

Section 23 - Signs

(orig. 2-10-58; am. 7-20-81; am. 2-6-84; am. 2-13-01; am. 4-20-10; am. 2-06-18)

A. Intent and Purpose

1. This section is intended to provide for the orderly control of Signs, to permit the use of Signs necessary for adequate identification, direction, and notification as may be required by law in order to promote the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Jefferson County, to preserve the right of free speech and expression, to minimize distractions to motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians, and to protect aesthetic qualities by preventing visual clutter, protecting scenic views and preserving the County's character. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
2. Contained in this section are the requirements for Signs which are allowed in various zone districts. These include details pertaining to the size, shape, height, location, setbacks and construction of Signs. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 2-06-18)

B. General

1. No Sign shall be erected, maintained, or modified unless it is in full compliance with the regulations for the zone district in which it is located and all applicable provisions and regulations of this Zoning Resolution, Colorado State Statutes and Federal regulations. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 2-06-18)
2. No Sign shall be placed in the right-of-way of any public street/road or highway except as specified in the Jefferson County Right-of-Way Sign Policy and Procedure as amended and as specifically provided for in this section of this Zoning Resolution. (orig. 2-10-58; am. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 12-17-02; am. 9-15-09; am. 2-06-18)
3. Signs requiring permits are only allowed as an accessory use, and cannot be constructed on property that does not have a primary use. Signs not requiring permits are allowed as described below. (orig. 2-06-18)
4. Signs located in the Vision Clearance Triangle shall comply with the Vision Clearance Triangle provisions and/or Sight Distance provisions of the Transportation Design and Construction Manual. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 12-17-02; am. 7-1-03; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
5. A non-commercial message may be substituted, in whole or in part, for the message on any Sign that is not on public property or right-of-way, other than a Cautionary Sign. The substitution Sign must be of similar material and quality as the Sign it is replacing, unless the substitution Sign falls within the Banner Sign exception of Section D.6 below, and may be made without any additional or permitting. (orig. 2-06-18)
6. Sign Permits
 - a. No Sign, except for those not subject to Sign Permits listed below, shall be erected or modified without first obtaining a Sign Permit from Planning and Zoning. The Sign Permit shall be valid for one year, and all work must be completed within this time frame or a new or renewal Sign Permit will be required. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
 - b. The location and placement of Signs requiring a Sign Permit may be reviewed and approved as part of a Site Development Plan Process; however, a Sign Permit is still required prior to the installation of such Signs. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 6-14-88; am. 7-23-02; am. 12-17-02; am. 3-26-13; am. 3-3-15; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
 - c. Prior to construction or modification of a Sign requiring a Sign Permit, an application for a Sign Permit for such Sign shall be filed with Planning and Zoning and shall include the following: (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 12-17-02; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
 - (1) Application. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 5-3-94, am. 9-29-15)

- (2) Plot plan drawn to scale showing property boundaries of the lot, parcel or tract with all existing structures, Vision Clearance Triangles and location of the proposed Sign. All existing Signs on the site must be included on the plot plan. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 9-15-09; am. 2-06-18)
 - (3) Elevation drawing, picture, or rendering of the Sign and/or building wall showing the height, area, dimensions and materials of the proposed Sign. See requirements below for sign area measurement. (orig. 7-23-02; am. 04-04-06; am. 9-15-09; am. 2-06-18)
 - (4) A nonrefundable processing fee in an amount established by the Board of County Commissioners. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 5-3-94; am. 9-29-15)
7. Nonconforming Uses: Nonconforming Signs shall be subject to the procedures and requirements in the Nonconforming Buildings, Structures, and Uses Section of this Zoning Resolution. (orig. 2-06-18)
 8. Signs shall be maintained in good condition at all times. Signs shall be kept neatly painted, including all metal parts and supports that are not galvanized or of rust-resistant metals. Banners and banner flags shall not be torn or in disrepair.

