

Article 7.17 Signs

7.17.01 Intent

The purpose of this article is to regulate signs, to minimize outdoor advertising, and to protect public safety, health and welfare; minimize abundance and size of signs to reduce visual clutter, motorist distraction, and loss of visibility; promote public convenience; preserve property values; and enhance the aesthetic appearance and quality of life within the City. The requirements contained herein are intended to be content neutral. The following objectives are accomplished by establishing the minimum amount of regulations necessary concerning the size, placement, construction, illumination, and other aspects of signs in the City in order to:

- a) Protect the public right to receive messages, including religious, political, economic, social, philosophical and other types of information protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.
- b) Maintain and improve the image of the City by encouraging signs of consistent size which are compatible with and complementary to related buildings and uses, and harmonious with their surroundings.
- c) Recognize that the proliferation of signs is unduly distracting to motorists and non-motorized travelers, reduces the effectiveness of signs directing and warning the public, causes confusion, reduces desired uniform traffic flow, and creates potential for accidents.
- d) Recognize that the principal intent of commercial signs, to meet the purpose of these requirements and serve the public interest, should be for identification of an establishment on the premises, and not for advertising special events, brand names or off-premise activities, as these can be advertised more appropriately by other methods.
- e) Eliminate potential conflicts between business signs and traffic control signs, which could create confusion and hazardous consequences.
- f) Enable the public to locate goods, services and facilities without excessive difficulty and confusion by restricting the number and placement of signs.
- g) Prevent placement of signs which will conceal or obscure signs of adjacent uses.
- h) Prevent off-premise signs from conflicting with other land uses.
- i) Prevent signs that are potentially dangerous to the public due to structural deficiencies or disrepair.
- j) Prohibit portable commercial signs in recognition of their significant negative impact on traffic safety and aesthetics.

7.17.02 Signs Not Requiring a Permit

A sign of the following type shall be permitted on all parcels in the City without the issuance of a sign permit, subject to all other requirements of this Article:

- (a) **Device Signs.** Permanent signs on vending machines, ATM's, gas station pumps, or other containers indicating only the contents or purpose of such devices, provided that the sign area of each device shall not exceed three (3) square feet and there are no more than one sign per device.
- (b) **Directional Signs.** The sign shall bear no advertising other than logos.
- (c) **Flags.** Flags, provided there shall be no more than three (3) flags per lot, the maximum size of each flag shall be 50 square feet, and the flag poles comply with relative height limitations.
- (d) **Employment Signs.** "Help wanted" signs soliciting employees for the place of business where posted, provided that the maximum area for all such signs shall not exceed six (6) square feet.
- (e) **Enclosed Signs.** Any sign that is located completely within a building and is not visible from the outside.
- (f) **Historical Signs.** Plaques or signs designating a building or premises as a historic structure or premises not to exceed six (6) square feet.
- (g) **Identification Signs.** Signs for the sole purpose of designating an assigned house number, owner name, occupant, or building name. Identification signs shall not be counted in the total sign area allowed on the premises, however, such signs in excess of one (1) square foot in surface display area may be allowed as part of the total sign area otherwise allowed by this Ordinance.
- (h) **Incidental Signs.** Small signs, emblems, or decals informing the public of goods, facilities, or services available on the premises. The total of all such incidental signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet.
- (i) **Non-conforming Signs.** Legal non-conforming signs existing on the effective date of the adoption of the Ordinance. Removal of the sign shall constitute an elimination of the non-conforming status.
- (j) **Non-commercial Message Sign.** A political sign shall not exceed eight (8) square feet per side and a total of 16 square feet in a residential district. A political sign shall not exceed 16 square feet per side and a total of 32 square feet in a non-residential district. The maximum height of a political sign is 6 feet. The sign shall not be placed within a side yard setback area, as required under the zoning ordinance in the district in which the property is situated.

- (1) There shall be only one non-commercial message sign not pertaining to a specific event allowed per lot or parcel. If related to a specific event, the sign must be removed within 7 days of the event. The owner of the property or the person in charge thereof shall be responsible for the removal of the signs.
 - (2) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the foregoing, non-commercial message signs not exceeding four (4) square feet in total area are permitted as window signs (i.e. as signs placed on the inside of windows of a structure so as to be visible from outside the structure).
 - (3) Anything in this Chapter to the contrary notwithstanding, a sign permitted in this Chapter as an on-premises advertising sign may contain a lawful non-commercial message, except for traffic signs, railroad crossing signs, danger or other emergency signs, and directional signs.
- (k) **Public Signs.** Public signs, authorized signs by a government body or public utility, including traffic signs, legal notices, railroad crossing signs, warnings of a hazard, and similar signs.

