

## 705 Signs. \*1 -2 +2



### A. Purpose and Scope.

**Compile Chapter**

1. The purpose of the Sign Ordinance is to provide fair, comprehensive, and enforceable regulations that will foster a good visual environment for Phoenix. This section regulates on-premise signs which are visible from public streets or which are visible from one site to another. These regulations balance the need to protect the public safety and welfare, the need for a well-maintained and attractive community, and the need for adequate identification, communication and advertising for land uses. The regulations allow for a variety of sign types and sizes for a site. The sign standards are intended to allow signs with adequate visibility from streets that abut the site; this ordinance does not guarantee signs which are visible from streets farther away. The standards are also intended to balance the function and aesthetics of signs. The regulations for signs have the following specific objectives:
  - a. To ensure that signs are designed, constructed, installed, and maintained so that the public safety is protected and traffic safety is maintained;
  - b. To allow and promote positive conditions for sign communication while at the same time promoting an attractive environment;
  - c. To reflect and support the desired character and development patterns of the General Plan and the various zoning districts;
  - d. To allow for adequate, effective, and aesthetic signs in commercial and industrial zones which promote a pleasing visual environment and prevent over concentration of signage; and
  - e. To ensure that the constitutionally guaranteed right of free speech is protected.
2. In cases in which two or more provisions of this section conflict, the most restrictive provision shall prevail.
3. This section is not intended to repeal, abrogate, annul or in any way impair or interfere with existing provisions of other laws or ordinances, except those specifically repealed by this section, or with private restrictions placed upon property by covenant, deed or other private agreement. Where this section imposes a greater restriction on signs than is imposed or required by such existing provisions of the law, ordinance, contract, or deed, the provisions of this section shall control.
4. The provisions of this section shall not be construed as relieving or limiting in any way the responsibility or liability of any person erecting or owning any sign for personal injury or property damage resulting from the placing of a sign, or resulting from the negligence or willful acts of such person, his or her agents, employees, or workers in the construction, maintenance, repair, or removal of any sign erected in accordance with a permit issued hereunder. Nor shall it be construed as imposing upon the City or its officers or employees any responsibility or liability by reason of the approval of any signs, materials, or devices under the provisions of this ordinance.
5. Sign-related definitions are included in Chapter 2 of this ordinance.
6. This section sets forth the standards for the number, size, placement, and physical characteristics of on-premises signs. The regulations set forth herein do not restrict the content of on-premises

signs. This section applies to all zoning districts in the City. Other regulations in the City Code may also apply to signs.

7. This section shall not apply to the following signs:

- a. Traffic signs and all other signs erected or maintained by a governmental body including, but not limited to, danger signs, railroad crossing signs, and signs of a noncommercial nature required by public laws, ordinances or statutes.
- b. Warning signs not over six square feet in area.
- c. Advertising in the public right-of-way and on private property adjacent to the public right-of-way when erected under the provisions of Section 3-8(b) of the Phoenix City Code, regarding placement of provisional signs, posters, placards, banners, shields, flags, signs, bills, cards, or other decorative or pictorial devices or advertisements on the street.

B. **Sign Permits.** This section sets forth requirements for sign permits, types of signs which do not require permits, and signs which are not permitted in the City of Phoenix.

1. **Sign permit general requirements.**

- a. **Requirement for permit.** Unless otherwise provided in this section, all signs shall require a sign permit from the Planning and Development Department before being erected, displayed, relocated or altered. Written approval from the Planning and Development Department personnel is required before any change, modification, alteration or other deviation from the terms and conditions of the sign permit and before any such change in the use of the sign as originally permitted can be made. The Planning and Development Department shall maintain a record of all such requests and approvals.
- b. **Qualifications to apply for a permit.** The owner, tenant, or lessee of the property on which the sign is located, or his or her authorized agent, a contractor licensed by the State of Arizona, a registered architect or a registered engineer shall be able to file a sign permit application on a form provided by the Planning and Development Department. The application shall include the signature of the applicant or his or her authorized agent and shall include the legal address of the proposed location of the sign.
- c. **Substitutions for original applicant.**
  - (1) At any time after a sign permit is issued, a new owner, tenant, lessee, architect, engineer or contractor of record may be substituted for the original owner, tenant, lessee, architect, engineer or contractor of record if the new interest is recorded on the original papers by affidavit and the new interest assumes all obligations he or she would have had under the original permit.
  - (2) The change of interest discussed above shall not imply that any fees paid for the permit shall be returned, even if paid by the person who has been replaced. Additional fees shall be charged for the change of interest. Such fees are listed in appendix A.2 of the City Code and are on file with the Planning and Development Department.
- d. **Documents which must accompany permit application.** All applications for sign permits shall be accompanied by the relevant documents prescribed herein.
  - (1) **Engineered plans required.** To the extent not previously approved by the City, the following signs shall require engineered plans, and the permit application shall include

complete plans and calculations sealed by an engineer or architect registered in the State of Arizona.

- (a) Roof, canopy, and marquee signs when the area of the face of one sign or the aggregate area of all signs exceeds twenty-five square feet.
- (b) Combination signs exceeding fifty square feet in area.
- (c) Projecting signs greater than fifty square feet in area or twelve feet in width. Calculations shall also be furnished on unusual conditions for signs smaller than this.
- (d) Ground or pole signs when the area of the face of one sign or the aggregate area of all signs on the sign structure exceeds thirty-five square feet and the structure exceeds six feet in height.
- (e) Wall signs in excess of one hundred square feet in area, except:
  - (i) Wall signs constructed of cut-out letters and insignia attached directly to the building and for which no individual letter exceeds one hundred square feet in area.
  - (ii) Any signs painted directly upon the wall of a building.
- (f) Calculations shall be furnished when requested by the Planning and Development Department for unusual or unique signs.

(2) **Plans.** All applications for sign permits shall be accompanied by plans indicating the scope and structural detail of the work. Details of connections, guy lines, supports, and footings are required, together with a plot layout showing the location of signs and their relationship to buildings and lots.

(3) **Approval of standards.** A fabricator may submit plans for a sign to the Building Official for approval and file as a standard. Upon approval as a standard, permits may be obtained for such sign without refileing detailed structural plans. Such signs shall be given a standard number by the fabricator and the standard number shall be shown on each permit application.

(4) **Contractor certification.** A certified statement that sign faces, sign cabinets and method of attaching signs to their support structure shall be designed and constructed to conform to the specifications of the Phoenix Construction Code may be accepted in lieu of formal engineering plans and calculations, provided certification is made and sealed by an engineer or architect registered in the State of Arizona.

e. **Revocation of permits for noncompliance with the permit's terms or for being void.**

- (1) If the Zoning Administrator or his or her designee finds that:
  - (a) The work under any sign permit is not in accordance with the terms of the permit;
  - (b) The sign is in violation of any provision of this ordinance or any other City ordinance; or
  - (c) There was any false statement or misrepresentation of material fact in the permit application, payment for the permit or plans on which issuance of the permit was based.

The Zoning Administrator or his or her designee shall notify the owner or applicant in writing of the defect and of the time in which the defect must be corrected. If the defect is not timely corrected, the Zoning Administrator or his or her designee shall revoke the permit with a written revocation. No work under the permit, other than correction of the defect, shall continue after the initial notice of the defect is served.

(2) A permit which has been issued in error is void. The Zoning Administrator or his or her designee shall revoke the permit and notify the owner or applicant in writing of the revocation. No work shall be done under the permit after this notice is served.

f. **Revocation of permits for nonuse.** A sign permit shall be null and void if work under the permit is not started within one hundred eighty days of the permit's issuance or if building operations under a sign permit are suspended for a period of sixty days. The Zoning Administrator or his or her designee may extend these time limits if the delays are not caused by willful acts or negligence of the contractor, owner, or applicant. Requests for extension shall be submitted and responded to in writing.

g. **Issuance of permits.**

(1) Planning and Development Department personnel shall examine applications for sign permits within a reasonable time after filing. They shall issue the permit if it appears from the application and any supporting documents that the requested sign(s) and any existing sign(s) conform to the requirements of this section.

If Planning and Development personnel find that any requested or existing sign(s) or uses directly related to the application and in the ownership and control of the permit applicant violate any applicable provision of this section or any other City Code or ordinance, they shall not issue the sign permit until the violation is corrected.

(2) A sign permit shall be a license to proceed with the work specified in the permit. It shall not give authority to violate, cancel, alter, or set aside any of the provisions of this section or any other City code, ordinance or regulation. Issuance of a sign permit shall not prevent Planning and Development personnel from requiring correction of errors in plans or in construction where such errors are in violation of the terms of stipulations of the permit, this section or any other City code, ordinance or regulation.

(3) No additional permits shall be issued for signs appurtenant to any use or establishment having overdue sign regulations charges or unpaid reinspection charges due on the use or establishment.

h. **Applicant action considered withdrawal of application.** If a permit is not obtained within ninety days after the applicant has been notified that plans are approved, the Planning and Development Department shall consider the application withdrawn and may destroy any plans, specifications, and calculations pertaining to the application.

i. **Sign permit fee.** All applications for sign permits shall have a fee to be established by the City Council, a copy of which is on file with the City Clerk and in the Planning and Development Department. A schedule of the fee can be found in Appendix A.2 to the City Code. Particular provisions regarding the fee are located in Section 705.I.

j. **Sign identification tags.** Signs shall display an identification tag which is readily visible from public property or property accessible to the public after the sign is erected. The particular requirements for the tags are:

(1) The Planning and Development Department shall issue a sign permit tag bearing the permit number for all signs requiring a permit. If the sign permit tag is lost, defaced, or illegible, it shall be replaced by painting the permit number on the face or structure of the sign in numerals at least three-quarters of an inch high.

