

ARTICLE 20 SIGNS

SECTION 2000 PURPOSE

The use of signs to identify uses, advertise business and provide general orientation in St. Leon is a recognized need and right of property owners within appropriately zoned districts. It is the purpose of this Section to provide a balanced system of signage to facilitate communication between people and their environment and to avoid visual clutter that is potentially harmful to traffic safety, property values, community appearance, and the economic vitality of St. Leon.

SECTION 2010 PERMIT REQUIRED

1. Except as otherwise provided herein, it shall be unlawful for any person to erect, construct, enlarge, move or convert any sign within the jurisdiction of the St. Leon Plan Commission, or cause the same to be done without first obtaining a sign permit for each sign from the Planning Director.
2. Application for a permit shall be made to the Department on forms provided by the Department, and shall include, and be accompanied by, the following information:
 - a. Name and address of the property owner of the premises on which the sign is located or is to be located;
 - b. Name and address of the owner of the sign;
 - c. Consent from the property owner;
 - d. Clear and legible drawings with description showing the location of the sign which is the subject of the permit, and all other signs for which a construction permit is required, when such signs are on the same premises;
 - e. Drawings showing dimensions, construction supports, sizes, electrical wiring and components, materials of the sign, method of attachment, and character of structural members to which attachment is made. If required by the Planning Director, engineering data shall be supplied on submitted plans and certified by a duly licensed engineer;
 - f. A statement, in writing, that the applicant has obtained all necessary licenses and/or approvals from other affected governmental agencies pertaining to any sign proposed to be erected, constructed, altered, repaired, improved, maintained, converted, or manufactured adjacent to, or visible from, any State or Federal roadway.

3. The following shall not be considered as creating a sign and therefore shall not be required to have a sign permit:
 - a. The changing of advertising copy or message on an approved sign.
 - b. Painting, repainting, cleaning, or other normal maintenance and repair of a sign or sign structure, unless a structural change is involved.

SECTION 2015 EXEMPT SIGNS

The following incidental signs are exempt from other requirements of this Section, except for the noted requirements:

1. Business Identification Sign

An identification sign on or near a building entrance or service entrance to a business in a business, commercial, or industrial zoning district is permitted, provided such signs state only the street address number and name of the business or building. Such sign shall be mounted flush against the wall, and shall not exceed four (4) square feet.

2. Damaged Sign

A conforming sign erected under a legally obtained permit which is damaged or destroyed by wind, weather, or other accidental means beyond the control of the applicant may be replaced or restored to its original size, shape, and location (as prior to the accident) without obtaining an additional permit. Replacement of a damaged or destroyed sign with a new sign of different size, shape, or location from the original sign shall require a permit.

3. Integral Signs

Names of building, dates of erection, monumental citations, commemorative tablets and the like, when carved into stones, concrete, or similar material, or made of bronze, aluminum, or other permanent type construction and made an integral part of the structure.

4. Parking Signs

Signs for public and private parking shall be permitted. Such signs shall be subject to a three (3) foot setback from the right-of-way, and shall not be used for advertising purposes. Signs shall be no greater than six (6) feet in height and no greater than six (6) square feet in area. Such signs shall be installed so as not to present a hazard to traffic entering or leaving the premises.

5. Private Traffic Directional Signs

Signs directing traffic movement onto or within a premise. Illumination of these signs shall be permitted in accordance with Section 6-101-5.H, Performance Standards. The leading edge of such signs shall be a minimum of three (3) feet from any curb or traffic movement aisle, the sign shall be no greater than three (3) feet in height and no greater than six (6) square feet in area.

6. Public Signs

Signs of a non-commercial nature and in the public interest erected by, or on the order of, a public officer(s) in performance of his/her public duty, such as safety signs, danger signs, trespassing signs, traffic signs, memorial plaques, signs of historical interest, signs directing the traveling public to public and quasi-public facilities, or signs on public buildings or structures and the like.

