

ORDINANCE NO. 2782

AN ORDINANCE REVISING TITLE 15, CHAPTER 15.11 OF THE OCCGF, PERTAINING TO THE STANDARDS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, DESIGN AND PLACEMENT OF BILLBOARD SIGNS

WHEREAS, Section 15.11.212 B of the Great Falls, Montana City Code provides for the regulation of billboard signs in specific zoning districts; and

WHEREAS, interested individuals are required to complete and submit an application for construction of such billboard signs with the Community Development Department which reviews and makes decisions concerning all applications; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana recognizes that billboards are a necessary and appropriate advertising medium, and that there are acceptable and viable locations for billboards within the community.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA:

Section 1. That Title 15, Chapter 15.11, OCCGF, pertaining to the Standards for the Construction, Design and Placement of Billboard Signs, be revised as depicted in Exhibit A in its entirety, where any language indicated by a strike-out be removed, and any language be added which is in bold type.

PASSED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF GREAT FALLS, MONTANA, this 17th day of April, 2001.

Randall H. Gray, Mayor

ATTEST:

Peggy J. Bourne, City Clerk

(SEAL OF CITY)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

David V. Gliko, City Attorney

State of Montana)
County of Cascade : ss
City of Great Falls)

I, Peggy J. Bourne, City Clerk of the City of Great Falls, Montana, do hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was placed on its final passage and passed by the Commission of the City of Great Falls, Montana, at a meeting thereof held on the 17th day of April, 2001.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have set my hand and affixed the Seal of said City this 17th day of April, 2001.

Peggy J. Bourne, City Clerk

(SEAL OF CITY)

State of Montana)
County of Cascade : ss
City of Great Falls)

Peggy J. Bourne, being first duly sworn, deposes and says: That on the 17th day of April, 2001, and prior thereto, she was the City Clerk of Great Falls, Montana; that as said City Clerk she did publish and post by law and as prescribed and directed by the Commission of said city to wit:

On the Bulletin Board, first floor, Civic Center Building;
On the Bulletin Board, first floor, Cascade County Courthouse;
On the Bulletin Board, Great Falls Public Library

Peggy J. Bourne, City Clerk

(SEAL OF CITY)

ORDINANCE
EXHIBIT A

15.11.080 Definitions and abbreviations. A. Abandoned Sign means any sign that has ceased to advertise any bona fide business, product or service for a period of one hundred and eighty consecutive days.

B. "Approved plastic" means only those slow-burning plastics of no greater combustibility as now approved by the Underwriter Laboratories, Inc. for sign use.

C. **"Bench Sign" is an off-premise sign painted upon benches and which are located upon public property including sidewalks, surfaced boulevards and immediately adjacent private property.**

D. Billboard is a sign ~~larger than 200 square feet in area~~ which is designed to advertise products, services or businesses not necessarily located on the premise on which the sign is located. ~~A sign shall not be considered billboard unless the~~ **A billboard is further defined as a sign that is designed with a surface on which temporary posters panels or bulletins are mounted the copy may be changed from time to time for the purpose of conveying a visual-advertising message. Billboards are included within the term off-premise signs for the purpose of this sign code.**

E. "Curb line" means the line at the back of the curb nearest to the lot line. In the absence of a curb, the City Engineer shall establish the curb line.

F. "Display surfaces" means the area made available by the sign structure for the purpose of displaying the advertising message.

G. "Electric sign" means any sign containing electrical wiring, but not including signs illuminated by an exterior light source.

H. Freestanding Signs. "Freestanding signs" are structures not supported by walls, building, or poles and structures designed to be moved from place to place.

I. Interstate Corridor shall mean the land within 200 feet of the right-of-way of Interstate Highway 15 within the corporate limits of Great Falls.

J. "Marquee" means a permanent roofed structure attached to and supported by the building and projecting over public property.

K. "Marquee sign" means any sign attached to the bottom of a marquee.

L. "Noncombustible material" means any material which will not ignite at or below a temperature of twelve hundred degrees Fahrenheit during an exposure of five minutes, and which will not continue to burn or glow at that temperature, as specified in the current adopted edition of the Uniform Building Code.

M. "Nonconforming Sign" means a sign lawfully erected, but which does not comply with the provisions of the subsequently passed current regulations, or that fails to comply with the current regulations due to changed conditions.

N. "Nonstructural trim" means the molding battens, caps, nailing strips, latticing, cutouts or letters and walkways which are attached to the sign structure.

