

PART 1-C SIGN REGULATIONS

9-106 SIGNAGE

A. TITLE; FINDINGS OF FACT; PURPOSE AND INTENT.

1. *Short title.* The provisions of this Subchapter shall hereafter be known and cited as the “Sign Ordinance of the City of Oak Forest,” but is referred to internally as “Subchapter.”
2. *Findings of fact.* The provisions of this Subchapter are derived from a combination of statutory research into similar types of legislation enacted by corporate authorities throughout Illinois and other states and the need to enforce policies, plans and programs approved and enforced by the corporate authorities, as related to the following findings:
 - (a) To remain a healthy and vibrant community, the city must exercise its police power in a manner which promotes economic development, while preserving and protecting the aesthetic aspects of the community;
 - (b) The city’s land development codes, of which the signage regulations are a part, are intended to maintain and improve the quality of life for all citizens of the city, through the implementation of an official comprehensive plan;
 - (c) The city’s signage regulations must be updated and kept current so as to reflect the latest judicial and appellate decisions of the appropriate legal jurisdictions, as related to signage and constitutional protection;
 - (d) The city’s signage regulations must reflect the legal principle of content neutrality in its interpretation and enforcement of the regulations; specifically assuring the right of commercial and non-commercial messages to utilize the same means of conveyance regarding their messages;
 - (e) While recognizing the need for signage as a valid means of promoting and advertising commercial and non-commercial products, programs and points of view, the physical means used to convey such messages may not always prove to be feasible in light of the need for public safety, and as such, deserve to be regulated in a fair and expeditious manner through the provisions of this Subchapter;
 - (f) Excessive signage, particularly when clustered in close proximity, can be classified as visual pollution and in extreme cases, can serve as a distraction to pedestrians, motorists and others and require stringent regulation and oversight as provide for by these provisions;
 - (g) The existence of nonconforming signage is detrimental to public welfare and the visual aesthetics of the city; and
 - (h) The unregulated placement of billboards can be detrimental to the visual aesthetics of the city, but must be balanced by legal requirements and considerations of equality of opportunity in terms of location and administrative review.

3. *Purpose and intent.* Given the findings documented in division (2) above, the purpose and intent of this Subchapter is to establish reasonable regulations for the design, construction, installation and maintenance of all exterior signs in the City of Oak Forest in order to:

- (a) Balance the right of individuals, institutions and organizations to identify and promote their commercial businesses and convey their noncommercial messages, reinforcing the right of free speech and protecting against active or passive censorship, while fulfilling the city's obligation to protect the public against the unrestricted proliferation of signs;
- (b) Protect the public health, safety and welfare;
- (c) Reduce traffic hazards;
- (d) Facilitate the creation of an attractive and harmonious community;
- (e) Protect property values while preserving and promoting community aesthetics;
- (f) Promote economic development;
- (g) Preserve and protect the right of free speech as exercised through the use of signs containing both commercial and non-commercial content; and
- (h) Focus the city's regulatory efforts on the secondary aspects associated with signage, insofar as the secondary effects may adversely affect aesthetics, vehicular and pedestrian safety.

4. *Application.*

- (a) It shall be unlawful to erect, use, display, enlarge, expand, alter, operate, maintain, locate, relocate, or remove any sign within the city except in conformance with the regulations of this Subchapter.
- (b) Any sign not expressly permitted by the regulations of this Subchapter shall be prohibited. Unless otherwise provided by ordinance, for any new zoning district created in the city, the applicable sign regulations for the new zoning district created in the city, the applicable sign regulations for the new zoning district shall be those that apply to signs in the Single-Family Residential Districts.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

B. INTERPRETATIONS AND DEFINITIONS.

1. *Interpretation*

- (a) Where there is a conflict between the provisions of this Subchapter and provisions of other ordinances, codes and/or regulations of the city, the provisions specified by this Subchapter shall prevail.
- (b) Should a conflict be identified between any specific provisions of this Subchapter, the more restrictive provision shall prevail.

2. *Sign classifications.*

- (a) For purposes of this Subchapter, each sign shall be classified both according to function and structure, as follows.

3. *Functional sign types.*

- (a) *Attention getting devices.* Streamers, posters, ribbons, lights bulbs, light bands, spinners and attention-getting devices that move, blinking, electronic and/or flashing signs, except time, temperature and date signs, signs which exhibit changing natural and/or artificial light or colored effects, and festoon lighting, signs (other than neon signs) which contain bare, unshielded light or tubes which are visible from a public street and/or a private residence.
- (b) *Banner sign.* A sign consisting of cloth, canvas, fabric, paper or other light material that is secured or mounted so as to permit movement of the material, but not an official flag or emblem.
- (c) *Civic event sign.* A sign that announces or identifies a civic use, purpose, event or program.
- (d) *Construction sign.* A sign that announces the subdivision, development, construction or other improvement of a lot and located on that lot during the subdivision, development, construction or improvement.
- (e) *Development map or directory sign.* A sign that depicts some or all of the buildings and other prominent features of, or that lists, by address or other summary means, some or all of the locations within a multi-building development containing, and limited to, information to assist persons coming on the lot to locate destinations within the lot.
- (f) *Governmental sign.* A sign that is erected and maintained pursuant to, and in the discharge of, any governmental function, or required by any law, ordinance or governmental regulation.
- (g) *Holiday decorations.* Signs that are in the nature of decorations, clearly incidental to, and customarily and commonly associated with, any national, local or religious holiday.
- (h) *Home occupation sign.* A sign that identifies a home occupation.

- (i) *Identification sign.* A sign that is limited in content to the name, trademark or other readily recognized symbol or address, or any combination thereof, of a building or development that advertises the name of a business, profession or service being conducted on the lot on which the sign is located.
- (j) *Inflatable sign.* A temporary sign made of flexible material or fabric that is made to take on a three-dimensional shape (to blow up like a balloon) when filled sufficient volume of air or gas.
- (k) *Joint-identification sign.* A sign that serves as a common or collective identification sign for two or more business, professional or service uses on the same lot.
- (l) *Lawn service sign.* A sign that announces that lawn services are provided on a lot.
- (m) *Memorial sign.* A sign that memorializes a person, place, event or structure.
- (n) *Nameplate sign.* A sign that is limited in content to the name or address, or both, of the owner or occupant of a building or lot on which it is located.
- (o) *Off-site advertising sign.* Any sign, including, without limitation, a billboard, that advertises or directs attention to a business, commodity, service or activity conducted, sold, or offered on property other than the lot on which the sign is located.
- (p) *Official flag or emblem.* A flag or emblem of a government, college, theological seminary, religious institution or commercial enterprise.
- (q) *On-site directory sign.* A sign, not readable from any public right-of-way, that lists the names and locations of some or all of the occupants or uses of a building or group of buildings, or both.
- (r) *On-site informational sign.* A sign, other than a development map or directory sign, that is commonly associated with, and limited to, information and directions necessary or convenient for persons coming on the lot, including, without limitation, ground signs marking entrances and exits, parking areas, one-way drives, restrooms, and pick-up and delivery areas or window signs identifying, without limitation, entrances, exits, hours of operation, credit cards accepted, contact information and services provided.
- (s) *Personal event sign.* A sign that announces a personal event or occasion, such as a birth, graduation or other celebration or event.
- (t) *Political election sign.* A sign that announces or supports political candidates or issues in connection with any national, state or local election.
- (u) *Political message sign.* A sign, other than a political election sign, that expresses a noncommercial message regarding an issue of political or public concern.

- (v) *Promotional sign.* A sign that promotes a sale, seasonal product or activity, or community or civic event.
- (w) *Public utility sign.* A sign that is erected by public utility companies or construction companies to warn of danger or hazardous conditions, including, without limitation, any sign indicating the presence of underground cables, gas lines and similar devices.
- (x) *Reader board sign.* A sign that has changeable, physical copy for the purposes of advertising special events, sales or information changed on a regular basis. Reader board signs do not include electronic message centers.
- (y) *Real estate sign.* A sign that advertises the offering for sale, rent or lease, as well as the status of the sale, rental, lease or management, of the lot upon which the sign is located.
- (z) *Security sign.* A sign that announces that a security system is maintained on a lot.
- (aa) *Street clock.* Any timepiece erected upon a standard and located on a sidewalk or an exterior of a building or structure for the convenience of the public and which advertises a place of business.