7. Name Plate

A nameplate which shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area is permitted for each dwelling unit of a single-family or row-structure. Such nameplate shall state nothing other than the name and/or address of the occupant. No other sign shall be allowed. This paragraph shall not be construed to prohibit each dwelling unit from also displaying a house numbering plate for identification.

8. Historical Markers

9. Window Signs

Signs located in or on windows do not require a permit as long as such signs are located on the inside of the building.

10. Accessory Signs

Matter appearing on gasoline pumps, newspaper vending boxes, automatic teller machines, and vending machines, or matter appearing on or adjacent to entry doors such as "Push", "Pull", "Open" or "Closed" signs, or matter appearing on display windows or doors identifying hours of operation, credit cards accepted, and similar information.

11. Special Event Signs

Special event signs shall comply with the sign requirements of the underlying zone district except that a maximum of two (2) banners (which may be double-faced) shall be permitted and the total combined area of all faces shall not exceed 100 square feet in area. **All signs shall be removed within 24 hours of cessation of the special event.**

12. Signs for public, non-profit or religious institutions

One (1) free-standing sign not over thirty-two (32) square feet in area may be located on the premises of said institutions.

SECTION 2020 GENERAL PROVISIONS

The following general provisions shall apply to all signs in all zoning districts:

1. No portion of any sign may be erected within five (5) feet of a street right-of-way.
2. The first permanent sign on any property shall include within the sign area the street address number of the property. The number shall be discernible from the traveled portion of the adjacent right-of-way. The letters and numbers shall be a minimum of four (4) inches in height.
3. Permitted free-standing signs shall include the following types of signs:
 - a. Pole. A sign which is supported by one or more uprights in the ground, with the sign surface mounted at a specified height above grade level to the bottom of the sign.
 - b. Ground. Any sign, other than a pole sign, in which the entire bottom is in contact with or is closely associated with the ground and is independent of any other structure.
 - c. Monument. A ground sign that is supported by a base that is connected directly to the ground with a maximum height of four (4) feet.
4. Free-standing signs shall be located no closer to the side property line than the Building Setback Line. Free-standing signs shall also be located at least five (5) feet outside of the State or Town road right-of-ways.
5. The bottom edge of any free standing pole sign (excluding entrance signs) erected in or above any area used for vehicular movement or parking shall be at least ten (10) feet above the paved level of such area. This height may be increased in a case where tractor-trailer or other large vehicle traffic would require a greater height clearance. Unless otherwise permitted, no sign advertising goods or services shall exceed one (1) story or fifteen (15) feet in height, whichever is lower;
6. No portion of any sign may be erected so as to obstruct sight lines along any right-of-way or so as to obstruct sight lines to traffic control devices, street name signs at intersections, directional signs, or signals and/or railroad grade crossings, and shall maintain required vision clearance requirements as stipulated by Section 6-101-5.F of this Ordinance.
7. A landscaping area equal to the total sign area shall be installed at the base of all free-standing signs, with the exception of billboards. A landscaping plan shall be submitted with each sign permit application for a free-standing sign, such landscaping plan to be approved by the Plan Commission or its designee.

SECTION 2025 MAINTENANCE

1. All signs shall be maintained in a good state of repair, including, but not limited to, repair of defective parts, painting and cleaning. The replacement of the structural members of a non-conforming sign for the purpose of extending the life of such non-conforming sign, shall not constitute maintenance as defined in this Section, but shall be considered as new construction and must, therefore, satisfy all requirements of this Ordinance.
2. The owner of any property on which a sign is located, and those responsible for maintenance of the sign, shall be jointly responsible for the maintenance of the area in the vicinity of the sign and shall be required to keep this area mowed in accordance with Town standards and maintained in a safe, clean and sanitary condition, free of noxious or offensive substances and rubbish.
3. When any sign or adjacent area is not maintained within the provisions of this Ordinance, or determined otherwise unsafe, the Planning Director or authorized representative shall send written notice to both the owner of the property on which such sign is located and the sign owner. Notice shall direct the owners to remove, repair or alter the sign or to maintain the property in accordance with Town standards. If said sign is not removed, replaced, or altered, or the property not properly maintained within thirty (30) days, the Planning Director, or authorized representative, shall cause the sign to be removed, repaired, or altered, or the property to be maintained at the expense of the property and/or sign owner in accordance with the procedures of this Ordinance. For temporary or portable signs, the Planning Director, or authorized representative, shall provide a three (3) day notice for removal of the sign. The representative may remove a sign immediately and without notice if, in his/her opinion, the condition or location of the sign is such as to present a threat to the safety of the public.

