



City of Merritt

“City of Merritt Sign Regulation Bylaw No. 1900, 2005”

Consolidated For Convenience – May 26, 2025

Bylaw No. 1900	May 10, 2005
Amendment Bylaw No. 1921	November 8, 2005
Amendment Bylaw No. 2062	September 9, 2008
Amendment Bylaw No. 2102	June 8, 2010
Amendment Bylaw No. 2395	May 14, 2025

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CITY OF MERRITT

BYLAW NO. 1900

A BYLAW TO REGULATE SIGNS WITHIN THE CITY OF MERRITT

WHEREAS the Community Charter and the Motor Vehicle Act authorizes Council to regulate signs;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the City of Merritt, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. CITATION

This bylaw shall be cited as "**CITY OF MERRITT SIGN REGULATION BYLAW NO. 1900, 2005**".

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3. DEFINITIONS

In this Bylaw:

Banner means a sign composed of lightweight, non-rigid material such as cloth, canvas or similar fabric that is temporarily mounted to a pole or building by one or more edge but does not include flags.

Billboard means a sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, entertainment conducted, sold or offered at a location other than the lot on which the sign is located but does not include a multiple user sign.

Building Face means the total area of the wall of a building, including window and door areas, which fronts onto a street.

Business means the carrying on of a commercial or industrial undertaking of any kind or nature or the providing of professional, personal or other services for the purpose of gain or profit.

Canopy means a structure, either rigid and permanent, or a non-rigid hood or cover, which projects from the wall of a building and includes, but is not limited to, awnings and marquees.

Canopy Sign means a sign attached to or constructed in or on the face of a canopy, awning or marquee.

Community Economic Development Sign means a sign which is erected to display information promoting Merritt and the Nicola Valley to the travelling public.

Directional Sign means an on-site sign indicating the direction only, of business, parking area, product service or event for the purpose of directing pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

Election Sign means a sign used to promote a candidate or party during a municipal, provincial or federal election.

Fascia Sign means a sign which is in any manner affixed flat to the wall or fascia of a building, whether forming part of the building or not, and having the exposed face approximately parallel to the plane of the wall.

Fence Sign means a temporary or permanent sign attached to a fence but does not include a sign located on the inside of a fence which faces inward toward the property and is not intended to be visible from any street.

Freestanding Sign means and includes any sign wholly supported from the ground by a structural member or members, independently of and visibly separated from any building or other structure and permanently fixed to the ground.

Frontage means the length of the front parcel line.

Garage Sale Sign means a temporary sign not exceeding 0.4m² in area and advertising a residential garage, church, or school rummage sale.

Home Occupation Sign means a sign identifying a home occupation as defined in the Zoning Bylaw.

Incidental Sign means a small information sign not exceeding 0.3 square metres in surface area that provides information such as address, name of building, person or activity, washrooms, telephones, help wanted, hours of operation, parking, entrance, exit, or safety signs that are primarily intended for the convenience of the public.

Illuminated Sign means a sign in which a source of artificial light is used in order to make readable the message and shall include internally and externally lighted signs and reflecting, glowing, animated or radiating signs and includes, but is not limited to, readerboard, neon and other electronic signs.

Multiple User Sign means an off-site free-standing sign consisting of two or more individual signs identifying businesses not located (but contiguous to) on the property where the sign is located.

Mural means a non-commercial image painted on an exterior wall or other integral part of a building.

Person means, in addition to its ordinary meaning, a partnership, association, company, society and body corporate.

Portable Sign means a sign not permanently attached to the ground or to a building that does not fall under the definition of a 'sandwich board sign.'

Projecting Sign means any sign other than a wall, a canopy or fascia sign, which is attached to a building.

Real Estate Sign means a temporary free standing or fascia sign indicating that the property on which it is located is for sale, rent or lease along with the name of the agent, contact or owner.

Real Estate Sign, Open House means a temporary sign directing the public to a subdivision or property within the City at a location other than the site on which the sign is located during the hours that the property is open for public inspection.

Roof Line means the line made by the intersection of the wall of the building with the roof of the building or whichever face fronts the street.

