column include nonconforming uses and uses approved by special review, minor special review, and special exception.

#### B. Maximum Total Allowed Sign Area

Maximum total allowed sign area in the Rural Residential districts is calculated on a use- or structure-based, per frontage basis. The total amount of signage may not exceed the amount identified in the Maximum Number Column.

#### C. Sign Dimensions

1. Table 8-1 identifies the amount permanent signage allowed in the Rural Residential districts.
2. Applicants may apply the allowed sign area to any sign type permitted in the zoning district. Selected sign types shall comply with the regulations associated with each sign type in Sec. 8.3, *Standards for Permanent Signs*.
3. If a sign type is not listed in Table 8-1, Table 8-2, or Section 8.2.3, *Exemptions*, it is not allowed in the Rural Residential zoning districts.

**Table 8-1: Permanent Signs in Rural Residential Districts**

Use or Structure	Max. Number	Sign Category	Height (max., ft.)	Sign Area per Sign (max., s.f.)	Setback (min., ft.)	Additional Standards
<b>Residential</b>						
Multifamily Access	1 per driveway	Free-standing, Access Point	6	32	5' from driveway	8.3.3.A, <i>Access Point Sign</i>
Multifamily Complex	1 per residential structure per street frontage	Attached	Top of wall	20	n/a	8.3.1, <i>Attached Signs</i>
		Free-standing	6	20	n/a	8.3.3, <i>Freestanding Signs</i>
Residential	1 per property	Attached	Top of wall	32	n/a	8.3.1, <i>Attached Signs</i>
		Free-Standing	6	32	n/a	8.3.3, <i>Freestanding Signs</i>

**Table 8-1: Permanent Signs in Rural Residential Districts**

Use or Structure	Max. Number	Sign Category	Height (max., ft.)	Sign Area per Sign (max., s.f.)	Setback (min., ft.)	Additional Standards
Rural Property Access	1 per property	Free-standing	14' min. clearance	8.2.3.B.5, <i>Property Signs</i>		
Subdivision Access	1 per subdivision entrance [1]	Attached	Top of wall	32	n/a	8.3.3.A.4, <i>Subdivision Entry Sign</i>
		Free-standing	6	32	n/a	
Nonresidential						
Nonresidential Use or Structure	1 per street frontage; max. 2 per property	Attached	Top of wall	32	n/a	8.3.1, <i>Attached Signs</i>
		Free-Standing	6	32	n/a	8.3.3, <i>Freestanding Signs</i>
Nonresidential Access	1 per driveway	Access Point	3	2	5' from driveway	8.3.3.A, <i>Access Point Sign</i>

**Notes:**

Subdivision entrance signs located on both sides of the street at any one entrance are measured as one identification sign and cannot exceed the maximum single sign area.

**D. Illumination Standards**

1. All signs in Rural Residential districts shall be unlit or indirectly illuminated.
2. All lighting shall be aimed and/or shielded to ensure that no direct light is seen upon any nearby street or upon any nearby residential property.

**8.4.2. Rural Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial Districts****A. Applicability**

1. The standards in this section shall apply to the following zoning districts: Agricultural Commercial Enterprise (ACE), Rural Commercial (RC), and Community Facilities (CF).
2. Uses and structures identified in the Use or Structure Column include nonconforming uses and uses approved by special review, minor special review, and special exception.

**B. Maximum Total Allowed Sign Area****1. Maximum Sign Area Calculation**

The total sign area for all signs for which permits are required shall not exceed one square foot per linear foot of building frontage for the first 200 linear feet of building frontage, plus one-half square foot per linear foot of building frontage thereafter.

- a. Where a structure is not oriented parallel to the frontage, no more than two sides of a building may be counted as building frontage.
- b. The total sign area shall include all sign faces and shall be calculated according to the standards of Section 8.9.

## 2. Minimum Sign Area Entitlement

Where the maximum sign calculation only permits less than the following amount of signage, all non-residential properties are entitled to the following minimum signage:

- a. Each property shall be entitled to one freestanding sign per street frontage of 50 square feet per face and one wall sign per business of 32 square feet in size so long as all other requirements of this Article 8 are met.
- b. For properties where the minimum sign area entitlement is applicable, maximum individual sign size shall be limited to the sizes permitted in Section D.3.a, not the sign sizes based on lineal footage calculation above.

## C. Allowed Signs

Table 8-2 identifies the types of signs allowed in Rural Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial districts, and the regulations associated with each sign type. If a sign type is not included in Table 8-2 or Section 8.2.3, Exemptions, it is not allowed.

Table 8-2: Permanent Signs in Rural Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial Districts							
Use or Structure	Max. Number	Sign Category	Height (max., ft.)	Sign Area per Sign (max., s.f.)	Setback (min., ft.)	Illumination	Additional Standards
Residential							
See Table 8-1.							
Nonresidential							
Nonresidential Access	1 per driveway	Access Point	6	3	5' from driveway	Internal or Indirect	8.3.3.A, <i>Access Point Sign</i>
Nonresidential Use or Structure	1 per street frontage; max. 2	Attached	Top of wall where affixed [1]	64 sf, no more than 7 ft vertical measure	n/a	8.4.2.D, <i>Illumination Standards</i>	8.3.1, <i>Attached Signs</i>
	per property	Free-standing	60% of sign max allowed in Tables 8-8 and 8-9.		n/a		8.3.3, <i>Freestanding Signs</i>
Notes:	[1] Rooftop signs that extend above the wall shall be allowed in the Red Feather Lakes business district only.						

## D. Illumination Standards

- Static signs in Rural Mixed-Use, Commercial, or Industrial districts may be unlit or have - 1interior or indirect exterior illuminated. Sign illumination shall comply with Sec. 4.10, Exterior Lighting.
- All lighting shall be aimed and/or shielded to ensure that no direct light is seen upon any nearby street or upon any nearby residential property.
- Electronic message displays may be used in as part of an attached or freestanding sign as identified in Table 8-3. EMDs shall not be installed as stand-alone signage.

