



MEMO

PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

To: Common Council
From: Dave Kittel, Director of Planning and Community Development
Date: 10/02/2025
Re: Sign Ordinance Update: CCD, IND and Creation of 17.33

Background information:

Staff have initiated an update and reorganization of the City's sign ordinance to improve clarity, enforcement, and alignment with current development patterns. The attached draft proposes the creation of a new section (17.33) dedicated exclusively to sign regulations, removing sign and billboard provisions from Section 17.32. These proposed updates have been reviewed by the Plan Commission with the Commission recommending approval of the updates pending a public hearing to be scheduled for the Common Council. This is meant as an introduction to the proposed changes to ensure the Council has time to review and understand the changes before action is taken.

Overview of Proposed Changes

- **New Section 17.33:** Consolidates all sign regulations into a standalone section for easier reference and enforcement.
- **Removal from 17.32:** Sign and billboard regulations will be removed from the general zoning provisions to reduce redundancy and confusion.

District-Specific Updates

Commercial Core District (CCD) – Section 17.20

- Language has been simplified for clarity.
- Staff proposes allowing properties that meet the lot requirements of the Commercial Highway District (17.22) to follow that district's sign regulations, subject to Plan Commission approval. This would:
 - Provide flexibility for larger lots.
 - Reduce nonconformities.
 - Maintain district character through controlled review.

Industrial District – Section 17.25

- Updates include:
 - Allowing signage in parks under Institutional District provisions.

- Adding standards for temporary signs, including:
 - Size and duration limits.
 - Restrictions near residential districts.
 - Option for extended duration via Plan Commission approval.

Rationale These changes aim to:

- Simplify ordinance structure.
- Improve enforcement consistency.
- Provide flexibility for unique lot configurations.
- Reduce existing nonconformities.
- Ensure signage remains appropriate to district character.

Next Steps Staff is presenting this as introduction to the Common Council. The next steps would be to go to the legislative committee and having a hearing in November at the Common Council to then take action on this item. The draft language is below for the changes to 17.20 and 17.25 and attached the language for creating 17.33 and also a document that shows all the changes together for additional information:

17.20 CCD Commercial Core District

6. Permitted Accessory Signs

Exterior 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.

17.25 IND Industrial District

6. *Permitted accessory signs.* For each principal structure, the following shall apply:
 1. *Flat signs.* Flat signs limited in aggregate area to 25 percent of the wall area fronting on a street.
 2. *Detached signs.* For every 90 feet of lot frontage, one detached sign limited in area to 200 square feet on each side (limit of two sides and 400 square feet) and 30 feet in height.
 3. *Temporary signs.* Temporary signs as provided in section 17.16(5)(b).

Temporary detached signs are limited in area to 100 square feet on each side, with a limit of two sides and 200 square feet, and limited to 15 consecutive days and 90 total days per calendar year. Such signs shall not contain any flashing lights and shall not be located within 100 feet of any residential district. Longer duration may be approved by the Plan Commission on a case-by-case basis.

4. Signage as provided in section 17.24(6)(a).

Strategic Plan:

Reviewing and updating ordinance is a procedural item and not directly tied to the Strategic Plan.

Budget: Not applicable

Recommendation:

Review the updates

