

ARTICLE 31 SIGNS and ADVERTISEMENT

3100 PURPOSE

The purpose of these sign regulations is to provide standards for the placement, display, and use of outdoor advertising and designed to enhance the aesthetic environment of the Township, improve pedestrian and traffic safety, and to minimize possible adverse effects of advertising on public and private property.

3101 GENERAL PROVISIONS

Applications for sign permits are reviewed and permits may be issued by the Zoning Department with the submission of the required information: property address, property owner, sign owner, business name, type of sign, a site plan indicating location dimensions, height, design, copy area, any illumination and/or electrical components, material, and structural supports of proposed sign, dimensions of existing building and distance from property lines and adjacent roadways.

The following types of signs shall require a Zoning Permit:

A. NEW SIGNS

B. GRAND OPENING Temporary signage not permanently mounted; permitted for two-30 day periods announcing the opening of a business in a *Commercial or Industrial* District.

C. TEMPORARY or PORTABLE SIGN, WHICH is not permanently mounted and permitted for two-30 day periods per calendar year.

D. SPECIAL EVENT SIGNAGE See Section 3110

E. SUBDIVISION ENTRANCE See Section 3105

F. NONCONFORMING SIGN and nonconforming sign structure is permitted to remain in place on the same premises of such use. A nonconforming sign shall be removed when the previous nonconforming use is no longer in business. (Any new sign on the premises shall conform to the current sign provisions).

G. WINDOW SIGN shall be permitted in Commercial or Industrial Districts only and may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the total window surface.

A sign permit is not required for regular maintenance of an existing sign or for a change of copy on painted, printed, or changeable copy signs as long as the sign area or structure is not enlarged or modified in any way for the existing/current owner and/or tenant to which the original Zoning Permit was issued.

3102 REQUIREMENTS

- A.** No sign shall project into a public right-of-way or impede vehicular visibility at any street or roadway intersection.
- B.** Illumination and lighting devices shall employ only light of constant intensity; shall not contain flashing, intermittent, rotating, or moving lights; illumination or light beams may not be directed upon a public thoroughfare, highway, sidewalk, or adjacent premises so as to cause glare or reflection that constitutes a traffic hazard or nuisance.
- C.** No sign shall be placed on the roof of any building except those signs that appear to be a continuation of the face of the building or a mansard roof and does not extend above the upper edge of the mansard roof-line or the highest point of the roof peak.
- D.** No sign shall be attached to or obstruct a fire escape.
- E.** All signs shall be properly maintained and plainly marked with the name of the party responsible for maintenance. Defective, torn, or damaged parts shall be replaced.

F. Compliance

If a sign is installed, constructed, or maintained in violation of any of the terms of this Resolution, the Zoning Department shall notify the owner or lessee thereof to alter such sign so as to comply with this Resolution. Any owner, lessee or sign contractor who installs a new sign without a permit may be subject to three times the normal fee schedule.

G. Variations

In specific cases variations may be made to these regulations, authorized by the Board of Zoning Appeals, where practical difficulties or hardships exist in carrying out this Section of the Resolution. Any variance shall be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this Resolution and in accordance with the procedures and provisions specified in Article 24. Hardship shall be based on physical limitations of the land or structures and does not encompass financial considerations.

H. Double frontage lots

If a development is located on a lot that is bordered by two streets that do not intersect at the lot's boundaries (a double front lot), then the development may have a pole or low profile sign on *each* street (subject to total sign area limitations in the table in Section 3107).

I. Central Avenue / I-475 Interchange signs

Commercial businesses within 200 feet of the intersection of Central Avenue and I-475 may, in addition to signs allowed in Section 3107, may install a pole sign not to exceed sixty (60') feet in height with a maximum sign area of one hundred fifty (150') square feet per face.

