

Chapter 25

Signs and Public Art

This chapter establishes standards for signs. It begins with a statement of purposes and principles for sign regulation in Williston. A list prohibited types of signs and an explanation of permit requirements, including the requirement for master sign plans, follows. Standards for the permitted type, number, size, and illumination of permanent signs in each zoning district are presented in a table and WDB 25.6 and 25.7. WDB 25.8 addresses temporary signs. The chapter ends with standards for continuing use of nonconforming signs and definitions of ‘community information center’ and ‘public art.’

25.1 Purpose – Principles – Authority

25.1.1 *What role do signs play in Williston’s landscape?* Williston permits signs that serve the public by identifying local businesses, providing directions, making people aware of regulations and possible safety hazards, making people aware of community events and political messages, and assisting town residents in the occasional sale or lease of homes and household goods.

What is a sign? For the purposes of this bylaw, a “sign” is anything that is intended to attract attention that is not specifically excluded from this definition. This includes what people typically think of as signs, ranging from small “No Parking” signs to large billboards. It also includes other attention getting devices or displays, including vending machines that are visible from a public way; pennants and pinwheels that bear no message; and similar devices or displays. Community information centers and public art, both of which are defined later in this chapter, are excluded. So are scoreboards installed as provided by WDB 17.8.

25.1.2 *What principles guide sign regulation in Williston?*

25.1.2.1 Signs are Important. Signs that effectively serve the purposes listed above are an important feature of the town’s landscape. They help people navigate through the community and make people aware of local businesses, homes for sale or rent, the sale of household goods, and community events. They also help make people aware of regulations and safety hazards and provide a means of political expression.

25.1.2.2 Freedom of Speech. Federal courts have made it clear that signs are a legitimate medium for political expression. The owner of any sign which is otherwise allowed by these standards may substitute noncommercial copy in lieu of any other commercial or non-commercial copy. The purpose of this provision is to prevent any inadvertent favoring of commercial speech over non-commercial speech, or favoring of any particular non-commercial message over any other non-commercial message. This provision prevails over any more specific provision to the contrary.

25.1.2.3 Signs Have Impacts. Despite their importance in the town’s life, signs that are too numerous, too large, poorly placed, improperly illuminated, or out of scale or character with

their surroundings will seriously detract from Williston’s landscape and economy. They can block or diminish scenic views, obstruct views at driveways and intersections; distract motorists; block pedestrian ways; hide architectural or landscape details that contribute to the character of buildings, neighborhoods, and the town; create light trespass and pollution; and project a sense of clutter and haste that is not consistent with either a healthy economy or a healthy community life.

25.1.2.4 A Positive Contribution. Well-designed signs in the right locations can make a positive contribution to Williston’s landscape, economy, and community life. Compliance with these standards will ensure that they do so.

25.1.2.5 Location Matters. Different types, numbers, and sizes of signs are appropriate in different parts of Williston and the standards adopted here vary accordingly.

25.1.2.6 Signs Require the Same Level of Planning and Design as Buildings. The need for signs must be anticipated at the beginning of every project. A master sign plan is required for all developments that could have multiple occupancies. Whether a master sign plan is required or not, all new buildings and major additions to existing buildings must be designed with a sign band or other definite locations for the placement of permitted signs. An application for a discretionary permit is not complete if it fails to show how signs will be placed or posted.

Placement of Signs v Design of Signs. To be clear, WDB 25.1.2.6 does not require applicants to include a specific number, type, or size of signs, or the design of individual signs in applications for discretionary permits. It simply requires that the applicant show where signs may be placed on the site or on proposed buildings or additions. The individual signs that fill those “blanks” will be separately permitted.

25.1.3 Under what authority does the town regulate signs? 25 V.S.A. § 2291(7) gives Vermont municipalities the authority to:

To regulate or prohibit the erection, size, structure, contents and location of signs, posters or displays on or above any public highway, sidewalk, lane or alleyway of the municipality and to regulate the use, size, structure, contents and location of signs on private buildings or structures.

Note also that signs are “structures” within the meaning of 25 V.S.A. § 4411, which provides the general authority for local zoning.

25.2 Sign Regulation by Zoning District. Because signs must be consistent with the purpose of each zoning district, the type, number, height, and size of signs allowed varies among the districts. See Table 25.A for specific requirements for signs in each zoning district. Signs in VZD must also comply with the *Williston Village Historic District Design Review Guide*. WDB 25.6 provides an explanation of Table 25.A.

25.3 Prohibited Signs. Some types of signs simply may not be placed or posted in Williston. Those types of signs are listed below. Also, any sign that does not comply with the standards established in this chapter, with any other requirement of this bylaw, or with an applicable, approved master sign plan is prohibited. The placement or posting of a prohibited sign is a violation of this bylaw, subject to enforcement as provided in WDB 7.4-7.6.

