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Chapter 18.20 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS – SIGNS

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18.20.010 Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to:

A. Generally, protect and enhance the visual character and identity of the community by establishing standards that regulate the type, number, location, size and lighting of signs;

B. Create a more pedestrian-oriented Community Business Center by providing signage standards with an appropriate human scale;

C. Promote and protect a high-quality character and aesthetic appearance of development within the Community Business Center by establishing standards and guidelines relating to signage design and materials;

D. Recognize and provide for the necessary private purposes of signs which include the identification of businesses and promotion of products and services;

E. Promote and protect a high-quality character and aesthetic appearance of development within the Residential Areas of the City.

F. Recognize the public purposes of signs which includes considerations of traffic safety, economic and aesthetic welfare;

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1 G. Promote and protect a safe vehicular and non-vehicular transportation
2 environment by establishing standards for sign luminance, placement, density and
3 frequency, animation and motion or any other factors which may lead to undue or
4 inappropriate distraction.

5
6 H. Provide for the safe construction, location, erection and maintenance of signs.
7 (Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

8 9 **18.20.020 Permit requirements.**

10 A. No sign shall hereafter be erected, constructed, refaced, altered, or repaired
11 except as provided by this Chapter and a permit for the same has been issued in
12 accordance with this Chapter unless such sign is exempted per NMC 18.20.030. In
13 addition, all signs located within the Community Business Center overlay shall be subject
14 to the provisions of this Chapter as well as all applicable Design Guidelines of the
15 Community Business Center Plan.

16 17 18 **18.20.025 Permit submittal standards.**

19 A. The following information is required to be submitted with a sign permit,
20 unless determined not applicable by the Director:

- 21
22
- 23 a. Site plan to scale with a scale no smaller than 1" = 20' (1:20);
 - 24 b. Elevations for the building average finished grade and/or nearest street
25 curb grade, whichever is applicable;
 - 26 c. Dimensions and heights for sign surface area and copy area using
27 calculation methods as established in this chapter;
 - 28 d. Location of all signs in relation to building and/or site features;
 - 29 e. Sign materials and type of sign; and
 - 30 f. Illumination type, locations, shielding and lumen intensity.
 - 31 g. Other information as may be needed to determine compliance with this
32 chapter.

33 34 B. Master Sign Plan.

35 A Master Sign Plan shall be submitted for the new development or redevelopment of
36 non-residential multi-tenant structures and shopping plazas. The Master Sign Plan shall
37 contain all of the information as required under Section 18.20.025 A above for all of the
38 proposed signage to be included with the multi-tenant structure or shopping plaza. For
39 new development, the Master Sign Plan shall be submitted with the proposed
40 development's Site Plan Application or other applicable land use application. For
41 redevelopment, the Master Sign Plan shall be submitted with the proposed
42 development's Building Permit Application or other applicable construction application.

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18.20.030 Signs exempt from permit

The following signs and/or displays do not require a sign permit. Exemption from a sign permit shall not be construed as relieving the owner of any sign from the responsibility of appropriately sizing, locating, erecting, maintaining, or removing said sign or display. Exempt signs listed below are subject to compliance with the provisions of this chapter, and any other law or ordinance regulating the same:

A. No sign permit shall be required for repainting, cleaning, or other normal maintenance and repair of a sign, or for sign face and copy changes that do not alter the size, structure or type of the sign.

B. Historic site markers or plaques and gravestones,

C. Signs required by law, or intended to notify the public of public meetings or hearings, including but not limited to:

1. Official or legal notices issued and posted by any public agency or court,
2. Temporary sandwich/A-frame signs or bulletin board signs, or
3. Traffic directional or warning signs;

D. Plaques, tablets or inscriptions indicating the name of a building, date of erection, or other commemorative information, which are an integral part of the building structure or are attached flat to the face of the building, which are non-illuminated, and which do not exceed four square feet in surface area;

E. Directional and Incidental Signs

Directional and Incidental signs shall not be included in the sign area or number limitation of NMC 18.20.070 through 18.20.110, provided they shall not exceed 3 square feet in total surface area and are limited to one for each entrance or exit to surface parking areas or parking structure for directional signs.

F. State or federal flags;

G. Religious symbols;

H. The flag of a commercial institution, provided no more than one flag is permitted per business premises, and further provided the flag does not exceed 20 square feet in surface area;

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1 I. Structures or improvements intended for a separate use, such as phone
2 booths, charitable donation containers, and recycling boxes;

3
4 j. Commercial or Industrial building addresses with numbers and letters not
5 more than 10 inches in height, or Residential building addresses with numbers and
6 letters not more than 8 inches in height;

7
8 K. Yard signs in residential zones, provided:

- 9 1. Only one sign per property;
- 10 2. The total surface area for all faces of the sign does not exceed 12 square
11 feet;
- 12 3. The sign is not used for commercial purposes. Commercial signs in
13 residential zones are regulated elsewhere in this Chapter;
- 14 4. The sign does not exceed a maximum height of 4 feet;
- 15 5. Letters or symbols in the copy area of the sign may not exceed 6 inches
16 in height.

17
18 L. Signs not oriented or intended to be legible or visible from a right-of-way,
19 other property, or from the air;

20
21 M. Signs inside of a building which are not visible from public right of way, other
22 property, from the air, or as may be regulated within the Community Business Center
23 overlay;

24
25 N. Painted wall decorations or murals of a non-commercial nature;

26
27 O. Signs affected by stipulated judgments to which the city is a party, entered by
28 courts of competent jurisdiction;

29
30 P. Interior window signs in any residential unit, except as may be regulated
31 within the Community Business Center overlay;

32
33 Q. Temporary window signs placed upon or near a window in a nonresidential
34 structure, provided:

35 1. The total surface area of such temporary window sign(s), in combination
36 with any permanent window sign(s), do not obscure more than 20 percent of total
37 transparent window area on any particular building façade; and

38 2. Such signs are posted for a period not exceeding 60 days. Signs which
39 remain longer than 60 days or are consecutively replaced with variations will be
40 considered permanent and must comply with the provisions of this chapter for
41 permanent window signs;

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1 R. Strings of incandescent lights in nonresidential zones where the lights do not
2 exceed five watts per bulb, the bulbs are placed no closer than six inches apart and do
3 not flash or blink in any way. Strings of lights in residential zones are not regulated;
4

