

SECTION 14: SIGN REGULATIONS

Subdivision 1. PURPOSE

All signs hereinafter erected, altered, substantially repaired, relocated or maintained shall conform to the provisions of this Ordinance. No sign shall be allowed in any zoning district unless it is a permitted use, conditionally permitted use or accessory use established in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance. In no case, shall a sign be erected that will obscure traffic sight distance.

Subdivision 2. SIGNS GENERALLY

1. All sign locations shall be kept free from unreasonable growth, debris or rubbish. Failure to correct such conditions after being so directed in writing by the Zoning Administrator shall be cause for revocation of the existing permit and removal of sign or signs on said location or locations.
2. All signs shall be properly identified stating the name and address of the individual or firm responsible for the sign.
3. Private signs other than underground utility warning signs are prohibited within public right-of-way and easements, provided, however, such underground utility is located within such right-of-way easement.
4. Illuminated signs may be permitted; except that devices giving off an intermittent or rotating beam or rays of light shall be prohibited.
5. No sign shall, by reason of position, shape or color interfere in any way with the proper functioning or purpose of a traffic sign or signal.
6. Signs shall not be painted on fences, rocks, or similar structures or features nor shall paper or similar signs be attached directly to a building wall by an adhesive or similar means.
7. No lighting for signs shall directly reflect light beams onto any public road or highway.
8. All signs shall be located outside of any public right-of-way; except as otherwise allowed in this Section. A statement shall be filed with the Zoning Administrator in a form approved by the county attorney stating that all costs of removal of the sign shall be borne by the applicant should the widening of the road necessitate removal or relocation of the sign.
9. No sign in excess of three (3) square feet shall be less than five hundred (500) feet from the intersection of two or more public roads or less than five hundred (500) feet from the intersection of a public road and a railroad, provided that advertising may be affixed to or located adjacent to a building at such intersection in such a manner as not to cause any greater obstruction of vision than caused by the building itself. A conditional use permit is required for exceptions.
10. Off-premise signs are not permitted.

Subdivision 3. PERMITTED SIGNS

The following signs are allowed without a land use permit but shall comply with all other applicable provisions of this Section.

1. Government signs. Signs of a public, non-commercial nature to include safety signs, danger signs, trespassing signs, traffic signs, signs indicating scenic or historical points of interest, memorial plaques and the like, when signs are erected by or on order of a public officer or employee in the performance of their official duties.
2. Directory signs. A wall sign which identifies the business, owners, manager, or resident occupant and sets forth the occupation or other address information but contains no advertising. There may be one (1) directory sign per zoning lot not to exceed two (2) square feet per business or resident occupant. Home occupations may display a directory sign.
3. Directional and parking signs (on-site). On-site directional and parking signs intended to facilitate the movement of vehicles and pedestrians upon which the sign is located. Such signs shall not exceed six (6) square feet in total area.
4. Integral signs. Names of buildings, date of construction, commemorative tablets and the like, which are on the building or structure.
5. Real estate signs. For the purpose of selling, renting or leasing a single parcel, a sign not in excess of sixteen (16) square feet per surface may be placed in the front yard.
6. Construction signs. The purpose of selling or promoting a residential project, commercial area, or an industrial area, one sign not to exceed two hundred forty (240) square feet of surface may be erected upon the project site.
7. Election signs. Election signs are permitted in all districts provided such signs are removed within ten (10) days following the election. No election signs shall be permitted more than three (3) months preceding the election the sign relates to.
8. Agricultural product signs. Signs indicating that the proprietor of a farm is a dealer in seed fertilizer or other agricultural products only when such dealership is incidental to the primary agricultural business of the farm.
9. Crop demonstration signs. Any farm crop demonstration sign for informational use.
10. Holiday signs. Signs or displays which contain or depict messages pertaining to a national or state holiday and no other material. Such signs may be displayed for a period not exceeding thirty (30) days.

