

ORDINANCE NO. 2024- 04

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF REPUBLIC, WASHINGTON, ADDING A NEW CHAPTER 15.20 TO THE REPUBLIC MUNICIPAL CODE WHICH REGULATES AND CONTROLS THE SIZE, CONSTRUCTION, LOCATION, ELECTRIFICATION AND MAINTENANCE OF EXTERIOR SIGNS AND SIGN STRUCTURES IN THE COMMERCIAL ZONE OF THE CITY OF REPUBLIC.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Republic, Washington, has determined that it is necessary to preserve and improve the appearance of the commercial zone in the City and provide clarity, visibility and public safety for pedestrians and motorists that certain regulations be enacted to regulate and control the size, construction, location, electrification and maintenance of exterior signs and sign structures in the commercial zone in the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Republic, Washington, do ordain as follows:

SECTION 1 – AMENDMENT BY ADDITION.

It is hereby added a new Chapter 15.20 to the Republic Municipal Code entitled “Signs” as follows:

“15.28.010 Intent.

The intent and purpose of this chapter is to create a set of signage standards for signs that promote the commerce of Republic and its businesses in a way that is effective, safe, consistent and visually pleasing to residents and visitors. This is accomplished by regulating and controlling the size, construction, location, electrification and maintenance of exterior signs and sign structures in the commercial zone. This chapter preserves and improves the appearance of the City as a place to live, and provides clarity, visibility and public safety for pedestrians and motorists.

15.28.020 Administration and Enforcement.

- (1) All permanent and temporary signs shall comply with the provisions of this chapter;
- (2) The Administrator is authorized to review and approve or deny applications for permits and enforce all provisions of this chapter;

- (3) Where there is ambiguity or dispute concerning the interpretation of this chapter, the decision of the Administrator shall prevail, subject to appeal as provided herein;
- (4) Any unlawful sign which has not been removed within 10-days after notice of a violation may be removed by the Administrator or his/her designee without further notice, and the costs shall be charged to the violator;
- (5) All signs for which a permit is required shall be subjected to inspection and reinspection as may be deemed necessary by the Administrator; and
- (6) All signs, including non-complying and abandoned signs, and sign support structures, together with all of their supports, braces, guides and anchors, must be maintained in a condition which is safe and appears as originally permitted.

15.28.030 Definitions and Abbreviations.

"Abandoned signs" means any sign located on property that is vacant and unoccupied for a period of six months or more; or any sign which pertains to any occupant, business or event unrelated to the present occupant or use; or any sign in ill repair for more than 30 days, except real estate signs advertising a property for rent, lease or sale, provided that such property is, in fact, still for rent, sale or lease.

"Administrator" means the clerk-treasurer of the city, or their designee.

"Dilapidated" means a sign that has fallen into a state of disrepair, ruin or decay by misuse or neglect.

"Directional sign" means a permanently mounted sign intended to guide pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

"Directory sign" means a sign that lists the tenants or occupants of a multiple tenant building complex, or commercial zone.

"Electric sign" means any sign containing electrical wiring, but not including signs illuminated by an exterior light source.

"Electronic message centers (EMCs)" means a sign whose display may include messages that are static, messages that appear or disappear from the display through dissolve, fade, travel or scroll modes, or similar transitions and frame effects that have text, animated graphics or images that appear to move or change in size, or be revealed sequentially rather than all at once.

"Freestanding sign" (also "pole sign") means any sign supported by one or more uprights, poles or braces in or upon the ground and that are independent from any building or other structure.

"Hazardous" means a sign that is deemed dangerous or unsafe by way of condition, design, support and/or structure; causing potential risk of physical harm to persons or property.

"Illuminated sign" means any electric sign or other sign employing the use of any lighting sources for the purpose of decorating, outlining, accentuating or brightening the sign area.

"Monument sign" means a freestanding sign which is attached to the ground by means of a wide base.

"Multiple-tenant building" means a single structure housing two or more retail, office, or commercial uses.

"Noncomplying sign" means a sign which was legally installed under laws or ordinances in effect prior to the effective date of the ordinance codified in this chapter or subsequent revisions, but which is in conflict with the provisions of this chapter.

"Off-premises directory sign" means a sign which directs traffic to a place other than on the property on which the sign is located.

"Off-premises sign" means a sign which advertises or promotes merchandise, services, goods, or entertainment which are sold, produced, manufactured or furnished at a place other than on the property on which the sign is located.

"On-premises sign" means a sign advertising the business or the owner, or the products or services offered on the property.

"Portable sign" means any sign not permanently attached to the ground or other permanent structure, or a sign designed to be transported, including, but not limited to, signs designed to be transported by means of wheels, signs converted to A- or 1-frames, menu and sandwich board signs, balloons used as signs, and/or umbrellas used for advertising.

