

G. SIGNS

1. **Purpose.** Throughout this section, regulations of size, location, illumination, etc., will encourage the communication of information and orientation for both visitors and citizens, provide for the effective identification of business establishments, minimize distractions to motorists and pedestrians while promoting visual harmony, safety and a respect for the environmental character of the community; and specifically:
 - a. To enhance the economy and efforts of the Dolores Business Community by promoting the reasonable, orderly, and effective display of signs and encouraging better communication with the public,
 - b. To support existing and future business ventures within the Town of Dolores;
 - c. For the protection and encouragement of local tourist-related businesses for the general economic well being of Dolores;
 - d. To preserve the value of private property by assuring compatibility of signage with surrounding land uses;
 - e. To provide a sign code compatible with the Vision Statement of the Dolores Comprehensive Plan;
 - f. To establish procedures and regulations which control the location, size, type, and number of signs permitted; and
 - g. To provide an equitable mechanism whereby signs which are illegal or abandoned can be removed.
2. **Applicability.** The following regulations shall govern the placement and construction of all outdoor advertising display within the Town of Dolores.
3. **Exempt signs.** Exempt signs shall include the following signs:
 - a. Temporary (30 days or less) civic, cultural and public service window posters, when posted inside commercial establishments,
 - b. Temporary (90 days or less) promotional or special sales signs, when displayed in conjunction with a commercial establishment;
 - c. Temporary signs announcing the sale or leasing of a property or building shall be exempt provided they do not, individually or collectively exceed 12 sq. ft. and are promptly removed after closing of sale or leasing of the subject property;

- d. Temporary banners, streamers and window signs associated with, among other things, hunting season, Escalante Days, Color fest, and other similar events can only be displayed during such seasons or preceding such events;
- e. Traffic control signs installed by proper authorities;
- f. Customary holiday decorations including New Years Day, Valentines Day, Presidents Day, St Patrick, Easter, First Day of Spring, Mothers Day, Memorial Day, Fathers Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Veterans Day, Christmas, and Hanukkah;
- g. Public information or seasonal advertising signs on public property;
- h. Non-conforming "historic" signs that have been in place for more than 50 years;
- i. One (1) 40 sq. ft. wall sign and one (1) 40 sq. ft. free-standing sign shall be allowed on property owned or used by a Church or religious organization, in all zone districts.

4. Prohibited signs. Prohibited signs include the following signs:

- a. Signs employing mercury vapor, low pressure and high pressure sodium, and metal halide lighting;
- b. Signs containing statements, words, or pictures of an obscene, indecent or immoral character; and
- c. Signs advertising business, activity, product or service not conducted on the premises upon which sign is located, including billboards, but not including signs directional signs erected in accordance with all the requirements of Article V.G.5.e. Directional Signs.

5. Permitted Signs

a. **Wall mounted signs.** Wall-mounted signs and/or signs or lettering painted directly on a building shall be permitted in accordance with the following standards:

(1) The sign shall be affixed to the facade of the building, and shall project outward from the wall to which it is attached no more than 12 inches; the bottom of the sign shall be at least eight (8) feet above the sidewalk elevation and the top of the sign shall not extend more than twenty-five (25) feet above the sidewalk elevation.

(2) There shall be no size limit for signs or letters printed directly on, or mounted on, the exterior facade of a building.

b. **Gas Stations.** Two (2) gas canopy signs identifying the brand of gasoline sold in a gasoline service station, not exceeding 16 square feet, shall be permitted on a gas canopy over gasoline pumps.

c. **Projecting signs.** Projecting signs, including graphic or icon signs, mounted perpendicular to the building wall, in accordance with the following standards:

- (1) The signboard shall not exceed an area of twenty-four (24) sq. ft.;
- (2) The distance from the ground to the lower edge of the signboard shall be eight (8) ft. or greater;
- (3) The distance from the building wall to the signboard shall not exceed six (6) inches;
- (4) The width of the signboard shall not exceed four (4) feet; and
- (5) Projecting signs shall be limited to one (1) such sign per business per street frontage.

d. **Free-standing signs.** Free-standing signs advertising on-site businesses or land uses may be permitted only in the CH, Commercial Highway District, in accordance with the following standards:

- (1) One (1) free-standing sign is permitted per on-site business per street frontage.
- (2) Each sign shall be limited to a maximum 20 feet in height or height of building, whichever is greater, and shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet above grade when located adjacent to or projecting over a pedestrian way and larger than two (2) square feet in area.
- (3) Each free-standing sign may have two (2) faces and a maximum area of one (1) sq. ft. per linear foot of street frontage, per street, up to 75 sq. ft., provided the two (2) faces are the same size and join back-to-back without any overlap.

