

**City of Cannon Beach  
Cannon Beach Sign Regulations  
Frequently Asked Questions**

**Updated August 2004**



## General Questions

**What is considered a sign?** A sign is defined as any identification, description, illustration, symbol or device which is affixed upon a building, structure or land and whose primary purpose is to convey a message.

**Are there exemptions to the definition of what constitutes a sign?** Yes. The following are exempt from the sign regulations: 1) signs, other than neon signs, within a building not intended to be visible from the exterior of the building; and 2) three flags of national or state governments.

**How do I measure the sign?** The sign measurement is determined by the outer dimensions of the frame or cabinet surrounding the sign face. This measurement does not include foundations, supports and other essential structures which do not serve as a backdrop or border to the sign. Only one side of a double-faced sign is counted in measuring the sign area. The sign measurement is determined by utilizing basic perimeter formulas, i.e. rectangle or square. (See the attached Figures).

**How do I determine what sign regulations apply to me?** In order to determine the sign requirements for your property or business, you need to determine the zone in which your property is located. The City has different regulations for its commercial and residential zones.

### Signs in Commercial Zones: Limited Commercial (C1), General Commercial (C2) & Residential Motel (RM)

**How much sign area is a business permitted to have?** The maximum sign area permitted for any business is 36 square feet. This includes all the signs associated with the business, including open/closed signs, temporary signs, menus, and advertising for specific products. However, not all businesses are able to have 36 square feet of sign area.

To determine the amount of sign area your business is permitted you need to have the following information:

1. *The site frontage, in feet, of the property on which the business is located.* The site frontage is the length of the property line adjacent to the street. For example, a lot with 50 feet of frontage on a street has a street frontage of 50 feet;

Generally, no individual property can have more than one square foot of sign area per lineal foot of site frontage on a street. For example, the total maximum sign area for a property with 50 feet of frontage on a street is 50 square feet. There is a multiple business exception to this rule for properties that have limited street frontage and contain multiple businesses.

2. *The length of your business frontage, in feet.* The business frontage is the total length of the exterior building wall, facing a street, parking lot or pedestrian way, which contains your business entrance.

No individual business can have more than one square foot of sign area per lineal foot of business frontage. There is a multiple business exception to this rule for properties that contain multiple businesses.

3. *The number of other businesses located on the same property as your business and the amount of signage that those businesses have.*

There is an exception to the rule that no individual property can have more than one square foot of sign area per lineal foot of site frontage on a street where there are multiple businesses on a property. This exemption permits each business to have twenty square feet of sign area. For example, if there are five businesses located on a lot with 50 feet of site frontage, each of the 5 businesses is permitted 20 square feet of sign area.

## Examples

24 *Example 1:* A proposed business is located on a lot with 50 feet of site frontage, its business frontage is feet and there is one other business on the lot, which has 20 square feet of sign area. The proposed business is permitted a maximum of 24 square feet of sign area, as determined by its business frontage.

30 *Example 2:* A proposed business is located on a lot with 75 feet of site frontage, its business frontage is feet and there are two other businesses with a total of 50 square feet of sign area. This business is permitted 25 square feet of sign area, as determined by the site frontage.

*Example 3:* A proposed business is located on a lot with 50 feet of street frontage, its business frontage is 25 feet and there are five other businesses located on the property with a total of 100 square feet of sign area. This business is permitted 20 square feet of sign area, as determined by the multiple business exemption.

**How many signs can my business have?** A business may have only one permanent sign, other than a freestanding sign, per business frontage. A permanent sign is one with an area of four square feet or more. There is no limit on the number of temporary or incidental signs, other than the total square footage of sign area permitted for the business.

**Is there a maximum individual sign size?** Yes, 24 square feet.

**What types of signs are permitted?** The following types of signs are permitted: permanent, freestanding, wall, projecting, window, awning, temporary, incidental and lawn signs.