7.17.03 Temporary Signs

The following regulations shall be applicable to all temporary signs placed or situated at any place other than inside a "building" as defined in this Ordinance. All Temporary Signs shall be in accordance with *Table 7.17.1*.

- (a) Projection into Right-of-Way. No temporary sign shall be strung across any public right-of-way nor shall any temporary sign project beyond the property line except as authorized by the City Commission.
- (b) Removal. Temporary signs shall be removed promptly at the end of the display period provided for above.
- (c) Damaged Signs. Any temporary sign found by the Building Official to be in a torn, damaged or unsafe condition must be removed by the owner within three (3) days after his receipt of notice to do so from the Building Official.

Table 7.17.1: Temporary Sign Regulations

Type of Sign	Maximum Size	Maximum Height	Maximum Number	Permitted Duration & Other Requirements
Temporary Signs Not Requiring a Permit				
Community Special Event Signs	Discretion of the Building Official and considering the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May include ground or wall signs, banners, or similar displays ▪ If located over a public street, sign must be at a height that does not conflict with vehicular traffic and must be approved by the City Commission 			May be installed up to 3 weeks prior to event and may remain no more than 30 days in total

Type of Sign	Maximum Size	Maximum Height	Maximum Number	Permitted Duration & Other Requirements
Garage Sale Signs in Residential Districts	5 square feet	4 feet	1 per lot, 2 on corner lot (1 facing each street)	Shall be erected no more than 10 business days before and removed within 1 business day after the sale
Real Estate: Sale or Lease of Individual Residential Dwelling or Lot	5 square feet	4 feet	1 per lot, 2 on corner lot (1 facing each street)	Shall be removed within 14 days of sale closing, or the lease or rental of the premises. Sign may not be illuminated.
Temporary Signs Requiring a Permit				
Banners and Pennants	Discretion of the Building Official and considering the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be securely attached to a building or structure 			May be erected two (2) times per calendar year, for a maximum of 30 days each time.
Construction Signs	64 square feet	15 feet	1 per lot, 2 on corner lot (1 facing each street)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Shall be removed from premises within 30 days after issuance of the occupancy permit or temporary occupancy permit In the case of renovations (e.g. addition to a building) or maintenance or repair (e.g. roofing or siding), rather than the construction of a new building, the construction sign may have a maximum sign area of 16 square feet.
Grand Opening Special Sale & Promotional Signs	16 square feet	Wall sign not higher than building	1 per lot, 2 on corner lot (1 facing each street)	May be erected for a maximum of 15 consecutive days every 6 months
Real Estate: Development, Sale or Lease Signs	64 square feet	10 feet	1 per lot, 2 on corner lot (1 facing each street)	Remove within 7 days after all units or lots sold or leased

7.17.04 Prohibited Signs

Table 7.17.2: Prohibited Signs

Any sign not expressly permitted.
String Lights. Spinners, strings of light bulbs, pennants, or streamers, hung overhead to draw attention to a business or its merchandise on display. In no case does this restrict the use of string lights for holidays or religious events.