4. *Structural sign types.*

- (a) *Awning, or canopy.* A sign that is mounted or painted on or attached to an awning, or canopy.
- (b) *Electronic Message Center.* A sign that has changeable, electronic copy composed of a series of lights that is used as an accessory display tool to the primary business sign for informational purposes only. A time, temperature, or fuel price only sign shall not be considered an electronic message center.
- (c) *Ground sign.* A sign that is mounted to or part of an independent base affixed to the ground and designed as an integral part of that base, the height of which *base is three feet or less.*
- (d) *Mobile sign.* A sign that is attached to, or carried by, any motor vehicle, bicycle or other similar apparatus.
- (e) *Moving or animated sign.* Any sign or part of a sign that changes physical position by any movement or rotation or that gives the visual impression of movement or rotation, excluding electronic message center signs as defined above.
- (f) *Pole sign.* A sign that is supported by one or more columns, uprights, poles or braces that extend from the ground or from an object on or in the ground.
- (g) *Portable sign.* A non-illuminated sign that is not permanently affixed to a building, a structure or the ground.

- (h) *Projecting sign.* A sign that is affixed to any building or structure that projects outward from the building or structure by more than 12 inches.
- (i) *Sign Walker.* A temporary sign being held by, attached to, or in the form of a person or animal advertising for a business that is within the incorporated limits of the City and whose primary entrance is located 500 feet from the described sign.
- (j) *Temporary sign.* A sign that is professionally constructed of cloth, canvas, fabric, paper, plywood or other light material, is not attached to a permanent sign, and intended to be displayed for a short period of time. Without limitation of the foregoing, and without preclusion of any other functional sign from being considered to be a temporary sign, the following signs shall, for purposes of this Subchapter, be deemed to be temporary signs:
 - (i) Civic event signs;
 - (ii) Construction signs;
 - (iii) Holiday decorations;
 - (iv) Inflatable sign;
 - (v) Personal event signs;
 - (vi) Political election signs;
 - (vii) Promotional signs;
 - (viii) Real estate signs;
 - (ix) Sign Walker;
 - (x) Banner signs;
 - (xi) Portable signs; and
 - (xii) Mobile signs.
- (k) *Wall sign.* A sign that is affixed directly to or otherwise inscribed on an exterior wall, including doors, of any building, retaining wall, or other structure. Supports or braces from a wall sign to the roof shall not cause a wall sign to be considered to be a roof sign under this Subchapter.
- (l) *Window display.*
 - (i) The display of actual merchandise, products, and goods sold, as well as the means or material necessary to display those items, including, without limitation, the following:
 - i. Stands;
 - ii. Mannequins;
 - iii. Platforms;
 - iv. Lighting; and
 - v. Backdrops, provided that: a backdrop shall be located behind the displayed items; and a backdrop that is not permanently constructed to fully enclose the window area shall not occupy more than 25% of the window area; and any sign that is part of a backdrop shall not exceed 50% of the window area. For purposes of this Section B, a "backdrop" shall be defined as a temporary structure that has been suspended from

a ceiling, set on the ground, or otherwise supported and does not fully enclose a window area.

- (ii) Window displays shall not include words or messages on any board, banner, or other sign face including, without limitation, a business name, a product name, price or discount information, or description of services provided by that business.
- (m) *Window sign.* A sign that is painted on or applied or attached to a window, or that is located within the interior of a structure and that is plainly visible and is erected, constructed or maintained for the primary purpose of being viewed from the exterior of that structure. A window display, as defined by this Subchapter, shall not be considered to be a window sign.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

C. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

1. *General requirements for a sign permit.* Except as provided in Section I of this Subchapter below, it shall be unlawful for any person to erect, relocate or structurally alter, within the City of Oak Forest, any sign or other advertising structure as defined in this Subchapter, without first obtaining a building permit from the Building Commissioner.
2. *Authority.* The Community Development Director may, in accordance with the procedures and standards set forth in this Section C, grant zoning approval of signs authorizing the construction and maintenance of signs subject to the regulations and standards contained in this Subchapter.
3. *Procedure.*
 - (a) *Application.* An application for a sign permit shall be filed by the owner of, or any person having a contractual interest in, the lot on which the sign is proposed to be located on a form provided by the Community Development Director and shall require the applicant to provide the following information at a minimum:
 - (i) The name, address and telephone number of the applicant, owner or owner's representative, and the person, firm, corporation or association erecting the sign;
 - (ii) A site plan, drawn to scale, depicting the location of the building, structure and lot upon which the proposed sign is to be attached or erected;
 - (iii) Photographs or drawings depicting the proposed sign and its relationship to the building to which it is to be mounted or the surrounding area;
 - (iv) Drawings of the proposed sign depicting the specifications and method of construction and attachment or erection, as the case may be, to the building or ground;

- (v) One accurate color sketch or rendering depicting the proposed colors proposed to be used on the sign and the existing surrounding materials;
 - (vi) If required by the Community Development Director, a master signage plan depicting all existing and proposed signs on the building or the lot or both;
 - (vii) Written consent of the owner, or the authority to act on behalf of the owner, of the building, structure and lot on which the sign is to be erected;
 - (viii) If required by the Community Development Director, a copy of an electrical permit;
 - (ix) If required by the Community Development Director, a copy of an insurance policy or bond;
 - (xi) If required by the Community Development Director, a copy of stress sheets and calculations showing that the structure is designed for dead load and wind pressure in any direction in the amount required by this Subchapter and all other laws and ordinances of the city;
 - (xii) A survey indicating the lot lines and a drawing that shows the mounting technique and the underground details of the sign installation; and
 - (xiii) Any other information the Community Development Director shall require to show full compliance with this Subchapter and all other laws and ordinances of the city.
- (a) *Fees.* Sign permit fees shall be in the amounts established from time to time in the Building Code.
 - (b) *Action by the Community Development Director.* Within 60 days following the proper filing of a completed application, the Community Development Director shall either grant the sign permit or, by written notice stating the reasons therefore, grant the application with modifications or conditions, deny the application, or, where applicable, refer the application to the Planning and Zoning Commission for its review pursuant to Section D of this Subchapter. The failure of the Community Development Director to act within 60 days, or such further time to which the applicant shall agree, shall be deemed to be a decision granting the sign permit.
2. *Standards for sign permits.* No sign permit shall be granted pursuant to this Subchapter unless the applicant shall establish, at a minimum, the following conditions.

- (a) *Visual compatibility.* The proposed sign shall be visually compatible with the building or lot on which the sign is proposed to be located and surrounding buildings and structures in terms of height, size, proportion, scale, materials, texture, colors and shapes.
 - (b) *Quality of design and construction.* The proposed sign shall be constructed and maintained with a high quality design and materials and a good relationship with the design and character of the neighborhood.
 - (c) *Appropriateness to site.* The proposed sign shall be appropriate to its location in terms of design, landscaping and orientation on the lot, and will not create a hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic, detract from the value or enjoyment of neighboring properties, or unduly increase the number of signs in the area.
 - (d) *Compliance with this Subchapter.* The proposed sign shall comply with all applicable provisions of this Subchapter.
 - (e) *Sign dimensions maximums.* Where detailed in this Subchapter, listed dimensional standards are the highest measure of maximum amounts allowed for the proposed conditions; however, such factors associated with the subject site or building, and other extenuating circumstances may reduce the allowable maximum dimensional standards in order to promote proportional signage with the associated structure and property.
3. *Conditions on sign permits.* As part of a sign permit, the Community Development Director may impose any conditions and limitations concerning the construction and maintenance of the sign as may be necessary or appropriate to insure satisfaction of the standards set forth in this Section C of this Subchapter and the purposes and objectives of this Subchapter and to minimize any adverse effects upon other property in the vicinity. These conditions shall be expressly set forth in the sign permit. Violation of any condition or limitation shall be a violation of this Subchapter and shall constitute grounds for revocation of the sign permit.
4. *Expiration of permits.*
- (a) *Permanent signs.*
 - (i) Sign permits for any sign other than a temporary sign shall remain in effect until such time that the sign face, sign copy or structural elements are changed, modified or altered so as to deviate from the terms or conditions of the sign permit.
 - (ii) Any change, modification or alteration shall require the issuance of a new sign permit.
 - (b) *Temporary signs.* Sign permits for temporary signs shall remain in effect for a period not to exceed 30 days. Temporary signs shall be removed within seven days after the

expiration of the sign permit. Within any one-year period, only four new sign permits for a temporary sign shall be permitted to be issued for any lot.

