

CHAPTER 8

SIGNS

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8.01 Purpose. The purpose of these requirements is to ensure that the outstanding visual resources of the county are protected and that traffic safety is enhanced by setting requirements for the size, number, placement, and lighting of signs.

8.02 Applicability.

(1) Signs restricted. Unless exempted under sub. (2), no sign shall hereafter be located, erected, structurally altered, moved, or reconstructed, except as permitted by this chapter.

(2) Signs exempted. The following shall be exempt from the requirements of this chapter:

(a) Memorial signs and tablets displayed on public property or in cemeteries.

(b) Official traffic and parking signs, and informational, legal or directional notices erected by federal, state, or local units of government.

(c) Guidance signs authorized by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation under Trans. 200.03, Wisconsin Administrative Code, tourist-oriented directional signs as authorized by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation under Trans 200.08, Wisconsin Administrative Code, and other directional and other official signs as authorized under Section 84.30(3)(a), Wisconsin Statutes. (Amended: 23 March 2010, Ord. No. 2010-02)

(d) Official government entity flags, except as pertains to the Town of Gibraltar additional requirements, as provided in s. 8.09(5)(a).

(e) Outdoor murals or other outdoor artwork, determined by the Planning Director, upon referral and recommendation of the Zoning Administrator, not to be signs.

8.03 General sign requirements. The following requirements shall apply to all permitted signs, unless exempted in s. 8.02(2):

- (1) No undulating, swinging, rotating, or otherwise moving sign shall be permitted.
- (2) Except for flashing or fluttering time and/or temperature sign messages, no flashing, fluttering, or otherwise animated sign messages shall be permitted.
- (3) One flag bearing words such as "Open", "Welcome", "For Sale", or similar message no greater than 18 square feet shall be permitted per parcel. (Added: 1 Sept. 2003, Ord. No. 06-03)
- (4) No sign shall obstruct clear visibility of traffic along any public road or intersection of roads or driveways.
- (5) No signs, except signs erected by a unit of government, shall project over or be located within any public right-of-way.
- (6) Signs shall not resemble, imitate, or approximate the shape, size, form, or color of traffic signs, signals, or devices. Signs shall not obstruct or interfere with the effectiveness of traffic signs, signals or devices, nor be lighted in such a way so as to cause glare or impair driver visibility upon public roads.
- (7) Signs shall not be located or maintained in such a way that prevents free ingress or egress from any floor, window, or fire escape; and no sign shall be attached to a fire escape.
- (8) Any spotlights used to illuminate signs shall be shielded such that their light source cannot be seen from adjoining roads or properties.
- (9) No sign shall be placed on or over the roof of any building.
- (10) No sign shall be painted or mounted on rocks or other natural features, except that nameplates and/or addresses for residences and "No Hunting," "No Trespassing," "No Dumping," and signs of a similar nature may be affixed to trees, and temporary real estate signs may be affixed to trees per the standards of s. 8.04(2)(d). (Amended: 8 August 2000, Ord. 11-00)
- (11) No sign shall contain obscene or derogatory language, symbols, or pictures.
- (12) Wall signs.
 - (a) Size. The sign face area of a wall sign shall not exceed 15 percent of the area of the side of the building to which it is attached. If more than one sign is present, the combined sign face area shall not exceed 15 percent of the area of the side of the building to which they are attached.

(b) Design. Wall signs shall not extend more than 6 inches from the building's wall surface, nor beyond the end of the wall.

(13) Window signs. The sign face area of window signs shall not exceed 20 percent of the glass area of the window.

(14) Projecting signs.

(a) Size. The sign face area of a projecting sign shall not exceed 24 square feet.

(b) The sign shall not extend more than 5 feet from the wall to which it is attached.

(c) The bottom of such sign shall be at least 7 feet above the grade directly below the sign.

(d) The top of such sign shall not extend above the building's roof.

(15) Freestanding signs.

