

XVIII. Signs and Fences

18.1 Signs

(A) Applicability

This Section shall govern and control the erection, placement, alteration, enlarging, moving, operation, and maintenance of all signs by permitted uses within all districts. Refer to Section 5.3 for additional provisions pertaining to signs in the US-41/M-28 Access Management Overlay District. These regulations apply to signs that are visible from the public right-of-way, public facilities, trails open to the public, and navigable waterways. Nothing herein contained shall be deemed a waiver of the provisions of any other ordinance or regulation applicable to signs. Whenever regulations or restrictions imposed by this Ordinance are either more or less restrictive than those imposed by any governmental authority, the regulations, rules, or restrictions which are more restrictive, or which impose higher standards or requirements, shall govern. Regardless of any other provision of this Ordinance, no sign shall be erected or maintained in violation of any state or federal law or regulation. Any sign that can be displayed under the provisions of this ordinance may contain a non-commercial message.

(B) Intent

The sign regulations of this Section are intended to balance public and private interests to promote a safe, well-maintained, vibrant and attractive community while accommodating the need for signs to inform, direct, identify, advertise, advocate, promote, endorse, and otherwise communicate information. It is not the intent or purpose of this Section to regulate the message displayed on any sign or the content. These provisions are intended to:

1. Prevent blight and protect aesthetic qualities by preventing visual clutter and preserving scenic and natural beauty, prevent intrusion of commercial messages into non-commercial areas and preserving rural landscapes, and preventing light pollution and preserving the night sky; and
2. Promote an ordered visual environment that supports a healthy economy and business climate by providing businesses with opportunities to inform, identify, and communicate effectively without excessive competition for visual attention; and
3. Enable the public to locate goods, services, and facilities without difficulty and confusion; and
4. Protect and enhance public and private investment in property by encouraging the design, scale, and placement of signs so that they are appropriately conspicuous, visible, and legible; and



5. Assure that the information displayed is clearly visible, legible, and readable so that the sign achieves the intended purpose; and
6. Protect public safety by controlling the proliferation of signs that are unduly distracting to motorists or that reduce the effectiveness of signs directing and warning the public; and prohibiting signs that are structurally unsafe or poorly maintained.
7. Reinforce and support the desired community character in a manner that takes into consideration building scale and massing, building and sign setbacks, travel speed, and pedestrian presence so that signage contributes to a sense of place.
8. Ensure that the constitutionally guaranteed right of free speech is protected and to allow signs as a means of communication for business identification and other commercial speech, non-commercial speech, and dissemination of public information, including but not limited to public safety information and notification as may be required by law.

(C) Definitions

Diagrams are for illustrative purposes only. When the meaning of any text conflicts with the corresponding diagram, the text shall control.

Word or Phrase	Definition
A	
Abandoned Sign	A sign which for a period of at least ninety (90) consecutive days no longer identifies or advertises a legal, ongoing business establishment, product, location, service, idea, or activity.
Alteration	A change in the size or shape of an existing sign. Copy or color change of an existing sign is not an alteration. Changing or replacing a sign face or panel is not an alteration.
Animated Sign	A sign employing actual motion, the illusion of motion (as through repetitive or sequential light patterns), or light and/or color changes achieved through mechanical, electrical, or electronic means. Animated signs, which are differentiated from changeable signs as defined and regulated by this Ordinance, also include those that are motivated by environmental input such as wind, thermal dynamics, etc.
Architectural Projection	Any projection from a building that is decorative and/or functional and not intended for occupancy, and that extends beyond the building façade, but that does not include signs as defined herein. See also AWNING and CANOPY.
Area Of Sign	See Section 18.1(D) Measurement Standards, "Sign Area".
Awning	An architectural projection or shelter extending from and supported by the exterior wall of a building and composed of a rigid or non-rigid covering on a supporting framework that may be either permanent or retractable.



Word or Phrase	Definition
Awning Sign	A sign displayed on or attached flat against the surface of an awning. An awning that contains a sign as defined in this Ordinance shall comply with the applicable sign area requirements for wall signs.
B	
Balloon Sign	A lighter-than-air gas-filled balloon, tethered in a fixed location, that has a sign on its surface or attached in any manner.
Banner	A temporary, lightweight sign attached or imprinted on a flexible surface that deforms under light pressure and is typically constructed of non-durable materials, including, but not limited to, cardboard, cloth, and/or plastic.
Billboard	see OFF-PREMISE SIGN.
Building Façade	That portion of any exterior elevation of a building extending vertically from grade to the top of a parapet wall or eaves and horizontally across the entire width (but not depth) of that building elevation.
Building Unit Façade	In a multi-tenant building, the portion of the building façade that pertains to a particular storefront or tenant. The building facade for a building unit shall be measured from the centerline of the party walls defining the building unit.
C	
Candela Per Square Meter (CD/M2)	The SI (metric) unit used to describe the luminance of a light source or of an illuminated surface that reflects light. Also referred to as Nits.
Canopy	A freestanding or attached permanent overhead shelter not enclosed by walls.
Canopy Sign	A permanent sign affixed in an essentially flat plane to a canopy or visible underneath a canopy. The area of canopy signs shall be counted toward the total permitted area for wall signs.
Changeable Copy Sign	A sign or portion thereof on which the copy or symbols change either automatically through electrical or electronic means (for example, time and temperature units), or manually through placement of letters or symbols on a panel mounted in or on a track system.
Commemorative Sign	Any sign erected in remembrance of a person or event or which recognizes the historical status of a building. Examples include cornerstones, historical markers, memorial plaques or tablets, etc.
Conforming Sign	A sign that is legally installed in conformance with all prevailing jurisdictional laws and ordinances.
Construction Sign	A temporary ground or wall sign identifying a construction project and the persons, firms, or businesses that are directly involved in the project.
D	
Directional Sign	A sign designed and erected for the purpose of providing direction and/or orientation for pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