**What types of signs are prohibited?**

- Signs with flashing elements and with moving, rotating or otherwise animated parts.
- Signs that contain luminescent, fluorescent or phosphorescent elements, including day-glow or neon.
- Signs with neon-type lighting or that are internally lighted.
- Signs that extend above a flat roof or the ridge of a pitched roof.
- Sandwich boards, reader boards, bench signs.
- Wall graphics, such as murals.
- Sounds systems projecting sound audible from a public street or adjacent property.
- Balloons, streamers, spinners, wind socks, kites or other devices moved by wind.

**Can a sign extend into a street?** Yes. A projecting sign can extend up to 2 feet into a street.

**What are the requirements for a freestanding sign?** Each lot is permitted one freestanding sign per site frontage. The freestanding sign must be reviewed and approved by the City's Design Review Board.

**What sign materials may be used?** Signs may be wood, etched or painted on a window or be part of an awning. Other materials must be reviewed by the Design Review Board.

**What is the permitted size of sign lettering?** Letters may be no larger than 12 inches in height.

**Is there a limitation on the height of a sign?** Yes. Freestanding, projecting or awning signs may not exceed 16 feet in height, including its supporting structure.

**Are there any limits on a freestanding signs' support structure?** Yes. The sign's support structure cannot be more than 2 feet higher or wider than the sign.

Signs in Residential Zones: Residential Very Low Density (RVL), Residential Lower Density (RL), Residential Moderate Density (R1), Residential Medium Density (R2), Residential High Density (R3), & Residential Alternative/Manufactured Dwelling (RM).

**How much sign area is permitted in conjunction with a residential property?** A maximum of 10 square feet.

**How many signs are permitted in conjunction with a residential property?** One permanent sign and no more than two temporary and/or lawn signs. A temporary sign is a sign that is not permanently attached to a building or the ground. A lawn sign is a temporary freestanding sign made of rigid materials. A real estate sign is an example of a lawn sign.

**Is there a maximum individual sign size?** Yes. A permanent sign can have an area of no more than 2 square feet. A temporary or lawn sign can have an area of no more than 4 square feet.

**What types of signs are permitted?** The following types of signs are permitted: incidental (a small permanent sign), wall, projecting, window, temporary, and lawn signs.

## Sign Permits

**When do I need a sign permit?**

1. A sign permit is required for the placement of any permanent sign, which is an area of 4 square feet or more.
2. A sign permit is also required if you move an existing permanent sign to a new location.

**What does a sign permit cost?** \$25

**What items must be included with the sign permit application?**

1. A scale drawing showing the dimensions of the sign, the proposed colors, and the size of the proposed letters.
2. A sketch of the building indicating the location of the sign(s).
3. For a freestanding sign, a site plan of the property showing where the sign(s) will be placed.

**What happens after I turn in my permit application?** Your application is reviewed by the Planning and Building Departments. You will be notified when the sign permit is granted, or if the sign application is denied or needs modification.

If the proposed sign is a freestanding sign, the sign must be approved by the Design Review Board. You must provide ten (10) color copies of the sign drawings and site plan for the Board's use. The Design Review Board, which meets monthly, has the authority to approve, modify or deny a freestanding sign application.

**Do I have to do anything after I receive my sign permit?** Yes. Notify the City after the sign has been placed. The City will verify your sign placement.

