



# Plan Commission Meeting Agenda

Thursday, May 14, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

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## Call Meeting to Order

## Roll Call

## Notice of Open Meeting

## Approval of Agenda

## Approval of Minutes

1. Approve minutes from previous meeting

## Regular Business

2. Public Comments
3. Election of officers: Chair, Vice- Chair, Secretary
4. Consider and take action regarding the rewriting of the zoning code related to signs and developer stakeholder feedback
  
5. Consider and take action related to amending the section of the zoning code pertaining to historic preservation and downtown design standards
6. Consider and discuss recent legislation related to comprehensive planning and affordable housing
7. Consider and take action regarding a recommendation of updating the city's comprehensive plan
8. Future Agenda Items and reminders: Joint Plan Commission - City Council Workshop May 19, 2026 at 5:15 pm

## Adjourn



## Plan Commission Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 12, 2026 at 6:30 PM

Columbus City Hall – 105 N. Dickason Boulevard

### Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm.

### Roll Call

A quorum consisted of Stapelmann, Hajewski, Meyers, Monday, Albright, Anfinson, and Finkler. Staff liaison Kornmann was present.

### Notice of Open Meeting

### Approval of Agenda

### Approval of Minutes

1. Approve minutes from February 2026 meeting

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from February 12, 2026, as presented by Finkler, second by Hajewski. There was no additional discussion, and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

### Regular Business

2. Public hearing regarding conditional use permit for a RV staging area on Commerce Drive - Parcel 1512.18

Monday opened the public hearing. Joe Henchel representing Markquart RV commented about the lot expansion for staging area. Henchel also highlighted Markquart's commitment to the community and its expansion project. There were no other members of the public in attendance for comment.

Monday called for members of the public to speak three times and asked Kornmann if there were any correspondence. Kornmann noted there would need to be coordination with the neighboring parcel regarding storm water.

Monday closed the public hearing after no additional comments were made regarding the conditional use permit for parcel 1512.18 for RV staging area.

3. Consider and take action regarding a conditional use permit for RV staging area – Parcel 1512.18 located on Commercial Drive (Robbins Creek Commerce Center)

Kornmann presented an overview of the project and the latest review letter update. Kornmann noted the conversation to determine if the site is considered a parking lot. Kornmann does not see it as a parking lot as the use is for merchandise, not customers and cited other examples within the city. The conditional use could still consider landscaping and lighting. The project uses an existing curb cut and Markquart has their plans for its storm water permit. Kornmann highlighted the drainage ditches. There was discussion as to the use of the property. Henchel noted it would be to store and prep additional inventory and not used as a sales display. Kornmann was asked about the parking space ordinance. Kornmann highlighted that any changes to the lot according to condition would require the lot to be in compliance. Lighting, landscaping, screening and striping were discussed. Kornmann noted the differences between the proposed lot's conditional uses and

Markquart's current conditions on their primary lot. There was discussion regarding the recommended conditions and additional discussion regarding lighting.

Motion to approve the conditional use permit for an RV staging area by Markquart with the conditions outlined in the staff memo A through K by Finkler, with a second by Anfinson. There was no additional discussion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

The approved conditional use will be sent to Council for final approval.

4. Consider and take action regarding draft zoning rewrite including parking requirements

Sonja Kruesel, the representative from Vandewalle and Associates, gave a presentation on the zoning code rewrite. The presentation highlighted parking standards. The proposed parking requirements would reduce the amount of parking from the current code but emphasize minimums versus maximums. There was discussion involving residential parking. The goal of updating the standards is to reduce the number of variances done and allow flexibility. There was discussion regarding conversion of single-family homes into multi-family and the parking associated with the change. Garages as proposed would count towards the total number of parking spaces for residential properties. Additional discussion involved parking minimums in commercial properties and adding flexibility for businesses to better determine how much parking they actually need. A parking study may be a barrier with the proposed code. There was discussion about parking spaces for industrial areas. Downtown parking was addressed. The Plan Commission brought up parking for bicycles in commercial and multi-family apartments. Additional discussion about parking enforcement for the downtown area.

Kreusel and City staff will be looking at zoning districts and sign ordinance at a future meeting.

### **Adjourn**

Finkler motioned to adjourn the meeting with a second from Meyers. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05pm.

\*\* These minutes will be approved at a future meeting and may be amended. These minutes are respectfully submitted by David Bennett, Communications and Economic Development Coordinator \*\*

# City of Columbus Zoning Code Rewrite

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**Plan Commission  
May 14, 2026  
Sign Code Discussion**



# Today's Discussion

- Last Meeting (March 12)
  - Parking
- Today (May 14)
  - Present draft Sign Code and review key policy questions or changes with the Plan Commission

## Proposed Reorganization of the Zoning Code

- Article 1: Introduction
- Article 2: Establishment of Zoning Districts
- Article 3: Land Use Regulations
- Article 4: Bulk Regulations
- Article 5: Nonconforming Situations

- Article 6: Performance Standards
- Article 7: Exterior Building Design Standards
- Article 8: Landscaping Requirements
- **Article 9: Signage**
- Article 10: Administration and Procedures
- Article 11: Definitions

← Part 2

## Goals of New Sign Code

- Become compliant with federal law (content-neutral)
  - Change sign names to “yard”, “arm and post”, etc. from “political”, “for sale”
- Reduce ambiguity with clearer standards by sign type and zoning district
- Consolidate similar and redundant sign types
- Modernize sign types available (many very large sign allowances in current code)
- Create summary tables of standards
  - 4 new tables are the new Sign Code

# Draft Overview

Item #4.

1. Reed v Gilbert
2. Organization
3. User-Friendly Tables & Graphics
4. Policy Questions

# Reed v. Gilbert – Cannot Regulate Content

Item #4.

- U.S. Supreme Court June 2015
- Supreme Court case involving freedom of speech
- Can't define or regulate a sign based on its content, message, or speaker (e.g., real estate sign)
- Most sign codes in the country are affected, temporary sign categories in particular
- Columbus's new draft is content-neutral

If you must read the sign to know how to read it, it's not content-neutral

# Reed v. Gilbert – What can be regulated?

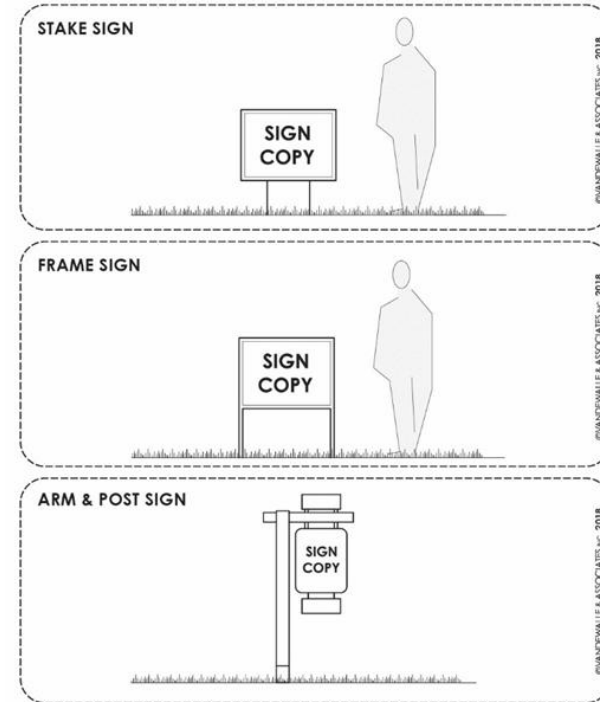
Item #4.

Cannot regulate content but we can regulate **time, manner, and place**

- (1) Time = duration
- (2) Manner = materials, height, etc.
- (3) Place = setbacks, zoning districts, etc.

## Example in Practice: Yard Signs

- Take the place of “content-based” categories: real estate signs, garage sale signs, political signs, etc.



# New Groups, Categories, and Types

Sign Group	Sign Categories	Sign Types	Example
Permanent Business Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freestanding</li> <li>On-Building</li> <li>Pedestrian</li> <li>Changeable Copy</li> </ul>	Monument, Dual Post, Pylon Wall, Awning, Canopy, Marquee, Projecting Suspended Menu Board, Sandwich, Bulletin, Drive-Thru	<p>MONUMENT SIGN</p> <p>SIGN COPY</p> <p>©VANDEWALLE &amp; ASSOCIATES INC. 2023</p>
Other Business Signs (Temporary)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Window</li> <li>Board/Banner</li> <li>Flag/Feather</li> <li>Development</li> </ul>	Window Board, Banner Flag, Feather Active Building, Active Plat	<p>BANNER SIGN</p> <p>SIGN COPY</p> <p>©VANDEWALLE &amp; ASSOCIATES INC. 2023</p>
Misc. Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site Guidance</li> <li>Placemaking</li> <li>Yard</li> </ul>	On-Building Locational, Interior Site Navigation Metal Plaque, Permanent Gateway, Community, Community Interior-Oriented Stake, Frame, Arm and Post	<p>INTERIOR SITE NAVIGATIONAL SIGN</p> <p>SIGN COPY</p> <p>ADDITIONAL PARKING</p> <p>©VANDEWALLE &amp; ASSOCIATES INC. 2023</p>

**Figure 114.09.11(1): Business Sign-Permanent Group 2**

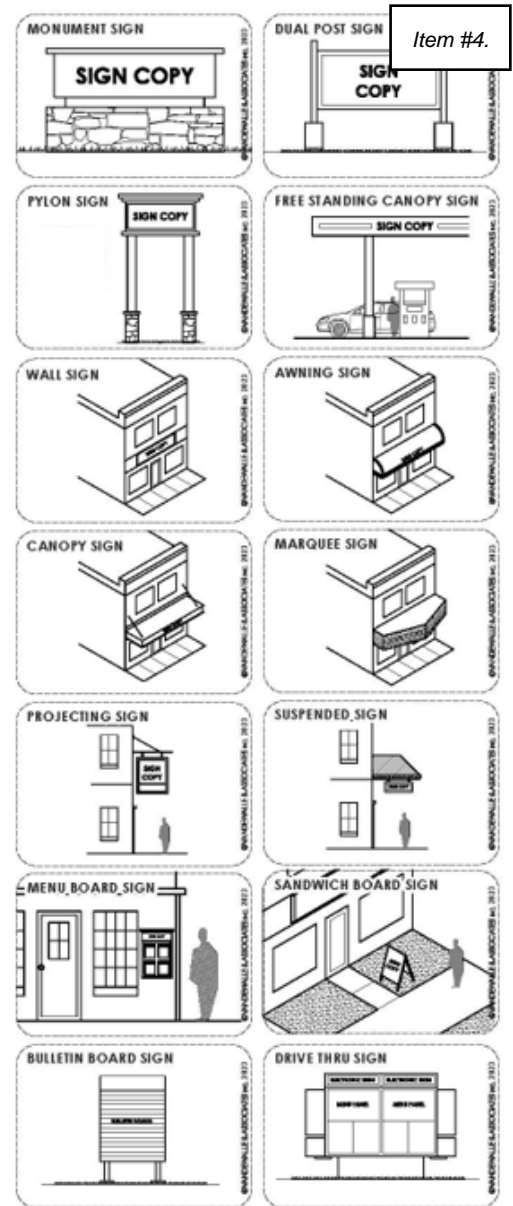
Sign Categories & Sign Types	Sign Permit Required and Approver (see Section 114.09.27)	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Locations Allowed	Sign Face Materials Allowed	Sign Lighting Allowed	Sign Area Formula	Sign Area & Height Maximums for Zoning Districts:								
							1 & 2 Family Residential SR-1, SR-2, MR-1, MH	Multi-Family Residential MR-2	Mixed-Use and Other INST, CMU, BP, LI, HI, PR, IOA, AG	Downtown DMU					
<b>A. Freestanding Sign Category 1,2</b> Choose 1 of the following Sign Types.															
1. Monument Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per street frontage	Minimum height of sign = minimum distance from the right-of-way 10	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts. 12	Standard. 4,5	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of street frontage	Not allowed	60 sf area 6 ft height	120 sf area 12 ft height	60 sf area 6 ft height					
2. Dual-Post Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18								Not allowed	120 sf area 20 ft height	Not allowed					
3. Pylon Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18								Not allowed	See Footnote 17	Not allowed					
4. Freestanding Canopy Sign 16, 17								None. Use max area. 17	Not allowed	Not allowed					
<b>B. On-Building Sign Category 1,2</b> Choose 2 of the following Sign Types.															
1. Wall Sign 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per business per street frontage	Sign shall not extend above parapet or fascia. Minimum overhang rules. 9, 5, 9, 10 Sign may not project within 2 feet of curb.	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Standard. 5	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of building façade length	Not allowed	Per formula.							
2. Awning Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								15% of canopy/awning area							
3. Canopy Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								Not allowed	40 sf area	30 sf area					
4. Marquee Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10															
5. Projecting Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10															
<b>C. Pedestrian Sign Category 1,2</b>															
1. Suspended Sign 1, 2, 6, 9, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each customer entrance.	Minimum overhang rules. 6, 8, 9, 10	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Ambient or Gooseneck.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed			4 sf area					
<b>D. Changeable Copy Sign Category 1,2</b> Choose any combination of the following Sign Types.															
1. Menu Board Sign 1, 2, 15	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each business.	Within 10 ft of customer entrance. Minimum 8' from the right-of-way. 10	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Internal. Ambient only.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed	4 sf area							
2. Sandwich Board Sign 1, 2, 13								1 per drive thru lane	Drive-thru 11	Standard. 4,5	Not allowed	8 sf area/4 ft height/2 ft width			
3. Bulletin Board Sign 14												Not allowed	30 sf area/6 ft height		
4. Drive Thru Sign 1, 2, 4, 11													Not allowed	48 sf area/8 ft height	Not allowed

**Footnotes Containing Additional Development Requirements:**

- Refer to Section 114.09.05 for definitions and rules for each Sign Category (lettered), and each Sign Type (numbered).
- Available to land uses identified in Section 114.03.05. No signs are permitted in the Conservancy Zoning District.
- The number of permitted on-building signs may be transferred from one wall to another, but the total combined sign area on the receiving wall shall still be limited by its length ratio of said wall.
- Electronic Message Signs (of up to 50% of the sign area) are permitted for this Sign Type in nonresidential districts. See Section 114.09.08.
- "Standard" means the following forms of sign lighting: ambient, backlit, internal, and gooseneck.
- Within the DMU zoning district, Awnings, Canopies, Marquees, Projecting, and Suspended Signs may extend from the attached facade into the right-of-way up to 5 feet and shall be a minimum of 8 feet above grade (Section 114.03.28(7)).
- Every business shall be guaranteed a minimum of 50 square feet of Wall Sign area, regardless of the business's actual building façade length.
- Sign copy shall be horizontally and vertically centered on the face of the awning, canopy, or marquee. Sign copy shall not extend above or below an awning or marquee but may extend up to 12" in height above the canopy face.
- Bottom of sign shall be a min. of 14 feet above a drive, alley, street, parking space or other vehicle surface; a min. of 8 feet above a sidewalk, patio, or other ground-level surface; and a max. of 5 feet from the building. Wall Signs shall not project more than 12 inches horizontally beyond the edge of any wall or other surface to which they are mounted.
- Sign must be located on-site and must not be located within any street right-of-way (which includes the entire public sidewalk and street terrace area), except for footnote 6 and 13, or vision triangle without a permit from the City Engineer.
- Drive Thru Signs shall conform to the location requirements for Drive-Through and In-Vehicle Sales or Service land uses (see Section 114.03.10(9)). Drive Thru Signs shall be located within 15 feet of the building, sign copy shall not be viewable from the public right-of-way or an adjacent residential land use, sign type may be either freestanding or wall mounted and must meet noise and lighting standards in the zoning code. A max. 96 sf of total Drive Thru Signs is permitted per business.
- Sign must be designed of materials complementary to and harmonious with the building and site and must be closely integrated with site landscaping.
- Signs shall only be located on a sidewalk and be no more than 3 feet from the property line, shall provide a minimum width of 5 feet of unobstructed public pedestrian walkway, and shall only be displayed during the hours of operation for on-site land use.
- Sign type only permitted for an institutional land use as determined by the Zoning Administrator (see Section 114.03.12).
- Menu Board Signs shall be securely affixed to the exterior wall of the building and shall not extend more than 4" from the wall on which it is mounted.
- Any In-Vehicle Sales and Service land use is permitted to include illuminated fuel price signage within a Freestanding Sign. Such signs shall count toward the site's maximum permitted sign area.
- Only permitted for In-Vehicle Sales and Service land uses. Stripe width shall be permitted on all sides of the freestanding canopy and limited to a max. height of 50% of the fascia's vertical height. Sign copy shall be limited to a max. of 24 square feet per fascia facing a public right-of-way.
- See Section 114.09.10 for Highway Interchange Overlay Sign standards.

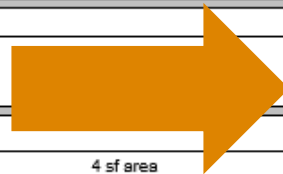
Abbreviations: ft = feet max = maximum min = minimum sf = square feet P.C. = Plan Commission

**Example Sign Diagrams:**



**Figure 114.09.11(1): Business Sign-Permanent Group 2**

Sign Categories & Sign Types	Sign Permit required and approver (see Section 114.09.27)	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Locations Allowed	Sign Face Materials Allowed	Sign Lighting Allowed	Sign Area Formula	Sign Area & Height Maximums for Zoning Districts:					
							1 & 2 Family Residential SR-1, SR-2, MR-1, MH	Multi-Family Residential MR-2	Mixed-Use and Other INST, CMU, BP, LI, HI, PR, IOA, AG	Downtown DMU		
<b>A. Freestanding Sign Category</b> 1,2 Choose 1 of the following Sign Types.												
1. Monument Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per street frontage	Minimum height of sign = minimum distance from the right-of-way <sup>10</sup>	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts. <sup>12</sup>	Standard. <sup>4,5</sup>	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of street frontage	Not allowed	60 sf area 6 ft height	120 sf area 12 ft height	60 sf area 6 ft height		
3. Pylon Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18								Not allowed	120 sf area 20 ft height	Not allowed		
4. Freestanding Canopy Sign 16, 17								None. Use max area. <sup>17</sup>	Not allowed	See Footnote 17	Not allowed	
<b>B. On-Building Sign Category</b> 1,2 Choose 2 of the following Sign Types.												
1. Wall Sign 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per business per street frontage	Sign shall not extend above parapet or fascia. Minimum overhang rules. <sup>4, 5, 9, 10</sup> Sign may not project within 2 feet of curb.	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Standard. <sup>5</sup>	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of building façade length	Not allowed	Per formula.				
2. Awning Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								15% of canopy/awning area				
3. Canopy Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								40 sf area				
4. Marquee Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								30 sf area				
5. Projecting Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10												
<b>C. Pedestrian Sign Category</b> 1,2												
1. Suspended Sign 1, 2, 6, 5, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each customer entrance.	Minimum overhang rules. <sup>6, 8, 9, 10</sup>	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Ambient or Gooseneck.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed					
<b>D. Changeable Copy Sign Category</b> 1,2 Choose any combination of the following Sign Types.												
1. Menu Board Sign 1, 2, 15	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each business.	Within 10 ft of customer entrance.	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Internal.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed	4 sf area				
2. Sandwich Board Sign 1, 2, 13			Minimum 8' from the right-of-way. <sup>10</sup>					Ambient only.	Not allowed	8 sf area/4 ft height/2 ft width		
3. Bulletin Board Sign 14			1 per drive thru lane					Drive-thru <sup>11</sup>	Internal.	Not allowed	30 sf area/6 ft height	
4. Drive Thru Sign 1, 2, 4, 11									Standard. <sup>4,5</sup>	Not allowed	48 sf area/8 ft height	Not allowed



**Footnotes Containing Additional Development Requirements:**

- Refer to Section 114.09.05 for definitions and rules for each Sign Category (lettered), and each Sign Type (numbered).
- Available to and uses identified in Section 114.03.05. No signs are permitted in the Conservancy Zoning District.
- The number of permitted on-building signs may be transferred from one wall to another, but the total combined sign area on the receiving wall shall still be limited by its length ratio of said wall.
- Electrical signs (of up to 50% of the sign area) are permitted for this Sign Type in nonresidential districts. See Section 114.09.08.
- Standard lighting forms of sign lighting: ambient, backlit, internal, and gooseneck.
- Within the conservancy district, Awnings, Canopies, Marquees, Projecting, and Suspended Signs may extend from the attached facade into the right-of-way up to 5 feet and shall be a minimum of 8 feet above grade (Section 114.03.28(7)).
- Every building shall be guaranteed a minimum of 50 square feet of Wall Sign area, regardless of the business's actual building facade length.
- Sign copy shall be horizontally and vertically centered on the face of the awning, canopy, or marquee. Sign copy shall not extend above or below an awning or marquee but may extend up to 12" in height above the canopy face.
- Bottom of sign shall be a min. of 14 feet above a drive, alley, street, parking space or other vehicle surface; a min. of 8 feet above a sidewalk, patio, or other ground-level surface; and a max. of 5 feet from the building. Wall Signs shall not project more than 12" horizontally beyond the edge of any wall or other surface to which they are mounted.
- Signs mounted on-site and must not be located within any street right-of-way (which includes the entire public sidewalk and street terrace area), except for footnote 6 and 13, or vision triangle without a permit from the City Engineer.
- Drive Thru Signs shall conform to the location requirements for Drive-Through and In-Vehicle Sales or Service land uses (see Section 114.03.10(9)). Drive Thru Signs shall be located within 15 feet of the building, sign copy shall not be viewable from the public right-of-way or an adjacent residential land use, sign type may be either freestanding or wall mounted and must meet noise and lighting standards in the zoning code. A max. 96 sf of total Drive Thru Signs is permitted per business.
- Signs designed of materials complementary to and harmonious with the building and site and must be closely integrated with site landscaping.
- Signs shall only be located on a sidewalk and be no more than 3 feet from the property line, shall provide a minimum width of 5 feet of unobstructed public pedestrian walkway, and shall only be displayed during the hours of operation for on-site land use.
- Sign type only permitted for an institutional land use as determined by the Zoning Administrator (see Section 114.03.12).
- Menu Board Signs shall be securely affixed to the exterior wall of the building and shall not extend more than 4" from the wall on which it is mounted.
- Any In-Vehicle Sales and Service land use is permitted to include illuminated fuel price signage within a Freestanding Sign. Such signs shall count toward the site's maximum permitted sign area.
- Only permitted for In-Vehicle Sales and Service land uses. Stripe width shall be permitted on all sides of the freestanding canopy and limited to a max. height of 50% of the fascia's vertical height. Sign copy shall be limited to a max. of 24 square feet per fascia facing a public right-of-way.
- See Section 114.09.10 for Highway Interchange Overlay Sign standards.

Abbreviations: ft = feet max = maximum min = minimum sf = square feet P.C. = Plan Commission

**Example Sign Diagrams:**

**Figure 114.09.11(1): Business Sign-Permanent Group 2**

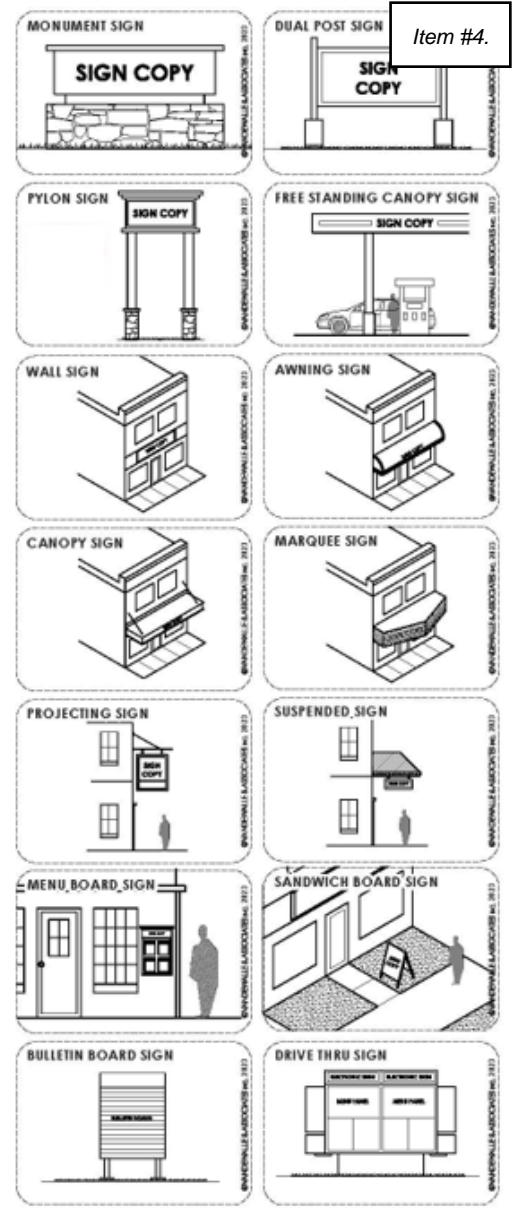
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							1 & 2 Family Residential SR-1, SR-2, MR-1, MH	Multi-Family Residential MR-2	Mixed-Use and Other INST, CMU, BP, LI, HI, PR, IOA, AG	Downtown DMU
<b>A. Freestanding Sign Category</b> 1,2 Choose 1 of the following Sign Types.										
1. Monument Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per street frontage	Minimum height of sign = minimum distance from the right-of-way <sup>10</sup>	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts. <sup>12</sup>	Standard. <sup>4,5</sup>	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of street frontage	Not allowed	60 sf area 6 ft height	120 sf area 12 ft height	60 sf area 6 ft height
3. Pylon Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18							Not allowed	Not allowed	120 sf area 20 ft height	Not allowed
4. Freestanding Canopy Sign 16, 17							None. Use max area. <sup>17</sup>	Not allowed	See Footnote 17	Not allowed
<b>B. On-Building Sign Category</b> 1,2 Choose 2 of the following Sign Types.										
1. Wall Sign 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per business per street frontage	Sign shall not extend above parapet or fascia. Minimum overhang rules. <sup>4, 5, 9, 10</sup> Sign may not project within 2 feet of curb.	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Standard. <sup>5</sup>	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of building façade length	Not allowed	Per formula.		
2. Awning Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								15% of canopy/awning area		
3. Canopy Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								40 sf area		
4. Marquee Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								30 sf area		
5. Projecting Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10										
<b>C. Pedestrian Sign Category</b> 1,2										
1. Suspended Sign 1, 2, 6, 9, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each customer entrance.	Minimum overhang rules. <sup>6, 8, 9, 10</sup>	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Ambient or Gooseneck.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed	4 sf area		
<b>D. Changeable Copy Sign Category</b> 1,2 Choose any combination of the following Sign Types.										
1. Menu Board Sign 1, 2, 15	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each business.	Within 10 ft of customer entrance. Minimum 8' from the right-of-way. <sup>10</sup>	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Internal. Ambient only. Internal. Standard. <sup>4,5</sup>	None. Use max area.	Not allowed	4 sf area		
2. Sandwich Board Sign 1, 2, 13							Not allowed	8 sf area/4 ft height/2 ft width		
3. Bulletin Board Sign 14							Not allowed	30 sf area/6 ft height		
4. Drive Thru Sign 1, 2, 4, 11							1 per drive thru lane	Drive-thru <sup>11</sup>	Standard. <sup>4,5</sup>	Not allowed

**Footnotes Containing Additional Development Requirements:**

- Refer to Section 114.09.05 for definitions and rules for each Sign Category (lettered) and each Sign Type (numbered).
- Available to land uses identified in Section 114.03.05. No signs are permitted in the City of Portland's Historic Preservation Zoning District.
- The number of permitted on-building signs may be transferred from one building to another, but the total combined sign area on the receiving wall shall still be limited by its length ratio of said wall.
- Electronic Message Signs (of up to 50% of the sign area) are permitted for the same use in nonresidential districts. See Section 114.09.08.
- "Standard" means the following forms of sign lighting: ambient, backlit, interior, or gooseneck.
- Within the DMU zoning district, Awnings, Canopies, Marquees, Projecting, and Suspended Signs may extend from the attached facade into the right-of-way up to 5 feet and shall be a minimum of 8 feet above grade (Section 114.03.28(7)).
- Every business shall be guaranteed a minimum of 50 square feet of Wall Sign, regardless of the business's actual building facade length.
- Sign copy shall be horizontally and vertically centered on the face of the awning, canopy, or marquee. Sign copy shall not extend above or below an awning or marquee but may extend up to 12" in height above the canopy face.
- Bottom of sign shall be a min. of 14 feet above a drive, alley, street, parking lot, or other vehicle surface; a min. of 8 feet above a sidewalk, patio, or other ground-level surface; and a max. of 5 feet from the building. Wall Signs shall not project more than 12 inches horizontally beyond the edge of any wall or other surface to which they are mounted.
- Sign must be located on-site and must not be located within any street right-of-way, which includes the entire public sidewalk and street terrace area), except for footnote 6 and 13, or vision triangle without a permit from the City Engineer.
- Drive Thru Signs shall conform to the location requirements for Drive-Through Vehicle Sales or Service land uses (see Section 114.03.10(9)). Drive Thru Signs shall be located within 15 feet of the building, sign copy shall not be viewable from the public right-of-way or an adjacent residential land use, sign type may be either freestanding or wall mounted and must meet noise and lighting standards in the zoning code. A max. 96 sf of total Drive Thru Signs is permitted per business.
- Sign must be designed of materials complementary to and harmonious with the building and site and must be closely integrated with site landscaping.
- Signs shall only be located on a sidewalk and be no more than 3 feet from the property line, shall provide a minimum width of 5 feet of unobstructed public pedestrian walkway, and shall only be displayed during the hours of operation for on-site land use.
- Sign type only permitted for an institutional land use as determined by the Zoning Administrator (see Section 114.03.12).
- Menu Board Signs shall be securely affixed to the exterior wall of the building and shall not extend more than 4" from the wall on which it is mounted.
- Any In-Vehicle Sales and Service land use is permitted to include illuminated fuel price signage within a Freestanding Sign. Such signs shall count toward the site's maximum permitted sign area.
- Only permitted for In-Vehicle Sales and Service land uses. Stripe width shall be permitted on all sides of the freestanding canopy and limited to a max. height of 50% of the fascia's vertical height. Sign copy shall be limited to a max. of 24 square feet per fascia facing a public right-of-way.
- See Section 114.09.10 for Highway Interchange Overlay Sign standards.

