

## Chapter 15. Sign Regulations

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### 15.1. Purpose and Applicability.

Signage is an important component of the overall community theming and identity. Signage plays a vital role in communicating to the residents and visitors within PPGN, both at the pedestrian level and to those travelling along roadway corridors. The following regulations establish the procedures for the review and approval of all signs within PPGN.

The signage standards and criteria as set forth within the Mesa Zoning Ordinance are the base sign standards and criteria for use within PPGN except as modified within this Chapter or through an approved comprehensive sign plan. If this Chapter is silent on a signage regulation, then the Mesa Zoning Ordinance regulation controls except as may be modified through an approved comprehensive sign plan as well as through additional signage criteria and design guidelines developed at the time of DUP approval. All permanent signage within PPGN shall be reviewed and approved as part of a Master Comprehensive Sign Plan or Individual Comprehensive Sign Plan as discussed below in Chapter 16.2 and Chapter 16.3. Certain temporary signs are subject to approval of a Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan as discussed in Chapter 16.4(c).

### 15.2. Master Comprehensive Sign Plans.

A Master Comprehensive Sign plan is intended to create a cohesive and flexible foundation for community-wide signage within PPGN that is appropriate to the character of the overall community, provides adequate identification and information, provides a good visual environment, promotes traffic safety and is regulated to the extent reasonably necessary.

**15.2(a) Review and Approval.** A Master Comprehensive Sign Plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Zoning Administrator or Board of Adjustment in conjunction with the granting of a Special Use Permit (“SUP”) to establish the regulations for all permanent community-wide signage, such as overall project monumentation and identification, entry monumentation, directional signage, and other permanent signage of a community-wide nature. A Master Comprehensive Sign Plan must contain all of the following information for each proposed sign:

1. Sign Type (attached, wall mounted, monument, awning, etc.)
2. Sign Area.
3. Height and Length.
4. Location.
5. Color and Materials.
6. Lighting, Electronics, or Animation.

**15.2(a)(i) Review Criteria.** Because of the unique nature of land use styles and architectural characteristics within PPGN, a Master Comprehensive Sign Plan may contain signage standards and criteria that exceed the permitted height, area and number of signs specified in the Mesa Zoning Ordinance based on the following criteria:

1. **Placement.** All signs shall be placed where they are sufficiently visible and readable for their function. Factors to be considered shall include the purpose of the sign, its location relative to traffic movement and access points, site features, structures, and sign orientation relative to viewing distances and viewing angles.
2. **Quantity.** The number of signs that may be approved shall be no greater than that required to provide reasonable project identification and entry signs, internal circulation and directional information to destinations and development sub-areas, and business identification. Factors to be considered shall include the size of the development, the number of development sub-areas, and the division or integration of sign functions.
3. **Size.** All signs shall be no larger than necessary for visibility and readability unless unique land use or architectural considerations exist. Factors to be considered in determining appropriate size shall include topography, volume of traffic, speed of traffic, visibility range, proximity to adjacent uses, amount of sign copy, placement of display (location and height), lettering style and the presence of distractive influences.
4. **Materials.** Sign materials shall be compatible with architectural and/or natural features of the project. This may be accomplished through similarity of materials for sign structures and faces, the use of complementary colors, similarity of architectural style, or the use of a consistent lettering style or copy.
5. **Context.** The design of all signs should respect the context of the surrounding area and the character established by existing signage. Items to be considered include, but are not limited to, lettering style, sign placement, and architectural style.
6. **Sign Illumination and Brightness.** Signs, when illuminated, shall conform to the Mesa Lighting and Electrical Code, and shall conform to the brightness standards specified in the Mesa Sign Ordinance.

### 15.3. Individual Comprehensive Sign Plans.

An Individual Comprehensive Sign plan is intended to establish flexible signage criteria tailored to a specific development project with standards appropriate to the unique character of the development.

**15.3(a) Review and Approval.** An Individual Comprehensive Sign Plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Zoning Administrator or Board of Adjustment in conjunction with the granting of a Special Use Permit (“SUP”) to establish the regulations for all permanent signs. An Individual Comprehensive Sign Plan may be submitted at or after the time of Site Plan and Design Review or Subdivision Plat review and must contain all of the following information for each proposed sign:

1. Sign Type (attached, wall mounted, monument, awning, etc.)
2. Sign Area.
3. Height and Length.
4. Location.
5. Color and Materials.
6. Lighting, Electronics, or Animation.

