
Zoning Ordinance
Article Seven
Sign Standards

Sign Regulations

7.1 Intent

The intent of this Article is to further the goals of the Comprehensive Plan; avoid the proliferation of signage; encourage signs to be compatible with the scale of buildings and the surrounding features; maintain and enhance the aesthetic environment of the county; eliminate potential hazards to motorists and pedestrians resulting from signs; and promote the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Madison County.

7.2 Sign Regulations that Apply

Under the sections in this Article are sign regulations arranged by type. The four digit codes listed are referred to in the "Development Standards that Apply" section on the Two-Page Layout for each Zoning District.

General Sign Standards (GS)

7.3 General Sign Standards (GS)

GS-01: This General Sign Standards section applies to the following districts:



Except as otherwise provided in this Article, it shall be unlawful for any person to erect, construct, enlarge, move or convert any sign within the jurisdiction of the Madison County Plan Commission, or cause the same to be done without first obtaining a sign permit from the Planning Director. The following general sign standards apply to all signs within the jurisdiction of the Madison County Plan Commission.

- A. **Inspection:** Signs for which a permit is required may be inspected periodically by the Planning Director for compliance with this Article.
- B. **Removal of Sign:** The Planning Director may order the removal of any sign erected or maintained in violation of this Article consistent with the provisions of Article 14 of this Ordinance.
- C. **Maintenance:** All signs and their components shall be kept in good repair and in safe, neat, clean and attractive condition. If failure to maintain a sign is determined by the Planning Director, a written notice will be given to the owner, business operator or lessee of the property consistent with the provisions of Article 14 of this Ordinance.
- D. **Abandoned Signs:** A sign shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located within 30 days from the date when the business which it advertises is no longer conducted on the premises. For the purpose of this requirement, the sign shall include all supports, poles, and other structural elements. In no instance shall the removal of only the sign face be considered compliance with this provision.
- E. **Illuminated Signs:** All illuminated signs must meet the standards specified in the State Electrical Code, as adopted and amended by the State of Indiana. In addition, all illuminated signs shall comply with the following standards.
 - a. All illuminating elements shall be kept in satisfactory working condition and immediately repaired or replaced if damaged or burned out. Signs that are only partially illuminated shall meet all electrical requirements for that portion directly illuminated.
 - b. All electrical wiring for permanent signs shall be in conduit. All electricity for signs shall have a disconnecting switch located in a readily accessible place.
 - c. The direct or reflected light from a primary light source shall not create a traffic hazard to operators of motor vehicles on public and/or private roadways.
 - d. The light from any illuminated sign shall be so shaded, shielded, or directed such that the light intensity or brightness will not be objectionable to the surrounding properties. All lighting shall have 90 degree cut-off luminaries (shielded downlighting). No light shall shine directly onto adjacent property.
- F. **Exempt Signs:** The following signs are exempt from all provisions of this Ordinance.
 - a. Flags of any country, state, unit of local government, institution of higher learning, or similar institutional flags.
 - b. Names of buildings, date of erection, monumental citations, commemorative tablets and the like when carved into stone, concrete or similar material or made of bronze, aluminum, or other permanent type construction and made an integral part of the structure.

General Sign Standards (GS)

