

City of Westminster

Draft Sign Code Update

Please note:

Existing text is shown with a white background

Proposed text is shown with a grey shaded background

Chapter 17.330 – SIGNS (DRAFT)

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17.330.005 – Purpose

This chapter establishes regulations for signs in the City of Westminster. The purpose of these regulations is as follows:

- A. To promote the creation of an attractive visual environment that promotes a healthy economy by:
 - 1. Permitting businesses to inform, identify, and communicate effectively.
 - 2. Directing the general public through regulations for the use of signs while maintaining attractive and harmonious application of signs on buildings and sites.
 - 3. Maintain a content-neutral approach to sign regulations so as not to inhibit protected forms of freedom of expression.
- B. To protect and enhance the physical appearance of Westminster in a lawful manner that recognizes the rights of property owners by:
 - 1. Requiring the appropriate design, scale, and placement of signs.
 - 2. Requiring the orderly placement of signs on a building and property while avoiding regulations that are so rigid and inflexible that all signs in a series are monotonously uniform.

3. Assuring that the information displayed on a sign is clearly visible, conspicuous, legible and readable so that the sign achieves the intended purpose.
 4. Regulating the number and size of signs according to standards consistent with the purpose of the City's various zoning districts and the intent of the Zoning Regulations.
 5. Facilitating creative, well-designed signs that contribute in a positive way to the City's visual environment, and help maintain an image of quality for the City.
 6. Ensuring that signs are responsive to the aesthetics and character of their particular location (adjacent buildings and surrounding neighborhood) and that signs are compatible and integrated with their building's architecture and design and with other signs on the site.
 7. Ensuring the quality of the City's visual environment and appearance by avoiding sign clutter, signs of excessive size, poor quality design and by subjecting certain signs to the necessary discretionary processes.
 8. Preserving the residential character of the neighborhood within the residential districts in the City by placing time, place and manner regulations on signage in those zones, including limiting commercial signage displayed therein.
- C.** To foster public safety along public and private streets within Westminster by assuring that all signs are legible, and in safe and appropriate locations.
- D.** To have administrative review procedures that are the minimum necessary to:
1. Balance the community's objectives and regulatory requirements with the reasonable advertising and directional (way-finding) needs of businesses.
 2. Allow for consistent enforcement of all sign regulations.
 3. Minimize the time required to review a sign permit application.
 4. Provide flexibility as to the number and placement of signs so the regulations are responsive to business needs while maintaining a high quality design environment.

17.330.006 – Applicability

This Chapter 17.330 of the Westminster Municipal Code is intended to regulate the following:

- A.** Permanent signs on private property.
- B.** Temporary signs on private property.
- C.** Billboards
- D.** The following signs are exempt from regulation under this Zoning Ordinance.
 1. Any public purpose/safety sign and any other notice or warning required by a valid and applicable federal, state or local law, regulation or resolution, including any signs erected and maintained by any government agency, special district, or utility.

2. Any sign located entirely within a building; not within three feet of a window, door, or opening; and not visible from the exterior of the building.
3. Any sign located on private property and not visible from another private or public property or from street right-of-ways.

17.330.007 – Permit Required

All permanent signs, billboards and temporary commercial signs erected within the City of Westminster must obtain a permit pursuant to the provisions of this Chapter. Any sign erected without a permit or not in compliance with the provisions of this Chapter is an illegal sign and may be abated by the City.

17.330.008 – Permitting Procedures; Appeals

- A. Except as provided for in Section 17.300.006 (Applicability), no construction, erection, installation, relocation, or alteration of any sign is permitted prior to obtaining a sign permit pursuant to a Zoning Clearance (Chapter 17.515).
- B. Procedures to obtain permits for signs shall be as specified in Article 5 (Land use and Development Permit Procedures), and shall be subject to the time lines provided for in that article, unless otherwise indicated in this chapter
- C. Applications shall be filed with the Planning Division on the appropriate City forms, pursuant to the requirements of Section 17.500.015, together with all necessary fees and/or deposits, exhibits, maps, materials, plans, reports, and other information specified in the application form and any applicable Planning Division handout, and any additional information required by the Director in order to describe clearly and accurately the proposed project, its potential environmental impact, and its effect on existing improvements, and to conduct a thorough review of the proposed sign(s).
- D. Sign permit applicants must obtain any and all applicable permits and/or approvals that may be required by other provisions of this Code, including but not limited to, building permits and electrical permits.
- E. Sign permit appeals shall be subject to the appeal procedures of Chapter 17.640.

17.330.009 – Measurement Standards

A. Sign Area and Dimensions

1. **Wall Signs.**
 - a. The area of a wall sign with a background or frame is measured as the entire area of the sign within the background or frame.
 - b. The area of a wall sign with individual elements applied directly to a wall or consists of noncontiguous segments or has an irregularly shaped perimeter, then the area of the sign shall be all of the area encompassed within a single continuous rectilinear-perimeter of **not more than ten straight lines**, enclosing the extreme limits of the message surface and including any

color , material, or graphic which is integrated therein which differentiates the message from the background against which it is placed.

2. **Freestanding Signs.**

- a. Height.
 - (1) The height of a freestanding sign shall be measured from the base of the sign or supportive structure at its point of attachment to the ground, to the highest point of the sign.
 - (2) A freestanding sign on a man-made base, including a graded earth mound, shall be measured from the grade of the nearest pavement or top of any pavement curb.
- b. Sign frames are included in the area measurement of a freestanding sign.
- c. The area of a freestanding sign does not include:
 - (1) Structural support, unless the structural support constitutes all or part of a display device.
 - (2) Design features that are part of a building or other freestanding structure and are not an integral part of the sign.

3. **Back-to-Back Sign Faces.**

- a. The area of two identical sign faces placed back to back is measured as only one of the two sign faces if the sign faces:
 - (1) Cannot be viewed from any point at the same time.
 - (2) Are part of the same sign structure.
- b. When a sign has more than two display surfaces, the sign area is measured as the total area of all display surfaces visible from a single direction.

4. **Appeals.** Determinations of sign area and dimensions made by the Director may be appealed to the Planning Commission.

B. Determining Building Frontage and Frontage Length

1. **Building Unit.** A building unit means a single-tenant building or the area occupied by a tenant in a multiple-tenant building. The frontage of a building unit (tenant space) is the basis for determining the permitted sign area for wall signs.
2. **Building (Unit) Frontage.** The frontage of a building unit includes any building elevation that:
 - a. Faces a public street, including a freeway;
 - b. Faces a driveway, where such driveway is located within the same retail shopping center where the subject building unit is located;

- c. Faces customer parking areas for the subject building unit; or
- d. Contains a public entrance(s) to the building unit.

3. Length of Building Frontages

- a. The length of a building frontage is the sum of all wall lengths parallel, or nearly parallel, (no more than 45 degrees) to the facing frontage (i.e. street, parking lot, primary entrance, secondary public entrance).
- b. For buildings facing two or more streets, the length of the building frontage and allowable sign area is calculated separately for each building frontage.
- c. The building frontage for a tenant space is measured from the centerline of the party walls defining the tenant space.

17.330.010 – Permitted Sign Types

A. Permitted Sign Types by Zoning District. Table 17.330-1 identifies permitted sign types by zoning district.

TABLE 17.330-1 ZONING DISTRICTS AND LAND USE TYPES FOR MAJOR SIGNS

Zoning Districts	Sign Type					
	Awning	Freestanding	Identification, Building Marker and Instructional	Projecting and Suspended	Wall	Window
Standards	17.330.011.A	17.330.011.E	17.330.011.F/G/H	17.330.011.I	17.330.011.L	17.330.011.M
Residential (R1)	NP	NP	P	NP	NP	NP
Residential (R2, R3, R4, R5)	NP	P	P	NP	P	NP
Special Purpose (P/SP, P/OS, CEM, PF)	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Commercial (CR, C1, C2, CM)	P	P	P	P	P	P
Industrial (M-1, M-2)	P	P	P	P	P	NP
Little Saigon	P	P	P	P	P	P
Civic Center	P	P	P	P	P	P

Key: P = Permitted, C = Permitted with Conditional Use Permit, NP = Not Permitted, NA = Not Applicable

- B. Institutional Uses.** All sign types are permitted for institutional uses located within any zoning district. Such uses may include but are not limited to day care facilities, convalescent hospitals, senior housing, religious places of worship and similar uses.
- C. Non-Commercial Speech.** Signs in any zoning district are allowed for any protected, non-commercial speech. No limit on the number of signs. Such signs are limited to a maximum of 8 feet high and a maximum of 40 square feet per sign. One lot or parcel may display a maximum of 80 square feet of such signs.

