

CHAPTER 22.50 SIGNS

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22.50.010 Purpose.

The overall purpose of this chapter is to promote the public health, safety and general welfare; to increase the effectiveness of visual communication in the city; and to enhance and maintain the aesthetic character of the city by:

- A. Promoting and protecting property values, attracting new residents, and encouraging orderly development; and
- B. Recognizing the purpose of signs for identification and economic well-being of businesses in the city of Monroe; and
- C. Promoting a business person's right to identify their business through reasonable and effective methods; and
- D. Minimizing dangerous conflicts between signage and traffic control devices; and
- E. Minimizing visual distractions between signage and motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians; and
- F. Increasing the city's attractiveness; and
- G. Promoting the city's scenic views, historical assets, architecture, streetscapes, and landscaping; and
- H. Regulating the type, number, location, size, and illumination of signs; and
- I. Facilitating fair and consistent neutral enforcement; and
- J. Recognizing and protecting the use of the public right-of-way as a forum for noncommercial speech; and
- K. Allowing for limited temporary commercial signage in the public right-of-way, to provide a flow of commercial information to consumer to enable them to make vital decision of purchasing a home, and to further the critical public goal of providing for equal access to housing; and
- L. Uphold the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

The purpose of this title is implemented by controlling the number, type, design, lighting, construction, materials, location, use, and maintenance of all signs and sign structures.

22.50.020 Permanent Commercial Signs.

Table 22.50.020: Permanent Commercial Sign Allowance determines whether a specific permanent commercial sign is allowed in a zoning district or by land use activity. The zoning

district or land use activity is identified in the left column, the type of sign in the second column, and the specific commercial sign allowances are located in the rows of the table.

A. If no symbol or number appears in the table box at the intersection of the column and row, the sign is not allowed in that category or is not subject to an allowance.

B. If a letter appears in the table box at the intersection of the column and row or in the column or row heading, the sign may be allowed subject to the appropriate requirement and specific conditions indicated in the table footnotes.

C. All applicable requirements shall govern a permanent commercial sign whether or not the requirements are cross-referenced in Table 22.50.020: Permanent Commercial Sign Allowance.

Table 22.50.020: Permanent Commercial Sign Allowance

Purpose	Type of sign	Permit required	Number of signs	Area max per sign in sq ft	Height in ft	Set-back in ft	Comments
Access, Landmark, and Informational Signs – All Zones							
entry	monument	yes	1	6	4	2	Per vehicle entry
landmark	wall (h)	No	1	2	8	2	Per building frontage
informational – private	wall (h)	No	1	4	8	2	Per building frontage – must be for an original purpose and may not simply repeat the same message over and over
informational – private	freestanding	No	1	4	8	2	Per property frontage – must be for an original purpose and may not simply repeat the same message over and over
informational – public	wall (h)	No	1	2	8	2	Per building frontage
Informational - public	freestanding	No	1	2	8	2	Per organization
Institutional (IN) and Limited Open Space (LS) Zoning Districts							
Informational	wall (h)	yes	1	6	8		Per frontage visible from ROW – no limit within the site if not ROW visible
	freestanding	yes	1	6	6	2	Per property
	window – opaque	No	1	20%			Percent of window area per window
	window – transparent	No	1	20%			Percent of window area per first floor window
	wall (h)	yes	1 (t)	40	24		Per building frontage
	projecting	yes	1	20	(a)		Under 4 ft wide, mounted 6 inches from attaching wall.
	changeable message	yes	1	50%	10		Percent changeable of allowable sign area
Advertising - freestanding	<300 lf frontage	yes	1	40	10	2	Per property frontage
	>300 lf frontage	yes	2	40	10	2	Signs must be located more than 200 lf apart
	monument – off-premises multitenant directions (f)	yes	1	24	10	2	Per closest arterial/collector road for businesses not located on the arterial or collector road; prohibited in ROW; maximum 1/4 mile straight line distance from sign to property

	TOTAL single-tenant site			100		2	Total allowed for combination of signs, except window signage
	TOTAL multitenant site			120		2	Total allowed for combination of signs, except window signage
Downtown Commercial Zoning District (DC)							
informational	wall (h)	yes	1	6	8		Per frontage visible from ROW – no limit within the site if not ROW visible
	window – opaque	No	N/A	20%			Percent of window area per window
	window – transparent	No	N/A	20%			Percent of window area per first floor window
	under awning – lieu blade	yes	1	10	(a)	(b)	Per business on street frontage
	awning/canopy fascia (g)	yes	1	40%	(a)	(b)	Percent of vertical edge of awning/canopy
	blade in lieu of under awning	yes	1	16	(a)	(b)	Per tenant space – may have blade or under awning but not both
	Directory – per tenant	yes	1	6	8		Per primary or secondary building frontage
	wall – single tenant (h)	yes	1 (t)	100			2.0 sf/1.0 lf of building frontage per primary or secondary frontage up to maximum per frontage; secondary sign maximum 75% of primary sign maximum; no digital contents within the “Historic Main neighborhood” per MMC 22.50.120
	wall – multitenant (h)	yes	1 (t)	150			2.0 sf/1.0 lf of tenant space building frontage per primary or secondary frontage up to maximum per frontage; secondary sign maximum 75% of primary sign maximum; no digital contents within “Historic Main” per MMC 22.50.120(D)
	Projecting	yes	1	20	(a)	(b)	Under 4 ft wide, mounted 6 inches from attaching wall – no digital contents within Historic Main Zone per MMC 22.50.120
	changeable message	yes	1	50%	10		Percent changeable of public service message of allowable sign area
	advertising - freestanding	monument – single tenant	yes	1	32	10	2 (e)
monument – multitenant		yes	1	48	10	2 (e)	Per street frontage, Lewis Street allowed 80 sf and height up to 20 ft
monument – off-premises multitenant directions (f)		yes	1	24	10	2	Per closest arterial/collector road for businesses not located on Main or Lewis Streets; prohibited in ROW; maximum 1/4 mile straight line distance from sign to property
off-premises multitenant advertising (f)		yes	1	32	10	2	Per closest arterial/collector road for businesses not located on Main or Lewis Streets, prohibited in ROW; maximum 1/4 mile straight line distance from sign to property
	TOTAL single-tenant site			140		2	Total allowed for combination of signs, except window signage