(a) Size. The maximum size of freestanding signs shall be as follows:

1. Directional signs shall not exceed 3 square feet in sign face area.

2. Nameplates and/or addresses for residences; "No Hunting," "No Trespassing," "No Dumping," and signs of a similar nature; "Open/Closed" signs; "Vacancy/No Vacancy" signs; and operational signs designating entrances, exits, service areas, parking areas, restrooms, and other functional operations of a building or premises shall not exceed 4 square feet in sign face area. (Amended: 8 August 2000, Ord. 11-00)

3. On-premise signs which are not listed in subd. 2. shall not exceed 24 square feet in sign face area. 4. Off-premise signs, except for directional signs, shall not exceed 32 square feet.

(b) Such signs shall be located at least 5 feet from all side lot lines.

(16) Awning signs. (Added: 25 June 1996, Ord. 16-96)

(a) The bottom of such signs shall be at least 7 feet above the grade directly below the sign. (Typographical error corrected: 20 Sept. 2016; Ord. 2016-14)

(b) The message of such signs shall consist of not more than one line of copy.

(c) Such signs shall not extend more than 5 feet from the wall to which the

awning is attached.

8.04 Specific requirements for particular signs. In addition to the requirements of s. 8.03, general sign requirements, the following requirements shall be met for each specified sign. There shall be no specific requirements for particular signs that are not listed in this section, but such signs shall comply with the requirements of s. 8.03, general sign requirements.

(1) Election campaign signs shall be subject to the following:

(a) Such signs located on residential property, as defined in s. 12.04, Wis. Stats., shall not be erected or displayed prior to the election campaign period, as defined in s. 12.04, Wis. Stats., and shall be removed within 7 days after the election.

(b) Such signs located on property other than residential property, as defined in s. 12.04, Wis. Stats., shall meet the following:

1. The signs shall not be placed on public property.
2. The signs shall not exceed 24 square feet in sign face area.
3. The signs shall not be erected or displayed earlier than 60 days prior to the election to which they pertain.
4. The signs shall be removed within 7 days after the election.
5. The sign shall not be illuminated.

(2) Temporary real estate signs, advertising the sale, rent, or lease of the property on which the sign is placed, shall be subject to the following requirements:

(a) Such signs located on the property being advertised for sale, rent, or lease shall not require a permit, shall be limited to 5 square feet in area, shall be a maximum of 68 inches in height as measured from the ground to the top of the sign, and shall be limited in number to one along each road that abuts the property.

(b) Off-premise real estate signs shall be no more than one square foot in area with a maximum height of 36 inches as measured from the ground to the top of the sign, shall not contain company logos nor copy other than "Real Estate for Sale/Lease/Rent", shall be permitted only at intersections of county, town, and/or private roads, and shall be limited in number to one per intersection.

(c) All temporary real estate signs shall be located outside public rights-of-way, a minimum of 15 feet from side lot lines, and shall not be attached to utility poles.

(d) Except along state highways, temporary real estate signs may be attached to trees during those times when the ground is frozen, provided that: no portion of the tree is trimmed, the devices used to attach the sign to the tree do not penetrate the tree, and all other applicable requirements of s. 8.04(2) are met.

(e) Temporary real estate signs shall not be illuminated.

(f) Such signs shall be removed within 10 days of the sale, rent, or lease of the property advertised. (Recreated: 8 August 2000, Ord. 11-00)

(g) In addition to the signs authorized and regulated in Sections 8.04(2)(a) through (f) above, a single "Open House" sign shall be allowed subject to the following:

1. Said sign shall not exceed 6 sq. ft.

2. Said sign shall be suspended from or affixed to a fixed post.

3. If said sign is located on the property offered for sale, it shall be located within 50' of the access driveway. If said sign is located on an access easement, the applicant shall receive written approval from the owner of the underlying property. If said sign is located on property other than those specified above, it shall be located within 80' of the access driveway and the applicant shall receive written approval from the property owner.

4. Said sign shall be displayed only at such hours as a licensed real estate professional is at the property to conduct the open house (and shall be removed daily).

