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## **A Quick Guide to Ouray County Sign Regulations**

Outdoor signs in Ouray County are regulated by Ouray County Land Use Code, Section 8 – Outdoor Sign Regulations. Section 8 of the Land Use Code is attached to this memo for reference purposes.

### **General Notes Regarding the Ouray County Outdoor Sign Regulations:**

- The purpose of the regulations is to provide reasonable opportunity for the usage of signs, while protecting the natural beauty and aesthetics of the County, while avoiding the proliferation of signs and hazards to vehicles or pedestrians.
- Signs in place for seventy-two hours or less are not subject to the Outdoor Sign Regulations.
- Signs are regulated by size, not content, as decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in Reed v. Town of Gilbert, AZ.
- Per Ouray County Land Use Code, other than certain signs located in the Colona Zone, the following regulations apply:
  - Signs shall not exceed a maximum of 6 square-feet per sign face.
  - Each property side that is adjacent to a road may have one single-sided or one double-sided sign. Maximum of 6 square feet per sign face.
  - Each property that is not adjacent to a street or road may have on single-sided or one double-sided sign. Maximum of 6 square feet per sign face.

### **Prohibited Signs:**

- Flashing, blinking, animated, scrolling, lights, or moving parts; illumination which changes in brightness, intensity or color, streamers, LED/LCD screens, florescent lighting, or inflatable objects are prohibited by the Ouray County Land Use Code.
- Use of symbols, colors, or shapes resembling government posted traffic signs or traffic control lights.
- Signs that interfere with the safety of pedestrian or vehicle traffic including blocking or view of government posted traffic signs or control signals.

### **County Enforcement of Sign Code:**

- If the County Land Use Department receives a complaint regarding a sign, staff will send a letter to the property owner noticing them of the complaint and requesting that the sign(s) either come into compliance with Ouray County Outdoor Sign Regulations as defined in Section 8 of the Land Use Code, or be removed.
- County staff will not enter your property or remove the sign.

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Ouray County Land Use Department  
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**SECTION 8  
OUTDOOR SIGN REGULATIONS**

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**8.1 PURPOSE AND APPLICABILITY:**

- A. Signs are necessary for advertising, providing directions, way-finding, disseminating information, ensuring prompt response to emergency calls, to guide traffic, identify hazards and protect the safety of vehicles and pedestrians.
- B. The purpose of these regulations is to provide reasonable opportunity to allow the necessary uses of signs, while protecting the natural beauty and aesthetic attributes of the County, avoiding proliferation of signs and hazards to vehicular or pedestrian safety.
- C. This Section is not applicable to signs owned and placed by any federal, state or local government or agency thereof; and is not applicable to signs required or permitted by State statute or other sections of this Code, including, but not limited to, signs permitted or required by **C.R.S. 1-13-113, 31-21-119, 121,124** and **C.R.S. 18-4-201(3)**, or any signs related to addressing requirements of public safety and emergency response agencies.
- D. This Section is not applicable to signs in place for less than seventy-two (72) hours.

**8.2 GENERAL RULES:**

- A. Signs in all zones shall conform to the lighting standards of the Outdoor Lighting Regulations of this Code.
- B. Signs placed in the right-of-way in any zoning district are prohibited and may be removed by the County without notice.

**8.3 PROHIBITED SIGNS:**

- A. The following are prohibited features of any sign:
  - (1) Flashing, blinking, animated, scrolling, spinning, lights, or moving parts; illumination which changes in brightness, intensity or color, streamers, LED/LCD screens, florescent lighting, or inflatable objects.
  - (2) Use of symbols, colors or shapes resembling government posted traffic signs or traffic control signals.
- B. No sign shall be designed or placed in a manner that interferes with the safety of vehicular or pedestrian traffic, including the blocking of reasonable and appropriate view of government posted traffic signs or control signals.

**8.4 ON-SITE SIGN REGULATIONS BY ZONING DISTRICT OR PLAT:**

On-site signs, meaning signs that are placed inside of the property boundaries owned or leased by the persons or entity owning or benefiting from the sign shall comply with the following criteria:

- A. Colona Zone:

**(1) On-site signs attached to a building in the Colona Zone:**

- a) Signs attached to a building shall not exceed a maximum of thirty-two (32) square feet per sign face.
- b) Each building side that is adjacent to a street or road (alleys excluded) may have one of the following:
  - i. One (1) single-sided sign face; or
  - ii. One (1) double-sided sign with two (2) sign faces (*thirty-two (32) square feet per sign face is allowed for a total maximum of sixty-four (64) square feet*).
- c) Signs shall be on no more than two surfaces per building.
- d) Attached signs shall not extend more than five (5) feet beyond the exterior wall to which they are attached.
- e) Roof-mounted signs are prohibited

**(2) On-site free-standing signs in the Colona Zone:**

- a) Signs that are free standing shall not exceed a maximum of twelve (12) square feet per sign face.
- b) Each building or business may have one of the following:
  - i. One (1) single-sided free-standing sign face; or
  - ii. One (1) double-sided sign with two (2) sign faces (*twelve (12) square feet per sign face is allowed for a total maximum of twenty-four (24) square feet*).
- c) Free-standing signs shall not exceed six (6) feet in height as measured from natural grade to the top of the sign.
- d) The provisions of this section regarding numbers of signs, face size, location, height and other specifications, as set forth above, set out the default parameters for free-standing signs as to what will be allowed as a matter of right in the Colona Zone. These specifications may be altered for any commercial use in conjunction with the issuance of a Special Use Permit under Section 5 of this Code. Any such alteration shall be based upon consideration of the type of proposed commercial operation, its location in relation to any public road or highway, the speed limits allowable in said road or highway, and other relevant factors.

