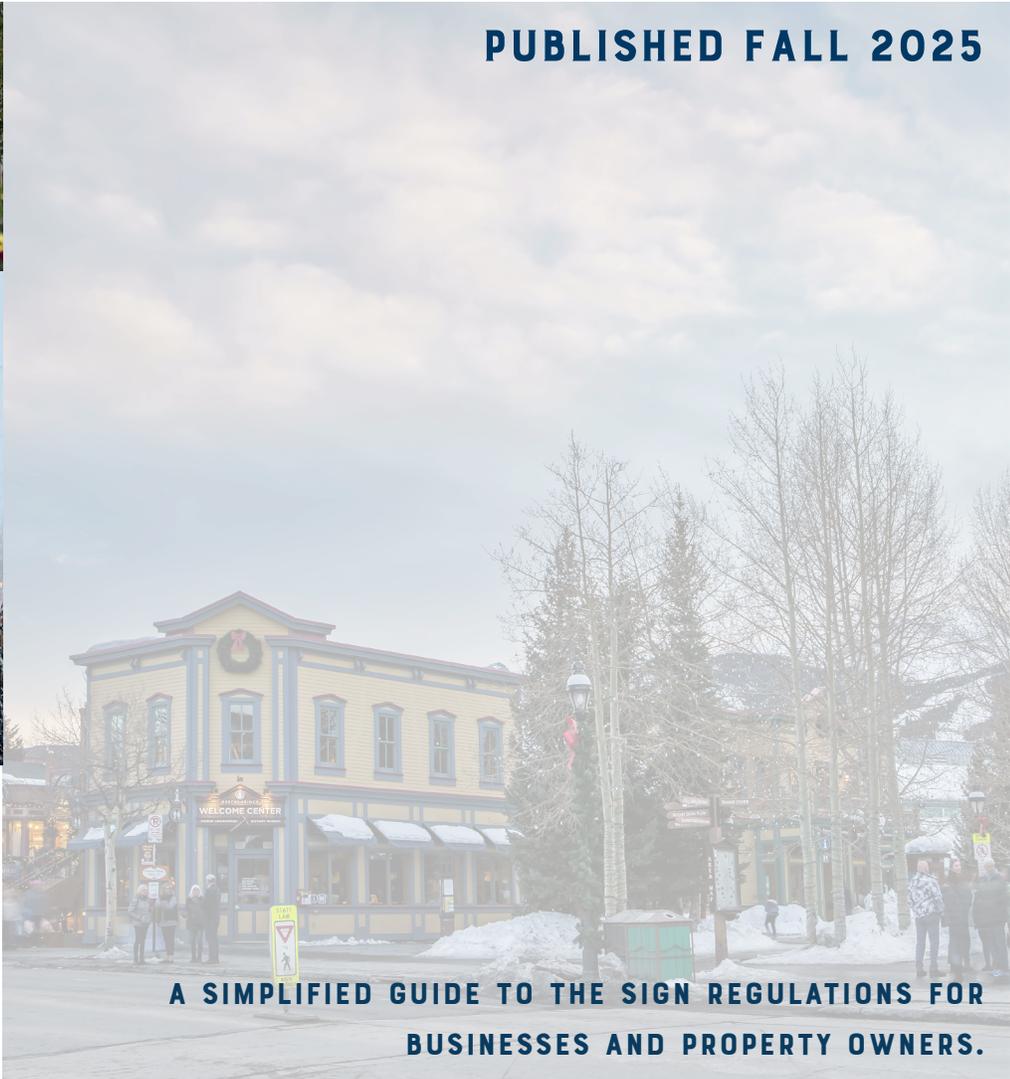


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**TOWN OF BRECKENRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**A SIMPLIFIED GUIDE TO THE SIGN REGULATIONS FOR
BUSINESSES AND PROPERTY OWNERS.**



TOWN OF BRECKENRIDGE SIGN CODE HANDBOOK

**PREPARED BY CLIF CROSS,
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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1

INTRODUCTION

The Breckenridge Sign Code Handbook is designed to help business owners and property managers understand the Town’s regulations regarding signage. Proper signage plays an important role in preserving the aesthetic charm and historical character of Breckenridge while ensuring businesses can effectively communicate with residents and visitors.

