

Chapter 24

SIGN CODE

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Sec. 24-01. Purposes and review.

(1) Purpose. The Marshfield Sign Code is a regulatory document adopted by the city that is designed to govern the use, approval, construction, change, replacement, location and design of signs and related informational tools within the city. The sign code is not intended to and does not restrict, limit or control the content or message of signs. The sign code has a number of specific purposes:

- (a) To encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication.
- (b) To protect, conserve and enhance property values.
- (c) To enhance the attractiveness and economic well being of Marshfield as a place to live and conduct business.
- (d) To encourage creative and well-designed signs that contribute in a positive way to the city's visual environment, express local character, and help develop a distinctive image in the city.
- (e) To recognize that signs are a necessary form of communication and provide flexibility within the sign review and approval process to allow for unique circumstances.
- (f) To create a framework for a comprehensive and balanced system for sign regulation, to facilitate an easy and pleasant communication between people and their environment, and to avoid the visual clutter that is potentially harmful to traffic and pedestrian safety, property values, business opportunities and planning and economic appearance.
- (g) To encourage and, to the maximum extent feasible, require that all signs within the city be brought into compliance with the terms of this sign code.

The sign code allows for a variety in number and type of signs for a use. The provisions of this Code do not necessarily assure or provide for a property owner's desired level of visibility for the signs.

(2) Organization. The sign code is divided into 18 sections designed to address specific issues about signs. In Marshfield, the regulation of signs is related to the actual or proposed use of the property. This means that there are separate sets of regulations for:

- (a) Residential signs,
- (b) Public signs,
- (c) Commercial signs, and
- (d) Industrial signs.
Related to these individual use standards are regulations for the size and shape of signs, location of signs on the property or building, overall sign design, sign maintenance and the approval process. No single section of this sign code contains all of the regulations for any specific sign type.

(3) Permits. There are three types of sign permits available through this sign code.

- (a) "Standard sign permits" are appropriate for most sign applications. This type of permit is intended for signs that comply with all applicable terms of this sign code, without deviation or variation. Standard sign permits are reviewed and approved by the director of planning and economic development or plan commission as appropriate.
- (b) "Alternative sign permits" are appropriate for sign applications that seek approval for proposed signage that is not completely described by the terms of this sign code or not fully in compliance with the specific provisions of the Code. Alternative sign permits are reviewed by the director of planning and economic development and approved by the Marshfield Plan Commission.
- (c) "Limited sign permits" are designed for the approval of temporary, time limited signs and are approved by the director of planning and economic development.

(4) Use. The sign code is intended to be used by the public, sign specialists, city staff and city elected and appointed officials. Questions regarding the sign code should be directed to the director of planning and economic development.

(5) Conflict. When the provisions of this sign code are inconsistent with one another or when the provisions of this sign code conflict with provisions found in other adopted ordinances or regulations, the more restrictive provision shall govern.

(6) Interpretation. Interpretation of the provisions of the sign code shall be made by the director of planning and economic development.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003)

Sec. 24-02. Definitions.

As used in this sign code the following terms shall have these prescribed meanings:

(1) *Abandoned sign.* Any sign remaining in place which for a period of ninety (90) days or more no longer advertises or identifies an ongoing business, product, service, idea or commercial activity located on the site.

(2) *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, goods, services, idea or statement.

(3) *Alteration.* Any change of copy, sign face, color, size, shape, illumination, location, construction or supporting structure of any sign.

(4) *Animated sign.* A sign that uses movement, lighting or special materials to depict action or create a special effect to imitate movement.

(5) *Attention-attracting device.* Any streamer, pennant, propeller, inflatable sign, tethered balloon, portable sign, bunting or other artificial device, figure, shape, color, sound, light or exhibit, whether live, animated or still, that is intended to attract attention to the use or business being conducted on the site.

(6) *Awnings and canopies.* Awnings and canopies are roof-like covers that project from the wall of a building for the purpose of shielding a doorway or window from the elements. Canopies may also be freestanding, such as a covering over service station islands.

(7) *Banner.* A sign having the characters, letters, illustrations or ornamentation applied to cloth, paper, fabric or other lightweight material, with only such material for a backing.

(8) *Beacon/search beacon.* Any light with one or more beams directed into the atmosphere or directed at one or more points not on the same lot as the light source; also, any light with one or more beams that rotate or move.

(9) *Big box retail.* Retail store larger than 40,000 square feet. Usually national chain retail stores fall into this category.

(10) *Billboard.* Any sign with a sign area in excess of 350 square feet that identifies or communicates a commercial or non-commercial message related to an activity conducted, a service rendered or a commodity sold at a location other than where the sign is located.

(11) *Building.* Any structure used or intended for supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy.

(12) *Building frontage.* That building elevation that fronts on a public street.

(13) *Building marker.* Any sign indicating the name of a building, date or incidental information about its construction.

(14) *Business/tenant frontage.* That 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 building frontage, the building elevation providing customer access shall be considered the business frontage.

(15) *Changeable copy sign.* A sign or portion thereof with characters, letters or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged manually without altering the face of the sign.

(16) *Channel letters.* Three-dimensional individually cut letters or figures, illuminated or unilluminated, affixed to a structure.

(17) *Commercial message.* Any sign wording, logo or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names, advertises or calls attention to a business product, service, idea or commercial activity.

(18) *Construction sign.* A sign erected on the lot on which construction is taking place or on a building undergoing tenant or occupant change that advises the public of pertinent information regarding the construction, management, leasing and future tenants of the building(s).

(19) *Copy.* Words, letters, numbers, figures, designs or other symbolic representations incorporated into a sign.

(20) *Development.* Any subdivision of land; any consolidation or accumulation of tracts of land; any material change in the use or appearance of any lot of land; any activity that affects lot lines, easement locations, number of lots, setback, locations of structures, dedications of streets or utilities; or the act of building buildings, structures or improvements on, in, under or over land.

(21) *Directional.* A sign that indicates the required or preferred direction of movement for vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

(22) *Director of planning and economic development.* The director of planning and economic development or a city staff member assigned to act in his or her behalf.

(23) *Directory sign.* A sign for listing the tenants, occupants, floor plan, addresses or suite numbers of a building, center or residential building complex.

(24) *Double-faced sign.* A sign constructed to display its message on the outer surfaces of two identical and opposite planes at an angle of 60 degrees or less.

(25) *Drive-through facility.* An establishment that by design, physical facilities, service or by packaging procedures encourages or permits customers to receive services, obtain goods or be entertained while remaining in their motor vehicles.

(26) *Electronic reader board.* A sign or portion thereof which can be electronically changed or rearranged without altering the face or the surface of the sign. A sign on which the only copy that changes is an electronic or mechanical indication of time or temperature shall be considered a "time and temperature" portion of a sign and not a commercial message or an electronic reader board sign for purposes of this sign code.

(27) *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.

(28) *External illumination.* The lighting of an object from a light source located a distance from the object.

(29) *Facade.* See "Elevation".

(30) *Flag.* Any fabric containing distinctive colors, patterns or symbols used as a symbol of a business, corporation or other private entity.

- (31) *Flashing sign.* A sign that contains an intermittent or sequential flashing light source.
- (32) *Freestanding sign.* Any non-movable sign not affixed to a building.
- (33) *Front foot.* A measure of land width, being one foot along the front lot line of a property.
- (34) *Frontage, road.* A roadway with an alignment adjacent to and generally parallel with a limited access highway whose purpose is to serve commercial, institutional, industrial or typically medium- to high-density residential use.
- (35) *Frontage, street.* The length of a lot line that abuts public street right-of-way.
- (36) *Future tenant sign.* A temporary sign that identifies the names of future businesses that will occupy a site or structure.
- (37) *Grand opening.* A one-time promotional activity not exceeding 30 calendar days used by newly established businesses within two months after occupancy to inform the public of their location and service available to the community.
- (38) *Gross floor area.* The sum of the gross horizontal areas of the several floors of a building or structure from the exterior face of the exterior walls, or from the centerline of a wall separating two buildings, but excluding any space where floor-to-ceiling height is less than six feet.
- (39) *Height of sign.* The vertical distance from the base of the sign at normal grade to the top of the highest attached component of the sign.
- (40) *Illuminated sign.* A sign designed to give forth artificial light directly or through translucent material from a source of light within such sign or a sign illuminated by an external light directed primarily toward such sign.
- (41) *Inflatable device.* An object that is inflated with air or gas.
- (42) *Informational sign.* A sign with a purpose secondary to the use of the lot on which it is located that provides directives and/or identifying messages.
- (43) *Internal illumination.* A source of illumination entirely within the sign which makes the sign content visible at night by means of the light being transmitted through a translucent material, but wherein the source of the illumination is not visible.
- (44) *Large building.* Any building that meets one of the following three criteria: a building exceeding 125 feet in length or having three or more stories or has square footage in excess of 60,000 square feet.
- (45) *Lot.* Any piece or parcel of land or a portion of a subdivision, the boundaries of which have been established by some legal instrument of record that is recognized and intended as a unit for the purpose of transfer of ownership.

(46) *Luminaire*. A complete unit for the purpose of generating usable and somewhat controllable light that comprises one or more lamps, parts designed to distribute the light, parts used to position and protect the light source, and a means to connect the light source(s) to an electrical supply.

(47) *Maintenance*. The repair or replacement in kind of individual sign components including paper, fabric or plastic copy panels, electrical wiring and bulbs, or paint, stucco or other exterior finishes.

(48) *Marquee*. A hood or permanent construction that projects from the wall or a building, usually above the entrance.

(49) *Marquee sign*. Any sign attached to, in any manner, or made a part of a marquee.

(50) *Master sign plan*. A plot plan and accompanying documentation that identifies all existing and proposed on-premises signage on a development or complex of buildings.

(51) *Monument sign*. A permanent, freestanding sign mounted on a base or other supports and where the bottom of the sign face is located within three (3) feet of ground level.

(52) *Multiple-tenant building*. A development consisting of two or more separate uses or tenancies that share either the same lot or structure and use common access and/or parking facilities.

(53) *Non-conforming sign*. Any sign that conformed to existing sign regulations at the time it was erected but that would no longer be permitted by virtue of the adoption of this sign code or an amendment thereto.

(54) *Off-premises sign*. Any sign advertising or announcing any place, product, goods, services, idea or statement whose subject is not available or located at or on the lot where the sign is erected or placed.

