

**CHAPTER 6 – SIGNS**

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DRAFT

## CHAPTER 6 - Section 724. Signs.

### Section 600. ~~724.1.~~ Purpose.

The purpose and intent of this Section is to provide minimum standards to protect the public health, safety and welfare, convenience and enjoyment of the general public through consistent and nondiscriminatory sign standards. Sign regulations are intended to make Manatee County safer by reducing safety hazards, to contribute to the development and maintenance of an attractive visual environment, while facilitating the communication of messages to the public. The purpose is to avoid an environment that encourages visual blight while protecting and promoting the aesthetic environment of the unincorporated area of Manatee County. The objectives and strategies of this section are as follows:

- A. ~~a.~~ Improve pedestrian and traffic safety;
- B. ~~b.~~ Lessen the visual clutter that may otherwise be caused by the proliferation of improper placement, illumination and animation and excessive height and excessive size (area) of signs which compete for the attention of pedestrian and vehicular traffic;
- C. ~~c.~~ To allow and encourage signs appropriate to the zoning district in which they are located and consistent with the category of use and function to which they pertain;
- D. ~~d.~~ Categorize signs based upon the function that they serve and tailor the regulation of signs based upon their function;
- E. ~~e.~~ To allow for the identification of business, residential and public uses without creating safety hazards, confusion, unsightliness, or visual obscurity of adjacent businesses or other neighboring structures; and
- F. ~~f.~~ Recognize the commercial communication requirements of all sectors of the business community and promote both renovation and proper maintenance.

### Section 601. ~~724.2.~~ Applicability of Other Code or Regulatory Requirements.

- A. ~~a.~~ Signs requiring the issuance of building permits or other advertising structures shall be permitted, constructed, and maintained in strict conformity with the Florida Building Code, Florida Statutes, and all other applicable regulations.
- B. ~~b.~~ Signs requiring the issuance of a sign permit or other advertising structures shall be permitted, constructed and maintained in strict conformity with the Land Development Code and all other applicable regulations (including, but not limited to, maximum size, number of signs, minimum setbacks, maximum height, minimum ground clearance and minimum separation requirements).
- C. ~~c.~~ No sign shall be permitted as a main or accessory use except in accordance with the provisions of this Code.
- D. ~~d.~~ In the event that any of the provisions of this Section are in conflict with other sections of this Code or other applicable requirements, the provisions of this Section shall apply.

### Section 602. ~~724.3.~~ Administration.

The Department Director shall be responsible for the administration of this Section in coordination with other appropriate County and State Departments.

**Section 603.724.4. Sign Permits.****603.1. Activities Requiring a Sign Permit.**

- A. ~~a~~—No person shall erect, demolish, alter, rebuild, enlarge, extend, relocate, attach to, suspend from, or support from a building or structure a permanent or temporary sign unless a permit for such sign has been issued by the Department Director or unless such signs are specifically exempted from permit requirements.
- ~~A.B. a~~—Painting, repainting, cleaning or other ordinary repairs and maintenance of any legal sign or sign structure shall not require a sign permit. Replacement of any structural elements of a sign shall require a sign permit.
- C. ~~b~~—No permit shall be required to change the advertising copy or message on signs which are specifically designed for the use of replaceable copy, or panels.
- D. ~~c~~—It shall be unlawful to change, modify, alter, or otherwise deviate from the terms or conditions of a sign permit without the prior written approval of the Department Director. ~~The W~~ritten record of such approval shall be entered upon the original permit application and maintained in the files of the County.
- E. ~~d~~—No sign permit for any on-site sign shall be issued until a building permit has been issued for the establishment to which it relates.
- F. ~~e~~—All sign permits for permanent on-site and off-site signs shall be valid for the life of the sign. All temporary sign permits shall be valid for the period specified on the permit.
- G. ~~f~~—No sign permits for on-site signs will be issued for premises when existing signage of the same type exceeds the limits of this Code. Existing signs will either have to be modified or removed to allow additional signage. This requirement shall apply separately to wall signs and freestanding signs.
- H. ~~g~~—Non-commercial messages permitted in substitution: Wherever these regulations permit erection of signs for commercial purposes or for the identification of the property on which the sign is located, the permittee may substitute any non-commercial message in lieu of the messages otherwise permitted. The right to substitute the non-commercial message does not waive any other requirement imposed by the ordinances of the County as to number, size, construction, location, lighting, obscenity, safety or any other regulated attribute. The right created by this subsection is one of substitution and not one of addition.

**603.2. ~~724.14. Signs Allowed Without a Sign Permit, Generally.~~**

The following types of signs may be erected without the issuance of a sign permit. All such signs shall be placed, maintained and removed in conformance with all other requirements of this Code except government signs:

- A. ~~i~~—Construction sign
- B. ~~p~~—Farm sign
- C. ~~d~~—Flags
- D. ~~e~~—Garage sale sign
- E. ~~e~~—Government sign
- F. ~~g~~—Mural sign
- G. ~~b~~—On-site directional sign
- H. ~~n~~—Political sign
- I. ~~n~~—Real estate sign
- J. ~~f~~—Sandwich board sign
- K. ~~k~~—Signs incorporated on machinery or equipment
- L. ~~r~~—Signs related to fund-raising for schools, parks and churches

- M. ~~q~~-Tag sign
- N. ~~m~~-Temporary institutional sign types
- O. ~~a~~-Temporary off-site sign
- P. ~~e~~-Temporary sign
- Q. ~~t~~-Warning sign
- R. ~~j~~-Window sign

**603.3. ~~724.5.~~ Sign Permit Application Procedures.**

Pursuant to Section 105, ~~t~~The Department Director shall establish Administrative Procedures for sign permit applications which shall include, but need not be limited to, sufficiency review of sign permit applications, various issues specific to each Department of the County, and application contents.

A. ~~724.6. Permit Authority~~**Sign Permit Review.** The Department Director shall approve or deny the sign permit or building permit as applicable within forty-five (45) days after receipt of a complete application. If the Department Director fails to act within forty-five (45) days, the permit shall be deemed denied. If ~~the a sign~~ permit is denied, the Department Director shall prepare a written notice of his or her decision, describing the applicant's appeal rights, and send it by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the applicant.

B. **Sign Permit Appeals.** The applicant may file a written notice of appeal to the Hearing Officer containing the specific grounds for appeal within fifteen (15) days after the date of receipt of the Department Director's written notice. The Hearing Officer shall hear the appeal and render a decision within thirty (30) days after the date of receiving the written notice of appeal. If the Hearing Officer does not grant the appeal, then the applicant may seek relief in the Circuit Court for Manatee County, as provided by law. The public hearing notice requirements in Chapter 23 Section 516 do not apply to the appeal provided for in this section.