**B. On-site signs in the Alpine, High Mesa, North Mesa, South Mesa, South Slope, and Valley Zones:**

- (1) Signs in these zones shall not exceed a maximum of six (6) square feet per sign face.
- (2) Each property side that is adjacent to a street or road may have one of the following:

- i. One (1) single-sided sign face; or
  - ii. One (1) double-sided sign with two (2) sign faces (*six (6) square feet per sign face is allowed for a total maximum of twelve (12) square feet*).
- (3) Properties that are not adjacent to a street or road may have one of the following:
- i. One (1) single-sided sign face; or
  - ii. One double-sided sign with two (2) sign faces (*six (6) square feet per sign face is allowed for a total maximum of twelve (12) square feet*).
- (4) The sign may be free standing or affixed to the ground or some other object.
- (5) The sign may not be attached to any other existing signs, traffic control equipment, public utilities, or trees.
- (6) The sign may be attached to fences or fence posts with the permission of the property owner.
- (7) The top of the sign may be no more than six (6) feet from the ground.
- (8) No lights, illumination, or neon or reflective material or paint may be used in conjunction with the sign.
- (9) Other provisions or specifications which may be more or less restrictive may be provided as a term or condition of the issuance of any Special Use Permit.

**C. Public Lands Zone**

Signs in the Public Lands Zone are under other governmental jurisdiction.

**D. Plats and Special Use Permits**

Commercial lots in PUDs or County approved subdivisions will be governed by plat notes, any applicable development agreement, any applicable Special Use Permit, and/or covenants and restrictions.

**8.5 OFF-SITE SIGN REGULATIONS FOR ALL ZONING DISTRICTS:**

Off-site signs, meaning signs that are placed outside of the property boundaries owned or leased by the persons or entity owning or benefiting from the sign, may be placed in any zone other than the Public Lands Zone and the Alpine Zone and shall comply with the following criteria:

- A.** Off-site signs shall not exceed a maximum of eighteen (18) square feet in total, and each individual sign shall not measure more than six (6) square feet.
- B.** No more than three (3) off-site signs are permitted on a lot or parcel and each surface used as a sign counts as one (1) sign, even if multiple surfaces are connected (the front and back of a sign, each with information, counts as two (2) surfaces).
- C.** May be free standing or affixed to the ground or some other object.

- D. The top of the sign may be no more than six (6) feet from the ground.
- E. No lights, illumination, neon, or reflective paint may be used in conjunction with the signs.
- F. Signs shall be spaced no closer together than three hundred (300) feet on a single parcel. Signs must be within a .5 mile of the persons or entity owning or benefitting from the sign.
- G. Signs may not be attached to any other existing signs, traffic control equipment, public utilities, or trees.
- H. Signs may be attached to fences or fence posts with the permission of the property owner.
- I. Any signs on areas adjacent to State Highways 550 or 62, as defined at **2 CCR- 601, et seq.**, must comply with State statutes and applicable regulations of the Colorado Department of Transportation.

#### **8.6 SUBDIVISION AND ENTRY SIGNS:**

- A. Property entry gates or structures identifying the name of the property may be approved as part of a site development permit or building permit for a property, and are otherwise not considered to be “signs” and therefore are not subject to the provisions of this section.
- B. Subdivision signs for the purpose of identifying subdivisions may be permitted as a term or condition of an approved plat, according to the procedures and criteria provided in the Planned Unit Development provisions of this Code, and if permitted, shall be required to meet the following criteria:
  - (1) Located to be easily visible from a distance of one-hundred (100) feet.
  - (2) Setback from roadways to prevent obstructing views at intersections and to allow use of established right-of-ways for utilities, and road maintenance.
  - (3) Constructed of materials that are compatible with the natural surroundings.
  - (4) Indirect night lighting may be allowed with low wattage light sources that are not visible or create a traffic hazard, consistent with the Outdoor Lighting Section of this Code.
  - (5) Each sign face shall not exceed a total of thirty-two (32) square feet.
  - (6) No more than two (2) sign faces are allowed (*thirty-two (32) square feet per sign face is allowed for a maximum of sixty-four (64) total square feet*).
  - (7) The top of the sign shall be no higher than 10 feet above nearest adjacent road grade.
  - (8) Sign support shall complement the overall sign theme and be constructed to withstand typical weather conditions including winds.
  - (9) Signs within a subdivision shall have a common design.

*Note: Homeowners’ Association restrictive covenants may provide for more restrictive sign criteria. HOA covenants are not enforced by the County.*

**8.7 NON-CONFORMING SIGNS:**

- A. Legal non-conforming signs which were in existence prior (insert date of adoption of these revisions) may be maintained.
- B. If an existing non-conforming sign is replaced within any zone, it shall then conform to the sign standards contained in this Section.

**8.8 SIGN MAINTENANCE:**

- A. All signs shall be maintained and kept in good repair by the owner of the property on which the sign is erected, or in the case of off-site signs, by the person erecting the sign.
- B. If a sign is found to be in disrepair, the owner shall be given written notice by the County to repair or remove the sign within thirty (30) days. If such sign is not repaired or removed within thirty (30) days, the County may remove the sign at the expense of the owner.

**8.9 ADDRESS SIGNS:**

Address signs shall comply with the standards and criteria established by the Board as set forth in Resolution 2017-048 as adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, and as may be amended from time to time.