

City Code, Chapter 7B: SIGN REGULATIONS

**CHAPTER 7B  
SIGN REGULATIONS**

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*[Clerk's Note: Former Chapter 10 of the Town Code, "SIGNS", has been amended and renumbered as Chapter 7B by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989.]*

**ARTICLE I  
TITLE AND PURPOSE**

**SECTION 7B-100. TITLE.** This Chapter of the Columbus City Code shall be known and may be cited as the "Sign Ordinance" of the City of Columbus, Minnesota, and as referred to herein as "this Ordinance." The Sign Ordinance regulates the type, number, size, structure, height, lighting, erection, repair, location and maintenance of all outdoor signs within the City of Columbus; provides for the issuance of permits; and provides penalties for noncompliance and violation thereof. *[§ 7B-100, formerly § 10-100, amended by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989, and amended by Ord. No. 07-02, effective March 1, 2007, and amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

**SECTION 7B-101. PURPOSE.** It is the purpose of this Ordinance to protect the public health, safety, and welfare through the establishment of comprehensive and balanced regulations for signage in the City of Columbus. The City Council finds that unregulated signage may be detrimental to community aesthetics and public safety. The City Council finds that sign sizes, heights, and lighting have different aesthetic impacts within different zoning districts, such as residential districts and business districts, and that varying sign standards, based upon development density and highway traffic capacity, are appropriate to protect the public health, safety, and welfare. In establishing these sign regulations, the City Council makes the following additional findings to support the purpose of these regulations:

- A. General advertising signs are necessary to allow for business identity and promotion and to allow consumers to locate and access businesses in the City.
- B. Public information signage and traffic signage is necessary to promote public health, safety and welfare.
- C. There is a need to balance the purpose of adequate advertising opportunities with proper design controls and uniform standards that promote aesthetic quality in the City, prevent public nuisance, and promote public safety.
- D. The Minnesota Department of Transportation has technical memoranda identifying the distracting characteristics of flashing signs and dynamic signs, which may have impact on vehicular safety.
- E. The City Council believes that sign dimensions and controlling the frequency of changes in dynamic sign messages correlates to the aesthetic impact of such signs, particularly on county and local roadways, in residential districts, and in business districts with higher standards for design and architectural controls.

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F. Uniform sign standards are appropriate in each zoning district to create fair and equitable advertising opportunities for all businesses, to protect property investments and to promote pedestrian and motorist welfare and safety.

G. The varying land uses and development densities in different zoning districts, in addition to different highway functions and capacities, suggest that the magnitude and intensity of signs may have greater impact in one zoning district than another.

H. Sign standards that are more restrictive in residential districts and commercial districts with high site design and architectural standards are in the public interest in order to minimize aesthetic impacts and public nuisance and to protect private property investment.

I. Standards for the illumination of signs that are more restrictive in residential districts and commercial districts with high site design and architectural standards are in the public interest in order to minimize aesthetic impacts and public nuisance and, to protect private property investment.

*[§7B-101 added by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

## ARTICLE II DEFINITIONS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

**SECTION 7B-200. DEFINITIONS.** The following terms shall have the following meanings:

A. **Awning Sign** - A building sign or graphic printed on or in some fashion attached directly to the awning overhanging building windows or doors.

B. **Balloon Sign** - A temporary sign used to draw attention to property, with or without lettering, made of lightweight material supported by helium, hot, or pressurized air, and which is greater than eighteen inches in diameter.

C. **Banner Sign** - A temporary sign of flexible fabric mounted to a pole or a structure at one or more edges.

D. **Campaign Sign** - A temporary sign promoting the candidacy of a person running for a government office, or promoting an issue to be voted on at a governmental election.

E. **Canopy** - A roof-like structure without enclosed walls, attached to a building to cover a walkway or entrance, or an independent structure intended to provide cover from the weather.

F. **Changeable Copy Sign** - A sign or portion of a sign, which has a reader board for the display of text information in which letters, numbers and symbols may be changed or re-arranged manually.

G. **Changeable Copy Sign, Electronic** - A sign or portion thereof that displays electronic, non-pictorial, text information in which each letter, number, graphic, or symbol is defined by a small number of matrix elements using different combinations of light emitting diodes (LEDs), fiber optics, light bulbs or other illumination devices within the display area. Electronic changeable copy signs include computer programmable, microprocessor controlled electronic displays. Electronic changeable copy signs include projected images or messages with these characteristics onto buildings or other objects.

H. **Construction Sign** - A non-illuminated sign placed at a construction site identifying the project or the name of the architect, engineer, contractor, financier and other involved parties, or announcing the character of the building enterprise or the purpose for which the building is intended.

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- I. **Development Project Sign** - A sign placed at a development site for the purpose of selling or promoting the project.
- J. **Directional Sign** - Any sign which serves solely to designate the direction of any place or area and, as such, shall be located on the same lot as said place or area. Examples include "entrance" and "exit" signs.
- K. **Dynamic Sign** - Any electronic changeable copy sign, electronic graphic display sign, video display sign, or any other sign capable of electronic or digital messaging or display.
- L. **Electronic Graphic Display Sign** - A sign or portion thereof that displays electronic, static images, static graphics or static pictures, with or without information, defined by a small number of matrix elements using different combinations of light emitting diodes (LEDs), fiber optics, light bulbs or other illumination devices within the display area where the message change sequence is accomplished immediately or by means of fade, repixelization or dissolve modes. Electronic graphic display signs include computer programmable, microprocessor controlled electronic or digital displays. Electronic graphic display signs include projected images or messages with these characteristics onto buildings or other objects.
- M. **Flag** - Any fabric or similar flexible material attached at one end of the material, usually to a staff or pole, so as to allow movement of the material by atmospheric changes and which contains distinctive colors, patterns, symbols, emblems, insignia, or other symbolic devices.
- N. **Flashing Sign** - An illuminated sign that blinks or changes in light intensity creating a blinking or flashing appearance, but not including any Dynamic Signs.
- O. **Freestanding Sign** - Any sign which has supporting framework that is anchored in the ground, which is independent from any building or other structure and which has an open area between the ground and the sign face. The minimum open area between the ground and bottom of the sign face for all permanent freestanding signs greater than 50 square feet in area shall be 6 feet.
- P. **Garage Sale Sign** - A temporary sign less than 12 square feet in area located on private property which advertises a temporary sale of residential household goods.
- Q. **Ground Sign** - A freestanding sign with its sign face mounted on the ground or mounted on a base attached to the ground at least as wide as the sign (see Monument Sign).
- R. **I-35 Corridor.** The I-35 Corridor is that portion of the City of Columbus which lies within the area which is 300 feet easterly of and parallel with the easterly right-of-way lines of Interstate Highway Nos. 35, 35E, and 35W and within the area which is 300 feet westerly of and parallel with the westerly right-of-way lines of Interstate Highway Nos. 35, 35E, and 35W. A parcel of land which lies partially within this corridor shall be deemed to be entirely within the corridor for the purposes of these sign zoning regulations
- S. **Illuminated Sign** - Any sign which contains an element designed to emanate artificial light, internally or externally.
- T. **Incidental Sign** - A small sign that has a directional or informational purpose for uses often secondary to the primary use of the property on which it is located, such as "service center," "drive-up window," "restroom," and other similar directives.
- U. **Inflatable Sign** - A balloon sign or other three-dimensional object, with or without lettering, logos, or symbols, supported helium, hot or pressurized air, used for advertising or to draw attention to a property.