- a. The EMD shall not be larger than the following percent of the total square footage of the sign face when compared as separate components:

Table 8-3 Permitted EMD Signage in Rural Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial Districts	
Sign Type	Max. % EMD/Total Sign Area
Attached	40; 32 sf max per sign
Freestanding	
Monument > 10' height	10
Monument < 10' height	25
Pole	0

- b. For purposes of determining the allowable total sign area, the permanent graphic portion of the sign and the EMD shall be included in the same perimeter and measured as a single sign, inclusive of any physical separation between the two components.
4. Only one EMD sign, either attached or freestanding is permitted per developed parcel.
5. EMD signs shall be setback at least 500 feet from residential property, measured pursuant to Sec. 8.9.5.

### 8.4.3. Urban Districts

#### A. Applicability

- The standards in this section shall apply to the following zoning districts: Urban Residential 1 (UR-1), Urban Residential 2 (UR-2), Urban Residential 3 (UR-3), Multifamily Residential (MR), Manufactured Housing Park (MHP), Mixed-Use Neighborhood (MU-N), Mixed-Use Commercial (MU-C), Commercial Corridor (CC), Commercial Neighborhood (CN), Commercial Destination (CD), Industrial Light (IL), Industrial Heavy (IH), Airport (AP).
- Uses and structures identified in the Sign Type Column include nonconforming uses and uses approved by special review, minor special review, and special exception.
- Applicants that are within a GMA are encouraged to review the sign regulations for the municipality where their property may be annexed and select specific sign types (e.g., awning, canopy, projecting, wall, monument) that conform to the applicable sign code.
- Where a municipality permits a sign type that the County prohibits, the applicant will need to wait until annexation to apply for that sign type.

#### B. Maximum Total Allowed Sign Area

##### 1. Residential Districts

Maximum total allowed sign area in the Urban Residential districts is calculated on a use- or structure-based, per frontage basis. The total amount of signage may not exceed the amount identified in Table 8-4.

Table 8-4: Maximum Total Allowed Sign Area for Urban Residential Districts and Uses		
Maximum Allowed Signage		
Single Family	1 per lot, must front arterial	
Multifamily	1 per lot plus Access Point Sign(s)	Maximum total permitted sign area calculation applies (See 8.4.3.B) unless otherwise specified in Table 8-6.

## 2. Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial Districts

### a. Calculation of Maximum Total Sign Area by Lineal Building Frontage

The total sign area for all signs for which permits are required shall not exceed two square feet per linear foot of building frontage for the first 200 linear feet of building frontage, plus one square foot per linear foot of building frontage thereafter.

- i. Where a structure is not oriented parallel to the frontage, no more than two sides of a building may be counted as building frontage.
- ii. The total sign area shall include all sign faces and shall be calculated according to the standards of Section 8.9.

### b. Minimum Total Allowed Sign Area Entitlement

Where the maximum sign calculation only permits less than the following amount of signage, all non-residential properties are entitled to the following minimum signage:

- i. Each property shall be entitled to one freestanding sign per street frontage of 50 square feet per face and one wall sign per business of 32 square feet in size so long as all other requirements of this Article 8 are met.
- ii. For properties where the minimum sign area entitlement is applicable, maximum individual sign size shall be limited to the sizes permitted in Section D.3.a, not the sign sizes based on lineal footage calculation above.

**Table 8-5: Maximum Total Allowed Sign Area for Urban Mixed-Use and Non-Residential Districts and Uses**

#### Total Permitted Signage

Residential Uses in Mixed-Use Structure	See Table 8-4.
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Non-Residential Uses in MU or NR Structure	Maximum total permitted sign area calculation applies (See 8.4.5.B) unless otherwise specified in Table 8-7.  Signs may be either attached or freestanding; if one sign type is chosen then the other is not permitted  Must comply with individual sign type standards below
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### C. Allowed Signs

Table 8-6 identifies the types of signs permitted in Urban Residential districts, and the regulations associated with each sign type. Table 8-7 identifies the types of signs permitted in Urban Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial districts and the regulations associated with each sign type. If a sign type is not included in the applicable table or Section 8.2.3, Exemptions, it is not permitted.

Table 8-6: Permanent Signs in Urban Residential Districts						
Sign, Structure, or Use Type	Max. Number	Height (max., ft.)/ Clearance (min. ft.)	Sign Area per Sign (max., sf)	Illumination	Additional Standards	
Attached Signs						
Awning or Canopy Multifamily only	1 per awning or canopy elevation	Height: May not project above canopy	MF District: 15% of canopy fascia where mounted; SF District: 10% of canopy fascia where mounted	Unlit or Indirect	See 8.3.1.B, <i>Canopy Sign</i>	
Projection Multifamily only	1 per frontage per building	Clearance: 8	15	Unlit or Indirect	See 8.3.1.C, <i>Projecting Sign</i>	
Wall Single Family [1]	1 per lot, must front arterial	Max. Height Dimension: 7	4	Unlit or Indirect	See 8.4.1.C.3, <i>Wall Signs</i> , <i>Not included in Max Total Area</i>	
Wall Multifamily	1 per lot	Max. Height Dimension: 7	20	Unlit or Indirect		
Freestanding						
Sign. Structure, or Use Type	Number (max)	Height (max., ft.)/ Clearance (min. ft.)	Sign Area per Sign (max., sf)	Setback	Illumination	Additional Standards
Access Point Multifamily only	1 per primary entrance	4	16	2' from ROW; 10' from property lines	Unlit or Indirect	See 8.3.3.A, <i>Access Point Sign</i> <i>Not included in Max Total Area</i>
Single Family or Duplex [1]	1 per lot, must front arterial	5	4	n/a	Unlit or Indirect	8.3.3, <i>Freestanding Signs</i> <i>Not included in Max Total Area</i>
Multifamily	1 per lot	6	20	n/a	Unlit or Indirect	<i>Not included in Max Total Area</i>
Notes:						
[1] Single family uses or structures are permitted either one wall sign or one freestanding sign.						

