

**TOWN COUNCIL OF CENTREVILLE
ORDINANCE NO 15-2025**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF CENTREVILLE AMENDING THE TOWN OF CENTREVILLE ZONING ORDINANCE, WHICH IS CHAPTER 170 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF CENTREVILLE, TO UPDATE THE DEFINITIONS, DESIGN STANDARDS, SIGN CHARTS, AND CODE PROVISIONS REGARDING SIGNS

WHEREAS, the Town Council of Centreville has the authority under Section 5-213 of the Local Government Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, to adopt regulations;

WHEREAS, Section 4-102(6) of the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes the Town Council of Centreville to regulate the location and use of buildings, signs and structures on the land;

WHEREAS, the Town desires to amend Chapter 170 of the Code of the Town of Centreville to amend the definitions, design standards, sign charts, and code provisions regarding signs;

WHEREAS, the Town Council received a favorable recommendation on the zoning amendment from the Centreville Planning and Zoning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council held a public hearing on the zoning amendment on February 5, 2026

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Council of Centreville:

Section 1. The recitals set forth above are incorporated herein by reference and made a part of this Ordinance.

Section 2. Section 170-38 Signs of the Centreville Town Code is hereby amended as shown on the Exhibit A attached hereto.

(Language to be deleted from the existing Ordinance is indicated in ~~**bold-strikethrough**~~ format and language to added is indicated by ***bold italics*** text)

Section 3. Section 170-70 Definitions of the Centreville Town Code is hereby amended as shown on the Exhibit B attached hereto.

(Language to be deleted from the existing Ordinance is indicated in ~~**bold-strikethrough**~~ format and language to added is indicated by ***bold italics*** text)

Section 4. Chapter 170 Attachment 9 Table 3 – General Commercial C-2, Planned Business District (PBD), and Light Industrial (I) Sign Types and Dimensional Regulations by Zoning District is hereby amended as shown on the Exhibit C attached hereto.

(Language to be deleted from the existing Ordinance is indicated in ~~**bold-strikethrough**~~ format and language to added is indicated by ***bold italics*** text and/or highlighted)

Section 5. Chapter 5 Signage of the Centreville Design Standards is hereby amended as shown on the Exhibit attached hereto.

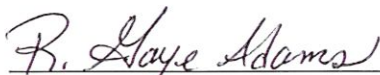
(Language to be deleted from the existing Ordinance is indicated in ~~bold-strikethrough~~ format and language to added is indicated by *bold italics* text and/or highlighted)

Section 6. If any section, clause, paragraph, sentence or phrase of the Ordinance or the application thereof to any person, or circumstances is held invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity or unconstitutionality shall in no way effect other provisions or any other application of this Ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application, and for this purpose the provisions of this Ordinance are declared severable.

Section 7. This Ordinance shall become effective twenty days after its enactment.

ATTEST:

THE TOWN COUNCIL OF CENTREVILLE

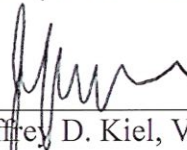


R. Gaye Adams
Town Clerk

First Reading: January 8, 2026
Second Reading: January 22, 2026
Enacted: February 5, 2026
Effective: February 25, 2026