Roof Sign means any sign erected upon, against, or directly above a roof or on top of or above a parapet of a building, and wholly supported by the building.

Sandwich Board Sign means a non-illuminated portable sign consisting of two flat faces/surfaces joined at one end and resting on the ground.

Sign means any symbol, identification, description, illustration or device, illuminated or non-illuminated, which is visible from any public place or is located on private property and exposed to the public, and which directs attention to a product, service, place, activity, person, institution, business or solicitation, including any permanently installed or situated merchandise, with the exception of window displays.

Sign Area means the total area within the outer edge of the borders of a sign, and, in the case of a sign without borders, the total area within the shortest line circumscribing the letters, numbers, figures, or other symbols, devices or representations comprising the message of the sign (for a sign with two or more faces, the area shall be calculated for one face only).

Sliders/Banners/Riders on realty signs shall mean the attachments to the realty sign and whose area shall be included in the calculation for the total sign area (2102)

Temporary Construction Sign means a temporary sign erected on a construction site indicating the name and nature of a construction project, demolition or the contractor.

Temporary Special Event Sign means a temporary sign of a civic, philanthropic, educational, religious, or community nature posted for the purpose of information, direction, identification or promotion of a place, person, event or activity occurring in the Nicola Valley for a specified period of time.

Tourist Information Sign means a sign or sign kiosk which is erected by a government agency, non-profit organization or association which displays advertising or information directed towards tourists.

Under Canopy Sign means a sign suspended from an awning or marquee and located directly below and under it.

Vehicle Sign means a sign, which is erected on or attached to a vehicle where the principal purpose of the vehicle is to serve as a sign or a sign structure.

Wall Sign means a sign painted on the exterior wall or other integral part of a building that conveys a commercial message, and may include writing, corporate symbols or logos.

Window Sign means a sign, which is painted or affixed to the inside of a window and in the view of the general public.

4. APPLICATION

This bylaw is applicable to the erection, placement, display, alteration or movement of all signs on private property and on road allowances within the boundaries of the City of Merritt. This bylaw does not apply to:

- a) Signs located inside a building and not visible or intended to be visible from any street.
- b) Building addresses containing number and street only.
- c) Name and/or address plates for private residences.
- d) Street name and traffic signs.
- e) Signs erected by the Provincial, Federal or Municipal governments or agencies of those bodies.

- f) Signs indicating a hazard.
- g) Flags or emblems of political, civic, philanthropic, educational or religious organizations.
- h) Other incidental signs as defined in this bylaw.

5. SEVERABILITY

If any Part, Section, Sub-section, clause, phrase or sentence of this bylaw is for any reason held to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this bylaw.

6. INSPECTION

Any employee of the City appointed to administer or enforce the provisions of this bylaw is hereby authorized to enter at all reasonable times upon any property to ascertain whether the regulations and provisions herein contained are being or have been complied with. It shall be unlawful for any person to prevent or obstruct, or seek to prevent or obstruct any official in, or from the carrying out of an official duty under this bylaw.

7. BASIC PROVISIONS

a) Conformity

No sign shall be erected, placed, displayed, altered or moved within the City unless such sign is in conformity with all provisions of this bylaw and any applicable regulations of the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Highways.

b) Non-conformity

All signs lawfully in existence and located on the property that the sign pertains to at the time of adoption of this bylaw, although the sign does not conform to the provisions of this bylaw, may continue to be used, but shall not be rebuilt, constructed, altered or moved unless in conformity with the provisions of this bylaw.

c) Location of Signs

Except as specifically provided by this bylaw, no sign shall be displayed except on the premises to which the sign refers and which the sign is intended to advertise, identify, provide information on, or attract attention to.

d) Safety

All signs shall be structurally sound, comply with all applicable provisions of the BC Building Code, the Fire Code and the City of Merritt Building Bylaw and be free from all hazards caused by or resulting from decay or the failure of structural members, fixtures, lighting or appurtenances. Every electrical sign shall be approved and labeled in conformity with the Canadian Standards Association and shall conform to the Provincial Electrical Code of British Columbia.