**Table 8-7: Permanent Signs for Urban Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial Districts**

Sign Type	Number (max)	Height (max., ft.)	Sign Area per Sign (max., s.f.)	Illumination	Additional Standards	
Attached Signs						
Awning	1 per awning	Clear: 8	Lesser of 35 sf or 25% of total awning area	Indirect or Backlighting	See 8.3.1.A, <i>Awning Sign</i>	
Canopy	1 per canopy elevation	Height: May not project above canopy	30% of canopy fascia where mounted;	Internal	See 8.3.1.B, <i>Canopy Sign</i>	
Under Canopy	1 per building entrance	Clear: 8	4	Any	See 8.3.1.B, <i>Canopy Sign</i>	
Projecting	1 per frontage per building	Clear: 8	15	Any	See 8.3.1.C, <i>Projecting Sign</i>	
Wall	1 per NR use	Height: 7	100	Indirect	See 8.3.1.C.3, <i>Wall Signs</i>	
Window	N/A; See Sign Area	Height: 7	Lesser of 50% of window or 80 sf	Internal		
Freestanding Signs						
Sign. Structure, or Use Type	Max. Number	Height (max., ft.)/ Clearance (min. ft.)	Sign Area per Sign (max., sf)	Setback	Illumination	Additional Standards
Access Point	1 per entrance	4	16	2' from ROW; 10' from property lines	Any	See 8.3.3.A, <i>Access Point Sign</i> ; included in Max Total Area
Monument or Pole	1 per street frontage	Monument: See Table 8-9	15 from interior property lines; min 75' spacing between freestanding signs	Any	Any	8.3.3.B, <i>Monument Signs</i> ; included in Max Total Area
		Pole: See Table 8-8				8.3.3.C, <i>Pole Signs</i> ; included in Max Total Area
Structural Canopy	1 per elevation	Height: may not project above canopy	12	Any		See 8.3.3.D, <i>Structural Canopy (Detached Canopy)</i> ; included in Max Total Area

#### D. Freestanding Sign Standards by Setback

1. The maximum height and size standards for freestanding pole and monument signs is adjustable based on the distance of the sign setback.

**Table 8-8: Pole Sign Dimensions by Setback**

Setback (ft.)	Maximum Height (ft.)	Maximum Size Allowed Per Side (s.f.)
0	8	20
5	8	27
10	10	33
15	12	50
20	14	60
25	16	70
30	18	80
36 and more	18	90

**Spacing**

No freestanding sign shall be located within 15 feet of any interior side lot line.

- In order to encourage their use, the following modification of the freestanding sign requirements table is allowed for monument signs.

**Table 8-9: Monument Sign Dimensions by Setback**

Setback (feet)	Maximum Height (feet)	Maximum Size Allowed Per Side (Square Feet)
0	7	45
5	8.5	60
10	10	75
15 and more	12	90

**E. Illumination Standards**

- Static signs in Urban Mixed-Use, Commercial, or Industrial districts may be unlit or have interior or indirect exterior illuminated. Sign illumination shall comply with Sec. 4.10, Exterior Lighting.
- All lighting shall be aimed and/or shielded to ensure that no direct light is seen upon any nearby street or upon any nearby residential property.
- Electronic message displays may be used in as part of an attached or freestanding sign as identified in Table 8-10. EMDs shall not be installed as stand-alone signage.
  - The EMD shall not be larger than the following percent of the total square footage of the sign face when compared as separate components:

**Table 8-10 Permitted EMD Signage in Rural Mixed-Use, Commercial, and Industrial Districts**

Sign Type	Max. % EMD/Total Sign Area
Attached	40; 32 sf max per sign
Freestanding	
Monument > 10' height	25
Monument < 10' height	40
Pole	50



- b. For purposes of determining the allowable total sign area, the permanent graphic portion of the sign and the EMD shall be included in the same perimeter and measured as a single sign, inclusive of any physical separation between the two components.
- 4. Only one EMD sign, either attached or freestanding is permitted per developed parcel.
- 5. EMD signs shall be setback at least 150 feet from residential property, measured pursuant to Sec. 8.9.5.

## 8.5. Standards for Temporary Signs

### 8.5.1. Purpose

The purpose of these temporary sign regulations is to:

- A. Enhance opportunities for visual communication, including promoting the legibility of such communications;
- B. Create a more attractive economic and business climate within the County;
- C. Enhance and protect the physical appearance of all areas of the County;
- D. Identify permissible signage for temporary uses and temporary events, and
- E. Reduce the distractions, obstructions, and hazards to pedestrian and automobile traffic caused by the excessive number, size, or height, inappropriate means of illumination or movement, indiscriminate placement, overconcentration, or unsafe construction of signs.
- F. Establish maintenance, abandonment, and removal requirements that limit the continued use of temporary signs that are in violation of this article.

### 8.5.2. Display

Temporary signs shall comply with the following unless otherwise specified in this article:

- A. No temporary sign shall be erected, re-erected, or maintained for more than a cumulative 30 days per year, unless otherwise permitted in this section or specified in the sign permit.
- B. Temporary event signs, such as a Small Sales Event or Commercial Event, may be displayed on private property provided the signs meet the following requirements:
  - 1. The sign conforms to all requirements of this section;
  - 2. The sign does not interfere with pedestrian or automobile traffic;
  - 3. The sign is not placed in the public right-of-way or on public property;
  - 4. The sign is placed with the express permission of the property owner; and
  - 5. The sign is not a public danger or nuisance during high winds or inclement weather.

### 8.5.3. Generally Applicable Standards

#### A. Location

- 1. Temporary signs are subject to the prohibited sign locations identified in Section 8.2.4.
- 2. No temporary sign shall cause unsafe ingress or egress or otherwise create traffic visibility problems.

## B. Temporary Sign Types

1. The total amount of temporary signage allowed on any lot may be allocated among any of the following temporary sign types, subject to the applicable standards of this article:
  - a. Banner sign
  - b. Door sign
  - c. Yard sign
2. Wind driven signs, except for flags, and inflatable temporary signs are prohibited.

## C. Temporary Sign Size and Placement Limitations

The following temporary sign type, size, and placement limitations are generally applicable to temporary signs unless otherwise specified in this section.

