# ARTICLE 9
# SIGNS

## Section 9.01 Purpose.

The primary function of signage, as it relates to this Ordinance, is to identify a particular use or business occupying a lot or building in the Township. The Township further finds that reasonable use of signage promotes commerce in the Township. However, unrestricted signage does not benefit individual businesses or property owners, or the community as a whole, because a proliferation of signs in the Township would unduly distract or endanger motorists and pedestrians; cause the deterioration of business or residential areas; obstruct vision; negatively impact property values; and reduce the effectiveness of both business signage and signs needed to direct and warn the public.

It is the intent of this Article that all signs be designed, constructed, and maintained in a manner appropriate in appearance with the intended character of their vicinity so as not to adversely affect the intended character of the zoning district where the sign is located. The further purposes of this Article are to:

1. Encourage free expression of ideas and dissemination of messages, regardless of content, using signs that are compatible with their surroundings and legible under the circumstances in which they are designed to be seen.

2. Regulate the construction, alteration, repair, and maintenance of all signs with respect to safety, location, dimensions, height, and method of illumination.

3. Permit such signs as will not, by reason of their size, location, or manner of display, endanger public health or safety; confuse or mislead traffic; or obstruct vision necessary for traffic and pedestrian safety.

4. Minimize the proliferation of visual clutter and preserve the appearance of the Township by preventing the placement of oversized signs that are out of scale with surrounding buildings and uses.

5. Seek the removal of unlawful and abandoned signs, and encourage the replacement or removal of nonconforming signs that are incompatible with the purpose of this Article.

The provisions of this Article shall be considered to be the minimum necessary to meet the intent and purposes of this Article and Ordinance, and to promote and protect the public health, safety, comfort, morals, and convenience.

# Section 9.02 General Standards.

The following general standards shall apply to signs in all zoning districts:

## A. Compliance Required.

All signs erected, altered, and maintained in Saline Township shall conform to the standards of this Article. In no case shall any sign exceed the maximum sign height and sign area standards that apply to the type of sign or an equivalent sign regulated by this Article.

## B. Standards of Measurement.

Dimensional standards and measurements for signs shall be subject to the following (see illustration):

1. **Sign height.** The distance from the average level of the ground or pavement directly below the sign to the highest point of the sign structure, including any supportive or decorative elements (see illustration).

2. **Sign setback.** Setbacks shall be measured from the closest road right-of-way or front lot line to the nearest edge of the sign.

3. **Sign area.** The surface area of a sign shall include the total area within any regular geometric figure (circle, triangle, rectangle, etc.) enclosing the extreme limits of letters, symbols or other material forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the background against which it is placed (see illustration).

    a. Where two (2) sign faces with identical sign areas are placed back to back no more than two (2) feet apart, then the sign area shall equal the area of one (1) face.

    b. Where two (2) sign faces with different sign areas are placed back to back no more than two (2) feet apart, then the sign area shall equal the area of the larger face.

    c. Where two (2) sign faces are placed more than two (2) feet apart at any point, then the sign area shall equal the total area of all sign faces.

    d. Where a sign has more than two (2) sign faces, then the sign area shall equal the total area of all sign faces.

4. **Signable area.** The signable area of a building shall equal the area of the building's street level façade (see illustration).

5. **Multiple uses.** Where more than one business or use occupies space on the street level façade, the total signable area allowed for the building shall be divided among the businesses or uses in proportion to the size of each occupied space.

6. **Corner lots.** Where a building has two (2) or more street level facades (such as on a corner lot), the signable area shall equal the area of the largest street level façade.

## C. Construction and Maintenance.

All signs shall be constructed or installed in compliance with the State Construction Code enforced by Washtenaw County and other applicable building, fire, and electrical codes; shall be maintained in good repair and working order; and shall present a neat and orderly appearance. Non-galvanized or corrosion-prone materials shall be painted as necessary to prevent corrosion.

All sign faces shall be smooth, and no nails, tacks or wires shall be permitted to protrude from any sign. This shall not exclude the use of block letters, decorative elements or other devices that may extend over the top or in front of the sign structure.

## D. Placement Requirements.

The following placement standards shall apply to all signs:

1. No sign may extend above any parapet or be placed upon any roof surface. For purposes of this Article, roof surfaces constructed at an angle of 75 degrees or more from horizontal (such as mansard roofs) shall be regarded as wall space.

2. No sign attached to a building, other than a permitted awning sign, shall project more than one (1) foot from the building wall.

3. Signs shall not be located within nor extend over any road right-of-way or corner clearance area, except where specifically authorized by this Article. This restriction shall include any future planned rights-of-way, as defined by the master transportation plans for the Township, county or state road authorities.

4. All signs shall be located at least ten (10) feet from any utility pole, overhead wire, transformer or streetlight.

## E. Hazards and Obstructions.

Signs shall not be designed or maintained in a manner that would confuse or mislead motorists or pedestrians, create traffic or pedestrian hazards, obstruct free and clear vision or interfere with any traffic control device. No sign shall be erected or maintained so as to prevent ingress or egress from any door, window or fire escape. No sign of any kind shall be attached to a standpipe, fire escape or other means of ingress or egress.

## F. Use.

All signs shall be accessory to the principal use of the lot where the sign is located, and shall not impair the use of adjacent properties. Any sign permitted by this Article may contain a non-commercial message.

