

ZONING ARTICLES

ARTICLE NUMBER - 7

ARTICLE NAME – Article XIII Sign Regulations

AMOUNT – N/A

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Bylaw, Article XIII by adding new Section 13.3 as follows:

Section 13.3.0 BURLINGTON SIGNAGE DISTRICTS

Signs erected in a duly adopted Burlington Signage Districts (“BSD”) shall be governed by the zoning provisions applicable to such district. If the BSD provisions conflict with Article XIII SIGN REGULATIONS of the Town of Burlington Zoning Bylaws or the Burlington Signage District Guidelines, then the zoning provisions of the BSD shall govern. Further, if such provisions conflict with Article XIV ENVIRONMENT Section 3.0 Sign and Advertising Devices of Town of Burlington General Bylaws, then the zoning provisions of the BSD relating to signage shall govern.

13.3.0.1 Sign Definitions

The following definitions shall apply to this zoning provision, notwithstanding any other definitions in the Burlington Zoning or General Bylaws.

Advertising Mural: A permanent or temporary large scale sign that covers all or a major portion of a blank or unfinished wall, building or structure.

Awning Sign: A permanent sign printed on, sewed on, or otherwise attached to an Awning.

Balloon Sign: A permanent or temporary sign that is lighter than air or gas filled balloon attached by means of a rope or tether to a definite or fixed location. A display designed to inflate or move by use of a fan or blower (air activated) is also considered a balloon sign.

Banner Sign: A permanent or temporary sign that is constructed of cloth, canvas, plastic fabric, or similar lightweight, non-rigid material that can be mounted to a structure with cord, rope, cable, or similar method or that may be supported by stakes in the ground.

Barber Pole: A type of permanent sign used by barbers to signify the place or shop where they perform their craft. The trade sign is a staff or pole with a helix of colored stripes (often red and white, but usually red, white and blue). The pole may be stationary or may rotate, often with the aid of an electric motor.

Blade Sign: A permanent sign which extends out from a building face or wall so that the sign face is perpendicular or at an angle to the building façade.

Bulletin Board: A permanent sign which accommodates manually changeable copy which displays information on activities and events on the premises.

Canopy Sign: A permanent sign attached to a freestanding permanent roof-like shelter attached to or requiring support from an adjacent structure.

Construction Sign: A temporary sign which is located on a lot that is under construction.

Directional Sign: A permanent or temporary sign that provides directions necessary or convenient for motorists or pedestrians coming onto premises including signs marking entrances and exits, parking areas, loading zones or circulation directions.

Directory Sign: A permanent sign which functions to identify more than one occupant of a building, group of buildings, or occupants of a premises.

Display Surface: The area of the sign available for the advertising message.

Electric Sign: A permanent or temporary sign containing electric wiring which is illuminated.

Electronic Sign: A permanent or temporary sign whose alphabetic, pictographic or symbolic informational content can be changed or altered on a fixed display screen composed of electrically illuminated segments. For the purposes of this Article, electronic signs within ground or wall signs are regulated as one of the two (2) following types:

Electronic Display Sign: A sign, or portion of a sign, that displays an electronic image or video, which may or may not include text. This definition includes but is not limited to plasma screens, digital screens, flat screens, LED screens, video boards and holographic displays.

Electronic Message Sign: A sign, or portion of a sign, that uses changing lights to form a sign message or messages in text form wherein the sequence of messages and the rate of change is electronically programmed and can be modified by electronic processes.

Feather Sign: A temporary sign that is constructed of cloth, canvas, plastic fabric, or similar lightweight, non-rigid material that is supported by a single vertical pole permanently mounted into the ground.

Flashing Sign: A permanent or temporary sign with blinking or flashing lights, or other illuminating devices that change light intensity, brightness or color, or blinking lights, or rotating beacons.

Flat Sign: A permanent or temporary sign attached to, painted on or erected against the wall of a building with the face in a parallel plane of the building wall. Signs mounted on mansard facades, sloping roof surfaces with a pitch of more than 60 degrees to the horizontal, shall be considered a Flat Sign. Also called a "wall sign".

Freestanding Sign: A permanent or temporary sign that is attached to a completely self-supporting structure that is not a building. The base of a freestanding sign above median grade is included as part of the sign. For the purposes of this Article, freestanding signs are regulated as one of the following types:

A-Frame Sign: A temporary advertising device ordinarily in the shape of an "A", or some variation thereof, located on the ground, not permanently attached and easily movable, and usually two (2) sided. Also called a "sandwich board".