### 1. Temporary Sign Dimensions

The following temporary sign dimensions are applicable when the LUC section refers to a specific temporary sign type, such as Large Temporary Sign:

Table 8-11: Temporary Sign Dimensions								
Sign Type	Extra Large Temporary Sign		Large Temporary Sign		Medium Temporary Sign		Small Temporary Sign	
Measurement	Area (sf)	Height (f)	Area (sf)	Height (f)	Area (sf)	Height (f)	Area (sf)	Height (f)
<b>Rural</b>								
Agriculture or Conservation District	48	8	32	6	8	6	4	3
Residential District	32	6	16	6	8	6	4	3
Non-Residential in Residential District	32	6	16	6	8	6	4	3
Non-Residential District	48	8	32	8	8	6	4	3
<b>Urban</b>								
Residential District	32	6	16	6	8	6	4	3
Non-Residential in Residential District	32	6	16	6	8	6	4	3
Non-Residential District	48	8	32	8	8	6	4	3

### 2. Dimensions and Measurement

The maximum sign area identified in Table 8-11 is for a single sign face. Temporary signs may be printed on both sides or two single-sided banners may be placed back-to-back. V-type configurations are prohibited.

### 3. Location

- a. Signs, except for door signs, shall be located at least 150 feet apart and a minimum of five feet behind all property lines on the parcel.
- b. Door signs shall be located within ten feet of a pedestrian entrance and shall be removed when the business is closed and during severe weather events.

4. Temporary signs shall not be illuminated.
5. Temporary signs shall not contain any digital components, or a changeable message component or mechanism.

**D. Materials**

1. All temporary signs shall be made of durable materials.
2. Balloons shall be made of biodegradable materials.

**E. Removal**

1. Unless specified otherwise in this section, temporary signs shall be removed at the end of the event for which the sign was permitted.
2. If the County determines that a property has excess temporary signage, the County may require the removal of an appropriate amount of square footage of temporary signage to bring the property into compliance with this LUC.

#### 8.5.4. Temporary Signs Allowed Without a Permit

- A. The temporary sign types listed in this section are named for the activity or use that the sign permit is associated with. This is done for ease of understanding by Code users. Pursuant to Section 8.2.5, Larimer County does not regulate the content of allowed signage.
- B. Sign dimensions are provided in Table 8-11.

**Table 8-32: Temporary Signs Allowed Without a Permit**

Activity, Use, or Event	Number of Signs Allowed				Duration
	Extra Large	Large	Medium	Small	
Active Real Estate Listing					
Existing Residential	-	-	1 per street frontage on the property listed	-	The sign may be placed when the real estate listing becomes active and shall be removed within 45 days of the sale of the property or when the listing is deactivated.
Vacant Land	1 per street frontage on the property listed	-	-	-	
Active Construction Permit	Larger temporary signs may be permitted according to the requirements of Section 8.5.5, Temporary Signs that Require a Permit.		1 per property with active construction	-	The sign may be placed when the construction permit is issued and must be removed within one week of final inspection or completion of the project, whichever occurs first.
Door Sign, Nonresidential Use Only [1]	1 sign, maximum six square feet in area per side, per business				Door signs are allowed to be used 365 days a year, are not subject to the 30-day duration limitation for temporary signs, and shall be taken in daily at the close of business.
Election Event					

**Table 8-32: Temporary Signs Allowed Without a Permit**

Activity, Use, or Event	Number of Signs Allowed				Duration
	Extra Large	Large	Medium	Small	
Rural and Urban Residential Districts	-	-	Any number	-	The sign may be placed for a period of 60 days prior to a state, local, or national election. Total signage in excess of the maximum amount allowed on the property during non-election periods must be removed within five days after the applicable election event.
Rural and Urban Nonresidential Districts	-	Any number	-	-	
General Temporary Sign	-	-	Any number [2]		See Section 8.5.3.E.
Home Occupation Retail Sales Event [3]	-	-	1 per property	-	The sign may be placed seven days before the event and shall be removed within 24 hours of the end of the retail sales event.
Small Sales Events (Estate/Garage/Yard Sale)	-	-	-	1 per street frontage	The signs shall be displayed only during the day of the small sales event.

**Notes:**

[1]: Door signs shall be placed within 15 feet of the primary business entrance and shall not impede pedestrian sidewalk circulation. Door signs are not permitted for accessory rural or home occupations.

[2]: The maximum total area of a Medium temporary sign may be distributed across more than one sign face.

[3]: The sign shall be located on private property no farther from the subject parcel than the nearest arterial road.

### 8.5.5. Temporary Signs that Require a Permit

The placement of temporary signs allowed in this section requires the issuance of a temporary sign permit. Each sign approved according to this section will have a removal date identified in the permit.

#### A. Active Construction Permit, Large Sign

Temporary signage is permitted in association with active construction as measured by the duration of a construction permit as follows:

1. One large temporary sign shall be allowed per street frontage per property as follows:
  - a. The sign(s) must be removed within one week of final inspection or completion of the project, whichever occurs first.
  - b. One temporary sign is permitted in association with an active construction permit without a sign permit as set forth in Section 8.5.4, Temporary Signs Permitted Without

a Permit. The total number of construction signs per property includes all temporary signs permitted in association with active construction whether they require a sign permit or not.

2. One extra large temporary sign per vehicle access point sign per , with a maximum of two signs per project or phase of a project as indicated on the construction permit.
  - a. Temporary access point signs shall be located within the development.
  - b. Signs shall be allowed to remain for no more than two years following issuance of the temporary sign permit.
3. In addition to the sign(s) above, a temporary project sales office shall be entitled to one small temporary sign that may be indirectly lit.

**B. Noncommercial Public Event on Private Property, Large Sign**

A noncommercial public event on private property may be permitted temporary signage as follows:

1. Any number of signs is allowed, subject to the following maximum size standards:
  - a. Residential district: Medium temporary sign;
  - b. Mixed-Use and Non-Residential districts: Large temporary sign.
2. Signs may not be placed more than 45 days prior to the event and must be removed within five days after the event.

