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**ORDINANCE NO. 2026-04-01**

An Ordinance, Amending Section 15.6.4, Definitions, Repealing and Replacing Section 15.6.9 Permitted Signs by Use, and 15.6.10 Permitted Signs by Definition and Requirements Subsections (a) through (m)

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**Whereas**, the Sign Code is in Section 15, Building Code, and currently limits businesses to one wall sign or one monument sign, in most cases; and

**Whereas**, the Sign Code limits multi-tenant buildings to identifying more than two businesses on a single monument sign; and

**Whereas**, buildings with between one and three tenants are subject to these regulations, and buildings with more than three tenants are permitted greater flexibility under the Planned Sign Code Requirements; and

**Whereas**, numerous businesses have more than one wall sign and a monument sign; and

**Whereas**, this ordinance would provide new applicants with similar opportunities; and

**Whereas**, businesses have generally desired to have a sign program like approved existing wall and ground signs; and

**Whereas**, the Ordinance amends the Sign Code to make the language as consistent and clear as possible, knowing that the Sign Code will be reviewed holistically with the Zoning Code Amendment Process; and

**Now, therefore**, the Common Council does ordain as follows: The City of Glendale desires to generally adopt revised regulations regarding the City's Sign Code.

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## **SECTION I**

The following Sections of the Glendale Code of Ordinances are hereby amended as listed below:

### **15.6.4 - Definitions. Sign.**

- 1) Any device for visual communications and the structure that supports it, which is used or is intended to attract the attention of the public, when the display of this device is visible beyond the boundaries of the property upon which the display is made.
- 2) The term "sign" shall not include national flags, flags of political subdivisions, and symbolic flags of any institution or business, or badge or insignia of the United States, State of Wisconsin, Milwaukee County, City of Glendale, foreign countries, or official historic plaques.
- 3) The term "sign" shall not include artworks, including but not limited to wall murals and statues, which do not contain a commercial message, logo, or branding.

## **SECTION 2**

The following Sections of the Glendale Code of Ordinances are hereby repealed in their entirety and replaced with the following:

### **15.6.9 Permitted signs by use.**

- a) *Single-family residence.*
  - 1) A single-family residence is allowed a nameplate sign not to exceed 3 square feet.
  - 2) No business signs are permitted in a residential district.
  - 3) Signs in residential districts shall not be illuminated.
  - 4) Temporary rummage sale signs are allowed.
  - 5) One sign may be located on the property of the sale, and two additional directional signs may be located on private property with the permission of the property owner.
- b) *Public uses, institutional uses, schools, and churches.*

- 1) The total permanent sign area allowed for public uses, institutional uses, schools, and churches shall be determined by the Planning and Architectural Review Commission.
  - 2) Traffic directional signs are permitted per 15.6.10(f)
  - 3) Landscaping is required at the base of all freestanding/monument signs as approved by the Zoning Administrator.
- c) *Residential subdivisions, condominiums, and apartment complexes.* Residential subdivisions, condominiums, and apartment complexes are allowed residential entry-way signs. Subdivision, condominium, and apartment complex signs shall, in addition to the requirements of this chapter, comply with the following guidelines:
- 1) *Area:* Maximum area based upon site conditions, as approved by the Planning and Architectural Review Commission, generally 15—30 square feet.
  - 2) *Height:* Maximum six feet for freestanding signs and 15 feet for signs mounted on building walls.
  - 3) *Materials:* Wood, stone, copper, stainless steel, stucco, brick, or any other material approved on a case-by-case basis by the Planning and Architectural Review Commission.
  - 4) *Lighting:* Lighting for subdivision and development signs shall be limited to ground lights directed at the sign.
  - 5) *Review:* Project name signs shall be designed to be integrated into an architectural or landscape feature. The sign(s) and landscape feature(s) shall be approved by the Planning and Architectural Review Commission.
- d) *Office, Retail, and Industrial buildings.*
- 1) **Monument Signs.** Buildings with up to three tenants or three individually owned condominium suites may have a monument sign. A maximum of three individual businesses may be identified on each monument sign.
  - 2) **Wall Signs.**
    - a. Each tenant or individually owned condominium suite with a separate exterior entrance shall be permitted to have a wall sign on the exterior building wall, as stated in 15.6.10 (c).
    - b. Buildings with four or more tenants or four individually owned condominium suites qualify for the planned signed program, which shall meet the requirements set forth in section 15.6.10(a).
    - c. Traffic directional signs are permitted per 15.6.10(f).
    - d. Landscaping is required at the base of all monument signs as approved by the Zoning Administrator.