17.330.011 – Standards for Permanent Signs

A. Awning-Type Signs

TABLE 17.330-2 STANDARDS FOR AWNING-TYPE SIGNS

	Number Allowed	Maximum Sign Area
Awning	No limit as long as the total sign area does not exceed the maximum allowed for wall signs and subject to other limitations in this table and below.	33% of total awning area, subject to the limitations below
Canopy	No limit as long as the total sign area does not exceed the maximum allowed for wall signs and subject to other limitations in this table and below.	1.5 square feet per lineal foot of building or tenant frontage.
Marquee	1 per site entrance	40 square feet

1. Awning-type signs for multiple-tenant projects are only allowed as part of an approved sign program to ensure continuity of architecture and sign identification for the entire development. Individual tenants within multiple-tenant projects may not erect awning signs unless they are part of a sign program for the entire project. Awning signs are allowable on single-tenant buildings without a sign program;
2. Awning-type signs may only be located on building frontages.
3. Combinations of signs on awnings and canopies with wall signs are permitted but may not exceed the maximum allowable sign area per building elevation.
4. **Awning and Canopy Signs.**
 - a. Awnings may not be internally illuminated so that light is emitted from the awning. Lighting directed downwards to illuminate the exterior surface of the awning is allowed.
 - b. Sign text may not exceed one line.
 - c. For Awnings, letter height may not exceed 2/3 the height of the valance, not to exceed 12 inches.
 - d. Awnings shall not encroach into public property (right-of-way).

- e. The lettering must be permanently fixed to the face of the canopy, valance of the awning, or directly on top of the canopy.
- f. The lettering must not extend above the edge of the building roofline.
- g. An awning or canopy sign may not project further from the building wall than the canopy.
- h. Awnings and canopies must be compatible with the architectural style of the building(s) to which they are attached.
- i. A sign is allowed on all faces of an awning or canopy but the total sign area cannot exceed the allowance established for wall signs.

5. Marquee Signs.

- a. Marquee signs are limited to theatres and auditoriums.
- b. A marquee sign must be affixed to a building wall directly above the primary public entrance of the use.

B. Changeable Copy Signs.

- 1. Changeable copy may be utilized on any permitted sign.
- 2. A changeable copy sign may not include an electronic sign, electronic message center sign, or time, date, and temperature sign.
- 3. Trivision signs are not an allowed form of changeable copy.

C. Drive-Through Ordering Signs.

TABLE 17.330-3 STANDARDS FOR DRIVE-THROUGH ORDERING SIGNS

Number Allowed	Maximum Height
2 per business	8 ft.

- 1. Drive-Through Ordering Signs may not be located in the setback area.
- 2. All Drive-Through Ordering Signs shall be internally illuminated and all sign panel backgrounds shall be translucent.

D. Electronic Message Center Signs

TABLE 17.330-4 STANDARDS FOR ELECTRONIC MESSAGE CENTER (EMC) SIGNS

Number Allowed	Maximum Sign Area	Minimum Time Between Message Change
1 per lot EMC sign is not in addition to the allowed	An EMC may utilize up to 80% of the allowable sign area.	A message must be displayed for a minimum of 8 seconds before changing

<p>wall or freestanding sign(s) One of the allowed freestanding sign or wall sign can be an EMC</p>		
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1. **Additional Signs.** Additional EMC signs may be approved by the Planning Commission.
2. **Conditional Use Permit.** An EMC sign located within 500 feet from any property containing a residential uses (measured to the nearest property line of property containing residential uses to the sign) is subject to a conditional use permit to ensure compatibility and to preclude the intrusion of light and glare into residential areas. An EMC sign that is located more than 500 feet from any property containing a residential use (measured to the nearest property line of property containing residential uses to the sign) is not subject to a conditional use permit, however all other provisions of Section 17.330.011(D) shall apply.
3. **Conditions.** In addition to the required findings for a conditional use permit, the Planning Commission shall not approve a conditional use permit for an EMC sign unless positive findings can be made for the following:
 - a. The proposed design of the EMC sign is complete and consistent within itself and is compatible in design with the architectural theme or character of the existing or proposed development it will serve and the community in which it will be located.
 - b. The proposed EMC sign shall be erected such that the sign’s light and glare will not adversely affect the character, livability, or quality of life of any residential community it will be adjacent to or located in.
 - c. The EMC sign shall not display flashing or animated messages intended to attract the attention of passing drivers, so as not to constitute a hazard to the safe and efficient operation of vehicles upon a street or freeway.
 - d. The applicant has demonstrated that the proposed electronic message display surface is factory-certified as capable of complying with the brightness standards, below.
4. **Service Station Signs.** Electronic signs used solely to display prices for gasoline sales at service stations shall not be required to obtain a conditional use permit, but such freestanding signs will be subject to the standards in Section 17.330.011.E.5 (Freestanding Automobile Service Station Price Signs).
5. **Sign Form.** An EMC sign may take the form or style of a freestanding sign, or wall sign only. Other sign forms are prohibited. All EMC signs shall comply with the standards applicable to freestanding signs or wall signs, as specified in this Chapter.
6. **Brightness.** EMC signs must have automatic dimming capability that adjusts the brightness to the ambient light at all times of the day and night. The following brightness standards and limitations shall apply:
 - a. Dawn to dusk: unlimited.

- b. Dusk to dawn: the display surface shall not produce luminance in excess of 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light conditions, or the level recommended by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) for the specific size and location of the site, whichever is less.
- c. The display brightness shall be controlled by a photocell or light sensor that adjusts the brightness to the required dusk-to-dawn level based on ambient light conditions without the need for human input. Use of other brightness adjustment methods, such as timer- or calendar-based systems, shall only be used as a backup system;
- d. The display shall be factory-certified as capable of complying with the above brightness standards. Such certification shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Director; and
- e. The sign owner shall provide to the Director, upon request, certification by an independent contractor that the brightness levels of the sign are in compliance with the requirements of this section.

7. **Display Message.**

- a. The message shown on the EMC display shall not flash, shimmer, glitter, or give the appearance of flashing, shimmering, or glittering.
- b. The EMC display shall have no message or illumination which moves, or is in continuous motion, or which appears to be in continuous motion. Display of full-motion video and video-like sequences is prohibited.
- c. There shall be a direct change from each message to the next, with no transition effect, and no blank or dark interval in between, to avoid a flashing or blinking effect.
- d. The intensity of illumination shall not change, except as required to comply with the dusk-to-dawn brightness standards.
- e. All messages shall be limited to on-site advertising of goods or services, or noncommercial messages (i.e., time, temperature, or public service announcements). All off-site advertising messages are prohibited (see Standards for Off-Premises Signs, Section 17.330.020); this includes messages by or for sponsors, patrons, brands, and other similar off-site parties or entities.

8. **Fixed Copy.** Fixed/permanent sign copy on each face of an electronic message center sign shall be limited to the identification of the business, address, shopping center name or icon and two major tenants or products or services. The fixed/permanent sign copy shall not flash, shimmer, glitter, or give the appearance of flashing, shimmering, or glittering, and shall be included in the overall sign area of the subject sign (wall or freestanding) and shall be consistent with other criteria established for wall or freestanding signs.

9. **Exemptions.** Electronic message center signs and other similar electronic displays that are not visible from the public right-of-way and any other public or private property shall be exempt from the requirements of this subdivision (D), except that such a sign or display shall be adequately covered or shielded, and properly oriented and aimed, so as to prevent the emission or generation

of light and glare above the sign location. All building and electrical permits shall be obtained as required by the Westminster Municipal Code.

E. Freestanding Signs

1. All Freestanding Signs.

a. Street Frontage. Residential streets shall not be included in determining length of street frontage for a non-residential freestanding sign.

b. Location.

- (1) No freestanding sign may block, obscure, or obstruct existing sign area, on any building or freestanding sign, including on abutting property.
- (2) Where more than one freestanding sign is used for a business or group of businesses, the minimum distance between two freestanding signs on the same property shall be 100 feet.

c. Projection and Overhang. No freestanding sign shall overhang a property line adjoining a public right-of-way or a property line between parcels.

d. Design. The following design standards shall apply to all freestanding signs:

- (1) New plastic sign faces on sign cabinets for freestanding signs are prohibited, except for "push-through/through-the-face" types. The portion of a sign cabinet identifying individual tenants may consist of an internally-illuminated cabinet with individual plastic faceplates for each tenant; however, these faceplates shall be push-through/through-the-face types whenever feasible.
- (2) A freestanding sign, including a sign's structural supports, shall be compatible in design (i.e. use of materials, colors, etc.) with the architectural theme or character of the development.
- (3) All tenant faceplates on a freestanding sign shall be comprised of the same background color, except where the background color is subject to a federally registered trademark.
- (4) Individual channel letters on a background, reverse channel letters, or push-through/through-the-face designs are preferred, both for the main sign and the identification of tenants.

e. Setbacks.