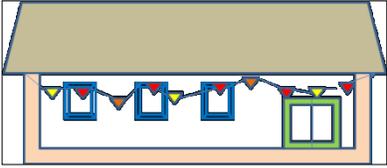


Word or Phrase	Definition
E	
Electronic Message Sign	An electrically activated, changeable, permanent sign whose variable message and/or graphic presentation capability can be electronically programmed by computer from a remote location without having to physically or mechanically replace the sign face. These signs typically use an LED (Light Emitting Diode) light source.
F	
Façade	See BUILDING FAÇADE.
Farm	The land, plants, animals buildings, structures, ponds used for agricultural or aquacultural activities, machinery, equipment, and other appurtenances used in the commercial production, harvesting, and storage of farm products as defined in the Michigan Right to Farm Act, Act 93 of 1981.
Flashing	An effect where sign illumination is characterized by a repetitive cycle of illumination (on) and non-illumination (off). For purposes of this Ordinance, flashing is defined as occurring if the cyclical period between on-off phases of illumination is less than twenty (20) seconds, or if each change is not complete within one (1) second or less.
Footcandle	An English unit of measurement of the amount of light intercepting an object at a given distance from a light source (illuminance). One footcandle is equal to one lumen per square foot. Can be measured by means of an illuminance meter.
Freestanding Sign	A sign which is permanently affixed in or upon the ground, principally supported by one or more foundations, columns, poles, or braces. May also be referenced as a Pole, Ground, or Monument Sign.
G	
Governmental Sign	A sign erected and maintained pursuant to and in discharge of any governmental or utility functions, or as required by law, ordinance, or other governmental regulation. Examples include traffic, utility, safety, railroad crossing, and identification signs for public facilities.
Grade	the elevation of the ground surface.
Ground Sign	See FREESTANDING SIGN.
H	
Height Of Sign	See Section 18.1(D) Measurement Standards, "Sign Height".
Holiday Decorations	Signs or displays that may include lighting and which are a nonpermanent installation celebrating holidays only for the duration of the holiday season.
I	
Illuminated Sign	A sign characterized by the use of artificial light, either projecting through its surface(s) (internally illuminated) or reflecting off its surface(s) (externally illuminated).
Interior Sign	Any sign placed within a building, but not including WINDOW SIGNS as



Word or Phrase	Definition
	defined by this Ordinance.
M	
Mansard	A roof-like façade comparable to an exterior building wall.
Marquee	A permanent roof-like shelter extending from part or all of a building façade and constructed of some durable material.
Marquee Sign	A permanent sign affixed in an essentially flat plane to a marquee or visible underneath a marquee.
Moving Sign	A sign with components that physically move or have the appearance of moving.
Mural	A picture on an exterior surface of a structure. A mural is a sign only if it is related by language or logo to the advertisement of any product or service or the identification of any business. Only the portion of the mural that is a sign is counted toward total permitted sign area.
N	
Neon Sign	A sign with tubing that is internally illuminated by neon or other electrically charged gas.
Nit	A photometric unit of measurement referring to luminance. One nit is equal to one candela per square meter (cd/m ²).
Non-Conforming Sign	A sign that was legally installed by permit in conformance with all applicable laws or ordinances in effect at the time of its installation, but which no longer complies with subsequently enacted laws and ordinances having jurisdiction relative to the sign.
O	
Off-Premise Sign	A sign used to promote an interest other than that of businesses, individuals, goods, services, activities, events, or facilities conducted or maintained on the premises on which the sign is located, or the sale/lease of the premises on which the sign is displayed. (Also called BILLBOARD or COMMERCIAL OUTDOOR ADVERTISING SIGN).
On-Premise Sign	A sign used to promote businesses, individuals, goods, services, activities, events, or facilities conducted or maintained on the premises on which the sign is located, or the sale/lease of the premises on which the sign is displayed.
P	
Parapet	The extension of a building façade above the line of the structural roof.
Pennants	Flexible material suspended from a rope, wire, or string designed to move with the wind. (<i>Figure 1</i>)
	Figure 1



Word or Phrase	Definition
	
Pole Sign	See Freestanding Sign.
Political Sign	A temporary sign intended to advance a political statement, cause, or candidate for office.
Portable Sign	Any moveable sign not permanently attached to the ground or a building and easily removable using ordinary hand tools, including, but not limited to, sandwich board signs, A-frame signs, inverted “T” signs, and signs carried by a person. This does not include temporary, real estate, construction, vehicle, and similar signs defined herein.
Projecting Sign	A sign which projects from and is supported by a wall or parapet of a building with the display surface of the sign in a plane perpendicular to or approximately perpendicular to the wall.
R	
Real Estate Sign	A temporary sign advertising the sale, rental, or lease of the property or premises upon which it is located.
Revolving/Rotating Sign	See animated sign.
Roof Sign	A sign mounted on, above, or over the main roof portion of a building or on the uppermost edge of a parapet wall of a building, and which is wholly or partially supported by such building. Signs mounted on mansard facades, pent eaves, and architectural projections such as canopies or marquees shall not be considered to be roof signs, being fascia signs on roof-like projections.
S	
Shopping Center	A multi-tenant commercial structure which is constructed and managed as a unified entity with shared parking areas.
Sign	Any device visible from a public place whose essential purpose and design is to convey either commercial or noncommercial messages by means of graphic presentation of alphabetic or pictorial symbols or representations. Noncommercial flags or any other flags displayed from flagpoles or staffs will not be considered to be signs.
Sign Face	The surface upon, against, or through which the sign copy is displayed or illustrated, not including structural supports, architectural features of a building or sign structure, nonstructural thematic or decorative trim, or any areas that are separated from the background surface upon which the sign copy is displayed by a distinct delineation, such as a reveal or border.
Special Event Sign	A temporary sign pertaining to any civic, patriotic, or special event of general public interest.
T	