~~724.8. Violations. The failure of a property owner to remove a sign prohibited by this Code shall constitute a violation of this Code. In addition to other remedies, the Director is hereby authorized to cause removal of the sign with proper notice, at the expense of the owner of the sign or property.~~

~~724.9. Unless otherwise expressly permitted herein. Signs on rights of way, utility poles or on trees; hazardous signs, signs within the visibility triangle or any sign, except government and legal nonconforming signs, located upon, within or otherwise encroach upon County or public rights of way or on public lands or within the visibility triangle, shall be subject to immediate removal, without notification to violators, and impounding by the Manatee Sheriff's Office, or other authorized County employee at the expense of the owner, agent, lessee, sign contractor, or other person having beneficial use of the sign. When impounded, the sign shall be held by Manatee County for a minimum of ten (10) days, during which the sign owner may recover the sign upon payment of removal and storage costs. After ten (10) days the sign may be sold or destroyed at the option of the county.~~

Commented [LDI1]: Moved to Violations section (at end of chapter)

**Section 604. ~~724.12.~~ Prohibited Signs.**

Prohibited signs, except as otherwise provided by this Section, ~~include~~shall be determined as follows:

- A. ~~a~~-All signs not expressly permitted are hereby prohibited.
- B. ~~b~~-Abandoned signs are hereby prohibited.
- C. ~~c~~-Signs which imitate or resemble official traffic or government signs and signals are hereby prohibited.
- D. ~~d~~-Signs within any public rights-of-way (County or State) or on public lands, except for government signs, are hereby prohibited.
- E. ~~e~~- Signs in visibility triangles are hereby prohibited.
- F. ~~f~~-Signs causing traffic or any other hazard are hereby prohibited.
- G. ~~g~~-Signs which bear or contain statements, words, or pictures of any obscene, pornographic, ~~f~~or immoral

character] are hereby prohibited.

H. ~~h.~~ Signs which emit audible sound, vapor, smoke, odor particles, or gaseous matter are hereby prohibited.

I. ~~i.~~ Signs that have unshielded illuminated devices that produce glare or are a hazard to motorists or occupants of adjacent properties are hereby prohibited.

J. ~~j.~~ Signs that due to any lighting or control mechanism, causes radio, television, or other communication interference are hereby prohibited.

K. ~~k.~~ Signs that are erected or maintained so as to obstruct any firefighting equipment, window, door, or opening used as a means of ingress or egress for fire escape purposes, including any opening required for proper light and ventilation, are hereby prohibited.

L. ~~l.~~ Signs for any home occupations and conditional home occupations, except as otherwise permitted, are hereby prohibited.

~~724.7. Maintenance:~~

~~a. Painting, repainting, cleaning or other ordinary repairs and maintenance of any legal sign or sign structure shall not require a sign permit. Replacement of any structural elements of a sign shall require a sign permit.~~

~~b. The failure of the owner, agent, or lessee of a sign for which a sign permit has been issued to properly maintain the sign in accordance with the requirements of this Code shall constitute a violation of this Code.~~

**Commented [LD12]:** a moved up to signs requiring permit; b moved to violations.

**Section 605. ~~724.15.~~ General Sign Standards.**

**605.1. Sign Standards Matrix**

All signs requiring a permit shall comply with the ~~S~~ sizes, heights, setbacks and other specifics ~~are~~ identified in Table 6-1, the Sign Standards Matrix, see Appendix A. All signs requiring a permit shall comply with the additional in addition to the general standards below stated in the following subsections.

SIGN MATRIX—APPENDIX A

Table 6 - 1 ~~Table 5-4~~: Sign Dimensional Standards

**Commented [LD13]:** [we recommend redoing this table. It currently mixes types of development and types of signs. Doesn't include standards for other signs (temporary, any others?)]

PROJECT TYPE	SETBACKS/LOCATION NOTES (FROM PROPERTY LINE)				MAX HEIGHT	MAX SQUARE FEET (sf) SIZE	LOCATION RESTRICTIONS	ILLUMINATION ALLOWED?	TIME LIMIT?	MISC.
	Front	Side	Rear	Other						
<b>FREE STANDING SIGNS</b>										
<b>RESIDENTIAL &amp; NON RESIDENTIAL PROJECT IDENTIFICATION SIGNS—FREE STANDING</b>										
Residential Subdivision/Multi-family Identification	12' from front lot line or street rights-of-way	10' from side lot line	10' from rear lot line		8'	32 sf	Intersection entrances only, one on each side of entrance	Yes	No	LED not permitted
Home Occupation										Not permitted See 724.12.n.604
<b>NON-RESIDENTIAL</b>										
DRI/CDD/ Large Project on-site Directional Signage										See 724.14.606 Master Sign Plan Option
Interstate										See 724.14.606 Master Sign Plan Option
North Central Overlay District (NCO)										See 724.16.609
Off-Site Directional Signs										See 724.17.1611
Outdoor Advertising Signs										See 724.18.613

PROJECT TYPE	SETBACKS LOCATION NOTES (FROM PROPERTY LINE)				MAX HEIGHT	MAX SQUARE FEET (sf) SIZE	LOCATION RESTRICTIONS	ILLUMINATION ALLOWED?	TIME LIMIT?	MISC.
	Front	Side	Rear	Other						
Political Signs	5' from property line in nonresidential districts				10'	6 sf in residential district; 32 sf all other districts			See <a href="#">724.14.1.e</a> <a href="#">724.14.1.f</a> <a href="#">609.2</a>	See <a href="#">724.14.1</a> <a href="#">609.2</a>
Restricted Temporary Signs	12' from front lot line	10' from side lot line	10' from rear lot line		25'	16 sf	2 per event	No	Yes. 120 days per year	See <a href="#">724.13</a> <a href="#">609</a>
Subdivision/Project Identification	12' from front lot line	10' from side lot line	10' from rear lot line	25' from residential lot lines	20'	75 sf	Intersection entrances only, one on each side of entrance	Yes	No	LED not permitted
Single/Multi-Establishment Premises:										
<a href="#">Lot with &lt;50' Frontage</a>	12' from front lot line	10' from side lot line	10' from rear lot line		25'	50 sf	One sign per frontage (up to 50' frontage)	Yes	No	LED not permitted
<a href="#">Lot with 50'-150' frontage</a>	12' from front lot line	10' from lot line	10' from lot line		25'	75 sf	One sign per frontage 50' to 150' frontage	Yes	No	LED not permitted
<a href="#">Lot with 150'-1,000' frontage</a>	12' from front lot line	10' from side lot line	10' from rear lot line		25'	75 sf plus 1 sf or each 6' of frontage (max 150 sf)	One sign per frontage 150'-1,000' frontage	Yes	No	LED Permitted on collector or arterial roadways
<a href="#">Lot on arterial and &gt;1,000' frontage</a>	20' from front lot line	Min. 1000' between these signs	No other permanent signs along frontage.		25'	150 sf each (2 signs max) or one 300 sf sign	One sign per frontage 1000' min. between signs No other permanent signs along	Yes	No	LED Permitted on collector or arterial roadways