**C. Commercial Event on Private Property**

A commercial event on private property, such as a sidewalk sale or grand opening, in a mixed-use or nonresidential zoning district may be permitted temporary signage as follows:

**1. Allowed Sign Types:**

- a. A banner or banners that do not cumulatively exceed 100 square feet in total sign area and which are mounted flush to a building wall.
- b. Balloons and other types of lighter than air objects which have no linear dimension greater than two feet.

**2. Conditions and Timeframe**

- a. The temporary sign permit may specify such conditions and limitations as are deemed necessary to protect adjoining properties and the public.
- b. The permit may not be approved for a time period that exceeds 30 consecutive days in any calendar year for each property, or each business in a multi-tenant center.

**3. Temporary Sign Removal**

- a. The applicant shall remove any temporary signs on or before the expiration date of the permit.
- b. If a person erects any temporary signs for a commercial event without receiving a permit as herein provided, the person shall be ineligible to receive a temporary sign permit for the remainder of the calendar year. Applicants will be asked to verify that commercial event signage was not placed prior to the issuance of a temporary sign permit.

- c. If a temporary sign associated with a commercial event sign permit remains up for longer than 30 days, the sign will be considered a permanent sign, require a sign permit and all other regulations in this Article 8 apply.

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#### **8.5.6. Temporary Sign Substitution for Damaged Permanent Sign**

- A. In the event that a permanent sign is substantially damaged through fire, natural disaster, or similar emergency, or in the case of major construction projects, where existing permanent signage is removed for construction purposes, a temporary sign may be allowed for display for a period of time not exceeding 60 days.
- B. Temporary signage is limited to a maximum of 32 square feet per address unless the temporary signage is affixed to any wall face of the main structure.
- C. When temporary signage is affixed to any wall face of the primary structure, the maximum size of temporary signage may be increased to allow for a maximum coverage of 20 percent of the area of the wall face to which it is affixed. In no case shall any temporary signage exceed a maximum size of 250 square feet.

### **8.6. Nonconforming Signs**

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#### **8.6.1. Limitations on Expanding or Altering Nonconforming Signs**

A nonconforming sign shall not be:

- A. Structurally or physically changed to another nonconforming sign, although the sign copy may be changed;
- B. Structurally or physically altered in order to prolong the life of the sign, including a change from the original materials of the sign, except to meet safety requirements;
- C. Structurally or physically altered to include an Electronic Message Display; or
- D. Altered in a way that increases the degree of nonconformity of the sign.

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#### **8.6.2. Bringing Signs into Conformance**

All nonconforming signs on a property shall be brought into conformance with this Code when:

- A. A change of use, as defined in the Code, occurs on the property;
- B. A new sign is added to the property; or
- C. A change to any sign beyond routine maintenance and repairs, except in the content of a sign occurs on the property.

### **8.7. Installation and Maintenance**

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#### **8.7.1. Installation**

- A. All signs must be permanently affixed or attached to the ground or to a structure, except for those temporary signs and vehicle signs that are specifically allowed in this Chapter 8.0.
- B. All electrical signs placed in Larimer County shall bear the label of Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.
- C. All electrical service to a freestanding sign shall be underground.

### **8.7.2. Maintenance**

- A. All signs shall be maintained in good condition at all times. All signs shall be kept neatly finished and repaired, including all parts and supports. The following specific sign maintenance standards shall apply. Repairs, where required, shall be equal to, or better than the original sign in quality of materials and design:
    - 1. Sign finishes and structures shall be maintained in good condition and shall not have:
      - a. Any surface area covered with disfigured, cracked, ripped, faded, or peeling paint, poster paper, or other material.
      - b. Rusted, disfigured, peeling, faded, bent, broken, dilapidated, or deteriorated sign facings, or supports, or loose appendages, or struts.
    - 2. All signs shall have sign facings installed, whether blank or with copy content.
    - 3. Signs that are designed to be upright and level shall be installed and maintained in an upright and level position. Signs that are not upright and level shall be removed or restored to an upright and level position.
    - 4. Signs shall not have weeds, trees, vines, or other vegetation growing on, or in it, or obscuring the view of the sign from the right-of-way from which it is to be viewed.
    - 5. No internally illuminated sign shall be allowed to operate with less than full illumination.
    - 6. Temporary signs and flags shall not be faded, tattered, or torn.
  - B. The building official may inspect any sign governed by this code and shall have authority to order the painting, repair, alteration, or removal of a sign which constitutes a hazard to safety, health or public welfare by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation or obsolescence.
  - C. The building official shall have the power to order a change in the illumination of any sign that becomes a hazard or nuisance.
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### **8.7.3. Abandonment**

#### **A. Abandoned Signs**

- 1. Except as otherwise provided in this article, the County may determine that a conforming or nonconforming sign or sign structure has been abandoned where either:
  - a. The sign or sign structure is no longer used by the property or sign owner, in which case discontinuance of sign use may be shown by any of the following:
    - i. Expiration or revocation of a business license or required zoning permit or approval for the business located on the property,
    - ii. A six-month cessation of use of the property or tenant unit with which the sign or sign structure is associated, or
    - iii. Failure to display a message on the sign for 45 days.
  - b. The sign or sign structure has been damaged, and repairs and restoration have not been started within 45 days of the date the sign was damaged, or, once started, are not diligently pursued to completion.
- 2. Temporary signs shall be considered abandoned if the associated permit has expired, the permit-associated event has occurred in the past, the sign fails to meet the maintenance requirements of this section, or when there is excess temporary signage on a property following the end of an expanded temporary signage period, such as an election event.

**B. Damage to Nonconforming Signs**

A nonconforming sign shall not be re-established after damage or destruction if the estimated cost of reconstruction exceeds 50 percent of the appraised replacement cost.