**15.3(a)(i) Review Criteria.** An Individual Comprehensive Sign Plan may contain signage standards and criteria that exceed the permitted height, area and number of signs specified in the Mesa Zoning Ordinance based on the following criteria:

1. **Placement.** All signs shall be placed where they are sufficiently visible and readable for their function. Factors to be considered shall include the purpose of the sign, its location relative to traffic movement and access points, site features, structures, and sign orientation relative to viewing distances and viewing angles.
2. **Quantity.** The number of signs that may be approved shall be no greater than that required to provide project identification and entry signs, internal circulation and directional information to destinations and development sub-areas, and business identification. Factors to be considered shall include the size of the development, the number of development sub-areas, and the division or integration of sign functions.
3. **Size.** All signs shall be no larger than necessary for visibility and readability unless unique land use or architectural considerations exist. Factors to be considered in determining appropriate size shall include topography, volume of traffic, speed of traffic, visibility range, proximity to adjacent uses, amount of sign copy, placement of display

(location and height), lettering style and the presence of distracting influences.

- 4. **Materials.** Sign materials shall be compatible with architectural and/or natural features of the project. This may be accomplished through similarity of materials for sign structures and faces, the use of complementary colors, similarity of architectural style, or the use of a consistent lettering style or copy.
- 5. **Context.** The design of all signs should respect the context of the surrounding area and the character established by existing signage. Items to be considered include, but are not limited to, lettering style, sign placement, and architectural style.
- 6. **Sign Illumination and Brightness.** Signs, when illuminated, shall conform to the Mesa Lighting and Electrical Code, and shall conform to the brightness standards specified in the Mesa Sign Ordinance.

**15.4. Temporary Signs.**

The Temporary Sign regulations are intended to provide flexibility for signage that is specific to land uses and events of a limited duration. Certain temporary signs are allowed by right subject and do not require a sign permit while others are subject to approval of a Temporary Use Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan.

**15.4(a) Temporary Signs Allowed by Right.**

**15.4(a)(i) Real Estate Signs.** Real Estate Signs that conform to the following requirements are allowed by right and not subject to the issuance of a sign permit by the City of Mesa. Alternate Real Estate Signs may be approved through the Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan process outlined in Chapter 16.4(c).

- 1. Signs pertaining only to the lease, sale, or rental of the land or buildings upon which such signs are displayed are permitted in all LUGs.
  - a. One non-illuminated sign per street building, lot or parcel in conformance with the following schedule:

Parcel Size	Max. Area	Max. Height	Min. Setback from Prop. Lines
Less than 1.0 ac.	6 sq. ft.	6 ft.	None
1.0 ac. To 10.0 ac.	12 sq. ft.	6 ft.	10 ft.
More than 10.0 ac.	24 sq. ft.	8 ft.	10 ft.

- b. Real estate signs shall be removed within 10 days after the lease, sale, or rental of the property or building has been accomplished.
  - c. Portable real estate signs shall not exceed 6 square feet in area or 4 feet in height.
2. Open house directional signs intended to direct traffic to a residence for lease, sale, or rental are permitted in all LUGs.
- a. Three non-illuminated signs per each home or group of homes in a subdivision for sale.
  - b. No such sign shall exceed six square feet in area.
  - c. Signs shall only be displayed while a salesperson is on duty at the home for sale.
  - d. Signs shall not be located in the public right-of-way or be placed so as to create a traffic hazard.
  - e. The display of such signs for subdivision sales is permitted but not in addition to weekend subdivision directional signs as specified in Chapter 16(e).

**15.4(a)(ii) Contractor Signs.** Contractor Signs that conform to the following requirements are allowed by right and not subject to the issuance of a sign permit by the City of Mesa. Alternate Contractor Signs may be approved through the Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan process outlined in Chapter 16.4(c).

- 1. Signs designating the contractors engaged in the construction or repair of the development upon which such signs are displayed are permitted in all LUGs.
- 2. One non-illuminated sign per development project, not exceeding eight square feet in area and six feet in height.
- 3. Signs shall not be placed closer than ten feet to the public right-of-way.

**15.4(a)(iii) Political and Campaign Signs.** Political and Campaign Signs must conform to the requirements of the Mesa Sign Ordinance as contained within the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.

**15.4(a)(iv) Subdivision Weekend Directional Signs.** Subdivision Weekend Directional Signs are allowed pursuant to the requirements within the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.

**15.4(b) Temporary Signs Subject to Approval of an Administrative or Temporary Use Permit.**

**15.4(b)(i) Grand Opening Signs.** Canvas signs, banners, advertising flags, pennants, streamers, garlands, whirly-gigs, and similar devices intended to advertise the initial opening of a new business, new occupancy, or new proprietor or

management are allowed subject to approval of a Temporary Use Permit by the City of Mesa and shall only be valid for a maximum period of 30 consecutive days.