5 S. Temporary on-premises non-illuminated signs not exceeding 16 square feet
6 for charitable fundraising events placed by nonprofit and charitable organizations. Such
7 signs shall not be placed more than seven days prior to the event and must be removed
8 within two days following the event.
9

10 Such events may have two off-premises signs which shall not exceed 6 square feet per
11 side per sign. If such signs are placed within public right-of-way, signs may be placed
12 only in the periphery of said right-of-way and may not be placed in medians or areas
13 which would obstruct pedestrian or vehicular movement, or block the vision of moving
14 traffic;
15

16 T. Temporary signs on private property when such signs are solely designated to
17 direct pedestrians or vehicular traffic while on the property on which the signs are
18 located, and which do not exceed the standards for incidental signs; and
19

20 U. Signs on private property which are required by law or ordinance. (Ord. 45 §
21 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).
22

23 V. One off-site human sign per business which does not violate any other
24 provisions of this Chapter, or any other applicable law or ordinance.
25

26 **18.20.040 Prohibited signs.**

27
28 Except as indicated by this Chapter, the following signs or displays are prohibited:
29

30 A. Signs not specifically allowed by this chapter.
31

32 B. Portable signs, except for signs specifically allowed under this Chapter.
33

34 C. Private signs on utility poles;
35

36 D. Signs which, by reason of their size, location, movement, content, coloring or
37 manner of illumination may be confused with traffic control signs or signals, including,
38 but not limited to signs containing words such as “stop”, “look”, and “danger”;
39

40 E. Signs located in the public right-of-way, except where specifically permitted in
41 this chapter;
42

43 F. Posters, pennants, banners or streamers, strings of lights, blinking lights or
44 flashing lights, balloons, searchlights, clusters of flags, strings of twirlers or propellers,

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1 flares, and other displays of a carnival nature; except as architectural features, or on a
2 limited basis as seasonal decorations or as provided for in NMC 18.20.110 as grand
3 opening displays, or the following other exceptions:

- 4
- 5 1. National, state, and institutional flags when properly displayed,
- 6
- 7 2. Signs and banners approved as temporary signs, and
- 8
- 9 3. Balloons as approved as temporary signs;

10

11 G. Electronic and/or non-electronic message center signs, unless specifically
12 allowed under this Chapter.

13

14 H. Video monitors and other similar image projection devices unless specifically
15 allowed under this Chapter and the Community Business Center design guidelines.

16

17 I. Signs erected at the intersection of any street which obstruct free and clear
18 vision, or pedestrian or vehicular movement;

19

20 J. No sign shall have or consist of any moving, rotating, or otherwise animated
21 part, unless specifically allowed under this chapter;

22

23 K. No three-dimensional statue, caricature or representation of persons, animals
24 or merchandise shall be used as a sign or incorporated into a sign structure. However,
25 barber shop poles or other high-quality professionally made three-dimensional signs as
26 may be allowed under the Community Business Center design guidelines and approved
27 by the Director are excluded from this provision;

28

29 L. Any sign attached to, painted on or placed upon a vehicle or trailer parked on
30 public or private property. The prohibition of this paragraph does not prohibit the
31 identification of a firm or principal products on a vehicle operating during the normal
32 course of business;

33

34 M. No public address system or sound devices shall be used in conjunction with
35 any sign or advertising device;

36

37 N. No roof signs or signs which project above the roof shall be permitted;

38

39 O. Obscenity. No sign shall bear or contain statements, words, or pictures in
40 which the dominant theme of the material, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient
41 interest in sex or is patently offensive because it affronts the contemporary community
42 standard relating to the description or representation of sexual material which is utterly
43 without redeeming social value;

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1 P. Traffic Obstructing Signs. No sign or sign structure shall be constructed in such
2 a manner or at such location that it will obstruct access to any fire escape or other
3 means of ingress or egress from a building or any exit corridor, exit hallway, or exit
4 doorway. No sign or supporting structure shall cover, wholly or partially, any window or
5 doorway in any manner that it will substantially limit access to the building in case of
6 fire;

7
8 Q. Abandoned signs. (Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

9
10 R. Billboards.

11
12 **18.20.050 Temporary signs.**

13
14 If not specified in this section, temporary signs or displays shall be limited to the sign
15 type and dimension standards of the zoning district in which the sign is to be placed.
16 Portable signs shall be allowable sign types for “temporary signs” provided they are A-
17 frame sign types and meet the other requirements of this Section. Unless specifically
18 stated in this Section, sign permits are not required for temporary signs. The following
19 temporary signs or displays are permitted as follows:

20
21 A. Grand Opening Displays.

22
23 1. Signs, posters, pennants, strings of lights, blinking lights, balloons and
24 searchlights are permitted for a period of up to 30 consecutive days to announce the
25 opening of a new enterprise or the opening of an enterprise under new management;
26 and

27
28 2. All grand opening displays shall be removed upon the expiration of 30
29 consecutive days;

30
31 3. Permits for grand opening displays are not required.

32
33 B. City Events and Displays

34 City-sponsored event signs may be hung across or over public rights-of-way, provided:

- 35
36 1. Such signs are non-illuminated;
37 2. Signs are removed within 60 days; and
38 3. Signs do not block vehicular or pedestrian movement or required
39 sight clearance.

40
41 C. Garage/Yard sale signs.

42 1. One on-premise and 3 off-premises garage/yard sale signs are allowed
43 per sale;

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1 2. Signs may be single or double sided. In no case shall any single sign
2 face or side exceed 3 square feet in surface area for on-premises signs or off-premises
3 signs;

4
5 3. Signs shall not be placed for a period exceeding three (3) days;

6
7 4. Placement of off-premises signs within the periphery of a public right-
8 of-way is permitted provided pedestrian and vehicular movement, as well as sight vision
9 clearance, are not impeded.

10
11 5. Permits for garage/yard sale signs are not required.

