

**CITY OF RIFLE, COLORADO  
ORDINANCE NO. 17  
SERIES OF 2015**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RIFLE, COLORADO, AMENDING THE  
SIGN CODE OF THE CITY OF RIFLE SET FORTH AT ARTICLE VIII OF  
CHAPTER 16 OF THE RIFLE MUNICIPAL CODE.

WHEREAS, Article VIII of Chapter 16 of the Rifle Municipal Code, the City of Rifle Sign Code, provides terms and conditions regarding the use, placement, and characteristics of signs within the City of Rifle (“City”); and

WHEREAS, City staff charged with interpreting and applying the Sign Code have recommended that the Sign Code be amended to improve its ease of interpretation and application by the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to address the recommendations of the City staff by amending the Sign Code to improve its ease of interpretation and application.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RIFLE, COLORADO, THAT:

Section 1. The foregoing recitals are incorporated herein as if set forth in full.

Section 2. Article VIII of Chapter 16 of the Rifle Municipal Code is hereby amended, with additions shown in double underlined text and ~~strike-through language deleted~~:

**ARTICLE VIII  
Sign Code**

**Sec. 16-8-10. Purpose and intent.**

(1) Recognize that signs are a necessary means of visual communication for the convenience of the public and for the benefit of individuals, businesses, government and other entities to convey information or advertising.

(2) Provide a reasonable balance between the right of those concerned to identify businesses, services and other activities by the use of signs and the right of the public to be protected against the visual discord resulting from the unrestricted proliferation of signs and similar devices.

(3) Provide flexibility within the sign review/approval process to allow for unique circumstances and creativity.

(4) Limit signs to those which are accessory and incidental to the use on the premises where such signs are located.

(5) Protect the public from damage or injury caused by signs that are poorly designed or maintained and from distractions or hazards to pedestrians or motorists caused by the indiscriminate placement or use of signs.

(6) Encourage signs that are responsive to the aesthetics and character of their particular location, adjacent buildings and uses, and the surrounding neighborhood. Ensure that signs are compatible and integrated with the building's architectural design and with other signs on the property.

(7) Ensure that signs are appropriate and compatible with their location and site features, including but not limited to the street on which they are located, the orientation of the building on the site, surrounding buildings, surrounding neighborhood characteristics, the type of building on the site and landscaping.

(8) Bring nonconforming signs into compliance with these regulations.

**Sec. 16-8-20. Scope and applicability.**

- (a) The provisions of this Article shall apply to the display, construction, erection, alteration, use, maintenance and location of all signs within the City. All signs displayed, constructed, erected or altered after the date of the adoption of the ordinance codified in this Article shall be in conformance with the provisions of this Article.
- (b) Nonconforming signs. A sign existing on February 1, 2015 and not in compliance herewith shall be regarded as a nonconforming sign. A nonconforming sign may continue if the business or land use associated with the sign continues in operation and it is properly repaired and maintained, subject to the following requirements.

Nonconforming signs shall be brought into conformance with the Sign Code under the following circumstances:

(1) A nonconforming sign that is structurally altered, relocated or replaced shall comply with the sign code. Replacement of a sign face or sign text, if done without altering the sign structure, shall not constitute a structural alteration or replacement.

(2) Discontinued nonconforming signs. Whenever a business, industry, service or other use has been discontinued and has ended its operations, nonconforming signs and nonconforming sign structures pertaining to the use shall be removed by the property owner within ninety (90) days. Notice of violation shall be given to the property owner and (14) days will be given to remedy the violation, at which time the City may remove the signs. The City shall keep the sign in storage for thirty (30) days, during which they may be recovered by the owner only upon payment to the City for costs of removal and storage. If not recovered within the thirty-day period, the sign and supporting structure shall be declared abandoned and title shall vest with the City. The costs of removal and storage (up to thirty [30] days) may be billed to the owner. If not paid, the applicable

costs may be imposed as a tax lien against the property from which the sign was removed.

(3) Sign maintenance. The owner of a sign and the owner of the premises on which such sign is located shall be jointly and severally liable to maintain signs, including any illumination sources, in neat and orderly condition and in a good working order at all times, and to prevent the development of any rust, corrosion, rotting or other deterioration in the physical appearance or safety of such signs. The City may inspect any sign governed by this Article and shall have the authority to order the painting, repair, alteration or removal of a sign which constitutes a hazard to safety, health or public welfare by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation or obsolescence.

**Sec. 16-8-30. Sign permits and administration.**

(a) Sign permit required.

(1) A sign permit shall be required in order to erect, move, alter, reconstruct or repair any permanent or temporary sign, except signs that are exempt from permits in compliance with Section 16-8-70 below.

(2) On properties with more than one (1) primary use, a separate permit shall be required for signage for each individual use. See Paragraph 16-8-50(b)(2) of this Article for information on properties with multiple buildings or multi-use centers.

