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## **Chapter 108 – Signs**

### **Article I. In General**

#### Sec. 108-105 – Definitions

If a word or term defined in this chapter appears in the text, its meaning may be construed as set forth in the definition of the word or term as found in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning. If a word is not defined herein, a term is defined by commonly used English language dictionaries.

*Abandoned sign* means a sign which no longer identifies or advertises a bona fide business, lesser, service, owner, product, or activity, and/or for which no legal owner/business/lesser can be found.

~~Address sign means identification numbers only, whether written or in numerical form.~~ Definition moved to Chapter 105.

~~Advertising device sign~~ *Attention-getting device* means a non-standard sign or an object or device other than a sign that has as its purpose to promote, advertise, or sell a product or service obtainable on the premises upon which the sign object or device is located, and not to identify the premises.

*Area identification sign* means a freestanding or wall sign which identifies ~~a single-family or multifamily residential subdivision, a commercial development or an industrial park or office park and which is located on the same parcel as the development it identifies.~~ the name of any of the following:

- (1) A residential subdivision;
- (2) A multiple residential complex consisting of three or more structures;
- (3) A business or industrial structure containing two or more independent concerns;
- (4) A single business or industrial complex consisting of three or more separate structures existing on individual platted lots or as a planned unit development;
- (5) A mobile home court;
- (6) Any integrated combination of such developments or structures; or
- (7) A shopping center.

Such signs shall identify an area or complex and may also name the principal business in the building or development.

*Awning* means a hood or cover which projects from the wall of a building.

*Awning sign* means a sign attached or affixed to an awning.

*Banner* means a sign made of fabric or non-rigid material with no enclosing framework.

*Bench sign* means a sign which is affixed to a bench.

*Billboard* means a sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, entertainment, or attraction sold, offered or existing elsewhere than upon the same lot or parcel where such sign is displayed.

*Box cabinet sign* means an exterior sign that is constructed to be substantially supported by a separate box-like structure, with each segment of the sign message attached to one or a group of supports, and with or without internal illumination.

*Business directory sign* means a freestanding or wall sign which identifies the names of the specific businesses located in a shopping center or business or industrial park and which is located on the parcel of the center so identified.

~~Business sign means a sign relating in its subject matter to the parcel on which it is located, or to products, accommodations, services or activities on the parcel on which it is located.~~

Canopy means a permanent roof-like structure of rigid materials.

Canopy sign means a sign attached or affixed to a canopy.

Channel letter means a custom-made metal or plastic letter, number, or symbol, with or without internal illumination, that is used in exterior signage.

~~Attraction board manual (Changeable copy sign) or reader board sign~~ means a sign or portion thereof with characters, letters or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged ~~on which the copy is changed~~ manually without altering the face or the surface of the sign.

Directional or instructional sign means a sign providing no advertising of any kind, which provides direction or instruction to guide persons to facilities intended to serve the public, including but not specifically limited to those signs identifying restrooms, public telephones, public walkways, affiliation with motor clubs, acceptance of designated credit cards, and other similar signs providing direction or instruction to persons using a facility but not including those signs accessory to parking areas.

Eaves means the part of a roof that meets or overhangs the walls of a building.

Electronic messaging center ~~(dynamic display)~~ means any characteristic of a sign that appears to have movement or that appears to change, caused by any method other than physically removing and replacing the sign or its components, whether the apparent movement or change is in the display, the sign structure itself, or any other component of the sign. This includes a display that incorporates a technology or method allowing the sign face to change the image without having to physically or mechanically replace the sign face or its components. This also includes any rotating, revolving, moving, flashing, blinking, or animated display and any display that incorporates rotating panels, LED lights manipulated through digital input or any other method of technology that allows the sign face to present a series of images or displays.

