

CITY OF KAUKAUNA

ORDINANCE NO. 1943-2025

ORDINANCE REPEALING AND REPLACING SECTION 17.20

WHEREAS, the City of Kaukauna is pursuing updates to the existing sign code for greater clarity and simplicity; and,

WHEREAS, this proposed change would simplify the sign regulation for the Commercial Core District and allow greater flexibility for larger properties; and,

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission has recommended the following ordinance changes; and,

WHEREAS, the Legislative Committee has recommended the following ordinance changes; and,

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on November 18th, 2025 at the Council meeting to hear any public comments on this matter; and,

WHEREAS, the Common Council finds the following ordinance changes to be in the public interest;

NOW THEREFORE, it is ordained by the Common Council of the City of Kaukauna, Wisconsin, that Ordinance Section 17.20 of the Kaukauna Municipal Code be created as follows:

BEFORE ADOPTION

17.20 CCD Commercial Core District

1. *Purpose.* This district is established to provide for a centrally located intensely developed core of commercial activity. It is intended that the physical development of the district be highly concentrated and integrated offering a convenient and attractive shopping environment. It is also intended that, to the maximum extent practicable, various establishments be operated and managed in a coordinated manner. Permitted uses are limited to those which are highly compatible, mutually reinforcing, and conducive to common approaches in operation, area design improvements, traffic and pedestrian circulation, and parking. In addition, buildings and structures are subject to a certificate of appropriateness in section 17.48.
2. *Permitted principal uses and structures.*
 1. Retail outlets for sale of food, home furnishings, appliances, and wearing apparel, including repair strictly incidental to sales, office equipment, hardware, toys, sundries and notions, books and stationery, leather goods and luggage, jewelry, art, camera or photographic supplies, including camera repair, alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption, sporting goods, hobby and pet shops,

delicatessen, bake shop (but not wholesale bakery), musical instruments, florist and gift shops, and similar products.

2. Service establishments such as barber and beauty shops, shoe repair, restaurants, except drive-in restaurants, interior decorator, photographic studios, dance or music studio, tailor or dressmaker, laundry or dry cleaner, radio or television repair, and similar uses.
 3. Banks and other financial institutions, employment offices, business offices, professional offices, and similar establishments.
 4. Dwellings above or behind other principal uses so as to not interrupt business frontage.
 5. High density multifamily dwellings (minimum of 24 units) not exceeding five stories or 75 feet in height.
 6. Municipal parks.
3. *Permitted accessory uses and structures.*
1. Uses and structures customarily accessory and clearly incidental to permissible principal uses and structures which do not involve operations or structures not in keeping with the character of the district; provided, however, that garbage and trash shall be kept in closed containers and that such containers shall not be visible from portions of the premises customarily open to pedestrian or automobile circulation or parking.
 2. Craft production, or small-scale on-site production and/or assembly of arts, crafts, foods, beverages or other type of product involving the use of small-scale equipment and/or hand tools. This use shall be an accessory use to a retail/eating/drinking/tasting component that occupies a minimum of 10 percent of usable space. The retail/eating/drinking/tasting component shall front the street at sidewalk level and shall remain open to the public. All production, processing and distribution activities shall occur within an enclosed building. Craft production includes, but is not limited to ceramic art, glass art, candle-making, custom jewelry manufacture, bakeries, confectionaries, butchers, coffee roasting establishments, food production.
 3. Craft beverage production, including, but not limited to alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine, cider and intoxicating liquor.
 1. Craft brewers shall meet the Wisconsin State Statute §§125.29 criteria for brewers and shall not manufacturing a total of more than 10,000 barrels of fermented malt beverages in a calendar year. Appropriate licensing shall be held to permit on-site tastings and retail purchase of fermented malt beverages.

2. Craft vintners (includes wine and cider production) shall meet the Wisconsin State Statute §§125.53 criteria for winery permits. Appropriate licensing shall be held to permit on-site retail operations under a State-issued winery permit.
 3. Craft distillers (producing intoxicating liquor) shall meet the Wisconsin State Statute §§125.52 criteria for manufacturers' and rectifiers' permits. Appropriate licensing shall be held to permit on-site retail operations under a State-issued winery permit.
4. *Special exception uses and structures.*
 1. Clubs and organizations.
 2. Printing and publishing establishments.
 3. Commercial recreation facilities in completely enclosed buildings, including theaters, arcades, and amusement centers.
 4. Hotels.
 5. Taverns.
 6. Bowling alleys.
 7. Automobile sales and service.
 8. Automobile filling stations.
 9. Mortuaries.
5. *Dimensional requirements.* There are no minimum lot area or width requirements, no yard requirements or maximum height limitations; provided, however, that buildings and structures are subject to a certificate of appropriateness in section 17.48.
6. *Permitted accessory signs.* One exterior sign permitted on each sidewall of a building fronting on a street or public way. On all exterior signs, the name and graphics/logo of the business must occupy at least 60 percent of the sign area. Advertising by material or product manufacturers and suppliers shall not be considered the graphics/logo of the business, except when such manufacturer constitutes the entire official name of the business (i.e., Domino's Pizza or Pizza Hut). No sign or any part of a sign structure shall extend above the roofline of buildings. Signs shall not be permitted on sidewalls, unless fronting on a street or public way and no sign shall be painted directly onto the surface of a building.

