

Ordinance #1323

An ordinance of the City of Lansing, Michigan, to repeal and replace the existing signs ordinance, being Part 14, Title 4 of the Lansing Codified Ordinances in its entirety, with Part 13, Title 2, regulating the size, location, and character of signs and sign structures on property in Lansing.

THE CITY OF LANSING ORDAINS:

Section 1. That Part 14, Title 4 of the Lansing Codified Ordinances, is hereby repealed in its entirety

Section 2. That in its place, **Part 13, Title 2** of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Lansing, Michigan, be and is hereby enacted to read as follows:

PART 13, TITLE 2

CHAPTER 1310 SIGNS

1310.01 INTENT AND SUBSTITUTION

(a) This chapter is intended to:

- (1) Provide guidance on sign display in limiting the allowable number, size, and placement of signs to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the City of Lansing.
- (2) Eliminate visual clutter and distractions to protect and improve traffic and pedestrian safety.
- (3) Protect and enhance the community's aesthetic quality and the character and appearance of the City of Lansing.
- (4) Provide standards for the maintenance and repair of signs and establish procedures for enforcing the provisions of this Chapter.

1310.02 APPLICABILITY

This chapter shall apply to all persons, businesses, and associations owning, occupying, or having control/management of any premises located within the city limits of the City of Lansing.

All new, reconstructed, altered, or relocated signs within the city limits shall comply with the provisions of this Chapter. Any sign already erected as of the effective date of this chapter which is rendered nonconforming by the provisions of this chapter or subsequent amendments hereto, shall be subject to the restrictions and regulations contained herein.

1310.03 DEFINITIONS

ABANDONED SIGN. A sign advertising a business, activity or product which remains on the premises for more than six (6) consecutive months after the business, activity, or product to which it is related to ceased active operation on the premises.

ABANDONED SIGN STRUCTURE. A structure which supported a sign and remains on the premises for more than twelve (12) consecutive months after it ceased to support a lawful sign for a business, activity, or product that has ceased active operation on the premises.

ANIMATED SIGN. A sign or display that uses movement or the appearance of movement using patterns of lights, changes in color or light intensity, computerized special effects, video displays, or through any other method.

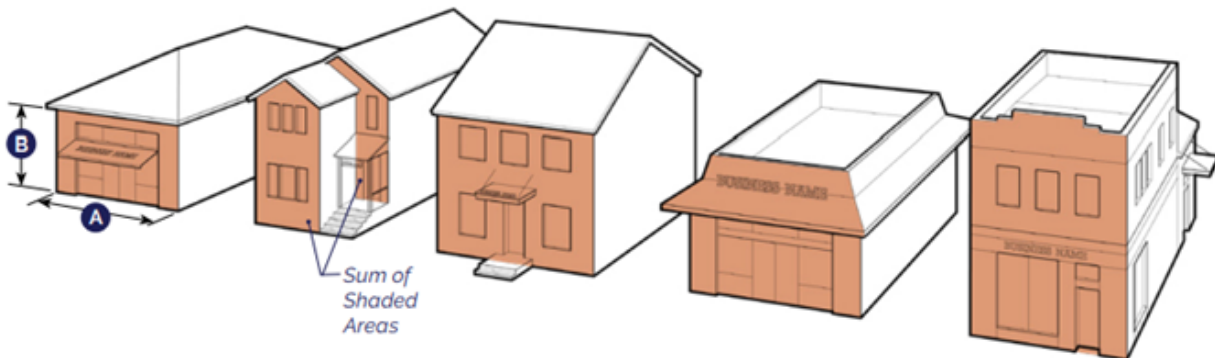
AREA. The entire area of a sign within the limits of writing or pictorial representation together with any frame, other material, or color forming an integral part of the display, but excluding the necessary supports or uprights on which such sign is attached. The area shall be determined by measuring from the outside edge of the frame, material, or color forming the sign. If the sign has no backing, but a wall or canopy is used as the background, a square or rectangle shall be formed around the text or symbols, and those dimensions will be used to compute the area. When a sign has two (2) or more faces, the area of all faces shall be used in determining the total area of the sign.

BANNER SIGN. A temporary sign, as further defined herein, made of cloth, paper, fabric, or other flexible materials, either with or without a supporting framework.

BUILDING FAÇADE. All exterior sides of a building.

BUILDING FRONTAGE. The front of a building facing a right-of-way. In the case of a corner lot, or in the case of a building covering an entire block a building may have more than one frontage. In the case of a multi-tenant building, the frontage of a building or side containing the main entrance directly to that area of the building that the business occupies. For a parcel with more than one (1) line abutting a right-of-way, the building frontage that is used to calculate the allowable wall signage is the one which is intended to be the front wall of the building either by entranceway or another architectural feature. Where this distinction cannot be made, the smaller of the facades facing a right-of-way shall be used to calculate the allowable wall sign area.

[FIGURE 1]



ELECTRONIC MESSAGE CENTER. A sign capable of displaying words, symbols, figures, or images that can be electronically changed by remote or automatic means.

FREESTANDING SIGN. A self-supported sign on the ground by a base, foundation, pole, or brace, not attached to a building and intended to be permanently displayed on the property.

HEIGHT, CLEARANCE. For signs attached to a building or a support structure, the vertical distance measured from the lowest point of the natural grade directly below the sign to the lowest edge of the sign.

[FIGURE 2]



Vertical Clearance

HEIGHT, SIGN. The vertical distance measured from the natural grade directly below the sign to the highest point of the sign or sign structure to which it is attached.

ILLUMINATED SIGN. A sign or part thereof that incorporates fluorescent, neon, LED, or any other form of lighting, or one which is illuminated by an external source such as ground lights that shine directly on the sign.

INSTITUTIONAL LAND USE. Government buildings, schools, churches, hospitals, community centers, public parks, and recreational facilities, or any other public or quasi-public use permitted in the zoning district in which the institution is located.

