

ORDINANCE NO. 2019-26

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF LARGO, FLORIDA AMENDING THE CITY OF LARGO COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT CODE CHAPTER 12 SIGN STANDARDS BY AMENDING SECTION 12.4.4 C., ENTITLED "MAINTENANCE OF SIGNS" AND SECTION 12.6 ENTITLED "NONCONFORMING, ABANDONED AND DAMAGED SIGNS" TO REVISE THE REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR COMPLIANCE WITH SIGN STANDARDS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the Largo City Commission has adopted the Comprehensive Development Code ("CDC") which encompasses all of the City's land development regulations; and

WHEREAS, the CDC is intended to regulate and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Largo through reasonable, consistent and non-discriminatory sign standards, and to implement the City's Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of Largo, Florida, adopted Ordinance No. 2007-27 on June 5, 2007, which provided for the amortization over a ten (10) year period of existing pole signs made nonconforming by the adoption of the ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of Largo, Florida, adopted Ordinance No. 2014-72 on August 19, 2014, which extended the amortization period for existing nonconforming pole signs for an additional two (2) years; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission wishes to continue to prohibit nonconforming, damaged and abandoned signs;

WHEREAS, the City Commission wishes to continue to protect the safety of motorists, pedestrians, and others from distraction caused by signs;

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that some signs, particularly large signs, detract from the aesthetic beauty of the landscape and the City Commission wishes to preserve the aesthetic beauty of the City of Largo;

WHEREAS, the regulation of signage for purposes of aesthetics has long been recognized as advancing the public welfare;

WHEREAS, the City Commission wishes to continue to restrict the height and size of particular signs and that such restrictions advance the City's goal of preserving the aesthetic beauty of the City of Largo;

WHEREAS, the City Commission recognizes that pending amortization date may be a challenge for some business owners within the City of Largo who must balance the repair costs of existing, damaged, nonconforming signs against the replacement costs of a conforming sign; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission recognizes and supports the need to eliminate the nonconforming sign amortization period while providing sufficient provisions to ensure the eventual conformity of all signs with the City's sign code; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission determines that it is in the best interest of its residents, businesses and visitors to amend the CDC to clearly address the maintenance of signs and the treatment of nonconforming, abandoned and damaged signs.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY OF LARGO CITY COMMISSION HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. That the above recitals are true and correct and are incorporated by reference as the findings of the City Commission.

SECTION 2. That Section 12.4.4 C of the Comprehensive Development Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

C. Maintenance of signs - All portions of a sign and its supporting structure shall be maintained in a safe condition, so as not to be detrimental to public health and safety, and in neat appearance according to the following:

- (1) Signs shall be structurally sound, kept in a vertical, upright position and securely attached to the applicable supporting foundation at all times.
- (2) If the sign is lighted, all lights shall be maintained in working order and functioning in a safe manner.
- (3) Internal electrical, mechanical or structural components shall not be exposed.
- (4) Exposed surfaces shall be clean and free of rust, dents and holes.
- (5) If the sign is painted, the painted surface shall be kept in good condition and shall not be peeling or flaked.
- (6) Every sign shall be kept in such manner as to constitute a complete or whole sign.
- (7) No trash shall be allowed to accumulate in the area around a freestanding sign and all weeds shall be kept out. Landscaping shall be properly maintained according to Chapter 10 landscape standards and/or an approved development order.
- (8) All applicable maintenance standards found in Chapter 18 of the CDC.

SECTION 3. That Section 12.6 of the Comprehensive Development Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

Section 12.6 Nonconforming, Abandoned and Damaged Signs

12.6.1 Nonconforming Signs

A. Objective - To have all previously permitted signs which no longer conform to the standards of this CDC (legal, nonconforming signs) within the City of Largo removed in an expeditious manner, while

minimizing the cost associated with removal.

B. Applicability - Removal of all signs not conforming with the provisions of this Section shall be required. Allowable signage for developed properties shall be based on the underlying land use designation for the property. No freestanding signs shall be permitted on vacant and/or undeveloped property. The type, number, and dimensional standards for allowable signage shall be shown on a master sign plan pursuant to the requirements of this Section.

C. Removal - Removal of all nonconforming signs shall be required when one or more of the following circumstances apply to a property containing nonconforming signs:

- (1) A Development Permit (DP) is required for work on a new or existing sign or its light source;
- (2) A DO is required for development or (re)development of the property (e.g., a Level II Full Scale Review as described under Section 3.1.2, above).

12.6.2 Abandoned and/or Damaged Signs

A. Objective - To have all abandoned or damaged signs within the City of Largo removed in an expeditious manner, while minimizing the costs associated with removal.

B. Applicability -

(1) Damaged sign - Any damaged sign must be repaired or replaced by the sign owner within ninety (90) days after written notification from the City of Largo.

(2) Abandoned conforming sign - Any sign conforming with the requirements of this Chapter, pertaining to or associated with an event or business which is no longer ongoing and which has been inactive or out of business for a period of ninety (90) consecutive days or longer shall be removed by the sign owner within ninety (90) days after written notification from the City of Largo.

a. Exception - A conforming sign that is abandoned can remain for 180 consecutive days as long as the name of the business is no longer visible on the sign face by replacing the sign copy with a blank face or covering the sign with a temporary covering, such as a sign cover, sign banner or sign bag. Such sign coverings shall be weather resistant and maintained in good condition.

b. On a property with multiple tenants with a sign dedicated to the individual tenants, if the sign is sixty percent (60%) or more blank for a period of ninety (90) days or more, it shall be removed. If the sign otherwise conforms with the requirements of this Chapter, the property owner shall be given ninety (90) days after written notice from the City, to bring the sign into compliance with all requirements of this Chapter. If the sign is a nonconforming sign, it shall be removed within thirty (30) days after written notice from the City.

(3) Nonconforming abandoned and/or damaged signs –

a. Any damaged nonconforming sign that requires a permit to be repaired shall be removed within thirty (30) days after written notification from the City of Largo.

b. Any abandoned nonconforming sign pertaining to or associated with an event or business which is no longer ongoing and which has been inactive or out of business for a period of thirty (30) consecutive days or longer shall be removed within thirty (30) days after written notification from the City of Largo.

SECTION 4. That all ordinances or parts thereof inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed and superseded.

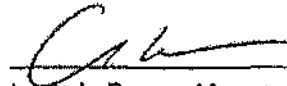
SECTION 5. That it is the intention of the City Commission that each provision hereof be considered severable, and, if any section, subsection, sentence, or provision of this ordinance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance shall not be affected.

SECTION 6. That this ordinance shall become effective immediately upon its final passage and adoption.

APPROVED ON FIRST READING March 19, 2019

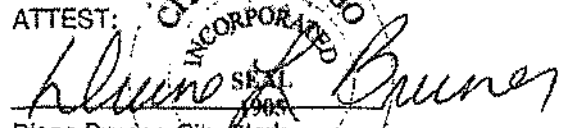
PASSED AND ADOPTED ON
SECOND AND FINAL READING April 2, 2019

CITY OF LARGO, FLORIDA



Louis L. Brown, Mayor

ATTEST:



Diane Bruner, City Clerk

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:



Alan Zimmer, City Attorney