PROJECT TYPE	SETBACKS (FROM PROPERTY LINE)				MAX HEIGHT	MAX SQUARE FEET (sf) SIZE	LOCATION RESTRICTIONS	ILLUMINATION ALLOWED?	TIME LIMIT?	MISC.
	Front	Side	Rear	Other						
Wall, Mansard & Canopy	Cannot project beyond roofline or sidewalks attached to	Cannot project more than 24" away from attached wall	Cannot project onto streets. Must be 8' above pedestrian walkways	Less than 1000 feet of frontage on single street		-2 sf per linear foot of building frontage (200 sf max)	frontage. Arterial Road w/1,000' + frontage One sign per establishment in single/multi occupancy premises. Multi establishment premises with less than 1,000' frontage on a single street may have one identification or combination wall sign 200 sf in lieu of all freestanding signs on the same frontage	Yes	No	Allowed in both residential and non-residential districts. Corner locations get one sign for each frontage

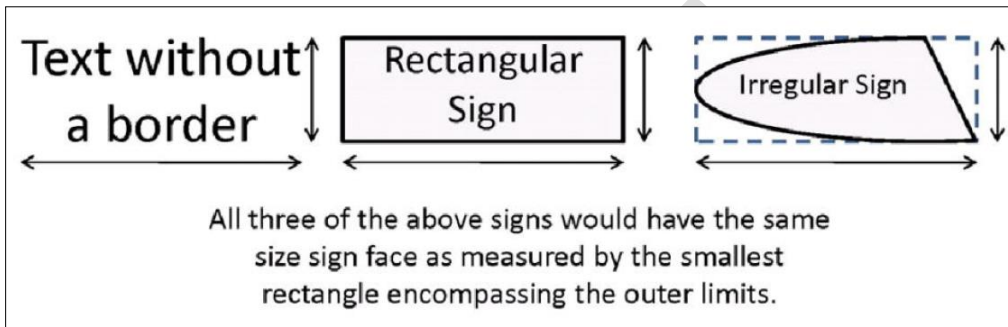
sf = square feet; ft./ = feet; min. = minimum; " = inches

**605.2. Measuring Signs.**

**A. Sign Area.** The area of a sign includes ~~Sign Area shall mean~~ the entire area within the outer periphery of the smallest single or combination of regular simple geometric shapes within which the message is contained. This shall enclose the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblems, and all material, color, or lighting forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate it from the background against which it is placed. The sign area is calculated in units of square feet based on one (1) side. However, the maximum total area allowed for all sides shall not exceed twice the allowable specified in this Code.

Commented [LD14]: Brought in from definitions.

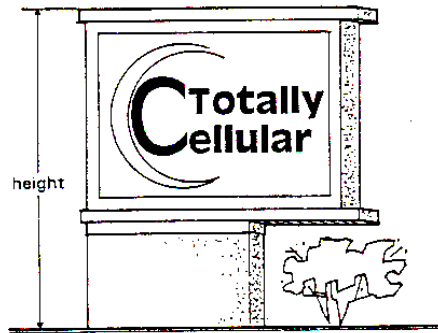
**Figure 6 - 1: Sign Area**



**B. Sign Height.** The height of a freestanding sign shall be measured from the base of the sign or supportive structure at its point of attachment to the ground, to the highest point of the sign. A freestanding sign on a man-made base, including a graded earth mound, shall be measured from the grade of the nearest pavement or top of any pavement curb.

Commented [LD15]: Brought in from definitions.

**Figure 6 - 2: Measurement of Height**



**605.3. a-Illumination of Signs.**

- A. Generally.** All illumination shall be so shaded, shielded or directed so that the light beam shall not adversely affect safe vision of pedestrians or vehicles moving on public or private streets, travel ways, or parking areas. Light shall not shine or reflect in an offensive manner on or into residential structures, motels or hotels.
- B. Exposed Lighting—Maximum Power.** Exposed reflective-type bulbs or incandescent lamps shall not exceed forty (40) watts.
- C. External Lighting.** Where an external source of illumination is used, such source or glare shall not be visible from any public way or adjacent property.

**605.4. ~~b.~~ Changeable Copy Signs. (Manual or LED Signs).**

- A. ~~1)~~ Changeable Copy Signs shall be allowed along functionally classified roadways only.
- B. ~~2)~~ Changeable Copy Signs shall be allowed only in the R/O/R, MU, IL, and IH Future Land-Use Categories.
- C. ~~3)~~ The display shall not change more than once every five (5) seconds. No animation, scrolling, flashing or appearance of movement is permitted. All such displays shall be a minimum of eight (8) feet above the grade.
- D. ~~4)~~ Changeable Copy Signs shall be limited to one (1) per premises and cover not more than sixty-five (65) percent of the erected freestanding or wall sign area.
- E. ~~5)~~ Changeable Copy Signs within the Historic Vista Protection area are subject to additional review in accordance with [Section 729.403.6](#).

**605.5. ~~d.~~ Canopy, Awning Signs.**

Canopy, Awning Signs may be allowed in lieu of wall signs providing a building permit is obtained.

**605.6. ~~e.~~ Signs for Drive-Through Restaurants.**

In addition to the signs otherwise permitted by this Code, a drive-through restaurant shall be permitted identification signs placed in proximity to the drive-through lane for purposes of identifying items available on-site. The signs shall require a permit.

**Section 606. ~~724.11.~~ Sign Standard Adjustments and Master Sign Plans.**

Adjustments as specified in this section may be permitted subject to the criteria set forth below. Applications for adjustments shall be reviewed and considered for approval without regard to the content of the signs.