**C. Sign Removal**

1. An abandoned sign or sign structure is prohibited and shall be removed by the owner of the sign or owner of the premises within 45 days of a determination of abandonment.
2. When a sign or sign structure becomes abandoned due to demolition or destruction of the structure in which the business was located, the sign and structure shall be removed at the same time as the demolition of the structure, or within 45 days of a determination of abandonment.
3. Where a successor to a business agrees in writing, prior to the demolition of the structure or as part of a determination of abandonment, to bring any sign into compliance with and to maintain the sign as provided in this section, the removal requirement shall not apply. The sign and sign structure shall be brought into full compliance prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for use of any part of the associated structure or business.

## 8.8. Sign Permits

### 8.8.1. Applicability and Process

- A. A sign permit is required prior to the placement of any new sign, relocation of an existing sign or remodeling of any sign for which a building permit is also required, although the copy on an existing sign may be changed without a permit. Sign permit applications for properties with multiple tenants shall be accompanied by a sign plan that indicates the total amount of signage permitted on the property and how that signage is or will be allocated by sign type and location across the property.
- B. No sign permit shall be required for those signs regulated by Section 8.2.3.D, Sign Regulation Exemptions.
- C. Approval criteria. No permit for a new sign shall be approved unless such sign is in conformance with the requirements of this Article 8 and includes a non-residential property sign inventory form.
- D. Non-residential property sign inventory form.
  1. A sign inventory form shall be submitted prior to or concurrent with the issuance of a sign permit for any permanent sign in a nonresidential district.
  2. The form may include a graphic representation or photos showing all existing and/or proposed signage for the subject property.
  3. Properties and uses subject to the site plan requirement in Section 6 of the Larimer County Land Use Code may include a sign inventory form as part of the site plan review process.

### 8.8.2. Additional Procedures

Pending full codification of the new Larimer County LUC, this section shall be applied in conjunction with Larimer County LUC Article 6, Review Procedures. Additional procedures available in that article, such as variance or appeal, are also applicable to the sign permit process.



## 8.9. Measurement and Calculation

### 8.9.1. Applicability

The following methods shall be used to calculate the total square footage of the sign area of any sign.

### 8.9.2. Sign Area

#### A. Inclusion in Maximum Sign Area Calculation

1. Unless otherwise specified in Sec. 8.4, Permanent Sign Regulations by Zone District, all sign faces shall be counted and considered part of the maximum total sign area allowance.
2. The sign area of building mounted signs shall not include structural elements used to attach or support the sign that do not contribute to the display.
3. Any freestanding sign that can be viewed from two street frontages and that is so placed that it has equal or nearly equal exposure from each frontage, shall be counted twice, once for each frontage.

#### B. Measurement of Sign Area

Sign area shall be calculated as the entire area within a continuous perimeter drawn with not more than eight straight lines to create a geometric figure enclosing the extreme limits of the sign.

##### 1. Attached Signs

- a. Sign copy mounted, affixed, or painted on a background panel or area is calculated as the entire area contained within the sum of the smallest geometric figure that will enclose all of the sign copy.
- b. Signs with a frame or cabinet shall be calculated as the entire area contained within the smallest geometric figure that will enclose the outer edge of the frame or cabinet and encompass all sign copy.
- c. Signs that consist of individual letters that are mounted to a wall, or "race-way" type signs that consist of individual letters that are mounted to a base that is mounted to a wall, which utilize the building wall as the background, and freestanding individual letters that are mounted to a monument base shall be considered individual letter signs. The sign area of such signs shall be calculated as the entire area within a continuous geometric figure enclosing the extreme limits of the sign.

##### 2. Freestanding Signs

- a. The measurement of the sign area of a freestanding sign shall include, in addition to the sign face area, any portion of the freestanding sign base which exceeds one and one-half times the area of the sign face.
- b. The base shall include any structural component of the sign, including raised landscape planter boxes.

- c. Freestanding signs with two or more faces that are aligned to each other at an angle greater than 90° shall be considered a single sign face.

### 3. Three-Dimensional Signs

The area of a spherical, cubical, or polyhedral sign equals 1/2 the total surface area. See Figure 8-9.



Figure 8-9: 3D Sign Measurement

### 4. Movable Sign Elements

If elements of a sign are movable or flexible, such as a flag or banner, or if the sign includes any permitted copy extensions, the measurement is taken when the elements or extensions are fully extended and parallel to the plane of view.

## 8.9.3. Determination of Frontage

1. Sign allowance shall be calculated on the basis of the length of the one building frontage which is most nearly parallel to the street it faces.
2. If a lot fronts on two or more streets, the sign area for each street shall be computed separately. The area of signage allowed for each lot frontage shall be displayed on the frontage for which it was calculated and shall not be combined and placed on a single frontage unless otherwise provided in this article or when the structure has multiple tenants.
3. Signage in multi-tenant structures shall first be calculated across all frontages to establish the overall permitted signage, and then allocated to each tenant unit based on a sign plan created for the site and submitted with each sign permit application.
4. If a building does not have frontage on a dedicated public street, the owner of the building may designate the one building frontage which shall be used for the purpose of calculating the sign allowance.

## 8.9.4. Height and Clearance

### A. Height

1. The height of a freestanding sign shall be measured as the vertical distance from the average finished grade of the ground below the sign excluding any filling, berming, mounding or excavating solely for the purposes of increasing the height of the sign, to the top edge of the highest portion of the sign including any architectural appurtenances. See Figure 8-10.
2. For purposes of this section, average finished grade shall be considered the lower of:
  - a. The lowest elevation where the base of the sign meets ground level or
  - b. The nearest public or private sidewalk within 25 feet of the sign.

