

4.14 Signs

A. Purpose.

The purpose of this section is to regulate the location, size, placement and certain features of signs to enable the public to locate goods, services and facilities; to prevent competition for attention; to prevent hazards to life and property; and to protect the natural roadside aesthetics throughout Lent Township.

B. Permits Required.

Except as otherwise provided in this Ordinance, no sign shall be erected, constructed, altered, rebuilt, or relocated until a permit for the sign has been issued. However, no permit will be required under this Ordinance for the following signs:

1. Real estate sales signs under nine (9) square feet in area on residential properties which are for sale.
2. Real estate signs under thirty-two (32) square feet in area on commercial and industrial properties which are for sale.
3. Political signs.
4. Public information and directional signs.
5. Traffic/Construction signs
6. Address/location signs or numbers less than two (2) square feet in total or combined area.

C. Prohibited Signs.

No sign shall be erected or maintained:

1. Which purports to be or resembles an official traffic control device, sign, or signal or railroad sign or signal; or which hides from view or interferes in any material degree with the effectiveness of any traffic control device, sign, or signal, or railroad sign or signal, or which obstructs or interferes with the driver's view of approaching, merging, or intersecting traffic.
2. Which prominently displays the word "stop" or "danger".
3. Which contains statements, words, or pictures of an obscene, indecent, or immoral character, or such as would offend public morals or decency.
4. No advertising signs or supporting facilities for signs shall be placed in or upon public waters.
5. On any right-of-way of any highway, except as otherwise provided by law or as allowed in this Ordinance, or allowed by the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Transportation.
6. If any part of such sign extends more than six (6) feet over the public right-of-way, and is less than eight (8) feet above ground level. Canopies and marquees shall be considered an integral part of the structure to which they are attached. This Section does not apply to signs posted by duly constituted public authorities in the performance of their public duties.
7. On private land without the written consent of the owner thereof and in conformance with this Ordinance.
8. On trees, shrubs, or which are painted or drawn upon rocks or natural features, or on any public fences or utility poles.
9. Which have lights or beacons directed skyward.
10. Which has flashing or moving lights, except as specifically permitted in this Ordinance.
11. Which is structurally unsafe and would have to be removed.

D. General Provisions.

The following requirements shall apply to all signs in all Districts.

1. Signs painted on a building shall be governed by the square footage limitations specified in the appropriate zoning Districts. These shall be repainted when required, to be kept in good condition, and shall be repainted, removed or painted out when they are not so maintained.
2. Signs shall not obstruct any window, door, fire escape, stairway or opening intended to provide light, air, ingress or egress for any building or structure.
3. The owner, lessee or manager of any ground sign and the owner of the land on which the same is located shall keep grass or weeds and other growth cut and debris and rubbish cleaned up and removed from the lot on which a sign is located.
4. Signs which may be or may hereafter become rotted, unsafe or unsightly shall be repaired or removed by the owner or lessee of the property upon notice by the Zoning Administrator.
5. Political signs are allowed in any District, on private property, with the consent of the owner of the property. Such signs must be removed within seven (7) days following the date of the election or elections to which they apply.
6. In any District, banners, ribbons, flags, animal displays, inflatables, pieces of sculpture, fountains or other displays or

features which do not clearly fall within the definition of a sign, but which direct attention to an object, product, activity, person, institution, organization or business, shall require a sign permit. Mobile signs on wheels or otherwise capable of being moved from place to place shall conform to the provisions of this Ordinance just as permanently affixed signs.

7. Illuminated signs shall be diffused or indirect so as not to direct rays of light skyward, into adjacent property or onto any public street or right-of-way.

8. Real estate sales signs may be placed in any yard providing such signs only advertise the sale of that particular property.

9. Real estate development project sales signs may be erected for the purpose of selling or promoting a real estate development project.

- a. Such signs shall not exceed one hundred (100) square feet in area.
- b. Only one (1) such sign shall be erected on each road frontage with a maximum of three (3) such signs per
- c. project.
- d. Such signs shall be removed when the project is eighty (80%) percent completed, sold or leased.
- e. Such signs shall not be located closer than one hundred (100) feet from any existing residence.

11. Construction signs shall not be erected before issuance of a building permit or remain after issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

12. Banners, pennants, ribbons, flags, beacons and temporary signs may be used for grand openings, special events and holidays, but must be removed after the event or a maximum of ten (10) days, whichever is shorter. No business or property may utilize such signs more than three times in a calendar year.