(3) Changing or replacing the copy on an existing lawful sign shall not require a permit, provided that the copy change does not change the size of the sign, affect the sign structure, or render the sign in violation of this Article.

(b) Application for a sign permit.

(1) Sign permit application requirements. Applications for sign permits shall be made in writing on forms furnished by the City staff. The application shall contain:

(2) The street address of the proposed sign structure;

(3) Names and addresses of the owner, sign contractor and erector;

(4) Legible site plans which include the specific location of the sign and setbacks to adjacent property lines and buildings;

(5) A detailed drawing indicating the dimensions, materials and colors of the proposed sign structure. A certification by a structural engineer may be required by the City staff for a freestanding or projecting sign;

(6) A graphic drawing or photograph of the sign copy;

(7) A description of the lighting to be used, if applicable;

(8) If the sign is to be located off the premises advertised, a written lease or permission from the property owner of the site on which the sign will be located; and

(9) Sign permit fee and plan check fee as established by the current fee schedule. The applicant shall pay all costs billed by the City relative to the review of the application.

a. Sign permit application certification of completion. Upon receipt of a sign permit application, the City staff shall either certify that the application is complete and in compliance of all submittal requirements or reject it as incomplete and notify the applicant in writing of any deficiencies.

b. Staff review and approval. When the City staff has determined the application to be complete, the City staff shall review the sign permit in accordance with the established review criteria and has the authority to approve, approve with conditions or deny the sign permit. Upon the City staff's approval of the sign permit, the sign permit and any building or electrical permits required for the sign shall be issued to the applicant.

c. Terms of approval. Once a sign permit has been issued, it shall be unlawful to change, modify or deviate from the terms or conditions of the approved permit without the consent of the City.

d. Provision of insurance. For freestanding signs, projecting signs and any sign that is located on or above public right-of-way, proof of public liability insurance must be provided.

(c) Interpretation. When it is required that an interpretation be provided for standards and regulations specified in this Article, said interpretations shall be made by the Planning Director.

### Sec. 16-8-40. Sign design.

(a) Professional. Signs shall be made by a professional sign company or other qualified entity as determined by the Planning Director.

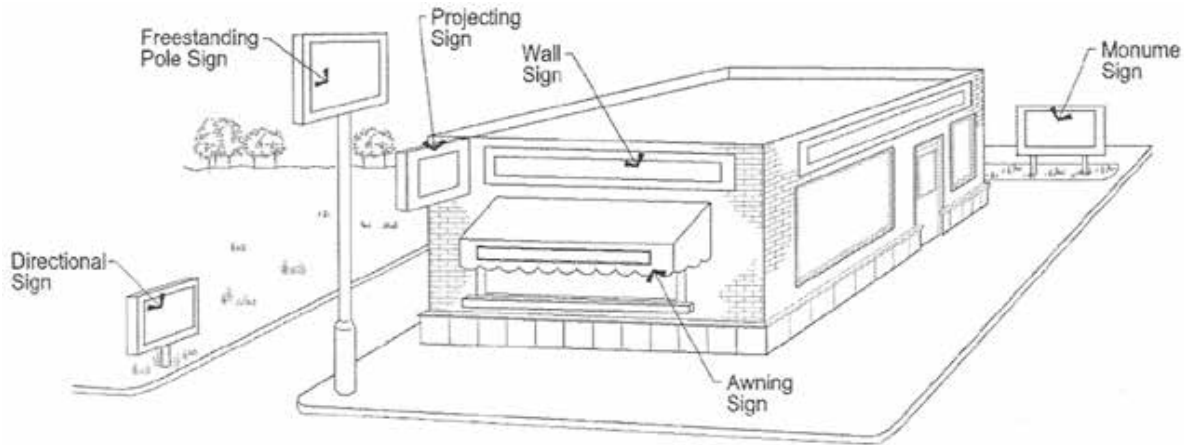
(b) Materials. Signs shall be constructed of durable, high quality architectural materials. The sign package must use materials, colors and designs that are compatible with the building facade. Sign materials must be of proven durability. Treated wood, painted metal, stone, brick and stucco are the preferred materials for signs. Plastic, vinyl and fabric materials, including banners and stake signs, are

Figure 16-8-1. Signs and architectural details.



considered impermanent material and are addressed in 16-8-70(4).