<p>Moving or Animated Signs. Except as otherwise expressly provided, no sign shall contain any moving or animated parts nor have the appearance of having any movement or animation. No sign shall employ any flashing, moving, oscillating, blinking, or variable intensity light or intermittent lights resembling the flashing lights customarily used in traffic signals, or police, fire, ambulance, or rescue vehicles, or lights so bright as to be blinding or distracting to a vehicle driver.</p>
<p>Inflatable Signs. Signs that are comprised in part or wholly of a balloon or any other inflated object or character.</p>
<p>Obsolete signs, as defined.</p>
<p>Portable or Movable signs, as defined, except where expressly permitted in this Article.</p>
<p>Signs that Obstruct Access. Signs which obstruct free access or egress from a required door, window, or other required exit.</p>
<p>Signs that Obstruct View of Road Signs. Signs that obstruct any approved traffic control device, road sign, or signal from view; interfere with sight distance necessary for traffic safety; or distract from visibility of existing traffic signs or devices.</p>
<p>Signs that Confuse Traffic.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any sign which makes use of the words "stop", "look", or "danger", or any other words, phrases, symbols, or characters, in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse traffic. 2. Signs which in any way simulate or could be confused with the lighting of emergency vehicles or traffic signals; there shall be no red, yellow, or green illumination on any sign located in the same line of vision as a traffic control system, nor interference with vision clearance along any highway, street, or road or at any intersection of two or more streets.
<p>Illegal Signs. Any sign unlawfully installed, erected, or maintained.</p>
<p>Snipe Signs. Signs attached to a utility pole, fence or affixed to a tree except as may otherwise be permitted by this article.</p>
<p>Roof Signs. Signs shall not be erected on any part of a building's roof unless there is no practical available wall area on the front of the building to permit the allowed wall sign, in which case the Planning Department may grant an administrative waiver.</p>
<p>Road Furniture Signs. Signs on street furniture, such as benches and trash receptacles, not including commemorative plaques or engravings not larger than one-half (0.5) square foot.</p>
<p>Fire Hydrants. Any sign not attached to a building and erected within 10 feet of a fire hydrant.</p>
<p>Signs in Public Right-of-way or on City-owned property. Unless otherwise provided in these regulations, no sign, except those established by the City of Lapeer, Lapeer County, state or federal governments shall be located in, project or overhang into any public right-of-way or dedicated easement, or elsewhere on city-owned property except with the consent of the City.</p>
<p>Motor Vehicle Signs.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It shall be unlawful to park, place or store a vehicle or trailer on which there is a motor vehicle sign on private or public property for the purpose of advertising a business or products or for the purpose of directing people to a business or business activity. 2. <i>Presumption.</i> There shall be a presumption that this subsection has been violated if the motor vehicle sign is visible from a street and one or more of the following circumstances exist: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The motor vehicle sign is attached to a vehicle or trailer that is unregistered or not

<p>operable;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. The motor vehicle sign is larger in any dimension than or extends beyond any surface of the vehicle or trailer to which it is attached; c. The motor vehicle sign is attached to a vehicle or trailer that is parked or stored in a public right-of-way or an area not designed, designated, or commonly used for parking; d. The motor vehicle sign is attached to a vehicle or trailer that is regularly parked or stored in a "front yard" or "side yard," as such terms are defined in this zoning ordinance, that abuts a street, when there are other areas of the property designed, designated, or available for the parking or storage of the vehicle or trailer that are not visible from the street or do not abut streets; or e. The motor vehicle sign is attached to a vehicle or trailer that is regularly parked or stored within fifty (50) feet of a street, when there are other areas of the property designed, designated, or available for the parking or storage of the vehicle or trailer that are more distant from the street or not visible from the street. <p>3. <i>Rebuttal of Presumption.</i> The presumption set forth in subsection c., above, may be rebutted by evidence showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The vehicle is temporarily parked in a particular location in the course of conducting personal activities or business activities that involve the loading or unloading of goods for customers, providing services to off-site customers, conducting off-site business, or engaging in work breaks; b. The activities in subsection 1., above, are being actively undertaken during the period of such parking; c. The activities in subsection 1., above, require the presence of the vehicle for purposes of transporting equipment, people, supplies and/or goods necessary for carrying out such activities; and d. The activities in subsection 1., above, are not, other than incidentally, related to advertising, identifying, displaying, directing, or attracting attention to an object, person, institution, organization, business, product, service, event or location.
<p>Unsafe Signs. Any sign or sign structure which the Building Official has determined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is structurally unsafe; 2. Constitutes a hazard to safety or health by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation, or abandonment; 3. Constitutes a hazard to safety or health by reason of blocking views; 4. Is capable of causing electric shock to a person who comes in contact with it; 5. Is unlawfully installed, erected, or maintained; 6. Is located in public street or utility right-of-way, except where expressly permitted herein; 7. Is not kept in good repair, such that it has broken parts, missing letters, or non-operational lights; or 8. Does not meet applicable requirements of any adopted City Building Code.
<p>Search Lights, as defined.</p>

7.17.05 Schedule of Sign Regulations – Property Used for Non-residential Purposes

The following table includes regulations for permanent non-residential signs.