Word or Phrase	Definition
Temporary Sign	Any sign intended to display messages of a transitory or temporary nature, and which is not permanently embedded in the ground or affixed to a building or structure.
Travel Lane	As used in the measurement of sign setback, the boundary indicated by the marked pavement edge (white line).
V	
Vehicle Sign	Any sign permanently or temporarily attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer.
W	
Wall Sign	A sign affixed to an exterior wall of a building or structure and that projects not more than twelve (12) inches from the building or structure wall. Also includes signs affixed to architectural projections provided the copy area of such signs remains on a parallel plane to the face of the building façade or to the face(s) of the architectural projection to which it is affixed.
Window Sign	A sign affixed to the interior or exterior surface of a window with its message intended to be visible to the exterior environment. This includes a one-way vision decal which is a graphic affixed to either the interior or exterior of a window and which allows visibility either into or out of the window. A one-way vision decal is a sign only if it is related by language or logo to the advertisement of any product or service or the identification of any business. Only the portion of the window decal that is a sign is counted toward total permitted sign area.

(D) Measurement Standards

1. Sign Area

- a. For a wall sign which is framed or outlined to provide a background for a sign display, the area shall include the entire portion within such background or frame.
- b. For a wall sign composed of individual letters, figures, or elements mounted on a wall or similar surface, the area shall be the area of the smallest geometric figure, or the sum of the combination of regular geometric figures, which form or approximate the perimeter of all sign elements in the display. See Section 18.1(D)3 below for shape measurement instructions. The area of a sphere shall be computed as the area of a circle. The Zoning Administrator may exclude minor appendages to a regular shape from the calculations.
- c. For a freestanding sign, the sign area shall include the frame, if any, but shall not include the pole or other structural support unless such pole or structural support is internally illuminated or otherwise so designed to constitute a display device.



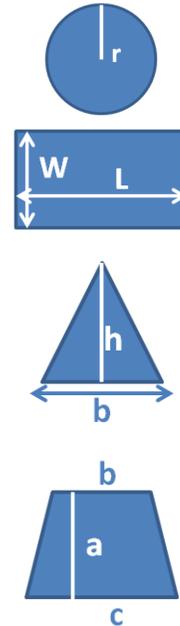
- d. When two (2) identical sign faces are placed back to back so that both faces cannot be viewed from any point at the same time, and are part of the same sign structure, the sign area shall be computed as the measurement of one (1) of the two (2) faces. The area of all other multiple-sided signs shall be computed as fifty (50) percent of the sum of the area of all faces of the sign.

2. Sign Height

- a. For a freestanding sign, height is measured from the base of the sign or supportive structure at its point of attachment to the ground to the highest point of the sign.
- b. A freestanding sign on an earth mound or other base that has the effect of raising the grade shall be measured from the grade of the nearest paved road.
- c. Where a freestanding sign is mounted along a road that has a higher grade level as compared to the grade level directly below the freestanding sign, then height shall be measured from the road grade to the highest point of the sign.

3. Shapes

- a. The area of a circle is found by multiplying the square of the radius (r) by 3.1416. Radius is the distance from the center to the outer edge.
- b. The area of a square, rectangle, or parallelogram (four sided figures with two pair of parallel sides) is found by multiplying the length (L) by the width (W).
- c. The area of a triangle (three sided figure) is found by multiplying one-half of the base (b) times the height (h).
- d. The area of a trapezoid (four sided figure with only one pair of parallel sides) is found by multiplying the altitude (a) by the sum of its bases (b+c) and taking one-half of that product.
 $A = \frac{1}{2} a(b+c)$



4. Shapes

- a. The area of a circle is found by multiplying the square of the radius (r) by 3.1416. Radius is the distance from the center to the outer edge.



- b. The area of a square, rectangle, or parallelogram (four sided figures with two pair of parallel sides) is found by multiplying the length (L) by the width (W).
- c. The area of a triangle (three sided figure) is found by multiplying one-half of the base (b) times the height (h).
- d. The area of a trapezoid (four sided figure with only one pair of parallel sides) is found by multiplying the altitude (a) by the sum of its bases (b+c) and taking one-half of that product.

$$A = \frac{1}{2} a(b+c)$$

5. Illuminance

- a. Footcandle measurements are taken with a footcandle meter accurate to two decimal points for accuracy.
- b. Measurements are ideally taken at a distance of 100 feet perpendicular to the display for a sign of 100 square feet. If the sign size is other than 100 square feet, the measured reading needs to be prorated to what an otherwise identical sign of 100 square feet area would produce. Prorating is based on this formula:

$$\text{Prorated footcandles} = \text{Measured footcandles above ambient} \times \frac{100}{\text{sign area (sq ft)}}$$

