

# ***FYI Forest Grove...***

## **Signs in the Town Center**

The City's new sign code and public way use permit took effect on December 23, 2009. The City Council directed staff to provide information about the new code provisions over the next six months (by the end of June, 2010). After that date until the end of September, the Council directed a lenient enforcement of the code (i.e. staff will send notices of violation with no penalties or citation). After September, the City will begin regular enforcement. Of course, staff will work with individuals to assist in compliance at anytime.

As part of the informational effort, this article is part of a series explaining various aspects of the new sign code. It describes the signs allowed in the Town Center.

Canopy or hanging signs up to 15% of each wall face of the building to which the sign is attached are permitted.



Wall signage (including window signage) with a gross area of up to 15% of the face of the building to which the sign is attached or painted are permitted. No more than two lighted signs are permitted in the windows of each business.



Businesses with ground-floor entrances which have the front building line within five feet of the public right-of-way are permitted one projecting sign on the front building face, side, or corner in lieu of a wall sign. Projecting signs can project no more than six feet, have a maximum vertical dimension of six feet, and be limited to a maximum of twenty-four square feet of area per face.

Lighting for signs in the Town Center is limited to internal lighting (where the light source is inside the sign) or indirect lighting (screened from view, where the light source is located below the sign, and is part of an ornamental feature of the sign structure). Braces and struts which support indirect lighting from the top or sides of the sign are generally prohibited, but may be allowed for signs and lighting approved through the Town Center Track 2 *Design Guidelines* process.

**Temporary Signs** in the Town Center are permitted. They can't have moving parts or be lighted. They have to be affixed to a permanent structure (not a vehicle or a tree) and cannot be higher than the building's eave, top of wall, or parapet. Up to two temporary signs not exceeding 100 square feet each (such as banner signs) are allowed. They can be erected for no more than 30 consecutive days and for no more than sixty (60) days in a calendar year. No temporary signs are allowed if the site has a changeable copy (manual or electronic) sign.

**Portable signs** (such as A-boards or sandwich boards) are allowed provided they are professionally prepared, contain no moving parts and are unlighted. Each property (not each business) is allowed one portable sign, not exceeding six square feet in area. The sign must be located on private property directly adjacent to the business to which the sign pertains, unless the business has obtained a *Public Way Use Permit* from the City's Engineering Department; those signs may be located in the public right-of-way but only if located directly adjacent to the business to which the sign pertains. All portable signs are to be removed at the close of the business day.

These types of Portable Signs are not allowed:

- Signs on a parked vehicle unless the vehicle is being used for transport in the normal day-to-day operations of a business.
- Signs propped up by or leaning against a motor vehicle when the vehicle is parked in the public right-of-way
- Moving signs
- Festoons (strings of ribbons, tinsel, small flags, lights, or pinwheels)
- Balloon signs
- Flashing signs
- Off-premise signs

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PERMIT FEES for permanent signs through June 30, 2010 are calculated as follows: A base fee of \$64 + \$2.83 for each square foot of sign face area. The maximum fee is capped at \$1,755. A building permit and electrical permit may also be required.

This article is intended only to provide a general overview of the new regulations. The sign code in its entirety has been incorporated into Development Code Articles 8 and 12 which may be viewed on the City of Forest Grove website: [www.forestgrove-or.gov](http://www.forestgrove-or.gov). If you have any questions, please contact Senior Planner James Reitz @ (503) 992-3233 or [jreitz@forestgrove-or.gov](mailto:jreitz@forestgrove-or.gov).