

Information Sheet

Real Estate Signs in Residential Districts, Commercial, Office and OG Districts

The Germantown Sign Ordinance regulates the installation, size, location, height, content, maintenance, removal and appearance of all real estate signs erected in Commercial Office, Old Germantown and Residential Districts. The most essential provisions of the Sign Ordinance for each District are outlined separately below:

Residential Districts

A. Permit Requirements and Fees

1. Permits are not required for single-family, two-family residences or individual lots in developed subdivisions. Approval is not required to install these signs.
2. Permits are required for signs erected for multi-family units.
3. Permits are required for undeveloped tracts of land of three (3) acres or more.
4. Applications for sign permits are obtained in the Department of Community Development Office at 1920 S. Germantown Road, Germantown, Tennessee.
5. Permit fees are currently thirty dollars (\$30.00) per sign. Fees are subject to change.

B. Size of Signs

1. Single-family, two-family or multi-family developed lots -- The sign area of one face shall not exceed nine (9) square feet. Signs may be doubled faced.
2. Undeveloped tracts of three (3) acres or more -- The sign area of one face shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet. Signs may be doubled faced.

C. Location of Signs

1. Real Estate signs shall be located at least ten (10) feet behind the face of the curb.
2. Where no curb exists, signs shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet from the edge of the shoulder of the road.
3. On corner lots, one (1) sign allowed per street front.
4. Signs are not allowed on the rear side of double frontage lots.

D. Height of Signs

1. Height of the sign shall be a maximum of four (4) feet as measured from surrounding grade to the top of the sign.
2. The height of signs for undeveloped tracts of three (3) acres or more shall be a maximum of six (6) feet measured from the surrounding grade to the top of the sign.

E. Content

Content allowed on the main sign panel (See attached drawing to identify the main sign panel).

- (a) Name of the Real Estate Company/For Sale by Owner
 - (b) For Sale, rent or lease
 - (c) Name of agents
 - (d) Phone numbers of agents, Real Estate company or owner when sale is by owner
 - (e) Sold when a contract has been negotiated (The word "Sold" is the only content allowed). Content such as "Sold, may we sell yours?", #1 in sales, another satisfied customer, we work harder, etc. will not be allowed
 - (f) Information required by law
 - (g) Real Estate company's web address not to exceed one (1) line of text
2. The following information may be placed on metal or other rigid strips attached between the sign frame below the sign main panel, provided the attached strips which are computed in the total sign size do not increase the size of the sign larger than nine (9) square feet. (See attached drawing to identify the location of the strips)
 - (a) Physical description of the property
 - (b) Type of financing
 - (c) Corporate owner
 - (d) Shown by appointment only
 - (e) Key Box
 - (f) Open house -- date
 - (g) Swimming pool
 - (h) Warranty
 - (i) Lease purchase
 - (j) Sold-may appear on either the main sign panel or strip, but not in both places
 - (k) Real Estate Agent's personal e-mail address or web page, not to exceed one (1) line of text

3. It may be permitted to attach to a real estate sign either a box or a tube (not both) for the purpose of storing real estate information pertaining to the premise upon which the sign is located. Any other advertising material placed within or on the exterior of these containers will be illegal and the City may remove the containers. Following is the definition, size and color of these containers:

Real Estate Information Tube/Box means a box or tube attached to one end of the temporary real estate sign for the purpose of holding a brochure whose information relates to the subject property. The dimensions of the box shall be a maximum ten (10) inches by fourteen (14) inches by three (3) inches, and the tube shall be a maximum twelve (12) inches by three (3) inches in diameter. The box and the tube shall be black or white in color, or translucent. Advertising on the exterior of the box tube shall be prohibited.

F. Removal

1. All real estate signs shall be removed within seven (7) days of the closing of the sale, rental or lease of the premises.

G. Miscellaneous Yard Signs

1. One (1) separate yard sign not to exceed four (4) square feet per face, located a minimum of ten (10) feet behind the curb and not over four (4) feet in height may be used for the following purposes only:
 - (a) To announce Open House - including day and hours.
 - (b) To identify model home.

H. General Information

1. Directional signs or any sign placed off the premises of the property being advertised are illegal signs and will be removed by the City.
2. Pennants, streamers, ribbons, spinners, strings or light or other similar items used to attract attention, and pictures of food, people and animals are prohibited on signs.
3. All signs and components thereof must be kept in good repair, safe, neat, clean and attractive condition.
4. Real estate signs are also subject to removal if the City's Design Review Commission finds the signs to be detrimental to the appearance or character of the area in which they are located.

I. Enforcement

1. The City's Code Enforcement Officer is authorized to remove any real estate signs not maintained in accordance with provisions of the Sign Ordinance without notice to the sign owner. In addition, any person, firm or corporation violating any of the Sign Ordinance provisions may be fined Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) with each day of continuance of a violation considered a separate offense.