Abbreviations: ft = feet max = maximum min = minimum sf = square feet P.C. = Plan Commission

**Example Sign Diagrams:**



**Figure 114.09.11(1): Business Sign-Permanent Group 2**

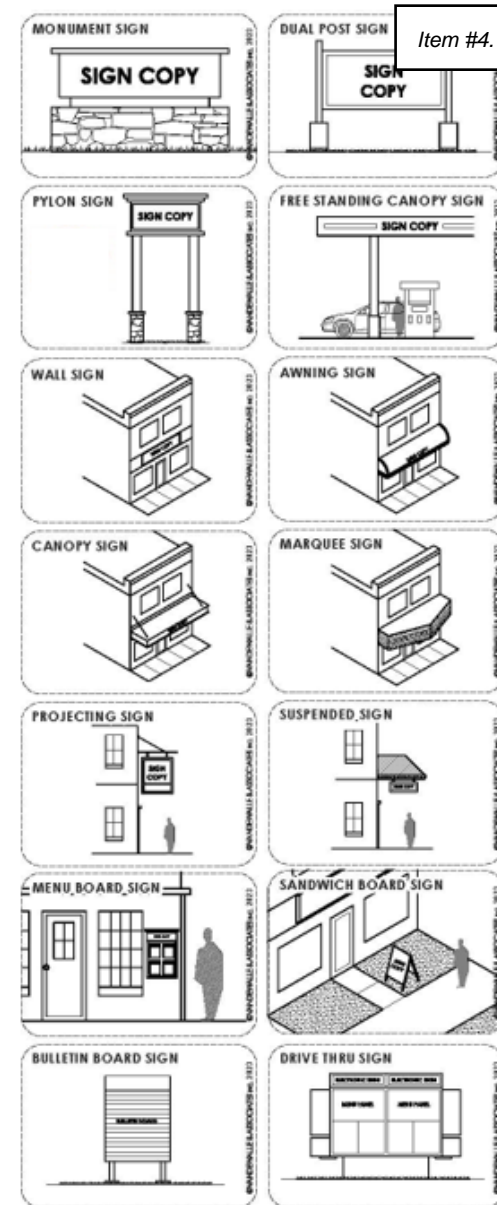
Sign Categories & Sign Types	Sign Permit Required and Approver (see Section 114.09.27)	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Locations Allowed	Sign Face Materials Allowed	Sign Lighting Allowed	Sign Area Formula	Sign Area & Height Maximums for Zoning Districts:					
							1 & 2 Family Residential SR-1, SR-2, MR-1, MH	Multi-Family Residential MR-2	Mixed-Use and Other INST, CMU, BP, LI, HI, PR, IOA, AG	Downtown DMU		
<b>A. Freestanding Sign Category</b> 1,2 Choose 1 of the following Sign Types.												
1. Monument Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per street frontage	Minimum height of sign = minimum distance from the right-of-way 10	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts. 12	Standard. 4,5	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of street frontage	Not allowed	60 sf area 6 ft height	120 sf area 12 ft height	60 sf area 6 ft height		
2. Dual-Post Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18							Not allowed	Not allowed	120 sf area 20 ft height	Not allowed		
3. Pylon Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18							Not allowed	See Footnote 17	Not allowed			
4. Freestanding Canopy Sign 16, 17							Not allowed	See Footnote 17	Not allowed			
<b>B. On-Building Sign Category</b> 1,2 Choose 2 of the following Sign Types.												
1. Wall Sign 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per business per street frontage	Sign shall not extend above parapet or fascia. Minimum overhang rules. 4, 5, 9, 10 Sign may not project within 2 feet of curb.	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Standard. 5	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of building façade length	Per formula.					
2. Awning Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10							15% of canopy/awning area					
3. Canopy Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10							Not allowed	40 sf area		30 sf area		
4. Marquee Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10							Not allowed	40 sf area		30 sf area		
5. Projecting Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10							Not allowed	40 sf area		30 sf area		
<b>C. Pedestrian Sign Category</b> 1,2												
1. Suspended Sign 1, 2, 6, 9, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each customer entrance.	Minimum overhang rules. 6, 8, 9, 10	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Ambient or Gooseneck.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed		4 sf area			
<b>D. Changeable Copy Sign Category</b> 1,2 Choose any combination of the following Sign Types.												
1. Menu Board Sign 1, 2, 15	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each business.	Within 10 ft of customer entrance. Minimum 8' from the right-of-way. 10	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Internal. Ambient only.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed	4 sf area				
2. Sandwich Board Sign 1, 2, 13							Not allowed	8 sf area/4 ft height/2 ft width				
3. Bulletin Board Sign 14							Not allowed	30 sf area/6 ft height				
4. Drive Thru Sign 1, 2, 4, 11							1 per drive thru lane	Drive-thru 11	Standard. 4,5	Not allowed	48 sf area/8 ft height	Not allowed

**Footnotes Containing Additional Development Requirements:**

- Refer to Section 114.09.05 for definitions and rules for each Sign Category (lettered), and each Sign Type (numbered).
- Available to land uses identified in Section 114.03.05. No signs are permitted in the Conservancy Zoning District.
- The number of permitted on-building signs may be transferred from one wall to another, but the total combined sign area on the receiving wall shall still be limited by its length ratio of said wall.
- Electronic Message Signs (of up to 50% of the sign area) are permitted for this Sign Type in nonresidential districts. See Section 114.09.08.
- "Standard" means the following forms of sign lighting: ambient, backlit, internal, and gooseneck.
- Within the DMU zoning district, Awnings, Canopies, Marquees, Projecting, and Suspended Signs may extend from the attached facade into the right-of-way up to 5 feet and shall be a minimum of 8 feet above the ground (Section 114.03.28(7)).
- Every business shall be guaranteed a minimum of 50 square feet of Wall Sign area, regardless of the business's actual building façade length.
- Sign copy shall be horizontally and vertically centered on the face of the awning, canopy, or marquee. Sign copy shall not extend above or below an awning or marquee but may extend up to 12" in height above the canopy face.
- Bottom of sign shall be a min. of 14 feet above a drive, alley, street, parking space or other vehicle surface; a min. of 8 feet above a sidewalk, patio, or other ground-level surface; and a max. of 5 feet above the building. Wall Signs shall not project more than 12 inches horizontally beyond the edge of any wall or other surface to which they are mounted.
- Sign must be located on-site and must not be located within any street right-of-way (which includes the entire public sidewalk and street terrace area), except for footnote 6 and 13, or vision triangle view triangle. Sign copy shall not be viewable from the City Engineer.
- Drive Thru Signs shall conform to the location requirements for Drive-Through and In-Vehicle Sales or Service land uses (see Section 114.03.10(9)). Drive Thru Signs shall be located within 15 feet of the building. Sign copy shall not be viewable from the public right-of-way or an adjacent residential land use. sign type may be either freestanding or wall mounted and must meet noise and lighting standards in the zoning code. A max. 96 sf of total sign area is permitted per business.
- Sign must be designed of materials complementary to and harmonious with the building and site and must be closely integrated with site landscaping.
- Signs shall only be located on a sidewalk and be no more than 3 feet from the property line, shall provide a minimum width of 5 feet of unobstructed public pedestrian walkway, and shall only be displayed during the hours of operation for on-site land use.
- Sign type only permitted for an institutional land use as determined by the Zoning Administrator (see Section 114.03.12).
- Menu Board Signs shall be securely affixed to the exterior wall of the building and shall not extend more than 4" from the wall on which it is mounted.
- Any In-Vehicle Sales and Service land use is permitted to include illuminated fuel price signage within a Freestanding Sign. Such signs shall count toward the site's maximum permitted sign area.
- Only permitted for In-Vehicle Sales and Service land uses. Stripe width shall be permitted on all sides of the freestanding canopy and limited to a max. height of 50% of the fascia's vertical height. Sign copy shall be limited to a max. of 24 square feet per fascia facing a public right-of-way.
- See Section 114.09.10 for Highway Interchange Overlay Sign standards.

Abbreviations: ft = feet max = maximum min = minimum sf = square feet P.C. = Plan Commission

**Example Sign Diagrams:**



**Figure 114.09.11(1): Business Sign-Permanent Group 2**

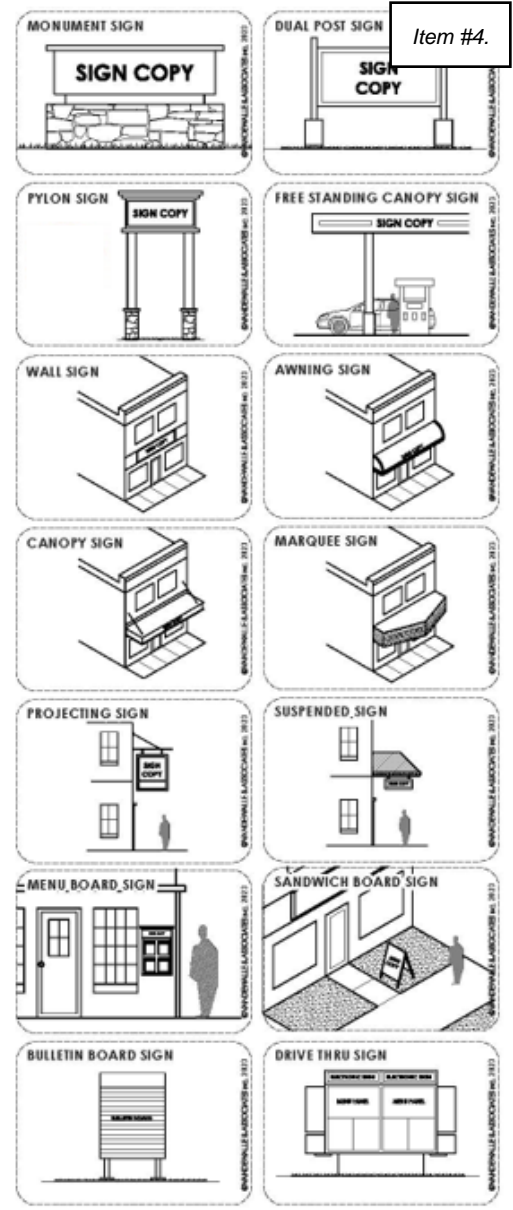
Sign Categories & Sign Types	Sign Permit Required and Approver (see Section 114.09.27)	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Locations Allowed	Sign Face Materials Allowed	Sign Lighting Allowed	Sign Area Formula	Sign Area & Height Maximums for Zoning Districts:			
							1 & 2 Family Residential SR-1, SR-2, MR-1, MH	Multi-Family Residential MR-2	Mixed-Use and Other INST, CMU, BP, LI, HI, PR, IOA, AG	Downtown DMU
<b>A. Freestanding Sign Category 1,2</b> Choose 1 of the following Sign Types.										
1. Monument Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per street frontage	Minimum height of sign = minimum distance from the right-of-way 10	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts. 12	Standard. 4,5	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of street frontage	Not allowed	60 sf area 6 ft height	120 sf area 12 ft height	60 sf area 6 ft height
2. Dual-Post Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18								Not allowed	120 sf area 20 ft height	Not allowed
3. Pylon Sign 1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18								Not allowed	See Footnote 17	Not allowed
4. Freestanding Canopy Sign 16, 17								None. Use max area. 17	Not allowed	Not allowed
<b>B. On-Building Sign Category 1,2</b> Choose 2 of the following Sign Types.										
1. Wall Sign 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per business per street frontage	Sign shall not extend above parapet or fascia. Minimum overhang rules. 4, 5, 9, 10 Sign may not project within 10 feet of curb.	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Standard. 5	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of building façade length	Not allowed	Per formula.		
2. Awning Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								15% of canopy/awning area		
3. Canopy Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								40 sf area		
4. Marquee Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10								30 sf area		
5. Projecting Sign 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10								Not allowed		
<b>C. Pedestrian Sign Category 1,2</b>										
1. Suspended Sign 1, 2, 6, 9, 10	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each customer entrance.	Minimum overhang rules. 6, 8, 9, 10	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Ambient or Gooseneck.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed	4 sf area		
<b>D. Changeable Copy Sign Category 1,2</b> Choose any combination of the following Sign Types.										
1. Menu Board Sign 1, 2, 15	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each business.	Within 10 ft of customer entrance.	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Standard. 4,5	None. Use max area.	Not allowed	4 sf area		
2. Sandwich Board Sign 1, 2, 13			Minimum 8' from the right-of-way. 10				Not allowed	8 sf area/4 ft height/2 ft width		
3. Bulletin Board Sign 14			Drive-thru 11				Not allowed	30 sf area/6 ft height		
4. Drive Thru Sign 1, 2, 4, 11			1 per drive thru lane				Not allowed	48 sf area/8 ft height		

**Footnotes Containing Additional Development Requirements:**

- 1 Refer to Section 114.09.05 for definitions and rules for each Sign Category (lettered), and each Sign Type (numbered).
- 2 Available to land uses identified in Section 114.03.05. No signs are permitted in the Conservancy Zoning District.
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- 4 Electronic Message Signs (of up to 50% of the sign area) are permitted for this Sign Type in nonresidential districts. See Section 114.09.08.
- 5 "Standard" means the following forms of sign lighting: ambient, backlit, internal, and gooseneck.
- 6 Within the DMU zoning district, Awnings, Canopies, Marquees, Projecting, and Suspended Signs may extend from the attached facade into the right-of-way up to 5 feet and shall be a minimum of 8 feet above grade (Section 114.03.28(7)).
- 7 Every business shall be guaranteed a minimum of 50 square feet of Wall Sign area, regardless of the business's actual building façade length.
- 8 Sign copy shall be horizontally and vertically centered on the face of the awning, canopy, or marquee. Sign copy shall not extend above or below an awning or marquee but may extend up to 12" in height above the canopy face.
- 9 Bottom of sign shall be a min. of 14 feet above a drive, alley, street, parking space or other vehicle surface; a min. of 8 feet above a sidewalk, patio, or other ground-level surface; and a max. of 5 feet from the building. Wall Signs shall not project more than 12 inches horizontally beyond the edge of any wall or other surface to which they are mounted.
- 10 Sign must be located on-site and must not be located within any street right-of-way (which includes the entire public sidewalk and street terrace area), except for footnote 6 and 13, or vision triangle without a permit from the City Engineer.
- 11 Drive Thru Signs shall conform to the location requirements for Drive-Through and In-Vehicle Sales or Service land uses (see Section 114.03.10(9)). Drive Thru Signs shall be located within 15 feet of the building, sign copy shall not be viewable from the public right-of-way or an adjacent residential land use, sign type may be either freestanding or wall mounted and must meet noise and lighting standards in the zoning code. A max. 96 sf of total Drive Thru Signs is permitted per business.
- 12 Sign must be designed of materials complementary to and harmonious with the building and site and must be closely integrated with site landscaping.
- 13 Signs shall only be located on a sidewalk and be no more than 3 feet from the property line, shall provide a minimum width of 5 feet of unobstructed public pedestrian walkway, and shall only be displayed during the hours of operation for on-site land use.
- 14 Sign type only permitted for an institutional land use as determined by the Zoning Administrator (see Section 114.03.12).
- 15 Menu Board Signs shall be securely affixed to the exterior wall of the building and shall not extend more than 4" from the wall on which it is mounted.
- 16 Any In-Vehicle Sales and Service land use is permitted to include illuminated fuel price signage within a Freestanding Sign. Such signs shall count toward the site's maximum permitted sign area.
- 17 Only permitted for In-Vehicle Sales and Service land uses. Stripe width shall be permitted on all sides of the freestanding canopy and limited to a max. height of 50% of the fascia's vertical height. Sign copy shall be limited to a max. of 24 square feet per fascia facing a public right-of-way.
- 18 See Section 114.09.10 for Highway Interchange Overlay Sign standards.

Abbreviations: ft = feet max = maximum min = minimum sf = square feet P.C. = Plan Commission

**Example Sign Diagrams:**



# Other Sign Code Elements

## Sign Definitions

- Coupled with graphics and tables = less interpretations

## Unique Situations

- Electronic message signs and fuel price signs

## Sign Measurements



## Approvals and Permits

- Staff review and approvals = reduced application time

## Prohibited Signs

- Off-premise, abandoned, animated/flashing, inflatable, pylon, roof, portable, vehicle, ROW

## Maintenance

## Nonconforming

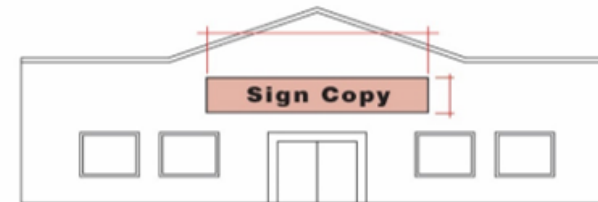
## Violations

Figure 114.09.15(2): Measurement of Sign Area



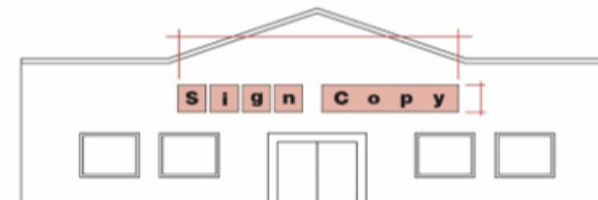
Example 1: Individual letters on a neutral surface

Sum of the smallest rectangles



Example 2: Individual letters or words grouped on one or more panels

Smallest single rectangle



Example 3: Individual letters on separate panels

Smallest single rectangle

# Overarching Changes

## **Consolidated Sign Types**

- Personal Message, Home Improvement, Real Estate, Temporary Open House, Sold, Election, Yard Sale= Yard Signs

## **Retained Requirements That Work**

- Maximum size, location, number per site/building, etc.

## **Increased User-Friendliness**

- Tables, diagrams, examples

## **Less Interpretations/Ambiguity**

- Definitions, metrics-based standards, signs in ROW and off-premise prohibited

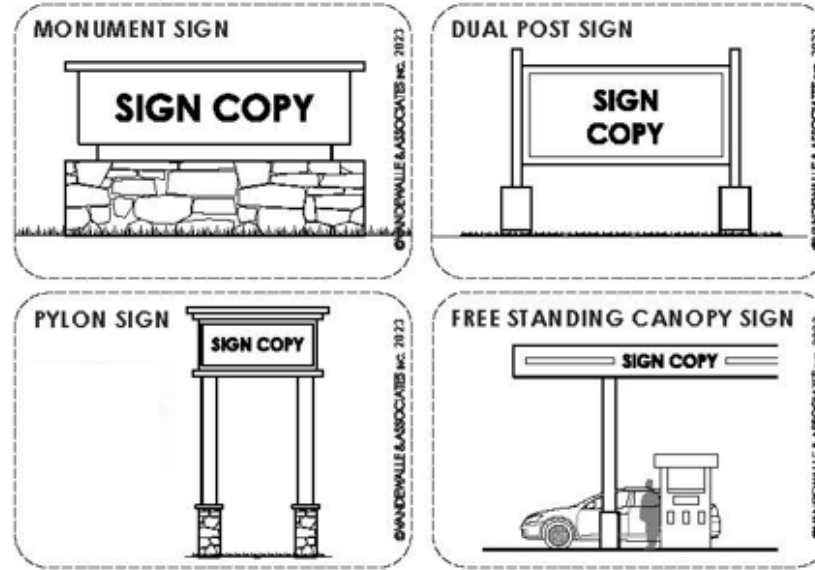
## **Expedited Approval Time**

- Staff approval for most sign types

# Freestanding Signs

## Existing:

- Permits monument, dual post, and pylon signs (retained in draft)
- Allows 1 sign per street frontage + CUP for additional signs
- Setback guidance varies
- Conflicting standards for size (lot size vs. frontage; 120 sf vs. 500 sf max)



## Should we...?

- Keep the proposed approach
- Remove proposed approach
- Modify the approach

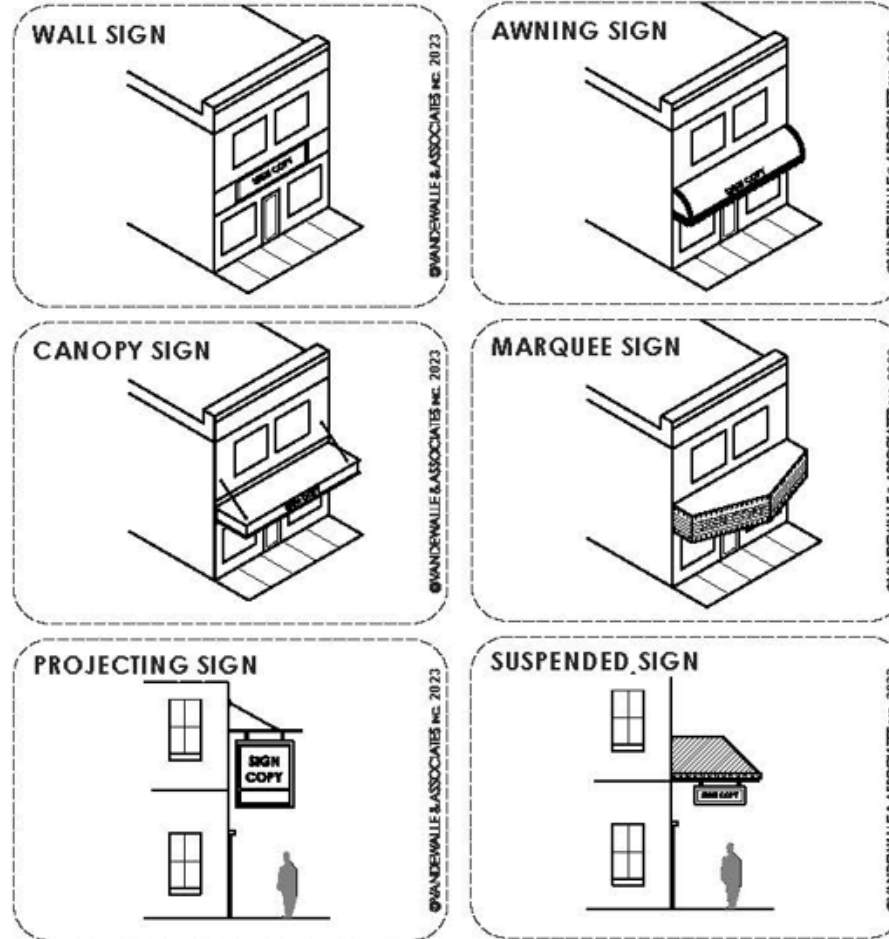
## Proposed:

- Quantity: Limit to 1 sign per street frontage (eliminate CUPs)
- Setback: Require setback equal to sign height (safety + simplicity)
- Size Standard:
  - 1 sq. ft. of sign area per 1 linear ft. of street frontage
  - Eliminate exceptions/bonuses
  - Reduce maximum size limits

# Downtown Signage

## Existing:

- Overlay district
- Oversized signs (out of scale)
  - Wall: 500 sf / 25'
  - Projecting: 100 sf
  - Ground: 150 sf / 20'
  - Roof signs permitted



## Proposed :

- Replace overlay with DMU standards
- Context-sensitive sizing
  - Wall: 1 sf / ft frontage
  - Projecting: 30 sf
  - Ground: 60 sf / 6–8'
  - Roof: Prohibited

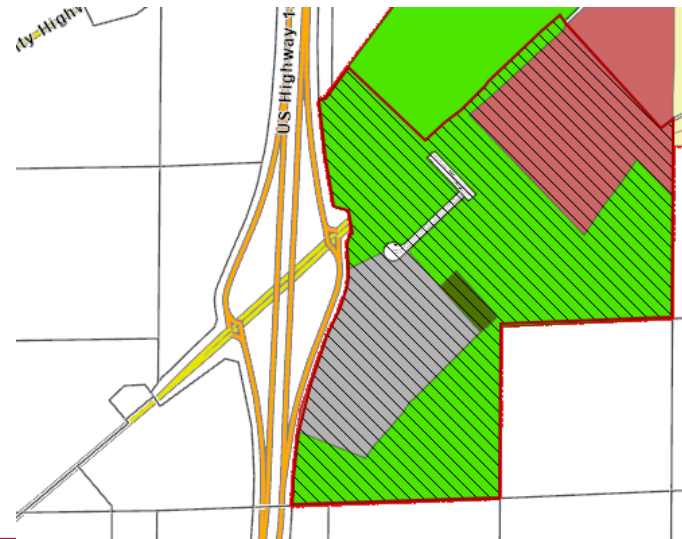
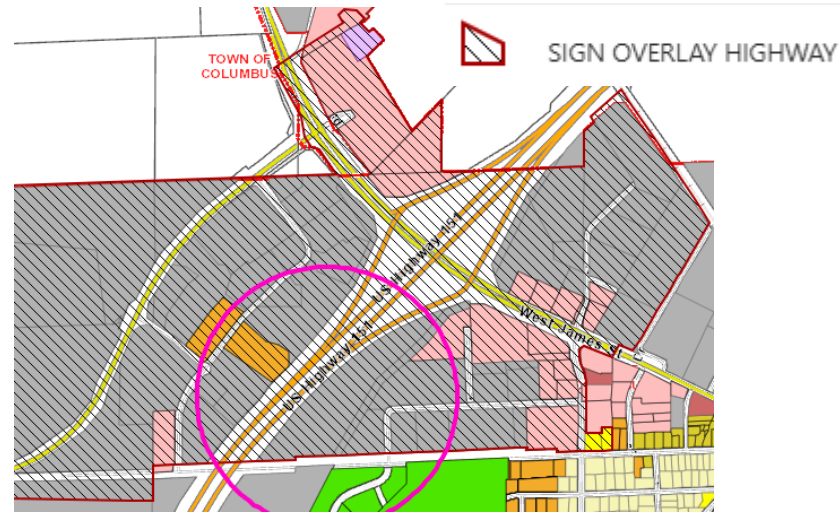
### Should we...?