### G. Illumination.

Internal and external sign illumination shall be permitted, subject to the following:

1. **External sign illumination.** External illumination of signs shall be permitted in any zoning district, provided that the light source(s) shall be fully shielded, directed towards the sign face, and designed to concentrate all light on the sign copy area (see illustration).

2. **Internal sign illumination.** Signs accessory to non-residential uses in any zoning district may be internally illuminated, provided that the sign faces are more than fifty percent (50%) covered by semi-opaque colors and materials with a color value and saturation of fifty percent (50%) or higher (see illustration). Internal illumination of signs accessory to residential uses shall be prohibited.

3. **Hours of illumination.** Illuminated signs shall be equipped with a functional timer control. Such signs shall not be illuminated after 11:00 p.m., or one-half (½) hour following the close of the business day for the principal use, whichever is later. Such signs shall not be illuminated before sunrise, or one-half (½) hour prior to the beginning of the business day, whichever is earlier.

4. **Other Limitations.** Sign illumination shall be provided solely by electrical means or devices, and shall not be of a flashing, intermittent, moving or animated type.

### H. Changeable Copy Area.

A changeable copy area shall be allowed as part of a permitted sign, provided that the changeable copy area shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the total sign area.

### I. Animated Copy Prohibited.

To minimize visual distractions and hazards for motorists, pedestrians, and property; animated copy, as defined in Section 18.02 (Definitions), shall be prohibited as part of any sign allowed under this Ordinance.

## Section 9.03 Signs Allowed Without a Permit.

The following signs are exempt from Section 9.09 (Sign Permit) requirements, and shall be permitted accessory to a permitted use in any zoning district. Such signs shall be subject to all other applicable standards of this Article:

### A. Temporary Signs.

Temporary signs not otherwise provided for in this Section shall be subject to the following:

1. The maximum permitted height and total sign area for all temporary signs on a single zoning lot shall not exceed the following:

| Zoning District Name | Maximum Sign Area for All Signs | Maximum Sign Height |
|---|---|---|
| A-1 (Agricultural-Conservation) | 32.0 square feet | 6.0 feet |
| R-1 (Rural Residential) | 18.0 square feet | 5.0 feet |
| R-2 (Suburban Residential) | 18.0 square feet | 5.0 feet |
| R-3 (Urban Residential) | 18.0 square feet | 5.0 feet |
| MHP (Manufactured Housing Park) | 18.0 square feet | 5.0 feet |
| C-1 (Local Commercial) | 32.0 square feet | 6.0 feet |
| C-2 (Special Commercial) | 32.0 square feet | 6.0 feet |
| I-1 (Industrial-Research) | 32.0 square feet | 6.0 feet |
| PSP (Public/Semi-Public Services) | 18.0 square feet | 5.0 feet |

2. Such signs shall be removed by the property or business owner, agent or person responsible for creating or placing the sign on the lot within seven (7) calendar days following completion or discontinuation of the event, action or activity to which the sign pertains.

3. Temporary signs on zoning lots in the Township shall be set back a minimum of ten (10) feet from all road rights-of-way. Such signs shall not be located within or over any road right-of-way, except as authorized by the Township Board and any other agency with jurisdiction.

4. Such signs determined by the Zoning Inspector to be in a torn, faded, damaged or unsafe condition shall be immediately removed by the owner, agent or person responsible for creating or placing the sign on the lot. Failure to remove a sign in such condition shall be considered a violation of this Ordinance.

## B. Address Numbers and Nameplate.

All principal buildings shall display their assigned address number in a manner legible from the road right-of-way. In addition, one (1) nameplate shall be permitted per principal building to provide for the further identification of the building, use or occupants. The nameplate shall not exceed four (4) square-feet in area, and shall be attached flat against the building wall.

## C. Other Signs and Sign-Related Activities.

The following types of signs and sign-related activities shall be permitted accessory to a permitted use in any zoning district:

1. Painting, servicing, cleaning or minor repairs to an existing sign, provided that the sign is restored to its original design and all work is in compliance with applicable structural and electrical codes, and the requirements for such signs specified in this Article.

2. One (1) window sign accessory to a principal non-residential use not exceeding four (4) square-feet in area and may be illuminated. Additional window signs may be permitted in accordance with Section 9.05 (Building Mounted Signs).

3. Memorial signs, tablets or markers that are cut into the face of masonry surfaces or constructed of bronze or other incombustible materials, and are located flat on the façade wall of a building.

4. Flags bearing the official design of a nation, state, municipality, educational institution, award or non-profit organization; and pennants installed by the Township on or over public roads.

5. Signs of a duly constituted governmental body; signs required to be maintained by law or governmental order, rule or regulation; signs identifying public access, municipal facilities and similar official markers; and incidental signs displayed for the direction, safety or convenience of the public.

6. Traffic safety and control signs that conform to the requirements of the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices; and essential service signs denoting utility lines, railroad lines, hazards, and precautions.

7. Changes to sign copy within an approved changeable copy area.

8. Incidental signs carried by or affixed to clothing worn by persons; and incidental signs on vehicles, trailers, and similar transitory devices that are in motion, in transit through or within the Township, or associated with and regularly used in the course of conducting the principal use located on the premises.

