

# City of Charles Town Sign Design Guide

Charles Town, WV Zoning Ordinance **Part 13, Article 1324 of the Charles Town Code**



## Table of Contents

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Signs Not Requiring a Permit</b> Section 1324.07	<b>16</b>
		Permanent Informational Signs	16
		Occupant/Street Number Sign	
		Governmental Sign	
		Building Marker Sign	
		Public Service Sign	
		Incidental Sign	
		Off-Premise Directional Sign for Church	
<b>All Signs Must</b>	<b>3</b>	Permanent Business Signs and Flags	18
		Window Sign	
		Business Identification Sign	
		Home Occupation Sign	
		Jurisdictional Flag	
		Corporate Flag	
		Other Flag	
<b>Sign Area Computations</b> Section 1324.04	<b>4</b>	Temporary Informational Signs	20
Area: Single-faced signs		Yard Sale Sign	
Area: Multi-faced signs		Political Sign	
Height		Itinerant Merchant Sign	
		Quasi-Public Scheduled Sales Event Sign	
		Quasi-Public Public Event Sign	
		Quasi-Public Special Seasonal Event Sign	
<b>Signs Requiring a Permit</b> Section 1324.06	<b>6</b>	Temporary Business Signs	22
General Requirements	6	For-Profit Single Business Sign	
On-Premise Ground Sign		For-Profit Combined Development Sign	
Wall Sign		Construction Project/Contractor Sign	
Projecting/Suspended Sign		Off-Premise Residential Real Estate Sign	
Canopy/Awning Sign		On-Premise Residential Real Estate Sign	
GC Zoning Districts	10	Non-Residential Real Estate Sign	
On-Premise Ground Sign			
Wall Sign			
Projecting/Suspended Sign			
Canopy/Awning Sign			
NC and OT-MUC Zoning Districts	12		
On-Premise Ground Sign			
Wall Sign			
Projecting/Suspended Sign			
Canopy/Awning Sign			
NR, R-3, R-15, and OT-R Zoning Districts	14		
On-Premise Ground Sign			
Wall Sign			
		<b>Prohibited Signs</b> Section 1324.08	<b>24</b>
		Safety Hazards	
		Nuisances	
		Unauthorized Placement	

## Purpose

This design guide is intended to simplify the design process for signs in the City of Charles Town. It includes illustrated representations and organized lists of many of the rules included in the Zoning Ordinance.

It is not intended to be a replacement for Article 1324 of the Zoning Ordinance. In the event of a conflict, the Zoning Ordinance shall prevail.

## All Signs Must

**Comply with City Building and Electrical Codes**

**Be constructed of permanent materials** except flags and window signs

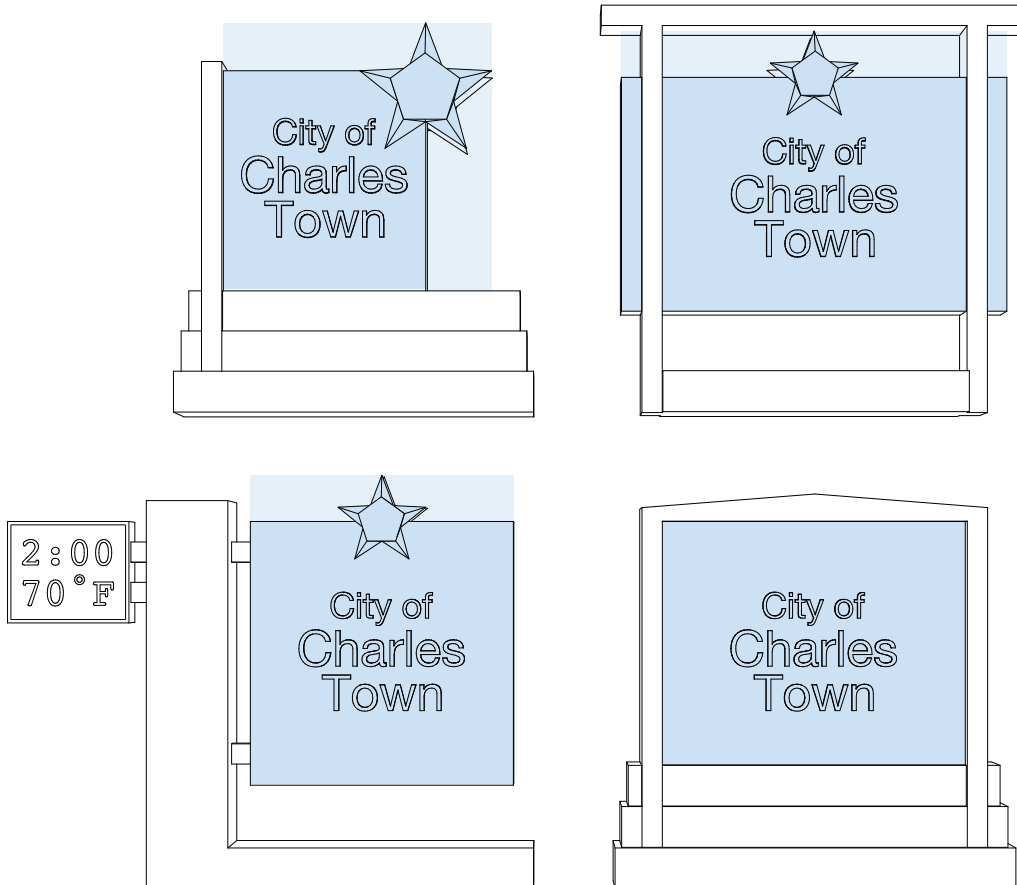
**Be permanently attached to the ground, a building, or another structure**

**Be maintained in good structural condition**

**No flashing or animation permitted**

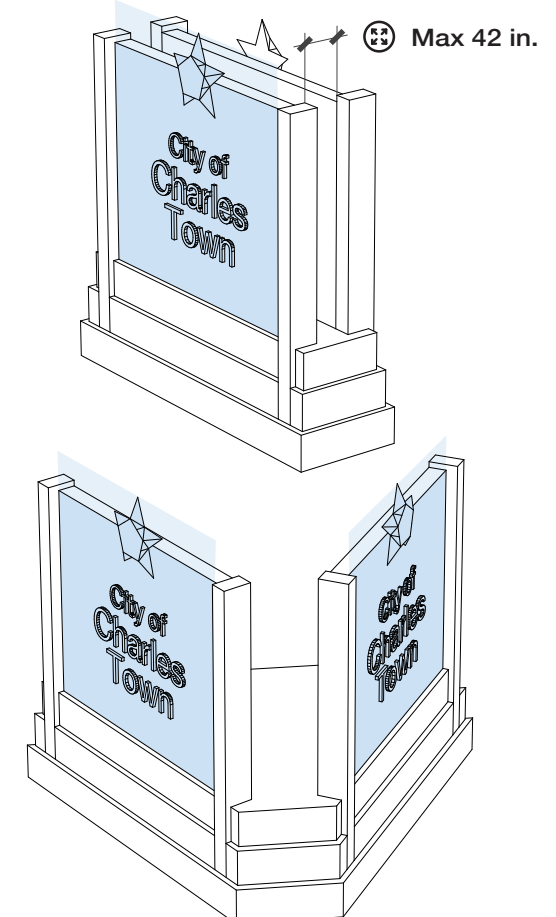
## Area: Single-faced signs

- ① Exclusively time and temperature information allowed in addition to maximum sign area
- Ⓢ Smallest rectangle encompassing every part of sign and backdrop not including structure or decorative fence or wall
- Ⓢ The space between separate sign graphics is counted in sign area



