

SIGN CODE UPDATE
DISCUSSION #3: FREESTANDING SIGNAGE

Planning Commission Meeting
November 21, 2024

GOALS OF UPDATING THE SIGN CODE

- Consistency in terms and definitions
- Clear purpose and intent of the sign code
- Clear distinctions between what sign types and sizes are allowed in each zoning district
- Consistency in interpretation and administration
- Reorganization of regulations from Chapter 117 and the COR Framework
- Streamlining processes
- Easier to read and understand for all users

WHAT COUNTS AS A FREESTANDING SIGN?

- Area identification signs (Residential Districts)
- Ground signs (Business & Employment Districts)
- Shopping center signs (Business Districts)
- Business/Industrial park identification signs (Employment Districts)
- Unified development signs (Sec. 117-467)
- Project signs (COR Districts)
- Menu boards* (Business & COR Districts)
- Directional signs (Sec. 117-463(L) & COR Districts)
- Institutional and Recreational Identification Signs, and Institutional Attraction Boards (Sec. 117-463(G-H))
- Pylon signs
- Monument signs

AREA IDENTIFICATION SIGN (MR, RR, R-1A, R-1B, R-1C, R-2, R-3)

- 1 sign per vehicular access to a development
- 32 square feet maximum



GROUND SIGNS (B-1, B-2, B-3, I-1, I-2)

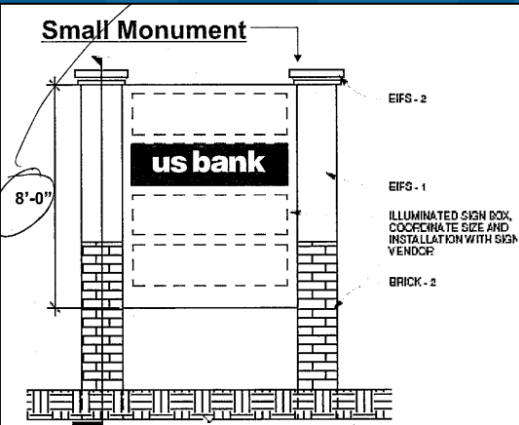
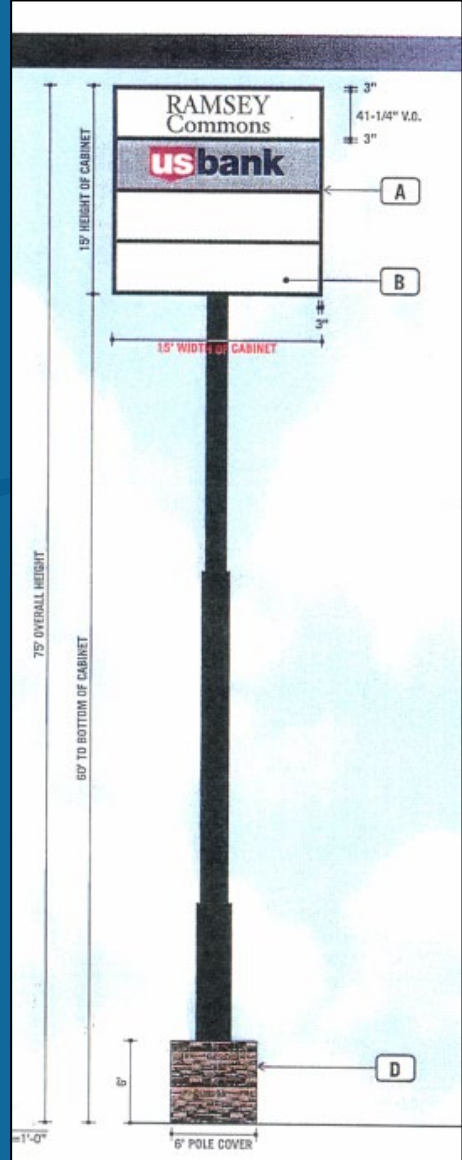
- 1 per road frontage per parcel, with 2 max.
- For 1st ground sign in Hwy. 10 Signage Overlay District
 - 150 SF max. for one face
 - 300 SF max. total for all faces
 - 75 feet max. height
- For 1st ground sign elsewhere:
 - 100 SF max. for one face
 - 200 SF max. total for all faces
 - 25 feet max. height
- For 2nd ground sign
 - 50 SF max. for one face area
 - 100 SF max. total for all faces
 - 12.5 feet max. height

Note: “SF” means “square feet”.