Table 7.17.3: Schedule of Regulations

Type of Sign	Maximum Area	Height	Illumination	# Permitted/Other Provisions
Wall Sign (a)	The lesser of 10 percent of the area of the front face of the building or tenant space, or three (3) square feet for each lineal feet of building frontage or tenant space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Must not exceed max. building height in district ii) Must not be higher than wall upon which it is attached iii) Bottom of sign must be at least 8 feet above ground level or sidewalk 	Permitted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Must not extend beyond the ends of the wall on which it is attached ii) Sign may not be more than 12 inches thick, measured from the wall on which it is attached
Awnings and Canopies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Lettering may cover maximum of 1/3 of awning or canopy ii) Lettering shall not project above, below or beyond the physical dimensions of the awning or canopy 	Bottom of awning or canopy must be at least 7 feet above ground level or sidewalk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Not permitted under awning or canopy, except for gas station canopy ii) Building mounted lighting may indirectly illuminate the area above or below the awning or awning 	Individual letters shall not be larger than 9 inches from top to bottom
Directional Signs	4 square feet per sign	4 feet maximum	Permitted	Determined by City Building Official
Monument Signs (b)	<p><u>Areas Zoned CBD-1 or CBD-2</u> 20 square feet per side; 40 square feet total</p> <p><u>Other Areas</u> 56 square feet per side; 112 square feet total</p>	8 feet maximum	Permitted	One (1) per each side of parcel facing a street
Poster Panel Signs (Sandwich signs, A-frames) (c)	7 square feet per side; 14 square feet total	3.5 feet maximum	Not permitted	Only permitted in the CBD-1 and CBD-2 Zoning Districts

Type of Sign	Maximum Area	Height	Illumination	# Permitted/Other Provisions
Business Center Sign, including for multiple tenant commercial or shopping centers and multiple tenant office buildings	64 square feet per sign face; 128 total square feet for both sides	<u>Areas Zoned CBD -1 or CBD-2:</u> 10 feet max. <u>Other Areas:</u> 16 feet max.	Permitted	i) 1 per Business Center ii) Individual businesses are not allowed to have individual pole/pylon signs.
Window Signs	Not more than 25% of surface of window	n/a	Not permitted, except for LED sign	n/a
Projecting Signs (d)	8 square feet per side; 16 square feet. total	i) Must not be higher than wall upon which it is attached ii) Bottom of sign must be at least 8 feet above ground level or sidewalk	Permitted	i) Only permitted in the CBD-1 and CBD-2 zoning districts ii) 1 per business, provided not within 20 feet of another projecting sign
Rear Entry Signs	Wall sign: 6 square feet; Projecting sign: 6 square feet per side; 12 square feet total	Bottom of sign must be a minimum of 8 feet above the ground or sidewalk	Permitted	1 per business
Marquee Signs (e)	10 percent of the wall, up to maximum of 100 square feet	i) Must not exceed building height in district; ii) Must not be higher than building iii) Bottom of sign must be at least 8 feet above ground level or sidewalk	Permitted	1 per parcel
Billboards (f)	175 square feet per side; 350 square feet total		Permitted	i) Only allowed in the I-2 zoning district ii) Must be on property fronting an expressway or State trunkline highway.
Electronic or Manual Changeable Message Signs (g)	24 square feet	Per type of sign as listed above	Permitted	1 per parcel

7.17.06 Additional Provisions for Signs in Table 7.17.3

(a) Wall Signs

- (1) Materials Required. All wall signs of a greater area than fifty (50) square feet shall have a surface or facing of noncombustible material.
- (2) Limitation on Placement. No wall sign shall cover wholly or partially any wall opening.
- (3) Supports and Attachments. All wall signs shall be safely and securely attached to structural members of the building by means of metal anchors, bolts or expansion screws. In no case shall any wall sign be secured with wire, strips of wood or nails.

(b) Monument Signs

- (1) Material Required. Every monument sign over fifty (50) square feet in total surface area shall have a surface or facing of noncombustible material.
- (2) Letters, etc. to be Secured. All letters, figures, characters or representations in cutout or irregular form, maintained in conjunction with, attached to, or superimposed upon any sign shall be safely and securely built or attached to the sign structure.
- (3) Anchorage and Support. All monument signs shall be securely built, constructed and erected upon posts sunk at least forty-two (42) inches below the surface of the ground and embedded in concrete. A lightning grounding device shall be provided.
- (4) Base. The base of the monument sign must be constructed of masonry material that matches or complements the material on the main building.