## Section 9.04 Signs Allowed With a Permit.

The following signs shall be permitted accessory to a permitted use in any zoning district, subject to approval of a sign permit in accordance with Section 9.09 (Sign Permit):

### A. Site Entry Features with Signage.

Site entry features with signage may be erected at the entrance to a residential subdivision, condominium or multiple-family development; elderly or senior housing development; manufactured housing park; or office, research or industrial park, subject to the following (see illustration):

| Standards | Site Entry Features with Signage |
|---|---|
| **Maximum number of permitted signs** | Two (2) signs per entrance from a public road classified as a major road or primary road by the transportation plans for the Township, county or state road authorities. |
| **Minimum required setbacks** | Ten (10) feet from any road right-of-way and 15 feet from the edge of pavement for any internal access drive. |

| Standards | Site Entry Features with Signage |
|---|---|
| **Maximum sign area** | 24.0 square feet |
| **Maximum sign height** | 6.0 feet |
| **Method of illumination** | External light sources only. |

**B. Building Directory.**

Where a single building on a single lot is occupied by more than one (1) business, dwelling or other use above the street level façade (such as a multiple-tenant office or commercial building), a building directory sign may be erected on the street level façade for these uses, subject to the following (see illustration):

1. The building directory shall be separate from any permitted signs accessory to the uses occupying the street level façade.

2. The maximum sign area shall not exceed three percent (3%) of the signable area of the building.

3. Illumination of such signs shall be limited to external light sources.

**C. Construction Signs.**

Temporary construction signs shall be subject to the following:

| Standards | Construction Signs |
|---|---|
| **Maximum number of permitted signs** | One (1) sign per road frontage of the zoning lot. |
| **Minimum required setbacks** | Ten (10) feet from any road right-of-way and 15 feet from the edge of pavement for any internal access drive. |
| **Maximum sign area** | 24.0 square feet |
| **Maximum sign height** | 6.0 feet |
| **Method of illumination** | External light sources only. |
| **Display period** | The sign shall not be erected prior to final site plan or final preliminary plat approval, and shall be removed within 14 calendar days of completion of the project's final phase, or upon expiration of site plan or permit approval. |

# Section 9.05 Building-Mounted Signs.

The intent of this Section is to establish consistent and reasonable standards for the location, size and range of permitted types of signs located on buildings in the Township, and to minimize the proliferation of excessive or out-of-scale building signage.

## A. Table of Building Mounted Signs.

The following shall apply to all building-mounted signs accessory to non-residential uses in any zoning district:

| Standards | Type of Permitted Signs | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Wall** | **Awning** | **Window** |
| **Permit required**? | yes | yes | no |
| **Internal or external illumination permitted?** | yes | yes | no |
| **Maximum number of sign faces per sign** | one (1) | one (1) | one (1) |
| **Minimum sign height** | none | 7.5 feet | none |
| **Maximum permitted sign area of all signs** (square feet) | 10% of the signable area of the building space occupied by the use. | | 15% of the street level window surface area. |

## B. Additional Standards.

The following additional standards shall apply to all building-mounted signs:

1. **Location.** All building-mounted signs shall be located entirely within the street level façade(s).

2. **Rear public entrance sign.** One (1) additional building-mounted sign not exceeding four (4) square feet in area shall be permitted at any rear public entrance.

3. **Painted wall signs.** Signs applied with paint or similar substance on an exterior surface of a structure shall be considered a building-mounted sign subject to the standards of this Section. Prior to painting a sign on a wall, the wall surface shall be freshly painted with a continuous base color.

# Section 9.06 Ground Signs.

The intent of this Section is to establish consistent and reasonable standards for the height, location and size of ground signs in the Township, and to minimize the proliferation of excessive or out-of-scale ground signage that would compete for the attention of motorists, or create traffic hazards or visual blight within the Township. The following shall apply to ground signs accessory to non-residential uses in any zoning district:

## A. Ground Sign Standards.

| Maximum Ground Sign Height | Minimum Sign Setback from Buildings and Road Rights-of-Way | Maximum Sign Area per Ground Sign | Maximum Number of Ground Signs per Zoning Lot |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 feet | equal to actual sign height | 40 square feet | 1 |

1. Approval of a sign permit per Section 9.09 (Sign Permit) shall be required to erect, alter or relocate a ground sign in the Township.

2. Ground signs shall be prohibited within corner clearance areas, as defined in Section 5.208 (Corner Clearance Zones).

3. Setbacks shall be measured from the near edge of the planned future road right-of-way, as defined by the master transportation plans for the Township, county or state road authorities.

4. A maximum of two (2) sign faces shall be permitted per ground sign.

5. No part of a ground sign shall be located within a required side yard or within ten (10) feet of a side lot line.

6. Ground sign shall be set back a minimum of 50 feet from any existing residential dwellings on abutting zoning lots.

7. No ground sign shall be placed in such a manner as to prevent any motorist on a curve of a road from obtaining a clear view of approaching vehicles for a distance of 500 feet along the road.

## B. Permitted Modifications.

The following modifications to the standards of this Section have been established to preserve the character and appearance of the Township's lower intensity use districts through more restrictive standards; ensure that permitted signage is in reasonable proportion to the land use intensity; and address the specific signage needs of multi-tenant shopping centers and uses that abut major roads or primary roads as defined by the master transportation plans for the Township, county or state road authorities.