**15.4(b)(ii) Temporary Use Signs.** Signs intended to support, promote, identify, or advertise a Temporary Use, as permitted within individual LUGs pursuant to Chapters 8, 9 and 10, are permitted in accordance with the following:

1. Must be approved as part of the Temporary Use Permit required for the Temporary Use.
2. Must be located entirely upon the property authorized for the Temporary Use.
3. May not be displayed prior to or after the dates of the Temporary Use as specified in the Temporary Use Permit.
4. Permitted in addition to signage otherwise permitted by this Chapter.
5. May include balloons, banners, flags, and portable signs as approved as part of the Temporary Use Permit.

**15.4(b)(iii) Portable Signs.** Portable signs that advertise a specific business are allowed within the CC and CMX LUGs subject to the following annual conditions:

1. Approval of an Administrative Use Permit from the City of Mesa Planning Director or designee subject to the applicable fee. The Administrative Use Permit shall be valid for one year from the date of issue. As part of the application process, the Planning Director shall designate to the business owner the approved location for the placement of the portable sign.
2. A business owner shall apply to the Planning Director for renewal of the Administrative Use Permit within 30 days of the expiration date of the current use permit. The Planning Director shall renew the use permit provided that, on the date of application, the business owner is in compliance with all applicable signage regulations pertaining to portable signs.
3. A portable sign may be located on private property or within the public right-of-way, provided the sign does not interfere with pedestrian movement or wheelchair access to, through and around the site or obstruct ADA access. A minimum access width of 5 feet shall be maintained along all sidewalks and building entrances accessible to the public. If a portable sign is located within the public right of way, the business owner shall be required to obtain an encroachment permit from the City Engineer.
4. A portable sign shall not encroach into required off-street parking areas, and may not be arranged so as to create site distance conflicts or other traffic hazards.

5. A portable sign shall be utilized only during the regular hours of operation of the business or special event, and shall be removed during non-business hours.
6. A portable sign shall be professionally made and constructed of durable, weather-resistant materials such as aluminum, plastic, or wood finished surfaces and shall be maintained in good condition throughout the term of the use permit.
7. At the time of application, and for any renewals, a use permit application for a portable sign shall require submission of a Certificate of Insurance, which complies with the following criteria:
  - a. Public liability insurance in an amount not less than \$1,000,000.00 for injuries to each person, and in an amount not less than \$1,000,000.00 for any one occurrence.
  - b. Property damage insurance in an amount not less than \$1,000,000.00 for damage to the property of each person on account of any one occurrence.
  - c. Said policies shall name the City of Mesa as additional insured and shall constitute primary insurance for the city, its officers, agents and employees, so that any other policies held by the city shall not contribute to any loss under this insurance.
  - d. Policies shall provide for 30 days prior written notice to the city of cancellation or material changes.

**15.4(c) Temporary Signs Subject to a Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan.** A Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan is required for all temporary signs that relate to existing or future development projects within PPGN, or are of a community-wide nature such as community banners, street light banners, temporary directional signage, subdivision signs, and homebuilder signs. A Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan must be reviewed and approved by the Zoning Administrator or Board of Adjustment in conjunction with the granting of a Special Use Permit (“SUP”) to establish the regulations for all proposed temporary signage. The following sign types require approval of a Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan:

**15.4(c)(i) Development Signs.** Development signs are signs pertaining only to the proposed development of the property on which such signs are located. Development signs may include graphic temporary screen walls or fence banners that promote the proposed development.

**15.4(c)(ii) Real Estate Signs.** Real Estate Signs are permitted by right as outlined in Chapter 15.4(a)(i); however, alternate Real Estate Signs may be approved through a Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan.

**15.4(c)(iii) Contractor Signs.** Contractor Signage are permitted by right as outlined in Chapter 15.4(a)(ii); however, alternate Contractor Signs may be approved through a Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan.

**15.4(c)(iv) Subdivision Signs.**

1. Subdivision Signs. Subdivision Signs are signs pertaining to the sale of lots, tracts, or homes within a recorded subdivision that are located on the site of such subdivision.
2. Subdivision Directional Signs. Subdivision Directional Signs are signs located beyond the boundary of the subdivision that provide directional information to the subdivision location.
3. Subdivision Weekend Directional Signs. Subdivision Weekend Directional Signs are allowed pursuant to the requirements of the Mesa Zoning Ordinance. No Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan is required.