12 D. Construction [/Development Marketing] Signs.

13
14
15 Construction signs identifying architects, engineers, planners, contractors or other
16 individuals or firms involved with the construction of a building (s) or subdivision and
17 announcing the character of the building (s) or subdivision or the purpose for which it is
18 intended may be displayed as follows;;

19
20 1. The sign (s) may only be placed after preliminary plat approval or
21 preliminary site plan approval;

22
23 2. One non-illuminated, single or double-faced sign with a total sign face
24 surface area of 32 square feet is permitted for each public street upon which the project
25 fronts;

26
27 3. No sign shall exceed 10 feet in height;

28
29 4. No sign shall be located closer than 15 feet from the property line of
30 the adjoining property; except for flag pole parcels which may be located within 5 feet
31 of adjoining property line;

32
33 5. Construction signs must be removed by the date of first occupancy of
34 the premises or one year after placement of the sign, whichever occurs first;

35
36 6. Permits for construction signs are required.

37 E. Political Signs.

38
39
40 1. Signs may be single or double sided. In no case shall any sign face or
41 side exceed 6 square feet in surface area for on-premises signs, or 3 square feet for off-
42 premises signs;

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1 2. On-premises political signs, posters or bills located at the headquarters
2 of a political party, candidate or public service office are permitted. All on-premises
3 political signs, posters or bills shall comply with the dimensional and location
4 requirements of the zoning district in which located.
5

6 3. Off-premises political signs that do not exceed five square feet in area
7 may be displayed on private property with the consent of the property owner.
8

9 4. Political signs, posters or bills within the public right-of-way may be
10 displayed from the closing date for filing for an election until 14 days after the general
11 election, except that, after a primary election, candidates not advancing to the general
12 election shall remove their signs within 14 days after the primary election. Political signs
13 within private property have no removal time period, provided such signs conform to all
14 other provisions of this chapter.
15

16 5. Political signs, posters, bills or other advertising devices may be located
17 within public easements or street rights-of-way as long as they are not placed within the
18 vision clearance of an intersection and do not interfere with vehicular or pedestrian
19 movement.
20

21 6. Permits for political signs, posters or bills are not required.
22

23 F. Real Estate Signs. 24

25 1. All exterior real estate signs must be of metal, wood or plastic or other
26 rigid and durable material.
27

28 2. Single-Family Residential "Transfer of Property Rights" Signs.
29 On-premises signs advertising "transfer of property rights" shall be limited to:
30

- 31 a. One single or double-faced sign per street frontage. In no case
32 shall any single sign face or side exceed 4 square feet in surface
33 area;
- 34 b. The sign must be placed wholly on the property for sale. The sign
35 may remain up until the property sale closes or the property
36 rents.
37

38 3. Multi-Family Residential "Transfer of Property Rights" Signs.
39 On-premises signs advertising "transfer of property rights" shall be limited to:
40

- 41 a. One single or double-faced sign per street frontage. In no case
42 shall any single sign face or side exceed 12 square feet in surface
43 area;

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- 1 b. The sign must be placed wholly on the property for sale. The sign
2 may remain up until the property sale closes or the property
3 rents.
4

5 4. Off-Premises Residential “Transfer of Property Rights” Signs.

6 Off-premises signs advertising “transfer of property rights” and/or the direction to a
7 property (s) shall be limited to:
8

- 9 a. Three single or double-faced signs. In no case shall any single sign
10 face or side exceed 3 square feet in surface area;
11 b. Signs advertising the same property must be spaced a minimum of 60
12 feet apart, unless they are advertising for the same multi-family
13 development.
14 c. Placement of off-premises signs is permitted only during daylight
15 hours and when the seller or their representative is in attendance at
16 the property for sale or rent.
17 d. Placement of off-premises signs are permitted within the periphery of
18 a public right-of-way provided pedestrian and vehicular movement,
19 as well as sight vision clearance, are not impeded.
20

21 However, if a realtor has more than one house open for inspection in a single
22 development or subdivision, off-premises signs are limited to four for the entire
23 development or subdivision. T.
24

25 5. Undeveloped Commercial or Industrial Property “Transfer of Property 26 Rights” Signs.

27 Signs advertising undeveloped commercial or industrial property “transfer of property
28 rights” shall be limited to:

- 29 a. On-premises signs only, except for properties with no public street
30 frontage whereby one off-premises sign shall be allowed. Off-
31 premises signs on public property are subject to City approval.
32 b. One single- or double-faced sign per street frontage. In no case shall
33 any single sign face or side exceed 12 square feet.
34 c. Signs may be displayed while the property is actually for sale or rent.
35 d. If freestanding, the sign may not exceed 5 feet in height and shall be
36 located more than 15 feet from any abutting interior property line
37 and wholly on the property for sale or rent.
38 e. All other sign types shall be regulated under the specific zoning
39 district sign regulations in which the sign is to be placed.
40

41 6. Developed Commercial or Industrial Property “Transfer of Property 42 Rights” Signs.

43 Signs advertising developed commercial or industrial property “transfer of property
44 rights” shall be limited to:

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- a. On-premises signs only, except for properties with no public street frontage whereby one off-premises sign shall be allowed. Off-premises signs on public property are subject to City approval.
- b. One single- or double-faced sign per street frontage. In no case shall any single sign face or side exceed 16 square feet.
- c. Signs may be displayed while the property is actually for sale or rent.
- d. If freestanding, the sign may not exceed 5 feet in height and shall be located more than 15 feet from any abutting interior property line and wholly on the property for sale or rent.
- e. All other sign types shall be regulated under the specific zoning district sign regulations in which the sign is to be placed.

7. Permits for real estate signs are not required.

G. Community Event Signs.

1. Community event signs shall be limited to announcing or promoting a nonprofit sponsored community fair, festival or event;
2. Community event signs may be displayed no more than 60 days prior to the event;
3. Community event signs shall be removed by the event sponsor within 14 days following the end of the community fair, festival or event;
4. Permits for community event signs are not required.

(Ord. 2005-311 § 1; Ord. 2001-248 § 38; Ord. 2000-210 § 54; Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

H. Homeowners Association (HOA) Notices

1. Signs noticing property owners of official HOA meetings and events shall not require a sign permit. Such signs shall not exceed 6 square feet per side and shall meet all other applicable sign requirements of this Chapter.

18.20.060 Special temporary signs.

A. Authorization.

1. The Director shall be empowered to permit temporary signs not exempted by NMC 18.20.110. The Director shall attach such conditions to the issuance of a permit for a temporary sign as may be necessary to ensure discontinuance of the

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1 use of the sign in accordance with the terms of the authorization, and to ensure
2 substantial compliance with the purpose of this title.