Modifiers shall be cumulative down each column of the following table, as applied to a particular land use or zoning lot:

| | Permitted Modifiers | Maximum Sign Height | Minimum Sign Setback | Maximum Sign Area per Ground Sign | Maximum Number of Signs |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 10 feet | equal to actual sign height | 40 square feet | 1 |
| Cumulative Modifiers | **Located in the A-1 District** | – 2 feet | no change | – 8 square feet | no change |
| | **Located in the R-1, R-2, R-3 or MHP District** | – 2 feet | no change | – 12 square feet | no change |
| | **Total lot frontage exceeds 500 feet on one (1) road right-of-way** | no change | no change | + 12 square feet | + 1 additional sign |
| | **Sign abuts a major road or primary road with a posted speed limit of 50 miles per hour or higher** | + 2 feet | no change | + 12 square feet | no change |
| | **Sign abuts a public road with a right-of-way width of 120 feet or greater** | + 2 feet | no change | + 12 square feet | no change |
| | **Lot is occupied by three (3) or more separate non-residential uses (e.g. shopping center or multi-tenant office building)** | no change | no change | + 24 square feet | no change |
| | **Total Permitted With Modifiers:** | _____ feet | _____ feet | _____ square feet | _____ sign(s) |

## Section 9.07 Billboards.

**A. Findings.**

The Township has made the following determinations related to billboard signs, as defined in Section 18.02 (Definitions):

1. Unrestricted use of billboard signs is incompatible with the intended character and sound development of Saline Township.

2. Billboard signs are only appropriate along the US-12 state highway corridor. Location of such signs away from this highway corridor would detract from the visual appearance and rural/recreational character of the Township, which is attractive to visitors and residents and a benefit to the local agricultural economy.

3. Limitations on the number, size, height, location, and illumination of permitted billboard signs are necessary to:

   a. Minimize visual clutter and hazards for motorists and pedestrians;

   b. Prevent obstructions of light and air for adjoining lots and uses;

   c. Ensure that such signs are not out-of-scale with the structures and character of land uses along the US-12 corridor; and

   d. Ensure that such signs are not harmful to the promotion of commerce in the Business Districts.

## B. Billboard Standards.

The following standards shall apply to billboard signs in the Township:

1. Billboard signs shall be permitted in any zoning district, provided that such signs shall be limited to locations within 300 feet of the US-12 state highway right-of-way. Installation of any billboard sign at any other location in the Township shall be considered a use violation of this Ordinance subject to Section 1.09 (Violations and Penalties).

2. Not more than two (2) billboards may be located per linear mile of the US-12 state highway right-of-way, subject to the following:

   a. Distance measurements shall be made parallel to the centerline of the highway right-of-way from the point closest to the billboard location for one (1) linear mile in both directions along the highway.

   b. This requirement shall apply separately to the each linear mile measurement along the highway, and shall not be limited to the boundaries of Saline Township.

   c. All billboard signs visible in any manner from the highway right-of-way shall be counted towards the maximum number permitted per linear mile.

   d. Each billboard face visible to motorists proceeding from any given direction on the highway shall be considered a separate billboard sign for purposes of this Section.

   e. Double-faced billboard structures shall be considered one (1) billboard sign for purposes of this Section, subject to the following:

(1) Such structures shall have not more than two (2) billboard faces set back-to-back not more than ten (10) feet apart at any point.

(2) Not more than one (1) billboard face shall be visible to motorists proceeding from any given direction on the highway.

3. Billboard signs shall comply with the following minimum setback requirements:

   a. 1,000 feet from another billboard sign visible in any manner along either side of the US-12 state highway right-of-way;

   b. 300 feet from the boundary of abutting Rural Residential Districts, Residential Districts, or lots occupied by existing RESIDENTIAL USES, including across any road or highway right-of-way;

   c. 75 feet from any road or highway right-of-way; and

   d. 30 feet from any boundary of the lot upon which the billboard is located.

4. The maximum sign area of each billboard sign shall not exceed 300 square feet.

5. The maximum height of each billboard sign shall not exceed 30 feet above the grade of the ground upon which the billboard is located.

6. No billboard shall be on top of, cantilevered over, or otherwise suspended above any building.

7. Internal and external illumination of billboard signs in the Township shall be prohibited.

8. Billboard signs shall conform to the standards of Section 9.02C (Construction and Maintenance) and Section 9.02E (Hazards and Obstructions), and shall also comply with the applicable requirements of the Highway Advertising Act (P.A. 106 of 1972, as amended).

**C. Nonconforming Billboards.**

Nonconforming billboards shall be permitted to continue, subject to the provisions of Section 9.10 (Nonconforming Signs). The Zoning Inspector shall be responsible for maintaining an inventory of the location and condition of all existing billboard signs in the Township.

## Section 9.08 Prohibited Signs.

The following types of signs are prohibited in all districts:

1. Signs that resemble and could be confused with an official highway, traffic or government sign, signal or traffic control device; or that obscure a sign, signal or

traffic control device displayed by public authority to provide traffic instruction, direction or public information.

2. Signs painted on or attached to trees, utility poles, fences or streetlights.

3. Signs placed upon or across any road or other right-of-way, except as otherwise provided for in this Article.

4. Signs that incorporate string lights; flashing, moving or intermittent lights of changing degrees or intensity; exposed incandescent bulbs; animation; or unshielded luminous tube lighting.