5. Said sign shall not be used to advertise an open house at the location of a single family residence.

(Added: 23 March 2004; Ord. 2004-09)

(3) Temporary on-site construction signs, promoting a building under construction and/or the contractor(s) for such building, shall be subject to the following:

(a) Only one construction sign shall be allowed per construction project.

(b) No such sign shall exceed 24 square feet in sign face area.

(c) No such sign shall be erected prior to beginning of construction.

(d) All such signs shall be removed within one week after completion of construction and prior to occupancy.

(e) Construction signs which are freestanding signs shall be located at least 15

feet from any public right-of-way.

(4) Temporary new development signs. Signs promoting a new subdivision, apartment complex, and other new developments shall not exceed 24 square feet in sign face area and shall be located on the premises of the new development. The sign permit for such signs shall expire after 2 years.

(5) Residential neighborhood signs shall be freestanding signs only, shall be limited to identifying the name of a neighborhood area such as a subdivision or housing development, may include a single directional arrow, shall not exceed 24 square feet in sign face area, shall be placed not more than 100 feet from the entrance to the neighborhood area, and shall be limited in number to one per entrance.

(Amended: Nov. 5, 2001, Ord.11-01; Effective Dec. 16, 2001.)

(6) Advertising signs.

(a) Off-premise. Advertising signs which are off-premise signs shall meet the following:

1. Number limited. No more than 2 such signs shall be permitted for each business establishment, commodity, or product.
2. Sign spacing for freestanding and projecting signs. This spacing requirement shall only apply to advertising signs which are freestanding or projecting signs. In all districts, an off-premise advertising sign shall be located no closer to any advertising sign than a distance equal to one-half of the required minimum lot width for new lots in the zoning district in which the sign is located.

(b) On-premise. Advertising signs which are on-premise signs shall meet the following:

1. Number limited for freestanding and projecting signs. In the Natural Area, Exclusive Agricultural, Prime Agricultural, General Agricultural, Countryside, Estate, and Conservation Area districts, the maximum number of on-premise advertising signs which are freestanding or projecting signs shall be a total of 3 such signs per business. (Amended: 27 February 2007 – Ord. No. 2007-04; Effective 12 March 2007)
2. Sign spacing for freestanding and projecting signs. This spacing requirement shall only apply to advertising signs which are freestanding or projecting signs. In the Heartland-3.5, Heartland-5, Heartland-10, Single Family Residential-10,000, Single Family Residential-20,000, Single Family Residential-30,000, Small Estate Residential, Rural Residential, High Density Residential, Commercial Center, Mixed Use Commercial, Recreational Commercial, Light Industrial, Countryside-5, Village Commercial, General

Commercial, Neighborhood Residential, and Chambers Island districts, no on-premise advertising sign shall be located closer to any advertising sign than a distance equal to one-half of the required minimum lot width for new lots in the zoning district in which the sign is located. In all other zoning districts, there shall be no spacing requirements for on-premise advertising signs. (Amended: 27 February 2007 – Ord. No.2007-04; Effective 12 March 2007)(Amended: 22 February 2011 – Ord. No. 2011-03)(Amended: 25 March 2014; Ord. 2014-03)

(7) Directional signs. Directional signs shall be subject to the following:

(a) Such signs may be in addition to, or in lieu of, off-premise advertising signs erected in accordance with sub.(6).

(b) Directional signs are permitted where a change in travel direction is required as shown in the following illustration, examples 1 and 3. A directional sign which indicates that a use is straight ahead is permitted only where the person seeking the use might normally follow a main travel route (compare the following illustration, examples 2 and 4).

(c) Unless limitation is waived, no more than 4 such signs shall be permitted for each use. If multiple travel routes to a particular use are logical, the Planning Director, upon referral and recommendation of the Zoning Administrator, may waive this limitation and authorize the number of such signs deemed necessary.