(c) Poster Panel (Sandwich Board, A-Frames) Signs. Poster panel signs may be placed only within the CBD-1 and CBD-2 Zoning Districts at the public entrances to retail, personal service or restaurant businesses, on either private property or the public sidewalk, subject to the following requirements:

- (1) Clearance for Pedestrians. The sign shall be located a minimum of two (2) feet from the edge of the curb and must be located so that at least a five (5) foot wide sidewalk is maintained between the sign and the building wall for pedestrian traffic flow and safety.
- (2) Number. There shall be only one sign permitted for each building address for which there is provided a separate entrance, regardless of the number of tenants in the building.
- (3) Storage. Each sign shall be placed outside only during the hours when the business is open to the general public, and shall be stored indoors at all other times.

Any sign which is found to be not in compliance with this requirement may be confiscated by City Code Enforcement officials. A second violation will result in loss of the sign permit for a period of one (1) year.

- (4) Hazard. A portable sidewalk sign shall not occupy or obstruct the use of any fire lane or required off-street parking. Any sign which creates a visual or safety hazard may be ordered to be removed by the Police Chief.
- (5) Maintenance. All sign frames shall be constructed of a weather proof material and shall be kept in good repair.
- (6) Businesses not Fronting on Nepessing Street. Directional poster panel signs for downtown businesses not fronting on Nepessing Street are permitted to be placed on Nepessing Street corners subject to the following provisions:
 - a. One (1) directional sidewalk sign is allowed per corner, representing multiple businesses if necessary.
 - b. The sign shall be placed in a location that does not interfere with other signage or features in the vicinity.
 - c. All other provisions of the sign ordinance shall be complied with.
- (7) Permit. No poster panel sign shall be placed on display without the owner first obtaining a permit from the City of Lapeer.
- (8) Quality. Hand-lettered or stenciled sign faces are prohibited, with the exception of restaurant daily specials. All sign faces shall be professionally created in conformance with the specifications for sidewalk signs adopted by the City of Lapeer Downtown Development Authority.

(d) **Projecting Signs**

- (1) Construction. Every part of a projecting sign, with a total surface area greater than ten (10) square feet, shall be constructed of noncombustible material.
- (2) Movable Parts to be Secured. Any movable part of a projecting sign, such as the cover of a service opening, shall be securely fastened by chains or hinges.
- (3) Thickness Limitation. The distance measured between the principal faces of any projecting sign shall not exceed eighteen (18) inches.
- (4) Projection over Public Property. No projecting sign may project beyond the property line unless approved by the City.
- (5) Bracing, Anchorage and Supports. Projecting signs of a greater total surface area than ten (10) square feet or fifty (50) pounds in weight shall not be attached to nor supported by frame buildings nor the wooden framework of a building. All projecting

signs shall be thoroughly secured to the building by iron or other metal anchors, bolts, supports, rods or braces.

(e) **Marquee Signs**

- (1) Material Required. Every marquee sign, including the upright supports and braces thereof, shall be constructed entirely of noncombustible materials.
- (2) Bracing, Anchorage and Supports. Every marquee sign shall be thoroughly secured to the building by iron or metal anchors, bolts, supports, rods or braces.

(f) **Billboards**

- (1) Minimum Lot Size. Such signs shall be allowed on premises with a minimum total area of one (1) acre and a minimum dimension of 200 feet on any one side (based on the deed or recorded legal description.)
- (2) Height. Such signs shall comply with the height limitations and with the front, rear, and side setback provisions of the I-2 zoning district.

(g) **Changeable Message Signs**

- (1) Such sign shall be part of a monument sign only and shall be subject to the area, height, and placement requirements for a ground sign in such location as otherwise permitted under this ordinance.
- (2) Changeable message signs are not allowed on property in a residential zoning district or on property zoned Central Business District.
- (3) The changeable message portion of such sign shall not exceed 1/3 of the sign area, and the remainder of the sign shall be of a permanent character as otherwise required under this ordinance.
- (4) In addition to the general requirements for sign maintenance, all changeable copy signs shall bear a legible message, other suitable display or be left blank. Electronic devices when not in use are to be left blank and unlighted. Any lighted or electronic changeable message sign in which the electrical or lighting components are operating in an erratic, broken or damaged fashion shall be turned off or removed.
- (5) The sign shall not include animation and the message on the sign may change a maximum of four (4) times per minute. At all other times the sign message and background must remain constant.
- (6) Exceptions:
 - a. Reader boards owned by government entities, public agencies, and community organizations displaying community information are exempt from

the area limitations set forth in subsection (1) above. Such signs must comply with all other applicable provisions in this ordinance.