3103 PROHIBITED

The following types of signs are prohibited in Sylvania Township:

- Search lights
- Rotating signs, moving figures
- Animated
- Balloons or other gas-filled figures
- Pennants, flags (excluding national, state, institutional, political, corporate)
- Billboards (100 square feet or larger)
- Signs placed and/or painted on vehicles or trailers situated on the premises for the sole purpose of advertising goods or services sold on the property.
- Sign or object attracting attention to a business that interferes with the safety of the traveling public.
- Roof signs extending above the highest point of the roof.
- Signage attached to fences, trees, telephone poles, public benches, street lights or street signs.
- Abandoned signs
- A sign composed of cardboard, paper or like material attached to light standards, poles of any type, buildings or structures.

For Special Event Signage, See Section 3110.

3104 EXEMPT

The following signs shall be excluded from requiring a sign permit:

A. Auction sign

- Maximum four (4) signs per auction permitted and not more than thirty-two (32) square feet each in size; three (3) signs may be located off-premise and removed within seven (7) days from date of auction.

B. Real estate sign

- Non-illuminated real estate signs in districts that advertise the sale, rental or lease.
- In *A* or *R* districts: not to exceed (6) six square feet in sign area.
- In *C* or *M* districts: not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in sign area.
- One sign permitted per street frontage; a second real estate sign may be permitted for no longer than one-24 hour time period per property advertised; must be removed within seven (7) days of sale, rental or lease of premise.

C. Future development, future subdivision

- Advertising the sale or lease of a future residential subdivision, a development, a building, or an area; shall not include a permanent subdivision sign.
- Shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet per face in area
- May not be illuminated

D. Construction sign

- One (1) sign indicating the contractor, engineer, or architect located at a construction project site.
- Thirty two (32) square feet maximum or less in surface area in any district.

- May be erected thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of construction and shall be removed seven (7) days following completion of construction.

E. Tenant identification sign

- Used to identify businesses within a complex or building having two or more occupants;
- Shall be located at or near entrance to said building and may consist of tenants name, business title, address/location within building; copy panel shall be no larger than 6 square feet

F. Memorial sign, tablet

- Name of building or date of construction, placed on the building provided that such signs do not exceed two (2) square feet in area.

G. Directional sign

- Located on the premises of a business to direct traffic flow; such ground or wall signs shall not contain any advertising material; shall not exceed five (5) feet in height nor exceed fifteen (15) square feet in area.

H. Private property sign

- Relating to private parking, no dumping, or warning the public against trespassing, or danger from animals or other elements; shall not exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area.

I. Political sign

- Public election or candidate signs shall not be placed within public right-of-way and not exceed 16 square feet in area;
- May be placed only on private property with permission of property owner; (Rev 5-2-2017. Z20-C988)

J. Garage sale/yard sale sign

- Signs must be removed within five (5) days upon completion of such sale.

K. Holiday lights and decorations having no commercial message.

L. Window sign

- Sign area may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the total window surface; allowed in *C* and *M* Districts.

M. Public notice or warning sign which is required by applicable federal, state, local law or regulation.

N. Works of art that do not include a commercial message.

3105 RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISION

Signs may be internally illuminated or by reflected light; illumination shall shine on sign only and not onto neighboring dwellings, properties or street and wattage must be regulated. When located within the center of a boulevard, sign shall be located in a manner so as not to create a traffic hazard or impede vehicular visibility. A sign identifying the name of a subdivision or a development in a Residential or Agricultural District shall meet the following requirements:

A. Low-Profile, Monument sign

- Fifteen (15') feet minimum from a right-of-way line.
- Ten (10') feet minimum from an adjacent property line.
- Fifty (50') square feet maximum sign area per face.
- Five (5') feet maximum height measured from the ground surface or seven (7') feet in height measured from elevation at the centerline of the roadway.
- Not more than two (2) located at an entrance.

B. Wall sign

- One-twenty four (24') square feet maximum sign area.

C. Street signs installed by private entities shall meet the minimum requirements set forth in the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (OMUTCD).

3106 PUBLIC or SEMI-PUBLIC USE

One (1) low-profile sign or monument sign, and one (1) wall sign are permitted on lots containing a main building other than a dwelling, such as a church, school, or semi-public use in any *Residential District* and shall meet the following requirements:

A. Low-Profile, Monument sign

1. Fifty (50') square feet maximum sign area per face.
2. Ten (10') feet minimum from a property line.
3. Five (5') feet minimum from a right-of-way line.
4. Signage shall not obstruct traffic visibility at the road or highway intersections.
5. Maximum height permitted is measured from the ground surface and is determined by the distance from the right-of-way line as shown in the table below.