TABLE 17.330-5 SETBACK STANDARDS FOR FREESTANDING SIGNS

Setbacks from Property Line	Setback from Intersection of Driveway and Sidewalk	Setback From Public Right-Of-Way for Portion of Sign Above 9 feet
3 feet from front property line 10 feet from all other property lines	10 feet, unless a lesser setback is acceptable to the City Engineer	The portion of a sign with a vertical clearance of at least 9 feet is not required to be setback from the public right-of-way.

2. Freestanding Signs Adjacent to a State Highway or Freeway*

TABLE 17.330-6 STANDARDS FOR FREESTANDING SIGNS ADJACENT TO A STATE HIGHWAY AND FREEWAY

	Minimum Lot Size	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Height
Highway	55,000 square feet	150 square feet	40 feet
Freeway	65,000 square feet	300 square feet	80 feet

*These standards are applicable to only one of the allowed freestanding signs.

3. Freestanding Signs in the Civic Center Overlay.

TABLE 17.330-7 STANDARDS FOR FREESTANDING SIGNS: CIVIC CENTER OVERLAY

Continuous Street Frontage	Number of Signs	Sign Area (Each Sign and Per Face)	Height
0 – 100 feet	0	N/A	N/A
101-500	1 (monument)	100 square feet	10 feet
501-1,000	2 (monument)	100 square feet	10 feet
1001-1500	3 (monument)	100 square feet	10 feet
1501-2000	4 (monument)	100 square feet	10 feet
Over 2000	4 (monument)	100 square feet	10 feet
	1 pylon	100 square feet	25 feet

4. Freestanding Signs: Commercial and Industrial zones and Little Saigon Overlay.

TABLE 17.330-8 STANDARDS FOR FREESTANDING SIGNS: COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES AND LITTLE SAIGON OVERLAY

Continuous Street Frontage	Number of Signs	Sign Area (Each Sign and Per Face)	Height
0 – 100 feet	0	N/A	N/A
101-300	1	100 square feet	25 feet
301-750	2	100 square feet	25 feet
751-1500	3	100 square feet	25 feet
1501-2000	4	100 square feet	25 feet
Over 2000	5	100 square feet	25 feet

5. Freestanding Automobile Service Station Price Signs.

- a. In addition to other signs, an automobile service station may display one freestanding sign per street frontage for the display of fuel prices. Maximum height 10 feet, maximum 100 square

- feet sign area. The freestanding sign(s) can include the name of the service station in addition to the fuel prices.
- b. Digital/changeable copy technology may be used in price signs strictly for the purpose of pricing adjustments and may not be utilized to transmit any other digital messages
 - c. Digital/changeable copy may not scroll, blink, flash , glitter, shimmer or travel horizontally or vertically across the face of the sign.
6. **Multi-Family Residential Uses, Freestanding Signs.**
- a. One monument type sign per lot. Maximum height 6 feet, and maximum area 50 square feet.
7. **Institutional Uses within Residential Districts.**
- a. One Freestanding Sign per lot. Maximum height 25 feet and maximum area 100 square feet.
8. **Institutional Uses within Non-Residential Districts.**
- a. Subject to the standards listed in Sections 17.330.011(E)2-4 above.

F. Identification Signs.

TABLE 17.330-9 STANDARDS FOR IDENTIFICATION SIGNS

Number Allowed	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Projection
1 per entrance	50 square feet	4 inches from the surface of the wall where the sign is mounted

- 1. In addition to the wall signs otherwise permitted by these regulations an additional sign may be permitted up to a maximum of 50 square feet for the purpose of identifying first floor tenants that do not have outside building frontage.
- 2. The sign must be affixed to the wall.
- 3. Information on the sign may include the building address, year built, name of building or primary tenant, property management information, and a directory of tenants.

G. Building Marker

TABLE 17.330-10 STANDARDS FOR BUILDING MARKER

Number Allowed	Maximum Sign Area
1 per building	4 square feet

In addition to the wall signs otherwise permitted, a Building Marker, affixed to the wall, may include only building name, date of construction, or historical data on historic site; and be cut or etched into masonry, bronze, or similar material.

H. Instructional Signs

TABLE 17.330-10 STANDARDS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL SIGNS

Number Allowed	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Height
1 per site entrance	6 square feet	6 feet

1. One instructional sign visible from the right-of-way is permitted in addition to other signs when, based on its size, location, and intended purpose, it will not constitute additional advertising. Additional instructional signs visible from the right-of-way are permitted at each site entrance provided they do not include the business name or logo. Additional instructional signs are allowed on the lot if they are not readable from the right-of-way. The additional instructional signs may include the name of the business and logo. These signs are intended to aid vehicle and pedestrian traffic to maneuver safely onto and within the site.

I. Projecting and Suspended Signs

TABLE 17.330-11 STANDARDS FOR PROJECTING AND SUSPENDED SIGNS

Maximum Sign Area	Minimum Vertical Clearance	Maximum Projection from the Wall	Minimum spacing between projecting or suspended signs
12 square feet	8 feet above the walkway	5 feet	15 feet

1. Such signs are applicable when there are multiple businesses in continuous buildings with an adjacent sidewalk on which pedestrians are walking parallel to the front of the buildings. These buildings may be adjacent to a public street or adjacent to a private walkway in front of buildings that are set back from the public right-of-way.
2. Projecting signs must not project into the street right-of-way or public property until and unless the City enacts an ordinance and creates procedures and a permitting process for encroachments into the right-of-way.
3. Individual tenants within multiple-tenant projects/buildings may not erect projecting or suspended signs unless they are part of a sign program for the entire project/building. A projecting or suspended sign is allowable on a single-tenant building without a sign program.

J. Service Station Canopy Signs.

TABLE 17.330-12 STANDARDS FOR SERVICE STATION CANOPY SIGNS

Number Allowed	Maximum Sign Area
Any number of signs on a single canopy face not exceeding the cumulative sign area allowed for the same single canopy face	25% of the canopy face area of a single canopy face

1. Canopy fascia may be illuminated when not facing a residential zone that abuts the property.
2. Canopy fascia illumination is subject to zoning clearance.
3. Canopy fascia lighting must maximize opportunities for energy conservation, while avoiding glare and light trespass through design of lighting installations, selection of fixture type, lighting technology and location, and control of light levels.
4. The display surface shall not produce luminance in excess of 0.3 foot-candles above ambient light conditions, or the level recommended by the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) for the specific size and location of the site, whichever is less.
5. Canopy sign is in addition to the allowed wall sign for the building.

K. Subdivision Entry Features.

TABLE 17.330-13 STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION ENTRY FEATURE WALL SIGN

Number Allowed	Maximum Sign Area
2 per tract entrance; 1 per wall	50 square feet

L. Wall Signs.

TABLE 17.330-14 STANDARDS FOR WALL SIGNS

Number Allowed	Maximum Sign Area
Each tenant or building may have multiple wall signs as long as the total wall sign area does not exceed the maximum.	1.5 square feet per lineal foot of building or tenant frontage, with exceptions below.

1. Sign area shall not exceed 200 square feet, as determined by Section 17.330.009 (Measurement Standards) of this Chapter.
2. Maximum sign area need not be less than 40 square feet.
3. No wall sign shall extend beyond the perimeter of the signable areas (as defined in Section 17.330.022 (Definitions)) on which it is displayed.
4. In single or multi-story buildings with no direct access from the outside to tenant spaces, the following shall apply:
 - a. The maximum sign area applies to each floor and not to each tenant.
 - b. A maximum of one wall sign shall be permitted for a tenant occupying the same floor where the wall sign is located.
5. Each qualified wall frontage is allowed signs subject to the size limitations above.
6. Allowed sign area cannot be transferred from one building side or wall to another
7. The area of any wall sign may be increased by twenty-five percent when the building is set back (where the sign is proposed) at least 200 feet from the public right-of-way, and may be further increased an additional twenty-five percent for each additional 200 feet of setback, up to a maximum increase in sign area of seventy-five percent.
8. No wall sign shall extend beyond or above the top of the parapet wall of a flat-roofed building, or above the top of a mansard roof. A sign displayed above the eave line of a sloped roof building shall be considered a roof sign. No wall sign shall be located upon an architectural protrusion.
9. No wall sign may project more than fourteen inches from the wall. No wall sign may project into the public right-of-way.
10. Wall signs shall only be erected within areas that are signable areas as defined in Section 17.330.022 (Definitions). The maximum area of the signage allowed is restricted by the total sign area designated for each frontage.
11. **Design.** The following design standards shall apply to all wall signs:
 - a. **Channel letters required.** Signs consisting of individual channel letters are required. Exposed raceways are prohibited unless necessitated by structural considerations.
 - b. **Foam letters.** Foam letter signs are prohibited.
 - c. **Cabinet signs.**
 - (1) New cabinet (“can”) signs are prohibited, except in the case of unusually shaped signs or logos that would be onerous to render in channel letter form.
 - (2) Existing cabinet signs may continue to be used and maintained but not enlarged, subject to the regulations of this chapter. However, upon replacement of the sign face or copy, use of a “push-through” cabinet sign face and new cabinet shall be required, with the sign copy rendered in relief either in front of or behind the sign face of the new cabinet.