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- c. Public signs erected by or on the order of public officer(s) in the performance of public duty, such as signs to promote safety, no trespassing, or traffic signs, memorial plaques, signs of historical interest, and signs directing people to public and quasi-public facilities.
 - d. Utility signs are permitted to mark cables and lines for public and private utilities unless determined to be a hazard by the Planning Director.
 - e. Seasonal or holiday signs, including lighting erected in connection with the observance of holidays, provided that such signs shall be removed no later than 30 days following the holiday.
 - f. Real estate signs provided they are not located in the right-of-way and do not exceed 6 square feet in residential zoning districts and 32 square feet in non-residential zoning districts.
 - g. Political signs and other signs of expression, provided that they are not posted more than two months before the next election day and are removed ten calendar days after each election.
- G Prohibited Signs:** The following types of signs are expressly prohibited in all zoning districts.
- a. Signs that utilize any motion picture, laser, or visual projection of images or copy in conjunction with any business or advertisement.
 - b. Signs that emit audible sound, odor or visible matter.
 - c. Signs that purport to be or are in imitation of, or resemble an official traffic sign or signal or which bear the words “Stop”, “Slow”, “Caution”, “Danger”, “Warning”, or similar words.
 - d. Signs that may be construed as a light of an emergency or road equipment vehicle.
 - e. Signs that hide any traffic or roadway sign, signal or device from view.
 - f. Signs that interfere with the Sight Visibility Area as defined in Article 6.
 - g. Signs that are located in any right-of-way, non-sign easement, or septic field.
 - h. Signs that obstruct any door, fire escape, stairway, or any opening intended to provide entrance or exit for any structure.
 - i. Signs placed on vehicles parked on public or private property primarily for the purpose of displaying the sign. Prohibited signs do not include those displayed on vehicles parked for the purpose of lawfully making deliveries or random sales or service. Prohibited signs do not include vehicles which are customarily used for transporting persons or properties, and vehicles parked at a driver's place of residence during non-business hours or for incidental purposes.
 - j. Signs consisting of banners, streamers, pennants, and/or inflatable devices with alone or in combination with other such signs.
- H. Off-Premise Signs:** Off-premise signs shall be classified as either Class I, Class II or Class III depending on the maximum square feet of sign area per side of sign. A Class I off-premise sign shall have a maximum of 1000 square feet of area, a Class II off-premise sign shall have a maximum of sixteen feet of sign area and a Class III off-premise sign shall a maximum of four square feet. All classes of off premise signs shall be prohibited in all zoning districts with the exceptions described below:
- a. General Conditions for all Classes of off-premise signs:
 - 1. Under no circumstances shall real estate signs placed on property for sale or lease, political signs, or agricultural seed signs identifying test plots be considered off-premise signs.
 - 2. A sign permit shall be obtained from the Planning Director for all off-premise signs
 - 3. Multiple faces mounted on the same structures shall be considered one sign. “Double stacked” signs shall be prohibited.
 - 4. Off-premise signs shall be mounted on structures permanently anchored in the ground. Mobile off-premise signs, inflatable off-premise signs, and off-premise signs placed on vehicles or trailer

General Sign Standards (GS)

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shall be prohibited.

5. Double sided signs are permitted, with each allowed the maximum square footage, provided that such signs are completely back-to-back or at an offset no greater than angle of 45 degrees.
 - b. Class I off-premise signs shall be permitted in any commercial or industrial zoning district within 200 feet of any United States Interstate Highway or State Highway. Permitted off-premise signs shall meet the following requirements:
 1. Class I off-premise signs shall be setback a minimum of 50 feet from any public right-of-way and 300 feet from any other property line. Setbacks shall be measured from the property line or right-of-way to the nearest part of the sign, including the pole, sign face, or any attached ladder, catwalk or other access structures.
 2. No Class I off-premise sign shall be located any closer than 3000 feet to any other off-premise sign.
 3. No off-premise sign shall exceed 40 feet in height. No sign face area shall exceed 60 feet in length or 25 feet in height.
 4. There shall be a maximum of three new Class I signs permitted in Madison County per calendar year. (The removal of an existing Class I off-premise sign does NOT permit an additional Class I off-premise sign in any year).
 - c. Class II off-premise signs shall be permitted in any commercial or industrial zoning district within 200 feet of any United States Interstate Highway or State Highway. Class II permitted off-premise signs shall meet the following requirements:
 1. Class II off-premise signs shall be setback a minimum of 50 feet from any public right-of-way and 100 feet from any other property line. Setbacks shall be measured from the property line or right-of-way to the nearest part of the sign, including the pole, sign face, or any attached ladder, catwalk or other access structures.
 2. No Class II off-premise sign shall be located any closer than 3000 feet to any other off-premise sign.
 3. No Class II off-premise sign shall exceed 8 feet in height. No sign face area shall exceed 4 feet in length or 4 feet in height. .
 - d. Class III off-premise signs shall be permitted in any nonresidential zoned district within 200 feet of any United States Interstate Highway, State Highway or County Road with the approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals as a Special Use. Permitted off-premise signs shall meet the following requirements:
 1. Class III off-premise signs shall be setback a minimum of 20 feet from any public right-of-way and 100 feet from any other property line. Setbacks shall be measured from the property line or right-of-way to the nearest part of the sign, including the pole, sign face, or any attached ladder, catwalk or other access structures.
 2. No Class III off-premise sign shall be located any closer than 500 feet to any other off-premise sign.
 3. No Class III off-premise sign shall exceed 4 square feet in area or 4 feet in height. No sign face area shall exceed 2 feet in length or 2 feet in height.