	TOTAL multitenant site			180		2	Total allowed for combination of signs, except window signage
Mixed Use – General (MG) and Mixed Use – Neighborhood (MN) Zoning Districts							
informational	wall (h)	yes	1	6	8		Per frontage visible from ROW – no limit within the site if not ROW visible
advertising	window – opaque	No	N/A	15%			Percent of window area per window
	window – transparent	No	N/A	20%			Percent of window area per first floor window
	awning/canopy fascia (g)	yes	1	40%	(a)	2	Percent of vertical edge of awning/canopy
	under awning in lieu of blade	yes	1	10	(a)	2	Per tenant space
	blade in lieu of under awning	yes	1	16	(a)	2	Per tenant space – may have blade or under awning but not both
	wall – single tenant (h)	yes	1 (t)	80/100			1.5 sf/1.0 lf of primary or secondary frontage up to maximum per frontage; maximum 80 MN, 100 MG; secondary sign maximum 75% of primary sign maximum
	wall – multitenant (h)	yes	1 (t)	120/150			1.5 sf/1.0 lf of tenant space building frontage per primary or secondary frontage up to maximum per frontage; maximum 120 MN, 150 MG; secondary sign maximum 75% of primary sign maximum (d)
Projecting	yes	1	20	(a)		Under 4 ft wide, mounted 6 inches from attaching wall	
changeable message	yes	1	50%	10		Percent changeable of allowable sign area; allowed in MU only	
advertising - freestanding	monument – single tenant	yes	1	32	8	2	Per street frontage
	monument – multitenant	yes	1	48	8	2	Per street frontage
	single street freestanding – single tenant <200 lf frontage	yes	1	80	20	2	Per street frontage; allowed in MG only
	freestanding – single tenant >200 lf frontage	yes	2	80	20	2	Per street frontage over 200 lf located more than 100 lf apart up to 4 total signs per site; allowed in MG only
	freestanding – multitenant <200 lf frontage	yes	1	120	20	2	Per street frontage; allowed in MG only
	freestanding – multitenant >200 lf frontage	yes	2	120	20	2	Per street frontage over 200 lf located more than 100 lf apart up to 4 total signs per site; allowed in MG only

	freestanding – limited highway intersection	yes	1	140	45	2	Per 522 frontage at 522/Main Street intersection; sign must be perpendicular to and abutting 522 ROW, digital contents allowed
	TOTAL single-tenant site – MU-N only			140		2	Total allowed for combination of signs, except window signage
	TOTAL multitenant site – MU-N only			180		2	Total allowed for combination of signs, except window signage
General Commercial (GC), Industrial Transition (IT), and Tourist Commercial (TC) Zoning Districts							
informational	wall (h)	yes	1	40%	(a)	2	Percent of vertical edge of awning/canopy
	freestanding	yes	1	6	8		Per frontage visible from ROW – no limit within the site if not ROW visible
advertising	window – opaque	No	N/A	20%			Percent of window area per window
	window – transparent	No	N/A	20%			Percent of window area per first floor window
	under awning in lieu of blade	yes	1	10	(a)	2	Per business on street frontage
	blade in lieu of under awning	yes	1	16	(a)	2	Per tenant space – may have blade or under awning but not both
	awning/canopy fascia (g)	yes	1	6	6	2	Per property
	wall – single tenant (h)	yes	1 (t)	200	24		1.5 sf/1.0 lf of frontage per primary or secondary frontage up to maximum per frontage; secondary sign maximum 75% of primary maximum
	wall – multitenant (h)	yes	1 (t)	300	24		1.5 sf/1.0 lf of tenant space building frontage per primary or secondary frontage up to maximum per frontage; secondary sign maximum 75% of primary maximum (d)
	Projecting	yes	1	20	(a)		Under 4 ft wide, mounted 6 inches from attaching wall – digital contents allowed
advertising - freestanding	single tenant <400 lf frontage	yes	1	100	35	2	Per street frontage – digital contents allowed except where visible from Lake Tye Park
	single tenant >400 lf frontage	yes	2	100	35	2	Per street frontage over 400 lf located more than 100 lf apart for a total of no more than 4 signs per site – digital contents allowed except where visible from Lake Tye Park
	multitenant <400 lf frontage	yes	1	150	35	2	Per street frontage – digital contents allowed except where visible from Lake Tye Park
	multitenant >400 lf frontage	yes	2	150	35	2	Per street frontage over 400 lf located more than 100 lf apart up for a total of no more than 4 signs per site – digital contents allowed except where visible from Lake Tye Park

	off-premises multitenant advertising	yes	1	150	35	2	Per intersection of arterials and collectors on US 2 for businesses not located on US 2; located more than 100 lf from another freestanding sign subject to the total maximum allowable on- and off-premises sign area of each tenant; prohibited in ROW; maximum 1/4 mile straight line distance from sign to property
	limited highway intersection	yes	1	140	45	2	Per 522 frontage at 522/Main Street intersection; sign must be perpendicular to and abutting 522 ROW – digital contents allowed
	monument – off-premises multitenant directions (f)	yes	1	24	10	2	Per closest arterial/collector road for businesses not located on US 2; prohibited in ROW; maximum 1/4 mile straight line distance from sign to property
	changeable message – gas	yes	1	20	8	2	100% changeable of allowable sign area – digital contents allowed
	changeable message – food	yes	2	24	8	2	100% changeable of allowable sign area – digital contents allowed
	changeable message – movie	yes	1	80	24	2	80% changeable of allowable sign area – digital contents allowed
	TOTAL single-tenant site			360			Total allowed for combination of on- and off-premises signs, except window signage
	TOTAL multitenant site			480			Total allowed for combination of on- and off-premises signs, except window signage

Light Industrial (LI), General Industrial (GI), and Shoreline Industrial (SI) Zoning Districts

informational	wall (h)	yes	1	6	8		Per frontage visible from ROW – no limit within the site if not ROW visible
	freestanding	yes	1	6	6	2	Per property
advertising	window – opaque	No	N/A	20%			Percent of window area per window
	window – transparent	yes	1	20%	(a)		Percent of vertical edge of awning/canopy
	blade in lieu of under awning	yes	1	16	(a)	2	Per tenant space – may have blade or under awning but not both
	wall – single tenant (h)	yes	1 (t)	300	24		1.0 sf/1.0 lf of frontage per primary or secondary frontage up to maximum per frontage; secondary sign maximum 75% of primary sign maximum
	wall – multiple tenant (h)	yes	1 (t)	300	24		1.0 sf/1.0 lf of tenant space building frontage per primary or secondary frontage plus 32 sf/tenant for each additional tenant after the first 2 tenants; secondary maximum 75% of primary maximum (d)
	projecting	yes	1	20	(a)		Under 4 ft wide, mounted 6 inches from attaching wall
	changeable message	yes	1	50%	10		Percent changeable of allowable sign area

advertising - freestanding	monument	yes	1	50	6	2	Per vehicle complex entry
	single tenant <400 lf frontage	yes	1	100	35	2	Per street frontage – digital contents allowed except where visible from Lake Tye Park
	single tenant >400 lf frontage	yes	2	100	35	2	Per street frontage over 400 lf located more than 200 lf apart for a total of no more than 4 per site – digital contents allowed except where visible from Lake Tye Park
	multitenant <400 lf frontage	yes	1	150	35	2	Per street frontage – digital contents allowed except where visible from Lake Tye Park
	multitenant >400 lf frontage	yes	2	150	35	2	Per street frontage over 400 lf located more than 200 lf apart for a total of no more than 4 per site – digital contents allowed except where visible from Lake Tye Park
	off-premises multitenant advertising (f)	yes	1	150	35	2	Per intersection of arterials and collectors for businesses not located on Fryelands Blvd; sign located more than 100 lf from another freestanding sign subject to the total maximum allowable on- and off-premises sign area of each tenant; prohibited in ROW; maximum 1/4 mile straight line distance from sign to property
	monument – off-premises multitenant directions (f)	yes	1	24	10	2	Per closest arterial/collector road for businesses not located on Fryelands Blvd; prohibited in ROW; maximum 1/4 mile straight line distance from sign to property
	TOTAL single-tenant site			360			Total allowed for combination of on- and off-premises signs, except window signage
	TOTAL multitenant site			488			Total allowed for combination of on- and off-premises signs, except window signage