Whether you are installing a new sign or modifying an existing one, this handbook provides an overview of the requirements, best practices, and approval processes necessary to comply with local regulations. By adhering to these standards, businesses contribute to a vibrant and cohesive streetscape that benefits the entire community.

This handbook simplifies the Town’s sign regulations into a clear, user-friendly format, providing guidance on what types of signage are allowed, how to obtain necessary approvals, and what steps to take to remain in compliance. If you need further clarification, always refer to the official Town Code or contact the Community Development Department.

1.1

Purpose of the Sign Code

The Town of Breckenridge has established sign regulations to:

- Maintain and complement the historical and architectural character of the town.
- Provide clear, effective communication.
- Enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- Prevent sign clutter and visual or physical obstruction by regulating sign design, size, and placement.
- Ensure compliance with the town’s Dark Sky initiative by regulating illuminated signage.

Understanding the intent behind these regulations helps businesses create signs that align with Town goals while still effectively marketing their services. The Town encourages creative, high-quality signage that enhances the character of commercial areas.

UNDERSTANDING REGULATIONS

Development Code Signs on Private Property regulatory chapter Town Code; Title 9, Chapter 15. Regulatory Scope

1. All exterior signs and sign structures that are located on private property within Town are subject to these regulations.
2. Signs and sign structures located on private property within Town are subject to any safety and construction requirements of the Town’s building and Technical Codes.
3. Signs located on Town-owned property are regulated by a separate chapter of the Town Code; Title 11, Chapter 8.

TYPES OF PERMITTED SIGNS

2.1 Sign Types

2.2 Additional Signage

2.3 Temporary and Special Event Signs

The Town encourages the use of handcrafted, artistic, and historically inspired signage to maintain Breckenridge's character. Businesses should also consider using high-quality materials and design elements that complement the surrounding architectural styles.



Fig 2.1 Example of high-quality materials and design of signage located at the Breck Create Arts District in Town.



Fig 2.2 Another example of high-quality materials and design of signage located at the Breckenridge Welcome Center on a snowy day.

2.1

Sign Types

Breckenridge allows various types of signage that fit within the Town's design standards. Examples of permitted sign types include:

- **Wall Signs:** Mounted directly onto a building's façade.
- **Projecting Signs:** Signs attached to a building that extend outward.
- **Monument Signs:** Freestanding signs with a large base positioned at ground level.
- **Freestanding Signs:** Signs extending from the ground from a pole or structure.
- **Awning Signs:** Lettering and graphics displayed on awnings.
- **Window Signs:** Signs both temporary and permanent displayed in storefront windows.
- **Temporary Signs:** A sign that is not a permanent sign.
- **Historic District-Specific Signs:** Must align with the character of historic buildings.

UNDERSTANDING REGULATIONS

A Change of Copy, Text, or Message:

Does not require a permit, so long as, the change does not alter the material, size, location, or illumination of the sign.

Additional Signage

- **Window Wraps:** may have one window wrap spanning the storefront's width, up to 12 inches tall, made of semi-permanent materials, and placed within 6 inches of the top or bottom of the window.
- **Window Signs:** may display up to 4 signs, temporary or permanent, as long as the combined area does not exceed 5 square feet.
- **Real Estate Signs:** One sign (max 4 square feet) may be placed on the property while it is actively for sale or rent. It must be removed once the sale or lease is finalized.
- **Election Signs:** up to 12 square feet in total area may be displayed up to 45 days before an election and must be removed within 5 days after the election. No single sign can be larger than 4 square feet.



Fig 2.3 Example of window wraps (described above) and outdoor display of merchandise (described in the next section).



Fig 2.4 Example of temporary window signs (described above).

Temporary and Special Event Signage

Special Events that were approved by the Town under the SEPA permit may request a variance from the Sign Code for the event. Applicants may request:

- **Temporary Signage:** which includes banners, flags, and other signs to advertise during the events.
- **Main Street Banners:** Applicant may submit for a banner to be strung across Main Street, please refer to 11-8-7 of the Town Code.
- **Off-Premise Signage**
- **Banner Signs:** Allowed for special events; must be removed within 7 days.

Please reach out to the Planning Department if you have questions regarding a Special Event, or the application process.



Fig 2.5 Example of temporary signage allowed per the Special Events Permit process for the "Race of the Santas" event. The "SEPA permit" allows for more temporary signage, like the archway above, during the duration of the event.