(2) All signs for which a variance or use permit has been granted shall display a special identification tag to show that the sign has been exempted from complying with one or more of the requirements of this ordinance.

(3) Electric signs shall display an electrical component tag certifying compliance with the City Electrical Code, or an approved tag issued by a testing laboratory approved by the Planning and Development Department.

k. **Nontransference of permits and identification tags.** Permits, permit numbers and identification tags shall not be transferable; they are valid only for a specific sign at the specifically designated location. If, at any time, a sign or sign structure is altered, removed, or relocated, the existing identification tag(s) shall be removed and application made for new one(s) when necessary.

2. **Signs which do not require a sign permit.** The following signs shall not require a permit or the payment of an annual sign regulation charge. However, they shall conform to the requirements of general applicability, Section 705.C and any applicable sections of the Building Code.

a. Signs not visible from public streets or which are not visible from one property to another. Notwithstanding the foregoing, a sign that is visible from a public street shall not require a sign permit if the sole purpose of the sign is to provide on-site directional or locational information.

b. The flag, pennant, or insignia of any nation, state, county, city or other political entity or any church or religious organization. However, the display of more than one flag of this or any other nation, state, county, city or other political entity or any church or religious organization shall not be permitted. This section shall not prohibit the display of individual flags of multiple nations, states, counties, cities or other political entities or churches or religious organizations.

c. Tablets, grave markers, headstones, statuary or remembrances of persons or events that are noncommercial in nature and tablets such as memorials or cornerstones, or the name, date of erection and use of building when built into its walls.

d. Works of fine art when not displayed in conjunction with a commercial enterprise and through which an enterprise may not receive direct commercial gain.

e. Temporary decorations or displays celebrating the occasion of traditionally accepted patriotic or religious holidays.

f. Signs on a truck, bus, car, boat, trailer or other motorized vehicle and equipment provided all the following conditions are adhered to:

(1) Primary purpose of such vehicle or equipment is not the display of signs.

(2) Such signs are magnetic, decals, or painted upon an integral part of the vehicle or equipment as originally designed by the manufacturer, and do not break the silhouette of the vehicle.

(3) Vehicle/equipment is in operating condition, currently registered and licensed to operate on public streets when applicable, and actively used in the daily function of the

business to which such signs relate.

(4) Vehicles and equipment are not used primarily as static displays, advertising a product or service, nor utilized as storage or shelter. \*7

(5) During periods of inactivity exceeding forty-eight hours such vehicle/equipment are not so parked or placed that the signs thereon are displayed to the public. Vehicles and equipment engaged in active construction projects and the on-premise storage of equipment and vehicles offered to the general public for rent or lease shall not be subjected to this condition.

g. Temporary window signs. Specific regulations regarding temporary window signs are located in Section 705.D.5.

h. Political signs having an area of thirty-two square feet or less, provided that:

(1) Any person or organization planning to erect political signs relating to a candidate or issue on the ballot of a primary, general, or special election shall first file with the Planning and Development Department the name, address, and telephone number of a person who shall be responsible for the proper erection and timely removal of the signs; and \*4

(2) Political signs shall be removed within ten days after the election to which they refer. Signs erected for a primary election may remain only if they continue to be valid for the next general election. \*4

i. Temporary signs for events of a general City-wide civic or public benefit nature as covered by Section 3-8 of the Phoenix Municipal Code.

j. Nameplates, street address signs, and combination nameplate and street address signs containing no advertising copy, not exceeding two square feet in area and limited to one per street front per use for residential uses.

k. Street address signs, wall-mounted nameplates and wall-mounted combination nameplate and street address signs containing no advertising copy, not exceeding six square feet in area for commercial and industrial uses.

l. Religious outdoor fund solicitation signs displayed by bona fide religious organizations, limited to one sign of not more than eight square feet in area per street front.

m. Address directory(ies) as required and enforced by the Fire Marshal or his authorized representative in accordance with the Phoenix Fire Code Section 28.42.

n. Changing copy on a legal sign, bulletin board, display encasement, or marquee; or maintenance where no structural changes are made; or the changing of the interchangeable letters on signs designed for them. However, repainting of painted wall signs when more than fifty percent of the copy has been removed shall require that written notice of the proposed repainting be received by the Planning and Development Department at least three days prior to repainting. Change on any sign when an increase in square footage occurs, shall require a permit. The nonconforming status of a sign shall not be affected by the repainting.

o. Temporary, nonilluminated, real estate signs, not more than six square feet in area, advertising the sale or rental of premises on which the sign is located.

- p. Temporary, nonilluminated signs not over sixteen square feet, erected in connection with new construction work when displayed only during the actual construction work. Such signs shall be on the construction site and may identify the architects, engineers, contractors, and other firms involved in the construction and may advertise any product or the character or proposed use of the building.
- q. Bulletin boards for charitable or religious organizations and churches which appertain to a legal use and which do not exceed the area allowed for their district or thirty-two square feet, whichever is less.
- r. Business names or logos on the face of fuel pumps. Such signs shall not count against permitted sign area on-site.
- s. A barber pole, animated or not, which is appurtenant to the barber business and affixed directly to the wall of the exterior of the occupied space. +8
  - 1. Barber poles shall be no taller than thirty-six inches and no wider than ten inches. +8
  - 2. Requests to deviate from these requirements are subject to obtaining a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Section 307. +8

3. **Signs not permitted in Phoenix.** The following signs are not permitted in the City of Phoenix, except as provided elsewhere in this section:

- a. Signs which occupy or project into public right-of-way.
  - (1) No sign shall occupy public property in any manner, nor shall any sign extend across a property line where such property line borders a public or private street, highway, alley, lane, parkway, avenue, road, sidewalk, or other right-of-way, whether such a right-of-way has been dedicated to the public in fee or by easement, and whether or not such right-of-way has been used as right-of-way. However, wall signs may be allowed to project a maximum of eighteen inches into any such right-of-way provided the bottom of such wall sign is at least eight feet above grade.
  - (2) Planning and Development personnel may, without notification, cause to be removed any temporary or portable sign erected upon or projecting into public property.
- b. Projecting signs lower than eight feet above grade. No projecting sign shall be erected with the bottom of such sign closer than eight feet to ground grade level. The thickness measured between the principal faces of any projecting sign shall not exceed forty-eight inches when such sign is of solid construction.
- c. Signs which pose a traffic hazard. No sign shall be erected, operated, used or maintained which:
  - (1) Due to its position, shape, color, format, or illumination, obstructs the view of, or may be confused with, an official traffic sign, signal, or device or any other official sign.
  - (2) Displays lights resembling the flashing lights customarily associated with danger or those used by police, fire, ambulance, and other emergency vehicles.
  - (3) Uses in a manner which may confuse motor vehicle operators, the words "stop," "warning," "danger," "turn," or similar words implying the existence of danger or the need for stopping or maneuvering.

- (4) Creates in any other way an unsafe distraction for motor vehicle operations.
- (5) Obstructs the view of motor vehicle operators entering a public roadway from any parking area, service drive, alley, or other thoroughfare.

d. Vehicle-mounted signs. Except as provided elsewhere in this section or specifically exempted by other sections of this Code, signs mounted upon, painted upon, or otherwise erected on trucks, cars, boats, trailers, and other motorized vehicles or equipment shall be regulated as ground signs and signs mounted upon a trailer chassis with or without wheels shall be considered to be portable ground signs, which are prohibited.

e. Signs which interfere with visibility at street intersections or driveways. at all public street intersections, there shall be no sign erected between the heights of three (3) feet and ten (10) feet and no obstruction to vision between those heights other than a single post or column which does not exceed twelve (12) inches in its greatest cross sectional dimension, within the visibility triangle formed by the lot lines on the street side of such lot and a diagonal line joining points on such lot lines at distances from the point of their intersection as set forth in the following table and as shown in the graphic below: \*9