- Keep the proposed approach
- Remove proposed approach
- Modify the approach

# Highway Interchange Overlay

## Existing:

- Overlay allows larger signs
- Max size: up to 1,200 sf
- Max height: 35' (roadway or grade)
- 500' separation from residential (unless screened)



## Proposed :

- Option to retain parcel based overlay or change to linear distance from highway (i.e. 1,500 from centerline of 151)
- Reduce max size: 500 sf
- Measure height from site grade (consistent standard)
- Evaluate need for 500' separation requirement

### Should we...?

- Keep the proposed approach
- Remove proposed approach
- Modify the approach

# Separation / Buffer Requirements

Separate Distance: “No commercial signs may be located within 75’ of a residential zoning district, unless the sign is fully screened from the residential property.”

- This is a unique provision to Columbus
- It’s not currently within the draft because we are proposing to reduce many of the maximum sign standards and thus make signs less intrusive on neighboring properties.

Should we...?

- Keep the proposed approach
- Remove proposed approach
- Modify the approach

# Electronic Message Signs

## Proposed:

- Permitted
  - Nonresidential uses only
  - Max 1 per site
  - Allowed as part of:
    - Freestanding
    - Drive-Thru
    - Community signs
- Key Standards
  - Max 50% of total sign area
  - Not visible within 100 ft of residential districts
  - Counts toward total sign area

- Display Requirements
  - Change frequency: every 3–10 seconds
  - No animation (instant transitions only)
  - Auto-adjust brightness (ambient light)
- Other
  - Must meet lighting standards
  - Must remain fully legible

### Should we...?

- Keep the proposed approach
- Remove proposed approach
- Modify the approach



# Yard Signs

Should off-premise signs  
be prohibited entirely?

Or

Only permit off-premise **yard signs**  
(as opposed to off-premise  
freestanding signs like billboards or  
pylons) to account for things like  
community events and small  
businesses?



**Based on your review of the Draft Sign Ordinance, is there anything else you'd like to discuss?**

## **Next Steps**

Future Plan Commission Working Meetings:

- Zoning Map
- Part 2 Continued

**Plan Commission Sign Code Review**  
**Simplified Guide and Policy Questions**  
**May 14, 2026**

- Review of Reed vs. Gilbert Law impact (Content Neutral Regulations)
- Review of main changes to code
- Policy questions or issues for Plan Commission attention
  - Most signs are proposed to be approved by staff
  - Discuss highway overlay which allows taller signs
    - Current = parcel based
    - Proposed = discuss. We could do 1,500 linear distances from centerline of Hwy 151
  - Instead of a downtown overlay, we just have specific standards to the DMU district
  - Overall many signs had very big size allowances – we’ve reduced them
    - Example – 100 sf projecting sign in downtown would have been huge
  - Change the way marquee signs are regulated
    - Currently only allowed for certain land uses (theaters, hotels, entertainment). Instead we will change to regulating by zoning districts.
  - Window signs
    - Proposed 25% of window maximum. Is this enough? Do you want to allow 50%?
  - Yard signs
    - Do you want to allow off-premise signs in yards?
  - Off-premises signs
    - Other than yard signs, we would prohibit other types (billboards, etc.)

# **DRAFT**

## **CITY OF COLUMBUS, WISCONSIN CHAPTER 114: ZONING ORDINANCE**

Section 114.09.01: Purpose

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## Section 114.09.01: Purpose

**ARTICLE IX: SIGNAGE****Section 114.09.01: Purpose**

- (1) The purpose of this Chapter is to establish standards for the fabrication, erection, and use of signs, and to regulate the location, type, size, and height of signage for all properties within the City of Columbus. The adoption of this Chapter reflects the formal finding of fact by the City of Columbus Plan Commission and City Council that regulation of signage advances the following compelling governmental interests:
- Elimination of signage that the City has determined to be a cause of unsafe traffic and visibility conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and passengers.
  - Protection of pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and passengers from injury caused by the faulty and uncontrolled construction and use of signs within the City.
  - Protection of pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and passengers from injury caused by distractions, obstructions, and hazards created by certain signs or by cluttered, distracting, or illegible signage.
  - Promotion of the public welfare, health, and safety of all persons using public thoroughfares and rights-of-way within the City of Columbus in relation to the signage displayed thereon, or overhanging, or projecting into such public spaces.
  - Preservation of the value of private property by assuring the compatibility of signs with surrounding land uses.
  - Assuring that public benefits derived from expenditures of public funds for the improvement and beautification of public streets and other public structures and spaces are protected from visual blight and unsafe conditions by exercising reasonable controls over character and design of signage.
  - Advancing the aesthetic goals of the City throughout the community and ensuring the effectiveness and flexibility in the design, creativity, or use of signage without creating a detriment to the general public.
- (2) Furthermore, this Chapter leaves ample and adequate alternative channels of communication and is narrowly defined so as to limit regulation to exterior signage and signage designed to be viewed from beyond the boundaries of a site.

**Commented [BR1]:** Staff: This is a more robust version of the purpose statement that you have right now and we believe it covers more than the current statement does. We would encourage this version of the existing:  
[https://library.municode.com/wi/columbus/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=MUCO\\_CH114ZO\\_ARTYSUSSTRE\\_DIV6SI\\_S114-132PU](https://library.municode.com/wi/columbus/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=MUCO_CH114ZO_ARTYSUSSTRE_DIV6SI_S114-132PU)

**Section 114.09.02: Reserved****Section 114.09.03: Definitions**

- (1) **Definition of a Sign.** In this Chapter, the word “sign” means any object, device, display, structure, or part thereof, situated or visible from outdoors, which is used to advertise, identify, display, direct or attract attention to an object, person, institution, organization, business, product, service, event, or location by any means, including words, letters, figures, designs, logos, symbols, fixtures, colors, illumination, or projected images.

For the purposes of this Chapter, the following are not signs regulated by this Chapter:

- Traffic control devices and similar structures erected by roadway authorities located within a right-of-way to communicate regulatory, directional or similar information to users.
- Decorations that are incidentally and customarily associated with a holiday, community festival or similar event.
- Flags which do not contain a commercial message or commercial logo or branding.

**Commented [BR2]:** Staff: This is a much improved version of the definition for sign than you have today (Includes anything that promotes, calls attention to or invites patronage, or anything similar, to a business, location, or product.) Additionally, the list below is generally inclusive of the exemptions you have in your code today. Right now, these are scattered all over vs. in one location as proposed.

## Section 114.09.03: Definitions

- (d) Art works, including but not limited to wall murals and statues, which do not contain a commercial message or logo or branding.
- (e) Building colors and lighting which do not contain a commercial message or commercial logo or branding.
- (f) Window displays of merchandise, pictures, or models of products or services incorporated in a window display, which are not directly attached to an interior or exterior window surface.
- (g) Vehicles that are licensed, operable, and parked in legal parking spaces.
- (h) Individual signs that are less than one square foot in area. Individual signs shall not be combined in a “mosaic” arrangement to create a resulting larger sign.
- (i) Construction site banners as defined in Wis. Stats. §66.1102(5)(a).
- (2) **Other Definitions.**
- (a) **Advertising.** Any writing, painting, display, emblem, drawing, sign, or other device designed, used, or intended for display or any type of publicity for the purpose of making anything known or attracting attention to a place, product, good, service, idea, or statement.
- (b) **Building frontage.** The width of the building façade that fronts a public street, highway, or interstate.
- (c) **Business frontage.** The portion of a building frontage occupied by a single tenant space having a public entrance within the building frontage. For businesses located on the interior of a building without frontage, the building elevation providing customer access shall be considered the business frontage.
- (d) **Commercial message.** Any sign wording, logo, branding, or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names, advertises, or calls attention to a business product, service, idea, or commercial activity. Any sign authorized by this Chapter may contain a commercial message.
- (e) **Copy.** Words, letters, numbers, figures, designs, or other symbolic representations incorporated into a sign.
- (f) **Changeable copy.** Sign copy that may be changed manually to provide different information such as boards with changeable letters, bulletin boards, and chalkboards.
- (g) **Customer entrance.** The entrance that the public can use when an establishment is open to the public.
- (h) **Electronic message sign:** See [Section 114.09.08](#).
- (i) **Elevation, building.** The view of any building or other structure from any one of four sides regardless of the configuration or orientation of a building. No building shall be treated as having more than four building elevations. Each elevation will generally be identified as a north, south, east or west building elevation.
- (j) **External illumination.** The lighting of an object from a light source located a distance from the object.
- (k) **Façade.** See “Elevation, building.”
- (l) **For lease.** The period of time in which a property is being offered for lease through a licensed real estate agent or is being offered for lease by the owner.
- (m) **Height of sign.** The vertical distance from the average ground level at the base of the sign to the top of the highest attached component of the sign. See [Section 114.09.15\(2\)](#) for the measurement of sign height.
- (n) **Lighting, ambient.** Illumination in which the only light that falls onto the sign comes from sources that are available naturally (e.g. sunlight, moonlight) or from artificial lighting sources used for other purposes in the vicinity of the sign (e.g. street lights, lighting installed for other purposes or sites)

**Commented [BR3]:** Staff: we'll have to come back to this definition after your review of the rest of the code because in some areas of the existing ordinance its measured from the grade of the roadway vs. site. We would recommend moving away from measuring it based on the roadway grade, but we can discuss that further.

## Section 114.09.03: Definitions

- (o) **Lighting, backlit.** Illumination that is arranged in such a way that the light is cast from behind the sign to the eyes of the viewer. Often, the lighting element is unshielded but concealed behind individual freestanding letters, creating a silhouette effect.
- (p) **Lighting, gooseneck.** Illumination resulting from light emitted directly from a shielded light fixture located at the top of the sign and angled downward onto the sign face. The light fixture is attached to a curved neck which is often flexible, allowing the user to position the light source onto the sign face.
- (q) **Lighting, internal.** Illumination emanating from a lighting element that is located behind the sign face and which is completely enclosed.
1. Internally illuminated signs shall have a light-colored copy on a dark-colored or opaque background, so that the copy is legible during the day and night. When illuminated, the sign shall appear to have an illuminated copy with a dark or non-illuminated background.
    - a. The requirements of Subsection (q)1., above, shall not apply to internally illuminated individual characters, letters, or shapes that do not contain copy on the sign face.
  2. Neon lighting is not considered to be internal lighting.
- (r) **Lighting, neon.** Glass tube lighting in which a gas and phosphors are used in combination to create a colored light. Neon lighting is not considered internal lighting as defined in Subsection (q) above.
- (s) **Maintain.** Maintaining the existing appearance of the sign; replacing the sign face or the supporting structure with identical materials, colors, and messages; changing the message of a Changeable Copy Sign; or changing the face of an Off-Premises Advertising Sign (billboard).
- (t) **Noncommercial message.** Any wording, logo, branding, or other representation that does not, directly or indirectly, name, advertise, or call attention to a business product, service, idea, or commercial activity. Any sign authorized by this Chapter may contain a noncommercial message.
- (u) **Open house.** An on-premise event used to advertise the lease, rent, or sale of a property.
- (v) **Plat phase.** The subset of lots, rights-of-ways, and outlots located within the perimeter boundary of a Final Plat that is being developed during a discrete and separate period from other lands in the same Final Plat.
- (w) **Sign area.** The entire face of a sign, including the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblem, or other display, together with any material or color forming an integral part of the background of the display but not including any supporting framework. See Section 114.09.15(4).
- (x) **Sign face.** The area or display surface used for the message.
- (y) **Site.** A site shall include all lots that are contiguous, under unified single ownership and intended to remain under unified single ownership under the jurisdiction of this Chapter. A site may also be determined to be a portion of a single lot where more than one building contains separate businesses. For the purposes of this Chapter, the site shall be determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- (z) **Temporary sign.** A sign or advertisement intended to be displayed for a certain limited period. If a sign display area is permanent, but the message displayed is subject to periodic changes, that sign shall not be considered temporary. A portable sign shall not be considered a temporary sign or used for such a purpose.
- (aa) **Three-dimensional signs.** Signs that have a depth or relief on their surface. Where a sign consists of one or more three-dimensional objects (i.e., balls, cubes, clusters of objects, sculpture or statue-like trademarks), the sign area shall be measured according to its maximum projection upon a vertical plane. See Section 114.09.15(4).
- (bb) **Windowpane.** The area defined by any combination of the window frame and mullions located within said frame.

**Commented [BR4]:** Staff: Today, you have externally illuminated, internally illuminated, and gooseneck. Additionally, as you'll see further below, we put all of the lighting requirements within the lighting section of the code. Today, you have some of those standards in the sign code. We'll need to discuss that approach further with the review of the lighting code.

**Section 114.09.04: Reserved****Section 114.09.05: Definitions Related to Sign Groups, Sign Categories, and Sign Types**

This Section provides the definitions related to various Sign Groups, Sign Categories, and Sign Types. Figures 114.09.11(1) through 114.09.11(3.A) provide the regulations for these signs applicable to each zoning district, including an indication of whether a particular Sign Type is permitted or prohibited as a new sign. Any Sign Type not addressed by this Chapter shall be considered prohibited.

- (1) **Business Sign--Permanent Group.** A permanent sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, or entertainment conducted, sold, offered, or manufactured upon the site where the sign is located.

“Business Sign--Permanent” is a Sign Group which contains various Sign Categories and Sign Types that a business is eligible to use, and which requires a sign permit. This Sign Group includes the following Sign Categories: Freestanding Signs, On-Building Signs, Pedestrian Signs, and Changeable Copy Signs. See Figure 114.09.11(1) for additional rules related to zoning districts.

- (a) **Freestanding Sign Category.** A sign permanently resting on or supported by a slab, pedestal, post, pylon, or any other form of base located on the ground.

The following Freestanding Sign Types are addressed by this Chapter:

1. **Monument Sign.** A type of Freestanding Sign in which the bottom edge of the sign face is located within one foot of a ground-mounted pedestal. The ground-mounted pedestal may be smaller, equal to, or wider in width than the face of the sign.
2. **Dual Post Sign.** A type of Freestanding Sign mounted to the sides or ends of two or more posts, with the majority of the sign area located between the outermost posts, with the bottom edge located within an average of three feet of existing grade.
3. **Pylon Sign.** A type of Freestanding Sign erected upon one or more pylons or poles, generally of a height that is taller than permitted for a Dual Post sign.
4. **Freestanding Canopy Sign.** A type of Freestanding Sign placed directly on the facade of a freestanding canopy associated with an In-Vehicle Sales and Service land use (See 114.03.10(9)).

- (b) **On-Building Sign Category.** A type of sign permanently affixed to a wall of a building, and which is generally oriented and sized for visibility to motorists.

The following On-Building Sign Types are addressed by this Chapter:

1. **Wall Sign.** A type of On-Building Sign that is mounted directly on, and parallel to, a building façade or other vertical building surface. A Wall Sign also includes a permanent sign located on the interior of a building within five feet of the exterior wall that is intended to be viewed primarily from beyond the boundaries of the site. Whether an interior sign is considered a Wall Sign shall be determined by the Zoning Administrator during the sign permit review process.
2. **Awning Sign.** A type of On-Building Sign that is directly affixed via sewing, silk screening, painting, or similar method to a non-rigid removable awning which is mounted to the façade of a building. The definition of an awning can be found in Section 114.11.01.
3. **Canopy Sign.** A type of On-Building Sign that is directly affixed via bolts, brackets, or similar method to a rigid permanent canopy which is mounted to, or adjacent to, the façade of a building. The definition of a canopy can be found in Section 114.11.01.

**Commented [BR5]:** Staff: Please see the sign code translation table document. We are proposing all new names for signs to create content neutrality.

### Section 114.09.05: Definitions Related to Sign Groups, Sign Categories, and Sign Types

4. **Marquee Sign.** A type of On-Building Sign that is mounted to a permanent roof-like structure that projects out from the exterior wall of a structure and shelters the entrance or entrance approaches to a building.
5. **Projecting Sign.** A type of On-Building Sign that is mounted at any angle other than parallel to the wall on which it is mounted, extending from the face of the wall.
- (c) **Pedestrian Category.** A sign attached to the façade of a building and mounted just above sidewalk level, and which is oriented and sized for visibility to nearby pedestrians rather than to motorists.
  1. **Suspended Sign.** A type of Pedestrian Sign that is mounted to the nearest wall, oriented to pedestrian traffic, and suspended from the underside of a horizontal plane surface, such as a covered porch, arcade, or canopy.
- (d) **Changeable Copy Sign Category.** A sign typically used to advertise daily specials, daily menu items, or on-site events that change on a frequent basis and which usually includes changeable copy. This type of sign is often associated with restaurants, taverns, retail stores, music venues, and retail stores.

The following Changeable Copy Sign Types are addressed by this Chapter:

1. **Menu Board Sign.** A type of Changeable Copy Sign mounted flat against a wall containing changeable copy.
  2. **Sandwich Board Sign.** A type of freestanding Changeable Copy Sign placed on the ground and constructed in such a manner as to form an “A”-like shape, hinged or not hinged at the top, with each angular face held together at an appropriate distance by a supporting element such as a folding bar, latch, or chain.
  3. **Bulletin Board Sign.** A type of freestanding Changeable Copy Sign located on-site containing changeable copy and resting on or supported by a pedestal, post, or other form of base located on the ground.
  4. **Drive Thru Sign.** A type of Changeable Copy Sign used only in conjunction with drive-through or drive-in establishments, as further defined in [Section 114.03.10\(9\)](#).
- (2) **Business Sign--Other Group.** A sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, or entertainment conducted, sold, offered, or manufactured upon the site where the sign is located. “Business Signs--Other” is a Sign Group which contains various Sign Categories and Sign Types that a business is eligible to use, which do not require a Sign Permit, and which are typically used to promote temporary activities. This Sign Group includes the following Sign Categories: Window Signs, Temporary Board & Banner Signs, Temporary Flag or Feather Signs, and Temporary Approved Development Signs. See [Figure 114.09.11\(2\)](#) for additional rules related to zoning districts.
- (a) **Window Sign Category.** A type of sign that is either painted onto a window, attached to the inside face of an exterior window, or located inside a building within three feet of a window and intended to be viewed from the exterior of the building. Window Signs may face toward the outside, the inside, or both.
  - (b) **Temporary Board & Banner Sign Category.** A sign located outside of a building for a defined display time limit. Such signs are often used for the purpose of informing the public of a sale or special offer.

The following Temporary Board & Banner Sign Types are addressed by this Chapter:

1. **Board Sign.** A type of Temporary Board & Banner Sign that is temporarily placed on the ground and is made of rigid material such as plywood or corrugated plastic.
2. **Banner Sign.** A type of Temporary Board & Banner Sign that is made of flexible material such as cloth or vinyl and is supported along one or more sides or at two or more corners by wires, ropes, string, nails, or other removable fastening materials.

### Section 114.09.05: Definitions Related to Sign Groups, Sign Categories, and Sign Types

(c) **Temporary Flag & Feather Sign Category.** A sign located outside of a building. Such signs are often used for the purpose of informing the public of a sale or special offer.

1. **Flag Sign.** A type of Temporary Flag & Feather Sign that is located outside of a building. It's made of vinyl, fabric, or other similar lightweight all-weather flexible material which is mounted on a pole.
2. **Feather Sign.** A type of Temporary Flag & Feather Sign consisting of a piece of vertically elongated, flexible material such as cloth or vinyl which is affixed to a single pole driven in the ground. The pole may be rigid or flexible but is not permanent.

(d) **Temporary Approved Development Sign Category.** A sign which is limited to display only during the active development of a building or plat, but does not include construction site banners defined under Wis. Stats. §66.1102(5).

The following Temporary Approved Development Sign Types are addressed by this Chapter:

1. **Active Building Board Sign.** A type of Temporary Approved Development Sign that is made of a rigid material such as plywood or corrugated plastic, which may be displayed only on the site of a building under construction, and only during the time period in which the Building Permit is valid.
2. **Active Plat Board Sign.** A type of Temporary Approved Development Sign that is made of a rigid material such as plywood or corrugated plastic, which may be displayed only on the site of a subdivision plat under construction, and only during the time period when less than 80 percent of the lots in the plat phase have been sold.

(3) **Miscellaneous Sign Group.** "Miscellaneous Sign Group" is a Sign Group containing various Sign Categories and Sign Types that a site or business is eligible or required to use. This group includes the following Sign Categories: Site Guidance Signs, Placemaking Signs, and Yard Signs. See Figure 114.09.11(3) and 114.09.11(3.A.) for additional rules related to zoning districts.

(a) **Site Guidance Sign Category.** A Sign Category that includes signs that the City finds essential or highly desirable in order to protect the public health, safety, or welfare. Specifically, these signs are used to provide information essential to the following public purposes: to deliver mail; to identify property addresses for the provision of emergency services such as fire or rescue service; to identify the management of rental properties for the provision of emergency services; to provide information about parking limitations or warnings against trespass; and, to provide information about required traffic flow where a safe path to a destination is not evident.

The following Site Guidance Sign Types are addressed by this Chapter:

1. **On-Building Locational Sign.** A type of Site Guidance Sign located on-building that typically indicates addressing information or the name or address of the property owner, tenant, or manager of the property.
  2. **Interior Site Navigational Sign.** A type of Site Guidance Sign that typically includes a directional arrow or symbol that directs people to a specific destination within a development or site or indicates a warning from the property owner related to conditions on-site or that cites a City, State, or Federal law, order, rule, or regulation. Examples may include signs listing parking hours or "No Trespassing," "No Loitering," or "Customer Parking Only" signs. This Sign Type may also include either the name, logo, or symbol of the destination, provided that the name, logo, or symbol is less than 1 square foot.
- (b) **Placemaking Sign Category.** A Sign Category that conveys information which the City of Columbus finds desirable to encourage placemaking, particularly related to officially-recognized historic places, officially-designated neighborhoods, and conveying information for the general public. Signs in this Category are optional and are only permitted through official government action, including designation of historic places, creation of outlots in a Plat or Certified Survey Map, and the presence of an Institutional land use.

## Sections 114.09.06 to 114.09.07: Reserved

The following Placemaking Sign Types are addressed by this Chapter:

1. **Metal Plaque Sign.** A type of Placemaking Sign is available to officially-recognized historic properties, sites, or districts, typically denoting the name of the building onto which it is mounted, its date of erection, or historical information.
  2. **Permanent Gateway Sign.** A type of Placemaking Sign typically indicating the name of a neighborhood, neighborhood association, or subdivision recognized by the City of Columbus.
  3. **Community Sign.** A type of Placemaking Sign typically providing information to the community regarding scheduled public events, public activities, and public facilities.
  4. **Community Interior-Oriented Sign.** A type of Placemaking Sign typically indicating or recognizing a business or other entity which sponsors or supports a particular sport, team, event, or other activity in which persons are or will be engaged at the location where the sign is displayed.
- (c) **Yard Sign Category.** A Sign Category which is available to all land uses and is intended to accommodate a wide variety of sign purposes (e.g. garage sale signs, for sale signs, political signs, “slow down for kids” signs, on-premises advertising signs, etc.), often needed on a temporary basis. Such signs are freestanding and mounted on one or two stakes or posts and do not have footings. Yard Signs are not permitted in any street terrace or other portion of a right-of-way.

The following Yard Sign Types are addressed by this Chapter:

1. **Stake Sign.** A type of Yard Sign that consists of a sign face erected upon one or more metal wires or wood, metal, or plastic stakes of no more than three inches in width.
2. **Frame Sign.** A type of Yard Sign that consists of a frame into which a sign face can be inserted and erected upon two wood, metal, or plastic stakes or ground spikes.
3. **Arm & Post Sign.** A type of Yard Sign mounted on a post or posts, either with a bracket arm extending outward to support a hanging sign, with the sign attached directly to the side of the post, or with the sign mounted between two posts.

## Sections 114.09.06 to 114.09.07: Reserved

## Section 114.09.08: Electronic Message Signs

- (1) **Electronic Message Sign.** A type of sign that displays words, lines, logos, graphic images, or symbols, which may be changed electronically to provide different information, and which includes computer signs, electronic reader boards, video screens, LCD signs, electronic time and temperature signs, and other signs with electronically-controlled changing or moving displays.
- (a) Electronic Message Signs shall be permitted only with nonresidential land uses. No more than one Electronic Message Sign shall be permitted per site.
  - (b) In addition to the setback requirements of this Chapter, no Electronic Message Sign shall have a message that is visible from any residential zoning district within 100 feet of the sign.
  - (c) Electronic Message Signs may be integrated into the design of the following Sign Types: Freestanding Signs, Drive Thru Signs, or Community Signs, but may not comprise more than 50 percent of the sign’s total area. Electronic Message Signs shall count toward the site’s maximum permitted sign area.
  - (d) Messages and non-text images shall not change appearance more than once every 3 seconds or less than once every 10 seconds and transitions between messages shall be via instantaneous change. Use of Electronic Message Signs for images, text, or lighting that change appearance in a manner not permitted above shall be considered animated signs, which are prohibited per Section 114.09.30.

**Commented [BR6]:** Staff: your existing standards do not specify the number permitted on a given site or which land uses/zoning districts these are permitted in. How would you like to handle this?

**Commented [BR7]:** Staff: the existing standard is no electronic message sign within 500’ of a residential property. That’s a really big setback in our experience. Do you want to keep 500’?

**Commented [BR8]:** Staff: similar to the note above in (a), we couldn’t figure out what the existing standards were so we provided some ideas here for your consideration.

**Commented [BR9]:** Staff: we reflected your existing requirements here. Typically, we only put a minimum requirement for time between changes, not a range. Also, we typically have a longer minimum interval to avoid flashing signs (10 or more seconds). However, please let us know how your existing approach is working on if you’d like to make changes.

## Section 114.09.09: Fuel Price Signs

- (e) Electronic Message Signs shall be equipped with photosensitive equipment which automatically adjusts the brightness and contrast of the sign in direct relation to the ambient outdoor illumination.
- (f) Electronic Message Signs shall comply with the exterior lighting requirements of Section 114.06.20.
- (g) Electronic Message Signs shall be maintained so as to display messages in a complete and legible manner.