5. *Revocation of permit.* Any sign permit issued pursuant to this Section C of this Subchapter may be revoked or suspended by the Community Development Director if the holder of the sign permit violates the terms of the sign permit or any other provision of this Subchapter.
6. *Effect of issuance of a sign permit.* The issuance of a sign permit shall not authorize construction or maintenance of any sign, but shall merely authorize the preparation, filing and processing of applications for any other permits or approvals that may be required by the codes and ordinances of the city, including, without limitation, a building permit.
7. *Final inspection.*
 - (a) Within 14 days following the issuance of a sign permit, the owner shall schedule with the Community Development Director a final inspection of the sign.
 - (b) If the owner fails to schedule a final inspection, or if Community Development Director determines at the final inspection that the sign fails to comply with this Subchapter, the Community Development Director shall have the authority to revoke the sign permit and require that the sign be removed.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

D. SIGNS THAT REQUIRE REVIEW BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION.

1. *Signs requiring review.* Prior to the issuance of a sign permit by the Community Development Director pursuant to Section C of this Subchapter above, the following signs require review at a duly noticed public meeting by, and approval of, the Planning and Zoning Commission, pursuant to the procedures contained in division (3). below.
 - (a) The erection, installation or maintenance of any sign that is contemplated to be part of, or in connection with, a planned unit development that is approved pursuant to the Zoning Code, except for those signs that are consistent with a previously approved sign package.
 - (b) The erection, installation or maintenance of any sign that is contemplated to be part of, or in connection with a use that requires a conditional or special permit pursuant to the Zoning Code, except for those signs that are consistent with a previously approved sign package.
 - (c) The erection, installation or maintenance of any sign that is identified in this Subchapter designated as requiring specific review by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
2. *Standards.* No sign permit application shall be approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission unless the Planning and Zoning shall find that:

- (a) The proposed sign is not contrary to the intent of this Subchapter;
- (b) The proposed sign shall be erected and maintained in accordance with the intent of this Subchapter;
- (c) The proposed sign shall comply with all applicable provisions of this Subchapter;
- (d) The proposed sign shall comply with the standards for sign permits set forth in Section C of this Subchapter;
- (e) The proposed sign is reasonably necessary, and the degree of the exception is the minimum necessary to accomplish the purpose of the sign; and
- (f) The sign will not result in adverse effects upon the neighboring properties, or the health, safety and general welfare of the public.

3. *Procedures for Planning and Zoning Commission review.*

- (a) *Application.* If Planning and Zoning Commission approval is required pursuant to this Subchapter, upon submittal to the Community Development Director of a completed sign permit application as required pursuant to Section C of this Subchapter, the Community Development Director shall refer the application and all other relevant documents to the Planning and Zoning Commission for its consideration and decision.
- (b) *Notice.* Notice of the public meeting shall be provided in accordance with 11-203 of this Code.
- (c) *Meeting before the Planning and Zoning Commission.* The Planning and Zoning Commission shall consider the application at a public meeting commenced within 60 days after the completed sign permit application is submitted to the Community Development Director. At the meeting, the applicant and all interested parties shall have an opportunity to be heard and to present testimony and documentary evidence relating to the proposed sign.
- (d) *Decision.* The Planning and Zoning Commission shall either:
 - (i) Approve the sign permit application and direct the Community Development Director to issue a sign permit if, based on the application, the testimony, and other information presented at the meeting, and all other reliable and relevant evidence, documents and information, the Planning and Zoning Commission determines that the proposed sign, including illumination plans if applicable, complies and is consistent with the provisions of this Subchapter; or
 - (ii) Deny the sign permit application if the Planning and Zoning Commission determines that the application and consideration of the testimony and other evidence presented at the meeting, as well as other reliable and relevant evidence,

documents and information reveal that the applicant has not satisfied the conditions of this Subchapter. The Planning and Zoning Commission's decision shall be forwarded in writing to the applicant and the Building Department within 30 days of the decision.

- (e) *Conditions.* The Planning and Zoning Commission may approve a sign permit subject to any conditions the Planning and Zoning Commission shall deem necessary to protect the public welfare and to achieve the purposes of this Subchapter.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

E. SIGN PACKAGES.

1. (A) *Intent.* The intent of the regulation of sign packages is to ensure that properties with multiple buildings, and buildings with multiple occupants or tenants, provide signage that is well designed and consistent throughout that building or property, while providing some flexibility in the design of the signs that are approved through a sign package.
2. (B) *Process.*
 - (a) *Special permit & public hearing.* A special permit application must be submitted for any sign package or amendment thereof, and a public hearing must be held in accordance with the City Zoning Ordinance.
 - (b) *Sign package review required.* A sign package shall be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission for its review and approval in accordance with this Section E, prior to issuance of any sign permit for the building, for:
 - (i) Any newly constructed building that contains multiple storefronts with ground floor entrances; or
 - (ii) Any existing building that contains multiple storefronts with ground floor entrances for which a building permit application has been submitted requesting approval of exterior facade improvements relating to all of the multiple storefronts with ground floor entrances.
 - (c) *Sign package review voluntary.* A sign package may be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission for its review and approval in accordance with this Section E for:
 - (i) Any property containing more than one building for which an application has been submitted requesting approval of more than one sign on that property;
 - (ii) Any property that has frontage along two or more streets for which an application has been submitted requesting approval of more than one sign on that property; and

(iii) Any multiple tenant building for which an application has been submitted requesting approval of more than one sign on that building or property.

3. *Contents of sign package.*

- (a) An application for approval of a sign package shall include details regarding the design and location of all proposed signs for which a sign permit is required.
- (b) The sign package shall clearly define the areas of the building or property for which approval of a sign package is requested. At a minimum, the following details shall be provided in the application submittal for approval of a sign package:
 - (i) Sign design, material(s), anchorage and support(s);
 - (ii) Sign location(s);
 - (iii) Sign color(s);
 - (iv) Sign dimensions; and
 - (v) Method of illumination.

4. *Standards.*

- (a) No sign package shall be approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission unless the Planning and Zoning Commission shall find that the sign package incorporates signage that is:
 - (i) Unified and consistent throughout the building or property;
 - (ii) Of a higher quality than would be otherwise required under the applicable sign regulations; and
 - (iii) Compatible with the design and materials of the building or buildings, and consistent with the area surrounding the building or property.
- (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Subchapter, an approved sign package shall govern the installation and maintenance of all signage requiring a sign permit on the building or property, or portion thereof, for which the sign package has been approved.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

F. VARIATIONS AND APPEALS.

1. *Right to petition for a variance.*

- (a) A request for a variance from the provisions of this Subchapter may be filed with the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- (b) The Commission may recommend the granting of a variance, subject to final approval by the City Council, should they determine the unusual shape or topography of the

subject property has created circumstances which result in an unusual hardship being inflicted on the applicant through the strict enforcement of the provisions of this Subchapter.

(c) The degree of relief granted from the provisions by the City Council shall be limited to those variances which:

(i) Allow a setback less than that required under this Subchapter; or

(ii) Allow the area or height of a sign to be increased by up to 25% of the maximum allowable height or facing.

2. *Revocation of permit.* Should the Community Development Director determine there has been a violation of the provisions of this Subchapter or a misrepresentation of fact on the application form, the Community Development Director may, in his or her sole and absolute discretion, revoke any such applicant's permit issued under this Subchapter. The applicant may appeal the revocation to the Planning and Zoning Commission in accordance with the appeal process and procedures established in this Section F.
3. *Appeals.* Within 30-days after any adverse decision by the Community Development Director under Section C of this Subchapter or City Council on an application for a permit under this Subchapter, the applicant or permittee shall be entitled to a speedy and expeditious review process in accordance with the applicable provisions of this Subchapter, and those other codes, regulations, policies and *procedures* covering the appeal of any and all administrative review or procedural decision exercised in conjunction with an application for permit or a request for variance under the provisions specified herein.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

G. General Standards.

The following general standards shall apply to all signs.

1. *Illumination.*

- (a) *Location and Design of Light Source.* Whenever an external artificial light source is used for a sign, such source shall be located, shielded and directed so as not to be directly visible from any public street or private residence. No receptacle or device housing a permitted light source for a sign shall protrude more than twelve (12) inches from the face of the sign or building to which it is attached; provided, however, that a receptacle or device housing a permitted light source for a sign may be located more than twelve (12) inches from the face of the sign if such light source is ground mounted, locked in place, and cannot be redirected. Decorative serpentine fixtures associated with awnings and canopies may extend beyond twelve (12) inches with approved anchoring and electrical installation by the Building Commissioner.