e) Maintenance

- i) All signs shall be maintained in readable and clean condition and the site of the sign shall be maintained free of weeds, debris and rubbish. Normal sign maintenance does not require a sign permit, but shall conform to all other requirements of this bylaw.
- ii) It shall be the responsibility of the owner and person or persons constructing, erecting, enlarging, converting, altering or relocating any sign to ensure that such signage has been left in a safe condition and in compliance with the requirements of this bylaw.
- iii) A sign which advertises or identifies an activity, business, production and/or service which is no longer conducted or available shall be deemed to have been abandoned and the owner of the property upon which the sign is located must remove the abandoned sign within thirty days from when the activity, business, production and/or service is no longer conducted or available.

f) Obstruction

No sign shall be displayed where it will interfere or otherwise obstruct any traffic control device, or in any way interfere with visibility from one street to another.

g) Accessibility

No sign shall be placed in such a manner as to obstruct access by being placed less than 2.0 metres above grade or by creating a clear path of less than 1.5 metres in width.

h) Zones

All zones regulating the prohibition, placement and size of signs in this bylaw shall conform to the zones in the City of Merritt Zoning Bylaw, as amended from

time to time.

8. PERMITS AND FEES

- a) No person shall erect, place, construct, or alter any sign in the City without first obtaining a permit, unless otherwise specified in this Bylaw, and no person shall maintain or suffer any such sign to remain on, or affixed to, the lands or premises of which he/she is the owner or occupier unless he/she is the holder of a valid and subsisting permit in respect of the said sign issued pursuant to this Bylaw.
- b) Permits for the construction or erection of signs shall be issued by the City upon satisfactory information being supplied by the applicant that the provisions of this bylaw are being fulfilled. The City may require that all drawings and specifications, or any part thereof, be prepared, signed and sealed by, and the construction carried out under, the supervision of a professional engineer registered in the Province of British Columbia.
- c) Signs requiring a permit shall be subject to fees in accordance with the City of Merritt Fees and Charges Bylaw, as amended from time to time or replaced.

(2395)

9. MAXIMUM HEIGHT AND AREA

No sign may exceed 8 metres in height, unless otherwise specified, and the total area of all signs on a property may not exceed 20% of the area of the building face upon which the sign is situated or 1 square metre for every 100 square metres of lot area, whichever is greater, unless otherwise specified.

10. SIGNS ALLOWED WITHOUT A PERMIT

The following signs do not require a permit subject to the following regulations:

a) **Banner Sign**

A Banner Sign may be placed in any non-residential zone provided that the area of a banner does not exceed 5.0 square metres that the sign is situated on private property and the total area of all signs, including banners, does not

exceed 20% of the area of the building face or 1 square metre for every 100 square metres of lot area, whichever is greater. A banner sign exceeding 5 square metres in area and/or encroaching over a public right-of-way may be permitted if it meets the conditions of a Temporary Special Event Sign. A Banner Sign may not be placed on a roof. A Banner Sign may only be temporarily mounted for a period of up to sixty (60) days. A period of 60 days must elapse from the time of removal of a banner sign before another banner sign may be erected on the same premises.

b) **Election Sign**

An Election Sign may be placed in any zone up to 30 days prior to a Municipal, Provincial or Federal election, by-election or referendum but shall not be placed on City parkland, on/or adjacent to City owned or occupied buildings, or in locations which may cause a traffic or pedestrian hazard. Election Signs must be removed within 7 days of said election.

c) **Garage Sale Sign**

Garage Sale Signs may be placed in any residential zone up to 7 days prior to sale and must be removed within 2 days of the sale provided the sign does not exceed 0.4 square metres in area.

d) **Home Occupation Sign**

One Home Occupation Sign may be erected for a licensed home occupation, subject to the following regulations:

- i) Permitted Types: fascia, projecting, window, canopy or freestanding. Illuminated, roof and sandwich board signs are not permitted.
- ii) Sign Area: The area of a home occupation sign shall not exceed 0.3 square metres.