Temporary Sign Standards (TS)

7.4 Temporary Sign Standards (TS)

TS-01: This Temporary Sign Standards section applies to the following districts:



One temporary sign identifying a temporary home sales facility shall be permitted for such facilities meeting the requirements of the Temporary Use/Structure Standards of Article 6. A permit shall be required, and the sign shall be subject to the following requirements:

- A. The sign may be illuminated consistent with the overall illumination requirements for temporary home sales facilities established by Article 6.
- B. The sign shall not exceed 24 square feet in area or 6 feet in height from ground level.
- C. The sign shall be placed a minimum of 10 feet from any public right-of-way and any other property line.

Permanent Sign Standards (PS)

7.5 Permanent Sign Standards (PS)

PS-01: This Permanent Signs Standards section applies to the following districts:



One sign shall be permitted per property used for agricultural purposes. The sign shall be a maximum of 32 square feet in area and 6 feet in height. The sign shall be setback a minimum of 10 feet from the right-of-way of any public street or other property line. A permit shall be required.

PS-02: This Permanent Sign Standards section applies to the following districts:



The following signs shall be permitted. A permit shall be required for each sign unless otherwise specified.

- A. One sign not exceeding a combined area of 2 square feet is permitted as a wall sign on the primary structure of each dwelling unit. No illumination is permitted. No permit is required.
- B. Two entry signs for residential developments are permitted at each entrance to the development.
 - a. No sign shall exceed 32 square feet in area.
 - b. No sign shall exceed 4 feet in height, measured from ground level. In no case may mounding or other alterations of the natural ground level be used as a point of reference for measuring sign height.
 - c. Each sign shall be setback a minimum of 2 feet from the right-of-way of any public street.

PS-03: This Permanent Sign Standards section applies to the following districts:



The following signs shall be permitted. All signs require a permit unless otherwise specified.

- A. One ground sign per entrance in conjunction with a permitted or approved special use not exceeding 6 feet in height and 50 square feet in area.
- B. One wall sign in conjunction with a permitted or approved special use not exceeding 32 square feet in area.
- C. Directional signs no more than 4 feet in height and no more than 6 square feet in area. A minimum setback of 2 feet from any public right-of-way is required. No permit is required.

PS-04: This Permanent Sign Standards section applies to the following district:



The following sign regulations shall apply. All signs require a permit unless otherwise specified.

- A. One square foot of signage shall be allowed for every 1 foot of the front facade of the building that is occupied by that use. (For example: If a use occupies a tenant space in a commercial building and that space includes 50 feet of the buildings frontage then 50 square feet of signage would be allowed for the use.) In no instance shall the amount of signage permitted per use exceed 100 square feet.

Permanent Sign Standards (PS)

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- a. Any combination of the following signs may be used as long as they do not exceed the total area allowed per use or are inconsistent with the other development standards listed in this section:
 1. Wall signs,
 2. Awning signs,
 3. Projecting signs,
 4. Free-standing signs,
 5. Changeable copy signs,
 6. Time & temperature sign, and
 7. Multi-Tenant Joint Entrance Signs.
- b. Development standards per type of sign are as follows:
 1. **Wall Sign:** Wall signs shall be located on the facade of the primary structure. No wall sign shall exceed 50 square feet in area.
 2. **Awning Sign:** Awning signs shall be printed on awnings mounted on the facade of the primary structure.
 3. **Projecting Sign:** No projecting sign shall, at its lowest point (except for the supporting building, structure, or column), be less than 8 1/2 feet above grade level. In no case shall it extend more than 4 feet beyond its supporting structure. Permission must be granted by the Board of County Commissioners if the proposed sign extends into the right-of-way. No projecting sign shall exceed 12 square feet in area. No more than 1 projecting sign shall be permitted per use.
 4. **Free-standing Sign:** Free-standing signs shall be placed a minimum of 10 feet from the public right-of way. No free-standing sign may exceed 6 feet in height or 50 square feet in area.
 5. **Changeable Copy Signs and Time/Temperature Signs:** Changeable copy signs and time/temperature signs shall be counted toward the maximum allowable square footage and shall meet the development standards which are consistent with the manner in which they are mounted.
 6. **Multi-Tenant Joint Entrance Signs:** Structures and/or centers containing multiple uses shall establish 1 sign at each entrance for the joint use of all tenants for which the facility is designed. The use of individual free-standing signs for each tenant is prohibited. Each sign shall be setback a minimum of 10 feet from all public rights-of-way. No sign may exceed 18 feet in height or an average of 24 square feet per tenant in area.
- B. **Window Signs:** Non-illuminated window signs not exceeding 25% of the window area are permitted. No permit is required and they shall not be counted toward the total area allowed per use. Illuminated window signs, and any exceeding 25% of the window area shall be counted toward the total sign area and shall require a sign permit.
- C. **Directional Signs:** Directional signs must be no more than 4 feet in height and no more than 6 square feet in area. Directional signs shall be setback a minimum of 2 feet from all public rights-of-way. No permit is required and they shall not be counted toward the total area allowed per use.