- c. Footcandle measurements are taken first with the sign displaying all white (maximum brightness) and then taken again with the sign switched off. The difference between these measurements (measured footcandles above ambient) is then compared with, and should not exceed, the illuminance limit of this Ordinance (0.3 footcandles).
- d. To determine the maximum sign average luminance allowed (L) to meet a given illuminance limit at the viewer's eye (Ev) use the following formula, where L = Allowable maximum sign luminance, D = Distance from sign center to observation point in feet, Ev = illuminance limit in footcandles, S = Sign area in square feet:

$$L \text{ (cd/sq m or nits)} = 10.76D^2Ev \div S$$

(E) Signs Exempt from Permitting

The following signs shall not require permits for erection, subject to the restrictions herein contained. See Section 18.1(C) Definitions for clarification.

- 1. Governmental Signs



Includes, but is not limited to off-premise wayfinding signs on public trails, provided that such trail signs are made of materials and erected per the requirements of the appropriate public entity; and provided that such trail signs shall only be located at designated turnoffs and on the public trail right-of-way. No such trail sign shall exceed an area of sixteen (16) square feet.

2. Commemorative Signs

Provided that no such sign shall exceed an area of six (6) square feet.

3. Security and Warning Signs

Provided that no such sign shall exceed an area of six (6) square feet, and there shall be a minimum of one-hundred (100) feet between signs on the same road frontage. These limitations shall not apply to the minimal requirements for the posting of conventional “no trespassing” signs in accordance with state law, such as the Recreational Trespass Act, part 731 of Act 451 of 1994, MCL 324.73102.

4. Interior Signs

Signs inside a building, including signs affixed to interior windows, such as decals and/or logos, provided that the combined area of such signs shall not exceed twenty-five (25) percent of the individual window area. Includes neon window signs which are not animated.

5. Church or School Manual Changeable Copy Signs

Does not include electronic changeable copy signs that require a permit) Each church or school shall be permitted one (1) changeable copy sign provided that no such sign shall exceed an area of thirty-two (32) square feet and a height of eight (8) feet.

6. Residential Name/ Address Sign

Does not include signs with commercial messages except on signs in the AF district.

a. Unlimited numbers of permanent freestanding or wall signs provided the total combined area of such signs on the lot shall not exceed eight (8) square feet.

b. No such sign shall exceed a height of twelve (12) feet.

7. On-Site Signs



Signs which are not legible from a public road, provided that no such sign shall exceed an area of six (6) square feet. This also includes signs indicating reserved parking for handicapped individuals.

8. Vehicle Signs

Sign located on the rolling stock of common carriers or on licensed motor vehicles or trailers which are primarily and actively used for business purposes and/or personal transportation.

9. Public Art

Including sculpture; original art murals; and painted, carved, and/or applied building accents and decorations (including those on awnings, canopies, or other appurtenances) that are not signs related by language or logo to the advertisement of any product or service or the identification of any business. This does not include window graphics (see *Section 18.1(C) Definitions for Window Sign*).

10. Flags

Flags other than those representing corporate or commercial entities are permitted in all residential districts provided the support structures comply with the setback and height provisions of that zoning district.

11. Holiday Decorations

(F) Prohibited Signs

The following signs are prohibited:

1. Animated signs, including but not limited to flashing signs, moving signs, pennants, revolving or rotating signs, streamers, and twirling signs.
2. Signs containing phosphorescence, luminescence, mirrors, strobe lights, search lights, or other high intensity light fixtures.
3. Any sign which simulates or imitates any official traffic lights, signs, or signals, or signs that interfere with the effectiveness of any official traffic light, sign, or signal.
4. Any sign which obstructs the view of authorized traffic signs or signals for pedestrians and motorists; or which obstructs the clear-vision triangle as defined by the road authority at any road intersection; or which prevents the driver of a motor vehicle from having a clear and unobstructed view of approaching, intersecting, or merging traffic; or which extends into the public right-of-way without authorization of the road authority.



5. Signs which prevent unhindered ingress or egress from any door, window, fire escape, or that prevent unhindered access from one part of a roof to any other part.
 6. Signs visible from the public road which are affixed to trees or other natural vegetation, utility poles, fences, fence posts, benches, perimeter walls, outbuildings, or any other buildings or structures except as otherwise permitted in this Ordinance. Does not include conventional "No Trespassing", "No Hunting", "Beware of Animal", other signs warning of danger, or other legal postings in accordance with state law.
 7. Signs affixed to a motor vehicle, trailer, or other wheeled device parked with the primary purpose of display.
 8. Banners, portable signs, balloon signs, or other gas-filled figures except as provided elsewhere in this Ordinance, such as Section 18.1(G), Temporary Signs.
 9. Roof signs as defined by this Ordinance.
 10. Any sign that exceeds a height of thirty (30) feet.
 11. Signs which emit any odor, noise, smoke, or visible matter other than light. Open flames used to attract public attention to a business or sign shall not be permitted.
 12. Off-premise signs are prohibited with the following exceptions:
 - a. New off-premise signs falling under the exemption for service clubs and religious organizations as permitted by the *Highway Advertising Act of 1972, being Act 106 of 1972, as amended*; and
 - b. Those off-premise signs lawfully erected and maintained under the *Highway Advertising Act of 1972* at the time of the adoption of this provision on 3/18/13; and
 - c. Off-premise signs as otherwise permitted by this Ordinance.
 13. Abandoned signs as defined in this Ordinance.
 14. Any sign or sign type not expressly permitted.
- (G) Temporary Signs**

Temporary signs do not require a permit unless they are mounted longer than ninety (90) days, provided they meet the standards of this subsection. Signs that do not meet the standards of this subsection are subject to the standards for permanent signs. Signs that meet the standards of this subsection are not counted in the total area calculations for signage allowed on any particular premises or building.