SECTION 2027 NON-CONFORMING SIGNS

Any sign lawfully established prior to the effective date of this Ordinance that does not conform to the regulations herein shall be deemed a non-conforming sign and may be continued except under the following provisions:

1. If there is an increase in the size of the sign face or an increase in the height of the sign;
2. If the sign is relocated from its original place of installation;
3. If there is a complete replacement of the sign;
4. If the sign is covered under a variance, granted by the Board of Zoning Appeals, which has expired;
5. If the sign is destroyed to an extent equal to or greater than fifty percent (50%) of its value; and/or
6. If the sign is considered an obsolete sign as defined under subsection G, Prohibited Signs, of this Section.

SECTION 2035 PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following signs are prohibited. It shall be unlawful to erect and maintain:

1. Any sign which is not included under the types of signs permitted or exempted in this Section.
2. Any portable or moveable sign, except in compliance with the provisions of this Section.
3. Any sign that projects over or into a public right-of-way.
4. Off-premises signs, except as expressly permitted in this Section.
5. Flashing signs.
6. Pennants, propellers, pinwheels, streamers, balloons, and similar small objects, except as temporary signs.
7. Signs imitating or resembling official traffic or government signs or signals.
8. Signs located within a public right-of-way, other than traffic or government signs or signals located permanently or temporarily for public safety.
9. Tacking, pasting or otherwise affixing of signs of a miscellaneous character, visible from a roadway, located on buildings, barns, sheds, trees, towers, utility poles, posts, fences, benches, trash containers, parking meters or other structures.
10. Business signs that advertise an activity, business, product, project, or service no longer conducted or available on the premises upon which the sign is located within three (3) months of the end of business activity.
11. Signs placed on parked vehicles or trailers where the apparent purpose is to advertise a product or to direct people to a business or activity located on the same or nearby property. This includes vehicles with a sole apparent purpose to advertise business. Motor vehicles with the primary purpose of the cartage of goods are exempt from this restriction.
12. Signs which bear or contain statements, words or pictures of an obscene, pornographic, or immoral character, or which contain advertising matter which is untruthful or will offend public morals or decency.
13. Signs painted on, or attached to, any fence or wall which is not structurally a part of a building, except to identify a residence or residential structure by means of posting the name of the occupant or structure and the street address.
14. Signs which operate or employ any stereopticon or motion picture projection or media in conjunction with any advertisements; or signs which have visible moving parts or give the illusion of movement, except as permitted in this Section.
15. Signs which emit audible sound, odor, or visible matter.

16. Signs which purport to be, or are an imitation of, or resemble, an official traffic sign or signal, or which bear the words “Stop”, “Go Slow”, “Caution”, “Danger”, “Warning” or similar words, except as permitted in subsection F of this Section.
17. Signs which, by reason of their size, location, movement, content, coloring or manner of illumination, may be confused with or construed as a traffic control sign, signal, or device, or the light of an emergency or road equipment vehicle, or which hide from view any traffic or roadway sign, signal or device.

SECTION 2037 TEMPORARY SIGNS

Temporary signs shall be permitted at any location and shall be required to have a permit unless otherwise specified. The following conditions apply to temporary signs:

1. Portable Signs (including “a-frame” and “arrow” signs)

One (1) portable sign per lot may be permitted for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days per calendar year. Said sign is not to exceed forty (40) square feet in area or six (6) feet in height.