- d. **Flat wall signs.** Wall signs consisting of copy that is painted or otherwise applied or rendered, with no surface relief, onto a background sheet product of wood (including plywood, fiberboard, etc.), plastic, or metal, which is then affixed to the building wall, shall not be permitted, unless approved through the Creative Sign Permit process, in order to ensure that the sign is of a high-quality design. The purpose of this regulation is to avoid the use of these materials in low-quality sign designs.

M. Window Signs

TABLE 17.330-15 STANDARDS FOR WINDOW SIGNS

Maximum Area	Placement
The aggregate area of window signs (combined with any temporary window signs) in each individual window may not exceed 25 percent of the area of that window or glazing panel. For the purpose of determining the area of a window or glass panel that is glazed, all non- glass materials and surfaces, such as metal or wood used to frame a window or glazed glass panels shall not be included as a part of the window or glazed panel.	Window signs are only allowed within windows that can clearly be seen through (transparent window) or glazing of a building. Opaque windows may not contain window signs. All window signs must be located on windows along the façade directly adjacent to the street frontage of the lot.

17.330.012 – Identification of Business for Emergency Responders

For the purpose of providing adequate emergency services, all businesses must have one sign that is clearly legible, and must contain the street number and the name of the business in the English alphabet.

17.330.013 – Non-Conforming Signs

A. General Provisions

1. Nonconforming signs must be maintained in good condition pursuant to Section 17.330.018 (Maintenance).
2. A nonconforming sign may not be altered, modified or reconstructed except:
 - a. When such alteration, modification or reconstruction would bring such sign into conformity with these regulations;
 - b. When the existing use has new ownership that results in a change in the name or logo of the use or business on the property, and such change complies with subsection “d” below;
 - c. When the space is reoccupied by a similar use and the new occupant requires no external building or site renovation, and such change complies with subdivision (d), below;
 - d. Cabinet signs with translucent plastic faces shall be subject to the requirement to utilize a push-through-type of sign face upon replacement of the sign face or copy or when the circumstances specified in subdivision (B), below, are met.
 - e. Any alteration, modification or reconstruction permitted in this section is limited to the replacement of a sign panel, replacing individual letters and logos within the same area (subject to (d), above) or repainting a sign face, and does not permit changes to the structure, framing,

erection or relocation of the sign unless such changes bring the sign into conformity with these regulations.

B. Limitation for Non-Conforming Signs

1. **Removal.** A nonconforming sign must be removed upon verification that any of the following conditions have been met:

- a. The use to which such non-conforming sign refers has been abandoned for more than 90 consecutive days; or
- b. The use to which such non-conforming sign refers has changed to another use, where a permit is required for any interior or exterior improvement, modification, alteration, addition, or expansion to such use; or
- c. The regulation or amendment to these regulations which made the sign non-conforming has been in effect for 15 years or more.

2. **Extension of time to comply.** The timeframes established in this Section for a sign to be brought into compliance with the requirements of these regulations may be extended at the request of the sign owner or lessee. In evaluating the extension of time for a nonconforming sign, the Director will consider the following factors to determine whether the owner of the sign has had a reasonable amount of time to recoup the initial investment:

- a. The value of the sign at the time of construction and the length of time the sign has been in place.
- b. The life expectancy of the original investment in the sign and its salvage value, if any.
- c. The amount of depreciation and/or amortization of the sign already claimed for tax or accounting purposes.
- d. The length of the current tenant lease or expected occupancy compared to the date the sign is to be brought into compliance.
- e. The extent to which the sign is not in compliance with the requirements of these regulations.
- f. The degree to which the Director determines that the sign is consistent with the purposes of these regulations.
- g. Whether the sign has “historical” or “landmark” significance and should, therefore, be exempt from amortization.

17.330.014 – Standards for Temporary Signs

- A. Temporary signs must be properly maintained at all times. Any faded, torn, ripped, detached, defaced, or otherwise damaged temporary sign must be promptly repaired, replaced, or removed.
- B. Removal of temporary signs is the responsibility of the owner and/or tenant of the property on which the temporary sign is located. The City may remove temporary signs placed on public property in violation of this Chapter without prior notice. The City may remove temporary sign placed on private property in violation of this Chapter, after making reasonable attempts to notify the owner that the temporary signs must be removed. Failure to timely remove a temporary sign is subject to an administrative citation per sign removed, to offset the cost of removal by the City.
- C. Signs exempt from a sign permit are still subject to any applicable building and/or electrical permit.

TABLE 17-330-16 STANDARDS FOR TEMPORARY SIGNS

	Residential Zones	Commercial Zones	Industrial Zones
Multi-family/mixed use residential containing 16 units or more_Flags	<i>Permit required (Commission action required).</i> 1. Maximum 1 flag pole for every 50 lineal feet of lot frontage. Additional poles may be placed along either side of the main walkway(s) leading to the main entrance(s) of the complex 2. Maximum height 15 feet. 3. 18sq. ft. maximum size of flag and no more than one flag per pole. 4. Maximum display period up to one year, renewable annually.		<i>Prohibited.</i>
Balloon Signs (18 inches or less in diameter)	<i>Prohibited.</i>	<i>Permit required.</i> Allowed, subject to the following: 1. Only allowed for outdoor display uses located on lots 15,000 square feet or greater. 2. May not extend beyond any property line or over any public-right-of-way, regardless of wind conditions. 3. Must be securely anchored. 4. May not be released into the air. 5. Metallic (mylar) balloons are prohibited. 6. Maximum height above ground 30 feet. 7. Total maximum display period 180 days per 12-month period. (A single permit can allow such signs to be displayed during weekends (including Fridays) and holidays.)	
Additional Temporary Signage That May Be Displayed During Period of Construction	<i>Permit required.</i> 1. One per street frontage of a property greater than 1 acre. 2. 32 sq. ft. maximum size. 3. 8 ft. maximum height. 4. 5 ft. minimum setback from property line. 5. May only be on display for the period during which active construction is proceeding on the project or when an active entitlement application is on file with the City. 6. Sign face must be constructed of wood, plastic or metal. 7. May display any message, not otherwise prohibited by law (i.e., may not contain obscenity).		

	Residential Zones	Commercial Zones	Industrial Zones
Flags	<p><i>No sign permit required.</i></p> <p>1. Flags may display any noncommercial message or image. This regulation is intended to prohibit advertising or products or services in residential areas, in order to preserve the residential character of neighborhoods, not to incidentally prohibit business names or logos that may be associated with noncommercial images such as sponsored athletes or events.</p> <p>a) Maximum pole height 20 feet</p> <p>b) Maximum flag size 15 square feet (3 feet by 5 feet)</p> <p>c) No portion of the pole or flag shall encroach into the interior side yards at any time (including portions of the front and rear yards that overlap with the side yards).</p> <p>d) No portion of the pole or flag shall be within five feet of the front and street side property lines.</p> <p>e) Maximum number: 3 flags</p>	<p><i>Permit required.</i></p> <p>1. Flag poles may be 1.5 times the height of the building, but not more than 50 feet tall.</p> <p>2. Maximum number: 2 flags</p> <p><i>No sign permit required.</i></p> <p>1. Flags exempt under Section 17.330.017.</p> <p>a) Maximum height of flag pole 60 feet</p> <p>b) Maximum flag size 9 feet by 12 feet (108 square feet).</p> <p>c) Maximum number of flag poles: 3</p> <p>d) Maximum number of flags 3</p>	