Table 1: Temporary Signs

Use	Types of Signs Allowed	Number of Signs Allowed	Permitted Sign Area	Maximum Height
All Districts				
Temporary political signs (no earlier than 90 days before election to 10 days following election)	Freestanding	Unlimited	4 SF each, or up to 32 SF each if at least 30 FT from white line or curb	-----
Temporary real estate signs (under construction)	Freestanding or Wall	One per vested party up to 3. Total of one for 4 or more vested parties.	Three individual signs max 6 SF each, or one shared sign max 32 SF.	10 FT
Temporary portable (remove during non-business hours or when activity is closed)	Freestanding	One per lot at any one time	12 SF each	-----
Temporary off-premise directional (display for 72 hours - remove within 24 hours after event)	Freestanding	Unlimited	3 SF each	3 FT
R-1, R-2, MFR, and WFR Districts				
Temporary real estate signs (subdivision and multi-unit properties - display only 3 years)	Freestanding	One per public road frontage.	50 SF when fronting state hwy; 32 SF when fronting other roads.	12 FT when fronting state hwy; 8 FT when fronting other roads
	Freestanding Directional	Unlimited	6 SF each	6 FT
Temporary real estate signs (property for sale - removed within 7 days after sale or lease)	Freestanding	One per 300 FT road frontage; plus one per each additional 200 FT frontage	9 SF each	-----
AF District				
Temporary roadside stand or self-pick farm (display seasonally within 1.5 mile)	Freestanding	Up to 2	12 SF each	-----
Temporary real estate signs (property for sale - removed within 7 days after sale or lease)	Freestanding	One per 300 FT road frontage; plus one per each additional 200 FT frontage	16 SF for lots which are less than 20 acres; 32 SF for lots which are 20 acres or more.	-----



Use	Types of Signs Allowed	Number of Signs Allowed	Permitted Sign Area	Maximum Height
C and I Districts				
Temporary real estate signs (property for sale - removed within 7 days after sale or lease)	Freestanding	One per 300 FT road frontage; plus one per each additional 200 FT frontage	32 SF each	-----
C, I and MP Districts				
Temporary banners (display no longer than 90 days)	Wall	Unlimited	Total combined not to exceed 20% of area of any one building façade or building unit facade; and not to exceed 80 SF per lot	-----

1. All temporary signs shall be located on-premises except as otherwise indicated below, and shall not be illuminated.
2. Temporary signs shall not be located in the public right-of-way, except as otherwise indicated below.
3. Political Signs
 - a. Temporary off-premise political signs located in the public right-of-way shall be placed more than thirty (30) feet from the edge of the roadway (or from the white line along the edge) on highways without barrier-type curbs, and shall be placed more than three (3) feet from the back of the curb on highways with barrier curbs, or in accordance with applicable State law.
 - b. No political sign shall exceed an area of four (4) square feet. Area may be increased to up to thirty two (32) square feet provided that the sign is located at least thirty (30) feet from the edge of the roadway (white line along the edge) or curb. All political signs shall be allowed no earlier than ninety (90) days prior to any election and shall be removed within ten (10) days following the election.
4. Temporary Real Estate Signs
 - a. For each site under construction, each vested party involved with the development, such as but not limited to contractors, professional design firms, and lending institutions, shall be permitted one (1) construction identification sign, provided no such sign shall exceed an area of six (6) square feet, and provided there are no more than three (3) such signs located



on one (1) site. If the number of vested parties exceeds three (3), all vested parties may share one (1) construction identification sign not to exceed an area of thirty two (32) square feet. Such signs shall not exceed a height of ten (10) feet, and shall be removed within fourteen (14) days after the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

- b. Within the R-1, R-2, MFR, and WFR districts, one temporary development sign for subdivisions or other multi-unit properties is permitted for each public road frontage for a period not to exceed three (3) years. Such sign shall not exceed an area of fifty (50) square feet or a height of twelve (12) feet for properties fronting a state highway; or an area of thirty-two (32) square feet or a height of eight (8) feet for properties fronting all other roads. The specifications for placement, area, number, and height of such signs shall be specified on the Zoning Compliance Permit application for that development. Such signs shall be removed upon sale of eighty (80) percent of all lots or units within the development or after three (3) years, whichever comes sooner. These developments are also permitted temporary signs directing the public to specific units, and no such sign shall exceed an area of six (6) square feet or a height of six (6) feet.
- c. Only one (1) temporary real estate sign shall be permitted per road frontage for each individual parcel, provided, however, if the parcel contains over three-hundred (300) feet of road frontage, one (1) additional sign shall be permitted for each additional two-hundred (200) feet of road frontage. Such signs shall be placed in accordance with state law or appropriate road agency rules.
- d. Within the R-1, R-2, MFR, and WFR districts, temporary real estate signs shall not exceed an area of nine (9) square feet except as otherwise provided herein. Real estate signs in Commercial or Industrial districts shall not exceed an area of thirty-two (32) square feet. In the AF District, for lots which are less than twenty (20) acres, the area of such signs shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet. In the AF district, for lots which are twenty (20) acres or more, the area of such signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet. Signs shall be removed within seven (7) days after the property has been sold, rented, or leased.