Figure 16-8-2. Types of signs



**Sec. 16-8-50. Sign standards by zoning district.**

(a) The following are standards for signs in the LDR, MDR, MDR-X, EZ zoning districts:

<i>Type of Sign</i>	<i>Number of Signs</i>	<i>Maximum Area (sq. ft.)</i>	<i>Maximum Height</i>	<i>Lighting Types</i>	<i>Comments</i>
<b>Awning/ Canopy or Wall</b>			Limited to first story of building	Direct or indirect	Cannot project more than 12" beyond face of awning, canopy or building wall
Public or quasi-public uses	1 per street front	5% of building facade OR 25 sq. ft., whichever is less	unless second story has pedestrian access such as balcony	Lighting must be turned off from 11 pm to 6 am if within 500' of residential zone district	Cannot obstruct window, door or other architectural details
Multi-family complex	1 per street front	5% of building facade	Must be at least 8' above finished grade		
Legal existing nonconforming commercial	1 per street front or 1 per tenant	OR 25 sq. ft., whichever is less	Can be no more than 25' above grade		Cannot extend above top of awning, canopy or building eave line

					Signs located under a canopy or awning are considered suspended signs
<b>Freestanding</b>				Lighting must be turned off from 11 pm to 6 am if within 500' of residential zone district	Monument signs are only freestanding signs permitted in residential zone districts
Public or quasi-public use	1 per street front	1 sq. ft. for each lineal foot of building frontage OR 25 sq. ft., whichever is less	8'	Direct or indirect	Must be at least 8' from pavement Must be at least 4' from building
Multi-family complex	1 per street front	1 sq. ft. for each lineal foot of building frontage OR 25 sq. ft., whichever is less	6'	Direct	
Legal existing nonconforming commercial	1 per street front or 1 per tenant	1 sq. ft. for each lineal foot of building frontage OR 25 sq. ft., whichever is less	8'	Direct or indirect	
Subdivision entrance	1 monument sign per entrance	25 sq. ft.	6'	Direct	

Group child care center	1	10 sq. ft.	6'	Unlighted	
Home occupation	1	1 sq. ft.	4'	Unlighted	
Projecting or Suspended Sign	<u>1 per building frontage in MDR-X zone only; LDR and MDR not allowed</u>	<u>16 sq. ft.</u>	<u>Must be at least 8' above finished grade</u>  <u>Can be no more than 25' above grade</u>		<del>Not allowed</del>
Window Sign					
Legal existing nonconforming commercial			Ground level only	Unlighted	Cannot exceed 25% of area of window Posters for temporary (<30 days) events are exempt

(b) Signs in the CBD, CS, TC, LI, I and PD zoning districts. See Chapter 16, Article 18 for additional standards for signs within the Central Business District.

(1) Properties or buildings with one (1) primary use and one (1) primary entrance are subject to the following guidelines:

<i>Type of Sign</i>	<i>Number of Signs</i>	<i>Maximum Area (sq. ft.)</i>	<i>Maximum Height</i>	<i>Lighting Types</i>	<i>Comments</i>
<b>Awning/ Canopy or Wall</b>	No maximum number of signs. The total area of all wall signage must not exceed Maximum Area calculation	1 sq. ft. per linear foot of building frontage facing a street.  Add 30	The lesser of 25' OR the top of first floor of structure  Exception: wall signs above the	Direct, indirect, or internal  Lighting must be turned off from 11 pm to 6 am if	Cannot project more than 12" beyond face of awning, canopy or building wall  Cannot obstruct window, door or other

<i>Type of Sign</i>	<i>Number of Signs</i>	<i>Maximum Area (sq. ft.)</i>	<i>Maximum Height</i>	<i>Lighting Types</i>	<i>Comments</i>
		square feet per additional use in multi-use buildings  Central Business District: maximum 75 square feet	first floor of a building may be used in place of a freestanding sign	within 500' of a residential zone district	architectural details  Cannot extend above top of building eave line  Signs located under canopy or awning are considered suspended signs
<b>Freestanding</b>					
Business, institution, government, multifamily, subdivision	1 per 1,500 feet of street frontage per lot  OR 1 per street frontage for corner and double frontage lots.  Pole signs not permitted in the Central Business District; monument signs only	The lesser of:  1 sq. ft. for each lineal foot of building frontage  OR  170 sq. ft. on Airport Road and Hwy 13.  130 sq. ft. in all other areas.	Cannot exceed height of principal building  OR 25 ft. whichever is less  Exceptions: At least 20 feet permitted on Airport Road and Hwy 13	Direct, indirect or internal  Lighting must be turned off from 11 pm to 6 am if within 500' of residential zone district	Must be at least 8' from pavement  Must be at least 4' from building  On corner lots, maximum square footage must be shared if utilizing more than 1 sign  For multi-tenant uses, 1 freestanding sign is permitted
Home Occupation	1	4 sq. ft.	6'	Unlighted	
Projecting or	1 per building	16 sq. ft.	Limited to		If used in



<i>Type of Sign</i>	<i>Number of Signs</i>	<i>Maximum Area (sq. ft.)</i>	<i>Maximum Height</i>	<i>Lighting Types</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Suspended Sign	frontage		first story of building unless second story has pedestrian access such as balcony Must be at least 8' above finished grade Can be no more than 25' above grade		conjunction with awning/canopy or wall sign, size is calculated as part of total allowable area for awning/canopy or wall sign  Must generally align with other projecting or suspended signs in same block Limited to 4-foot width
Window Sign		Cannot exceed 25% of area of window		Unlighted	Posters for temporary (<30 days) events are exempt  <u>Areas under gas station canopies and near pumps shall be considered window display areas and may have impermanent material signs attached. Freestanding sign or light</u>