- b. Electronic signs of private and parochial schools (public schools are exempt by statute) shall be exempt from the above provisions.
- c. Time and temperature displays are exempt from subsection (1) above.

7.17.07 Signs in Residential Districts

- a) **Signs in Residential Areas Not Requiring a Permit.** Ground and wall type signs are permitted in residential zoning districts as defined in this Ordinance without a permit and subject to the following conditions:
 - (1) **Sign Advertising the Rental, Sale or Lease of the Property Upon Which it is Located** Subject to the following Conditions:
 - a. Not more than four (4) feet in height nor more than five (5) square feet in area, including attachments.
 - b. No sign may be erected within a public right-of-way, nor in such manner on private property as to create a sight restriction for automotive traffic.
 - c. No such sign shall be lighted or otherwise artificially illuminated.
 - d. All such signs shall be removed within two (2) weeks after the consummation of a lease or sales contract covering that property.
 - e. There shall not be more than one (1) such sign per lot.
 - (2) **Dwelling Nameplate.** For each dwelling unit, one (1) nameplate not exceeding two (2) square feet in area indicating name of occupant. Such sign shall not contain advertising of any nature.
- b) **Signs in Residential Areas Requiring a Permit.** Ground and wall type signs are permitted in residential zone districts as defined in this Ordinance with a permit and shall satisfy the following conditions:
 - (1) **Sign Advertising the Lots and/or Buildings Erected in Any Subdivision or Multiple-Family Development.** It shall be permissible for a real estate broker or builder to erect one (1) sign not to exceed a total surface area of sixty-four (64) square feet nor an overall height of ten (10) feet, the lower edge of which shall not be less than eighteen (18) inches above the surrounding ground level, to advertise the lots and/or building erected in any one (1) subdivision, provided that said real estate broker or builder owns, has listed for sale or has the owner's permission to sell a minimum of ten (10) lots in said subdivision. No such sign or billboard shall be erected or maintained within one hundred (100) feet of any occupied residence unless the written consent of the owner and occupant of such residence is first obtained.

- (2) Multiple-Family Residential Developments. Any person owning or operating any multiple-family residential developments may erect a sign bearing the name of the development, such sign not to exceed twenty-four (24) square feet in area and not to exceed an overall height of six (6) feet above the ground level, which sign shall be made of noncombustible material and may be lighted during the hours of darkness, and which shall contain no advertising or information other than the name of the residential development and status of occupancy. No more than one (1) sign may be erected for each development entrance.
- (3) Signs Accessory to Churches, Schools or Nonprofit Institutions. Churches, colleges, schools, buildings housing governmental functions and utilities of the City, County or State or any subdivision thereof, are permitted to erect a sign. Such signs, when of a permanent nature, shall be constructed of noncombustible material and shall meet all the requirements of this Ordinance, except as provided hereafter:
- a. There shall be not more than one (1) sign.
 - b. Such signs shall be set back from the lot line at least one-third (1/3) of the distance from the lot line to the nearest building, but need not be set back more than one hundred (100) feet from the property line.
 - c. No sign shall exceed twenty (20) square feet in area, unless the sign is located more than fifty (50) feet behind the property line, then said sign may be increased by five (5) additional square feet for each additional ten (10) feet of setback, but in no event shall such sign exceed fifty (50) square feet in area.
 - d. Maximum height shall be eight (8) feet.

In the case of such signs in non-residential zoning districts, the signs must comply with the requirements for the district in which they are located.

7.17.08 Parking Area Signs

- (a) Signs in areas designated as P District or accessory to parking areas as defined or required by this Ordinance shall meet the following requirements:
- (1) One (1) wall or ground sign may be erected to designate each entrance to or exit from a parking area; each sign shall be not more than four (4) square feet in area.
 - (2) One (1) wall or ground sign designating the conditions of use shall be permitted for each parking area; each such sign shall be limited to a maximum area of nine (9) square feet; but shall be screened from adjoining property.