(55) *On-premises sign*. Any sign advertising or announcing any place, products, goods, services, idea or statement whose subject is available or located at or on the lot where the sign is erected or placed.

(56) *Oversite committee*. An independent committee has been established to review sign permit requests in the central business district. The committee shall provide additional review and recommendations in this special district based upon the policies and regulations adopted by the special district committee.

(57) *Parapet wall*. The vertical extension of the exterior building wall above the plate line.

(58) *Pennant*. Any lightweight plastic, fabric or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind, suspended from a rope, wire or string, usually in a series, designed to move in the wind.

(59) *Permanent sign.* A freestanding sign supported by structures or supports that are placed on, or anchored in, the ground and that are independent from any building or other structure.

(60) *Person.* Any association, company, corporation, firm, organization, manager or corporate officer, or partnership, singular or plural, of any kind.

(61) *Plate line.* The point at which any part of the roof structure first touches or bears upon an external wall.

(62) *Pole sign.* A permanent, freestanding sign that is mounted on pole(s) or other support(s) that is placed on, and anchored in, the ground and that is independent from any building or other structure.

(63) *Political sign.* A sign designed for the purpose of advertising support of or opposition to a candidate or proposition for a public election.

(64) *Non-Permanent sign.* Any sign not supported by structures or supports that are placed on, or anchored in, the ground and that are independent from any building or other structure.

(65) *Principal building.* The building in which is conducted the principal use of the lot on which it is located. Lots with multiple principal uses may have multiple principal buildings, but storage buildings, garages and other clearly accessory buildings shall not be considered principal buildings.

(66) *Projecting sign.* Any sign affixed to a building in such a manner that its leading edge extends more than 12 inches beyond the surface of such building.

(67) *Property frontage.* The side of a lot or development site abutting on a public street.

(68) *Quasi-public.* A governmental body is an organization that either

- (a) Primarily contracts with or handles activities agreed upon with public governmental bodies, or
- (b) By statute allocates or issues tax credits, tax abatement, public debt, tax-exempt debt, rights of eminent domain, or leaseback agreements. It also includes associations that directly accept appropriated money from a public governmental body, but only when they have meetings, records, or votes that relate to the appropriations.

(69) *Real estate sign.* Any on-premises sign placed upon a lot, subdivision or parcel of land or on a building advertising the lease, rent or sale of said building, lot or parcel of land.

(70) *Repair.* The replacement of metal or wood cabinets, structural faces, supporting structural members, primary uprights, posts and poles, or the sign in its entirety.

(71) *Rider.* A small sign attached to a real estate sign that provides limited information about the property (e.g., number of bedrooms, agent's name, open house, etc.).

(72) *Right-of-way.* The land opened, reserved or dedicated for a street, sewer, water line, walk, drainage course or other public purpose.

(73) *Roof sign.* Any sign mounted on a building situated in total or in part above the eave of that part of the building to which it is mounted.

(74) *Setback.* The distance from the property line to the nearest part of the applicable building, structure or sign measured perpendicularly to the property line.

(75) *Sign.* Any device conveying either commercial or non-commercial messages or both commercial or non-commercial messages for visual communication that is used for the purpose of bringing the subject thereof to the attention of the public, but not including any lawful display of merchandise.

The term "sign" shall also mean and include any display of one or more of the following:

- (a) Any letter, numeral, figures, emblem, picture, outline, character, spectacle delineation, announcement, trademark, and logo;
- (b) Multiple colored bands, a stripe or stripes, patterns, outlines or delineation's displayed for the purpose of commercial identification; or
- (c) Anything specified above in (a) or (b) in part or in combination by any means whereby the same are made visible from beyond the boundaries of the lot on which the same are displayed for the purpose of attracting attention outdoors to make anything known.

(76) *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.

(77) *Sign face.* The area or display surface used for the message.

(78) *Special event sign.* A sign that carries a message regarding a special event or function that is of general interest to the community and does not include for-profit business promotional activities that are strictly commercial in nature.

(79) *Structure.* Anything constructed or erected on the ground or which is attached to something on the ground, including sign supports, uprights, braces and framework, whether installed on, above or below the surface of land or water.

(80) *Suspended sign.* A sign that is suspended from the underside of a horizontal plane surface and is supported by such surface.

(81) *Three-dimensional signs.* Signs that have a depth or relief on their surface.

(82) *Time and temperature unit.* A sign or portion of a sign displaying only current time and temperature in an electronic, digital fashion.

(83) *Use*. Includes all purposes or activities for which the land or buildings are arranged, designed or intended, or for which land or buildings are occupied or maintained. A use may include multiple ownership, tenancy or affiliations and may include accessory, conditional and temporary uses.

(84) *Vehicle sign*. A sign mounted, painted or otherwise placed on a trailer, truck, automobile or other vehicle so parked or placed so that the sign thereon is visible from a public street or right-of-way and is so parked primarily for the purpose of displaying advertising signage.

(85) *Wall sign*. A non-projecting sign that is attached parallel to a wall or building.

(86) *Window sign*. Any sign, pictures, symbol or combination thereof designed to attract off-premises attention and communicate information about an on-premises activity, business, commodity, event, sale or service that is placed inside a window or upon the window panes or glass and is visible from the exterior of the window.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003; Ord. No. 1106, § 1, 7-24-2007; Ord. No. 1136, § 1, 8-26-2008)

Sec. 24-03. Approval process.

This sign code provides three types of sign applications. A standard sign permit application is intended for signs that conform to the terms of this sign code and require no special conditions. An alternative sign permit application is intended for signs that are not contemplated by the specific terms of this sign code and require modifications of those terms for approval. A limited sign permit application is intended for short-term use of signs that are temporary in nature.

(1) *Application required*. No sign or sign structure shall be altered, displayed or changed, including a change of copy, color or sign face, until the appropriate fee is paid to the city and a sign permit is issued by the city unless the sign is specifically exempt from a permit requirement pursuant to section 24-06. The common council is authorized to establish fees for all applications and permits required by the sign code. Normal maintenance shall not be considered alteration or change unless it exceeds 50 percent of the present value of the sign. A sign erected, altered, displayed or changed without a permit shall be considered an illegal sign and shall be subject to the penalties described in this sign code.

(2) *Form*. Applications for sign permits shall be made upon forms provided by the department of planning and economic development.

(3) *Complete application*. Within ten business days of the submission of an application for a sign permit, the director of planning and economic development shall determine whether the application is complete and in compliance with the requirements of this sign code. Complete applications shall be processed in accordance with this section of the sign code. The director of planning and economic development will attempt to provide the applicant of an incomplete application with a written description of the application's deficiencies within the ten-day review period. The director of planning and economic development shall not process incomplete

lete applications.

(4) *Information required for standard and alternative sign permit application.* Both standard and alternative sign permit applications shall include the information specified on the application form. At a minimum, this shall include:

- (a) Scale drawings showing elevations of the proposed sign, relationship to buildings and other signs, and location of the foundation or post hole location in relation to the property line and public right-of-way;
- (b) Sign legend or commercial message, lettering or font style, and colors;
- (c) Construction specifications;
- (d) Electrical components and wiring;
- (e) Method of attachment and design of structured members to which attachment is to be made;
- (f) Location of foundation or post hole location in relation to the property line and public right-of-way;
- (g) Name, address, telephone number and signature of property owner granting permission for the construction, operation, maintenance or display of sign structure;
- (h) Name, address, telephone number, occupational license number and signature of sign contractor, if applicable;
- (i) Legal description and street address of premises or property upon which sign is to be located;
- (j) Use of property, lot, building or structure for which sign will provide information or advertising;
- (k) Approximate value of the sign to be installed, including the cost of installation; and
- (l) Other information, as may be reasonably required by the city administrator or director of planning and economic development.

(5) *Information required for limited sign permit applications.* A limited sign permit application shall include the sign size and all reasonable measurements, location, materials and time duration, along with such information as is deemed necessary by the director of planning and economic development.

(6) *Oversight committees.* Applications for sign permits in the central business district shall be reviewed as provided in this sign code with additional review and recommendation made by the sign oversight committee based upon the policies and regulations adopted by the committee.

(7) *Review and action.* Upon the submission of a complete application, the director of planning and economic development shall process the application within 15 working days according to one of the following procedures: standard, alternative or limited sign permit application. The director

of planning and economic development shall either issue the standard or limited sign permit or notify the applicant in writing of his denial and reasons thereof, according to the procedures outlined in this subsection.

The director of planning and economic development shall schedule alternative and specified standard sign permit applications (see below) with the plan commission for consideration at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the plan commission pursuant to the plan commission calendar.

The director of planning and economic development shall:

Standard Application

- (a) Obtain recommendation of oversight committee where applicable.
- (b) If the application is seeking master sign plan approval or submitted with a development application subject to plan commission review, the director of planning and economic development shall review and make a recommendation to the plan commission.

(c) If section (b) above is not applicable, the director of planning and economic development shall approve the application if it is in compliance (complies with all terms and specifications) with the requirements of this sign code and other applicable city regulations; or

(d) If Section 2 (b) above is not applicable, the director of planning and economic development shall deny the application if it fails to comply in any manner with the requirements of this sign code or other applicable city regulation.

Alternative Application

- (a) Obtain recommendation of oversight committee where applicable.
- (b) Review the application to determine general compliance with the terms of this Sign Code and the approval criteria specified in Section.
- (c) Schedule the application for review and action by the plan commission.

Limited Sign Permit Application

Limited sign permit applications shall be checked for conformance with the sign code and may be approved by the director of planning and economic development for a specified period of time.

Application Denial

If an application is denied (either by the director of planning and economic development for a standard or limited sign permit, or by the plan commission for an alternative sign permit or certain standard sign permit for master sign plans), the director of planning and economic development shall provide the applicant with a written notice of the denial within five business days of the denial.

(8) *Criteria for approval.*

Standard and Limited Applications

- (a) Submission of a complete application.
- (b) Compliance with the terms of this sign code.
- (c) Compliance with Veterans Parkway Corridor requirements for property located within the district.
- (d) Compliance with downtown guidelines for property located within the district

Alternative Application

- (a) Submission of a complete application.
- (b) General compliance with the general intent and purpose of this sign code.
- (c) The design and location of the sign would not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular safety.
- (d) The sign would not be located so as to have a negative impact on adjacent property.
- (e) The sign would not add to an overproliferation of signs on a property or cause needless repetition or redundancy of signage.
- (f) The sign utilizes and/or enhances the architectural elements of the building.
- (g) The image presented by the sign is of high quality and is consistent or compatible with the surrounding area as a whole.
- (h) Compliance with special criteria for Veteran's Parkway and central business district.