25.3.1 Are animated signs permitted? No. Animated, blinking, flashing, and moving signs or signs that appear to move are prohibited. This includes any sign that interferes with, imitates, or resembles an official traffic control sign, signal, or device, or attempts or appears to direct the movement of

traffic with motion or the appearance of motion. Holiday displays that comply with WDB 25.4.2.11 are exempt from this prohibition.

25.3.2 *Are illuminated signs permitted?* Illuminated signs are permitted in compliance with WDB 25.6.7 and Chapter 24 of the bylaw, but three types of illuminated signs are simply prohibited.

25.3.2.1 Beacons. The use of spotlights, searchlights, beacons, or similar lights that are projected toward the sky to attract attention is prohibited.

25.3.2.2 Glaring. Any sign with lighting that interferes with the safe operation of motor vehicles or bicycles or that unnecessarily trespasses on neighboring properties is prohibited.

25.3.2.3 Internally Illuminated. With the exception of the limited use of illuminated window signs, internally illuminated signs are prohibited. This prohibition includes “LED readerboard” signs that are often used to display changeable copy like announcements and gasoline prices.

25.3.3 *Are off-premises signs permitted?* An off-premise sign is a sign that advertises a commercial enterprise or event that is placed on a parcel of land that is not the same parcel where the enterprise or event is located. Off-premises signs are generally prohibited, but there are three minor exceptions to this standard.

25.3.3.1 Directional Signs. Off-premises directional signs may be permitted where a special event is permitted under the provisions of the Special Events Ordinance as described in Appendix E.

25.3.3.2 Product Advertising. Product advertising signs are “off-premise” signs and, thus, prohibited. A limited exception for product advertising using temporary signs is provided by WDB 25.8.

25.3.3.3 Off-premise agricultural signs. Signs placed in in the ARZD, VZD and RZD advertising the sale of agricultural products in the ARZD, VZD and RZD. While state law generally prohibits off-site signage, 24 V.S.A Section 494 (12) provides an exception as follows:

Directional signs, subject to regulations adopted by the Federal Highway Administration, with a total surface area not to exceed six square feet providing directions to places of business offering for sale agricultural products harvested or produced on the premises where the sale is taking place, or to farmers' markets that are members of the Vermont farmers market association selling Vermont agricultural products.

Signs advertising farms, farmstands, and farmer’s markets that are members of the Vermont farmers market association and that are located in the RZD, VZD and ARZD may be placed off-premise, only in the ARZD, VZD and RZD, under the following conditions:

- Only one off-premise agricultural sign may be placed on any one parcel of land.
- Off-premise agricultural signs may not exceed four feet in height
- Off-premise agricultural signs may not exceed six feet in area and may be double-sided.
- Off premise agricultural signs must not be permanently anchored to the ground

- Off premise agricultural signs may not be placed more than 10 days prior to the commencement of the sales activity they advertise and must be removed no more than 10 days following the cessation of such activity.
- Off premise agricultural signs must be set back a minimum of five feet from the edge of any public or private right-of-way.
- No permit is required for the placing of such signs, but the property owner where the sign is placed must give his or her permission for the sign.

25.3.4 Is product advertising permitted? Only in the limited way permitted by WDB 25.8.

25.3.5 Are pennants and similar attention-getting displays permitted? No. Pennants, strings of flags, and other serial signs are prohibited.

25.3.6 May I place a sign in the public right-of-way? No sign shall be placed in a public right-of-way except for the official signs permitted by WDB 25.4.4.8. Any other sign placed in a public right-of-way is subject to immediate removal by the town or state and the enforcement procedures of WDB 7.4-7.6.

25.3.7 May I hang a sign on a lamp post or other streetscape feature? Complying official and regulatory signs may be attached to light standards, bridges, and other functional features of the streetscape, public or private, but only where doing so is consistent with WDB 25.3.6.

25.3.8 Are roof signs permitted? No sign shall be mounted on the roof of a building. Further, no sign that is attached to a building may extend above the roofline. The DRB may permit an exception to this prohibition for signs mounted on the sloping sides of gambrel or mansard roofs. Where such an exception is allowed the resulting sign/s will be treated as wall signs, and as part of the development's overall sign area.

What is the roofline? For the purposes of sign regulation, this bylaw defines the "roofline" as the lowest point defined by the eaves or, where there are no eaves or similar overhangs, the top of the wall.

25.3.9 May I hang a sign on a tree? No. Signs may not be painted on or attached to cliffs, boulders, trees, or any other naturally occurring feature of the landscape. The administrator may, however, permit an exception to this standard for building numbers and/or home business signs when no reasonable alternative exists or the placement of a freestanding sign would result in the unnecessary clearing of trees.

25.3.10 May I place as sign on an antenna or tower? No. Signs may not be attached to antennae or towers that are regulated by Chapter 21 of this bylaw. See WDB 21.3.5.3.