## Section 114.09.09: Fuel Price Signs

- (1) **Fuel Price Signs.** A type of sign that lists the price of gasoline sold on-site, as required by Wis. Stat. section 100.18(8).
  - (a) Fuel Price Signs shall not be separate signs, but rather shall be integrated into the design of a permitted Freestanding Sign, described in 114.09.11.
  - (b) Fuel Price Signs shall list no more than one price per type of fuel. Such prices shall be displayed on a single structure.
  - (c) Fuel Price Signs may be illuminated, per the exterior lighting requirements of Section 114.06.20.
  - (d) Fuel Price Signs may contain changeable copy or Electronic Message Signs per the requirements of Section 114.09.08.

**Commented [BR10]:** Staff: this section doesn't exist in the current code, but we recommend adding it because these are regulated by state statutes. Basically, we are saying they are permitted within other business signs permitted by this chapter.

## Section 114.09.10: Highway Interchange Overlay

- (1) The Highway Interchange Overlay is intended to permit additional maximum sign area and sign height at identified locations within the City of Columbus near the interchanges of U.S. Highway 151, State Highway 73, and State Highway 16. All lots permitted to have additional sign size and height beyond those provided in Section 114.09.11 are limited to those parcels identified in Figure 114.09.10a.
  - (a) Signs adjacent to residential zoning districts. No signs shall be permitted within 500 feet of any residential zoning district boundary line unless completely screened from the residential zoning district by a building, solid fence, or an evergreen planting. Evergreen plantings shall be not more than two feet shorter than the height of the sign at the time of planting and spaced so as to affect an opaque screen of the sign. All required screening shall be continuously maintained.
  - (b) One of the permitted freestanding signs on properties located in the Highway Interchange Overlay can exceed the maximum permitted sign area up to a maximum of 500 square feet and must adhere to all other requirements as outlined in Figure 114.09.11(1).
  - (c) One of the permitted freestanding signs on properties located in the Highway Interchange Overlay can exceed the maximum permitted sign height up to a maximum of 35 feet above the average ground level at the base of the sign and must adhere to all other requirements as outlined in Figure 114.09.11(1).
  - (d) The regulations of subsection (1)(a) and (1)(b) above only apply to parcels zoned Corridor Mixed Use, Institutional, Business Park, Light Industrial, and Heavy Industrial.
  - (e) All freestanding signs in the Highway Interchange Overlay require issuance of a Sign Permit from City Staff.

**Commented [BR11]:** Staff: Please see the notes documented within the translation table document regarding the proposed changes to this overlay district.

Figure 114.09.10a Highway Interchange Overlay Map

## Section 114.09.11: Permitted Sign Rules

**Section 114.09.11: Permitted Sign Rules**

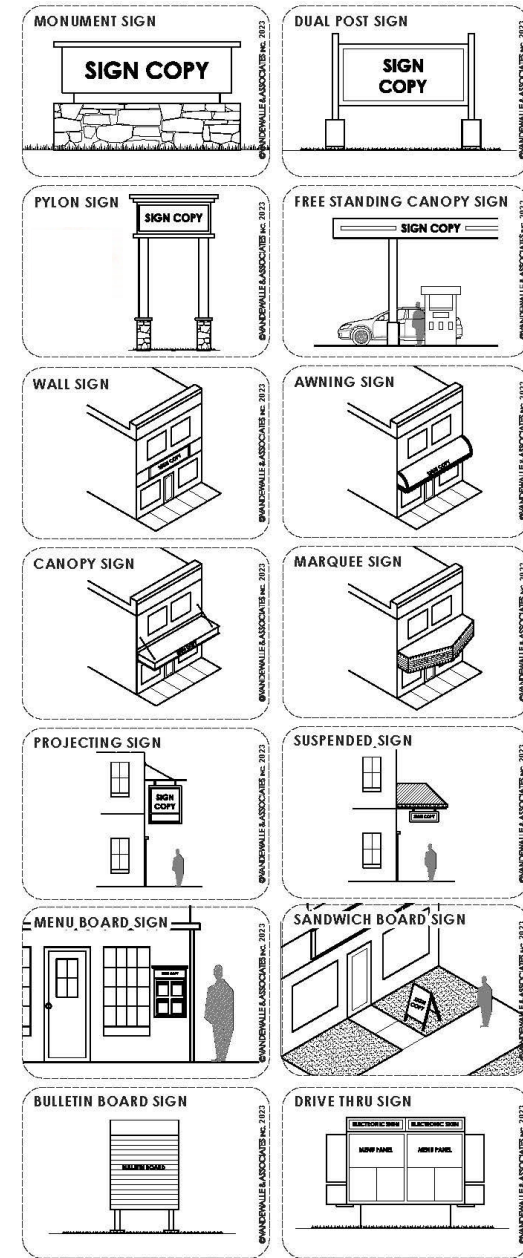
- (2) Signs shall be allowed on private property in the City in accordance with Figures 114.09.11(1) through 114.09.11(3.A.), which address permitted signage as it relates to permits, quantity, area, location, lighting, and zoning districts. The requirements set forth in Figures 114.09.11(1) through 114.09.11(3.A.) shall be declared to be part of this Chapter.
- (a) The rules for signs in the Business Signs--Permanent Group are located in Figure 114.09.11(1).
  - (b) Additional rules pertaining to the Freestanding Sign Category are located in Figure 114.09.11(1.A).
  - (c) The rules for signs in the Business Signs—Other Group are located in Figure 114.09.11(2).
  - (d) The rules for signs in the Miscellaneous Sign Group are located in Figure 114.09.11(3) and Figure 114.09.11(3.A.).
  - (e) Signage for all uses in the Planned Unit Development zoning district (See Section 114.02.11) shall be permitted per the underlying zoning district and may be granted flexibility through the Planned Unit Development process.

**Commented [BR12]:** Staff: the goal with the tables below is that pretty much the entire sign code is located within these four tables and that's pretty much all you'll need to reference. However, because there is so much content within each table, we have created a separate document with questions, comments, and discussion on the various standards shown below.

Section 114.09.11: Permitted Sign Rules

Figure 114.09.11(1): Business Sign-Permanent Group <sup>2</sup>							Sign Area & Height Maximums for Zoning Districts:				
Sign Categories & Sign Types	Sign Permit Required and Approver (see Section 114.09.27)	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Locations Allowed	Sign Face Materials Allowed	Sign Lighting Allowed	Sign Area Formula	1 & 2 Family Residential	Multi-Family Residential	Mixed-Use and Other	Downtown	
							SR-1, SR-2, MR-1, MH	MR-2	INST, CMU, BP, LI, HI, PR, IOA, AG	DMU	
<b>A. Freestanding Sign Category</b> <sup>1,2</sup> Choose 1 of the following Sign Types.											
1. Monument Sign <sup>1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18</sup>	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per street frontage	Minimum height of sign = minimum distance from the right-of-way <sup>10</sup>	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts. <sup>12</sup>	Standard. <sup>4,5</sup>	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of street frontage	Not allowed	60 sf area	120 sf area	60 sf area	
2. Dual-Post Sign <sup>1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18</sup>								6 ft height	12 ft height	6 ft height	
3. Pylon Sign <sup>1, 2, 4, 10, 12, 16, 18</sup>								Not allowed	120 sf area	Not allowed	
4. Freestanding Canopy Sign <sup>16, 17</sup>								Not allowed	See Footnote 17	Not allowed	
<b>B. On-Building Sign Category</b> <sup>1,2</sup> Choose 2 of the following Sign Types.											
1. Wall Sign <sup>1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 10</sup>	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 sign per business per street frontage	Sign shall not extend above parapet or fascia. Minimum overhang rules. <sup>6, 8, 9, 10</sup> Sign may not project within 2 feet of curb.	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Standard. <sup>5</sup>	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of building façade length	Not allowed	Per formula.			
2. Awning Sign <sup>1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10</sup>								15% of canopy/awning area			
3. Canopy Sign <sup>1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10</sup>								40 sf area			
4. Marquee Sign <sup>1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10</sup>								30 sf area			
5. Projecting Sign <sup>1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10</sup>								Not allowed			
<b>C. Pedestrian Sign Category</b> <sup>1,2</sup>											
1. Suspended Sign <sup>1, 2, 6, 9, 10</sup>	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each customer entrance.	Minimum overhang rules. <sup>6, 8, 9, 10</sup>	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	Ambient or Gooseneck.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed	4 sf area			
<b>D. Changeable Copy Sign Category</b> <sup>1,2</sup> Choose any combination of the following Sign Types.											
1. Menu Board Sign <sup>1, 2, 15</sup>	Yes: For each new sign. City staff approval.	1 for each business.	Within 10 ft of customer entrance.	Durable, all-weather materials in all districts.	None. Use max area.	Not allowed	4 sf area				
2. Sandwich Board Sign <sup>1, 2, 13</sup>			Minimum 6' from the right-of-way. <sup>10</sup>				Ambient only.	8 sf area/4 ft height/2 ft width			
3. Bulletin Board Sign <sup>14</sup>			1 per drive thru lane				Drive-thru <sup>11</sup>	Internal.	30 sf area/6 ft height		
4. Drive Thru Sign <sup>1, 2, 4, 11</sup>								Standard. <sup>4,5</sup>	48 sf area/8 ft height		Not allowed
<b>Footnotes Containing Additional Development Requirements:</b>											
1 Refer to Section 114.09.05 for definitions and rules for each Sign Category (lettered), and each Sign Type (numbered).											
2 Available to land uses identified in Section 114.03.05. No signs are permitted in the Conservancy Zoning District.											
3 The number of permitted on-building signs may be transferred from one wall to another, but the total combined sign area on the receiving wall shall still be limited by its length ratio of said wall.											
4 Electronic Message Signs (of up to 50% of the sign area) are permitted for this Sign Type in nonresidential districts. See Section 114.09.08.											
5 "Standard" means the following forms of sign lighting: ambient, backlit, internal, and gooseneck.											
6 Within the DMU zoning district, Awnings, Canopies, Marquees, Projecting, and Suspended Signs may extend from the attached facade into the right-of-way up to 5 feet and shall be a minimum of 8 feet above grade (Section 114.03.28(7)).											
7 Every business shall be guaranteed a minimum of 50 square feet of Wall Sign area, regardless of the business's actual building façade length.											
8 Sign copy shall be horizontally and vertically centered on the face of the awning, canopy, or marquee. Sign copy shall not extend above or below an awning or marquee but may extend up to 12" in height above the canopy face.											
9 Bottom of sign shall be a min. of 14 feet above a drive, alley, street, parking space or other vehicle surface; a min. of 8 feet above a sidewalk, patio, or other ground-level surface; and a max. of 5 feet from the building. Wall Signs shall not project more than 12 inches horizontally beyond the edge of any wall or other surface to which they are mounted.											
10 Sign must be located on-site and must not be located within any street right-of-way (which includes the entire public sidewalk and street terrace area), except for footnote 6 and 13, or vision triangle without a permit from the City Engineer.											
11 Drive Thru Signs shall conform to the location requirements for Drive-Through and In-Vehicle Sales or Service land uses (see Section 114.03.10(9)). Drive Thru Signs shall be located within 15 feet of the building, sign copy shall not be viewable from the public right-of-way or an adjacent residential land use, sign type may be either freestanding or wall mounted and must meet noise and lighting standards in the zoning code. A max. 96 sf of total Drive Thru Signs is permitted per business.											
12 Sign must be designed of materials complementary to and harmonious with the building and site and must be closely integrated with site landscaping.											
13 Signs shall only be located on a sidewalk and be no more than 3 feet from the property line, shall provide a minimum width of 5 feet of unobstructed public pedestrian walkway, and shall only be displayed during the hours of operation for on-site land use.											
14 Sign type only permitted for an institutional land use as determined by the Zoning Administrator (see Section 114.03.12).											
15 Menu Board Signs shall be securely affixed to the exterior wall of the building and shall not extend more than 4" from the wall on which it is mounted.											
16 Any In-Vehicle Sales and Service land use is permitted to include illuminated fuel price signage within a Freestanding Sign. Such signs shall count toward the site's maximum permitted sign area.											
17 Only permitted for In-Vehicle Sales and Service land uses. Stripe width shall be permitted on all sides of the freestanding canopy and limited to a max. height of 50% of the fascia's vertical height. Sign copy shall be limited to a max. of 24 square feet per fascia facing a public right-of-way.											
18 See Section 114.09.10 for Highway Interchange Overlay Sign standards.											
Abbreviations: ft = feet max = maximum min = minimum sf = square feet P.C. = Plan Commission											

Example Sign Diagrams:

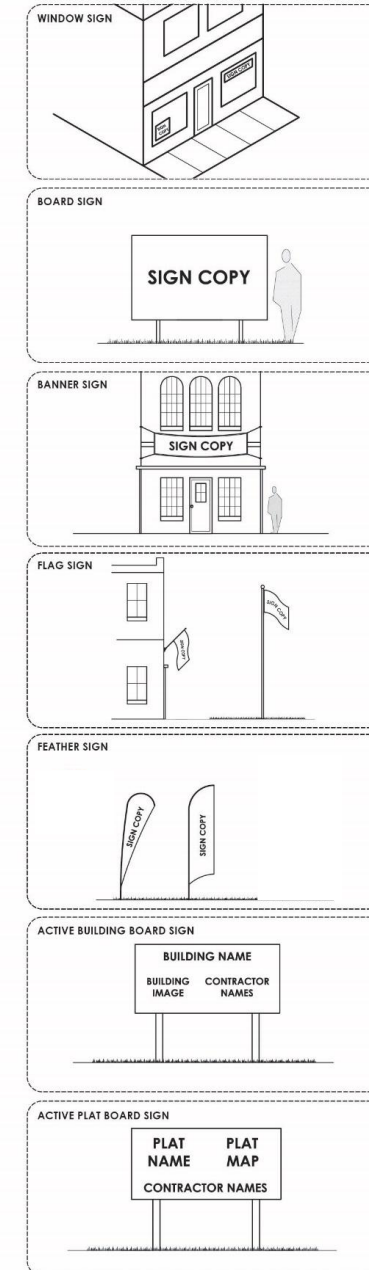


Commented [BR13]: Staff: Please the sign code translation table document for notes related to retaining existing standards and/or our proposed approach to modifying them.

Section 114.09.11: Permitted Sign Rules

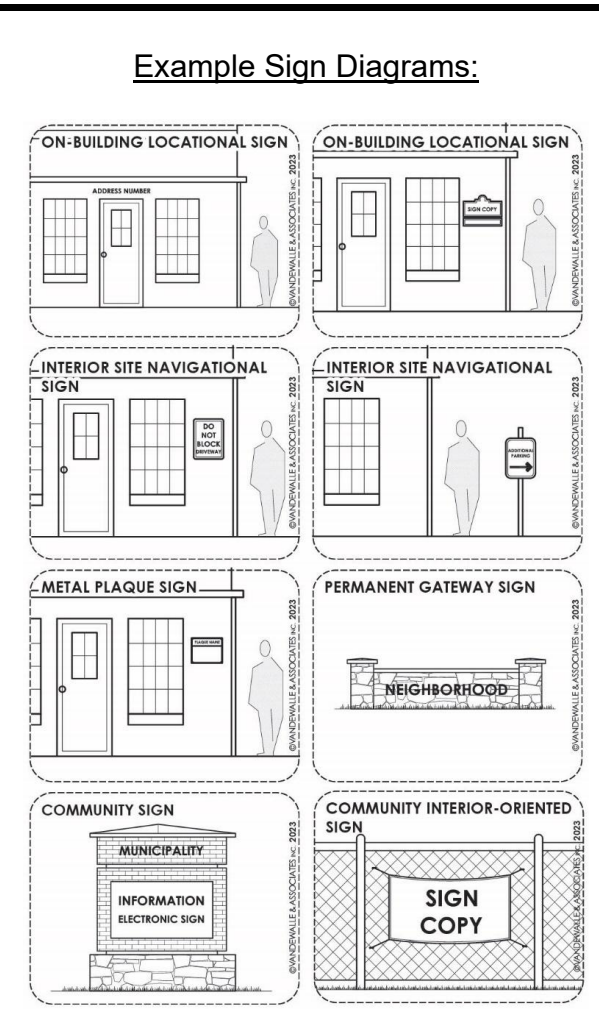
Figure 114.09.11(2): Business Sign--Other Group <sup>2</sup>							Sign Area & Height Maximums for Zoning Districts:			
							1 & 2 Family Residential SR-1, SR-2, MR-1, MH	Multi-Family Residential MR-2	Non-Residential and Mixed-Use INST, CMU, BP, LI, HI, PR, IOA, AG	Downtown DMU
Sign Categories & Sign Types	Sign Permit Required and Approver (see Section 114.09.27)	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Locations Allowed	Sign Face Materials Allowed	Sign Lighting Allowed	Sign Area Formula				
<b>A. Window Sign Category</b> <sup>1,2,4</sup> No time limit on the display of these signs.										
1. Window Sign <sup>1,2,4</sup>	Sign Permit not required.	Not to exceed maximum coverage percentages <sup>4</sup>	Only allowed on the inside of the window.	Paper, vinyl, or similar lightweight material, paint, durable, all-weather material	Ambient only; up to 2 internally illuminated or neon sign per tenant	Based on the percent of window area covered. →	Not allowed.	25% max window area coverage per window up to 25% max total window coverage area per façade <sup>4</sup>		
<b>B. Temporary Board or Banner Sign Category</b> <sup>1,2,3</sup> Display limit is based on the footnotes below. <sup>8</sup>										
1. Board Sign <sup>1,2,3,8</sup>	Sign Permit not required.	1 per lot frontage.	Sign setback shall be at least max. sign height <sup>3</sup>	Plywood or similar rigid, all-weather material.	Ambient only.	None; Use max sign area limit. →	Not allowed.		32 sf max area 8 ft max height	Not allowed.
2. Banner Sign <sup>1,2,3,8</sup>		1 per lot frontage.	On-building	Vinyl, Fabric, or Lightweight all-weather material.			Not allowed.		32 sf max area, cannot exceed building height	
<b>C. Temporary Flag or Feather Sign Category</b> <sup>1,2,3</sup> Display limit is based on the footnotes below. <sup>9</sup>										
1. Flag Sign <sup>1,2,3,7</sup>	Sign Permit not required.	1 per lot frontage.	Freestanding sign setback shall be at least max. sign height. Façade mounted Flags shall be a min. of 8 feet above grade <sup>3</sup>	Vinyl, Fabric, or Lightweight all-weather material.	Ambient Only	None; Use max sign area limit. →	32 sf max area, cannot exceed building height <sup>3,7</sup>			
2. Feather Signs <sup>1,2,3,9</sup>							Not allowed.		12 sf max area 8 ft max height <sup>9</sup>	Not allowed.
<b>D. Temporary Approved Development Sign Category</b> <sup>1,2,3</sup> Display limit is based on the period of active development. <sup>5,6</sup>										
1. Active Building Sign <sup>1,2,3,5</sup>	Sign Permit not required.	2 per development site.	On-Building or Freestanding & clustered in a single location approved by the City Staff.	Any durable, all-weather material.	Ambient only.	None; Use max sign area limit. →	48 sf max area <sup>5</sup> 8 ft max height			
2. Active Plat Sign <sup>1,2,3,6</sup>							32 sf max area for each sign <sup>6</sup> 8 ft max height			
<b>E. Prohibited Other Sign Category</b> <sup>1</sup> Display of the following signs is always prohibited in all zoning districts:										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signs resembling any traffic control sign or located within a required vision triangle near a street intersection or driveway apron, as determined by the <b>City Engineer</b>.</li> <li>Signs that project above the building parapet or eave.</li> <li>Signs that flutter, undulate, swing, rotate, or otherwise move, e.g. inflatable signs, wind socks/tubes, pennants, streamers, festoons, and pinwheels; except signs permitted in A.-D., above.</li> <li>Flashing, scrolling, or animated signs (including signs that change their appearance less than once per <b>3 seconds</b>), beacon, search lights, and strobe lights.</li> <li>Signs mounted on platforms, with wheels or runners, such as trailer signs, sled signs, or other portable signs.</li> </ul>										
<b>Footnotes Containing Additional Development Requirements:</b>										
1 Refer to Section 114.09.05 for definitions and rules for each Sign Category (lettered), and each Sign Type (numbered).										
2 Available to land uses identified in <b>Section 114.03.05</b> . No signs are permitted in the Conservancy Zoning District.										
3 Sign must be located on-site and must not be located within any street right-of-way (which includes the entire public sidewalk and street terrace area) or vision triangle. Within the DMU zoning district, Flag signs may extend from the attached façade into the right-of-way up to 5 feet and the bottom of the flag shall be a minimum of 8 feet above grade.										
4 A "Window" is the total area within a window frame, which may be divided by muntins or mullions. Glass areas divided by walls, piers or columns are considered separate windows. Signs shall only be placed on windows located on the ground floor. Any number of Window Signs are permitted within a period of 60 days prior to, and 10 days following, any local, state, or federal election.										
5 Period of active building development is between the issuance of the building permit and the issuance of the first occupancy permit for the building.										
6 Period of active plat development is between the recording of the final plat to the issuance of building permits for 80% of the lots as applied to each development phase in the final plat. One additional Active Plat Sign is permitted for a subdivision with greater than 100 lots.										
7 Flag Signs must be mounted to a pole. The pole can either be driven into the ground or attached to a building. If the pole is driven into the ground, it must be rigid and permanent. If the pole is attached to the building, it must also be rigid. A Flag Sign shall be displayed a maximum of 30 consecutive days, 3 times per calendar year. The following flags are exempt: National flags, flags of political subdivisions, and symbolic flags of any institution or badge or insignia of the United States, State of Wisconsin, Dodge or Columbia County, City of Columbus, foreign countries or official historic plaques. See <b>Section 114.03.28</b> for flagpole requirements.										
8 A Banner Sign shall be displayed a maximum of 30 consecutive days, 3 times per calendar year. A Board Sign shall only be displayed for the duration of time the subject property is for lease, for rent, for sale, or hosting an open house associated with the property being for lease, rent, or sale. The sign must be removed within 10 days after undergoing a rental or lease agreement, sale, or open house.										
9 Feather Signs shall only be displayed during business hours.										
Abbreviations: ft = feet max = maximum min = minimum sf = square feet P.C. = Plan Commission										

Example Sign Diagrams:



Section 114.09.11: Permitted Sign Rules

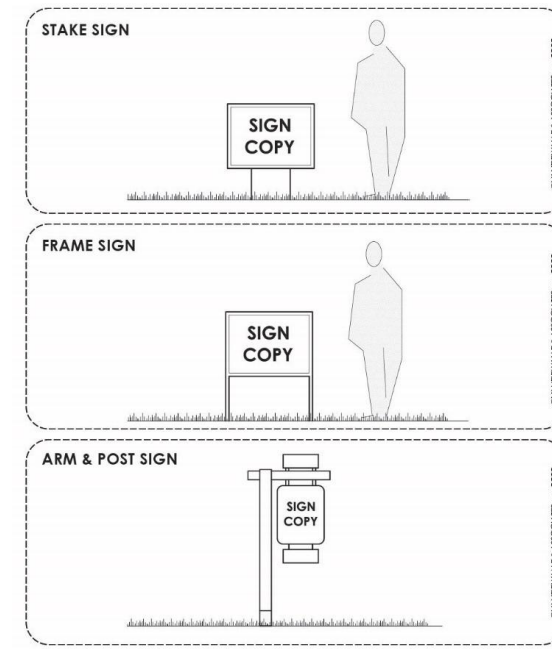
Figure 114.09.11(3): Miscellaneous Sign Group <sup>2</sup>							Sign Area & Height Maximums for Zoning Districts:			
							1 & 2 Family Residential SR-1, SR-2, MR-1, MH	Multi-Family Residential MR-2	Non-Residential and Mixed-Use INST, CMU, BP, LI, HI, PR, IOA, AG	Downtown DMU
Sign Categories & Sign Types	Sign Permit Required and Approver (see Section 114.09.27)	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Locations Allowed	Sign Face Materials Allowed	Sign Lighting Allowed	Sign Area Formula				
<b>A. Site Guidance Sign Category <sup>1, 2, 6</sup></b>										
1. On-Building Locational Sign <sup>1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 10</sup>	Sign Permit not required.	1 required per address.	On-building, and visible from street. <sup>8</sup>	Any durable, all-weather material.	Ambient only.	None needed. Use max sign area limit. →	4 sf max area <sup>10</sup>	12 sf max area 12 ft max mounted height <sup>10</sup>		
2. Interior Site Navigational Sign <sup>1, 2, 6, 8, 9</sup>	Yes. For each new sign. Staff approval	As permitted by the Zoning Administrator	On-building or freestanding. <sup>6, 8</sup>				4 sf max area 6 ft max height			
<b>B. Placemaking Sign Category <sup>1, 2, 6</sup></b>										
1. Metal Plaque Sign <sup>1, 2</sup>	Yes. For each new sign. H.P.C. approval	Up to 2 per historic building, property, or district.	On-building <sup>8</sup> or freestanding. <sup>6</sup>	Bronze, aluminum, or stainless steel.	Standard. <sup>7</sup>	None Needed. Use max sign area limit. →	6 sf max area 6 ft max height			
2. Permanent Gateway Sign <sup>1, 2, 3, 6</sup>		As approved per the subdivision plat.	Minimum height of sign = minimum distance from the right-of-way <sup>6</sup>	Any durable, all-weather material.	Standard. <sup>7</sup>		32 sf max area 6 ft max height			
3. Community Sign <sup>1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 11</sup>	Yes. For each new sign. Staff approval	1 additional monument sign per lot			Standard. <sup>5, 7</sup>	1 sf of sign area per 1 ft of building façade length	See Monument Signs in Figure 114.09.11(1)			
4. Community Interior-Oriented Sign <sup>1, 2, 4, 6</sup>		As permitted by the Zoning Administrator	Affixed to fences facing the interior of a recreational field		Ambient only.	None Needed. Use max sign area limit. →	32 sf max area 15 ft max heights			
<b>Footnotes Containing Additional Development Requirements:</b>										
1 Refer to Section 114.09.05 for definitions and rules for each Sign Category (lettered), and each Sign Type (numbered).										
2 Available to land uses identified in Section 114.03.05, other than Community Signs and Community Interior-Oriented Signs. No signs are permitted in the Conservancy Zoning District.										
3 Permanent Gateway Signs shall be located within a platted outlot or within a permanent sign easement and shall only be configured as a monument sign.										
4 Community Signs shall only be configured as a monument sign. Community Signs and Community Interior-Oriented Signs are only allowed for Institutional land uses as determined by the Zoning Administrator (see Section 114.03.12) and are the only sign type that's permitted to be an Off-Premises Advertising Sign.										
5 Electronic Message Sign are permitted per Section 114.09.08.										
6 Sign must be located on-site and must not be located within any street right-of-way (which includes the entire public sidewalk and street terrace area) or vision triangle.										
7 "Standard" means the following forms of sign lighting: ambient, backlit, internal, and gooseneck.										
8 On-building signs must be located within 10 feet of building's main entrance, unless otherwise permitted to be placed in an alternative location on the building by the Zoning Administrator.										
9 May also include either the name, logo, or symbol of the destination, provided that the name, logo, or symbol is less than 2 square feet.										
10 Home occupations are permitted one additional On-Building Locational Sign. Such sign shall be a maximum of 3 square feet.										
11 Water tower signs shall be approved by the Plan Commission through the Site Plan review process (see Section 114.10.43).										
Abbreviations: ft = feet max = maximum min = minimum sf = square feet P.C. = Plan Commission H.P.C. = Historic Preservation Commission										