(9) *Special criteria for central business district.* This district represents an area of distinctive or unique character within the City of Marshfield. Applicants for sign approval within the central business district may use the alternative sign permit application process to propose sign approvals that would be inappropriate due to size or design elsewhere in the city. Questions regarding additional constraints should be directed to the department of planning and economic development.

- (a) Central business district. The central business district is defined by the boundaries of all property within the City of Marshfield currently located within the "B-5" zoning district. It is a pedestrian oriented district that is characterized by many buildings that have no front property line setback. It is equally important which signage be viewed by pedestrians as well as by motorists. The central business district oversight committee will adopt design guidelines that will be reviewed by the director of planning and economic development and approved by the plan commission.

Applicants may be granted latitude in signage design under the alternative application process for setback allowances, overhang dimensions, marquee signs and other signage characteristics that contribute to the pedestrian or urban nature of this district.

- (b) Veterans Parkway. The Veterans Parkway corridor shall be defined as 100 feet beyond the public right-of-way on each side of the parkway, except for those properties within the central business district, within the city limits, and such properties as may be added

to that district from time to time. Authorized signs include those that are compatible with their surroundings, are appropriate to the activity that displays them, are expressive of the identity of individual activities and the corridor as a whole, and are legible in circumstances in which they are seen. The planning and economic development department will review all sign applications in the Veterans Parkway corridor.

In addition to the general signage requirements contained within this sign code, the following shall apply within the Veterans Parkway corridor:

1. Height. No multi-tenant signs shall exceed a height based on a rate of one foot of height per one foot of distance from any right-of-way line, starting with a minimum of eight feet in height up to a maximum of 15 feet in height for signs visible from Veterans Parkway and a maximum of ten feet in height for signs visible from other streets or public right-of-ways.
2. Freestanding business signs. Signs for individual freestanding office, flex tech, industrial or commercial buildings will be permitted when no multitenant sign can be obtained. No lot may have both a multi-tenant sign and a separate freestanding business sign.
3. Prohibited signs. Signs in excess of 200 square feet in area shall be prohibited in the Veterans Parkway corridor.
4. Signage area. Signage area in the Veterans Parkway corridor shall be governed by the following standards:

<i>Type of Roadway (lanes)</i>	<i>Posted Speed (mph)</i>	<i>Maximum Sign Area Commercial/ Industrial Surroundings (square feet)</i>	<i>Maximum Sign Area Institutional/ Residential Surroundings (square feet)</i>
2	Up to 40Over 40	3575	2050
4	Up to 40Over 40	50100	3580

(10) Appeals.

- (a) Any final determination, made by the director of planning and economic development may be appealed to the plan commission by filing a written notice of appeal with the director of planning and economic development within ten days of the determination.
 1. The director of planning and economic development shall transmit to the plan commission all papers constituting the record upon which the action appealed was taken.

2. The director of planning and economic development shall schedule the appeal or application at the next regular meeting of the plan commission following the first regular meeting after the determination.
 3. The plan commission shall have 30 days from the date said matter is first scheduled for its meeting in which to act on the application or appeal.
 4. Appeal may be taken by the applicant, any owner of land directly affected by the determination, any person determined by the plan commission to be actually aggrieved by the determination, or any person otherwise given the standing to appeal by law.
- (b) Any final determination of the plan commission may be appealed to the circuit court except as provided herein.
- (c) Any determination of the director of planning and economic development that has been altered in any way on appeal or through alternative permit application or master sign application, to the plan commission may be appealed to the council by filing a written notice of appeal with the director of planning and economic development within ten days of the determination.
1. The director of planning and economic development shall transmit to the common council all papers constituting the record upon which the action appealed was taken.
 2. The director of planning and economic development shall schedule the appeal or application at the next regular meeting of the common council following the first regular meeting after the determination.
 3. The common council shall have 30 days from the date said matter is first scheduled for its meeting in which to act on the application or appeal.
 4. Appeal may be taken by the applicant, the director of planning and economic development, any owner of land directly affected by the determination, any person determined by the common council to be actually or potentially aggrieved by the determination, or any person otherwise given the right of appeal by law.
- (d) Any final determination of the common council may be appealed to the circuit court.
- (11) *Inspections and certificates of compliance.*
- (a) Within 5 business days of completion of work under an approved sign permit, the sign installer shall file with the director of planning and economic development a notice of completion, on a form to be provided by the department of planning and economic development. If the construction is complete and in full compliance with this sign code, the director of planning and economic development shall sign the notice of completion and send a copy to the applicant within 5 business days of receipt of the notice.

- (b) If the construction is not in full compliance with this sign code, the director of planning and economic development shall give the property owner or tenant notice of the deficiencies and shall allow an additional 30 days from the date of inspection for the deficiencies to be corrected.
- (c) If the deficiencies are not corrected by the date identified by the director of planning and economic development, the sign permit shall lapse and the sign shall be removed immediately.
- (d) If the construction is in full compliance and the deficiencies are corrected, the director of planning and economic development shall sign the notice of completion and send a copy to the applicant.

(12) *Suspension/revocation.* The director of planning and economic development may, in writing, suspend or revoke a permit issued pursuant to this sign code where the permit is issued on the basis of a material omission or misstatement of fact.

(13) *Expiration.*

- (a) It is unlawful to maintain a sign or sign structure without a validly issued sign permit unless the sign is specifically exempt from a permit requirement pursuant to this sign code.
- (b) Issued permits shall expire and become void if the work authorized by the permit is not completed within 180 days from the date of permit issuance, or if the work is abandoned (as evidenced by failure to make reasonable progress) for a period of 30 days or more at any time after the work is commenced. Before such work can be commenced or resumed thereafter, a new permit shall be obtained and a fee of one-half the amount required for a new permit shall be paid to the city, provided no changes have been made in the original plans and specifications and, further provided, that the permit issuance date has not exceeded one year.
- (c) A sign permit shall lapse and be of no further effect if the business activity on the premises or business to which the sign permit is related, is discontinued for a period of 90 days.

(14) *License requirements for sign installers.* All sign installers shall have an electrical license to perform electrical work on illuminated or neon signs (including installation), as required by sections 17-03 and 17-38(1) of the electrical code.

Exception: Section 17-38(4) of the electrical code provides that non-licensed installers can perform electrical work if the sign company is qualified by a Nationally Recognized Testing Laboratory (NRTL) to manufacture and work on listed signs. These sign companies shall register with the electrical inspector's office and provide proof of qualification and a minimum of \$500,000 of liability insurance.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003; Ord. No. 1008, § 0, 3-9-2004; Ord. No. 1050, § 1, 5-24-2005; Ord. No. 1136, § 1, 8-26-2008)

Sec. 24-04. Violations and enforcement.

It is hereby declared unlawful for any person, firm or corporation to construct, place, install, alter, change, maintain, use or permit the construction, placement, installation, alteration, change, maintenance or use of any sign contrary to or in violation of any provision of this sign code, or of any provision designated as a condition of approval of a sign permit, either by the approval processes specified herein or through an amendment or appeal to the plan commission as established by this sign code. Enforcement will be handle by the department of planning and economic development or its designee.

(1) *Illegal signs.* The installation, construction or display of any illegal or prohibited sign is hereby declared unlawful and in violation of this sign code.

(2) *Responsible parties.* Any owner, tenant or occupant who causes, facilitates, aids or abets any violations of this sign code, or who fails to perform any act or duty required by this sign code is subject to the enforcement provisions of this section. The owner, tenant and occupant may be held individually and jointly responsible for the violations, prescribed civil or criminal sanctions, and for abating violations.

The city shall have the following remedies and enforcement powers:

- (a) Voluntary compliance. The director of planning and economic development may seek voluntary compliance with the provisions of this sign code through notices of violations, warnings or other informal devices designed to achieve compliance in the most efficient and effective manner under the circumstances.
- (b) Withhold permits.
 - 1. The city may deny or withhold all permits, certificates or other forms of authorization issued pursuant to this sign code or other code provisions, ordinances or regulations for any land, structure or use upon which there is an uncorrected violation of a provision of this sign code or an unmet condition or qualification of a permit, certificate, approval or authorization previously granted by the city. As an alternative, the city may grant authorization subject to the condition that the violation be corrected. This enforcement provision shall apply regardless of whether the current owner or applicant is responsible for the violation in question.

(3) *Revoke or suspend permits.*

- (a) Any permit may be ordered revoked or suspended by the director of planning and economic development when there is a determination that:
 - 1. There is a departure from the plans, specifications or conditions as required pursuant to the terms of this sign code and/or the permit issued;
 - 2. The same was procured by false representation or misstatement of fact; or
 - 3. Any provision of this sign code is being violated.

- (b) Written notice of the revocation shall be served upon the owner, owner's agent or contractor, or upon any person employed in the construction or maintenance of the sign for which the permit was issued, or shall be posted in a prominent location;
- (4) *Stop work.* With or without revoking permits, the city may order work stopped on any sign on any land on which there is an uncorrected violation of a provision of this sign code or other city ordinances.
- (5) *Injunctive relief.* The city may seek injunctive or other equitable relief in court to stop any violation of this sign code or of a permit, certificate or other form of authorization granted hereunder.
- (6) *Abatement.* The city may seek a court order in the nature of mandamus, abatement, injunction or other action or proceeding to abate or remove a violation or to otherwise restore the sign or premises in question to the condition in which they existed prior to the violation.
- (7) *Other remedies.* The city shall have all such other remedies as are or may become available from time to time as provided by federal or Wisconsin law, this sign code or other related provisions.
- (8) *Remedies cumulative.* The remedies and enforcement powers established in this sign code shall be cumulative.
- (9) *Penalties.* The owner or general agent of a building or use where a violation of any provision of this sign code has been committed or exists, or the lessee or tenant of an entire building or entire premises where a violation has been committed or exists, or the owner, general agent, lessee or tenant of any part of the building or premises in which a violation has been committed or exists, or the general agent, architect, builder, contractor or any other person who commits, takes part in or assists in any violation or who maintains any building or premises in which any violation exists shall be guilty of an offense punishable by a fine of not less than \$10.00 and not more than \$500.00 for each and every day that such violation continues.
- (10) *Habitual offenders.* For the second and subsequent offenses involving the same violation (defined as each individually identified sign violation) at the same building or premises, the punishment shall be a fine of not less than \$250.00 or more than \$500.00 for each and every day that such violation shall continue.
- (11) *Enforcement procedures.*
- (a) Non-emergency matters. In the case of violations of this sign code that do not constitute an emergency or require immediate attention, the director of planning and economic development shall give notice of the nature of the violation to the property owner or to any other person identified by the permit or application as responsible for the sign in some manner, or to the applicant for any relevant permit in the manner described below. The person receiving the notice shall have ten days to correct the violation, unless otherwise stated in the notice, after which further enforcement action shall be taken.