- (b) *Level of Illumination.* In no event shall the illumination of any sign, resulting from any internal or external artificial light source, exceed 175 foot candles when measured with a standard light meter held perpendicular to the sign face at a distance equal to the narrowest dimension of such face. All artificial illumination shall be so designed, located, shielded, and directed as to prevent the casting of glare or direct light upon adjacent property or streets.
 - (c) *Signs Adjacent to Residential Areas.* Any illuminated sign located on a lot abutting or across a street from, and visible from, any residentially zoned area shall not be illuminated between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. except that such sign may remain illuminated during such time as the activity to which the sign pertains is open for business so long as such sign is not a public or private nuisance.
 - (d) *Flashing Lights Prohibited.* Except for public service signs, electronic message centers, or when expressly permitted by this Subchapter, no flashing, blinking or intermittent lights shall be permitted.
 - (e) *Neon and Other Illuminated Tubing.* Neon and other illuminated tubing may be provided as an architectural enhancement subsequent to design review approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
2. *Sign Colors.* No sign shall employ more than four (4) colors plus black and white, unless otherwise expressly addressed in this Chapter.
 3. *Electrical Elements.* All wiring, fittings and materials used in the construction, connection and operation of electrically illuminated signs shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Oak Forest Building Code.

No metal sign illuminated by any means requiring internal wiring and no electrical fixtures attached to any sign shall be lower than nine (9) feet from grade unless it is grounded by the use of a grounding conductor run with the circuit conductors and is also grounded by being bonded to a grounding electrode at the sign site.

4. *Structural Elements.* The construction and structural components of all signs shall be in accordance with the standards and regulations of the Oak Forest Building Code. All permanent signs shall be constructed of fire-resistant materials and shall be capable of withstanding wind pressures of at least thirty (30) pounds per square foot of surface area and of receiving dead loads based on the actual weight of the structure. In no case shall the structural elements of a pylon sign extend above the top of the sign face.
5. *Minimum Elevation of Certain Signs.* The bottom of every awning, canopy, wall and pylon sign shall be elevated at least eight (8) feet above grade. Whenever possible wall signs on the same façade shall maintain the same top and bottom elevations above grade.
6. *Obstruction of Access Ways.* No sign or sign structure shall obstruct free ingress to or egress from a fire escape, door, window or other required access way.

7. *Obstruction of Window Surface.* No sign shall project over, occupy or obstruct any window surface required for light or ventilation by any applicable provision of the Oak Forest Building Code.
8. *Traffic Safety.*
 - (a) *Confusion With Traffic Signals.* No sign shall be maintained at any location where by reason of its position, size, shape, content, color, or illumination it may obstruct, impair, obscure, interfere with the view of, or be confused with, any traffic control sign, sign or device, or where it may interfere with, mislead or confuse traffic.
 - (b) *Obstruction of Sight Triangles Prohibited.* No sign, nor any part of a sign other than a supporting pole or brace no greater than eighteen (18) inches in width or diameter shall be located lower than eight (8) feet from grade within the area of any sight triangle as defined in Subsection 12-206 S of this Code.
9. *Signs of Right-of-Way.* Except as provided in this paragraph, no sign except governmental signs authorized in this Subchapter shall be placed in or extend into or over any public property or right-of-way. Temporary signs advertising civic functions may extend into or over a public right-of-way upon the specific prior approval of the Community Development Director on the basis of need and impact on pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and impact on surrounding properties.
10. *Sign Identification.* All signs shall be plainly marked with the name of the person, firm or corporation hanging or erecting the sign and the sign permit number.
11. *Sign Maintenance.* The owner of a sign and the owner of the premises on which such sign is located shall be jointly and severally liable to maintain such sign, including its illumination sources, in compliance with this Code and all applicable laws, in a safe and secure condition, and in a neat and orderly condition and good working order at all times, and to prevent the development of any rust, corrosion, rotting or other deterioration in the physical appearance or safety of such sign. The premises around ground and pylon signs shall be kept clean and free of all rubbish and weeds.
12. *Sign Measurement.*
 - (a) *Area to be Included.* The supporting structure or bracing of a sign shall be omitted in measuring the area of the sign unless such structure or bracing is made part of the message or face of the sign. Where a sign has more than one display face, all faces shall be included in determining the area of the sign.
 - (b) *Area of Signs With Backing.* The area of all signs with backing shall be measured by computing the area of the sign backing.
 - (c) *Area of Signs Without Backing.* The area of all signs without backing shall be measured by computing the area of the smallest regular geometric figures that can separately encompass all words, letters, figures, emblems and other elements of the sign message.

- (d) *Area of Signs With and Without Backing.* The area of all signs formed by a combination of elements with and without backing shall be measured by counting the area of such elements measured in accordance the foregoing subparagraphs.
 - (e) *Neon and other illuminated tubing.* When approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission, every lineal foot of neon and other illuminated tubing shall be counted as two square foot of sign area.
13. *Signs on Lots With Multiple Users.* Where more than one user occupies a zoning lot, the owner of the lot shall be responsible for allocating permitted signage among such users.
14. *General Safety.* Notwithstanding any other provision of this Subchapter, no sign shall be located in any area or in any manner so as to create a nuisance or a threat to the public safety and welfare.

H. PERMITTED SIGNS BY ZONING DISTRICT.

(A) Signs requiring a sign permit in the following Zoning Districts: R1, R2, R3, R4, R5,

Type of Sign	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	C1	C2	C3	O1	II	OS	IB
Attention getting devices (a)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Development map or directory	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Governmental	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Home occupation	S	S	S	S	S	S	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Identification	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Joint-identification	S	S	S	S	S	S	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Lawn service	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Memorial	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Nameplate	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Off-site advertising (b)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	S	-	-
Official flag or emblem	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
On-site directory				-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
On-site informational	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Political message	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Projecting sign	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Public utility	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Reader board	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	S	S	-	-	-	-
Reader board (portable)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Security	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Street clock	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	S	S	-	-	-	-
Awning, or canopy	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Electronic Message Center	-	-	-	-	-	-	P/S						
Ground	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Pole	-	-	-	-	-	-	S	S	S	S	S	S	S

P = Permitted use S = Special permit required P/S- Permitted or special permit depending on certain conditions.

(a) Attention Getting Signs are prohibited with the exception of New and Used Car Dealerships as provided for under Section K.

(b) Off-site advertising shall be limited to identification/joint-identification signs for developments as needed to provide direction/location visibility when not possible to be achieved on site.

Type of Sign	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	C1	C2	C3	O1	I1	OS	IB
Temporary Signs													
Banner	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Civic event	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Construction	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Holiday	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Inflatable	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Mobile	-	-		-	-	-	P	P	P	-	-	-	-
Personal	P	P	P	P	P	P	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Event	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Political election	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Portable	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Promotional	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Real estate	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Sign Walker	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Wall				-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Window display	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	-	-	-	-
Window sign	-	-	-	-	-	-	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

P = Permitted use S = Special permit required P/S- Permitted or special permit subject to certain conditions.

- (a) Attention Getting Signs are prohibited with the exception of New and Used Car Dealerships.
- (b) Off-site advertising shall be limited to identification/joint-identification signs for developments as needed to provide direction/location visibility when not possible to be achieved on site.

I. SIGNS EXEMPTED FROM PERMIT REQUIREMENTS.

The following signs shall be exempt from the permit requirements of this Subchapter:

Exempt Sign Type	Number of Signs Permitted on Lot	Maximum Permitted Sign Area	Maximum Permitted Sign Height
Civic event (a)	-	-	-
Construction	One	12 SF in residential zoning districts total; 32 SF in all other zoning districts total	Four feet
Lawn service	One	Six sf total	Four feet
Memorial	One	Four sf total	Four feet
Nameplate	One	1 sf for single-family dwellings total, 3 sf for multi-family buildings total	Four feet
Official flag or emblem	One	24 sf total	15 feet
Personal event (b)	One	32 sf total	Seven feet
Political election (c)	No limit Four	Six sf 32 sf total	Four feet
Political message	Two	Six sf	Four feet
Real estate (d)	One sign, two signs if the lot has double frontage	6 sf one side (12 sf on 2 sides total) for single-family residential properties 16 sf on one side (32 sf on 2 sides total) for all other properties	4 feet for single-family residential properties 6 feet for all other properties
Window sign	-	25% of the window area	-

(a) Signs do not require a permit and are permitted in the public right-of-way.

(b) Signs shall be posted no more than three days prior to and removed no later than one day after the date of the event.