Ashley Heffernan Kaiser, Esq., President



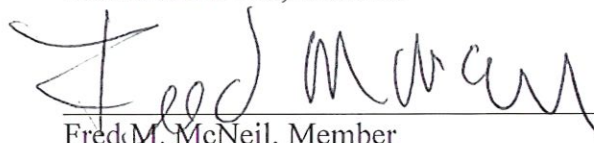
Jeffrey D. Kiel, Vice President



Sandra L. Huffer, Member



Frederick E. Beu, Member



Fred M. McNeil, Member

EXHIBIT A SIGN AMENDMENTS

170-38 Signs

- A. Purpose. Signs obstruct views, distract motorists, displace alternative uses of land, and pose other problems that legitimately call for regulation. The purpose of this section is to prescribe the standards for location, design, illumination, height and size of all types of signs within the Town of Centreville in order to protect the unique and small town character of the Town. This section also intends to promote the following:
1. To encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication for the convenience of the public by preventing their overconcentration, improper placement and excessive size;
 2. To maintain and enhance the aesthetic environment while promoting creativity and the Town's ability to attract sources of economic growth and development;
 3. To minimize the potential adverse effects of signs on nearby public and private property;
 4. To enable the fair and consistent enforcement of these sign regulations without regulating the content of any sign. To accomplish this objective, this subsection must be interpreted in a manner consistent with the First Amendment guarantee of free speech.
- B. General regulations.
1. Signs requiring permits. Other than temporary signs provided for in Subsection D herein and exempt signs as provided herein, no sign shall be erected, enlarged, or altered without a permit from the Zoning Administrator. Applications for permits shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator. Each application shall be accompanied by drawings and written material showing the area and general appearance of the sign, the method of illumination, the exact location of the proposed sign, and the method of construction and/or attachment of such sign to the building or structure. Signs that do not extend over seven feet above existing grade and are completely screened from view, inclusive of light, from public roadways and other parcels by on-site buildings, structures, evergreen landscaping, and/or grade differences are exempt from the sign provisions of this chapter including the requirement to obtain a permit. [Amended 6-6-2019 by Ord. No. 07-2019]
 2. Nonconforming signs may not be enlarged, substantially altered, moved, or replaced except to bring the sign into conformity with these regulations. Nonconforming signs may be repaired and maintained to the original sign specifications. Notwithstanding the language herein, nonconforming electronic message centers that are grandfathered may be replaced if the existing sign is ever damaged or destroyed.
 3. Signs shall be maintained in good condition. The Zoning Administrator may order the removal of any sign, sign structure or awning that is not maintained in accordance with this Code.

4. Traffic control devices on private or public property must be erected and maintained to comply with the Maryland Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
5. No sign, except for a traffic, regulatory, or information sign, shall use the words "stop," "caution," or "danger," or shall incorporate red, amber, or green lights resembling traffic signals, or shall resemble "stop" or "yield" signs in shape and color.
6. No sign shall be erected which is affixed to a fence, utility pole, or tree, shrub, rock, or other natural object.
7. Signs shall not cover architectural details such as, but not limited to, arches, sills, moldings, cornices, and transom windows.
8. No sign shall be permitted which becomes unsafe or endangers the safety of a building, premises or person. The Zoning Administrator is authorized to order such signs to be made safe or be removed and such order shall be complied with within seven days of the receipt of such order.
9. No sign, sign structure or part thereof shall be located so as to obstruct or conflict with traffic sight lines, or traffic control signs or signals. No lighting of signs shall be permitted which is of flashing, intermittent, rotating, or other animated type, or which would tend to blind or distract motorists, or which would shine directly onto any dwelling.
10. Noncommercial content may replace the message on any permitted or exempt sign.
11. Official notices or advertisements posted or displayed by or under the direction of any public court officer in the performance of official or directed duties shall not be subject to the provisions of this section, provided that all such signs shall be removed by the property owner no more than 10 days after their purpose has been accomplished or as otherwise required by law.
12. Where a federal, state, or local law requires a property owner to post a sign on the owner's property to warn of a danger or to prohibit access to the property either generally or specifically, the owner must comply with the federal, state, or local law to exercise that authority by posting a sign on the property. If the federal, state, or local regulation describes the form and dimensions of the sign, the property owner must comply with those requirements; otherwise, when not defined, the sign shall be no larger than two square feet and located in a place on the property to provide access to the notice that is required to be made.
13. All illuminated signs located on a lot adjacent (includes across a street) to any residentially zoned or residentially used parcel shall be turned off between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
14. The Town may designate areas for the placement of civic signs on public property.

C. Permitted sign types, sizes, and standards by zoning district. The Official Tables of Sign Types and Dimensional Regulations are included at the end of this section in Tables I through 4.¹

There is no table for the Traditional Neighborhood Development District (TND). The sign provisions for the TND District are included in § 170-29.1.