<i>Type of Sign</i>	<i>Number of Signs</i>	<i>Maximum Area (sq. ft.)</i>	<i>Maximum Height</i>	<i>Lighting Types</i>	<i>Comments</i>
					<u>poles may not have impermanent signage.</u>
A-frames	1 per retail or restaurant use in <u>CBD, CS, and TC</u> only; <u>business structure</u> must be adjacent to <u>a City street-sidewalk, or internal sidewalk with minimum 4 feet of clearance width remaining with sign in place; sign may only be placed on a directly adjacent sidewalk.</u>	6 sq. ft.	48" tall; 24" wide	Unlighted	Subject to Chapter 11, Article II, Encroachment Permits Must be removed during non-business hours May not be open/closed sign only  <u>A-frames on internal lots must be placed on the sidewalk, and not impede parking or traffic flow</u>

(2) Multi-use buildings and multi-building properties must create a sign program specific to that property according to the following guidelines.

- a. The sign program must be approved by the Planning Department and will be kept on file as a reference for reviewing sign applications within that development.
- b. Signage shall follow a similar theme throughout the project. This theme shall be based on the similar scale, size, height, shape and/or color.
- c. Individual uses may not have individual freestanding signs.

**Sec. 16-8-60. Measurement of sign area and height.**

(a) Sign surface area.

(1) The area of a geometric shape enclosing any message, logo, symbol, name, photograph or display face shall be measured using standard mathematical formulas.

(2) The computation of letters not attached to a surface or plane shall be made by determining the area enclosed within the smallest geometric figure needed to completely encompass all of the letters, words, insignias or symbols.

(3) Time and temperature devices shall not be included within the measurement of maximum sign area.

(b) Sign support. Supporting framework or bracing that is clearly incidental to the display itself shall not be computed as sign area.

(c) Back-to-back (double-faced) signs. Back-to-back signs shall be regarded as a single sign only if mounted on a single structure, and the distance between each sign face does not exceed two (2) feet at any point.

(d) Three-dimensional signs. Where a sign consists of one (1) or more three-dimensional objects (i.e., balls, cubes, clusters of objects, sculpture), the sign area shall be measured as the maximum projection upon a vertical plane. Signs with three-dimensional objects that exceed a projection of six (6) inches from the sign face may be approved in compliance with Section 16-8-100.

(e) Wall signs. If a sign is attached to a wall, only that portion of the wall onto which the sign face or letters are placed shall be calculated in the sign area.

(f) Sign height. The height of a sign shall be measured from the highest point of a sign to the ground surface beneath it. When berms are used in conjunction with signage, the height of the sign shall be measured from the mean elevation of the fronting street. See Figure 16-2 for examples of sign height measurement.

**Sec. 16-8-70. Exempt signs.**

(a) The types of signs listed herein are exempt from permit requirements of these regulations and may be placed in any zoning district subject to the provisions of these regulations.

(1) Common exempt signage including: building identification signs, incidental signs, landmark signs, addresses, vacancy and no vacancy signs, no trespassing signs (maximum size of 8 square feet), time and temperature signs (maximum size of 10 square feet), and changeable copy signs for church, school, civic uses, and theaters.

(2) Nonvisible signs. Signs that are not visible beyond the boundaries of the lot or parcel upon which they are located and/or from any public thoroughfare or right-of-way shall be exempt from the provisions of this Article.

(3) Art, architectural features, or religious symbols. Integral decorative or architectural features of buildings, and works of art, so long as such features or works in no way identify a product or business and do not contain letters, trademarks, moving parts or lights.

(4) Banners. Banners applied to paper, plastic or fabric used to decorate or attract attention to a business, activity or event, provided that:

- a. The banner is displayed in conjunction with a special event for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days.
- b. Banners are displayed no more than two (2) times per calendar year per location.
- c. One (1) banner per street frontage per establishment shall be permitted.
- d. Non-profit special event banners. Temporary special event signs and banners for religious, charitable, civic, fraternal or similar nonprofit or not-for-profit organizations shall be erected no sooner than thirty (30) days prior to and removed no later than seven (7) days after the event. No such sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet. No such sign shall be illuminated.

(5) Banners on private light poles. Commercial banners may be displayed on privately-owned light poles, provided that:

- a. The business has an outdoor sales component such as auto/vehicle/equipment sales or other acceptable merchandise occurring outdoors.
- b. One banner per light pole, or two if placed to mirror each other and total size not exceeding size requirements below.
- c. Size is no greater than 8 feet in height and 6 feet in width.
- d. At least 10 feet off the ground.
- e. Consistent theme and professional design.