	Residential Zones	Commercial Zones	Industrial Zones
Temporary Signage Allowed to Be Displayed During a One-Time Event (Private Property)	<p><i>No sign permit required, except as required by Section 17.540.045 for garage sale permits.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3 square feet maximum area 5 feet maximum height Maximum number. 1 per property May display any message, not otherwise prohibited by law (i.e., may not contain obscenity). May be displayed up to 2 days before the one-time event, and must be removed within 24 hours after the event ends. No sign shall be placed on public property, including but not limited to flood channel fencing One-time events held at a property which qualify for this additional sign (that may contain any message) include garage sales and open house events. 	<i>Prohibited.</i>	<i>Prohibited.</i>
Human Signs	<i>Prohibited.</i>	<i>Prohibited.</i>	<i>Prohibited.</i>
Inflatable Characters	<i>Prohibited— unless permitted as a Season or Holiday Display</i>	<p><i>Permit required.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Only allowed for outdoor display uses located on lots 15,000 square feet or greater, and subject to the following standards: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Inflatable characters must be located on and anchored to the ground, and in no event may be placed on the roof of any structure on the lot. Inflatable characters must not contain any text or images intended to convey a message or information. Inflatable characters may not be displayed more than 90 total calendar days per property. 	
Interim Identification Signs	<i>Prohibited.</i>	<p><i>Permit required.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One temporary sign for the identification of a new establishment is allowed until permanent signs can be erected. 50 sq. ft. maximum. The interim sign may not be displayed longer than 60 days. The Director will grant a one-time extension upon a showing that the delay in obtaining and mounting a permanent sign has been caused by factors beyond the control of the establishment. 	
Pennants/Pennant Strings	<i>Prohibited.</i>	<i>Prohibited</i>	<i>Prohibited</i>

	Residential Zones	Commercial Zones	Industrial Zones
Portable Signs	<i>Prohibited</i>	<p><i>Permit required.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All portable signs, must be constructed of wood, fiberglass, or similar material, as approved by the Planning Division. 2. Text, script, logos, or other information must be painted or applied in a manner consistent with the purpose and intent of this chapter to require quality signs. Portable sign copy must look professional and of similar quality in its design and display as permanent signage, i.e., not handwritten, sloppy, or non-uniform. 3. Portable signs may not extend, into the public right-of-way, including streets and public sidewalks, or adjacent properties. 4. Portable signs may not be placed within any required parking areas, parking lots, or planters. 5. Portable signs may not be located within required public access areas, which include on-site private walkways or sidewalks. Portable signs may be placed within building recesses or in a manner as not to obstruct pedestrian flow. 6. Portable signs may not block any area required or designated for the purpose of providing access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. 7. Portable signs may not exceed 12 square feet in area. 8. Portable signs may not exceed 4 feet in height. 	
Banners	<i>Prohibited- Unless permitted as a Seasonal or Holiday Display.</i>	<p><i>Permit Required.</i></p> <p>Except when used as an Interim Identification Sign, banners are allowed only on freestanding parking lot light fixtures of a commercial zoned property not to exceed 2.5'x 7'in area and not subject to time restrictions. Banners placed on parking lot light fixtures shall not be used for off-site advertisement or identification. All banners within a parking lot shall be of a uniform color and material and subject to the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Banners must be constructed of plastic, vinyl, canvas, or other weather resistant material. Banners may not be constructed of paper, cardboard, clear plastic, or similar material. 2. Banners must be located entirely within the subject property and may not project over property lines or into the public right-of-way. 	

	Residential Zones	Commercial Zones	Industrial Zones
<p>Noncommercial Temporary Signs.</p>	<p><i>No sign permit required</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All signs shall be posted on private property only. Signs are prohibited on all utility poles, street trees, traffic control devices, poles, signs, light poles and on any privately or publicly owned signs, utility equipment, telephone and electrical lines and infrastructure, including flood channel fences and street medians. 2. 40 sq. ft. maximum per sign. 3. 8 ft. high maximum per sign. 4. No limit on the number of signs up to a maximum area of 80 sq. ft. for each lot or parcel. 5. Signs shall not interfere with or be designed in such a manner that they will be confused with traffic control signals or signs, or obstruct the vision of traffic. Signs shall not be placed on any public property or right of way or posted on any utility pole or device. 6. All such signs shall maintain a setback of at least 5 feet from any public right-of-way. 7. Signs shall be placed at least five feet (5') distance from each other. 8. Signs shall not be placed so as to obstruct ingress and egress into any private or public property. 9. No sign shall be placed so as to obstruct pedestrians' or motorists' view of signs erected by a local, state, or federal governmental agency, including, but not limited to, traffic signs, public directional signs, parking signs, and street address signs. 10. No sign shall be placed so as to obstruct or hinder sidewalk or street access by pedestrians and vehicles. 11. Signs shall not have moving parts, emit smoke, light, or sound. 12. For signs posted on any property other than the sign owner's property, the person or entity responsible for the sign shall obtain written permission from the property owner or their authorized representative prior to posting of any signs 13. Signs shall be removed from a premise no later than 5 days following the conclusion of the activity or event promoted, when such a sign promotes an activity that has a specified time. 		
<p>Real Estate For Sale or Lease Signs, on-premises</p> <p>Note: This category of signage is permitted as required by Civil Code section 713. The City does not intend to create a content-based regulation but must include this category as required by the state law.</p>	<p><i>No sign permit required.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One per street frontage. 2. 5 sq. ft. maximum. 3. 6 ft. high maximum. 	<p><i>No sign permit required.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One per street frontage. 2. 32 sq. ft. maximum. 3. 12 ft. high maximum. 	

	Residential Zones	Commercial Zones	Industrial Zones
Seasonal or Holiday Displays	<p><i>No sign permit required.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seasonal or holiday displays may include painted window signs, twinkle or holiday lights, light standard decorations, flags, or other similar ornamentation approved by the Planning Division. 2. No seasonal or holiday display may extend into the public right-of-way, adjacent properties, or public street or alley. 3. No seasonal or holiday display may be placed so as to obstruct visibility of ingress or egress to the site. 4. Seasonal or holiday displays may not be exhibited longer than 30 consecutive days per holiday and may not be displayed on a single property more than a cumulative 90 days per calendar year. 5. Seasonal or holiday displays may not extend into the public right-of-way, adjacent properties, or public street or alley. 		
Window Signs	<p><i>Prohibited</i></p>	<p><i>No sign permit required.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Only allowed within windows that can clearly be seen through (transparent window) or glazing of a building. Opaque windows may not contain window signs. 2. Must be located on windows along the façade directly adjacent to the street frontage of the lot. 3. The aggregate area of temporary window signs (combined with any permanent window signs) in each individual window may not exceed 25% of the area of that window or glazing panel. For the purpose of determining the area of a window or glass panel that is glazed, all non-glass materials and surfaces, such as metal or wood used to frame a window or glazed glass panels shall not be included as a part of the window or glazed panel. 	

17.330.015 – Standards for Billboards

TABLE 17.330-17 STANDARDS FOR BILLBOARDS

Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Height
14 x 48 feet	35 feet

- A. Billboards are subject to a Conditional Use Permit, which will establish parameters reasonably necessary to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses including, but not limited to, maximum sign area, height, setbacks, and sign face dimensions.
- B. An electronic message center sign may be allowed if it can be found not to negatively impact surrounding uses, particularly residential uses.
- C. Billboards shall meet all the requirements of the California Department of Transportation and applicable state and federal law.
- D. The owner of the billboard shall be required to provide public service advertising at its sole cost and expense and/or advertisement space for businesses in the City, at no or reduced cost, for a minimum of 30 days a year.
- E. Billboards must be visible primarily from freeways.

17.330.016 – Sign Program

- A. This section establishes standards and procedures for the review and approval of Sign Programs. The purpose of a Sign Program is to:
 - 1. Ensure that all signs on a subject property are of complementary style and design, and are compatible with the architecture and theme of the property.
 - 2. Provide a process for the review of the signs to ensure that new developments or major remodels achieve the highest quality of design by complementing the development with high-quality signs.
 - 3. Establish special sign criteria and standards for a given property when such additional regulation or waivers from the provisions of this chapter are considered appropriate and beneficial.
- B. **Applicability.** Application for a Sign Program shall be required for the following:
 - 1. Multi-tenant developments of three or more separate businesses that either occupy the same building or lot, or share common access and parking facilities.
 - 2. Whenever five or more signs are proposed for a development, whether for single or multiple tenants.
 - 3. Whenever wall signs are proposed on multi-tenant buildings over one story in height having a shared building entry.
 - 4. Whenever multiple projecting or suspended signs are proposed.
 - 5. Whenever awning signs are proposed for multiple-tenant projects/buildings

- C. Application.** A Sign Program application shall include all information and materials required by the Department, and the filing fee as specified in a fee resolution to be adopted by the City Council.
- D. Approval authority.** An application for a Sign Program shall be subject to review and approval or disapproval by the Director, under the procedures set forth in Chapter 17.520 (Development Review).
- E. Findings.** The Director shall not approve a Sign Program unless the proposed Sign Program meets the following design criteria:
1. All signs in the Sign Program are designed in such a manner so as to be internally consistent, coordinated, and whole within themselves, and harmonious with any existing signs remaining on the site.
 2. Any existing signs on the site, if they are to remain, are of high quality design and materials, and complement the existing or proposed building and architecture, and will be complemented by the new signs in the Sign Program as well.
 3. All signs in the Sign Program will complement and enhance the architectural theme of the subject property.
 4. All signs in the Sign Program comply with the standards of this chapter, unless specific exemptions have been granted in the interest of enhanced design and compatibility, and such exemptions are not contrary to the intent of this chapter.
- F. Waiver of standards.** A waiver from the development standards of this chapter may be granted for signs in a Sign Program if the findings required for a Creative Sign Permit are made by the Planning Commission, and the waiver will achieve the specified purpose of a Creative Sign Permit. However, prohibited signs shall not be approved through a Sign Program.