2. Banners

One (1) banner per lot may be permitted for a period not to exceed sixty (60) days per calendar year. Said sign is not to exceed forty (40) square feet in area or six (6) feet in height.

3. Political Campaign Signs

Temporary political signs must be placed outside public street right-of-way. The signs shall be removed within one week after the election. No permit shall be required.

4. Garage Sale Signs

Signs advertising the sale of miscellaneous household items for the purpose of a residential “garage” or “yard” sale shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area. Such signs may be erected on the premises one (1) week in advance of the sale and shall be removed within forty-eight (48) hours after the sale. No permit shall be required.

5. Construction Signs

During a construction period, construction signs which identify the owner, architect, engineer, contractor and other individual or firm involved with construction, but not including any advertisement of any product; and signs announcing the character of the building enterprise or the purpose of the building. Said signs shall be a maximum of thirty-two (32) square feet for each project. Said sign shall be set back at least ten (10) feet from a public right-of-way. The sign shall be confined to the site of construction and shall be removed within thirty (30) days after the end of construction. No permit shall be required.

6. Real Estate Signs

One real estate sign advertising the sale, rental or lease of the premises or part of the premises on which the sign is displayed, shall not exceed four (4) square feet in residential districts and thirty-two (32) square feet in business or industrial districts. Such sign shall be removed within fourteen (14) days of the sale, rental or lease. Such sign shall be set back from the street right-of-way at least ten (10) feet. Signs shall reflect no advertising other than to indicate the party listing the property for sale, rental or lease. No permit shall be required.

7. Subdivision or Multi-Family Signs

One (1) temporary subdivision or multi-family project identity sign indicating only the name and/or address of the premises and/or the name of the management and builder(s). Such a sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and shall be located at least ten (10) feet from a public right-of-way. The maximum approval period shall be twelve (12) months from the date the permit is issued. Such approval may be extended for another twelve (12) months or until the project is eight-five (85) percent completed or is occupied, whichever occurs first.

7. Inflatable Signs

Inflatable signs shall not be permitted on residentially zoned or used properties, except for displays intended for celebratory events of short duration, as in the case of birthdays. Such signs may be displayed for no more than fourteen (14) days during a calendar year on any lot in a business or industrial district, limited to one (1) such sign per lot. Such sign shall not exceed the permitted building height by more than twenty (20) feet.

10. Produce Signs

One (1) temporary sign shall be permitted which advertises the sale of produce or crops grown on the premises, provided that the sign does not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and is placed at least ten (10) feet from the street right-of-way. This provision does not include "arrow signs". No permit shall be required.

SECTION 2040 ILLUMINATION OF SIGNS

1. Sign illumination shall be designed so as not to cause glare which may result in traffic hazards or which may interfere with the customary use of nearby residences.
2. For signs which are externally illuminated, such lighting shall be mounted on top of the sign and directed downward towards the copy in order to prevent spillover onto surrounding uses and into the night sky.
3. In residential districts, only nameplates, bulletin boards used by churches or public buildings, and permanent, on-site subdivision identity signs may be illuminated. In non-residential districts, all signs may be illuminated provided they meet other provisions established in this Ordinance.
4. Signs displaying electronically changing or animated messages are permitted, provided:
 - a. Such signs do not create a traffic hazard to vehicular traffic on thoroughfares along which the sign is oriented;
 - b. Such signs may not be placed closer than thirty-five (35) feet to a public right-of-way;
 - c. The area containing the changing or animated messages shall not exceed thirty (30) percent of the total sign area;
 - d. No more than one (1) such sign shall be permitted per lot.

SECTION 2050 AGRICULTURAL AND RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

This section shall apply to the following zoning districts: A-1, R-1, R-2, and R-3.