(6) Construction signs. Temporary construction signs, provided that:

- a. Signs are limited to information regarding participating building contractors, subcontractors, professional firms, lending institutions and property owners.
- b. Signs in conjunction with any single-family residential use shall not exceed eight (8) square feet each.
- c. Signs in conjunction with all uses besides single-family residential shall have a maximum area of thirty-two (32) square feet each.
- d. Only one (1) such sign oriented per street front per premises shall be erected. On corner lots, any two (2) such signs located on the same premises shall be located at least one hundred (100) feet apart as measured by using a straight line.
- e. Such signs shall not be illuminated.
- f. Such signs shall only appear at the construction site.
- g. Such signs shall be removed within seven (7) days after completion of the project.

(7) Decorations (holiday). Temporary decorations or displays, when such are clearly incidental to and are customarily and commonly associated with any national, state, local

or religious holiday or celebration; provided that such signs shall be displayed for not more than sixty (60) days in any one (1) year and may be of any type, number, area, height, location, illumination or animation.

(8) Flags. Government and nongovernment flags are allowed, provided that they do not display commercial logos.

(9) Garage, estate, yard sale or farm auction. Signs which advertise a private garage or yard sale ~~on the lot on which the sign is located~~; provided that such signs: are displayed no more than twice per year per dwelling unit. The sale sign is limited to four (4) square feet per face of sign area. It may be installed not more than seven (7) days prior to the sale, and it must be removed not later than two (2) days after the sale.

- a. Are limited to four (4) square feet per face of sign area.
- b. Are installed not more than one (1) day prior to the sale, and are removed not later than twelve (12) hours after the sale.
- c. Are not placed on light or street poles or traffic control devices such as stop signs, parking signs, or cross walk signs.
- d. Do not block vehicle line of site, or obstruct vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
- e. Signs that do not meet these requirements may be removed and discarded by city officials without notice to the owner.

(10) Hunting season signs. Temporary signs and banners intended to attract attention of seasonal hunters, provided that:

- a. Signs are only permitted between August 1 and December 1 each year.
- b. Signs must be placed on the same premises of the business or activity for which they are displaying information.
- e. ~~No such sign shall exceed sixteen (16) square feet.~~
- c. No such sign shall be illuminated or animated.

(11) Notice boards and other governmental notices. Notice boards for public or religious institutions or other uses as approved by City staff and primarily intended for pedestrians.

(12) Political signs. Political signs displayed on private property in accordance with an official election or signs erected on behalf of candidates for public office, provided that if placed by an individual or organization that is not the owner of the property:

- a. Written permission of the property owner is obtained prior to placement of said signs.
- b. Such written permission shall include the earliest date upon which said signs will be placed and any date upon which said signs will be removed.

- ~~a. Residential district signs shall not exceed three (3) square feet per face or six (6) square feet total.~~
- ~~b. In commercially zoned locations, the maximum sign area shall be ten (10) square feet for each sign face, or twenty (20) square feet total.~~
- ~~c. Such signs shall be placed no closer than eight (8) feet from the nearest pavement edge.~~
- ~~d. All such signs may be erected no sooner than sixty (60) days in advance of the election for which they were made.~~
- ~~e. The signs are removed within seven (7) days after the election for which they were made.~~
- ~~f. The property owner upon whose land the sign is placed shall give written permission for the placement of said signs and will be responsible for violations.~~

(13) Real estate sign. Properties being offered for sale, lease or development may have temporary signage, subject to the following limitations:

- d. For individual residential and commercial lots, one (1) sign is permitted per lot. The maximum sign area shall be six (6) square feet for each sign face. The maximum height shall be five (5) feet.
- e. For residential and commercial major subdivisions, one (1) sign is permitted per subdivision. The maximum sign area shall be thirty-two (32) square feet for each sign face. The maximum height shall be eight (8) feet.
- f. Each shall be limited to two (2) sign faces.
- g. Signs must be located on the lot or subdivision being advertised. Such signs shall be placed no closer than eight (8) feet to the property line or nearest pavement edge or sidewalk, whichever is closer. Placement shall also conform to the City's site distance triangle requirements.
- h. No more than three (3) temporary directional signs advertising a specific planned commercial or mixed use development, subdivision, multi-family development, etc., may also be permitted off-site. Each such sign may have a maximum area of four (4) square feet and shall be placed outside all existing rights-of-way.
- i. All signs advertising lots for sale or lease shall be removed no later than seven (7) days after the closing or signing of a lease agreement.
- j. All signs advertising subdivisions shall be removed after seventy-five percent (75%) of lots have sold within an advertised subdivision.
- k. No sign allowed under this Subsection shall be lighted.