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TYPES OF PROHIBITED SIGNS

Certain types of signs are not allowed in Breckenridge to preserve the Town’s character and reduce visual clutter. Prohibited signs may create distractions, obstruct scenic views, or clash with the historic aesthetic of the community. Enforcement of prohibited signs helps maintain a uniform and visually appealing streetscape. Business owners should consult the Town’s guidelines before investing in new signage to prevent issues with compliance.

UNDERSTANDING REGULATIONS

These guidelines help keep the town visually appealing while allowing effective advertising. Businesses and property owners should review these regulations before installing any signage to ensure compliance.

3.1

List of Prohibited Signs

The following types of signs are not allowed within the Town of Breckenridge:

- **Flashing or Animated Signs:** Any sign that moves, blinks, or changes display automatically.
- **Off-Premise Advertising:** Billboards or any sign promoting businesses not located on the premises.
- **Temporary or Portable Signs:** Including sandwich boards, A-frame signs, or leaning signs.
- **Roof Mounted Signs:** Any sign placed directly on the roof of a structure.
- **Signs affixed to trees or utility poles.**
- **Internally Lit Signs, or digital LED signs:** exterior of a building or on the interior of the building within 5 feet of a window.
- **Inflated signs, balloons, or inflatable party devices intended for short-term use.**
- **Attention-getting devices:** Any flag, streamer, or similar device used for attracting attention.



Fig 3.1 Example of a prohibited temporary Sandwich Board Sign on the sidewalk in Breckenridge. As described above, temporary signage, like this and other leaning signs, are prohibited.



Fig 3.2 Example of a prohibited temporary Banner Sign hung on the exterior of a business. As discussed above, temporary signage like this or attention getting devices are prohibited.

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SIGN PERMITS & APPLICATION PROCESS

Installing a sign in Breckenridge requires careful planning to ensure compliance with the Town's regulations. Before moving forward, businesses should connect with the Planning Department to understand the guidelines and obtain a Sign Application. Each businesses' sign allotment depends on the linear dimension of the 'Building Frontage'

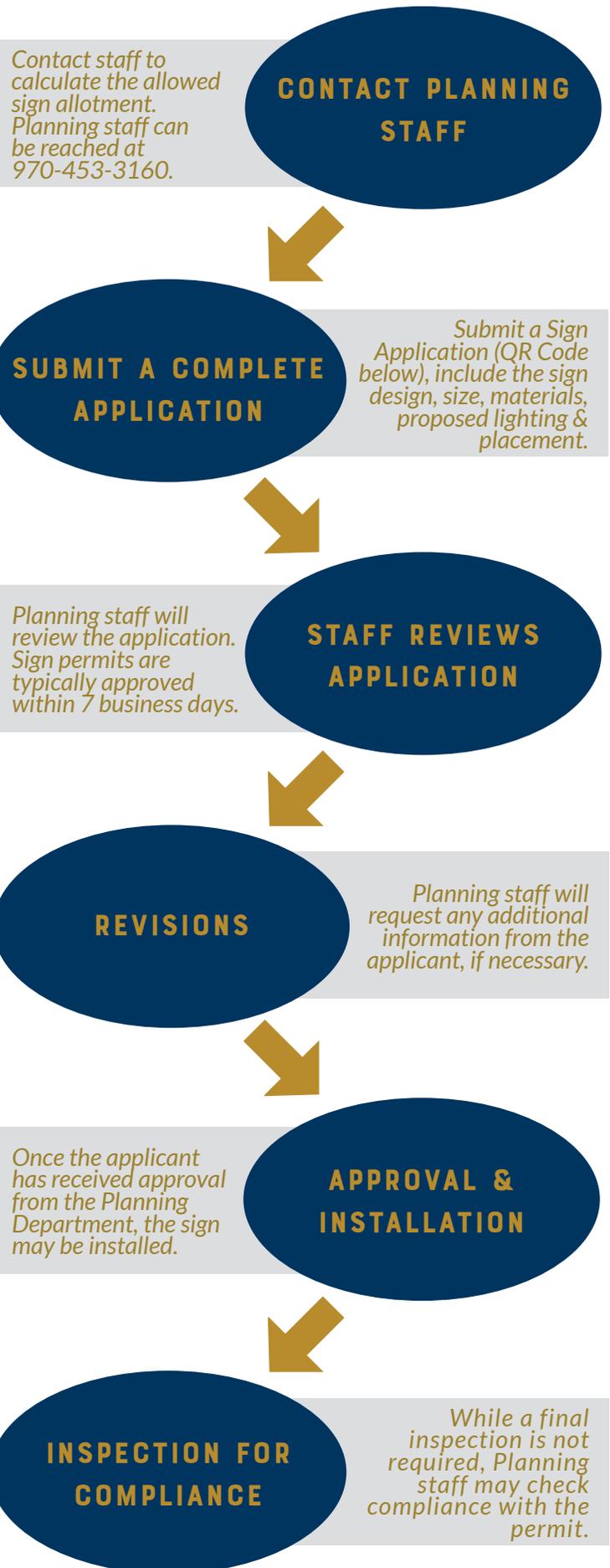
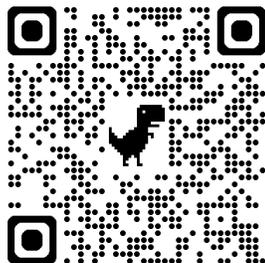
Once an application is submitted, staff will review it to ensure the sign meets all size, material, and placement requirements. If any revisions are needed, applicants will be notified promptly. Once approved, installation can proceed according to the approved sign permit, followed by a final inspection to confirm compliance.