Table Notes:

- (a) Must comply with MMC 22.50.110.
- (b) All signs may be located at the edge of the public ROW. Under-awning signs may extend six feet while blade and projecting signs may extend four feet into the public ROW or over the sidewalk where the sidewalk is at least ten to twelve feet wide.

Column headings:

- (c) For buildings with two or more frontages, the length of the wall and allowable sign area shall be calculated separately for each such building frontage.

ROW footnotes:

- (d) If the site has reached the maximum, newly created tenant spaces shall be allowed one tenant identifying wall sign located above the tenant's entry not to exceed sixteen square feet in surface area – not to be used as a bonus by tenants with existing signs. For multitenant building with a shared entry, the signage per tenant shall be determined by dividing the tenant's gross floor area by the gross floor area of the building to determine the percentage of the building occupied by the tenant. The tenant is then allotted that percent of the total square footage allowed for the site.
- (e) No setback required in the Historic Main neighborhood subject to city engineer approval of visibility.
- (f) Minimum three businesses per sign; must not have arterial street frontage available for freestanding signage and special circumstances are necessary because of the location, size, shape, or topography of the property or business, group of businesses, or business area to provide it with signage privileges typical of other properties in the vicinity or zoning district.
- (g) Awning or canopy fascia lettering should be composed of a single line of type with letters under twelve inches and not occupy more than two-thirds of the fascia linear surface front or side.

(h) No wall sign shall project more than eighteen inches from the wall of a building, nor extend above the eave or deck line of the building upon which it is located; except those located upon parapet walls, wherein they may be located above the deck line but not above the height of the parapet wall. No wall sign shall have an image area larger than twenty-five percent of the area of the message.

22.50.030 Temporary Commercial Signs.

General. Temporary commercial signs provide information concerning advertisement of a commercial nature subject to the provisions listed in Table 22.50.030: Temporary Commercial Signs – All Zones.

A. Duration. Except as provided in the following table, no temporary commercial sign shall be erected, re-erected, or maintained for more than thirty consecutive days in a year. For the purpose of this regulation, any sign of similar content erected subsequent to the original temporary sign shall be considered as the original sign for the time limitation contained herein.

B. Location. Signs shall be located on site, except as provided in the following table. Temporary commercial signs cannot be affixed or located on utility poles, street sign, fence, tree, stop sign, or other similar structure within the ROW without underlying property owner permission.

C. Illumination. Not permitted.

D. Permit. A no-fee permit is required for temporary commercial signs. A label, issued by the City shall be affixed to all temporary commercial signs.

Table 22.50.030: Temporary Commercial Signs – All Zones						
Purpose	Type of sign	Number of signs	Area maximum per sign in sq ft	Height in ft	Setback in ft	Comments
advertising	A-frame	1	8	4		Per business, 2 ft x 4 ft outside of pedestrian walkway. Maximum 60 days per year. Must comply with MMC 22.50.100. May be displayed during business hours only.
	Banners (b)	1	1.5 sf/1.0 lf of primary facade			Maximum of 60 days per year. Increments of 60, 30, 15, or 10 days; upon removal, a banner may not be re-erected for a duration equal to the time it was displayed. Shall not be located within the ROW.
	Inflatable (a)	1				Maximum 30 days per year. Shall not be located off-site or within round-a-bouts or medians nor block vehicular sight-distance.
	stake signs		6			Maximum 120 days per year. Shall not be located within round-a-bouts or medians nor block vehicular sight-distance. A maximum of two signs are allowed offsite.
	freestanding	1	20	10	2	Per street frontage

	Window/poster	N/A	20% of window area			Per window, per building
	freestanding directional	5	4	3	2	1 sign on site, 4 off-premises signs allowed.

Table Notes:

- (a) Inflatable objects or signs, air-supported structures, kites, and searchlights shall be located on the premises for which they are advertising, in the location specified under the approved permit. Inflatable objects or signs, air-supported structures, kites, and searchlights cannot be located in the public right-of-way or in required landscaping or parking areas. Shall not interfere with pedestrian movement, nor impede the vision or block the movement of motorists on private or public rights-of-way. Size, height, and illumination shall adhere to all applicable city, state and federal requirements relating to public safety, air and vehicular traffic control and the like. Kites and inflatable objects such as balloons shall not be operated more than one hundred fifty feet from the grade of the earth beneath the point of attachment, without written waivers from the Federal Aviation Administration. The beam of the searchlight shall not flash against any building or sweep an arc greater than forty-five degrees from vertical.
- (b) Banners shall be located completely on the wall of the building or leased space of the sponsoring business. Banners cannot be located in required parking areas, upon poles, other constructed frame, affixed to or covering required landscaping, utility poles or vehicles and shall be affixed so as to survive high winds or storm events.

22.50.040 Permanent Noncommercial Speech Signs.

Noncommercial speech signs express noncommercial speech or other philosophical messages. Noncommercial speech signs do not promote commercial products or services. The content of such signs is not regulated, but is subject to Table 22.50.040: Permanent Noncommercial Speech Signs, and the following requirements:

- A. The permanent noncommercial sign allowance table determines whether a specific type of permanent noncommercial sign is allowed. The sign type is identified in the left column and the specific noncommercial sign allowances are located in the rows of the table.
- B. If no symbol or number appears in the table box at the intersection of the column and row, the sign is not allowed in that category or is not subject to an allowance.
- C. All applicable requirements shall govern a noncommercial sign whether or not the requirements are cross-referenced in Table 22.50.040: Permanent Noncommercial Speech Signs.