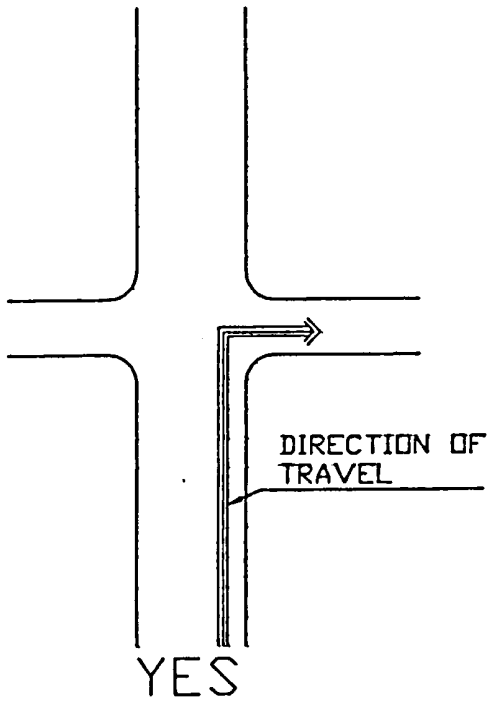
(d) Directional signs shall only contain information identifying the name of an establishment, the distance to the establishment, and a directional arrow. No other information shall be identified on the sign.

(e) Such signs shall only be permitted in proximity of road intersections, but shall not obstruct clear visibility of traffic along any public road or intersection of roads.

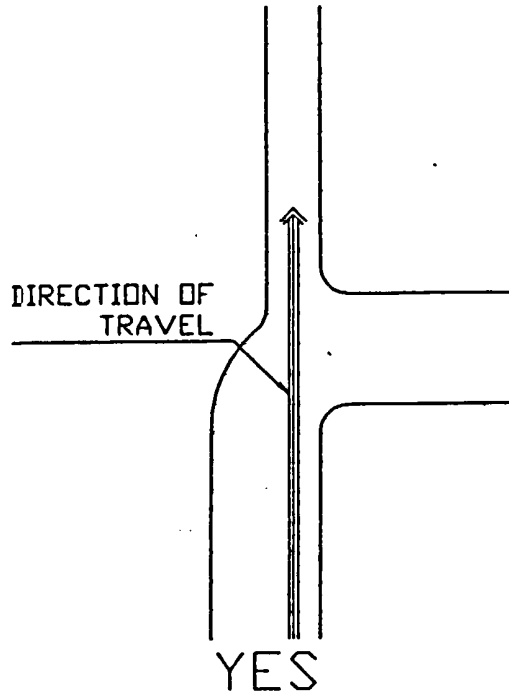
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Directional Signs Indicating Change in Road