25.3.11 May I use a parked vehicle to advertise my business? The use of an unregistered vehicle or trailer as a sign is prohibited. The use of signs affixed to registered vehicles or trailers is also prohibited. This prohibition is not intended prevent a business from painting vehicles that are routinely used in the conduct of that business, but the administrator may require that existing parking areas where such vehicles are routinely parked be brought into compliance with the landscaped buffer requirements for parking areas that are adopted in this bylaw.

25.3.12 Unsafe Signs. The following types of signs are unsafe, by definition, and constitute a violation of this bylaw that must be removed upon receipt of a notice of violation sent under the authority of WDB 7.4:

25.3.12.1 ... any sign that interferes with drivers' or cyclists clear and unobstructed view of official traffic control signs and approaching or merging traffic;

25.3.12.2 ... any sign that prevents drivers or cyclists from seeing approved signs on neighboring properties;

25.3.12.3. ... any sign with lighting that interferes with the safe operation of motor vehicles or bicycles or that unnecessarily trespasses on neighboring properties; and

25.3.12.4 ... any sign that obstructs a pedestrian way. At least 70% of the width of the pedestrian way must be left open to passage when placing portable sign approved in compliance with WDB 25.7.2.3.

25.3.12.5 Any sign that is determined to be structurally unsound or to present a hazard of electrical shock will also be considered unsafe and subject to immediate repair or removal. The Administrator will use the most recent edition of the *Uniform or International Sign Code* as the basis for the enforcement of this standard.

25.4 Permit Requirements for Signs

25.4.1 *Is a permit required for a sign?* Usually, but it depends on the type of sign. WDB 25.4.4 exempts some types of signs from the need for a permit, but NOT from compliance with this bylaw. An administrative permit is required for the placement or posting of all other signs.

25.4.2 *Is there a special application form for sign permits?* Yes. Applicants must use the *Sign Permit Application* and *Sign Permit Checklist* provided by the town in preparing their applications.

25.4.3 *Is there a fee for the placement or posting of a sign?* The application fee set by the Selectboard must accompany all applications for permits for signs.

25.4.4 *What type of signs may be placed or posted without a permit?* No review is required for the placement or posting of non-illuminated signs of the types listed below or for the routine maintenance and repair of existing signs. This exemption from the requirement for a permit does not, however, exempt any sign from compliance with all other requirements of this chapter and this bylaw. Exempt signs do not count as part of the total number or area of signs permitted by this chapter.

25.4.4.1 **Building Numbers**. No permit is required for building numbers required by Williston's *Road Name and Road Location Numbering Ordinance*. The relevant portions of that ordinance appear as Appendix F of this bylaw. The placement of building numbers must comply with the standards set by Table 25.A.

25.4.4.2 **Changes in Copy**. No permit is required for changes in copy that use the originally approved font, size, and color of lettering or for copy changes to approved kiosks, bulletin boards, or other community information centers on which the messages posted are expected to change on a regular basis.

25.4.4.3 **Directional Signs**. No permit is required for the placement or posting of up to 4 directional signs that have an area of less than two (2) SF each and do not include a logo larger

than one-half (0.5) SF or a commercial message. See WDB 25.7.9 for additional restrictions on directional signs.

25.4.2.4 Donor or Recognition Plaques. No permit is required for the placement or posting of a donor or recognition plaque not exceeding two (2) SF on a permitted structure or sign.

25.4.4.5 Flags. No permit is required for the display of flags provided that:

- Each flag does not exceed 25 SF in size, and
- no more than four (4) are flown at any one time.

Proposed freestanding flagpoles must be included on the plans submitted for permit approval.

25.4.4.6 Holidays.

- No permit is required for seasonal holiday displays that include no commercial message or logo, that are not permanently attached to the ground or a structure, that are removed after 30 days, that are comprised of parts which do not individually exceed four (4) SF each.
- Signs that are temporarily displayed on town property for Williston's Independence Day (4th of July) celebration need not obtain a permit.

25.4.4.7 Memorial Signs. No permit is necessary for cornerstones or similar displays of the names of buildings and their date of erection or for messages in memory of individuals or groups that do not exceed six (6) SF in size, that are cut into a stone or masonry surface or that are cast in bronze or a similar material, and that permanently affixed to an approved building.

25.4.4.8 Regulatory Signs. No permit is required for the placement or posting of a regulatory sign placed by the town or the state. Regulatory signs may be placed in the public right-of-way in accord with the *Uniform Manual for Traffic Control Devices*.

25.4.4.9 Special Events. An additional permit is not required for the placement or posting of signs that are approved by a special events permit. The Administrator may place limitations on the number and location of these signs, and these signs may only be displayed for a maximum of 30 days. These signs are not allowed to be placed in the public right of way.