Table 22.50.040: Permanent Noncommercial Speech Signs						
Type of sign	Permit	Number of signs	Area maximum per sign in sq ft	Height in ft	Setback in ft	Comments
Residential Zones						
Wall	yes	1	32	24	2	For properties with 4 or more dwelling units
monument-gateway	yes	1	40	5	2	For properties or tracts owned by an HOA. Sign quantity and location shall be at each vehicle complex entry.

freestanding - entry	yes	1	32	10	2	For properties with 4 or more dwelling units, 2 signs permitted per public entrance if located opposite one another and not exceeding 16 sf/sign face.
wall	yes	1	16	5	2	Illumination prohibited
monument	yes	1	16	5	2	May be illuminated but must adhere to MMC 22.50.130(E)
freestanding	yes	1	16	5	2	May be illuminated but must adhere to MMC 22.50.130(E)
Commercial Zones						
wall	yes	1	150	5	2	1.5 sf/1.0 lf of tenant space building frontage per primary or secondary frontage up to maximum per frontage. Secondary sign maximum 75% of primary sign maximum
monument	yes	1	16	5	2	May be illuminated but must adhere to MMC 22.50.130(E)
freestanding	yes	1	16	5	2	May be illuminated but must adhere to MMC 22.50.130(E)

22.50.050 Temporary Noncommercial Speech Signs.

Temporary Noncommercial speech signs express noncommercial speech or other philosophical messages. Temporary Noncommercial speech signs do not promote commercial products or services. The content of such signs is not regulated, but is subject to Table 22.50.050:

Temporary Noncommercial Speech Signs, and the following requirements:

- A. Illumination. Not permitted.
- B. Construction. Temporary signs, other than inflatable and banners, shall be constructed of a durable, rigid, all-weather material (i.e., plywood, plastic, etc.) so as not to lose structural integrity in inclement weather. Signs must be of a sufficient weight and stature to ensure that they will remain in place during high winds.
- C. Location. Temporary Noncommercial Speech signs cannot be affixed or located on utility poles, street sign, fence, tree, stop sign, or similar structures within the ROW without owner permission. Portable signs meeting the definition of Temporary Noncommercial Speech may be erected off-premises as set forth in the sign allowance table.
- D. Duration. For the purpose of this regulation, any sign of similar content erected subsequent to the original temporary sign shall be considered as the original sign for the time limitation contained herein.
- E. Permit. A no-fee permit is required for temporary noncommercial signs. A label, issued by the City shall be affixed to all temporary noncommercial speech signs.

Table 22.50.050: Temporary Noncommercial Speech Signs			
Sign type	Duration	Size	Location
Banners	60 days per year. Increments of 60, 30, 15 or 10 days; upon removal, a banner may not be re-erected for a duration equal to the time it was displayed	32 sq ft	Shall not be located within the ROW without the underlying property owner consent.
Inflatable	30 days per year.	n/a	Must be located on-site.

A-frame	60 days per year.	6 sq ft per side.	Must comply with MMC 22.50.100. May be located within the ROW.
Stake Signs	90 days per year	6 square feet	Shall not be located within round-a-bouts or medians nor block vehicular sight-distance.

22.50.060 Murals.

Permit Required. Murals containing a commercial sign message shall require a sign permit and shall only be allowed on premises in the DC, GC, SI, TC, MN, MG, LI, GI, LS, and IN zoning districts. The commercial “display area” of the mural shall be calculated against the allowed signage for the site and/or tenant.

22.50.070 Exempt Signs.

General. Subject to the requirements of this section, the following signs shall be exempt from all sign permit provisions and are not subject to the size and other allowances specified in the sign allowance table of this chapter, except for construction, safety regulations and permitting requirements for permanent signs or where otherwise referenced in this chapter. These exemptions shall not be construed as relieving the owner of the sign from the responsibility of its erection and maintenance, and its compliance with the provisions of this code or any other law or ordinance regulating the same.

- A. Traffic or pedestrian control signs, signs required by law, or signs indicating scenic or historic points of interest that are erected by or on the order of a public officer in the performance of their public duty.
- B. Signs erected or installed by or at the direction of the city, such as traffic signs, legal notices, railroad warning signs, signs showing the location of underground public utility facilities, and other signs of a nonadvertising nature erected for warning or emergency purposes.
- C. Signs erected or installed by or at the direction of the city, such as a City wide system of freestanding Directory signs allowing vehicular and pedestrian wayfinding throughout the city.
- C. Public safety signs including temporary private ground or wall signs exclusively relating to the safety of the public (e.g., “no parking today,” “use covered walkway,” “do not enter,” “danger,” “loading zone”) may be located as needed for public safety without limitations as to number, size, or location so far as the requirements of this chapter are concerned.
- D. Signs directly related to a municipal building, structure or installed by the city or required by a governmental entity.
- E. The flag of governmental and public institutions.
- F. The flag of a commercial institution not advertising a product to be left loose to fly in the breeze. Not to exceed one per business and twenty square feet in surface area.
- G. Decorative flags and bunting for a celebration, convention or commemoration of significance to the community located on public right-of-way, when authorized by the city council for a prescribed period of time.
- H. Banners located over the public right-of-way, which display governmental speech including government events and celebrations.
- I. Temporary signs and decorations that are customary for special holidays and that are erected on private property.
- J. Official public notices of federal, state or local governments; official court notices.

- K. Signs incorporated into machinery or equipment by a manufacturer or distributor, which identify or advertise only the product or service dispensed by the machine or equipment, such as signs customarily affixed to vending machines, newspaper racks, telephone booths or gasoline pumps.
- L. Lettering or symbols painted directly onto or flush-mounted magnetically onto an operable vehicle.
- M. Advertising signs located on licensed taxicabs and buses or commercial vehicles operating during the normal course of business. Signs on public transit benches and shelters and on and within public transit vehicles.
- N. The changing of the advertising copy or message on a sign or theater marquee, reader boards, and similar signs specifically designed for the use of replaceable copy.
- O. Painting, repainting, cleaning, repairing or normal maintenance of an advertising structure or the changing of the advertisement copy or message thereon shall not be considered an erection or alteration which requires a sign permit unless a structural or electrical change is made.
- P. Interior signs.
- Q. Historic signs, typically wall or projecting signs, where the sign is proposed to be restored or authentically recreated as evidenced by historic photographs.
- R. Sculptures, fountains, mosaics, and design features that do not incorporate advertising or identification.
- S. Identification signs upon recycling collection containers for public, charitable or nonprofit organizations.

22.50.080 Prohibited Signs.

General. From and after the effective date of this chapter, it is unlawful for any person to maintain, erect or place the following signs that are prohibited in the city of Monroe.