**606.1. ~~724.11.1.~~ Purpose and Applicability.**

~~a.~~ The sign regulations are designed to avoid an environment that encourages visual blight while protecting and promoting the aesthetic environment of the unincorporated area of Manatee County. These regulations apply over a wide area but because of the County's diversity of development types, some sites may be difficult to develop in compliance with these regulations. The adjustment review process provides a mechanism by which the regulations of this section may be modified if the proposed signs continue to meet the intended purpose of the sign regulations with the submission of master sign plans. Adjustments provide flexibility for unusual situations and allow for alternative ways to meet the purposes of this Code while providing certainty and the efficient processing of land use applications.

~~b.~~ Each adjustment shall be considered unique and shall not set a precedent for others.

**606.2. ~~724.11.2.~~ Sign Standards Eligible for Adjustments.**

~~a.~~ Adjustments shall be limited solely to the size, number, height, or setback of a sign. Additionally, adjustments may be granted for locations only for on-site signs. No other adjustments to any other requirements of this Code are permitted.

~~b.~~ No adjustments shall be granted for the following items:

- A. ~~1)~~ Changes in permitted types of signs.
- B. ~~2)~~ Adjustments which permit building-mounted signs to extend above the roof line.
- C. ~~3)~~ Adjustments which permit a sign to be located in a visibility triangle.
- D. ~~4)~~ Adjustments which permit a prohibited sign.
- E. ~~5)~~ Adjustments shall not allow any sign in off-site advertising sign-free areas as described in [Section 611.724.18](#).

**606.3. ~~724.11.3.~~ Application Requirements.**

~~a. An application for an adjustment shall be accompanied by documentation that establishes how the applicant meets the criteria of Section 724.11.~~

Commented [LD16]: Combined with next paragraph.

~~b.~~ The application for an adjustment shall be accompanied by a master sign plan and documentation that establishes how the applicant meets the requirements of this Section. The master sign plan is intended to produce a coordinated and complimentary graphic image that achieves consistency and harmony among signs. For a master sign plan to be considered, the property must be developed and remain in unified control and must have a minimum combined street frontage of one thousand (1,000) feet or more. The master sign plan shall provide at least the following elements:

- ~~A. 1.)~~ An elevation plan, drawn to scale, depicting all signs placed or to be placed on the buildings on the parcel.
- ~~B. 2.)~~ A site plan, drawn to scale, indicating the location of all freestanding signs erected or to be erected on the parcel, including setbacks.
- ~~C. 3.)~~ A scale drawing of all freestanding signs depicting the sign type, sign number, sign setback, height, dimensions and sign area, including the sign structures.
- ~~D. 4.)~~ For directory signs or other signs providing for more than one (1) tenant, the amount of sign area allocated for each tenant shall be indicated.
- ~~E. 5.)~~ The types of illumination to be used for each type of sign.
- ~~F. 6.)~~ A section addressing the process for approval of changes to the master sign plan.
- ~~G. 7.)~~ A statement that "Any proposed sign by any tenant that creates a uniform change from the approved Master Sign Plan will require the applicant to obtain a statement from the property owner or manager's designated reviewer assessing the extent to which the variation is in keeping with the intent and goals of the Master Sign Plan."

#### ~~606.4. 724.11.4. Adjustments—Administratively Approved.~~

The Department Director is authorized to grant adjustments administratively and the criteria by which adjustments are considered shall not be interpreted to regulate signage based upon sign content. The Department Director shall review the application for the adjustment and master sign plan and may request comments of members of the development review committee (DRC). The adjustments which may be administratively approved are as follows:

- ~~A. a.)~~ The request of the adjustment would not result in a reduction of a code requirement or an increase in a code limitation by more than twenty (20) percent regarding sign height, sign setback, sign size, number of signs or sign location (on-site). Provided, however, once the administratively approved adjustments for either sign area, height or number of signs cumulatively exceed twenty (20) percent of the applicable sign standard for a specific sign or signs, then approval of any further adjustments to any one (1) or more of the above standards may only be granted by the Hearing Officer.
- ~~B. b.)~~ Adjustment would not result in a sign otherwise prohibited by this Code.
- ~~C. c.)~~ Adjustment requests are limited to on-site signs when necessary to clear obstruction or interference by excessive grades, buildings, bridges, trees and the like provided that all the other requirements of this Code are met.
- ~~D. d.)~~ Simultaneously, with the approval of the adjustments requested the Department Director shall also consider approval of the master sign plan provided the master sign plan provides that signs of a similar type and function within the development meet the following criteria:
  - ~~1. 1.)~~ The proposed signs provide a consistent shape or theme and such review shall be performed without regard to the content of the sign;
  - ~~2. 2.)~~ The proposed signs use a consistent style and type of illumination; and
  - ~~3. 3.)~~ Any proposed building signs are mounted in a consistent location on the building.
  - ~~4. 4.)~~ The master sign plan provides for uniformity of proportions of tenant signs.
  - ~~5. 5.)~~ ~~The Plans shall~~ depict sign foundation landscape improvements.

**606.5. ~~724.11.5.~~ Amendments to Approved Master Sign Plan.**

After approval of a master sign plan, no sign shall be erected, placed, painted or maintained, except in conformance with such plan or provided that the plan is amended. All changes, except as provided in this Section, to an existing master sign plan shall require a formal application with all required information as determined by the [Department](#) Director to enable the staff to properly evaluate the requested change in accordance with the above criteria.

**606.6. ~~724.11.6.~~ Hearing Officer Authority—Adjustments.**

The determination of the [Department](#) Director to grant, grant with modifications or deny an adjustment is appealable to the Hearing Officer in accordance with the requirements of this Code. The Hearing Officer shall conduct a de novo public hearing to hear applications for adjustments requesting a reduction of a Code requirement or an increase in a Code limitation by more than twenty (20) percent regarding sign height, sign size, number of signs or sign location (on-site). The Hearing Officer shall also have the authority to hear appeals from determinations of the [Department](#) Director regarding the granting, granting with modifications or denial of adjustments administratively. The proceedings for the Hearing Officer shall be advertised and conducted in accordance with the procedures in this Code. A sign which requires an adjustment shall be subject to individual review of its location, design, configuration, operation and the particular location proposed to assure consistency with this Code and the Comprehensive Plan. Each adjustment may require the imposition of individualized conditions to achieve such consistency.

The Hearing Officer shall review the proposed adjustment, shall consider the written staff analysis and the testimony at the public hearing, and shall grant, grant with conditions or deny the application. The request for an adjustment shall not subject the entire application for development approval to a public hearing unless otherwise required by this Code, but only that portion necessary to rule on the issue under consideration.

