

SECTION 13 SIGNS

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- 13.1 **PURPOSE**

There is a significant relationship between the manner in which signs are displayed and public safety, and the value and economic stability of adjoining property. The reasonable display of signs is necessary as a public service and to the conduct of competitive commerce and industry. The regulations in this Section establish minimum and maximum standards for display of signs in direct relationship to the functional use of property and to the intensity of development as permitted within the zoning districts which are provided in this Ordinance.

Chapter 225, Section 440, et. seq. of the Illinois Compiled Statutes is an act that relates to the control of the erection and maintenance of billboards and other outdoor advertising devices on lands adjacent to the Federal-Aid Primary System and the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways in Illinois. Consequently, this Ordinance is applicable and enforceable only in commercially and industrially zoned areas along these roads and highways and in all zones along all other roads and highways in Will County.

13.2 TYPES OF SIGNS

For the purpose of this Ordinance, signs are classified according to their district as follows:

1. All districts
2. Residential districts
 - a. Accessory
 - b. For sale
 - c. Parking
 - d. Church bulletins
3. Commercial
 - a. Residential
 - b. Marquees
 - c. Nameplates
 - d. Standards
 - e. Shopping Center
 - f. Wall
 - g. Illumination
 - h. Traffic
 - i. On-premise
 - j. Advertising (outdoor billboards)
4. Industrial
 - a. Commercial
 - b. Advertising (outdoor billboards)
 - c. On-premise
5. Agricultural

13.3 PERMITTED LOCATION

No sign shall be permitted unless it is in compliance with the requirements of this Ordinance.

13.4 PERMITS AND FEES REQUIRED

1. A fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00) plus an additional two dollars (\$2.00) per square foot of the gross surface area of the sign shall be collected by the Zoning Administrator when the sign permit and registration tag are issued.
 - a. The calculation on an on-premise freestanding pole, ground, monument or any similar sign shall be based only on one face of the sign. That calculation shall be based on the largest face of the sign.
 - b. Fascia or wall signs: Only the actual copy area shall be included in the above-mentioned fee.
 - c. The calculation of the sign permit fee for an advertising sign (outdoor billboard) shall be based on the gross area of the face of each sign on the standard or pole. A sign permit and registration tag must be obtained for each sign face.
2. An annual registration fee in the amount of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) due January 1 of each year; shall be collected by the Zoning Administrator for each advertising sign (outdoor billboard) structure. The annual registration fee will be two hundred dollars (\$200.00) if paid after February 1 of each year.
3. Non-conforming signs as defined in Section 13.5 of this Ordinance shall be exempt from the permit fee. They shall be required to secure a registration tag.
4. Advertising signs (outdoor billboards) are permitted only as a special use permit in the C-4 Highway Commercial District and in the I-1, I-2, and I-3 Industrial Districts per Section 14.10. Advertising signs (outdoor billboards) adjacent to the Federal-Aid Primary or Interstate System in accordance with the permit requirements of Chapter 225, Section 440, Illinois Revised Statutes, shall provide verification that an Illinois State permit was issued and shall be subject to all permit and fees required in accordance with Sections 13.4(1) and 13.4(2).
5. Those signs listed as exempt in Section 13.10-8 shall be exempt from the requirements for permits and fees listed above.

13.5 NON-CONFORMANCE

1. Any sign or sign structure lawfully existing or under construction on July 20, 1978, but whose location or use does not conform with that required or permitted in the regulations herein, shall be known as “non-conforming” and may remain, and the use

then being made thereof may be continued in accordance with the regulations established in Section 11.2 of this Ordinance.

2. Non-conforming signs shall be registered with the Zoning Administrator. A fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00) to cover the cost of the registration tag shall be collected at the time of registration.

13.6 UNLAWFUL SIGNS

If the Zoning Administrator shall find that any sign has been constructed or erected or is being maintained in violation of the provisions of this Section, he shall give written notice to the person to whom the zoning certificate has been issued. The Zoning Administrator may take any actions permitted by this Zoning Ordinance, the Will County Building Ordinance and state law to enforce the provisions of this chapter.