(c) For residential zoned property, political signs do not have any time limitation. For non-residential zoned property, political signs shall be erected no earlier than 45 days prior to an election or referendum and removed no later than seven days after the election or referendum. Signs shall be placed on private property only.

(d) Signs for single-family residential properties shall be removed no later than seven days following the sale or rental of the subject property. Signs for all other properties shall be removed no longer than fourteen (14) days

following the date upon which the development or structure is ninety percent (90%) sold or leased or one (1) year, which is less.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

J. PERMITTED SIGNS REQUIRING SIGN PERMITS.

Sign Type	Number of Signs Permitted on Lot	Maximum Permitted Sign Area	Maximum Permitted Sign Height
Attention getting devices (a)	-	-	-
Development map or directory	One	Ten sf total	4 feet
Home occupation	-	-	-
Electronic Message Center	Refer to Section K, Structural Type Regulations		
Identification	One	25 sf total	Eight feet
Joint-identification	One	40 sf total	Ten feet
Off-site advertising	-	-	-
On-site directory	One	Ten sf total	Four feet
On-site informational	One	Three sf total	Four feet
Projecting	Refer to Section K Structural Type Regulations		
Public utility	-	-	-
Reader board	One	40 sf total	20 feet 10 Feet
Security	One	Two sf total	-
Street clock	Refer to Section, Structural Type Regulations		
Awning, or canopy or marquee	Refer to Section K, Structural Type Regulations		
Ground	Refer to Section K, Structural Type Regulations		
Moving or animated	-	-	-
Pole	Refer to Section K, Structural Type Regulations		
Temporary signs (b)	Refer to Section K, Structural Type Regulations for all Temporary Signs		
Banner (c)	-	32 sf total	4 feet
Portable	-	32 sf total	4 feet

Promotional (d)	-	32 sf total, except inflatable signs	6 feet, except inflatable signs shall not exceed 15 feet
Wall	Refer to Section K, Structural Type Regulations		
Window display (e)	-	-	-
(a) Attention Getting Signs are only permitted for New and Used Car Dealerships. These signs will still require the issuance of a permit. See Section K, Structural Type Regulations for all Temporary Signs.			
(b) Temporary Signs. Sign permits for temporary signs shall remain in effect for a period not to exceed 30 days. Temporary signs shall be removed within seven days after the expiration of the sign permit. Within any one year period, only four new sign permits for a temporary sign shall be permitted to be issued for any lot.			
(c) Banners are also permitted on city light poles subject to City Council approval.			
(d) (1) Special events such as: carnivals, circuses and the like. These signs shall not be erected more than 14-days in advance of the event, and shall be removed no later than three days after the termination of the event. The signs shall be placed on private property in a manner that does not obstruct the vision of pedestrians or vehicles accessing a public or private right-of-way; (2) Including, hot air balloons are permitted for grand openings, sales, and other special events on a temporary basis, for no more than three days at a time.			
(e) Window Display. The display of actual merchandise, products, and goods sold, as well as the means or material necessary to display those items, including, without limitation, the following: (a) stands; (b) mannequins; (c) platforms; (d) lighting; and (e) backdrops, provided that (1) a backdrop shall be located behind the displayed items and (2) a backdrop that is not permanently constructed to fully enclose the window area shall not occupy more than 25% of the window area and (3) any sign that is part of a backdrop shall not exceed 50% of the window area. For purposes of this Subchapter, a “backdrop” shall be defined as a temporary structure that has been suspended from a ceiling, set on the ground, or otherwise supported and does not fully enclose a window area.			

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

K. STRUCTURAL TYPE REGULATIONS.

1. *Ground signs.*

(a) *Construction of ground signs.*

- (i) *Materials required.* Ground signs shall have a surface or facing of incombustible materials with bases constructed of decorative durable materials, such as brick, stone, or decorative masonry block; provided, however, that structural trim composed of combustible material, may be used.

- (ii) *Secured letters or fixtures.* All letters, figures, characters or representations in cut-out or irregular form, maintained in conjunction with, attached to, and/or superimposed upon any ground sign, shall be safely or securely built and/or attached to the sign structure.
- (iii) *Landscaping.* Ground signs shall be landscaped at their base in a manner harmonious with the landscape concept for the whole site. Landscaping shall form an attractive, dense cluster at the base of the sign that is equally attractive in winter and summer. Planting beds shall extend one and a half (1.5) feet from the sign base on all sides. The landscape area shall be curbed at the perimeter when the sign is incorporated into a hard-surfaced parking area. Shrubs or other ground covers shall be a minimum of 60% of the height of the base at planting without blocking the sign copy for the purpose to cover or soften the base. If the proposed sign base is visually enhanced, the Community Development Director may grant partial relief of the landscaping requirement.

(b) *Standards for ground signs.*

- (i) *Height and area limitations.* Ground signs shall not exceed a height greater than 10 feet above the adjoining ground level, if such ground level is higher than the street level. Ground signs shall not exceed 100 square feet on one side (200 square feet on two sides) in surface area for the first ground sign. Any ground sign beyond the first ground sign shall not exceed fifty-percent the area of the first sign.
- (ii) *Quantity and Spacing.* One ground sign shall be permitted per street frontage on a zoning lot with 100 or more lineal feet of continuous street frontage. Zoning lots with a continuous street frontage over 600 lineal feet may apply for a second sign on that street frontage as a special permit. No ground sign shall be closer than two feet away from any other sign, building and/or structure.
- (iii) *Setbacks.* Ground signs shall be erected no less than two feet from the property line of the subject property on which the sign is erected. Ground signs shall not encroach into a sight triangle as defined in Subsection 12-206 of this Code
- (iv) *For lease/for sale component.* In lieu of an exempt real estate sign as provided for under Section I of this Subchapter, a ground sign for a multi-tenant building or lot may contain an additional 16 square feet of area on one side (32 square feet on two sides total) for the purposes of advertising for lease or for sale units. This additional component may be used for additional signage for the principal use when the building or lot is fully leased or sold. The addition of this component precludes any multi-tenant building or lot from displaying an exempt real estate sign as provided for under Section I of this Subchapter.

2. *Pole signs.*

(a) *Construction of pole signs.*

- (i) *Materials required.* Pole signs shall have a surface or facing of incombustible materials with poles and other support structures enclosed with decorative durable materials, such as brick, stone, or decorative masonry block; provided, however, that structural trim composed of combustible material, may be used.
- (ii) *Secured letters or fixtures.* All letters, figures, characters or representations in cut-out or irregular form, maintained in conjunction with, attached to, and/or superimposed upon any ground sign, shall be safely or securely built and/or attached to the sign structure.
- (iii) *Landscaping.* Pole signs shall be landscaped at their base in a manner harmonious with the landscape concept for the whole site. Landscaping shall form an attractive, dense cluster at the base of the sign that is equally attractive in winter and summer. Planting beds shall extend one and a half (1.5) feet from the sign base on all sides. The landscape area shall be curbed at the perimeter when the sign is incorporated into a hard-surfaced parking area. Shrubs or other ground covers shall be a minimum of 60% of the height of the base at planting without blocking the sign copy for the purpose to cover or soften the base. If the proposed sign base is visually enhanced, the Community Development Director may grant partial relief of the landscaping requirement.

(b) *Standards for pole signs.*

- (i) *Height and area limitations.* Pole signs shall not exceed a height greater than 15 feet above the adjoining ground level or street level with up to twenty-five percent increase subject to special permit approval. Pole signs shall not exceed 100 square feet on one side (200 square feet on two sides total) in surface area for the first pole sign. Any pole sign beyond the first pole sign shall not exceed fifty-percent the area of the first sign; however,
- (ii) *Quantity and Spacing.* In instances where the standards for a ground sign are not able to be physically met or extenuating circumstances exist, one pole sign shall be allowed with a special permit per street frontage on a zoning lot with 100 or more lineal feet of continuous street frontage. Zoning lots with a continuous street frontage over 600 lineal feet may apply for a second sign on that street frontage as part of a special permit. No pole sign shall be closer than two feet away from any other sign, building and/or structure.
- (iii) *Design.* Pole signs shall implement a unique design theme consisting of various shapes and styles, and shall not use the traditional style of a singular pole with a cabinet/box display attached.
- (iv) *Setbacks.* The final location of any pole sign shall be determined as a condition of the special permit with no pole sign to be erected less than two feet from the property line of the subject property on which the sign is erected and comply with the sight triangle requirement of Subsection 12-206 of this Code. The bottom

portion of any pole sign shall be at least 8 feet from the adjoining ground level. The location of the sign shall not obstruct the view of motorists and pedestrians.