- e) All establishments not covered specifically by this section will be governed by the sign restrictions provided in section 15.6.10 hereof.
- f) *Planned developments*. Entrance markers must be approved by the Planning and Architectural Review Commission. Signs shall be compatible with the development.
- g) Corporate and institutional campus signage.
  - 1) Freestanding traffic directional signs on properties ten acres or more:
    - a. Off-street traffic directional signs on private property that direct traffic from public rights-of-way shall require permits.
    - b. There is no limit to the number of directional signs to allow for orderly traffic flow, with approval of the Zoning Administrator.
    - c. The traffic directional signs shall be either monument-style signs or two-post style signs. No single post signs are permitted. For monument-style signs, at least a ten-inch base shall be provided. The signs shall coordinate with all other signs on the property regarding design, style, fonts, colors, etc.
    - d. The overall sign shall not exceed 16 square feet.
    - e. The traffic directional sign shall not exceed six feet, including base, if a monument-style sign.
    - f. The traffic directional sign shall be set back a minimum of five feet from any property line and shall be located so as not to impede vehicular or pedestrian traffic flow.
    - g. The traffic directional sign shall not impede vehicular or pedestrian traffic throughout the site/property.
  - 2) Wall sign traffic directional signs on properties ten acres or more:
    - a. Off-street traffic directional signs on private property that direct traffic from public rights-of-way to specific building entrances.
    - b. The number of wall directional signs shall be limited to five to ensure orderly traffic flow, with approval from the Zoning Administrator.
    - c. Wall signs shall be proportional to the building element to which they are attached. The signs shall coordinate with all other signs on the property regarding design, style, fonts, colors, etc.
    - d. The overall sign size shall not exceed ten square feet.

**15.6.10 Permitted signs by definition and requirements.**

NOTE: Refer to section 15.6.9 for permitted signs by use.

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a) *Planned sign program.* The program is designed for office, retail, and industrial centers with four or more tenants. The program allows commercial centers to have one free-standing sign (a master identification sign) to display the center's name, not the individual businesses within the center. Businesses within the center may display a wall sign to advertise their location. The intent of the planned sign program is to establish a theme for sign placement, lettering style, color, and related design considerations, while also reducing sign clutter.

(1) *Master identification sign.*

- a. Master identification signs are free-standing signs that identify the name of a multiple-tenant building or center. Such signs shall not contain the names of tenants or occupants of the center. Only office, retail, and industrial centers that qualify for the planned sign program (see section 15.6.9 for qualifications) will be permitted one free-standing master identification sign. This section is not meant to preclude the identification of the center being given the name of a principal tenant. It is meant to prohibit the use of tenant boards as the main identification signs.
- b. The area of a master identification sign shall be determined by the following formula:
  1. Centers of 100,000 square feet of building area or under will be permitted one monument sign of no more than 150 square feet.
  2. Centers over 100,000 square feet of building area will be subject to restrictions imposed by the plan commission.
- c. Height of a master identification sign.
  1. The height of a master identification sign shall not exceed ten feet and shall be a monument sign.
  2. Centers of over 100,000 square feet of building area will be subject to height restrictions imposed by the planning and architectural review commission.
    - a. The approved Plan Sign Program shall be signed by all owners of the property or their authorized agents, and by the Zoning Administrator or Designee, as authorized by the Planning and Architectural Review Commission.
    - b. A master identification sign shall be in a landscaped area of meaningful open space, of at least 250 square feet.