1. Unless specified otherwise in this sign code, notice shall be given in person, by United States mail postage prepaid, or by posting notice on the premises.
 2. Notice of the violation shall state the nature of the violation and the time period for compliance. The notice may state corrective steps necessary and the nature of subsequent penalties and enforcement action, should the situation not be corrected.
- (b) Emergency matters. In the case of violations of this sign code that constitute an emergency situation as a result of safety or public concerns or violations that will create increased problems or costs if not corrected immediately, the city may use the enforcement powers available under this sign code without prior notice. The director of planning and economic development shall attempt to give notice simultaneously with the beginning of an enforcement action.
- (c) Specific limited permit signs. Real estate, construction and special event signs are subject to removal pursuant to the following provisions:
1. In view of the inexpensive nature of these signs and the administrative burden imposed by the non-emergency enforcement provisions, the director of planning and economic development is authorized to direct the summary removal of such signs when the same are unlawfully erected and/or maintained.
 2. After the summary removal of a sign pursuant to this section, the director of planning and economic development shall notify the property occupant, owner, or other responsible party of the removal by one of the methods described in subsection (11)(a)1 above. If the sign identifies a party other than the occupant, the director of planning and economic development shall notify that party. If the sign is removed from public property or an off-premises location, no notice is required prior to disposal.
 3. The notice shall state that the sign has been removed and identify the location to which the city has moved the sign.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003)

Sec. 24-05. Maximum sign area allowed determined by use.

Each use permitted in the city is limited to a specific amount of signage. Table 1, Maximum Sign Area by Use, describes the appropriate measurements for determining the maximum signage allowed by any particular use.

(1) Table 1 contains more than one measurement standard per use. These are expressed in terms of:

- (a) Maximum number of signs;
- (b) Sign area permitted as a function of linear front footage of a lot; and/or
- (c) Maximum sign size. The maximum total sign area may not exceed the most restrictive (lesser) of the standards for measurement identified in Table 1.

(2) Notwithstanding section 2(a) above, all existing non-residential lots shall be permitted a minimum of 50 square feet of signage, except in the central business district, which shall be permitted a minimum of 25 square feet, all of which at any location may be subject to standard or alternative sign permit approval.

(3) Lots fronting on two or more streets are allowed the permitted sign area for each frontage; however, the total sign area that is oriented toward a particular street may not exceed the portion of the lot's total sign area allocation that is derived from the lot, building or wall area frontage on that street.

(4) A "use" shall include all purposes or activities, for which the land or buildings are arranged, designed or intended, or for which land or buildings are occupied or maintained. A use may include multiple ownership, tenancy or affiliations and may include accessory, conditional and temporary uses.

(5) Any measurement not specifically provided for in Table 1 may be determined by reasonable interpretation of Sign Code Table 1 by the director of planning and economic development.

(6) The maximum sign size for individual tenant wall signs in multi-tenant developments shall be the same as the maximum size for individual uses, unless the size is restricted through a master sign plan or otherwise restricted in Table 1, such as through the size and/or location of the building. For example, the maximum size of a wall sign for an individual tenant in an office park would be 200 square feet; provided the building facade is of a sufficient size to permit the full 200 square feet of signage (wall signs are limited to ten percent of building facade).

(7) Additional sign area would be allowed under the following conditions:

- (a) If the business or development qualifies as a large building, which is defined as any building exceeding 125 feet in length/frontage or having three or more stories or have square footage in excess of 60,000 square feet. If the business or development qualifies under any of the three they will be allowed additional sign area per building elevation of up to 150 square feet, provided the following:
 - 1. This must not exceed two percent of gross floor area of building for manufacturing or industrial facilities or big box retail.
 - 2. This must not exceed ten percent of building facade for office buildings, public or quasi-public facilities.
- (b) If the building has an additional set-back it may be allowed additional sign area. The amount of signage may be increased by a percentage to be determined by dividing the number of feet the building is set-back from the front lot line, measured from the closest point of the building to the lot line, by the required amount of set-back.

(8) Site difficulties. If there are unusual site factors, which preclude an allowed sign from being visible to the street immediately in front of the site, an adjustment will be granted to achieve visibility standards. This adjustment is not intended to be used to make signs visible to other

streets or to freeways. Site difficulties may include the sign face being blocked due to topography of the site, existing development or landscaping on the site, or from abutting development or landscaping. This set of adjustment criteria is generally intended for freestanding and monument signs and allows greater flexibility in placement of the sign. This would also be a guideline for pole signs in the 'B-4' and 'B-5' commercially zoned areas. The adjustment will be approved if all four of the following criteria are found to be met:

- (a) There is no reasonable place on the site for an allowed sign without an adjust to achieve visibility standards to the street immediately in front of the site.
- (b) If the proposed sign extends past the five-foot setback requirement, the sign will not create a traffic or safety hazard.
- (c) Of potential adjustments to meet the visibility standard, the request is the most consistent with the surrounding development and sign patterns.
- (d) The adjustment is the minimum needed for a sign to meet the visibility standards.

TABLE 1: MAXIMUM SIGN AREA BY USE

<i>Use</i>	<i>All Signs</i>	<i>Freestanding Signs</i>	<i>Building Signs</i>	<i>Other Signs</i>
	Maximum Area	Maximum Number and Type, Sign Permit Required	Maximum Number and Type, Sign Permit Required	Maximum Exempt Signs Maximum Number and Type, Sign Permit Required
Residential				
Household (Home Occupation requires a permit)	6 s.f. total sign area;	1 per frontage on public right-ofway	0	1 per frontage on public right-ofway 0
Subdivision And Multi-Family Development	120 s.f. sign area, not including monument base;	2 per entrance; other signs through Master Sign Plan	0, signs determined by individual use	0 Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Group	32 s.f. sign area;	0	0	1 per frontage on public right-ofway Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area

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Public and Quasi-Public and Other Non-Commercial Uses	Maximum sign area 100 s.f. per building elevation on elevations facing public right-of-way., 200 s.f. would be considered under the alternative permit process.				
Airport and Medical Facilities	2 s.f. of sign area per linear foot street frontage	1 per frontage on collector street or higher; 1 informational per driveway	10 percent of building facade, only facades facing public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
College, Planning & Economic Service, Day Care, Religious Assembly, Safety Services & Schools or similar uses	2 s.f. of sign area per linear foot street frontage	1 per frontage on collector street or higher; 1 informational per driveway	6 percent of building facade, only facades facing public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Commercial	Maximum sign area 200 s.f. per building elevation on elevation facing public right-of-way				
Recreation, Entertainment, Theater, Retail Sales and Service	2 s.f. sign area per linear foot street frontage	1per frontage on public right-ofway; 1 informational per driveway	10 percent of building facade, only facades facing public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area

Office, Banks and Financial Institutions	2 s.f. sign area per linear foot street frontage	1 per frontage; 1 informational per driveway	10 percent of building facade, only facades facing public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Office Park	2 s.f. sign area per linear foot street frontage	1 per frontage, in addition to individual building and wall signs as determined by Master Sign Plan; 1 informational per driveway	Determined by individual building use	Determined by individual building use	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Parking, Commercial	.5 s.f. sign area per linear foot street frontage	One per frontage; one informational per driveway	10 percent of building facade, only facades facing public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Restaurant	2 s.f. sign area per linear foot street frontage	1 per frontage; 2 changeable copy signs per drivethrough lane; 1 informational per driveway	10 percent of building facade, only facades facing public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Self-Service Storage	2 s.f. sign area per linear foot street frontage	1 per frontage; 1 informational per driveway	Amount of signage determined by 10 percent of building facade that faces public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area

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Shopping Center	2 s.f. sign area per linear foot street frontage	1 per frontage, in addition to individual building and wall signs pursuant to Master Sign Plan	Determined by individual building	Determined by individual building	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Vehicle Repair/Service and Sales	2 s.f. sign area per linear foot street frontage	1 per frontage; 1 informational per driveway	10 percent of building facade, only facing public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Motor Fuel Sales	2 s.f. sign area per linear foot street frontage	1 per frontage; 1 changeable copy per frontage on public right-of-way only for pricing at service stations, 1 informational per driveway	10 percent of building facade, only facing public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Manufacturing	Maximum sign area 200 s.f. per building elevation on elevations facing public right-of-way				
Manufacturing, Warehousing, Waterrelated and Wholesale Sales	Two percent of gross floor area of principal building	1 per frontage; one informational per driveway	5 percent of building facade, only facing public right-of-way	As permitted by maximum area measurement	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area

Industrial Park	2 percent of gross floor area per building, allocated by building	1 per frontage in addition to individual building and wall signs pursuant to master sign plan; one informational per driveway	Total number of banners determined by available maximum sign area
Central Business District	25 percent wall area below 26 feet in height plus ten percent wall area over 26 feet in height	As determined by use category above	

Other: Anything not specified in this Table may be determined by reasonable interpretation of the sign code by the director of planning and economic development

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003; Ord. No. 1136, § 1, 8-26-2008)

Sec. 24-06. Measurement standards.

(1) *Sign area of individual signs.* The area of a sign face (which is also the sign area of a wall sign or other sign with only one face) shall be computed by means of the smallest square, circle, rectangle, triangle or combination thereof that will encompass the extreme limits of the writing, representation, emblem or other display, together with any material or color forming an integral part of the background of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the backdrop or structure against which it is placed, but not including any supporting framework, bracing or decorative fence or wall when such fence or wall otherwise meets provisions of this sign code and is clearly incidental to the display itself.