**TABLE B-1**

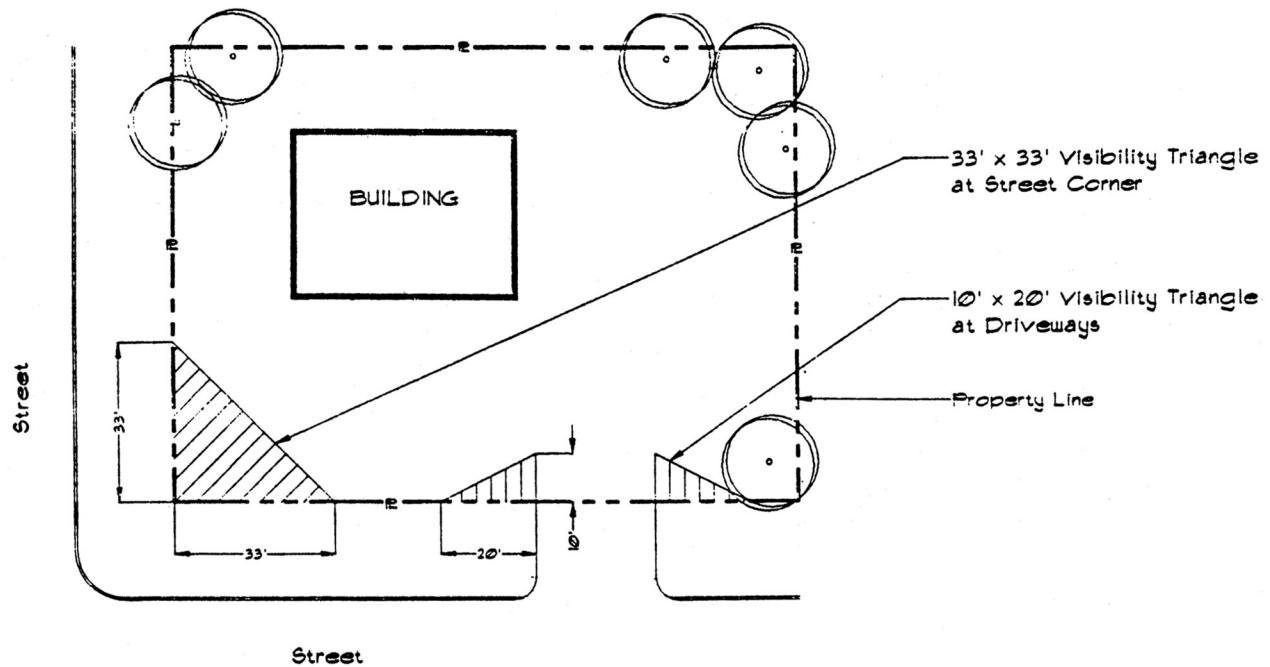
**Size of Unobstructed Sight Triangle at Corner Lots +9**

<b>Classification of Intersecting Public Streets*</b>	<b>Distance Measured Along Each Street (Dimension "X" In Graphic Below)</b>
Local-Local	33'
Local-Collector	33'
Collector-Collector	33'
Collector-Major	33'
Major-Major	33'
Major-Local	33' along major street 15' along local street
Any Public Street—Driveway	33' along major street 15' along local street 10' perpendicular to street

\* As defined in the City of Phoenix Minimum Right-Of-Way Standards Map

**SIGNS WHICH INTERFERE WITH VISIBILITY AT STREET INTERSECTIONS OR DRIVEWAYS**





### Signs Which Interfere With Visibility

- f. Signs projecting above roofline. Unless otherwise provided, no signs shall be erected upon or project through the roof of any building nor shall any sign attached to a building extend above roofline of that building.
- g. Portable ground signs. Portable ground signs, including A-frame signs, are prohibited, unless specifically permitted elsewhere in this ordinance.
- h. Signs for home occupations. Signs for home occupations are prohibited.
- i. Signs on doors. Only pedestrian signs shall be located on glass doors.

C. **Requirements of General Applicability.** All on-premises signs in Phoenix must conform to the following regulations:

1. **Animation.** No sign shall be animated or contain the optical illusion of sign movement, except as may be allowed in the commercial land use designations as defined in Section 705.D.1.a, subject to obtaining a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Section 307. Time and temperature devices shall not be considered as animation. Electronic message displays approved with a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Sections 307 and 705.C.13 shall not be considered as animation. \*10
2. **Flags and banners.** Flags, banners, pennants, streamers, or other similar devices are permitted only as follows:
  - a. Flags which do not require a sign permit under Section 705.B.2.b (flags of a political entity or religious institution).
  - b. One corporate flag per premises in commercial land use designations as defined in Section 705.D.1.a subject to a use permit.
  - c. If specifically allowed as part of a special sign district.
3. **Electric signs.** All electric signs shall conform to the Electrical Code of the City of Phoenix.

4. **Construction Code requirements.** All signs shall conform to the requirements of the Phoenix Construction Code.

5. **Combination signs.** The thickness measured between the principal faces of any combination sign shall not exceed sixty inches when such a sign is of solid construction.

6. **Illumination.**

a. The source of indirect illumination for signs shall be so oriented or shielded that it is not visible from any residential use or public thoroughfare.

b. Direct illumination by incandescent sources shall not exceed eleven watts per bulb without a dimming device or sunscreen; provided, however, no single bulb shall exceed forty watts.

c. Illumination shall not be used from 11:00 p.m. until sunrise on directly illuminated signs where the total light sources on any face exceeds one hundred fifty watts.

d. In no event shall an illuminated sign be located closer than sixty feet to any single-family residential use or undeveloped property with a single-family residential zoning classification (RE-43 through R-2, P.A.D.-1 through 12) unless the sign does not face or is not oriented to the residential property or a use permit is obtained in accordance with the provisions of Section 307

e. No flashing, blinking or rotating lights, metal halide lights exceeding seventy-five watts, or high or low pressure sodium light bulbs shall be permitted for either permanent or temporary signs. In no case shall mercury vapor light sources be used for direct or internal illumination.

f. All sign illumination shall satisfy the provisions of the Phoenix Dark Sky Ordinance. Section 23-100, Phoenix City Code.

g. Exposed neon and other similar tube type illumination, bare incandescent or fluorescent lights shall be permitted as an integral part of a sign.

7. **Location.**

a. No sign shall be erected so as to prevent ingress to or egress from any door or window, or any other exitway required by the Construction Code of the City of Phoenix, and amendments thereto, or by the Fire Department regulations.

b. No sign shall be attached to a standpipe, gutter, drain, or fire escape, nor shall any sign be erected so as to impair access to a roof.

c. Signs and sign structures shall be located to provide the minimum horizontal and vertical clearance from electrical wires and conductors as required by the National Electric Code Safety Standards.

d. No sign or group of signs exceeding an aggregate area of four square feet shall be erected upon any light standard, pole, etc., unless the structure was designed for that purpose or it can be demonstrated that such standards are structurally strong enough to support the additional load.

8. **Sound.** No sign shall emit any sound which is intended to attract attention beyond the boundaries of the lot on which it is located or which creates a public nuisance.

9. **Including outdoor advertising signs in on-premise sign area calculations.** Any outdoor advertising sign on-site or within two hundred feet of the property advertised shall be included in the allowed

ground sign area for that property if the outdoor advertising sign exclusively advertises that property. This provision shall not apply to an outdoor advertising sign which relates to multiple properties or businesses including that property.

10. **Maintenance and repair.** All signs and sign structures shall maintain the following standards of structural repair and visual appearance. All structural and nonstructural components must be positioned and secured in accordance with approved plans for the sign. Any apparently deteriorated, damaged, or weakened components shall be promptly repaired or replaced. All lettering, advertising copy and painted surfaces must be free of chipping, peeling, and fading detectable within three hundred feet of the sign. Components composed of plastic, acrylic, and other artificial compositions must be free of cracks, holes, buckling, or any other condition affecting the strength and stability of the component. Electrical signs must be maintained in working order. Minimum maintenance requirements for electrical signs and electrical systems include but are not limited to: prompt removal and replacement of all defective bulbs, tubes, neon light segments, damaged or deteriorated electrical wiring, and malfunctioning control devices and related circuitry. If Planning and Development personnel determine that these standards have not been met, notice shall be given of specific defects and reasonable time for correction. Failure to comply with such notice shall constitute a violation of Section 705, and shall necessitate the total removal of the sign and sign structure.

11. **Provisions regarding commercial and noncommercial signs.**

- a. All signs except signs that contain noncommercial messages shall be appurtenant to a permitted use of the property on which displayed.
- b. Noncommercial signs, except political signs which do not require a sign permit under Section 705.B.2.h, shall conform to the requirements of this section applicable to identification signs.

12. **Rotating signs.** Rotating signs shall be permitted subject to obtaining a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Section 307

13. **Electronic message displays.** Electronic message displays shall be permitted in the Commercial/Industrial land use designations and for nonresidential uses in Residential Districts as defined in Section 705.D.1.a, subject to obtaining a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Section 307 and satisfying the following conditions: +10

- a. The sign copy shall change only through an immediate transition of the sign copy or message that does not have the appearance of moving text or images. The sign copy shall not use flashing, intermittent or moving lights or produce the optical illusion of movement. No part of the sign structure or cabinet may move or rotate, except as otherwise permitted by this Section 705. +10
- b. The sign copy shall be displayed for a minimum of eight (8) seconds provided, however, that the Zoning Administrator or the Board of Adjustment shall have the authority to increase the display time only if the sign will be located within one hundred (100) feet in any direction of another electronic message display on either an on-premise or outdoor advertising sign and traffic safety concerns are raised. These increases in display time shall be either (i) in eight (8) second increments to a maximum of thirty-two (32) seconds or (ii) to a longer period if requested and agreed to by the applicant. +10
- c. The sign shall include photocell technology to control and vary the intensity of lighting depending on the amount of ambient light that is present (e.g. daytime, nighttime, cloudy

conditions). The intensity of the lighting shall not exceed three hundred (300) nits from dusk until dawn unless the sign is turned off in accordance with the provisions of Section 705.C.13.d as it is located within 150 feet of Single Family Residential zoned property. +10

d. The sign shall not be illuminated between 11:00 p.m. and sunrise when (1) located within one hundred fifty (150) feet of Single Family Residential zoned property and (2) visible from such development or property. +10

e. An electronic message display may be used as a wall sign. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 705.C.11.a and Section 705.D.3 limiting location of a wall sign to the portion/suite of a multi-tenant building in which the use being identified is located, an electronic message display wall sign may identify any use in the multi-tenant building. This provision applies only for uses that are not also identified on a ground sign with an electronic message display that is used to identify uses at the multi-tenant building. +10

f. Except as provided herein, the sign shall conform to the size and placement standards established in Section 705.D. +10

g. The signs may be located only as follows: +10

1) On property adjacent to a freeway, major arterial, arterial or collector street, as designated by the City of Phoenix Street Classification Map, and +10