Minimum Distance from Right-of-Way	Maximum height permitted
5'	5'
10'	8'
15'	9'
20' and over	10'

B. Wall sign

- Fifty (50') square feet maximum sign area.

When any Public or Semi-Public use is located within any Commercial Zoned District, the minimum requirements set forth in the specified district in which it is located shall be followed.

3107 COMMERCIAL and INDUSTRIAL SIGNS

One (1) of each sign type shall be permitted on one lot, excluding wall signs. For any district not listed, confer with Zoning Official for appropriate classification.

All measurements are the maximum square footage allowed per face area.

DISTRICT or USE	PERMITTED	LOW-PROFILE	POLE SIGN	WALL SIGN (Facing ROW)	PROJECTING
C-1	Low-profile Pole Wall Projecting	60	60	1.5 square feet per building width	40
C-2	Low-profile Pole Wall Projecting	100	100	1.5 square feet per building width	40
C-4, M-1 M-2, M-3	Low-profile Wall	50	-	1.5 square feet per building width	-

A. LOW PROFILE, MONUMENT SIGN

1. Ten (10) feet minimum from any adjacent property line;
2. One sign per five hundred (500) feet of lot frontage.
3. Not permitted if pole sign is used.
4. Five (5) feet minimum from a right-of-way line.
5. Signage shall not obstruct traffic visibility at the road or highway intersections.
6. Maximum height permitted is measured from the ground surface and is determined by the distance from the right-of-way line as shown in the table below.

Minimum Distance from Right-of-Way	Maximum height permitted
5'	5'
10'	8'
15'	9'
20' and over	10'

B. POLE SIGN

- Ten (10) feet minimum from the right-of-way line;
- Ten (10) feet minimum from any adjacent property line;
- Thirty (30) feet maximum in height in any C District;
- Shall not exceed one sign per five hundred (500) feet of lot frontage.

C. WALL SIGN

- Multiple wall signs are permitted provided the *combined* square footage is within the total wall sign size limit allowed.

- Awning, back-lift awning, and canopy signs are treated as wall signs for the purposes of this table.

D. PROJECTING SIGN

- Shall not project from the front or face of a building more than two (2) feet, including those projecting from the face of any theatre, hotel or motel marquee; excludes awning and canopy signs.
- Not permitted when pole sign is used.

E. DIRECTIONAL SIGN

- For off-street parking areas; height shall not exceed five (5) feet from grade level nor exceed fifteen (15) square feet in area.

3108 COMMON SIGNAGE for multiple uses

The use of common/combined signage is preferred when a structure contains more than one business establishment, more than one building, or when the owners of two or more contiguous lots voluntarily agree to develop common signage.

A plan shall specify standards for consistency among all signs affected by the plan in regard to color scheme, location of signs, lettering, material, lighting, and sign proportion and may not exceed the following limitations:

A. POLE SIGN

- Maximum number shall not exceed one per five hundred (500) feet of lot frontage.

B. LOW-PROFILE, MONUMENT SIGN

- Maximum number shall not exceed one per five hundred (500) feet of lot frontage.

C. POLE, WALL, LOW-PROFILE, or PROJECTING SIGN

- Maximum sign area shall not exceed three (3) square feet of sign per lineal foot of street frontage, *or*
- Five (5%) percent of the ground floor of the principal building, *or*
- One thousand (1,000) square feet, whichever is less.

3109 OFF-PREMISE

A. As used in this Resolution an off premises sign shall be defined as any sign advertising a product, service, business or activity which is sold, located or conducted elsewhere than on the premises on which the sign is located, or which said product, service, business or activity is sold, located or conducted on such premises only incidentally, if at all.