## Area: Multi-faced signs

- Ⓢ Back-to-back identical signs using the same structure: if one side is larger, measure the largest face. Sign faces more than 42 in. apart are classified as separate signs
- Ⓢ Otherwise: add together single-faced area of sign visible from a single point

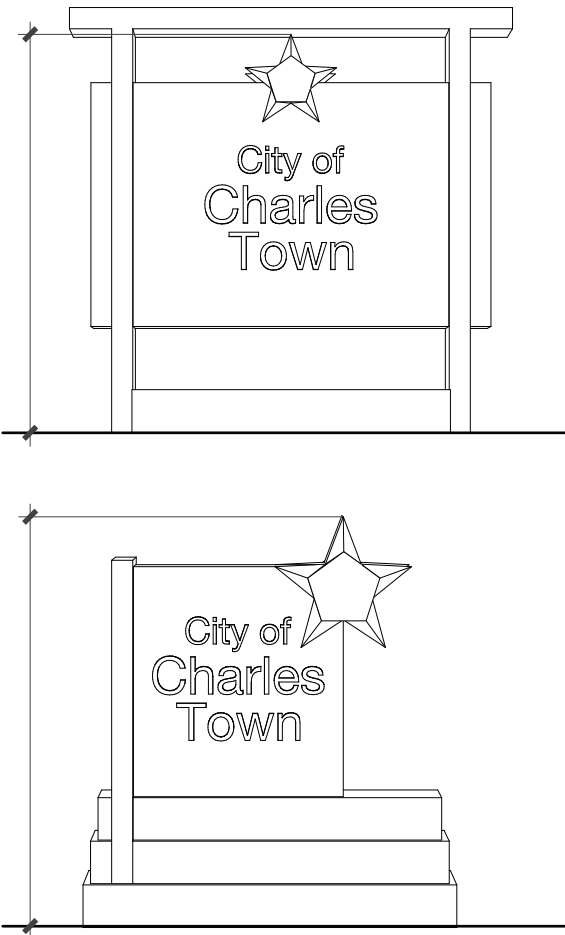




Height

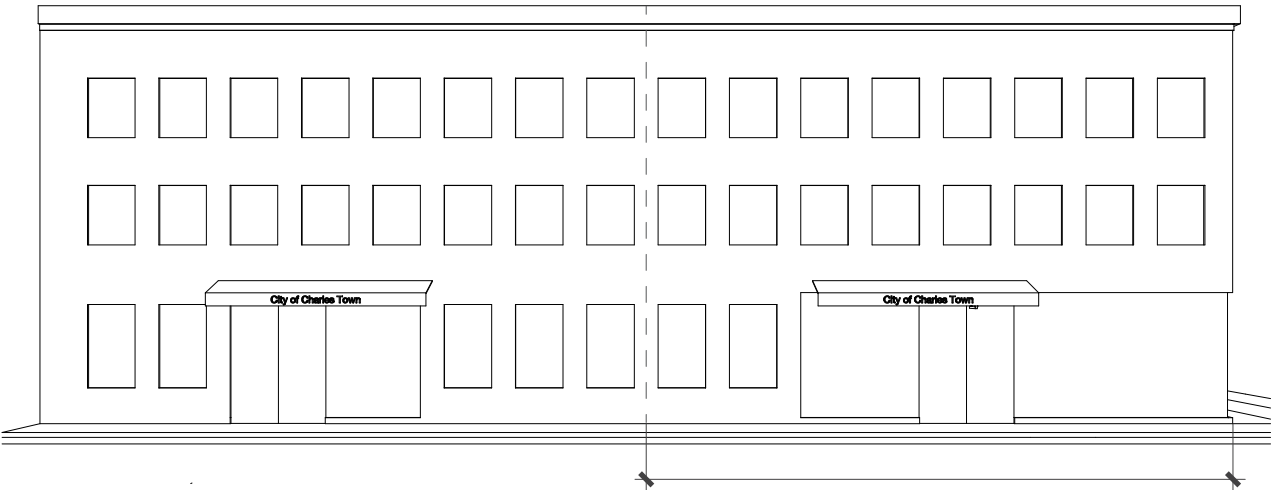
- Ⓜ Base of sign at normal grade to top of highest part of sign

Normal grade: grade before or after construction except changes solely for sign location; if indeterminable, elevation of crown of nearest public street or principle building entrance, whichever is lower



Tenant Frontage

- Ⓜ Length of ground floor wall occupied by tenant as if flat, without alcoves, extrusions, screened walls, or fences.



General Requirements

On-Premise Ground Sign

Free-standing sign with its base or supports mounted directly to the ground.