2) Spaced a minimum of one hundred (100) feet from flashing warning signs, including but not limited to flashing warning signs at school crosswalks, train crossings and fire stations. +10

h. The maximum height of an electronic message display located on a ground sign within fifty (50) feet of a traffic signal that alternately directs roadway traffic to stop and to proceed shall be eight (8) feet. The maximum height of the electronic message display may increase one (1) foot for every twelve (12) feet in additional setback from the subject traffic signal to the maximum height permitted by the standards of Section 705.D for a ground sign in the applicable zoning district. Notwithstanding these limitations, the maximum height of the ground sign containing the electronic message display shall be limited only by the standards established for a ground sign in the applicable zoning district in Section 705.D. The distance between the ground sign and the traffic signal shall be measured between the closest points on the subject ground sign and the traffic signal pole, as demonstrated on a site plan or survey submitted with the sign permit application. +10

i. In addition to their on-premise advertising and identification purposes, the signs may be used for warning signs, as defined in Section 202 of the Zoning Ordinance. +10

**D. Requirements For Specific Types of Signs.** This section includes specific standards for ground signs, wall signs, directional signs, window signs, marquees/canopies/awnings, pedestrian signs, construction/real estate signs, subdivision sale signs, and temporary signs. All signs approved following the effective date of this ordinance shall be subject to the following requirements:

1. **Ground and wall signs—General standards.** Ground and wall signs shall be permitted as described below. Table D-1 sets forth general standards for ground and wall signs. Sections 705.D.2 and 705.D.3 set forth more specific standards for these signs.

a. **Definition of land use.** The land use designations used in table D-1 are defined as follows:

- (1) Single-family land use includes activities in the following zoning districts which meet the Zoning Ordinance definition of residential use: S-1; S-2; RE-43; RE-35; RE-24; R1-18; R1-14; R1-10; R1-8; R1-6; R-2; and P.A.D.-1 through 11.
- (2) Multiple-family land use includes activities in the following zoning districts which meet the Zoning Ordinance definition of residential use: R-3; R-3A; R-4; R-4A; R-5; and P.A.D.-12 through 15.
- (3) Nonresidential activity in a residential area includes any activity in the R-O district or the districts listed in Sections 705.D.1.a.1 and 2 above which does not meet the Zoning Ordinance definition of residential use.
- (4) Commercial land use includes all activities in the C-O, C-1, C-2, C-3, PSC, RSC, Commerce Park, A-1, A-2, Resort, P-1, and P-2 zoning districts.

**b. Definition of street classification.** The street classification designations used in table D-1 refer to street classes from the City’s street classification map and General Plan, as follows:

- (1) The freeway designation includes the freeway/expressway street classes;
- (2) The high volume street designation includes the major arterial, arterial and collector street classes;
- (3) The low volume street designation includes the minor collector and local street classes.

**TABLE D-1. IDENTIFICATION SIGNS**

Land Use	Wall Signs		Ground and Combination Signs			
	Height (feet)	Area (square feet)	Number of Signs	Height (feet)	Area (square feet)	Spacing (feet)
Single-family residential	15	2	1 <sup>2</sup>	5(8) <sup>3</sup>	16	300 ft. between entrance
Multifamily residential	15	1 sq. ft./each 4 lin. ft. (minimum 24; maximum 120)	1 per driveway	5(8)	16(32)	150
Nonresidential activity in residential district	15	1 sq. ft./each 4 lin. ft. (minimum 24; maximum 120)	1 per driveway	5(8)	16(32)	150

	Wall Signs		Ground and Combination Signs			
Land Use	Height (feet)	Area (square feet)	Number of Signs	Height (feet)	Area (square feet)	Spacing (feet)
Commercial Industrial	25 ft. or no closer to roofline than one-half the vertical dimension of sign <sup>7</sup>	1 per lin. ft. per elevation <sup>7</sup> (minimum 50) (maximum 500)	Primary sign <sup>4</sup> 1 permitted per 300 ft. of street frontage (minimum 1)	Freeway <sup>5</sup> 35(48)	Freeway <sup>5</sup> 200	100 ft. minimum
			Secondary sign <sup>4</sup> 1 permitted per 150 ft. of street frontage (less signage permitted above)	High volume street <sup>6</sup> 16(20)	High volume street <sup>6</sup> 110(150)	
				Low volume street 12(15)	Low volume street 80(110)	
				High volume street <sup>6</sup> 12(15)	High volume street <sup>6</sup> 80(110)	
Low volume street <sup>8</sup> (10)	Low volume street 60(80)					

<sup>1</sup>Numerals in parentheses ( ) represent height and area possible through design review. Special regulations for ground signs on corner parcels are set forth in Section 705.D.2.d.

<sup>2</sup>Two subdivision identification signs permitted at each entrance to a subdivision. For a multi-family residential project, each driveway per street frontage shall be permitted one double-faced identification sign or two single faced identification signs placed one on each side of one entry driveway. \*<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup>Only subdivision identification signs shall be able to use design review to achieve a height of eight feet.

<sup>4</sup>One sign on a multiple-use parcel shall include center identification, i.e. the name of the center.

<sup>5</sup>Freeway signs shall only be located on a property with freeway frontage<sup>5</sup> and must be within three hundred feet of, and oriented to, a freeway, expressway or parkway as identified on the City’s street classification map.

<sup>6</sup>A sign on a high volume street shall be limited to sign standards permitted for a sign on a low volume street if the sign is located on a public street on which residential development or undeveloped residentially zoned property has frontage within one hundred fifty feet of the sign.

<sup>7</sup>Wall signs over fifty-six feet in height require comprehensive sign plan approval, shall be limited to two identification signs per building, and shall be subject to the special regulations set forth in Section 705.13.31. Requests to exceed two signs per building up to a maximum of four signs may be considered in accordance with Section 506.83, and based on one or more of the following criteria:

1. That additional signage is necessary to provide building identification for those members of the public accessing the site from arterials or freeways;
2. That illumination from the signs will be restricted to no greater than one footcandle as measured at the property line, if greater illumination could otherwise have a negative impact on nearby residential properties;
3. That the location and/or grouping of other buildings limits or restricts the visibility of the signs;
4. That the buildings be located on the Central Avenue Corridor (Third Avenue to Third Street, and Fillmore Avenue to Camelback Road), or within, abutting or adjoining a designated village core. \*3 \*5

<sup>8</sup>Spacing of ground signs for multi-family and non-residential uses in a residential district may be reduced to 100 feet from ground signs on an adjacent commercially zoned property. +6

#### Date of Addition/Revision/Deletion - Table D-1

- \*3 Revision on 12-8-1993 by Ordinance No. G-3712
- \*5 Revision on 8-28-1996 by Ordinance No. G-3951
- +9 Addition on 6-2-2004 by Ordinance No. G-4611, eff. 7-2-2004
- \*9 Revision on 6-2-2004 by Ordinance No. G-4611, eff. 7-2-2004

#### 2. **Ground signs—Specific standards.**

a. **Frontage requirement—Multiple-use parcel.** This section sets forth the number and type of signs permitted on a multiple-use parcel. If such a parcel has more than one street front, the signage for each street shall be calculated separately depending on the length of each frontage. If such a parcel contains a corner site which uses section 705.D.2.d to determine its signage, the frontage of that corner parcel shall not be included in the calculation of the street frontage for signs described in this section.

- (1) **Primary identification sign.** A multiple-use parcel may display one primary identification sign for the first three hundred feet, or portion thereof, of frontage and one additional primary identification sign for each additional full three hundred feet of frontage.
- (2) **Secondary identification sign.** A multiple-use parcel may display one secondary identification sign for each one hundred fifty feet of frontage. The number of permitted secondary identification signs shall be reduced by the number of primary identification signs on the same street frontage of the multiple-use parcel.

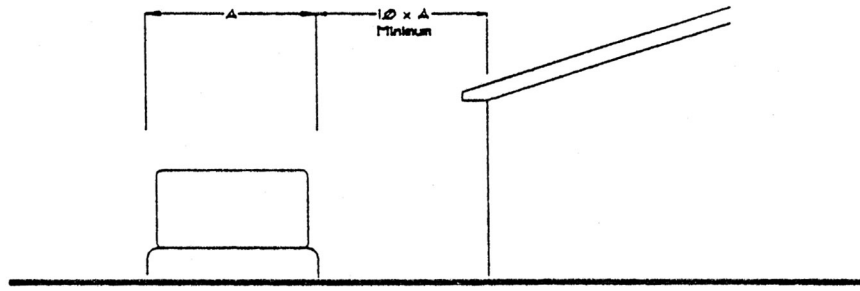
b. **Frontage requirement—Single-use parcel.** This section sets forth the number and type of signs permitted on a single-use parcel. If such a parcel has more than one street front, the signage for each street shall be calculated separately depending on the length of each frontage.

- (1) **Parcel with one hundred feet or less of frontage.** A single-use parcel with one hundred feet or less of frontage may display one secondary identification sign.
- (2) **Parcel with between one hundred and three hundred feet of frontage.** A single-use parcel with between one hundred and three hundred feet of frontage may display one primary identification sign.