Monument Sign: A permanent sign placed upon or supported by the ground independently of any other structure.

Pole Sign: A permanent sign with a visible support structure that is usually double-faced, mounted on a round pole(s), square tube, or other fabricated member without any type of secondary support.

Yard Sign: A temporary sign placed in the ground or attached to a supporting structure, posts, that is not attached to a building or structure. Also called an H- Frame Sign.

Illuminated Sign:

Externally Illuminated: A sign, any part of which is illuminated from an exterior artificial light source.

Internally Illuminated: A sign illuminated by an artificial light source that is within the sign.

Individual Letter Sign: A permanent sign made of separate letters. Individual Letter Signs attached to the wall of a building with the face in a parallel plane of the building wall or mansard facades with sloping roof surfaces with a pitch of more than 60 degrees to the horizontal. Individual Letter Signs shall be regulated as Flat Signs.

Main Business Name Sign: A permanent sign intended to be one of the primary signs indicating the name and/or nature of the business. The specific sign types considered Main Business Name Signs are listed under the applicable signage district.

Marquee Sign: A permanent sign attached to a permanent roof-like structure projecting beyond the face of the building, typically intended to advertise live entertainment uses.

Menu Board: A permanent or temporary sign which functions to list items for sale.

Moving Sign: A permanent or temporary sign or other advertising structure with moving, revolving or rotating parts or visible mechanical movement of any kind, including wind activated signs. Clocks are not considered signs with moving parts.

Noncommercial Sign: A temporary sign that does not direct attention to a business, a service or a product for sale, and is typically of a political, religious, or ideological nature.

Obsolete Sign: A sign which no longer correctly directs or encourages any person, advertises a business, lessor, owner, product, activity conducted or available on the premises where the sign is displayed.

Off Premises Sign: A permanent or temporary sign which directs attention to a business, service, product or entertainment not sold or offered or only incidentally sold or offered on the premises on which the sign is located.

Open-For-Business Sign: A pennant sign indicating that the business is open. To be displayed only when the business, service or organization is open.

Parapet Sign: A permanent sign mounted on the building's parapet.

Pennant Sign: A sign on cloth, fabric or other lightweight material normally fastened to a stringer, which is secured or tethered to allow movement of the sign.

Permanent Sign: Any sign that is not temporary.

Portable Sign: A sign which is mounted or designed to be mounted on a self-propelled or towed vehicle.

Projected Sign: The use of technology to project a sign on any surface

Real Estate Sign: A temporary sign advertising the premises or any part thereof for sale, lease, or rent.

Roof Sign: A permanent sign located on or attached to a building and extending above the eave of the roof of a building. Signs mounted on mansard facades, sloping roof surfaces with a pitch of more than 60 degrees to the horizontal, shall be considered a Flat Sign.

Sign: Any visual device or representation designed or used for the purpose of communicating a message or identifying a product, service, person, organization, business, or event.

Sign Area: The area of a sign is determined by measuring the entire area within a single continuous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblem, flag, device or other figure of similar character, together with any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the background against which it is placed.

Sign Frontage: For ground level uses, the length along a building front with a pedestrian entrance, which is occupied by a separate and distinct use. For upper level uses, the length along a building front on the same face as the primary ground level entrance into the building, which is occupied by a separate and distinct use.

Sign Structure: Any structure or material which supports a sign, not including the building.

Signage District: An area included in the Burlington Signage District Map that regulates signage under this Article. Applicable Design Rules and Regulations are specified in the Burlington Signage District Design Guidelines.

Snipe Sign: A temporary sign of any material used for the purpose of advertising something that is not located on the property where the sign appears. These are often affixed to trees, fences, or utility poles but can also be affixed to buildings or other features.

Temporary Sign: Any sign, including its supporting structure, which is intended to be maintained for a limited period of time, either in terms of hours of the day or duration in days, as defined in the sign district Permitted Sign Table.

Under Awning Sign: A permanent or temporary sign attached to and mounted under an awning.

Window Sign: A permanent or temporary sign printed on, affixed to, in contact with or etched on a window or the glass surface of the door of such a building. Non-illuminated signs located inside of the building within two (2) feet of the storefront and illuminated signs located inside of the building within five (5) feet of the storefront are considered Window Signs.

13.3.0.2 Permitted and Prohibited Signs

Permitted Signs are listed in the applicable Signage District and shall be consistent with the standards enumerated in that Signage District. Signs not specifically permitted in the applicable Signage District are prohibited.