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- V. **Marquee** - A permanent roof-like structure projecting beyond an entertainment center or similar use or extending along and projecting beyond the wall of that building, generally designed and constructed to provide cover from the weather.
- W. **Monument Sign** - A freestanding sign with its sign face mounted on the ground or mounted on a base attached to the ground at least as wide as the sign (see Ground Sign).
- X. **Motion Sign** - Any sign which revolves, rotates, has any moving parts or gives the illusion of motion.
- Y. **Mural** - A work of graphic art painted on or applied to a building wall which contains no advertising or logos.
- Z. **Name Plate** - A sign which designates the individual names of businesses or names of the persons occupying a building.
- AA. **Off-Premises Sign** - Any sign bearing advertising or display unrelated to a business, enterprise, or profession conducted, or a commodity or service sold or offered upon the real property where such Sign is located.
- BB. **On-Premises Sign** - Any sign bearing advertising or display related to a business, enterprise, or profession conducted, or a commodity or service sold or offered upon the real property where such sign is located.
- CC. **Pennant Sign** - A rope with small flags or triangular shapes of fabric or plastic, with or without lettering, logos, or symbols, and used for advertising or to draw attention to a property.
- DD. **Permanent Sign** - A non-temporary sign designed and intended for long-term use.
- EE. **Portable Sign** - Any sign which is designed to be transported, by trailer or on its own wheels, and not permanently anchored to the ground.
- FF. **Projecting Sign** - A sign in which the plane of the sign is perpendicular to the wall on which it is attached.
- GG. **Public and Institutional Use** – Local, state, and federal governmental uses, public and private educational facilities, churches and religious facilities, and hospitals.
- HH. **Public Service Sign**. A non-commercial governmental sign containing public identification information, directional information, public advisories, or similar messaging serving a public purpose.
- II. **Pylon Sign** - A freestanding sign which has one or more supportive structures anchored in the ground and which has a sign face elevated above ground level by one or more poles or beams and with the area below the sign face open.
- JJ. **Real Estate Sign** - A temporary sign, less than 32 square feet in area in residential zoning districts and less than 96 square feet in area in commercial and industrial zoning districts, which announces the sale, rental, or lease of property by the owner or real estate company.
- KK. **Sign** - Any structure, placard, announcement, declaration, device, demonstration or insignia used for direction, information, identification or to advertise or promote any business, product, goods, activity, services, interests, or to draw attention.
- LL. **Sign Area** - A measurement including the outermost dimensions of the sign frame containing the sign face.
- MM. **Sign Band** – An area on an exterior wall of a building that is intended to be the common location of permitted wall signs for multiple messaging or multiple building tenant signs.
- NN. **Sign Face** - The surface of the sign upon which the message of the sign is exhibited.

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OO. **Sign Height** - The height of the sign shall be computed as the vertical distance measured from the base of the sign at average property grade within 30 feet of the sign to the top of the highest attached component of the sign.

PP. **Sign Structure** - The base, poles, uprights, bracing, and framework which supports the sign face.

QQ. **Subdivision Sign** - A permanent sign designed to identify a residential or commercial subdivision.

RR. **Suspended Sign** - A sign that is connected to and suspended from the underside of a horizontal plane surface, such as a canopy, marquee, or similar structure.

SS. **Temporary Sign** - A sign which is not permanently affixed or installed, and is intended to be displayed for a limited period only.

TT. **Traffic Sign**. A sign installed and maintained by a governmental entity for the purpose of directing pedestrian and vehicular movement, including but not limited to street signs, speed limit signs, stop and yield signs, caution signs, directional signs, and similar public service and traffic advisory signs located within public rights-of-way.

UU. **Video Display Sign** - A sign that changes its message or background in a manner or method of display characterized by non-interrupted, constant motion or pictorial imagery, which may or may not include text and depicts action or a special effect to imitate movement, the presentation of pictorials or graphics displayed in a progression of frames which give the illusion of motion, including but not limited to the illusion of moving objects, moving patterns or bands of light, or expanding or contracting shapes, not including electronic changeable copy signs. Video display signs include projected images or messages with these characteristics onto buildings or other objects.

VV. **Wall Sign** - A sign in which the plane of the sign is attached parallel to the exterior wall of a building and does not extend more than two feet from the surface of the wall.

WW. **Wall Sign Area** - A measurement including the outermost dimensions of the sign frame containing the sign face. In instances where sign lettering is affixed to the wall, sign area is the measurement of a polygon drawn around all of the letters (including logos or emblems) of the sign message.

*[§ 7B-200 amended by Ord. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

**SECTION 7B-201. GENERAL PROVISIONS.** The following provisions apply to all signs, except signs located within buildings and not visible from the exterior of the buildings.

A. Every parcel occupied with a structure shall have an address sign, clearly legible from the public street where access is located. Address signs may include numbering on a US Postal Service Mailbox, a monument with affixed address, or numbers affixed to a building. Address signs shall not exceed 4 square feet in area.

B. No sign shall be erected without first obtaining a permit, except address signs, garage sale signs, political signs, allowable public safety and traffic signs located within public rights-of-way.

C. No signs or notices may be located within public easements or rights-of-way or on utility poles, utility appurtenances, or trees within public rights-of-way, except street signs, traffic signs, public safety signs, authorized directional signs, and similar public service signs.

D. No sign shall be placed in a location that obstructs the view of drivers of vehicles or shall be placed in a location that is hazardous to pedestrians. The minimum sign setback at the

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intersection of public streets shall be no closer than 30 feet from the point of right-of-way intersection, as measured along the rights-of-way (other setbacks may apply).

E. No sign shall be designed to mimic traffic and public service signs or be placed in a location that obstructs the view of traffic and public service signs.

F. On-premises traffic directional signs (e.g. "one-way" or directional arrows), not exceeding 2 square feet in area and 4 feet in height are permitted for all commercial, industrial, and public/institutional uses.