Commercial, Office and Old Germantown (OG) Districts

The allowability, size, location, height, content, type and the allowable time real estate signs are permitted will vary depending on the type sign and location. This information sheet will outline the provisions of the Sign Ordinance pertaining to each type sign and location:

A. Permit Requirements

1. All real estate signs erected in commercial, office and the Old Germantown District, except real estate window signs, require a permit and must be approved by the appropriate City official prior to installation. No approval or permit is required for window signs; however, window signs not in compliance with the Sign Ordinance will be removed and subject to the penalties prescribed in the Ordinance.
2. Applications for Sign Permits are obtained at the Department of Community Development, 1920 South Germantown Road, Germantown, Tennessee.
3. Permit fees are thirty dollars (\$30) per sign. Fees are subject to change.

- B. Real estate signs erected in Shopping Centers, Shopping Malls, Shopping Plazas, and Office Centers and other area where a group of businesses or offices are located in a common project or building will be governed by the following provisions:

1. Allowable real estate signs

- (a) During the first year of a new project, or a project that has undergone renovation equal to twenty five (25) percent of its value, one (1) project sign per street front for a maximum period of one (1) year.
- (b) One (1) real estate window sign per business premise. Window signs are authorized whenever the premise is available for rent, lease or sale and are not subject to the one (1) year limitation of the project sign.

2. Size of Signs

- (a) Project sign - maximum size, twenty-five (25) square feet per face
- (b) Real estate window sign maximum size - three (3) square feet

3. **Location of Signs**

- (a) Project signs - minimum thirty (30) feet from the face of the curb, except at street intersections. These signs shall be located a minimum of sixty (60) feet from the extension of the adjacent right-of-ways.
- (b) Real estate window signs shall be located inside the window of the premise being rented, leased or sold. The sign may be positioned at any height or location on the inside of the window.

4. **Content on Signs**

- (a) Project and real estate window signs may advertise the sale, rental or lease of the premise and the identification of agents for same and a telephone number.

5. **Height** of the project sign shall not exceed six (6) feet.

6. **Removal of Signs**

- (a) Project sign - project sign shall be removed within seven (7) days of the closing of the sale, rental or lease of all available space in the project or upon the expiration of one (1) year as indicated on the permit. No renewal of the permit is allowed when such would result in the sign being displayed for a period exceeding one (1) year.
- (b) Real estate window signs shall be removed within seven (7) days of the closing of the sale, rental or lease of the premises.
- (c). Real estate signs in commercial and office districts other than those listed in Paragraph B above are basically real estate signs for buildings with single tenants or undeveloped lots.

C. **Allowable Signs**

1. **Allowable Signs**

One (1) sign per street front.

2. **Size**

One (1) face not to exceed twenty five (25) square feet.

3. **Location**

Must be located thirty (30) feet from the face of the curb or edge of pavement. At street intersections, signs must be located a minimum of sixty (60) feet from the extension of the adjacent right-of-way.

4. **Height**

Maximum of six (6) feet measured from the top of the sign to the surrounding grade.

5. **Content**

Real estate signs may advertise the sale, rental or lease of the premise, identify the agents for same and phone numbers.

6. **Removal**

Signs must be removed within seven (7) days after the closing date of the sale, rental or leasing of the premises or upon expiration of the sign permit.

D. Real Estate Signs Erected in Old Germantown Districts

1. **Allowable Signs** (Ground mounted)

(a) One (1) ground mounted real estate sign per street front. Buildings with multiple tenants are authorized a ground mounted sign only when the entire building is for sale, lease or rent.

(b) In buildings with multiple tenants, a real estate window sign no larger than three (3) square feet may be located on the interior of a window of the premise being sold, rented or leased. Window signs may be located any height or location on the window.

1. **Size** (Ground mounted)

One (1) face shall not exceed nine (9) square feet. In no case shall the total sign area exceed eighteen (18) square feet.

2. **Location** (Ground mounted)

Signs must be at least ten (10) feet behind the face of the curb. Maximum height cannot exceed four (4) feet.

4. **Content** (Ground mounted and window signs)

Real estate signs may contain advertisement for the sale, rental or lease of the premise, the identification of the agents for same and phone numbers.

5. **Removal** (Ground mounted and window signs)

Real estate signs shall be removed within seven (7) days of the closing of the sale, rental or lease of the premises; or as determined by the City; or upon expiration of the permit for ground mounted signs.

E. General Information

1. Directional signs or any sign placed off the premises of the property being advertised are illegal signs and will be removed by the City.

2. Pennants, streamers, ribbons, spinners, strings of light or other similar items used to attract attention, and pictures of food, people and animals are prohibited on signs.

3. All signs and components thereof must be kept in good repair, safe, neat, clean and in attractive condition.