- (3) **Parcel with more than three hundred feet of frontage.** A single-use parcel with more than three hundred feet of frontage may display the same number and sizes of signs as a multiple-use parcel with the same frontage.
- c. **Height limitation.** No ground sign shall be higher than the limit set forth in table D-1.
- d. **Special regulations for corner parcels.**
- (1) **Parcel with less than one hundred feet of frontage on either street.** A corner parcel with less than one hundred feet of frontage on either street may display:
- (a) One ground sign which shall not exceed twenty feet in height and one hundred fifty square feet in area; or
  - (b) One ground sign on each street front which shall not exceed five feet in height as of right, eight feet in height through design review and thirty-two square feet in area.
- (2) **Parcel with more than one hundred but less than three hundred feet of frontage on both streets.** A corner parcel with more than one hundred feet of frontage on both streets may display:
- (a) One ground sign at the corner which does not exceed twenty feet in height and one hundred fifty square feet in area; or
  - (b) One ground sign on each street front which shall not exceed fifteen feet in height and one hundred ten square feet in area on a low volume street or eighteen feet in height and one hundred thirty square feet in area on a high volume street.
- (3) All signs for corner parcels must comply with the visibility triangle restrictions located in Section 705.B.3.e.
- (4) **Parcel at intersection of a street and a freeway.** A corner parcel with less than three hundred feet of frontage at the intersection of a freeway and a street may display one freeway sign along the freeway frontage and may display one ground sign along the street frontage complying with the requirements of table D-1 for that street classification.
- e. **Special regulations for time and temperature ground signs.** Clocks and time and temperature devices which do not exceed an area of thirty-two square feet shall not be included in the calculation of the size of a ground sign.
- f. **Location of ground signs.** Ground signs shall be located in the front yard, or side yard of a corner lot adjacent to a street. Ground signs may be located at the property line or two feet from the back side or a curb or sidewalk, whichever is greater.
- g. **Separation from building.** No freestanding ground sign which exceeds eight feet in height may be located closer to a building or structure than one times the width of the sign at its widest point. Signs located closer to the building must be attached to the building or structure as a wall or projecting sign unless approved through Design Review. The following graphic illustrates this section:

#### SEPARATION FROM BUILDING





### Separation From Building

h. **Information displayed.** No ground sign shall contain more than ten items of information. The following material shall not be considered when calculating items of information:

- (1) Information on a retail gasoline outlet ground sign which: shows affiliation with a motor club; indicates acceptance of designated credit cards; or fuel price and grade information;
- (2) Information on a theater showing names and, if applicable, ratings of current showings or performances; and
- (3) Addresses required by Section 705.D.2.j.

i. **Sign and structure size limitations.** The maximum size of a ground sign is listed in table D-1.

j. **Address requirement for ground signs.** All ground signs, other than ground signs on corner parcels, shall display the address of the lot or parcel on which the sign is erected. The address numerals shall be a minimum of six inches high but shall not exceed six square feet in area. The address shall neither be included in the calculation of the area of the ground sign nor be counted as an item of information.

k. **Reader panels.** A ground sign may be a reader panel.

### 3. Wall signs—Specific standards.

a. **Height of wall signs.** No wall sign shall be displayed higher than the maximum set forth in table D-1.

b. **Establishment of wall sign area.** The permitted wall sign area shall be determined with the area formulae set forth in table D-1 and Section 705.D.3.i. The formulae base area for each use in a building on the linear frontage of the building or suite in which the use being signed is located. Wall sign area from one building elevation shall not be exceeded, except as provided in Section 705.D.3.d.2 regarding the minimum wall sign or as approved through a comprehensive sign plan.  
\*3

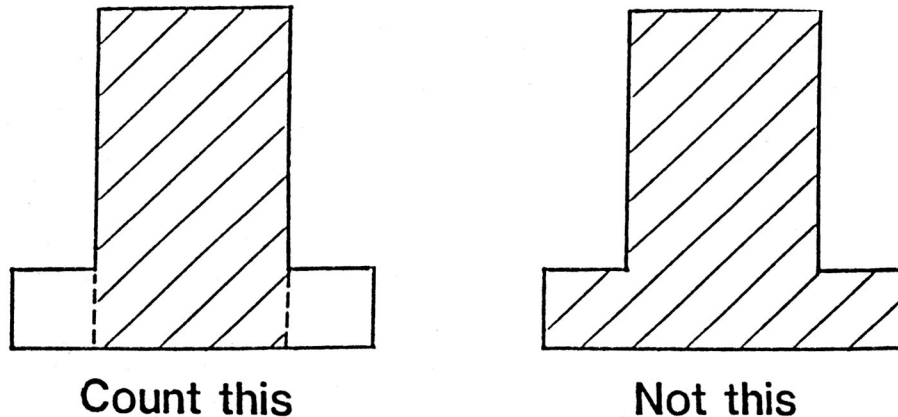
c. **Number of signs.** There is no limit on the number of wall signs that can be established on a facade, provided that the permitted wall sign area for a use or building is not exceeded.

d. **Permitted size of sign.**

- (1) **Maximum.** The maximum size of a permitted wall sign is set forth in table D-1.
- (2) **Minimum.** Every property or use with frontage shall be entitled to a wall sign the size of which is set forth as minimum size in table D-1.

- e. **Special regulations for time and temperature wall signs.** Clocks and time and temperature devices which do not exceed an area of thirty-two square feet shall not be included in the calculation of the size of a wall sign.
- f. **Reader panels.** A wall sign may be a reader panel.
- g. **Signs erected above the roofline.** Design review shall be required for any wall sign that exceeds the height of the roofline or is placed on the slope of a peaked roof to ensure integration of the sign into the architecture of the building. No sign shall be permitted to break the silhouette of the building on which it is located. \*9
- h. **Signs erected on attached walls.** A wall sign erected against a bearing or nonbearing wall connected to a building structure within building setback lines of the premises shall be permitted through design review to ensure integration of the wall and sign with the building. The area of such wall signs shall be deducted from the area permitted on the building wall to which the bearing or nonbearing wall is connected.
- i. **Signs erected over fifty-six feet in height.** +3

- (1) **Area.** The area of a wall sign erected over fifty-six feet in height shall not exceed one percent of the area of the elevation to which it is attached. This area shall not be increased through a comprehensive sign plan and shall not be counted against the wall signage which may be placed on the building below fifty-six feet. This provision is illustrated in the graphic below:



#### Signs Erected Over 56 Feet

- (2) **Placement on wall.** A wall sign erected over fifty-six feet in height shall be placed in the top ten percent of the wall to which it is attached and shall not exceed eighty percent of the width of the building face to which it is attached. A wall sign shall be located no closer to the side edge of a building than one-half the width of the largest letter or element of the sign.
- (3) **Illumination.** A wall sign erected over fifty-six feet in height shall be either internally illuminated or backlit. Such a sign shall include neither flashing lights nor changing messages.
- (4) Wall signs over fifty-six feet in height require comprehensive sign plan approval, and shall be limited to either identification of the building or one occupant per building (not different tenants on different facades of the building), two identification signs per building, and shall be subject to the special regulations set forth in Section 705.D.3.i. Requests to

exceed two signs per building up to a maximum of four signs may be considered in accordance with Section 506.B.3 and based on one or more of the following criteria:

- (a) That additional signage is necessary to provide building identification for those members of the public accessing the site from arterials or freeways;
- (b) That illumination from the signs will be restricted to no greater than one footcandle as measured at the property line, if greater illumination could otherwise have a negative impact on nearby residential properties;
- (c) That the location and/or grouping of other buildings limits or restricts the visibility of the signs;
- (d) That the buildings be located on the Central Avenue Corridor (Third Avenue to Third Street, and Fillmore Avenue to Camelback Road), or within, abutting or adjoining a designated village core. +5

j. **Painted wall signs.** Signs that are painted directly on to walls shall require design review approval. +9

#### 4. **Directional signs.**

a. **Number of directional signs.** There shall be no more than two directional signs per driveway entrance to a lot, parcel or multiple-use lot or parcel. Only one of these signs may include business identification. There shall be no limit on the number of directional signs interior to a site which do not include business identification.

b. **Size of and amount of information on directional signs.** No directional sign shall be greater than six square feet in area and have a height greater than three feet above grade. Information placed on the signs other than business name or logo, type of use, or directional arrows and/or informational copy shall only be included upon the approval of a comprehensive sign plan as provided in Section 705.E.2.b.3. No more than twenty-five percent of the area of a directional sign may be devoted to business identification; such area shall not be assessed as business identification sign area.

5. **Window signs.** A use may display window signs so long as the aggregate area of such signs does not exceed thirty percent of each window area located on the ground floor of the building. For computation of area, window panels separated by muntins or mullions shall be considered as one continuous windowpane. Window signs shall not be assessed as wall signs. Window signs may not be located on glass doors, as regulated in Section 705.B.3.i.

#### 6. **Marquees, canopies and awnings.**

a. **Restrictions for marquee signs.** Signs on marquees shall be considered wall signs and shall be subject to the requirements established for wall signs.

##### b. **Restrictions for canopies and awnings.**

- (1) Signs on canopies and awnings shall be considered wall signs and shall be subject to the requirements established for wall signs. However, lettering which does not exceed seven inches in height which is displayed on the edge of a canopy or awning hanging perpendicular to the ground shall not be counted against the allowable signable area of a wall frontage.