The Hearing Officer shall make findings that the criteria of these regulations have or have not been satisfied by the applicant.

The action by the Hearing Officer to grant an adjustment or to grant an adjustment with conditions or safeguards shall be documented in the form of a resolution containing a legal description of the property to which the adjustment applies, together with the terms of the adjustment and any additional conditions or safeguards imposed.

**606.7. ~~724.11.7.~~ Conditions.**

In granting any adjustment, the [Department](#) Director or the Hearing Officer shall prescribe appropriate conditions and safeguards in conformity with these regulations. Violation of such conditions and safeguards, when made a part of the terms under which the adjustment is granted, shall be deemed a violation of this Code.

**606.8. ~~724.11.8.~~ Amendments.**

An adjustment may be amended only by following the procedures in this Section.

~~724.17. Off-Site Signs. All off-site signs shall be in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 479, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 14-10, Florida Administrative Code, as amended.~~

**Section 607. ~~724.17.1.~~ Off-Site Directional Signs.**

~~a-~~ Off-site directional signs shall be permitted only in non-residential and agricultural zoning districts, provided the following standards are met:

- A. ~~b-~~ Off-site directional signs shall not be located closer than one thousand (1,000) feet from any other off-site sign.
- B. ~~e-~~ Off-site directional signs shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet of sign area, and ~~the sign~~ shall not exceed ten (10) feet in height. Signs placed on agricultural-zoned property are allowed up to thirty-two (32) square feet in area.
- C. ~~d-~~ Off-site directional signs shall be located on private property a minimum of five (5) feet from a lot line. No signs over thirty (30) inches in height, shall be located within any required visibility triangle.
- D. ~~e-~~ More than one (1) facility or activity may be listed on any one (1) off-site directional sign.

**Commented [LD17]:** The State Statute refers to "Outdoor Advertisement". Sentence moved to the "Outdoor Advertisement" section.

~~E. f.~~ Off-site directional signs may require a State Department of Transportation sign permit when located adjacent to any State road per Chapter 479, Florida Statutes.

**Section 608. ~~724.10.~~ Public Schools ~~Signs.~~**

~~724.10.1. Applicability. This Section shall apply to the signs of all public educational facilities proposed by the School Board. Educational facilities shall be defined within the meaning of Section 1013.33.01, Florida Statutes. Pursuant to Section 1002.33(16), Florida Statutes, this Section shall not apply to the development of charter schools.~~

- ~~a. Signs requiring the issuance of a permit or other advertising structures shall be permitted, constructed, and maintained in strict conformity with the Florida Building Code, Florida Statutes, Land Development Code and all other applicable regulations (including, but not limited to, maximum size, number of signs, minimum setbacks, maximum height, minimum ground clearance and minimum separation requirements).~~
- ~~b. No sign shall be permitted as a main or accessory use except in accordance with the provisions of this Code.~~
- ~~c. In the event that any of the provisions of this Section are in conflict with other sections of this Code or other applicable requirements, the provisions of this Section shall take priority.~~

~~A. d.~~ Public educational facility signs (main or accessory) placed on property owned or leased by the School Board of Manatee County shall be exempt from the requirements of this ~~ordinance chapter~~ and County permitting if the sign meets all of the following standards: Educational facilities shall be defined within the meaning of Section 1013.01, Florida Statutes.

- ~~1. 1.)~~ The sign meets minimum setback, minimum ground clearance and maximum height requirements of this Code; and shall comply with visibility triangle restrictions of this Code.
- ~~2. 2.)~~ The on-site sign is for providing information related to the school or facility at which it is placed.
- ~~3. 3.)~~ The sign conforms to the Florida Building Code.
- ~~4. 4.)~~ The sign is inspected as required by applicable law.

~~B. e.~~ Signs placed on property owned or leased by the School Board of Manatee County which do not meet the above requirements shall be required to comply with all the provisions of this ~~Section 724~~ Chapter.

**Section 609. Restricted Temporary Signs.**

**609.1. ~~724.13.~~ Restricted Temporary Signs.**

A restricted temporary sign is for the purposes of advertising promotional sales events or merchandise at specified times, up to one hundred twenty (120) days, throughout the calendar year. The days to secure a restricted temporary sign permit are at the discretion of the property owner. A restricted temporary sign permit sticker shall be granted to a property owner identifying the valid dates of the permit. The permit sticker identifying the days that the permit is valid shall be displayed in plain view. A property owner may secure a restricted temporary sign permit by making application to the Department Director. A site plan depicting proposed sign type, size, height and location shall be included in the application.

The types of Restricted Temporary Signs are limited to those identified below. Standards are applicable as set forth in the Sign Matrix (Appendix A). All such signs shall be placed, maintained and removed within the timeframes identified in the permit.

- ~~A. a.~~ Animated signs
- ~~B. b.~~ Banners with text
- ~~C. c.~~ Flashing or moving
- ~~D. d.~~ Multi-prism signs
- ~~E. e.~~ Portable signs
- ~~F. f.~~ Roof signs
- ~~G. g.~~ Snipe signs
- ~~H. h.~~ Twirling signs

**Commented [LD18]:** STAFF, please review the changes to this section. One part says that if a permit is required, they have to comply with all sign standards, but later it says they are all exempt. Also, FS deems charter schools to be public schools.

I. ~~i.~~ Other similar signs

**609.2. ~~724.14.1.~~ Political Signs.**

- A. ~~a.~~ The maximum height of political signs is ten (10) feet;
- B. ~~b.~~ The required setback for political signs from the property line in non-residential districts shall be five (5) feet;
- C. ~~c.~~ The maximum sign area in residential districts for political signs is six (6) square feet; ~~in~~ all other districts thirty-two (32) square feet;
- D. ~~d.~~ Erection and removal of all political signs shall be the joint responsibility of the owner of the property upon which the sign is placed, of the owner of such sign and the candidate for whom such sign was placed. Each such person shall be jointly and severally liable for violation of the terms and conditions of this section.
- E. ~~e.~~ Political signs, as temporary signs, may be erected on private property and shall be removed within thirty (30) days after the election or a referendum issue has been decided.

**Section 610. ~~724.16.~~ Signs—North Central Overlay District Signs.**

**610.1. ~~724.16.1.~~ Purpose.**

The purpose of this section is to provide standards for the design and construction of signs in the North Central Overlay District to reflect the character of the community and to be expressive of individual businesses.