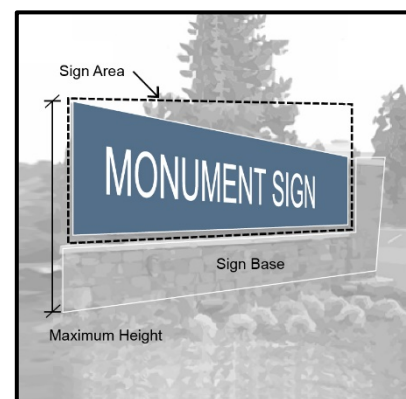
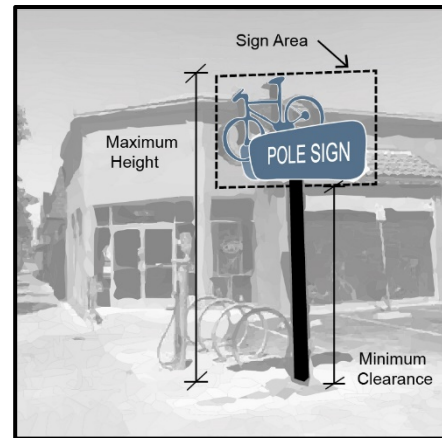


Figure 8-10: Measuring height

3. When the existing finished grade at the point of measurement is lower than the average elevation of the adjacent street finished grade parallel to the location where the sign will be installed, that portion of the sign below the street shall not be included in determining the sign's overall height.

**B. Clearance**

Clearance for pole and projecting signs shall be measured as the smallest vertical distance between the sign and the finished grade directly underneath the sign at the lowest point of the sign structure, including any framework or other structural elements. See Figure 8-11.



**Figure 8-11: Measuring clearance**

### 8.9.5. Setback and Separation

**A. Setback**

Setbacks shall be measured from the nearest property boundary line to the edge of the sign face in applicable districts, or from the edge of the residential structure to the edge of the sign face in unlisted districts. See Figure 8-12.

**B. Separation**

Sign separation shall be measured along the property lines from the center of the signs.



**Figure 8-12: Measuring setback**

## 8.10. Definitions

**Abandoned sign:** A sign that meets the criteria for abandonment in Section 8.7.3.

**Access point sign:** A sign located at a motor vehicle access point to a property.

**Agricultural sign:** A sign permitted in association with specific agricultural uses and activities as described in Section 8.2.3.

**Ambient light monitor:** A device that is attached to an electronic message display that measures on a continuous basis the brightness of light surrounding the sign. The monitor is connected to the system that controls the brightness of the electronic message display. The brightness is then automatically adjusted based on the measured ambient light.

**Animated sign:** Any sign that uses mechanical means to depict action, motion, or create a special effect or scene, including the display of video.

**Attached sign:** A sign that is attached or affixed to a building, including: awning signs, canopy signs, marquee signs, projecting signs, roof signs, wall signs, and window signs.

**Banner.** A sign which is constructed of cloth, canvas, or other type of natural or manmade fabric, or other similar light material which can be easily folded or rolled, but not including paper or cardboard.

**Billboard.** A type of freestanding sign that incorporates a sign face that is larger than 70 square feet, mounted on one or more pole structures, such that the lowest part of the sign face is 10 feet or more above adjacent grade.

**Building frontage.** The side of the building which is parallel to or most nearly parallel to a public street.

**Business.** An activity concerned with the supplying and distribution of goods and services. For purposes of this section, the term "business" shall not include an activity which is accessory to a residential use, such as a home occupation. The term "business" shall include principal agricultural uses. See also "Multi-tenant center" regarding two or more businesses located on a single property.

**Cabinet sign.** A sign that contains all the text, artwork, logos and/or other information displayed within an enclosed cabinet.

**Changeable copy sign:** A sign whose informational content can be changed or altered by manual or electric, electro-mechanical or electronic means. Changeable signs include the following types:

1. **Manually activated:** Signs whose alphabetic, pictographic or symbolic information content can be changed or altered by manual means.
2. **Electrically activated:** Signs whose alphabetic, pictographic or symbolic informational content can be changed or altered on a fixed display surface composed of electrically illuminated or mechanically driven changeable segments. Electrically activated signs include the following two types:
  - a. **Fixed message electronic signs:** Signs whose basic informational content has been pre-programmed to include only certain types of information projections, such as time, temperature, predictable traffic conditions or other events subject to prior programming.
  - b. **Computer controlled variable message electronic signs:** Signs whose informational content can be changed or altered by means of computer-driven electronic impulses.

**Commercial speech:** Expression by a speaker for the purposes of commerce, where the intended audience is actual or potential consumers, and where the content of the message is commercial in character. Commercial speech typically advertises a business or business activity or proposes a commercial transaction.

**Copy:** The graphic content of a sign surface in either permanent or removable letter, pictographic, symbolic, or alphabetic form.

**Damaged sign:** Any sign that, for any reason, has received less than 50 percent damage to any combination of the copy area or sign structure.

**Dangerous sign:** A sign constituting a hazard to public safety because it no longer complies with some or all requirements of the building code or electrical code.

**Destroyed sign:** Any sign that, for any reason, has received 50 percent or greater damage to any combination of the copy area or sign structure.

**Door sign:** A manual changeable copy sign typically located near the entrance of a business and intended to be seen from the street such as menu boards, sandwich boards, or A-frame signs.

**Electronic message display (EMD):** A sign with a display surface composed of light-emitting diodes (LEDs) or similar light sources that is capable of displaying varying words, symbols, figures, or images that can be electronically or mechanically changed by remote or automatic means.

**Flag:** A flexible piece of fabric, that is attached along one edge to a straight, rigid flagpole (directly or with rope), and which is designed to move when the wind blows. Flags are typically (but not necessarily) rectangular in shape, and often (but not always) include printed or embroidered insignia that symbolizes a nation, state, or organization, or that display a graphic or message.

**Flashing sign:** An electronic message display, portion thereof, or non-EMD lighting that changes light intensity in a brief, brilliant, or sudden and transient outburst of light causing a steady on and off, glittering, sparkling, or scintillating pattern. Neon and incandescent lamps may flash in the following ways.

1. Alternating. One section comes on as another goes off.
2. Scintillating. Random sections go on and off with part of the lighting on at all times.
3. Chasing. One section comes on at a time and is followed by one section going off at a time. Part of the sign is on at all times.
4. Sweeping (filling). The lighting sections individually go on until all of the sections are on, then the entire group goes off and then the process is repeated.
5. On-off action. Lighting that goes all on and then all off.

**Freestanding sign.** A nonmoveable sign that is anchored directly to the ground or supported by one or more posts, columns, or other vertical structures or supports, and not attached to or dependent for support from any building.