## Sign Definitions

1. **Abandoned sign** means a sign pertaining to a use or lot where the message of the sign no longer pertains to a use or activity occurring on the lot.
2. **Awning sign** means a sign that is placed on a temporary or movable shelter supported entirely from the exterior wall of a building.
3. **Bench sign** means a sign painted on or attached to a bench.
4. **Building frontage** means an exterior building wall facing a street, parking lot or pedestrian walkway.
5. **Business frontage** means the lineal frontage of a building or portion thereof devoted to a specific business and having an entrance open to the general public.
6. **Corner sign** means a sign that is placed on a lot so as to be visible from two public streets;
7. **Freestanding sign** means a sign on a frame, pole or other support structure which is not attached to any building or permanent structure.
8. **Frontage** means the single full surface of a building facing a given direction.
9. **Incidental sign** means a sign, other than a temporary or lawn sign, which does not require a permit.
10. **Lawn sign** means a temporary freestanding sign made of rigid materials.
11. **Permanent sign** means a sign attached to a building, structure or the ground in some manner, having a sign face area of four square feet or more and made of materials intended for more than short-term use.
12. **Projecting sign** means a sign attached to and projecting out from a building face or wall and generally at right angles to the building.
13. **Readerboard sign** means a sign which can accommodate changeable copy.
14. **Sandwich board sign** means a sign not supported by a structure in the ground, nor attached to or erected against a structure, and capable of being moved.
15. **Sign** means any identification, description, illustration, symbol or device which is affixed upon a building, structure or land and whose primary purpose is to convey a message.
16. **Site frontage** means the length of the property line parallel to and along each public right-of-way.
17. **Temporary sign** means a sign not permanently attached to a building, structure or the ground.
18. **Undeveloped site** means a lot with no permanent structure which contains a use permitted by the zone in which it is located.
19. **Wall graphic** means a painting or other graphic art technique which is applied directly to the wall or face of a building or structure.
20. **Wall sign** means a sign attached to or erected against the wall of a building with the sign face in a parallel plane of the building wall.
21. **Window sign** means a sign permanently affixed to the window panes of a building.

## Sign Face Measurement

Figure 1.

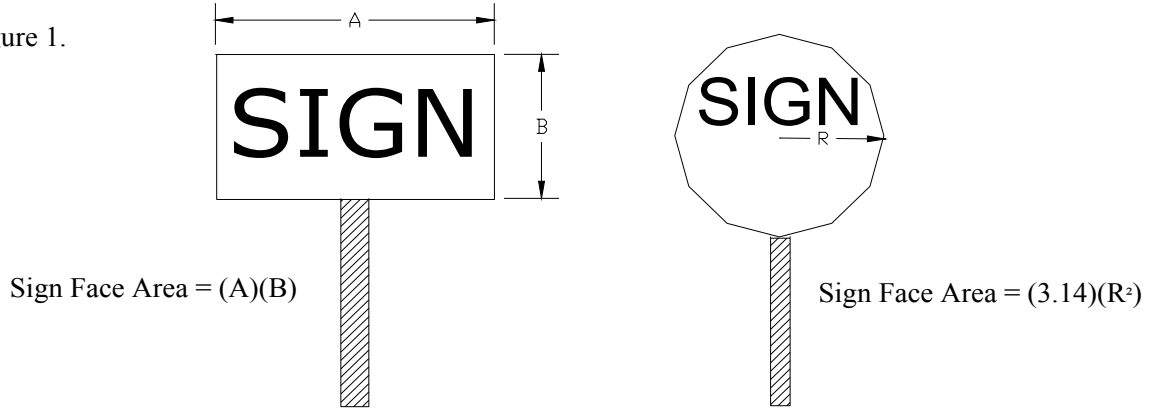


Figure 2.