**610.2. ~~724.16.2.~~ Applicability.**

- ~~a.~~ The provisions of this Section shall apply to:
- ~~1) new and replacement signs within~~ the North Central Overlay District, ~~as~~ outlined in the Official Zoning Atlas.
- ~~2) Signs installed after April 5, 2005, including replacements for existing fixtures.~~
- ~~b.~~ The provisions of this Section are intended to supplement regulations in this Code. In the event of a conflict between other provisions of this Code and this Section, the more restrictive of the provisions shall prevail.
- ~~c.~~ Government signs are exempt from this Section.

**610.3. ~~724.16.3.~~ Prohibited Sign Types.**

In addition to the sign types prohibited in ~~Section 724~~ this Chapter, the following sign types which are not representative of the character in the North Central Area are prohibited:

- A. ~~a.~~ Pole signs.
- B. ~~b.~~ Changeable copy signs, if message is changed electronically only.
- C. ~~c.~~ Fluorescent signs.
- D. ~~d.~~ Neon signs, except those denoting incidental information when designed within the area of a permitted sign type and occupying no more than four (4) square feet of sign area. Neon may not be used for architectural accent purposes.

**610.4. ~~724.16.4.~~ Standards.**

- A. ~~a.~~ **Generally.** Signs in the NCOD shall conform to the following standards in addition to, and subject to, the requirements of ~~Section 724, Signs~~ this Chapter, and applicable development approvals.
1. ~~1)~~ Permitted signs shall include those classified as being on-site, temporary, exempt, or subdivision.
2. ~~2)~~ The total area of all sign faces on a sign shall not exceed one hundred (100) square feet.



- 3. ~~3~~ Sign materials, colors, and shapes considered for approval must be architecturally consistent with the building they identify. Architectural consistency includes compatibility of forms, materials, finishes, and colors.
- 4. ~~4~~ Residential subdivision signs shall conform to the sign matrix of this Code.

**B. ~~b~~-Ground signs.** Ground signs shall be designed and constructed to complement the architectural character of on-site buildings that conform to these design standards by using natural materials, direct lighting, and limiting the size and number of signs. Address information shall be provided on signs to assist drivers in finding businesses.

- 1. ~~1~~ Maximum sign area and height shall be as follows:

**Table 6 - 2 ~~Table 5-2: North Central Overlay District Maximum Sign Area & Height~~**

Specification	Length of Roadway Frontage		
	0- <del>3</del> 300 Linear Feet	300 <del>1</del> -600 Linear Feet	≥600 <del>1</del> + Linear Feet
Maximum Sign Area	60 <del>Square Feet</del> <sup>sf</sup>	80 <del>Square Feet</del> <sup>sf</sup>	100 <del>Square Feet</del> <sup>sf</sup>
Maximum Sign Height	8 <del>Feet</del> <sup>ft.</sup>	12 <del>Feet</del> <sup>ft.</sup>	16 <del>Feet</del> <sup>ft.</sup>

- 2. ~~2~~ The exterior base structure shall be made or faced with natural materials such as native stone, brick, wood, or timber materials.
- 3. ~~3~~ Ground signs shall include a street address number or range of address numbers for the building(s) it identifies and shall be considered as a part of the sign area.
- 4. ~~4~~ One (1) ground sign is allowed for each road frontage per premises, regardless of the length of roadway frontage. In the case of a shopping center with freestanding buildings, each freestanding building may be permitted a separate ground sign provided the outparcel has a minimum of one hundred (100) feet of frontage on the roadway where the sign is located.
- 5. ~~5~~ Ground signs shall be set back a minimum of twelve (12) feet from the front lot line and ten (10) feet from side and rear lot lines.
- 6. ~~6~~ For properties abutting residential districts, ground signs shall be set back twenty-five (25) feet from the residential district.
- 7. ~~7~~ The use of roof, capital, landscape, or base design detail on signs is encouraged.
- 8. ~~8~~ Landscaping is encouraged in the area surrounding the sign base.

**Section 611. ~~724.18~~-Outdoor Advertising Signs.**

**611.1. Allowed Outdoor Advertising Signs**

All outdoor advertisement shall be in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 479, Florida Statutes, and Chapter 14-10, Florida Administrative Code, as amended. Outdoor Advertising Signs are permitted on undeveloped or vacant parcels in the GC, HC, CRV, LM, HM, PDC, PDI, PDRV, PDUI and PDPM districts, except as provided in **Section ~~611.2~~ ~~724.18.1~~**, subject to the restrictions elsewhere in this **Section ~~724~~ Chapter**, the applicable state statute and the following:

**A. ~~a~~-Location and Dimensional Standards.**

- 1. ~~1~~ Maximum height: Forty (40) feet above grade;
- 2. ~~2~~ Maximum length: Forty (40) feet;
- 3. ~~3~~ Minimum spacing between: Two thousand (2,000) feet same side of road;
- 4. ~~4~~ Minimum sign area: Two hundred (200) square feet per face;



~~5. 5-~~ Maximum sign area: Two hundred (200) square feet per face; and

~~6. 6-~~ Maximum faces per side: One (1) face per side.

**B. ~~b-~~ Setbacks.** In addition to other restrictions, all outdoor advertising signs must meet all required district building setbacks, minimum fifteen (15) feet. All such signs shall be located no closer than twenty (20) feet to any building or structure.

**C. ~~c-~~ Separation.** ~~e-~~ No outdoor advertising sign shall be erected closer than three hundred (300) feet to any church, school, cemetery, public park, public playground, major thoroughfares, historic sites, landmarks or residential zoning districts, state or national forest.

**D. ~~d-~~ Prohibited Types of Outdoor Advertising Signs.** ~~f-~~ Three-prisms, three-dimensional, scrolling, and rotating signs are not allowed.

**E. ~~e-~~ Nonconforming Outdoor Advertising Signs.** ~~g-~~ Nonconforming outdoor advertising signs shall not be moved, altered, enlarged, or reconstructed without complying with this Code.

**F. ~~f-~~ Permit.** ~~h-~~ No outdoor advertising sign shall be erected without a sign permit from Manatee County and the Florida Department of Transportation.

**G. ~~g-~~ Off-Site Advertising Sign-Free Areas.** The following thoroughfares shall be sign-free areas from which no off-site advertising sign shall be visible. Off-site directional signs are permitted in these areas.

1. U.S. 19, South from Hillsborough County line to the Palmetto City limits.

2. S.R. 64, East from the Bradenton City limits to S.R. 675.

3. 26th St. W., South from the Bradenton City limits to Sarasota Bay.