D. Temporary signs. The following regulations shall apply to temporary signs.

1. Except as otherwise provided herein, temporary signs shall not exceed four square feet in area and 4.5 feet in height.
2. A property owner may place one temporary sign on the property without restriction on time.
3. In addition to the one sign allowed without restriction on time, one temporary sign may be located on the property when the property is being offered for sale or lease for a period ending 15 days following the date on which a contract of sale or lease has been executed by a person purchasing or leasing the property. If the sign face is attached to a post, the top of post shall be no more than six feet above grade.
4. In any calendar year, for up to 60 days in a residential district and 30 days in a nonresidential district, a property owner may display temporary signs in excess of the two signs expressly allowed by this section.
5. No temporary sign shall be attached or secured to a building, fence, porch, railing, tree, or any other object or structure.
6. No temporary sign shall be located within 10 feet of a public road right-of-way, nor shall any such sign be located in a required side yard setback or within two feet of a side property line in the CBD.
7. Temporary signs provided in Subsection D(2), (3), and (4) herein shall be exempt from the requirement to obtain a permit.
8. One temporary sign that exceeds the qualitative standards set in Subsection D(1) above may be allowed only by permit under the following conditions:
 - a. It complies with all other sign standards and requirements of this chapter for the district where it is located and the land use as regulated.
 - b. A temporary sign permit will allow the property owner to display a sign only at the specific location on the site and/or building noted on the permit.
 - c. The temporary permit will entitle the owner to interchange one temporary sign with any other temporary sign with the same dimensions.
 - d. Under the permit, the display of the temporary sign shall be limited to 90 days during the 365-day period the permit is valid.
 - e. Failure to obtain a permit for any temporary sign not otherwise expressly allowed without permit by this Subsection D(8) or to comply with the conditions of this Subsection D(8) subjects the sign and/or property owner to the enforcement provisions of this chapter.

- f. A temporary sign permit as provided in this Subsection D(8) shall automatically expire one year after its issuance or after the 90th day of the display of the sign, whichever shall occur first.
 - 9. One temporary sign associated with the opening of a development or subdivision may be allowed by permit, provided the following requirements are met:
 - a. It is no greater than 32 square feet in size for development tracts less than 1/2 acre or 50 square feet for tracts larger than 1/2 acre.
 - b. It is not greater than eight feet in height.
 - c. It is removed within 90 days of its installation, except that for developments involving the dedication of public streets, the sign may remain in place until the dedication of associated public streets and/or utilities or for a complete and uninterrupted one-year period, whichever occurs first.
 - d. Signs permitted pursuant to this Subsection D(9) shall also comply and be subject to Subsection D(8)(b) and (e).
- E. Supplemental standards for sign types. The following supplemental standards apply to specific sign types:
 - 1. Awning signs. All drop awnings attached to buildings shall not, when let down to the full extent, be less than seven feet above the sidewalks of the Town at all points. The lowest portion of all display signs fastened to, suspended from, or supported by a building or structure so as to project therefrom at an angle shall be not less than seven feet vertically above the surface of the sidewalks of the Town at all points.
 - 2. Directional signs. Directional signs are permitted in all zoning districts. Directional signs shall not exceed two square feet in area, shall not exceed three feet in height, and shall not contain any advertising material.
 - 3. Electronic Message Centers. New electronic message centers (EMCs) are permitted for governmental and institutional uses as a freestanding sign in non-residential zones along State roads, excluding the Central Business District (CBD), where the same or more intense zoning (excluding the Central Business District), where the same or more intense zoning (excluding the Central Business District) exists across the State road as more particularly shown on Table 4 (Attachment 10 to the Zoning Ordinance).). EMCs are also permitted for public schools as a freestanding monument sign in residential zones along State roads, where non-residential zoning exists across the State road as more particularly shown on Table 4(Attachment 10 to the Zoning Ordinance). The four existing EMCs are grandfathered and considered nonconforming signs for the purpose of § 170-38. The following provisions shall apply to new and existing EMCs including nonconforming EMCs:
 - a. Duration of message change interval. Each message on an EMC can be changed no more frequently than once every five minutes, and the actual change process is accomplished in two seconds or less with no face in or fade out.