(4) **Multiple signs.** Whenever more than one (1) sign is placed on a free-standing structure, or on a projecting structure, the combination of signs shall be considered as one (1) sign for the purpose of computing sign area and determining the number of signs on a parcel. Total sign area shall be computed by adding the areas of the individual signs and shall not exceed 75 sq. ft. per parcel.

(5) Signs advertising a gasoline service station shall not exceed the height of the gas canopy.

- (1) Ground signs (monument-style) may be less than eight (8) ft. in height if adequately protected by plants, landscaping, benches, etc. and the signs do not impair the vision of vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

a. **Directional signs.** CDOT sign standards for off-highway uses are more restrictive than the town's sign standards. Citizens wishing to install signs for off-highway non-residential uses are advised to contact CDOT directly a CDOT District office in Durango, CO

b. **Roof-mounted signs.** Roof mounted signs shall not have their highest point more than 25 ft. above grade and not to exceed 32 sq. ft.

6. Signs permitted by special exception. Changes to otherwise required sign standard may be approved by Special Exception pursuant to Article VI.R. and in accordance with the following standards:

a. Historic replica signs. Historic replica signs may be permitted in the CB, Commercial Business District where each of the following criteria are met:

- (1) A historic replica sign shall be located on a structure or in a district that has been historically designated pursuant to Article VI.S. of this Code;
- (2) Applications for a historic replica sign and or a reproduction will be supported by documentation evidencing the historic style, format and location of the sign to be replicated;
- (3) A historic replica sign shall replicate the style, format and location of a historic sign, but need not employ the same words, phrases or symbols; and
- (4) The Planning Commission or Town Board must find that the proposed historic replica sign contributes positively to the historic redevelopment of the town.

b. Reproductions. Reproductions are encourage and may be permitted in the CH, Commercial Highway District as well as the CB-1, Commercial Business District and CB-2, Commercial Business District.

7. Illumination. Illumination of all signs shall be in accordance with the standards in this section.

a. The light from any illuminated sign shall be so shaded, shielded or directed that the light intensity or brightness will not be objectionable to people in surrounding areas.

b. Neither the direct nor the reflected light from primary light sources shall create a traffic hazard to passing motorists.

b. No sign shall have blinking, flashing or fluttering lights or other illuminating devices that have a changing light intensity, brightness or color. Beacon lights are not permitted.

c. No colored lights shall be used at any location or in any manner so as to be confused with or construed as traffic control devices.

d. Internally illuminated signs over 40 sq. ft. are required to have a dark background and light lettering.

8. Sign Area Measurement.

a. **Area to be measured.** The area of a sign shall be measured excluding the outside dimension of the frame, structure or bracing of the sign. Where a sign has two (2) or more display faces, the area of one (1) face shall be used in determining the area of the sign.

b. **Computations.** The area of a signs with or without backing shall be computed by enclosing, with the smallest single continuous perimeter, all backing, background, materials, letters, numbers or emblems, which are part of the overall display.

9. **Permits.** It shall be unlawful to erect, construct, or reconstruct any sign without first obtaining a sign permit pursuant to Article VI.U. of this Code.

1. Illegal and Unused Signs

a. **General.** in order to achieve the general purpose and objectives of the Ordinance as specified in Section I, it is necessary to provide for the removal of signs which are illegal, non-conforming and abandoned (non-used). Each such classification of signing involves a varying level of impact upon the general purpose and objectives of this Ordinance. The following subsections identifying circumstances under which such classifications occur and the method of correction and or disposition required.

(1) **Abandonment.** Abandonment of a sign shall immediately terminate the permit for such a sign. Abandonment of a sign shall be evidenced by:

(a) The expiration of a Town of Dolores Business License for a business advertised on a sign by more than 30 days, or

(b) The cessation of business, other than the customary cessation for a seasonal business, for more than 30 days other than sale or transfer of ownership.

(c) When a sign has been abandoned as defined above, the Town shall send a letter requesting removal of the abandoned sign. If said sign is not removed within (60) sixty days, the town may remove the sign at the property owner's expense.

(2) **Illegal Signs.** An illegal sign is any sign erected or altered after the effective date of this Ordinance and not complying with the provisions thereof.

11. All existing wall mounted, signs directly painted on the façade, directional, projecting, free standing, or roof mounted signs shall be legal and accepted from adoption of Ordinance #436 amending sign ordinance with the exception of billboards which will be eliminated two (2) years form effective date of Ordinance #436 or on expiration of current variance whichever is first. Billboards are defined as all off premise signs.