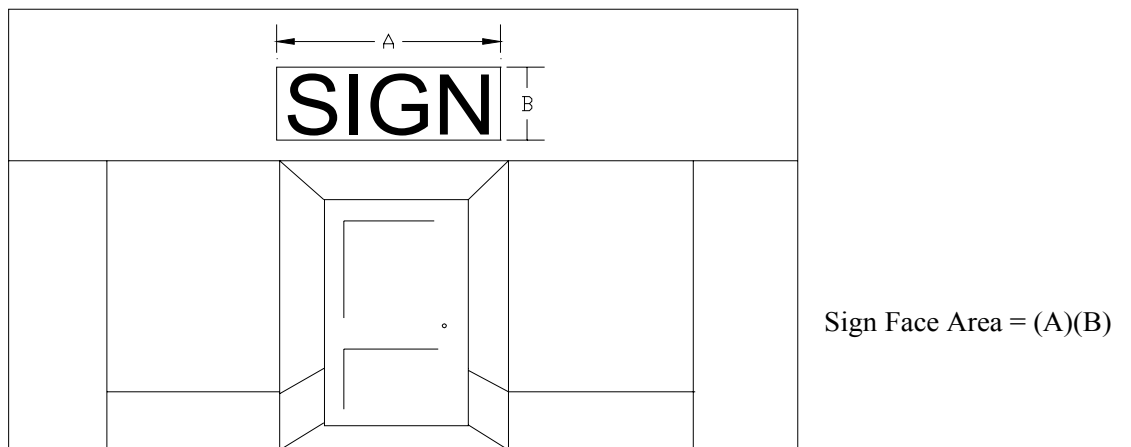
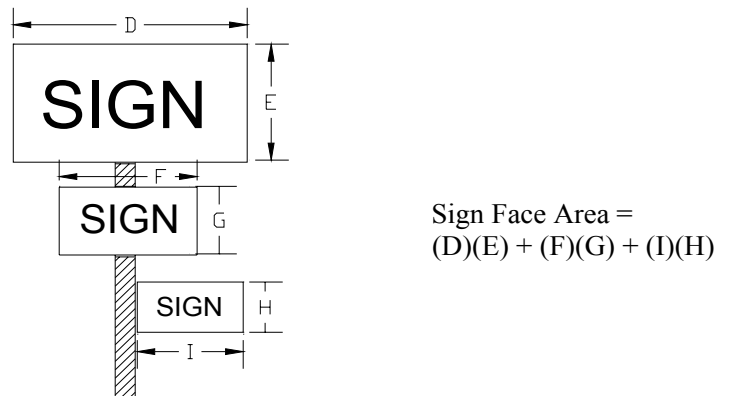
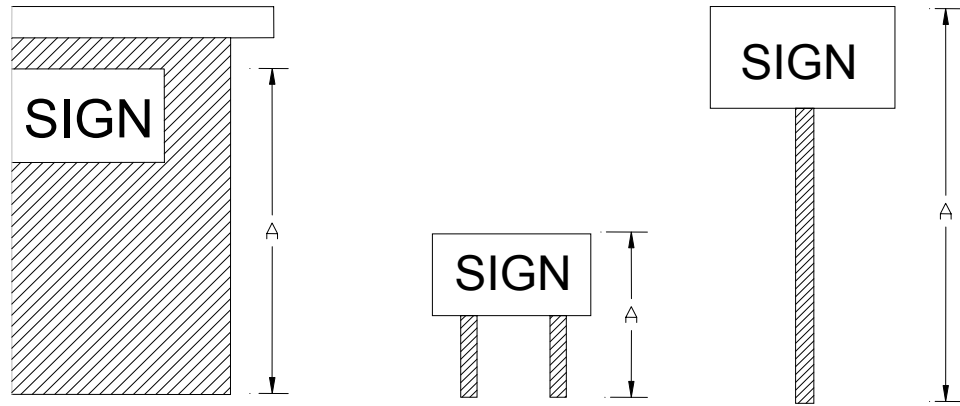


Figure 3.



## Sign Height

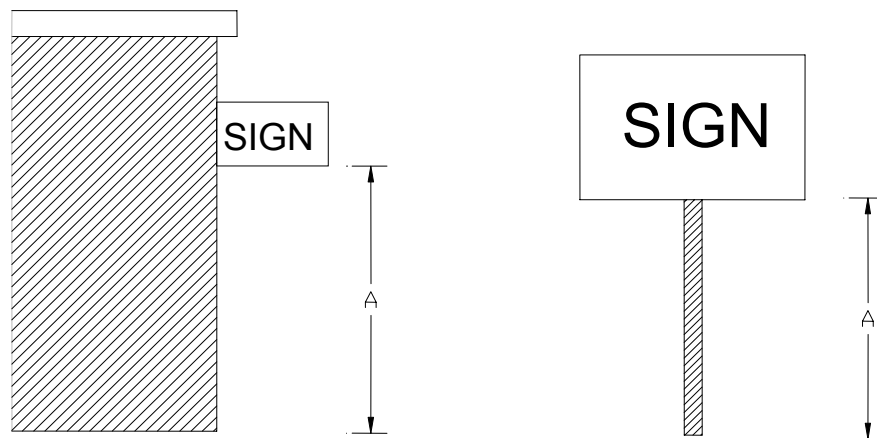
Figure 4.



A = Height

## Sign Clearances

Figure 5.



A = Clearance