5. Signs that have any visible moving parts, mechanical movement, rotation, or other apparent visible movement achieved by electrical or mechanical means or by action of normal wind currents; and signs that discharge any audible sound, odor or visible matter.

6. Roof signs, inflatable signs, projecting signs, and portable signs.

7. Building-mounted signs that obstruct window or door openings, inhibit ingress or egress, or interfere with building ventilation.

8. Signs displayed without required permits or outside of permitted size, location or time period limitations.

9. Non-accessory and off-premises signs, including billboard signs per Section 9.07 (Billboards), except as otherwise provided for in this Article.

10. Abandoned or unlawful signs, displays of obscene material on any sign, and any other sign not expressly permitted by this Article.

## Section 9.09 Sign Permit

It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, alter, or relocate any sign, sign structure or sign area subject to permit approval under the provisions of this Article, without first obtaining appropriate permit(s) from the Township and paying the required permit fee according to the schedule of fees established by the Township Board.

### A. Sign Permits.

Where a provision of this Article requires approval of a sign permit, such approval shall be subject to the provisions of Section 1.07 (Permits and Certificates of Zoning Compliance) and the following:

1. The Zoning Inspector shall be responsible for verifying compliance with this Article, prior to issuing a sign permit under this Section.

2. A separate building permit may be required in accordance with the State Construction Code enforced by the Washtenaw County.

3. Issuance of a building permit by Washtenaw County shall not exempt the building permit holder from compliance with the requirements of this Section and Article.

**B. Required Information for Sign Permit Applications.**

The following shall be provided with any sign permit application:

1. **Application information.** Permit applications shall include the following information:

   a. The name, address and telephone numbers for the applicant, property owner, and sign contractor; address or property location where the sign is to be located; and written consent of the property or sign owner to perform the proposed work.

   b. Where a proposed sign would encroach into a road right-of-way, copies of permits or approvals from the Township Board and any other agency with jurisdiction.

   c. Any other information required by the Zoning Inspector to show full compliance with this Ordinance.

2. **Plot plan.** A plot plan shall include a parcel survey, easements, dimensions, locations of all structures, and all existing and proposed signs on the zoning lot. If building-mounted signs are proposed, elevation drawings of all buildings on the site shall be provided showing all existing and proposed building-mounted signs.

3. **Sign details.** Specifications and drawings showing the materials, design, dimensions, structural supports, and method of illumination.

4. **License and insurance.** Every person who engages in the erecting, altering or dismantling of permanent signs in the Township shall first submit proof of appropriate licenses or certifications, and a liability insurance policy that indemnifies Saline Township and its prior, present and future employees, officials, representatives and from all damage suits or other actions brought or claimed against the erector for injuries or damages to persons or property sustained by any person or persons through any act of omission or negligence of said erector, his servants, agents or employees. Said policy shall contain a clause whereby it cannot be canceled or changed until after written notice has been filed with the Township at least 30 days prior to the date of cancellation.

5. **Removal agreement or performance guarantee.** The Zoning Inspector may require a signed removal agreement or performance guarantee to guarantee the future removal of a sign in accordance with Section 1.08C (Performance Guarantees).

# Section 9.10 Nonconforming Signs

All existing signs that do not conform to the provisions of this Article shall be permitted to continue as nonconforming signs until removed or altered, subject to the following:

**A. Good Working Order.**

Nonconforming signs shall be maintained in accordance with the requirements for all signs specified in Section 9.02 (General Standards), to the maximum extent feasible. Nonconforming signs shall be maintained with all necessary structural and decorative components, including supports, sign frame, and electrical equipment. All sign copy areas shall be intact, and illuminated signs shall be capable of immediate illumination.

**B. Servicing.**

Painting, servicing, cleaning or minor repairs to a nonconforming sign shall be permitted, provided that the sign is restored to its original design and all work is in compliance with the requirements for all signs specified in Section 9.02 (General Standards).

**C. Alterations.**

Alterations to nonconforming signs shall be prohibited, except as follows:

1. **Sign copy area.** The sign copy area of a nonconforming sign may be altered, including replacement of sign panels and changes to the sign copy, provided that the degree of nonconformity is not increased, and provided that any sign illumination is brought into compliance with the provisions of Section 9.02G (Illumination).

2. **Billboard signs.** A nonconforming billboard sign may be altered, including replacement of sign panels and changes to the sign copy, provided that the sign area and height are not increased, and provided that any sign illumination is brought into compliance with the provisions of Section 9.02G (Illumination).

3. **Sign frame or structural elements.** Alterations to the sign frame or structural elements of a nonconforming sign shall be permitted, subject to the following:

   a. The sign shall be brought into compliance with the maximum sign height and sign area standards for the location and type of sign, as specified in this Article.

   b. Where a ground sign is nonconforming with respect to a required setback, the existing sign's wiring and support structure(s) may be re-used, subject to the following:

      (1) The sign shall be located outside of any existing or planned future road right-of-way, as defined by the master transportation plans for the Township, county or state road authorities.

(2) The sign shall be located outside of any corner clearance area, as defined by Section 3.208 (Corner Clearance Zones).

(3) The existing sign setback distance shall be maintained or increased by the permitted alterations.