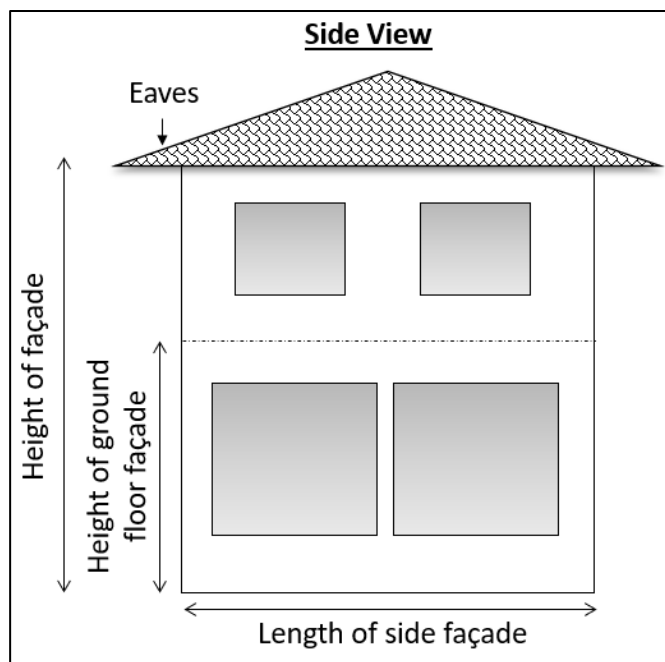
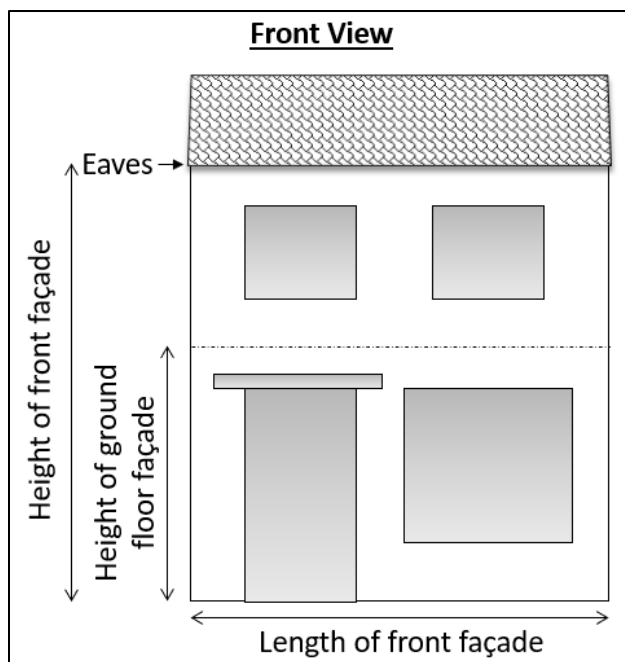
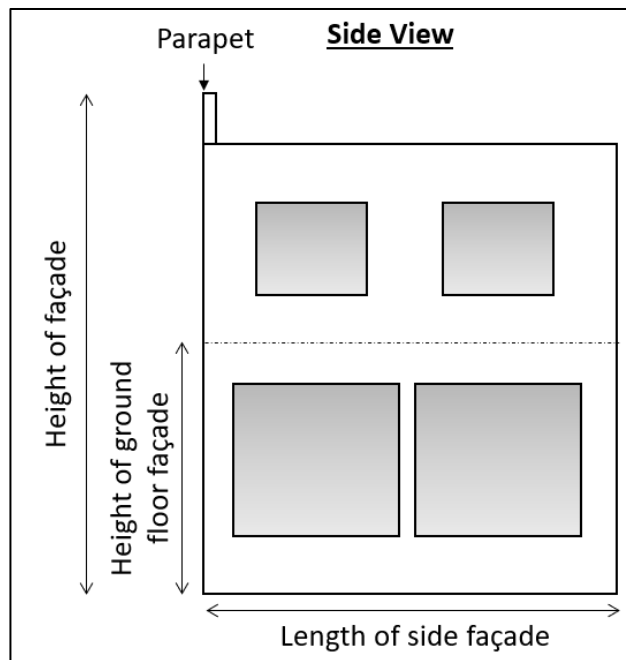
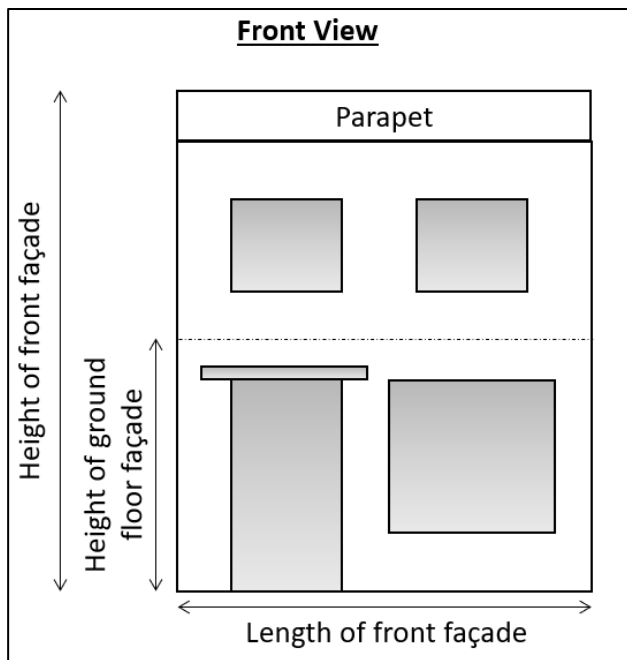
External illumination means illumination of a sign which is affected by an artificial source of light which is not contained within the sign itself.