C. Prohibited Signs

The following types of Signs are expressly prohibited in all districts unless specifically permitted in a Planned Development (PD) District. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 11-19-91; am. 2-13-01; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)

1. Balloons or similar types of "lighter than air" objects tethered to the ground or wall by lines or other method. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 04-04-06; am.10-25-11; am. 9-29-15)
2. Search lights. (orig. 7-20-81)
3. Signs consisting of any flashing, blinking, rotating, moving, or otherwise animated parts or lighting except those Signs that meet the Electronic Message Centers regulations outlined below. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
4. Billboards, Off-Premise signs, and Pole Signs. (orig. 11-19-91; am. 7-23-02; am. 12-17-02; am 04-04-06; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
5. Roof Signs. (orig. 7-23-02)
6. Signs that emit any sound (except drive thru Signs described below), smoke, or odor. (orig. 2-06-18)
7. Signs that are structurally unsafe or are a health or safety hazard. (orig. 2-06-18)
8. Signs that impair the visibility of traffic movement, or distract or contain an element that distracts, the attention of driver in a manner likely to lead to unsafe driving conditions. (orig. 2-06-18)

D. Signs Not Requiring Permits

1. Temporary Ground Signs: Six (6) Temporary Ground Signs shall be allowed on each property. Temporary Ground Signs shall not be erected for more than 6 months within a consecutive 12- month period. Temporary Signs shall not be illuminated in any way. (orig. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
 - a. All Zone Districts: Temporary Ground Signs shall not extend outside the property line, shall not exceed 42 inches in height and shall not be more than 8 square feet per Sign Face in area, except as provided in Section D.1.b below. (orig. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
 - b. Agricultural Zone Districts: Properties meeting the minimum lot size requirements of the Agricultural Zone District shall be allowed Temporary Ground Signs of up to 32 square feet in lieu of the 8 square foot Temporary Ground Signs described above. Temporary Ground Signs more than 8 square feet shall be set back 10 feet from the property line and shall not exceed 10 feet in height. (orig. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)

2. Signs or tablets, not to exceed 2 square feet, when cut into any masonry surface or inlaid to be part of the building or when constructed of bronze or other incombustible material. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 9-29-15)
3. Window Signs: Window Signs that do not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the Window Sign Area in which they are displayed. Window Signs do not count against the overall allowed square footage of signage on the site, but Window Signs total maximum square footage cannot exceed the overall Sign area square footage allowed on site. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
4. Bus Bench Signs: Signs that are part of a bus bench in unincorporated Jefferson County which bus bench shall be reviewed approved and authorized pursuant the Jefferson County Policies and Procedures, as amended. (orig. 7-23-02; am. 12-17-02; am. 12-10-09)
5. Temporary Banner Signs: Banner Signs shall be allowed for up to six months, on non-residential uses and shall be limited to a total of one (1) Banner Sign per business, organization, or tenant, not to exceed 50 square feet per Sign. Banners Signs shall be securely mounted to a wall, structure or duly permitted Sign. (orig. 10-25-11; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)
6. Portable or Wheeled Signs: Portable or Wheeled Signs shall be allowed on non-residential uses and shall be limited to a total of one (1) Portable or Wheeled Signs per business, organization, or tenant, not to exceed 12 square feet per Sign Face, with a maximum height of 6 feet. The Portable or Wheeled Signs shall not inhibit pedestrian access or circulation, and placement of such Signs shall allow a minimum of 30 inches of clearance around the device to ensure uninhibited pedestrian access or circulation. (orig. 10-25-11; am. 2-06-18)
7. Flags: The total area of flags shall not exceed 30 square feet and shall be affixed to permanent flagpoles or flagpoles that are mounted to buildings. Flags cannot exceed the height permitted in the zone district. (orig. 2-06-18)
8. Drive Thru Signs: Ground Signs located in parking lot drive thru aisles that are no larger than 50 square feet and oriented toward the drive thru. A maximum of two are permitted per drive aisle. (orig. 2-06-18)
9. Parking Lot Signs: Signs located interior to parking lot boundaries that are no larger than 5 square feet, no taller than 42 inches, except as otherwise required pursuant to federal law or regulation. Parking Lot Signs shall be limited to a total of one (1) sign per 15 parking spaces, and shall be limited to one (1) sign every fifty (50) feet, except as otherwise required pursuant to federal law or regulation. (orig. 2-06-18)
10. Cautionary Signs: Cautionary Signs shall be no more than 5 square feet per Sign. Free-standing Cautionary Signs shall be no taller than 42 inches. Cautionary Signs may also be located on a wall or fence and shall not exceed the height of the wall or fence on which it is placed. Signs shall be limited to one (1) Sign every one-hundred (100) feet on the property lines or on any fence or other permitted structures that lies within the property lines. Cautionary Signs serve a compelling government interest because they promote the safety and welfare of pedestrians and motorists by alerting people to danger which reduces accidents and other injuries. (orig. 2-06-18)
11. Wall Signs in residential zone districts up to 4 square feet. Such Signs may not be illuminated. (orig. 2-06-18)
12. Projecting Signs on agricultural, commercial, or industrial zoned properties less than 10 square feet. One Sign allowed per tenant. (orig. 2-06-18)