SHOPPING CENTER SIGN (B-1, B-2, B-3)

- Approved with a sign plan
- Plan should include:
 - Number of signs
 - Type of signs
 - Sign sizes
 - Construction materials
 - Sign messages
 - Sign locations



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL PARK SIGNS (I-1, I-2)



- 1 sign per vehicular access to a development
- 1 sign max. per each principal building
- 100 SF max. for one face
- 200 SF max. total for all faces
- 10 feet max. height



UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT SIGNS

- Designed for multi-tenant commercial and employment developments for off-premise copy along an arterial or collector roadway.
- Signs must meet these conditions:
 - Identify the development at the top
 - Be located within 500 feet of the development, not separated by an arterial road
 - 30 feet max. height
 - Total sign area max. 250 SF per face, 500 SF total
 - Dynamic display max. of 100 SF per face & 200 SF total
 - Approved as part of a master sign plan with Site Plan Review

PROJECT SIGNS (COR 1, 3, 4A, 4B, 4C)

- Freestanding on-premise area identification sign for single-family, multi-family, commercial, industrial, or office park developments.
- 1 sign per street frontage per parcel (including wall and project signs).
- COR-1, COR-3, & COR-4a/b/c
 - 6 SF max. face area, 2 faces max.
 - Sign board has 32 SF max. area and has architectural requirements
 - Readable faces must be perpendicular to the adjacent street
 - 6 feet max. height
 - Sign only allowed if the business is setback at least 6 feet from the right-of-way.



PROJECT/GROUND SIGNS (COR-2 & COR-2B)

- 1 sign per street frontage per parcel (including wall and project signs).
- 100 SF max. face area for single signs
- 150 SF max. face area for shared signs along common driveways
- 6 feet max. height

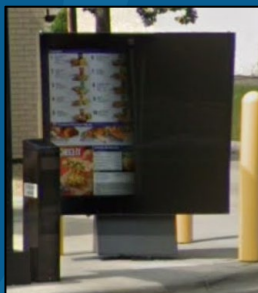


MENU BOARDS

- COR-2 & COR-2b
 - 1 per drive-through lane with only 1 face
 - 40 SF max. face area & 3 feet max. face height
 - No advertising messages allowed
 - Menu boards count toward sign allowances.
- B-1, B-2, & B-3
 - 1 per drive-through lane with only 1 face
 - 50 SF max. face area; no max. face height
 - No advertising messages allowed.



Caribou Coffee,
Ramsey COR



Taco Bell, Anoka



Dairy Queen, Anoka



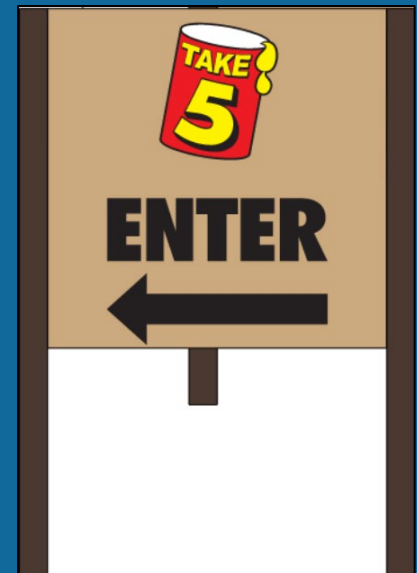
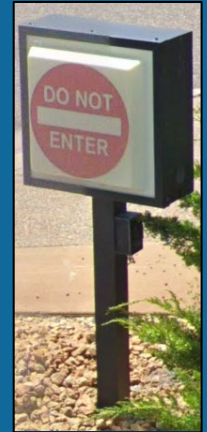
McDonald's, Anoka