17.330.017 – Creative Sign Permit

A waiver from the provisions of these sign regulations may be considered through the procedures set forth in this Section. Provided that, any prohibited signs, including those listed in Section 17.330.019 (Prohibited Signs) and any sign not specifically permitted, shall not be approved except through the provisions of Chapter 17.555 (Administrative Adjustments and Variances). The purpose of the creative sign permit is to allow innovative and original signage in limited locations around the City.

- A. Creative Sign Permit.** This section establishes standards and procedures for the review and approval of Creative Sign Permits. The purposes of the Creative Sign Permit are to:
1. Encourage signs of unique design that exhibit a high degree of imagination, inventiveness, spirit, and thoughtfulness.
 2. Provide a process for the application of sign regulations in ways that will allow creatively designed signs that make a positive visual contribution to the overall image of the City, while mitigating the impacts of large or unusually designed signs.
 3. An applicant may apply for a Creative Sign Permit in order to request approval of development standards that differ from the provisions of this chapter, but comply with the purpose and findings

of this section. However, the Creative Sign Permit process shall not be used to allow any prohibited sign type or feature.

B. Applicability.

1. Creative Sign Permits may only be issued for the parcels comprising the Westminster Mall, Westminster Center, the commercial center at the northeast corner of Beach Boulevard and Heil Avenue and for those parcels within the Little Saigon Community Plan Area (as designated in the Westminster General Plan).
2. Creative Sign Permits may only be issued for on-premises signs.

C. Application. A Creative Sign Permit application shall include all information and materials required by the Department, and the filing fee as specified in a fee resolution to be adopted by the City Council.

D. Approval authority. An application for a Creative Sign Permit shall be subject to review and approval or disapproval by the Planning Commission, subject to a noticed public hearing set forth in Section 17.630.010 (Notice of Public Hearings and Administrative Review).

E. Findings. The Planning Commission shall not approve a Creative Sign Permit unless the proposed sign meets the following design criteria (in addition to the findings required in Chapter 17.520 (Development Review)):

1. **Design quality.** The sign shall:

- a. Constitute a substantial aesthetic improvement to the site and shall have a positive visual impact on the surrounding area.
- b. Be of unique design, and exhibit a high degree of imagination, inventiveness, spirit, and thoughtfulness; and
- c. Provide strong graphic character through the imaginative use of color, graphics, proportion, quality materials, scale, and texture.

2. **Contextual criteria.** The sign shall contain at least one of the following elements:

- a. Classic historic design style;
- b. Creative image reflecting current or historic character of the City; or
- c. Inventive representation of the logo, name, or use of the structure or business.

3. **Architectural criteria.** The sign shall:

- a. Utilize or enhance the architectural elements of the building; and
- b. Be placed in a logical location in relation to the overall composition of the building's facade and not cover any key architectural features and details of the facade.

4. **Impacts on surrounding uses.** The sign shall be located and designed not to cause light and glare impacts on surrounding uses, especially residential uses.

17.330.018 – Maintenance

All signs must be maintained in accordance with the following:

- A.** The property owner and/or tenant business must maintain the sign to all City standards and in a condition appropriate to the intended use; and has a continuing obligation to comply with all building code requirements.
- B.** When a wall sign is removed from a building, the surface of the building where the sign was placed shall be restored to match the same wall surface. All holes and penetrations onto the wall surface associated with the sign shall be filled and replaced with materials to match the same wall surface. Wall surface materials that are faded, broken, missing, or altered as a result of the sign shall be repaired and/or replaced to match the same wall surface.
- C.** If the sign is deemed by the Director to be in an unsafe condition, the owner of the business to which the sign relates, as well as the owner of the property on which the sign is located, will be immediately notified in writing, and must, within 48 hours of receipt of such notification, respond to the City with a plan to correct the unsafe condition, remove the unsafe sign, or cause it to be removed. If after 7 days, the unsafe condition has not been corrected through repair or removal, the City may cause the repair or removal of such sign at the expense of the property owner or lessee. If the total costs are not paid in full within 60 days of the repairs or removal, the amount owed will be certified as an assessment against the property where the sign is located, and lien upon that property, together with an additional 10 percent penalty for collection as prescribed for unpaid real estate taxes.
- D.** In cases of emergency, the City may cause the immediate removal of a dangerous or defective sign without notice. A post-removal hearing will be provided to the sign owner and property owner.
- E.** Whenever any sign, either conforming or nonconforming to these regulations, is required to be removed for the purpose of repair, re-lettering or re-painting, the same may be done without a permit or without any payment of fees provided that all of the following conditions are met:
 - 1. There is no alteration or remodeling to the structure or the mounting of the sign itself;
 - 2. There is no enlargement or increase in any of the dimensions of the sign or its structure;
 - 3. The sign is accessory to a legally permitted, conditional or nonconforming use.

17.330.019 – Prohibited Signs

The following signs shall be prohibited:

- A. Super Graphic Signs.** Unless permitted per section 17.330.005 (Creative Sign Permit)
- B. Unlawful Sign Projections.** No sign shall project into an adjoining private property under separate ownership, or into a public right-of-way or established setback.

- C. Flashing Signs.** No sign shall flash, shimmer, blink or glitter, nor give the appearance of flashing, shimmering, blinking or glittering.
- D. Moving or Rotating Signs.** No sign shall rotate, oscillate or otherwise move, nor give the appearance of rotating, oscillating or moving. This includes rotating trivision signs.
- E. Sound, Odor, Particulate Matter.** No sign shall emit audible sound, odor or particulate matter.
- F. Unlawful Illumination.**
 - 1. No sign illumination system shall contain or use any beacon, spot, or stroboscopic light, or reflector which is visible from any public right-of-way or adjacent property.
 - 2. Generally, illuminated signs shall not be allowed to change color or light intensity. The exception being neon, fiber optic, or light-emitting diode (LED) light sources, which are permitted to gradually change color. Light intensity shall not be allowed to change.
 - 3. No floodlight shall be used which is not hooded or shielded so that the light source is not visible from any public right-of-way, adjacent property, or residential dwelling unit.
- G. Street Furniture.** Signs shall not be placed on street furniture, as defined in this title.
- H. Signs on City Trees.** Signs posted, stapled or otherwise affixed to city trees, including as provided for in Section 12.24.060.

I. Advertising vehicles.

- 1. No person shall park or convey any mobile billboard advertising display as defined herein, either standing alone or attached to a motor vehicle, upon any public street or public lands in the City of Westminster. "Convey" shall mean to drive, carry, pull, or otherwise transport.
- 2. Removal of Mobile Billboard Advertising Displays Authorized.
 - a. Pursuant to Section 22651 (v) and (w) of the California Vehicle Code, a peace officer, or any regularly employed and salaried employee of the City, who is authorized to engage and is engaged in directing traffic or enforcing parking laws and regulations, may remove, or cause to be removed, the mobile billboard advertising display, or anything that the mobile billboard display is attached to, including a motor vehicle, located within the territorial limits of the City when the mobile advertising display is found upon any public street or any public lands, if all of the following requirements are satisfied:
 - b. When a mobile billboard advertising display either standing alone or attached to a motor vehicle, is parked or left standing in violation of this Code, and the registered owner of the vehicle or display was previously issued a warning notice or citation for the same offense;
 - c. A warning notice or citation was issued to a first-time offender at least 24 hours prior to the removal of the vehicle or display. The City is not required pursuant to Section 22651(v)(2) and Section 22651(w)(2) of the California Vehicle Code to provide further notice for a subsequent violation prior to enforcement; and

- d. The warning notice or citation advised the registered owner of the vehicle or display that he or she may be subject to penalties upon a subsequent violation of the ordinance that may include removal of the vehicle or display.

3. Permanent Advertising Signs Excepted.

- a. Pursuant to Section 21100(p)(2) and (p)(3) of the California Vehicle Code, this section does not apply to advertising signs that are permanently affixed in a manner that is painted directly upon the body of a motor vehicle, applied as a decal on the body of a motor vehicle, or placed in a location on the body of a motor vehicle that was specifically designed by a vehicle manufacturer for the express purpose of containing an advertising sign, such that they are an integral part of, or fixture of a motor vehicle for permanent decoration, identification, or display and that do not extend beyond the overall length, width, or height of the vehicle. See Figure 17.330-30.