(2) *Wall signs (planned sign program).*

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- a. Individual businesses within retail and industrial centers are permitted a wall sign in addition to the master identification sign. In office centers, only tenants with separate exterior entrances will be permitted a wall sign.
  - b. The maximum area for each wall sign shall not exceed 150 square feet. (A guideline to follow when determining wall sign size is one square foot of signage per every lineal business front foot of tenant space).
- (3) *Tenant board signs (planned sign program)*. Tenant board signs are permitted for all industrial uses and office centers. Retail establishments without street frontage or exterior entrances may display a tenant board sign. Tenant board signs may be visible only to internal traffic. Sign letters identifying businesses may not exceed three inches in height. Location and number of signs are to be determined by the Planning and Architectural Review Commission.
- (4) *Traffic directional signs (planned sign program)*. Traffic directional signs are permitted for retail, industrial, and office centers. The signs must meet the size, height, and location requirements set forth in section 15.6.10(f).
- (5) *Requirements and procedures of the planned sign program*.
- a. All properties that qualify for the planned sign program must submit a planned sign program plan to the Planning and Architectural Review Commission for their property. No sign permit shall be issued for an individual business located on a property that requires a planned sign program until such a program plan is submitted and approved by the Planning and Architectural Review Commission. After the approval of a planned sign program, no sign shall be erected, placed, painted, or maintained, except in conformance with the planned sign program.
  - b. The planned sign program plan submittal must contain the following information:
    - 1. An accurate plot plan of the property indicating the location of buildings, building entrances, parking lots, driveways, landscaped areas, and sign locations;
    - 2. A building elevation drawing or rendering of any building face to which signs are to be attached.
    - 3. A landscape plan for meaningful open space.
    - 4. Computation of the maximum allowable total sign area, and the maximum dimensions and area for individual signs.
    - 5. Standards for consistency among signs to be located on the property will be made regarding:
      - i. Lettering or graphic style; and
      - ii. Lighting; and

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- iii. Material; and
  - iv. Color, or colors allowed.
    - c. The planned sign program may contain such other features and restrictions as the owners and the planning and architectural review commission may reasonably determine and agree to.
    - d. Reserved.
    - e. A planned sign program may be amended by filing a revised planned sign program for planning and architectural review commission review and approval.
6. *Other signs (planned sign program).* Properties required to have a planned sign program that are also allowed to have a digital billboard under this chapter shall integrate the digital billboard standards into the planned sign program.
- b) *Free-standing signs.* Except to the extent allowed in section 15.6.5(b), or other specific provisions of the code relating to government or temporary signs, or the planned sign program, or by State laws regulating political signs, free-standing signs shall not be allowed. Where allowed, free-standing signs shall be subject to the following regulations:
- (1) *Identification.* A freestanding sign may identify the individual business, building, or building complex only by name, or by name and principal service offered, where the name does not identify the principal service offered. For all uses, the sign may identify up to two businesses that occupy the same building and may identify the availability of an on-site automatic teller machine.
  - (2) *Total area.* A freestanding sign may be double-faced. The area of each free-standing sign face shall be computed as .6 square foot times the lineal front foot of the property, to a maximum of 150 square feet.
  - (3) *Placement and construction requirements.*
    - a. A freestanding sign shall be permanent in construction and subject to the requirements of the Building Code of the City of Glendale.
    - b. The height of a freestanding sign shall be no more than 15 feet.
    - c. The sign shall be in a landscaped area of open space of at least 100 square feet.
    - d. Freestanding signs must be at least 60 feet from monument signs and other freestanding signs.
    - e. A freestanding sign must be set back ten feet from the front property line.
- c) *Wall signs.*

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1) *Identification.* A wall “sign” may identify the individual business, building, or building complex. For all uses, the sign may identify up to three businesses that occupy the same building.

2) *Total area.*

a. In office, commercial, and industrial buildings containing three tenants or fewer, the total area of wall signs per building shall be computed as 0.8 square feet per lineal foot of frontage, to a maximum of 150 square feet total.

i. In multi-tenant office, commercial, and industrial buildings containing up to three businesses, the available sign area allowance is distributed among tenants.

ii. Each business is guaranteed a minimum of 50 square feet of wall sign, including in multi-tenant office, commercial, and industrial buildings of three or fewer tenants.

b. Total Number Permitted

i. No more than one wall sign is permitted per exterior building wall, except in multi-tenant buildings of three or fewer, as described in 15.6.10 (c)(2)a.

ii. No more than four wall signs are permitted per building.

iii. The total square footage of all wall signs shall not exceed the maximum permitted wall sign allowance per building.

c. The area of each wall sign in centers that require a planned sign program shall not exceed 100 square feet.