**15.4(c)(v) Community Theming Banners and Streetlight Banners.** Banners, street light signs, and holiday decorations that are part of a DU-wide or community-wide theming program and that advertise community, cultural, social or recreational events, denote districts within PPGN, celebrate events, activities or accomplishments are allowed on private property, or within or over public or private right-of-way, subject to approval of a Temporary Comprehensive Sign Plan. Such banners or signs shall not advertise merchandise or services for sale. Sponsorship information shall be limited to 30% coverage.

**15.5. Exceptions to Sign Regulations and Signs Not Requiring a Permit.**

**15.5(a) Exceptions to Sign Regulations.** The provisions of this Chapter and the Mesa Zoning Ordinance shall not apply to the following signs, which are excepted signs and do not require permitting by the City of Mesa.

1. Flags, pennants, or insignia of any nation, state, county, city, or other political unit, or any church or religious organization.
2. Works of fine art, statuary, sculpture, or depictions of persons, places, or events noncommercial in nature and not used for purposes of commercial identification.
3. Temporary decorations, displays, banners, canvas signs, advertising flags, pennants, streamers, garlands, whirly-gigs, and other similar devices that promote traditional patriotic, religious, or local holidays; community festivals; community and recreational events; and Special Events. Said signs may be displayed 30 calendar days prior to the event and 10 calendar days after the event. Such banners or signs shall not advertise merchandise or services for sale. Sponsorship information is limited to 30% coverage.
4. Temporary signs for events of a general Citywide or community-wide civic or public benefit.



5. Signs not discernable beyond the boundaries of the lot or parcel upon which they are located, or from any public right-of-way.
6. The placement and maintenance of official traffic, fire, and police signs, signals, and devices and markings of the State of Arizona and the City of Mesa or other authorized public agency, and the posting of notices as required by law.
7. Non-illuminated directional or informational signs of a noncommercial public or quasi-public nature, including street, building, or suite numbers which do not exceed 6 square feet in height.
8. Signs displayed during recognized holidays as identification of temporary sales areas for trees, pumpkins, and other similar holiday items, provided such signs are displayed on within thirty days prior to the recognized holiday and removed immediately thereafter.
9. Messages painted directly on, or adhesive vinyl film affixed to, the exterior of existing mineral glass windows or other glazing. The message may cover a maximum of 30% of the surface area of the glass.
10. Menu signs.
11. Signs which have been designated a historic landmark by the City of Mesa.

**15.5(b) Permits Not Required.** Sign permits are not required for the following signs provided that such signs are subject to all other provisions of this Chapter and the Mesa Zoning Ordinance and do not include any electric.

1. Any sign less than six square feet in area and not otherwise prohibited by this Chapter.
2. Non-Permanent signs less than thirty-two square feet in area and specifically permitted by this Chapter.
3. Standard sign maintenance (as defined in the Mesa Zoning Ordinance).
4. Relocation as required by the City.
5. Window signs that cover a maximum of 30% of the surface area of the glass.

#### **15.6. Prohibited Signs.**

The following signs and conditions are prohibited:

1. Vehicle Signs. Vehicle signs that are displayed for the purpose of exhibiting commercial advertising, identifying an on-site business, or supplying directional information to an off-site business, by means of any of the following:
  - a. The absence of a current, lawful license plate affixed to the vehicle on which the sign is displayed; or
  - b. The vehicle being inoperable as defined in the Mesa City Code; or
  - c. The vehicle on which the sign is displayed is not parked in a lawful or authorized location, or is on blocks or other supports, or is

- parked in a manner that is distinct or different from the pre-determined parking area design; or
- d. The vehicle on which the sign is displayed is not used for business activities associated with the product(s) or service(s) designated by the vehicle sign for two consecutive business days; or
  - e. The vehicle on which the sign is displayed is a part, section, or element of an outdoor display by a dealership or business of transportation vehicles such as motor vehicle, recreational vehicle, watercraft, manufactured home, motorcycle, or utility trailer.
2. Off-site signs (billboards).
  3. Signs displayed in a location prohibited by this Chapter.
  4. Signs placed so as to prevent or inhibit free ingress to or egress from any door, window, or any exit way required by the City of Mesa.
  5. Signs placed in a location which obstructs the view of any traffic sign, signal, or other traffic-control sign, or of a vehicle operator entering, exiting, or traveling upon the public right-of-way.
  6. Signs that by way of shape, color, or position may be confused with any authorized traffic- control or public directional sign.
  7. Signs within the public right-of-way except as specifically allowed by this Chapter or the Mesa Zoning Ordinance.