(2) No portion of any canopy or awning shall be less than eight feet above the level of the sidewalk or other surface over which it projects.

(3) Awning signs may be illuminated indirectly or internally.

**7. Pedestrian signs.**

a. Pedestrian signs shall not be counted as part of wall or window signable area.

b. The height of pedestrian sign lettering or symbols shall not exceed four inches.

**8. Construction and property sale, lease or rental signs.** Construction and property sale, lease or rental signs are permitted subject to the requirements listed in table D-2.

**TABLE D-2**

Land Use	Maximum Area	Maximum Height from Grade	Number
Construction signs:			
Residential	32 sq. ft.	12 ft.	1/street front
Nonresidential activity in residential district, commercial	100 sq. ft.	12 ft.	1/street front
Property sale, lease, or rental signs:			
Residential	6 sq. ft. if less than 10 acres; 16 sq. ft. if more than 10 acres	12 ft.	1/@ 300 ft. of street front
Nonresidential activity in residential district, commercial	32 sq. ft. if less than 10 acres; 100 sq. ft. if more than 10 acres	12 ft.	1/@ 300 ft. of street front

**9. Subdivision sale and model home signs.** Subdivision sale signs, open house directional signs, off-site subdivision directional signs, and model home signs are permitted in the RE-43, RE-35, RE-24, R1-18, R1-14, R1-10, R1-8, R1-6, R-2, R-3, R-3A, R-4, R-4A, R-5, P.A.D.-1 through 15, R-O and C-O zoning districts subject to the following restrictions:

**a. Subdivision sale signs.**

(1) The signs shall be located within the subdivision to which they refer.

(2) The area of such signs shall be limited to two square feet for each lot upon which a dwelling shall be built to a maximum of six hundred square feet. A minimum sign of ninety-six square feet shall be allowed for any subdivision. No single sign, including embellishments, shall exceed three hundred square feet.

(3) Such signs for condominiums, cooperatives, community apartments, townhouses, or similar developments in which an undivided interest in the land is coupled with the right of exclusive occupancy of any unit located thereon shall not exceed a total area of fifty square feet for the first fifty or fewer dwelling units plus one square foot for each dwelling unit over fifty up to a maximum of one hundred fifty square feet. There shall be no more than one such sign per street frontage; such signs shall not exceed twelve feet in height.

(4) Staff-mounted flags not exceeding four by six feet per flag may be used during the period of sale. There shall be allowed one flag per lot to a maximum of twenty-five flags. No flag shall be closer than twenty feet to another flag. No flag shall exceed twenty-five feet in height.

b. **Model home signs.** Each model home lot or dwelling approved by the Site Planning Division of the Planning and Development Department may have fifteen square feet of signage. No permit is required for any nonilluminated ground sign under three feet in height or any nonilluminated wall sign under eight feet in height. Two flags as permitted in Section 705.D.9.a(4) may be located on each of the model home lots.

c. **Open house signs.**

(1) Six real estate directional signs, which may be portable, may be located on property other than that to which the signs refer to direct people to a real estate open house. Each sign shall not exceed an area of four square feet, shall be erected only when a person is on duty at the open house, and shall not be erected without the consent of the property owner on whose property it is erected.

(2) Banners and pennants may be used during a real estate open house provided that such signs are erected only when a person is on duty at the open house.

d. **Off-site subdivision directional signs.** Two directional signs may be erected on undeveloped property within one mile of a subdivision or development. Copy on such signs shall be limited to: 1) the corporate or subdivision name, logo, and sale slogan; 2) types of homes offered for sale (single-family, town homes, condos, etc.); 3) developer name; and 4) travel directions. Such signs shall be removed within three years after erection or ten days after all lots or dwelling units in the subdivision which were offered for sale have been sold, whichever first occurs. A common sign structure for the placement of directional information for multiple subdivisions may be permitted subject to obtaining a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Section 307 so long as no subdivision receives more than thirty-two square feet of the sign and the sign does not exceed three hundred square feet in size and eighteen feet in height.

e. **Removal of subdivision sale signs, flags, model home signs, and off-site subdivision directional signs.** Subdivision sale signs, flags, model home signs, and off-site subdivision directional signs shall be removed within three years or upon expiration of a use permit for the model homes. In any case, flags shall be removed upon discontinuance of sale of homes within the subdivision for a period in excess of one hundred eighty days or ten days after all lots upon which dwelling units have been offered have been sold.

10. **Temporary signs.** The Zoning Administrator or his or her designee may issue a permit for temporary signs for: temporary events, including grand openings; business identification prior to placement of permanent signage; places of worship; and business identification during periods of construction in adjacent rights-of-way. Such signage is subject to the following general requirements for temporary signs and the listed standards for specific types of temporary signs.

a. **General requirements for temporary signs.**

(1) Signs permitted by Section 705.D.10.c may include banners and balloons but shall not include portable "A" frame signs, pennants, streamers or other similar devices.

(2) Temporary signs shall comply with all applicable codes and ordinances.

- (3) No temporary signs shall encroach into the public right-of-way or the traffic visibility zone at corners or driveways.
- (4) Balloons shall be subject to the following safety standards:
  - (a) Balloons shall be securely fastened.
  - (b) Balloons shall be set back from the property line at least one foot for each foot of the height of the balloon, including the tethering cord.
  - (c) Balloons shall not project above the roofline.
- (5) Banners shall be subject to the following safety standards:
  - (a) Banners shall be attached to a solid structure in a secure manner.
  - (b) Banners shall have a minimum clearance of eight feet above grade when placed above an area open for the common or general use of the public.
  - (c) Banners shall be vented to ensure they will withstand wind pressure from any direction applied to the projected exposed area.
  - (d) Banners shall not project above the roofline.

b. **Temporary event signs.** Signs for temporary events permitted under Section 708 of this ordinance are permitted as follows:

- (1) Such signs shall be erected no more than two days prior to the event and shall be removed no more than one day after the event.
- (2) Such signs are limited to no more than four events at one site in a calendar year.

c. **Grand openings/temporary business identification while awaiting permanent signage.** Signs for grand openings or temporary business identification while awaiting permanent signage are permitted as follows:

- (1) Temporary business identification is limited to one sign per street front.
- (2) Such signs shall be erected for a period not to exceed fourteen days.
- (3) Permits for grand openings shall be issued only if a valid building permit for construction or alteration of the building or suite for that location has been issued, or a valid application for a certificate of occupancy has been made, if required, for the address in question.

d. **Temporary business identification during periods of right-of-way construction.** Signs for temporary business identification during periods of right-of-way construction are permitted as follows:

- (1) Such signs are permitted only during periods of construction in adjacent rights-of-way; the signs must be removed immediately upon restoration of traffic flow on the affected rights-of-way.
- (2) The lot or parcel on which the business is located must be immediately adjacent to the right-of-way construction zone.

- (3) Such signs are limited to one per street front.
- (4) Each sign is limited to sixteen square feet in area and can be no more than five feet in height.

e. **Temporary signs for places of worship.** Temporary signs for places of worship are permitted as follows:

- (1) Such signs shall be erected only on the future building site of a place of worship.
- (2) Such signs shall be limited to thirty-two square feet in area.
- (3) Such signs shall be limited to a height of eight feet.
- (4) Such signs are limited to one per street front.
- (5) If such a sign is double-faced, the faces shall be no further than six inches apart.
- (6) Such signs shall be set back ten feet from the public right-of-way.

E. **Flexibility Provisions.** This section sets forth a variety of procedures which provide flexibility for the Sign Code. The procedures include the use of design review to receive additional height and area for signs, the comprehensive sign plan, and the community sign district.

1. **Design review to achieve extra height and area.** As indicated in Table D-1, the design review process is available to increase the area and height of ground signs. The design review guidelines used for this process are set forth in Section 507 Tab A under "project signage." If an applicant satisfies guidelines 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.3, the sign may use the extra height and area set forth in Table D-1. A copy of the design review procedures used for this process is on file with the Sign Regulation Section of the Planning and Development Department. \*9

2. **Comprehensive sign plans.** The comprehensive sign plan use permit is intended to encourage a flexible procedure to allow signage which is not in strict compliance with the provisions of the district regulations under this Sign Ordinance, but which is appropriate to the character of the development, provides adequate identification and information, provides a good visual environment, promotes traffic safety and is regulated to the extent necessary to be consistent with the purpose and intent of this Sign Ordinance as specified in Section 705.A.

a. The Zoning Administrator or Board of Adjustment may issue use permits for comprehensive sign plans for commercial or industrial uses, industrial centers, hospitals, PCDs, multiple-family developments with a residential convenience market, and uses permitted in Section 647.A.1.i, or where mandated by a stipulation to a zoning approval. The use permit, or any modification thereto, may contain such conditions, requirements or standards that may be stipulated by the Zoning Administrator or Board of Adjustment to assure that signs covered by the use permit will not be detrimental to persons or property in the vicinity, or to the public welfare in general. \*11

b. Comprehensive sign plans approved under this section shall be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

(1) **Placement.** \*5

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. In commercial centers in which some tenants are in

locations having little or no street visibility, in order to provide identification, wall signs may be placed on walls of the building in which such tenants are located, even though not on a wall of the space occupied by those tenants.