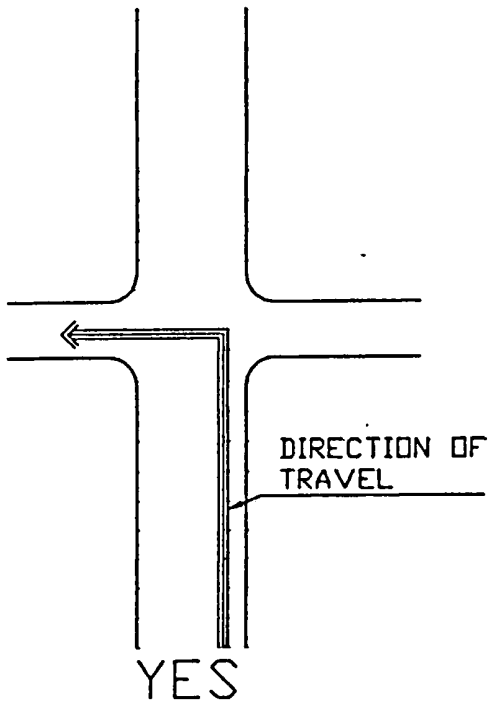
Example 1



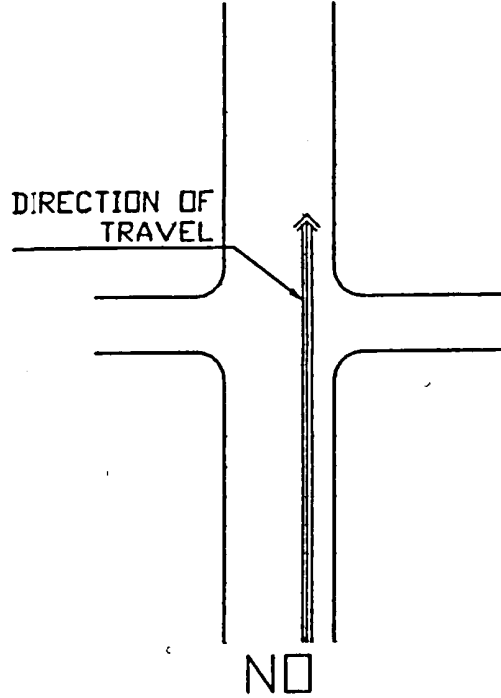
Example 2



Example 3



Example 4



8.05 Permits.

(1) The following signs shall require a sign permit as provided in s. 11.02, sign permits:

(a) Directional signs.

(b) Election campaign signs which exceed 4 square feet in sign face area and which are not located on residential property, as defined in s. 12.04, Wis. Stats.

(c) On-premise signs which are any of the following:

1. Advertising signs which are freestanding or projecting signs.
2. Residential neighborhood signs.
3. Temporary new development signs.

(d) All off-premise signs except temporary civic event signs which promote events of community significance.

(2) All other signs not listed in sub. (1) shall not require a sign permit, but shall comply with the other requirements of this chapter.

(3) The changing or altering of the sign face area shall require a sign permit, unless the sign is exempted from the permit requirement as provided in sub.(2). The changing of text or logos or the repainting and routine maintenance of signs shall not be deemed changes or alterations requiring a sign permit.

8.06 Nonconforming signs.

(1) Except as specified in sub. (2), nonconforming signs may continue, but structural alterations or repairs to the sign or support structure are prohibited, unless the sign is brought into conformity with this Ordinance. (Amended: 25 February 1997, Ord. 6-97)

(2) Signs that are nonconforming because they are in a public right-of-way; are flashing, fluttering, or moving signs; contain obscene language, symbols, or pictures; or which remain beyond a time limit specified by this chapter or by the sign permit shall be removed or brought into compliance. If such sign is not removed or brought into compliance, the owner or lessee of the property upon which the sign is located shall be subject to prosecution and penalties as provided in chapter 12, enforcement.

8.07 Abandoned signs.

(1) Abandoned signs shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the property upon which the sign is located, unless the sign's message is changed in compliance with this Ordinance. Such removal or change of message shall be completed within 1 year of the date upon which it becomes an abandoned sign.

(2) If the owner or lessee fails to remove the sign, the Zoning Administrator shall give the owner 60 days written notice to remove said sign or change its message in compliance with this Ordinance. Upon failure to comply with this notice, the owner or lessee of the property upon which the sign is located shall be subject to prosecution and penalties as provided in chapter 12, enforcement.

8.08 Town of Washington additional sign requirements. The following shall apply only within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Town of Washington.

(1) No off-premise advertising signs shall be permitted.

(2) Directional signs.

(a) All directional signs shall be located on common signposts provided by the Town of Washington, said signs considered as public signage for the purpose of this Ordinance.

(b) No business which is located outside of the jurisdictional boundaries of the Town of Washington shall be identified on the common signposts.

(c) Number of directional signs. No single business parcel shall have more than 3 signs located on any common signpost within the Town of Washington, nor shall any single business parcel have more than one sign on any single common signpost.

(d) Location of common signposts. Common signposts shall be located at intersections as official public signage, and shall identify the most direct, expeditious, and convenient route to individual businesses. Intersections with common signposts shall be authorized by the Town Board of Supervisors.

(e) Character, design, and construction requirements.

1. All directional signs shall be uniform in color, size, and shape as determined by the Washington Town Board of Supervisors.