7.17.09 General Requirements for all Signs

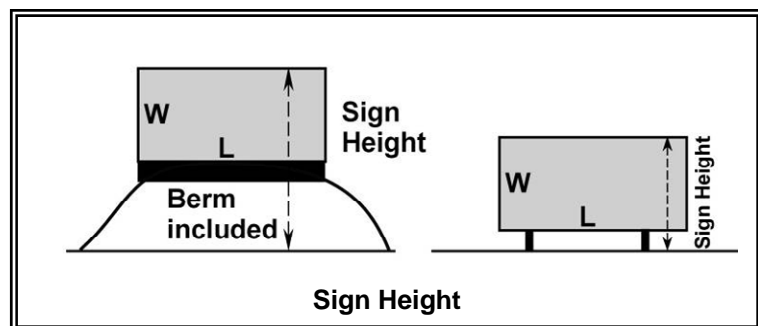
- (a) **Wind Pressure and Dead Load Requirements.** Ground, projecting, wall and marquee signs shall be designed and constructed to withstand a wind pressure of not less than thirty

(30) pounds per square foot of surface area and shall be constructed to receive dead loads as required elsewhere in the City Building Code.

- (b) **Illumination.** All illumination shall be concentrated on the area of the sign or landscape feature so as to prevent glare upon the street or adjacent property. No sign shall be illuminated by other than electrical means or devices, and wiring shall be installed in accordance with the National Electrical Code. Any signs shall be of a wattage of not to exceed 60 watts per bulb. No lights shall be permitted in excess of 60 watts per bulb and in no instance shall such light be located as to be hazardous to traffic.
- (c) **Obstructions to Doors, Windows and Fire Escapes.** No sign shall be erected or maintained so as to prevent free ingress or egress from any door, window or fire escape. No sign of any kind shall be attached to a stand pipe or fire escape.
- (d) **Signs Not to Construct a Traffic Hazard.** No sign shall be erected at the intersection of any streets in such a manner as to obstruct free and clear vision or at any location where, by reason of the position, shape or color, it may interfere with, obstruct the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal or device, or which makes use of the words "Stop", "Look", "Danger" or any word, phrase, symbol or character in such manner as to interfere with, mislead or confuse traffic.
- (e) **Clear Vision Area.** No sign shall be located within, project into, or overhang the corner clearance area as defined in Section 7.14.05 of this ordinance.
- (f) **Face of Sign Shall Be Smooth.** No nails, tacks or wires shall be permitted to protrude from the front of any sign. This shall not exclude, however, the use of block letters, electrical reflectors, or other devices which may extend over the top and in front of the advertising structure.
- (g) **Measuring Sign Height**

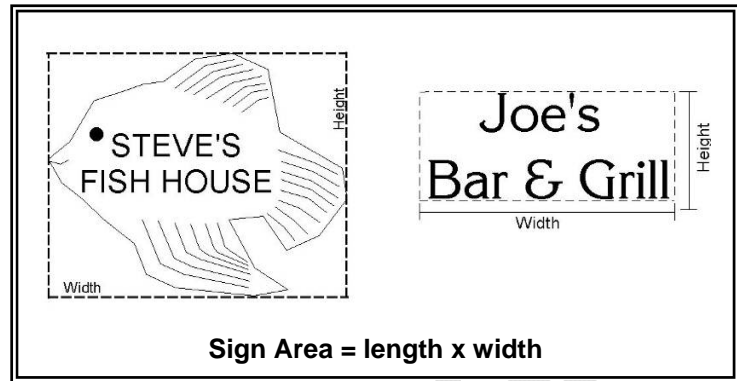
- (1) The permitted height of all signs supported by the ground shall be measured from the level of the ground, finished surface, adjacent to the sign.

- (2) Sign height shall not be measured from an area of the ground that has been built-up or constructed in a manner that would have the effect of allowing a higher sign height than permitted by these regulations (e.g. the height of signs erected on a berm shall be measured from the finished grade adjacent to the berm.)



(h) **Measuring Sign Area**

- (1) Sign area shall be measured as the square footage of the sign face and any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate it from the background against which it is placed.