- b. Transitions/flashing/animation. The EMC shall display only static messages that remain constant in illumination intensity and do not have movement or the appearance or optical illusion of movement (no revolving, flashing, moving, scrolling, or rotating). Also, the EMC shall consist only of alphabetic or numeric characters on a plain black background and may not include graphic, pictorial, or photographic images.
- c. Dimming. The EMC shall be equipped with a fully operational light sensor that automatically adjusts the intensity of the billboard according to the amount of ambient light.
- d. Brightness levels. EMCs shall not exceed a maximum illumination of 0.3 footcandle above the ambient light as seen at a distance of 150 feet for the time period between sunset and sunrise. The applicant shall provide written certification from the sign manufacturer that the light intensity has been preset not to exceed the levels specified above, and the intensity level is protected from end-use adjustment.
- e. Colors. EMCs shall be a single color on any given message or display (i.e., they shall be mono color signs) and shall always use only one color.
- f. Time restrictions. EMCs located on a lot adjacent (includes across a street) to any residentially zoned or residentially used parcel shall be turned off between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- g. Audio speakers. Audio speakers are prohibited.
- h. Malfunctions. EMCs shall be designed to either freeze the display in one static position, display a full blank screen, or turn off in the event of a malfunction.
- i. Annual Permit Requirement.
 - (1) All existing and future EMCs permitted under this section shall require a permit from the Zoning Administrator which shall be reviewed and renewed annually.
 - (2) Annual renewal applications shall be submitted no later than thirty (30) days prior to the permit's expiration.
 - (3) As part of the annual permit review, the Zoning Administrator shall confirm compliance with:
 - (a) All operational and display standards of this section;
 - (b) Applicable safety, brightness, and timing requirements; and
 - (c) Any conditions imposed at the time of permit issuance.
 - (4) Failure to demonstrate continued compliance may result in suspension, non-renewal, or revocation of the EMC permit, or fines.
 - (5) Renewal fees, if applicable, shall be established by the Town Council by resolution.

4. Freestanding Signs. Freestanding signs may be dual-sided. For the purposes of sign area calculation, only one side of a dual sided freestanding sign will be considered. Freestanding sign height shall be measured from the average contact grade to the

highest point of the sign or supporting structure. Sign area calculation does not include any portion of the sign containing architectural features or addresses.

F. Prohibited signs. The following signs are prohibited:

1. Pennants, streamers, and spinning or similar type signs, except feather signs.
2. Any sign that flashes or rotates.
3. Any sign fastened to, and supported by, or on the roof of a building, and no projecting sign shall extend over or above the roof (including mansard roofs) of a parapet wall of a building.
4. Off-premises signs. Any sign advertising or identifying a business or organization which is not located on that premises, other than temporary signs. ~~Existing off-premises signs for which a valid permit has been issued will be permitted to remain for a period of one year from the date of the adoption of this ordinance.~~
5. Signs in the public right-of-way, except easel/placard signs placed on the sidewalk in front of a business, provided that the sign doesn't impede pedestrian traffic.
6. Signs that are obscene, illegal, hazardous to traffic, imitative of official government signs (i.e., Stop, Danger, Caution, etc.) or obstructive to public visibility so as to create a hazard to the public.
7. New electronic message centers (EMCs) and digital electronic signs of any kind, are prohibited, except for governmental and institutional signs in non-residential zoning districts (excluding the Central Business District) and for public school signs in residential zoning districts and subject to the supplemental standards contained in § 170-38.E(3) and Table 4 (Attachment 10 to the Zoning Ordinance).