LEGALLY NONCONFORMING SIGN. A sign which does not comply with one (1) or more of the requirements of this Chapter but was lawfully erected prior to its effective date.

LOCAL STREET. A street not designated as an arterial corridor, activity corridor, suburban corridor, prime connector, or neighborhood connector on the Form-Based Zoning Code Street Typology Map.

MULTI-TENANT SIGN. A sign that provides advertising for two (2) or more establishments that are completely separated from each other within a building, a series of buildings on the same parcel of land, or businesses on adjoining parcels of land that function as a single development with shared access and/or parking.

NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRANCEWAY SIGN. A sign located on property owned or controlled by the City that identifies the name of a subdivision, condominium development, or neighborhood organization recognized as being active by the City of Lansing Department of Neighborhoods, Arts, and Citizen Engagement.

PROJECTING SIGN. A sign, other than a wall sign, as defined in this Chapter, affixed to an exterior building wall with the exposed faces perpendicular to the plane of the wall.

PUBLIC SIGN. A sign, whether temporary or permanent, erected in the public interest by or upon orders from the City of Lansing, Ingham County, State of Michigan, federal government or any agency thereof having appropriate jurisdiction, Public signs include traffic control signs, signs of historical interest,

and signs that communicate messages to the public involving safety matters or emergency situations, which signs may or may not be erected in the public right-of-way.

SIDEWALK SIGN. A portable 'A-frame' (\wedge) or 'inverted-T' sign (\perp) comprised of two (2) separate panels or faces located on a public sidewalk.

SETBACK. The distance between a property line and the nearest edge of the sign.

SIGN. A device, fixture, placard, or structure that uses any color, form, graphic, illumination, symbol or writing to advertise, announce or identify the purpose of a person or entity, or to communicate information to the public.

SIGN STRUCTURE. Includes, but is not limited to a pole, base, or frame intended to be used for the support or display of a sign, regardless of whether the sign itself has been removed.

SUSPENDED SIGN. A sign that is suspended, hung, or connected to the underside of an awning, canopy, or horizontal building surface, and intended to be viewed by pedestrians on a non-public sidewalk at close range.

[FIGURE 3]



TEMPORARY SIGN. A sign, banner, inflatable, or other advertising device, with or without a structural frame, intended for a limited period of display.

TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGN. A sign used solely to direct traffic by identifying building and parking lot entrances/exits, service areas and traffic flow throughout the site.

UNSAFE OR DANGEROUS SIGN. Any sign or sign component, which becomes damaged, insecure, or in danger of falling.

UNLAWFUL SIGN. Any sign that was not lawfully erected or maintained whether prior to or since the adoption of this Chapter.

VACANT PARCEL. Any parcel or lot of record on which no building or structure exists thereon or is not legally occupied.

VEHICLE SIGN. A sign affixed to a parked vehicle or truck trailer which is located on a property primarily for display, rather than for transportation purposes.

[FIGURE 4]



WALL SIGN. A sign attached parallel to and extending not more than twenty-four (24) inches from the wall of a building. Painted signs, signs which consist of individual letters, cabinet signs, and signs mounted on the face of a mansard roof, shall be considered wall signs.

WINDOW SIGN. A sign located on a window or behind a window which is intended to be viewed from the outside. A window sign does not include blinds, shades or screens, or solid color backgrounds that may cover the window and do not display a sign as defined in this Chapter.

1310.04 LICENSING, PERMITS, AND FEES

- (a) **License Required.** No person shall engage in the business of, or perform the work of, installing, erecting, maintaining, repairing, or altering any sign without first obtaining a license therefor from the City Clerk. All such licenses shall automatically expire on April 30 of each year unless renewed. All applications for sign permits must be submitted by a duly licensed sign erector. Said license holder shall perform all work stipulated on the sign permit.
- (b) **Insurance Requirements for Licensees.** All licensees engaged in the installation, alteration, maintenance, repair, or erection of signs shall file with the City Clerk proof of a general liability insurance policy and enforcement which insures the licensee and the City against any liability imposed upon the licensee and/or the City arising out of the work performance for the signs. Such insurance shall provide for the payment to any person injured, or to another by reason of the death of any one person, to the extent of \$100,000.00, and for the payment of \$300,000.00 for injuries to or the death of more than one person, and for property damage in the amount of \$100,000.00.
- (c) **Permit Required.** Unless specifically exempt under this Chapter, no person shall erect, construct, relocate, or cause to be erected, constructed, relocated, or significantly altered, any sign, without first obtaining a sign permit with information required by the Building Safety Office. A separate, additional electrical permit is required for new electrical service or any changes to existing electrical service regardless of the size or exemption status of the sign. All signs exempted from permit shall be reviewed by the zoning administrator for compliance with this Chapter.

(d) All projecting signs extending over the public right-of-way, regardless of size or permit required, shall be licensed and placed on file with the Public Service Department.

(e) Permit Application. Each sign permit application shall require the applicant to provide the following information:

(1) The name, current address, and current telephone number of the applicant.

(2) The legal description or the permanent parcel number, and the address, of the parcel on which the activity is to occur.

(3) The location of the proposed sign relative to the property lines of the parcel.

(4) All points of ingress and egress on the subject parcel and on adjacent parcels if there are adjacent parcels within 60 feet of the proposed sign location or alteration, and the location of parking spaces, if any.

(5) A sign plan which includes the following information: location of sign on parcel, sign dimensions, sign message dimensions, height, width of building, parcel zoning district, and a sign sketch.

(6) Construction design information.

(7) Any other information which, in the determination of the Department, may be necessary to adequately review the proposal.

Sign permit applications, along with the appropriate nonrefundable fee, shall be submitted to the Building Safety Office on forms made available by the City. Upon receipt of a sign permit application, the Building Safety Office shall forward the application to the Planning Division for review and approval prior to the issuance of a sign permit. If it is discovered that the sign permit application contains any false information, the Building Safety Office may revoke the permit or deny the permit application, whichever is appropriate.