- A. Signs that contain statements, words or pictures of an obscene, indecent or immoral character such as will offend public morals or decency under the prevailing statutes or U.S. Supreme Court rulings.
- B. Any sign that constitutes a traffic hazard or is detrimental to traffic safety because of size, location, movement, content, or method of illumination. Any sign that obstructs the vision of drivers or detracts from the visibility of any official traffic control device because it diverts or tends to divert the attention of drivers of moving vehicles away from traffic movement on streets, roads, intersections, or access facilities. No sign shall be erected so that it obstructs the vision of pedestrians, or which by its glare or by its method of illumination constitutes a hazard to traffic. No sign may use words, phrases, symbols or characters in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse the steady and safe flow of traffic.
- C. Signs that are of such an intensity or brilliance as to cause glare or impair the vision of any motorist, cyclist or pedestrian using or entering the public right-of-way, or that are a nuisance or hazard to occupants of any property because of glare or other characteristics.
- D. Laser signage consisting of light based displays, with beams or wide spectrum lights that result in an image.
- E. Signs attached to public vegetation and structures within the right-of-way, including utility poles, traffic control devices, and lampposts, or other city-owned property, except the right-of-way itself, unless otherwise allowed pursuant to state or federal laws, are prohibited.
- F. Signs that are in violation of the building, electrical or fire codes adopted by the city.
- G. Advertising vehicles. This does not include automobile for sale signs.
- H. Portable reader board signs including trailer signs.
- I. Signs with visible moving, revolving or rotating parts or visible mechanical movement of any description or other apparent visible movement achieved by optical illusion, motion, electrical, electronic or mechanical means, except for traditional barber poles.
- J. Signs that emit odor or visible matter such as smoke or steam, or involve the use of live animals.
- K. Off-premises signs including, but not limited to, billboards, snipe signs and those signs upon vehicles and trailers, except for those otherwise authorized by this chapter. This prohibition shall

not apply to noncommercial signs, or other categories of signage specifically exempted under this chapter.

L. Billboards and all product advertising sponsored flags (including feather banners) and posters except those allowed as interior signs that are not visible from the street ROW.

M. Signs that are painted, pasted, or printed on any curb, pavement or any portion of any sidewalk or street, except house numbers and traffic control signs.

N. Signs painted directly on a sloped or gabled roof surface.

O. Signs for which a permit has been granted under conditions with which the permittee does not comply.

P. Any sign or advertising structure or supporting structure that is torn, damaged, defaced or destroyed.

Q. Abandoned signs or signs in poor repair.

R. Any other signs that are not specifically permitted or exempted by this chapter.

22.50.090 Scenic Vistas Act.

All signs within the city of Monroe visible from SR 2 or SR 203 must be in conformance with the standards of the Scenic Vistas Act (Chapter 47.42 RCW and Chapter 468-66 WAC) that is incorporated herein by this reference as well as the related Washington State Department of Transportation ("WSDOT") rules, regulations, and noncompliance penalties; provided, that all signs within the city shall also be subject to any additional restrictions as provided in this chapter. In the case of conflict between the requirements of the Scenic Vistas Act and this chapter, the more restrictive requirement shall apply.

22.50.100 A-Frame Signs.

A. Location. Shall meet the following requirements:

1. A-frame signs shall conform to the size, number, location, and other specifications listed in the sign allowance table and illustrated in the sign design guidelines.

2. Shall be located on the premises for which it is advertising, in the location specified under the approved permit. Not to be located in the public right-of-way unless otherwise specified. Not to be located in required parking areas, affixed to or covering required landscaping such as bushes or shrubs. Portable or A-frame signs shall not be affixed to, mounted upon or placed upon vehicles parking within the public right-of-way.

3. Shall not interfere with pedestrian movement, nor impede the vision or block the movement of motorists on private or public rights-of-way; provided, however, that due to unique location or other particulars no portable or A-frame sign shall be of such a size that it intrudes into any area required to be free of impediments pursuant to the Washington State Barrier Free Access or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations as they now exist or may hereafter be amended.

4. A-frame signs in the downtown commercial zoning district may be located on the public sidewalk directly in front of the sponsoring business; provided, that a minimum distance of four feet is maintained between the wall of the sponsoring business and the portable sign. Additionally, the location requirements codified at subsection (A)(2) of this section and the permit requirements found in subsection (A)(8) of this section must be satisfied. Where the public streetscape has been improved and the walkway is a minimum ten feet in width, A-frame signs may be placed within the two-foot zone extending from the private property line or building frontage; provided, that the sign does not extend further into or otherwise obstruct or detract from the portion of the walkway reserved for public access.

B. Illumination. Not permitted.

C. Construction. Portable signs shall be constructed of durable, rigid, all-weather materials (i.e., plywood, plastic, etc.) so as not to lose their structural integrity in inclement weather. Sign must be of a sufficient weight and stature to ensure that it will remain in place during high winds. Owners of portable signs shall be required to keep their signs legible and well maintained.

D. Additional Permit Requirements. For those signs located in the ROW, the applicant shall provide the city with a letter of indemnification appropriate to the city attorney, holding the city harmless for loss or injury resulting from the sign.

22.50.110 Projecting and Suspended (under Awning) Signs.

A. Projection over Right-of-Way. Only those projecting and suspended and under awning signs located in the downtown commercial zoning district may be permitted to project into the public right-of-way, provided they meet all requirements relating to traffic, construction, safety and size; and are attached to an approved awning, canopy, marquee or porte cochere.

B. Additional Permit Requirements. When deemed necessary due to safety concerns, those projecting and suspended (under awning) signs located in the downtown commercial zoning district, over the public right-of-way, shall require the applicant to provide the city with a letter of indemnification appropriate to the city attorney, holding the city harmless for loss or injury resulting from the sign.

C. The area under the sign free of obstructions to allow passage of pedestrians and vehicles shall be eight feet under awning/canopy fascia, blade, and under-awning signs, and twelve feet under projecting signs.

22.50.120 Digital Content and Video Display Signs.

Changeable copy by electronic or video means may be utilized on any permitted freestanding sign; provided, that the sign is at least thirty-five feet in any direction from any other sign that uses electronic display and is ninety degrees perpendicular to the flow of traffic, and is not located within the Historic Main neighborhood in the Downtown Commercial zone.

A. Only one EMC, EMD, or video sign is permitted per site for each street frontage on which the development fronts and the sign is visible from the public ROW.

B. Electronic message centers and displays (EMC and EMDs) are subject to the following restrictions:

1. The copy cannot change more than once every four seconds.
2. The interval between successive displays is zero such that an approaching driver cannot perceive any flashing of the display screen.
3. No special visual effects of any kind such as moving toward or away from the viewer, expanding or contracting, bouncing, rotating, spinning, twisting, or otherwise portraying movement or animation as the message is displayed on the screen or to accompany the transition between any successive messages.
4. Message sequencing is prohibited.

C. Video display signs are subject to the following restrictions:

1. Any portion of the message that uses a video display method shall have a minimum duration of two seconds. Calculation of the duration shall not include the number of frames per second used in a video display method.
2. There shall be zero seconds of still image or blank screen following every message using a video display method so that an approaching driver cannot perceive any flashing of the display screen.
3. Audio speakers shall be prohibited in association with a sign using a video method of display.