(2) **Quantity.** The number of signs that may be approved within any development 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. 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. In no event shall a plan contain a ground or wall sign which exceeds by more than fifty percent any maximum height standard or by twenty-five percent any maximum area standard allowed on the site through the design review process. There shall be no prescribed limit on the percentage by which a comprehensive sign plan may allow a directional sign to exceed the area or height restrictions permitted on the site.

(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) **Illumination.** Illumination shall be in conformance with Section 705.C.6 of this ordinance.

(6) **Context.** +5

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.

c. Requests for use permits under this section shall be accompanied by an application including, but not limited to:

- (1) The applicant's name and address;
- (2) A legal description of the property;
- (3) Existing zoning on the property;
- (4) A site plan, depicting the proposed plan of development;
- (5) A description and/or illustration of proposed sign locations;
- (6) Standards for size, quantities, materials, and illumination; and
- (7) A narrative description of the common theme for signage within the development, how it relates to architectural and/or landscaping elements of the development, and how the comprehensive sign plan relates to each of the criteria set forth in Section 705.E.

d. **Comprehensive sign plan amendments.**



- (1) **Minor amendments.** Applications for minor amendments to comprehensive sign plans shall be reviewed by the Zoning Administrator. The Zoning Administrator may approve the changes without further public hearing, so long as the changes will meet each of the following:
    - (a) The signs meet all other standards or requirements set forth in this section;
    - (b) The signs conform to the information included with the original comprehensive sign plan application to satisfy the requirements of Sections 705.E.2.c.6 and 705.E.2.c.7; and
    - (c) The changes will not increase the number of ground signs, except directional and menu signs, in the comprehensive sign plan.
  - (2) **Other amendments.** Except as provided in this section, applications for amendments to comprehensive sign plans shall be processed in the same way as an original application.
- e. No use permit authorized under this section may vary from the provisions of Sections 705.B.3.b, 705.B.3.c, 705.B.3.e, 705.B.3.f, 705.C.7, 705.C.8, or 705.D.5.b.
- f. Signs for uses permitted in Section 647.A.1.i are allowed as follows:
- (1) The provisions of Section 705.D regarding signage for commercial land uses, shall be used as the "underlying zoning district" standards for purposes of this section.
  - (2) Up to two identification signs may exceed the size allowed under the provisions of Sections 705.E.2.b.3 under the following conditions:
    - (a) The site devoted to the uses meets the area standards of Section 647.A.1.i or is located in the downtown as identified in Council Resolution No. 15143 approved March 13, 1979;
    - (b) The use permit may increase the size of the signs up to two hundred fifty square feet upon a finding of the Zoning Administrator that:
      - (i) Any additional size is necessary for visibility for traffic control;
      - (ii) Any additional size is consistent with the character of development and zoning of nearby properties from which the signs are visible; and
      - (iii) Any additional size meets any other restrictions deemed appropriate by the Zoning Administrator.
  - (3) The signs permitted by Section 705.E.2.f may each contain up to one hundred square feet of animated message panel. The use permit shall specify the frequency of change in the message and any animation of the panel, and other restrictions deemed appropriate by the Zoning Administrator.
  - (4) One sign, in addition to those permitted by Section 705.E.2.f, that exceeds the size allowed by Section 705.E.2.b.3 may be painted on, or otherwise applied directly to, the roofs of buildings associated with the uses under the following conditions:
    - (a) The sign shall not be visible from the ground;

(b) The signs shall not be larger than one thousand square feet or ten percent of the roof surface on which they are applied, whichever is larger; and

(c) The signs shall identify the facility only by name or logo.

(5) Wall signs for the uses may be located so the top of the sign is no closer to the roofline than one-half the vertical dimension of the sign. Height, location and illumination shall be as specified in the use permit.

g. Comprehensive sign plans for hospitals may include ground signs no higher than the limit set in Section 705.D for commercial land use designations. \*9

h. Wall signs over fifty-six feet in height, approved in accordance with the provisions of this section shall be further subject to the provisions of Section 506.B.3 when more than two wall signs not to exceed a maximum of four wall signs over fifty-six feet in height are provided on a building. +5

3. **Community sign district.** The community sign district use permit procedure is intended to create a flexible incentive procedure to upgrade and update signage, particularly nonconforming signs, in business areas that lack compatibility between existing signs and the surrounding environment, consistent with the purpose of the comprehensive sign plan.

a. The Zoning Administrator or Board of Adjustment may issue a use permit for community sign districts in business areas with multiple parcels under separate ownership, such as along arterial streets with strip commercial development. The use permit, or any modifications thereto, may contain such conditions, requirements or standards that may be stipulated by the Zoning Administrator or Board of Adjustment to assure that signs covered by the use permit will not be detrimental to persons or property in the vicinity, or to the public welfare in general. \*6

b. Community sign districts approved under this section shall be evaluated based upon the criteria stated in Section 705.E.2. The Zoning Administrator and/or Board of Adjustment should also consider the extent to which properties in the application are under multiple ownership or control, and the extent to which flexibility is necessary to create an incentive to move toward sign conformity, in its evaluation.

c. A community sign district may be initiated by a petition of all the owners of property in the area included in the proposed district. The application for a community sign district shall include the following:

(1) The name and address of each property owner in the district;

(2) Legal descriptions for all property within the district;

(3) A site plan, showing existing and proposed development within the district;

(4) Existing zoning on property in the district;

(5) A description and/or illustration of proposed sign locations;

(6) Standards for size, quantities, materials and illumination of signs; and

(7) A narrative description of the theme for signage within the district, how it relates to architectural and/or landscaping elements within the district, and how the community sign district relates to the criteria and considerations set forth in subsection 2 [b].

d. Minor modifications to a community sign district may be administratively approved by the Zoning Administrator, or his or her designated representative, subject to such conditions as are necessary in his or her opinion to carry out the intent of the original approval. Major modifications to a use permit approved under this section shall require the applicant to follow the procedure utilized in obtaining the original use permit.

e. No use permit authorized under this section may vary from the provisions of Sections 705.B.3.b, 705.B.3.c, 705.B.3.e, 705.B.3.f, 705.C.7, 705.C.8, or 705.D.5.b.

F. **Special area sign regulations.** This section includes sign regulations which apply only to specified properties or areas of the City.

1. **Downtown Redevelopment Area sign district.** The provisions of this Downtown Redevelopment Area sign district apply to all properties in the Downtown Redevelopment Area, as defined in City Council Resolution No. 15143. The purpose of this district is to provide unique signage in the Downtown Redevelopment Area. Sign regulations for the underlying zoning districts shall apply to signage not addressed in this sign district.

a. **Sale, lease or rental signs.** Signs indicating sale, lease or rental in conjunction with a proposed development may be erected subject to the following:

(1) Securing a permit under Section 705.B and in conformance with all other provisions of this section.

(2) Obtaining a letter of authorization from the Community and Economic Development Director. Factors which will be reviewed during consideration of the letter shall include: compatibility of the size of the sign in relation to the existing development in the area; conformance of the proposed uses with general redevelopment goals; and reasonable expectation of development of the subject property.

The letter authorization shall be revoked by the Director upon a finding by him that the applicant or his or her successors no longer have a beneficial interest in the property. The sign or signs shall be removed within two weeks of the date of revocation of the letter of authorization.

(3) **Sign standards.**

(a) Within the district area, no such sign shall exceed one hundred square feet in area; the area may be further restricted by the letter of authorization.

(b) No such sign shall be more than fourteen feet high; this height may be further restricted by the letter of authorization.

(c) A minimum of thirty percent of each such sign shall contain copy identifying the subject as being part of a redevelopment area as furnished by Community and Economic Development Department Director.

(d) There shall be no more than one such sign for each street front for any property.

(4) Upon issuance of a building permit, a construction project sign may also be erected on the property in accordance with the provisions of Section 705.D.8. No other temporary signs shall be erected.

b. **Banners, balloons, flags, guidons.** Banners, balloons, flags, guidons and other similar advertising devices otherwise prohibited by this ordinance shall be permitted subject to obtaining a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Section 307 and subject to the following findings:

- (1) The signs are erected in conjunction with special promotional events of a civic or commercial nature;
- (2) The signs are appropriate in scale, composition and manner of display with surrounding development; and
- (3) The length and frequency of such displays are compatible with the goals and objectives of the downtown redevelopment program.

When two or more adjoining establishments are to participate equally in the event, a single request for a use permit may be filed.

c. **Permanent business identification signs.** Signs painted on awnings or attached to legal or nonconforming marquees, entrance portals or canopies which project over the public right-of-way shall be permitted subject to obtaining a use permit in accordance with the provisions of Section 307 and satisfying the following standards:

- (1) Such signs or the structures to which they are attached may project over a public sidewalk, walkway or pedestrian court so long as they do not project closer than three feet to a vehicular way or parking area, except when affixed to and identifying the entrance to off-street parking, loading and/or unloading facilities under which the vehicle must travel.
- (2) The source of illumination for such signs shall be erected, operated, used and maintained so as not to cause a traffic hazard as described in Section 705.B.3.c.
- (3) Sign copy is limited to the name and/or logo of the establishment or building, identification of and direction to off-street parking facilities, or directions to functional areas within a building or development.
- (4) Copy on awnings shall be limited to the vertical lead edge of the awning. Awnings shall not be backlit.

G. **Nonconforming signs, abandoned signs, and signs for nonconforming uses.** This section sets forth the rules which apply to nonconforming signs, discontinued signs, and signs for nonconforming uses.