G. Shopping Center Signage. The following shall apply to Shopping Center Signage.

1. Subject to the following, the Planning Commission may approve a Comprehensive Signage Plan as part of a new development, or redevelopment of a shopping center in the C-3 and PBD Districts. (Additional Standards are found in Attachment 9, Table 3 of Chapter 170). In its review, the Commission shall consider the request in the context of the site, the compatibility and consistency of the signs with themselves and with respect to the unit(s) or building they are identifying, safety/visibility concerns, lighting and other neighborhood compatibility issues. Signage shall be reasonably consistent throughout the shopping center for architectural features, materials, and lighting, and appropriate for the architectural design of the building(s). Directory signage shall be included as part of the above considerations. Signs included with the Comprehensive Signage Plan shall be exempt from the maximum total signage per property, but must comply with the maximum signage area for each sign type per business.

2. A Comprehensive Signage Plan shall include a detailed overall design and treatment of signs throughout the shopping center. At a minimum the Plan shall include:

a. Sign Dimensions.

b. Materials.

c. Lighting and illumination used for the sign.

d. Color Scheme.

e. Lettering or Graphic Style

f. Location of each sign

g. Exceptions to the size limits allowed as approved by the Planning Commission of standardized corporate identity signage for anchor stores.

3. Freestanding Shopping Center Signage.

a. The location of Freestanding Shopping Center sign as part of an approved Comprehensive Signage Plan may be permitted on a separate parcel if the parcels share a common entrance, provided the separate parcel is included in the Comprehensive Signage Plan.

b. Freestanding Shopping Center Signage is limited to one (1) sign per approved shopping center development or re-development. Placement of the sign in close proximity of the entrance is encouraged.

c. Freestanding shopping center signs shall have a minimum setback from the property line of 10 feet.

4. The Planning Commission may allow for increases in the individual sign size limits contained in Attachment 9, Table 3 of Chapter 170 for standardized corporate identity signage of anchor stores where appropriate.

5. Amendments. The periodic replacement of individual signs as tenants change shall not require modification of the Comprehensive Signage Plan, unless the Zoning Administrator determines the proposed signage substantively deviates from the approved Plan. Should this occur, the review and approval of the proposed change to the Comprehensive Shopping Center Sign Plan by the Planning Commission shall conform with all the requirements of this Ordinance.

EXHIBIT B DEFINITIONS

The following definitions shall be added or amended. All other definitions shall remain unchanged.

170-70 Definitions:

For the purposes of this chapter, certain terms or words herein shall be interpreted as follows:

.....

ANCHOR STORE. *A large, prominent retail store in a shopping center that serves as the main customer draw.*

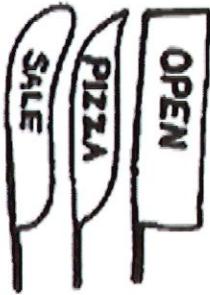
COMPREHENSIVE SIGNAGE PLAN. *A series of scaled drawings diagrams that indicate the location, size, and types of signage, including signage materials, color scheme, illumination and graphics that will be used within a Shopping Center.*

SHOPPING CENTER. *A complex of three (3) or more commercial establishments, located proximately with at least 20,000sf of building surface area, consisting of a minimum of two (2) or more freestanding buildings utilizing shared entrance(s) and parking.*

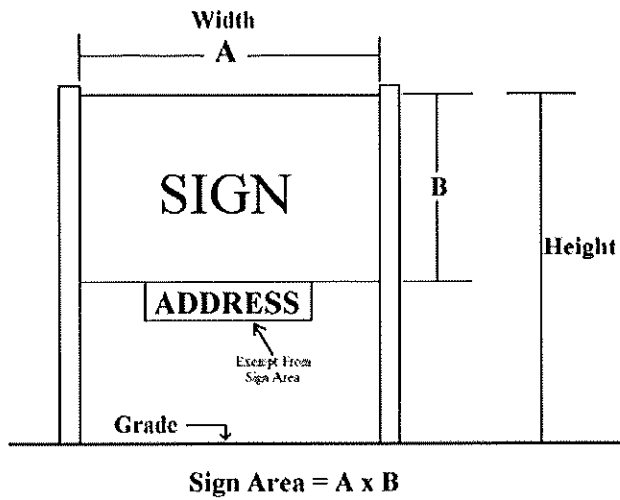
SIGN. A structure or device designed or intended to convey information to the public in written or pictorial form. For the purposes of this definition, the term "sign" shall not include scoreboards. More specific sign definitions are given below. [Amended 3-7-2019 by Ord. No. 01-2018;⁴ 6-6-2019 by Ord. No. 07-2019]