(f) Exceptions. No permits are required for the following signs or changes thereto:

(1) Signs that are less than ten (10) square feet in area.

(2) Exempt Signs listed in Section 1310.09 and Temporary Signs permitted by Section 1310.11.

(3) The changing of removable parts of an approved sign that is designed for such changes, or the repainting or reposting of display matter.

(4) The replacement of a sign face within an existing sign cabinet if it does not involve the replacement of any structural component of the sign.

These exceptions do not relieve the sign owner or the owner of the property upon which the sign is located from compliance with all other requirements of this Chapter regarding size, placement, erection, maintenance, removal, and disposal.

(g) Appeal Procedure. An appeal of any decision by the Zoning Administrator shall be made as follows:

(1) Appeals pertaining to the structural features or abandonment of a sign shall be made to the Building Board of Appeals.

(2) Square footage of sign area, setback requirements, message unit limitations and other dimensional requirements shall be made to the City Board of Zoning Appeals.

(3) All appeals shall be made within 30 days from the date of receipt-of the decision, by the Zoning Administrator, that is being appealed.

An appeal fee shall be paid at the time of the filing of the appeal. The appeal application shall specify the particular grounds upon which the appeal is based and shall be signed by a party aggrieved, or his or her authorized representative. If a variance is sought, the appeal shall specify the requirements from which the variance is sought, and the nature and extent of such variance.

(h) **Inspection of Work Covered by Permit.** A person conducting or performing work covered by a permit required by this chapter shall notify the Building Safety Officer or their designee when such work has commenced, in accordance with the inspection schedule established by the Building Safety Office. Unless otherwise indicated, no person shall conceal any portion of such work until it has been inspected and approved by the Building Safety Officer or their designee. When required, a certificate of inspection will be issued. No electrical or illuminated sign shall be permanently operated before it has been inspected in accordance with the City Electrical Code.

(i) **Suspension or Revocation of Licenses and Permits.** The Director shall give notice, in writing, to the holder of a license or permit issued under this chapter of the reasons for any proposed suspension or revocation of such license or permit, which notice shall be served upon such holder at least five days before the time set for the hearing before the Building Board of Appeals. At the hearing, the licensee or permittee may appear, in person, or be represented by counsel, and may contest such suspension or revocation. For good cause shown at such hearing, the Building Board of Appeals may suspend or revoke any such license or permit.

(j) **Fees.** Permit, licensing, and appeal fees shall be established by resolution of the City Council and are nonrefundable.

1310.05 SIGN ILLUMINATION

(a) An electrical permit is required for new electrical service or any changes to existing electrical service regardless of the size or exemption status of the sign.

(b) The intensity of all lights used for the illumination of a sign shall be maintained at a level, and directed, positioned, or shielded to prevent:

(1) Glare onto adjacent properties;

(2) Interfering or impairing the vision of motorists or bicyclists traveling on a public right of way; and

(3) Competition for attention with other signs in the area.

1310.06 MAINTENANCE

(a) All signs, including those for which a permit is not required, shall be maintained in a safe and working condition. Signs with peeling paint, excessive rust, broken sign faces, bent cabinets or supports, or any other

structural or operational defect, including burned out light bulbs or tubes, shall be in violation of this Chapter.

1310.07 ENFORCEMENT

The Zoning Administrator, Building Official, or any of their designees are authorized to enforce this Chapter.

- (a) **Right of Entry.** Whenever it is necessary to make an inspection to enforce any of the provisions of this chapter, or whenever an authorized enforcing officer of the City has reasonable cause to believe that there exists on any building or upon any premises any condition or violation of this chapter which makes such building or premises unsafe, dangerous or hazardous, the authorized enforcing officer may enter such premises at all reasonable times to inspect the same or to perform any duty imposed upon the authorized enforcing officer by this chapter, provided that if such premises is occupied, the authorized enforcing officer shall first present proper credentials and request entry. If such premises is unoccupied, the authorized enforcing officer shall first make a reasonable effort to locate the owner or other persons having charge or control of the premises and request entry. If such entry is refused, the authorized enforcing officer shall have recourse to every remedy provided by law to secure entry.
- (b) **Unsafe, Dangerous, Unlawful, Abandoned Signs.** Unsafe, dangerous, unlawful, or Abandoned signs, as determined by the authorized enforcing officer, shall be immediately removed, or shall be made safe or lawful whichever is appropriate in accordance with all the provisions of this chapter, and laws of the State of Michigan. The authorized enforcing officer shall notify the property owner and/or other known responsible parties in writing of such condition and shall direct them to remove the sign in question or make immediate corrections, whichever is appropriate. Should the property owner and/or other known responsible parties fail to comply with such notice, the authorized enforcing officer shall take all action necessary to remove the sign or correct the unlawful or unsafe condition, including Court ordered enforcement. If ordered by a court, any cost incurred by the City in removing or making the sign safe shall be a lien against the real property on which the sign is located, and shall be reported to the City Assessor, who shall bill the property owner and/or other known responsible party and assess the cost against the property until paid. Any property owner and/or other known responsible party aggrieved by the determination of the authorized enforcing officer, may appeal the determination as provided in Section 1310.04(f).
- (c) **Legally Nonconforming Signs, Sign Structures.** Legally Nonconforming Signs or Sign Structures shall be immediately removed by the property owner and/or other responsible parties, consistent with standards for loss of legal nonconformity of [Chapter 1270](#). The authorized enforcing officer shall notify the property owner and/or other known responsible parties in writing of such condition and shall direct them to remove the sign or sign structure in question. Should the property owner and/or other known responsible parties fail to comply with such notice, the authorized enforcing

officer shall take all action necessary to remove the nonconformity, including pursuing Court ordered enforcement. If ordered by a court, any cost incurred by the City in removing the sign or sign structure shall be a lien against the real property on which the sign or sign structure was located, and shall be reported to the City Assessor, who shall bill the property owner and/or other known responsible party and assess the cost against the property until paid. Any property owner and/or other known responsible party aggrieved by the determination of the authorized enforcing officer, may appeal the determination as provided in Section 1310.04(f).