Section 114.09.11: Permitted Sign Rules

Figure 114.09.11(3.A.): Miscellaneous Sign Group							Sign Area & Height Maximums for Zoning Districts:			
							1 & 2 Family Residential SR-1, SR-2, MR-1, MH	Multi-Family Residential MR-2	Non-Residential and Mixed-Use INST, CMU, BP, LI, HI, PR, IOA, AG	Downtown DMU
Sign Categories & Sign Types	Sign Permit Required (see Section 114.09.27)	Number of Signs Allowed	Sign Locations Allowed	Sign Face Materials Allowed	Sign Lighting Allowed	Sign Area Formula				
<b>A. Yard Sign Category</b>										
1. Stake Sign <sup>1,2,4,5,7,8</sup>	No. Sign Permit not required.	2 per lot.	Must be located on-site <sup>3</sup>	Any material.	Ambient only.	None needed. Use max sign area limit. →	6 sf max area 4 ft max height			
2. Frame Sign <sup>1,2,4,5,7,8</sup>										
3. Arm & Post Sign <sup>1,2,4,5,6,7,8</sup>							10 sf max area <sup>6</sup> 6 ft max height			
<b>Footnotes Containing Additional Development Requirements:</b>										
1 Refer to Section 114.09.05 for definitions and rules for each Sign Category (lettered), and each Sign Type (numbered).										
2 Available to land uses identified in Section 114.03.05. No signs are permitted in the Conservancy Zoning District.										
3 Yard Signs must be located on-site and must not be located within any street right-of-way (which includes the entire public sidewalk and street terrace area) or vision triangle.										
4 Yard Signs may be displayed permanently, but typically are not.										
5 One additional Yard Sign or Arm & Post Sign per lot is permitted if the subject property is for lease, for rent, for sale, or hosting an open house. The additional sign(s) must be removed within 10 days after undergoing a rental or lease agreement, sale, or open house.										
6 The area maximum for Arm & Post signs includes the sign face, as well as any additional placards that are attached to the sign.										
7 Any number of Yard Signs is permitted within a period of 60 days prior to, and 10 days following, any local, state, or federal election, with a maximum area of 32 square feet per sign and maximum height of 6 feet per sign.										
8 No off-premises Yard Signs are permitted.										
Abbreviations: ft = feet max = maximum min = minimum sf = square feet P.C. = Plan Commission										

Example Sign Diagrams:



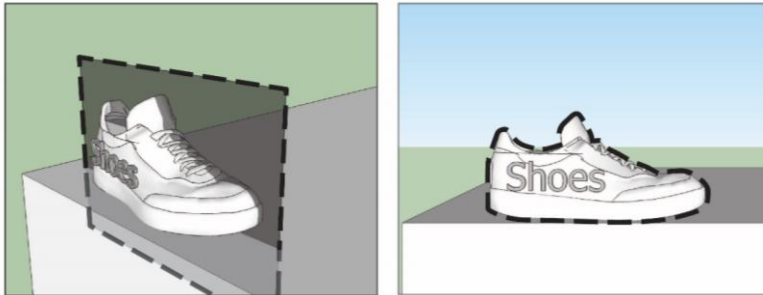
**Sections 114.09.12 to 114.09.14: Reserved****Section 114.09.15: Sign Setback, Height, Measurement, and Flexibility**

- (1) Sign Setbacks. Signs must be located on-site, outside of the vision triangle, and must not be located within any street right-of-way. Each sign type must be set back in a location consistent with Figure 114.09.11(1), Figure 114.09.11(2), Figure 114.09.11(3), and Figure 114.09.11(3.A). Any sign to be placed within a public easement requires City approval.
- (2) Sign Height.
  - (a) The height of a freestanding sign shall be measured from the average ground level adjacent to and at the base of the sign to the top of the highest attached component of the sign.
  - (b) The average ground level is defined as the average elevation of the ground upon which the sign supports are placed, except when the sign supports rest upon a berm or other area elevated above the surrounding ground. In such cases, the average elevation of the base of such berm or other area shall be considered as the ground level.
- (3) Minimum Ground Clearance. All On-Building and Pedestrian Signs shall have a minimum clearance of 14 feet above a drive, alley, or street and a minimum of 8 feet above a sidewalk, path, trail, or other ground-level surface.
- (4) Measurement of Sign Area: The measurement of sign area is based on the arrangement of sign copy and sign background:
  - (a) In the case of a freestanding sign (including three-dimensional objects), sign area shall include the total sign area(s) that can be viewed from any single vantage point. i.e., for a typical freestanding sign that faces two directions, only the largest sign face visible from any single vantage point shall count toward the total permitted sign area. Sign area shall not include any elements of the sign structure designed solely for support of the sign structure and located below or to the side of the sign message. Examples of parts of a freestanding sign structure which are exempt from the sign area include the sign base and the supporting columns, posts, or poles.
  - (b) For signs comprised of individual letters and related copy which are attached to a background surface with one or more neutral surface colors, sign area shall be measured as the sum of the smallest rectangle enclosing each letter or related copy. See Example 1 in Figure 114.09.15(2).
  - (c) For signs comprised of individual letters and related copy surrounded by one or more sign background colors on individual panels, sign area shall be measured as the smallest single rectangle enclosing the entire sign message and any and all background color areas. See Example 2 in Figure 114.09.15(2).
  - (d) Groupings of related smaller signs may be counted as one sign. In such cases, sign area shall be measured as the smallest single rectangle enclosing the individual signs and any and all background color areas. See Example 3 in Figure 114.09.15(2).
  - (e) For signs comprised of one or more three-dimensional objects (i.e., balls, cubes, clusters of objects, sculpture or statue-like trademarks), the sign area shall be measured as its maximum projection upon a vertical plane. See Figure 114.09.15(1).

**Commented [BR14]:** Staff: as noted above and within the separate document, we can adjust this approach as needed.

**Commented [BR15]:** Staff: please let us know if this aligns with how you approach measuring signs today.

**Figure 114.09.15(1): Measurement of a 3D Sign Area**

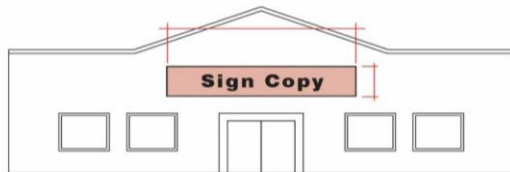


**Figure 114.09.15(2): Measurement of Sign Area**



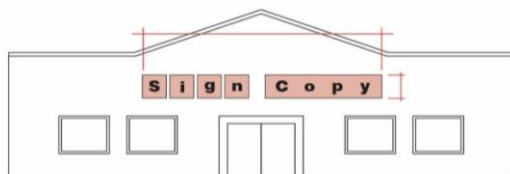
Example 1: Individual letters on a neutral surface

Sum of the smallest rectangles



Example 2: Individual letters or words grouped on one or more panels

Smallest single rectangle



Example 3: Individual letters on separate panels

Smallest single rectangle

**Sections 114.09.16 to 114.09.26: Reserved****Section 114.09.27: Sign Approvals and Permits – Application, Enforcement, and Revocation**

- (1) Applicability.
- (a) All of the following sign types shall not be erected, installed, or constructed without the granting of a permit from the Zoning Administrator in accordance with the provisions of this Section.
1. Freestanding
  2. On-Building
  3. Pedestrian
  4. Changeable Copy
  5. Interior Site Navigational
  6. Permanent Gateway
  7. Community Signs and Community Interior-Oriented Signs
- (b) No Metal Plaque Sign shall be erected, installed, or constructed without the approval by the Historic Preservation Committee.
- (c) For signs requiring a permit in Subsection (a), above, this Section shall apply and be construed to require a permit for a change of copy on any sign or for any conversions or changes in the sign structure.
- (d) This Section shall not apply to repainting or re-facing with the same sign copy, cleaning, repair, or other normal maintenance of the sign or sign structure.
- (e) No new permit is required for signs which are in place as of the effective date this Chapter, and such signs may remain as legal nonconforming signs if they do not comply with every provision of this Chapter. Any alteration or relocation of such signs shall conform to the requirements of this Chapter. Refer to [Section 114.09.35](#) for rules pertaining to nonconforming signs.
- (f) Any sign permit granted hereunder shall not be assigned or transferred to any other sign, including a modified sign face or modified sign structure.
- (g) The owner or tenant may request the granting of one permit for all signs on a site that requires a sign permit.
- (2) Review Authority.
- (a) The Zoning Administrator shall review all signs per [Section 114.09.27\(1\)](#).
- (3) Sign Permit Application. Each sign permit application shall include all required elements of the City of Columbus Sign Permit Application.
- (4) Granting and Issuance.
- (a) The Zoning Administrator shall review the application within 14 working days of submittal to ensure it is complete per the requirements of Subsection (3), above.
- (b) In cases where no other review or approvals are required under this Chapter, the Zoning Administrator shall review said application for compliance with Subsection (5), below, and shall, in writing, either approve or deny said sign permit within 30 working days of the acceptance of the complete application and payment of the required fee. If the permit application is denied, the Zoning Administrator shall state the reasons therefor. Failure of the Zoning Administrator to act within this time frame shall not constitute automatic approval of the sign permit.

**Commented [BR16]:** Internal note: to be revised based on changes made within the tables above.

**Commented [BR17]:** Staff: please let us know how you want to handle application requirements within the code - 1) do you want to spell out the required applications elements here or 2) reference a future document to be created that will be the sign permit application. The existing code spells out the requirements:  
[https://library.municode.com/wi/columbus/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances?nodeId=MUCO\\_CH114ZO\\_ARTV5USSTRE\\_DIV6SI\\_S114-138PEGU](https://library.municode.com/wi/columbus/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=MUCO_CH114ZO_ARTV5USSTRE_DIV6SI_S114-138PEGU)

**Commented [BR18]:** Staff: please let us know if these timelines are appropriate and something you feel comfortable with. We can always create more time, if needed.

Section 114.09.27: Sign Approvals and Permits – Application, Enforcement, and Revocation

- (c) When a proposed sign is associated with any development that requires a Site Plan, a sign permit shall not be granted prior to the approval of a Site Plan. In such cases, the Zoning Administrator shall review said application for compliance with Subsection (5), below, and shall place the item on the appropriate meeting agenda(s) within 30 working days of the acceptance of the complete application and payment of the required fee. Within 14 working days of recommendation or action by the body with recommending or approval authority, the Zoning Administrator shall approve or deny said sign permit based on such recommendation or action.
- (d) A granted sign permit shall expire, and shall be null and void, if the sign is not attached or erected within 365 days after the issuance of the sign permit.
- (5) Basis for Granting a Sign Permit. In deciding whether or not to grant a sign permit, the Zoning Administrator shall determine whether the proposed sign is in compliance with the provisions of this Chapter. In such review, the Zoning Administrator may also consider the following factors:
- (a) Any signage affixed to a building shall be dimensioned and located in such a manner that it fits the building's architectural features and proportions.
- (b) All signs shall be designed to fit the zoning and character of the surrounding area including compatibility with the building characteristics, adjacent uses, and adjacent signs. Special consideration should be made where proposed signage is located on or adjacent to locally identified historic structures or publicly owned recreation and conservancy areas. Signage in the Planned Unit Development zoning district shall conform to the planned or existing dominant architectural theme of the area. Signage in or abutting residential properties should be designed and located so as not to create a nuisance.
- (c) Signs illuminated by floodlights or spotlights shall be positioned in such a manner that none of the light spills over onto an adjoining property or glares or shines into the eyes of motorists or pedestrians.
- (d) All signs must conform to the lighting standards in Section 114.06.20.
- (e) Signs shall use colors and materials that complement the building façade, maintain legibility, and avoid visual clutter, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- (f) Landscape features shall be incorporated around the base of all permanent freestanding signs. Landscape plantings or other landscape materials shall not be considered as part of the allowable signage.
- (g) Whether the sign is designed, constructed, installed, or maintained in such a manner that it does not endanger public safety or traffic safety and minimizes conflict with vehicular or pedestrian circulation.
- (h) Whether the sign is in compliance with all provisions of the City of Columbus Municipal Code and Building Code, including those related to traffic safety, traffic visibility, sign setbacks, and structural integrity.
- (6) Enforcement and Revocation of Sign Permit.
- (a) A sign permit may be revoked if the applicant has failed to comply with the provisions of this Chapter or any conditions that may have accompanied the permit at the time of issuance. Revocation requires written notice by either the Zoning Administrator for Zoning Code violations or the Building Inspector for Building Code or other construction code violations.
- (b) In the event that construction, installation, or manufacture of a sign for which a permit has been issued has not commenced within 365 days from the date of the issuance of such permit, said permit shall be null and void and automatically revoked. If work authorized by such permit is suspended or abandoned for a period of 180 days any time after the work is commenced, the original permit shall become null and void. In such cases, a new permit shall be obtained to complete the work and a new permit fee shall be required.

**Commented [BR19]:** Staff: Today, there are some lighting requirements within the sign code. We recommend grouping all lighting standards together in one location in Article 6.

## Sections 114.09.28 to 114.09.29: Reserved

- (c) Any sign subject to a revoked permit shall be removed by the licensee, sign owner, or property owner within 30 days of such revocation.
- (7) Appeals, Interpretations, Exceptions, and Variances. Any applicant or sign permit holder affected by a decision of the Zoning Administrator may petition for a hearing before the Plan Commission in the same manner and subject to the same procedures as other appeals of decisions of administrative officers (Section 114.10.52), Variances (Section 114.10.51), or Interpretations and Exceptions (Section 114.09.16). The filing of such petition automatically stays removal of any sign involved and already legally erected until the Plan Commission decides whether to sustain, modify, or withdraw the notice.
- (8) **Removal of Signs in Violation of this Chapter.**
- (a) If the Zoning Administrator determines that any sign was established in violation of this Chapter following its adoption, the Zoning Administrator shall notify the sign permit holder or the owner of the property on which the sign is located. Said notification shall indicate that such violation shall be corrected within 30 days of receipt of said notice on penalty of automatic revocation of any sign permit, and that removal of the sign by the City may occur at the expense of the owner of the property.
- (b) If notification is sent and the violation is not corrected within 30 days, the Zoning Administrator shall revoke the permit for any sign which is in violation of this Chapter. It shall be the duty of the Zoning Administrator to cause removal of such sign.
- (c) The expense of removing such sign shall be charged to the owner of the property on which the sign is located. If the owner fails to pay such expense within one month of being billed therefore, or has not made arrangement for payment satisfactory to the City Attorney, then such expense shall become a lien on the property and shall be placed upon the tax roll in accordance with Wis. Stats. §66.0627.
- (d) Any sign illegally placed in a public right-of-way shall be subject to immediate removal and confiscation without notice by the Zoning Administrator or Building Inspector.
- (9) Adjustments to Approved Signs. The following adjustments may be approved administratively by City staff and no additional process is necessary.
- (a) A proposed adjustment that does not alter the size, location, or placement of the approved sign.
- (b) A proposed adjustment that would remove a sign component which is not required under the Chapter.

**Commented [BR20]:** Staff: The existing code just says that any sign in violation of code is considered a nuisance and the building inspector can take action in accordance with state statutes. We could mirror this approach, but that doesn't really provide much guidance to staff on what to do. This is an example of a process that could be easily referenced in the future. However, it's more rigid than what you have now.

## Sections 114.09.28 to 114.09.29: Reserved

## Section 114.09.30: Sign Prohibitions and Limitations

The regulations contained in this Subsection apply to signs in all zoning districts.

- (1) **Prohibited Signs.**
- (a) **Abandoned Sign.** Any sign remaining in place on a site or a portion of a site (such as a single tenant in a multitenant building) that has been vacant, closed, or otherwise unoccupied for a period of 90 days.
- (b) **Animated Sign.** A sign having lights or illumination which flashes, scrolls, moves, rotates, twinkles, blinks, flickers, varies in intensity of color, or uses intermittent electrical pulsations. Electronic Message Signs meeting the definition and requirements of Section 114.09.08 of this Chapter shall not be considered an animated sign.
- (c) **Billboard Sign.** An Off-Premises Advertising Sign which is freestanding, constructed of durable materials, and permanently affixed to a structure used to display advertisements and other messages to vehicle travelers for a fee paid to the owner of the structure.

**Commented [BR21]:** Staff: this list is generally in line with what you have in the existing code. The one exception being that roof signs are permitted in the downtown overlay and we have proposed to make them prohibited throughout the community. See the translation document for more details.

## Section 114.09.30: Sign Prohibitions and Limitations

- (d) **Beacon Sign.** Any light with one or more beams directed into the atmosphere or directed at one or more points not on the same site as the light source; also, any light with one or more beams that rotate or move.
- (e) **Inflatable Sign.** A sign capable of being filled with and expanded by air or other gas, including “dancing” inflatable signs where air moves through the sign causing it to move.
- (f) **Off-Premises Advertising Sign.** A sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, or entertainment that is conducted, sold, or offered elsewhere than upon the site where the sign is displayed. Off-Premises Advertising Signs include billboards.
1. Existing legal Off-Premises Advertising Signs made nonconforming by this Section shall be permitted to continue as legal, nonconforming signs, subject to the requirements of [Section 114.09.35](#).
  2. Any advertising sign not considered an Off-Premises Advertising Sign is considered to be an On-Premises Advertising Sign.
- (g) **Portable Sign.** A sign not permanently attached to the ground that is designed to be moved from one location to another. Also, a sign mounted on a frame or chassis designed to be easily relocated, including unlicensed or inoperable vehicles or trailers whose principal commercial use is for signage. Licensed and operable business vehicles, trailers, or other pieces of equipment shall not be considered mobile or portable signs. Sandwich Board Signs meeting the definition and requirements of [Section 114.09.05\(1\)\(d\)2](#) of this Chapter shall not be considered mobile or portable signs.
- (h) **Roof Sign.** A sign displayed above the eaves or cornice of a building.
- (i) **Vehicle Sign.** A vehicle, trailer, or other piece of equipment which contains any sign or advertising device, which is unlicensed or inoperable, or which is parked on a public right-of-way or in a location that is not an active worksite so as to be seen from a public right-of-way.
1. Business vehicles legally parked in any of the locations described below shall not be considered Vehicle Signs.
    - a. A business vehicle parked on-site at the place of business in a parking space designated for company vehicle parking or storage on a site plan approved by the City; or
    - b. A business vehicle legally parked on-site at the residence of an employee (including driveways and legal off-street parking spaces)
- (2) **Sign Prohibitions.**
- (a) No sign shall be erected at any location where it may, by reason of its position, shape, color or design, interfere with, obstruct the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal or device, nor shall such sign make use of words such as “stop,” “look,” “danger,” or any other word, phrase, symbol, or character in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse users of streets or highways.
  - (b) No fluttering, undulating, swinging, rotating, or otherwise moving signs such as windsocks, balloons motorized signs, pennants, and streamers shall be permitted. This shall not apply to Banners Signs, Flag Signs, or Feather Signs as defined in [Figure 114.09.11\(2\)](#) or Community Interior-Oriented Signs as defined in [Figure 114.09.11\(3\)](#).
  - (c) No signs shall project above the building parapet or eave, or be mounted on or extend above the roof, if attached to the building.
  - (d) No flashing, scrolling, or animated signs shall be permitted. Flashing is defined as changing more than once within a [3-second time](#) interval.
  - (e) No signs shall be mounted to an unlicensed trailer or other unlicensed vehicle.
  - (f) No beacon signs shall be permitted.

**Commented [BR22]:** Staff: there are several similar provisions within the existing code, but they are scattered in different locations. We have grouped them altogether here for easier reference.

## Sections 114.09.31 to 114.09.32: Reserved

- (g) No off-premises advertising signs shall be permitted, except for Community Signs and Community Interior-Oriented Signs.
  - (h) No abandoned signs shall be permitted. See Section 114.09.30(1)(a).
  - (i) No sign shall be located within a required bufferyard or within a permanently protected green space area.
- (3) **Sign Limitations.**
- (a) No sign shall be erected, relocated, or maintained so as to prevent free ingress to or egress from any door, window, or fire escape, and no sign shall be attached to a standpipe or fire escape.
  - (b) No sign shall be placed in a manner that would impede vehicular or pedestrian safety, or impede access or visibility. Signs shall meet the visibility requirements of Section 114.06.03.
  - (c) No private sign shall be attached to or painted on any natural feature (e.g. tree or rock), fence, fire hydrant, public utility pole, public light pole, or traffic regulatory structure, unless otherwise authorized by the City Engineer.
  - (d) Unless otherwise allowed by this Chapter, no sign shall be permitted within or extend into a public right-of-way.

## Sections 114.09.31 to 114.09.32: Reserved

## Section 114.09.33: Appearance, Construction, and Maintenance of Signage

- (1) All signs shall be constructed, mounted, and maintained so as to comply with the appropriate detailed provisions of the Building Code as adopted by the City relating to the design, structural members and connections. Signs shall also comply with the applicable provisions of the Electrical Code as adopted by the City.
- (2) The base or support(s) of all ground-mounted signs shall be securely anchored to a concrete base or footing, and shall meet minimum wind load capabilities of 30 pounds per square foot.
- (3) Freestanding Signs, Permanent Gateway Signs, and Community Signs shall:
  - (a) Conceal the footings and related supporting structure, including bolts, flanges, and brackets with landscaping using the formula of two landscaping points for every foot of sign's width as measured on the sign face or sign base – whichever is greater.
  - (b) Construct the base of the sign using durable, all-weather materials. The base of the sign may be smaller, equal to, or larger in width than the face of the sign.
  - (c) Follow the color scheme of the principal building and incorporate architectural features (such as sills, piers, reveals, capstones, medallions, etc.) which are part of the architectural makeup of the building shall be incorporated into the sign.
- (4) Signs mounting hardware may be visible following installation and mounted to masonry surfaces either within the mortar joints or directly affixed to the brick and stone. Signs located on any historically-designated property and falling under the review authority of the Historic Preservation Committee shall be applied to masonry surfaces using mechanical fasteners applied to the mortar joints only and not directly into brick or stone. Drilling to provide electrical service shall follow the same rule.
- (5) No sign shall be suspended in a way that will allow the sign to swing due to wind action. Signs shall be anchored to minimize any lateral movement that would cause wear on the sign face or supporting members or connections.
- (6) All permanent signs and their supporting members shall be constructed of standardized, durable, all-weather sign materials.

**Commented [BR23]:** Staff: This is something to also be addressed above within the tables - does the HPC review any types of signs today? Should they be reviewing any signs in the future? Per your feedback earlier in this process, we have tried to make the sign process as streamlined as possible in making pretty much everything a staff review situation.

## Section 114.09.34: Reserved

- (7) Sign materials in the Business Sign—Permanent Group ([Figure 114.09.11\(1\)](#)) shall be compatible with the design of the face of the façade where they are placed and shall contribute to the legibility of the sign.
- (8) No combustible materials other than approved plastics shall be used in the construction of electric signs.
- (9) All signage within the jurisdiction of this Chapter shall remain in a state of proper maintenance. Proper maintenance shall be the absence of loose materials (including peeling paint, paper or other material), the lack of excessive rust, the lack of excessive vibration or shaking, and the presence of the original structural integrity of the sign, its frame and other supports, its mounting, and all components thereof.
- (10) Every sign requiring either Plan Commission or Zoning Administrator approval hereafter erected shall have marked in a conspicuous place thereon the date of erection, the manufacturer's name, the permit number, and the voltage of any electrical apparatus used in connection therewith.
- (11) The repainting of the same colors, changing of parts, and preventive maintenance of signs which completely conform to the requirements of this Chapter, and result in absolutely no change in the appearance of the sign from that originally approved, shall not be deemed alterations requiring a sign permit.
- (12) Any signs which may be, or may hereafter become rotted, unsafe, or in a state which is not properly maintained shall be subject to the provisions of [Section 114.10.60](#).
- (13) If any sign or sign hardware is suspended or projects above a public right-of-way, the issuance and continuation of a sign permit shall be conditioned on the sign owner agreeing to hold the City harmless, and annually submitting and maintaining in force liability insurance for such a sign in such form and such amount as the City may reasonably from time to time determine, provided that the amount of such liability insurance shall be at least \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence per sign and naming the City as certificate holder.

## Section 114.09.34: Reserved

## Section 114.09.35: Nonconforming Signs

- (1) Nonconforming Signs. Permanent signs existing as of the effective date of this Chapter, which do not conform to the provisions of this Chapter but that conformed and met all applicable regulations of the ordinance on the effective date of this Chapter, shall be legal nonconforming signs.
- (2) Continuation of a Legal Nonconforming Sign.
  - (a) Legal nonconforming signs may be maintained.
  - (b) Legal nonconforming signs shall not be altered or moved to a new location without being brought into compliance with the requirements of this Chapter. See Subsection (3)(a), below, for what would constitute an alteration of a sign.
  - (c) When the principal structure located on the site undergoes a change of land use per the lettered land use categories described in Article III of the Zoning Ordinance, all legal nonconforming signs shall be brought into conformance with the provisions of this Chapter or shall be removed.
  - (d) Whenever there is a change in the sign user (excluding off-premises signs), sign owner, or owner of the property on which the sign is located, the new sign user, sign owner, or new property owner shall forthwith notify the Zoning Administrator of the change. No new sign permit is required unless there is modification of the sign face, sign color, or sign structure. The sign will continue to be considered legal nonconforming.
- (3) Alteration of Legal Nonconforming Signs.

**Commented [BR24]:** Staff: the existing sign code nonconforming section references the Zoning Code's overall approach to nonconforming situations. We assume that means that signs are handled the same way today as stated within the [nonconforming structures section of the code](#). This would mean the existing rule is that they can stay, but can't be changed in anyway. This is similar to how we have written these requirements. Please review and let us know if you'd like to make changes.

## Section 114.09.36: Reserved

- (a) For the purpose of this Section, alteration of a sign is considered to be any change to the sign's frame, supporting structure, lighting, material, height, location, color, or any other alterations as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- (b) Altering a sign does not include maintaining the existing appearance of the sign; changing the appearance of the sign face; replacing the sign face or the supporting structure with identical materials, colors, and messages; changing the message of a Changeable Copy Sign; or changing the face of an Off-Premises Advertising Sign (as defined in [Section 114.09.30\(1\)\(f\)](#)).
- (c) A tenant sign may be replaced to accommodate a new tenant sign without triggering the need to bring the entire project identification sign, or any of its parts, into compliance with the provisions of this Chapter. Tenant sign replacement requires a new Sign Permit under [Section 114.09.27](#).