**Government sign:** Any temporary or permanent sign erected and maintained by the city, county, state, or federal government.

**Incidental sign:** A small sign that is primarily oriented to pedestrians.

**Indirect lighting:** A source of external illumination of any sign.

**Inflatable sign:** a sign that is constructed from or attached to an envelope flexible material that is given shape and / or movement by inflation. The phrase inflatable sign does not include balloons that are less than 18 inches in all dimensions. Inflatable signs do not include hot-air balloons use for air travel.

**Integral sign:** A sign that is carved into stone or similar material that is incorporated in the structure of a building.

**Internal sign:** A sign that is internal or interior to a property or development that is not directed toward external view and is not readily legible from the public right-of-way.

**Maintenance:** For the purposes of this article, the cleaning, painting, repair, or replacement of defective parts of a sign in a manner that does not alter the structure of the sign.

**Multi-tenant center.** One or more buildings, located on a single property, containing two or more separate and distinct businesses or activities which occupy separate portions of the building with separate points of entrance, and which are physically separated from each other by walls, partitions, floors or ceilings. For purposes of Article 8, the term "multi-tenant center" shall include buildings containing condominium units. See also "property."

**Nonconforming sign.** A sign that does not meet one or more of the requirements of this Article 8, but which was erected in conformance with any adopted standards and procedures in existence at that time.

**Pennant:** A piece of fabric, plastic or other flexible medium that may be in the shape of a triangle, rectangle or other shape, is typically mounted to a flexible cord or rope that is stretched across two points, is mounted in quantity and spaced along the cord or rope.

**Permanent sign.** A sign that is permanently affixed or attached to the ground or to a structure.

**Portable sign.** A sign that is not permanently affixed or attached to the ground or to a structure and that is designed to be easily transportable from one location to another, including but not limited to a sign designed to be displayed while mounted or affixed to the trailer by which it is transported.

**Premises.** See "property."

**Private sale sign.** A sign associated with a private sale of personal property such as a house sale, garage sale, rummage sale, yard sale, and the like.

**Property.** A lot, tract, or parcel of land together with the buildings or structures thereon. For purposes of this Article 8, individual condominium ownerships in a structure shall not be considered separate property. See also "multi-tenant center."

**Remodeling.** A change in any aspect or character of a sign including addition or change in the type of lighting, increase in height or size, addition of sign faces or change from wood posts and frame to metal posts and frame, but not including a change in the content or message of the sign face.

**Required sign:** A sign that is required by an applicable building code (e.g., address numbers) or health and safety regulations (e.g., the Occupational Safety and Health Act ("OSHA")) or other laws or regulations, whether such sign is temporary or permanent.

**Rider:** A subordinate sign panel that is attached to a swing sign, either above the horizontal member or below the principal sign face. To illustrate, but without limiting the range of messages that a rider may convey, if the swing sign is used to advertise a property as "for sale," a rider is often used to convey a related message such as "contract pending."

**Roof sign.** A sign erected upon or above a roof or above a parapet wall of a building.

**Rural property access point sign.** An access point sign located at the entrance to a rural property. For purposes of this Article 8, the term rural property shall be limited to properties that are located outside a growth management area (GMA) overlay zoning district of Larimer County.

**Sign:** Any writing (including letter, word or number), pictorial representation (including illustration or declaration), product, form (including shapes resembling any human, animal or product form), emblem (including any device, symbol, trademark, object or design which conveys a recognizable meaning, identity or distinction) or any other figure of similar character that is a structure or any part thereof, or is written, painted, projected upon, printed, designed into, constructed, or otherwise placed on or near a building, board, plate, or upon any material object or device whatsoever, that by reason of its form, location, manner of display, color, working, stereotyped design, or otherwise attracts or is designed to attract attention to the subject or to the property upon which it is situated, or is used as a means of identification, advertisement, or announcement. The term "sign" shall not include the following:

- (1) Works of fine art; and

(2) Products, merchandise, materials, or equipment which are offered for sale or used in conducting a business, along with any incidental and customary product labels on such items, when such items are kept or stored in a location which is designed and commonly used for the storage of such products, merchandise, materials, or equipment.

**Sign area:** The total dimensions of a sign surface used to display information including text, symbols, or images.

**Sign face.** The area of a sign upon or through which the message is displayed. For the purposes of measurement, sign faces are defined as follows:

1. Single-sided sign: A sign with only one face plane.
2. Two-sided (also referred to as double-faced or “V” sign): A sign with back-to-back face planes that are parallel or within 30° of parallel.
3. Three-sided sign: A sign with three face planes.
4. Three-dimensional sign: A sign that is sculptural or three-dimensional in form.

**Sign plan.** A graphic representation showing a comprehensive detailed presentation of all signage proposed for a particular property.

**Sign structure(s):** The base, footer, support poles, framing, and all other parts and components onto which the copy area is resting or attached.

**Sign structure area:** The total surface area of the structure of a monument sign that supports its copy area and contains dimensional or material differences from the plane of the sign face. Architectural embellishments and decorative features that do not contain or support advertising copy shall not be included in the sign structure area.

**Sign walker:** A person who carries a sign that is worn, held, or balanced by that person and is not installed or attached to real property.

**Street frontage.** A property line that abuts a public right-of-way that provides public access to or visibility to the property.

**Temporary sign.** A sign which, due to the materials used or the method, manner, or location of display; is suited only for brief display.

**Vehicle sign.** A sign which is painted on, affixed to, or otherwise mounted on any vehicle or on any object which is placed on, in, or attached to a vehicle. For purposes of this definition, the term "vehicle" shall include trucks, buses, vans, railroad cars, automobiles, tractors, trailers, hot air balloons, motor homes, semi-tractors, or any other motorized or nonmotorized transportation device.

**Wind-driven sign.** Any sign consisting of one or a series of banners, pennants, ribbons, spinners, streamers, captive balloons or other objects or material fastened in such a manner as to move, upon being subjected to pressure by wind or breeze.

**Window Sign.** A sign that is applied to or attached to the exterior or interior of a window or located in such a manner within a building that it is visible from the exterior of the building through a window.