13.7 MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

Every sign including but not limited to those signs for which permits or for which no permits or permit fees are required, shall be maintained in a safe, presentable, and good structural material condition at all times, including the replacement of defective parts, painting, repainting, cleaning, and other acts required for the maintenance of said sign. The Zoning Administrator shall require compliance with all standards of this Code.

13.8 REMOVAL OF OBSOLETE SIGNS

Any sign, which does not advertise a bona-fide business conducted, or a product sold upon the premises, shall be taken down and removed by the owner, agent, or person having the beneficial use of the structure upon which such sign may be found within ten (10) days after written notification from the Zoning Administrator. Failure to comply with such notice within the time specified in such order shall constitute a violation of the Zoning Ordinance.

13.9 ALTERATIONS

No display sign or outdoor advertising device shall be altered, rebuilt, enlarged, extended, or relocated except in conformity with the provisions of this Ordinance. The repainting, changing of parts and copy, and preventive maintenance of signs shall not be deemed to be alterations if performed by the sign permit holder.

13.10 GENERAL STANDARDS

1. No sign shall be erected, constructed or maintained so as to obstruct any fire escape, required exit, window or door opening used as a means of egress.
2. No sign shall be attached in any form, shape or manner which will interfere with an opening required for ventilation, except that such signs may be erected in front of and may cover transom windows when not in violation of the provision of the Building or Fire Prevention Codes.

3. No sign shall be suspended by chains or other devices that will allow the sign to swing due to wind action. Signs shall be anchored to prevent any lateral movement that would cause wear on supporting members or connections.
4. The tacking, pasting or otherwise affixing of signs, visible from a public way, on the walls of buildings, barns, sheds, on trees, poles, posts, fences or other structures is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by this Ordinance.
5. No person shall park any vehicle or trailer on a public right-of-way or public property or on private property so as to be visible from a public right-of-way, which has attached thereto or located thereon any sign or advertising device for the basic purpose of providing advertisement of products or directing people to a business or activity located on the same or nearby property or any other premise. This Section is not intended to prohibit any form of vehicular signage such as a sign attached to a bus or lettered on a motor vehicle which is regularly and customarily used to transport persons or property for business purposes.
6. No sign shall imitate or resemble official traffic or government signs or signals.
7. The following signs are exempt from the regulations of this Section and from obtaining a sign permit and registration tag:
 - a. Memorial signs and tablets displayed on private property not exceeding six (6) square feet in area.
 - b. Address numerals and signs bearing the names of occupants of the premises and permitted occupations not exceeding two (2) square feet in area.
 - c. Governmental flags and insignia, when not used for commercial purposes.
 - d. Legal notices.
 - e. Governmental traffic and parking signs.
 - f. Signs advertising the premises for sale or lease may be permitted not to exceed six (6) square feet in all residential districts, twenty (20) square feet in all commercial districts, and thirty-two (32) square feet in all industrial districts.
 - g. In Agricultural districts, signs advertising the premises for sale or lease shall be permitted on the premises, not to exceed twenty (20) square feet.
 - h. Temporary Political Signs.
 - i. Temporary political signs may be located in any zoning district provided that they are erected not more than sixty (60) days before an upcoming election, and must be removed within six (6) days following an election.

ii. The total copy area for all political signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet of total copy area per zoning lot. No such sign shall exceed six (6) feet in height above grade.

i. Highway directional signs and signs announcing the location of or directing traffic to given locations which include, but are not limited to the following:

i. Service areas-automobile, food, and lodging.

ii. Public and quasi-public information signs.

iii. Commercial or industrial districts.

Such signs shall be made and installed in accordance with the specifications of the appropriate road authority.

j. Church and School signs, subject to the following:

i. There shall be not more than one (1) sign per zoning lot, except that on a corner lot two (2) signs, one facing each street, shall be permitted.

ii. No on-premise sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and no off-premise sign shall exceed twenty (20) square feet in area.

iii. No sign shall be closer than eight (8) feet to any other zoning lot.

iv. No sign shall project higher than ten (10) feet above the established average grade.