- (2) When a sign consists solely of lettering or other sign elements printed, painted or mounted on a wall of a building without any distinguishing border, panel or background, the calculation for sign area shall be measured by enclosing the most protruding edges of the sign elements within a parallelogram or rectangle.
- (3) The area of a double-faced sign such as a pole/pylon or monument sign shall be computed using only one (1) face of the sign provided that: 1) the outline and dimensions of both faces are identical, and 2) the faces are back to back so that only one face is visible at any given time.

7.17.10 Legal Non-Conforming Signs

- (a) Any sign existing at the time of adoption of these regulations which does not comply with all provisions shall be considered a legal non-conforming sign and may be permitted to continue if the sign is properly maintained and not detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the community.
- (b) Nothing shall prevent the strengthening or restoring to a safe condition of any portion of a sign declared unsafe by the Building Official. Such signs may be improved only to the extent that such improvement does not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the current market value of the existing sign structure.
- (c) Subject to exceptions below, any legal non-conforming signs may be continued in operation and maintained after the effective date of these regulations provided that the signs shall not be:
- (1) Structurally altered so as to extend their useful life;
 - (2) Expanded;
 - (3) Relocated;
 - (4) Re-established after damage of more than fifty percent (50%) of the value at the time of such damage or destruction;

- (5) Modified in any way that would increase the degree of non-conformity of such sign.
- (d) Abandonment or obsolescence of a non-conforming sign shall terminate immediately the right to maintain such a sign.
 - (1) An obsolete sign and its supporting structure shall be removed by the property owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located when the business which it advertises is no longer conducted on the premises within ten (10) days after written notice from the Building Official.
 - (2) A sign which is in conformity with the other provisions of these regulations may remain in place if such sign is obscured by the use of a blank panel attached within the frame of the sign and shall be permitted to remain for a period not to exceed one hundred and twenty (120) days.
 - (3) Where a successor to an inactive business agrees, within thirty days of the date of written notice by the Building Official, to maintain the sign as provided for by these regulations, this removal requirement shall not apply, provided that the existing sign and structure conforms to all current sign requirements.
- (e) All portable signs, except those specifically permitted by these regulations, that exist on the effective date of these regulations, shall be removed immediately upon the enactment of these regulations.
- (f) Any illegal non-conforming signs that exist on the effective date of these regulations shall be removed immediately upon the enactment of these regulations and shall be replaced by signs that conform to these regulations.

7.17.11 Administration

- (a) No sign, permanent or temporary, shall be erected, structurally altered or relocated, except as otherwise provided in these regulations, without review and approval from the City of Lapeer Building Department.
- (b) **Application.** The application, on a form provided by the City of Lapeer Building Department, shall contain the proposed location of the sign, the name and address of the sign owner and of the sign erected, the name and address of the owner of the business and of the property if different from that of the sign owner, drawings and/or sketches showing the design and location of the sign, the estimated cost of construction and any other information as the Building Official may require to ensure compliance with these regulations and with other ordinances of the City.
- (c) **Staking of Signs Proposed Location.** The location of a proposed sign shall be staked by the property owner. The Building Department will use the staked location to determine compliance with required setbacks set out in these regulations before issuing a sign permit.

- (d) **Permit Required.** For all signs requiring a permit, a sign permit application shall be applied for with the City of Lapeer Building Official. The Building Official will approve a sign permit application that clearly conforms to the requirements of these regulations. If the sign is situated in the public right-of-way, the applicant must obtain a license from the City and must possess adequate liability insurance.
- (e) **Fees.** All permit fees for signs shall be as established by the Lapeer City Commission.
- (f) **Nullification.** A sign permit shall become null and void if the work for which the permit was issued has not been completed within six months after the date of the permit.
- (g) **Exceptions.** The following shall not require a sign permit:
- (1) The changing of the advertising copy or message on an approved painted or printed sign, on a theater marquee and on similar approved signs which are specifically designed for the use of replaceable copy.
 - (2) Painting, repainting, cleaning or other normal maintenance or repair of a sign or a sign structure, unless a structural change is made.
- (h) **Certificate of Compliance.** All signs shall require a final inspection and the issuance of a Certificate of Compliance from the Building Department. The property owner shall notify the Building Department immediately upon erecting the sign to request the final inspection.

7.17.12 Appeals

Any person aggrieved by any decision or order of the Building Official in connection with any dimensional or location provision of these regulations may appeal to the Board of Zoning Appeals within 30 days of the decision or order.