
19.620.130 Nonconforming signs.

Any sign lawfully erected and maintained prior to the effective date of this ordinance, but which does not conform to the provisions of this chapter, or because of a zone change after the effective date of this chapter affecting the property upon which the sign is located ceases to comply with the applicable zone district regulations, is a nonconforming sign. The purpose of the regulations in this section is to limit the number and extent of nonconforming signage by prohibiting alteration or enlargement of such signage so as to increase the discrepancy between their condition and the standards and requirements of this chapter.

- A. *Continuance and maintenance.* Nonconforming signs that were legal when first installed, and which have not been modified so as to become illegal, may be continued, except as otherwise provided in this section.
 - 1. Reasonable and routine maintenance and repairs may be performed on signs that are nonconforming provided there is no expansion of any nonconformity with the current requirements of this chapter.
 - 2. A sign that did not conform to law existing at the time of its erection shall be deemed an illegal sign and shall not be a nonconforming sign. The passage of time does not cure illegality from the outset. Pursuant to the applicable requirements of State law, the City may require that an illegal sign be removed or be replaced by a conforming sign.
 - 3. A sign is subject to the standard procedures for abatement of nuisance if it is found to be unsafe because the structure creates an immediate hazard to persons or property.
- B. *Alterations and additions to nonconforming signs.* No nonconforming sign shall be moved, altered, or enlarged unless required by law or unless the moving, alteration or enlargement will result in the elimination or substantial reduction of the sign's nonconforming features.

C. Amortization

- 1. *Abandonment of nonconforming sign.* Whenever a nonconforming sign has been abandoned, or the use of the property has been discontinued for a continuous period of 90 days, the nonconforming sign shall be removed as provided for in State law and Section 19.620.140, Enforcement, of this chapter.
- 2. *Damage to or destruction of nonconforming sign.* Whenever a non-conforming sign is damaged by any cause other than intentional vandalism and repair of the damage would not exceed 50 percent of the replacement cost based on an independent professional appraisal, the sign may be restored and the non-conforming use of the sign may be resumed, provided that restoration is started within one year and diligently pursued to completion.
 - 1a. *Whenever a nonconforming sign is destroyed by any cause other than intentional +vandalism and repair of the damage would exceed 50 percent of the reproduction cost based on an independent appraisal, such sign may be only be restored, reconstructed, altered or repaired in conformance with the provisions of this chapter.*
 - 2b. *The extent of damage or partial destruction shall be based upon the ratio of the estimated cost of restoring the sign to its condition prior to such damage or partial destruction, to the estimated cost of duplicating the entire sign, as it existed prior to the damage or destruction.*
 - 3c. *Estimates for this purpose shall be made or shall be reviewed and approved by the Community and Economic Director or his/her designee.*

3. Change in use or occupancy. Whenever there is change in use or occupancy in a tenant space or property on which there is a nonconforming sign(s), the nonconforming sign(s) shall be removed or brought into compliance with the provisions of this chapter prior to the start of operations.

4. Historic signs. Signs identified as character-defining features of designated or eligible cultural resources, as defined by Title 20, and/or deemed individually significant in their own right pursuant to Section 20.50.010, shall be exempt from this section.

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ED. Signs rendered nonconforming by annexation. Any sign that becomes non-conforming subsequent to the effective date of this section by reason of annexation to the City of the site upon which the sign is located, shall be subject to the provisions of this section.

(Ord. 7331 §96, 2016; Ord. 7300 §2, 2015; Ord. 6966 §1, 2007)