(14) Strings of light bulbs. Displays of string lights, provided that:

- d. They are decorative displays which only outline or highlight landscaping or architectural features of a building.

e. They are steady burning, clear, noncolored bulb lights. No blinking, flashing, intermittent changes in intensity or rotating shall be permitted unless in conjunction with holiday decorations.

f. They shall not be assembled or arranged to convey messages, words, commercial advertisements, slogans and/or logos.

(15) Vehicular signs. Signs displayed on trucks, buses, trailers or other vehicles which are being operated or stored in the normal course of a business, such as signs indicating the names of the owners or businesses which are located on moving vans, delivery trucks, rental trucks and trailers and the like, shall be exempt from the provisions of these regulations, provided that the primary purpose of such vehicles is not for the display of signs, and provided that they are parked or stored in areas appropriate to their use as vehicles.

(16) Ideological signs. Ideological signs displayed on private property, provided that if placed by an individual or organization that is not the owner of the property:

c. Written permission of the property owner is obtained prior to placement of said signs.

d. Such written permission shall include the earliest date upon which said signs will be placed and any date upon which said signs will be removed.

#### **Sec. 16-8-80. Prohibited signs.**

The following signs are inconsistent with the purposes and standards in this Article and are prohibited in all zoning districts:

(1) Animated signs. Signs with flashing, rotating, blinking or other illuminating or animating devices that have a changing brightness or intensity or color; or signs with movement, animation or apparent movement. This includes signs with optical illusion of movement by means of a design which presents a pattern capable of reversible perspective, giving the illusion of motion or changing of copy. Time and temperature signs and barber poles less than three (3) feet in height are exempt from this prohibition.

(2) Signs in the right-of-way. Any sign, other than a traffic control sign, erected, constructed or maintained within, over or upon the right-of-way of any road or highway.

(3) Roof signs.

(4) Signs confused with traffic control devices. Any sign whose size, location, movement, content, coloring or manner of illumination may be confused with or construed as a traffic control device, sign or signal, when in fact, it is not a traffic control device, sign or signal.

(5) Off-premises signs. Any off-premises advertising sign or any other sign not pertinent and clearly incidental to the permitted use on the property where located, except for temporary subdivision directional signs, directional real estate signs and political signs, and except for signs permitted in Section 16-8-90.

(6) Temporary stake signs. Any sign attached to non-permanent wire stake stands pushed into the ground when used for commercial advertising purposes except as permitted in Section 16-8-70.

(7) Signs emitting any sound or noise.

(8) Searchlights or beacons.

(9) Inflatable signs. Inflatable figures, shapes or mascots or tethered balloons except during hunting season for five (5) days.

(10) Signs of nonpermanent material. Fabric signs, flags, pennants or banners when used for commercial advertising purposes, except as permitted in this Article.

(11) Electronic message boards. Electronic message boards except governmental signs.

(12) Signs for vacated or abandoned entities. Any sign (together with its supporting structure) now or hereafter existing which, ninety (90) days or more after the premises have been vacated, advertises an activity, business, product or service no longer produced or conducted upon the premises upon which such sign is located. If the sign or sign structure is covered or the identifying symbols or letters removed, an extension of time may be granted by the Building Official upon good cause for such extension being shown. (This provision shall not apply to permanent signs accessory to businesses which are open only on a seasonal basis, provided that there is clear intent to continue operation of the business).

(13) Signs on natural features. Any sign painted on rocks or other natural features or terrain, unless approved by the City Manager.

**Sec. 16-8-90. Off-premises signs.**

Off-premises signs, are generally prohibited, except for those specific types of signs listed in this Section.

(1) Business district identification signs. A business district identification sign is an off-premises sign for the identification of a specific business district or center identified in the Comprehensive Plan or a business improvement or redevelopment area approved by the Planning Commission. Business district signs shall not:

- a. Interfere with pedestrian or vehicular safety;



- b. Detract from the pedestrian quality of the surrounding area; or
  - c. Add to an over-proliferation of signs on one (1) property or in one (1) area.
- (2) Church and civic club off-premises signs. A church or civic club off-premises sign is an off- premises sign intended to direct people to the church or civic club and/or state meeting dates and times. Such signs shall not:
- d. Interfere with pedestrian or vehicular safety;
  - e. Detract from the pedestrian quality of the surrounding area;
  - f. Add to an over-proliferation of signs on one (1) property or in one (1) area;
  - g. Be allowed for any organization that has not proven nonprofit status;
  - h. Measure more than four (4) square feet; or
  - i. Number more than five (5) for any organization.

**Sec. 16-8-100. Creative signs.**

(a) Purpose. This Section establishes standards and procedures for the design, review and approval of creative signs. The purposes of this creative sign program are to:

(1) Encourage signs of unique design and that exhibit a high degree of thoughtfulness, imagination, inventiveness and spirit; and

(2) Provide a process for the application of sign regulations in ways that will allow creatively designed signs that make a positive visual contribution to the overall image of the City, while mitigating the impacts of large or unusually designed signs.

