

ARTICLE E.

SIGNS

Sec. 8-3111. Generally.

All signs within the city shall be erected, constructed or maintained in accordance with the provisions of this article, and only those signs that are listed in this article shall be erected in the city.

- (a) *Traffic safety.* No sign shall be erected in the city that:
 - (1) Obstructs the sight distance at an intersection or along a public right-of-way.
 - (2) Would tend by its location, color or nature to be confused with or obstruct the view of traffic signs or traffic signals by motorists or pedestrians.
 - (3) Uses admonitions such as "stop," "go," "slow," "danger," etc., which might be confused with traffic directional signs.
- (b) *Fire safety, light and air.* No sign shall be erected or constructed that will violate any of the city regulations as to health, required light, safety or air, as defined in the building code.
- (c) *Sign conditions.*
 - (1) *Unsafe signs.* Whenever a sign becomes structurally unsafe or otherwise endangers the safety of the building or the public, the zoning administrator shall order that such sign be made safe or removed. Such order shall be complied with within ten days of the receipt thereof by the person owning or using the sign or the owner of the building or premises on which such unsafe sign is affixed or erected.
 - (2) *Unmaintained signs.* Whenever a sign is physically damaged or is not maintained and is determined by the zoning administrator to negatively impact the visual character of the surrounding area or pose an unsafe condition, the zoning administrator shall order that such sign be properly maintained or removed. Such order shall be complied with within 90 days of receipt thereof.
- (d) *Shielding of separate use signs.* Any separate use sign within 100 feet of any residential zoning district which is illuminated shall be shielded in such a manner as to prevent rays of light from being cast into any residential premises.

- (e) *Illumination.* Illumination devices, such as but not limited to floodlights or spotlights, shall be so placed and so shielded as to prevent the rays or illumination therefrom from being cast into neighboring dwellings and approaching vehicles.
- (f) *Wind pressure.* Signs or other structures shall be capable of withstanding horizontal loads as required by the City of Savannah building code.
- (g) *Exposed sign area.* The exposed area of a sign shall, by definition, include the total area of all parts of the sign, including the structural framing. In assuming or determining the pressure on any sign, the wind shall be assumed to be blowing from the direction which will produce the maximum stress.
- (h) *Historical site/structure.* Freestanding or projecting signs, not associated with an historical site or structure, shall not be permitted within 35 feet, as measured from the respective property line(s), of any historical site or structure.
- (i) *Discontinued use signs and sign supports.* Except as provided for hereunder, all exterior "on-premises" signs and sign supports associated with a principal use shall be removed within 30 days from the date such principal use is terminated, relocated or discontinued:
 - (1) *Interior window signs.* An interior window sign announcing the relocation or closing of a use may be allowed for a period of 90 days from the date of the closing, provided the sign does not exceed the most restrictive of the following size limitations:
 - a. The sign shall not exceed the maximum size provisions for an announcement sign for the district in which it is located; or
 - b. The sign does not exceed ten percent of the glassed area of the window or door pane on which it is located.
 - (2) *Architectural feature signs.* A sign designed and constructed as an integral part of the building facade may remain if its removal would require the destruction or removal of the facade or a structural portion of the building or its appendages. Such signs include marquees, tile and masonry designs or embedded plaques or shields on the structure or its entryway, stained glass signs, cornerstone signs or similar type signs.
 - (3) *Conforming design and maintained signs or sign supports.* When a sign or sign support is in conformance with the current zoning requirements and is kept in good repair, it shall be allowed to remain in place until the new use occupies the premises or for a period of six months from the closing date of the previous business, whichever occurs first, in order to provide any new use an opportunity to utilize the sign or its support.

The reviewing agency may specifically allow the sign or sign support to thereafter remain upon a finding that it is compatible with the new use and will not result in a cluttered appearance. The reviewing agency may permit such sign to be relocated elsewhere on the premises. Unless the reviewing agency approves such request, the discontinued use sign and/or support shall be removed from the premises. Alternative actions such as incorporating the notable sign into a new use's signage plan or storing the sign or sign standard in a protected area such as a museum are encouraged.