1. *Flat signs.* For each principal structure, flat signs limited in aggregate area to 15 percent of the wall area fronting on a street or public way (total wall area, including the window area). Flat signs are permitted, provided that:
 1. Flat signs may not project more than 18 inches beyond the primary surface of the building.
 2. Flat signs may be luminous or illuminated by any acceptable method, but no blinking, flashing, or alternating lighting shall be permitted. All lighting and electrical elements, such as wires, conduit, junction boxes, transformers, ballasts, switches, and panel boxes shall be concealed from public view.
 3. Flat signs shall be located in the signable area of the building facade. If no signable area can be distinguished in the facade, a suitable signable area shall be determined by the redevelopment authority. If a sign is placed between windows, the height of the sign may not exceed more than two-thirds the height of the space.
 4. In buildings containing two or more businesses, the signable area may also include an area adjacent to the entrance to be used for a business directory. This sign shall not exceed seven square feet in total area. In addition, in buildings that contain two or more businesses, the owner may divide the signable area for the building occupants. In buildings where the facade is divided by architectural details, each business may be allowed a signable area.
2. *Projecting signs.* Projecting signs are permitted, provided that:
 1. One projecting sign per street front.
 2. Size of the sign not to exceed 16 square feet.
 3. Projecting signs may be displayed only if a building facade is 20 inches or more in width, unless the sign consists solely of a symbol.
 4. Signs shall project no more than five feet from the face of a building.
 5. Distance from a projecting sign to a side property line shall not be less than three feet.
 6. Projecting signs shall maintain a minimum vertical distance between the bottom of the sign and the grade of the right-of-way line of nine feet.
 7. Projection shall be at 90 degrees to the building face.
 8. Both sides of the sign shall be finished.

9. Signs should be a simple, geometric shape, such as a square, rectangle, circle, hexagon, etc., or may be a cutout symbolic or representational shape related to the nature of the business.
10. For one-story structures, projecting signs may extend to the juncture of roof and wall.
3. *Awnings.* Flameproofed, fabric awnings shall be permitted. The only items of information allowed on an awning shall be the name of the business, graphics/logo, and the street number and the combined area of such signs in excess of 15 square feet must be counted as part of the total area allowed that building for its exterior signs.
4. *Window signs.* No window sign shall occupy more than 30 percent of the total area of the window in which the sign is located. No window sign shall be affixed to a window surface, except that the name, monogram, logo, address, and telephone number of the person or firm occupying the premises as well as a description of products or services offered may be permanently affixed upon a window. The surface area of such signs is not to be included in the overall computation of allowable signage. The provisions of this subsection shall not restrict the reasonable application upon the glass surface of a door or window of lettering or decals giving the address, hours of business, entrance or exit information, professional or security affiliations or memberships, credit cards which are accepted or other similar information, nor shall the surface area of such lettering or decals be included in the overall computation of allowing window signs.
5. *Detached signs.* For every 100 feet of lot frontage, one detached sign limited to 50 square feet in area on each side (limit of two sides and 100 square feet) and 25 feet in height; provided, however, that the building is set back at least 35 feet from the street curb.
6. *Nonpermanent signs.* Nonpermanent signs shall be restricted in use to the display of special limited time promotions, sales, or events and shall be used for the sole purpose of serving as an identification sign. Such signs shall be limited in use on any premises to a period not to exceed 14 consecutive days at a time and not more frequently than four times per calendar year with a minimum of 30 days lapsed between each period of use. A sign permit shall be obtained prior to each time a sign is placed on a premises. The maximum size of such signs shall be 20 square feet on each face, back to back.
7. *Roof street signs.* Roof street signs shall be displayed within the selected signable area. The gross area permitted for the sign may not be more than 40 percent of the signable area. If the sign is enclosed by a box or outline, the total area of the sign, including the background, is counted as the gross area. If the sign consists of individual letters, only the area of the letters is counted as the

gross area. In case of multiple occupancies, the signable area may be divided among the occupants.

7. *Off-street parking requirements.*

1. *All permitted principal uses except dwelling units.* Any exterior expansion of a building or construction of a building shall be subject to review by the city plan commission to ensure that adequate off-street parking is available in the area. New construction or expansion creating 750 square feet or more of floor space shall provide specific locations of employee and customer parking and attest to its availability in writing, specifically noting if the parking is private or public and what parking space is available. Lack of parking is grounds for denial of the building permit application. Denials for permits shall be provided in writing, noting the reasons for denial and any supporting documentation of the denial. Appeals from this determination can be submitted to the city common council within 45 days of written notice of the denial. The common council can override the city plan commission's denial by a three-fourths vote of the common council.
2. *Dwelling units.* 1 1/2 parking stalls per dwelling unit. Dwelling units classified as elderly housing through applicable state or federal designations shall have one parking stall per dwelling unit.
3. *Parking surface requirements.* All parking areas shall be surfaced with a durable, dust-proof surface consisting of concrete or bituminous concrete properly sealed and surface treated.
8. *Incompatible use buffer requirements.* All areas wherein parking surfaces or vehicular traffic fall within ten feet of a property line abutting a single-family dwelling or two-family dwelling shall require a fence, hedge, or landscaped buffer, as set forth in section 17.32 Supplementary District Regulations.