8. All advertising signs shall display the name of the owner, erector, and permit number on a metal plate supplied by the County. The permit holder shall affix the metal plate to the sign at a height of normal eye view.

9. No rotating beam, or illumination device resembling an emergency light shall be permitted in any zone.

10. No sign shall be permitted which is animated by means of flashing, blinking, or traveling lights, except traveling message unit devices as permitted in Section 13.11-2(f).

11. Illuminated signs shall be shaded so as to not shine on adjacent residential properties or onto a public highway in such a way as to interfere with the vision of drivers.

12. Signs that are in conflict with public traffic signals shall not be permitted.

13. No sign shall project beyond property lines.

13.11 SIGN PROVISIONS BY DISTRICT

1. Residential Districts: In all residential districts, the following classes of signs are permitted in accordance with the regulations set forth herein:

Non-flashing, non-illuminated signs

- a. Accessory Nameplate and Identification Signs, subject to the following:

Height: No sign shall project higher than one (1) story or fifteen (15) feet above the curb level, whichever is lower.

- i. There shall be not more than one (1) exempt nameplate, not exceeding two (2) square feet in area for each unit indicating the name or address of the occupant or a permitted occupation. Such signs are exempt in accordance with Section 13.10-7(b).
 - ii. For multiple-family dwellings of up to ten (10) dwelling units, for apartments, hotels, and for buildings other than single-family dwellings, a single identification sign not exceeding nine (9) square feet in area may be displayed.
 - iii. For multiple-family dwellings over ten (10) dwelling units, a sign of fifty (50) square feet in area may be displayed. Only the name and address of the building and the name of the management thereof may be contained on the sign.
 - iv. In connection with the construction or remodeling of a building, other than a single-family residence, there shall be permitted one (1) sign not exceeding one hundred (100) square feet in area; on corner lots, two such signs, one facing each street shall be permitted. Said sign(s) shall be removed within two (2) weeks after completion of the structure indicated.
 - v. In connection with the construction or development of a new residential subdivision or planned unit development consisting of less than one hundred (100) residential units, a sign not exceeding one hundred (100) square feet shall be permitted. For subdivisions or planned unit developments with more than one hundred (100) residential units, two (2) signs totaling no more than two hundred (200) square feet shall be permitted. Said signs shall be removed within two (2) weeks after the completion of the subdivision or planned unit development indicated.
- b. For Sale and To Rent Signs, exempt in accordance with Section 13.10-7(f), subject to the following:

Area and Number: There shall be not more than one (1) such exempt sign per zoning lot, except that on a corner lot, two (2) such exempt signs, on facing each street, shall be permitted. No sign shall be closer than ten (10) feet to any other zoning lot.

Height: No such exempt sign shall project higher than ten (10) feet above the established average grade.

c. Signs Accessory to Parking Areas, subject to the following:

Area and Number: Signs designating parking area entrances or exits are limited to one (1) sign for each such exit or entrance and to a maximum of four (4) square feet each. One sign per parking area and limited to a maximum size of nine (9) square feet shall be permitted. On a corner lot, two (2) such signs, one facing each street, shall be permitted.

Height: No entrance or exit sign shall project higher than five (5) feet and no parking sign shall project higher than ten (10) feet above the established average grade of the parking area.

2. Commercial District: In all commercial districts, the following signs are permitted, subject to the requirements set forth hereinafter:

a. All signs and nameplates permitted in the residential districts.

b. Signs on Marquees, Canopies and Awnings: Restrictions imposed herein on the projection of signs across property lines into the public way shall not apply to signs located on marquees or canopies provided that any sign located on a marquee or canopy shall be affixed flat to the surface thereof, and further, no sign shall extend vertically or horizontally beyond the limits of said marquees or canopy, except that individual, freestanding letters may project to a height not exceeding sixty (60) inches above the same.

