



The Corporation of the District of North Cowichan

Sign Bylaw

Bylaw 3479

[Consolidated and printed by authority of the Corporate Officer under section 139 of the Community Charter. Current to January 19, 2017. Last amended December 7, 2016. Amendments: 3527, 3548, 3624.]

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The council of The Corporation of the District of North Cowichan enacts as follows:

Definitions

1 In this bylaw:

"**accommodation**" means a business listed in the most current British Columbia Approved Accommodation Guide;

"**attraction**" means a location within North Cowichan that belongs to 1 or more of the following categories:

- (a) artisans;
- (b) breweries, distilleries and cideries;
- (c) bridges, buildings and structures;

- (d) forestry;
- (e) gardens and parks;
- (f) historic and heritage sites;
- (g) markets;
- (h) murals;
- (i) museums;
- (j) orchards and farms;
- (k) view points;
- (l) wineries and vineyards.

"attraction directional sign" means a sign designed, installed and maintained by North Cowichan regarding a permit for an accommodation or attraction;

"canopy" means a fixed, unenclosed structure projecting from a building wall to protect the public from the weather;

"clearance curb" means the distance between a sign or canopy and the elevation of the nearest curb line vertically coinciding with the horizontal axis of the lowest part of the sign or canopy;

"clearance height" means the distance between the lowest part of a sign or canopy and the grade below it;

"fascia sign" means a sign that projects no more than 0.3 m from the face or wall of a building or structure to which it is attached;

"freestanding sign" means a sign supported by a structure rather than attached to a building;

"sign" means a structure, natural object, thing, painting or representation

- (a) used as, or in the nature of, an announcement, direction, or advertisement, and
- (b) intended to attract attention to an object, product, place, activity, person; institution, organization, or business.

Permit requirements and exemptions

- 2**
- (1) A person must not erect a sign without first obtaining a permit. [BL3527]
 - (2) Despite subsection (1), a permit is not required to erect or place the following:
 - (a) a temporary sign announcing the date of a charitable event or function, if the sign is erected or placed no sooner than 2 weeks before, and removed no later than 3 days after, the date of the event or function;
 - (b) a sign promoting a community health, safety, or welfare campaign;
 - (c) an unlighted sign, smaller than 0.75 m² in area, selling, leasing or renting real or personal property on which the sign is displayed;
 - (d) a sign erected or placed by North Cowichan, other than an attraction

directional sign;

- (e) a political sign for a candidate or issue in connection with an election or other voting opportunity;
- (f) a parking entrance or exit sign, smaller than 0.57 m² in area;
- (g) a sign smaller than 1 m² in area displaying the name of a contractor, engineer, or architect during construction, alteration, or demolition of a building or structure;
- (h) a window sign whose area does not exceed 25% of the area of the window to which it is attached;
- (i) a sign smaller than 0.57 m² in area, displayed to prevent trespassing;
- (j) a sign smaller than 0.57 m² in area, attached to a dwelling house, and displaying only the name and occupation of the dwelling house's occupant;
- (k) a bulletin board, smaller than 1.2 m² in area, on a public building, school, or church property;
- (l) a sign smaller than 2.3 m² in area, in a subdivision, displayed for no more than 6 months, advertising lots for sale. [BL3527]

Applications

3 An application for a permit to erect or place a sign must include plans and specifications showing the following:

- (a) the boundaries of the lot on which the sign is proposed to be erected or placed;
- (b) the sign's proposed location relative to any building wall;
- (c) the sign's proposed height and the proposed clearance under the sign, measured from grade;
- (d) the materials, construction method, illumination, and colours proposed to be used for the sign.

Permit fee

4 The fee for a permit to erect a sign is prescribed in the Fees Bylaw.

Freestanding sign

5 A freestanding sign must not

- (a) exceed 8 m in height,
- (b) exceed the smaller of
 - (i) 18 m² in area, or
 - (ii) 0.63 m² in area per lineal metre of street frontage,

- (c) be located closer than 1.5 m to an adjoining parcel,
- (d) project over a public right-of-way,
- (e) have a clearance height lower than 4.3 m where there is vehicle traffic, or
- (f) be located within 2 m of irrigation lines on public property, including traffic circles, roundabouts and boulevards. [BL3624]

Fascia sign

6 A fascia sign or canopy sign must not

- (a) have a clearance height lower than 2.7 m,
- (b) have a clearance curb less than 0.6 m, or
- (c) exceed 0.3 m² in area per lineal metre of building frontage.

Projecting sign

7 A projecting sign must not

- (a) have a clearance height lower than 2.7 m,
- (b) have a clearance curb less than 0.6 m, or
- (c) exceed the smaller of
 - (i) 18 m² in area, or,
 - (ii) 0.63 m² in area per lineal metre of street frontage.

Political posters and bills

8 Before a person may post a political poster or bill, the person must deposit security with North Cowichan, in the amount of \$100, to ensure that their election posters or bills are removed within 7 days after general voting day.

Accommodation and attraction

- 9** (1) A person may apply for an annual permit for an attraction directional sign, by
- (a) submitting a completed application in the form prescribed by the Director of Engineering and Operations,
 - (b) paying the fee prescribed in the Fees Bylaw, and
 - (c) posting a maintenance and repair cash bond of \$175 for each sign approved. [BL3548; BL3624]
- (2) Approval for more than 1 attraction directional sign will only be granted for a single route from a main highway to the attraction or accommodation.
- (3) After a permit for an attraction directional sign is issued, North Cowichan must acquire, install, repair and maintain the sign.
- (4) Despite subsection (3), North Cowichan will only replace an attraction directional sign 3 times before requiring that the permit holder obtain a new permit.

- (5) A permit holder must notify North Cowichan as soon as possible if their attraction directional sign is missing, damaged, or no longer required.
- (6) North Cowichan may remove an attraction directional sign if
 - (a) repairs, maintenance, or alterations are required to the sign,
 - (b) the sign poses a health or safety risk to the public,
 - (c) the permit for the sign has not been renewed,
 - (d) the accommodation or attraction no longer meets the qualifications for an attraction directional sign permit, or
 - (e) non-approved signage is added.

Prohibitions

- 10** (1) Subject to section 908(3) of the *Local Government Act*, no sign may be erected or placed on, against, or above a building or structure's roof, roof eave, or parapet.
- (2) No person may drop or scatter an advertisement.
- (3) No more than 1 flashing sign is permitted on a lot.
- (4) No flashing signs are permitted on land zoned Commercial Local Zone (C1) under North Cowichan's Zoning Bylaw.

Sign owner's duty

- 11** The owner of each sign erected in North Cowichan must keep the sign and its supports, braces, guys, and anchors in good repair in terms of safety and appearance.

Prosecutions

- 12** (1) A person who violates a provision of this bylaw is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$1,000 plus the cost of prosecution.
- (2) A separate offence is considered to be committed on each day during which a violation continues.

Severability

- 13** If any provision of this bylaw is, for any reason, found invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the provision must be severed and the remainder of the bylaw left enforceable and in effect.

Repeal

- 14** [Repealed; BL3624]

Read a first, second and third time on July 4, 2012
Adopted on July 18, 2012