G. Off-premises, non-advertising, public service directional signs (e.g. hospital, school, public/institutional facilities), not exceeding 2 square feet in area and 4 feet in height are permitted in all zoning districts.

H. No illuminated sign shall flash or change in illumination intensity, except for traffic signals, time and temperature signs, and as specifically permitted in this Ordinance.

I. No sign shall be painted on, attached to, or maintained upon trees, shrubs, or other natural features, except an address sign or subdivision monument sign which may be affixed to a landscape boulder.

J. No sign shall be painted on, attached to, or maintained upon a vehicle or trailer, except signs on vehicles and trailers which are related to the business and premises upon which the vehicles and trailers are kept or used in normal business functions.

K. No signs are permitted on accessory structures, except as specifically permitted in this Ordinance.

L. Signs are permitted on canopies covering the gasoline dispensing pump islands on properties approved for gasoline sales, provided the total signage square footage on the canopies does not exceed 120 square feet. Illuminated canopy signs are permitted. Dynamic canopy signs are not permitted.

M. Illuminated signs are permitted in all commercial and industrial districts and permitted for public/institutional uses in the Rural Residential District. The amount of ambient lighting from internally lit signs shall not exceed an intensity of illumination greater than 3 foot candles measured at the property line abutting any residential district boundary or 10 foot candles measured at other property lines. The source of illumination on externally lighted signs must be shrouded and shall not allow the light source to be seen from or impact public rights-of way or adjacent properties.

N. Portable/temporary advertising signs (including banners and pennants) are prohibited in all districts except as specifically authorized below:

1. Temporary signs which are coincidental to or used in conjunction with a seasonal civic, school, or church function.

2. Temporary garage sale signs not exceeding 16 square feet in area and not used at the same address more than 7 consecutive days, nor more than 4 times per year.

3. Temporary construction signs advertising a public, institutional, residential, commercial, or industrial development not exceeding 64 square feet in area are permitted on a construction site until the project is completed.

4. Portable/temporary advertising signs are allowed four times per year per business for grand openings, anniversaries, holidays, or other special events.

A. Temporary retail product advertising signs that are no larger than 4 square feet in area and are attached to buildings, gas pumps, or authorized outdoor product displays are exempt from the above restrictions in Subsection 4.

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- B. Signs for the sale of produce and agricultural products raised on the premises that are no larger than 16 square feet in area are exempt from the above restrictions in Subsection 4.
5. The period of use for any portable/temporary advertising sign shall not exceed 30 consecutive days for any single event, and there shall be a minimum of 14 days between the use of special event portable/temporary advertising signs.
- A. Temporary retail product advertising signs that are no larger than 4 square feet in area and are attached to buildings, gas pumps, or authorized outdoor product displays are exempt from the above restrictions in Subsection 5.
- B. Signs for the sale of produce and agricultural products raised on the premises that are no larger than 16 square feet in area are exempt from the above restrictions in Subsection 5.
6. Portable/temporary signs shall not exceed 64 square feet in area and shall not be located in public rights-of-way or any location obstructing vehicular visibility.
- O. Legal nonconforming signs may not be expanded but may be continued through repair, maintenance, restoration, or sign face replacement, unless:
1. the sign is discontinued for a period of more than one year (discontinued shall mean the use or business associated with the sign has been discontinued for a period of more than one year); or
  2. the sign is destroyed by fire, neglect, or other peril to the extent of greater than 50% of its market value, and no building permit has been applied for within 180 days of when the sign was damaged.
- P. Projecting signs shall be prohibited except as specifically permitted in this Ordinance.
- Q. All signs shall be maintained in a safe and aesthetic condition at all times.
- R. Political campaign signs may be permitted on private property in any zoning district, but may not be placed sooner than ninety (90) days preceding the election involved and must be removed within ten (10) days following the election.
- S. No sign shall be erected or maintained in the window of a building, which occupies more than forty percent (40%) of the area of said window area.
- T. Dynamic signs permitted in this Ordinance shall meet the zoning district requirements established in Article III and the following minimum standards:
1. The electronic display background color tones, illumination intensity, lettering, logos, pictures, illustrations, symbols, and any other electronic graphic or video display for advertising signs shall not change at intervals less than those prescribed in individual zoning district provisions.
  2. The duration of the transition of the electronic image or message change of Dynamic signs with minimum intervals required prescribed between image or message change shall be instantaneous and include no fading, scrolling, or other special effects, except authorized Video Display signs.
  3. All dynamic signs must be equipped with a default mechanism that will stop the messaging or freeze the image in one position when a malfunction in electronic programming occurs.
  4. The sign must not exceed a maximum illumination of 7500 nits (candelas per square meter) during daylight hours and a maximum illumination of 500 nits (candelas per square meter) between dusk to dawn, as measured from the sign's face at maximum

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brightness. All dynamic signs must be equipped with an automatic dimmer control or other mechanism that automatically controls the sign's brightness according to ambient conditions. In addition, all dynamic signs must be equipped with a default mechanism that will eliminate sign lighting or freeze the brightness at 500 nits when a malfunction in the automatic dimmer control occurs.

5. Small dynamic signs that are pedestrian-oriented, customer service signs and not highway-oriented, general advertising signs, such as drive-through restaurant menu boards and gas pump dispenser information, are permitted, but are not subject to restrictions on the frequency of message change intervals, illumination standards, or default equipment. Small dynamic signs are permitted up to four (4) square feet.

6. Dynamic signs, including video display signs, that are used for authorized outdoor sporting and recreation events, oriented toward patrons in grandstands or similar outdoor seating and not toward highways or off-premises viewing, are permitted, but are not subject to restrictions on the frequency of message change intervals, illumination standards, or default equipment.

U. Freestanding sign area is calculated by multiplying the outermost dimensions of the sign face and structure holding or encasing the sign face. The column(s) or pole(s) supporting the freestanding sign are not included in the area calculation of signage, provided the column or pole structure is not more than 4 square feet in circumference or dimension. Freestanding signs may have two sign faces, provided the sign faces are parallel to each other and separated only by the framing and support system.

V. Ground sign or monument sign area is measured by multiplying the outermost dimensions of the entire structure or the total area within a polygon surrounding an irregular shaped sign.

W. Sign height is the distance between the average ground elevation within 30 feet of the sign and highest point of the sign structure.

Wall sign area is measured from the outermost dimensions of the sign frame or the area within a polygon surrounding the message of individual lettering and/or logos and emblems attached to a wall. Wall signs may be attached to door or window awnings and shall be included in the maximum aggregate total sign area allowed.