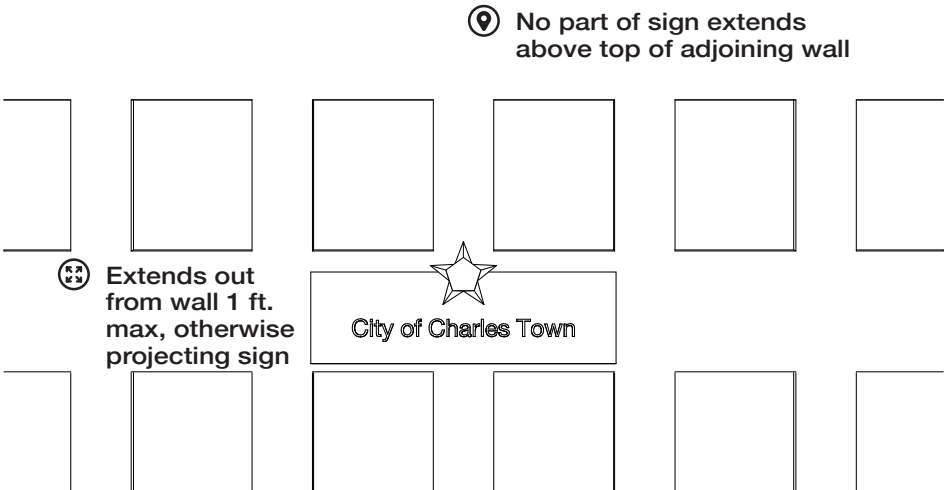
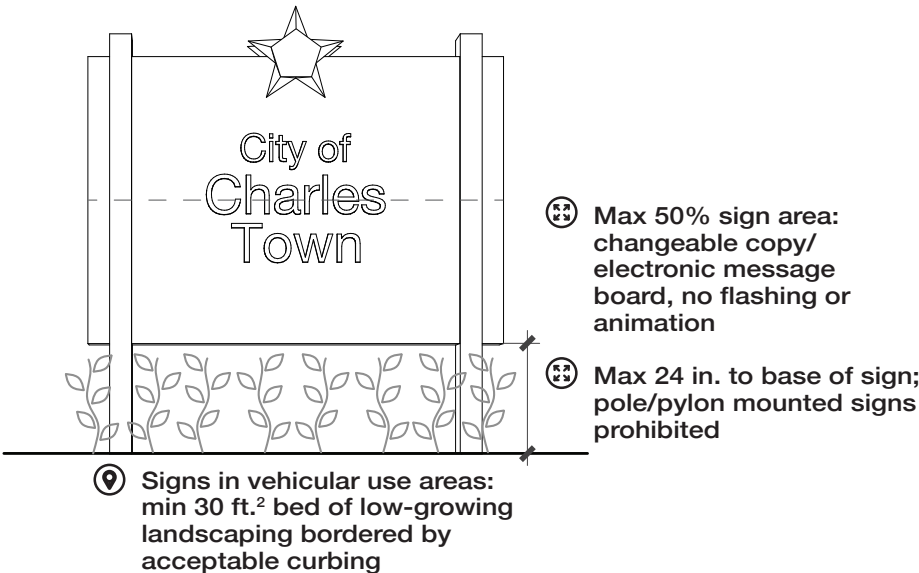
- ⓘ Combined Developments: All establishments except outparcels must share ground-mounted signs
- Ⓢ One sign: two sign faces located back to back on a single structure except entrance signs which can also be two separate single faced signs
- Ⓢ Drive through menu signs: max 32 ft.<sup>2</sup>



Wall Sign

A sign affixed on and parallel to the exterior wall of any building, including porticoes.

- ⓘ On historic buildings signs must be within sign frieze or other distinct place sign was intended to be. If none, sign must be placed below the typical second floor window area. Design and color of sign must fit building character per Design Review Standards
- 📍 In Historic Overlay District (HOD) no cabinet or box signs permitted
- Ⓢ Max allowable size on one wall not transferable to another wall

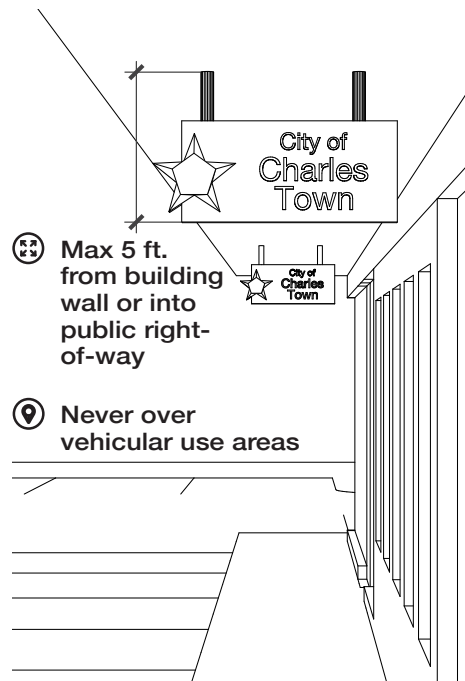
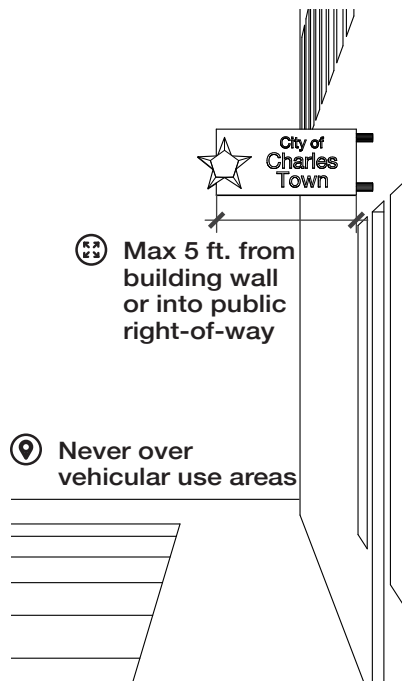


## General Requirements

### Projecting/Suspended Sign

A sign that projects or is suspended more than 1 ft. into a vehicular or pedestrian access way, usually perpendicular to building.

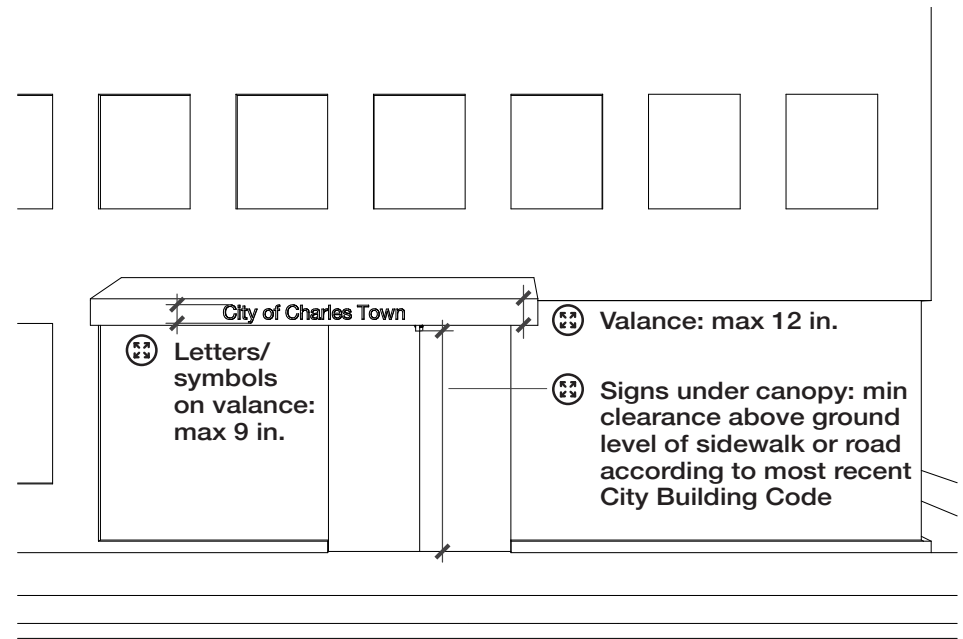
- ① Include only address and name of occupant
- 📍 If over public right-of-way, min \$500,000 per occurrence per sign liability insurance required



### Canopy/Awning Sign

Sign suspended or supported from, attached or applied to, or constructed as part of a canopy.