- (d) **Right-of-Way Signs.** Except as otherwise provided in [Chapter 1022](#), signs illegally placed in the public right-of-way may be removed and disposed of by the City, without notice to the owner of the property adjoining the right-of-way or the owner of the sign. The City may also issue a civil fine to the owner of the illegally placed sign(s).

1310.08 GENERAL SIGN PROVISIONS

- (a) Signs are permitted as an accessory use to a primary use. When the building on the premises containing the primary use is removed, all signs and sign structures located on the premises shall also be removed prior to finalization of the demolition permit.
- (b) Buildings in the DT-3 “Downtown Core” zoning district that are used for a public purpose and are owned or entirely occupied by the United States Federal Government, State of Michigan, or the City of Lansing and any of its agencies, departments or instrumentalities are exempt from the dimensional requirements of this chapter. The Director of the Department of Economic Development and Planning shall have sole authority to approve or deny signs for these agencies after reviewing the proposed signs' compatibility with the surrounding area and the intent expressed in this chapter.
- (c) **Location.**
- (1) Setbacks required by this Ordinance shall be measured from the property line adjoining a public right-of-way to the nearest edge of the sign.
 - (2) No freestanding sign shall be placed closer to any side or rear property line than five (5) feet.
 - (3) No sign, other than those installed by agencies of government or those authorized to be installed by such agencies with appropriate jurisdiction may be erected, or placed on public property, including rights-of-way.
 - (4) No sign may be installed in a location that obstructs the clear vision areas required by Section 1250.03.03 of the Zoning Ordinance or interferes in any way with the free use of any public right-of-way, public or private sidewalk, intersection, ingress or egress point, transit stop, parking space, drive aisle, driveway, building entrance, fire escape, or accessibility ramp.
 - (5) A plot plan depicting the clear vision area shall be provided with the sign permit application for a freestanding sign.

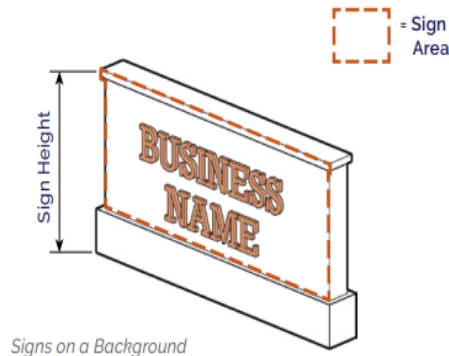
(d) Electronic Message Center (EMC).

- (1) All Electronic Message Center signs shall have automatic dimming controls, either by photocell or via software settings, in order to bring EMC lighting level at night into compliance with this chapter.**
- (2) EMC signs located within two hundred (200) feet of a residentially zoned property or property being used for residential purposes, shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 pm and 6:00 am.**
- (3) To preserve open vistas, protect the historic integrity of, and enhance the visual cityscape of Downtown Lansing and the Michigan State Capitol Building, EMC signs in the DT-3 district shall be limited to 20 square feet in sign area.**
- (4) EMC signs in all commercial or special zoning districts, excluding DT-3, are limited to 32 square feet in sign area.**
- (5) No sign message shall blink, scroll, flash, or be animated.**
- (6) All messages shall remain static while being displayed but may instantly change once every eight (8) seconds or longer.**
- (7) Any EMC sign that is malfunctioning shall be turned off until such time that it is functioning properly.**

(e) Sign Area Measurements.

- (1) The entire area of the framework and background of the sign is calculated as sign area, including any material or color forming the sign face or background used to differentiate the sign from the structure against which it is placed.**

[FIGURE 5]



- (2) The sign area for a sign mounted on a building wall, awning, fence, or landscape wall is the area of a rectangle that encompasses each word or graphic element. Sign area does not include any supporting framework or bracing, unless it is part of the message or graphic element.**

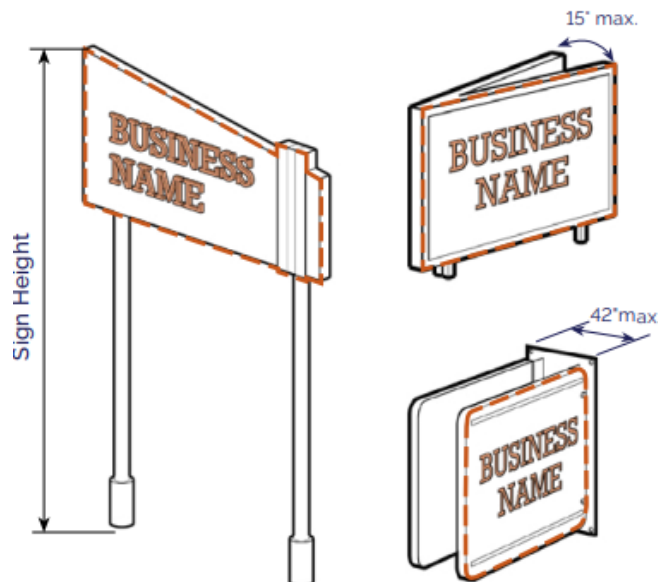
[FIGURE 6]



Individually Mounted Letters & Signs on an Awning

- (3) For signs that include a pole, pole cover, or bracket, the portion of the structure that is not an integral part of the display area shall not be included in the overall calculation of sign area provided no pole or pole cover exceeds two (2) feet in width.
- (4) If a sign has two (2) or more faces, the area of all faces is included in determining the area of the sign. However, if two (2) sign faces are placed back-to-back, or at an angle no greater than fifteen (15) degrees from one another so that both faces cannot be viewed from any point at the same time, the sign surface area shall be computed by the measurement of one (1) of the sign faces. In addition, sign faces that are part of the same sign structure shall not be more than forty-two (42) inches apart.