4. Manatee Ave. W. (S.R. 64), West from the Bradenton City limits (34th St. W.) to Holmes Beach City limits.

5. DeSoto Memorial Hwy. (75th St. W.), North from Manatee Ave. W. to the Manatee River.

6. Palma Sola Blvd., South from Manatee Ave. to Cortez Rd.

7. Palmetto Business 41, South from U.S. 41 to the Palmetto City limits.

8. U.S. 301 East from 24th Ave. East in Ellenton to S.R. 675 and from the Sarasota County line north to the intersection with U.S. 41.

9. Cortez Rd., East from Bradenton Beach City limits to 14th St. W.

10. U.S. 41, South from 30th Ave. to Cortez Rd., then West along Cortez Rd. to 14th St. W., then South to the Sarasota County line.

11. 53rd Ave., from new U.S. 301 West to 75th St. W.

12. S.R. 70, from old U.S. 301 East to S.R. 675.

13. Moccasin Wallow Road, East from U.S. 41 to U.S. 301.

14. University Parkway, East from U.S. 301 to western line of S31-T35-R19.

15. Entranceways, see **Section 737.900.**

16. Interstates, I-275 from the Skyway Bridge to the intersection with I-75; I-75 from the northern County line of Manatee County to the southern County line.

17. 15th Street East, from U.S. 301 and University Parkway to the Bradenton City limits.

18. 301 Boulevard East, North from 15th Street East to Bradenton City limits.

**611.2. ~~724.18.1-~~ Billboard Signs Exchange Program.**

**A. ~~(4)-~~ Purpose.** The purpose of this Section is to provide standards and restrictions for the exchange of signs previously approved as message center signs for electronic billboard signs to promote the visual aesthetics of the County and safety of vehicular travel. ~~\*-†~~ These standards and restrictions maintain, support and protect the aesthetic character of the County by providing for the removal of certain message center signs; as well as protect

the safety of the motoring public, by limiting the location of and specifications for electronic billboard signs and generally further the public interests of the citizens of Manatee County.

**B. ~~(2)~~ Applicability.** This Section shall be applicable to real property located within the Entranceway adjacent to I-75 which previously received Preliminary Site Plan approval for an on-site, freestanding message center sign in excess of four hundred (400) square feet on property zoned Planned Development-Mixed Use (PDMU) and located within the Mixed Use (MU) Future Land Use Classification prior to January 1, 2012.

**C. ~~(3)~~ Definitions.**

*Electronic Billboard Sign.* For purposes of this Section, electronic billboard sign is defined as a billboard sign that incorporates within or upon one or more of its sign faces digital or other electronic changeable message technology that allows advertising copy to be changed remotely rather than by changing the advertising copy on site with poster sheets or vinyl.

~~(a)~~ *Dwell Time* is the minimum duration of a single display on an electronic billboard sign. During the dwell time, the message display shall be static, and there shall not be any change of color; flash, fade, rotation, twinkle, swirl, scroll, show of action or motion, or illusion of action or motion.

~~(b)~~ *Message Sequencing* means dividing a single thought or message into two (2) or more successive sign displays on a single electronic billboard sign. For example, it shall be considered message sequencing if the second display answers a textual question posed in the first display, continues or completes a sentence started on the first display, or continues or completes a story line started on the prior display.

**D. ~~(4)~~ Upgrade to Electronic Billboard Sign.** An on-site sign previously approved as a freestanding message center sign may be upgraded to an electronic billboard sign upon processing an application for a Preliminary Site Plan approval to be heard by the Board of County Commissioners. A sign permit is also required in accordance with this code. A Preliminary Site Plan approval and the Sign permit is only valid for the specific location for which it has been issued. A Preliminary Site Plan approval and sign permit may not be transferred from one location to another. For each electronic billboard sign for which approval is sought, the sign owner must submit an application demonstrating that each of the following conditions of approval have been met:

**E. ~~(5)~~ Exchange Rate.**

1. ~~(a)~~ A minimum of eight (8) sign faces of static outdoor advertising signs must be permanently removed in exchange for each single sign face on an electronic billboard sign (electronic billboard sign face). In addition, the combined square footage of sign face area removed shall total at least four (4) times the square footage of electronic billboard sign face for which approval is sought.

2. ~~(b)~~ Notwithstanding, the foregoing subsection ~~(a)~~ 1 above, as an alternative to the exchange rate described above, a sign owner may permanently remove one (1) electronic billboard sign face in exchange for a new electronic billboard sign face and another location for which a sign permit is sought.

3. ~~(c)~~ Removal of the freestanding message center sign referred to in subparagraph ~~D(4)~~ of this Section, if constructed, must occur prior to the effective date of this Section in order to count for purposes of exchange of the exchange rate in this Section.

**F. ~~(6)~~ Locational and Dimensional Standards.**

1. ~~(a)~~ Each single sign face of the electronic billboard shall not exceed seven hundred (700) square feet.

2. ~~(b)~~ The parcel upon which the electronic billboard sign is located shall not be within a historic view protection area.

3. ~~(c)~~ The parcel upon which the electronic billboard sign is located must be adjacent to I-75 with the electronic billboard sign being orientated towards and viewable from I-75.

4. ~~(d)~~ The maximum height of the electronic billboard sign shall be sixty-five (65) feet.

5. ~~(e)~~ No electronic billboard sign shall be located within four hundred (400) feet of any residentially zoned property or within four hundred (400) feet of any property with an existing legal residential land use. The distance shall be calculated as the shortest measurable distance between the nearest point of the electronic billboard sign to the edge of the residential district or residential property.

~~6. (f)~~ Spacing. Electronic billboard signs shall be spaced a minimum of two thousand five hundred (2,500) feet from another electronic billboard sign which is facing in the same direction on the same roadway.

~~G. (7)~~ **Lighting Control and Mitigation.** Lighting from the electronic billboard sign shall not result in a light intensity greater than 3/10 of one (0.3) footcandle above ambient lighting, as measured at the property line of any residential property within two hundred (200) feet of the base of the sign structure. At the time of sign permit application, the sign owner applying for the sign permit for the electronic billboard sign shall submit a certification to the designated office of the County that this standard has been satisfied.