- ① Canopies on historic buildings allowed if building is documented having a canopy originally and if design and color of canopy fits building character per Design Review Standards
- 📍 In Historic Overlay District (HOD): signage on canopies/awnings not permitted; plastic and metal canopies/awnings not permitted
- 💡 If illumination is allowed, no bare bulbs



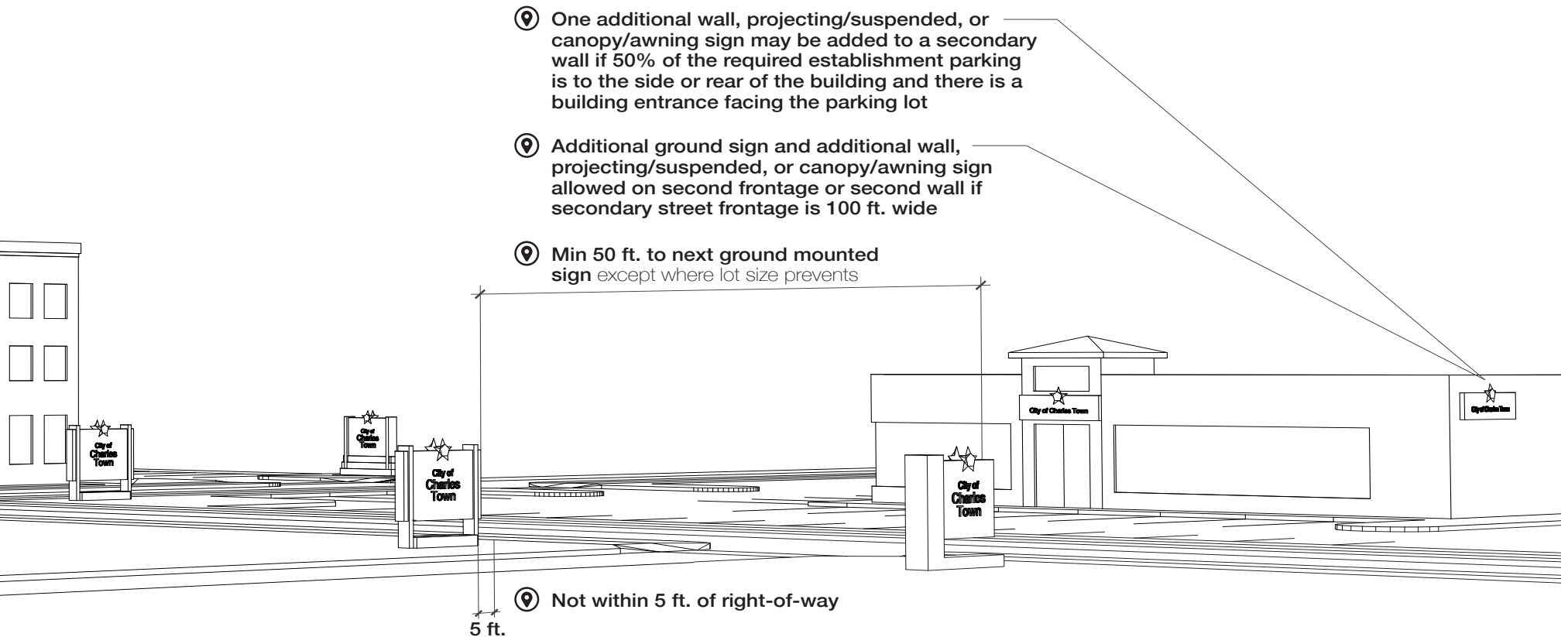
## General Requirements

- ⑨ **Combined Developments:**  
Use exclusively wall, projecting/suspended, or canopy/awning signs as individual establishment identification signs. Canopies without signs may be used with wall signs



- ⑨ One additional wall, projecting/suspended, or canopy/awning sign may be added to a secondary wall if 50% of the required establishment parking is to the side or rear of the building and there is a building entrance facing the parking lot

## General Requirements



- ④ Fast food restaurant:
- 1 wall sign on front and each side of building
  - 1 ground mounted sign
  - 32 ft.<sup>2</sup> total reader board

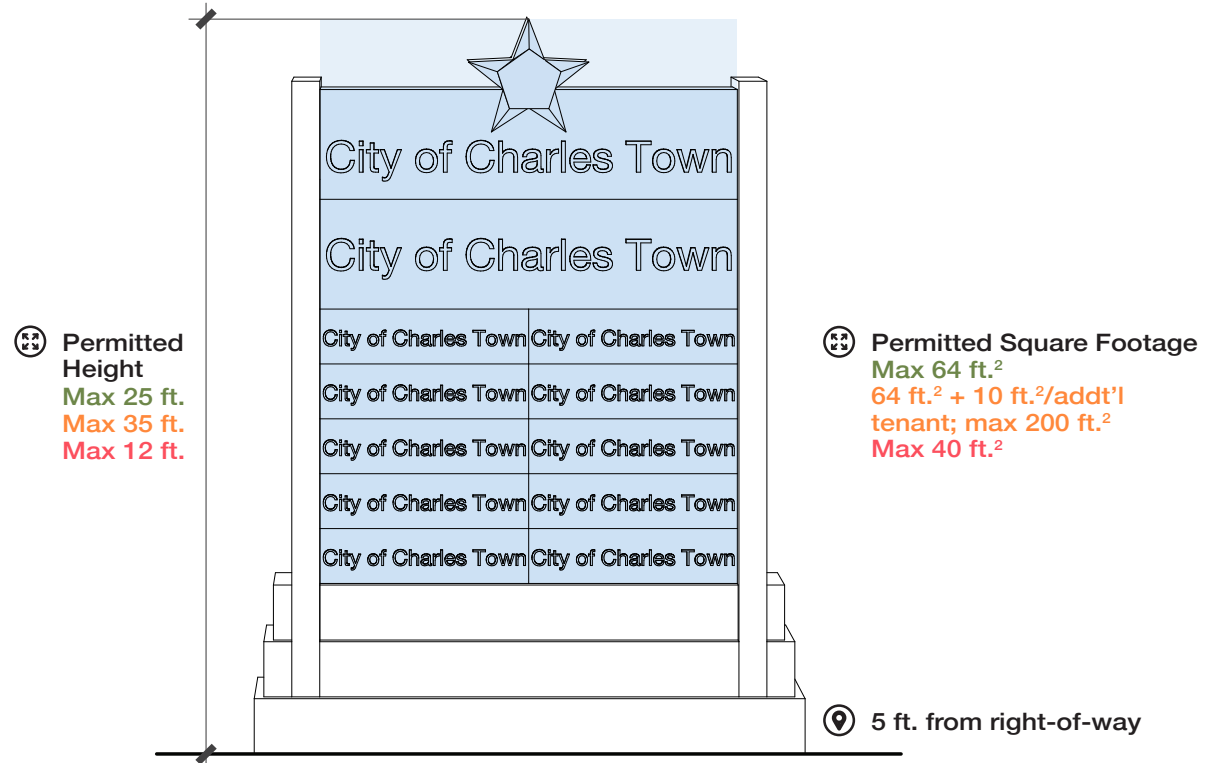


## General Commercial District

### On-Premise Ground Sign

- ⑨ Individual Business  
One sign per road frontage
- ⑨ Combined Developments & Commercial Subdivisions  
One sign per road frontage
- ⑨ Entrance Signs  
One sign per entrance road