3) *Placement and construction requirements.*

a. A face of a wall sign may not project more than 12 inches from the wall.

b. A wall sign identifying a business must be placed on the wall of the structure the business occupies.

c. No part of a wall sign shall extend above the roof line unless it is erected on a parapet wall or fascia which extends above the roof line of a flat roof on at least three sides of a building.

d. A wall sign is allowed on a roof surface only if the roof surface is within 25 degrees of being vertical (i.e., mansard roof).

d) *Monument signs (see definitions).*

(1) *Identification.* A monument sign shall identify a business as permitted in 15.5.4. definitions. For all uses, the sign may identify up to 3 businesses occupying the same building.

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(2) *Total area.*

- a. The area of each monument sign face shall be computed as .6 square feet times the lineal front foot of the property, to a maximum of 150 square feet.
- b. A monument sign may have multiple faces.
  1. When the angle between sign faces measures 45 degrees or less, the total sign area shall be computed by measuring the square footage of a single face.
  2. When the angle between sign faces measures greater than 45 degrees, the total sign area shall be computed by adding the square footage of each face.

(3) *Placement and construction requirements.*

- a. A monument sign shall be permanent in construction and subject to the requirements of the Building Code of the City of Glendale.
- b. The height of a monument sign shall be no more than ten feet.
- c. The sign shall be in a landscaped area of open space, of at least 100 square feet.
- d. Monument signs must be at least 60 feet from free-standing signs and other monument signs.
- e. A monument sign must be set back ten feet from the front property line.

e) *Drive-Through Facility Signs.*

- (1) Per Section 13.1.210, Drive-through facilities are permitted additional signs for the drive-through related activities.
- (2) Per Section 13.1.210 (b)(12), no more than two additional signs are permitted on a zoning lot, unless the Zoning Administrator determines that additional signs and sign area are necessary to facilitate the flow of traffic.
  - i. Additional drive-through signs may include wall signs, menu boards, traffic directional signs, or as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- (3) Drive-through facility signs must adhere to the development standards outlined in Section 13.1.210.

f) *Awning signs (see definitions).*

- (1) The area of a non-illuminated awning sign shall be calculated as the area of the copy and/or logo enclosed by one continuous line, connecting the extreme points of the copy and/or logo.
- (2) When awning signs are entirely illuminated, changing the appearance or characteristics of the awning in any manner, the entire area of the awning will

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be calculated as the sign area. Illuminated awnings will require planning and architectural review commission approval.

(3) When only the area of the awning where the copy and/or logo is located and illuminated, the area of the sign will be measured as the length and height of the illuminated portion of the awning.

g) *Traffic directional signs.* Traffic directional signs are permitted and located solely for the purpose of relieving traffic congestion and promoting the safe flow of traffic:

(1) One single or double-faced free-standing sign shall be permitted for each driveway. Traffic directional signs may be located up to the property line and shall be no higher than five feet above the established grade.

(2) The area of each side of a traffic directional sign shall not exceed six square feet.

(3) Twenty-five percent of the area of each side of a traffic directional sign may be used for the business name or logo.

(4) Internal traffic directional signs may be located within larger properties to direct traffic to specific locations on the site. Such signs may be single or double-sided as needed, may be no taller than five feet, and no larger than six square feet.

(5) Traffic directional signs shall not be illuminated but may have reflective lettering.

h) *Tenant board signs (directory).* Exterior tenant or directory signs are to be used to guide visitors to individual businesses within a multiple-tenant commercial building. Only centers that meet the requirements of the planned sign program may display tenant board signs. Letters identifying businesses may not exceed three inches in height. Location of the tenant board sign shall be determined by the planning and architectural review commission.

i) *Flags (commercial properties).*

(1) *Advertising flag.*

a. Only one flag may be utilized for advertising purposes.

b. The maximum area of a flag shall be 24 square feet.

c. The flag must consist of the name of the individual business, building, or building complex.

d. Flags must be in good condition and not have any rips or frays.