D. Digital content signs, including message centers and displays, videos, etc., must have automatic dimming capability that adjusts the brightness to the ambient light at all times of the day and night such that changeable message signs cannot exceed the following foot candles (fc) by zone:

Zoning District	Foot Candles
Transportation (TR), Institutional (IN), Limited Open Space (LS)	0.3
Downtown Commercial (DC), Mixed Use – Neighborhood (MN), Mixed Use – General (MG), Light Industrial (LI), General Industrial (GI), Shoreline Industrial (SI)	0.5

Source: Illuminating Engineering Society (IES)

E. Permit applications for electronic message centers and displays (EMCs and EMDs) and video display sign permits must include a copy of the manufacturer's operating manual which includes the manufacturer's recommended standards for light levels, scrolling or traveling speed and other display operations. EMCs and EMDs are subject to periodic assessment of the sign's performance and impact on traffic safety, driver and pedestrian distractions, and the other criteria of this code.

22.50.130 General Provisions.

A. General. No person shall erect, reconstruct, alter, relocate or place any sign within the city except such signs as are permitted, exempt, or not specifically regulated by this title. All signs, including the frames, braces or supports thereof, shall be constructed and maintained in compliance with this title, all applicable requirements of the Uniform Sign Code, Uniform Building Code, and all other applicable ordinances of the city.

B. Conflict of Provisions. If any provision of this chapter conflicts with the Uniform Sign Code or the Uniform Building Code, the provision of this chapter will govern.

C. Structure. Structural components of signs are regulated by the currently adopted edition of the Uniform Sign Code.

D. Electrical. Electrical components of signs are regulated by the currently adopted edition of the National Electric Code. All electrical signs must bear the U.L. label and shall receive a permit from the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries prior to issuance of the sign permit. All utilities, including electrical service, shall be located underground.

E. Illumination. The light directed upon, or internal to, any sign shall be shaded, shielded or directed so that the light intensity or glare shall not adversely affect the surrounding or facing premises, or adversely affect safe vision of operators of vehicles moving on public or private roads, highways or parking areas, or adversely affect safe vision of pedestrians on a public right-of-way. Glare and intense lighting of signs shall not shine on or directly reflect into residential structures. Flashing devices are prohibited from use where they are visible from the exterior of a building or location.

F. Sight Obstructions. All signs are subject to review by the city engineer for conformance with view obstruction and clearance triangle requirements.

G. Design and Materials.

1. Signs shall be designed for the purpose of identifying the facility or establishment in an attractive and functional manner and to help customers find the specific establishment and location; signs in residential zones should not serve as general advertising.

2. Signs shall be integrated into storefront, building and site design, where applicable, and shall be compatible with their residential, office, business or public park or open space surroundings, and clearly inform viewers of the building tenant or use.

3. Signs shall contain graphic elements that are readable for the intended purpose and of professional design quality.

4. Materials of construction for signs shall be of the quality and grade as specified for buildings in the building code.

5. Electrical raceways, if used, shall be painted to match the background color of the surface the sign is affixed to.

6. Backs of Signs. Exposed areas of backs of signs should be finished with appropriate color, material or texture to present an attractive appearance relative to the building materials, color and texture.

H. Inspections. All signs for which a permit is required shall be subject to inspection by the city. The permit holder shall notify the city when the following work is ready for inspection and shall not proceed further until such work has been approved:

1. Footings: before any concrete is poured for freestanding signs or any other sign partially supported on or attached to the ground.

2. Electrical. Signs containing electrical wiring shall be inspected before erection.

3. Final. Signs shall have a final inspection, which is to be made immediately after erection.
4. Relocation Required. The city of Monroe may, on ten days' written notice, by reason of changed traffic conditions or the construction or relocation of public improvements or otherwise, find that a private sign that extends over or maintained on a public property or the public right-of-way must be relocated. The person maintaining such sign must remove, relocate or alter the sign in accordance with the city's finding at their sole expense.
- I. Fire Exits. No sign or any portion thereof shall be anchored to, or attached to, or supported by any fire escape or any standpipe, or erected so as to obstruct or prevent the free ingress and egress from any window, door or fire escape.
- K. Property Owner's Consent. It is unlawful for any person to place, attach or maintain any sign, banner, card, sticker, handbill or other advertising device, within the right-of-way, upon or within any property, whether public or private, without securing the consent of the owner or their tenant or the underlying property owner if placing within the right-of-way, except as otherwise authorized by this chapter or by other applicable law.
- L. Projection over Public Property. Signs supported entirely on private property may extend into the public right-of-way as set forth in the sign allowance table; provided, that in no event shall any sign be permitted to extend beyond the curb line. In the absence of a curb, the curb line shall be established by the city engineer.
- M. Clearance from Power Lines. No sign shall be constructed or maintained which would have less horizontal or vertical clearance from communications lines or electric power lines than the clearance prescribed by the Electrical Construction Code of the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. In case of conflict, the most restrictive shall apply. Whenever it becomes necessary for workmen to be less than ten feet from any electrical conductor carrying more than six hundred volts, the sign contractor shall notify the proper utility company to provide a standby service crew.
- N. Power Source. No sign of any type shall be serviced by an overhead electric or power line from a source other than that which is internal to the sign.
- O. Parking lot signs: within parking lots, should be limited to those necessary for safety and identification. Any required signs for individual stalls should be marked on the pavement. Freestanding or wall-mounted signs should not be permitted, with the exception of ADA handicapped accessible parking signs. Entry/exit signs to parking areas are allowed as shown in the sign allowance table.

22.50.140 Maintenance and Removal.

- A. Responsibilities. It shall be the responsibility of every owner of real property and their tenant or other person in possession of such property with the consent of the owner to maintain every sign on such property in strict compliance with this code.
- B. Maintenance. Every sign shall be constantly maintained in good structural condition and in a state of security, safety, and good repair at all times including all supports, braces, guys, and anchors. The display surfaces of all signs shall be kept neatly posted at all times. If a sign is not so maintained, it must be removed or repaired within thirty days of notification by the city of Monroe. The owner, his agents, or assigns are responsible for such maintenance and compliance with this section.
- C. Maintenance Repair or Removal – Permanent Signs. The city of Monroe shall inspect and have the authority to order the owner to paint, repair, alter or remove permanent signs which have become dilapidated. The city may order the removal of any sign on private property that is not maintained in an orderly condition. In such a case, the city may issue a notice and order of code violation in accordance with Chapter 1.04 MMC. The city may abate conditions which were caused by or continue to be a code violation using lawful means, and recover the costs of abatement as further provided in Chapter 1.04 MMC. The order for maintenance or removal of any sign shall be sent by the city to the owner of the sign or property owner. The notice shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested. If the action requested in the order is not taken within the specified time period, the city may direct the sign to be removed from the premises.