- (v) *For lease/for sale component.* In lieu of an exempt real estate sign as provided for under Section I of this Subchapter, a pole sign for a multi-tenant building or lot may contain an additional 16 square feet of area on one side (32 square feet on two sides) for the purposes of advertising for lease or for sale units. This additional component may be used for additional signage for the principal use when the building or lot is fully leased or sold. The addition of this component precludes any multi-tenant building or lot from displaying an exempt real estate sign as provided for under Section I of this Subchapter.

3. *Electronic Message Centers.*

(a) *Quantity of electronic message centers.*

- (1) *Ground Sign.* One electronic message center per lot may be permitted as a component of any ground sign as an accessory tool to the primary business sign provided it meets the standards in division (b) below. Multiple electronic centers on any lot or any proposed electronic message centers not meeting the standards in division (b) below may be allowed subject to special permit approval.
- (2) *Pole Sign.* An electronic message center may be allowed as a component of any pole sign subject to special permit approval. Any electronic message center component as part of a pole sign shall be not displayed lower than 8 feet in height nor higher than 10 feet in height with any departures from these standards subject to a specific special permit approval condition.

(b) *Standards for electronic message centers.*

- (i) The electronic message center area shall not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the area of the ground sign to which it is part. The electronic message center area shall be integrated into the design of the overall ground mounted sign.
- (ii) The subject property of the electronic message center sign shall have no less than 100 feet of R.O.W. frontage on which the sign is to be located.
- (iii) Anything displayed on the lines of text on the sign shall be displayed monochromatically, and shall not change in color, intensity, brightness, shade or color gradient.
- (iv) The copy, logo or display of the sign shall remain static and unchanging for a period of no less than 10 seconds.
- (v) The sign may be used to advertise commercial products available at the businesses located on the premises, non-commercial messages from not-for-profit or governmental organizations located within the city, and advertisements for public meetings and non-commercial public events in the city.
- (vi) The message shall not consist of flashing, scintillating, chasing or animated lights, or include animated pictorial graphics.
- (vii) The illumination of the sign shall not exceed an intensity of 0.5 foot-candles as measured with a portable hand-held sensor at either the property line or ten (10) feet from the sign, whichever is lesser.

- (viii) The sign shall incorporate automatic dimmer software or solar sensors with maximum settings of 5,000 nits during daylight and 500 nits between dusk and dawn. If the city finds that the sign causes glare or otherwise impairs the vision of the driver of a motor vehicle, the owner of the sign, within twenty-four (24) hours of a request by city, shall reduce the intensity of the sign to a level acceptable to the city.
- (ix) The sign is prohibited within 100 feet of a principal residential structure if any part of the sign face would be visible from the principal residential structure.
- (x) Sign shall only operate between one half hour before the premises are opened, or 6:00 A.M., whichever is earlier and one half hour after premises is closed to the public, or 11:00 P.M., whichever is later.
- (xi) If at any time, more than thirty (30) percent of the display lights malfunction or are no longer working, the owner of the sign shall make repairs to the sign within thirty (30) days or the sign will require removal. All electronic message center signs must be equipped with a default mechanism that will stop the messaging or freeze the image in one position when a malfunction in electronic programming occurs.

4. *Wall signs.*

(a) *Construction of wall signs.*

- (i) *Materials required.* Wall signs shall have a surface or facing of incombustible materials; provided, however, that structural trim composed of combustible material, may be used.
- (ii) *Secured letters or fixtures.* All letters, figures, characters or representations in cut-out or irregular form, *maintained* in conjunction with, attached to and/or superimposed upon any wall sign, shall be safely or securely built and/or attached to the sign structure.

(b) *Location of wall signs.*

- (i) *Placement.* Wall signs shall be placed and designed so as to fit within the horizontal and vertical elements of a building. Wall signs shall not cover, wholly or in part, any window, door, architectural feature, or opening in a wall. Wall signs must be attached to a wall at a height of not less than 8 feet above ground level, and may only be located on walls that are facing a right of way.
- (ii) *Projection.* Wall signs shall not project beyond the end, tip, cornice, or roofline of the wall to which it is attached, nor extend more than six inches in depth from the wall to which they are attached.

(c) *Dimensions & Size.*

- (i) *Total maximum area.* Any wall sign shall not exceed 300 square feet in area.
- (ii) *Total wall sign area for large frontages.* The total area for all wall signs on a single tenant building, or individual tenant space in a multi-tenant building, with

more than thirty (30) feet of frontage shall not exceed more than one (1) square foot of area for each (one) 1 lineal foot of frontage facing a right of way.

(iii) *Total wall sign area for small frontages.* The total area for all wall signs on a single tenant building, or individual tenant space in a multi-tenant building, with thirty (30) feet of frontage or less shall not exceed more than one and a half (1.5) square feet of area for each one (1) lineal foot of frontage.

(iv) *Height.* The maximum height of any wall sign shall be no more than seven (7) feet.

(d) *Quantity.*

(i) *Single tenant number of wall signs.* A single tenant building shall be permitted one wall sign per frontage on public right of way or a main point of ingress/egress into the commercial development.

(ii) *Multi-tenant number of wall signs.* A multi-tenant or multi-storefront building shall be permitted one wall sign per business/store frontage on public right of way or a main point of ingress/egress into the commercial development. Each business/store shall be defined for the purposes of this Chapter as having its own secured entrance. Any business being operated inside of another business operation will not qualify for its own wall sign.

5. *Projecting signs.*

(a) *Area limitations.* Except by special permission of the City Council, projecting signs shall be limited in area as follows:

(i) Horizontal projecting signs, where width is greater than height, shall not exceed 50 square feet on each side; and

(ii) Vertical projecting signs, where height is greater than width, shall not exceed 100 square feet on each side.

(b) *Thickness limitation.* The distance measured between the principal faces of any projecting sign shall not exceed 18 inches.

(c) *Location of projecting signs.* Every projecting sign shall be placed at least 10 feet above the public sidewalk over which it is erected, no more than two feet from the face of the wall to which it is *attached*, measuring from the point of the sign nearest the wall, and at least one foot from the curb line. Every projecting sign shall be placed at least 15 feet above the public driveway, alley or thoroughfare over which it is erected.

(d) *Illumination requirements.* Projecting signs may be illuminated every night between sunset and 10:00 p.m. or the close of business day, whichever is earlier, by at least

five watts *per* square foot of sign surface, but in no case less than 60 watts for each sign surface.

6. *Temporary signs.*

(a) *Permits for temporary sign.*

(i) *Temporary sign permit required.* Permits for temporary signs shall be issued by the Community Development Director subject to the conditions of this Subchapter. Any signage departing from the standards of this Subchapter shall require special permit approval.

(ii) *Exempt temporary signs.* The following temporary signs shall not require a permit provided that meet the stated conditions.

(a) *Sign-Walkers.* A business or use is allowed one (1) sign-walker limited to activity during the following 2 hour shift periods: 6:00 a.m. until 8:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., and 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Sign-walkers must not obstruct the view or the path of travel of any pedestrian or motorist. Hand held or walking signs are allowed to promote or advertise sales, activities or events for the subject business or use in which it is associated with and within the City of Oak Forest. Sign walkers are allowed on property in which sale, activity, or event is taking place or on public sidewalk during the required times and distances regulated by this Ordinance.

A business or use is allowed one sign-walker or a temporary daily special sign(s) per street frontage; however both may not be used at the same time.

(b) *Pre-Opening and Grand Opening Temporary Signs.* One (1) temporary wall sign of a maximum of 32 square feet in area and 1 temporary ground sign of a maximum of 16 square feet on 1 side (32 square feet on two sides total) are allowed for a ninety (90) day period prior to the opening of a business or use (such as 'Coming Soon') and ninety (90) days after the opening of the business or use (such as 'Now Open'). Ground signs must be setback a minimum of 10 feet from all property lines and not obstructing the view or path of travel of any pedestrians or motorist. Any inappropriate or objectionable signage will be subject to removal by the Community Development Director or the Building Commissioner.

(c) *Daily Special Signs, Temporary.* 1 collapsible A-frame sign not to exceed 6 square feet in area (12 square feet on two sides total) is allowed. Signs may only be displayed during open to the public operating hours and must be removed daily from display after operating hours. Signs must be setback a minimum of 10 feet from all property lines and not obstructing the view or path of travel of any pedestrians or motorist.