Subdivision 4. DISTRICT REGULATIONS

1. Signs allowed in the "FP" FLOODPLAIN DISTRICT, "A" AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT, "R-1" RURAL RESIDENCE DISTRICT.
 - A. Permitted Signs. Permitted signs are regulated by Subdivision 3 of this Section.
 - B. Institutional signs. Two (2) of which one (1) may be free-standing but not higher than twelve (12) feet and the single or combined surface area shall not exceed thirty (30) square feet.
 - C. Home occupation signs as regulated in Section 13.
 - D. Residential signs.
 - 1.) One (1) nameplate sign for each dwelling not to exceed two (2) square feet in area per surface and no sign shall be so constructed as to have more than two (2) surfaces.
 - 2.) One (1) nameplate sign for each permitted nonresidential use or use by conditional use permit. Such sign shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet in area per surface and no sign shall be so constructed as to have more than two (2) surfaces.
 - 3.) Symbols, statues, sculptures and integrated architectural features on buildings may be illuminated by floodlights provided the source of the light is not visible from the public right-of-way or adjacent property.
 - 4.) Permanent signs of up to twenty (20) square feet identifying a residential subdivision or business park may be allowed if well landscaped and built with colors and materials compatible with the primary structure(s).
2. Signs allowed in the "C-4" FRINGE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT and "I-1" LIGHT INDUSTRY DISTRICT.
 - A. Permitted signs. Permitted signs as regulated by Subdivision 3 of this Section.
 - B. Business and Industry Signs.
 - 1.) Sign structures developed on property for which the sign relates shall be limited to not more than one (1) for a lot on one hundred (100) foot frontage or less and to only one (1) per additional one hundred (100) feet of additional lot frontage. Such structure may not contain more than two (2) signs per facing.

- 2.) No sign may be erected within one hundred (100) feet of an adjoining residential property.
 - 3.) The aggregate square footage of sign space per lot shall not exceed the sum of one (1) square foot for each front foot of lot or one hundred sixty (160) square feet, whichever is less.
 - 4.) No sign shall extend in height more than six (6) feet above the highest outside wall or parapet of any principle building except that one (1) identification sign in a commercial area of three (3) or more outlets may extend thirty (30) feet above the highest roof provided that such sign is not closer than thirty (30) feet from any lot line.
3. General Sign Standards. These standards shall apply to all signs except permitted signs as listed in Subdivision 3 of this Section.
- A. No signs shall be erected on property for which the sign does not relate as follows:
- 1.) Closer than three hundred (300) feet from platted streets, roads or highways.
 - 2.) Within one hundred (100) feet of property used for church or school purposes.
 - 3.) Less than eight hundred (800) feet from any other advertising device on the same side of the right-of-way, except in the "C-4" or "I-1" DISTRICT.

Subdivision 5. OFF-PREMISE ADVERTISING SIGNS (BILLBOARD)

OFF-PREMISE ADVERTISING SIGNS: Billboards and portable signs are not permitted in the Hutchinson Joint Planning Area.

OFF-PREMISE DIRECTIONAL SIGNS: Off-premise directional signs are conditionally permitted with special permission by the McLeod County Board, Hutchinson City Council and affected Township Board.

Subdivision 6. AMORTIZATION

Any sign or billboard existing on the effective date of this Ordinance which does not conform to the regulations set forth in this Ordinance shall become a non-conforming use and shall be discontinued; uses of signs and billboards which become non-conforming by reason of a subsequent change in this Ordinance shall also be discontinued within a reasonable period of amortization of the sign.

Subdivision 7. REMOVAL OF SIGNS AND BILLBOARDS

Any sign or billboard which is: erected or maintained contrary to the provisions of this Section; or, for which no land use permit has been obtained; or, for which the permit has been revoked; or, which is abandoned is hereby declared to be a public nuisance, illegal and non-conforming, and the Zoning Administrator may enter upon the land where the sign is located and may remove or destroy such sign after a hearing as provided by law and after thirty (30) days notice to the owner and permittee thereof, if known. No compensation shall be paid for any sign to be removed or destroyed, and the Zoning Administrator may collect the cost of removal or destruction from the person erecting or maintaining such sign or billboard. For the application of these regulations, whether a sign or billboard has been "abandoned" shall be determined by the County Assessor.

Subdivision 8. INSPECTION

Any sign or billboard for which a permit is required shall be subject to inspection by the Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Administrator or his duly authorized representative may enter upon any property or premises to ascertain whether the provisions of this Ordinance are being obeyed. Such entrance shall be made during business hours unless an emergency exists. The county shall order the removal of any sign that is not maintained in accordance with the maintenance provisions of this Section. Notice shall be given to the county of any change in sign owner.