Feather sign means a freestanding temporary sign consisting of a piece of flexible cloth, plastic or other similar material that is attached lengthwise to a single pole and designed to flutter or wave in the wind.

~~Flashing or scrolling signs or lights means a sign or lighting, other than a manual changeable copy sign, including dynamic display, which contains an intermittent or sequential flashing light source used primarily to attract attention.~~

Freestanding sign means a sign that is self-supporting and affixed to a frame structure and not attached to a building. Freestanding signs include monument signs and pylon signs.

Front façade means the vertical face of a building oriented along or toward the street to which the building is addressed. The area of the front façade is calculated by multiplying the length of the wall facing the street, as measured from edge to edge along the grade adjacent to the building, by the height of that same wall, as measured from the average grade adjacent to the building to the top of the parapet or eaves, whichever is less.



*Governmental sign* means a sign which is erected by a governmental unit.

~~*Ground sign* means a sign supported by structures or supports or upon the ground and not attached or dependent for support from any building.~~

*Highway 10 Signage Overlay District* means a district for purposes of allowing additional signage in a specified area due to limited visibility created by overpasses on Highway 10, described as all commercially zoned property located within 750 feet of the centerline of Highway 10 between the eastern border of the City of Ramsey and the centerline of Llama Street. Parcels located within the COR Zoning District are excluded from this overlay district, as sign regulations for that district are located in a separate section of the City Code.

*Illuminated sign* means any sign which is illuminated by an artificial light source.

*Mansard* means a sloped roof or roof-like facade architecturally comparable to a building wall.

*Marquee* means a permanent roof-like structure of rigid materials supported by and extending from the facade of a building.

*Monument sign* means a freestanding sign not supported by exposed posts or poles which is architecturally designed and located directly at grade.

*Motion sign* means any sign which revolves, rotates or has any moving parts.

*Nameplate/identification sign* means a sign which bears the name and/or address of the occupants of the building.

*Nonconforming sign, illegal*, means a sign which unlawfully existed prior to the adoption of the ordinance from which this chapter is derived.

*Nonconforming sign, legal*, means a sign which lawfully existed prior to the adoption of the ordinance from which this chapter is derived, but does not conform to the newly enacted requirements of this chapter.

*Off-premise sign* ~~Sign, advertising~~ means a sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, activity or entertainment not necessarily conducted, sold or offered upon the premises where such sign is located.

*Parapet* means a low protective wall along the edge of a roof.

*Pennants* means attention-getting devices which resemble flags and are of non-permanent paper, cloth or plastic-like consistency.

*Permanent sign* means any sign which is not defined as a temporary sign.

*Political sign* means a temporary sign used in connection with any local, state or national election or referendum, as regulated by State law.

*Portable sign* means any sign designed to be removed and not permanently affixed to the ground or a structure or a building.

*Principal business* means any commercial or industrial business operating on a property zoned for commercial or industrial land uses.