3 4 B. Issuance Authority.

5
6 1. The Director may issue temporary sign permits which shall terminate
7 within 30 days from the date of issuance; and

8
9 2. No permit shall be issued for a period longer than 30 days, but a permit
10 may be reissued by the Director for two additional permit periods (30 days each) not to
11 exceed a total of 90 days per calendar year.

12
13 C. Temporary signs may be placed at locations approved by the Director;
14 provided, that:

15
16 1. The total number of temporary signs shall not exceed one for any use
17 at any one period of time;

18
19 2. Such signs are not permitted for single-family and duplex dwellings;

20
21 3. The total area of temporary sign shall not exceed 24 square feet and
22 no more than 12 square feet per face. The permitted area for a banner shall be no more
23 than 24 square feet per face with the total sign area not to exceed 48 square feet;

24
25 4. Special event banners to be hung across public rights-of-way may be
26 permitted by the City Manager or the Director.

27 28 D. Attachment.

29
30 1. Temporary signs may not be permanently attached to the ground,
31 building, or other structures. (Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

32 33 **18.20.070 Sign area calculation.**

34 35 A. Pole or Pylon Signs.

36 Sign area for non-monumental freestanding signs (e.g. pole and pylon signs) shall be
37 calculated by determining the total surface area of the sign as viewed from any single
38 vantage point.

39 40 B. Monument Signs, Wall Signs, and Building-mounted Signs.

41 The sign surface area for signs contained entirely within a cabinet and mounted on or to
42 a wall, or within a monument, shall be calculated by measuring the entire area of the
43 cabinet.

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C. Signs with no Cabinet.

Sign area for letters or symbols, i.e. “copy”, which is painted or mounted directly on walls, monuments or freestanding signs, canopies or awnings, or fences shall be calculated by measuring the smallest single rectangle which will enclose the combined letters and symbols.

(Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

18.20.075 Sign height calculation

A. Sign height shall be measured as follows:

1. Freestanding sign - the vertical distance measured from the curb grade of the nearest street to the highest point of the sign, including any appurtenances, or to the highest point of the sign support structures, whichever is higher.

For allowable signs not covered under the measurement methods above, the Director shall determine the appropriate sign measurement method.

18.20.080 General sign requirements.

A. Structural Integrity of Signs

All signs and sign structures shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to comply with the provisions of the International Building Code and other applicable structural safety regulations.

B. Electronic Message Center Signs (EMCS).

Electronic Message Center Signs, such as LEDs or related technologies, shall be considered freestanding signs and are subject to the following general requirements:

1. An EMCS shall not be allowed in the Community Business Center overlay.

2. The EMCS shall be an on-premises sign, solely intended to display messages related to the use of the property on which the sign is located.

3. The EMCS display area shall not exceed 18 square feet per sign face;

4. The EMCS shall be a monument type sign;

5. The EMCS copy area shall not flash or roll onto the screen, but fade in and out. No chasing, scintillating, rotating, bouncing, blinking lights or change in brilliance of illuminated copy shall be permitted. The EMCS copy area is limited to text only; no animation is permitted;

6. The EMCS shall be designed to architecturally complement the structure to which it is associated, such as similar colors, materials and modulation;

7. The EMCS copy shall not change more than once every 3 minutes in residential zones; and

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1 8. All illuminated copy shall be turned off between the hours of 10:00
2 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. in residential zones; except that if the premises are open to
3 accommodate noncommercial public service events occurring beyond the hours
4 identified above, the illumination shall be turned off at the cessation of the event.
5

6 C. Off-Premises Signs 7

8 1. Due to the limitations on size and number of allowable signs in
9 the particular areas of the City in which the following signs typically occur, and given the
10 general public benefit the following signs provide, and given the temporary nature of
11 the message the following types of signs convey; the following types of signs shall be
12 allowed as temporary off-premises signs:
13

- 14 a. Directories or informational kiosks;
- 15 b. political signs;
- 16 c. real estate signs; and
- 17 d. special public event signs.
18

19 2. Uses located on lots without public street frontage in the Community
20 Business, Office and Industrial zones may have:
21

- 22 a. One permanent off-premises directional sign of no more than 16
23 square feet in total surface area of all sign faces;
- 24 b. Signs shall be no higher than 5 feet.
- 25 c. Such off-premise signs shall not be placed on public property
26 without a City lease agreement or other required agreement.
- 27 d. This allowance does not apply to individual uses and units in
28 multi-tenant structures and shopping plazas/centers.
29

30 D. Fuel Price Signs

31 Fuel price signs shall not be included in total sign area or number limitations of NMC
32 18.20.090 through 18.20.110, provided such signs do not exceed 20 square feet per
33 street frontage and only contain the price of gasoline.
34

35 E. Projecting Signs, Awning/Canopy Signs, and Suspended Signs

36 Projecting, awning/canopy, and suspended signs shall be considered building-mounted
37 signs and may be used in lieu of or in conjunction with wall signs where allowed,
38 provided:
39

40 1. They maintain a minimum clearance of eight feet above the finished
41 grade over which they project;

42 2. They do not project more than the width of the sidewalk when the
43 sidewalk abuts the building façade, and
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1 3. Where allowed to be used in conjunction with wall signs, the total sign
2 surface area for any combination of wall signs, projecting signs, suspended signs and
3 sign copy area on awnings/canopies shall not exceed:
4

- 5 a. 10% of the total area of the building's façade on which the
6 sign is located in the Office and Neighborhood Business
7 Zones, unless otherwise specifically allowed through
8 incentives; or
9 b. 15% of the total area of the building's façade on which the
10 sign is located in the Community Business, Industrial and
11 Mixed Use zones, unless otherwise specifically allowed
12 through incentives.
13

14 F. Wall Signs.

15 Wall signs shall be considered building-mounted signs and where permitted shall not:

- 16 1. Extend above the highest exterior facade upon which the sign is
17 located;
18 2. Extend beyond multiple floors of a structure unless approved by the
19 Director.
20 3. Extend beyond any vertical plane of a façade unless approved by the
21 Director.
22 4. Project more than one foot from the façade, unless when oriented
23 perpendicular to the façade in which case such a sign shall be regulated as a projecting
24 sign.
25 5. Exceed 10% of the total area of the building's façade on which the sign
26 is located in the Office and Neighborhood Business Zones, unless otherwise specifically
27 allowed through incentives; or
28 6. Exceed 15% of the total area of the building's façade on which the sign
29 is located in the Community Business, Industrial and Mixed Use zones, unless otherwise
30 specifically allowed through incentives.
31