- a. For each duplex and/or multi-family building, one (1) nameplate per dwelling unit, not to exceed two (2) square feet in area, is permitted.
- b. One (1) free-standing sign for a church, school, municipal building or other public building, not exceeding thirty-two (32) square feet in area, and one (1) wall sign, not exceeding one and one-half (1½) square feet in area for each lineal foot of building frontage shall be permitted; however, in no instance shall the total wall sign area exceed fifty (50) square feet.
- c. Signs listed under Exempt Signs and Temporary Signs are permitted; however, portable signs, including “a-frame” and “arrow” signs, are prohibited.

- d. One (1) free-standing identity sign for a subdivision or multi-family project is permitted. Such sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area. In the event there is more than one entrance or the subdivision or multi-family project fronts onto more than one road, additional signage may be permitted at the discretion of the Planning Director.

SECTION 2060 BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL

This section shall apply to the following zoning districts: B-1, B-2, H-1, I-1, and I-2.

- a. Free-Standing Buildings, not in an unenclosed shopping center or enclosed shopping mall, including free standing buildings located at unenclosed and enclosed shopping centers:
 - i. One (1) free-standing sign shall be permitted for each lot. The sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area.
 - ii. Wall sign

No specific limit is imposed on the number of wall signs; however, the total maximum sign area for all wall signs on a given building frontage shall be two (2) square feet in area for each lineal foot of building frontage. In no instance shall the total sign area for all signs for a single business exceed one hundred (100) square feet in area. A free standing building which is situated on more than one (1) street may have wall signs located on each exposed wall, per the size limitations above.
 - iii. Projecting signs may be used instead of wall or free-standing signs provided they do not project beyond the property line or public right-of-way line and maintain a clearance of ten (10) feet over pedestrian areas.
- b. Unenclosed Shopping Centers
 - i. One (1) free-standing sign shall be permitted for the shopping center, and shall meet the following requirements:
 - (A). Such sign shall have a maximum face area of two hundred (200) square feet.
 - (B). Where a shopping center has in excess of six hundred (600) feet of road frontage, one (1) additional free-standing sign shall be permitted. The distance between signs shall be at least five hundred (500) feet.

ii. Wall sign

No specific limit is imposed on the number of wall signs per business within the unenclosed shopping center; however, the total maximum sign area for all wall signs for a single business shall be two (2) square feet in area for each lineal foot of building frontage. In no instance shall the sign area for all signs for a single business exceed one hundred (100) square feet in area.

c. Enclosed Mall Shopping Centers

i. One (1) free-standing sign shall be permitted for the shopping center, and shall meet the following requirements:

(A). Such sign shall have a maximum face area of three hundred (300) square feet.

(B). Where a shopping center has in excess of six hundred (600) feet of frontage along any street or highway right-of-way, one (1) additional free-standing sign shall be permitted. The distance between signs shall be at least five hundred (500) feet.

ii. Wall signs shall be permitted on each wall facing the enclosed mall shopping center's parking lot. There is no specific limit on the number of wall signs; however, the total maximum sign area for all wall signs shall be two (2) square feet for each linear foot of building frontage. In no instance shall the total sign area for all wall signs exceed four hundred (400) square feet in area for each wall.

d. Business, Commercial and Industrial Parks

i. One (1) free-standing sign shall be permitted for business, commercial or industrial parks, and shall meet the following requirements:

(A). Such sign shall have a maximum face area of three hundred (300) square feet.

(B). Where a business, commercial or industrial park has in excess of six hundred (600) feet of frontage along any street or highway right-of-way, one (1) additional free-standing sign shall be permitted. The distance between signs shall be at least five hundred (500) feet.

ii. Uses and free-standing establishments within a business, commercial or industrial park shall meet the sign regulations under Free Standing Buildings within this Section.