- iii) Projection: a home occupation sign may not project over public property. A home occupation sign may be situated in a setback.
- iv) Height: no portion of a fascia or projecting home occupation sign may project above the roofline.
- v) Freestanding Structure: the top of the structure supporting a freestanding home occupation sign may not exceed 1.5 metres above finished grade.

e) Incidental Sign

An Incidental Sign may be placed in any zone provided the sign does not exceed 0.4 square metres in area and the sign is located on the property that it refers to.

f) Real Estate Sign

One real estate sign and attached slider/banner/rider with a combined area of up to 0.9 square metres may be placed on a property in all residential (R) zones and up to 3 square metres combined area in all commercial (C) and industrial (M) zones; except in the case of a corner property whereby a total of two real estate signs may be placed on a property provided each sign is facing a separate road allowance.

(2062, 2102)

g) Real Estate Sign, Open House

Directional Real Estate Open House Signs, up to 0.4 square metres in area, may be placed on road allowances during the actual time that the property is open for inspection by the public.

h) Sandwich Board Sign on Private Property

Sandwich Board Signs on Private Property are permitted subject to the following:

- i) On Commercially or Industrially zoned property with a single business, one Sandwich Board Sign is permitted provided the sign is located on the land owned or rented by the business being advertised and that the sign is not larger than 0.75 metres wide by 1.2 metres in height and a minimum horizontal passageway clearance of 1.5 metres is maintained on any private sidewalks

- ii) On Commercially or Industrially zoned property with multiple businesses, one sandwich board sign per business is permitted provided each sign is located directly in front of the business identified on the sign; a minimum horizontal passageway clearance of 1.5 metres is maintained on any private sidewalks; and the sign is not larger than 0.75 metres wide by 1.2 metres in height.

i) Temporary Construction Sign

A Temporary Construction Sign may be placed in any zone provided that the sign does not exceed 6 square metres in area and is in place for the duration of the project only.

j) Wall Sign

The written portion of a Wall Sign shall conform to the requirements of a fascia sign.

k) Window Sign

Window Signs may be placed in any commercial or industrial zone, subject to adherence to applicable Fire regulations.

l) Fence Sign – Temporary

A sign may be erected on a fence for a temporary period of up to sixty (60) days, provided:

- i) the fence sign is situated on property zoned commercial or industrial;
- ii) the fence sign relates directly to the business which is being carried on from the premises;
- iii) the fence sign is being used to promote a special business activity, event, product, new ownership, or a new location;
- iv) the fence sign shall not extend or protrude above or beyond the actual fence; and,
- v) the total area of all fence signs on a property may not exceed 20% of the area of the fence on or from which it is displayed and for the purpose of this regulation, the area of the fence shall be deemed to include the area of any and all gates, driveways or other openings therein.

- vi) A period of 60 days shall elapse from the time a fence sign is removed and another fence sign is installed.

11. SIGNS REQUIRING A PERMIT

In addition to signage types articulated in this bylaw, Development Permit regulations may stipulate additional sign permit requirements. The following signs require a sign permit and are subject to the following regulations:

(2102)

a) Canopy Sign

- i) Sign Area

The area of a canopy sign shall not exceed 1.0 square metre for every one metre of canopy frontage.

- ii) Projection

A canopy may project up to 1.5 metres over public property or into a required setback. However, a canopy may not project any closer than 0.6 metres horizontally to the road or sidewalk curb line.

- iii) Clearance

A canopy shall have a minimum clearance of 2.5 metres above the finished grade.