*Projecting sign* means any sign, all or any part of which extends beyond the surface of the building or wall by more than 16 inches.

*Pylon sign* means any permanent, freestanding sign mounted on posts or columns.

*Raceway* means a separate structure attached to a wall upon which channel letters can be mounted.

*Roof sign* means any sign erected upon the roof of a structure to which it is affixed.

*Sign* means any letter, word or symbol, device, poster, picture, statuary, reading matter, or representation in the nature of an advertisement, announcement, message or visual communication, whether painted, posted, printed, affixed or constructed, which is displayed outdoors to direct the attention of the public for informative or communicative purposes. Such communication located completely within an enclosed building and not exposed to view from a street shall not be considered a sign.

*Sign area* means that area within the marginal lines of the surface which bears the advertisement, or in the case of messages, figures or symbols attached directly to any part of a building, that area which is included in the smallest geometric shape which can be made to circumscribe the message, figure or symbol displayed thereon. The stipulated maximum sign area for a free standing or ground sign refers to a single facing.

*Sign, maximum height of*, means the vertical distance measured from the grade to the top of such a sign.

*Sign, minimum height of*, means the vertical distance measured from the nearest finished grade to the lower limit of such sign.

*Street frontage* means the proximity of a parcel of land to one or more streets.

*Temporary sign* means a sign which is erected or displayed for a limited period of time. ~~and not affixed to a Minnesota State Building Code approved structure.~~

*Wall sign* means any sign which is affixed to ~~or erected against~~ a wall of any building, including signs with individual letters, box cabinets, channelized components, service bay identification signs, and signs on mansards.

*Window sign* means a sign installed inside a window, or any sign placed within a building for the purpose of being visible from the public right-of-way. This does not include merchandise on display.

**Article II. Applications and procedures.**

- This is where I will be adding code items for permitting, reference to fee schedule, and references to building code. These items will be added for the March 27<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission public hearing.

**Article III. Standards and regulations.**

Sec. 108-300 – Purpose.

The following sections set forth standards and regulations for allowable sign types applicable in all zoning districts.

Sec. 108-301 – Bulk standards.

- (1) Minimum and maximum dimensional standards for signs for each zoning district are established in the following table:

	MR, RR, R-1A, R-1B, R-1C, R-2		R-3, COR-4A, COR-4B, COR-4C	B-1, B-2, B-3	I-1, I-2	COR-1, COR-3	COR-2, COR-2B	PI, P, CL, PUD
	Residential uses	Nonresidential uses						
<i>Wall, blade, and projecting signs (including box cabinet, channel letter, typeface on awnings and canopies, and business directory and area identification signs installed on walls)</i>								
Maximum sign area	Only per Home Occupation standards in Section 106-425(2)	15% of the front façade	15% of the front façade	15% of the front façade	15% of the front façade	15% of the front façade	15% of the front façade	15% of the front façade
Maximum size of an individual sign	Only per Home Occupation standards in Section 106-425(2)	15% of the front façade	<del>50</del> 100 square feet	15% of the front façade	15% of the front façade	<del>50</del> 100 square feet	<del>50</del> 100 square feet	15% of the front façade
Maximum height	Height of the parapet or eaves, whichever is less	Height of the parapet or eaves, whichever is less	Height of the parapet or eaves, whichever is less	Height of the parapet or eaves, whichever is less	Height of the parapet or eaves, whichever is less	Height of the parapet or eaves, whichever is less	Height of the parapet or eaves, whichever is less	Height of the parapet or eaves, whichever is less
Sign placement	Only per Home Occupation standards in Section 106-425(2)	Any building façade	Any building façade	Any building façade	Any building façade	Any building façade, with <del>at least 50%</del> a portion on the	Any building façade, with <del>at least 50%</del> a portion on the	Any building façade

						ground floor above or adjacent to the tenant entrance	ground floor above or adjacent to the tenant entrance	
Are box cabinet signs allowed?	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Are blade or projecting signs allowed?	No	No	Yes	No-Yes	No-Yes	Yes	Yes	No-Yes