**Section 114.09.36: Reserved****Section 114.09.37: Removal of Sign and Sign Structures Where Business Is No Longer In Operation**

- (1) A building, portion of a building, or site shall be determined to be vacated based on the following criteria: vacancy, cessation of some or all utilities, or lapse or termination of occupational permit or license. Vacation of a building, structure or site shall have the following effect:
  - (a) Within 90 days, the owner of the property shall take action regarding any sign and sign structures associated with the vacant building, portion of a building, or site located on the property. At the property owner's option, the property owner shall do one of the following: remove all such signs and structures, or replace the face of such signs with a blank sign face. If the property owner is granted an extension under Subsection (b) below, the requirement shall not apply during the extension period.
  - (b) An extension allowing signs or sign structures associated with vacant buildings, portions of buildings, or sites to remain on the property for an additional six-month time period after the original 90 days have lapsed may be granted under the following conditions:
    1. The property owner shall submit an application with the appropriate fee and allow staff to inspect the signs and sign structures on the vacated building, portion of a building, or site.
    2. Staff shall review the application and sign to determine that the sign will not be a hazard, safety concern, or blight for the duration of the extended time period.
    3. Signs shall be properly blanked out or covered, shall not be boarded up using wood or similar materials, and shall contain no commercial message.
    4. If the sign has been damaged during the vacated period to the point it becomes a safety hazard or blight on the property, staff may have the structure removed.
    5. Any additional applications for an extension, beyond the six-month extension period, shall be approved by the Plan Commission.
- (2) Sign structures that have been left without a sign face, or where the permit holder no longer has any interest in the site as owner or tenant, any of which for a continuous period of 90 days, shall be deemed abandoned and shall be removed by the owner of the sign structure or the City shall proceed to remove such sign structure pursuant to the terms of this Chapter if the owner has not been granted an extension.
- (3) If the sign or sign structure(s) have not been removed, the City shall send written notification to the property owner of record or last known occupant, via certified mail, return receipt requested, indicating that said property owner or occupant remove the sign or sign structure or apply for and be granted an extension. If the sign or sign structure have not been removed within 30 days after the City

**Commented [BR25]:** Staff: in the [abandonment of business signs](#) section, it says you have 30 days to remove the sign and can extend that up to 90 days with documentation provided by the business. We have typically found that communities like a little more time than what you have in your current code (90 days to remove and 6 month extension). However, we can modify this to reflect your current code, if desired.

Sections 114.09.38 to 114.09.39: Reserved

sends notice, and an extension has not been granted, the City may have the sign or sign structure removed.

- (4) Any and all costs incurred by the City in the removal of a sign or sign structure pursuant to the provisions of this Section, which authorized assessment of the cost, shall be collected as a special charge under Wis. Stats. §66.0627.

**Sections 114.09.38 to 114.09.39: Reserved**

**Section 114.09.40: Violations, Penalties, and Fees**

- (1) It shall be a violation of this ordinance for any person to maintain any prohibited sign, to perform or order the performance of any act prohibited by this ordinance, or to fail to perform any act which is required by the provisions of this Chapter. In the case of any such violation, each day in which such violation exists shall constitute a separate violation.
- (2) Any and all signs, erected, altered, or maintained in violation of this section, or any of the clauses provisions of the same, or in violation of any of the laws or ordinances of the City or the State of Wisconsin, are, and each of them is declared to be a public nuisance and subject to enforcement. Any such signs so erected, altered or maintained contrary to law shall be abated as a common nuisance by the Zoning Administrator.
- (3) Any person who shall fail to comply with any of the provisions of this chapter shall be subject to a penalty as prescribed by Section 114.10.60.
- (4) Fees related to signage shall be subject to those prescribed by Section 114.10.61.

**Commented [BR26]:** Staff: we put all of this information together in one location - in Article 10 or reference if you have it somewhere else existing in your muni code today. We'll address that aspect of things with the full Part 2.

**Sections 114.09.41 to 114.09.99: Reserved**

# City of Columbus Zoning Code Rewrite

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**Focus Group Meeting #1 - Summary**  
**April 29, 2026**



- Note that DOT will have setback restrictions on highways that may differ from local setbacks
- Supportive of standards that promote additional housing development
  - Reduced parking requirements
  - Smaller lots
  - No explicit housing unit cap based on density metric
  - ADUs as permitted use
- Supportive of objective design review standards for the downtown
- Supportive of revised (clearer) processes and illustrative diagrams, tables, charts

# City of Columbus Zoning Code Rewrite

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**Plan Commission  
May 14, 2026  
Historic Preservation Discussion**



# Today's Discussion

Item #5.

- Last Meeting (March 12)
  - Parking
- Today (May 14)
  - Present draft Historic Preservation Code sections and review key policy questions or changes with the Plan Commission

## Proposed Reorganization of the Zoning Code

- Article 1: Introduction
- **Article 2: Establishment of Zoning Districts**
- Article 3: Land Use Regulations
- Article 4: Bulk Regulations
- Article 5: Nonconforming Situations

Historic Preservation Overlay District  
DMU District

- Article 6: Performance Standards
- **Article 7: Exterior Building Design Standards**
- Article 8: Landscaping Requirements
- Article 9: Signage
- **Article 10: Administration and Procedures**
- Article 11: Definitions

DMU District – Downtown Design Standards

← **Part 2**

Downtown Design Review

# Existing Code Outline

- Zoning Code Division 9 – Historic Sites and Structures
- Section 114-173 through 114-187 includes:
  - purpose and intent
  - HLP Commission composition
  - HLP Commission powers and duties
  - Designation criteria
  - Designation procedures
  - Regulated work
  - Certificate of appropriateness procedures
  - Certificate of economic hardship
  - Misc. provisions
- Basically, a standard CLG (Certified Local Government) code

# Applicability of Existing Ordinance

- Only applies to **designated** local landmarks (structures, sites, neighborhoods, districts)
- Must be formally designated via ordinance procedures
  - Must follow nomination process
  - Current code has HLPC as final decider
- All alterations must receive certificate of appropriateness
  - Reviewed against historic preservation plan
  - HLPC approval within 45 days
  - Appealed to Council

# New Ordinance Approach

Item #5.

- Keep Historic Preservation Overlay (CLG) for formally designated local landmarks
- Add new Downtown Design Standards for DMU zoning district
  - Achieve community character goals in the downtown
  - Protecting community character doesn't necessarily require a formally designated downtown historic district

# Downtown Design District

- New ordinance creates downtown design standards applicable in the DMU (downtown) district
- Not an overlay, but:
  - Has standards specific to that zoning district
  - Has signage standards specific to that zoning district
  - Requires downtown design or alterations review (not a certificate of appropriateness)
  - Approval authority can be Plan Commission
    - Can have HLPC recommendation or not
    - PC action would be similar to site plan review in different districts
  - Doesn't apply to any historic resources outside of the DMU

# Example Standards

- Design theme:
  - Historic, pedestrian oriented development pattern... mixed-uses... minimal setbacks... on street parking... architectural styles popular at the time... Storefront facades... horizontal and vertical patterns... regularly spaced windows and doors...
- Setbacks
  - from DMU district
- Building mass
  - proportionate height and width from theme shall be maintained...
- Façade articulation
  - Required every 40 feet (recesses or projections – may be vertical or horizontal, may be achieved with materials, or structural breaks)

# Example Standards

Item #5.

- Materials
- Colors
  - Period-appropriate color palette examples include the Sherwin Williams historic exterior collections

# Historic Preservation Overlay

- Can keep the basic function of the existing ordinance
- Applies to designated properties, not to the downtown unless designated as such
- Unlocks certain state resources
  - grant for architectural survey, etc., tax credits for property owners
- Comes with added layer of governance
  - may be desired in some cases and not in others

# Policy Questions

Item #5.

- Keep Historic Preservation Overlay for use with designated landmarks?
- Use DMU Design Standards for downtown character?
- PC approval authority for downtown design review or add HLPC recommendation?

Plan Commission Historic Preservation Review  
Simplified Guide and Policy Questions  
May 14, 2026

- Review of existing code (Certified Local Government)
- Proposed approach
  - Keep CLG code for designated structures only (historic preservation overlay)
  - Use DMU district plus downtown design standards for the downtown community character
    - Objective standards
  - Moves Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission composition to Chapter 2 with similar details for other city committees
- Review design standards
- Questions
  - Keep Historic Preservation Overlay for use with designated landmarks?
  - Use DMU standards for downtown character?
  - PC approval authority for downtown design review?
    - Or Add HLPC as a recommendation?

## Section 114.07.50: DMU Zoning District Design Standards

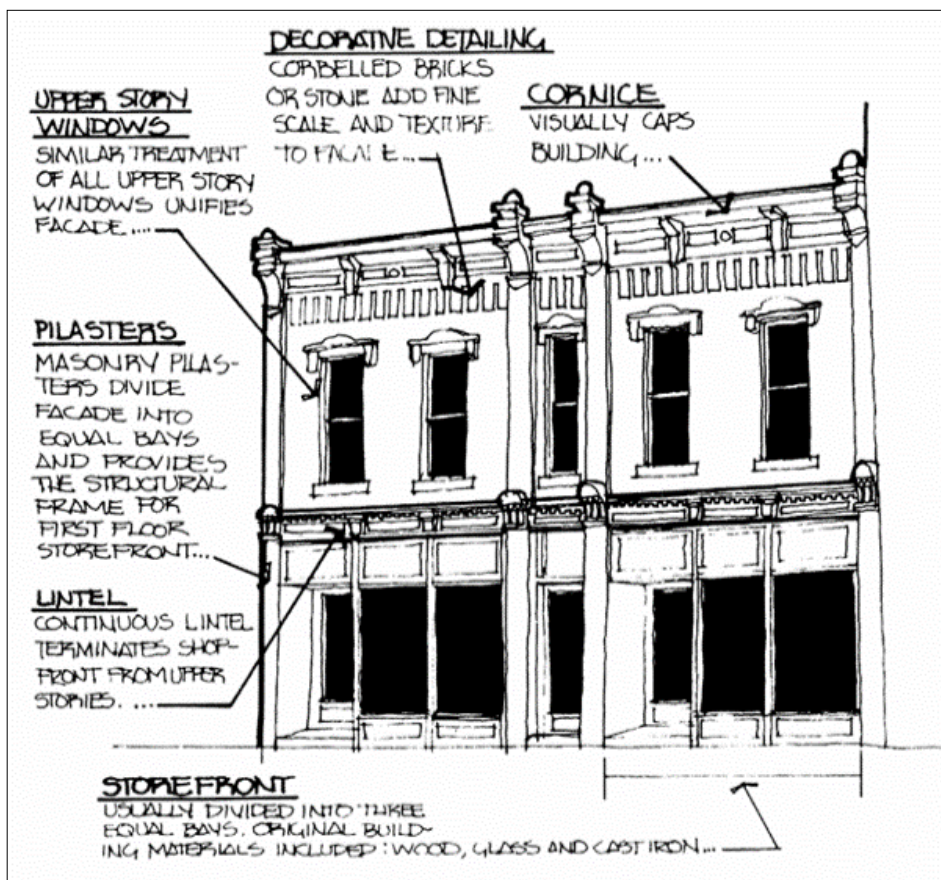
These standards apply to any land use, building, and structure within the Downtown Mixed Use zoning district constructed or altered after the effective date of this Chapter.

- (1) Purpose. This district is intended to preserve and enhance the special characteristics of downtown and shall promote the historic and architectural qualities of the area to preserve its original distinctive character by ensuring compatibility of design and architectural features and consistency with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan. Standards shall apply to the mapped boundaries of the Downtown Mixed Use zoning district.
- (2) Applicability. The regulations of this Section shall apply to new development and changes to the exterior of any building within the mapped boundaries of the Downtown Mixed Use zoning district.
- (3) Review and Approval.
  - (a) There are three categories of review in this district:
    1. **Renovation Review** (renovation of the exterior appearance of a property such as repainting, re-roofing, residing or replacing with identical colors, finishes, and materials)
    2. **Design Alteration Review** (change only in the exterior appearance of a nonresidential or multi-family property such as painting, roofing, siding, architectural component substitution, fencing, paving, or signage)
    3. **Project Review** (modification to the physical configuration of a property such as the erection of a new building, the demolition of an existing building, or the addition or removal of bulk to an existing building)
  - (b) Plan Commission and Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission review and approval may be required. The three categories and procedural requirements for review and approval are described fully in Section 114.07.51.
  - (c) Design standards for changes meeting the criteria for Project Review are found in Section 114.07.50(5), below. Design standards for changes meeting the criteria for Design Alteration Review or Renovation Review are found in Section 114.07.50(6), below.
  - (d) Designated Historic Structures. These regulations are separate and in addition to requirements related to changes to Local, State, and National Landmarks and properties as regulated by the City of Columbus Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission (see Section 114.02.22). Prior to taking action, Section 114.02.22 shall be followed for all locally-designated historic properties.

## Example Design Standards and Design Review

- (4) Design Theme: The design theme for the Downtown Mixed Use Zoning District is based on its historical, pedestrian-oriented development pattern that incorporates retail, residential, and institutional uses. Building orientation and character includes minimum setbacks at the edge of the sidewalk, use of alleys for access (if possible), and on-street or other off-site parking. The design theme is characterized by a variety of architectural styles popular at the time, including Italianate, Romanesque, and Neoclassical, in formats with office, storage, or residential located over commercial. The façades of these buildings have a traditional main street storefront appearance that can vary in scale depending on location and surroundings, have street yard and side yard setbacks of zero feet, have prominent horizontal and vertical patterns formed by regularly spaced window and door openings, detailed cornice designs, rich detailing in masonry coursing, window detailing and ornamentation, and are predominately brick, stone, or wood. Exterior building materials are of high quality. Exterior appurtenances are minimal. Exterior colors are harmonious, simple, and muted. Exterior signage blends, rather than contrasts, with buildings in terms of coloring (complementary to building), location (on-building), size (small), and number (few).

**Figure 114.07.50a: Architectural Components**



- (5) Design Standards for Project Review (New Construction, Building Additions, and Building Alterations).

- (a) The design standards contained in this Subsection shall apply to all changes meeting the criteria for Project Review (including all new buildings, building additions, and new building appurtenances). Such activities shall correspond to the following:
  - 1. The following requirements for building setback; height; building mass; horizontal rhythms (created by the placement and design of façade openings and related elements such as piers, columns); vertical rhythms (created by the placement and design of façade details such as sills, transoms, cornices and sign bands); roof forms; exterior materials; exterior surface features and appurtenances; exterior colors; exterior signage; on-site landscaping; exterior lighting; parking and loading area design; and the use of screening.
- (b) Building Setback. Throughout the district, the setback of buildings from street yard and side yard property lines shall conform to the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.
  - 1. No parking areas shall be located along any street frontage within the DMU district, unless an exception is granted through the conditional use process (Section 114.10.32).
- (c) Building Height.
  - 1. See Sections 114.04.11 to 114.04.14 for zoning district maximum height requirements.
- (d) Building Mass.
  - 1. Throughout the district, the massing of buildings may vary depending on location and surrounds, but shall conform to the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.
  - 2. The characteristic proportion (relationship between façade height and width) of the design theme shall be maintained.
  - 3. Building mass for large structures (with a façade area exceeding 5,000 square feet) shall integrate façade articulations to conform to the design theme described in Subsection (4), as determined by the Plan Commission.
- (e) Façade Articulation. As determined by the Plan Commission, façade lengths shall not be greater than 40 feet without articulation such as:
  - 1. Recesses or projections that step back or project a portion of the main façade plane.
  - 2. Recesses or projections of upper floors from the ground floor façade plane.
  - 3. Vertical division using different textures or materials.
  - 4. Division of the façade into individual units through the use of windows, entrances, arcades, porches, decks, balconies, lighting, or the incorporation of traditional storefront design along the ground floor per Section 114.07.50(6)(e).
  - 5. Roof form variation such as the inclusion of dormers, change in roof lines, or change in roof type.
  - 6. Public art installations located directly on a facade, such as murals (See Chapter 12.075 of the City of Columbus Municipal Code for public art standards).
- (f) Horizontal Rhythms. The horizontal pattern of exterior building elements formed by patterns of building openings for windows and doors, and related elements such as piers and columns shall be spaced at regular intervals across all visible façades of the building, and shall conform to the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.
- (g) Vertical Rhythms. The floor heights shall conform to the minimum and maximum height requirements of the DMU zoning district (Section 114.04.12). The rhythm of the ground floor shall harmonize with the rhythm of upper floors. The vertical pattern of exterior building

elements formed by patterns of building openings for windows and doors, and related elements such as sills, headers, transoms, cornices and sign bands shall conform to the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.

- (h) Roof Forms. Flat or gently sloping roofs which are not visible from the street shall be used. Mansards or other exotic roof shapes not characteristic of the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission, shall not be used. See Figure 114.07.50b.

**Figure 114.07.50b: Roof Forms**



- (i) Exterior Materials. Selected building materials conform to the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.
  1. Masonry. Stone or brick facing shall be of even coloration and consistent size. Cinder block, concrete block, concrete slab, or concrete panel shall not be permitted.
  2. Siding.
    - a. Wood, fiber cement, textured metal clapboard siding, or an alternative appropriate high-quality siding material may be appropriate, particularly if the proposed non-masonry exterior was used on a building which conforms to the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.
    - b. Clapboard or board and batten may be appropriate in certain instances where used on the existing structure within the same block-face which conforms to the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.
    - c. Class IV materials are prohibited.
  3. Glazing. Clear, or slightly tinted glass or related glazing material shall be used. Mirrored glass, smoked glass, or heavily tinted glass shall not be permitted, unless needed in a special situation as determined by the Plan Commission.
  4. Colors. Paint colors used on exterior materials shall reflect the building's era of original construction, target era of restoration/renovation, and/or era of historical significance.

Applicants may choose their paint color choice within one of these contexts. New construction paint colors should complement surrounding structures.

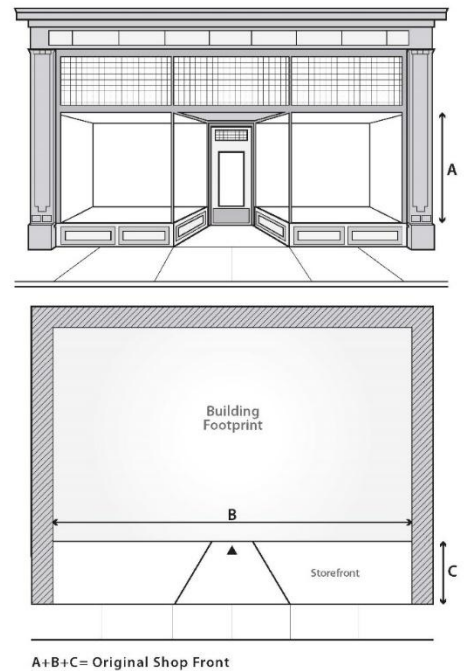
- a. Period-appropriate color palette examples include the Sherwin Williams historic exterior collections.
- (j) Exterior Surface. Exterior surface appurtenances shall conform to the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.
  - 1. The traditional storefront design theme (characterized by strong horizontal and vertical rhythms formed by building openings, windows, and transom windows) shall be employed for all new nonresidential buildings.
  - 2. Throughout the district, avoid cluttering building façades with brackets, wiring, meter boxes, antennae, gutters, downspouts and other appurtenances. Unnecessary signs shall also be avoided. Where necessary, such features shall be colored so as to blend in, rather than contrast, with the immediately adjacent building exterior. Extraneous ornamentation which is inconsistent with the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission, is also prohibited.
- (k) Awnings and Marquees. Awning and marquee size, color and placement shall complement the architectural character of the building, as determined by the Plan Commission.
  - 1. Soft, weather-treated canvas or vinyl materials which allow for flexible or fixed installation shall be used for awnings.
  - 2. Aluminum or suspended metal canopies shall be permitted.
  - 3. Signage applied to awnings shall be simple and durable.
  - 4. Backlit awnings are prohibited.
- (l) Exterior Lighting. On-building exterior lighting shall be compatible and harmonious with the design theme described in Subsection (4) above and Section 114.06.20, as determined by the Plan Commission.
  - 1. On-Building Lighting. The design, color, height, location, and light quality of all on-building light fixtures shall be consistent for all light fixtures.
  - 2. Ground-Mounted Lighting. The design, color, height, location and light quality of ground-mounted lighting shall be consistent with the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.
- (m) Signage. See Article IX for all signage requirements.
- (n) Cleaning. Structural components and exterior materials shall be cleaned when necessary, and with only the gentlest possible methods.
  - 1. Low-pressure water, steam cleaning, and soft natural bristle brushes are permitted.
  - 2. Sandblasting and power washing (more than 400 psi) are prohibited.
  - 3. Other methods shall be pre-approved by the Plan Commission.
- (6) Design Standards for Design Alteration Review and Renovation Review (Changes to the Exterior Appearance of a Property).
  - (a) Applicability. The design standards contained in this Subsection shall apply for the following changes to the exterior of a property:
    - 1. All changes meeting the criteria for Design Alteration Review (including painting, roofing, siding, architectural component substitution, fencing, paving, and signage)

2. All changes meeting the criteria for Renovation Review (including repainting, re-roofing, residing, or replacing with identical colors, finishes, and materials)
  3. Any other instance in which existing construction is proposed for rehabilitation and/or restoration. (New projects, building additions, and new appurtenances and features shall comply with the Design Standards of Subsection (5), above.)
- (b) In General. Buildings shall be restored relying on physical evidence (such as photographs, original drawings, and existing architectural details) as much as possible, in keeping with the design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.
- (c) Exterior Materials and Surface Features. Materials and features shall be replaced with exterior materials and surface features that create the same type of appearance as the original. If replacement is not possible, other features and materials may be used, provided they are compatible with the design and style of the building, as determined by the Plan Commission.
1. Where such knowledge is lacking, materials and features in common use at the time of building erection shall be used.
  2. Significant architectural features, including cornices, moldings and coursings shall be preserved or replaced with identical features and materials where possible.
- (d) Windows and Doors. The size, proportion, shape, and rhythm of original windows and doors shall not be altered.
1. Original window and door openings shall not be blocked. Where now blocked, blocked window and door openings shall be restored where possible.
  2. Window and door features, including lintels, sills, architraves, shutters, pediments, hoods and hardware, shall be preserved where possible.
    - a. If preservation is not possible, as determined by the Plan Commission, window and door features shall be replaced with identical features and materials. If replacement with identical features and materials is not possible, other features and materials may be used, provided they are compatible with the design and style of the building, as determined by the Plan Commission.
    - b. Dark frames (i.e. anodized bronze) shall be used to replace storefront and upper story windows.
    - c. Clear aluminum finishes and mill finish aluminum storm windows are prohibited.
    - d. If shutters are proposed, real, functional shutters or shutters that are the same dimensions as real, functional shutters (as opposed to purely decorative shutters) shall be used.
- (e) Storefronts. Storefronts shall fit inside the original shop front in terms of all 3 dimensions (vertical, horizontal and front to back articulation). See Figure 114.07.50c.
1. Display windows shall be restored to their original appearance.

## Example Design Standards and Design Review

2. The configuration of display windows shall be substantially similar to the original configuration. This provision shall be construed to prohibit garage doors and bay windows when they were not part of the original building design.
- (f) Entrances, Porticos, and Porches. Original porches, and steps shall be retained, except as required to meet accessibility standards. Porches, porticos, steps, and related enclosures which do not comply with the architectural design theme, as determined by the Plan Commission, shall be removed. See Section 114.04.40 for ramp requirements.
  - (g) Roofs. The original roof shape and character of visible materials shall be retained. Original architectural features which give the roof its essential character, including dormer windows, cupolas, cornices, brackets, chimneys and weathervanes, shall be preserved if in keeping with the architectural design theme described in Subsection (4) above, as determined by the Plan Commission.

**Figure 114.07.50c: Storefronts**



## Section 114.07.51: DMU District Design Review

- (1) Purpose and Scope. The design standards of this Chapter are intended to preserve and enhance the aesthetic qualities of the community and attain a consistent visually pleasing image for the City. DMU District Design Review is designed to enhance both aesthetic and economic objectives of the City by controlling the site design and exterior appearance of development within the district in a manner which is consistent with sound land use, urban design, and economic revitalization principles. The application of these standards will ensure the long-term progress and broad participation toward these principles.
- (2) Procedure for Review and Approval. There are three categories of review: Renovation Review, Design Alteration Review, and Project Review. These procedures do not apply to any modifications to the interior of a building or structure. See Figure 114.07.51a below for a summary of the processes.

**Figure 114.07.51a: Process for DMU District Design Review**

Procedure	Type of Proposal		
	Renovation <sup>1</sup>	Design <sup>2</sup>	Project <sup>3</sup>
1. Consultation with Zoning Administrator, to confirm type of proposal	Yes	Yes	Yes
2. Submit Proposed and Existing Building Elevations	No	Yes	Yes
3. Submit Site Plan Application	No	No	Yes
4. Submit Conditional Use Permit Application	No	No	Yes
5. Review and action by Zoning Administrator	No	Yes	Yes
6. Review and comment by the Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission <sup>4</sup>	No	Yes	Yes
7. Review and action by Plan Commission	No	Yes	Yes
8. Review and action by the Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission <sup>4</sup>	No	Yes	Yes

KEY: **Yes** = Step is required. **No** = Step is not required.

<sup>1</sup>Only a replacement to or maintenance of the exterior of a property.

<sup>2</sup>Only a change in the appearance of a property.

<sup>3</sup>Modification to the physical configuration of a property, i.e. new building, addition, or demolition

<sup>4</sup>See Section 114.07.51(3)(c) and (d).

- (a) **Renovation Review.** Applications which involve only a renovation of the exterior appearance of a property (such as repainting, re-roofing, residing or replacing with identical colors, finishes, and materials), as determined by the Zoning Administrator, are considered a Renovation Review and may proceed with the project; no additional processes are required other than a building permit.
- (b) **Design Alteration Review.** Applications which involve a change only in the exterior appearance (such as painting, roofing, siding, architectural component substitution, fencing, or paving), but no modification to the physical configuration of a property are considered Design Alteration Review and are subject to review and approval by the Zoning Administrator and the Plan Commission. The Zoning Administrator shall serve as the liaison between the applicant and the Plan Commission in facilitating the review of an application and shall ensure that the technical and procedural requirements of the Zoning Ordinance are met. The Plan Commission shall serve as the final discretionary review body on aesthetics, building design, and site design, and shall focus its review on the application’s compliance with sound aesthetic, land use, site design and economic revitalization practices. In part, this effort shall be guided by the Comprehensive Plan and other area plans.
  - 1. Procedure. Design Alteration Review proposals are subject to the following procedures:
    - a. The Zoning Administrator shall determine whether the Design Alteration Review application is complete and fulfills the requirements of this Chapter. If the application is determined to be incomplete, the Zoning Administrator, shall notify the applicant.
    - b. The Zoning Administrator shall coordinate review with the City’s Departments.
    - c. The Zoning Administrator shall review and approve or deny the application.
  - 2. Application requirements. In addition to the application requirements for site plan review, all applications for Design Alteration Review shall be made to the Zoning Administrator, and shall be accompanied by the building permit application, and, in addition, shall be accompanied by all of the following, unless specifically waived in writing by the Zoning Administrator:
    - a. A depiction of the existing appearance of the property. Clear color photographs are recommended for this purpose. Scaled and dimensioned drawings of existing components such as windows, doors, railings, fencing or other site components, and/or detailed building elevations which are proposed for alteration or replacement may be required by the City.
    - b. A depiction of the proposed appearance of the property. Paint charts, promotional brochures, and/or clear color photographs of replacement architectural components are recommended for this purpose. Scaled and dimensioned drawings of proposed components such as windows, doors, railings, fencing or other site components, and/or detailed building elevations which are proposed for alteration or replacement may be required by the City.
    - c. A written description of the proposed modification, including a complete listing of proposed components, materials, and colors.
    - d. Written justification for the proposed alteration consisting of the reasons why the applicant believes the requested alteration is in harmony with the building design

standards of the Downtown Mixed-Use Zoning District (Section 114.07.50), if applicable.