5. Temporary Banners

- a. In R-1, R-2, MFR, WFR and AF districts, temporary banners are not permitted on sites with residences, except those for holidays, religious commemoration, and special events.
- b. In C, I, and MP districts, the following standards apply:
 - 1) The total combined area of all temporary banners shall not exceed twenty (20) percent of the area of any one building façade or building unit facade.
 - 2) In no case shall the total combined area of all temporary banners exceed eighty (80) square feet per lot.
 - 3) A temporary banner may be displayed no longer than ninety (90) days, and shall be maintained in a neat, attractive, and safe condition.

6. Temporary Directional Signs

Temporary off-premise directional signs not exceeding an area of three (3) square feet or a height of three (3) feet shall be permitted on approach routes to private residential activities or events for a period not to exceed seventy-two (72) hours, provided they are placed in conformance with the requirements of the appropriate road authority. Such signs shall be removed within twenty-four (24) hours of the conclusion of the activity or event.

7. Temporary Portable Signs

- a. For permitted uses in the C & I districts, and for conditional uses in all districts, not to exceed one such sign per lot at any one time, and no such sign shall exceed an area of twelve (12) square feet.
- b. Portable signs must be sturdy, stable, and heavy enough to withstand typical winds without flipping over or sliding.
- c. Portable sign surfaces must be durable and weather resistant and shall not be made of loose or non-rigid materials.
- d. Portable sidewalk signs shall be placed directly next to the applicable business, and shall be a minimum of two (2) feet away from a curb or edge of road or parking lot, and a minimum of twenty-five (25) feet from an intersection. The sign must allow a minimum of five (5) feet of unobstructed walkway, and shall not be placed in a designated driveway or parking space.



- e. Portable signs shall be removed from the public space during non-business hours or hours during which an event is closed. Temporary portable signs that cannot be thus removed are not permitted.

(H) Signs Permitted By District

1. signs permitted in agricultural forestry (AF) district
 - a. Electronic Message signs are prohibited in these districts.
 - b. Farms are permitted up to two (2) freestanding or wall signs not to exceed a total combined area of forty-four (44) square feet, provided that no such sign shall exceed an area of thirty-two (32) square feet.
 - c. Up to two (2) additional temporary freestanding or wall signs, provided no such sign shall exceed an area of twelve (12) square feet. Each may be placed on land owned by, or under the control of, the operator of a roadside stand, or a farm offering customer harvesting of crops, during the season the roadside stand or self-pick operation is open for business. These signs shall be located within a one and one-half (1.5) mile radius of the roadside stand or farm advertised.
 - d. Conditional Uses are permitted any number of freestanding or wall signs not to exceed a total combined area of sixty (60) square feet, and not to exceed a height of 12 feet.

Table 2: Permanent Signs by District

Use	Types of Signs Allowed	Number of Signs Allowed	Permitted Sign Area	Maximum Height
R-1, R-2, MFR and WFR Districts				
Residential subdivision or mobile home park	Freestanding	One per vehicle entrance	20 SF each	8 FT
	Freestanding Directional	Unlimited	6 SF each	8 FT
Multi-family housing structure or other conditional use	Wall	Unlimited	Total combined 5% of building façade, no sign to exceed 32 SF	-----
Golf course signs	Freestanding	One per vehicle entrance	60 SF each	-----
AF District				
Permitted residential	see above standards for R-1, R-2, MRF, and WFR districts			
Permitted conditional use	Freestanding or Wall	Unlimited	Total combined 60 SF	12 FT



Farms	Freestanding or Wall	Up to 2	32 SF each; or total combined 44 SF	-----
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2. Signs permitted in the single-family residential (R-1), high density residential (R-2), waterfront residential (WFR), and multifamily residential (MFR) Districts
 - a. Electronic Message signs and signs with commercial messages are prohibited in these districts.
 - b. One (1) permanent freestanding sign identifying a subdivision or mobile home park shall be permitted per vehicle entrance, provided no such sign shall exceed an area of twenty (20) square feet, and no such sign shall exceed a height of eight (8) feet. Additional internal directional signs shall be permitted provided that no such sign shall exceed an area of six (6) square feet and a height of eight (8) feet.
 - c. Each multi-family housing structure and conditional use is permitted any number of wall signs not to exceed a total combined area of five (5) percent of the building façade, provided that no such sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.
 - d. One (1) on-premise freestanding sign identifying a golf course shall be permitted per vehicle entrance, provided no such sign shall exceed an area of sixty (60) square feet.
 - e. Internally illuminated signs shall not be permitted in these districts.
3. Signs permitted in Commercial (c) and Industrial (i) Districts
 - a. All signs permitted in a Residential district that relate to a permitted residential use in the C or I districts are permitted.
 - b. Freestanding Signs
 - 1) One (1) freestanding sign shall be permitted per road frontage for each parcel provided, however, if the parcel contains over three-hundred (300) feet of road frontage, one (1) additional sign shall be permitted for each additional three-hundred (300) feet of road frontage.
 - 2) One (1) additional freestanding sign shall be permitted for each vehicular entrance to a shopping center or planned industrial park. Permitted area for such signs shall be sixty (60) percent of the amount permitted by Table 3.
 - 3) Two (2) additional freestanding signs for menu/price boards shall be permitted for businesses with drive-through service, provided no such sign shall exceed an area of forty (40) square feet.