(b) Applicability. An applicant may request approval of a sign permit under the creative sign program to authorize on-site signs that employ standards that differ from the other provisions of this Article but comply with the provisions of this Section.

(c) Approval authority. A sign permit application for a creative sign shall be subject to approval by the Planning Commission.

(d) Application requirements. A sign permit application for a creative sign shall include all information and materials required by the City, and the filing fee based on the same fee schedule as a building permit.

(e) Design criteria. In approving an application for a creative sign, the Planning Commission shall ensure that a proposed sign meets the following design criteria:

(1) Design quality. The sign shall:

- a. Constitute a substantial aesthetic improvement to the site and shall have a positive visual impact on the surrounding area;

- b. Be of unique design and exhibit a high degree of thoughtfulness, imagination, inventiveness and spirit; and
  - c. Provide strong graphic character through the imaginative use of graphics, color, texture, quality materials, scale and proportion.
- (2) Contextual criteria. The sign shall contain at least one (1) of the following elements:
- a. Classic historic design style;
  - b. Creative image reflecting current or historic character of the City.
  - c. Symbols or imagery relating to the entertainment or design industry; or
  - d. Inventive representation of the use, name or logo of the structure or business.
- (3) Architectural criteria. The sign shall:
- a. Utilize and/or enhance the architectural elements of the building; and
  - b. Be placed in a logical location in relation to the overall composition of the building's facade and not cover any key architectural features/details of the facade.

**Sec. 16-8-110. Definitions.**

For purposes of this Article, the following words are defined as follows:

*Abandoned sign* means an unused or abandoned sign that meets any of the following criteria:

- a. A sign that identifies an establishment, products or services that no longer exist or are no longer provided on the premises where the sign is located.
- c. A sign that identifies a time, event or purpose which has passed or no longer applies.
- d. A sign that is vacant of copy.

*A-frame sign* means a sandwich-board-type sign typically used in front of a business for advertising purposes.

*Area* means the area of a geometric shape enclosing any message, logo, symbol, name, photograph or display face and shall be measured using standard mathematical formulas. See Section 16-8-60 for detailed computation information.

*Awning sign* means a sign that is painted, stitched, sewn or stained onto the exterior of an awning. An awning is a movable shelter supported entirely from the exterior wall of a building and composed of nonrigid materials except for the supporting framework.

*Banner* means a sign of flexible fabric, plastic, paper or similar material that is mounted to a pole or a building by wires, ropes or other temporary methods. Flags shall not be considered banners.

*Beacon* means a rotating or moving source of light.

*Building frontage* means the horizontal linear dimensions of that side of a building that abuts a street, parking area, mall or other circulation area open to the general public. Where more than one (1) use occupies a building, each such use having a public entrance or main window display shall be considered to have its own building frontage, which shall be the front width of the portion of the building occupied by that use.

*Building identification sign* means a nonilluminated sign constructed of metal or masonry or other permanent material which is permanently affixed to a building or structure for the purpose of identifying the name of a building, date of erection or other incidental or historical information, as approved by City staff.

*Canopy sign* means a sign that is permanently affixed to a roofed shelter attached to and supported by a building, by columns extending from the ground or by a combination of a building and columns. A marquee is not a canopy sign.

*Changeable copy sign* means a sign or part of a sign with characters, letters or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged on the surface of the sign. A sign on which the message changes more than eight (8) times per day shall be considered an animated sign and not a changeable copy sign.

*Commercial message* means wording, logo, or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service or other commercial activity.

*Courtesy sign* means a nonilluminated or indirectly illuminated sign which identifies, as a courtesy to customers, items such as credit cards accepted, redemption stamps offered, menus or prices.

*Façade* means the front of a building, including entries, parapets and rooflines, especially the principal face.

*Face* means the surface of a sign upon, against or through which the message is displayed, illustrated or illuminated.

*Fence sign* means a sign mounted or attached on a fence.

*Flag, government* means a device composed of flexible cloth, plastic or other similar material that displays local, state or federal emblems, seals or colors.

*Flag, nongovernment* means a device composed of flexible cloth, plastic or other similar material that displays nongovernment emblems, business or corporate logos, symbols or illustrations.

*Freestanding sign* means a sign that is supported by one (1) or more columns, uprights, poles or braces extended from the ground, or which is erected on the ground, and shall also include a monument sign and a pole sign but does not include a sign attached to a structure.

*Government sign* means a sign erected by government or government agencies for regulatory and informational purposes.

*Holiday decorations* means temporary decorations, strings of lights or displays clearly incidental to and customarily associated with any state, local or religious holiday.

*Ideological sign* means a sign communicating a philosophical message or ideas that do not fit in any other Sign Code category.