See general requirements for more information

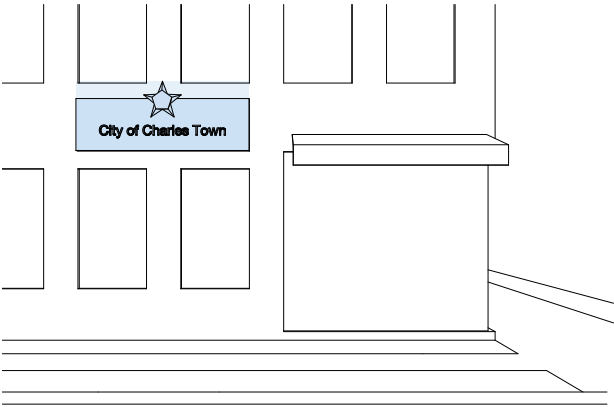


General Commercial District

⑨ Individual Business and Combined Developments: One wall, projecting/suspended, OR canopy/awning sign per road frontage

Wall Sign

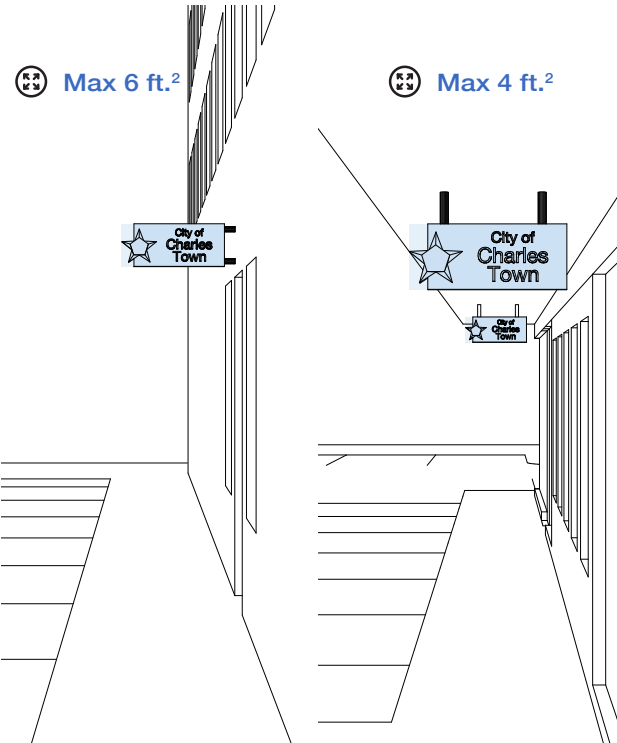
Ⓢ 1 ft<sup>2</sup>/linear ft. of building wall where sign is attached; max 200 ft.<sup>2</sup>



Projecting/Suspended Sign

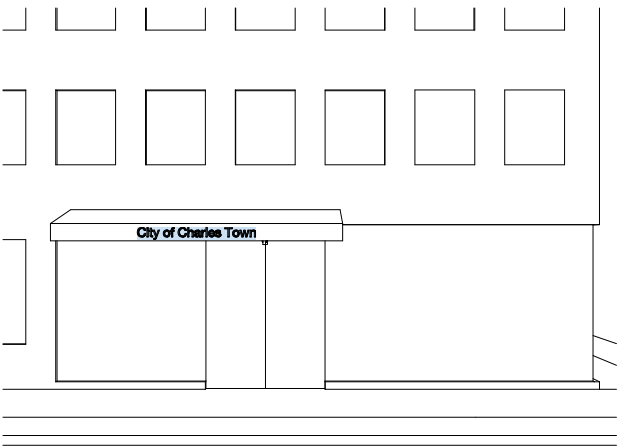
Ⓢ Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>

Ⓢ Max 4 ft.<sup>2</sup>



Canopy/Awning Sign

Ⓢ Max 12 ft.<sup>2</sup>



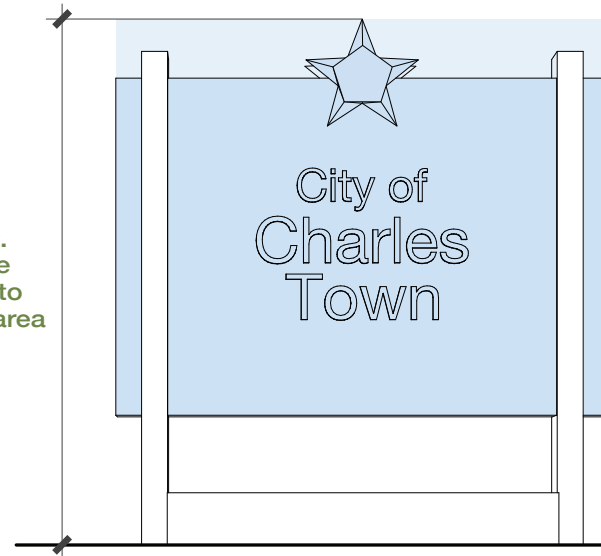
## Neighborhood Commercial and Old Town Mixed Use Commercial Districts

### On-Premise Ground Sign

- ⑨ Individual Business  
One sign per road frontage
- ⑨ Combined Developments & Commercial Subdivisions  
One sign per road frontage
- ⑨ Entrance Signs  
One sign per entrance road

See general requirements for more information

- Ⓢ Permitted Height  
Max 6 ft.; max 10 ft.  
if principle structure  
greater than/equal to  
25,000 gross floor area  
Max 12 ft.  
Max 12 ft.



- Ⓢ Permitted Square Footage  
Max 32 ft.<sup>2</sup>; max 64 ft.<sup>2</sup>  
if principle structure  
greater than/equal to  
25,000 gross floor area  
32 ft.<sup>2</sup> + 8 ft.<sup>2</sup>/add'l  
tenant; max 64 ft.<sup>2</sup>  
40 ft.<sup>2</sup> or 1 ft.<sup>2</sup>/5 linear ft. of  
road frontage; max 64 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ⑨ 5 ft. from right-of-way



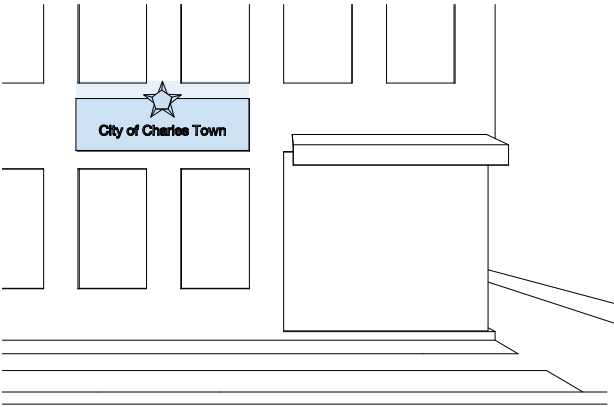


Nearhood Commercial and Old Town Mixed Use Commercial Districts

Individual Business and Combined Developments: One wall, projecting/suspended, OR canopy/awning sign per road frontage