32 G. Sign Illumination.

33 1. Freestanding and building-mounted signs in all zoning districts shall be
34 indirectly illuminated. No internally illuminated cabinets are allowed. This requirement
35 does not apply to permitted neon signs or channel lettering within the Community
36 Business Center Overlay.
37

38 2. Indirectly illuminated signs shall be arranged and/or shielded so that
39 no direct rays of light are projected from such artificial source into residences, any
40 street right-of-way, or the open sky.
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1 3. Indirectly illuminated signs shall have the illumination source directed
2 from the top of the sign downward and not from the bottom of the sign upward, unless
3 otherwise specifically approved by the Director.

4
5 4. Signs which, by reason of excessive luminance, create a hazard to
6 traffic and/or nuisance to adjacent residential areas shall be prohibited.

7
8 5. Electrical requirements for signs shall be governed by Chapter 19.28
9 RCW and WAC 296-46-910.

10 H. Placement of Signs.

11 1. Where available and feasible, permanent freestanding signs shall be
12 placed within a landscaped area on the site.

13 2. Freestanding signs shall be placed a minimum of 100 feet from
14 adjacent signs on the same property or neighboring properties. Exceptions to this
15 requirement may be allowed by the Director if the property owner can adequately
16 demonstrate site constraints prohibit minimum spacing requirements. Sign spacing
17 standards stated above do not include directories/informational kiosks, community
18 bulletin boards or incidental or directional signs.

19 3. Near Residential. No sign shall be located in a commercial or
20 industrial zone so that it is primarily visible only from a residential district.

21 4. Near Abutting Properties. Freestanding signs should be placed to the
22 maximum extent possible in the central one-third portion of a site's street frontage. In
23 no case, shall a permanent freestanding sign be located closer than 5 feet from an
24 abutting property. Community bulletin boards, kiosks and incidental signs are excluded
25 from this requirement.

26 5. Near Street Intersections. No signs in excess of two and one-half feet in
27 height shall be placed in the vision clearance area. The vision clearance area is the
28 triangle formed by a line connecting points 15 feet from the intersection of property
29 lines. In the case of an intersection involving an alley and a street, the triangle is formed
30 by a line connecting along the alley and 25 feet along the street. When the angle of
31 intersection between the street and the alley is less than 30 degrees, the distance shall
32 be 25 feet. This provision shall apply to all zones.

33 6. Near Driveways. No sign or portion thereof shall be erected within 10
34 feet of driveways unless the same is less than two and one-half feet in height.

35 7. Future Street Right-of-Way. No sign or portion thereof shall be erected
36 within future street rights-of-way, as depicted upon the Comprehensive Plan, unless and
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42
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1 until an agreement is recorded stipulating that the sign will be removed or relocated
2 upon street improvements at no expense to the city.

4 I. Signs for Shopping Plaza/Center and Multi-tenant Buildings

5
6 1. Shopping plazas with multiple tenants shall be allowed one
7 freestanding sign for the plaza per street frontage, even if the plaza is composed of
8 more than one tax lot or is owned by more than one property owner. (Ord. 2003-274 §
9 1; Ord. 2001-239 § 22; Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

10
11 2. Multi-tenant buildings not meeting the definition of “shopping plaza”
12 shall be limited to one freestanding sign per street frontage, provided that neither
13 street frontage is less than 100 feet, in which case only one sign shall be allowed.

15 **18.20.090 Residential zone signs.**

16
17 Signs in the R zones are limited as follows:

19 A. Nonresidential Use.

20 1. Signs in residential zones may be either freestanding or building-
21 mounted. All freestanding signs shall only be monument type signs.

22
23 2. Nonresidential uses in residential zones may have one on-premises
24 single or double-faced sign not exceeding 32 square feet per sign face or side to
25 identify the use provided the use occurs on a minimum of a one acre parcel of land; or

26
27 3. Nonresidential uses in residential zones, as specifically allowed under
28 this Chapter, may have one on-premises Electronic Message Center Sign (EMCS) not
29 exceeding 18 square feet in illuminated display area, provided the use occurs on a
30 minimum of a one acre parcel of land and provided such sign shall comply with NMC
31 18.20.060 (B). Such nonresidential uses are additionally allowed a non-electronic
32 identification sign in conjunction and attached to the EMCS provided the total surface
33 area of both signs does not exceed 32 square feet per sign face.

34
35 4. Nonresidential uses in residential zones are permitted one additional
36 sign not exceeding 32 square feet per sign face, provided:

37 a. The property has more than one street frontage and the
38 two permitted signs are placed a minimum of 150 feet apart; or

39 b. The use occurs on a parcel a minimum of one acre and
40 parking areas or vehicular entrances utilize more than one street or are
41 separated by at least 660 feet;

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1 5. Nonresidential uses in residential zones on parcels less than one acre
2 may have one on-premises single or double-faced sign not exceeding 16 square feet per
3 sign face or side to identify the use;

4
5 6. Community Residential Facilities (CRF) shall be limited to the same
6 signage standards as Type II Home Occupations and Home Industries, as follows:

7 a. A CRF Type I shall be limited to one sign with a total sign face
8 surface area of 2 square feet.

9 b. A CRF Type II shall be limited to one sign with a total sign face
10 surface area of 6 square feet.

11
12 7. Letters or symbols within the sign copy of any nonresidential use sign
13 shall not exceed 6 inches in height. Multiple lines of letters and symbols are allowed
14 provided they fit within the permitted sign surface area. The Director may allow a height
15 limitation of up to 12 inches for official symbols associated with and identifying the use.

16 17 B. Residential Use.

18
19 1. One residential identification sign not exceeding two square feet is
20 permitted; and

21
22 2. One permanent residential development identification sign not
23 exceeding 32 square feet is permitted per entrance and exit, per development. The
24 maximum height for the sign shall be six feet. The sign may be freestanding or mounted
25 on a wall, fence, or other structure.