"Projecting sign" means a sign, other than a wall sign, which projects from and is supported by a wall of a building or structure.

"Projection" means the distance by which a sign extends over public property or beyond any face of the building.

"Roof sign" means a sign erected upon a roof or parapet of a building or structure.

"Sign" means any communication device, structure, or fixture, including the supporting structure, that identifies, advertises and/or promotes an activity, product, service place, or business.

"Sign area" (also "display area") means the entire area of a sign on which copy or other form of advertising is to be placed, including any background surface, material or color that forms an integral part of the display or is used to differentiate the sign from the backdrop or nearest structure. Sign support structures shall not be included in the calculation of sign area. Sign area shall be based upon one side of a flat two-sided sign only (i.e., angular signs consisting of two distinctly different sign surfaces, and multi-sided signs shall include all sides in their calculation).

"Sign height" means the vertical distance measured from either the grade below the sign or upper surface of the nearest street curb, whichever permits the greatest sign height, to the highest point of the sign.

"Sign structure" means any structure which supports or is capable of supporting any sign defined in this code. A sign structure may be a single pole and may or may not be an integral part of the building.

"Structure" means that which is built or constructed, an edifice or building of any kind, or any piece of work artificially built up or composed of parts joined together in some definite manner.

"Suspended sign" is a sign which hangs below the permanent overhang, marquee or canopy extending over public or private sidewalks or rights-of-way.

"Temporary sign" means a sign, banner, pennant, valance, or advertising display constructed of plastic, cloth, paper, canvas, cardboard, and/or light, nondurable materials. Types of displays included in this category are political campaign signs, grand openings, special sales, special events, construction and garage sale signs.

"Up-lighting" means lighting that is directed in such a manner as to shine light rays above the horizontal plane.

"Wall sign" (also "flush mounted") means any sign attached to or erected against and parallel to the wall of a building, not projecting more than 12 inches from the wall.

15.28.040 Permits.

- (1) Application for Permit. Application for a sign permit shall be made in writing upon forms furnished by the Administrator. Such application shall contain the type of sign to be erected, the location by street address, property owner's name and address, number of proposed sign structures and the sign contractor or erector, if any. The application shall also contain a depiction of the sign as completed that complies with the requirements of this chapter. The Administrator may require additional information that he or she feels is necessary to ensure compliance with this chapter, including but not limited to a building permit, a site plan depicting the locations of proposed signage and dimensions of the proposed signage. The Administrator shall seek input from the Public Works Director and Building Inspector prior to making a decision on the application.
- (2) Approval or Denial of Permit.
 - (a) A permit shall be issued on or before the end of a 14-business-day review period if the application for a sign complies with the regulations contained in this chapter;
 - (b) Upon denial of an application for sign permit, the applicant has 14 business days to appeal the decision to the city council who shall review the denial of said application at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
3. Fees. A sign permit fee shall be paid in accordance with the applicable fee schedule approved by the city council for all signs governed by this chapter. If a building or electrical permit is required for a sign, applicable fees shall be in addition to a sign permit fee.
4. Waiver of Fees. The following types of signs are subject to the provisions of this chapter, provided, that the fees required under Section 15.28.040(3) above are waived:
 - (a) Signs related to Prospector Days events, activities or businesses;
 - (b) Signs related to Winterfest events, activities or businesses;
 - (c) Signs related to fundraising events or activities by emergency or first responder organizations, districts or municipal entities;
 - (d) Signs related to fundraising events or activities by non-profit organizations or entities;
 - (e) Signs related to certain for-profit organizations, businesses or entities, upon request by the organization, business or entity, and approval by the city council.

All signs referenced in Section 15.28.040(4)(a-e) above are limited to hanging the sign no earlier than thirty (30) days prior to the event, and must be removed within three (3) days following the conclusion of the event.

15.28.050 Prohibited Signs.

The following signs are prohibited within the city of Republic:

- (1) Signs which imitate, closely resemble, confuse or obstruct the visibility or interpretation of an official traffic sign, exit signs, signals or similar devices;
- (2) Signs located on trees, utility poles, public benches or any other form of public property or within any public right-of-way; with the exception of public information kiosks, authorized road signs, public facility directional signs, public agency installed wayfinding signs or sandwich boards, as described herein;
- (3) Signs that are abandoned or in a dilapidated or hazardous condition;
- (4) Signs with loudspeakers, excluding drive-up windows designed with the intent of being reasonably audible only to the occupant(s) of a vehicle for the purpose of communicating business transactions;
- (5) Beacons, strobe lights, scrolling or flashing signs;
- (6) Electrified, LED or internally illuminated signs with white backgrounds;
- (7) Electronic message centers (EMCs);
- (8) Signs which contain statements, words or pictures advertising illegal activity;
- (9) Signs with changeable copy, aka reader boards, with the exception of gasoline price signs, and changeable copy that occurs no more than three (3) times in a twenty-four (24) hour period;
- (10) Off-premises signs with the exception of off-premises directory signs as provided herein; and
- (11) Portable signs, except sandwich board signs (A-frame signs) as provided herein.