Caribou Coffee,
Ramsey Hwy. 47

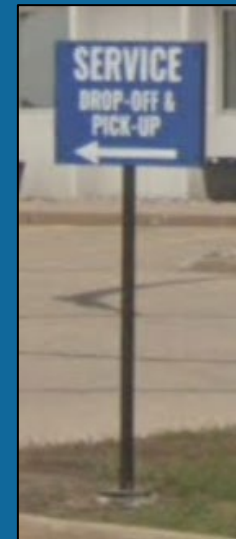
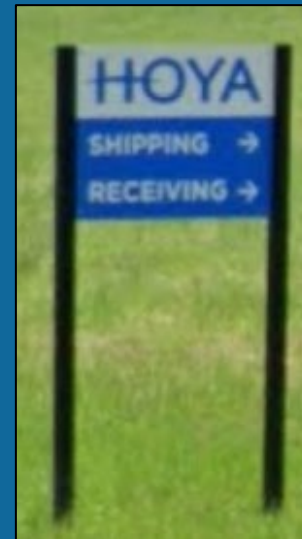
DIRECTIONAL SIGNS (COR-2 & COR-2B)

- Parking Lot Directional Signs
 - 1 per parking lot entrance/exit
 - 4 SF max. face area
 - 5 feet max. height
- Parking Lot Instructional Signs
 - 8 SF max face area
 - 7 feet max. height



DIRECTIONAL SIGNS – CHAPTER 117

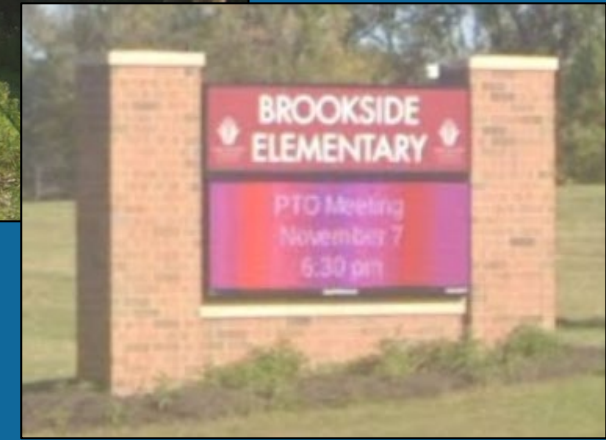
- Designed for on-site direction and instruction to guide persons to facilities intended to serve the public.
- 4 SF max. face area.



INSTITUTIONAL AND RECREATIONAL IDENTIFICATION SIGNS – CHAPTER 117



- 1 ground sign per parcel to identify the civic, philanthropic, educational, public or religious organization or recreational use occupying the parcel.
- For 1st ground sign:
 - 100 SF max. for one face
 - 200 SF max. total for all faces
 - 25 feet max. height
- For 2nd ground sign (if there is a 2nd entrance or 2nd street frontage):
 - 50 SF max. for one face area
 - 100 SF max. total for all faces
 - 12.5 feet max. height



INSTITUTIONAL ATTRACTION BOARDS —

CHAPTER 117

- 1 wall or ground sign per principal building.
- Must be located on the subject property.
- 15-foot minimum setback from all roadways & driveways.
- 50 SF max. for one face
- 100 SF max. total for all faces
- 15 feet max. height