- iv) Height

A canopy shall not extend above the roofline of the building.

b) Community Economic Development Sign

A Community Economic Development Sign may be permitted in any zone of the City upon the approval of Council, subject to the following:

- i) the styling of the sign is designed with the intention of creating an effective and pleasing appearance;
- ii) placement of the sign does not create a traffic or safety hazard or obstruct views; and,
- iii) information contained within the sign promotes the community in a general nature and is not specific to one individual or company.

c) Fascia Sign

i) Sign Area

The combined area of all fascia signs on a building shall not exceed 20% of the area of the building face.

ii) Projection

A fascia sign may project up to 0.3 metres into a public right of way or a setback.

iii) Height

A fascia sign shall not extend above the roofline of the building.

d) Freestanding Sign

i) Area

The combined area of all freestanding signs on a property shall not exceed 1.0 square metre for every 100 square metres of lot area, or a maximum of 25m² for any one sign.

ii) Projection

A freestanding sign may not project over public property. A freestanding sign may be located in a setback.

iii) Height

A freestanding sign may not exceed 8 metres in height above finished grade, except along the highway corridor zones, where, subject to development permit approval, one freestanding sign, not greater than 19 metres in height, may be erected on any lot.

(2395)

e) Illuminated Sign

An illuminated sign may be erected provided that:

- i) It is located on a property in the Park and Institutional (P), Industrial (M), and Commercial (C) zones. **(2395)**
- ii) The sign does not, in the opinion of the City, constitute a hazard to traffic.
- iii) The sign conforms to the other regulations set out in this section regarding size, siting, and height for the applicable type of sign (freestanding, fascia, roof, etc.).

f) Multiple User Sign

One Multiple User Sign is permitted on property zoned as Service Commercial, Corridor Commercial, or Light Industrial, provided that:

- i) the multiple user sign consists of a single sign structure with provision for two or more individual business signs; **(2395)**
- ii) the maximum height of the sign structure is 8 metres;
- iii) the sign area of each individual business sign does not exceed 1 square metre;
- iv) the businesses identified on the multiple user sign are contiguously located in the same zoning designation area where the multiple user sign is located;
- v) the individual business signs only advertise the names, addresses of the businesses and/or directional information;
- vi) the styling of the sign is designed with the intention of creating an effective and pleasing appearance;
- vii) placement of the sign does not obstruct traffic or create a hazard to traffic movement; and,
- viii) the written permission of the property owner is obtained.

g) Murals

A Mural may be placed on any wall in a C, M or P zone upon the approval of City Council subject to:

- i) the styling of the mural is designed with the intention of creating an effective and pleasing appearance;
- ii) the mural does not contain any images or wording that could be perceived as offensive, objectionable, abusive, pornographic, obscene, sexist, racist, harassing or provocative; and,
- iii) the mural does not contain any individual business names.

h) Portable Sign

One portable, non-flashing, sign identifying a business may be permitted per lot in the C, M and P zones provided that:

- i) The sign is not located on a public right-of-way or public property.
- ii) The sign is not energized by any means other than that approved by the electrical code.
- iii) The sign conforms to the other regulations set out in this section regarding size, siting, and height for a freestanding sign.
- iv) The sign area does not exceed 3 square metres.

i) Projecting Sign

i) Sign Area

The area of a projecting sign shall not exceed 2.0 square metres.

ii) Projection

A projecting sign may project up to 1.5 metres over public property or into a required setback, up to a total projection from the building of 3 metres. However, a projecting sign may not project any closer than 0.6 metres horizontally to the road or sidewalk curb line.

iii) Clearance

A projecting sign shall have a minimum clearance of 2.5 metres above the finished grade.

iv) Height

The top of a projecting sign shall not extend more than 4 metres above finished grade.

j) Roof Sign

i) Sign Area

The area of a roof sign shall not exceed 25 square metres.

ii) Height

A roof sign may project up to 1.0 metre above the highest part of the roof to which it is affixed. A roof sign projecting more than 1.0 metre requires engineering certification.

k) Sandwich Board Sign on City Sidewalk

Sandwich Board Signs are permitted on City sidewalks in areas zoned commercial (C) provided:

(2102)

- i) there is only one sign per property frontage and the sign is not larger than 1 square metre for each face and does not exceed 1.5 metres in height; except in the case of a corner property whereby a total of two Sandwich Board Signs may be placed on City sidewalks provided each sign is facing a separate road allowance.
- ii) the sign is located directly in front of the business for each business with a minimum 5 metre frontage and is located a minimum of 1.5 metres from the property line and 0.3 metres from the curb, or edge of roadway if a curb is not in place;
- iii) there is a minimum horizontal passageway clearance of 1.5 metres;
- iv) the sign has no security chains, ropes, electrical extensions or other attachments to the sign;