[FIGURE 7]



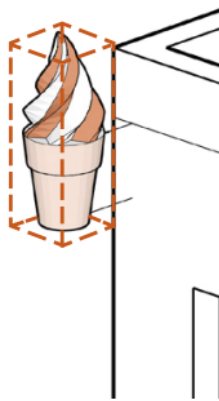
Signs with Poles or Brackets

Signs with 2 or More Faces

- (5) The sign area of Three-Dimensional, Free-Form, or Sculptural (nonplanar) signs is calculated as fifty (50) percent of the sum of the

area of the four (4) vertical sides of the smallest cube that will encompass the sign.

[FIGURE 8]



- (f) **Preservation of Required Landscaping.** No tree or shrub that was installed as part of an approved site or landscape plan for the property upon which it is planted, or which is otherwise required to comply with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, may be removed or trimmed to the extent that it may not survive, in order to accommodate a sign. Upon request, the Zoning Administrator may approve the relocation or replacement of plant materials, if it can be done in a manner that satisfies the requirements and the intent of the Zoning Ordinance regarding landscaping, screening, and buffering.

1310.09 EXEMPTION FROM PERMITTING

The following signs do not require a sign permit, but are subject to the applicable requirements of this chapter:

- (a) **Address Number Sign.** A sign that identifies the address of a property, structure, or establishment, provided it does not exceed four (4) square feet in area for buildings containing four (4) residential units or fewer and no other uses or sixteen (16) square feet in area for a building containing five (5) or more residential units or any non-residential uses.
- (b) **Public sign.** Public signs as defined by this Chapter and notices erected, authorized, or mandated by any governmental law, statute, ordinance, or signs that conform to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and is installed for the purpose of directing or instructing traffic.
- (c) **Construction/Work Zone Signs.** Signs designating construction/work zones, signs warning people to keep out of certain areas due to hazardous conditions, and signs identifying the future development of the site for which the construction fence is erected may be affixed to the fence, subject to the following conditions:
 - (1) Shall not be in the public right-of-way unless the project involves permitted work in the public right-of-way or unless the sign is affixed to an authorized temporary fence or barricade around the construction/work zone area in the public right-of-way.
 - (2) Must be removed within five (5) calendar days upon completion of the project.

- (3) Signs are allowed on each frontage of the construction/work zone.
 - (4) Shall not extend beyond the top or the ends of the support structure to which it is attached.
- (d) **Sidewalk Sign.** A two-sided, portable sign, placed directly outside of the establishment to which it relates, are allowed subject to the following conditions:
 - (1) A maximum of one (1) sidewalk sign is allowed per establishment per street frontage.
 - (2) Sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet in sign surface area per side and three (3) feet in height.
 - (3) Sign may be placed outside on the premises or public sidewalk during the business hours of the establishment to which it relates only and shall be stored indoors at all other times.
 - (4) Sign shall not interfere with ingress and egress to a building, parking lot or street; shall always maintain a minimum of five (5) feet of unobstructed sidewalk clearance; and shall not interfere with visibility at the intersection of any street or driveway.
 - (5) Sign shall not be illuminated, contain any electronic components, or have attached to it any balloons, streamers, banners, or other such materials.
 - (6) Sign may not be placed outdoors when high winds, heavy rain, or heavy snow conditions are present and may not interfere with any snow removal operations.
- (e) **Suspended Signs.** One (1) suspended sign up to six (6) square feet in area is permitted for each ground floor establishment. A minimum vertical clearance of at least eight (8) feet from the lowest edge of the sign to the finished grade directly below is required.
- (f) **Flags** that are not intended to solely draw attention to the site or any business/operation occurring thereon, shall be permitted on flag poles that are anchored into the ground, are at least twenty (20) feet but no taller than thirty-five (35) feet in height and not located in a public right-of-way.

1310.10 PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following signs and any other signs not specifically permitted by this Chapter are prohibited:

- (a) **Signs which are:**
 - (1) Abandoned signs, sign structures, or parts thereof.
 - (2) Animated signs using or indicating movement using lights or moving parts.
 - (3) Balloons, inflatables, pennants, streamers, spinners, or flags, and other objects which are used as signs.
 - (4) Banner signs extending on or over public property, except as authorized by the City, County, or State.
 - (5) Unlawfully installed or erected.
 - (6) Unsafe or capable of causing electrical shock.
 - (7) Using words or symbols which would tend to mislead or confuse vehicle operators. For example, "STOP", "LOOK", "DANGER".

- (8) Obstructing the view of, imitating, copying, purporting to be, or may be confused with any authorized official sign, traffic sign, traffic signal, or traffic control device.**
- (9) Obstructing or impairing access to windows, doors, roofs, or other building openings necessary for fire escape.**
- (10) In the public right-of-way, except as permitted and regulated elsewhere in these Ordinances.**
- (11) Attached to trees, streetlights, traffic signs, utility poles, utility boxes, or standpipes.**
- (12) Attached to any fence, wall, retaining wall, or accessory structure.**
- (13) Vehicle Signs.**
- (14) If attached to a building, project above the parapet or roof line, except as otherwise permitted and regulated by this Chapter.**
- (15) Contain obscenity.**

1310.11 TEMPORARY SIGNS

(a) In General:

- (1) Each non-residential use and each multiple family residential use with more than twenty (20) units is permitted one (1) temporary sign for up to thirty (30) calendar days, twice during a calendar year on the parcel of land where the business, agency, institution, or residential use to which the sign relates is in active operation.**
- (2) Shall only be permitted on parcels that have at least one (1) property line abutting a non-local street and shall be oriented toward a non-local street.**
- (3) A temporary freestanding sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area.**
- (4) A temporary wall sign shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet in area.**
- (5) Shall not be internally illuminated.**
- (6) An additional temporary sign may be allowed per parcel when the parcel, building, or building suite to which the sign relates is being offered for sale or lease subject to the following restrictions:**
 - a. Sign shall not be located in the public right-of-way.**
 - b. One (1) sign is allowed per street frontage.**
 - c. Sign shall not interfere with ingress and egress to a building, parking lot or street, shall always maintain a minimum setback of five (5) feet from a property line abutting a road right-of-way and shall not interfere with visibility at the intersection of any street or driveway.**
 - d. Sign shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet in area and four (4) feet in height on residential parcels of land that have twenty (20) residential units or fewer or on parcels of land containing nonresidential uses that are less than one-half (0.5) acres in size.**
 - e. Sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height on residential parcels of land containing more**

than (20) residential units or on parcels containing nonresidential uses that exceed one-half (0.5) acres in size.