To streamline the process, be sure to review the Sign Code in advance, provide accurate details in your application, and coordinate with Planning staff as needed.

Master Sign Plans will require additional review time, contact the Planning staff.

SIGN APPLICATION

The Sign application is available on the Town's website. Use [this link](#) or scan the QR Code.



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SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

5.1 General Regulations

5.2 Design and Placement Guidelines

5.3 Illumination and Lighting Regulations

5.4 Sign Maintenance Requirements

5.1

General Regulations

- A permit is required for most new permanent signs.
- Signs must be maintained in good condition.
- Signs should complement the architectural character of buildings.
- Signs must not obstruct sidewalks, public rights-of-way, or traffic visibility.
- Signs may not exceed allowed sign allotment per building frontage; max. size of 20 sq. ft.



Fig 5.1 Example of two businesses' signs that are crafted with high-quality materials and design. As seen in the photo, the signs are mounted to a freestanding directory sign, but each business still has a separate identification sign.

This is a great way to effectively advertise the business and remain compliant.

5.2

Design and Placement Guidelines

- Signs must be constructed of high-quality materials (e.g., wood, or high density urethane 3D carved signboards).
- Signs can have metal accents up to 25% of the sign area.
- Signs must not interfere with pedestrian pathways or sight lines for drivers.

UNDERSTANDING REGULATIONS

Dark Sky Lighting & Business Signage

1. Breckenridge follows Dark Sky Guidelines to reduce light pollution and preserve night-time views.
2. Sign illumination should use downward-facing, shielded lighting to prevent glare.
3. Internally illuminated signs and back-lit signs are generally prohibited to maintain the Town's mountain character.
4. Sign lighting should use warm-colored lights (3000K or lower). LEDs of no more than 950 lumens.

5.3

Illumination and Lighting Regulations

The Town of Breckenridge restricts certain types of illuminated signs to prevent excessive light pollution and maintain a welcoming nighttime environment.

Allowed illumination methods include:

- External lighting must be shielded and directed downward.
- Internally illuminated signs and back-lit signs are **prohibited**.
- Neon and LED scrolling signs are **prohibited**.



Fig 5.2 A view of decorative holiday lights on the Hot Shop at the Breck Create's Art District.

Seasonal Holiday Lights are allowed November 1st to April 1st of the following year. The Town recommends businesses decorate with lights to support the mountain town charm.

Review All Lighting Regulations [here](#).

Fig 5.3 Example of compliant, down-cast lighting of a business sign. As described above, all exterior lights must be shielded and directed downwards to mitigate excessive light pollution.



Fig 5.4 A view of permanent business signage and decorative holiday lighting. Exterior lighting should be treated the same when it comes to maintenance requirements. All signage and lighting shall remain in clean, safe, and operable conditions.

5.4

Sign Maintenance Requirements

These restrictions help preserve the charm of Breckenridge while allowing businesses to maintain a visible and attractive presence.