B. Off-premise signs shall be permitted in Commercial, Industrial or Agricultural Districts.

- C.** No off premise advertising sign permitted by this Chapter shall exceed the following maximum sign area:
- A maximum of seventy two (72) square feet, excluding any trim, skirt or border. In determining the area devoted to advertising if the trim, skirt, or border contains advertising it shall be included. In calculating the area devoted to advertising the area shall be measured by the smallest square, rectangle, triangle, circle, or combination thereof which will encompass the entire advertising device.
- D.** No off premise advertising sign permitted by this chapter shall exceed fifteen (15) feet above grade.
- E.** No off premise advertising sign permitted by this chapter shall be located less than three hundred (300') from any recorded residential subdivision, or any residential lot less than one acre in size, or five hundred feet from any dwelling, unit or semi-public use on an adjacent parcel or three hundred feet (300') from any intersection.
- F.** A maximum of two faces per sign structure is allowed, positioned either back to back or v-shaped, such that only one face is allowed per side. Both sides of a double-faced or v-shaped sign shall be of equal size. In no case shall there be more than one face per directional flow of traffic.
- G.** Off-premises advertising signs shall meet the following setback requirements:
1. Ten (10) feet from the edge of the right-of-way of any adjacent road but in no case shall such sign be closer than twenty-five feet from the edge of the traveled way of any road street, highway, lane, alley, or thoroughfare.
 2. Ten (10) feet from any abutting property boundary lines and outside of all sight visibility triangles.
- H.** Off-Premises advertising shall meet the following spacing requirements:
1. On Interstate (Federal) or primary (State) systems in accordance with the Agreement entered into by the State of Ohio and the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, and in conformity with 5501:2-2-02.3 of the Ohio Administrative Code as presently written or hereafter as amended or modified.
 2. On all other roads streets, highways, lanes, alleys, or thoroughfares not less than five hundred feet (500) from the edge of the nearest off premises advertising sign.
- I.** Lighted electrically activated multiple message and variable message devices are permitted where their only movement is the periodic changing of information against a solid, black or white background provided that the device meets the following conditions:
1. Each message or copy shall remain fixed for at least twenty (20) seconds and there shall not be more than three (3) changes per minutes.
 2. All changes in copy shall be accomplished in three (3) seconds or less.
 3. No such devise shall be placed within one thousand (1,000') feet of another multiple message or variable message advertising device on the same side of the road, street, highway, lane, alley, or thoroughfare visible in the same direction of travel.
 4. Such devise shall include a default system, which will freeze the copy displayed on the device in one position in case of malfunctions.

5. Only one (1) multiple message off premise advertising device or sign shall be permitted on a single lot facing the same direction.
6. The brightness of the text message shall not exceed 2,000 nits (one nit equals one candela per square meter) and the brightness of a graphic image sign shall not exceed 6,000 nits. The sign shall be equipped with a photocell to automatically reduce brightness to correspond with the reduction of available ambient light.
7. Such sign or device shall not flash as part of its copy or at any other time.

3110 SPECIAL EVENT SIGNAGE

This provision is designed to permit a type of advertising which is normally prohibited to assist in the promotion of a product or service, which normally prohibits signage techniques, as identified in Section 3103, and to assist in the promotion of a product or service. The use of cold air balloons, tents or other technique that may restrict the view of vehicular traffic shall be located a minimum fifty (50) feet from edge of roadway.

A Special Event Signage Permit shall be limited to:

- Permitted only in C-2 or Commercial PUD Zoning Districts.
- Total permits may not exceed fifteen (15) days total per calendar year.
- Each permit shall be issued for a minimum three (3) day period.
- A maximum five (5) permits issued per calendar year.

3111 ON-PREMISES ELECTRONIC MESSAGE CENTER

Lighted electrically activated multiple message and variable message devices are permitted for the advertising of, or providing information about the business, person, activity, goods, products or services primarily sold or offered for sale on premises where the sign is located provided:

- The only movement is the periodic changing of information against a solid, black or white background
- Each message or copy remains fixed for at least twenty (20) seconds.
- All changes in copy are accomplished in three (3) seconds or less such device includes a default system, which will freeze the copy displayed on the device in one position in case of malfunctions.
- Only one (1) electronic message center device is located on the premise and only face visible per directional flow or traffic. A free standing electronic message center shall not exceed fifty (50%) percent of the total allowable square footage for any on premises freestanding sign.
- The brightness of the text message shall not exceed 2,000 nits (one nit equals one candela per square meter) and the brightness of a graphic image sign shall not exceed 6,000 nits as certified by the sign contractor.
- The electronic message center shall be equipped with a photocell to automatically reduce brightness to correspond with the reduction of available ambient light.
- Such electronic message center is not flashing as part of its copy or at any other time.