Restrictions imposed herein on the projection of signs across property lines into the public way shall not apply to signs located on awnings, provided that any sign located on an awning shall be affixed flat to the surface thereof, shall be non-illuminated and non-flashing, and shall indicate only the name and address of the establishment on the premises. Further, no such sign shall extend vertically or horizontally beyond the limits of said awning.

c. Signs on Standards: Signs, clocks, or other advertising devices erected upon standards or separate supports shall be placed so as to be entirely within the property line of the premises upon which it is located, and no part of the sign or standard shall have a total height greater than forty (40) feet above the level of the street upon which the sign faces, or above the adjoining ground level if such ground level is above the street level, nor shall the surface of any such sign exceed an area of one hundred (100) square feet per face.

- d. Shopping Center Signs: For an integrated planned commercial development in single ownership and management, or under unified control, one (1) additional sign may be erected on each street abutting the property not exceeding one hundred fifty (150) square feet per face in area. Such signs shall be placed so as to be entirely within the property lines of the premises upon which they are located, and the bottom edge of such signs shall be at least eight (8) feet above the level of the ground, and the overall height shall not exceed fifty-five (55) feet above curb level or above the adjoining ground level if such ground level is above the street level.
- e. Wall Signs:
- i. Area: the gross area of a sign or signs on any wall of any principal building shall not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the area of the front face (including doors and windows) of the principal building.
 - ii. Location: The sign or signs may front on the front, side, or rear wall of the principal building.
 - iii. Projection: Signs suspended from any building shall not project more than ten (10) feet beyond the wall of the building, and the bottom of such signs shall not be less than ten (10) feet above the finished grade of the sidewalk or ground elevation, and shall not exceed thirty (30) feet in height.
 - iv. Its location and arrangement shall be subject to approval by the Zoning Administrator.
 - v. Height: No sign shall project higher than forty (40) feet above the curb level, and in no case shall a wall sign project higher than four (4) feet above the roof line.
 - vi. Illumination: Illumination shall not create hazard or nuisance. Signs shall be shaded whenever necessary to avoid casting bright light upon property located in any residential district.
 - vii. In cases where residential and commercial zoning are adjacent to each other, no sign shall be pointed, posted, or similarly posted directly on the surface of any wall, fence, or standard facing the side of any adjoining lot located in a residential district.
- f. Illumination: In all commercial zoning districts, no illuminated sign shall be of the flashing or intermittent type, except traveling message unit devices denoting the time and temperature and other information.
- g. Traffic and Parking Signs: Traffic or directional signs designating entrances, exits, and conditions of use for parking facilities accessory to the main use of the premises may be maintained, provided they are located within the property lines of the subject lot, and conform to the requirements of Section 13.11-1(c).

h. In all commercial districts, exempt signs advertising the premises for sale or lease, in accordance with Section 13.10-7(f), may be permitted, not to exceed twenty (20) square feet.

i. Advertising Signs: Advertising signs (outdoor billboards) which advertise products, commercial, or public service activities, not related to the occupancy and use of the premises, are allowed only as a Special Use in the C-4 (Commercial Highway) District and are subject to the following:

i. Area:

No individual sign shall exceed the following maximum area requirements for signs readable and intended to be viewed from the following types of highways and streets:

1) Interstate Highways:

2) seven hundred (700) square feet

3) Federal Aid Primary Highways:

4) three hundred seventy-eight (378) square feet

5) Federal Aid Secondary and County Highways and all other highways, streets and roads: two hundred (200) square feet

ii. Whenever the applicant for a permit does not own the proposed site, a fully executed site lease or other proof of consent to erect and maintain a sign on the site must accompany permit application.

iii. If the sign site is adjacent to a Federal-Aid Primary or Interstate Highway, a copy of a valid Illinois Department of Transportation sign permit must accompany the County permit application.

iv. Spacing: No billboard advertising sign shall be located within a 5,280 foot radius to another billboard advertising sign. Twin or back-to-back V-type sign structures shall be considered one sign for purposes of this Section.

v. Height: No advertising sign shall project higher than forty (40) feet above curb level or four (4) feet above the roof or parapet line of the nearest building, whichever is higher.

vi. Illuminations: Signs shall be shielded whenever necessary to avoid casting bright light upon property located in any residential district.