*[§ 7B-201, formerly § 10-201, amended by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989, amended by Ord. No. 07-02, effective March 1, 2007, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010, amended by Ord. No. 13-01, effective January 31, 2013.]*

**SECTION 7B-202. CONSTRUCTION AND REPAIR.** All signs shall be constructed according to all codes and standards and in such manner and of such material and workmanship that they shall be safe and substantial, shall be properly secured, supported and braced, and shall be kept with proper maintenance and repair, structurally and aesthetically. Freestanding illuminated signs permitted in this Ordinance shall be served with underground electrical service.*[§ 7B-202 amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

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**ARTICLE III**  
**DISTRICT PROVISIONS**

**SECTION 7B-300. GENERAL.** In addition to the signs permitted and regulated in Article II, the following specific sign regulations apply within the following zoning districts. Sign permit provisions are included in Article IV of this Ordinance.

*[§ 10-300 (now § 7B-300), amended by Ord. No. 83-2, effective May 25, 1983, amended by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989 and amended by Ord. No. 00-06 effective August 17, 2000, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.] [§ 7B-300, Paragraph E, amended by Ord. 93-7, effective November 11, 1994.]*

**SECTION 7B-301. AGRICULTURE (AG) DISTRICT. (RESERVED FOR FUTURE USE)**

*[§ 10-301 (now § 7B-301), amended by Ord. No. 83-2, effective May 25, 1983, amended by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989 and amended by Ord. 93-7, effective November 11, 1994, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

**SECTION 7B-302. AGRICULTURE PRESERVE (A/P) DISTRICT. (RESERVED FOR FUTURE USE)**

*[§ 7B-302A, amended by Ord. No. 93-7, effective November 11, 1994 and by Ord. No. 98-8, effective January 21, 1999, amended by Ord. No. 00-2, effective February 24, 2000, amended by Ord. No. 07-02, effective March 1, 2007, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

**SECTION 7B-303. RURAL RESIDENTIAL (RR) DISTRICT.**

A. **Wall Signs for Residential Zone Businesses.** One wall sign is permitted on the principal structure or accessory structure used for residential zone businesses. The maximum sign area shall not exceed 4 square feet. Illuminated signs and dynamic signs are not permitted.

B. **Freestanding Signs for Public and Institutional Uses.** One on-premises freestanding sign is permitted on properties with public and institutional uses. The maximum sign area shall not exceed 100 square feet in area, nor 16 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the front property line and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.

C. **Wall Signs for Public and Institutional Uses.** One wall sign is permitted on each wall of the principal structure with public street frontage. The maximum sign area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area. Individual sign lettering shall not exceed 24 inches in height. Illuminated wall signs are permitted. Dynamic wall signs are not permitted.

*[§ 7B-303, added by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989, amended by Ord. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010, amended by Ord. No. 13-01, effective January 31, 2013.]*

**SECTION 7B-304. SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL (SR) DISTRICT.**

A. **Freestanding Signs.** One on-premises freestanding sign or monument sign is permitted for each Suburban Residential subdivision. The maximum freestanding sign area shall not exceed 80 square feet in area, nor 16 feet in height. The maximum ground sign area shall not exceed 80 square feet in area, nor 12 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the front property line and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Dynamic signs are not permitted.

B. **Wall Signs.** Wall sign are not permitted in the SR District, except incidental identification or locational signs, such as “Management Office,” “Community Room,” and similar signs not exceeding 4 square feet in area or lettering exceeding 12 inches in height.

*[§ 7B-304, added to Chapter 7B by Ord. No. 89-8, effective January 19, 1990, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May, 6, 2010.]*

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**SECTION 7B-305. COMMUNITY RETAIL (CR) DISTRICT.**

A. **Freestanding Signs.** One on-premises freestanding sign is permitted for each commercial parcel with a principal use. Properties with multiple businesses may share space on freestanding signs. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with less than 20,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 100 square feet in area, nor 20 feet in height. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with at least 20,000 square feet gross floor area but less than 40,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 150 square feet in area, nor 25 feet in height. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with 40,000 square feet gross floor area or more shall not exceed 200 square feet in area, nor 30 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the front property line and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.

B. **Freestanding Signs for Developments in I-35 Corridor.** In addition to the one allowed on-premises freestanding sign in Subsection A. above, properties in the I-35 Corridor, as defined in Section 7B-200.R. of this Ordinance, are allowed a second on-premises freestanding sign to be oriented toward the interstate highway and located in the I-35 Corridor, as provided in this subsection.

1. The maximum sign area for the second on-premises freestanding sign shall not exceed 200 square feet in area, nor 30 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the property line oriented toward the interstate highway and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.

2. On any property located in the I-35 Corridor, which is also located within 300 feet of the intersection of an interstate highway on- or off-ramp and the intersecting highway, the second on-premises sign allowed in Subdivision 1 above may be substituted for a freestanding sign not exceeding 100 square feet in area, nor 60 feet in height. Such sign substituted in this Subdivision 2 may be illuminated but shall not be dynamic.

3. For any single development in the I-35 Corridor with least 150 acres in area and with a principal structure with at least 60,000 square feet of gross floor area, the maximum sign area for the second on-premises freestanding sign is allowed to exceed the maximum area and height in Subdivision 1, up to 720 square feet in area and 65 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the property line oriented toward the interstate highway and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted. Signs in this Subdivision 3 include full motion video display messaging with no minimum intervals between images and require an Interim Use Permit. The procedure and requirements for the application and public hearing for an Interim Use Permit are described in Sections 7A-530 and 7A-531 of the Columbus City Code. Additional criteria for the issuance of an Interim Use Permit for a Dynamic sign permitted in this Subdivision 3 shall include but are not limited to:

- a. The sign shall not be considered a traffic hazard or cause a public safety concern.
- b. The sign shall not be considered a public nuisance.
- c. Consideration must be given for public emergency and public service messaging.
- d. In the event any of the above criteria are not met before or after an Interim Use Permit is issued, video display messaging will be terminated and the

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Dynamic sign messaging must conform to messaging display intervals that do not change less than once every 8 seconds.

C. **Wall Signs.** Wall signs are permitted on each wall of a principal structure with direct public street frontage. Principal structures served by private street frontage are permitted one wall sign. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with less than 20,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 36 inches. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with at least 20,000 square feet gross floor area but less than 40,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 42 inches. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with 40,000 square feet gross floor area or more shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 48 inches. Wall sign area allowed on a wall but not used on that wall may be allocated to another wall of the same building. Illuminated wall signs are permitted. Dynamic wall signs are not permitted.

D. **Sign Band for Multiple Wall Signs.** Buildings with multiple uses or multiple businesses may have multiple wall signs, provided the aggregate total wall sign area does not exceed the standards in Subsection C. above, and the individual sign areas are similar and complementary in size, shape and location on the building.