Wall Sign

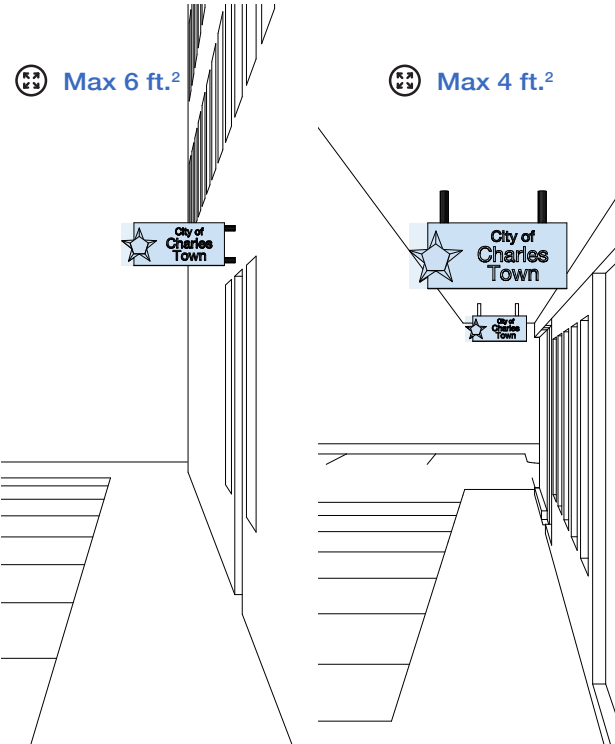
1ft<sup>2</sup>/linear ft. of individual tenant occupied building wall where sign is attached; max 64 ft.<sup>2</sup>



Projecting/Suspended Sign

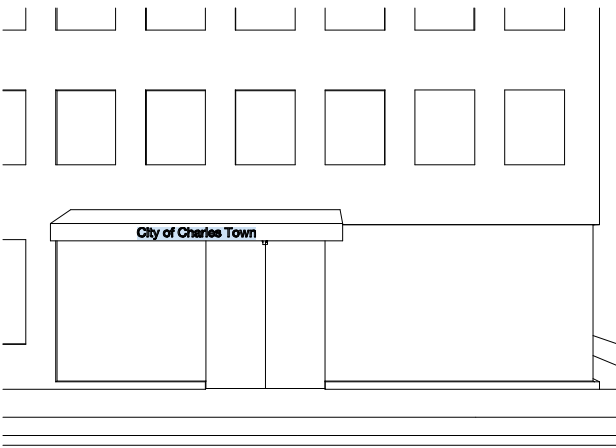
Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>

Max 4 ft.<sup>2</sup>



Canopy/Awning Sign

Max 12 ft.<sup>2</sup>

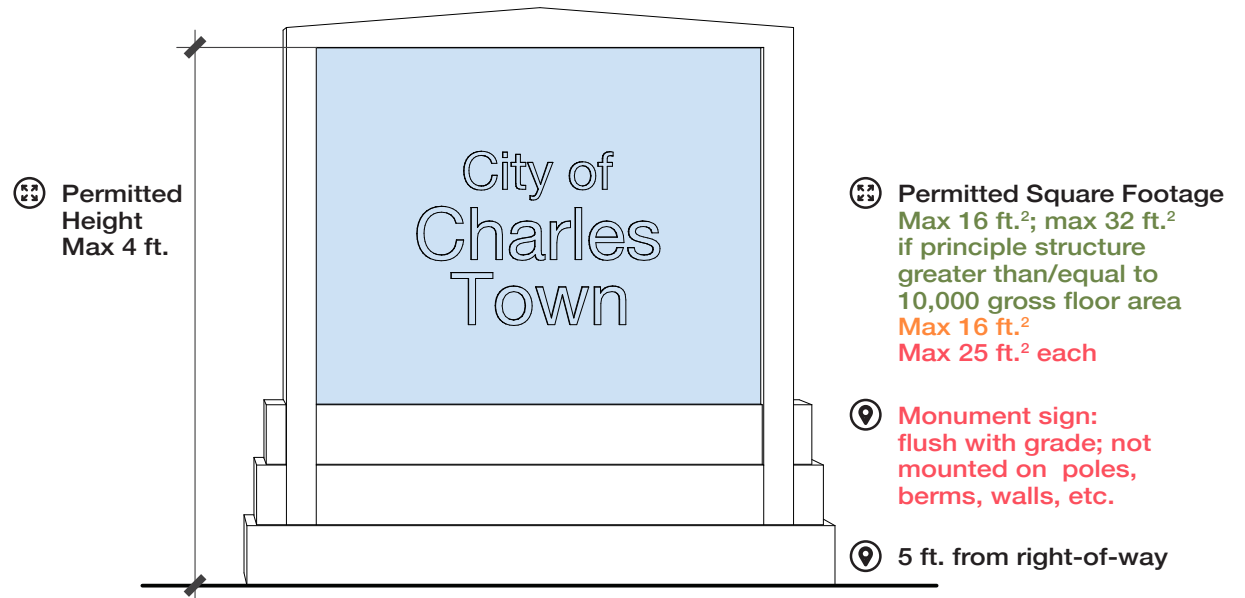


## Neighborhood, Old Town Residential; and Residential Low, Medium-High Density Districts

### On-Premise Ground Sign

- ⑨ Institutional and Recreational uses:  
One ground OR wall sign per premise
- ⑨ Miscellaneous uses:  
One sign per premise
- ⑨ Residential Subdivision Entrance Sign:  
Two signs per entrance road

