

## **Section 9.3 General Standards and Regulations**

### **A. Compliance, Permits and Review**

1. Compliance Required: No sign shall be erected, used or maintained unless in compliance with the regulations of this Article and this Ordinance.
2. Required Permit/Review: All signs require a zoning permit prior to placement, use, erection, replacement or alteration unless exempted by subsection (4) below. All signs shall require a building permit as may be required by the Michigan Building Code.
  - a. A sign application for a use subject to site plan review according to Article 14 shall be acted upon as provided by Article 14, either as part of the site plan review procedure for the entire project or as part of a proposed revision to a previously approved site plan.
  - b. A sign application for a use that is not subject to site plan review according to Article 14 shall be acted upon by the Zoning Administrator.
3. Application Information: An application for a zoning permit for a sign shall include the following minimum information regarding such sign, in addition to the information required by Article 14:
  - a. The location and placement of the proposed sign on the lot and/or building façade including proposed setbacks from lot lines, easements and driveways.
  - b. A fully dimensioned scale drawing of the plans, specifications and method of construction and/or attachment. Drawings shall include the sign area and height and the sign's colors and construction materials. In the case of a wall sign, the dimensions of the wall on which the sign is to be attached shall be provided.
  - c. Written consent of the owner of the lot, building, and/or structure, if other than the applicant.
  - d. Any other information the approving body may require to establish conformance with the Ordinance.
4. Signs Exempt from Permit/Review: The following signs are exempt from the provisions of subsection (2) above but shall conform to all other regulations and standards of this Article including sign area, height and setback standards.
  - a. Signs required by a public agency having jurisdiction over a road right-of-way.
  - b. Official notices issued by a public agency, court, or government official.
  - c. Signs painted on operating, licensed commercial motorized vehicles.
  - d. Ordinary maintenance, servicing, repainting, cleaning, altering, or changing the information of an existing sign, provided the size, location and/or structure are not changed.
  - e. Indoor signs affixed to or covering windows.
  - f. Signs authorized under Section 9.6 and 9.7.
  - g. Signs less than six (6) sq. ft. in area not otherwise listed above.

### **B. Construction, Maintenance and Abandonment**

1. Building Code: All signs shall be constructed and maintained in a manner consistent with building code provisions and maintained in good structural condition and repair at all times, free of hazards to the general public. Signs shall not be constructed from materials that are remnants or manufactured for a different purpose. No sign shall be erected prior to the receipt of all building permits as may be necessary under the Michigan Construction Code.
2. Integrally Designed: A sign shall be integrally designed so that its elements are of a unified character and are not comprised of an assemblage of different sign types and materials. No support shall be used accommodate multiple signs intended to serve the same business, tenant or occupant of a lot.
3. Width/Length Ratio: No free-standing sign shall have a dimension that exceeds five times that of its opposite dimension, such as in the case of a sign's width and length.
4. Maintenance: All signs shall be kept neatly painted, stained, sealed or preserved at all times including all metal parts and supports. Signs shall be maintained free of peeling material, fading, rust, rot, insect infestation or other conditions reflective of a state of disrepair.
4. Abandonment: No message or information shall be displayed on a sign for more than one hundred eighty (180) days after such message or information is obsolete or otherwise no longer applicable.

### **C. Lighting:**

1. Authorized Lighting: Signs may be illuminated unless specified otherwise, and may be internally or externally illuminated unless specified otherwise. Lighting shall comply with the National Electrical Code.
2. Moving Illumination: No sign shall include flashing, blinking, moving or variable intensity illumination except as authorized in subsection (5) below in association with an EMC sign.
3. Exterior Illumination: The source of exterior sign illumination shall be shielded from public road right-of-ways and adjacent properties, and shall not be visible beyond the property line of the lot on which the sign is located. All externally lit signs shall be illuminated by lights affixed to the sign and directed downward on the sign face only. This subsection (3) shall not apply to neon lights, and exposed bulbs not exceeding fifteen (15) watts, provided such signs shall not exceed four (4) sq. ft. in area.
4. Interior Illumination: The source of interior sign illumination shall be shielded from public road right-of-ways and adjacent properties, and shall not be visible beyond the property line of the lot on which the sign is located.
5. EMC Signs:
  - a. An image on an EMC sign, and any portion of an image on an EMC sign, shall stay constant for a minimum of thirty (30) seconds, without any change in movement, light intensity or color. Message scrolling and similar moving messages are prohibited.
  - b. Any change or transition in display on an EMC sign shall not exceed one (1) second in duration.
  - c. An EMC sign shall have no message changes during hours that the business or use is not open or otherwise available to the public.
  - d. An EMC sign shall be equipped with automatic dimming technology that automatically adjusts the sign's brightness in direct correlation with ambient light conditions. No EMC sign shall