E. Specific Zone District Sign Regulations Requiring a Permit

1. Residential Zone Districts (CD-LR, CD-MR, ground floor residential in MU, Residential, M-H, Mountain Residential, Suburban Residential) (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 11-4-03, am. 04-04-06, am. 9-29-15)
 - a. Entry Feature Signs: Signs located on an entry feature. These Signs shall be reviewed as part of

the miscellaneous permit for the entry feature. Multiple Signs per entry feature are allowed, provided the total Sign square footage does not exceed 50 square feet. The Signs can be illuminated either by a concealed light source or Internal Illumination (orig. 04-04-06; reloc. 2-06-18; am. 5-21-19)

b. No other Signs requiring permits are allowed in Residential Zone Districts (orig. 2-06-18).

2. Agricultural and Conservation Zone Districts (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02, 04-04-06 am. 9-29-15)

a. Maximum Number of Signs Requiring a Permit per Lot: One Single-Faced Ground Sign or one Double-Faced Ground Sign for each lot line adjacent to a street and any combination of other authorized Signs subject to Total Sign Area Per Lot requirements. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 5-20-08; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)

b. Total Sign Area Per Lot: 200 square feet. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02)

c. Setback from lot lines: 10 feet (am.04-04-06)

d. Sign Characteristics Table (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)

Type	Maximum Sign Area (subject to Total Sign Area per Lot)	Maximum Sign Height
Wall Signs	50 s.f.	Wall height to which Sign is attached.
Ground Signs	50 s.f. per face in area	12 feet

3. Commercial, Industrial and Mineral Conservation Zone Districts (including: CD-O/LI, CD-RS, CD-RM, CD-MU, MU (other than ground floor residential)) (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 04-04-06; am. 9-29-15)

a. Maximum Number of Signs Requiring a Permit per Lot (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 04-04-06; am. 2-06-18)

(1) Entry Feature Signs: Entry Feature Signs located at the entry to commercial developments from Public Rights of Way that are no larger than 50 square feet and no taller than 12 feet. Two (2) Single-Faced Ground Signs, or one (1) Double-Faced Ground Sign is allowed per primary access. The Signs can be illuminated either by a concealed light source or Internal Illumination. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 04-04-06; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)

(2) Single and Multi-Tenant Buildings: One Single-Faced Ground Sign or one Double-Faced Ground Sign per lot adjacent to a street. Any number of Wall or Projecting Signs subject to the Sign area limitations outlined in this Section. (orig. 7-23-02; am 04-04-06; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)

(3) Accessory Buildings (including but not limited to garden centers, car washes, fuel pumping canopies): Three (3) Wall Signs. (orig. 7-23-02; am. 2-06-18)

b. Setback: 8 feet. For setbacks on lot lines not adjacent to a street, the setback may be 5 feet. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 04-04-06)

c. Materials: Ground Sign material shall be similar to the architecture and materials of the building. (orig. 9-15-09)

d. Single Tenant Sign Characteristics Table (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02, am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)

