



Department of Planning and Building Services
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SIGN PERMITS

The Sign Code regulates both temporary and permanent signs in the City to ensure they are safe, visually clear for drivers, and help keep the area neat and attractive. Compatibility with the built environment is key. Signs are reviewed in all zones, including residential. This handout provides a brief overview of the sign code.

The Sign Code can be complicated. Factors like property and building size, zoning, and existing signs affect what is allowed. Before designing any sign, it's recommended to consult the Planning and Building Services Department.

WHAT IS A SIGN?

The definition of a sign is very broad. A sign is any device, structure, or fixture which incorporates graphics, symbols, or written copy visible to the public that is intended to communicate information.

COMPATIBILITY

Compatibility is determined by reviewing how the elements of proposed form, proportion, scale, color, materials, surface treatment, overall sign size, and the size and style of lettering relate together. Please refer to [LOC 47.10](#) for the permit requirements based on your zone.

CONSOLIDATED APPLICATIONS FOR BUILDING AND PLANNING REVIEW

Permanent signs that require a building permit (signs attached to buildings or monument signs over 5 ft. above grade) are processed and reviewed as [Building Permit applications](#). Please submit your structural and sign permit materials directly to the Building Department in order to have a streamlined review of your application. **Electrical permits may be required for lit signs.**

SIGNS REQUIRING ONLY PLANNING REVIEW

Some signs only require Planning Department review for Sign Code compliance and do not need the consolidated review. The [Sign Permit application](#) would be submitted to planning@lakeoswego.city, then processed and issued by the Planning Department.

The following signs require Planning review, but not a Building permit:

- Unilluminated Monument Signs less than 5 ft. above grade
- Fabric, window, or plastic banner signs (not including those that are affixed to a building, like an awning)
- Change of copy (text) of an existing sign
- Temporary signs larger than those allowed in LOC 47.08.300, usually banner signs for special events or store openings.

SIGNS NOT REQUIRING BUILDING OR PLANNING REVIEW

Incidental Signs

Small signs, like public signs or flags, are allowed without a permit in any zone. These signs must also meet the compatibility standard as described above. Size limitations apply - please refer to [LOC 47.06.205](#). There is no permit or fee required.

Temporary Signs

Temporary signs are allowed in all zones with limits on the size, placement, duration and manner in which a sign is displayed. Temporary signs can include window signs, signs attached to the side of a building, and signs attached to stakes and driven into the ground.

Please refer to [LOC 47.08.300](#) for regulations on the time, place and manner for temporary signs. Generally, there is no permit or fee required. However, temporary signs that advertise a special event or store opening, such as a banner, require a Temporary Sign Permit and fee (see page 1).

Portable Signs (A-Frame or "Sandwich Board" Signs, Etc.)

This type of temporary sign is only allowed under the following restrictions:

- (1) only on Sundays between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.;
- (2) only in residential zones; and,
- (3) only in the public right-of-way.



[LOC 47.08.300\(2\)\(c\)](#) describes in detail the restrictions on placement, contact information, design and size of these signs. Improperly placed portable signs may be removed. Please also refer to [Temporary Signs in the Right-of-Way](#) brochure.

RIGHT-OF-WAY ENCROACHMENT

Signs cannot extend into the public right-of-way (except certain types like A-frame signs). Signs in the public right-of-way can be removed, with retrieval subject to fees or fines.

The following may help determine the boundary of the public right-of-way:

- Water meters, utility boxes, utility lines, and overhanging wires
- Traffic signals, signs, street lights, and fire hydrants
- Road medians and landscape islands
- Sidewalks and streets (unless marked as private property)
- Property pins showing the edge of the public right-of-way

Note: This is just a summary of the Sign Code. For specific details or approval, please refer to Chapter 47 or contact the Planning and Building Services Department.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

To help ensure any required permit application is processed smoothly, make sure to include all required items from the list below. This includes the business owner and property owner's signatures, business license number, and the correct fees.

If you have any questions, consult the Planning and Building Services Department.

Required Items for Sign Permits Applications:

- **Building Department Application Materials:** A Structural Building Permit form and all required structural review materials.
- **Completed Sign Permit Application:** Signed by both the **property** and **business** owners. If someone is submitting on their behalf, agent authorization is needed. The business owner must also provide the business license number.
- **Electrical Permit:** If required, submit it separately to Building (either electronically or in person).
- **Scaled Plans:** Accurate plans showing the dimensions of proposed signage, building elevation details, and site plan.
- **Fees:** Administrative fees are based on the type of sign(s) you're applying for (e.g., wall sign, monument sign, window sign, etc.).

Note: The Building Department may have additional requirements for their review.