15.28.060 Permanent On-Premises Signs.

Permanent on-premises signs are signs attached to a building or structure or to the ground in a manner that enables the sign to resist environmental loads, such as wind, and that preclude ready removal or movement of the sign and whose

intended use appears to be indefinite. Permanent signs include, but are not limited to, the following types of signs: wall signs, projecting signs, roof signs, freestanding signs, marquee signs, awning signs, monument, and multi-tenant signs.

Each business shall be permitted one permanent sign, not including wall signs, per street entrance. Multi-tenant signs shall count towards one of the allowable signs.

(1) Wall Signs.

(a) Permits may be obtained to erect multiple wall signs on each wall facing a street or public right-of-way;

(b) The maximum area for the total of all permitted wall signs for any single wall plane shall not exceed 25 percent;

(c) Wall signs shall not project more than 12 inches from the wall plane and shall be mounted parallel with the building face; and

(d) Clearance under the lowest point of any wall sign which projects more than two inches over a public walkway shall not be less than eight feet.

(2) Projecting Signs.

(a) Signs shall conform to the clearance and projection requirements of Table 1:

Table 1
Projection of Signs

Clearance	Maximum Projection
Less than 8'	Not Permitted
8'	2'
8' to 16'	2', plus 6" for each foot of clearance in excess of 8'
Over 16'	5'

(b) The total area of all projecting signs shall not exceed 15 square feet or project more than five feet from the building face. The structure around or supporting the sign shall not be included in the total area;

(c) Clearance under the lowest point of any sign which projects more than two inches over a public walkway shall not be less than eight feet;

(d) Clearance from High Voltage Power Lines. Signs shall be located not less than six feet horizontally or 12 feet vertically from overhead

electrical conductors which are energized in excess of 750 volts. The term "overhead conductors," as used in this section, means any electrical conductor, either bare or insulated, installed above the ground, except such conductors as are enclosed in iron pipe or other material covering of equal strength; and

- (e) No permitted sign or sign structure shall project into any public alley below a height of 14 feet above grade.
- (3) Roof Signs. No roof sign shall exceed the highest point of the structure the sign is advertising unless part of a facade.
- (4) Freestanding Signs.
 - (a) A minimum separation between all freestanding signs shall be 50 feet;
 - (b) The maximum height for freestanding signs shall be 8 feet and the maximum sign size shall be 32 square feet.
- (5) Monument Signs. The minimum separation between all monument signs shall be fifty (50) feet.
- (6) Multi-Tenant Signs.
 - (a) Multi-tenant commercial signs shall be located within the business complex for which they advertise and only tenants of that business complex may advertise on the sign;
 - (b) Any business advertising on a multi-tenant commercial sign may not have a separate freestanding sign on its property located within the associated business complex.
- (7) Directional Signs. Directional signs shall be located on the premises to which the sign is intended to guide or direct pedestrian or vehicular traffic and shall not exceed two square feet per face, with the exception of authorized road signs or public agency directional signs. Directional signs shall not be included in the maximum number of signs allowed.

15.28.070 Miscellaneous Sign Restrictions.

- (1) All signs visible from State Route 21 must be in conformance with the standards of the Scenic Vistas Act (Chapter 47.42 RCW and Chapter 468-66 WAC) that are incorporated herein by this reference and as such are subject to WSDOT rules, regulations and noncompliance penalties. In the case of conflict between the requirements of the Scenic Vistas Act and this code, the more restrictive requirement shall apply;

- (2) All signs that are located within the shoreline area, as defined by the City of Republic shoreline master program, must comply with the shoreline master program as it now exists or hereinafter amended;
- (3) A suspended sign cannot exceed three square feet in area;
- (4) Signs illuminated by up-lighting shall be shielded by a roof overhang or similar structure to protect the night sky. Indirectly illuminated signs shall be directed away from adjacent properties and shall not project light from the light source across property lines or directly toward traffic; and
- (5) Drive-through menu board signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in area and a maximum height of seven feet, and shall face away from the street and residential properties.

15.28.080 Temporary Signs.

Temporary signs are signs not intended for permanent installation which are to be used for a limited amount of time. Types of temporary signs include but are not limited to political campaign signs, banners, pennants and special event signs.