1. **Signs for a legal nonconforming use.** After the effective date of this ordinance, new or additional signs for a nonconforming use shall be permitted in accordance with permitted signage for the zoning district in which the nonconforming use is located.

2. **Signs rendered nonconforming.**

a. **General rule.** Except as provided in this section, a nonconforming sign, as defined in Chapter 2, may continue in the manner and to the extent that it existed at the time of the ordinance adoption, amendment or annexation which rendered the sign nonconforming. This section shall not prohibit reasonable repairs and alterations to nonconforming signs.

b. **Exceptions.** The following provisions set forth the only exceptions to the regulations regarding nonconforming signs:

(1) **Signs approved by variance or comprehensive plan.** A sign approved by variance or comprehensive sign plan before the effective date of this ordinance (August 6, 1993) shall not be considered nonconforming and shall not be subject to the regulations set forth in this section.

(2) **Signs nonconforming due to spacing/separation standard.** Nothing in this section shall require a sign which is nonconforming solely due to not satisfying a separation standard (e.g. spacing between ground signs, separation between ground signs and buildings, spacing of signs from residential areas) to eliminate that nonconformity if meeting that standard on the site is not possible. This section shall not be construed to exempt such signs from the provisions requiring reduction of height and area nonconformities.

3. **Alteration or removal of nonconforming signs.** A nonconforming sign structure shall not be reerected, relocated or replaced unless it is brought into compliance with the requirements of this ordinance as provided below.

a. **Signs moved due to governmental action.** Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, legal nonconforming signs that are located on a parcel of property which is severed from a larger parcel of property and acquired by a public entity for public use by condemnation, purchase or dedication may be relocated on the remaining parcel without extinguishing the legal nonconforming status of that sign provided that the nonconforming sign:

- (1) Is not increased in area or height to exceed the limits of the district in which it is located;
- (2) Remains structurally unchanged except for reasonable repairs or alterations;
- (3) Is placed in the most similar position possible on the remaining property that it occupied prior to the relocation; and
- (4) Is relocated in a manner so as to comply with all applicable safety requirements.

After relocation pursuant to this subsection, the legal nonconforming sign shall be subject to all provisions of this section in its new location.

b. **Structural change to nonconforming sign.** If the structure of a nonconforming sign is changed, the height and area of the sign shall not be increased to exceed the height and area limits of the site on which it is located. If the sign exceeds the site's height and/or area limitations, the excess height and/or area shall be reduced a minimum of fifty percent. Two such reductions shall be permitted; after the third structural change, the sign shall conform to current standards. Nothing in this section shall require a nonconforming sign to be reduced to a height or area less than that allowed on the site.

c. **Reduction of nonconformity when design review required for project.** If a nonconforming sign is located on a parcel which is experiencing development for which design review, as specified in Section 507, is required, the height and area of the sign shall not be increased to exceed the height and area limitations of the site. If the sign exceeds the site's height and/or area limitations, the excess height and/or area shall be reduced a minimum of fifty percent. Two reductions triggered by design review shall be permitted; after the third reduction, the sign shall conform to current standards. Nothing in this section shall require a nonconforming sign to be reduced to a height or area less than that allowed on the site.

Design review required by one of the following types of development shall not cause reduction in a sign's nonconforming height and/or area:

(1) An addition of less than two thousand square feet when the addition is less than fifty percent of the size of the usable space of the site which is the subject of design review. A series of additions which total more than fifty percent of the usable space of the site shall require reduction of nonconformities. Usable space shall not include areas such as restrooms and storage rooms.

(2) An addition of more than two thousand square feet when the addition is less than ten percent of the size of the usable space of the site which is the subject of design review. A series of additions which total more than ten percent of the usable space of the site shall require reduction of nonconformities. Usable space shall not include areas such as restrooms and storage rooms.

(3) A modification required by federal, State or local regulations or programs.

d. **Damaged or deteriorated nonconforming signs.** Any nonconforming sign shall be removed or rebuilt in full conformity to the terms of this ordinance if it is damaged or allowed to deteriorate to such an extent that the cost of repair or restoration is fifty percent or more of the cost of replacement of such sign.

4. **Obsolete and abandoned signs.** Obsolete sign copy and abandoned sign structures shall be removed by the owner of the property, his agent, or the person having the beneficial use of the building or structure upon which such sign or sign structure is erected within thirty days after written notification from the Planning and Development Director or his representative. Obsolete sign copy shall be removed by covering the sign face, replacing the sign face with a blank sign face, or replacing the obsolete sign copy with sign copy that is not obsolete. Failure to comply with such notice within the time specified in such notice shall be considered a violation of the terms of this section.

H. **Fees and charges.** This section sets forth the types of fees and charges required for display of a sign and obtaining a sign permit. The amount of such fees shall be established by the City Council. A copy of the schedule of the fees is on file with the City Clerk and in the Planning and Development Department. A schedule of the fees is located in appendix A, Zoning Fee Schedule, of this ordinance.

1. **Annual sign regulation charge fee.**

a. **Requirement.** Except as provided elsewhere in Section 705, it shall be unlawful to display any sign without first paying an annual sign regulation charge. Payment of an annual sign regulation charge shall not be construed as authority to violate any provision of this ordinance, or other law, nor shall such payment excuse compliance with this ordinance or any other law.

b. **Expiration of fees and charges.** All annual sign regulation charges shall expire at midnight on December 31 of each year. No annual sign regulation charge shall be returned because of changes in business or removal of a sign voluntarily or at the City's request.

2. **Permit and reinspection fees.** Applications for sign permits and reinspections require a fee, as discussed below.

a. **Requirement.** Before issuing a permit, the Planning and Development Director, or his representative, shall collect the fees prescribed by the ordinance unless a bond has been posted as provided in Section 705.H.2.d. Such fees shall be paid in lawful money of the United States, or by collectable draft or check. Should such draft or check be uncollectible within a reasonable time, the permit shall be null and void.

b. **Fee for reconsideration of withdrawn applications.** Renewed action on withdrawn plans shall require a new plan check fee.

**c. Investigation fees for commencing work without first obtaining a permit.**

(1) Whenever work for which a permit is required by this section has been started without obtaining the permit, a special investigation shall be made before a permit is issued for the work. Working beyond the authorized scope of a sign permit constitutes work without a permit, is a violation of this section, is grounds for the Planning and Development Department to stop all work on the sign until appropriate permits are obtained, and subjects all such unpermitted work to assessment of the investigation fees set forth herein.

(2) An investigation fee, in addition to the permit fee, shall be collected whether or not a permit is then or subsequently issued. The investigation fee shall be equal to the amount of the permit fee required by this section with a minimum and maximum fee as set forth in appendix A.2 of the City Code. The payment of an investigation fee shall not exempt any person from compliance with all other provisions of this section nor from any penalty prescribed by law.

**d. Bond in lieu of cash payment.** Any person, firm, or corporation doing business as a sign contractor may elect to pay permit and inspection fees on a charge account basis provided he has first filed with the Planning and Development Department a bond in the sum of one thousand dollars for the benefit of the City of Phoenix. The bond shall be executed by said person, firm, or corporation and by a surety company maintaining an agency in the City of Phoenix. In lieu thereof, the bond may be in writing on a form to be provided by the Planning and Development Department and accompanied by cash deposit of one thousand dollars. All bonds shall stipulate that the person, firm, or corporation named therein shall pay within forty-five days of the issuance of any permit, all fees accrued under this section. Said bond shall not be transferable.

Charges accrued during each month shall be promptly remitted to the City by the fifteenth of the following month or as often during the month as the accrued charges equal to the value of the bond, and failure to do so shall be sufficient cause to refuse any further permits and to refuse to inspect or have inspected any work done by or for such person, firm, or corporation.

Date of Addition/Revision/Deletion - Section 705

- \*1 Revision on 10-7-1992 by Ordinance No. G-3572
- 2 Deletion on 7-7-1993 by Ordinance No. G-3676
- +2 Addition on 7-7-1993 by Ordinance No. G-3676
- +3 Addition on 12-8-1993 by Ordinance No. G-3712
- \*3 Revision on 12-8-1993 by Ordinance No. G-3712
- \*4 Revision on 6-21-1995 by Ordinance No. G-3868
- +5 Revision on 8-28-1996 by Ordinance No. G-3951
- \*5 Revision on 8-28-1996 by Ordinance No. G-3951
- \*6 Revision on 7-1-1998 by Ordinance No. G-4109
- \*7 Revision on 10-4-2000 by Ordinance No. G-4298 (eff. 2-1-2001)
- +8 Addition on 4-17-2002 by Ordinance No. G-4436, eff. 6-21-2002
- +9 Addition on 6-2-2004 by Ordinance No. G-4611, eff. 7-2-2004
- \*9 Revision on 6-2-2004 by Ordinance No. G-4611, eff. 7-2-2004
- +10 Addition on 7-7-2010 by Ordinance No. G-5534, eff. 8-6-2010
- \*10 Revision on 7-7-2010 by Ordinance No. G-5534, eff. 8-6-2010
- \*11 Revision on 1-19-2011 by Ordinance No. G-5482, eff. 2-18-2011

**The Phoenix Zoning Ordinance is current through Ordinance G-6362, passed September 20, 2017.**

Disclaimer: The City Clerk's Office has the official version of the Zoning Ordinance. Users should contact the City Clerk's Office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

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