Permanent Sign Standards (PS)

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PS-05: This Permanent Sign Standards section applies to the following district:



The following sign regulations shall apply. All signs require a permit unless otherwise specified.

- A. One and one-quarter square feet of signage shall be allowed for every 1 foot of the front facade of the building that is occupied by that use. (For example: If a use occupies a tenant space in a commercial building and that space includes 100 feet of the building's frontage then 125 square feet of signage would be allowed for the use.) In no instance shall the total amount of signage permitted per use exceed 150 square feet.
- a. Any combination of the following signs may be used as long as they do not exceed the total area allowed per use or are inconsistent with the other development standards listed in this section:
1. Wall signs,
 2. Awning signs,
 3. Projecting signs,
 4. Free-standing signs,
 5. Changeable copy signs,
 6. Time & temperature sign, and
 7. Multi-Tenant Joint Entrance Signs.
- b. Development standards per type of sign are as follows:
1. **Wall Sign:** Wall signs shall be located on the facade of the primary structure. No wall sign shall exceed 75 square feet in area.
 2. **Awning Sign:** Awning signs shall be printed on awnings mounted on the facade of the primary structure.
 3. **Projecting Sign:** No projecting sign shall, at its lowest point (except for the supporting building, structure, or column), be less than 8 1/2 feet above grade level. In no case shall it extend more than 4 feet beyond its supporting structure. Permission must be granted by the Board of County Commissioners if the proposed sign extends into the right-of-way. No projecting sign shall exceed 12 square feet in area. No more than 1 projecting sign shall be permitted per use.
 4. **Free-standing Sign:** Free-standing signs shall be placed a minimum of 10 feet from the public right-of way. No free-standing sign may exceed 15 feet in height or 75 square feet in area.
 5. **Changeable Copy Signs and Time/Temperature Signs:** Changeable copy signs and time/temperature signs shall be counted toward the maximum allowable square footage and shall meet the development standards which are consistent with the manner in which they are mounted.
 6. **Multi-Tenant Joint Entrance Signs:** Structures and/or centers containing multiple uses shall establish 1 sign at each entrance for the joint use of all tenants for which the facility is designed. The use of individual free-standing signs for each tenant is prohibited. Each sign shall be setback a minimum of 10 feet from all public rights-of-way. No sign may exceed 18 feet in height or an average of 40 square feet per tenant in area.
- B. **Window Signs:** Non-illuminated window signs not exceeding 25% of the window area are permitted. No permit is required and they shall not be counted toward the total area allowed per use. Illuminated window signs, and any exceeding 25% of the window area shall be counted toward the total sign area and shall require a sign permit.
- C. **Directional Signs:** Directional signs must be no more than 4 feet in height and no more than 6 square feet in area. Directional signs shall be setback a minimum of 2 feet from all public rights-of-way. No permit is required and they shall not be counted toward the total area allowed per use.

Permanent Sign Standards (PS)

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PS-06: This Permanent Sign Standards section applies to the following district:



The following sign regulations shall apply. All signs require a permit unless otherwise specified.