*[§ 7B-305 added by Ord. No. 95-3, effective May 3, 1996, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010, amended by Ord. No. 13-01, effective January 31, 2013.]*

**SECTION 7B-306. COMMERCIAL SHOWROOM (C/S) DISTRICT.**

A. **Freestanding Signs.** One on-premises freestanding sign is permitted for each commercial parcel with a principal use. Properties with multiple businesses may share space on freestanding signs. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with less than 20,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 100 square feet in area, nor 20 feet in height. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with at least 20,000 square feet gross floor area but less than 40,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 150 square feet in area, nor 25 feet in height. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with 40,000 square feet gross floor area or more shall not exceed 200 square feet in area, nor 30 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the front property line and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.

B. **Freestanding Signs for Developments in I-35 Corridor.** In addition to the one allowed on-premises freestanding sign in Subsection A. above, properties in the I-35 Corridor, as defined in Section 7B-200.R. of this Ordinance, are allowed a second on-premises freestanding sign to be oriented toward the interstate highway and located in the I-35 Corridor, as provided in this subsection.

1. The maximum sign area for the second on-premises freestanding sign shall not exceed 200 square feet in area, nor 30 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the property line oriented toward the interstate highway and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.

2. On any property located in the I-35 Corridor, which is also located within 300 feet of the intersection of an interstate highway on- or off-ramp and the intersecting highway, the second on-premises sign allowed in Subdivision 1 above may be substituted for a freestanding sign not exceeding 100 square feet in area, nor 60 feet in height. Such sign substituted in this Subdivision 2 may be illuminated but shall not be dynamic.

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3. For any single development in the I-35 Corridor with least 150 acres in area and with a principal structure with at least 60,000 square feet of gross floor area, the maximum sign area for the second on-premises freestanding sign is allowed to exceed the maximum area and height in Subdivision 1, up to 720 square feet in area and 65 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the property line oriented toward the interstate highway and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted. Signs in this Subdivision 3 require an Interim Use Permit. The procedure and requirements for the application and public hearing for an Interim Use Permit are described in Sections 7A-530 and 7A-531 of the Columbus City Code. Additional criteria for the issuance of an Interim Use Permit for a Dynamic sign permitted in this Subdivision 3 shall include but are not limited to:

- a. The sign shall not be considered a traffic hazard or cause a public safety concern.
- b. The sign shall not be considered a public nuisance.
- c. Consideration must be given for public emergency and public service messaging.
- d. In the event any of the above criteria are not met before or after an Interim Use Permit is issued, video display messaging will be terminated and the Dynamic sign messaging must conform to messaging display intervals that do not change less than once every 8 seconds.

C. **Wall Signs.** Wall signs are permitted on each wall of a principal structure with direct public street frontage. Principal structures served by private street frontage are permitted one wall sign. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with less than 20,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 36 inches. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with at least 20,000 square feet gross floor area but less than 40,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 42 inches. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with 40,000 square feet gross floor area or more shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 48 inches. Wall sign area allowed on a wall but not used on that wall may be allocated to another wall of the same building. Illuminated wall signs are permitted. Dynamic wall signs are not permitted.

D. **Sign Band for Multiple Wall Signs.** Buildings with multiple uses or multiple businesses may have multiple wall signs, provided the aggregate total wall sign area does not exceed the standards in Subsection C. above, and the individual sign areas are similar and complementary in size, shape and location on the building.

*[§ 7B-306 added by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010, amended by Ord. No. 13-01, effective January 31, 2013.]*

**SECTION 7B-307. HORSE RACING (HR) DISTRICT.**

A. **Special Purpose of the HR District.** The City Council makes the following findings in establishing the sign regulations in the HR District:

1. The HR Zoning District was created to accommodate the unique land use reflecting the Minnesota State Legislature's provisions for a single standardbred horse racing facility allowed within the Seven County Metropolitan Area.
2. Minnesota Statutes Chapter 240 includes the provisions for regional horse racing facilities and the Minnesota Racing Commission's rules, regulations, and permitting procedures.

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3. The Running Aces harness track and gaming facility is a unique, one-of-a-kind, regional entertainment facility.
4. The Running Aces harness track and gaming facility occupies the largest single business property in the City of Columbus.
5. The Running Aces harness track and gaming facility is located adjacent to Interstate Highway 35 (I-35), and has direct access to the facility provided via county and local roadways.
6. The Running Aces harness track and gaming facility holds a variety of special public and private events throughout the year, in addition to harness track racing and gaming.
7. There is considerable traffic generated by and attributed to the Running Aces harness track and gaming facility.
8. There is a need for signage opportunities which are relevant to the size and scope of a regional entertainment facility.

**B. Freestanding Signs.** One on-premises freestanding sign is permitted for each commercial parcel with a principal use. Properties with multiple businesses may share space on freestanding signs. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with less than 20,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 100 square feet in area, nor 20 feet in height. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with at least 20,000 square feet gross floor area but less than 40,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 150 square feet in area, nor 25 feet in height. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with 40,000 square feet gross floor area or more shall not exceed 200 square feet in area, nor 30 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the front property line and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.

**C. Freestanding Signs for Developments in I-35 Corridor.** In addition to the one allowed on-premises freestanding sign in Subsection B. above, properties in the I-35 Corridor, as defined in Section 7B-200.R. of this Ordinance, are allowed a second on-premises freestanding sign to be oriented toward the interstate highway and located in the I-35 Corridor, as provided in this subsection.

1. The maximum sign area for the second on-premises freestanding sign shall not exceed 200 square feet in area, nor 30 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the property line oriented toward the interstate highway and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.
2. On any property located in the I-35 Corridor, which is also located within 300 feet of the intersection of an interstate highway on- or off-ramp and the intersecting highway, the second on-premises sign allowed in Subdivision 1 above may be substituted for a freestanding sign not exceeding 100 square feet in area, nor 60 feet in height. Such sign substituted in this Subdivision 2 may be illuminated but shall not be dynamic.
3. For any single development in the I-35 Corridor with least 150 acres in area and with a principal structure with at least 60,000 square feet of gross floor area, the maximum sign area for the second on-premises freestanding sign is allowed to exceed the maximum area and height in Subdivision 1, up to 720 square feet in area and 65 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the property line oriented toward the interstate highway and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted. Signs in this Subdivision 3 require an Interim

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Use Permit. The procedure and requirements for the application and public hearing for an Interim Use Permit are described in Sections 7A-530 and 7A-531 of the Columbus City Code. Additional criteria for the issuance of an Interim Use Permit for a Dynamic sign permitted in this Subdivision 3 shall include but are not limited to:

- a. The sign shall not be considered a traffic hazard or cause a public safety concern.
- b. The sign shall not be considered a public nuisance.
- c. Consideration must be given for public emergency and public service messaging.
- d. In the event any of the above criteria are not met before or after an Interim Use Permit is issued, video display messaging will be terminated and the Dynamic sign messaging must conform to messaging display intervals that do not change less than once every 8 seconds.