(2) *Sign area of multi-faced signs.*

- (a) Double-faced sign with faces at 60 degrees or less. Unless otherwise specified in these regulations, when the sign faces of a double-faced sign are parallel or the angle formed by the sign faces is 60 degrees or less, only one sign face shall be measured in computing the sign area. If the two faces of such a double-faced sign are of unequal area, the larger sign face shall be considered the area of the sign.
- (b) Other multi-faced signs. For all other multi-faced signs, the area of each sign face shall be added together to compute total sign area.

- (c) Three-dimensional signs. 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 as their maximum projection upon a vertical plane. Signs with three-dimensional objects that exceed a projection of six inches from the sign face shall be subject to approval through the alternative sign permit process.

(3) *Height of sign.* The height of a sign shall be computed as the vertical distance from the base of the sign at normal grade to the top of the highest attached component of the sign. Normal grade shall be construed to be the lower of:

- (a) Existing grade before construction, or
- (b) The newly established grade after construction, exclusive of any filling, mounding or excavating solely for the purpose of placing the sign.

In cases in which normal grade cannot reasonably be determined, sign height shall be computed on the assumption that elevation of the normal grade at the base of the sign is equal to the elevation of the nearest point of the crown of a public street, or the grade of the land at the principal entrance to the principal structure on the lot, whichever is lower.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003)

Sec. 24-07. Illumination.

Sign illumination may be allowed by permit as indicated in sections 24-08 and 24-09. Where a sign applicant seeks a permit for illumination, the following standards shall apply:

(1) Illumination shall be designed to eliminate negative impacts on surrounding right-of-way and properties. The light from an illuminated sign shall not be of an intensity or brightness that will create a negative impact on residential uses in direct line-of-sight to the sign.

(2) Signs may not be illuminated in a manner that interferes with (including glaring or blinding), misleads or confuses traffic.

(3) External light sources shall be directed and shielded to limit direct illumination of any object other than the sign.

(4) In no case, with all lighting components energized, shall the lighting intensity of any sign, whether resulting from internal or external illumination, exceed 60 foot candles when measured with a standard light meter held at a distance of ten inches from the sign face.

(5) Maximum brightness levels for electronic reader boards shall not exceed 5,000 nits when measured from the sign's face at its maximum brightness during daylight hours and 500 nits when measured from the sign's face at its maximum brightness between dusk and dawn. In no case shall the light intensity exceed the standards set forth in subsection (4).

(6) No illumination shall be anything other than a steady, continuous burning bulb or lights. Flashing, blinking, oscillating, rotating or intermittent turning on-and-off of any illuminating

device is prohibited. Time/weather informational signs and official warning and regulatory signs erected by the city or state are exempt from this regulation.

(7) Neon shall not be considered a bare bulb and will be subject to appropriate luminary measure.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003; Ord. No. 1050, § 2, 5-24-2005)

Sec. 24-08. Standards for permitted signs.

Signs that are subject to the city standard sign permit approval process must comply with the following standards. Signs that are subject to a limited or alternative sign permit approval, and exempt signs, must comply with the standards established in section 24-05 and section 24-09.

TABLE 3: STANDARDS FOR PERMITTED SIGNS

Type of Signs

Awning/Canopy
(Building)

Definition. Awnings and canopies are roof-like covers that project from the wall of a building or are freestanding for the purpose of shielding from the elements. Canopies may also be freestanding, such as a covering over a service station island. Canopy does not include marquee signs.

Measurement. Maximum sign size shall not exceed coverage of one-half of the face of the canopy or awning. The sign shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Additional requirements.

- (a) An awning or canopy sign must be an integral part of the awning or canopy to which it is attached.
- (b) Awning or canopy signs may be placed only on first and second story building elevations, including those facing a parking lot or pedestrian way. Canopy signs on freestanding canopies (such as service station islands) may only be located on elevations facing public rights-of-way. May not project from the wall of the building a distance of less than three feet from the edge of a curbed street.
- (c) No structural element of an awning or canopy shall be located less than eight feet above finished grade.

- (d) Awnings and canopies shall be constructed of durable material(s) and maintained in such a manner as to continue the original appearance.
- (e) Awnings and canopies shall, wherever practicable, match the established underclearance, height and projection of awnings and canopies that exist on abutting lots.
- (f) Awnings and canopies shall be compatible with the architectural integrity of the building(s) to which they are attached.

Banner

(Building and Other) Permanent

Definition. A sign having the characters, letters, illustrations or ornamentations applied to cloth, paper, fabric or other lightweight material, with only such material for a backing. The definition of banner does not include flags.

Measurement. Banner measurement shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Setback. Banners on buildings: Not applicable.

Other: As required by zoning ordinance setback for use or structure to which banner is attached.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Additional requirements.

- (a) Banners must be mounted to permanent structures and may not be displayed on temporary mounting such as metal stakes, wood posts or trees or other improvised manner.
- (b) All banners shall be regularly maintained. Deteriorated banners (torn, faded, sagging or in disrepair) shall not be displayed.

Changeable Copy

(Does not include Electronic Reader Boards)

Definition. A sign or portion thereof with characters, letters or illustrations that can be changed or rearranged manually without altering the face of the sign. Marquee signs are not considered "changeable copy" signs, and are allowed as they are.

Measurement.

- (a) Maximum total area for a freestanding sign 40 square feet.
- (b) Shall not be included within the maximum sign area total for the use pursuant to Table 3.

Setback. Must meet required zoning setback for use.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.
Additional requirements.

- (a) May only be ground mounted or wall mounted.
- (b) A sign on which the only copy that changes is an electronic or mechanical indication of time or temperature shall not be considered a changeable copy sign.

Electronic Reader Board

Definition. A sign or portion thereof which can be electronically changed or rearranged without altering the face or the surface of the sign. A sign on which the only copy that changes is an electronic or mechanical indication of time and/or temperature shall not be a commercial message or an electronic reader board sign for purposes of this sign code.

Measurement.

- (a) Maximum total area is 40 square feet.
- (b) Shall not be included within the maximum signs area total for the use pursuant to Table 3.

Setback. Must meet required zoning setback for use.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Additional requirements.

- a. Flashing of display may be prohibited, as regulated under Section 24-12 (2)(a).
- b. Animated signs or other electronic reader boards not completely described by the terms of this sign code or not fully in compliance with the specific provisions of the code, shall be reviewed through the alternative permit process.

Marquee

Definition. A hood or permanent construction that projects from the wall of a building, usually above the entrance generally lit and intended for advertisement of regularly changing activities on the premises. A marquee sign is any sign attached to, in any manner, or made part of a marquee.
Measurement. Banner measurement shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Setback. Not applicable. Overhang over public right-of-way may be approved by permit.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Monument

(Freestanding)

Definition. A permanent, freestanding sign mounted on a base or other supports and where the bottom of the sign face is located within three(3) feet of ground level.

Measurement.

- (a) Non-residential maximum area 75 square feet per sign face, maximum height 12 feet except as described in Setback subsection c. below.
- (b) Residential maximum area 60 square feet per sign face, maximum height 8 feet except as described in setback section c below.
- (c) Monument sign measurements shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Setback.

- (a) Non-residential: Ten feet from property line, provided there are no sight restrictions.
- (b) Residential: Ten feet from property line, provided there are no sight restrictions.
- (c) For each additional two foot setback from the street right-of-way over ten feet, one additional foot may be added to the height of the sign, to a maximum of 16 feet, and an additional four square feet per face per two foot setback may be added to the area of the sign, for a maximum of 16 square feet additional per sign face.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Additional requirements.

- (a) Non-residential development may have one monument sign per frontage from a public right-of-way.
- (b) Residential development may have two monument signs per entrance from a public right-of-way.
- (c) A sign may be incorporated into a retaining wall or masonry wall designed to screen parking, loading or service areas.
- (d) No monument sign shall be located within 50 feet of any other freestanding sign (monument, pole, and billboard) on the same lot, except at primary entrances to developments.
- (e) The bottom edge of the sign face must be in continuous contact with the structural base and must be a minimum of 12 inches above the ground.

Pole

(Freestanding)

Definition. A permanent, freestanding sign that is mounted on a pole(s) or other support(s) that is placed on and anchored in the ground or on a base and that is independent from any building or other structure.

Regulation.

- (a) One pole sign is permitted for each building for each street frontage. The total area of the pole sign for a building having one street frontage shall not exceed 80 square feet. Where a building has two or more street frontages, each permitted pole sign in excess of one shall be no greater than one-half the area of the first sign.
- (b) No part of the pole sign shall be closer than five feet to the front property line or exceed 20 feet in height to the top of the sign. The height shall be measured from the base of the sign or grade of the nearest adjacent roadway, whichever is lower.
- (c) Certain signs, based on temporary nature or limited size, may be permitted pursuant to section 24-09: Construction/future tenant, informational, real estate, special event and other, upon the review and approval of the director of planning and economic development.

Projecting
(Building)

Definition. Any sign affixed to a building in such a manner that its leading edge extends more than 12 inches beyond the surface of such building. Awnings and canopies are not considered projecting signs.

Measurement.

- (a) Maximum total sign area 32 square feet.
- (b) Sign clearance must be at least eight feet above finished grade.
- (c) Projecting sign measurement shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 5.

Setback.

- (a) Reserved.
- (b) May not project more than six feet from the wall of the building to which the sign is attached.
- (c) May not project from the wall of the building a distance of less than three feet from the edge of a curbed street.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Additional requirements.

- (a) Must be located on the vertical surface of a building.
- (b) May not extend above top of the roof or parapet line.
- (c) All movable parts, such as covers to service openings, shall be securely fastened.
- (d) One projecting sign per building for single-tenant buildings. One projecting sign per tenant for multi-tenant buildings.
- (e) Permitted only if the design of the sign is approved by the director of planning and community development.
- (f) Cannot protrude into the vision triangle as regulated by the zoning ordinance of the City of Marshfield.
- (g) Permitted only if proof of liability insurance is provided to the director of planning and community development.

Suspended
(Building)

Definition. A sign that is supported from the underside of a horizontal plane surface and is supported by such surface.

Measurement. Maximum sign area of 16 square feet. Suspended sign measurement shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Setback. Not applicable.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-04.