Type	Maximum Sign Area (subject to Total Sign Area per Lot)	Maximum Sign Height
Wall Signs	1 square foot of total Sign area per linear foot of Building Frontage* not to exceed 350 square feet	Wall height to which Sign is attached.

	total. No individual Sign shall exceed 150 square feet. Each building will be allowed to have a minimum of 100 square feet of total Sign area regardless of the amount of Building Frontage. However, if the building does not have 100 linear feet of Building Frontage the maximum individual Sign size shall not exceed 50 square feet or 1 square foot of Sign per linear feet of Building Frontage, whichever is greater.	
Accessory Building Wall Signs	50 s.f. total Sign area	Wall height to which Sign is attached.
Ground Signs	50 s.f. per Sign Face	12 feet

*The longest building wall containing a customer entrance will determine building frontage.

e. Multi-Tenant Sign Characteristics Table (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02; am. 9-29-15; am. 2-06-18)

Type	Maximum Sign Area (subject to Total Sign Area per Lot)	Maximum Sign Height
Wall Signs	1 square foot of total Sign area per linear foot of tenant Building Frontage* not to exceed 350 square feet total. No individual Sign shall exceed 150 square feet. Each tenant will be allowed a minimum of 50 square feet of total Sign area regardless of tenant Building Frontage. Tenants that do not have Building Frontage will be allowed 1 Wall Sign not to exceed 50 square feet. The area of this Sign will not be deducted from the total allowable Sign area.	Wall height to which Sign is attached.
Accessory Building Wall Signs	50 s.f. total Sign area	Wall height to which Sign is attached.
Ground Signs	50 s.f. per Sign Face	12 feet

*The longest building wall containing a customer entrance will determine tenant building frontage.

4. Planned Development (P-D) Zone Districts: Sign regulations for Planned Development Zone Districts shall be as stated in the Official Development Plan for the particular Planned Development. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 12-17-02)

F. Sign Area Measurement

1. Area to be Measured: The area of a Sign shall be measured in conformance with the regulations as herein set forth; provided that the Sign Structure or bracing of the Sign shall be omitted from measurement unless such Sign Structure or bracing is made a part of the message or face of the Sign. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 9-29-15)
2. Sign area is calculated as the area that encloses the limits of text and graphics of a Sign, together with any frame or material or color forming, integral part of the display or used to differentiate the Sign's message from the background which it is placed. The area excludes the structure upon which the Sign is placed unless the structure is an integral part of the display, or used to differentiate it from the background. The area includes any open areas contained within the outer limits of the display face of a Sign, or between any component, panel, strip, or figure of any kind composing the display face, whether this open area is enclosed by a frame or border or not. (orig. 2-06-18)
3. Signs with Backing: The area of all Signs with Backing or a background, material or otherwise, that is part of the overall Sign display shall be measured by determining the sum of the areas of such square, rectangle, triangle, portion of a circle or any combination thereof, which creates the smallest single continuous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of the Display Surface or face of the Sign, including

all frames, backing, face plates, nonstructural trim or other component parts not otherwise used for support. (orig. 7-20-81)

4. Signs without Backing: The area of all Signs without Backing or a background, material or otherwise, that is part of the overall Sign display shall be measured by determining the sum of the areas of each square, rectangle, triangle, portion of a circle, or any combination thereof, which creates the extreme limits of each word, written representation (including any series of letters), emblems or figures of similar character, including all frames, face plates, nonstructural trim or other component parts not otherwise used for support for parts of the Sign having no backing. (orig. 7-20-81)
5. Total Sign Area per Lot Measurement:
 - a. Only a Single-Face of a Ground Sign is considered. (orig. 2-06-18)
 - b. For a Double-Faced Ground Sign, the total area of the largest face shall determine the Total Sign Area of the Sign (orig. 9-29-15; reloc. 2-06-18)
6. Sign Face Measurement:
 - a. Standard formulas for common regular geometric shapes must be used. All display faces of a Sign must be included. (orig. 2-06-18)
 - b. For irregularly shaped Signs, area is measured as the area within the smallest eight-sided right-angled polygon that encloses all of the text, graphics and framing of the Sign. (orig. 2-06-18)
 - c. Sign Face Area must include spaces between separate letters of a Sign. (orig. 2-06-18)
 - d. The base of a Ground Sign should not be included in Sign Face Area measurement. (orig. 2-06-18)