	MR, RR, R-1A, R-1B, R-1C, R-2		R-3, COR-4A, COR-4B, COR-4C	B-1, B-2, B-3	I-1, I-2	COR-1, COR-3	COR-2, COR-2B	PI, P, CL, PUD
	Residential uses	Nonresidential uses						

*Freestanding signs (monument and pylon)*

Maximum sign area*	Not allowed	32 square feet per face; 64 square feet total	32 square feet per face; 64 square feet total	100 square feet per face; 200 square feet total	100 square feet per face; 200 square feet total	32 square feet per face; 64 square feet total	32 square feet per face; 64 square feet total	100 square feet per face; 200 square feet total
Maximum height *	Not allowed	6 feet	6 feet	25 feet	25 feet	6 feet	6-25 feet	25 feet
Maximum number of signs per parcel	Not allowed	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage
Are pylon signs allowed?	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

\*Note: Some parcels within the Highway 10 Signage Overlay District have larger maximum sign area and height regulations. Refer to the Performance Standards section for these standards.

	MR, RR, R-1A, R-1B, R-1C, R-2		R-3, COR-4A, COR-4B, COR-4C	B-1, B-2, B-3	I-1, I-2	COR-1, COR-3	COR-2, COR-2B	PI, P, CL, PUD
	Residential uses	Nonresidential uses						

*Freestanding area identification and business directory signs (monument and pylon)*

Maximum sign area*	32 square feet per face; 64	32 square feet per face; 64 square feet total	32 square feet per face; 64	100 square feet per face;	100 square feet per face;	32 square feet per face; 64	32 square feet per face; 64	100 square feet per face; 200 square feet total
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	square feet total		square feet total	200 square feet total	200 square feet total	square feet total	square feet total	
Maximum height*	6 feet	6 feet	6 feet	25 feet	25 feet	6 feet	6-25 feet	25 feet
Maximum number of signs per parcel	1 per vehicular access to a development	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage	1 per street frontage
Are pylon signs allowed?	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

\*Note: Some parcels within the Highway 10 Signage Overlay District have larger maximum sign area and height regulations. Refer to the Performance Standards section for these standards.

Sec. 108-302 – Performance standards.

(1) Wall signs.

- a. For a sign which is framed, outlined, or otherwise prepared and intended to provide a background for a sign display, the sign face area and dimensions shall include the entire portion within such background or frame.
- b. For a sign comprised of individual letters, figures, or elements on a wall or similar surface of the building or structure, the area and dimensions of the sign face shall encompass the total area of each letter, figure, or element used in the sign.
- c. For wall signs that utilize backer boards as a design element, the backer board should only be used to the extent needed for supporting the sign.
- d. All wall signs designed to be affixed flat against an exterior wall or raceway shall not project more than 16 inches from the wall to which the sign is affixed.
- e. Buildings with two or more tenants shall proportionately distribute allowable wall signage to each tenant, based on the percentage of the façade occupied by each tenant.
- f. Wall signs may be internally or externally illuminated, provided that the light source is not visible or exposed on the face or sides of the characters.
- g. Building directory signs attached to an exterior wall count toward allowable wall signage.
- h. Signage attached to a motor fuel station canopy counts toward allowable wall signage.
- i. Wall signs are not allowed on any of the following uses in any zoning district, except those explicitly allowed in accordance with home occupation performance standards in Section 106-425(2) of City Code:
  - i. single-family detached dwellings,
  - ii. detached townhome dwellings (including villas, cottage homes, and the like),
  - iii. attached townhouse dwellings,
  - iv. two-family attached dwellings,
  - v. accessory dwelling units (ADUs),
  - vi. any detached accessory structure built in conjunction with any of the uses listed in Items i-v in this section above.

(2) Projecting and blade signs.

- a. The total area of each sign face counts toward the allowable area for wall signage.
- b. Each face of the projecting or blade sign must not exceed 32 square feet in area.
- c. Projecting signs must not exceed 3 feet in width.
- d. All projecting and blade signs must maintain a minimum vertical clearance of 10 feet between the ground and the sign's lowest edge.
- e. Projecting and blade signs may be internally or externally illuminated, provided that the light source is not visible or exposed on the face or sides of the characters.

(3) Awnings and canopies.