3112 SIGN DEFINITIONS

ABANDONED SIGN: a sign or sign structure, which no longer identifies or advertises a business, service, owner, product or activity; shall be removed within 30 days of notification by the Township Zoning Inspector/Official.

ANIMATED: continuous illumination that may flash, move, rotate, flicker, blink, scroll, use intermittent electrical impulses, or which has revolving, or rotating parts or other visible mechanical movements.

AREA, SIGN: the area of the largest single face of the sign where the copy is placed, but excluding the necessary supports or uprights on which the sign may be placed. Embellishments and other architectural features are not included in the square footage of the sign area calculation, and are not to exceed twenty five (25) percent of the single face area.

AWNING SIGN: sign attached to an awning that covers a doorway, window, or face of the building; may be internally illuminated.

BANNER SIGN: any decorative banner, pennant, flag or like devices, herein after defined and referred to as banner shall be located on private property, outside of vision triangles of motorists and shall not extend into or be allowed to move into the public right-of-way. No decorative banner, pennant, flag or like devices shall be attached to a public utility pole or to a pole of any type except one constructed for that particular purpose and providing that the flag banner or like device flies from the upper extent of such pole and is attached thereto, fence, street lights or the poles supporting such devices, light standard or any other device used to support outdoor lighting of any type, street or traffic control signs or the post supporting such signs, structures or buildings. The bottom of each banner displayed shall be no less than 12 feet and no more than 40 feet from the top of the nearest curb or if there is no curb from the surface of the nearest street.

BILLBOARD: an advertisement for an establishment, service, merchandise, or entertainment which is not sold, produced, manufactured or furnished at the property on which the said sign is located; one hundred (100) square feet or larger.

BUILDING FACE: the window and wall area of a building and having one plane or elevation.

BUSINESS SIGN: directs attention to a business or profession conducted on the premises; a "For Sale" or "For Rent" sign relating to the property to which it is displayed.

CANOPY SIGN: a sign attached to or part of a roof-like covering, which protrudes and protects any entryway of a building.

CHANGEABLE COPY: a sign or portion thereof with characters, letters or illustrations with a message or illustration that can be changed manually or electronically or changed and/or rearranged without altering the size or the face of the sign. Should a message change occur, said message change shall be at a minimum twenty (20) second interval.

CLEARANCE, SIGN: the smallest vertical distance between the grade of the adjacent street, highway, or street curb and the lowest point of any sign, including framework extending over that grade.

COMMERCIAL MESSAGE: wording, logo or other representation that directly or indirectly names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service or other commercial activity.

COPY: graphic content of a sign surface in either permanent or removable letter, pictographic, symbolic or alphabetic form.

CONSTRUCTION SIGN: temporary sign identifying an architect, engineer, contractor, subcontractor and/or material supplier participating in construction on the property on which the sign is located; does not require a Zoning Permit.

DEVELOPMENT SIGN, FUTURE SUBDIVISION SIGN: a non-illuminated, non-permanent sign not exceeding 32 square feet per face in area indicating the future construction of a development, subdivision, building, or an area advertising the sale or lease of properties and not fitting under the definition of a construction sign; Zoning Permit is not required.

DIRECTIONAL SIGN: on-premise sign giving direction or instruction to facilitate traffic flow; any sign that directs the flow of traffic to or from an off-street parking area.

DOUBLE FACED: sign having two sides.

HEIGHT: vertical distance measured from the highest point of the sign, including decorative embellishment, ground elevation, or the surface grade beneath the sign, whichever is less.

ELECTRIC MESSAGE CENTER: a sign whose visual display includes alphabetic, numeric or symbolic content that can be changed or altered on a fixed display screen composed of electronically illuminated segments.