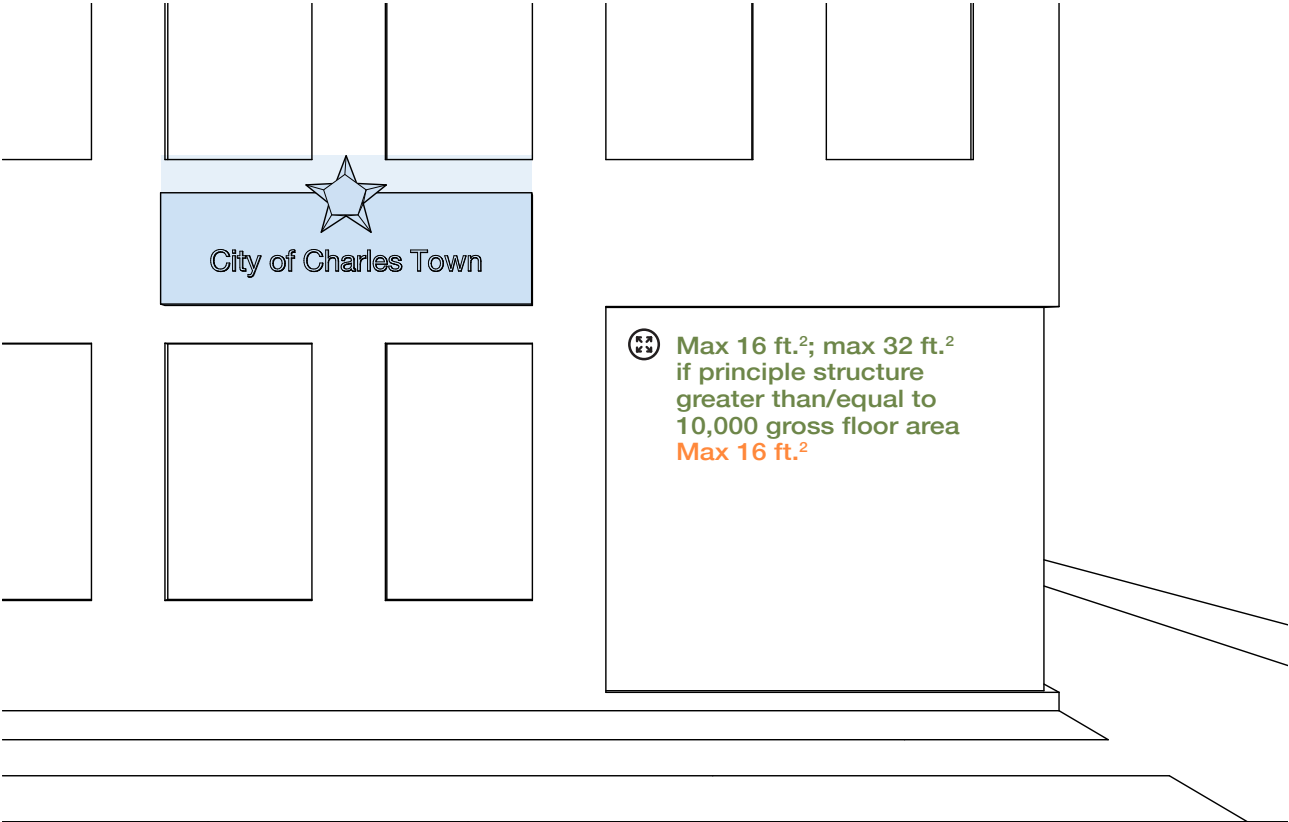
See general requirements  
for more information



Neighborhood, Old Town Residential; and Residential Low, Medium-High Density Districts

Wall Sign

- ⑨ Institutional and Recreational uses:  
One ground OR wall sign per premise
- ⑨ Miscellaneous uses:  
One sign per premise



Projecting/Suspended and Canopy/Awning  
Signs not permitted





## Permanent Informational Signs

### Occupant/Street Number Sign

- ① Address of structure or occupant
- 📍 Affixed to structures, mailboxes, decorative light posts, driveway entrances, etc.  
Must be visible from street
- ⚡ Illumination not allowed



### Governmental Sign

- Posted by local, state, or federal agencies
- ① Regulatory, welcome, traffic control, etc.



### Building Marker Sign

- ① Building name  
Date of construction  
Historical data on historic building, site
- Etched in masonry, bronze, or similar material



## Signs Not Requiring a Permit Section 1324.07

### Permanent Informational Signs

#### Public Service Sign

Displayed for the convenience of the general public

E.g. public restrooms, automobile inspection, hours of operation, freight entrances, credit cards accepted, etc.

- ① Service information  
Business names, logos
- Ⓜ Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀ Illumination allowed



#### Incidental Sign

Vehicular entrances/exits, parking areas, one-way traffic, no trespassing, no dumping, no loitering, etc.

- ① Directional information
- Ⓜ Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀ Illumination allowed



#### Off-Premise Directional Sign for Church

- 📍 Ground mounted  
Max 2 signs within City limits
- Ⓜ Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀ Illumination not allowed



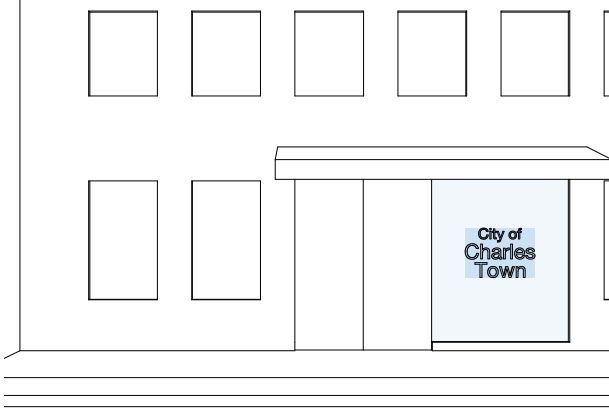
## Signs Not Requiring a Permit Section 1324.07

### Permanent Business Signs and Flags

#### Window Sign

Sign applied to building glass area so the sign can be read from off-premise

- ④ Interior or exterior of glass  
On windows or doors
- Ⓢ Max 25% of total storefront glass can be covered  
Considered wall sign if more than 25% of total storefront glass is covered



#### Business Identification Sign

Pedestrian oriented sign identifying building or tenant(s)

- ④ Tenant/building name(s), numbers, and logo; no other advertising
- ④ Attached to building  
One sign per entrance
- Ⓢ Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>



#### Home Occupation Sign

Sign advertising a business or occupation conducted in a residential dwelling

- ④ Suspended or projected, ground mounted, or wall sign  
Not above the first floor
- Ⓢ Max 16 in. x 16 in.
- ⊘ Illumination not allowed





## Signs Not Requiring a Permit Section 1324.07

### Permanent Business Signs and Flags

#### Jurisdictional Flag

- ① Flag of USA, State of West Virginia, City of Charles Town, foreign nations with US diplomatic relations, other flag adopted or sanctioned by elected body of competent jurisdiction

- 📍 Flagpole: max 40 ft. tall

- Ⓜ Max 60 ft.<sup>2</sup>

Flown in accordance with Stars and Stripes protocol from US Congress



#### Corporate Flag

- ① Company logo, insignia, symbol, or name

- 📍 Flagpole: max 40 ft. tall

- Ⓜ Max 24 ft.<sup>2</sup>



#### Other Flag

Seasonal or promotional flag

- ① No advertising text

- Ⓜ Max 24 ft.<sup>2</sup>



## Signs Not Requiring a Permit Section 1324.07

### Temporary Informational Signs

#### Yard Sale Sign

- 📍 On- or off-premise
  - Not attached to street signs
  - Not in public right-of-way
- 📏 Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 Max 72 hrs in any 30 day period



#### Political Sign

- Sign advertising a candidate or issue to be voted upon on an election day, attached to the ground by stakes
- 📍 Candidates involved in election
  - 📍 Min 10 ft. from street pavement
  - 📏 Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>  
Max 4 ft. tall
  - ☀️ Illumination not allowed
  - 🕒 Max 60 days before election  
Max 48 hrs after election or associated runoff election
- Unfit signs may be removed by City
- Bumper stickers, etc. are allowed; other portable and roof-mounted political signs are prohibited

#### Itinerant Merchant Sign

- Sign or banner
- 📍 1 per establishment
  - 📏 Max 24 ft.<sup>2</sup>
  - ☀️ Illumination not allowed
  - 🕒 Period of operation





## Temporary Informational Signs

### Quasi-Public Scheduled Sales Event Sign

Public, quasi-public, and non-profit organization scheduled sales events  
E.g. rummage and bake sales for schools, churches, etc.