Additional requirements.

- (a) Reserved.
- (b) Maximum of one sign per building entrance.
- (c) There must be eight feet of clearance from the bottom of the sign to finished grade.

Wall

Definition. A non-projecting sign that is attached parallel to a wall or building.

Measurement.

- (a) May not exceed coverage of ten percent of facade upon which sign is located, or as specified in Table 1.

- (b) Wall signs for public/quasi-public uses may not exceed 100 square feet on any single building elevation unless it meets the exception under section 24-05(7).
- (c) Wall signs for commercial and industrial uses may not exceed 200 square feet on any single building elevation unless it meets the exception under section 24-05(7).
- (d) May not project more than 12 inches from wall to which attached, measured from the wall to the outer surface of the sign.
- (e) Wall sign measurement shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Setback. Not applicable.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-04.

Additional requirements.

- (a) Wall signs may not overlap or cover doors, windows or architectural details.
- (b) The sign must be confined within the limits of the building (e.g., wall, facade, parapet) unless otherwise permitted by this sign code.
- (c) The sign must be supported by the wall of the building to which it is attached.
- (d) Buildings exceeding three stories shall only be identified by the building, building complex or development name.
- (e) Wall signs may not be painted directly on to any building surface.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003; Ord. No. 1136, § 1, 8-26-2008)

Sec. 24-09. Standards for limited permit and exempt signs.

Signs that are subject to the limited permit approval process must comply with the following standards. Signs that are identified as exempt are not required to receive a city-issued permit but must conform to the standards of this section.

TABLE 4: STANDARDS FOR LIMITED PERMIT AND EXEMPT SIGNS

Type of Signs

Building Marker

Definition. Any sign indicating the name of a building, date or incidental information about its construction.

Measurement. Maximum sign area three square feet. Building marker measurement shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Setback. Not applicable.

Illumination. Allowed with standard sign permit, not through a limited permit application.

Additional requirements.

- (a) Must be mounted on building or affixed permanently at a location adjacent to the main building entrance.
- (b) Must be cut into a masonry surface or made of bronze or other permanent material.

Banner (Building and Other) Temporary

Definition. A sign having the characters, letters, illustrations or ornamentations applied to cloth, paper, fabric or other lightweight material, with only such material for a backing. The definition of banner does not include flags.

Measurement. Banner measurement shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Setback. Banners on buildings: Not applicable

Other: As required by zoning ordinance setback for use or structure to which banner is attached.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Additional requirements.

- (a) All banners shall be regularly maintained. Deteriorated banners (torn, faded, sagging or in disrepair) shall not be displayed.
- (b) Banners may be displayed for a maximum of 60 days cumulatively during one calendar year.
- (c) Banners must be mounted to permanent structures and may not be displayed on temporary mounting such as fences, metal stakes, wood posts, trees or other improvised matter.

Construction/Future Tenant

Definition. A sign, erected on the lot on which construction is taking place or on a building undergoing tenant or occupant change, that advises the public of information regarding the construction, management, leasing, and future tenant of the building(s).

Measurement.

- (a) Maximum sign face area 32 square feet for a freestanding sign.

- (b) Maximum height eight feet for a freestanding sign.
- (c) Maximum total sign area for a building sign as permitted by section, wall signs.
- (d) Shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use.

Setback. Twenty feet from right-of-way for freestanding sign.

Illumination.

- (a) Not permitted for freestanding signs.
- (b) Allowed with standard sign permit for building signs.

Additional requirements.

- (a) One sign per frontage on public right-of-way.
- (b) May be erected up to 90 days prior to date of actual construction. Must be removed when a certificate of occupancy is issued, as applicable. If construction is not begun within 90 days or not continually progressed to completion, sign must be removed until construction begins.

Non-Permanent

(Exempt from permitting requirement)

Definition. Any sign not supported by structures or supports that are placed on, or anchored in, the ground and that are independent from any building or other structure.

Measurement. Existing signs currently in use that are 50 square feet may continue to be utilized for a period not to exceed ten years from the date of the passage of this ordinance. Any new non-permanent signs may not exceed 40 square feet. All non-permanent sign measurements shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Illumination. Prohibited.

Additional requirements.

- a. No more than one per property.
- b. A multi-tenant commercial property may be allowed a maximum of one sign per tenant, subject to approval of a master sign plan.
- c. A non-commercial sign is considered on-premise signage and is entitled to the privileges that on-premise signs receive under this sub-section and exempt from the off-premise sign restrictions of Section 24-11 Subsection 1.

Window/Door
(Building)

Definition. Any sign, pictures, symbol or combination thereof, designed to attract off-premise readers and communicate information about on-premises activity, commodity, event, sale, or service that is placed inside a window or door or upon the window panes or glass and is visible from the exterior of the window.

Measurement. Window and door signs shall be limited to 50 percent of window and door area. They will not be counted against total allowable signage for the property.

Setback. Not applicable.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Flag

(Exempt from Permitting Requirement)

Definition. any fabric containing distinctive colors, patterns, or symbols used as a symbol of a business, corporation or other private entity.

Measurement.

- (a) Maximum flag size 40 square feet.
- (b) Maximum pole height 35 feet or not more than ten feet above the roof line of the primary building, whichever is less.
- (c) Corporate or business flag measurement(s) shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.

Setback. must meet required zoning setbacks for use.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Additional requirements.

- (a) All flag poles shall be ground mounted.
- (b) Flags may not be located in such a way as to intentionally attract the attention of the public for commercial purposes.
- (c) All flags shall be flown on a pole, with a maximum of three poles per use.
- (d) Additional poles will be considered under the alternative permit process.

Informational

(Exempt)

Definition A sign with a purpose secondary to the use on the lot on which it is located that provides directives and/or identifying messages.

Measurement.

- (a) Maximum sign area per face three square feet.
- (b) Maximum sign height as computed from the ground for freestanding signs three feet. Shall not be of height or location to interfere with vision of motorists entering or leaving premises.
- (c) Maximum sign height on light pole mounted signs as approved by director of planning and economic development.
- (d) Informational sign measurement shall be included within the maximum sign area total for use pursuant to Table 1.
- (e) This shall not include informational signage that is included as part of a "master sign plan".

Setback. Must meet required zoning setbacks for use.

Illumination. Permitted pursuant to section 24-07.

Additional requirements.

- (a) Informational signs may be mounted on buildings, fences, light poles, bollards or walls, or may be painted onto curbs and paved areas.
- (b) Freestanding informational signs are limited to one per driveway and as needed internally based on function as determined by the director of planning and economic development.
- (c) At least 60 percent of the sign area must be related to non-commercial information, the remaining sign area may identify the business, institution, shopping center or development by name, logo or both.
- (d) An informational sign may not contain any commercial messages legible off-premises.

Philosophical Signs

(Exempt from Permitting Requirement)

Regulation.

Philosophical, personal, religious, educational or other non-commercial signs are exempt from the permitting process provided they do not pose a health or safety hazard. Philosophical signs shall not exceed six square feet in area and four feet in height, and are limited to one per frontage on a

public right-of-way, except in residential.

Political Signs

(Exempt from Permitting Requirement)

Regulation.

- (a) Residential districts. Measure or issue shall not exceed six square feet in area and four feet in height. These political signs shall be allowed in addition to other signs permitted in residential districts and shall not be counted when calculating compliance with the maximum allowable sign area of Table 1.
- (b) Non-residential use. In non-residential zoning districts, , the measure or issue shall not exceed 32 square feet in area or six feet in height. These political signs shall be allowed in addition to other signs permitted in non-residential districts and shall not be counted when calculating compliance with the maximum allowable sign area of Table 1.
- (c) Political signs may be placed on private property and only with the permission of the property owner. Political signs shall not be placed in any portion of public or street right-of-way or land under public ownership or interest.

Real Estate Signs

(Exempt from Permitting Requirement)

Definition. Any on-premises sign placed upon lot, subdivision or parcel of land or on a building advertising the lease, rental or sale of the building, parcel, lot or land.

Measurement.

Residential.

- (a) Maximum area per sign face: Seven square feet, including riders.
- (b) Maximum height: Five feet, including riders.
- (c) One sign per frontage on a public right-of-way.

Non-Residential.

- (a) Maximum area per sign face: 16 square feet.
- (b) Maximum height: Eight feet for freestanding signs.

Setback.

- (a) Residential: Within property line.
- (b) Non-Residential: Five feet from right-of-way.

Illumination. Not permitted.

Additional requirements.

- (a) Two riders are allowed per residential sign.
- (b) Must be removed within ten days of sale, rental or lease.

Special Event

(Limited Permit)

Definition. A sign that carries a message regarding a special event or function which is of general interest as determined by the director of planning and economic development and does not include for-profit business promotional activities that are strictly commercial in nature. Measurement.

- (a) Maximum sign area 200 square feet for sign spanning public right-of-way. Maximum sign area 16 square feet for special event sign.
- (b) Sign shall not be included within the maximum sign area total for use.

Setback. As determined by zoning designation for lot.

Illumination. Not permitted.

Additional requirements.

- (a) May be placed not more than seven days before event and must be removed within 48 hours after event.
- (b) Limit of one sign per lot, per event.
- (c) Special event directional signs may be posted not to exceed seven days prior to the event and must be removed within 48 hours of the end of the event. Directional signs shall not exceed four square feet per sign face and four feet in height.
- (d) Signs spanning a public right-of-way shall be at least 15 feet above the highest point of the right-of-way.

Other Signs

(Exempt from permit requirements if set forth in a-c)

- (a) Signs not exceeding six square feet in area that are customarily associated with residential use and that are not of a commercial nature, such as signs giving property identification names or numbers, names of occupants, signs on mailboxes, signs posted on private property relating to private parking, or signs warning the public against trespassing or danger from animals.
- (b) Signs erected by or on behalf of, or pursuant to the authorization of, a governmental body, including legal notices, identification and informational signs and traffic,

directional or regulatory signs.

- (c) Official signs of a non-commercial nature erected by a public utility company.
- (d) Yard/garage/estate sale signs that are posted on-premise on the day of the sale not to exceed three times in one calendar year. May also be displayed off-premises on the day of the sale only, not withstanding section 24-14.
- (e) Signs in this section are limited to one per frontage on a public right-of-way and do not count against maximum sign area.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003; Ord. No. 1050, § 3, 5-24-2005; Ord. No. 1136, § 1, 8-26-2008)

Sec. 24-10. Master sign plans.