26
27 3. Within a residential development containing more than 100 lots or
28 residential units, one neighborhood identification sign not exceeding two square feet is
29 permitted for each cul-de-sac or comparable logical grouping of residential lots or units.
30 The signs may be freestanding or mounted on a wall, fence, or other structure but shall
31 be of a uniform design throughout the development. (Ord. 2002-263 § 1; Ord. 2000-210
32 § 53; Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

33
34 4. Type I home occupations are not allowed signage indicating an
35 accessory commercial use. Type II home occupation and home industry signs shall
36 comply with the sign requirements established in NMC 18.30.050 and NMC 18.30.060.

37
38 5. Community Bulletin Boards are permitted through a conditional use
39 permit provided the total surface area of all sides or faces does not exceed 40 square
40 feet. In no case shall any single side exceed 20 square feet in surface area.

41
42 6. Letters within the sign copy shall not exceed 6 inches in height.
43 Multiple lines of letters and symbols are allowed provided they fit within the permitted
44 sign surface area of the sign cabinet.

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1
2 **18.20.100 Office zone signs.**
3

4 Signs in the O zones shall be limited as follows:
5

6 A. Each parcel, with its associated use, is allowed a combination of one (1)
7 freestanding sign, building mounted signs and window signs as provided in this section,
8 and;
9

10 In cases of a multi-tenant structure (2 or more separate units) on a single parcel, the
11 structure shall be allowed one freestanding sign in accordance with this Chapter and
12 each individual unit within the multi-tenant structure (s) is allowed only a combination
13 of building-mounted and window signs as provided in this section.
14

15 B. Building-Mounted Signs

16 1. Wall signs and/or any combination of allowable building-mounted
17 signs are permitted, provided all building-mounted signs do not total an area more than
18 10 percent of the building façade (excluding ground floor window area) on which they
19 are located, unless specifically allowed through incentives; and do not project more
20 than one foot from the surface in which they are mounted, unless specifically approved
21 as a projecting sign; and provided they are limited to building facades with street
22 frontage.
23

24 2. Projecting, Awning/Canopy and Suspended signs are considered
25 building-mounted signs and are permitted in accordance with 18.20.060 E
26

27 C. Freestanding Signs.

28 1. Freestanding signs shall only be monument type signs.
29

30 2. One sign not exceeding 30 square feet per sign face (i.e. cabinet area) is
31 permitted for each street frontage of the parcel the use is located, provided corner
32 parcels with a street frontage of less than 100 feet on each street shall be permitted
33 only one freestanding sign;
34

35 3. On parcels where more than one freestanding sign is permitted, the
36 sign area permitted for individual freestanding signs may be combined; provided the
37 combined sign does not exceed 50 square feet per sign face;
38

39 4. Multi-tenant building(s) on an individual and separate parcel of land
40 are allowed a maximum of 50 square feet of sign surface area per side.
41

42 5. The maximum height for freestanding signs shall be five feet.
43
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1 D. Permanent Window Signs are permitted, provided:

- 2 1. Such signs do not cover more than 10% of the ground floor window
3 area of the building façade on which they are located;
4 2. Illuminated window signs are limited to two signs per storefront
5 window area for each individual commercial unit.
6 3. Each illuminated window sign(s) shall not exceed 3 square feet in size
7 per side.
8 4. Illuminated window sign size shall be calculated using the Letter and
9 Copy area calculation method.

10
11 E. Letters or symbols within the sign copy shall not exceed 10 inches in height.
12 Multiple lines of letters and symbols are allowed provided they fit within the permitted
13 sign surface area.

14
15 F. Directories/Informational Kiosks or Community Bulletin Boards.

- 16 1. Signs of this type are allowed for multi-tenant structures with more
17 than 6 units and shopping plazas, provided:
18 a. The total surface area of all sides or faces does not exceed 40
19 square feet. In no case shall any single side exceed 20 square feet
20 in surface area.
21 b. Lettering and symbols used on Directories/Informational Kiosks
22 shall be limited to no more than 2 inches in height;
23 c. No more than 25% of the total surface area of the sign shall
24 display commercial messages.
25 d. The sign is setback at least 25 feet from the right-of-way, unless
26 otherwise approved by the Director.
27
28 2. Directories/Informational Kiosks which provide weather
29 protection or seating for pedestrians, and as approved by the Director, shall be allowed
30 an additional 10 square feet per side, but in no case shall all sides of the sign exceed a
31 total surface area of 60 square feet.

32
33 (Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

34 **18.20.110 Neighborhood Business zone signs.**

35
36
37 Signs in the NB zones shall be limited as follows:

38
39
40 A. Each parcel, with its associated use, is allowed a combination of one
41 freestanding sign, building mounted signs and window signs as provided in this section,
42 and;
43

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1 In cases of a multi-tenant structure (2 or more separate units) on a single parcel, the
2 structure shall be allowed one freestanding sign in accordance with this Chapter, and
3 each individual unit within the multi-tenant structure (s) is allowed only a combination
4 of building-mounted and window signs as provided in this section.

5 6 B. Building-Mounted Signs

7
8 1. Wall signs and/or any combination of allowable building-mounted
9 signs are permitted, provided all building-mounted signs do not total an area more than
10 10 percent of the building façade (excluding ground floor window area) on which they
11 are located, unless specifically allowed through incentives; and do not project more
12 than one foot from the surface in which they are mounted, unless specifically approved
13 as a projecting sign; and provided they are limited to building facades with street
14 frontage.

15 2. Projecting, Awning/Canopy and Suspended signs are considered
16 building-mounted signs and are permitted in accordance with 18.20.060 E.

17 18 C. Freestanding Signs.

19
20 1. One monument type sign not exceeding 30 square feet per sign face is
21 permitted for each street frontage of the lot, provided corner lots with a street frontage
22 of less than 100 feet on each street shall be permitted only one freestanding sign;
23

24 2. Multi-tenant developments that have more than 300 feet of street
25 frontage on one street may have one additional freestanding sign for each 300 feet of
26 street frontage, or portion thereof. Such signs shall be separated from one another by a
27 minimum of 150 feet, if located on the same street frontage;
28

29 3. The maximum height for freestanding signs shall be five feet.
30 (Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

31 32 D. Permanent Window Signs are permitted, provided:

33 1. Such signs do not cover more than 10% of the ground floor window
34 area of the building façade on which they are located;

35 2. Illuminated window signs are limited to two signs per storefront
36 window area for each individual commercial unit.