3. The Zoning Administrator shall forward the Design Alteration Review application to the Plan Commission for review and final determination.
- (c) **Project Review.** Applications which involve modification to the physical configuration of a property (such as the erection of a new building, the demolition of an existing building, or the addition or removal of bulk to an existing building) are subject to Project Review by the Zoning Administrator and the Plan Commission. The Zoning Administrator shall serve as the liaison between the applicant and the Plan Commission in facilitating the review of an application and shall ensure that the technical and procedural requirements of the Zoning Ordinance are met. The Plan Commission shall serve as the final discretionary review body on aesthetics, building design, and site design, and shall focus its review on the application’s compliance with sound aesthetic, land use, site design and economic revitalization practices. In part, this effort shall be guided by the Comprehensive Plan and other area plans.
1. Procedure. Project review proposals shall follow procedures for Site Plan Review per Section 114.10.43.
  2. Application requirements. In addition to the application requirements for conditional use permits, all applications for Project Review shall be made to the Zoning Administrator, and shall be accompanied by the building permit application, and, in addition, shall be accompanied by all of the following, unless specifically waived in writing by the Zoning Administrator:
    - a. A depiction of the existing appearance of the property. Color photographs are recommended for this purpose. Scaled and dimensioned drawings of existing components such as windows, doors, railings, fencing or other site components, and/or detailed building elevations which are proposed for alteration or replacement may be required by the City.
    - b. A depiction of the proposed appearance of the property. Paint charts, promotional brochures, and/or clear color photographs of replacement architectural components are recommended for this purpose. Scaled and dimensioned drawings of proposed components such as windows, doors, railings, fencing or other site components, and/or detailed building elevations which are proposed for alteration or replacement may be required by the City.
    - c. For all projects involving a new building, or an addition exceeding 100 square feet of gross floor area that reduces or extends a building’s footprint or height, a detailed, scaled site plan shall be provided meeting all required elements of Section 114.10.43.
    - d. Written justification for the proposed alteration or new construction consisting of the reasons why the applicant believes the requested alteration or new construction is in harmony with the applicable building design standards for Special Areas in Section 114.07.50.
- (3) Additional Recommendations Permitted Under the Special Area Design Review Process.
- (a) The Zoning Administrator are hereby authorized to make recommendations for, or require modifications to, a proposed application for Renovation Review, Design Alteration Review, or Project Review.
  - (b) The Plan Commission is hereby authorized to make recommendations for, or require modifications to, a proposed application for Design Alteration Review and Project Review.

## Example Design Standards and Design Review

- (c) The Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission (see Section 114.02.22) is hereby authorized to make recommendations for, or require modifications to, a proposed application for Design Alteration Review and Project Review for all locally-designated historic properties.
  - (d) The Historic Landmarks Preservation Commission shall also review and provide feedback prior to Plan Commission action on a proposed application for Design Alteration, Project Review, Zoning Map Amendment (Section 114.10.30), or Planned Unit Development (Section 114.10.45) for any non-locally-designated historic property within the Downtown Mixed Use zoning district.
- (4) Appeals. Appeals from the decisions of the Zoning Administrator and Plan Commission may be made to the City Board in accordance with the provisions of Section 114.10.52.

## **Sections 114.07.52 to 114.07.99: Reserved**

## Section 114.02.22: Historic Preservation Overlay Zoning District

- (1) Purpose and Intent. It is hereby declared a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements or sites of special character or special architectural, archeological or historic interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people. The purpose of this section is to:
  - (a) Effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement and preservation of such improvements, sites and districts which represent or reflect elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history.
  - (b) Safeguard the City's historic, prehistoric and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in such historic structures, sites and districts.
  - (c) Stabilize and improve property values, and enhance the visual and aesthetic character of the Village.
  - (d) Protect and enhance the City's attractions to residents, tourists and visitors, and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry.
- (2) **Historic Landmark and Preservation Commission Composition.**
  - (a) An Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission is created, consisting of seven members. Each member shall have to the highest extent practicable a known interest in historic preservation. The mayor shall appoint the commissioners, subject to confirmation by the common council. Each member shall serve staggered terms of three years. The terms of appointees shall commence on May 10 of the year of appointment.
  - (b) The commission shall annually designate a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary/treasurer from among its members who shall perform those duties as are common to their offices and shall adopt regular meeting dates and reasonable rules of procedure.
  - (c) The preservation commission may adopt specific operating guidelines for designation of historic sites, structures, districts and neighborhoods provided they are in conformity with criteria and standards established by this division.
- (3) Definitions. As used in this section, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:
  - (a) Certificate of appropriateness. The certificate issued by the Commission approving alteration, rehabilitation, construction, reconstruction or demolition of an historic structure, historic site or any improvement in an historic district.
  - (b) Commission. The Historic Landmark and Preservation Commission described under this Section.
  - (c) Historic district. An area that contains two or more historic improvements or sites, which has been designated an historic district pursuant to the provisions of this section.
  - (d) Historic site. Any parcel of land of historic significance due to a substantial value in tracing the history or prehistory of man, or upon which an historic event has occurred, and which has been designated as an historic site under this section, or an improvement parcel, or part thereof, on which is situated an historic structure and any abutting improvement parcel, or part thereof, used as and constituting part of the premises on which the historic structure is situated.
  - (e) Historic structure. Any improvement which has a special character or special historic interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the Village, state or nation and which has been designated as an historic structure pursuant to the provisions of this section.

**Commented [SK1]:** Will remove this section. Instead proposed to move Composition into Municipal Code Chapter 2

**Commented [SK2]:** Will be moved to Chapter 2

- (f) Improvement. Any building, structure, place, work of art or other object constituting a physical betterment of real property, or any part of such betterment, including streets, alleys, sidewalks, curbs, lighting fixtures, signs and the like.
- (4) Historic structure, historic site and historic district designation criteria.
- (a) For purposes of this chapter, an historic structure, historic site, or historic district designation may be placed on any site, natural or improved, including any building, improvement or structure located thereon, or any area of particular historic, architectural, archeological or cultural significance to the City, such as historic structures, sites or districts which:
1. Exemplify or reflect the broad cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state or community;
  2. Are identified with historic personages or with important events in national, state or local history;
  3. Embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type or specimen inherently valuable for a study of a period, style, method or construction, or of indigenous materials or craftsmanship;
  4. Are representative of the notable work of a master builder, designer or architect who influenced his age; or
  5. Have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important to prehistory or history.
- (b) The Commission shall adopt specific operating guidelines for historic structure and historic site designation, providing such are in conformance with the provisions of this chapter.
- (c) The Commission may select geographically defined areas within the City to be designated as historic districts and shall prepare a historic preservation plan for each area. An historic district may be designated for any geographic area of particular historic, architectural or cultural significance to the City, after application of the foregoing criteria. Each historic preservation plan prepared for or by the Commission shall include a cultural and architectural analysis supporting the historic significance of the area, the specific guidelines for development, and a statement of preservation objectives.
- (5) Historic preservation commission powers and duties.
- (a) Designation.
1. The Commission shall have the power to recommend designation of historic structures, historic sites and historic districts within the City limits. All historic structure, historic site and historic district designations shall be made by the Common Council and shall be made pursuant to Subsection (5) hereof.
  2. Once designated, such historic structures, sites and districts shall be subject to all the provisions of this section and shall continue to be subject to all other provisions of this **Chapter 114**, Zoning Code, of this Municipal Code, including those provisions and requirements specific to the particular zoning district in which the said historic structure, site or district is situated.
- (b) Regulation of construction, reconstruction, alteration and demolition.
1. No owner or person in charge of an historic structure, historic site or structure within an historic district shall reconstruct, alter or demolish all or any part of the exterior of such property or construct any improvement upon such designated property or properties or cause or permit any such work to be performed upon such property or demolish such property unless a certificate of appropriateness has been granted by the Commission. Also,

unless such a certificate has been granted by the Commission, the Building Inspector shall not issue a permit for any such work.

2. Upon filing of any application for a certificate of appropriateness with the Commission, the Commission shall approve the applications unless:
    - a. In the case of a designated historic structure or historic site, the proposed work would detrimentally change, destroy or adversely affect any exterior feature of the improvement or site upon which said work is to be done;
    - b. In the case of the construction of a new improvement upon an historic site, or within an historic district, the exterior of such improvement would adversely affect or not harmonize with the external appearance or other neighboring improvements on such site or within the district;
    - c. In the case of any property located in an historic district, the proposed construction, reconstruction, exterior alteration or demolition does not conform to the purpose and intent of this section and to the objectives and design criteria of the historic preservation plan for said district;
    - d. The building or structure is of such architectural or historical significance that its demolition would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the Village or state;
    - e. In the case of a request for the demolition of a deteriorated building or structure, any economic hardship or difficulty claimed by the owner is self-created or is the result of any failure to maintain the property in good repair.
  3. If the Commission determines that the application for a certificate of appropriateness and the proposed changes are consistent with the character and features of the property or district, it shall issue the certificate of appropriateness. The Commission shall make this decision within 45 days of the filing of the application.
  4. This issuance of a certificate of appropriateness shall not relieve the applicant from obtaining other permits and approvals required by the City. A building permit or other municipal permit shall be invalid if it is obtained without the presentation of the certificate of appropriateness required for the proposed work.
  5. Ordinary maintenance and repairs may be undertaken without a certificate of appropriateness, provided that the work involves repairs to existing features of an historic structure or site or the replacement of elements of a structure with pieces identical in appearance and material, and provided that the work does not change the exterior appearance of the structure or site and does not require the issuance of a building permit.
- (c) Appeals. Should the Commission fail to issue a certificate of appropriateness due to the failure of the proposal to conform to the guidelines, the applicant may appeal such decision to the Common Council within 30 days. In addition, if the Commission fails to issue a certificate of appropriateness, the Commission shall, with the cooperation of the applicant, work with the applicant in an attempt to obtain a certificate of appropriateness within the guidelines of the section.
- (d) Recognition of historic structures, sites and districts. At such time as an historic structure, site or district has been properly designated, the Commission, in cooperation with the property owner, may cause to be prepared and erected on such property, at City expense, a suitable plaque declaring that such property is an historic structure, site or district.
- (6) Procedures.

- (a) Nominations. Nominations for designation of a single property or an historic district under this chapter may be submitted to the Commission by the Historic Preservation Commission, the Common Council, the Plan Commission, or City staff. Members of the public may request consideration of a nomination; however, all nominations must be initiated or authorized by one of the above entities. The Commission shall review the nomination for completeness and eligibility under at least one of the criteria in Section 114.02.22(3)(a). The Commission, at its discretion, may then forward the nomination to the Common Council along with its recommendation for or against designation.
1. Nomination Application. Each application shall include all required elements of the City of Columbus Historic Designation Nomination Application.
- (b) Hearing. The Commission shall hold a public hearing to consider nominations for designation as historic structures and historic sites and for creation of historic districts. Notice of the time, place and purpose of the hearing shall be given to the owners of record, as listed in the Village tax roll, of the nominated property or whose property is situated in whole or in part within 300 feet of the said property. The notice of hearing shall be mailed to said owners at least 10 days prior to the hearing date.
- (c) Commission recommendation. Following the hearing, the Commission shall vote on the nomination and make its recommendations thereon to the Common Council.
- (d) Council action.
1. Designation of historic structures and historic sites. Upon receipt of the recommendations from the Commission, the Common Council shall either designate the property as an historic structure or an historic site or rescind such designation. After the designation or rescission has been made, the property owner or owners shall be notified of the Council's action. Any designation or rescission hereunder shall be recorded, at City expense, in the Columbia County or Dodge County, Wisconsin, Register of Deeds Office.
  2. Creation of historic district. Upon receipt of the recommendations from the Commission, the Common Council shall either designate or reject the historic district. Creation of the historic district shall constitute adoption of the plan prepared for that district and direct the implementation of said plan.
- (7) Effects of Denial. No application which has been denied shall be resubmitted for a period of 6 months from the date of said order of denial.
- (8) Interim control. No building permit shall be issued by the Building Inspector for alteration, construction, demolition, or removal of a nominated historic structure, historic site, or any property or structure within a nominated historic district from the date of the meeting of the Commission at which a nomination form is first presented until the final disposition is authorized by formal resolution of the Common Council as necessary for public health, welfare, or safety. In no event shall the delay be for more than 180 days.
- (9) Penalties for violations. Any person or persons violating any provision of this section shall, upon conviction, be subject to a penalty as provided in Section 66 of the City of Columbus Municipal Code. Notice of violations shall be issued by the Building Inspector.

**Commented [SK3]:** Please review. I changed this to address City feedback but we could change it back if it needs to stay that way to comply with CLG.

**Commented [SK4]:** What is correct Code section?

**Version 3.0**  
 - MUNICIPAL CODE  
 Chapter 2 - ADMINISTRATION  
 ARTICLE IV. - BOARDS, AUTHORITIES AND COMMISSIONS  
 DIVISION **x. HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**DIVISION x. HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND PRESERVATION COMMISSION**

**Sec. 2-2XX. How constituted.**

The Historic Landmarks and Preservation Commission shall consist of six members appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the council. These members shall hold three year terms. The commission shall elect by majority vote a chair, vice-chair and secretary. The commission shall meet at least once a year and when necessary. Further, there shall be one additional member of the commission which shall be a city council member acting as a voting member of the commission. The city council member shall be appointed by the mayor each April, except for the initial appointment which shall be made as soon as practicable following the adoption of this division.

**Sec. 2-287. Powers and duties.**

It is declared a matter of public policy that there is value in preserving the history of the City of Columbus. The purpose of this commission is to:

- (1) Effect and accomplish the protection, recognition, enhancement and perpetuation of historic preservation structures and sites that represent or reflect elements of the city's cultural, social, and architectural history.
- (2) Safeguard the city's historic and cultural heritage as embodied and reflected in historic structures, sites, districts and neighborhoods.
- (3) Foster civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past.
- (4) Protect and enhance the city's historic attractions for residents, tourists and visitors by supporting alternate uses of historic structures
- (5) Promote the use of historic structures, sites, districts and neighborhoods for the education, pleasure and welfare of the people of the city.

The activities and responsibilities of the board are set forth in the chart below:

Accounting	-Day to day accounting will be performed by the City Finance Director/Treasurer -The Finance Director/Treasurer shall determine how funding designated for historic preservation projects is allocated within city accounts -Only the Finance Director/Treasurer shall issue checks for payment of invoices
Members and Commission Meetings	-Meets at least once a year and when needed -Adhere to open meetings and public records law -Adhere to the City's Code of Ethics

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-All official city documents shall be stored on city owned/leased equipment and/or in city owned/leased facilities</li> <li>-The purchasing policy must be followed</li> </ul>
Budgeting and Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-May review budget reports related to historic preservation</li> <li>-May provide input for the funding of historic preservation projects and activities through the Community and Economic Development Department budget. Input must align with the established budget timeline.</li> <li>- May make recommendations to the capital improvements plan (CIP) through the Community and Economic Development Department. Input must align with the establish CIP timeline.</li> <li>-May make recommendations to apply for grants with council approval</li> <li>- Fundraising shall be approved on a project by project basis by the City Council or executed through the City's "Friends" group</li> <li>-Any donations shall be deposited as determined by the City Finance Director/Treasurer</li> </ul>
Facilities and Historic Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Makes recommendations regarding the alteration of designated historic public structures; specifically, structures that are considered contributing structures within a district or designated individually</li> <li>-Does not coordinate construction plans for the alteration of historic public structures or hire contractors.</li> <li>-Makes recommendations to plan commission/ council/state historical society if necessary</li> </ul>
Policies and Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--Provide policy guidance in the development of plans related to historic preservation including the designation of local historic structures</li> <li>-Recognize historic buildings and sites</li> <li>-Develop historic preservation education and promotion programs</li> <li>-Collaborate with local historic preservation organizations</li> </ul>

**Secs. 2-288—2-299. Reserved.**



## Agenda Item Report

**Meeting Type:** Plan Commission

**Meeting Date:** May 14, 2026

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**Item Title:** Consider and discuss recent legislation related to comprehensive planning and affordable housing

**Submitted By:** Mike Kornmann, Director of Community and Community Development

**Detailed Description of Subject Matter:**

Recently the state legislature enacted legislation known by some as the “truth in planning” law. It added requirements to plans, specifically to the land use section of the plan. It also further defines what parts of the plan are used for determining the consistency of decisions of zoning, subdivision, and official mapping to the comprehensive plan. The legislation also lays out other programs for incentivizing affordable housing.

**List all Supporting Documentation Attached:**

- Truth in planning power point
- Act 173 Legislative memo
- Mandatory rezone law bill text
- Nine elements of comprehensive planning

**Action Requested:** None.

# Truth in Planning - Wisconsin

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A new state legislature mandate on  
cities

# Wisconsin Comprehensive Planning Refresher

- Smart Growth law adopted 1999
- Nine required elements
- 20-year planning horizon
- Required towns, village, towns, counties and regional plan commissions to have comprehensive plans

# Nine Required Comprehensive Plan Elements

- Issues & Opportunities
- Housing
- Transportation
- Utilities & Community Facilities
- Agricultural, Natural & Cultural Resources
- Economic Development
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Land Use
- Implementation

# Original Consistency Framework

- Consistency required as of January 1, 2010
- Zoning, subdivision and official mapping decisions judged against the entire plan
- Narrative policies and maps all relevant

# What is the official map?

An official map is a legally adopted map, established by ordinance or resolution, that shows—with survey accuracy—the location and extent of existing and proposed public facilities, including but not limited to:

- **Streets and highways**
- **Parks, playgrounds, and other public grounds**
- **Railroad rights-of-way**
- **Utility corridors**
- **Drainageways**
- **Waterways, airports, and transit facilities (optional)**

Once adopted, the official map serves as the formal public record of where a municipality has laid out or intends to require land for future public use.

The City of Columbus “Official Map” was last adopted in 2008

# Truth in Planning: What Changed

## Key Details of the Truth in Planning Law (AB453/Act 173):

- **Goal:** To increase Wisconsin's housing supply, lower construction costs, and provide predictability for developers by reducing lengthy rezoning processes and Not-In-My-Backyard (NIMBY) delays
- **Consistency Requirement:** Municipalities must ensure zoning ordinances are consistent with comprehensive plans, which must now outline 20-year growth in 5-year increments.
- **Mandatory Rezoning:** If a developer proposes a project in an area identified in the comprehensive plan for residential use that is contiguous with existing development, the municipality must approve the rezoning.
- **Automatic Rezoning:** If a municipality's comprehensive plan is outdated or does not meet the new standards, requested land for residential development may be automatically rezoned to the requested classification.

# Other Parts of the law

- Affordable Housing
  - New Residential Tax incremental financing District
  - Lot size restrictions
    - Single family 7,500 sq ft max with max 70 ft lot width
    - Side setbacks no greater than 10 feet
    - Duplex 15,000 sq. ft. max
  - House size
    - Single story max is 1,500 sq. ft.
    - Two Story is 2,000 sq. ft. max

# Major Legal Change

- Consistency now determined using the Future Land Use Map only
- Narrative plan chapters no longer control zoning consistency

# Former vs. New Consistency Test

- Before: Entire comprehensive plan (text + maps) as related to zoning, subdivision, and official mapping
- Now: Future Land Use Map alone
  - Can text and policy narratives be added to the map?
  - Possibly

# Future Land Use Map - New Requirements

- Clearly identify residential land use areas
- Specify minimum and maximum residential densities
- Show timing and phasing of development
- Clearly identify and calculate all future land use types

# Why Map Accuracy Matters

- The map now has a greater regulatory effect
- Vague categories create legal and policy risk
- Zoning outcomes must match mapped intent both in **density and timing** (five year increments)
- Connection and coordination of infrastructure is also important

# Update Decision Facing the City

- City's comprehensive plan adopted in 2021
- Does not meet the the new law
- The deadline to meet the law is January 1, 2028
- Prioritizing this work with other long range plans and projects is challenging

# Option 1 - Land Use Chapter Update

- Update the Land Use Element and Future Land Use Map
- Address densities and timing
- Achievable by January 1, 2028
- Lower cost and narrower scope

# Option 2 - Full Comprehensive Plan Update

- Update all nine elements
- Improves internal policy consistency
- Higher cost - consultant assistance required
- Likely needed to begin fall 2026
- Estimated cost \$50,000
  - Some of this would be in 2026 but most of it in 2027
  - Currently not budget

# Plan Commission Role

- Discuss tradeoffs between update options
- Recommend a preferred approach to City Council

# Wisconsin Legislative Council

## ACT MEMO



**Prepared by:** Abby Gorzlancyk, Staff Attorney

April 13, 2026

### 2025 Wisconsin Act 173 [2025 Assembly Bill 453]

### Changes to Comprehensive Plans, Requests to Change Zoning Classifications, and Tax Incremental Districts

Generally, 2025 Wisconsin Act 173 makes changes to comprehensive plans, requests to change zoning classifications, and certain aspects of tax incremental districts (TIDs).

### Comprehensive Plans

Under current law, unless an exception applies, ordinances enacted or amended by a political subdivision that affect land use must be consistent with the political subdivision's comprehensive plan, and the comprehensive plan must have all the required planning elements.

Act 173 requires the land use element of the comprehensive plan of a city or village to identify, in five-year increments spanning 20 years, the areas in which residential land use is projected and to specify the minimum and maximum net density of residences that will be authorized. If a city or village enacts or amends certain zoning and local subdivision ordinances, those ordinances must be consistent with its comprehensive plan including incorporating residential net density standards into the ordinances. An ordinance is consistent with the comprehensive plan for a city or village if the ordinance permits a land use that is expressly identified for the land in the land use map of the comprehensive plan. The act specifies that these changes do not apply to a town or county.

Under the act, if a person submits to a city or village an application for a residential housing development permit or a request to change an existing zoning classification, and the comprehensive plan does not include net density requirements for areas in which residential land use is projected, the city or village must amend its comprehensive plan to include net density within 180 days. The application must certify that the land subject to the application is not located in a farmland preservation zoning district, an agricultural enterprise area, and is not subject to a farmland preservation agreement. For an amendment to add net density requirements in response to a request to change a zoning classification, a city or village does not need to follow otherwise required comprehensive planning procedures.

### Request to Change a Zoning Classification

Act 173 requires a city or village to approve a request to change a zoning classification of land that is required in order to proceed with a residential housing development within 90 days, if the following are satisfied:

- The proposed change is for an area identified on the political subdivision's comprehensive plan as projected for residential land use.
- The proposed change is for an area that is adjacent or close in proximity to existing development.

- 2 -

- Either the proposed net density range of the residences in the housing development falls within the net density range specified in the comprehensive plan, or the political subdivision has not added net density to the comprehensive plan by the 180-day deadline described in the section above.<sup>1</sup>
- Current housing supply in the political subdivision does not meet existing or forecasted housing demand within the next five years, as provided in the comprehensive plan.
- Certification that the proposed change is for an area that is not located with a farmland preservation zoning district or agricultural enterprise area and is not subject to a farmland preservation agreement.

The act creates an extension to the 90-day deadline if requested by the requestor of the zoning classification change. It also specifies that this request cannot be made to a town or county, nor does it apply to the extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction of a city or village.

The requestor may specify its preferences regarding the zoning classification, building setback requirements, lot width or frontage requirements, lot size requirements, and building size or bulk requirements. If the specified zoning classification allows the net density of residences proposed in the residential housing development, the land must be reclassified into that classification.

The act allows the denial of a request to change a zoning classification if the city or village demonstrates that the denial is necessary to prevent a shortage in or overburdening of public facilities, or to address a significant threat to the public health or safety. A city or village may also deny a request to change a zoning classification or a permit for a residential housing development for one year if it issues a request for proposals for a qualifying residential development with a specific net density range that aligns with the comprehensive plan,<sup>2</sup> and no person responds to the request, with certain specified exceptions. The act also specifies that these provisions do apply to a town or county.

Lastly, if a person is aggrieved by a political subdivision's failure to approve a request to change a zoning classification, either by the 90-day deadline or the extended time frame when requested, the requestor may seek relief through an action for mandamus and may recover court costs including reasonable attorney fees.

## TIDs

The act defines newly platted residential development, for purposes of mixed-use TIDs, to mean residential development on a parcel that has not previously been the site of permanent structures other than agricultural structures. It also increases the housing extension currently available for certain TIDs at the end of their lifespan, from one to two years.

**Effective date:** January 1, 2028.

For a full history of the bill, visit the Legislature's [bill history page](#).

AG:jal

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<sup>1</sup> If the 180-day update deadline is triggered by the request, then the 90-day timeline for the city or village to approve a request to change a zoning classification may begin only after the 180-day deadline.

<sup>2</sup> A qualifying residential development is defined as a residential development that is reasonably expected to receive sewerage and sanitary water services from a public utility and that is not reasonably believed to be environmentally contaminated.



## 2025 ASSEMBLY BILL 453

September 25, 2025 - Introduced by Representatives ARMSTRONG, BROOKS, DITTRICH, KNODL, KREIBICH, MURPHY, O'CONNOR, PIWOWARCZYK, SUMMERFIELD and PENTERMAN, cosponsored by Senator JAGLER. Referred to Committee on Housing and Real Estate.

1     **AN ACT to repeal** 66.1001 (1) (am) and 66.1001 (3m); **to renumber and**  
2     **amend** 66.1001 (2) (h), 66.1001 (3), 66.10016 (3) and 66.10016 (4); **to amend**  
3     59.69 (3) (a), 62.23 (3) (b), 66.1001 (2m) (title), 66.1001 (2m) (a), 66.1002 (2)  
4     (intro.), 66.1105 (6) (g) 1. (intro.) and 66.1105 (6) (g) 3.; **to repeal and**  
5     **recreate** 66.1001 (3) (title); **to create** 66.1001 (2) (h) 4., 66.1001 (3) (b),  
6     66.1001 (3) (c), 66.10016 (3) (b), 66.10016 (4) (b), 66.10016 (5) and 66.1105 (2)  
7     (cs) of the statutes; **relating to:** required approvals of rezoning requests  
8     related to residential development, contents of and consistency of local  
9     ordinances with local comprehensive plans, certain tax incremental district  
10    project costs related to residential development, and tax incremental district  
11    lifespan extension.

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### ***Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau***

This bill provides for mandatory rezoning upon certain requests for rezoning related to residential development, requires certain information in comprehensive

**ASSEMBLY BILL 453**

plans of political subdivisions, allows for a longer extension of the lifespan of a tax incremental district (TID) for housing stock improvement purposes, and provides a definition of “newly platted residential construction” for the purpose of defining certain costs that may be included as project costs for a TID.

***Mandatory rezoning and comprehensive planning***

This bill requires a political subdivision to grant a request for rezoning when a person submits a request for a change to a zoning classification of land that is required to proceed with a residential housing development and all of the following apply:

1. The proposed change is for an area identified in the political subdivision’s comprehensive plan as projected for residential land use.
2. The area is contiguous with existing development.
3. The proposed minimum and maximum net density of residences in the residential housing development are within the minimum and maximum net density for the area specified by the political subdivision in its comprehensive plan or the political subdivision has failed to comply with the requirement created in the bill to specify the minimum and maximum net density in the area.
4. Current housing supply in the political subdivision does not meet existing housing demand or forecasted housing demand within the next five years, as provided in the comprehensive plan.