EMBELLISHMENT: decorative or ornamental detail on a sign or sign structure.

EXEMPT SIGNS: excused from normal permit requirements. *See Section 3104.*

FACE: area of a sign that consist of the copy.

LOW-PROFILE SIGN: mounted directly to the ground with maximum height and setback distances regulations as outlined in Sections 3106-A and 3107-A.

MESSAGE: wording or copy on face of a sign.

MONUMENT SIGN: see **LOW-PROFILE SIGN**

NONCONFORMING SIGN: sign previously constructed and installed legally but does not currently comply with current sign requirements and restrictions.

OFF-PREMISE SIGN: see §3109.

PENNANT: a lightweight plastic, fabric, or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind, suspended from a rope, wire, or string, usually hung in a series designed to move in the wind.

POLE SIGN: supported by upright structures or supports that are anchored in the ground and independent from any building or other structure.

POLITICAL SIGN: temporary sign used in connection with a local, state, or national election or referendum; is exempt from requiring a Zoning Permit.

PORTABLE SIGN: see **TEMPORARY SIGN.**

PROJECTING SIGN: attached to and projecting out from a building wall or other structure that is not specifically designed to support the sign.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT: any sign intended primarily to promote items of general interest to the community, such as time, temperature or date; is not included in the total square footage of sign area allowed; permitted in commercial and industrial districts; Zoning Permit is required.

REAL ESTATE SIGN: temporary sign advertising the real estate upon which the sign is located as being for rent, lease or sale; cannot be more than 32 square feet in size; a Zoning Permit is not required.

ROOF SIGN: erected and constructed wholly on and over the roof of a building, supported by the roof structure and extending vertically above the highest point or peak of the roof.

SEASONAL SIGN OR HOLIDAY SIGN: any sign used for a holiday and installed for a limited period of time, such as "Christmas Decorations."

SIGN: any device, fixture, placard or structure that uses any color, form, graphic, illumination, symbol or writing to advertise, announce the purpose of, or identify the purpose of a person or entity or to communicate information of any kind to the public. Architectural design features such as building accent lighting are not considered signs.

SIGN FACE: entire area of a sign on which copy could be placed.

SIGN STRUCTURE: any structure that supports, has supported, or is capable of supporting a sign, including a decorative cover.

SPECIAL EVENT SIGNAGE: signs that are normally prohibited, that assist in the promotion of a product or service; such advertisement includes the use of flags, pennants, tents, balloons, gas filled balloons or searchlights directed upward; shall only be permitted for two 7-day periods per calendar year; Zoning Permit is required.

SUBDIVISION OR DEVELOPMENT SIGN, FUTURE: non-permanent, non-illuminated sign less than 32 square feet per face in area indicating the future construction of a development, subdivision, building, or area advertising the sale or lease of properties and not fitting under the definition of a construction sign; Zoning Permit is not required.

SUBDIVISION ENTRANCE SIGN OR DEVELOPMENT ENTRANCE SIGN: permanent sign located at the entrance of a subdivision, development, or public use identifying the name of said subdivision, development, or public use and does not contain a commercial message; may be internally illuminated or illuminated by reflected light; Zoning Permit is required.

TEMPORARY SIGN: any sign not permanently mounted or attached to the ground or permanent structure used for the advertisement or promotion of a product or service, including, but not limited to, portable signs, signs designed to be transported by means of wheels, signs converted to A- or T- frames, banners, menu signs, sandwich board signs, umbrellas used for advertising; allowed for two-30 day periods per calendar year; Zoning Permit is required.

VISION TRIANGLE: a triangular-shaped portion of land established at street intersections where nothing is erected, placed, planted, or allowed to grow in such a manner as to limit or obstruct the line of sight of motorists entering or leaving the intersection.

WALL SIGN: attached to or placed against a wall of a building with the face parallel to the building wall and extending not more than one (1) foot and advertises the use carried on within such building.

WINDOW SIGN: sign, picture, symbol or combination thereof designed to communicate information about a business, commodity, sale, or service that is placed inside a window; may not to exceed 50% of the window size.