## Section 9.11 Sign Removal by Township Action

### A. Abandoned or Unlawful Signs.

The Zoning Inspector shall have the authority to determine whether a sign is unlawful or has been abandoned, as defined in Section 18.02 (Definitions), subject to appeal by an aggrieved person to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The Zoning Inspector may order the removal of such signs in accordance with the following:

1. **Determination.** Written notification of the determination and any order for removal shall be provided by certified mail to the owner, operator or person having beneficial use of the property upon which the sign is located.

2. **Removal.** Abandoned or unlawful signs shall be removed within 30 days after notification of a determination and order for removal by the Zoning Inspector. All support structures and components shall be completely removed.

   a. Failure to remove the sign shall constitute grounds for the Township to seek Circuit Court approval to remove the sign at the property owner's expense.

   b. The owner shall reimburse the Township for removal costs, or the Township may place a lien on the property for necessary removal expenses.

### B. Damaged Signs.

Signs determined to be in a damaged condition by the Zoning Inspector shall be repaired or removed within 15 days after notification by certified mail. If such action is not taken by the owner, operator or person having beneficial use of the property where the sign is located, the Zoning Inspector shall have the authority to order the repair or removal of the damaged sign. The owner shall reimburse the Township for repair or removal costs, or the Township may place a lien on the property for such expenses.

### C. Unsafe Signs.

The Zoning Inspector may order the removal of any sign determined to be unsafe without prior notice. After removal, the Zoning Inspector shall notify the property owner by certified mail of the action taken and the reasons for the action. The owner shall reimburse the Township for removal, storage and reclamation costs, or the Township may place a lien on the property for such expenses.

**D. Nonconforming Signs.**

The elimination of nonconforming signs in the Township is hereby declared to be for a public purpose and for a public use. The Township may purchase nonconforming signs for the purpose of removal, or may initiate condemnation proceedings for nonconforming signs determined to be in violation of Section 9.10 (Nonconforming Signs) requirements.

**E. Temporary Signs.**

Temporary signs affixed within a road right-of-way or corner clearance zone, without a valid permit, or after permit expiration, may be removed by the Township without notice. Signs removed shall be held by the Township for seven (7) calendar days, after which the sign may be discarded.

## Section 9.12 Exceptions

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) shall have the authority to grant an exception from the strict application of these regulations in accordance with the following procedures and standards:

**A. Applications and Review Procedures.**

Any party who has been denied a permit for a proposed sign may file a request for an exception to this Article with the ZBA within 21 calendar days of the decision. Applications for exceptions from provisions of this Article shall be submitted and reviewed in accordance with Section 17.04 (Hearings and Decisions), and the following:

**B. Exception Standards for Signs.**

The ZBA shall consider the following exception standards, the intent and purposes of this Article, and any other factors deemed relevant in determining whether to grant an exception to particular requirements of this Article:

1. **Obstructions.** Construction of a conforming sign would obstruct the vision of motorists or otherwise endanger public health or safety.

2. **Visibility.** A conforming sign would be blocked from the sight of passing motorists due to existing buildings, trees or other obstructions.

3. **Site features.** Construction of a conforming sign would require significant tree removal or extensive topographic changes.

4. **Aesthetics.** The exception shall not adversely impact the character or appearance of the building or lot, the surrounding area, and the zoning district.

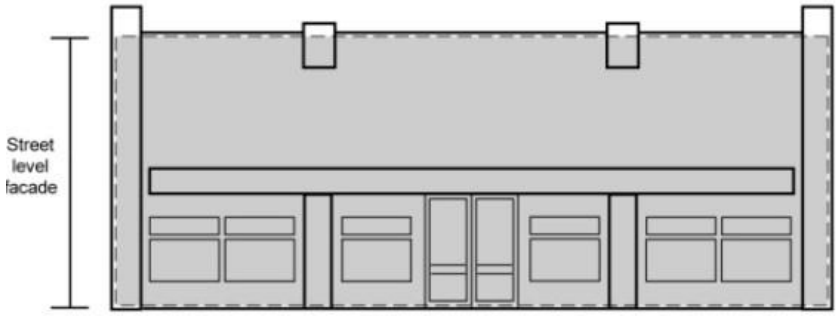
5. **Intent.** The exception shall not impair the intent and purposes of this Article.

6. **Minimum necessary action.** The exception shall be the minimum necessary to allow reasonable use, visibility, or readability of the sign.

## C. Findings and Conditions.

In a motion granting or denying a sign exception, the ZBA shall state the specific findings of fact and conclusions or grounds for the decision. The ZBA may attach conditions to a sign exception approval in accordance with the intent and purpose of this Article.