~~H. (8)~~ **Operational Standards.**

- ~~1. (a)~~ ~~Dwell time and duration of message.~~—The dwell time, defined as the interval of change between each individual message, shall be consistent with rules promulgated by the Florida Department of Transportation but in no event less than eight (8) seconds. Any change of message shall be completed in one (1) second. The dwell time shall not include the time required to change a message. There shall be no special effects or other content between messages.
- ~~2. (b)~~—The message shall be static during the dwell time set forth in subsection ~~H.1(7)(a)~~ above. There shall be no flashing or varying light intensity of movement during the message. Messages shall not scroll and shall not give any appearance of moving or in any way include active movement.
- ~~3. (c)~~—Messaging sequencing on an electronic billboard sign is prohibited.
- ~~4. (d)~~—Each electronic billboard sign's operating system shall contain a light sensing device to adjust brightness as ambient light conditions change in order to insure that the message meets the following brightness standards. The maximum brightness shall be 0.3 footcandles above the ambient light measured two hundred fifty (250) feet perpendicular from the face of the sign ~~or such less distance as may be required by Section 611724.18-1(e)(5).~~
- ~~5. (e)~~—No electronic billboard sign shall display light of such intensity that it interferes with the effectiveness of an official traffic sign, signal or device.
- ~~6. (f)~~—The electronic billboard sign shall have a default mechanism or setting that will cause the sign to turn off or freeze in one (1) position at a brightness no brighter than normal operation if a malfunction or failure (meaning any unintended interruption in message sequencing) occurs.
- ~~7. (g)~~—The electronic billboard sign shall not be configured to resemble a warning or danger signal nor shall there be any configuration which may cause a driver to mistake the sign for a warning or a danger sign. The sign shall not resemble or simulate any lights or official signage used to control traffic.
- ~~8. (h)~~—All electronic billboard signs shall be in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 479, Florida Statutes, as amended and Chapter 14-10, Florida Administrative Code, as amended.

**Commented [LD19]:** Wrong reference. Delete per staff (12/3/14).

**Section 612. 724.19. Nonconforming Signs and Uses.**

612.1. Continued Existence.

Nonconforming signs may continue to be displayed until the end of their useful life, subject to the following additional requirements:

- ~~A. a~~—Any sign not in conformance with the provisions of this Code, including legal nonconforming signs, shall be required to be brought into compliance at any time that a substantial improvement is made to the sign.
- ~~B. b~~—Nonconforming status shall not be afforded to any sign that was erected without the county, state, or federal agency required permits or on to any signs which have been illegally installed, constructed, placed, modified, or maintained.
- ~~C. c~~—Permitted alterations to nonconforming signs shall be limited to message changes on permanent on-site and off-site outdoor advertising signs and changeable copy signs, non-substantial repairs and other alterations which do not enlarge or prolong the life of the sign.
- ~~D. d~~—The prohibited alterations to a nonconforming sign unless the sign is brought into conformity with this Code

are: increases in sign area; re-erection or relocation of the sign; alterations which prolong the life of the sign; conversion to another sign type or function type.

- E. ~~e.~~ Any sign rendered nonconforming as a result of eminent domain or the threat of eminent domain shall not be required to be removed or relocated unless deemed a safety hazard by the [Department](#) Director.

#### **612.2.** ~~724.20.~~ Replacement. ~~Nonconforming Uses.~~

Nonconforming uses shall be allowed to replace existing signage with signage of the same height, area, location and dimension.

### **Section 613.** ~~724.21.~~ Violations.

#### **613.1.** ~~b.~~ Maintenance.

~~A.~~ The failure of the owner, agent, or lessee of a sign for which a sign permit has been issued to properly maintain the sign in accordance with the requirements of this Code shall constitute a violation of this Code.

#### **613.2.** ~~a.~~ Illegal Signs.

No persons shall erect or assist in the erection, construction, maintenance, alteration, relocation, repair, or do any work upon any sign to which a required permit and identification tag is not attached. Any such sign shall be illegal and may be subject to immediate removal.

#### **613.3.** ~~724.8.~~ Removal. Violations.

~~B.~~ The failure of a property owner to remove a sign prohibited by this Code shall constitute a violation of this Code. In addition to other remedies, the [Department](#) Director is hereby authorized to cause removal of the sign with proper notice, at the expense of the owner of the sign or property.

~~C.~~ 724.9. Unless otherwise expressly permitted herein, Signs on rights-of-way, utility poles or on trees; hazardous signs, signs within the visibility triangle or any sign, except government and legal nonconforming signs, located upon, within or otherwise encroaches upon County or public rights-of-way or on public lands or within the visibility triangle, shall be subject to immediate removal, without notification to violators, and impounding by the Manatee Sheriff's Office, or other authorized County employee at the expense of the owner, agent, lessee, sign contractor, or other person having beneficial use of the sign. When impounded, the sign shall be held by Manatee County for a minimum of ten (10) days, during which the sign owner may recover the sign upon payment of removal and storage costs. After ten (10) days the sign may be sold or destroyed at the option of the county.

#### **613.4.** ~~b.~~ Revocation.

The [Department](#) Director is authorized and empowered to revoke any sign permit issued (a) upon failure of the holder to comply with the plans and documentation supporting the application for the permit, or (b) if the permit was issued in error or on the basis of misstatement of facts or fraud by the applicant.

#### **613.5.** ~~e.~~ Violation of Code.

Any sign in violation of ~~Section 724 of this Code~~ [this Chapter](#) shall constitute a violation of this Code.

### **Section 614.** ~~724.22.~~ Severability of Sign Regulations.

If any part or provision of the sign regulations contained in [this Chapter](#) ~~Sections 724, 201~~, and other provisions of the Land Development Code regulating signs or application thereof to any person or circumstance is adjudged invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall be confined in its operation to the part, provision or application directly involved in the controversy in which such judgment shall have been rendered and shall not affect or impair the validity of the remainder of these sign regulations of the application thereof to other persons or circumstances. The

**Commented [LDI10]:** Moved from Sign Permit Review Section (at beginning of chapter)

Board of County Commissioners hereby declares that it would have enacted the remainder of these sign regulations even without any such part, provision or application. It is the specific intent of the Board of County Commissioners that each provision of the sign regulations contained in ~~Sections 724, 201~~ [this Chapter](#) and other provisions of the Land Development Code regulating signs shall stand alone and operate independently of any other provision herein. If any section, subsection, sentence, phrase or portion of the sign regulations in ~~Sections 724, 201~~ [this Chapter](#) or other provisions of the Land Development Code containing sign regulations, is declared invalid for any reason, it is specifically declared by the Board of County Commissioners that such section, subsection, sentence, phrase or portion is separate, distinct and independent of all other sections, subsections, sentences, phrases or portions of the sign regulations in the Land Development Code such that all other provisions are intended to remain valid and enforceable.

DRAFT