4. Post Storage Impound Hearing.

- a. Section 22852 of the California Vehicle Code applies to this Section with respect to the removal of any mobile billboard advertising display vehicle. Section 22852 is incorporated by reference as if set forth in full herein and provides, in summary, that whenever an authorized employee of the City directs the storage of a vehicle, the City shall direct the storage operator to provide the vehicle's registered and legal owner(s) of record, or their agent(s), with the opportunity for a post-storage hearing to determine the validity of the storage. Notice of the storage shall be mailed or personally delivered to the registered and legal owner(s) within 48 hours, excluding weekends, as specifically provided for under Section 22852 of the California Vehicle Code. To receive a post-storage hearing, the owner(s) of record, or their agent(s), must request a hearing in person, in writing, or by telephone within ten days of the date appearing on the notice. The City may authorize its own officer or employee to conduct the hearing as long as the hearing officer is not the same person who directed the storage of the vehicle.

5. Violation - Penalties.

- a. After the initial warning citation, a subsequent violation of this Section is a misdemeanor, punishable upon conviction by a fine of not less than Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250), nor more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000), or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six months, or by both fine and imprisonment. At the discretion of any person duly authorized by the Chief of Police to issue a citation for any violation of this section, or the Westminster City Attorney's Office, a violation of this section may be an infraction enforced through the parking penalty process set forth in Section 40200 et seq. of the California Vehicle Code. The City Council may establish from time to time by resolution an increase in the amount of the fine.

- J. Obstruction of Use or Visibility.** No sign shall be located so that any portion of the sign or its supports interferes with the free use of any fire escape or exit or obstructs any required fire standpipe,

stairway, door, ventilator or window; nor shall any sign be located so as to obstruct the visibility (corner cut-off areas) of vehicles or pedestrians using driveways or doorways.

- K. Interference with Utility Lines.** No sign shall be located which has less horizontal or vertical clearance from utility lines than that prescribed by the rules of the Public Utilities Commission of the State.
- L. Interference with Official Traffic Control Devices.** No sign shall appear in color, wording, design, location or illumination to resemble or conflict with any traffic control device.
- M. Decorative flags.** Flags with no intrinsic meaning (usually, but not limited to, simple flags of one or several colors, with or without a design motif), and that are intended only to draw attention to a building or location, are prohibited. However, nothing in this Subsection shall be construed to prohibit any flag that constitutes a protected form of expression and is in compliance with all other applicable provisions of the Municipal Code.
- N. Flag Signs.** Other than as provided in Table 17-330-16 (Standard for Temporary Signs), flag signs are prohibited. This includes any type of flag that functions as a sign, whether affixed to a building or not, including but not limited to those mounted on curved or flexible swivel masts and commonly referred to as “sails”, “feathers,” or “bow banners.”
- O. Flags attached to plants.** Signs may not be attached to trees, bushes or living plants.
- P. Projected light signs.** Any sign created by projecting light onto a surface is prohibited.
- Q. Roof signs.**
- R. Abandoned signs.**
- S. Off-premises signs,** unless exempted per Section 17.330.020.
- T. Faded, deteriorated, or damaged signs.**
- U. Human Signs.**

17.330.020 – Off-Premises Signs—Exception to Prohibition

- A.** Off-premise signs are permitted for businesses located within the City that do not have street frontages or lack the opportunity for a wall sign, that would be clearly visible to motorists from a major arterial street, subject to the following:
 1. Subject to authorization by an adjacent property owner, the subject business name can be added to a freestanding sign if the freestanding sign is otherwise permitted on the adjacent parcel and in compliance with all applicable standards for freestanding signs and signs in general.
 2. All sign area devoted to all off-premise businesses shall be included as part of the maximum allowed sign area for the freestanding sign.
 3. All sign area devoted to off-premise businesses on an individual freestanding sign shall not exceed 50 percent of the sign area of the same freestanding sign.

4. The freestanding sign must be located on a parcel adjacent to the subject property that lacks frontage or visibility.
5. Such off-premise signs under this section are subject to a Zoning Clearance, in accordance with Chapter 17.515 (Zoning Clearance) of this Title.

17.330.021 – Substitution Clause.

Any sign authorized under this Chapter may display noncommercial copy in lieu of any other copy. Signs displaying noncommercial content are subject to the same time, place, and manner regulations as commercial signs under this Chapter.

17.330.022 – Definitions

The following words and phrases used in this Sign Code have the following meanings:

Abandoned Sign. The sign face, frame and supporting pole or structure, and all appurtenances, of any sign for a business, institution, or other land use which has abandoned the premises for 90 days or more, or any land use for which the business license has expired and remained expired for one year. Abandoned sign also includes any promotional activity sign for which the permit has expired. Signs associated with a demolished or abandoned building shall also be considered abandoned signs.

Alteration. Any change in copy, color, size or shape, which changes appearance of a sign, or a change in position, location, construction or supporting structure of a sign, except that a copy change on a sign is not an alteration.

Animated Sign. A sign which has any visible moving part, flashing or osculating lights, visible mechanical movement of any description, or other apparent visible movement achieved by any means that move, change, flash, oscillate or visibly alters in appearance in a manner that is not permitted by these regulations.

Architectural Protrusion. “Architectural Protrusion,” as applied to the placement of wall signs refers to a building feature, such as a cornice, exposed rafter, bracket, column, railing, or similar projection in relief of a wall surface.

Area of Sign. The entire face of a sign including the advertising surface and any framing, trim or molding. For signs with more than two surfaces, the area is the maximum area of all display faces which are visible from any ground. If the supporting device is in itself a part of the sign, it shall be included in the calculation of the area of the sign. Refer to measurement standards in Section 17.330-006 (Measurement Standards).

Attraction or Reader Board. Any sign having changeable copy for the purpose of advertising events, sales, services or products provided on the site.

Awning. A shelter extending from the exterior wall of a building and composed of non-rigid materials except for the supporting framework.

Awning Sign. A sign painted on, attached to or supported by an awning.

Balloon Sign. A lighter-than-air gas-filled balloon, tethered in a fixed location, which has a sign with a message on its surface or attached in any manner to the balloon.

Banner Sign. A temporary, lightweight sign that contains a message which is attached or imprinted on a flexible surface that deforms under light pressure and that is typically constructed of non-durable materials, including, but not limited to, cardboard, cloth and/or plastic.

Billboard. An outdoor advertising structure that advertises goods, products or services not being sold or provided at the location of the structure.

Building Marker. A sign that includes the building name, date of construction, or historical data on historic site; must be cut or etched into masonry, bronze, or similar material.

Cabinet Sign. A sign with one or several faces, which contains all the text and/or logo symbols of each face upon a facing made of translucent and/or opaque material contained within a single enclosed cabinet, box or can. A cabinet sign may or may not be internally illuminated.

Canopy. A freestanding or attached permanent roof-like shelter, typically in front of a building entrance.

Canopy Sign. A sign that is attached to the vertical face or soffit of a canopy or on top of the canopy.

Changeable Copy Sign. A sign whose copy is periodically changed to advertise events, sales, and the like, with detachable but motionless lettering that must be manually installed, usually on a series of parallel tracks.

Construction Sign. See **Temporary Sign Displayed During Period of Construction.**

Directional Sign. A permanent instructional sign located on private property at or near the public right-of-way, directing or guiding vehicular traffic onto the property and/or toward parking or other identified locations on the property.

Electronic Message Center Sign. A sign 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. This includes signs whose informational content can be changed or altered by means of computer- or circuit-driven electronic impulses. An electronic message center sign displays only on-site sign copy, information, and advertising; otherwise it shall be considered a billboard. Electronic message center sign does not include a sign that displays only time, date, and/or temperature that is six (6) square feet or smaller.

Freestanding Sign. A sign that is supported by a structure connected permanently to the ground, or displayed directly upon a base connected permanently to the ground, and that is not structurally connected to a building or other structure. This includes but is not limited to those signs known as “pylon signs” and “pole signs.” See also **Monument Sign and Pylon Sign.**

Freeway Adjacent. An on premises free-standing sign located on a parcel which abuts a freeway or is located within, 500 feet of a freeway on- or off-ramp.

Foot candle. A measure of illumination on a surface that is one foot from a uniform source of light of one candle and equal to one lumen per square foot.

Grade. The level of the site at the property line located at the closest distance to the sign.

Height of Sign. Refer to measurement standards in Section 17.330-006 (Measurement Standards).

Highway Adjacent – commercial properties abutting Beach Boulevard

Holiday Decorations. Signs or displays including lighting which are a nonpermanent installation celebrating national, state, and local holidays or holiday seasons.

Human Sign. A person, visible from the public right-of-way, who is holding, twirling, or wearing a sign to draw attention to a business, project, place or event or to advertise, or to promote commercial activity or provide direction to commercial activity.