25.4.4.10 Temporary Signs. There are different standards for temporary window signs and all other temporary signs.

- No permit is necessary for the posting of temporary window signs that do not, cumulatively, exceed 25% of the total window area, that are each less than four (4) SF each in size, and that are removed or changed within 30 days of their posting.

- No permit is required for the placement or posting of other temporary signs that have an area of six (6) square feet or less and are displayed for a maximum of 90 days per calendar year. The number of allowed temporary signs, whether or not they are exempt from the requirement of having to file an Administrative Permit, is regulated by WDB 25.8.3 Portable signs that are used on a regular basis in the same location are not temporary signs. See WDB 25.7.2.3.
- Grand Opening Banner. Any business opening in a new location may place one banner on the property where the business is situated for a period of up to 30 days, provided that the size of the banner does not exceed 24 square feet.
- See WDB 25.8 for additional restrictions on temporary signs.

25.4.5 What type of permit is required for signs that are not exempt? You must have an administrative permit to place or post any sign that is not explicitly made exempt by WDB 25.4.4. Some common questions about permit requirements for signs are clarified below.

25.4.5.1 Temporary Signs. A permit is required for the placement or posting of temporary signs that are over six (6) SF in size or, in windows, over four (4) SF in size. This includes temporary signs advertising a business while a permanent sign is being prepared.

25.4.5.2 Illuminated Signs. With the exception of regulatory signs posted by a public agency, the placement or posting of illuminated signs is never exempt from the requirement for a permit.

25.4.5.3 Master Sign Plans. Posting a sign in compliance with an approved master sign plan requires an administrative permit, except for the posting of temporary signs approved by an approved Master Sign Plan.

25.4.6 Are there signs for which discretionary review is required? Yes.

25.4.6.1 In the VZD. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required for the placement or posting of any non-exempt sign in the Village Zoning District.

25.4.4.2 Developments with Multiple Occupancies. While the sign itself will not require a discretionary permit, the placement or posting of a new sign in an existing development that has, or reasonably could have, multiple occupancies will not be permitted until a master sign plan has been approved for that development, as provided by WDB 25.5. The administrator may permit the temporary placement or posting of a single sign of no more than 16 SF in size for a new tenant pending the approval of a master sign plan, with no such permit running for more than 180 days. Failure to obtain approval of a master sign plan within 180 days will void that permit and immediate removal of the sign will be required. The replacement of an existing sign with a sign of the same size or smaller in the same location will not trigger the requirement for a master sign plan.

25.5 Master Sign Plans

25.5.1 Are master sign plans required for new developments? A proposed master sign plan must be submitted with the application for a discretionary permit for any development that will, or may reasonably be expected to, have multiple occupancies.

25.5.2 Are master sign plans required for existing developments? A proposed master sign plan must be submitted and approved by the DRB before any new sign for which a permit is required may be posted in any existing development that has, or may reasonably be expected to have, multiple occupancies.

25.5.3 What should be included in a proposed master sign plan? Everything required by the *Master Sign Plan Checklist*. Master sign plans must anticipate all permanent and temporary signs, including seasonal banners and portable signs like sandwich boards, except for signs that are exempt under WDB 25.4

25.5.4 How are master sign plans reviewed? Review of a proposed master sign plan will ordinarily be combined with the review of an application for a discretionary permit. Existing uses may, however, need to secure approval of a master sign plan to permit new signs. In such cases, the DRB will review the proposed master sign plan following the procedure for the review of an application for a discretionary permit.

25.5.5 Can a master sign plan permit more or larger signs on my property? Possibly. An applicant may propose, and the DRB may approve, a master sign plan that permits some variation from these standards. Where such a variation is permitted, the DRB must make a specific written finding that the variation is consistent with the comprehensive plan and the purpose and principles for sign regulation established in this chapter. While a Master Sign Plan that includes more or larger signs than are allowed by these standards can be approved by the DRB, signs proposed under a Master Sign Plan must adhere to all other standards of this chapter, including but not limited to maximum height, setbacks, and illumination.

25.6 Basic Sign Standards. Basic standards for the permitted types of signs are set in Table 25.A. Additional explanations and more detailed standards are provided here and in WDB 25.7.

25.6.1 Is the number of signs that may be placed or posted on a site limited? Yes. See Table 25.A for limitations on the number of permanent signs. In some cases, that table specifies the maximum number of signs permitted on a lot. In other cases, it specifies a number of signs permitted per point of access or a number of signs permitted per building entrance or occupancy. No maximum number is specified for permanent wall or window signs, the extent of which is limited by the total sign area requirement of Table 25.A.

25.6.1.1 Signs Per Building. For the purposes of this chapter, the term “building entrance” includes only principal entrances to a building or to parts of a building that has multiple occupancies. It does not include emergency exits, loading doors, or any entrance to which public access is restricted.

25.6.1.2 Signs Per Point of Access. For the purposes of this chapter, the term “point of access” includes only widely spaced principal entrances from a road or path to a development. It does not include emergency or service drives, nor does it include points-of-access that are less than 330 feet apart.