2. All directional signs shall be constructed to the exact standards set by the Town of Washington.
 3. All directional signs shall contain information identifying business name, distance to business in miles, and a directional arrow, if appropriate. No other information shall be identified on any such sign.
- (3) Election campaign signs. In addition to the requirements contained in s. 8.04(1), the following provisions shall be met for election campaign signs which are not located on residential property, as defined in s. 12.04, Wis. Stats.:
- (a) No such sign shall be erected more than 30 days prior to a primary election.
 - (b) No such sign shall exceed 4 square feet in sign face area.
 - (c) No such sign shall be located within 15 feet of a public right-of-way or adjacent lot line.
 - (d) No more than one sign for each candidate shall be allowed on a single parcel or lot.

8.09 Town of Gibraltar additional sign requirements.

- (1) Findings. It is a primary objective of the Town of Gibraltar to maintain and enhance its unique visual character. That character emphasizing water vistas, scenic beauty, and historic buildings could be threatened by the uncontrolled proliferation of signs. The resultant scenic blight would diminish the community's attractiveness to tourists, reduce property values, and the distractions of excessive signage could aggravate traffic safety concerns. (Amended: 18 April 2000; Ord. 06-00 - Effective 29 May 2000)
- (2) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to set forth additional requirements to safeguard life, health, property, and public welfare and to preserve and enhance aesthetic values by regulating and controlling the design, size, number, location, construction, illumination, installation, and maintenance of all signs referred to in this section.
- (3) Applicability. This section shall apply to all signs located within the Town of Gibraltar. (Amended: 18 April 2000; Ord. 06-00 - Effective 29 May 2000)
- (4) Additional general sign requirements. The following requirements shall be in addition to any requirements listed in s. 8.03, general sign requirements.
 - (a) No sign shall be illuminated from within, except "Vacancy/No Vacancy" signs.
 - (b) Each business shall be permitted no more than two art flags. The use of any other sign not otherwise authorized by this ordinance, or any banner, pennant,

flag, balloon, streamers, or similar articles, or the outdoor display of clothing and accessories, stuffed animals, or posters, for identifying or advertising a product, business, show, or carnival shall be prohibited unless duly authorized by the Gibraltar Town Board. (Amended: 18 April 2000; Ord. 06-00 - Effective 29 May 2000)

(c) No satellite dish shall be used as a sign or sign structure.

(d) No sign shall be affixed to public utility poles.

(e) Reader boards shall be prohibited. (Amended: 23 March 2004; Ord. 2004-09)

(f) All wall, projecting, and free-standing (including directional) signs shall be constructed predominantly of natural materials such as wood or manufactured materials which give the appearance of wood. Signs with relief are encouraged. (Amended: 24 February 2009; Ord. 2009-02; Effective: 6 March 2009)

(g) Projecting Signs. Projecting signs shall not exceed 16 feet in height, except that such signs shall not extend above the roof if the roof of the building is less than 16 feet in height.

(h) Freestanding signs.

1. Such signs shall not exceed a height of 12 feet.

2. In order to provide visual clearance for vehicles, freestanding signs located within 15 feet of an intersection of two public rights-of-way, or an intersection of a driveway and a public right-of way, shall not exceed 3 feet in height or the bottom of the sign shall be at least 7 feet above grade.

3. Such signs shall be self-supporting structures permanently attached to sufficient foundations.

4. Electric service to freestanding signs shall be underground.

(i) Vehicular signs. No motor vehicle or trailer, which has attached thereto or located thereon any sign for the purpose of advertising a product or directing people to a business activity, shall be parked in view of a public road for more than 3 consecutive hours.

(5) Additional requirements for particular signs. The following requirements shall be in addition to any requirements provided in s. 8.03, general sign requirements, and s. 8.04, specific requirements for particular signs:

(a) Flags. There shall be not more than 2 government entity flags or nonprofit organization flags, emblems, or insignia displayed on a lot or building site at any one time, with the exception that no limitation shall be imposed on the display of

the United States Flag. Such flags, emblems, or insignia shall not be illuminated, with the exception of the United States flag. Flagpoles shall not exceed a height of 35' above preconstruction grade.