The bill provides that a political subdivision may refuse to grant a request meeting these requirements if the political subdivision demonstrates that the denial is necessary either 1) to prevent a shortage in, or the overburdening of, public facilities located in the political subdivision or 2) to address a significant threat to public health or safety.

The bill provides an exception to this mandatory rezoning procedure upon the failure of certain attempts to develop properties within a political subdivision. Specifically, if a political subdivision requests proposals for certain residential development and no proposals are received, the mandatory rezoning procedure created in the bill does not apply in that political subdivision for one year after the last date on which responses to the request were to be accepted.

The bill also specifies that a person who enforces the requirements of the bill by a mandamus action may recover any court costs and reasonable attorney fees attributable to the failure to approve the request within 60 days.

***Comprehensive planning***

Under current law, unless certain conditions apply, certain ordinances enacted or amended by a political subdivision that affect land use must be consistent with that political subdivision’s comprehensive plan. The ordinances to which this requirement applies are official mapping, local subdivision regulation, and zoning ordinances. Also under current law, if a political subdivision enacts or amends any of these ordinances, the comprehensive plan must contain at least all of the required planning elements. The required planning elements include the following: housing; transportation; utilities and community facilities; agricultural,

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natural, and cultural resources; economic development; land use; and intergovernmental cooperation.

The bill requires political subdivisions to identify in their comprehensive plans the areas in which residential land use is projected and, for each of these areas, to specify the minimum and maximum net density of residences that will be authorized. These projections and authorized densities must be provided for five-year increments over 20 years. Political subdivisions must ensure that their comprehensive plans satisfy this requirement if, after the effective date of the bill, the political subdivision enacts or amends an official mapping ordinance, local subdivision ordinance, or zoning ordinance or adds lands by annexation or consolidation intended for residential development. In addition, if a person requests rezoning or the approval of a permit related to residential housing development, the political subdivision must amend its comprehensive plan within 180 days to satisfy the residential use and density specification requirement.

If a person requests rezoning for a residential housing development and the political subdivision has not complied with the residential use and density specification requirement, the bill provides that the land is either rezoned to the person's requested zoning classification or that certain dimensional, physical, and location requirements requested by the person or the least restrictive dimensional, physical, and location requirements in the political subdivision's zoning ordinance for any residential classification apply.

***TIF generally***

Under current law, cities and villages may use tax incremental financing (TIF) to encourage development in the city or village. In general, under TIF, a city or village pays for improvements in a TID and then collects tax moneys attributable to all taxing jurisdictions on the increased property value in the TID for a certain period of time to pay for the improvements. Ideally, after that period of time, the city or village will have been repaid for its initial investment and the property tax base in the TID will have permanently increased in value.

In general and in brief, a city or village makes use of TIF using the following procedure:

1. The city or village designates an area as a TID and creates a project plan laying out the expenditures that the city or village will make within the TID, and the designation and project plan are approved by representatives of the other taxing jurisdictions (joint review board).

2. The Department of Revenue establishes the "base value" of the TID. This value is the equalized value of all taxable property within the TID at the time of its creation.

3. Each year thereafter, the "value increment" of the property within the TID is determined by subtracting the base value from the current value of property within the TID. The portion of taxes collected on any positive value increment (the tax increment) is collected by the city or village for use solely for the project costs of the TID. Tax increments collected by the city or village include taxes that would

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have been collected by other taxing jurisdictions, such as counties or school districts, if the TID had not been created.

4. Tax increments are collected until the city or village has recovered all of its project costs or until the TID reaches its statutory termination date.

***Extending the life of a TID for housing stock purposes***

Currently, a city or village may extend the life of a TID for up to one year for housing stock improvement if all of the following occur:

1. The city or village pays off all of the TID's project costs.
2. The city or village adopts a resolution stating that it intends to extend the life of the TID, the number of months it intends to do so, and how it intends to improve housing stock.
3. The city or village notifies DOR.

Current law requires the city or village to use 75 percent of the tax increments received during the period specified in the resolution to benefit affordable housing in the city or village and 25 percent to otherwise improve the city's or village's housing stock.

Under the bill, a TID's life may be extended for up to two years for housing stock improvement. Also, under the bill, all tax increments for housing stock improvement must be expended to purchase goods or services from for-profit entities.

***Expenditures for residential development***

Under current law, the project costs of a TID must be enumerated in the TID's project plan. These project costs are the expenditures that the city or village expects to make in carrying out the project plan. Current law limits the types of expenditures that may be included as project costs. For example, public works such as sewers, streets, and lighting systems; financing costs; and site preparation costs may be included. The costs of constructing administrative buildings, for example, may not.

Generally, under current law, project costs may, under certain circumstances, include expenditures for newly platted residential development. Currently, such expenditures may qualify as project costs only in TIDs for which a project plan was approved before September 30, 1995, or for mixed-use TIDs. With regard to a mixed-use TID, such expenditures qualify only if certain density or development quality standards are also satisfied.

The bill defines "newly platted residential development" as residential development on a parcel that has not previously been the site of permanent structures other than structures used solely for agricultural purposes.

Because this bill may increase or decrease, directly or indirectly, the cost of the development, construction, financing, purchasing, sale, ownership, or availability of housing in this state, the Department of Administration, as required by law, will prepare a report to be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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For further information see the state and local fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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*The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:*

1           **SECTION 1.** 59.69 (3) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

2           59.69 (3) (a) The county zoning agency may direct the preparation of a county  
3 development plan or parts of the plan for the physical development of the  
4 unincorporated territory within the county and areas within incorporated  
5 jurisdictions whose governing bodies by resolution agree to having their areas  
6 included in the county's development plan. The plan may be adopted in whole or in  
7 part and may be amended by the board and endorsed by the governing bodies of  
8 incorporated jurisdictions included in the plan. The county development plan, in  
9 whole or in part, in its original form or as amended, is hereafter referred to as the  
10 development plan. To the extent that the development plan applies to  
11 unincorporated areas of a county with the population described in s. 60.23 (34), it  
12 applies only to those unincorporated areas that are subject to county zoning.  
13 Beginning on January 1, 2010, ~~or, if the county is exempt under s. 66.1001 (3m), the~~  
14 ~~date under s. 66.1001 (3m) (b),~~ if the county engages in any program or action  
15 described in s. 66.1001 (3), the development plan shall contain at least all of the  
16 elements specified in s. 66.1001 (2).

17           **SECTION 2.** 62.23 (3) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

18           62.23 (3) (b) The commission may adopt the master plan as a whole by a  
19 single resolution, or, as the work of making the whole master plan progresses, may  
20 from time to time by resolution adopt a part or parts of a master plan. Beginning on

**ASSEMBLY BILL 453****SECTION 2**

1 January 1, 2010, ~~or, if the city is exempt under s. 66.1001 (3m), the date under s.~~  
2 ~~66.1001 (3m) (b),~~ if the city engages in any program or action described in s. 66.1001  
3 (3), the master plan shall contain at least all of the elements specified in s. 66.1001  
4 (2). The adoption of the plan or any part, amendment, or addition, shall be by  
5 resolution carried by the affirmative votes of not less than a majority of all the  
6 members of the city plan commission. The resolution shall refer expressly to the  
7 elements under s. 66.1001 and other matters intended by the commission to form  
8 the whole or any part of the plan, and the action taken shall be recorded on the  
9 adopted plan or part of the plan by the identifying signature of the secretary of the  
10 commission, and a copy of the plan or part of the plan shall be certified to the  
11 common council, and also to the commanding officer, or the officer's designee, of any  
12 military base or installation, with at least 200 assigned military personnel or that  
13 contains at least 2,000 acres, that is located in or near the city. The purpose and  
14 effect of the adoption and certifying of the master plan or part of the plan shall be  
15 solely to aid the city plan commission and the council in the performance of their  
16 duties.

17 **SECTION 3.** 66.1001 (1) (am) of the statutes is repealed.

18 **SECTION 4.** 66.1001 (2) (h) of the statutes is renumbered 66.1001 (2) (h)  
19 (intro.) and amended to read:

20 66.1001 (2) (h) *Land-use element.* (intro.) A compilation of objectives,  
21 policies, goals, maps, and programs to guide the future development and  
22 redevelopment of public and private property. In this paragraph, determinations of  
23 the net density of lands shall exclude only those portions of the lands that are  
24 wetlands, that are included in a 100-year floodplain, or that are owned by the

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1 federal government, a local governmental unit, as defined in s. 20.931 (1) (a), or a  
2 state agency, as defined in s. 20.931 (1) (c), and are not intended for redevelopment.

3 The element shall ~~contain~~ do all of the following:

4 1. Contain a listing of the amount, type, intensity, and net density of existing  
5 uses of land in the local governmental unit, such as agricultural, residential,  
6 commercial, industrial, and other public and private uses. ~~The element shall~~  
7 ~~analyze~~

8 2. Analyze trends in the supply, demand, and price of land, opportunities for  
9 redevelopment, and existing and potential land-use conflicts. ~~The element shall~~  
10 ~~contain~~

11 3. Contain projections, based on the background information specified in par.  
12 (a), for 20 years, in 5-year increments, of future residential, agricultural,  
13 commercial, and industrial land uses including the assumptions of net densities or  
14 other spatial assumptions upon which the projections are based. ~~The element shall~~  
15 ~~also include~~

16 5. Include a series of maps that shows current land uses and future land uses  
17 that indicate productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for building site  
18 development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands, the  
19 boundaries of areas to which services of public utilities and community facilities, as  
20 those terms are used in par. (d), will be provided in the future, consistent with the  
21 timetable described in par. (d), and the general location of future land uses by net  
22 density or other classifications.

23 **SECTION 5.** 66.1001 (2) (h) 4. of the statutes is created to read:

24 66.1001 (2) (h) 4. For 20 years, in 5-year increments, identify the areas in

**ASSEMBLY BILL 453****SECTION 5**

1 which residential land use is projected and, for each of these areas and increments,  
2 specify the minimum and maximum net density of residences, expressed in  
3 residential units per acre, that will be authorized.

4 **SECTION 6.** 66.1001 (2m) (title) of the statutes is amended to read:

5 66.1001 **(2m)** (title) ~~EFFECT OF ENACTMENT OF A~~ COMPREHENSIVE PLAN;  
6 ~~CONSISTENCY REQUIREMENTS.~~

7 **SECTION 7.** 66.1001 (2m) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

8 66.1001 **(2m)** (a) ~~The~~ Notwithstanding s. 66.1001 (2) (h) 4., the enactment of  
9 a comprehensive plan by ordinance does not make the comprehensive plan by itself  
10 a regulation.

11 **SECTION 8.** 66.1001 (3) (title) of the statutes is repealed and recreated to read:

12 66.1001 **(3)** (title) CONSISTENCY REQUIREMENTS.

13 **SECTION 9.** 66.1001 (3) of the statutes is renumbered 66.1001 (3) (a), and  
14 66.1001 (3) (a) (intro.), as renumbered, is amended to read:

15 66.1001 **(3)** (a) (intro.) ~~Except as provided in sub. (3m), beginning~~ Beginning  
16 ~~on January 1, 2010~~ the effective date of this paragraph .... [LRB inserts date], if a  
17 local governmental unit enacts or amends any of the following ordinances, the  
18 ordinance shall be consistent with that local governmental unit's comprehensive  
19 plan:

20 **SECTION 10.** 66.1001 (3) (b) of the statutes is created to read:

21 66.1001 **(3)** (b) 1. An ordinance enacted or amended under par. (a) is  
22 consistent with the comprehensive plan if the ordinance permits a land use that is  
23 expressly identified for the land affected by the ordinance enacted or amended  
24 under par. (a) in the adopted land use map contained in the comprehensive plan.

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1           2. An ordinance under par. (a) is not inconsistent with the comprehensive plan  
2 solely because it permits additional land uses beyond those identified in the plan.

3           3. With regard to the comprehensive plan, in determining consistency under  
4 par. (a), only the adopted land use map and the corresponding land use category  
5 descriptions in the comprehensive plan may be considered.

6           **SECTION 11.** 66.1001 (3) (c) of the statutes is created to read:

7           66.1001 (3) (c) 1. Beginning on the effective date of this subdivision .... [LRB  
8 inserts date], if a political subdivision enacts or amends any of the ordinances  
9 under par. (a) or adds lands by annexation or consolidation intended for residential  
10 development, the political subdivision shall do all of the following:

11           a. Ensure that the comprehensive plan of the political subdivision includes  
12 the material required under sub. (2) (h) 4.

13           b. Ensure that the residential net density standards specified under sub. (2)  
14 (h) 4. are incorporated into the ordinance.

15           2. If a person submits to a political subdivision an application for a permit, as  
16 defined in s. 66.10016 (1) (a), or a request for a change to an existing zoning  
17 classification, and the submission or request is related to a residential housing  
18 development, as defined in s. 66.10016 (1) (c), and the comprehensive plan of the  
19 political subdivision does not include the material required under sub. (2) (h) 4., the  
20 political subdivision shall amend its comprehensive plan to include the material  
21 required under sub. (2) (h) 4. within 180 days of receiving the application.

22           3. Subsection (4) does not apply to the amendment of a comprehensive plan  
23 under this paragraph.

24           **SECTION 12.** 66.1001 (3m) of the statutes is repealed.

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1           **SECTION 13.** 66.10016 (3) of the statutes is renumbered 66.10016 (3) (a) and  
2 amended to read:

3           66.10016 (3) (a) If a person submits a complete application for a permit  
4 related to a residential housing development meeting all existing requirements that  
5 must be satisfied to obtain the permit at the time the application is filed, the  
6 political subdivision shall grant the application. An application is deemed complete  
7 under this ~~subsection~~ paragraph if it complies with form and content requirements.  
8 An application is filed under this ~~subsection~~ paragraph on the date that the  
9 political subdivision receives the application.

10           **SECTION 14.** 66.10016 (3) (b) of the statutes is created to read:

11           66.10016 (3) (b) 1. Notwithstanding s. 66.1001 (2m) (a), and except as  
12 provided in subd. 4., sub. (5), and s. 66.1001 (3) (c) 2., if a person submits a request  
13 for a change to a zoning classification of land that is required to proceed with a  
14 residential housing development and all of the following are satisfied, the political  
15 subdivision shall grant the request within 60 days:

16           a. The proposed change is for an area identified in the political subdivision's  
17 comprehensive plan as projected for residential land use under s. 66.1001 (2) (h) 4.

18           b. The proposed change is for an area that is contiguous to existing  
19 development.

20           c. Either the proposed minimum and maximum net density of residences in  
21 the residential housing development falls within the minimum and maximum net  
22 density for the area specified under s. 66.1001 (2) (h) 4. for the current 5-year  
23 increment or the comprehensive plan does not include the material required under

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1 s. 66.1001 (2) (h) 4. and the political subdivision has not complied with s. 66.1001  
2 (3) (c) 2.

3 d. Current housing supply in the political subdivision does not meet existing  
4 housing demand or forecasted housing demand within the next 5 years, as provided  
5 in the comprehensive plan.

6 2. In a request under subd. 1., the requester may specify its preferences  
7 regarding any of the following:

8 a. The zoning classification provided in the political subdivision's zoning  
9 ordinance into which the land should be reclassified.

10 b. Building setback requirements.

11 c. Lot width or frontage requirements.

12 d. Lot size requirements.

13 e. Building size or bulk requirements.

14 3. If a request is granted by action of subd. 1., all of the following apply:

15 a. If the requester specified a zoning classification under subd. 2. a., and the  
16 zoning classification allows the net density of residences in the proposed residential  
17 housing development, the land subject to the request is reclassified into that  
18 classification.

19 b. If the requester did not specify a zoning classification under subd. 2. a., the  
20 specifications under subd. 2. b. to e. shall apply together with the least restrictive  
21 dimensional, physical, and locational requirements in the political subdivision's  
22 zoning ordinance for any residential classification or, if the political subdivision  
23 does not have a residential classification, the least restrictive dimensional, physical,

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1 and locational requirements for any classification in the political subdivision's  
2 zoning ordinance.

3 4. a. Subdivision 1. does not apply to a request that does not identify the  
4 proposed minimum and maximum net density of residences in the residential  
5 housing development.

6 b. A request for a change to a zoning classification of land that satisfies the  
7 requirements of subd. 1. may be denied by the political subdivision if the political  
8 subdivision demonstrates that the denial is necessary to prevent a shortage in, or  
9 the overburdening of, public facilities located in the political subdivision or to  
10 address a significant threat to the public health or safety.

11 **SECTION 15.** 66.10016 (4) of the statutes is renumbered 66.10016 (4) (a) and  
12 amended to read:

13 66.10016 (4) (a) A person aggrieved by a political subdivision's failure to  
14 approve an application under sub. (3) (a) or a request under sub. (3) (b) may seek  
15 relief through an action for mandamus as provided in ch. 783. If the court finds that  
16 the political subdivision improperly failed to approve the application under sub. (3)  
17 (a) or the request under sub. (3) (b), the court shall issue a writ of mandamus  
18 ordering the political subdivision to approve the application or request. For  
19 purposes of any mandamus claim filed under this subsection, substantial damages  
20 or injury shall be assumed.

21 **SECTION 16.** 66.10016 (4) (b) of the statutes is created to read:

22 66.10016 (4) (b) In an action for mandamus under par. (a) based upon a  
23 political subdivision's failure to approve a request under sub. (3) (b), the petitioner  
24 may recover court costs and reasonable attorney fees attributable to the failure to

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1 approve the request within the time frame provided in sub. (3) (b) 1. of submission  
2 of the request.

3 **SECTION 17.** 66.10016 (5) of the statutes is created to read:

4 66.10016 (5) In this subsection “qualifying residential development” means a  
5 residential development that is reasonably expected to receive sewerage and  
6 sanitary water services from a public utility and that is not reasonably believed to  
7 be environmentally contaminated. If a political subdivision issues a request for  
8 proposals for a qualifying residential development that specifies minimum and  
9 maximum net density of residences in the development that are within the  
10 densities specified for the area in the political subdivision’s comprehensive plan,  
11 and no person responds to the request by the date provided in the request for  
12 submissions, sub. (3) does not apply in that political subdivision for one year after  
13 the last date on which responses were to be accepted. A response under this  
14 subsection includes a response that does not include a qualifying residential  
15 development proposal if the response is from a person with the capability to  
16 construct a qualifying residential development in the requesting political  
17 subdivision and the response explains with specificity the person’s economic  
18 reasons for not submitting a proposal.

19 **SECTION 18.** 66.1002 (2) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

20 66.1002 (2) MORATORIUM ALLOWED. (intro.) Subject to the limitations and  
21 requirements specified in this section, a municipality may enact a development  
22 moratorium ordinance if the municipality has enacted a comprehensive plan, is in  
23 the process of preparing its comprehensive plan, or is in the process of preparing a  
24 significant amendment to its comprehensive plan in response to a substantial

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1 change in conditions in the municipality, ~~or is exempt from the requirement as~~  
2 ~~described in s. 66.1001 (3m)~~, and if at least one of the following applies:

3 **SECTION 19.** 66.1105 (2) (cs) of the statutes is created to read:

4 66.1105 (2) (cs) “Newly platted residential development” means residential  
5 development on a parcel that has not previously been the site of permanent  
6 structures other than structures used solely for agricultural purposes.

7 **SECTION 20.** 66.1105 (6) (g) 1. (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

8 66.1105 (6) (g) 1. (intro.) After the date on which a tax incremental district  
9 created by a city pays off the aggregate of all of its project costs, and  
10 notwithstanding the time at which such a district would otherwise be required to  
11 terminate under sub. (7), a city may extend the life of the district for ~~one year~~ up to  
12 2 years if the city does all of the following:

13 **SECTION 21.** 66.1105 (6) (g) 3. of the statutes is amended to read:

14 66.1105 (6) (g) 3. If a city receives tax increments as described in subd. 2., the  
15 city shall use at least 75 percent of the increments received to benefit affordable  
16 housing in the city. The remaining portion of the increments shall be used by the  
17 city to improve the city’s housing stock. All tax increments used under this  
18 subdivision shall be expended to purchase services or goods from for-profit entities.

19 **SECTION 22. Initial applicability.**

20 (1) This act first applies to an application for a permit, as defined in s.  
21 66.10016 (1) (a), or a request for rezoning made on the effective date of this  
22 subsection.

23 **SECTION 23. Effective date.**





# Required Elements of a Local Comprehensive Plan

Brian W. Ohm

Wisconsin's new comprehensive planning and "smart growth" law (1999 Wisconsin Act 9 signed by Governor Thompson in October 1999, as amended by 1999 Wisconsin Act 148) includes a definition of a comprehensive plan. Before this law, Wisconsin law did not define what is meant by the term "a comprehensive plan." The definition provides cities, villages, towns, counties and regional planning commissions with some guidance for local land use planning efforts. The comprehensive plan definition can be found at section 66.1001(2) of the Wisconsin Statutes. According to the new law, a comprehensive plan shall contain at least all of the following nine elements:

## 1. Issues and opportunities element

The issues and opportunities element is defined as the background information on the local government unit and its overall objectives, policies, goals and programs. This information is used to guide the future development and redevelopment of the local government unit over a 20-year planning period.

Specifically, the background information shall include:

- population, household and employment forecasts that the local government unit uses in developing its comprehensive plan; and
- demographic trends, age distribution, educational levels, income levels and employment characteristics that exist within the local governmental unit.

## 2. Housing element

The housing element is defined as a compilation of the local governmental unit's objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to provide an adequate housing supply to meet existing and forecasted housing demand.

Specifically, the housing element must:

- assess the age, structural, value and occupancy characteristics of the local governmental unit's housing stock; and



- identify policies and programs that
  - promote the development of housing for residents of the local governmental unit and provide a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels and of all age groups and persons with special needs;
  - promote the availability of land for the development or redevelopment of low-income and moderate-income housing; and
  - maintain or rehabilitate the local governmental unit's existing housing stock.

### 3. Transportation element

The transportation element is defined as a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of the various modes of transportation, including highways, transit, transportation systems for persons with disabilities, bicycles, walking, railroads, air transportation, trucking and water transportation.

Specifically, the element shall:

- compare the local governmental unit's objectives, policies, goals and programs to state and regional transportation plans;
- identify highways within the local governmental unit by function; and
- incorporate state, regional and other applicable transportation plans, including transportation corridor plans, county highway functional and jurisdictional studies, urban and rural area transportation plans, airport master plans, and rail plans that apply in the local governmental unit.

### 4. Utilities and community facilities element

The utilities and community facilities element is defined as a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development of utilities and community facilities in the local governmental unit. Examples include sanitary sewer service, storm water management, water supply, solid waste disposal, on-site wastewater treatment technologies, recycling facilities, parks, telecommunications facilities, power plants and transmission lines, cemeteries, health and child care facilities and other public facilities, such as police, fire and rescue, libraries and schools.

Specifically, the element shall:

- describe the location, use and capacity of existing public utilities and community facilities that serve the local governmental unit;
- include an approximate timetable that forecasts the need in the local governmental unit to expand or rehabilitate existing utilities and facilities or to create new ones; and
- assess future needs for governmental services that are related to such utilities and facilities.

### 5. Agricultural, natural and cultural resources element

The agricultural, natural and cultural resources element is defined as a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for the conservation and promotion of effective resources management. Examples of resources include groundwater, forests, productive agricultural areas, environmentally sensitive areas, threatened and endangered species, stream corridors, surface waters, floodplains, wetlands, wildlife habitat, metallic and nonmetallic mineral resources, parks, open spaces, historical and cultural resources, community design, recreational resources and other natural resources.



James A. Lagro, Jr.

## 6. Economic development element

The economic development element is defined as a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to promote the stabilization, retention or expansion of the economic base, as well as quality employment opportunities in the local governmental unit.

Specifically, the economic development element shall:

- include an analysis of the labor force and economic base of the local governmental unit;
- assess categories or particular types of desirable new businesses and industries;
- assess the local governmental unit's strengths and weaknesses with respect to attracting and retaining businesses and industries;
- designate an adequate number of sites for such businesses and industries.
- evaluate and promote the use of environmentally contaminated sites for commercial or industrial uses;
- identify county, regional and state economic development programs that apply to the local governmental unit.

## 7. Intergovernmental cooperation element

The intergovernmental cooperation element is defined as a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs for joint planning and decision making with other jurisdictions, including school districts and adjacent local governmental units, for siting and building public facilities and sharing public services.

Specifically, the element shall:

- analyze the relationship of the local governmental unit to school districts and adjacent local governmental units, and to the region, the state and other governmental entities;
- incorporate any plans or agreements to which the local governmental unit is a party under s. 66.0301, s. 66.0307, or s. 66.0309;
- identify existing or potential conflicts between the local governmental unit and other governmental units that are specified in this paragraph; and
- describe processes to resolve such conflicts.

## 8. Land use element

The land use element is defined as a compilation of objectives, policies, goals, maps and programs to guide the future development and redevelopment of public and private property.

Specifically, the element shall:

- list the amount, type, intensity and net density of existing land uses (such as agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial or other public and private uses) in the local governmental unit;
- analyze trends in the supply, demand and price of land, opportunities for redevelopment and existing and potential land-use conflicts;
- contain projections, based on the background information specified in par. (a), for 20 years, in 5-year increments, of future residential, agricultural, commercial and industrial land uses including the assumptions of net densities or other spatial assumptions upon which the projections are based;
- include a series of maps that show:
  - current and future land uses that indicate productive agricultural soils, natural limitations for building site development, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive lands;
  - the boundaries of areas to which services of public utilities and community facilities, as those terms are used in par. (d), will be provided in the future, consistent with the timetable described in par. (d); and
  - the general location of future land uses by net density or other classifications.



## 9. Implementation element

The implementation element is defined as a compilation of programs and specific actions to be completed in stated sequence to implement the objectives, policies, plans and programs contained in pars. (a) to (h). This includes proposed changes to any applicable zoning ordinances, official maps, sign regulations, erosion and storm water control ordinances, historic preservation ordinances, site plan regulations, design review ordinances, building codes, mechanical codes, housing codes, sanitary codes or subdivision ordinances.

Specifically, the implementation element shall:

- describe how each of the elements of the comprehensive plan will be integrated and made consistent with the other elements of the comprehensive plan;
- include a mechanism to measure the local governmental unit's progress toward achieving all aspects of the comprehensive plan;
- include a process for updating the comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan under this subsection shall be updated no less than once every 10 years.

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**Author:** Brian W. Ohm is an attorney and an associate professor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the University of Wisconsin–Extension.

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## Agenda Item Report

**Meeting Type:** Plan Commission

**Meeting Date:** May 14, 2026

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**Item Title:** Consider and take action regarding a recommendation of updating the city's comprehensive plan

**Submitted By:** Mike Kornmann, Director of Community and Community Development

**Detailed Description of Subject Matter:**

An update to the comprehensive plan can be a short term fix to comply with recent state legislation. To do so and update to the land use element and all relevant mapping is needed. This is much more achievable in time and money.

Option 2 is to update the entire plan. The cost to hire a consultant to create the plan is about \$50,000 with some recent research. It also takes time and may require a start to the plan the fall of 2026. Another challenge is priorities. We have a lot going on already and balancing time with other needed projects and programs is a challenge.

**List all Supporting Documentation Attached:**

- None

**Action Requested:**

Make a recommendation to council whether to update the entire plan or primarily the land use element.