- Signs must be clean, legible, and in good repair.
- Faded, broken, or damaged signs must be replaced or removed.
- Signs should be properly and professionally mounted to avoid injury or damage.

5.5

Seasonal Decorations

Decorations are allowed so long as they are maintained so as to not constitute a fire hazard and are removed after the season associated with the decoration has ended.

- Temporary winter holiday decorations must be removed by the day after the third Monday in February.

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DISPLAY OF OUTDOOR MERCHANDISING

The Town of Breckenridge carefully regulates outdoor displays of merchandise to preserve the town’s historic charm, prevent visual clutter, and ensure pedestrian safety. These regulations apply to businesses in designated land-use districts 17, 18, 18.2, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25 & a portion 11 ([view map here](#)) and outline what can and cannot be displayed outside. Reach out to the Planning Department to learn what district a business is located in.

6.1

Allowed Outdoor Displays

While most merchandise must be kept inside, businesses may display:

- 1 individual item that is actually for sale, placed on private property (not on sidewalks or public spaces).
- A single mannequin, dressed in a complete outfit (e.g. shirt, pants, shoes, hat). The mannequin must be placed safely and removed when the business is closed.
- Larger outdoor equipment such as bicycles, kayaks, and paddleboards, only with a permit.

6.2

Prohibited Outdoor Displays

To maintain an attractive streetscape and ensure safety, the following are not permitted outside businesses.

- Racks, tables, boxes, and bins for displaying merchandise.
- Clothing displayed on hangers, attached to structures, or placed on outdoor fixtures.
- Multiple items displayed at once - businesses are limited to displaying only a single item or a mannequin with a full clothing ensemble.
- Items that obstruct sidewalks, parking areas, or business entrances.



Fig 6.1 Example of Paddleboards displayed by Maggie Pond during the summer months. As described to the right, larger outdoor equipment are allowed to be displayed, but must be reviewed and approved by a permit prior to displaying the items.

UNDERSTANDING REGULATIONS

Key Requirements for Displays

1. Items must not block entrances, sidewalks, or neighboring businesses.
2. Merchandise must be removed during high winds or bad weather.
3. Displays must be on private property or with explicit permission if on shared space.
4. No signage or promotional materials may be attached to displayed items.

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ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE

The Town actively enforces sign regulations to maintain aesthetic standards and ensure compliance. Businesses found in violation may be subject to:

- **Violations:** Non-compliant signs will receive a notice for correction.
- **Fines & Penalties:** Businesses in continued violation will receive a notice and may face fines.
- **Appeals Process:** Owners can request a review of enforcement actions.
- **Removal of Illegal Signs:** Signs violating the code may be removed at the owner’s expense.
- Continued non-compliance may result in legal action.

Regular inspections help ensure that all signage remains in good condition and continues to meet Town standards. Business owners should periodically review their signage to confirm compliance. By proactively adhering to the Town’s sign code, businesses contribute to a well-maintained and visually appealing commercial district. Compliance ensures fairness among businesses while preserving the unique charm of Breckenridge.

Communications are regularly sent to the email listed on the business license. Please check this information with the Finance Dept. to ensure it is up-to-date.

Fig 7.1 A scenic view of the downtown area as seen from the Breckenridge Overlook located on Ski Hill Road.



FINE SCHEDULE	
Offense No.	Fine Amount
First Offense	\$100.00
Second Offense	\$250.00
Third Offense and each subsequent offense	As determined by the Municipal Judge

The fines and penalties associated from these items are regulated by 1-4-1-1 of the Town Code.



Fig 7.2 A scenic view of the downtown area as seen from Gold Run Road on the East of Town during the fall colors.

RESOURCE & CONTACT INFORMATION

FOR QUESTIONS OR PERMIT APPLICATIONS, CONTACT:

**Town of Breckenridge
Community Development Department**

**150 Ski Hill Road, PO Box 168
Breckenridge, CO 80424**

Phone: (970) 453-3160

Email:

CommDev@TownOfBreckenridge.com

Website:

<https://www.townofbreckenridge.com/departments/community-development>

To read further on any code section and for the exact wording on any requirement for signs see the Signs on Private Property Code, [Chapter 15 of Title 9](#) of the Town Code.

If you are looking for additional information regarding Outdoor Display of Merchandise, see [Chapter 7 of Title 2](#) of the Town Code.