37 3. Illuminated window signs shall not exceed 3 square feet in size.

38 4. Illuminated window sign size shall be calculated using the Letter and
39 Copy area calculation method.
40

41 E. Letters or symbols within the sign copy shall not exceed 10 inches in height.
42 Multiple lines of letters and symbols are allowed provided they fit within the permitted
43 sign surface area.
44

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F. Directories/Informational Kiosks or Community Bulletin Boards.

1. Signs of this type are allowed for multi-tenant structures with more than 6 units and shopping plazas, provided:

- a. The total surface area of all sides or faces does not exceed 40 square feet. In no case shall any single side exceed 20 square feet in surface area.
- b. Lettering and symbols used on Directories/Informational Kiosks shall be limited to 2 inches in height;
- c. No more than 25% of the total surface area of the sign shall display commercial messages.
- d. The sign is setback at least 25 feet from the right-of-way, unless otherwise approved by the Director.
- e. Only one sign per street frontage.

2. Directories/Informational Kiosks which provide weather protection or seating for pedestrians, and as approved by the Director, shall be allowed an additional 10 square feet per side, but in no case shall all sides of the sign exceed a total surface area of 60 square feet.

18.20.120 Community Business, Industrial and Mixed Use zone signs.

Signs in the CB, I and MU zones shall be limited as follows:

A. Each parcel, with its associated use, is allowed a combination of one freestanding sign, building mounted signs and window signs as provided in this section, and;

In cases of shopping plazas or multi-tenant structures (2 or more separate units) on a single parcel, the structure shall be allowed one freestanding sign in accordance with this Chapter, and each individual unit within the multi-tenant structure (s) is allowed only a combination of building-mounted and window signs as provided in this section.

B. Building-Mounted Signs

1. Wall signs and/or any combination of allowable building-mounted signs are permitted, provided all building-mounted signs do not total an area more than 15 percent of the building façade (excluding ground floor window area) on which they are located, unless specifically allowed through incentives; and do not project more than one foot from the surface in which they are mounted, unless specifically approved as a projecting sign; and provided they are limited to building facades with street frontage.

2. Projecting, Awning/Canopy and Suspended signs are considered building-mounted signs and are permitted in accordance with 18.20.060 E

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C. Freestanding Signs.

1
2
3 1. Freestanding signs in the Community Business Zone shall only be
4 monument type signs.

5 2. Freestanding signs in the Industrial and mixed use Zones shall only be
6 monument type signs.

7 3. One sign not exceeding 30 square feet per sign face, plus an additional
8 20 square feet per sign side for each additional business in a multiple tenant structure
9 but not to exceed 50 square feet per sign face total, is permitted for each street
10 frontage of the lot, provided corner lots with a street frontage of less than 100 feet on
11 each street shall be permitted only one freestanding sign;

12 4. On lots where more than one freestanding sign is permitted, the sign
13 area permitted for individual freestanding signs may be combined provided the
14 combined sign area does not exceed 50 square feet; and

15 5. The maximum height for freestanding signs shall be five feet, except
16 for one sign for a shopping plaza, in which case the maximum height shall be as
17 outlined in 18.20.100 G
18

D. Permanent Window Signs are permitted, provided:

19
20 1. Such signs do not cover more than 10% of the ground floor window
21 area of the building façade on which they are located;

22 2. Illuminated window signs are limited to two signs per storefront
23 window area for each individual commercial unit.

24 3. Illuminated window signs shall not exceed 3 square feet in size.

25 4. Illuminated window sign size shall be calculated using the Letter and
26 Copy area calculation method.
27

E. Directories/Informational Kiosks or Community Bulletin Boards.

28
29
30 1. Signs of this type are allowed for multi-tenant structures with 6 or
31 more units and shopping plazas, provided:

32 a. The total surface area of all sides or faces does not exceed 40
33 square feet. In no case shall any single side exceed 20 square feet
34 in surface area.

35 b. Lettering and symbols used on Directories/Informational Kiosks
36 shall be limited to 2 inches in height;

37 c. No more than 25% of the total surface area of the sign shall
38 display commercial messages.

39 d. The sign is setback at least 25 feet from the right-of-way, unless
40 otherwise approved by the Director.

41 e. Only one sign per street frontage.
42

43 2. Directories/Informational Kiosks which provide weather
44 protection or seating for pedestrians, and as approved by the Director, shall be allowed

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1 an additional 10 square feet per side, but in no case shall all sides of the sign exceed a
2 total surface area of 60 square feet.

3 4 G. Shopping Plazas.

5
6 Each shopping plaza may have one freestanding sign which shall not exceed a maximum
7 height of:

- 8
9
1. 5 feet when located on streets with speed limits below 35 mph.
 - 10 2. 6 feet for shopping plazas with 10 or fewer tenants when located on
11 streets with speed limits 35 mph or higher.
 - 12 3. 8 feet for shopping plazas with 11 or more tenants when located on
13 streets with speed limits 35 mph or higher.
- 14

15 Each shopping plaza may have one freestanding sign which shall not exceed a maximum
16 surface area of:

- 17
1. 50 square feet per sign face or side for shopping plazas/centers; or
 - 18 2. 64 square feet per sign face or side for shopping plazas/centers with
19 10 or more tenants
- 20
21

22 One additional sign may be allowed when a shopping plaza site has frontages on more
23 than one street or has more than 300 feet of street frontage, it shall be allowed an
24 additional sign with a maximum surface area of:

- 25
1. 50 square feet per sign face or side with a maximum sign cabinet
26 height of five feet.
- 27
28

29 Shopping Plazas are allowed to place banners on private light poles internal to the
30 property, provided:

- 31
- 32 1. Such banners do not individually exceed 16 square feet per side;
 - 33 2. Banners do not encroach into or over public right-of-way; and
 - 34 3. Do not display commercial messages, only shopping plaza name
35 identification may be displayed.
- 36
37

38 H. Multi-tenant structure(s).

39 Multi-tenant structure(s) in the Community Business zone which do not meet the
40 definition of a shopping plaza are limited to a maximum of 50 square feet of sign face
41 (i.e. cabinet area) per sign side. Multi-tenant structure(s) not meeting the definition of a
42 shopping plaza are limited to a maximum sign height of 5 feet.