exceed a brightness level of 0.3 foot candles above ambient light as measured using a foot candle meter at a distance determined by the square root of the sign's square foot area multiplied by 100. An example of such a determination in the case of a 12 sq. ft. sign is:

$$\sqrt{(12 \times 100)} = 34.6 \text{ feet measuring distance}$$

#### **D. Measurements**

1. **Sign Area:** The area of a sign shall be computed by calculating the square footage of a sign face as measured by enclosing the most protruding points or edges of all sign faces of the sign within a parallelogram, rectangle, triangle, or circle, or combination thereof, including any framing.
  - a. Where a sign has two (2) or more similarly shaped faces placed back-to-back, parallel to one another and less than eighteen (18) inches apart from one another, the area of the sign shall be the area of one (1) face.
  - b. Where a sign has two (2) faces placed back-to-back, parallel to one another and less than eighteen (18) inches apart from one another, but the signs are of differing sizes, the sign area shall be that of the larger sign.
  - c. In the case of a sign with three or more faces, the area of the sign shall be the area of all faces combined. Sign faces separated by more than eighteen inches (18") shall be considered to have three (3) or more faces.
2. **Sign Setbacks:** Sign setbacks shall be measured from the lot line horizontally to the nearest edge of the sign. The "nearest edge of the sign" shall be the leading edge of the sign closest to such lot line as viewed from above in plan or bird's eye view.
3. **Sign Height:** The height of a sign shall be measured from the highest point of the sign, including all frame and structural members of the sign, to the average ground elevation within ten (10) feet of the sign base. The height of a sign placed upon a berm shall be measured from the base elevation of the berm.

#### **E. Prohibited Signs.** The following signs are prohibited:

1. **Traffic Interference Signs:**
  - a. Signs which, due to location, design, color, or lighting, encourage confusion among drivers due to unauthorized traffic signs, signals or devices, or signs that make use of the words "stop", "look", "danger" or any word, phrase, symbol or character in such manner as to interfere with, mislead or confuse drivers or pedestrians.
  - b. Signs that obstruct free and clear vision of approaching, intersecting or merging traffic.
2. **Moving and Flashing Signs:** Signs that have flashing lights, visible moving parts, visible revolving parts or visible mechanical movement of any type, or other apparent visible movement irrespective of the cause of the movement including running copy signs.
  - a. Banners, pennants, festoons, spinners and streamers, and similar devices, which move due to wind or mechanical devices and which are intended to draw attention to a location are considered moving signs and are prohibited except as otherwise expressly authorized in association with a temporary sign according to Sec. 9.6.
  - b. This subsection (2) shall not be construed to prohibit EMC signs or signs that rely on light-emitting diodes (LEDs) provided such signs are in compliance with Sec. 9.3(C).
  - c. Signs that obstruct ingress or egress from a door, window or emergency exit.

3. Projecting Signs and Roof Signs: Projecting signs as defined herein and signs affixed to a roof and other signs that extend in height above the roof behind such sign.
4. Vehicle Signs: Signs greater than thirty (30) sq. ft. when located on parked vehicles within forty (40) feet of a public right-of-way, where the primary use of the vehicle is the display of such sign. This restriction shall not apply to parked vehicles during the period of their loading and/or unloading.
5. Banners: Signs comprised of banners except as otherwise expressly authorized in association with a temporary sign according to Sec. 9.6.
6. Sexual Content: Signs that have any words, lettering, photographs, silhouettes, drawings, or pictorial representations of a sexually explicit character including any sign elements portraying "specified anatomical areas" or "specified sexual activities" as defined in Article 18 under "Sexually Oriented Businesses."
7. Signs No Longer Applicable: Signs that advertise an activity, business, product, or service no longer conducted or available on the premises on which the sign is located.
8. Right-of-Way Signs: Signs placed in, upon, or over any public right-of-way, alley, or other public place, except upon approval of the governmental entity having jurisdiction over such right-of-way, alley, or other public place.
9. Obstruction of Access Way: Any sign that obstructs ingress or egress from any required door, window, fire or other required or access necessary way.
10. Other Signs:
  - a. Signs that are painted on or attached to any fence or any wall that is not a structural part of a building except in the case of a temporary sign authorized pursuant to Section 9.7.
  - b. Signs that emit audible sound, odor, or visible matter.
  - c. Any sign or sign structure which constitutes a hazard to public health or safety due to inadequate maintenance.
  - d. Any sign not expressly authorized by this Ordinance or otherwise unlawfully installed, erected or maintained.
11. Billboards: Billboards are prohibited.

**F. Window Signs:** No sign affixed to or covering a window which is intended to be viewed from the outside shall exceed one-quarter (25%) of the total window area except in the case of the advertising of the grand opening of a business according to Section 9.6. Window signage in excess of a total of sixteen (16) sq. ft. shall be applied to the calculation of total wall sign area.