One (1) portable (banner flags with single post on the ground) temporary sign for every 50 feet of right-of-way frontage of the business may be displayed on

the associated business property and only during open to the public operating hours and must be removed daily from display after operating hours.

A business or use is allowed one sign-walker or a temporary daily special sign per street frontage; however both may not be used at the same time.

- (d) *Attention Getting Devices Associated with New and Used Car Dealerships.* In addition to other temporary signs, new and used car dealerships shall be permitted to display attention getting devices as described in this paragraph with an approved temporary sign permit renewable annually. Attention getting devices shall be limited to non-illuminated banners and streamers attached only to light poles located on site. Any banner shall not exceed 21 square feet on one side in area with a maximum of two sides with a maximum of 4 banners per street frontage. The bottom of any such devices shall be no lower than 8 feet in height and shall not be displayed at a height greater than 15 feet. All displayed attention getting devices must be maintained in a safe and aesthetically pleasing condition, and if any devices become illegible, damaged, or otherwise in poor condition, such devices must be removed. Any devices are subject to revocation of the temporary sign permit and immediate removal based on a determination by the Community Development Director or the Building Commissioner in regards to degraded or unsafe conditions presented by any such devices. No signs may be re-established without obtaining an approved temporary sign permit.

(b) *Construction of temporary signs.*

- (i) *Materials.* Such signs shall be made of rigid materials such as wall board or other light materials with frames.
- (ii) *Weight limitation.* Temporary signs weighing in excess of 50 pounds must be approved by the Building Commissioner as conforming to the safety requirements of the Building Code of the City of Oak Forest.
- (c) *Location/projection of temporary signs.* No temporary sign shall extend over or into any street, alley, sidewalk or other public thoroughfare more than four inches from the wall upon which it is erected and shall not be placed or project over any wall opening.
- (d) *Erection, anchorage and support of temporary signs.* Every temporary sign shall be attached with wire or steel cables. No strings, ropes or wood slats for anchorage or support purposes shall be permitted.
- (e) *Duration of permits for temporary signs.* Permits for temporary signs shall authorize their erection and maintenance for period not exceeding 30 days.
- (f) *Advertising permitted on temporary signs.* The advertisement contained on any temporary sign shall pertain only to the business, industry or pursuit conducted on or

within the premises on which such sign is erected or maintained. This provision shall not apply to signs of a civic, political or religious nature.

- (g) *Temporary signs.* All temporary signs must comply with the temporary uses regulations provided in Section 9-103 of this Code.

7. *Awnings and canopies.*

- (a) *Construction of awnings and canopies.*

- (i) *Materials; awnings.* Awnings may be constructed of cloth or metal; provided, however, all frames and supports shall be of metal. All awnings shall meet the standards set forth in the design review guidelines.
- (ii) *Materials; canopies.* Canopies may be constructed of a cloth or metal hood; provided, however, all frames and supports shall be of metal. In the C-3 District, awnings shall be made of cloth; provided, however, all frames and supports shall be of metal.
- (iii) *Illumination.* In all non-residential districts except the C-3 District, awnings may be both internally and externally illuminated subject to all other applicable standards. In the C-3, any illumination must be provided by lighting cast down from above the awning or canopy via decorative serpentine fixtures subject to all other applicable standards.

- (b) *Location of awnings and canopies.*

- (i) *Heights above sidewalk; awnings.* No portion of an awning shall be less than eight feet above the level of the sidewalk or public thoroughfare over which it is erected.
- (ii) *Height above sidewalk; canopies.* No portion of a canopy shall be less than nine feet above the level of the sidewalk or public thoroughfare over which it is erected.
- (iii) *Setback from curb line.* No awning or canopy shall be permitted to extend beyond a point one foot inside the curb line.
- (iv) *Width.* No limitation on width of awnings; provided, however, full compliance with the wind pressure and dead load requirements is required. No canopy shall be permitted to exceed eight feet in width.
- (c) *Advertising.* No advertising shall be placed on any awning or canopy, except that the name of the owner and the business, industry or pursuit conducted within the premises may be painted or otherwise permanently placed in a space not exceeding twelve (12) inches in height on the front and side of the awning or canopy.

- (d) *Awnings to be rolled.* When applicable, awnings shall be rolled or folded against the building wall except when serving as a protection from sun, rain, snow or other inclement weather.

8. *Street clocks.*

- (a) *Construction requirements.* Street clocks shall be constructed of incombustible material, including the frames, braces and supports.
- (b) *Regulation of size and dial.* The dial of such clocks shall be not less than thirty (30) inches or more than forty (40) inches in diameter.
- (c) *Glass requirements.* Any glass forming a part of a clock shall be safety glass, or plate glass at least one-fourth inch thick and in case any single piece or pane of glass has an area exceeding three (3) square feet, it shall be constructed of wire glass, securely held in place.
- (d) *Moveable parts to be secured.* The cover or service openings of street clocks shall be securely fastened by metal hinges.
- (e) *Location/placement of street clocks.*
- (c) *Clocks erected on walls.* Clocks supported on the corner of any building or structure at the intersection of two streets shall not be less than fifteen (15) feet nor more than twenty (20) feet above the sidewalk and shall not project from the face or wall of the building or structure more than five feet.
- (d) *Clocks erected on sidewalk.* Clocks erected on the sidewalk shall be supported upon a post of ornamental design, shall be not less than fifteen (15) feet in height, shall be not more than twenty (20) inches from the outer edge of the curb, and shall be at least twenty (20) feet from the point of intersection of the lines of any street, measured parallel with the street.
 - (i) *Limitation on permits; clocks on sidewalks.* Any person erecting a street clock on any public sidewalk shall obtain the special written permission of the City Council in addition to all other permits required by this Subchapter.
 - (ii) *Limitation on permits; general.* No person shall be permitted to erect more than one street clock at any one business location.
 - (iii) *Advertising permitted.* Only the name of the owner, proprietor, or manager of the place of business erecting and/or maintaining such clock, and the nature of the business, shall be permitted as advertising matter on such clock.
 - (iv) *Must keep accurate time.* Street clocks shall keep accurate time and shall be promptly repaired or removed if this requirement is not complied with.

9. *Billboards; erection ban.* Subsequent to the effective date of this Subchapter, no new erection permits shall be issued by the Building Commissioner for billboards, except for areas designated for heavy industry within the City of Oak Forest. Existing billboards must comply with the requirements of Section M of this Subchapter.
10. *Exceptional & Unique Sign.* Signs not explicitly covered by this Subchapter may be allowed with special permit approval only within the context of the following considerations:
 - (a) The sign is integral to or will act as a visual enhancement to the architectural and aesthetic character to the building or lot upon which it is located;
 - (b) The sign is needed to provide advertising for a specific and unique aspect related to a particular business or lot;
 - (c) The sign utilizes technology or standards not presently covered by this Subchapter;
 - (d) The sign or elements of the sign are not explicitly prohibited under Section L of this Subchapter;
 - (e) The sign will not present visual, noise, smell or other nuisance conditions to the surrounding properties or the city as a whole; and
 - (f) The sign will not impact negatively on the health, safety, and welfare of the surrounding properties or the city as a whole.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

L. MAINTENANCE AND GENERAL SIGN PROHIBITIONS.

1. *Maintenance.* The owner or operator of a sign and the owner of the lot on which the sign is located shall be jointly and severally liable to maintain the sign, including its illumination sources, in compliance with this Subchapter and all applicable laws, in a safe, secure, neat and orderly condition, and in good-working order, at all times, and to prevent the development of any rust, corrosion, rotting or other deterioration in the physical appearance or safety of the sign. The area around any ground sign shall be kept clean and free of all rubbish, overgrown grass, other overgrown and poorly maintained landscaping, and weeds.
2. *Removal of obsolete signs.* No sign or other advertising structure shall advertise a business or product which is no longer in existence on the premises where a sign is located. Any sign shall be immediately taken down and removed from the subject property.
3. *General prohibitions.*
 - (a) No sign or other advertising structure shall be erected, relocated or maintained in a manner so as to prevent free ingress to, or egress from, any door, window or fire escape. No sign of any kind shall be attached to a standpipe or fire escape.
 - (b) No sign or other advertising structure shall:
 - (i) Obstruct free and clear vision at any street intersection;