*Illuminated sign* means a sign lighted by or exposed to artificial lighting or illumination.

*Illumination, direct* means lighting by means of an unshielded light source (including neon tubing) which is effectively visible as a part of the sign, where light travels directly from the source to the viewer's eye.

*Illumination, indirect* means lighting by means of a light source directed at a reflecting surface in a way that illuminates the sign from the front, or a light source that is primarily designed to illuminate the entire building facade upon which a sign is displayed. Indirect illumination does not include lighting which is primarily used for purposes other than sign illumination; e.g., parking lot lights or lights inside a building that may silhouette a window sign but are primarily installed to serve as inside illumination.

*Illumination, internal* means lighting by means of a light source that is within a sign having a translucent background, silhouetting opaque letters or designs, or which is within letters or designs that are themselves made of a translucent material.

*Incidental sign* means a sign, generally informational, that has a purpose secondary to the use of the zone lot on which it is located, such as "no parking," "entrance," "loading only," "telephone" and other similar directives. No sign with a commercial message or logo shall be considered incidental.

*Landmark sign* means a non-illuminated sign constructed of metal, masonry or other permanent material that is permanently fixed to a building or structure for the purpose of identifying a historic structure, historic place, significant event, personal memorial or other similar feature.

*Lot frontage* means any boundary line of a parcel of land that coincides with the right-of-way or street.

*Monument sign* means a freestanding sign where the entire bottom of the sign is affixed to the ground, not to a building.

*Multi-use building* means a building with multiple uses, each with an individual entrance. Note that a single business that includes multiple uses within one building, such as an auto sales office AND a vehicle service center, may be considered a multi-use building.

*Nonconforming sign* means a sign which was lawfully erected, altered, moved or maintained under previous sign codes and received a valid sign permit but does not conform to the provisions of this sign code nor has been subsequently granted a variance from the sign code.

*Off-premises sign* means any sign which is placed on a parcel of land other than that upon which the use, event or activity is located.

*On-premises sign* means any sign directly pertaining to an existing permitted use, event or activity on the property upon which said sign is located.

*Pennant* means a lightweight plastic, fabric or other material, whether or not containing a message or any kind, suspended from a rope, wire or string, usually in a series.

*Permanent sign* means a sign that is permanently fixed or attached to the ground or a structure, or any sign that is intended to be displayed on a continuing and ongoing basis for more than ninety (90) days.

*Political sign* means a noncommercial sign that either displays a message conveying political or ideological views or supports a specific political candidate or ballot item for election.

*Portable sign* means a 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 T- frames; menus and sandwich board signs; umbrellas used for advertising; and signs attached to or painted on vehicles parked and visible from the public right-of-way, unless said vehicle is used in the normal day-to-day operations of the business.

*Premises* means the physical location occupied by the business or activity being conducted.

*Projecting sign* means a sign attached to a building and extending in whole or in part more than six (6) inches beyond the surface of the building to which the sign is attached.

*Residential sign* means any sign located in a district zoned for residential uses that contains no commercial message, except advertising for goods and services legally offered on the premises where the sign is located.

*Roof sign* means a sign erected and constructed upon or over the roof or parapet of a structure or building.

*Sign* means any object, device, display or structure which is used to advertise, identify, display, direct or attract attention to an object, person, institution, organization, business,

product, service, event or location by any means, including words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, colors, motion, illumination or projected images.

*Stake sign* means any material attached to non-permanent wire stake stands pushed into the ground without a permanent foundation, such as real estate and campaign signs.

*Street sign* means an official sign erected by a government entity or subdivision developer in order to identify a street name.

*Suspended sign* means a sign suspended from the underside of a horizontal plane surface (such as ceiling, canopy, portico or soffit) and is supported by such a surface.

*Temporary sign* means a sign that is used only temporarily and is not permanently fixed to the ground or a structure.

*Time and/or temperature sign* means a sign intended to display time and temperature information for a limited period of time and capable of being viewed from any public right-of-way, parking area or neighboring property.

*Vehicular sign* means a sign displayed on a truck, bus, trailer or other vehicle.

*Vending machine sign* means a sign on a vending machine identifying products therein.

*Wall sign* means a sign painted on, incorporated into or affixed to the building wall that extends no more than six (6) inches from the wall or surface upon which it is attached, and whose display surface is parallel to the face of the wall on which it is attached or displayed.

*Window sign* means a sign that is displayed in, applied or attached to a window or that can be read through the window from the public right-of-way.

Section 3. This Ordinance shall become effective October 1, 2015.

INTRODUCED on August 19, 2015, read by title, passed on first reading, and ordered published as required by the Charter.

INTRODUCED a second time at a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Rifle, Colorado, held on September 2, 2015, passed without amendment, approved, and ordered published in full as required by the Charter.

Dated this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

CITY OF RIFLE, COLORADO

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

Mayor

ATTEST:

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City Clerk