SECTION 2070 OFF-PREMISES SIGNS

Off-premises signs are permitted only along Interstate Highway 74, and shall meet the following requirements:

1. Off-premises signs are permitted along Interstate Highway 74 where the site is located within a business or industrial district.
2. Size, setback, height and area restrictions:

Minimum Setback	Maximum Height	Maximum Area
20 feet (all lot lines)	30 feet	750 square feet for each face of sign

3. The minimum distance between any off-premises signs shall be two-thousand (2,000) feet.
4. Off-premises signs shall be located at least two thousand (2,000) feet from any residential zoning district or residential use.
5. Off-premises signs shall be located at least two-thousand (2,000) feet from any local, State or Federally-created historic district.
6. Off-premises signs shall be permitted within a maximum of six hundred sixty (660) feet from the Interstate Highway 74 right-of-way.
7. Off-premises signs shall be located at least five (500) hundred feet from an interchange or intersection, to be measured along the right-of-way at the beginning or end of pavement widening at the exit from or entrance to the main traveled way.
8. An off-premises sign may be mounted with two (2) faces back-to-back, or “V-ed” at an angle not to exceed sixty (60) degrees.
9. Off-premises signs that are double stacked, one on top of the other, are prohibited.

Section 2075 HIGH-RISE SIGNS

1. For properties having frontage along Interstate 74, signs may be erected, on B-1, B-2, H-1, I-1, and I-2 lots, which meet the definition of “High-Rise Signs,” as defined in this Ordinance. A high-rise sign is a sign erected at a minimum height of fifty (50) feet and a maximum height of eighty-five (85) feet above grade level, with a maximum sign square footage of seven hundred fifty (750) square feet, and only one sign may be erected upon the premises of the business being advertised. A minimum of one thousand (1000) feet of separation shall be maintained between high-rise signs, and such signs shall maintain said distance from a residential district, residential use, or local, State, or Federally-created historic district. Minimum setback shall be twenty (20) feet from any property line. A maximum of one (1) high-rise sign may be allowed per parcel.

2. The distance between the base of the high rise sign and any property line shall at least equal the height of the sign. If the facility is erected on a leased parcel taken from a parent tract, this distance may be measured to the property line of the parent tract.

SECTION 2080 ELECTRONICALLY CHANGEABLE MESSAGE BOARDS

The Board of Zoning Appeals may permit an electronically changeable message board as a Special Exception in all business districts. Such message signs must conform to Article 3, Sections 320 of this ordinance, and shall also be subject to the following minimum standards and requirements:

1. The application for a special exception permit shall be accompanied by the following information:
 - i. All of the information required by Section 2010 of this article;
 - ii. Identification of all interstate highways or other thoroughfares from which the sign will be visible;
 - iii. Number of the nearest milepost on the interstate highway from which the sign will be visible, or distance and direction from the nearest intersection on another thoroughfare;
 - iv. The location of the proposed sign on a U.S. Geological Survey, 1:24,000 scale topographic map and the location of all existing electronically changeable message boards on all streets within one-half mile of the proposed location;

A photograph not less than eight (8) inches by ten (10) inches in size, taken of the proposed location of the sign from each thoroughfare from which the sign will be visible. The proposed location of the sign shall be clearly marked to scale on each photograph.

2. An electronically changeable message board that is permitted as a conditional use, shall conform, at minimum to the following requirements:
 - i. Such message boards will be considered as a part of the permitted freestanding or building mounted signage. Up to 50% of the permitted sign area can be used for an electronically changeable message board.
 - ii. Electronically changeable message boards shall not be permitted at intervals of less than six-hundred sixty (660) feet, measured along the centerline of each interstate or thoroughfare from which the sign will be visible. The distance will be measured from lines through the center of the signs and perpendicular or radial to the centerline.
 - iii. Apparent motion of the visual message, caused by, but not limited to, the illusion of moving objects, moving patterns or boards of light, expanding contracting, or rotating shapes or other similar animation effects, shall be prohibited. Such restriction applies to "scrolling" or "running" messages. The message displayed on the board must be displayed for a minimum of five (5) second intervals. In no instance can a message, or part thereof, flash on the message board.