25.6.2 Is the total area of signs that may be placed or posted on a property limited? Yes. The combined area of all signs, excluding the signs that are exempted by WDB 25.4 and special events signs, must fall within the total sign area indicated for the zoning district in Table 25.A.

25.6.3 Is the area of individual signs limited? Yes. Table 25.A sets maximum areas for most individual signs.

25.6.4 How is sign area measured? The area of a sign is measured in square feet (SF) as the area within the smallest regular geometric shape - circle, rectangle, square, or triangle - that can be drawn around the copy of the sign, including logos, graphics, and all other contents, and the background on which that copy is displayed. The area of a freestanding, projecting, or suspended sign is measured for one face of the sign only. This means that if, for example, a freestanding sign can have an area of 16 SF, it can have two faces, one facing each direction, that are 16 SF each.

25.6.5 Are the dimensions of signs limited? Yes.

25.6.5.1 Height: Freestanding. Table 25.A limits the height of freestanding signs. The height of a freestanding sign is measured from the highest point of the sign structure to the average grade of the ground on which the sign is based.

25.6.5.2 Height: Other Signs: Signs that are attached to a building may not extend above the roofline of that building.

25.6.5.3 Width. The total width of that portion of a sign structure that is more than three (3) feet tall shall not be more than double the width of the sign itself.

25.6.6 Must sign structures conform to a construction code? Sign structures must comply with the requirements of the most recent edition of the *Uniform or International Sign Code*.

25.6.7 Are there standards for the illumination of signs? Yes. In addition to the standards adopted here, the lighting of signs must comply with the standards of Chapter 25 of this bylaw. Note specifically that signs may not be uplit. External illumination must be directed downward onto the face of the sign.

25.6.7.1 Internal Illumination. With the exception of the illuminated window signs permitted by WDB 25.7.7, the internal illumination of signs is not permitted

25.6.7.2 External Illumination. External light sources must be fully shielded so as to direct light only onto the sign face.

25.6.7.3 Backlit Illumination. Backlit signs must take the form of individually illuminated channel letters or symbols. Again, the light sources must be fully shielded so as to direct light only into the channels.

25.6.7.4 Time Illuminated. Signs associated with a specific use may be illuminated only from one hour before that use opens until one hour after it closes. Other signs may be illuminated between 7:00 AM and 11 P.M.

25.7 Standards by Sign Type. The standards adopted here are in addition to those of Table 25.A and apply where the type of sign for which the standard is set is permitted in the zoning district.

25.7.1 What are the standards for signs on awnings? The lowest point on any awning must be at least 7 feet, 6 inches above the sidewalk or other surface above which it extends. Temporary signs

hung from awnings must maintain this clearance. Awning signs count toward the total number and area of signs allowed.

25.7.2 What are the standards for freestanding signs? Freestanding signs are placed or posted on their own structures. They are not attached to a building or any other structure and may be portable. Different types of freestanding signs may be described in different ways, such as ground signs, monument signs, pole signs, portable signs, etc., but they are all subject to the same standards, except where this bylaw explicitly provides otherwise. Freestanding signs count toward the total number and area of signs allowed.

25.7.2.1 Landscaping. Except as provided by Table 25.A for the VZD and for portable signs regulated by 25.7.2.3, the base of all permanent freestanding signs shall be landscaped with perennial and/or annual plantings. This landscaping shall be part of the landscaping plan required by Chapter 23 – Landscaping, and is subject to all standards adopted in that chapter.

25.7.2.2 Type/Design. The DRB may require that a specific type of freestanding sign be used in the village or – at the time it is reviewing a proposed master sign plan - in any development, in accord with the principles of WDB 25.1.

25.7.2.3 Portable Signs. Portable signs, such as sandwich board signs, are designed for easy placement, but given their usual use, they are considered permanent and included in the total sign number and area.

- Portable signs may not exceed 12 SF on each face and must be removed when the business they advertise is closed.
- Sandwich boards may take up no more than 30% of a pedestrian walkway and may not be placed in a public right-of-way. Sandwich boards must be brought inside when the business with which they are associated is closed.

25.7.2.4 Vending Machines. Outdoor vending machines and other sales displays function as and are regulated as freestanding signs.

25.7.3 What are the standards for projecting signs? A projecting sign extends outward from the wall of a building. It may be perpendicular to the building wall or at an angle, but its message is intended to be read primarily by people approaching from one or both sides. Projecting signs count toward the total number and area of signs allowed.

25.7.3.1 Distance from Building. No projecting sign may extended more than four (4) feet beyond the building wall from which it projects.

25.7.3.2 Clearance above Grade. The lowest point on a projecting sign must be at least 7 feet, 6 inches above grade.

25.7.4 What are the standards for suspended signs? A suspended sign is hung under the ceiling of an arcade or other overhanging structure, more or less perpendicular to the building. Its message is intended to be read primarily by people approaching along the arcade. Suspended signs count toward the total number and area of signs allowed.