13.3.0.3 Non-Conforming Signs

Signs legally erected before the adoption of this bylaw which do not conform to the provisions of this bylaw may continue to be maintained without a permit, with the following conditions:

- a. No such sign shall be repaired, rebuilt, enlarged, reworded, or redesigned if the cost of such modification would exceed 35% of the replacement cost of a conforming sign at the time of the restoration.
- b. Any new signs shall only be permitted if all existing signs for that business conform to the requirements of this Bylaw.

13.3.0.4 Obsolete Signs

All Obsolete Signs shall be removed within 90 days of vacancy or notice of obsolescence, whichever is earlier.

13.3.0.5 Administration and Enforcement

The Inspector of Buildings is charged with the enforcement of Article XIII and may issue citations for violations of these regulations. Penalties for violations of this Article are found in Article IX, Section 9.1.3 of these Zoning Bylaws.

13.3.0.6 Installation and Maintenance Standards

The Inspector of Buildings shall require compliant construction and maintenance of all signs. All signs shall be maintained in a safe manner and consistent with the purpose of this Article and any standards specified in the applicable Signage District Design Guidelines. The Inspector of Buildings may order the removal of any sign that is not properly maintained.

13.3.0.7 Regulations

The Planning Board may implement Signage District Design Guidelines for Burlington Signage Districts.

13.3.0.8 Severability

The invalidity of any section or provision of this bylaw shall not invalidate any other section or provision thereof.

13.3.0.9 Special Permit

Notwithstanding the provisions set forth in this Section, the Planning Board may authorize alternative compliance where structural, architectural or other limitations beyond the applicant's control does not allow complete compliance and such relief is not detrimental to the Sign District.

13.3.1 Town Center Signage District

The Town Center Signage District (TCSD) referred to herein shall include all areas as reflected on the Burlington Signage District Map, as prepared by Town of Burlington Planning Department, dated January 2025. This map as may be amended from time to time is hereby made a part of this Bylaw in accordance with section 3.2.1 of this Bylaw. Design Rules and Regulations are specified in the Burlington Signage District Design Guidelines.

13.3.1.1 General Requirements for Town Center Signage District (TCSD)

13.3.1.1.1 Permitted and Prohibited Signs

Permitted Signs that are listed in Section 13.3.1.2, with the exception of A-Frame Signs, Temporary Window Signs, Real Estate Signs, Political Signs, and Construction Signs, require a permit and shall be consistent with the following general criteria:

- a. Signs shall not project more than 4 feet from the surface of the building or one-third of the depth of the fronting sidewalk, whichever is less. A minimum of 3 feet clearance from the sign to the lot line is required. In no case shall a sign impede the sidewalk or the line of sight for vehicular traffic.
- b. To promote design consistent with the goal of the TCSD, if there is more than one occupant on a property, businesses and landlords are strongly encouraged to collaborate with adjoining tenants on the intended placement, scale, and type of signage.
- c. To help maintain and complement the character of the district, it is encouraged that lighting around or on signs provides safety, utility and security; prevent glare on public roadways; protect the privacy of residents; promote energy-efficient outdoor lighting; and to reduce atmospheric light pollution.
- d. Sign types that are not listed in Section 13.3.1.2 are prohibited.

13.3.1.1.2 Quantity of Signs and Total Sign Area

a. Main Business Signs

Main Business Name Signs include Flat Signs, Awning or Canopy Signs, and Blade Signs.

b. Quantity of Signs

- i. Each business with a Sign Frontage facing one direction shall have no more than three (3) Main Business name signs.
- ii. Each business with Sign Frontages facing two directions shall have no more than four (4) Main Business name signs.

c. The Total Sign Area is defined as the sum of all applicable Sign Areas for each business, using the measurement methods described in the Burlington Signage District Design Guidelines.

- i. For a business with a Sign Frontage facing one direction, the Total Sign Area, in square feet, of all permanent signs, except for Directory Signs, Monument Signs, and Pole Signs, shall not exceed the Sign Frontage multiplied by 1.5, except that a use with less than thirteen (13) feet of Sign Frontage shall have a maximum of twenty (20) square feet of permanent signs.