- v) the sign is constructed with a rigid cross brace so that the sign is not collapsible;
- vi) the sign is removed from the sidewalk when the business to which the sign pertains is closed for business;
- vii) the sign is kept in good repair and maintained in a safe, neat, clean and attractive condition; and,
- viii) the applicant for a sidewalk Sandwich Board sign permit shall provide and maintain at their sole cost public liability insurance naming the City as co-insured, for the benefit of the City and the Licensee, in the amount of TWO MILLION DOLLARS (\$2,000,000.00) in respect of injury or death or property damage.

l) Temporary Special Event Sign

A Temporary Special Event Sign may be placed, erected or installed upon the approval of the City. The sign shall not be posted for more than fourteen days, after which time it must be removed.

m) Tourist Information Sign

A Tourist Information Sign may be permitted at, or near, each of the City's entrances on Voght Street and Nicola Avenue subject to the following:

- i) the styling of the sign is designed with the intention of creating an effective and pleasing appearance to the City's entrances;
- ii) placement of the sign does not obstruct traffic or create a hazard to traffic movement;
- iii) the sign location provides for adequate traffic access and egress;
- iv) the written permission of the property owner is obtained;
- v) the sign is not greater than 8 metres in height; and,
- vi) lot coverage does not exceed 10%.
- vii) Subject to an approved contractual agreement with the City, Tourist Information Signs, specifically those approved by Council under the Walk of Stars Society Sign and Graphics System, may contain sponsorship advertising for a third party business. The addition of the sponsorship advertising to a Tourist Information Sign shall require a permit but the permit fee shall not be charged.

n) Under Canopy Sign

i) Sign Area

The area of an under canopy sign shall not exceed 1.0 square metres.

ii) Projection

An under canopy sign may project up to 1.5 metres over public property or into a required setback. However, a canopy may not project any closer than 0.6 metres horizontally to the road or sidewalk curb line.

iii) Clearance

An under canopy sign shall have a minimum clearance of 2.5 metres above the finished grade.

iv) Height

The top of an under canopy sign shall not exceed 4 metres in height.

o) Balloon Sign

A balloon sign may be placed up to thirty (30) days in a calendar year, provided:

- i) the balloon sign is situated on property zoned commercial or industrial;
- ii) the balloon sign is located either on the roof of the building or on the ground of the property that the sign pertains to;
- iii) the balloon sign shall be securely anchored to the base and the base shall be securely anchored to the surface on which it rests and if located on a roof, the structural integrity of the building is not compromised;
- iv) the maximum permitted height of a balloon sign is eight (8) metres above the base of the supporting structure; and,
- v) the balloon sign is mounted in such a location and manner that the collapse of the unit will not affect an access route or public right of way.

Section 11 j) does not apply to a balloon sign mounted on a roof.

p) Fence Sign – Permanent

A sign may be erected on a fence provided:

- i) the fence sign is situated on property zoned commercial or industrial;
- ii) the fence sign relates directly to the business which is being carried on from the premises;
- iii) the fence sign shall not extend or protrude above or beyond the actual fence; and,
- iv) the total area of all fence signs on a property may not exceed 20% of the area of the fence on or from which it is displayed and for the purpose of this regulation, the area of the fence shall be deemed to include the area of any and all gates, driveways or other openings therein.

12. SIGNS NOT PERMITTED

Billboards are not permitted in the City of Merritt.

13. VIOLATIONS

Every person who contravenes a provision of this bylaw to which the Offence Act applies commits an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding \$2,000.00 and the costs of prosecution. Every person who contravenes a provision of this bylaw to which the City of Merritt Municipal Ticket Information Bylaw applies commits an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine in accordance with the City of Merritt Municipal Ticket Information Bylaw.

14. REPEAL OF PREVIOUS BYLAWS

CITY OF MERRITT SIGN REGULATION BYLAW 1763, 2001 and all amendments thereto are hereby repealed.