Identification Sign. A sign that serves to identify only the name, address, and use or principal tenant of the premises upon which it is located and provides no other advertisements or product identification.

Illegal Sign. Any sign placed without proper approval or permits as required by this Code at the time of sign placement; or any sign placed contrary to the terms or time limits of any permit and any nonconforming sign which has not been brought into compliance with any applicable provisions of this Code within 15 years of its effective date.

Illuminated Sign. Any sign for which an artificial source of light is used in order to make readable the sign's message, including internally and externally lighted signs and reflectorized, glowing or radiating signs.

Institutional Use. A nonprofit, educational, hospital, museum, public, or religious use (for example, church, public or private library, or school) or a government-owned or operated land use or structure used for a public purpose.

Instructional Signs. A sign clearly intended for instructional purposes, as determined by the Director, to aid vehicle and pedestrian traffic to maneuver safely onto and within the site.

Interim Identification Sign. A type of temporary sign that is issued to a new business for the purpose of identifying such business prior to the installation of a permanent sign.

Interior Sign. A sign that is located between one and six feet to the interior of any window through which the sign is visible.

Length of Frontage.

1. For measurement purposes, the length of any frontage as defined in Section 17.330-009 (Measurement Standards), is the sum of all wall lengths parallel, or nearly parallel (no more than 45 degrees), to such frontage, excluding any such wall length determined by the Director as clearly unrelated to the frontage criteria.
2. For buildings with two or more frontages, the length and allowable sign area are calculated separately for each such frontage.

3. The building frontage for a building unit is measured from the centerline of the party walls defining the building unit.

Logo, Logogram, or Logotype. An emblem, letter, character, pictograph, trademark, or symbol used to represent any firm, organization, entity, or product.

Marquee. A permanent, roof-like shelter extending from part or all of a building face and constructed of some durable material which may or may not project over a public right-of-way.

Marquee Sign. A sign that is attached to the vertical face or the soffit of a marquee.

Menu Board Sign. A sign that is displayed for the use of drive-thru, fast-food restaurant patrons to identify the food and prices available on the site.

Mobile billboard advertising display. An advertising display that is attached to a vehicle or any other mobile, non-motorized device, conveyance, or bicycle that carries, pulls, or transports a sign or billboard and is for the primary purpose of advertising.

Monument Sign. A type of freestanding sign not exceeding 10 feet in height, that is displayed directly on the ground, connected permanently to the ground, and which is not structurally connected to a building or structure. See also **Freestanding Sign**.

Mural. An original work of visual art which is composed, created or produced firsthand, and that is painted directly upon, tiled, or affixed directly to an exterior wall of a structure. Murals may not be constructed from mechanically-produced or computer-generated prints or images, including but not limited to digitally printed vinyl, and shall not have any electrical or mechanical components. A mural is a sign only if it contains a commercial message, or if it is related by language, logo, or pictorial depiction to the advertisement of any product or service or the identification of any business.

Nonconforming Sign. A sign which was validly installed under laws or ordinances in effect at the time of its installation, but which is in conflict with the current provisions of this Code.

Off-Premises Sign. A sign that identifies or communicates a commercial message related to an activity conducted, a service rendered, or a commodity sold at a location other than where the sign is located.

On-Premises Sign. A sign that identifies or communicates a message related to the activity conducted, the service offered, or the commodity sold on the premises upon which the sign is located. Any sign displaying a non-commercial message constitutes an on-premises sign.

On-Site Directional. A class of sign that directs persons to a destination within the subject site, typically a parking lot. An on-site directional sign contains simple information such as “Enter,” “Exit,” “This Way,” or “Do Not Enter,” as well as a business name and/or logo. An on-site directional sign is intended for traffic internal to the site, and is not directed at traffic on an adjacent road or right-of-way.

Portable Sign. A sign standing upon the ground but not permanently located upon a foundation. This includes, but is not limited to, those signs known as “sandwich-board signs,” “A-frame signs,” and “sidewalk signs.”

Private Street. Primary access ways that are intended to provide vehicular access to multiple commercial businesses and/or ownerships and are not dedicated as a public thoroughfare.

Projecting Sign. A sign that is attached to, and projects outward at an angle from, a wall or other essentially vertical plane of a building or structure. A projecting sign also may be known as a “blade sign.”

Push-Through Sign. A cabinet sign with sign copy rendered in relief either in front of or behind the sign face, similar to channel letters. A push-through sign typically is internally illuminated with an opaque face, creating a halo effect, although other designs such as illuminated letters or exposed neon in open-faced letters are acceptable as well. Also known as a **Through-the-Face Sign**.

Pylon Sign. A freestanding sign at least 10 feet in height, permanently affixed to the ground by one or more structural elements. See also **Freestanding Sign**.

Real Estate Sign. Any nonpermanent sign pertaining to the sale, exchange, lease, rental, or availability of land, buildings, condominium and similar units, or apartments. Such signs may include building name and address, price and amenities, identity of seller or broker, and similar information.

Residential Sign. A non-commercial sign used to display any protected speech on a residence.

Revolving or Rotating Sign. An animated sign.

Roof Sign. A sign that is mounted or positioned on the roof of a building, and which projects above the parapet wall of a building with a flat roof, or above the eave line of a building with a sloped roof (gambrel, gable or hip roof), or above the deck line of a building with a mansard roof.

Signable Area. “Signable area”, as applied to individual wall signs, shall be the area of one or more rectangle on a wall, which is unbroken by major architectural features such as doors, windows, columns or architectural protrusions. Only that portion of the building occupied by the businesses shall be used in calculating the signable area. A business with multiple frontages may not combine permitted signable area for one or more wall with that of another wall(s) for the purpose of placing the combined area, or any part of the combined area on one wall.

Sign. A device or structure used for visual communication or attraction, including any announcement, declaration, demonstration, display, illustration, insignia, model, statue, or symbol used to identify a place, or to advertise or promote the interest of any person; together with all appurtenant components, backgrounds, and supporting structures, except the building upon which a sign is placed. Official traffic-control devices are specifically exempted from this definition.

Sign Face. An exterior display surface of a sign including nonstructural trim exclusive of the supporting structure.

Sign Program. A coordinated program of all signs, including exempt and temporary signs for a business, or a development site. The sign program must include, but not be limited to, indications of the locations, dimensions, colors, letter styles and sign types of all signs to be installed on a site.

Site. All the contiguous ground area legally assembled into one development location which is a zoning lot. A zoning lot is defined as a permanent parcel (lot of record), multiple lots of record, or a portion of a lot of record.

Super Graphic Sign. A very large sign consisting of a message printed on flexible material (generally plastic-based) or painted directly on a surface, which covers all or a major portion of a wall, or windows, or structure. It's typically attached to a building or structure with adhesive, anchor bolts or a frame structure. A super graphic is a sign only if language, logo, or pictorial depiction relates it to the advertisement of any product or service or the identification of any business.

Suspended Sign. A sign that is attached to and suspended from the underside of an arcade or similar attached structural overhang of a building, and where such sign is perpendicular to the front building façade and directly above a pedestrian passageway.

Temporary Sign. A sign permitted on a temporary basis. Temporary signs are made of non-permanent materials and are not permanently attached or affixed to a building.

Temporary Sign -commercial. Any sign utilized to promote or advertise a commercial activity, event, product, service, or sale on a temporary basis.

Temporary Sign –non-commercial. Any sign made of non-permanent material taking the form of a placard, sign board, or similar device or structure and which displays a noncommercial message on a temporary basis.

Temporary Sign Displayed During Period of Construction. A nonpermanent sign identifying the persons, firms or business directly connected with a construction project.

Through-the-Face Sign. A cabinet sign with sign copy rendered in relief either in front of or behind the sign face, similar to channel letters. A push-through sign typically is internally illuminated with an opaque face, creating a halo effect, although other designs such as illuminated letters or exposed neon in open-faced letters are acceptable as well. Also known as a **Push-Through Sign**.

Tract Directional Sign. Any sign advertising the first public lease or sale of land subdivided for purposes of sale or lease not located on a portion of the subdivided land.

Trivision Sign. A sign face made up of slats that rotate to show up to three separate images, one at a time.

Vehicle Sign. Any sign permanently or temporarily attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer.

Wall-Painted Sign. A sign that is painted on a building wall in lieu of a permanent, fixed wall sign structure.

Wall Sign. A sign fastened to the wall of a building or structure in such a manner that the wall becomes the supporting structure for or forms the background surface of the sign.

Window, Area of. The area of a single window includes all of the window panes in an area that is separated by mullions, muntins, or other dividers.

Window Sign. A sign that is painted on, or attached to, the interior side of window or glass doors, or which is inside a window and mounted within one foot of a window, and that is intended to be seen from the exterior of the premises.