- (ii) Interfere with, obstruct the view of, or be confused with, any authorized traffic sign, signal or device because of its position, shape or color; or
 - (iii) Make use of the words "STOP," "LOOK," "DRIVE-IN," "DANGER" or any other word, phrase, symbol or character in a manner that interferes with, misleads, or confuses pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- (c) No sign or other advertising structure shall be permitted to constitute a hazard to safety or health by reason of inadequate design, construction, repair or maintenance.
 - (d) No signs may have blinking, flashing or fluttering lights, or other illuminating device, which has a changing light intensity, brightness or color; rotating beams, beacon or flashing illumination resembling an emergency light.
 - (e) No sign or other advertising structure shall display any matter in which the dominant theme of the material, taken as a whole, appeals to a prurient interest in sex, or is patently offensive because it affronts contemporary community standards relating to the description or representation of sexual matters, and is utterly without redeeming social value.
 - (f) No sign or other advertising structure shall be painted on or attached to a motor vehicle used primarily for the display of the sign. This Subchapter shall not prohibit the identification of a business and/or its products or services on those vehicle(s) owned and operated by the business, and parked or located in a manner appropriate to the normal course of business.
 - (g) No sign or other advertising structure shall have visible moving, revolving or rotating parts or visible mechanical movement of any kind, except for the movable hands of street clocks, or other apparent visible movement achieved by electrical, electronic or mechanical means, except for time-temperature-date signs.
 - (h) No sign designed to be moved from place to place (freestanding or on wheels), that is not otherwise permanently affixed to the ground, a building or other permanent structure shall be permitted.
 - (i) No signs attached to trees, fences, public utility poles, standpipes, gutter drains or fire escapes, other than warning signs issued by government officials or public utilities, shall be permitted. Signs attached to fences shall be legal only if the sign is in regards to the identification of the fence distributor, and shall be limited to one square foot in area.
 - (j) No streamers, posters, ribbons, lights bulbs, light bands, spinners, attention-getting devices that move, blink or flash signs shall be permitted; provided, however, that this restriction shall not apply to temperature and date signs, signs which exhibit changing natural and/or artificial light or color effects, and festoon lighting, signs (other than neon signs) which contain bare, unshielded light or tubes which are visible from a public street and/or a private residence.
 - (k) No signs or decorative elements shall be allowed on roofs.

- (l) Signs which are painted directly onto an exterior wall of any building or other structure.
- (m) No sign or other advertising structure shall be illuminated with lights, which glare into or upon the surrounding area of any residential premises or distract operators of vehicles and/or pedestrians accessing and/or using the public right-of-way.
- (n) Signs which are painted directly onto any exterior wall of any building or other structure are prohibited.
- (o) Any sign comprised of plywood or similar material.
- (p) No sign, except governmental and civic signs authorized in this Subchapter, shall be placed in or extend into or over any public property or right-of-way.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

M. NONCONFORMING SIGNS.

1. *Termination by abandonment.*
 - (a) Any *nonconforming* sign that is not used for a period of 30 consecutive days, regardless of any intent to resume or to not abandon the use shall be deemed to be abandoned and shall not thereafter be reestablished or resumed. Every sign shall be immediately removed or brought into conformity with the provisions of this Subchapter.
 - (b) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Section M, any period of discontinuance caused by government actions, strikes, material shortages, or “acts of God,” and without any contributing fault by the nonconforming user, shall not be considered in calculating the length of discontinuance for purposes of this Section M.
2. *Termination by change of business ownership.* Any nonconforming sign related to a closed business shall be brought into compliance with this Subchapter upon any change of ownership or control of the business.
3. *Termination by amortization.* Any nonconforming sign, or any nonconforming element of a sign capable of change or discontinuance separate from other elements of the sign that has not been terminated pursuant to any other provision of this Subchapter shall be terminated no later than the date provided in the following schedule.

Original Value of Sign or Sign Element as Shown on Sign Permit	Removal Required Within Following Period of Time*
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Less than \$1,000	1 year
\$1,001 to \$3,000	2 years
\$3,001 to \$5,000	3 years
\$5,001 to \$7,000	4 years
Over \$7,000	5 years
<p>* Removal required within the following period of time: The owner will have the provided period of time to remove the nonconforming sign. The time period will begin from the date in which the Community Development Director has notified the owner of the nonconforming sign.</p>	

4. *Special provisions regarding nonconforming billboards.* It is the policy of the city to avoid unnecessary and costly litigation resulting from requiring removal of a nonconforming billboard. The following procedures have been adopted to provide for a negotiated, mutually beneficial, cost effective method of removing, or otherwise bringing into compliance with the provisions of this division, nonconforming billboards.
 - (a) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Section M or elsewhere in this Subchapter, an owner or operator of a nonconforming billboard shall not be subject to the amortization or other nonconforming use provisions of this Subchapter.
 - (b) A nonconforming billboard shall be removed upon:
 - (i) The recommendation of the Community Development Director to the City Council; and
 - (ii) The City Council approving the recommendation by resolution duly adopted.
5. An owner or operator of a nonconforming billboard required to be removed under this division (4) shall receive a written notification from the Community Development Director that his, her or its billboard has been designated for removal and shall be asked to declare the value of the billboard in writing from an independent licensed appraiser. The notification shall not be deemed a final administrative action, nor shall it be deemed a final order, but shall only serve to begin a negotiated process for removal of a nonconforming billboard.
6. The city will use the appraisal as a basis for preparing an amortization agreement that will establish a period of time that the billboard may remain in operation and, as appropriate, a cash settlement payable at the end of the amortization period. The owner or operator shall cooperate in the negotiations to arrive at an agreed upon amortization and, as appropriate, cash settlement for removal of a nonconforming billboard.
7. In the event that the city and owner or operator of a billboard cannot agree to the terms of an amortization agreement, the city shall reserve the right, but have no obligation to, seek the condemnation of a nonconforming billboard in a court proceeding.

8. An amortization agreement shall be recorded in the office of the Cook County Recorder against the lot upon which the nonconforming billboard is located.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

N. UNLAWFUL SIGNS.

1. Should the Building Commissioner determine a sign or other advertising structure is in violation of the provisions of this Subchapter, thus becoming a prohibited sign, Building Commissioner or his or her designee shall give written notice to the permittee and/or the owner of the property upon which the structure is located.
2. If the permittee or owner fails to remove or alter the structure so as to fully comply with the provisions set forth in this Subchapter within ten days after the notice, the Building Commissioner may undertake the removal or alteration as is necessary to bring the structure into compliance and assess the removal or alteration costs to the permittee or owner.
3. The Building Commissioner may cause any sign or other advertising structure which presents an immediate peril to person or property to be removed or altered immediately and without notice.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

O. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Subchapter or the application thereof to any person or circumstances, shall be held invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity shall not affect the other provisions, or application thereof, of this Subchapter which can be given effect without the invalid provisions or application, and to this end, the provisions of this Subchapter are hereby declared to be severable.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

P. PROTECTION OF FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS.

Any sign permitted under the provisions of this Subchapter, may contain, in lieu of any other copy, any lawful noncommercial message that does not direct attention to a business operated for profit or to a commodity or service for sale, and that complies with all other requirements.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)

Q. PENALTY.

1. Any person violating any provision of this Subchapter for which no specific penalty is prescribed shall be subject to § 10.99 of the City of Oak Forest Code of Ordinances.

(1) Whoever violates or fails to comply with any of the provisions of this Zoning Code shall be fined not more than \$500 for each offense. A separate offense shall be deemed committed each day during or on which a violation or noncompliance occurs or continues. The penalty provided for herein shall be in addition to any fee, deposit, charge, surcharge, interest, insurance or bond requirement or equitable remedy provided in this Zoning Code.

(2) Whoever violates the provisions contained herein may, in addition to the penalty provided above, be imprisoned not more than six months and have his or her business license suspended or revoked. A separate offense shall be deemed committed each day during or on which a violation occurs or continues.

(Ord. 2381, Ch. 2 (part), passed - -1999)

2. A person who operates or causes to be operated a sexually oriented business in violation of the Zoning Code, is subject to a suit for injunction as well as prosecution for a criminal violation. The violation shall be a misdemeanor and shall be punishable by a fine of \$1,000 and/or six months in jail, and if an injunction must be sought, attorneys' fees and costs will be assessed at the discretion of the court against the sexually oriented business.

(2000 Code, § 17.44.040) (Ord. 2420 § 4, passed - -1999)

3. Any person or corporate entity violating any of the provisions of Sections A through P of this Subchapter shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof, be subject to a \$750 fine. For the purposes of this Subchapter, each day the violation is committed, or permitted to continue, shall constitute a separate offense.

(Ord. 2006-11-0068O, passed 11-28-2006)