- f. Sign shall be removed within five (5) calendar days following the closing of the sale or lease.

(7) Additional temporary signs may be allowed per parcel leading up to and following an official local, county, state, or federal election or referendum subject to the following restrictions:

- a. Sign shall not be located in the public right-of-way.
- b. Sign shall not interfere with ingress and egress to a building, parking lot or street and shall not interfere with visibility at the intersection of any street or driveway.
- c. Sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet in area or three (3) feet in height.
- d. Sign shall be removed within ten (10) calendar days following the election to which the sign was associated.

(b) Temporary Freestanding Signs:

- (1) Shall be subject to the site visibility requirements of Section 1250.03.03 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- (2) Shall be setback at least ten (10) feet from a property line abutting a public right-of-way line.
- (3) Shall not exceed six (6) feet in overall height.
- (4) No temporary sign of any kind, except for sidewalk signs and construction/work zone signs as permitted and regulated by this Chapter, shall be allowed in the public right-of-way.
- (5) Shall not be permitted on parcels of land in the DT-1 zoning district that are less than one-half (0.5) acres in size or have more than fifty percent (50%) of the total building area on the parcel in use for residential purposes.

(c) Temporary Wall Signs:

- (1) Must be flat mounted against the wall of a building and properly affixed thereto.
- (2) Shall not be placed above the first floor of the building, on a roof, or extend above the roofline of a building.
- (3) Shall not be illuminated.

(d) Temporary Signs in Residential districts

- (1) Temporary signs on parcels in residential zoning districts and on parcels used for single- or two-family dwellings in the DT-1 district are limited to three (3) feet in height and three (3) square feet in sign area.
- (2) Temporary signs shall not be placed in the right-of-way or attached to a fence, structure, or residential building.

1310.12 WALL SIGNS

(a) In General:

- (1) Wall signs shall be parallel to the building wall they are attached to and shall not project more than twenty-four (24) inches from the building wall. Wall signs may only extend up to thirty-six (36) inches beyond the wall of the building it is attached to in order to

accommodate a curved design or a sign that has depth through overlapping planes or varying plane thickness.

- (2) Wall signs shall not obstruct any door, window, fire escape, or ventilation system
- (3) Wall signs shall not extend above the top of a building wall or beyond the ends of the wall to which they are attached, except as otherwise permitted by this chapter.
- (4) Wall signs shall be located no higher on the building wall than twenty (20) feet from the finished grade of the wall to which it is attached.
- (5) One (1) sign shall be permitted on each of the four (4) walls facing different directions on:
 - a. Buildings being used for non-residential land uses.
 - b. Buildings with a mix of residential and nonresidential uses.
 - c. A multiple-family residential building containing more than twenty (20) units, except that no sign shall be permitted on a building wall that faces an adjoining parcel being used solely for residential purposes with less than twenty (20) units.
- (6) Each business that has a pedestrian or loading entrance on the rear of the building shall be permitted one (1) additional ten (10) square foot sign on the wall near that entrance to the building, for identification purposes only.
- (7) A wall sign may be attached to a mansard roof subject to all other requirements of this chapter.
- (8) In addition to wall signs, buildings that have at least six (6) stories above ground and are not used solely for residential purposes may have one (1) building identification sign on each of the four (4) walls of the highest floor of the building facing different directions. The building identification signs shall not exceed one hundred (100) square feet in area.
- (9) Wall signs may only be illuminated if the wall does not face a Single- or Two-Family residential use.
- (10) The combined total area of all walls signs shall not exceed what is permitted for the building based upon Table 1310.12 (a)(9):

Table 1310.12 (a)(9)	
Building Frontage	Maximum Wall Sign Area
Up to 39 lineal feet of building frontage	15 percent of building façade area Maximum size of 50 square feet
40 feet to 99 feet of lineal building frontage	15 percent of building façade area Maximum size 150 square feet
100 feet or more of lineal building frontage	15 percent of building façade area

	Maximum size 200 square feet
Building façade area calculated by 15 feet in height x building width	

(b) Multi-Tenant Buildings

- (1) Each business that occupies part of and has a direct entrance on the front wall of the building shall be permitted one (1) wall sign, the allowable square footage shall be based upon Table 1310.12 (a)(9) and determined by the linear footage of the front wall of the building that the business occupies.
- (2) Businesses that occupy a corner suite are permitted one (1) sign on the front wall and one (1) sign on the side wall of the building where the business is located. The allowable square footage for a sign on the side wall of the building is limited to one-half (0.5) of the square footage that is permitted for the business on the front wall of the building or fifty (50) square feet, whichever is greater.
- (3) Multi-tenant buildings may have one (1) multi-tenant wall sign on the rear facade of the building that is occupied by businesses. The allowable square footage for a sign on the rear of the building shall be the same as, and shall not be deducted from, what is permitted for the businesses on the front or side walls of the building.
- (4) Businesses that do not occupy any part of the frontage of the building shall be permitted one (1) sign, not exceeding ten (10) square feet in area on the front wall of the building, near the entrance for which the business can be accessed.