- (1) Temporary signs must be removed within seven days of the completion of the event or activity.
- (2) Temporary signs may extend across a public street or right-of-way only after a permit from the appropriate agency is obtained. Such signs, when extended over a public street, shall maintain a minimum height clearance of 20 feet.
- (3) Sandwich Board Signs (A-Frame Signs).
 - (a) Each sandwich board sign shall be no taller than 42 inches and no wider than 30 inches;
 - (b) Each sandwich board sign shall be properly anchored to ensure it does not tip or blow over and to prevent injury or damage;
 - (c) Each sandwich board shall be placed within the property boundary lines of the business applying for the sign permit or may be located in the public right-of-way adjoining the property, not to extend beyond a sidewalk or curb, or into the roadway or parking lot/stall. Sandwich boards shall be allowed to remain only during business hours;
 - (d) Only one sandwich board sign shall be allowed per business/use;

- (e) No sandwich board shall obstruct wheelchair access or obstruct pedestrian traffic; and
 - (f) Sandwich boards shall not be located within 10 feet of each other.
- (4) The following temporary signs shall not be subject to the provisions of this chapter, provided, that such temporary signs are limited to hanging such signs no earlier than ten (10) days prior to the event and must be removed within three (3) days following the conclusion of the event:
- (a) Signs depicting a car wash or similar event, typically as a fundraiser for a group or organization;
 - (b) Signs depicting the sale of beverages, typically as a fundraiser for a group or organization, or youth activities (for example, lemonade stands);
 - (c) Signs depicting yard or garage sales (limited to one (1) set of signs for the event per calendar year per address). If such limitation is exceeded, the signs must then comply with the provisions of this chapter.

15.28.090 Sign Location.

- (1) No sign shall project over or within the public right-of-way or easement with the exception of road signs, or approved sandwich boards as described herein, or directional signs that identify and/or provide direction to public facilities. Authorized road signs and directional signs shall be installed and maintained by a public agency;
- (2) Signs shall not be placed in areas where a vehicle driver's visibility (intersections, alleys, driveways) might be obscured; and
- (3) Signs shall be located on the premises of the business, activity, service, etc., being offered as provided in this chapter.

15.28.100 Design and Construction.

- (1) All signs shall be designed and constructed as provided for in Chapter 16 of the International Building Code (IBC) as it presently exists or as hereinafter amended;
- (2) All signs, including signs depicting company or business logos shall conform to the Western-Rustic Victorian architectural style as required in RMC 17.12.020, as amended, and shall be lettered with approved fonts only as adopted by the city council.

15.28.110 Electrical.

All signs containing electrical wiring shall be subject to the provisions of the governing electrical code, and the electrical components used shall bear the label accepted by the Washington Department of Labor and Industries.

15.28.120 Noncomplying Signs.

Any sign that is not in compliance with the provisions of this chapter upon its adoption shall be deemed a noncomplying sign. All noncomplying signs lawfully existing under all codes and regulations prior to the adoption of the ordinance codified in this chapter shall be allowed to continue and be maintained as a legal noncomplying sign for the duration of its life, provided:

- (1) No sign shall be changed in any manner that increases its noncompliance with the provisions of this chapter;
- (2) The sign is not hazardous or abandoned;
- (3) Signs damaged, altered or structurally modified by more than 25 percent of the total square footage or exceeding 25 percent of the replacement cost of the original sign shall be brought into compliance with this chapter; and
- (4) Legal, complying structural supports for abandoned signs may remain, if installed with a blank sign face and supporting structures are maintained.

15.28.130 Variances.

Any person may apply for an administrative modification of sign standards (variance) under the requirements of this chapter. Variances, however, will not nullify the intent or purpose of this chapter.

- (1) For a fee, in accordance with the applicable fee schedule approved by the city council, the applicant may apply to the city council for a variance of this chapter.
- (2) Upon a public hearing and review, the city council will grant or deny the request for modification.

15.28.140 Violations and Penalties.

The placement of any permanent sign without a sign permit shall be unlawful. Any person found to have violated any provision of this chapter shall be guilty of a civil infraction, and upon conviction thereof, shall be punishable by a civil penalty of an amount not to exceed \$250.00. Each 10 days that the violation continues shall be deemed to be a separate offense.

15.28.150 Indemnification.

The city, its officers, agents and employees shall be held harmless against any and all claims resulting from the erection, alteration, relocation, construction or maintenance of signs legally allowed as a result of this chapter.

SECTION 2 – SEVERABILITY. If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance is declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining parts of this Ordinance.

SECTION 3 – EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall take effective from and after its passage by the City Council, approval by the Mayor, and five (5) days after publication as required by law.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Republic, Washington, at its regular open meeting this 8th day of August, 2024.

APPROVED:



Gabriel Becklin, Mayor

ATTEST:



Nicolas Olsen, City Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

W. Scott DeTro, City Attorney