43 Multi-tenant structures are allowed to place banners on private light poles internal to
44 the property, provided:

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- 1 a. Such banners do not individually exceed 8 square feet per side;
- 2 b. Banners do not encroach into or over public right-of-way; and
- 3 c. Do not display commercial messages, only structure name identification
- 4 may be displayed.

5
6 I. Letters or symbols within the sign copy for any permitted sign shall not exceed
7 10 inches in height within Industrial and Mixed Use Zones, and may not exceed 14
8 inches in height in the Community Business Zone. Multiple lines of letters and symbols
9 are allowed per sign provided they fit within the permitted sign surface area.

10
11 (Ord. 2003-274 § 1; Ord. 2001-239 § 24; Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1,
12 1994).

13 **18.20.130 Nonconforming signs.**

14
15
16 A. Except as provided in this chapter, signs in existence on the date of
17 incorporation or which were legally established and conforming prior to subsequent
18 amendments to this ordinance, and which no longer t conform to the provisions of this
19 chapter, shall be regarded as nonconforming signs which may be continued beyond the
20 date of adoption of the ordinance (s) which established their nonconformity, provided:

- 21
22 1. Nonconforming signs within the all zoning districts shall be brought into
23 compliance with this Chapter upon substantial redevelopment of the
24 primary structure(s) to which the signs belong or substantial
25 redevelopment to the sign itself.

26
27 Substantial redevelopment shall include expansion or redevelopment
28 of the existing structure/use on the property which is valued at 50% or
29 more of the appraised value of the existing structure.

30
31 B. Signs located on premises annexed into the city after the incorporation date
32 which do not comply with the provisions of this chapter, shall be brought into
33 compliance with this chapter within a period of five (5) years after the effective date of
34 the annexation.

35
36 C. Any sign which is structurally altered, relocated or replaced shall immediately
37 be brought into compliance with all of the provisions of this chapter, except the
38 repairing and restoration of a sign on site or away from the site to a safe condition. Any
39 part of a sign or sign structure for normal maintenance shall be permitted without loss
40 of nonconforming status. Acts of God or vandalism which damage these nonconforming
41 signs shall be exempt from this section, if the cost of the repair is less than 50 percent of
42 the cost of replacing the sign with a conforming sign. However, the signs must be
43 restored to their original design or to a more conforming design.

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1 D. For purposes of this title, a sign face or message change shall be subject to the
2 following provisions:

3
4 1. A sign face or message change on a nonconforming sign is not allowed
5 as an alteration when the affected property and sign structure have been abandoned
6 for greater than 90 days;

7
8 2. A sign face or message change shall be allowed as an alteration only
9 for existing conforming signs and for nonconforming signs prior to their amortization
10 expiration date; and

11
12 3. No sign permit shall be required for allowable sign face or message
13 changes.

14
15 E. Signs in existence on the effective date of this chapter which do not comply
16 with provisions regulating flashing signs; use of par spotlights or rotating beacons;
17 rotating and revolving signs; flags; banners; streamers; or strings of lights; balloons or
18 temporary or incidental signs; shall be made to conform within 90 days from written
19 notice by certified mail given by the Director.

20
21 F. Any nonconforming sign used by a business, shopping center, or business
22 complex must be brought into conformance prior to any expansion or change in use
23 which requires a site review or conditional use permit. All nonconforming signs must be
24 brought into conformance with the same provisions as are required for new signs. No
25 building permits for new construction may be issued until compliance with this provision
26 is assured.

27
28 G. Variances can be granted using the variance procedure of Chapter 18.44 NMC
29 to alleviate unusual hardships or extraordinary circumstances which exist in bringing
30 nonconforming signs into conformity. The variance granted shall be the minimum
31 required to alleviate the hardship or extraordinary circumstance. (Ord. 45 § 1, 1994;
32 Ord. 18 § 1, 1994).

33 **18.20.140 Sign removal provisions – nonconforming and abandoned signs.**

34
35
36 A. All signs erected after the effective date of this code, which are in violation of
37 any provisions of this code, shall be removed or brought into conformance upon written
38 notice by the Director; provided, that the building official, or other city employee
39 authorized by the Director, may without notice remove any sign which is in violation of
40 any provision of this code and which is located in a public right-of-way or posted on a
41 utility pole.

42 B. If the owner of sign, building, structure or premises fails to comply with the
43 written order, the Director may take any action authorized by Chapter 18.50 NMC

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1 Enforcement, and Chapters 4.15 - 4.25, to enforce the order. The following exceptions
2 apply:

3
4 1. NMC 18.20.140, Nonconforming signs, provides for certain time limits
5 and other conditions for certain signs as described therein;

6
7 2. Any sign that by its condition or location presents an immediate or
8 serious danger to the public, by order of the building official, shall be removed or
9 repaired within the time the building official may specify:

10
11 a. In the event the owner of such sign cannot be found or refuses
12 to comply with the order to remove, the building official shall then have the dangerous
13 sign removed and the owner cited.

14
15 3. Temporary signs.

16
17 C. Any person who owns or leases a nonconforming or abandoned sign or sign
18 structure shall remove such sign or sign structure when the expiration of the
19 amortization period for the sign(s) or substantial redevelopment as provided in NMC
20 18.20.140 has occurred or the sign has been abandoned:

21
22 1. If the person who owns or leases such sign fails to remove it as
23 provided in this section, the Director shall give the owner of the building, structure or
24 premises upon which such sign is located, 60 days' written notice to remove it;

25
26 2. If the sign has not been removed at the expiration of the 60 days'
27 notice, the Director may remove such sign at cost to the owner of the building, structure
28 or premises; and

29
30 3. Costs incurred by the city due to removal, may be made a lien against
31 the land or premises on which such sign is located, after notice and hearing, and may be
32 collected or foreclosed in the same manner as liens otherwise entered in the liens
33 docket of the city.

34
35 D. Notwithstanding other provisions of this chapter, the building official, or other
36 city employee as authorized by the Director, may remove without notice any sign which
37 is in violation of any provision of this chapter and located in the public right-of-way, or
38 which is posted on a utility pole. (Ord. 76 § 1, 1995; Ord. 45 § 1, 1994; Ord. 18 § 1,
39 1994).