7. Sign Height Measurement:
 - a. Wall Signs may not exceed the height of the wall to which Sign is attached. Wall shall be understood as the highest vertical point before the wall becomes the roof. Signs may not be displayed as extensions of the roof structure. (orig. 2-06-18)
 - b. Ground Sign height shall be measured by the average Grade on either side of the Sign to the highest point on the Sign. Ground Signs may not exceed 12 feet in height. (orig. 2-06-18)
8. Building Frontage Measurement (Wall Signs): The longest wall on a building that has an entrance on it will be the wall that is used for determining frontage. Only one wall is used in determining frontage for an entire building, or the tenant of a building. (orig. 2-06-18)

G. Sign Illumination

1. Except as otherwise provided herein, Signs may be illuminated. However, such illumination shall be either by a downcast, concealed light source or Internal Illumination and shall comply with the requirements of the Lighting Section of this Zoning Resolution. All lighted Signs must have stationary and steady lighting and lights must be shielded so that light source is not visible beyond the property boundaries. (orig. 7-20-81; am. 7-23-02, am. 04-04-06; am. 9-15-09; am. 2-06-18)
 - a. Maximum illumination levels shall not exceed 0.3 foot candles as measured in front of the Sign, 50 feet away, for all Sign types. (orig. 2-06-18)
 - b. For residential parcels, there shall be no internally illuminated signs, except for an allowance for address numbers to be illuminated with no light spill past the walls of the residence (orig. 2-06-18)
2. Internally Illuminated Signs: Only the Sign Copy may be illuminated. The Sign must be displayed on a semi-opaque material; transparent or clear materials are not allowed so that the internal light source is not visible. (orig. 2-06-18)
3. Externally Illuminated Signs: Light source must be steady and stationary and tilted toward the Sign face no more than 5 feet away. (orig. 2-06-18)
4. Halo Illumination Signs: Light source must not be visible and the Sign must not be displayed on a reflective surface. (orig. 2-06-18)

H. Electronic Message Centers

1. Design Requirements: (orig. 2-06-18)
 - a. Electronic Message Centers ("EMCs") are permitted on Ground Signs which enclose the electronic message center component on all sides. (orig. 2-06-18)
 - b. EMCs are permitted to be both Single- and Double-Faced. (orig. 2-06-18)
2. Operational Requirements (orig. 2-06-18):
 - a. The EMC shall contain static messages only; (orig. 2-06-18)
 - b. Shall display messages for a period of not less than thirty (30) seconds (multiple EMCs, if used on the same Sign, shall be synchronized to change messages at the same time); (orig. 2-06-18)
 - c. Shall not use transitions or frame effects between messages; (orig. 2-06-18);
 - d. Shall conform to the Illumination Requirements set forth below; and (orig. 2-06-18)
3. Illumination Requirements (orig. 2-06-18):
 - a. EMC Illumination Limits: The difference between the off and solid-white measurements shall not exceed 0.3 foot-candles, as measured in front of the Sign, 50 feet away. (orig. 2-06-18).
 - b. Dimming Capabilities. All EMCs shall be equipped with a sensor or other device that automatically determines the ambient illumination and programmed to automatically dim according to ambient light conditions, or that can be adjusted to comply with the 0.3 foot-candle measurements. (orig. 2-06-18)
4. Location Requirements (orig. 2-06-18):
 - a. EMCs must meet setbacks of 8 feet from property lines. (orig. 2-06-18)
 - b. No EMCs are permitted on scenic byways as defined by Colorado State law. (orig. 2-06-18)

I. Variances

1. The Board of Adjustment will have the power to hear appeals and grant variances to the provisions of this Section. An Administrative Exception will not be permitted for the granting of relief from the requirements outlined in this Section. (orig. 2-06-18)