- 📍 One sign per street frontage
- 📏 Max 30 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 Max 72 hrs

### Quasi-Public Public Event Sign

Public, quasi-public, and non-profit organization public events  
E.g. charity benefits, fairs, fund drives, revivals, sporting events for schools, churches, etc.

- 📍 Allowed on- or off-premise
- 📏 Max 30 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 Max 30 days before event

### Quasi-Public Special Seasonal Event Sign

Public, quasi-public, and non-profit organization special seasonal events  
E.g. parades, fairs, festivals for schools, churches, etc.

- 📍 Allowed on- or off-premise
- 📏 Max 30 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 Max 14 days before event  
Max 72 hrs after end of event



## Temporary Business Signs

### For-Profit Single Business Sign

Temporary sign or banner used by a single business; maintained in good condition: not worn, faded, or torn

- ① Advertising for special sales, special events, promotions
- 📍 1 per establishment + 1 per every 300 ft. of street frontage on a designated major thoroughfare, max 3 signs
- 📏 Max 24 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 Removed at conclusion of special event period; no continuous specials to maintain sign



### For-Profit Combined Development Sign

Temporary sign used by a single business; maintained in good condition: not worn, faded, or torn

- ① Advertising for special sales, special events, promotions
- 📍 1 per establishment  
Mounted flush against building wall of advertised building
- 📏 Max 24 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 Removed at conclusion of special event period; no continuous specials to maintain sign



### Construction Project/Contractor Sign

Construction/contractor and subdivision project signs

- ① Future tenants  
Home builders  
Contractors  
Lenders  
Architectural or engineering designers
- 📏 Max 32 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 During period of construction  
Max 7 days after completion of project



## Signs Not Requiring a Permit Section 1324.07

### Temporary Business Signs

#### On-Premise Residential Real Estate Sign

- ① Advertising sale or lease of residential property
- 📍 1 per street frontage
- 📏 Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 Max 7 days after sale or lease of property



#### Off-Premise Residential Real Estate Sign

- ① Advertising sale or lease of residential property
- 📍 Off-premise
- 📏 Max 6 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 Only holidays and weekends 5pm Friday to 7am Monday



#### Non-Residential Real Estate Sign

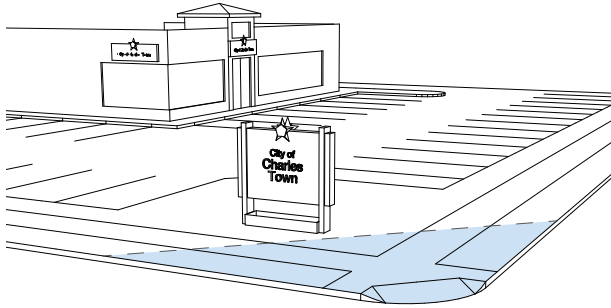
- ① Advertising sale or lease of non-residential property
- 📍 On-premise  
1 per street frontage
- 📏 Max 32 ft.<sup>2</sup>
- ☀️ Illumination not allowed
- 🕒 Max 7 days after sale or lease of property





## Safety Hazards

- ⑨ Obstruct or impair driver vision; placement in required sight triangle



- ⑨ Pavement markings; except for traffic control



- ① Obstruct view of, impede effectiveness of, or resemble railroad and traffic control devices, signs, or markings; warning signs; regulatory devices; or traffic sight lines

- ☼ Indirect illumination causing glare impairing driver vision, e.g. floodlights

- ⑨ Obstructing fire escapes, windows, doors, or other openings required as means of egress or ventilation

- ⑨ Portable signs: sign intended to be readily relocated even if attached to structure/ground; signs on wheels; advertising on visible vehicles not used regularly; or portable structures, e.g. trailers, tent signs, A-frame or T-shaped signs



## Nuisances

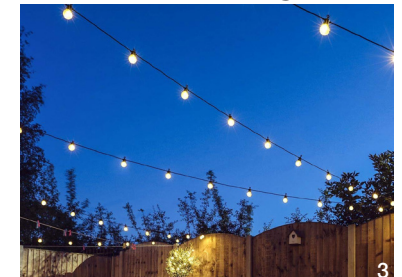
- ☼ Blinking, flashing, intermittent lights, animation, or moving parts



- ☼ Indirect illumination causing nuisance to adjoining property, e.g. floodlights

- ☼ Beacons, spotlights, searchlights visible from public right-of-way

- ① Pennants: hanging material, moves in wind  
**Streamers:** string, strip of pennants or flags  
**Spinners:** propeller device, wind activated  
**Festoon lighting:** string of outdoor lights suspended between points  
**Balloons, ribbons, inflatable signs**



## Nuisances

- ⑨ **Roof signs:** sign wholly or partially on or above roof, except mounted on parapet roof, not extending above roofline, which are wall signs
- ⑨ **Outdoor advertising signs/billboards:** sign advertising something not located on property where sign is located



- ① **Obscene, indecent, immoral language or pictures**

- Ⓢ **Continuous wall signs extending around building corners or radii**  
**Facsimile signs:** oversized 3D object e.g. chicken bucket, car, or human figure



## Unauthorized Placement

- ⑨ **Attached to or painted on utility poles, trees, parking meters, bridges, overpasses, rocks, other signs**



- ⑨ **Attached to or painted on benches and refuse containers; except officially recognized logotype**



- ⑨ **Fully or partially in or within 5 ft. of public road right-of-way; except as erected by government body or as permitted**

- ⑨ **Off-premise signs; except as otherwise permitted**

- ⌚ **Advertising an activity or business no longer conducted on the property where the sign is located**





<http://hative.com/roadsworth-street-art/> **Hative** <sup>1</sup>  
[http://sfsupplies.com/index.php?route=product/product&path=3000\\_3106\\_3124&product\\_id=1599](http://sfsupplies.com/index.php?route=product/product&path=3000_3106_3124&product_id=1599) **S&F Supplies** <sup>2</sup>  
[https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B018KCO5R8/ref=sspa\\_dk\\_detail\\_2?psc=1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B018KCO5R8/ref=sspa_dk_detail_2?psc=1) **Amazon, Festive Lights** <sup>3</sup>  
<https://www.preexamples.com/2012/01/nike-pr-stunt/> **PR Examples** <sup>4</sup>  
<http://wildwoodvideoarchive.com/north-wildwood-mcdonalds-sold/> **Wildwood Video Archive** <sup>5</sup>