The owner of the sign or the property shall be charged an amount equal to the city's cost for removal of the sign.

D. Maintenance Repair or Removal – Temporary Signs. The city of Monroe shall inspect and have the authority to remove or order the owner to paint, repair, alter or remove temporary signs which are not compliant with this chapter in compliance with MMC 22.50.170.

E. Abandoned and Obsolete Signs. Signs for which the use no longer exists, such as the vacation of a business or business site or a property that no longer remains commercially viable, shall be removed or the sign face covered within ten days following termination of the use or site.

22.50.150 Nonconforming Signs.

A. General. Every permanent sign except historic and landmark signs which, by reason of any amendment to the provisions of this chapter which occurred after the date the sign was installed, or by change of zoning district or by annexation of territory to the city, becomes in violation of or does not conform to the provisions hereof, shall be removed or altered so as to conform with the provisions of this chapter within five years from the effective date of such amendment or change unless the owner submits a written request for an extension to the city at least thirty days prior to the expiration of a five-year period from the date this ordinance was adopted (Ord. 005/2019), and the city approves the same. The city may grant up to two separate extensions for a total of two additional years.

B. Every limited duration and temporary sign must conform to the provisions of this chapter from the effective date of such amendment or change in all zones of the city.

C. Maintenance. Nonconforming signs may be maintained, repaired and repainted without permit or fee during the periods specified in subsection (A) of this section or any extensions granted under subsection (E) of this section, but no structural change shall be made nor shall any increase in area be permitted.

D. Moving or Alterations. In such cases where a nonconforming sign is moved or changed, the sign shall be treated as a new sign and subject to the requirements of this chapter.

E. Appeal. The period specified in subsection (A) of this section may be extended by the hearing examiner upon application of the person maintaining such sign if the examiner finds that such an extension is necessary for the preservation of substantial property rights of the applicant. The application for the extension shall be made in writing within ten days after notice to remove the sign has been issued by the city.

F. Removal of Nonconforming Signs. If the provisions of subsection (A) of this section are not complied with regarding removal or alteration of nonconforming signs, and no appeal is made in accordance with subsection (E) of this section, the nonconforming sign is to be removed, and the cost thereof shall be charged to the owner or tenant.

G. Any Change in Building Use or Classification. Any change requiring change of use or any new sign structure installation will require applicable signage to conform to the provisions of this section.

22.50.160 Permits and Fees.

A. Permits Required. It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, re-erect, construct, enlarge, display, alter or move a sign, or cause the same to be done, without first obtaining a permit for each sign from the city of Monroe as required by this chapter. This section shall not be construed to require an additional permit to clean, repaint, or otherwise perform normal maintenance or repair of a permitted sign or sign structure. If, however, a sign is modified in any way, a permit is required. No permit shall be required to change the message on a changeable message and electronic sign.

B. Permanent Permit Application Procedure – Single-Occupancy Buildings, Complexes, or Properties. A sign permit shall be filed providing completed forms and supplemental information deemed necessary by the city of Monroe to show full compliance with this and all other laws and ordinances concerning single-occupancy buildings, complexes, or properties. A separate permit

shall be required for a sign or signs for each business entity or location and a separate permit shall be required for each group of signs on a single supporting structure. Additional signs applied for separately shall require a separate permit.

C. Permanent Permit Application Procedure – Multi-Occupancy Buildings, Complexes, or Properties. A sign permit shall be filed providing completed forms and supplemental information deemed necessary by the city of Monroe to show full compliance with this and all other laws and ordinances concerning multi-occupancy buildings, complexes, or properties.

1. The purpose of this section is to establish binding master sign site plans for multi-occupancy buildings, multi-building complexes or properties under common ownership and/or control, in order to establish consistent sign design, location and materials and to allow for certain signage bonuses as set forth below. All development permits for multi-occupancy buildings, multi-building complexes and commonly developed properties sharing common access points and adjacent to one another, approved after the effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter, shall submit a master sign site plan to the city for approval.

2. Transfer for Master Sign Site Plan. The maximum determined signage for the development may be transferred from one tenant and/or parcel to another within the site.

3. Approval and Modification of Master Sign Site Plan. The city shall approve a master sign site plan and subsequent modifications. Any deviation from the approved master sign site plan such as additional signage, relocating signs, replacement signs and other modifications not including tenant name changes shall require modifying and updating the approved master sign site plan on file at the city.

D. Temporary Sign Permit Application Procedure – Except A-frame Signs. A no-fee sign permit shall be filed providing completed forms and supplemental information deemed necessary by the city of Monroe to show full compliance with this and all other applicable laws and ordinances. In addition, applications for A-frame sign permits shall comply with the insurance and Hold Harmless Provisions in MMC 22.50.160(F). The no-fee sign permit shall be affixed to each temporary sign.

E. Electrical Permits. An electrical permit shall be obtained for electric signs. Portable sign shall not be located on any property until such time as a building permit has been issued. No building permit will be issued until there is compliance with other codes and ordinances of the city of Monroe and the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries has approved the method of electrical power for said portable sign.

F. Insurance and Hold Harmless Provisions. The owners of any signs that are located in, project into or overhang a public right-of-way shall prior to approval of a sign permit execute and deliver to the city a hold harmless agreement in a form approved by the city attorney, holding the city harmless against any and all claims of any nature whatsoever arising out of the presence of such sign in or over the public right-of-way.

G. Permit Processing. All proposed signs other than those requesting a variance from the requirements of this chapter shall be processed by the city of Monroe following review and comment as specified above, and provided the proposed sign(s) is within the intent and purposes of this chapter, complies with this chapter's provisions, and will not be contrary to the public interest, detrimental to the public welfare or safety, or injurious to property in the vicinity. Signs must be inspected by the city and must conform to the currently adopted International Building Code.

H. Permanent Sign Permit Fees. A nonrefundable fee shall be paid upon the filing of an application for a sign permit in accordance with the sign fee which shall be established by city council.

I. Permanent Sign Permit – Time Limitation. If, after the issuance of a sign permit, the operations authorized thereunder are not completed or substantially completed within one hundred eighty days after the date of the permit, such sign permit shall be automatically null and void.

J. Revocation of Permit. The city of Monroe may, in writing, suspend or revoke a permit issued under provisions of this chapter whenever the permit is issued in error or on the basis of

incorrect information or whenever the sign is in violation of any ordinance, regulation or provision of this chapter.

K. Change of Copy. The holder of a permit, for the duration thereof, shall have the right to change the advertising copy words only on the structure or sign for which the permit was issued, without being required to pay any additional fees.

L. Permanent Wall Sign and Mural Maintenance. Failure to properly maintain the mediums used within a painted wall sign or mural or artwork as defined herein shall be sufficient grounds to revoke the sign permit.