- A. Two square feet of signage shall be allowed for every 1 foot of the front facade of the building that is occupied by that use. (For example: If a use occupies a tenant space in a commercial building and that space includes 100 feet of the buildings frontage then 200 square feet of signage would be allowed for the use.) In no instance shall the total amount of signage permitted per use exceed 350 square feet.
- a. Any combination of the following signs may be used as long as they do not exceed the total area allowed per use or are inconsistent with the other development standards listed in this section:
1. Wall signs,
 2. Awning signs,
 3. Projecting signs,
 4. Free-standing signs,
 5. Changeable copy signs,
 6. Time & temperature sign, and
 7. Multi-Tenant Joint Entrance Signs.
- b. Development standards per type of sign are as follows:
1. **Wall Sign:** Wall signs shall be located on the facade of the primary structure. No wall sign shall exceed 75 square feet in area.
 2. **Awning Sign:** Awning signs shall be printed on awnings mounted on the facade of the primary structure.
 3. **Projecting Sign:** No projecting sign shall, at its lowest point (except for the supporting building, structure, or column), be less than 8 1/2 feet above grade level. In no case shall it extend more than 4 feet beyond its supporting structure. Permission must be granted by the Board of County Commissioners if the proposed sign extends into the right-of-way. No projecting sign shall exceed 12 square feet in area. No more than one projecting sign shall be permitted per use.
 4. **Free-standing Sign:** Free-standing signs shall be placed a minimum of 10 feet from the public right-of way. No free-standing sign may exceed 15 feet in height or 75 square feet in area. Limited to 1 sign per lot unless located on a corner lot that 1 additional sign is permitted on the other street.
 5. **Changeable Copy Signs and Time/Temperature Signs:** Changeable copy signs and time/temperature signs shall be counted toward the maximum allowable square footage and shall meet the development standards which are consistent with the manner in which they are mounted.
 6. **Multi-Tenant Joint Entrance Signs:** Structures and/or centers containing multiple uses shall establish 1 sign at each entrance for the joint use of all tenants for which the facility is designed. The use of individual free-standing signs for each tenant is prohibited. Each sign shall be setback a minimum of 10 feet from all public rights-of-way. No sign may exceed 20 feet in height or an average of 40 square feet per tenant in area.
- B. **Window Signs:** Non-illuminated window signs not exceeding 50% of the window area are permitted. No permit is required and they shall not be counted toward the total area allowed per use. Illuminated window signs, and any exceeding 50% of the window area shall be counted toward the total sign area and shall require a sign permit.
- C. **Directional Signs:** Directional signs must be no more than 4 feet in height and no more than 6

Permanent Sign Standards (PS)

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square feet in area. Directional signs shall be setback a minimum of 2 feet from all public rights-of-way. No permit is required and they shall not be counted toward the total area allowed per use.

PS-07: This Permanent Sign Standards section applies to the following district:



The following sign regulations shall apply. All signs require a permit unless otherwise specified.

- A. One and one-quarter square feet of signage shall be allowed for every one foot of the front facade of the building that is occupied by that use. (For example: If a use occupies a tenant space in a building and that space includes 100 feet of the buildings frontage then 125 square feet of signage would be allowed for the use.) In no instance shall the total amount of signage permitted per use exceed 350 square feet.
- a. Any combination of the following signs may be used as long as they do not exceed the total area allowed per use or are inconsistent with the other development standards listed in this section:
1. Wall signs,
 2. Awning signs,
 3. Free-standing signs,
 4. Changeable copy signs,
 5. Time & temperature sign, and
 6. Multi-Tenant Joint Entrance Signs.
- b. Development standards per type of sign are as follows:
1. Wall Sign: Wall signs shall be located on the facade of the primary structure. No wall sign shall exceed 150 square feet in area.
 2. Awning Sign: Awning signs shall be printed on awnings mounted on the facade of the primary structure.
 3. Free-standing Sign: Free-standing signs shall be placed a minimum of 10 feet from the public right-of way. No free-standing sign may exceed 15 feet in height or 75 square feet in area.
 4. Changeable Copy Signs and Time/Temperature Signs: Changeable copy signs and time/temperature signs shall be counted toward the maximum allowable square footage and shall meet the development standards which are consistent with the manner in which they are mounted.
 5. Multi-Tenant Joint Entrance Signs: Structures and/or centers containing multiple uses shall establish one sign at each entrance for the joint use of all tenants for which the facility is designed. The use of individual free-standing signs for each tenant is prohibited. Each sign shall be setback a minimum of 10 feet from all public rights-of-way. No sign may exceed 18 feet in height or an average of 32 square feet per tenant in area.
- B. **Window Signs:** Non-illuminated window signs not exceeding 25% of the window area are permitted. No permit is required and they shall not be counted toward the total area allowed per use. Illuminated window signs, and any exceeding 25% of the window area shall be counted toward the total sign area and shall require a sign permit.
- C. **Directional Signs:** Directional signs must be no more than 4 feet in height and no more than 6 square feet in area. Directional signs shall be setback a minimum of 2 feet from all public rights-of-way. No permit is required and they shall not be counted toward the total area allowed per use.

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