O. "Off-premise directional sign" means a sign that is 200 sqft or less in area that directs attention to the location of a business. The sign area of the directional sign shall be included as a portion of the total allotment for the property or business on which the sign is erected

~~P. "Off-premise sign" means any sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, activity or product not usually sold, conducted or offered for sale on the premise where such a sign is located. sign as further defined herein which directs the attention of the public to a business, product, or service not located or offered on the same premises where such sign is located, or which conveys a message, directions, announcement, or communication not related to the premises where such sign is located. This term includes billboards.~~

Q. "On-premise sign" means any sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, activity or product sold, conducted or offered for sale on the premise where such a sign is located.

R. "Pole-ground signs" means any sign supported wholly by a pole, poles, I-beam or structure in the ground that is not a part of the building.

S. "Premise" means a single tract of land whether described by metes and bounds, certificate of survey, and/or by lot or lots and block designation as in a recorded plat, which at the time of application for a building permit or for taxation is designated by its owner or developer as the tract to be used, developed or built upon as a unit of land under single ownership or control.

T. "Projecting sign" means a wall sign that projects from and is supported by a wall of the building or structure.

U. "Projection" means the distance by which a sign extends over public property or beyond the building line.

V. "Roof sign" means any sign attached to roof framing, walls and/or columns of the building on which the entire advertising display is above the roof level.

W. "Shopping center" means a premise housing six or more individually operated retail/wholesale establishments housed together under one continuous roof or six or more establishments grouped together in one contiguous area (either land or buildings) designed for the purpose of establishing a shopping area.

15.11.080 - 15.11.100

X. "Sign" means any medium including display, light, device, figure, painting, drawing, message, plaque, poster, billboard, or other structure and the component parts which is designed, intended, or used to advertise, inform, or attract attention to the subject matter.

Y. "Sign structure" means the supports, uprights, braces and framework of the sign.

Z. **"Sign Face" means that portion of the sign structure visible from a single direction of travel and available for advertising. The term does not include border, trim, base, apron, supports, or other structural members. The total area of all sign faces may also be referred to as the "sign area".**

AA. "Temporary sign" means any sign, banner, pennant, valance or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric, cardboard, wallboard, plywood or other light materials, with or without frames, intended to be displayed for a limited period of time only.

BB. **"Transit Shelter Sign" is an off-premise sign painted on or affixed to a transit shelter as defined in City Code, section 12.08.010.C.1.a and which is located upon public property including sidewalks, surfaced boulevards and immediately adjacent private property.**

CC. "Uniform Building Code" means the current adopted edition of the Uniform Building Code published by the International Conference of Building Officials.

DD. "Wall sign" means any sign attached to the wall of a building or structure with the exposed face of the sign in a plane parallel to the plane of said wall. Wall signs include signs painted on awnings, or painted directly on the exterior of a building, and are counted against the total wall signage allowance.

EE. Window sign means any permanent sign affixed to an exterior ground floor window. (Ord. 2666 (Exh. B), 1994; Ord 2644 (part), 1993; Ord 2636 (part), 1992; Ord. 2377 2(part), 1985; Ord. 2416, 1986).

15.11.212 Off-premise signs. A. Off-premise Directional Signs. An off-premise directional sign is a sign directing attention to the location of a business. The sign area of the directional sign shall be included as a portion of the total allotment for the property or business on which the sign is erected as per Section 15.11.200.

~~B. Standardized Outdoor Advertising (Billboards).~~

~~1. Exposed areas of backs of signs must be covered and/or painted to present an attractive and finished appearance.~~

~~2. The maximum area for any one sign facing shall be six hundred seventy two square feet excluding any border, embellishment, trim, base or apron, support and other structural members. The maximum size limitations shall apply to each facing of a sign structure and signs may be placed back to back, side by side, or in a V type construction with not more than two displays to each facing and such sign structures shall be considered as one sign.~~

~~3. On all streets and highways within the jurisdiction of this chapter, no off premise sign except bench signs shall be established within five hundred feet of any other off premise outdoor advertising sign, measured on the same side of the same street. The above set forth spacing between sign structures does not apply to sign structures separated by buildings or other obstructions in such a manner that only one sign located with the above spacing distance is visible from the street at any one time.~~

~~4. Each sign structure shall at all times include a facing of proper dimensions to conceal back bracing and framework of structural members. During periods of repair, alteration or copy change, such facing may be removed for a maximum period of forty eight consecutive hours.~~

~~5. No pole mounted billboards shall exceed thirty five feet in height above the ground upon which it is erected.~~

~~6. No billboards shall be erected in other than commercial or industrial zones.~~

~~7. No billboards shall be erected in the B-2 or the B-3 zones of the City.~~

~~8. A billboard shall have the owner's name and date of installation firmly attached to each sign structure. (Ord. 2597 — 1, 2, 1991; Ord. 2482, 1987; Ord. 2377 2(part), 1985).~~

B. Standardized Outdoor Advertising (Billboards). The intent of this section is to regulate the visual impact of billboard signs on the community; to improve the appearance of designated entryways and scenic corridors through the regulation of billboard signage; and to help ensure compatibility between billboard signs and adjacent and nearby lands such as parks, schools, places of worship, and residential areas.