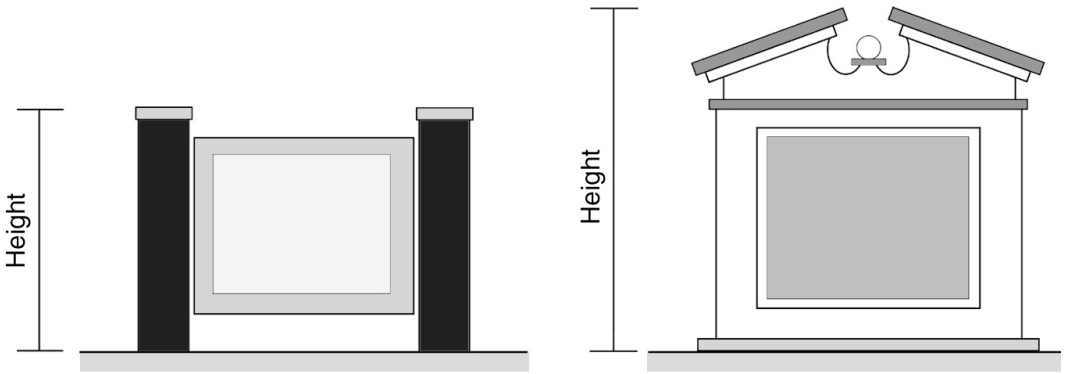
# ILLUSTRATIONS




Single-story Building

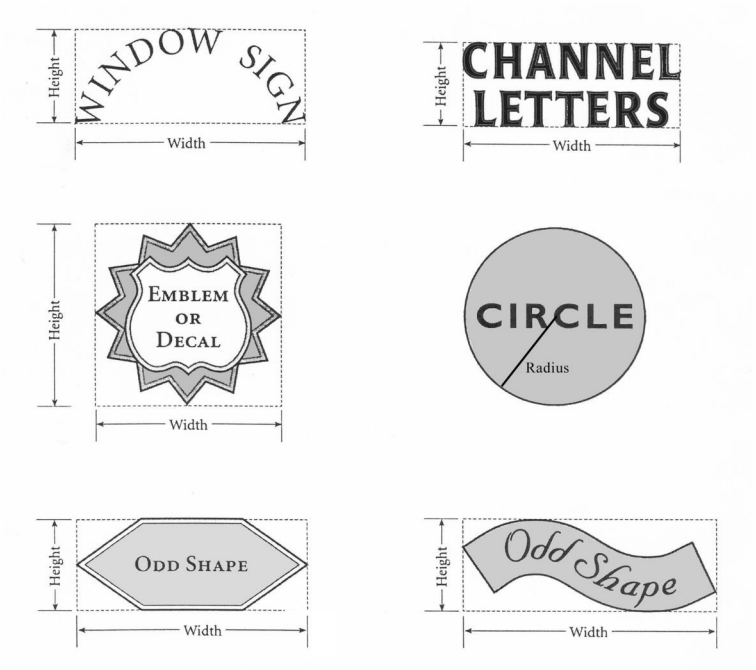
Multiple-story Building

## Signable Area

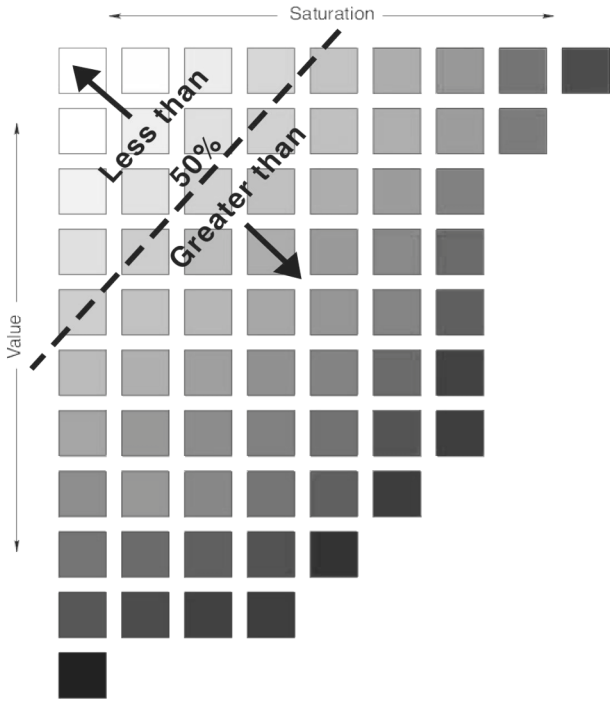



## Sign Height

# ILLUSTRATIONS




**Computation of Sign Area**



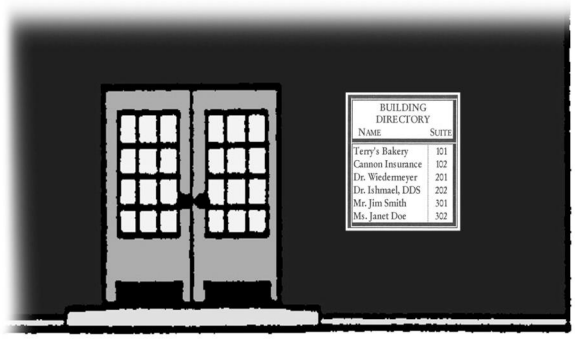

Color Value and Saturation

External illumination only

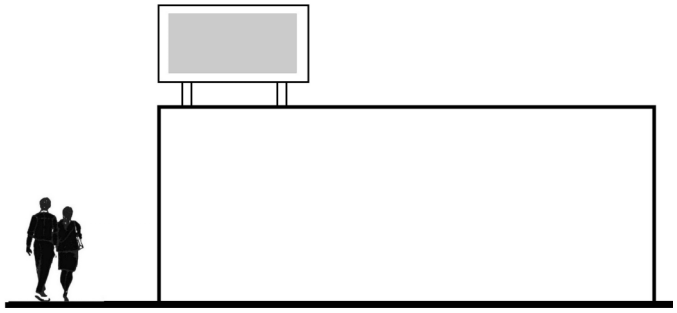
Internal illumination permitted