(1) *Purpose.* A master sign plan shall be used to establish criteria for and govern the construction of all signs associated with a use for which a master sign plan has been approved. A permit will be required for individual signs following or in conjunction with master sign plan approval. Signs constructed in violation of an approved master sign plan shall be considered in violation of this sign code.

(2) *Applicability.* A master sign plan shall be required of an applicant for a new development in the following circumstances:

- (a) Any portion, tenant or use of a non-residential development seeking sign permit approval for any or all of a development, campus, shopping center or business park;
- (b) Two or more separate tenant spaces are to be created on the same lot;
- (c) Two or more signs are proposed for a development;
- (d) All development plan, site plan, material change in land use or planned unit development applications;
- (e) The director of planning and economic development determines that a master sign plan is needed because of project characteristics such as:
 - 1. Size of proposed signs,
 - 2. Limited site visibility, and
 - 3. Site location relative to major transportation routes.

(3) *Submission requirements.* An application for master sign plan approval shall be submitted to the director of planning and economic development and shall include:

- (a) An accurate plot plan of the entire lot on which the use will be located at a scale of not less than one inch to 100 feet;

- (b) Location of buildings, parking lots, driveways and landscaped areas on the lot;
- (c) A table (or tables) containing:
 - 1. Computation of the maximum total sign area;
 - 2. Maximum area for individual signs;
 - 3. Height and number of freestanding signs; and
 - 4. Statement of the maximum total sign area and maximum number of signs permitted on the site by this sign code.
- (d) An accurate indication on the plot plan of the location and orientation of each sign for which a permit is currently being requested, the anticipated location of future signs requiring a permit, and the location of all reasonably anticipated limited permit signs.
- (e) A description and illustration of the following may be required:
 - 1. Colors and materials to be used in sign construction;
 - 2. Style of lettering for all signs;
 - 3. Appearance/location of logos or icons;
 - 4. Location of each sign on the building(s), with building elevations if necessary;
 - 5. All sign proportions; and
 - 6. Types of illumination.

(4) *Procedures.* A master sign plan shall be approved by the plan commission following the same procedure as for a standard sign permit application process described in section 24-3.

(5) *Flexible criteria.* The master sign plan may be approved by the plan commission with elements that exceed the permitted height, area and/or number of signs specified in this sign code if the director of planning and economic development recommends that:

- (a) The development site contains unique or unusual physical conditions such as topography, proportion, size or relation to a public street that would limit or restrict normal sign visibility;
- (b) The proposed or existing development exhibits unique characteristics of land use, architectural style, site location, physical scale, historical interest or other distinguishing features that represent clear variation from conventional development; or
- (c) The proposed signage incorporates special design features such as logos, emblems, murals or statuary that are integrated with building architecture.

(6) *Amendment.* A master sign plan may be amended by filing a new master sign plan for approval in conformance with the requirements of the sign code in effect at that time to be approved by the plan commission.

(7) *Binding effect.*

- (a) After approval of a master sign plan, no permanent sign shall be erected, placed, painted or maintained by the property owner or any buyer, tenant, subtenant, assignee, employee, agent or other party in use of the subject property except in conformance with such plan without obtaining a sign permit pursuant to section 24-3 and in conformance with the master sign plan.
- (b) If the plan commission has approved a master sign plan with flexible criteria pursuant to subsection (5) of this section, the director of planning and economic development is authorized to approve, through the standard sign permit approval process, sign applications in conformance with the master sign plan, which applications may conflict with the terms of this sign code, but only to the extent that the application is in conformance with the master sign plan.
- (c) A master sign plan shall be enforced in the same manner as any other provision of this sign code.

(8) *Requirements.*

- (a) The master sign plan shall be included in the application for final approval of any development plan, site plan, planned unit development, office/business/industrial park development (multi-part approvals) or building permit application for approvals issued by the City of Marshfield.
- (b) If the master sign plan has not been approved prior to the submission of such documents, it may be processed simultaneously.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003)

Sec. 24-11. Billboards.

(1) Billboards/off-premises signs are hereby prohibited in the downtown commercial district area. For purposes of this chapter, this area is defined as being between Doege and 11th Street on the North and South, and Chestnut and Cedar on the West and East. Billboards/off-premises signs are hereby prohibited along or viewable from Veterans Parkway between 4th Street and Wood. No new billboards may be constructed, erected or placed upon any premises, public or private, within the aforementioned areas, on or after passage of this ordinance. Furthermore, existing billboards/off-premises signs in the downtown area are hereby amortized for a period not to exceed ten years from date of the passage of this ordinance.

(2) Billboards existing in all other areas, prior to passage of this chapter may be maintained and continued in place as long as they comply with the standards and requirements of the ordinance. Billboards shall be promptly removed if they become deteriorated, dilapidated or abandoned. No billboard shall be enlarged, extended, reconstructed or structurally altered, and the total repair or alteration shall not during its remaining life exceed 50 percent of its assessed value. Repair costs shall include all time and all materials.

(3) If a billboard in said areas is damaged to the extent of 50 percent of its original value it shall not be repaired or restored and shall be promptly removed. Any billboard, which is not used for a period of 90 days, regardless of any intent to resume or not to abandon such, shall constitute an abandoned sign and must be removed within ten days. Removal is defined as sign face, sign structure and all materials.

(4) Billboards/off-premises signs are permitted under the alternative permit process only. Billboards may be allowed only within the M-2 light industrial district and M-3 general industrial district and within the B-3 highway business district and B-4 general commercial district. Billboards are only allowed on streets or highways designated as part of the state trunk highway system.

(5) No billboard/off-premises sign shall be permitted on the front or side facade of any building or on any roof-top.

(6) The maximum size of billboards is 250 square feet with no more than two signs per side, with a maximum of 500 square feet per structure in cases of back to back signs, and the maximum height shall be 25 feet. Billboards shall not be located within 500 feet of a residential dwelling that is properly zoned residential nor within 300 feet of another off-premises sign, as measured along the center line of the street. All billboards and other types of off-premises advertising structures must be set back a minimum of 15 feet from any public right-of-way.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003)

Sec. 24-12. Prohibited signs.

The following signs are expressly prohibited in the City of Marshfield, and shall not be approved through the alternative sign permit process:

(1) Snipe signs. Signs attached to any public utility pole or structure, street tree, fence, fire hydrant, bridge, curb, sidewalk, park bench or other location on public property, refer to section 24-14 for further clarification.

(2) Signs posing traffic or pedestrian hazards. No signs shall be erected, and there shall be no lighting of signs or premises in such a manner or location as to obstruct the view of, or be confused with, any authorized traffic signal, notice or control device, or with lights on any emergency vehicle. Specifically prohibited are signs or attention attracting devices using:

- (a) Lights or illuminations that flash, move, rotate, scintillate, blink, flicker or vary in intensity or color, except for time/temperature, date, stock market or similar brief informational displays.
- (b) Signs that are of such intensity or brilliance as to cause glare or impair the vision of motorists, cyclists or pedestrians.
- (c) Bare bulbs, except for time/temperature devices using bulbs of up to 25 watts. This does not include neon.

- (d) Words and traffic control symbols so as to interfere with, mislead or confuse traffic, such as "stop", "look", "caution", or "slow", as determined by the Marshfield Police Department or the director of planning and economic development. Either may order removal of any sign creating a danger to life or property.
 - (e) Any streamer, pennant, propeller, inflatable sign, tethered balloon, bunting or artificial device, figure, shape, color, sound, light or exhibit, whether live, animated, or still, that strobes, rotates, or emits sounds that would be considered a distracting device, as determined by the Marshfield Police Department or the director of planning and economic development.
- (3) Abandoned signs. Any sign remaining in place which for a period of 90 days or more no longer advertises or identifies an ongoing business, product, service, idea or commercial activity located on the site. See section 24-14 of this sign code.
- (4) Extending signs. Signs or sign structures, other than freestanding, that extend above the parapet, building roof line or canopy/awning against which the sign is located.
- (5) Use of a vehicle as a sign. Signs attached to or painted on motor vehicles or trailers that are parked on or adjacent to property for more than 24 consecutive hours, the principal purpose of which is to attract attention to a product sold or a business located on the property, not including vehicle sales licensed by the city. This is not meant to include logos and such on trucks and equipment, unless it is used as a stationary advertising device as previously described.
- (6) Non-compliance. Any other sign that does not comply with the terms, conditions or provisions of this sign code.
- (7) Roof sign. Any sign mounted on a building situated in total or in part above the eave of that part of the building to which it is mounted.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003; Ord. No. 1106, § 2, 7-24-2007; Ord. No. 1136, § 1, 8-26-2008)

Sec. 24-13. Design guidelines.

- (1) *General size, scale and location to the extent practical.*
 - (a) Signs affixed to the exterior of a building shall be compatible with the style, composition, materials, colors and details of the building, as well as with other signs used on the building or its vicinity.
 - (b) Signs shall fit within the existing facade features, shall be confined to signable areas and shall not interfere with door and window openings, conceal architectural details or obscure the composition of the facade.
 - (c) Sign size shall be scaled to be appropriate with the size of the overall elevation and architectural form(s) on which it is located.

- (d) Whenever possible, signs located on buildings within the same block shall be placed at the same height in order to create a unified sign band.
- (e) Signs on multiple-tenant buildings should be designed to complement or enhance other signs on the building.
- (f) Monument signs are the preferred style of freestanding signs. Wall signs are the preferred style of building signs.

(2) *Materials and installation.*

- (a) Signs shall be mounted so that the method of installation is concealed. Signs applied to masonry surfaces should be mechanically fastened to mortar joints only and not directly into brick or stone. Drilling to provide electrical service shall follow the same rule.
- (b) No sign (except flags) shall be suspended by chains or other devices 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.
- (c) All permanent signs and their supporting members shall be constructed of standardized sign materials.
- (d) Sign materials should be compatible with the design of the face of the facade where they are placed and should contribute to the legibility of the sign.
- (e) No combustible materials other than approved plastics shall be used in the construction of electric signs.
- (f) All signs shall 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.
- (g) Monument sign structures shall be constructed utilizing the materials and colors of the primary structure on the site or other compatible material.