**D. Wall Signs.** Wall signs are permitted on each wall of a principal structure with direct public street frontage. Principal structures served by private street frontage are permitted one wall sign. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with less than 20,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 36 inches. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with at least 20,000 square feet gross floor area but less than 40,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 42 inches. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with 40,000 square feet gross floor area or more shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 48 inches. Wall sign area allowed on a wall but not used on that wall may be allocated to another wall of the same building. Illuminated wall signs are permitted. Dynamic wall signs are not permitted.

**E. Sign Band for Multiple Wall Signs.** Buildings with multiple uses or multiple businesses may have multiple wall signs, provided the aggregate total wall sign area does not exceed the standards in Subsection C. above, and the individual sign areas are similar and complementary in size, shape and location on the building.

**F. Wall Signs on Accessory Buildings.** Signage on accessory structures shall be limited to wall signs providing identification or directional information, such as “Tack Room,” “Veterinarian,” or “Racing Officials.” Such signage shall not exceed 20 square feet in area or lettering exceeding 12 inches in height.

**G. Directional and Public Information Signs.** Small, freestanding signs providing directional and other public information, such as “Horse Racers Only,” “Park and Ride Facility,” and “RV Parking,” are permitted on private property in the HR District. Such signage shall not exceed 18 square feet in area or 8 feet in height or be located in areas impeding vehicle driver vision or safety.

*[§ 7B-307 added by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010, amended by Ord. No. 13-01, effective January 31, 2013, amended by Ord. No. 15-02, effective June 4, 2015.]*

**SECTION 7B-308. LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (LI) DISTRICT.**

**A. Freestanding Signs.** One on-premises freestanding sign is permitted for each commercial parcel with a principal use. Properties with multiple businesses may share space on freestanding signs. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with less than 20,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 100 square feet in area, nor 20 feet in height. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with at least 20,000 square feet gross floor area

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but less than 40,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 150 square feet in area, nor 25 feet in height. The maximum freestanding sign area for buildings with 40,000 square feet gross floor area or more shall not exceed 200 square feet in area, nor 30 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the front property line and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.

**B. Freestanding Signs for Developments in I-35 Corridor.** In addition to the one allowed on-premises freestanding sign in Subsection A. above, properties in the I-35 Corridor, as defined in Section 7B-200.R. of this Ordinance, are allowed a second on-premises freestanding sign to be oriented toward the interstate highway and located in the I-35 Corridor, as provided in this subsection.

1. The maximum sign area for the second on-premises freestanding sign shall not exceed 200 square feet in area, nor 30 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the property line oriented toward the interstate highway and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.

2. On any property located in the I-35 Corridor, which is also located within 300 feet of the intersection of an interstate highway on- or off-ramp and the intersecting highway, the second on-premises sign allowed in Subdivision 1 above may be substituted for a freestanding sign not exceeding 100 square feet in area, nor 60 feet in height. Such sign substituted in this Subdivision 2 may be illuminated but shall not be dynamic.

3. For any single development in the I-35 Corridor with least 150 acres in area and with a principal structure with at least 60,000 square feet of gross floor area, the maximum sign area for the second on-premises freestanding sign is allowed to exceed the maximum area and height in Subdivision 1, up to 720 square feet in area and 65 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the property line oriented toward the interstate highway and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted. Signs in this Subdivision 3 require an Interim Use Permit. The procedure and requirements for the application and public hearing for an Interim Use Permit are described in Sections 7A-530 and 7A-531 of the Columbus City Code. Additional criteria for the issuance of an Interim Use Permit for a Dynamic sign permitted in this Subdivision 3 shall include but are not limited to:

a. The sign shall not be considered a traffic hazard or cause a public safety concern.

b. The sign shall not be considered a public nuisance.

c. Consideration must be given for public emergency and public service messaging.

d. In the event any of the above criteria are not met before or after an Interim Use Permit is issued, video display messaging will be terminated and the Dynamic sign messaging must conform to messaging display intervals that do not change less than once every 8 seconds.

**C. Wall Signs.** Wall signs are permitted on each wall of a principal structure with direct public street frontage. Principal structures served by private street frontage are permitted one wall sign. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with less than 20,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 36 inches. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with at least 20,000 square feet gross floor area but less than 40,000 square feet gross floor area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or

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contain lettering heights greater than 42 inches. The maximum wall sign area for buildings with 40,000 square feet gross floor area or more shall not exceed 15% of the wall area or contain lettering heights greater than 48 inches. Wall sign area allowed on a wall but not used on that wall may be allocated to another wall of the same building. Illuminated wall signs are permitted. Dynamic wall signs are not permitted.

**D. Sign Band for Multiple Wall Signs.** Buildings with multiple uses or multiple businesses may have multiple wall signs, provided the aggregate total wall sign area does not exceed the standards in Subsection C. above, and the individual sign areas are similar and complementary in size, shape and location on the building.

*[§ 7B-308 added by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010, amended by Ord. No. 13-01, effective January 31, 2013.]*

**SECTION 7B-309. COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL (C/I) DISTRICT.**

**A. Freestanding Signs.** One on-premises freestanding sign is permitted for each commercial/industrial parcel with a principal use. Properties with multiple businesses may share space on freestanding signs. The maximum freestanding sign area shall not exceed 100 square feet in area, nor 40 feet in height. Signs shall be setback a minimum of 5 feet from the front property line and 20 feet from the side yard property lines. Illuminated signs and Dynamic signs are permitted.

**B. Wall Signs.** Wall signs are permitted on each wall of a principal structure with direct public street frontage. Principal structures served by private street frontage are permitted one wall sign. The maximum sign area shall not exceed 15% of the wall area. Individual sign lettering shall not exceed 36 inches in height. Wall sign area allowed on a wall but not used on that wall may be allocated to another wall of the same building. Illuminated wall signs are permitted. Dynamic wall signs are not permitted.

**C. Sign Band for Multiple Wall Signs.** Buildings with multiple uses or multiple businesses may have multiple wall signs, provided the aggregate total wall sign area does not exceed 15% of the wall area, and the individual sign areas are similar and complementary in size, shape and location on the building.