(Code 2011, § 17.20; Ord. No. 1761, 10-17-2017; Ord. No. 1770, 1-16-2018)

HISTORY

Repealed & Replaced by Ord. [1844](#) on 10/5/2021

AFTER ADOPTION

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2. Service establishments such as barber and beauty shops, shoe repair, restaurants, except drive-in restaurants, interior decorator, photographic studios, dance or music studio, tailor or dressmaker, laundry or dry cleaner, radio or television repair, and similar uses.
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 9. Mortuaries.
5. *Dimensional requirements.* There are no minimum lot area or width requirements, no yard requirements or maximum height limitations; provided, however, that buildings and structures are subject to a certificate of appropriateness in section 17.48.
6. *Permitted accessory signs.* Signs are allowed on walls fronting a street/public way. Name and logo must occupy at least 60% of the sign area. No advertising from manufacturers unless it's the business name (e.g., Domino's Pizza). No signs above the roofline or painted directly onto the building surface. Residential use properties in this district must adhere to the residential sign requirements in the matching district, for

example a single family home in the Commercial Core District would follow the Residential Single family sign regulations.

a. Flat Signs:

1. Area: Limited to 15% of the wall area fronting a street/public way.
2. Projection: May not project more than 18 inches beyond the building surface.
3. Lighting: Can be illuminated but no blinking/flashing lights. Electrical elements must be concealed.
4. Placement: Located in the signable area of the facade. The height between windows must not exceed two-thirds of the space.
5. Multiple Businesses: Signable area can include a business directory (max 7 sq ft) and be divided among occupants.

b. Projecting Signs

1. Quantity: One per street front.
2. Size: Max 16 sq ft.
3. Projection: No more than 5 feet from the building face. Minimum 3 feet from side property line. Minimum 9 feet above ground.
4. Shape: Simple geometric or symbolic shapes. Both sides must be finished.

c. Awnings

1. Material: Flameproofed fabric.
2. Information: Only name, logo, and street number. Combined area over 15 sq ft counts towards total exterior sign area.

d. Window Signs

1. Area: Max 30% of window area.
2. Content: Name, logo, address, phone number, product/service description. Not included in overall signage computation.
3. Window signs from commercial advertisement are not allowed on residential use windows and second floor apartments.

e. Detached Signs

1. Quantity: One per 100 feet of lot frontage.
2. Size: Max 50 sq ft per side (total 100 sq ft), max 25 feet in height. Building must be set back at least 35 feet from the street curb.

f. Nonpermanent Signs

1. Usage: Limited to special promotions/events. Max 14 consecutive days, up to 4 times per year with 30 days between uses. Max size 20 sq ft per face. Permit required.

g. Roof Street Signs

1. Area: Max 40% of signable area. If enclosed, total area including background counts. If individual letters, only letter area counts.

2. Multiple Occupancies: Signable area can be divided among occupants.

Properties that the lot dimensions meet the requirements of 17.22 may follow the sign requirements of that district by Plan Commission approval of the sign type, size and location for each requested sign not to exceed 300sqft in size per sign.

7. *Off-street parking requirements.*

1. *All permitted principal uses except dwelling units.* Any exterior expansion of a building or construction of a building shall be subject to review by the city plan commission to ensure that adequate off-street parking is available in the area. New construction or expansion creating 750 square feet or more of floor space shall provide specific locations of employee and customer parking and attest to its availability in writing, specifically noting if the parking is private or public and what parking space is available. Lack of parking is grounds for denial of the building permit application. Denials for permits shall be provided in writing, noting the reasons for denial and any supporting documentation of the denial. Appeals from this determination can be submitted to the city common council within 45 days of written notice of the denial. The common council can override the city plan commission's denial by a three-fourths vote of the common council.
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3. *Parking surface requirements.* All parking areas shall be surfaced with a durable, dust-proof surface consisting of concrete or bituminous concrete properly sealed and surface treated.

8. *Incompatible use buffer requirements.* All areas wherein parking surfaces or vehicular traffic fall within ten feet of a property line abutting a single-family dwelling or two-family dwelling shall require a fence, hedge, or landscaped buffer, as set forth in section 17.32 Supplementary District Regulations.

(Code 2011, § 17.20; Ord. No. 1761, 10-17-2017; Ord. No. 1770, 1-16-2018)

HISTORY

Repealed & Replaced by Ord. [1844](#) on 10/5/2021

Introduced and adopted by Common Council on the 18th day of November, 2025.

APPROVED: _____

Anthony J. Penterman, Mayor

ATTEST: _____

Kayla Nessmann, Clerk