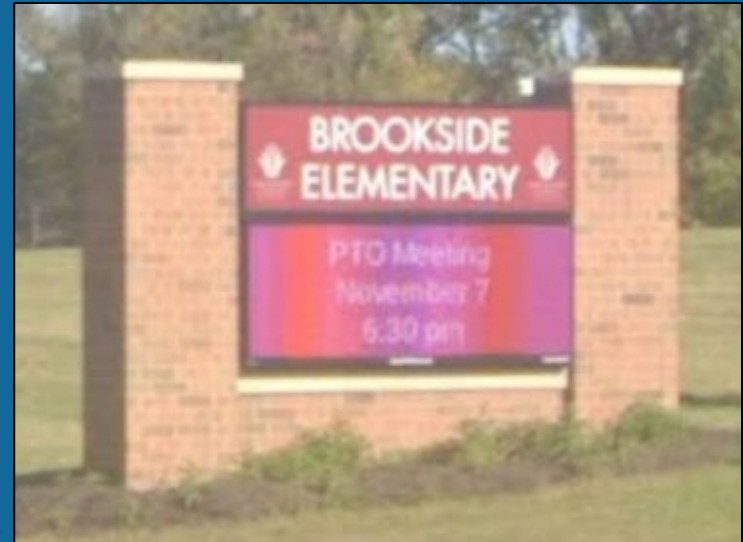
PYLON SIGNS

- No definition in Chapter 117 or COR Framework
- Freestanding pylon signs over 6 feet in height are prohibited in the COR, although pylon signs have been permitted through Site Plan Review resolutions.
- Staff suggests creating a definition for pylon signs to align with nearby cities and industry standards.



MONUMENT SIGNS

- No definition in Chapter 117 or COR Framework
- Staff suggests creating a definition for monument signs to align with nearby cities and industry standards.



WHAT ARE THE CURRENT PROCEDURES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION?

- Signage in the COR is typically approved as a package by Planning Commission and City Council, alongside site plans for new projects.
- Freestanding signs require separate permits from an overall building permit for new construction.
- Sign permits are required for changing panels on cabinet signs, even if the cabinet size remains the same.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT SIMILARITIES?

- All zoning districts have a maximum square footage for sign area, based on the zoning district.
- Maximum height for wall signs in most zoning districts.
- Freestanding signs in all zoning districts require separate permits from the overall building permit for new construction.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT DIFFERENCES?

- COR-1, 3, 4a, 4b, & 4c allow much less freestanding signage (6 SF per sign face) than other districts (32 to 100 SF per sign face)
- Signage in the COR is usually reviewed and approved by Planning Commission and City Council as a sign package, while signage in other districts is reviewed and approved administratively.
- Several inconsistencies in freestanding signage terms and definitions between zoning districts.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT CHALLENGES?

- Frequent concern from applicants regarding COR signage regulations being too stringent and complicated.
- Inconsistent language across zoning districts.
- COR Framework states that comprehensive sign plans shall be approved by the Zoning Administrator (staff).
- Highway 10 frontage rule conflicts with COR's prohibition on pylon signs exceeding 6 feet in height.
- The current sign code refers to obsolete zoning districts (E-1, E-2, & COR-5).
- No code language for tenant turnover or rebranding.
- Vague code language for PUD, PI, P, or CL districts.



TABLE OF CURRENT FREESTANDING SIGN REGULATIONS

	MR, RR, R-1a/b/c, R-2, R-3	B-1, B-2, & B-3	I-1 & I-2 (E-1 & E-2)	COR-1 & COR-3	COR-2 & COR-2b	COR- 4a/b/c	PUD, PI, P, & CL
Max. # of Freestanding Signs	1 per vehicular access to development	None	None	1 per street frontage**	1 per street frontage**	1 per street frontage**	1 per vehicular access or street frontage
Max. Sign Area per Face	32 SF	100 SF*	100 SF*	6 SF	100 SF	6 SF	100 SF
Max. Sign Area - Total	32 SF (1-sided only)	200 SF*	200 SF*	12 SF	200 SF	12 SF	200 SF
Height Maximum	Not specified	25 feet*	25 feet*	6 feet	6 feet	6 feet	25 feet
Review & Approval***	Staff	Staff	Staff	PC, CC, & Staff	PC, CC, & Staff	PC, CC, & Staff	PC, CC, & Staff

“SF” means “square feet”.

Menu boards and directional signs are omitted from this table for clarity.

* These figures represent the first allowable sign, outside of the Hwy. 10 overlay.

** Most buildings in the COR have multiple signs per tenant, approved through a sign package.

*** Sign reviews must be content-neutral, with a sole focus on size and placement.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Provide direction to Staff to develop clear, consistent, and simplified regulations for freestanding signage in all zoning districts.