1310.13 FREESTANDING SIGNS

(a) S-C, MX-C, MX-1, MX-2, DT-2, IND-1, IND-2, IND-3, INST-1 & INST-2 Zoning Districts.

- (1) One (1) freestanding sign per parcel of land is permitted. One (1) additional sign may be permitted on a corner parcel that is more than five (5) acres in size and has frontage along and direct access to two (2) non-local roads, if both signs are not oriented towards and clearly visible from the same road.
- (2) Sign shall be set back at least six (6) feet but not more than fifteen (15) feet from the property lines abutting a public right-of-way.
- (3) A freestanding sign may be set back up to thirty (30) feet from property lines abutting a public right-of-way if approved by the Zoning Administrator based on dimensional restraints of the property or building placement.
- (4) Sign shall not exceed twenty-five (25) feet in height and one hundred twenty (120) square feet in area.
- (5) Any sign set back less than ten (10) feet from the property line shall not exceed six (6) feet in height and thirty-two (32) square feet in area.
- (6) No freestanding sign shall be erected on a vacant parcel.

(b) MX-3, DT-1, DT-3, R-AR, MFR and R-MX Zoning Districts.

- (1) One (1) freestanding sign shall be permitted on each parcel of land containing a non-residential use, a mix of residential and non-residential uses or a multiple family residential use with more than twenty (20) residential units. One (1) additional sign may be permitted on a corner parcel that is more than five (5) acres in size and has frontage along and direct access to two (2) non-local roads, if both signs are not oriented towards and clearly visible from the same street.**
- (2) Sign shall only be permitted on parcels that have frontage on and shall be oriented towards a non-local street.**
- (3) Sign shall not exceed six (6) feet in height and thirty-two (32) square feet in area and shall be setback at least six (6) feet from property lines abutting a public right-of-way on parcels that are less than one (1) acre in size.**
- (4) Sign shall not exceed ten (10) feet in height and sixty (60) square feet in area and shall be setback at least ten (10) feet from property lines abutting a public right-of-way on parcels that are more than one (1) acre in size.**
- (5) No freestanding sign shall be erected on a vacant parcel.**

(c) Institutional Uses.

- (1) Institutional uses in the S-C, MX-C, MX-1, MX-2, MX-3, DT-1, DT-2, DT-3, IND-1, IND-2, and IND-3, zoning districts shall be subject to the same sign regulations as all other uses within said districts.**
- (2) In all other zoning districts, one (1) freestanding sign shall be permitted on parcels that are at least one-half (0.5) acre in size, have at least one (1) property line abutting a non-local street and contain an institutional use in active operation. One (1) additional sign may be permitted on a corner parcel that is more than five (5) acres in size and has frontage along and direct access to two (2) non-local streets, if both signs are not oriented towards and clearly visible from the same street.**
- (3) One (1) freestanding sign per entrance to the site along a non-local street shall be permitted for institutional uses in all zoning districts that are more than ten (10) acres in size, as long as the signs are separated by at least one hundred (100) feet.**
- (4) Sign shall not exceed six (6) feet in height and thirty-two (32) square feet in area and shall be setback at least six (6) feet from property lines abutting a public right-of-way on parcels that are less than one (1) acre in size.**
- (5) Sign shall not exceed ten (10) feet in height and sixty (60) square feet in area and shall be setback at least ten (10) feet from property lines abutting a public right-of-way on parcels that are more than one (1) acre in size.**

(d) Multi-Tenant Signs

- (1) Signs shall be permitted in the SC, MX-C, MX-1, MX-2, IND-1, IND-2, IND-3, INST-1, and INST-2 zoning districts.
 - (2) One (1) sign per parcel of land is permitted. One (1) additional sign may be permitted on a corner parcel, at least five (5) acres in size, with frontage along two (2) non-local streets if both signs are located near a primary entrance to the site and are not oriented towards or clearly visible from the same street.
 - (3) Sign shall not exceed twenty-five (25) feet in height and two hundred (200) square feet in area.
 - (4) Sign shall be setback at least ten (10) feet but no more than thirty (30) feet from the property lines abutting a public right-of-way.
 - (5) A business that is accessed from an adjacent multi-tenant site may, with expressly written permission from the sign owner, advertise its business on the multi-tenant sign but will then not be entitled to an additional freestanding sign on the parcel of land occupied by the business.
- (e) Signs that are located interior to a school campus, hospital campus, park, multiple-family development, or multi-tenant commercial development may exceed the number of signs allowed herein, provided that such signs are not clearly legible from any public street.
- (f) A business whose building and associated parking lot(s) covers multiple parcels that are not combined but are immediately adjacent to one another and are associated with the same establishment shall not be permitted more than one (1) freestanding sign.

1310.14 WINDOW SIGNS

- (a) Window signs shall not exceed twenty (20) percent of the area of the window from which the sign can be seen from the exterior of the building. All mounting hardware and equipment shall be concealed from the exterior view of the building. In the case of multi-pane windows, the surface area of the window shall be the combined surface area of the individual panes.

1310.15 AWNING/CANOPY SIGNS and VEHICLE SERVICE STATION CANOPY SIGNS

- (a) Awning/canopy signs.

- (1) Signs, on awnings or canopies located above entrances to a building intended to provide shelter or installed as an architectural element, shall count towards the allowable number and square footage of wall signage permitted for the business in the building that it relates thereto.
- (2) A sign may extend up to five (5) feet vertically above the flat roof of a canopy. If the sign is limited to the address or the name of the building, it shall not count towards the wall signage limitations. In no case shall the sign exceed forty (40) square feet in area.
- (3) Electronic Message Center signs are not permitted on awnings or canopies.
- (4) Only awnings or canopies on the first-floor story of the building may contain signs.