25.7.4.1 Clearance above Grade. The lowest point on a suspended sign must be at least 7 feet, 6 inches above the floor of the arcade, porch, or other pedestrian way over which it hangs.

25.7.4.2 Under a Ceiling Only. A suspended sign may not project outward beyond the ceiling of the arcade, porch, or other pedestrian space in which it hangs.

25.7.5 *What are the standards for wall signs?* A wall sign is painted on or attached to a wall and runs parallel to that wall. Its message is intended to be read primarily by people facing the building. Wall signs count toward the total number and area allowed.

25.7.5.1 Newer Buildings. Wall signs must be placed within the sign band or other space specifically designated for signs.

25.7.5.2 All Buildings. Wall signs must be placed so as not to block emergency exits, fire escapes, or windows, or to obscure architectural features.

25.7.6 *What are the standards for window signs?* Window signs may be posted within the glass area of a window. Table 25.A sets a limit on how much of each window signs may cover. That total area includes both permanent and temporary window signs.

25.7.7 *May some window signs be illuminated?* Yes, but only in the commercial and mixed use zoning districts. Illuminated window signs may be illuminated by LED, neon or another noble gas, or any other form of illumination approved by the administrator. Only one illuminated window sign per window, not to exceed two (2) per business establishment is permitted. No illuminated window sign shall exceed two (2) square feet in area.

25.7.8 *What are the standards for directory signs?* Directory signs are used when more than one business shares a site or structure. A directory sign may be of any of the sign types allowed in the zoning district in which it is located and must adhere to the size limit for an individual sign. One directory sign is allowed at each point of access from a collector or arterial. Directory signs must be approved as part of a master sign plan, as provided by WDB 25.5 and may be exempted from the total area or number of signs allowed by the DRB in order to encourage good attention to wayfinding.

25.7.9 *What are the standards for directional signs?* Directional signs may be of any permitted type. They convey directions (RESTROOMS →), regulations (NO PARKING), and similar information. No permit is required for the placement or posting of up to 4 directional signs that have an area of less than two (2) square feet and do not include a logo larger than one-half (0.5) SF or a commercial message. These smaller directional signs are not counted against the permitted number or area of signs, but must comply with the individual sign standards of Table 25.A. More than four (4) smaller directional signs may be allowed by an administrative permit at the discretion of the Administrator. Larger directional signs or directional signs featuring a larger logo or other commercial message may be placed or posted only with an administrative permit. Larger directional signs are included in the total number and area of signs allowed.

25.7.10 *What are the standards for banners?* Banners are signs whose message is painted or printed on a flexible material. They are regulated as freestanding, suspended, or wall signs depending on how they are used. Banners are generally temporary, but their regular use (on lamppost standards, for example) may be approved as part of a master sign plan.

25.7.11 What are the standards for recognition and donor signs? Recognition and donor signs do not count against the overall permitted number or area of signs, but must comply with the individual sign standards of Table 25.A.

25.8 Temporary Signs. Temporary signs usually announce events, like elections, meetings, or sales that have a limited duration, but may be used for any lawful message. Portable signs that are used on a regular basis in roughly the same location are not temporary signs.

25.8.1 Is a permit required to post a temporary sign? Maybe. As provided by WDB 25.4.4.10, no permit is required for the placement or posting of a temporary sign that has an area of six (6) SF or less. Also, temporary signs associated with events requiring a special event permit are regulated through that permit, and do not need an administrative permit. An administrative permit is required for the placement or posting of any other temporary sign.

25.8.2 What are the standards for the dimensions, height, and location of temporary signs?

25.8.2.1 How Table 25.A Applies. Temporary signs may be any of the types allowed in the zoning district in which they are located and while they do not – with the exception of temporary window signs - count toward the total number or area of signs permitted, they must comply with the limits that Table 25.A places on individual signs of their type. Temporary window signs are counted as part of the total area of window signs permitted.

25.8.2.2 Product Advertising. Temporary signs, including temporary window signs, may provide information regarding product names, logos, prices, and names and/or logos of financial sponsors. This information may comprise no more than 50% of the total area of each temporary sign.

25.8.2.3 A Reminder. Temporary signs may never be placed in a public right-of-way or otherwise violate the prohibitions of WDB 25.3.

25.8.2.4 Held Signs. Signs held or waved by a person are temporary signs, subject to all requirements of this bylaw.

25.8.3 What are the standards for the number of temporary signs? Temporary signs that are not associated with a special event permit are limited to:

- One (1) sign per public road frontage for parcels with fewer than ten (10) commercial occupancies, credit will be given for no more than two (2) road frontages OR
- Two (2) signs per public road frontage for parcels with ten (10) or more commercial occupancies, credit will be given for no more than two (2) road frontages.