- A. **AWNING SIGN.** A sign that is part of or attached to an awning, canopy or other protective cover over a door, window or entrance.
- B. **BANNER.** A sign of a temporary nature, possessing characters, letters, illustrations or ornamentation applied to a paper, plastic, or fabric of any kind intended to be hung with or without frames. National flags, flags of political subdivisions, and other such flags shall not be considered banners.
- C. **BULLETIN BOARD.** A changeable copy sign, which identifies and announces schedules or other activities.
- D. **DIRECTIONAL SIGN.** A sign, located on premises, directing traffic movement onto or within the premises and containing no advertising material, including signs marking entrances and exits, parking area, loading zones, or circulation direction.
- E. **DIRECTORY SIGN.** A sign which displays the names and locations of occupants or the use of a building.
- F. **ELECTRONIC MESSAGE CENTER (EMC).** An electrically activated changeable sign whose variable message and/or graphic presentation capability can be electronically programmed from a remote location or automatic means. Also known as an "EMC." EMCs typically use light-emitting diodes (LEDs) as a lighting source.
- G. **EXTERNAL ILLUMINATED SIGN.** A sign that is illuminated by an external light source.
- H. **FLUTTERING OR FEATHER SIGN.** A vertical portable sign made of lightweight material that is prone to move in the wind and that contains a harpoon-style pole or staff driven into the ground for support or supported by means of an individual stand. It includes such signs of

any shape, including flutter, bow, teardrop, rectangular, shark, feather, and U-shaped. (See figure below.)



- I. **FREESTANDING SIGN.** A self-supporting sign resting on or supported by two or more elements in a fixed location or any other type of base on the ground. Freestanding signs include, but are not limited to, ground signs and monument signs. A single supporting element sign is permitted if the support is at least 50% of the width of the sign.
- J. **ILLUMINATED SIGN.** A sign with an artificial light source incorporated internally or externally for the purpose of illuminating the sign.
- K. **INTERNAL ILLUMINATED SIGN.** A sign that is illuminated by a light source contained within the sign structure or housing.
- L. **PLACARD/EASEL SIGN.** A freestanding sign usually hinged at the top, or attached in a manner, and widening at the bottom to form a shape similar to the letter "A." Such signs are usually designed to be portable.
- M. **PROJECTING SIGN.** A sign, perpendicular to the facade other than a wall sign, which projects from a structure or building face.
- N. **SHOPPING CENTER SIGN.** A Freestanding sign that displays the various tenants of a Shopping Center as a whole, usually located near the entrance to the property or properties associated being unified by the shared entrance.
- O. **SIGN AREA.** The surface area of a sign shall be calculated as including the entire area within a regular geometric form or combinations of regular geometric forms comprising all of the display area of the sign and including all of the elements of the matter displayed. Frames and structural members not bearing advertising material shall not be included in the calculation of surface area.



- P. **TEMPORARY SIGN.** A banner, poster or advertising display of a transitory or temporary nature intended to display commercial or noncommercial messages.
- Q. **WALL/FLAT SIGN.** A sign painted on or affixed to and mounted parallel to a building facade or wall in such a manner that the facade or wall becomes the supporting structure for the sign and which has only one sign surface.
- R. **WINDOW SIGN.** A sign installed on the inside or outside of a window, which is visible from the sidewalk or street.

EXHIBIT C CHAPTER 170 ATTACHMENT 9 TABLE 3

SEE ATTACHED

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EXHIBIT D DESIGN STANDARDS CHAPTER 5

SEE ATTACHED

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