(3) *Color.*

- (a) Sign colors and finish shall be designed to reduce glare and enhance legibility.
- (b) The use of compatible colors is recommended both on the sign face and between the sign and structure, buildings, surroundings or project.
- (c) The use of too many colors is discouraged to avoid overwhelming the basic function of communication and compete with the content for the viewer's attention.
- (d) When a single property has multiple tenants with separate storefronts, wall signs shall be compatible.

(4) *Typeface and size.*

- (a) The size of the letter area to the overall sign background shall be proportionate.
- (b) Where a single property has multiple tenants with separate storefronts, the sign area and height shall be of uniform size on all wall signs.
- (c) The number of letter styles should be limited to not more than two for smaller signs and three for larger signs.
- (d) Symbols and logos can be used in place of words wherever appropriate.
- (e) Identification signs of a prototype design and corporate logos shall conform to the criteria for all other signs.

(5) *Landscaping.* A landscaped planting area shall be provided around the base of all freestanding, permanently mounted signs. The planting area shall extend from the sign base a minimum of three feet, be protected from vehicular encroachment, and be landscaped with a combination of low-growing shrubs or ground covers. The landscaped treatment shall be designed and maintained not to obstruct visibility of the sign message.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003)

Sec. 24-14. Signs on public property.

Signs in the public right-of-way. Except as described below, no sign shall be allowed in the public right-of-way. The following permanent or temporary signs may be allowed pursuant to city approval:

(1) Signs erected by or on behalf of a governmental body to post legal notices, identify public property, convey public information and direct or regulate pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Signs for public and quasi-public events are for those functions that are held by public or quasi-public organizations.

(2) Emergency warning signs erected by a governmental agency, a public utility company or a contractor doing authorized or permitted work within the public right-of-way.

(3) Special event signs pursuant to the terms of section 24-09.

(4) Directional signs designed to assist the general public in finding a route to a public use from city thoroughfares may be erected within the thoroughfare rights-of-way by the city at the expense of the identified use.

- (a) Directional signs shall be applied for through the alternative sign permit process.
- (b) Such signs may include, but are not limited to, the name and logo of each eligible use, a directional arrow and a distance indication.
- (c) The number, type, design and placement of signs is subject to the approval of the plan commission at the recommendation of the director of planning and economic development and director of public works.

(5) Bus stop signs erected by a public transit company and taxicab stop signs.

(6) Informational signs of a public utility regarding poles, lines, pipes or other facilities.

(7) Any sign installed or placed on public property, except in conformance with all the requirements of this sign code, shall be forfeited to the public and subject to confiscation.

(8) Temporary signs may be approved by the director of public works.

(9) Permanent signs must be approved by the board of public works.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003)

Sec. 24-15. Removal of sign and sign structures where business is no longer in operation.

(1) A building, structure or premises shall be determined to be vacated based on the following criteria: (1) vacancy, (2) cessation of some or all utilities, or (3) lapse or termination of occupational license. Vacation of a building, structure or premises shall have the following effect:

- (a) At 90 days, non-conforming signs shall lose their non-conforming status;
- (b) At 90 days, the owner of the property shall be responsible for removing any commercial sign and/or sign structure associated with the business that is out of operation located on the property; unless the property owner is granted an extension under subsection (d) below; and
- (c) Signs addressing the sale or leasing of the facility in compliance with section 6 of the sign code are permitted; however, conversion of an existing sign or sign structure to a sale or leasing sign, where permitted, shall not affect the time provisions of this section. In addition, the owner shall be responsible for restoring the facade of the building, structure or premises to its normal appearance.
- (d) An extension allowing vacant sign(s) and/or sign structure(s) 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:
 - a. The property owner must submit an application with the appropriate fee and allow staff to inspect the vacated sign(s) and/or sign structure(s).
 - b. Staff must 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.
 - c. Signs must be properly blanked out and contain no commercial message.
 - d. 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.

- e. After the original six month extension, one additional six month extension may be approved by staff for up to one year upon submittal of a new application and fee. Any additional applications for an extension, beyond the first year, must be approved by the Plan Commission.
- f. Owners of non-conforming signs may also apply for an extension however the sign shall not thereafter be reestablished except in full compliance with this chapter.

(2) Sign structures that have been left vacant, devoid of any message, display a message pertaining to a time, event or purpose that no longer applies, or where the permit holder no longer has any interest in the premises as owner or tenant, any of which for a continuous period of 90 days, shall be deemed abandoned and must 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 sign code if the owner has not been granted an extension.

(3) If the sign and/or sign structure(s) have not been removed, the city shall send written notification to the property owner of record and/or last known occupant, via certified mail, return receipt requested, indicating that the sign and/or sign structure must be removed or apply for and be granted an extension. If the sign and/or sign structure have not been removed within 30 days after the city sends notice, and an extension has not been granted, the city may have the sign and/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 constitute a lien against the property upon which the sign or sign structure existed and shall be collected in the same manner as provided elsewhere in the regulations of the City of Marshfield.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003)

Sec. 24-16. Maintenance and removal.

(1) All outdoor signs and supports shall be weather resistant and shall be maintained in good repair and structural condition in compliance with all building and electrical codes and in conformance with this sign code.

(2) The director of planning and economic development shall initiate necessary procedures to remove any sign and/or sign structure that poses an immediate danger or hazard to persons or property or is detrimental to the adjacent property owner, as provided in the city's adopted building code relating to abatement of nuisances.

(3) When a sign is removed or replaced, all brackets, poles and other structural elements (both surface and subsurface) that supported the sign shall also be removed and the site restored. Affected building surfaces shall be restored to match the adjacent portion of the structure.

(4) All signs shall be maintained in good structural condition, in compliance with all applicable building and electrical codes and provisions of this chapter.

(5) If the zoning administrator or the building services department finds that any sign, awning, banner, billboard, flag or any part of any such sign or derivative thereof is unsafe, insecure, dilapidated, out of repair or abandoned, or is in such poor condition that it is dangerous or a blighting influence upon the neighboring properties, they shall issue written notice to the owner of the property upon which the sign exists to cause the sign to be repaired or removed in its entirety. Such written notice shall prescribe a period of time for compliance of not less than ten calendar days and not to exceed 90 calendar days, weather permitting.

(6) A sign shall have no more than 20 percent of its surface are covered with disfigured, cracked, ripped or peeling paint, poster paper, plastic wrap, or other material for a period of more than 30 consecutive days.

(7) A sign shall not stand with bent, broken or missing sign faces, with broken supports, with loosed appendages or struts, or more than 15 degrees from the originally constructed position for a period not to exceed ten consecutive days.

(8) A sign and the ground surrounding it shall be neat, clean and presentable.

(9) An internally illuminated sign shall be allowed to stand with partial illumination for a period of no more than 30 consecutive days, without justification.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003)

Sec. 24-17. Non-conforming signs and sign structures.

(1) *Policy.* It is the policy of the City of Marshfield to encourage, and to the maximum extent practicable, require that all signs within the city be brought into compliance with the terms of this chapter.

(2) *Valid permit required.* The status afforded sign and sign structures pursuant to this section shall not be applicable to any sign or sign structure for which a sign permit was initially required but for which no sign permit was ever issued. Such sign and/or sign structures are deemed illegal and are subject to the provisions of this chapter governing illegal signs.

(3) *Existing sign and/or sign structures rendered non-conforming.* Signs which existed prior to the effective date of this chapter and which were constructed in compliance with the previous regulations but became non-conforming as a result of this legislation will be regulated as follows:

- (a) A non-conforming sign may be altered, converted or changed as long as such alteration, conversion or change does not increase the extent of non-conformity or exceed the 50-percent provision in paragraph (d) of this subsection. No such sign shall be moved in whole or in part to any other locations where it would remain non-conforming.
- (b) Any non-conforming sign, the use of which has been discontinued for a period of 90 days, regardless of any intent to resume or not to abandon such, shall not thereafter be reestablished except in full compliance with this chapter.

- (c) The routine maintenance or repair of a sign and sign structures is permitted, provided the cumulative repair or maintenance does not exceed 50 percent of the replacement cost of the sign.
 - (d) If any non-conforming sign requires change, repair, or maintenance which would constitute an expense of more than 50 percent of the replacement cost of the sign, such sign must either be removed or brought within the requirements of this section. Any non-conforming sign that is damaged due to circumstances beyond the owner's control shall be allowed to be rebuilt, provided that the nonconformity is not increased in any way. Any sign that must be removed shall be done so within 60 days, weather permitting, of the date of the receipt of notice from the zoning administrator. Any sign requiring change, repair, or maintenance to become conforming must be restored within 120 days, weather permitting from the date of notice.
 - (e) A sign that would be permitted under this chapter only with a sign permit, but which was in existence on the effective date of this chapter, or on a later date when the property is annexed to the city, and which was constructed in accordance the ordinances and other applicable laws in effect on the date of its constructions, but which by reason of its size, height, location, or construction is not in conformance with the requirements of this chapter, shall be issued a non-conforming sign permit if an application is filed within 90 days of receiving notification of non-conformance from the zoning administrator.
 - (f) Bring the existing sign into compliance with the code.
- (4) *Condemnation.*
- (a) Legal non-conforming sign and sign structures located on a lot of property that is severed from a larger lot of property and acquired by a public entity for public use by condemnation, purchase, dedication or any other means may, at the discretion of the city, be relocated on the remaining lot without extinguishing the legal non-conforming status of the sign provided that the non-conforming sign:
 - 1. Is not increased in size or height;
 - 2. Remains structurally unchanged except for reasonable repairs or alterations;
 - 3. Is placed in the same relative position on the remaining property that is occupied prior to the relocation; and
 - 4. Is relocated in such a manner so as to comply with all applicable safety requirements.
 - (b) After relocation pursuant to this section, the legal non-conforming sign shall be subject to all provisions of this sign code in its new location.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003; Ord. No. 1136, § 1, 8-26-2008)

Sec. 24-18. Fee schedule.

(1) Standard permit: \$50.00 plus \$.25 sq. ft. for everything over 100 square feet.

(2) Alternative permit: \$150.00.

(3) Master sign plan approval (Permanent signs): \$150.00.

(4) Limited sign permit: \$15.00.

(Ord. No. 987, § 1—3, 9-9-2003; Ord. No. 999, § 1—3, 10-27-2003; Ord. No. 1136, § 1, 8-26-2008)