*[§ 7B-309 added by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010, amended by Ord. No. 13-01, effective January 31, 2013.]*

**SECTION 7B-310. I-35 CORRIDOR LARGE OFF-PREMISES SIGNS.** Large or over-sized off-premises signs, commonly called “highway billboards,” are permitted within the I-35 Corridor, as long as the following conditions or restrictions are met:

**A. Setbacks.** Except as modified by this Section, off-premises signs must be setback a minimum of 5 feet from any public right-of-way. No off-premises sign shall obstruct in any way a driver’s vision of the road or hinder or obstruct any pedestrian path.

**B. Commercial or Industrial Zoning.** The property upon which the large off-premises sign is erected must be located within the CR, C/S, HR, or LI Zoning District.

**C. State and Federal Laws.** The requirements of State and federal law must be met before a permit is issued (see MINN. STAT. Ch. 173 (1991), and MINN. RULES, Parts 8810.0200 through 8810.1400 (1989), as amended).

**D. Size.** The sign face of a large off-premises sign shall not exceed 720 square feet and shall not exceed 1,440 square feet total for a multi-sided sign.

**E. Spacing, Setback and Additional Requirements.** Large off-premises signs are subject to the following spacing and setback restrictions:

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1. Signs shall be located no closer than 750 feet from another permitted or nonconforming large off-premises sign on the same side of the highway.
  2. Dynamic signs shall be located no closer than 3,750 feet from another permitted dynamic sign in excess of 200 square feet. The 3,750-foot measurement is a 360 degree measurement, calculated as a straight line from one dynamic sign to another dynamic sign, including measurements across the Interstate Highway as well as measurements to a permitted dynamic sign located on any other Interstate Highway.
  3. Large off-premises signs shall be located no closer than 750 feet from a state, county, or city park, historic site, public picnic grounds, highway rest area, church or school.
  4. Large off-premises signs shall be located no closer than 500 feet from any area zoned RR or SR.
  5. Large off-premises signs shall be located so as to not obstruct the view of any permitted on-premises sign.
  6. Illuminated signs shall be located and the source of illumination shielded so that neither the light source, nor direct visible rays or glare project beyond the surface of the sign to be illuminated.
  7. Large off-premises signs shall be located not less than 25 feet, nor more than 45 feet from the ground elevation on which the sign is erected.
  8. Large off-premises signs shall be constructed and mounted with a load factor consistent with the Minnesota State Building Code. Applicants shall submit structural plans certified by a licensed structural engineer.
  9. Dynamic sign messages shall not change at intervals less than once every 8 seconds. The duration of the transition of the electronic image message change shall be instantaneous and include no fading, scrolling, or other special effects.
- F. **Interim Use Permit.** Large off-premises signs shall only be erected or maintained upon approval of an Interim Use Permit. Interim Use Permits granted by this section shall be temporary in nature, valid for a period of twenty (20) years, or until any governmental agency with authority for construction of public roadways requires the underlying property for roadway purposes. Interim Use Permits shall be granted to a designated person or entity, and are not transferable to other persons or entities. An Interim Use Permit will terminate upon: (1) a violation of the conditions or terms of the permit; or (2) a change in the zoning regulations that render the use nonconforming.
1. **Interim Use Permit Applications.** Applications for large off-premises sign Interim Use Permits shall be filed with the City Administrator, together with a filing fee established by City Council. The application shall be forwarded to the Planning Commission for a public hearing. The Planning Commission shall consult with and consider the recommendations of the City Administrator, City Planner, City Engineer, and City Building Official in its deliberations and recommendations to the City Council for the Interim Use Permit. The procedure and requirements for the application and public hearing for an Interim Use Permit are described in Sections 7A-530 and 7A-531 of the Columbus City Code. The City Council shall consider the recommendations of the Planning Commission and City Administrator, City Planner, City Engineer, and City Building Official in its action on the Interim Use Permit application.

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2. **Interim Use Permit Renewal.** Upon the expiration of the twenty-year term of an approved Interim Use Permit, an applicant may re-apply for renewal of an Interim Use Permit for a large off-premises sign in the same manner as an initial application. Prior granting of an Interim Use Permit does not give an applicant any vested right to renewal. Interim Use Permits shall conform to restrictions or conditions as the City Council may determine are necessary to avoid conflict with surrounding land usage.

3. **Dynamic sign conversion of existing Interim Use Permits for large off-premises signs.** Applicants with an existing Interim Use Permit for a large off-premises sign may apply for an amendment to allow a dynamic sign. Applications for amendments to an existing Interim Use Permit are made in the same manner as an initial application under Section 7B-310F.1. In considering the application to amend the existing Interim Use Permit, the Planning Commission and City Council shall consult with and consider the recommendations of the City Administrator, City Planner, City Engineer and City Building Official. Interim Use Permits shall conform to restrictions or conditions as the City Council may determine are necessary, including the term of the amended Interim Use Permit, to avoid conflict with surrounding land usage.

4. **Dynamic sign conversion of existing legally nonconforming Conditional Use Permits for large off-premises signs.** Applicants with an existing legally nonconforming Conditional Use Permit for a large off-premises sign may apply for a dynamic off-premises sign by terminating the existing nonconforming Conditional Use Permit and applying for an Interim Use Permit for the dynamic off-premises sign. Applications for the Interim Use Permit are made in the same manner as an application under Section 7B-310F.1. In considering the application to issue an Interim Use Permit, the Planning Commission and City Council shall consult with and consider the recommendations of the City Administrator, City Planner, City Engineer and City Building Official. Interim Use Permits shall conform to restrictions or conditions as the City Council may determine are necessary, including the term of the Interim Use Permit, to avoid conflict with surrounding land usage.

G. **Public Service Messages.** In all new or amended Interim Use Permits for dynamic large off-premises signs, the applicant shall be required to provide a minimum number of public messaging opportunities, such as “Amber Alerts,” traffic and weather advisories, community events, and similar public messages. The number and sequencing of public messaging shall be comparable to the average number and sequencing of public messaging opportunities on dynamic large off-premises signs throughout the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, or as agreed upon by the City Council and applicant in the conditions of the Interim Use Permit.

H. **Findings.** The City Council shall make the following findings when issuing an Interim Use Permit for a large off-premises sign:

- a. The structure and sign conform to the regulations of this Section and other applicable provisions of the Columbus City Code;
- b. The date or event that will terminate the use can be identified with certainty;
- c. Permission of the use will not impose additional costs on the public if it is necessary for the public to take the property in the future; and

That the user agrees to any conditions that the City Council deems appropriate for permission of the use.

*[§ 7B-310 added by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

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**ARTICLE IV**  
**ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT****SECTION 7B-400. SIGN PERMITS.**

A. **Permits Required.** All signs shall require a sign permit, except for address signs, political signs, temporary real estate signs, portable/temporary advertising signs, public service signs, and traffic signs. Sign permits shall remain valid as long as the sign for which the permit was issued has been constructed and maintained according to all requirements of this Ordinance, except signs requiring an Interim Use Permit shall have a term specified in Interim Use Permit.

