

## SignCodeRevisionProject - Window Signs

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**From:** "Scenic Arizona" <scenicaz@mindspring.com>  
**To:** "Ench Curt" <curt@treehousedesigngroup.com>, "McBride-Olson, Shannon" <s...  
**Date:** 11/17/2016 11:07 AM  
**Subject:** Window Signs  
**Cc:** <signcoderevisionproject@tucsonaz.gov>

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Dear Joint Subcommittee Members:

At your November 14 meeting, I indicated that I would provide a sample definition of window sign from another Arizona municipal jurisdiction. This was in response to City staff's view that interior window signs should simply be deregulated.

After further research, it became apparent that each and every local jurisdiction in Arizona that reaches the threshold of defining a window sign includes the window's interior surface in the definition. In addition, over half also expressly include signs that are located inside the building and in some fashion placed behind the window for public view. Please find below the window sign definitions for 23 municipalities and two counties, including all of the 12 largest cities and towns in Arizona (other than Tucson and Yuma, the latter of which does not define window sign). Generally speaking, smaller cities and towns and counties with a rural orientation do not define window sign in their codes.

In terms of substantive regulations, most of these jurisdictions limit the size of window signs to a percentage of the window pane, ranging from 20% to 40%, with 25% by far being the most typical. Unlike the Tucson code, most of these jurisdictions do not require a permit for interior window signs and do not include interior window signs in the overall attached signage allowance. About a quarter of the jurisdictions also have language excluding displayed merchandise from the window sign definition, which would address the extreme case scenario that was mentioned in call to the audience at your last meeting.

In addition, some jurisdictions have separate definitions for permanent and temporary window signs, with the former typically including attached or suspended neon sign.

Scenic Arizona's view is that Tucson should adopt the norm of its sister jurisdictions in this regard and as follows:

1. Continue to define window sign so as to include the interior surface of the window;
2. Revise the window sign definition to also include signage located behind the window surface with the exclusion of merchandise being displayed.
3. Limit window signage to 25% of the window area (both interior and exterior).
4. Revise other provisions so as to not require a permit for interior temporary window signs.
5. Require window signs to be placed on the interior of or behind the window.
6. Add a provision for permanent (interior) window signs, which would continue to require a permit and be counted in the overall attached signage allowance.

As to definition of window sign, the Phoenix definition would most closely fit the foregoing: "Any sign affixed to the interior or exterior of a window, or any sign located inside a building within six feet of the

interior side of a window and displayed so as to attract the attention of persons outside the building. Merchandise which is included in a window display shall not be considered as part of a window sign.”

Again, we request that interior window signs continue to be regulated by the Sign Code and that the definition and other related provisions be revised to be in step with the sensible provisions other Arizona municipalities have adopted.

Mark Mayer  
Government Affairs & Outreach Coordinator  
Scenic Arizona

Pima County/Marana/Sahuarita:

“An on-site sign inside of or painted on a window, intended to be seen from the outside.”

Oro Valley:

“Any form of advertisement and/or identification associated with the business that is affixed to the interior or exterior of a window, or one that is placed immediately behind a window so as to inform or attract attention to the public outside of the building and/or tenant space.”

Scottsdale:

“Any poster, cut-out letters, painted text or graphics, or other text or visual presentation affixed to or placed behind a window pane which is placed to be read from the exterior of a building.”

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Tempe:

“A sign or signage placed in a window so as to attract the attention of persons outside of the building where the sign or signage is placed.”

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Chandler:

“Any permanent sign affixed to the interior or exterior of a window so as to attract the attention of persons outside the building”.

Gilbert:

“A sign applied or attached to a window, or displayed within 6 feet of the interior of a first floor window area so as to attract attention of persons outside the building. Window Signs do not include merchandise in a window display.”

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Mesa:

“Any sign placed on, affixed to, painted on, or located within the casement or sill area of a mineral glass window.”

Apache Junction:

“Any sign affixed to either the interior or exterior of a window.”

Superior:

“Any poster, cut-out letters, painted text or graphic, or other text or visual presentation affixed to, or placed within six (6) feet behind a window pane and is placed to be read from the exterior of a building.”

Phoenix:

“Any sign affixed to the interior or exterior of a window, or any sign located inside a building within six feet of the interior side of a window and displayed so as to attract the attention of persons outside the building. Merchandise which is included in a window display shall not be considered as part of a window sign.”

Peoria:

“A sign or signage placed in windows so as to attract the attention of persons outside of the building where the sign or signage is placed.”

Glendale:

“A sign affixed to the interior or exterior or placed immediately behind a window pane so as to attract the attention of persons outside the building.”

Avondale:

“A sign affixed to the interior or exterior of a window, or any sign located inside a building within six (6) feet of the interior side of the window and displayed so as to attract the attention of persons outside the building.”

Surprise:

“Any sign, picture, symbol or combination thereof, that communicates information about an activity, business, commodity, event, sale or service, and is placed inside a window or upon the window panes or glass and is visible from the exterior of the window. Signs placed or hung in any manner within three feet of the window pane shall be considered a window sign.”

Youngtown:

“Any sign viewable through and/or affixed in any manner to a window or exterior glass door such that it is intended to be viewable from the exterior (beyond the sidewalk immediately adjacent to the window), including signs located within six feet inside a building but visible primarily from the outside of the building.”

Wickenburg:

“A sign that is applied or attached to the interior of a window or in such manner within a building that in can be seen from the exterior of the structure through a window”

Flagstaff:

“A sign posted, painted, placed or affixed in or on a window exposed to public view.”

Sedona:

“A sign that is painted on, applied or attached to a window, but excludes merchandise included in a window display. Window signs shall include signs located in the interior of a structure placed so that they serve to effectively display advertising for passersby on any public areas or public rights-of-way.”

Camp Verde:

“A sign installed inside a window for the purpose of viewing from outside the premises. The term does not include merchandise located in a window.”

Chino Valley:

“Any sign, picture, symbol, or combination thereof, designed to communicate information about activity, business, commodity, event, sale, or service, that is placed inside a window or upon the window panes or glass and is visible from the exterior.”

Lake Havasu City:

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“A sign posted, painted, placed, or affixed in or on a window exposed to public view. An interior sign that faces a window exposed to public view and is located within three feet of the window.

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Bullhead City:

“A sign installed inside a window for the purpose of viewing from outside the premises. This term does not include merchandise located in a window.”

Yuma County:

“A sign installed inside a building or painted onto a window and intended to be viewed from the exterior of the building.”

FIN.