- 4) One (1) additional directional sign shall be permitted per legal driveway, provided no such sign shall exceed an area of four (4) square feet.
- 5) Freestanding signs shall not exceed a height of thirty (30) feet. Ground (monument) signs shall not exceed a height of sixteen (16) feet.

Unless otherwise indicated by specific reference, the area of any freestanding sign shall not exceed the amounts specified in **Table 3**, based on the speed limit of the roadway fronting the parcel.

Table 3: Freestanding signs in Commercial and Industrial Districts

Speed Limit	Freestanding Sign Area less than or = 40' setback from travel lane	Additional Sign Area greater than 40' setback from travel lane
35 mph or less	50 sq ft	5% for each additional 20' setback to a maximum of 40% additional
40 or 45 mph	120 sq ft	10% for each additional 20' setback to a maximum of 40% additional
50 or 55 mph	150 sq ft	15% for each additional 20' setback to a maximum of 40% additional

c. Wall Signs

- 1) The total area of all wall signs applied to any given façade (or unit façade/storefront) shall not exceed the area computed as a percentage of the area of the building facade or building unit façade in elevation view, including window and door areas and cornices to which they are affixed or applied as detailed in *Table 4*. See Section 18.1(C) Definitions for measurement of “Building Façade” and “Building Unit Façade”.
- 2) In the case of shopping center or a group of businesses located on a lot held in single and separate ownership, the provisions of this section relating to the total area of wall signs permitted on a facade shall apply with respect to each building, each use, or to each separate building unit or storefront. Such separate businesses or uses or storefronts shall be permitted wall signs only, and shall not be permitted individual and separate freestanding signs. Freestanding signs for the shopping center or group of businesses shall be allocated according to Section 18.1(H)3.b above.

Unless otherwise indicated by specific reference, the area of all wall signs on a building façade or building unit façade shall not exceed the percentages specified in *Table 4*, based on the area of building facade or building unit facade and distance of the sign from the nearest travel lane or adjacent property. A building with more than one road frontage shall be permitted wall sign area for each façade with road frontage.



Table 4: Wall signs in Commercial and Industrial Districts

Distance of sign from travel lane or adjacent property	Percentage of building facade or building unit facade permitted for sign area
0 to 100 feet	Fifteen (15) percent
101 to 300 feet	Twenty (20) percent
Over 301 feet	Twenty-five (25) percent

- d. Additional signs are permitted for service stations with convenience stores and pump islands as follows:
 - 1) Two (2) signs shall be permitted per canopy face, provided that total combined area of these signs shall not exceed twenty-five (25) percent of the canopy face.
 - 2) Spreader bars (signs located under the canopy over the pump islands) shall be permitted two (2) signs per spreader bar, provided no such sign shall exceed an area of four (4) square feet per sign. Additionally, combined sign area for all spreader bars shall not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet.
 - 3) Two (2) additional wall signs are permitted for a separate building used as an Accessory Car Wash, provided no such sign shall exceed an area of eight (8) square feet.
- e. Externally or internally illuminated signs are permitted.

(I) Regulations Pertaining to Sign Type

- 1. Freestanding signs
 - a. Shall not exceed a height of thirty (30) feet. Freestanding ground (monument) signs shall not exceed a height of sixteen (16) feet.
 - b. For Freestanding signs accommodating multiple panels, all single panels shall be aligned and of similar size and shape to present a unified whole.
- 2. Wall Signs
 - a. All wall mounted signs shall be mounted so that no part of the sign exceeds the height of the façade of the building upon which it is mounted, or exceeds the height of the architectural projection upon which it is mounted.
 - b. No wall sign shall project more than twelve (12) inches from the building or structure wall.



3. Canopy Signs

These provisions apply also to Marquee Signs and signs on other architectural projections which are not mounted parallel to the building facade. The copy area of any such sign shall not exceed an area equal to twenty-five (25) percent of the face area of the canopy, marquee, or architectural projection to which such sign is affixed, or fifteen (15) percent of the building façade to which it is attached, whichever is greater. The area of canopy signs shall be counted toward the total permitted area for wall signs.

4. Projecting Signs

- a. No projecting sign shall extend vertically above the highest architectural point of the façade to which it is mounted (such signs shall not be mounted on roofs).
- b. Projecting signs extending over a sidewalk or walkway shall not exceed a projection distance of two-thirds (2/3) of the width of the sidewalk or walkway with eight (8) feet of head clearance underneath the sign.
- c. Projecting signs shall not exceed an area of one (1) square foot area per every two (2) lineal feet of the building façade or building unit facade length on which such sign is mounted, except that no such sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet. The area of projecting signs shall be counted toward the total permitted area for wall or freestanding signs.

5. Illuminated Signs

- a. Externally illuminated signs shall utilize fully-shielded fixtures that minimize glare and light spill to non-sign areas.
- b. The lighting source shall be positioned so that the source is not directly visible from any usual viewing angle by pedestrians, motorists, or adjacent property owners. Upward-directed sign lighting is prohibited.
- c. The minimum necessary illumination or wattage to achieve readability from the public space shall be utilized. Bright colored lighting is prohibited on signs except as regulated as part of an electronic message sign.

6. Changeable Copy Signs - Manual

Changeable copy by non-electronic means may be utilized on any permitted sign.