25.8.4 What are the standards for the duration of temporary signs? Temporary signs as permitted by 25.8.3 may be posted for no more 90 days in any one calendar year. Signs that will be posted for more than 90 days (a subdivision sale sign, for example) are considered permanent and may be placed or posted only with a permit.

<p>Event? An event may include an election, a fund-raising campaign, a game, a meeting, or any other activity that has a definitely limited duration.</p>
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25.9 Abandoned and Nonconforming Signs

25.9.1 What is an abandoned sign? A sign is ‘abandoned’ when the use with which it was associated ceases to exist.

25.9.2 Must abandoned signs be removed? Yes. An abandoned sign must be removed within 90 days after the use with which it was associated ceases to exist.

25.9.3 What is a nonconforming sign? A nonconforming sign is an existing sign that would not be permitted if submitted for approval under this bylaw.

25.9.4 May nonconforming signs be maintained and repaired? Yes. Routine maintenance and repair of nonconforming signs is permitted.

25.9.5 When must nonconforming signs be replaced with conforming signs? A nonconforming sign may be used indefinitely, but must be removed, as required here, when circumstances change.

25.9.5.1 When Abandoned. As provided by WDB 25.9.1, any sign, conforming or not, must be removed within 90 days of when the use it identified ceases. New signs must comply with this bylaw.

25.9.5.2 Before a New Sign. No permit may be issued for a new permanent sign on a lot where there is a nonconforming sign.

25.9.5.3 When Damaged. A nonconforming sign must be removed or brought into compliance with this bylaw if it is damaged or destroyed and the cost of replacement or repair is 51% or more of the sign’s value at the time it was damaged or destroyed.

25.9.5.4 Change in Use. A nonconforming sign must be removed and, if replaced, replaced with a conforming sign when the use of the lot on which it is located changes.

25.9.6 Can a nonconforming sign be relocated? Yes, but only if the move is involuntary. Involuntary relocation may be caused by street widening or another town, state, federal, or utility action that is beyond the control of the sign’s owner.

25.9.7 Can a nonconforming sign be altered? Yes, but only if the change brings the sign into, or at least closer to, compliance with this bylaw. A nonconforming sign that will not be brought into full compliance may be altered only if its degree of nonconformity is reduced by at least 25%. Signs that are nonconforming due to their internal illumination must be brought into full compliance with the sign illumination requirements of this chapter when they are altered in any way that requires a permit. This means that a permit to change the panel or copy on an internally-illuminated sign will not be issued unless the internal illumination of the sign is eliminated. By January 1, 2025, all internally illuminated signs must either be removed, discontinued, or brought into compliance with the town’s regulations for the illumination of signs.

What does that mean? The degree of nonconformity is the extent to which a use is nonconforming. So, a sign that is 20 feet high instead of the permitted 12 feet, would have to be lowered by at least two feet (25% of 8 feet) for an alteration to be permitted.

25.10 Community Information Centers

25.10.1 What is a community information center? Permanent community information centers that allow the posting of information may be placed at municipal buildings and schools or on privately owned properties such as a green, park, or plaza, or other publicly visible locations. They do not count against the number or area of signs permitted by the bylaw if they bear only a small - maximum one SF - logo of the development, business, or institution.

25.10.2 Are there standards for community information centers? Yes. Community information centers may be provided in the form of bulletin boards, kiosks, or similar installations that are installed in accord with the standards this bylaw sets for accessory structures.

25.11 Public Art

25.11.1 What is public art? Public art includes sculptures, monuments, murals, and other objects of art that are not enclosed in a building or other structure and that will be visible from a public way. Public art may also be incorporated into functional objects like fountains, benches, lamp posts, and other streetscape features. Public art is often used to commemorate a person or event, but may also serve no purpose other than public enjoyment. While public art can and should help attract people to a place, it bears no commercial message, explicit or implicit.

25.11.2 Is public art regulated by the bylaw? It is not the intent of this bylaw to limit freedom of expression, but the town does need an opportunity to enforce the distinction between public art and signs. The town also needs to ensure that proposed public art does not constitute a hazard to drivers, cyclists, or pedestrians. For this reason, proposed public art must be included in all applications for discretionary permits and an administrative permit will be required for the addition of public art to an approved development.

Table 25.A Basic Standards for Permanent Signs for Nonresidential Uses. For temporary signs see WDB 25.4.4.10. For signs associated with residential uses, see WDB 20.20.