- ii. For a business with Sign Frontages facing two directions, the Total Sign Area for one side, in square feet, of all permanent signs, except for Directory Signs, Monument Signs, and Pole Signs, shall not exceed the Sign Frontage multiplied by 1.5, except that a use with less than thirteen (13) feet of Sign Frontage shall have a maximum of twenty (20) square feet of permanent signs.
- iii. The total Sign Area for the second side, in square feet, of all permanent signs, except for signs on windows above the first floor, Directory Signs, Monument Signs, and Pole Signs, shall not exceed the Sign Frontage multiplied by 1.3, except that a use with less than fourteen feet of Sign Frontage shall have a maximum of seventeen (17) square feet of permanent signs.

13.3.1.1.3 Exclusions

The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to the following signs:

- a. Any sign which is required or authorized by any law, rule, regulation, or permit of the federal or state governments, or any agency thereof, or any public authority created thereby.
- b. Any temporary sign erected or placed on any town premises under the provisions of any town bylaw or zoning bylaw or by direction or order of the town board or committee having lawful jurisdiction over such premises.
- c. Cemeteries, Gravestones, Monuments and Marker
- d. Historic and Memorial Plaques of six (6) square feet or less exclusive of supporting structures are permitted.
- e. Houses of worship under the provisions of MGL

Although the above signs are exempt, it is the Town's preference that the signage complies to the maximum extent practicable and shall take into consideration the surrounding area, public need and public benefit.

13.3.1.2 Town Center Signage District - Permitted Sign Table

Sign Type	Dimensional Requirements ¹	# Permitted ²	Illumination ³	Additional Bylaw Requirements ⁴
Awning Sign / Canopy Sign	Maximum sign height: 30 inches Maximum letter height: 15 inches Maximum sign width: 75% of the width of the awning or canopy	1 per storefront; up to 2 for businesses with more than 1 Sign Frontage orientation	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awning Signs or Canopy Signs shall not extend above or beyond any top or side edge of the façade, cornice, moldings or trim of the business front. • The section of the awning or canopy that incorporates writing, color pattern, or other types of graphics used for the identification of the business shall be considered the Sign Area. • Such sign shall be painted on or attached flat against the surface of, but not extending below or attached to the underside of the awning or canopy. • The top of Awning Signs or Canopy Signs advertising ground level businesses shall be no higher than 25 feet above grade, the bottom of second floor windowsills, the lower point of the roof, or the ground floor cornice, whichever is lowest. • The top of Awning Signs advertising upper level businesses shall be no higher than the bottom of the windowsills of the level above, the lower point of the roof, or the roof cornice, whichever is lowest. • Translucent fabric and plastic are not allowed. • No logo, trademark, or signage are allowed on the sides of canvas or fabric awnings. • No bottoms are allowed for canvas or fabric awnings.
Banner Sign	Maximum sign height: 48 inches Maximum sign width: 24 inches		None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowed on light poles only
Barber Pole	Maximum sign height: 36 inches	1 per barber shop	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not considered a sign when determining number of Main Business Name Signs or Total Sign Area.

Sign Type	Dimensional Requirements ¹	# Permitted ²	Illumination ³	Additional Bylaw Requirements ⁴
Blade Sign	Maximum depth: 6 inches Maximum sign area: 10 square feet	1 per storefront; up to 2 for businesses with more than 1 Sign Frontage orientation	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blade Signs are only allowed for businesses with a minimum of 18 feet of Sign Frontage. The top of Blade Signs shall be no higher than 25 feet above grade, the bottom of second floor windowsills, the lower point of the roof, or the ground floor cornice, whichever is lowest. The bottom edge of Blade Signs shall be no less than 7 feet above grade. Iconic variations of Blade Signs are considered on a case-by-case basis for an increased area of 15 square feet based on contextual factors.
Construction Signs	Maximum sign height: 10 feet Maximum sign width: 10 feet Maximum sign area: 48 square feet		None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not considered a sign when determining number of Main Business Name Signs or Total Sign Area. The use of Construction Signs is limited to the duration of construction.
Directory Sign	Maximum sign height: 7 feet Maximum sign width: 6 feet Maximum sign area: 24 square feet	1 per building	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not considered a sign when determining number of main business name signs or Total Sign Area. The street lot line shall be a minimum of 50 feet in length in order to install a Directory Sign. The top of a Directory Sign must be at least 5 feet above grade. For Directory Signs that also meet the definition for a Monument Sign, the regulations for Monument Signs may be used.
Electronic Display Sign		1 per gas station pump	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only allowed for fuel dispensing uses in gas stations Not allowed on the canopy.
Electronic Message Sign	Shall comply with Section 13.1.5 of the Zoning Bylaw, Municipal Uses (Town of Burlington)	Only 1 municipal sign on the Town Common	Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shall comply with Section 13.1.5 of the Zoning Bylaw, Municipal Uses (Town of Burlington)