- a. The area of all typeface applied to awnings and canopies, including all letters, numbers, symbols, and logos, counts toward the allowable area for wall signage.
- (4) Marquees
- a. The total sign area and placement of marquees must follow the same standards as wall signs.
  - b. Marquees may be internally or externally illuminated, provided that the light source is not visible or exposed on the face or sides of the characters.
- (5) Freestanding signs.
- a. Freestanding signs must be located fully on private property, with the permission of the property owner. The City will remove any signs in the public right-of-way, or erected without permission from the property owner. It is the property owner's responsibility to locate property lines to ensure compliance with this section.
  - b. Signs may be shared and combined at areas of shared entrances, cross-access easements and/or street frontages for multiple users. A written agreement or a signed leasing document must be provided to City staff alongside a permit application to ensure all parties utilizing the shared sign are permitted to do so on the subject property by the property owner. Shared freestanding signs installed in lieu of a standalone freestanding sign, including monument and pylon signs, shall not exceed 150 square feet per sign face and shall not exceed 300 square feet in total sign face area.
  - c. Freestanding building directory signs count toward allowable freestanding signage.
  - d. Any freestanding sign within 25 feet of any street right-of-way lines or driveway entrances shall have vertical clearance for proper visibility by motorists on all affected roadways.
  - e. No freestanding sign may be constructed or installed upon a property that does not have a principal structure.
  - f. Signs affixed to knee walls, retaining walls, or similar structures count toward allowable freestanding signage.
  - g. Scoreboards shall be permitted on properties used for recreational purposes.
    - i. A conditional use permit shall be required for properties not owned by the City.
    - ii. Advertising is permitted as an accessory use.
  - h. Freestanding signs may be internally or externally illuminated, provided that the lighting meets all standards in Section 106-310 of City Code.
  - i. Freestanding signage within the B-1, B-2, B-3, I-1, or I-2 zoning districts and within the Highway 10 Signage Overlay District, as defined in Section 106-970 of City Code, can be constructed with the following standards:
    - i. Maximum sign area: 150 square feet per face; 300 square feet total
    - ii. Maximum height: 75 feet
  - j. Monument signs.
    - i. In the COR, the signboard shall be constructed of wood, acrylic, aluminum or metal and shall be architecturally compatible with the style, composition, materials, colors and details of the building.
    - ii. In all districts outside of the COR, the signboard shall be constructed of durable materials and shall be architecturally compatible with the building.
  - k. Pylon signs.
    - i. In the COR, the signboard and base of the pylon shall be constructed with wood, acrylic, aluminum or metal and shall be architecturally compatible with the style, composition, materials, colors and details of the building.
    - ii. In all districts outside of the COR, the signboard and pylon shall be constructed of durable materials and shall be architecturally compatible with the building.
- (6) Window signs.
- a. Window signs include signs located within any glass or glazed area along the exterior of a building, or otherwise intentionally designed to be seen on the exterior of a building. This includes signs placed on doors, storefront, and clerestory windows.
  - b. Window signs shall not exceed the following maximum standards:



- i. Maximum sign area:
    - 1. All uses in the Residential, Business, Industrial, COR-2, COR-2B, PI, P, CL, and PUD zoning districts: no more than 30% of the window area.
    - 2. All uses in the COR-1, COR-3, COR-4A, COR-4B, and COR-4C zoning districts: no more than 10% of the window area or 4 square feet, whichever is less, and no more than 1 window sign per **building nonresidential tenant**.
  - c. Signs showing the hours of operation for a business are exempt from window sign requirements, provided they do not cover more than 30 percent of the window area.
  - d. No electronic messaging center signs, internally illuminated signs, or other internally illuminated attention-getting devices may be placed in any window, except for the following:
    - i. signs showing whether a business is open or closed,
    - ii. signs showing the hours of operation for a business.
- (7) Menu boards.
- a. Menu boards are intended to list products or services available for purchase at a business, through a drive-through lane, or through a walk-up window (ex. Food and beverages offered at restaurants; services offered at car washes; etc.).
  - b. Menu boards may be internally or externally illuminated, provided that the light source is not visible or exposed on the face or sides of the characters.
  - c. Menu boards may be freestanding or attached to an exterior wall.
  - d. Menu boards must be one-sided.
  - e. Menu boards adjacent to walk-up windows or business entrances must not exceed 3 square feet in size
  - f. Drive-through lanes may have up to 50 square feet in menu board area. The allowable area can be used in one sign or divided into multiple signs, as long as the cumulative total does not exceed 50 square feet.
  - g. All menu boards must not exceed 6 feet in height.
  - h. Menu boards adjacent to drive-through lanes may utilize electronic messaging centers, provided that all standards are met for both menu boards and electronic messaging centers.
  - i. Temporary signs shall not be attached to menu boards, nor shall menu boards be designed to allow for temporary signs to be attached for special promotions, events, or any other reason.
  - ~~j. No advertising messages are allowed.~~
- (8) ~~Wall-mounted building directory signs.~~ (Standards combined with Wall Signs.)
- ~~a. Building directory signs are intended to list all tenants of the building to which the sign is affixed.~~
  - ~~b. Building directory signs may be internally or externally illuminated.~~
  - ~~c. Building directory signs shall not project more than 6 inches from the building wall.~~
  - ~~d. All letters, numbers, symbols, and logos on the building directory shall not exceed 12 inches in height.~~
- (9) Directional signs.
- a. Directional signs are intended to guide pedestrian, vehicular, and freight traffic through parking lots to building entrances, drive-through lanes, loading zones, docks, or other similar destinations within a development.
  - b. Directional signs must not exceed 4 square feet in sign area.
  - c. Directional signs must not exceed 6 feet in height, unless they are affixed to other required infrastructure (such as light poles) to uniquely identify a portion of a parking lot for navigational purposes.
  - d. The total number of directional signs shall not exceed the number of parking lot entrances plus the number of drive aisles within the parking lot.
- (10) Service bay identification signs.
- a. Each service bay may have one identification sign on the outermost wall of any principal building adjacent to a service bay entrance.
  - b. If the identification sign only includes a number to identify the door or service bay, it shall not count toward the allowable wall sign area for the building.

- c. If the identification sign includes any information in addition to a number, such as a product, service, brand name, or other information, it shall count toward the allowable wall sign area for the building.

(11) Fuel pump island identification signs.

- a. All fuel pumps shall display the following information:
  - i. The type of service offered
  - ii. The price of gasoline, diesel, ethanol, or other product sold and dispensed at the fuel pump
  - iii. General direction to customers using the fuel pump
  - iv. Other relevant information pertaining to the facility.
- b. The sign area counts toward the maximum allowable sign area for the parcel on which it is located.

(12) Electronic messaging centers.

- a. Electronic messaging centers can be used as all or part of any allowable freestanding or wall sign in the Business, Industrial, COR, PUD, Public/Institutional, Parks, and Closed Landfill zoning districts. Electronic messaging centers are not allowed in Residential zoning districts, except in conjunction with the following principal uses:
  - i. Assisted living, memory care, and nursing home facilities.
  - ii. Multiple-family and/or senior living dwellings.
  - iii. Governmental or public facilities or utilities.
  - iv. Religious institutions.
- b. All electronic messaging centers shall meet the following display standards:
  - i. No sign may be brighter than is necessary for clear and adequate visibility, or that it interferes with the effectiveness of a traffic sign or signal, or that it distracts a driver from motor vehicle operation.
  - ii. All electronic messaging centers shall be equipped with a mechanism that automatically adjusts the brightness to ambient lighting conditions (e.g., dusk).
  - iii. The display shall not change more than once every 3 seconds.
  - iv. The display shall not include animations, flashing or scrolling text, full-motion video, special effects, or other non-static images.
  - v. The display must be one static image at a time, and the transition from one display to another must be instantaneous without special effects.
  - vi. The electronic messaging center must be designed and equipped to freeze on one display if a malfunction occurs. The electronic messaging center must also be equipped with a means to immediately discontinue the display if it malfunctions, and the sign owner must immediately stop the dynamic display when notified by the city that it is not complying with the standards of this section.

(13) Temporary signs. – to be added for the March 27<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission public hearing.