- vii. Setbacks: All portions of advertising signs, including their pedestals, shall be set back from the street right-of-way line (or easement line on undedicated streets) a distance of fifteen (15) feet or one (1) foot per twenty (20) square feet of a sign area, whichever is greater.
- viii. No advertising sign (outdoor billboard) shall be permitted to be erected within a 1,320-foot radius of any public park of more than five (5) acres in area.
- ix. No advertising sign (outdoor billboard) shall be located within a 1,320 foot radius of any residential district.
- x. No advertising sign (outdoor billboard) shall be permitted to be erected within a 1, 320 foot radius of any school building.
- j. Area: The maximum total area of all signs per zoning lot (except exempt, parking, and advertising (outdoor billboards) signs) shall not exceed the lesser of the following:

<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>C-1</u>	<u>C-2</u>	<u>C-3</u>	<u>C-4</u>	<u>C-5</u>	<u>C-6</u>
Maximum Number of Total Square Feet	100	200	400	500	200	300
Additional Use Bonus*	30	40	50	50	50	50
Square Feet of Signage Per Linear Foot of Street Frontage**	2.0	3.0	3.5	4.0	1.0	NA

*Additional square feet permitted for each additional, unique business enterprise in a separately occupied building space on the zoning lot.

**Square footage per linear foot is calculated by multiplying this number by the individual lot frontage. The resulting square footage is the maximum total sign area.

- 3. Industrial Districts: In all industrial districts, the following signs are permitted, subject to the requirements set forth hereinafter:
 - a. Advertising signs (outdoor billboards) which advertise products, commercial, or public service activities, not related to the occupancy and use of the premises, are allowed only as a Special Use in an I-1, I-2, or I-3 Industrial District and are subject to the requirements of Section 13.11-2(I)(1 thru 10).
 - b. All identification, commercial, and advertising signs permitted in the commercial districts.

- c. All signs and outdoor billboards shall adhere to the requirements for signs and outdoor billboards in commercial districts.
- d. In all industrial districts, signs advertising the premises for sale or lease may be permitted, not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.
- e. Area: The maximum total area of all signs per zoning lot (except exempt, parking and advertising (outdoor billboards) signs) shall not exceed the lesser of the following:

<u>Zoning District</u>	<u>I-1</u>	<u>I-2</u>	<u>I-3</u>
Maximum Number of Total Square Feet	400	600	800
Additional Use Bonus*	50	50	50
Square Feet of Signage Per Linear Foot of Street Frontage**	1.0	1.0	1.0

*Additional square feet permitted for each additional, unique business enterprise in a separately occupied building space on the zoning lot.

**Square footage per linear foot is calculated by multiplying this number by the individual lot frontage. The resulting square footage is the maximum total sign area.

- 4. Agricultural Districts: In both agricultural districts, signs shall not be larger than twenty (20) square feet in area pertaining to the sale of products produced thereon.

13.12 TEMPORARY MOBILE SIGNS

The use of mobile signs shall be limited to no more than twenty-one (21) days in a year on-premises in a commercial district only. Each usage shall be subject to a permit fee of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) payable prior to the date of usage. No more than two (2) permits for a temporary mobile sign may be issued for a zoning lot within a calendar year.

13.13 ILLEGAL SIGNS

The following signs are unlawful and a public nuisance:

- 1. Signs erected after the effective date of this Ordinance in violation of this Ordinance.
- 2. Signs not registered in accordance with this Ordinance.
- 3. Signs without valid permits as required by this Ordinance.

Each sign declared by this Section to be unlawful and a public nuisance shall be removed or brought into compliance with this Ordinance by the owner, without compensation.