B. **Application for Permit, Application Fee.** Application for a sign permit shall be made to the City Administrator on a form or forms prepared by the City. Each application must be accompanied by a non-refundable application fee and possible escrow for consultant review expenses, as established by the City Council. The application must contain at least the following information, unless waived by the City Administrator:

1. Name, address, and telephone number of the fee owner(s) of the property.
2. Name, address, and telephone number of the Contract for Deed purchaser(s) or lessee(s) of the property.
3. Street address of the property.
4. Legal description of the property.
5. A scaled site plan of the property showing the location and dimensions of all buildings, roads, driveways, and other improvements and topographical features, and the location(s) of the proposed sign(s). The application must be accompanied by scaled drawings of the proposed sign, including dimensions of the sign, freestanding sign height, ground clearance and property setback dimensions, sign content, and lettering dimensions.
6. The Zoning Administrator shall approve sign applications that are consistent with the requirements of this Ordinance, except applications requiring Interim Use Permits or Variances.
7. For signs which require an Interim Use Permit or for signs for which a Variance has been requested, the sign application procedure shall be administered and adjudicated concurrently with the Interim Use Permit application and Variance application prescribed in Chapter 7A of the Columbus City Code.
8. If the application is for a large off-premises dynamic sign in the I-35 Corridor, the site plan must illustrate the distance to the closest dynamic sign with a dynamic sign area exceeding 200 square feet, including dynamic signs on the opposite side of the highway.
9. If construction of a sign support structure is proposed which will require a Storm Water Management Plan under the provisions of Chapter 7D of the Columbus City Code, then a copy of the site plan or of a survey, altered to show the Storm Water Management Plan, shall be submitted with the application.

C. **Approved Permits.** The City Clerk shall issue a dated sign permit to the applicant upon receipt of all required permit fees and approval by the City Administrator or City Council. A copy of the permit shall be attached to a copy of the application and drawings and retained by the Clerk, according City records management policies.

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**D. Owner Responsibility.** The permit owner shall be responsible for all the requirements of this Ordinance, including proper maintenance and the liability for expense for removal of illegal signs incurred by the City.

*[§ 10-400 (now § 7B-400), amended by Ord. No. 83-2, effective May 25, 1983, and amended by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989, amended by Ord. No. 07-02, effective March 1, 2007, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

**SECTION 7B-401. NONCONFORMING SIGNS.**

**A. Nonconforming Signs.** Signs legally existing on the effective date of this Ordinance which do not conform to the regulations set forth herein are legal nonconforming signs. Legal nonconforming signs may not be expanded but may be continued through repair, maintenance, restoration, or replacement, unless:

1. the sign is discontinued for a period of more than one year (discontinued shall mean the use or business associated with the sign has been discontinued for a period of more than one year); or
2. the sign is destroyed by fire, neglect, or other peril to the extent of greater than 50% of its market value, and no building permit has been applied for within 180 days of when the sign was damaged.

**B. Immediate Removal of Hazardous Signs.** The City Council shall order the removal of any sign found to be hazardous for any reason or found to be hazardous because it is a "Hazardous Sign in a Right-of-Way." The City Council shall send an Order to Remove Sign to the record owner of the subject real property (if the sign is not on public property) and to the apparent owner and to the advertiser shown on the sign. The Order shall direct removal of the sign and its support structure within thirty (30) days of the date of mailing. The Order shall disclose the potential criminal penalties and the costs that may be imposed if it is necessary for the City to remove the Sign. No Sign shall be deemed to be legally nonconforming because it is presently defined as hazardous and was not defined hazardous under prior law, Ordinance, or regulation.

*[§ 7B-401, formerly § 10-401, amended by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989, amended by Ord. No. 07-02, effective March 1, 2007, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

**SECTION 7B-402. PENALTY.** Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this Chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor as defined in Chapter 7A, Article III, Section 7A-350 and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine or imprisonment in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 1, Section 1-109 of the Columbus City Code. The application of the above penalty shall not be held to prevent the enforced removal of prohibited conditions.

*[§ 7B-402, formerly § 10-402, amended by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989.] [§ 7B-402 amended by Ord. No. 92-2, effective April 17, 1992, amended by Ord. No. 07-02, effective March 1, 2007, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.]*

**SECTION 7B-403. VARIANCE.** In the event of practical difficulties arising from the literal interpretation of this Ordinance, the City Council may grant Variance from such provisions that shall be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this Chapter and in accord with the provisions of Chapter 7A and the Comprehensive Plan.

*[§ 7B-403, formerly § 10-403, amended by Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989, amended by Ord. No. 07-02, effective March 1, 2007, amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010, amended by Ord. No. 11-04, effective June 30, 2011.]*

**SECTION 7B-404. ADMINISTRATION AND ADJUDICATION.** The following provisions of Chapter 7A of the Columbus City Code shall also apply to the administration and adjudication of signs and sign permit applications: Chapter 7A, Article I, Sections 7A-110 through 7A-130; Chapter 7A,

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Article II (all); Chapter 7A, Article III, Sections 7A-340 and 7A-350; Chapter 7A, Article V, Section 7A-500 through 7A-562, 7A-565 through 7A-568; Chapter 7A, Article VI (all); and, Chapter 7A, Article VII (all). [*§ 7B-404 amended by Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010.*]



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*History of ordinances affecting the text of Chapter 7B [formerly Chapter 10] (since codification on August 26, 1981):*

*Ord. No. 83-2, effective May 25, 1983*  
*Ord. No. 89-1, effective July 21, 1989*  
*Ord. No. 89-9, effective November 3, 1989*  
*Ord. No. 89-9, effective November 3, 1989*  
*Ord. No. 89-17, effective December 8, 1989*  
*Ord. No. 92-2, effective April 17, 1992*  
*Ord. No. 93-7, effective November 11, 1994*  
*Ord. No. 94-5, effective January 12, 1996*  
*Ord. No. 95-3, effective May 3, 1996*  
*Ord. No. 97-6, effective March 13, 1998*  
*Ord. No. 98-8, effective January 21, 1999*  
*Ord. No. 00-02, effective February 24, 2000*  
*Ord. No. 07-02, effective March 1, 2007*  
*Ord. No. 10-06, effective May 6, 2010*  
*Ord. No. 11-04, effective June 30, 2011*  
*Ord. No. 13-01, effective January 31, 2013*  
*Ord. No. 15-02, effective June 4, 2015*

*This Chapter has been updated through the date of the latest ordinance listed above.*

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