1. Billboard signs that do not conform to the provisions of this section shall be considered to be nonconforming. The nonconforming billboard signs may remain pursuant to section 15.11.270, excepting that:

a. any billboard sign destroyed or damaged beyond 50% of its structural value by any cause whatsoever shall not be reconstructed.

b. In no case may the billboard be repaired or maintained resulting in the substantial upgrading or replacement of the structural support of the billboard. Substantial upgrading may include, but is not necessarily limited to, converting from a wood to a steel structure or a change from a multi-pole to a single-pole structure. However, a non-illuminated billboard may be illuminated provided the subject billboard is not nonconforming because of its proximity to a residential area or its location within an entry or scenic corridor pursuant to 15.11.212.E.2 & 3 below.

C. Property annexed to the City of Great Falls after the effective date of this ordinance shall be subject to further provisions of this section unless superceded by an annexation or development agreement.

D. All billboard signs permitted after the effective date of this section shall conform to the following standards:

1. No billboard signs will be erected in other than commercial or industrial zones.

2. The maximum sign face for any one billboard sign face excluding the Interstate Corridor within the City shall be 250 sq. ft. with a maximum sign face height of 12 ft. and length of 24 ft.

3. In the Interstate Corridor within the corporate limits of Great Falls, the maximum area for any one billboard sign face shall be 432 sq ft.

4. Billboard sign face limitations exclude any border, trim, base or apron, support or other structural members, but include any cut outs, extensions or protrusions. Size limits apply to each face of a sign structure and sign faces may be placed back to back or in a V-type configuration at an angle not to exceed 30 degrees with not more than one display per face.

5. On all streets and highways within the jurisdiction of this chapter, no off-premise directional/billboard sign except bench signs will be established within 1000 ft. of any other off-premise directional/billboard sign, measured on the same side of the street. Likewise, no billboard sign, facing a crossing street, will be placed within 300 ft., direct measurement, of any other billboard sign on the same side of the street.

6. The maximum overall height of a billboard sign shall be 30 ft. above the grade of the roadway to which the sign is oriented. Road grade shall be established at a point on the roadway nearest the sign.

7. No billboard signs shall be erected in the B-2, B-3 or B-4 zones of the City.

8. Billboard sign structures must be located entirely on private property, and no portion of any structure or sign face can overhang the public right-of-way.

E. Billboard signs are expressly prohibited in the following areas:

1. Within 300 ft in any direction of any property that is used for a public park, public school, private or parochial school, college or university, church, cemetery, courthouse, city hall or public museum on the same street where the greater frontage exists.

2. Within 150 ft. in any direction of any lot or parcel that is zoned residential or used as a primary residential use of any kind.

3. Within 200 ft. in any direction of the of the edge of the roadway surface along the following entry and scenic corridors (billboard free areas) within the City:

a. 10th Avenue South from I-15 Exit #278 to the intersection of 10th Avenue South and 2nd Street South.

b. River Drive from the south most city limits to 38th Street North.

c. Central Avenue West from 6th Street to the east bank of the Missouri River.

d. The area within the corporate limits of the city of Great Falls along 10th Avenue south from 57th Street to 54th Street.

F. The following installation, appearance, and maintenance standards shall apply to all billboard signs within the corporate limits of the city of Great Falls unless otherwise noted:

1. During periods of repair, alteration or copy change, such facing may be removed for a maximum period of 48 consecutive hours.

2. All billboard signs will have the owners name firmly attached to the sign structure.

3. All billboard sign structures will be of single pole construction and will not be placed on the roof or wall of a building or structure.

4. Sign structures must be painted, anodized, or otherwise finished in earth tones of brown and green, including beige, mocha, forest and kelly green, but not including teal or any florescent colors of any kind.

C. Off-Premise Temporary signs. Any off-premise temporary signs that encroach upon or cross any boulevard or right-of-way require a temporary sign permit and shall meet the following requirements:

1. Area Limitations. Temporary signs shall not exceed one hundred square feet in area.
2. Height. Minimum and maximum height as approved by the Building Official.
3. Time. One temporary sign permit may be issued at a time for a maximum of thirty consecutive days per business. (Ord. 2666 (Exh. B), 1994).