- (5) The sign area shall not exceed what is permitted for wall signage for the building, or fifty (50) percent of the awning or canopy surface on which it is displayed, whichever is less.
- (6) All awnings or canopies shall be subject to the architectural standards set forth in Section 1246.04.01 (d) of the Zoning Ordinance.
- (b) Motor Vehicle service station canopy signs.
 - (1) One (1) sign is permitted on each side of the canopy.
 - (2) No part of the sign shall extend above or below the canopy and must be flat mounted against the canopy.
 - (3) Signs shall not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the area of the side of the canopy to which it is attached.
 - (4) Signs on canopies shall not count towards the allowable number of wall signs for the building, whether or not it is attached thereto.
 - (5) EMC signs are permitted.

1310.16 PROJECTING SIGNS

Projecting signs are permitted in all non-residential zoning districts for each business occupying a building subject to the following provisions:

- (a) One (1) sign per business. Businesses on corner parcels that occupy a part of the first-floor building walls, may have one (1) projecting sign facing each public street. First floor businesses that have a customer entrance at the rear of the building may have one (1) projecting sign on the rear building wall.
- (b) Sign shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area or a maximum projection from the building wall of four and one-half (4.5) feet.
- (c) Where a projecting sign is located on the corner of a building and is used in lieu of one (1) permitted wall sign, the area of the projecting sign may exceed sixteen (16) square feet and shall be deducted from the total allowable wall sign area for the building establishment. Such signs shall be visible from at least two (2) directions.
- (d) Sign shall have a minimum vertical clearance of ten (10) feet from the bottom edge of the sign to the ground or sidewalk, or fifteen (15) feet if overhanging an alley.
- (e) Signs on the front building wall(s) shall be located within fifteen (15) feet of the ground directly below the sign. Signs on the rear building wall shall be located within twenty (20) feet of ground directly below the sign.
- (f) There shall be a minimum separation distance of eight (8) feet between projecting signs.

1310.17 NEIGHBORHOOD ENTRANCEWAY SIGNS

Signs that identify the name of a subdivision, condominium development, or neighborhood organization recognized as being active by the City of Lansing Department of Neighborhoods, Arts, and Citizen Engagement, may be located within the public right-of-way and shall be subject to the following:

- (a) Review, approval, and issuance of permits from the Public Service Department and the Building Safety Office are required prior to installation of a sign. A plan showing the proposed location of the sign, a rendering of the sign showing the content, materials and all dimensions and a plan for

appropriate landscaping around the base of the sign shall be submitted along with the permit applications.

- (b) The sign subject matter must be related solely to identifying the name of the subdivision, according to the recorded plat thereof, the name of the condominium according to the recorded master deed, or the name of the neighborhood organization/association recognized as being active by the Department of Neighborhoods, Arts, and Citizen Engagement, or its successor.
- (c) Sign shall not exceed six (6) feet in height and fifty (50) square feet in area and shall not be internally illuminated or contain a changeable message center of any kind.
- (d) One (1) sign on each side of the roadway at the primary entrance(s) or one (1) sign within a boulevard at the primary entrance(s) of the subdivision, condominium development or designated neighborhood association/organization may be permitted. The primary entrances where such signs may be located must be at the intersection of a street entering the area to which it is identifying and a non-local street, unless otherwise approved by the Public Service Department.
- (e) Signs may be located at no more than two (2) primary entrances to the subdivision, condominium development, or neighborhood association/organization area that it identifies.
- (f) The sign, land, and landscaping around the sign must be retained in ownership by the City. All construction, maintenance, or repair, however, shall be the responsibility of the homeowners or condominium association or the neighborhood organization/association.
- (g) Appropriate insurance and indemnity policies protecting the City against liability must be provided and maintained.
- (h) The City retains the right to remove the sign and the landscaping if it is not being properly maintained or if it necessary to perform roadway, sidewalk, or utility construction/repair, or for any reason at all.

1310.18 VARIANCES and APPEALS

- (a) The Board of Zoning Appeals shall hear and decide requests for variances and appeals regarding a decision or determination made by the Zoning Administrator related to the provisions of this Chapter. Requests made to the Board of Zoning Appeals are subject to all of the requirements, procedures, and evaluation criteria established by [Chapter 1274](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.
- (b) To prevent signs exceeding the dimensions allowed in this Chapter from conflicting with business, residential and public land uses, no new freestanding signs exceeding the dimensions allowed in this Chapter shall be constructed, and no existing signs shall be rebuilt in excess of their existing dimensions, within the City of Lansing, unless approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals based upon a determination that removal and replacement of such an existing sign is necessary to accommodate new development on the site upon which it is located.

(c) In making its decision, the Board must find that the proposed development is consistent with the zoning designation of the property and all applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance as well the goals and objectives of the City's current Master Plan and the future land use plan being advanced therein.

(d) Appeals pertaining to the structural features of a sign shall be made to the Building Board of Appeals.

1310.98 ISSUANCE OF MUNICIPAL CIVIL INFRACTION CITATIONS AND VIOLATION NOTICES

The Zoning Administrator, the Building Official and any of their designees are hereby designated as the authorized City officials to issue Municipal civil infraction citations (directing alleged violators to appear in court) or Municipal civil infraction violation notices (directing alleged violators to appear at the Municipal Ordinance Violations Bureau) as provided in Chapter 203 of these Codified Ordinances.

1310.99 PENALTY

Whoever violates any of the provisions of this chapter is responsible for a Municipal civil infraction and shall be subject to the civil fine provided in Section 203.06 of these Codified Ordinances, plus costs and other sanctions, for each infraction. Repeat offenses shall be subject to increased fines as provided in Section 202.99(c)(2).

Section 3. All ordinances, resolutions or rules, parts of ordinances, resolutions, or rules inconsistent with the provisions are repealed.

Section 4. Should any section, clause or phrase of this ordinance be declared to be invalid, the same shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole, or any part thereof other than the part so declared to be invalid.

Section 5. This ordinance shall take effect on the 30th day after enactment, unless given immediate effect by City Council, and shall expire December 31, 2032.