M. Interpretation. In all applications for permits where a matter of interpretation arises, the most restrictive definition shall prevail.

22.50.170 Administration and Enforcement.

A. Enforcing Authority. The city of Monroe is hereby authorized and directed to enforce all the provisions of this title in accordance with Chapter 1.04 MMC and to make necessary interpretations subject to appeal under MMC Chapter 22.84, Permit Processing.

B. Removal of Dangerous Signs. If the city of Monroe finds that any sign is unsafe or insecure, or is a menace to the public safety, the sign may be summarily removed in accordance with MMC 1.04.060.

C. Removal of Illegal Signs. If the city of Monroe finds that any sign has been constructed, erected, relocated or altered in violation of the provisions of this title, the city of Monroe is hereby authorized and directed to enforce all the provisions of this title in accordance with Chapter 1.04 MMC.

D. Any sign removed pursuant to this section may be returned to the owner if retrieved within ten days of removal or earlier upon the owner securing a permit. Any sign which is not retrieved by the owner within ten days may be destroyed.

E. Right of Entry. When it is necessary to make an inspection of a sign or business to enforce any of the provisions of this chapter, or when the city has reasonable cause to believe that an illegally located sign exists or a condition exists which makes a sign unsafe, the city may enter the premises or building where the sign is located at all reasonable times to perform any duty imposed by this chapter, to the extent permissible by law. If the building or premises where the sign is located is occupied, the city shall first present proper credentials and request entry, and if such building or premises be unoccupied, the city shall first make a reasonable effort to locate the owner or other persons having charge or control of the building or premises and request entry. If such entry is refused, the city shall have recourse to every remedy provided by law to secure entry, including procurement of a search warrant. No owner or occupant or any other person having charge or control of any building or premises shall fail or neglect, after proper request is made and a warrant is provided, to properly permit entry therein by the city for the purpose of inspection and examination pursuant to this chapter. Any person violating this subsection shall be subject to a penalty or fine established by city council.

F. Confiscation of Signs in Right-of-Way. Unauthorized signs or other advertising devices either in, or fully or partially supported on, or projecting over the public right-of-way are hereby declared to be a public nuisance and in violation of this sign code. The city may remove such signs at any time as a means of abating the nuisance. All signs confiscated by the city shall be held for ten working days, after which such signs may be destroyed or otherwise disposed of. The owner of a confiscated sign may recover the sign when it is still in the possession of the city of Monroe upon payment of the recovering fee found in the city of Monroe fees resolution to cover the cost of confiscation and storage.

G. Violation and Penalties. It shall be unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to erect, hang, construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, improve, convert, equip, use or maintain any sign or sign structure in the city, or cause or permit the same to be done, contrary to or in violation of the provisions of this title. Any person, firm or corporation violating any of the provisions of this title shall be subject to a penalty or fine established by city council, and each such person shall be deemed guilty of a separate offense for each and every day or portion thereof during which any violation of any of the provisions of this title is committed, continued, or permitted, and upon

conviction of any such violation such person shall be punishable by a penalty or fine established by city council.

H. Nonliability. This title shall not be construed to relieve from or lessen the responsibility or liability of any party owning, operating, constructing, installing, altering, removing, moving, or controlling any sign in the city. For damages to person or property injured or damaged either in person or property caused by any defect therein, the city or any agent thereof shall not be held as assuming any liability by reason of permit or of the inspection authorized hereunder or certificate of inspection issued by the city or any of its agents.

I. Conflicting Provisions. If any provision of this title is found to be in conflict with any provision of any zoning, building, fire, safety or health ordinance or code of the city, the provision that establishes the higher standard shall prevail.

J. Severability. If any provision of this title or its application to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the remainder of the chapter or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected, and to this end the provisions of this title are declared to be severable.

22.50.180 Interpretations.

Where there is any dispute concerning the interpretation of the chapter, the decision of the administrator shall prevail, subject to the variance and appeal provisions set forth in MMC 22.50.190. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, the provisions of this chapter shall be construed and enforced in a manner consistent with applicable state and federal constitutional requirements. After consultation with the city attorney, the administrator may disregard, and/or deviate from, the provisions of this chapter to the extent deemed necessary in the administrator's determination in order to avoid a violation of any party's constitutional rights. Any such determination of the administrator shall be made in writing and shall be appealable in accordance with MMC 22.50.190.

22.50.190 Variances and Appeals.

A. Powers. Recognizing that there are certain cases that may, or may not, be detrimental to aesthetic character, public health, safety and general welfare, and the effectiveness of visual communication in the city, depending upon the facts of each particular case, a limited power to issue variance permits and to interpret any section of the title is vested with the hearing examiner.

B. Appeals and Variances. Application for special permits and variances from the ruling of the city concerning the provisions herein contained may be made to the hearing examiner. The hearing examiner shall receive all applications requesting review of sign permit decisions, conditions, or determinations relating thereto, for a variance and special permit; and shall maintain and be custodian of all records of the minutes of the meetings and findings. All records shall be open to the public. Copies of the appellant's notice for all special exceptions shall be filed with the city of Monroe, hearing examiner, and planning commission, containing the decision of the city of Monroe and the reasons why the appellant is aggrieved, specifying the grounds therefore. Each application or request for a special exception filed shall be accompanied by a fee to cover the city's cost of handling the request for a special exception. Upon the filing of such fee and application, the city of Monroe shall forthwith transmit to the hearing examiner all papers constituting the record and decision of the city of Monroe relating to the request for a special exception. The hearing examiner shall fix a reasonable time for the public hearing and give due notice thereof to the parties and general public. The hearing examiner shall make a decision within a reasonable time after the hearing.

C. Stay. A request for any special exception to the hearing examiner stays all proceedings, in furtherance of the action from which the request for a special exception was taken, unless the city of Monroe, from whom the request for a special exception is taken, certifies to the hearing examiner, after the notice of a request for a special exception shall have been filed with the city of Monroe, that by reason of facts stated in the certification, a stay would in the city of Monroe's

opinion cause imminent peril to life or property, in which case such action shall not be stayed otherwise than by a restraining order, which may be issued by the superior court. The decision of the hearing examiner on the request for a stay shall be transmitted to the city of Monroe.

D. Collection of Expenses Incurred. Whenever there incurs any expense in connection with the removal or alteration of any sign, the cost thereof shall be paid by the owner of the real property upon which the sign is erected or maintained. In the event any other person is in possession of such property with the consent of the owner, the owner and such other person shall be jointly responsible for the payment of such cost.

1. The city shall submit to the owner and/or other person in possession of the premises a statement of costs incurred by the city for removing or altering the sign.
2. Upon the failure to receive full payment within thirty days from the date the statement is submitted, or within thirty days after conclusion of any appeal proceedings, whichever is later, the city is authorized to provide for the collection of the amounts due in any lawful manner.