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**CHAPTER 23 SIGN PROVISIONS**

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## CHAPTER 23 SIGN PROVISIONS

### Section 23.010 Purpose

- A. Protect and enhance scenic resources by minimizing visual impacts of signage, while authorizing signage necessary for commerce, recreation, safety and public information.
- B. Encourage the use of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Graphic Signing System for public signs in and adjacent to public rights-of-way.

### Section 23.020 Signs (GMA Only)

- A. Except for signs allowed without review pursuant to [Sections 3.100](#) and [3.180\(B\)](#), all new signs must meet the following standards unless these guidelines conflict with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for public safety, traffic control or highway construction signs. In such cases, the standards in the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices shall supersede these guidelines.
  - 1. The support structure shall be unobtrusive and have low visual impact.
  - 2. Lettering colors with sufficient contrast to provide clear message communication shall be allowed. Colors of signs shall blend with their setting the maximum extent practicable.
  - 3. Backs of all signs shall be unobtrusive, non-reflective, and blend in with the setting.
  - 4. Spot lighting of signs may be allowed where needed for night visibility. Backlighting is not permitted for signs.
  - 5. Except for signs along public highways necessary for public safety, traffic control, or road construction and consistent with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, the following signs are prohibited:
    - a. Luminous signs or those with intermittent or flashing lights. These include neon signs, fluorescent signs, light displays, and other signs that are internally illuminated, exclusive of seasonal holiday light displays.
    - b. New billboards.
    - c. Signs with moving elements.
    - d. Portable or wheeled signs, or signs on parked vehicles where the sign is the primary use of the vehicle.
  - 6. In addition to 1-5, signs shall meet the below guidelines according to Recreation Intensity Class, and subject to compliance Approval Criteria for Recreation Uses and Facility Design Guidelines for All Recreation Projects:

- a. Recreation Intensity Class 1 (Very Low Intensity) – Simple interpretive signs or displays, not to exceed a total of 50 square feet. Entry name signs, not to exceed 10 square feet per sign.
  - b. Recreation Intensity Class 2 (Low Intensity) - Simple interpretive signs and displays, not to exceed a total of 100 square feet. Entry name signs, not to exceed 20 square feet per sign.
  - c. Recreation Intensity Class 3 (Moderate Intensity) - Interpretive signs, displays or facilities. Visitor information and environmental education signs, displays, or facilities. Entry name signs, not to exceed 32 square feet per sign.
  - d. Recreation Intensity Class 4 (High Intensity) - Entry name signs, not to exceed 40 square feet per sign.
7. For recreation facility design projects, signs shall be limited to that necessary to provide relevant recreation or facility information, interpretive information, vehicular and pedestrian direction, and for safety purposes.
- B. Any sign which does not conform with a provision of these guidelines and has existed prior to their adoption is subject to the following provisions.
- 1. Alteration of existing nonconforming signs shall comply with these standards.
  - 2. Any nonconforming sign used by a business must be brought into conformance concurrent with any expansion or change in use which requires a development permit.

#### **Section 23.030 Signs (SMA Only)**

- A. All public signs subject to review located in SMA, must be designed and located in compliance with the standards described in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area Graphic Signing System and conform to the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices standards.
- B. New signs shall meet the minimum provisions of these standards in all cases where these provisions do not conflict with other regulations intended for public safety and information.
- C. All signs shall meet the following standards:
  - 1. New signs shall be allowed as specified in the applicable land use designations.
  - 2. No sign shall be erected or placed in such a manner that it may interfere with, be confused with, or obstruct the view of any traffic sign, signal or device.
  - 3. Pre-existing signs are allowed to continue provided no changes occur in size, structure, color or message.
  - 4. Except for signs allowed without review pursuant to Section 3.100 and 3.180(B) all new signs shall meet the following guidelines, and be consistent with the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices:

- a. Signs shall be maintained in a neat, clean and attractive condition.
  - b. The character and composition of sign materials shall be harmonious with the landscape and/or related to and compatible with the main structure upon which the sign is attached.
  - c. Signs shall be placed flat on the outside walls of buildings, not on roofs or marquees.
  - d. Signs shall be unobtrusive and have low contrast with the setting.
  - e. The visual impact of the support structure shall be minimized.
  - f. Outdoor sign lighting shall be used for purposes of illumination only, and shall not be designed for, or used as, an advertising display, except for road safety signs.
  - g. Backs of all signs shall be visually unobtrusive, non-reflective, and blend in with the setting.
  - h. Sign internal illumination or backlighting shall not be permitted except for highway construction, warning or safety.
5. Public signs shall meet the following standards in addition to standards C(1) through C(4).
- a. The Graphic Sign System provides design standards for public signs in and adjacent to public road rights-of-way. All new and replacement public signs, except those transportation regulatory, guide, and warning signs allowed outright, shall conform to the guidelines in this system. Types of signs addressed include recreation site entry, interpretive, specific service signs, destination and distance signs, variable message signs, or signs that bridge or are cantilevered over the road service.
  - b. Signs located outside public road rights-of-way are encouraged to be designed in such a way as to be consistent with similar purpose signs described in the Graphic Signing System.
  - c. Signs posted by governmental jurisdictions giving notice to the public shall be no larger than that required to convey the message intended.
6. Signs for public and commercial recreation facilities, home occupations, cottage industries, and commercial uses shall meet the following guidelines in addition to standards C(1) through C(4) and C(7).
- a. Any sign advertising or relating to a business which is discontinued for a period of 30 consecutive days shall be presumed to be abandoned and shall be removed within 30 days thereafter, unless permitted otherwise by the jurisdictional authority.
  - b. Any signs relating to or advertising for a business shall be brought into conformance with these sign guidelines prior to any expansion or change in use which is subject to review by the county.
  - c. Off-site and on-site directional signs on approach roads to recreational facilities may be permitted. Name and interpretive signs may be permitted on-site, but should be kept to the

minimum required to achieve the purpose(s) of the facilities.

- d.** Commercial recreation businesses approved in conjunction with a recreational facility may have a name sign not exceeding 16 square feet.
- e.** Recreation developments may be permitted one on premise name sign at each principal entrance. Such signs are encouraged to be of a low profile, monument type, and shall conform to the Graphic Sign System.

**7. Prohibited Signs**

- a.** Billboards.
  - b.** Signs that move or give the appearance of moving except signs used for highway construction, warning or safety.
  - c.** Portable or wheeled signs, or signs on parked vehicles where the sign is the primary use of the vehicle, except for signs used for highway construction, warning or safety.
- 8.** Sign clutter and other negative visual effects from excessive signs along all roads and highways, and at parking lots and recreation facilities, shall be reduced.