(Amended: 24 February 2009; Ord. 2009-02; Effective 6 March 2009)(Amended: 18 April 2000; Ord. 06-00 - Effective 29 May 2000) (Amended: 28 May 2002; Ord. 08-02 - Effective 8 July 2002)

(b) Nameplates and/or addresses; "No Hunting;" "No Trespassing;" "No Dumping;" "Open/Closed;" and "Vacancy/No Vacancy" signs shall not exceed 2 square feet in sign face area. No more than one "Open/Closed" and one "Vacancy/No Vacancy" sign shall be displayed for each business.

(c) Election campaign signs. In addition to the requirements of s. 8.04(1), election campaign signs which are not located on residential property, as defined in s. 12.04, Wis. Stats., shall meet the following:

1. Such signs shall not be erected or displayed earlier than 45 days prior to the primary election and shall be removed within 2 days following the general election.
2. Signs shall not exceed 4 square feet in sign face area.
3. Such signs shall be set back at least 15 feet from a public right-of-way.
4. Only one such sign for each candidate or measure shall be permitted on any lot or parcel.

(d) Outdoor vending machines shall be placed only next to the wall of a principal building, shall not be located within any public right-of-way, nor shall be placed on any public sidewalk.

(e) There shall be no more than 3 windsocks displayed on any parcel at any time.

(f) Temporary special event signs which promote events of community significance shall require authorization of the Gibraltar Town Board.

(g) Off-premise advertising signs. Off-premise advertising signs other than directional signs shall be prohibited. (Amended: 18 April 2000; Ord. 06-00 - Effective 29 May 2000)

(h) On-premise advertising signs. On-premise advertising signs shall be restricted as follows:

1. When there is only one business on a lot, such signage shall comply with the following requirements:
 - a. Not more than 2 advertising signs which are freestanding or projecting

signs shall be permitted.

b. The total area of all advertising signs (including wall and window signs) shall not exceed 36 square feet in sign face area and no individual sign shall exceed 24 square feet in sign face area.

2. When more than one business establishment are located in a single building or on one lot, such signage shall comply with the following requirements:

a. Two signs advertising the name of the multiple business establishment shall be permitted. Each sign shall not exceed 24 square feet in sign face area and the total sign face area of the 2 signs shall not exceed 36 square feet.

b. In addition to the 2 signs advertising the name of the multiple business establishment, directory signs shall be permitted for the establishment in accordance with the following table:

<u>Number of Businesses</u>	<u>Number of Directory Signs Allowed</u>	<u>Square Footage of Each Directory Sign</u>
2 - 4	1	12 sq. ft.
5 - 10	2	16 sq. ft.
11 - 15	2	20 sq. ft.
Over 15	3	20 sq. ft.

c. Each business within the multiple business establishment shall be permitted 2 signs. Each sign must be placed either on the entrance door or the exterior wall of the business. Each sign shall not exceed 6 square feet in sign face area and the total sign face area of the 2 signs shall not exceed 10 square feet.

(i) Directional signs.

1. Directional signs shall only be located on common signposts provided by the Town of Gibraltar and shall only be permitted at each intersection of Main Street/State Highway 42 with a town or county road, each intersection of two county roads, and each intersection of a county and town road. (Amended: 18 April 2000; Ord. 06-00 - Effective 29 May 2000)

2. Such signs shall be white with black lettering and shall measure 4 feet wide by 8 inches high.

3. Directional signs shall not be permitted for any business located immediately adjacent to Main Street/State Highway 42.
4. No business shall be permitted more than one directional sign, except that a business which operates on or from 2 roads shall be permitted not more than 2 directional signs.
5. All costs associated with a directional sign shall be assumed by the business listed thereon.

8.10 Scenic Byway additional sign requirements.

- (1) Signs advertising an individual, entity, or activity conducted on the property upon which the sign is located shall be permitted provided the sign is located within the area bounded by the buildings, driveways, and parking areas in which the activity is conducted or within 50 feet of that area.
- (2) Any sign not meeting the parameters of sub.(1) is not allowed if visible from the main traveled way of the scenic byway. (Added: 23 March 2010; Ord. 2010-02)