7. Changeable Copy Signs – Electronic (Also Called Electronic Message Signs)
 - a. Surface Area: The message display area shall not exceed forty (40) square feet, and shall be included in the calculation for total permitted area for the type of sign upon which the message is displayed.
 - b. The electronic display shall display a static message that does not change more frequently than once every twenty (20) seconds.
 - c. The electronic display shall not blink, flash, fade, rotate, scroll, or vary in illumination intensity, and it shall not contain moving characters or images, or perform actions that convey motion, except when the electronic message or display is changed to another message or display. Each change shall be complete in one (1) second or less.
 - d. All electronic message signs shall be equipped with a default mechanism that will display a static message when a malfunction in electronic programming occurs.
 - e. All electronic signs shall have installed an ambient light monitor, which shall continuously monitor and automatically adjust the brightness level of the display based on ambient light conditions. The maximum illuminance shall not exceed 0.3 foot candles over ambient light levels measured perpendicular to the sign face at a distance of 150 feet for those sign faces less than or equal to 300 square feet, and measured at a distance of 200 feet for those sign faces greater than 300 square feet. Or the illuminance can be determined by the proration method in the measurement standards. The sign owner shall assist with programming the sign for illuminance testing periodically upon written notice.
 - f. Audio speakers shall not be permitted with any electronic messaging sign except a drive-through restaurant menu/price board.

(J) Nonconforming Signs

It is the policy of Chocloy Township to encourage and, to the maximum extent practicable, require that all signs within the Township be brought into compliance with the requirements of this Ordinance.

1. Nonconforming permanent signs may continue to exist after the effective date of this Ordinance, provided that nonconforming signs shall be removed and changed in accordance with the provisions of this Code. The status of a nonconforming sign is not affected by changes in ownership.



2. Once a sign is altered to conform, or is replaced with a conforming sign, the nonconforming rights for that sign are lost and a nonconforming sign shall not be re-established.
3. Permanent signs and sign structures that are moved, removed, replaced, or structurally altered must be brought into conformance with this Ordinance, with the exception of nonconforming signs required to be moved because of public right-of-way improvements, which may be re-established. The replacement of removable faces or sign panel inserts does not constitute a structural alteration nor trigger loss of nonconforming status. Repair and maintenance of nonconforming signs, such as repainting or electrical repair, does not constitute a structural alteration nor trigger loss of nonconforming status. A non-conforming sign may be removed temporarily to perform sign maintenance or repair.
4. Nonconforming signs shall be removed or brought into conformance upon verification that the use to which such non-conforming sign refers has been abandoned for more than ninety (90) consecutive days (does not apply to seasonal businesses).
5. An extension may be approved for the time limit imposed in Section 18.1(J)4 above as approved by the Zoning Board of Appeals based on the following factors:
 - a. Value of the sign and length of time in place (amount of depreciation claimed)
 - b. Length of current lease or expected occupancy
 - c. Degree of non-compliance
 - d. Historic/landmark status of the sign

(K) Abandoned Signs

1. Abandoned Signs shall be removed in accordance with their conforming status. Nonconforming signs shall be removed within ninety (90) days of being determined to be abandoned. Conforming signs shall be removed within one (1) year of being determined to be abandoned.
2. An abandoned sign and/or sign structure may be removed by Chocolate Township at the expense of the property owner, and may be removed only at grade if such sign is not located in a public right-of-way.

(L) Maintenance of Signs

1. All signs and sign components (including supports, braces, anchors, electrical components, etc) shall be kept in a good state of repair, in compliance with all applicable building and electrical codes, and in conformance with the requirements of this Ordinance. Any sign which is determined by the Zoning Administrator to be unsecured, in danger of falling, and/or a hazard to safety or



public welfare by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation, obsolescence, disaster, damage, or inability to meet lateral and/or vertical loads shall be immediately abated by repair, rehabilitation, demolition, or removal. Such sign and/or sign structure may be removed by Chocolay Township at the expense of the property owner, and may be removed only at grade if such sign is not located in a public right-of-way.

2. Any electronic message sign shall be maintained so as to display messages in a complete and legible manner.

(M) Administration & Enforcement

It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, relocate, or structurally alter or repair any sign or other advertising structure within Chocolay Township as defined in this Ordinance without first obtaining a Zoning Compliance Permit. (See Section 18.1(J) and 18.1(L) for maintenance exceptions which do not require a Zoning Compliance Permit.)

1. Permitting

- a. Application for a permit to erect or replace or alter a sign shall be made by the owner of the property, or their authorized agent, to the Township Zoning Administrator, by submitting the required forms, fees, exhibits and information. Fees for sign permits for all signs erected pursuant to this Ordinance shall be established by the Township Board.
- b. An application for a sign permit shall contain the following:
 - 1) The applicants name and address in full, and a complete description of their relationship to the property owner.
 - 2) If the applicant is other than the property owner, the signature of the property owner concurring in submittal of said application is required.
 - 3) The address and parcel identification number of the property.
 - 4) An accurate scale drawing of the property showing the location of all buildings and structures and their uses, and location and height of all existing and proposed signs.
 - 5) If applicable, area of all building facades or building unit facades.
 - 6) A complete description and scale drawings of all existing and proposed signs, including dimensions of sign elements and sign area in square feet.
- c. A sign permit shall become null and void if the work for which the permit was issued has not been completed with a period of six (6) months after the date of the permit. Said sign permit may be extended for a period of thirty (30) days upon request by the applicant and approval of the Zoning Administrator.