(2) *Location and height requirements (all flags).*

a. A flag may only be suspended on a permanent, established flagpole that is no more than 35 feet high, unless otherwise approved by the planning and architectural review commission.

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- b. A flagpole shall be set back ten feet from the front property line and located in a setting of meaningful open space.
- j) *Shingle signs (see definitions).*
- (1) One sign, not exceeding one square foot in size, shall be allowed for each business front and shall be adjacent to the business which it identifies.
  - (2) The sign shall be suspended from a roof overhang, a covered walkway, a covered porch, or an open lattice walkway. No part of a suspended sign shall extend beyond the edge of the overhang. Signs placed parallel to the street may be attached to the fascia. A minimum clearance of six feet eight inches shall be maintained between the bottom of the sign and the nearest grade or sidewalk.
- k) *Window signs (see definitions).*
- (1) *Maximum size.* In no instance may more than 25 percent of an individual windowpane be covered.
  - (2) *Location.* Window signs must be placed behind a clear glazed window opening and not in unglazed openings.
- l) *Electronic message centers.*
- (1) *Zoning districts allowed.*
    - a. Electronic message centers are allowed in the following zoning classifications, with a special exception granted by the planning and architectural review commission:
      - i. M-1, when located adjacent to Good Hope Road west of Range Line Road.
      - II. B-1 "B" when located on a property with one use/tenant and adjacent to Port Washington Road between Henry Clay and Silver Spring Drive.
      - III. When part of a planned development district, such an electronic message center is integrated into the development agreement. In such instances, not more than one electronic message board is permitted per planned development district.
      - IV. When located within an S-1 Special (Institutional) District. Only one electronic message center is allowed per monument sign per property.
  - (2) *Scrolling, flashing, moving.*
    - a. Electronic message centers shall not have scrolling, flashing, or moving elements.
  - (3) *Sign area.* Fifty percent of the allowed monument sign area.
  - (4) *Number of electronic message centers.* One double-sided sign is permitted.

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(5) *Design standards.*

- a. The digital portion of any such sign must be enclosed on both sides by other sign materials such as brick, stone, wood, and/or other distinctive design materials.
- b. Electronic message boards may only be used in combination with a monument-style sign. Incorporation with a pylon, pole, or wall sign is not permitted.
- c. The background of any electronic message center shall be solid in color.

(6) *Malfunctions.* The digital message area shall go blank in the event of a malfunction.

(7) *Automatic brightness compensation.*

- a. Signs that contain changeable copy produced by light-emitting diodes (LEDs), incandescent or low-voltage lamps or bulbs, or cathode ray tubes (CRTs) shall include automatic brightness compensation features to adjust brightness to compensate for sun angle and ambient light conditions and ensure that the sign is visible but not necessarily radiant. Automatic dimming is required to maintain the appropriate illumination levels at all times of day and under all weather conditions.

(8) *Minimum fixed message.*

- a. Changeable copy shall remain fixed for a minimum period of one minute between changes.

(9) *Sign copy change time.*

- a. Where the changeable copy consists of light-emitting diodes (LEDs), incandescent or low-voltage lamps or bulbs, cathode ray tubes (CRTs), or another light source, the actual change between sign copy shall be instantaneous
- b. Where copy changes by an automated process other than those processes listed above (e.g., rotating panels, slats, or discs), the actual change between sign copy shall be accomplished within two seconds or less.

### **SECTION 3**

If any subsection, section, or portions of this article or the sections of this ordinance as enacted hereunder are for any reason held invalid or unconstitutional by any court of competent jurisdiction, such portions shall be deemed a separate, distinct, and independent provision, and such holdings shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions hereof.

### **SECTION 4**

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All ordinances or parts of ordinances contravening the terms and provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed to that extent.

**SECTION 5**

This Ordinance shall take effect upon passage and publication as provided by law, and the City Clerk shall so amend the Code of Ordinances of the City of Glendale. The Clerk shall indicate the date and number of this amending ordinance therein.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the Common Council of the City of Glendale, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2026.

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Bryan Kennedy, Mayor

Countersigned:

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Marcy Granger, City Clerk