**Sign Illumination**

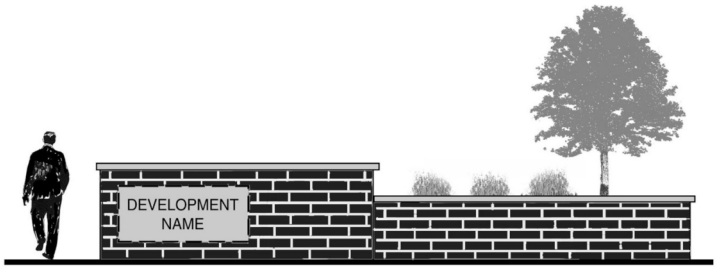
# ILLUSTRATIONS

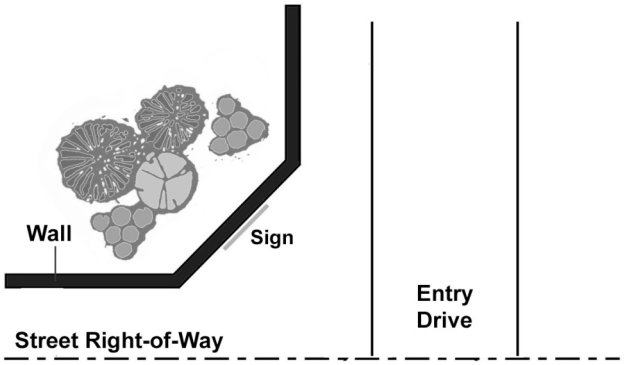



**Building Directory**



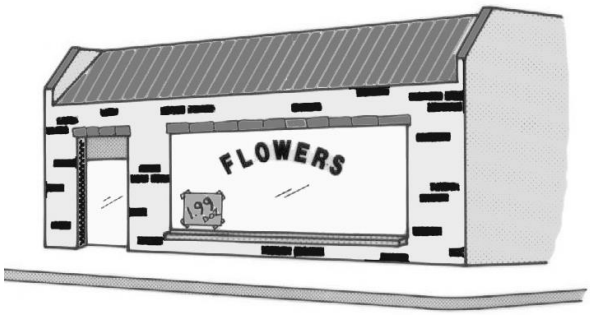
**Roof Sign**



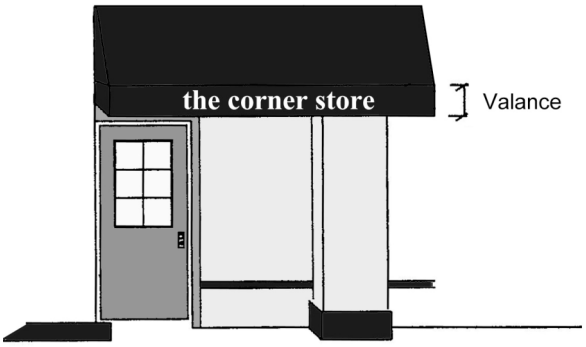




Site Entry Feature With Signage

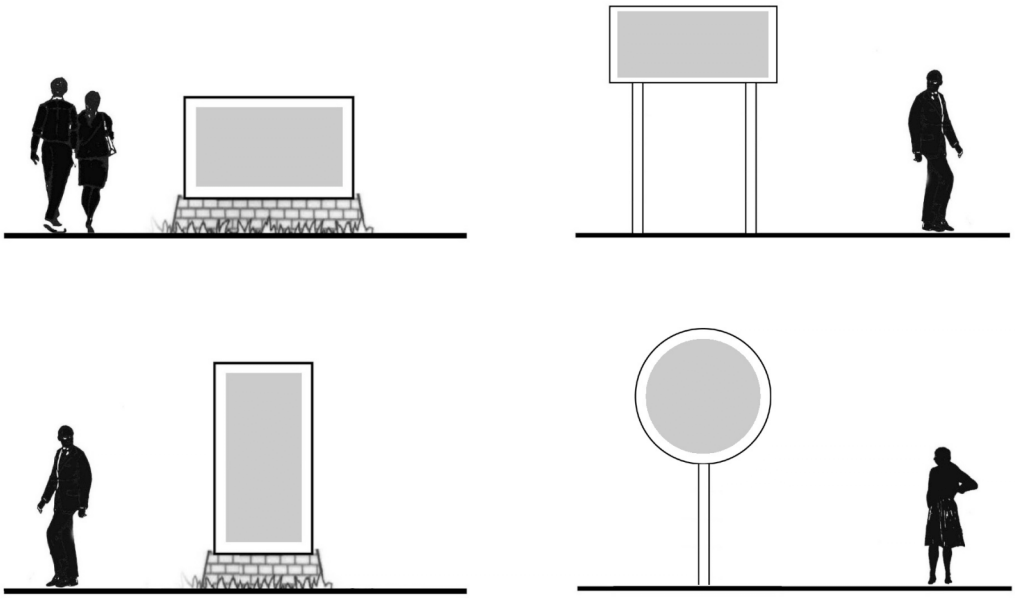
# ILLUSTRATIONS




**Window Sign**




**Awning Sign**



**Various Types of Ground Signs**