	ARRZD	RZD	VZD	MURZD
	for nonresidential uses permitted by WDB 31.1.3 and 31.A	for nonresidential uses permitted by WDB 39.1.3.2	for nonresidential uses permitted by WDB 42.1	for nonresidential uses permitted by WDB 38.1.3.2 and 38.1.3.3.
Maximum Sign Area as a Percentage of the Area of the Street-Facing Wall of the Structure	5%	5%	5%	8%
Awnings	permitted only as approved in a master sign plan	not permitted	not permitted	permitted only as approved in a master sign plan
Building Numbers	The building numbers required by Williston's <i>Road Name and Road Location Numbering Ordinance</i> are permitted in all zoning districts.			
maximum number	1	1	1	1
maximum size	2 SF	2 SF	2 SF	2 SF
maximum height	as for freestanding signs	as for freestanding signs	as for freestanding signs	as for freestanding signs
Directional	permitted	permitted	permitted	permitted
maximum number	see WDB 25.7.9	see WDB 25.7.9	see WDB 25.7.9	see WDB 25.7.9
maximum size	2 SF	2 SF	2 SF	2 SF
maximum height	8 ft	8 ft	8 ft	8 ft
Freestanding	permitted	permitted	permitted	permitted
maximum number	1 permanent	1 permanent	1 permanent	1 per permanent per point of access
maximum height	8 ft.	8 ft	8 ft	8 ft
maximum size	16 SF	16 SF	16 SF	24 SF
setback*	10 feet	10 feet	5 feet	5 feet
landscaping	base of permanent freestanding signs must be landscaped as required by WDB 25.7.2.1	base of permanent freestanding signs must be landscaped as required by WDB 25.7.2.1	permanent freestanding signs will be placed in greenbelt, additional landscaping optional	base of permanent freestanding signs must be landscaped as required by WDB 25.7.2.1
Projecting	not permitted	not permitted	not permitted	permitted
maximum number				1 per building entrance, as per WDB 25.7.3
maximum size				6 SF
Recognition	permitted, see WDB 25.4.2.4	permitted, see WDB 25.4.2.4	permitted, see WDB 25.4.2.4	permitted, WDB 25.4.2.4
Regulatory	permitted, see WDB 25.4.4.8	permitted, see WDB 25.4.4.8	permitted, see WDB 25.4.4.8	permitted, see WDB 25.4.4.8
Special Events	permitted only as approved by a special events permit, see WDB 25.4.4.9			
Suspended	not permitted	not permitted	permitted	permitted
maximum number			1 per building entrance, as per WDB 25.7.4	1 per building entrance, as per WDB 25.7.4
maximum size			3 SF	3 SF
Wall	permitted	permitted	permitted	permitted
maximum number	limited by maximum area	limited by maximum area	limited by maximum area	limited by maximum area
maximum size	24 SF	24 SF	16 SF	32 SF
Window	10% coverage of the glass area facing public ways, including both permanent and temporary window signs	not permitted	10% coverage of the glass area facing public ways, including both permanent and temporary window signs	20% coverage of the glass area facing public ways, including both permanent and temporary window signs.

Table 25.A, continued

	IZDE, IZDW	all other commercial zoning districts
	for nonresidential uses permitted by WDB	for nonresidential uses permitted by WDB 33.A, 34.A, 37.A and 41.A
Maximum Sign Area as a Percentage of the Area of the Street-Facing Wall of the Structure		
	8%	8%
Awnings	permitted only as approved in a master sign plan	permitted only as approved in a master sign plan.
Building Numbers	The building numbers required by Williston's <i>Road Name and Road Location Numbering Ordinance</i> are permitted in all zoning districts.	
maximum number	1	1
maximum size	4 SF	4 SF
maximum height	as for freestanding signs	as for freestanding signs
Directional	permitted	permitted
maximum number	see WDB 25.7.9	see WDB 25.7.9
maximum size	2 SF	2 SF
maximum height	8 ft	8 ft
Freestanding	permitted	permitted
maximum number	1 per point of access	1 per point of access
maximum height	12 ft	12 ft
maximum size	32 SF	32 SF
setback*	5 feet	5 feet
landscaping	base of permanent freestanding signs must be landscaped as required by WDB 25.7.2.1	base of permanent freestanding signs must be landscaped as required by WDB 25.7.2.1
Projecting	permitted	permitted
maximum number	1	1 per building entrance, as per WDB 25.7.3
maximum size	12 SF	12 SF
Recognition	permitted, see WDB 25.4.2.4	permitted, see WDB 25.4.2.4
Regulatory	permitted, see WDB 25.4.4.8	permitted, see WDB 25.4.4.8
Special Events	permitted only as approved by a special events permit, see WDB 25.4.4.9	
Suspended	permitted	permitted
maximum number	1 per building entrance, as per WDB 25.7.4	1 per building entrance, as per WDB 25.7.4
maximum size	3 SF	3 SF
Wall		
maximum number	limited by maximum area	limited by maximum area
maximum size	24 SF	24 SF
Window	20% coverage of the glass area facing public ways, including both permanent and temporary window signs	25% coverage of the glass area facing public ways, including both permanent and temporary window signs

* A greater setback may be required for signs near driveways and intersections. Signs may not be placed in a clear vision triangle.