13. The regulations contained herein do not apply to signs painted, attached by adhesive or otherwise attached directly to or visible through windows and glass portions of doors.

14. In all areas utilizing a uniform street and numbering system, a number sign legible from the road shall be required for residences and businesses.

15. Multi-faced signs shall not exceed two (2) times the allowed square footage of single-faced signs.

16. No sign shall exceed eighty (80) square feet in area.

E. Signs in the Rural Residential and Urban Growth Districts.

The following signs are permitted and regulations established for the Rural Residential and Urban Growth Districts:

1. Nameplate, address, real estate sales and development, public, political, identification, informational, institutional, business, directional, construction, temporary and agricultural crop demonstration signs.

2. One (1) of each type of sign is allowed per lot frontage, except political signs where one (1) per each candidate is permitted, and agricultural demonstration sign where one (1) for each demonstration plot is permitted, or as hereinafter allowed.

3. Sign Size and Location Requirements.

- a. Nameplate signs shall not exceed ten (10) square feet in area.
- b. Temporary construction signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area.
- c. Real estate signs shall not exceed nine (9) square feet and temporary real estate development project signs
- d. shall not exceed eighty (80) square feet.
- e. Crop identification signs shall not exceed ten (10) square feet in area or ten (10) feet in height.

4. Business signs, located on premises, for permitted uses, subject to the following provisions:

- a. No more than one (1) freestanding sign of not more than thirty-five (35) square feet in surface area and no more than fifteen (15) feet in height above the average grade.
- b. No more than one (1) flat wall sign, which shall not exceed thirty-five (35) square feet in surface area.

F. Signs in the Rural Transit Center District.

The following signs are permitted and regulations established for the Rural Transit Center District:

1. Signs as permitted and regulated in the Rural Residential and Urban Growth Districts.

2. Business signs, located on premises, subject to the following provisions:

- a. A maximum of one (1) freestanding sign not exceeding twenty (20) feet in height or eighty (80) square feet in area, located on the premises.

- b. Flush mounted or wall painted signs, not exceeding fifteen (15) percent of a single wall area.
- c. The total surface area of all business signs on a lot shall not exceed the sum of three hundred (300) square feet.
- d. No signs shall project above the roof of a structure.
- e. Directional signs on the premises, not exceeding three (3) square feet in area or six (6) feet in height.
- f. Electronic changeable message signs, displaying only the time and temperature.
- g. One (1) freestanding sign for each multiple tenant business development owned or managed as a single center or development, not exceeding eighty (80) square feet in area or twenty (20) feet in height.
- h. Each multiple tenant center, in which individual businesses will utilize wall signs, must design a wall sign concept for the entire center, to promote individual sign compatibility, sign area equity and ensure ordinance compliance.

G. Signs in the Natural Resource Preservation District.

No signs shall be permitted within the Natural Resource Preservation District, except for signs erected by the Federal, State, County or Township Governments for transportation and safety purposes and signs erected or authorized by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

H. Specific Service and Tourism Signs.

- 1. Specific service and tourist-oriented business signs, as defined in M.S. Section 160.292, are permitted subject to the purposes and requirements established in M.S. Section 160.283, Section 160.285 and Sections 160.292-160.296.
- 2. Specific service signs and tourist-oriented business signs shall be administered by the Zoning Administrator, County Engineer and State Commissioner of Transportation.
- 3. No signs permitted in this section shall exceed eighty (80) square feet in area or twenty (20) feet in height.

I. Off-Premise Signs.

- 1. An off-premise advertising sign is a sign that directs attention to a business, product, service, sale, activity or entertainment not conducted on the premises on which the sign is located.
- 2. Except as otherwise specifically permitted in this Ordinance, off-premise advertising signs are regulated as follows:
 - a. All off-premise advertising signs shall require a conditional use permit.
 - b. Off-premise advertising signs shall be considered a principal use of property and may not occupy any parcel with an existing structure or use.
 - c. One (1) off-premise advertising sign is permitted per parcel, not exceeding eighty (80) square feet in area or twenty (20) feet in height.
 - d. An off-premise advertising sign shall not be located closer than two thousand (2000) feet from another off-premise advertising sign.