Sign Type	Dimensional Requirements ¹	# Permitted ²	Illumination ³	Additional Bylaw Requirements ⁴
Flat Sign	Maximum lettering height: 24 inches Maximum sign width: 75% of the Sign Frontage	1 per Sign Frontage; up to 2 for businesses with more than 1 Sign Frontage orientation	External or Internal ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign height for occupants above the first floor may be up to 75% of the height from the top of the windows for that floor to the floor above but shall not be greater than 30 inches. • The top of a Flat Sign advertising ground level businesses shall be no higher than 25 feet above grade, the bottom of second floor windowsills, the lower point of the roof, or the ground floor cornice, whichever is lowest. • The top of Flat Signs advertising upper level businesses shall be no higher than the bottom of the windowsills of the level above, the lower point of the roof, or the roof cornice, whichever is lowest. • If mounted on a mansard facade, the top of a Flat Sign shall be no higher than 6 inches below the top of the parapet.

Free Standing Signs				
A-Frame Sign	Maximum height including structure: 4 feet Maximum sign area: 6 square feet on each side	1 per storefront	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A-Frame Signs shall be placed within 10 feet of entrance and shall not interfere with pedestrian traffic or violate standards of accessibility as required by the ADA or other accessibility codes. A-frame signs may be placed in the public right-of-way but shall maintain a five foot sidewalk clearance at all times. • A-frame signs are not permitted on the roadbed or medians, including parking and travel lanes. • Not considered a sign when determining number of signs or Total Sign Area • The use of A-frame Signs is limited to business hours only. Signs shall be stored indoors at all other times. A-frame signs shall not be used outdoors when high winds or heavy snow conditions exist. • No lights, banners, flags, balloons, or similar objects may be attached to A-Frame Signs.

Monument Sign	Maximum sign height: 12 feet including base Minimum lettering height: 6 inches Maximum lettering height: 12 inches Maximum sign width: 10 feet	1 per building	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monument Signs are only allowed for properties with three (3) or more tenants. • The street lot line shall be a minimum of 50 feet in length in order to install a Monument Sign. • No part of a Monument Sign may project into, over, or otherwise encroach on a public right-of-way. • Landscaping must be incorporated into the design. • Monument Signs shall be separated from the right-of-way by a minimum of 10 feet. • Not considered a sign when determining number of Main Business Name Signs or Total Sign Area.
Pole Sign	Maximum sign area: 20 square feet per side	1 per building	External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not considered a sign when determining number of main business name signs or Total Sign Area • The street lot line shall be a minimum of 50 feet in length in order to install a Pole Sign. • The top of a Pole Sign shall not exceed 8 feet above grade.
Open for Business Sign	Maximum sign height: 3 feet Maximum sign width: 5 feet	1 per business	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Open-for-Business sign may only be displayed when the business is open to the public.
Real Estate Sign	Maximum sign height: 3 feet Maximum sign width: 3 feet Maximum sign area: 6 square feet	1 per building	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The top of a Free Standing Real Estate Sign shall not exceed 5 feet above grade. • The use of Real Estate Signs is limited to the duration of the advertisement. • Not considered a sign when determining number of Main Business Name Signs or Total Sign Area.
Temporary Window Sign	Maximum sign area: 30% of glass area of each window		None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Temporary Sign may only be displayed for up to twenty one (21) days in any three (3) month period. • Not considered a sign when determining number of Main Business Name Signs but included in Total Sign Area.
Window Sign	Maximum sign area: 30% of glass area of each window		None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-illuminated signs located inside of the building within 2 ft of the storefront and illuminated signs located inside of the building within 5 ft of the storefront are considered Window Signs. • Not considered a sign when determining the number of Main Business Name Signs but included in Total Sign Area.

13.3.1.2 Town Center Signage District - Permitted Sign Table

NOTES:

1. In addition to sign-specific dimensional requirements set forth in this table, the total Sign Area requirement set forth in 13.3.1.1.2 shall also be satisfied.
2. In addition to sign-specific quantity requirements set forth in this table, the requirement for the total number of main business name signs for each use set forth in 13.3.1.1.2 shall also be satisfied.
3. Illumination methods shall conform to the Burlington Signage District Design Guidelines.
4. Style, including but not limited to materials, fonts, and landscaping, shall conform to the Burlington Signage District Design Guidelines.

Submitted by the Select Board

Requested by the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee