

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 81 OF TITLE VIII OF THE
CODE OF THE CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS**

THE CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS ORDAINS:

Section 1. Chapter 81 of Title VIII of the Code of the City of East Grand Rapids is amended in its entirety to read as follows:

**“CHAPTER 81
SIGNS**

8.11 INTENT AND APPLICABILITY OF SIGN REGULATIONS

The following regulations are intended to regulate the placement, size, construction and manner of display of signs and outdoor advertising in East Grand Rapids, in order to protect public safety, health and welfare; protect the constitutional right of free speech while imposing reasonable regulations; create a positive environment for business; minimize abundance and size of signs to reduce visual pollution, decrease distractions to motorists for safety and prevent loss of sight distance; promote public convenience; preserve property values; and promote aesthetics as a means of protecting the community’s welfare and enhancing the aesthetic appearance and quality of life within the city.

8.12 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of the following regulations, the following definitions shall apply:

- A. **AWNING, CANOPY OR MARQUEE:** A permanent retractable or fixed shelter constructed of non-rigid materials on a supporting framework that projects from the exterior wall of a building.
- B. **AWNING, CANOPY OR MARQUEE SIGN:** A sign affixed flat against the surface of an awning, canopy or marquee.
- C. **BANNER SIGN:** A sign made of fabric, plastic, or other non-rigid material without an enclosing structural framework.
- D. **BILLBOARD:** See Off-Premise Sign.
- E. **BLADE SIGN:** A small sign projecting from and attached directly to the side of the building intended to direct pedestrian traffic to specific locations or businesses.
- F. **BUSINESS CENTER SIGN:** A single sign providing advertising for two (2) or more businesses located upon the same premises, or upon two (2) or more contiguous parcels, which may include the name of the business center as well as the names and/or logos of individual businesses within the center.
- G. **COMMUNITY SPECIAL EVENT SIGN:** Signs and banners, including decorations and displays celebrating a traditionally-accepted patriotic or religious holiday, or special municipal or school activities; and temporary and portable signs containing public messages concerning special events sponsored by governmental agencies or nonprofit organizations.
- H. **CONSTRUCTION SIGN:** A sign that identifies the owners, financiers, contractors, architects, and/or engineers of a project under construction or recently completed.

- I. DAY: For the purpose of these regulations, a calendar day.
- J. DIRECTIONAL SIGN: A sign that gives directions, instructions, or facility information for the use on the lot on which the sign is located, such as parking or exit and entrance signs.
- K. ELECTRONIC MESSAGE SIGN: A sign designed to incorporate electronically animated type and graphics, not including electronic signs that display time and temperature only.
- L. GOVERNMENT SIGN: A sign erected by the City of East Grand Rapids, Kent County, state or federal government.
- M. GROUND SIGN: A sign resting directly on the ground or supported by short poles not attached to a building or wall.
- N. INCIDENTAL SIGN: A small sign, emblem, or decal informing the public of goods, facilities, or services available on the premises which is not intended to be visible from the street or adjacent properties. Examples of incidental signs include credit card signs, signs indicating the hours of business, no smoking signs, signs used to designate bathrooms, and signs providing information on business affiliations.
- O. NAMEPLATE: A non-electric on-premise identification sign giving only the name, address, and/or occupation of an occupant or group of occupants.
- P. OCCUPANT FRONTAGE:
 - 1. For a stand-alone building designed for one (1) tenant or business, the width of the building parallel to the right-of-way (not including alleys).
 - 2. For a multi-tenant building, the width of the leased space for the store measured on the wall parallel to the right-of-way (not including alleys), or on the wall(s) containing the public entrance(s) to the building.
- Q. OBSOLETE SIGN: A sign that advertises a product that is no longer available or that advertises a business that has closed.
- R. OFF-PREMISE SIGN: A sign which identifies a use or advertises products and services not available on the site or parcel on which the sign is located (e.g. billboards, signs providing directions to a business).
- S. POLE OR PYLON SIGN: A sign which is erected upon or supported by the ground on one (1) or more poles, uprights or braces.
- T. POLITICAL SIGN: A temporary sign used in connection with an expression of a political opinion or message or an official City of East Grand Rapids, school district, county, state, or federal election or referendum sign.
- U. PORTABLE SIGN: A sign designed to be moved easily and not permanently attached to the ground, a structure, or a building, including signs with wheels, signs mounted on vehicles for advertising purposes, and searchlights, but not including poster panel signs.
- V. POSTER PANEL SIGNS: A sign that is located outside of a business on a daily basis for the purpose of providing the public with information about the business (e.g. products and

services offered, daily specials etc.) and not permanently attached to the ground or building. Poster panel signs include sandwich board signs and “A” frame signs.

- W. PROJECTING SIGN: A sign, other than a wall sign or blade sign, that is affixed to any building or wall and whose leading edge extends more than twelve (12) inches beyond the building or wall.
- X. READER BOARD OR MESSAGE BOARD: A portion of a sign, which is accessory and incidental to a permanent sign, on which copy is changed manually.
- Y. REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT SIGN: A sign advertising the proposed development of a new or expanded commercial or residential project, which includes the name of the developer and may include name of the architect(s), contractor(s), and sales or leasing information.
- Z. REAL ESTATE SIGN: A sign advertising the real estate upon which the sign is located as being for sale, rent, or lease.
- AA. REAR ENTRY SIGN: A sign located at the rear, secondary or service entrance to a building.
- AB. ROOF SIGN: A sign erected upon the roof of a building.
- AC. SIGN: Any words, numerals, figures, devices, designs, pictures or trademarks erected on or otherwise affixed to a building, wall board, plate or any other structure, or on a vehicle or trailer, for the purpose of advertising or identifying an establishment, product, service, or activity.
- AD. TEMPORARY SIGN: A sign, banner or other advertising device constructed of cloth, canvas, fabric, plastic or other light temporary material, with or without structural frame, or any other sign intended for a limited period of display, but not including decorative display for holidays or public demonstration.
- AE. UMBRELLA SIGN: A sign or other advertising printed or otherwise attached to an umbrella, including umbrellas used in outdoor seating areas.
- AF. WALL SIGN: A sign painted or attached directly to and parallel to the exterior wall of a building not extending more than eight (8) inches.
- AG. WINDOW SIGN: A sign installed or affixed inside a window and intended to be viewed from the outside.

8.13 EXEMPT SIGNS

The following signs shall be exempt from sign permit requirements subject to the provisions noted:

- A. Address numbers with a numeral height no greater than eighteen (18) inches. One (1) address sign shall be permitted on each side of a building.
- B. Nameplates, not to exceed two (2) square feet. A limit of one (1) nameplate sign per each side of a building facing a street or parking area shall be permitted per business.

- C. Memorial signs or tablets, names of buildings, and date of erection, monumental citations, commemorative tablets when carved into stone, concrete or similar material or made of bronze, aluminum or other non-combustible material and made an integral part of the structure. Each sign shall be no larger than five (5) square feet and the combined signs shall not exceed twenty-five (25) square feet in area. One (1) sign shall be permitted per building; if the sign is set into the corner of a building, signs are permitted on both faces.
- D. Signs on a bus, truck, trailer, or other vehicle while operated and used for transport in the normal course of a business.
- E. Regulatory, directional and street signs erected by a public agency in compliance with the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards and the Michigan Barrier-Free Manual.
- F. Private traffic control signs which conform to the requirements of the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- G. Flags bearing the official insignia of a nation, state, municipality or educational institution. There shall be no more than three (3) flags per lot and the maximum size of each flag shall be fifty (50) square feet; however, flags on City-owned or school-owned properties shall be exempt from the area restriction.
- H. Plaques or signs designating a building as a historic structure and installed by a federal, state or local historical agency or group.
- I. Permanent signs on vending machines, ice containers or similar devices indicating only the contents, provided that the sign area shall not exceed six (6) square feet per device, and are be legible from the adjacent street.
- J. Portable "open house" signs with an area no greater than four (4) square feet, located on the premises of the open house event. The sign shall be removed at the end of the period of the open house each day.
- K. "Help wanted" signs soliciting employees for the place of business, where posted, provided that the maximum area shall be two (2) square feet.
- L. Political signs, which shall be removed no more than five (5) days after the general election or referendum to which the sign applies.
- M. Any sign that is located completely within an enclosed building and not visible from outside the building.
- N. Incidental signs, the aggregate size of which shall not exceed three (3) square feet.
- O. Signs indicating the location of a polling place.
- P. Signs advertising a rental or service business mounted upon rented or otherwise temporary equipment or structures, such as temporary storage units, trash dumpsters, portable toilets, and similar, provided that the rented or temporary equipment or structure is in full compliance with all applicable ordinances.

8.14 PROHIBITED SIGNS

The following signs are prohibited in all districts:

- A. Any sign not expressly permitted by this Chapter.
- B. Obsolete signs shall be removed within thirty (30) days of the cessation of the business.
- C. Signs held by pedestrians intended to draw attention to a business or other commercial activity.
- D. Signs that incorporate flashing or moving lights, including electronic message signs, except as otherwise permitted by this Chapter.
- E. Banners, balloons, pennants, , inflatable figures, spinners and streamers, unless specifically permitted by this Chapter.
- F. String lights, including rope lights, fiber optics or other similar types of lights strung across or over exterior areas (e.g., streets, parking lots, plazas, etc.), other than holiday decorations.
- G. Search lights and beacons.
- H. Moving signs, including any sign having the appearance of movement, has visible moving or revolving parts, or other visible mechanical movement, achieved by electrical, electronic, or mechanical means, including intermittent electric pulsations or movement caused by normal wind current.
- I. Any sign or sign structure that:
 - 1. Is structurally unsafe;
 - 2. Constitutes a hazard to safety or health by reason of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation, or abandonment;
 - 3. Constitutes a hazard to safety or health by reason of blocking views;
 - 4. Is capable of causing electric shock to any person who comes in contact with it;
 - 5. Is unlawfully installed, erected, or maintained;
 - 6. Is located in public street or utility right-of-way, except where expressly permitted herein;
 - 7. Is not kept in good repair, such that it has broken parts, missing letters, or non-operational lights; or
 - 8. Does not meet applicable requirements of the currently adopted Building Code for the City.
- J. Any sign erected on a tree or utility pole, except signs of a government or utility or a banner sign as permitted by this Chapter.
- K. Any sign not attached to a building and erected within ten (10) feet of a fire hydrant.

- L. Portable signs, except where expressly permitted by this Chapter.
- M. Any sign that obstructs free access to or egress from a required door, window, fire escape, or other required exit from a building or structure.
- N. Any sign which makes use of the words "Stop," "Look," or "Danger," or any other words, phrases, symbols, or characters, in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse drivers.
- O. Roof signs.
- P. Signs on street furniture, such as benches and trash receptacles, not including commemorative plaques or engravings not larger than one-half (1/2) square foot.
- Q. Off-premise signs.

8.15 GENERAL REGULATIONS

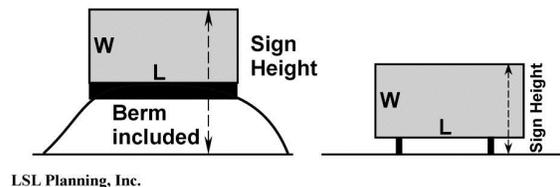
- A. Signs Permitted. Signs shall be permitted according to the zoning district of the property on which the sign is located, according to Chapter 50 of the East Grand Rapids City code.
- B. Sign Location. Except as otherwise provided in this Chapter, only governmental signs shall be located in, project or overhang into any public right-of-way or public dedicated easement.
- C. Clear Vision. Signs shall not be permitted within the clear vision triangle as established by Chapter 50, Section 5.25, upon any corner lot or within any clear vision triangle formed by the intersection of a street and a private access drive, except for a directional sign that measures no higher than thirty (30) inches high.

D. Measuring Sign Area

1. Sign area shall be measured as the square footage of the sign face and any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate it from the background against which it is placed.
2. When a sign consists solely of lettering or other sign elements printed, painted or mounted on a wall of a building without any distinguishing border, panel or background, the calculation for sign area shall be measured by enclosing the most protruding edges of the sign elements within a parallelogram or rectangle.
3. The area of a double-faced freestanding sign shall be computed using only one (1) face of the sign provided that: 1) the outline and dimensions of both faces are identical, and 2) the faces are back to back time.

E. Measuring Sign Height

1. The permitted height of all signs supported by the ground shall be measured from the level of the ground, finished surface, adjacent to the sign.



2. The permitted height of signs shall not be measured from an area of the ground that has been built-up or constructed to provide for a higher sign height than permitted by this Chapter. Accordingly, the height of signs erected on a berm shall be measured from the finished grade adjacent to the berm.

F. Design and Construction

1. Signs shall be designed to be generally compatible with the building and landscaping used on the property to promote an overall unified and aesthetic effect in accordance with the standards set forth in this Chapter.
2. Signs shall not be constructed from materials that are remnants of materials or materials or structures manufactured for some other purpose.
3. The background of a business center signs, including individual sign panels within the sign, shall be one (1) color. However, individual businesses may have different colored lettering or advertising.
4. Ground signs shall be landscaped with a combination of low shrubbery and perennial/annual plantings.
5. The maximum distance between parallel sign faces on a double-faced sign shall be twenty (20) inches. Any double-faced sign exceeding this distance shall be considered to have separate sign faces.
6. Every sign shall be constructed and maintained in a manner consistent with the City's currently adopted Building Code provisions and maintained in good structural condition at all times. All signs shall be kept neatly painted, stained, sealed or preserved including all metal parts and supports.
7. All signs erected, constructed, reconstructed, altered or moved shall be constructed to meet applicable State of Michigan Building Standards.
8. Portable signs, when permitted by this Chapter shall be constructed and maintained by the owner to withstand environmental conditions.

G. Illumination

1. Signs shall be illuminated only by steady, stationary, shielded light sources directed solely at the sign (i.e. front lit signs) or internal to it (i.e. back lit signs).
 - a. The background of front lit signs (external illuminated signs) may be any color, provided they are not reflective at night. However, they may use light reflecting lettering and messaging.
 - b. The background of back lit signs (internally illuminated signs) may be any color, provided the background is blacked out at night so that only the lettering and message is illuminated.
2. Use of glaring undiffused lights or bulbs shall be prohibited.
3. All lighting fixtures or light sources for lighted signs shall be positioned and/or shaded so that the light source is not visible from normal pedestrian areas or project onto adjoining properties or thoroughfares.

4. Underground wiring shall be required for all illuminated signs not attached to a building.
5. Lighting intensities for illuminated signs shall not exceed ten (10) foot-candles, measured at four (4) feet from any surface.

H. Banners on Public Property and Rights-of-Way.

1. Banners may be erected on poles or columns on public property in the C-1 Commercial District or upon rights-of-way immediately adjacent to Spectrum Health-Blodgett Hospital. A permit shall be required for initial installation of any banner.
2. Banners shall not exceed three (3) feet in any horizontal dimension nor exceed eight (8) feet in any vertical dimension. The bottom edge of the banner shall be at least eight (8) feet above the grade at the base of the pole on which it is attached.
3. Banners allowed under this Section shall publicize or promote community activities, local history, business district activities, or Spectrum Health-Blodgett Hospital. Commercial promotion of individual businesses is not permitted on banners within the City right-of-way.
4. After initial receipt of a permit, a banner may be replaced with a new banner without requiring a new permit, provided that the new banner is the same size and in the same location as the banner that was replaced.
5. Banners as permitted above may not be mounted or placed on fences or walls, except for temporary signs in the C-1 District as permitted in Section 8.19, Table 2.

8.16 SIGNS IN PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENTS

Signs in Planned Unit Developments shall be subject to a sign plan attached to the site plans approved by the City Commission. Where no sign plan is proposed, signs shall conform to Section 8.17 or Section 8.18, as applicable, based upon the use or uses within the approved Planned Unit Development.

8.17 SIGNS IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS

Signs for residential and non-residential uses in the A-1, A-2 and A-3 Residential Districts and the B-1 Apartment District are subject to the following:

A. Sign Setbacks for All Uses:

1. All signs in a Residential District shall be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from any property line and shall be located so that clear vision is maintained at all intersections.
2. Adjacent to properties within a residential district:
 - a. Non-illuminated signs: Ten (10) feet from any side or rear property line.
 - b. Illuminated signs: Twenty-five (25) feet from any side or rear property line.

B. Residential Uses:

1. Permit Exempt: the following signs are exempt from permit requirements and may not be illuminated.
 - a. One (1) real estate sign per lot is permitted, not to exceed six (6) square feet in area and three (3) feet in height.
 - b. Construction signs, not to exceed six (6) square feet in area and three (3) feet in height. No more than two (2) construction signs shall be permitted per lot. Construction signs shall be removed from the premises within thirty (30) days after the construction project has been completed.
 2. Permit Required:
 - a. Apartment complex identification ground signs: One (1) sign shall be permitted per frontage, not to exceed thirty-six (36) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height. An apartment complex identification sign may be illuminated in accordance with the requirements of Section 8.15, G.
- C. Non-Residential Uses: Except as exempted below, a permit is required for all signs serving non-residential uses.
1. Directional signs for all non-residential uses: Directional signs are permitted as necessary to direct the public to entrances and exits, parking areas and activity areas, subject to the approval of the City Services Director. No directional sign may exceed four (4) square feet. A freestanding directional sign may not exceed four (4) feet in height, unless located within a clear vision triangle (see Section 8.15, C).
 2. Construction signs: Construction signs for non-residential uses shall comply with the requirements for construction signs in commercial districts as stated in Section 8.18, A, 2. A permit is not required.
 3. Elementary, middle and senior high schools
 - a. School Identification ground sign: One (1) sign shall be permitted per school, not to exceed fifty (50) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height. A maximum of sixty-five percent (65%) of the sign may be dedicated to a reader board/ message board or electronic message sign, provided that no commercial messages are displayed. A school identification ground sign may be illuminated in accordance with the requirements of Section 8.15, G.
 - b. Temporary community special event banner signs: Temporary community special event banner signs may be erected on school property. A permit is not required. The Administration Center at Woodcliff shall be considered to be an elementary school for purposes of this Subsection C, 3.
 4. Churches:
 - a. Church Identification Ground Sign: One (1) sign shall be permitted per church complex, not to exceed thirty-six (36) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height. If the church is located on two or more streets, an additional ground sign per frontage, with a maximum area of 16 square feet and five feet in height, is permitted. A maximum of seventy-five percent (75%) of the sign may be dedicated to a reader board/ message board. An electronic message sign is not permitted. A church identification ground sign may be illuminated in accordance

with the requirements of Section 8.15, G.

- b. Wall sign: One (1) wall sign per frontage is permitted, with a maximum area of twenty-four square feet. Up to one-hundred percent (100%) of the sign may be dedicated to a reader board/message board. An electronic message sign is not permitted. The wall sign may be illuminated in accordance with the requirements of Section 8.15, G.
- c. Awning, canopy or marquee signs: An awning, canopy or marquee sign shall be considered a wall sign for the purposes of determining maximum sign area.
- d. Church banners: a church may erect one (1) banner on a front façade of the church building, attached to the wall, subject to the following:
 - (1) Maximum area shall be twelve (12) square feet. The area of the banner shall be applied toward the maximum sign area permitted for wall signs.
 - (2) The application for a permit must show the location of the sign, the material used for the banner, and the means of attaching the banner to the building.
 - (3) No portion of the banner may extend beyond the sides or top of the wall on which it is attached.
 - (4) The banner shall be properly anchored to the wall so that it will not become loosened by wind, vibration or other means.
 - (5) The banner shall be limited to messages related to church activities and functions.
 - (6) The banner may not be illuminated.
 - (7) After the initial permit is issued, the banner may be replaced with a different banner meeting all of the requirements of this Section, without need for an additional permit, provided that the banner is not changed more than once in a calendar month.

5. Hospitals

- a. Ground sign: One (1) ground sign, not exceeding one hundred (100) square feet in area and fifteen (15) feet in height, may be erected.
- b. Wall signs: One (1) per frontage upon a public street, with a maximum area of thirty six (36) square feet.
- c. Awning, canopy or marquee signs: An awning, canopy or marquee sign shall be considered a wall sign for the purposes of determining maximum sign area.

6. All other non-residential uses:

- a. Ground sign: One (1) ground sign, not exceeding thirty-six (36) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height, may be erected.

- b. Wall signs: One (1) per frontage upon a public street, with a maximum area of twenty-four (24) square feet.
- c. Awning, canopy or marquee signs: An awning, canopy or marquee sign shall be considered a wall sign for the purposes of determining maximum sign area.

8.18 SIGNS IN THE C-1 COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

A. Permitted Sign Types.

- 1. Permanent signs: See Section 8.19, Table 1. A permit is required for all permanent signs.
- 2. Temporary signs: See Section 8.19, Table 2. A permit is not required for temporary signs. Temporary signs may not be illuminated.

B. Specific Sign Requirements:

- 1. Wall signs
 - a. One (1) wall sign per principal building shall be permitted per street frontage on each parcel.
 - b. Multi-tenant building or shopping center.
 - (1) One (1) wall sign shall be permitted for each tenant having an individual means of public access.
 - (2) Tenants occupying a corner space in a multi-tenant structure shall be permitted to have one (1) sign on each side of the building.
 - (3) Where several tenants share a common entrance in a multi-tenant structure, only one (1) wall sign shall be permitted, with the total permitted sign area being allocated among the tenants.
- 2. Signs on awnings, canopies or marquees may project a maximum of six (6) feet into the public right-of-way and shall be at least three (3) feet from any street curb line. Such projection must be approved by the City Commission, who may require proof of insurance in the amount determined by the City Services Director and shall provide proof that the City of East Grand Rapids is an additional named insured on the policy.
- 3. Directional signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area, and four (4) feet in height, unless located in a clear vision triangle (see Section 8.15, C). The number and location of directional signs shall be shown on the approved site plan.
- 4. Poster panel signs shall be subject to the following:
 - a. At least thirty-five percent (35%) of the sign area shall be permanently painted or affixed graphics. The remainder may allow for changeable letters (reader board/message board) or handwritten advertisements.

- b. The sign shall be located a minimum of two (2) feet from the edge of the curb and must be located so that no less than five (5) feet wide of sidewalk is maintained between the sign and the building wall.
 - c. The sign shall only be displayed during operating business hours and shall be stored inside at all other times.
 - d. The sign must be constructed of weather-proof, durable material and kept in good repair.
 - e. The owner of the sign shall provide proof of insurance in the amount determined by the City Services Director and shall provide proof that the City of East Grand Rapids is an additional named insured on the policy.
5. Blade signs are permitted, subject to the following:
- a. Blade signs shall have no more than two (2) faces, placed back to back to each other in the same plane, and shall be no more than two inches (2”) thick.
 - b. Blade signs shall be constructed of rigid and permanent materials, such as wood, metal, or rigid polymer.
 - c. A blade sign may be illuminated only by an internal light source, unless indirectly illuminated by a shielded, wall-mounted building light or other ambient light source.
6. Projecting signs are permitted subject to the following:
- a. Projecting signs shall be illuminated only by steady, stationary, shielded light sources directed solely at the sign. Use of glaring undiffused lights or bulbs shall be prohibited.
 - b. The owner of the sign shall provide proof of insurance in an amount determined by the City Services Director and shall provide proof that the City of East Grand Rapids is an additional named insured on the policy.

(Section 8.19, Tables 1 and 2 appear on the next pages)

8.19 SCHEDULE OF SIGN REGULATIONS – C-1 DISTRICT

Table 1 – Permanent Signs in the C-1 District				
Type of Sign	Maximum Area	Maximum Height	Illumination	# Permitted
Wall Sign	1 sq. ft. per linear foot of occupant frontage, or 10% of the wall, whichever is greater, up to maximum of 50 sq. ft.	Must not protrude above the roof line	Permitted	arcel
				business for each tenant in multi-tenant building with separate means of access
				ach side of building facing a street or parking area
Awning, Canopy and Marquee	Lettering and/or graphics may cover maximum of 1/3 of canopy, awning or marquee fascia	Bottom of awning, canopy or marquee must be at least 8 ft. above ground level or sidewalk	Permitted	arcel
	Lettering and/or graphics shall be included within the permitted wall sign area			1/ each side of the building facing a street or parking area
Blade Sign	6 sq. feet. Blade signs shall not extend more than 18” beyond the face of the wal	Bottom of blade sign must be at least 5 ft. above ground level or sidewalk	Permitted as per Section 8.18, B, 5	1 per frontage, near business entrance.
Directional Sign	4 sq. ft. per sign	4 ft.	Permitted	Determined by City
Poster Panel Sign (Sandwich board signs, A-frames)	7 sq. ft.	3.5 ft.	Not permitted	1/parcel
				1/each side of building adjacent to a sidewalk or parking area
Ground Sign	36 sq. ft.	7 ft.	Permitted	1/lot
				1/street frontage on corner lots
Business Center Sign	50 sq. ft.	10 ft.	Permitted	1/Business Center
				No individual freestanding signs other than the Business Center sign are permitted.

Table 1 – Permanent Signs in the C-1 District

Type of Sign	Maximum Area	Maximum Height	Illumination	# Permitted
Window Sign (Permanent)	25% of surface of window (1)	n/a	Not permitted	1/window
Projecting Sign	24 sq. ft.	8 ft. above ground level or sidewalk; may not protrude above the roof line	Permitted as per Section 8.18, B, 6	1/parcel
				1/each side of building facing a street or parking area
Rear Entry Sign	6 sq. ft.	May not protrude above the roof line	Permitted	1/business
Umbrella Sign	1/3 of umbrella area	/a	Not permitted	n/a

(1) The area of permanent window signs shall be counted with the maximum permitted area of wall signs

Table 2 Temporary Signs in the C-1 District

Type of Sign	Type of Sign Permitted	Maximum Size	Maximum Height	Maximum Number	Required Setback	Permitted Duration
Construction Sign	Ground or Wall	36 sq. ft. (1)	10 ft.	1	(2)	Date of building permit to 1 week after the last construction trade has left
Window Sign (Temporary)	Paper or Fabric	(5)			(2)	30 days (6)
Real Estate - sale or lease of individual business or lot	Ground or Wall	16 sq. ft.	6 ft.	1 (3)	(2)	During periods of rent, lease, sale or availability
Real Estate Development Sign	Ground	36 sq. ft.	10 ft.	1 (3)	(2)	Until 51% of the units or sq. ft. of project are sold and/or leased, whichever comes first
Grand Opening Sign (not including changes in ownership)	Ground or Wall	16 sq. ft.	Ground: 4 ft.	1 (3)	(2)	1 period of a maximum of 30 consecutive days

Table 2 Temporary Signs in the C-1 District						
Type of Sign	Type of Sign Permitted	Maximum Size	Maximum Height	Maximum Number	Required Setback	Permitted Duration
			Wall: not higher than roof line			
Community Special Event Sign	(4)				(2)	Up to 3 weeks prior to event and not to exceed a total of 30 days

Footnotes to Table 2:

1. In the case of renovations (e.g. addition to a commercial building) or maintenance or repair (e.g. roofing or siding), rather than the construction of a new commercial building, the maximum sign area shall be sixteen (16) square feet.
2. The temporary sign shall be set back at least five (5) feet from any public right-of-way line, easement or private street and twenty-five (25) feet from any residential district property line, and shall be placed to ensure clear sight distances at all intersections.
3. On a corner parcel two (2) signs, one (1) facing each street, shall be permitted.
4. Special event signs may include ground signs and/or displays or wall signs, banners, pennants, or similar displays; the number, size and height of the sign(s) shall be subject to City Services Director approval.
5. The total of all window signs, temporary and permanent, shall not exceed one-third (1/3) of the total window area of each window. The area of permanent window signs shall also be counted with the total permitted area of wall signs.
6. Temporary window signs that are faded, yellowed, ripped or otherwise damaged shall be removed immediately.

8.20 NONCONFORMING SIGNS

- A. Any sign legally existing at the time of adoption of these regulations which does not comply with all provisions shall be considered a non-conforming sign and may be permitted to continue if the sign is properly maintained and not detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the community.
- B. Nothing shall prevent the strengthening or restoring to a safe condition of any portion of a sign declared unsafe by the City Services Director. The cost of improvements to these signs shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the current market value of the existing sign structure. Planned improvements exceeding this amount shall be required to conform to the current sign requirements of this Chapter.
- C. Subject to exceptions and amortization requirements below, any non-conforming signs may be continued in operation and maintained after the effective date of these regulations provided that the signs shall not be:
 - 1. Structurally altered so as to extend their useful life;
 - 2. Expanded;
 - 3. Relocated;
 - 4. Re-established after damage of more than fifty percent (50%) of the value at the time of the damage or destruction;
 - 5. Modified in any way that would increase the degree of non-conformity.
 - 6. Changed in copy, logo or other physical change in the appearance of the sign.
- D. Once obsolete, the nonconforming status of a sign shall end.
- E. All portable signs, except those specifically permitted by these regulations shall be removed upon the effective date of this Chapter.
- F. Any illegal signs that exist on the effective date of these regulations shall be removed upon the effective date of this Chapter and may be replaced by signs that meet the requirements of this Chapter. A permit shall be required if provided for in this Chapter.

8.21 ADMINISTRATION

- A. Review and Approval. Unless specifically excepted, every permanent or temporary sign for which a permit is required shall be erected, structurally altered or relocated only after review and approval from the City Services Department.
- B. Application. A permit application form, provided by the City Services Department, shall be completed in full and signed by the owner of the business and of the property owner if different from that of the sign, along with any other information the City Services Director may require to ensure compliance with this Chapter and other ordinances of the City. No application shall be considered complete until all required and requested information is provided.

- C. **Staking of Proposed Sign Location.** The location of a proposed sign (except wall-mounted signs) shall be staked by the property/sign owner to allow the City Services Department to determine compliance with required setbacks of this Chapter.
- D. **Permit Required.** Upon approval, a sign permit will be issued by the City Services Department. The City Services Department shall issue a numbered permit for all approved signs.
- E. **Fees.** All permit fees for signs shall be as established by the City Commission.
- F. **Nullification.** A sign permit shall become null and void if the work for which the permit was issued has not been completed within six (6) months after the date of the permit.
- G. **Exceptions.** The following shall not require a sign permit:
 - 1. Those signs listed as not requiring a permit in the preceding sections;
 - 2. **Replacing Copy.** The changing of the advertising copy or message on a conforming and approved sign which is specifically designed for the use of replaceable copy; and
 - 3. **Maintenance.** Painting, repainting, cleaning or other normal maintenance or repair of a sign or a sign structure, unless a structural change is made.
- H. **Certificate of Compliance.** The property owner shall notify the City Services Department immediately upon erecting a sign to request a final inspection for a Certificate of Compliance.

8.22 COMPLIANCE WITH CITY CODES

- A. All signs shall comply with the pertinent requirements of the City's adopted Building Code, as amended from time to time, except as may be modified by this Chapter.
- B. **Inspections.** Signs for which a permit is required will be inspected periodically and upon completion by a City Services Department representative for compliance with this Chapter and any applicable ordinances of the City.

8.23 REMOVAL

- A. **Removal**
 - 1. The City Services Director may order the removal of any permanent sign and its supporting structure that violates the provisions of this Chapter. The City Services Director shall give thirty (30) days notice in writing to the owner of the sign and its supporting structure requiring him/her to bring it into compliance within sixty (60) days. Any sign of a temporary nature shall require written notice of only three (3) days.
 - 2. After notification, if not removed by the owner the City may remove the sign and its supporting structure, or remove the sign without notice if City Services Director determines that the sign and its supporting structure presents an immediate safety threat. The cost of removal by the City shall be assessed against the owner of the sign or the owner of the building, structure or premises in the manner provided by law.
 - 3. Any portable sign, except as unless otherwise permitted by this Chapter, shall be removed within six (6) months from the effective date of this Chapter. The City

Commission may extend the date for removal up to an additional twelve (12) months if the owner is unable to comply with this time period due to conditions beyond his control.

B. Obsolete Signs.

1. A sign and sign structure conforming to the other provisions of this Chapter may remain in place up to one hundred and twenty (120) days from the date of its obsolescence if the sign area is obscured by the use of a blank panel attached within the frame of the sign.
2. This removal requirement for a sign and sign structure that conforms to this Chapter shall not apply if a successor to an inactive business agrees within thirty (30) days of the date of written notice by the City Services Director, to maintain the sign as provided for by this Chapter.

C. Costs of Enforcement. Any costs or expenses incurred by the City in enforcing these regulations shall be paid by the owner of the sign found to be in violation of these regulations, or, upon default thereof, by the owner of the sign or the owner of the property to reimburse the city for costs and expenses incurred in such enforcement, the owner of the property shall be billed for those costs and expenses in the manner permitted by law.

8.24 APPEALS, INTERPRETATIONS, AND VARIANCES

A. The City Commission shall act as the Board of Appeals for these regulations. The City Commission shall have the authority to interpret, consider appeals of administrative decisions and consider requests for variances.

B. Appeals

1. The City Commission shall hear appeals of administrative decisions where it is alleged that there is an error in any order, requirement, decision or determination made by the City Services Director, the Zoning Administrator, or other official of the City in the enforcement of these regulations, provided in no case shall the Committee hear an appeal on a matter that deals with requirements of the Building Code.
2. Any person aggrieved by any decision or order of the City Services Director or Zoning Administrator in connection with any provision of these regulations may appeal to the City of East Grand Rapids City Commission within thirty (30) days of the decision or order.

C. Interpretation. The City Commission may interpret any aspect of a sign or its framework that might adversely affect the health, safety and welfare of the public, except construction requirements set forth in the Building Code. Such interpretation may be requested by an applicant, business owner, city official, the Zoning Administrator of the City Services Director.

D. Variances

1. The City Commission shall hear variance requests on all applications that do not conform to the provisions of these regulations, relating to the location, maintenance, design, illumination, size, height, number and type of signs. The City Commission may require the applicant to present photographs of similar signs or color renderings of the proposed sign prior to making a decision on a variance request.

2. In no case shall City Commission have the authority to grant a variance when the matter concerns construction or design requirements of the Building Code. Only the Building Code Board of Appeals may consider these requirements.
3. The City Commission shall use the following standards to grant a variance. All of the following standards shall be satisfied, as applicable.
 - a. The applicant has demonstrated a variance is needed due to a practical difficulty on the site or unique condition that is more than mere inconvenience or mere inability to attain a supposed higher financial return or incur additional costs. These conditions may include varied topography, horizontal or vertical road curvature, or presence of structures or desired trees that limits visibility of a sign on the premises compared to similar sites with conforming signs in the same zoning district.
 - b. A variance is warranted due to circumstances exceptional and peculiar to the property for which the variance is requested, and those conditions do not exist generally throughout the city. These conditions may include such considerations as the significantly larger size of the site, frontage or building in comparison to other establishments in the same zoning district.
 - c. If applicable, a variance would significantly bring a nonconforming sign closer to conformity with this Chapter.
 - d. That allowing the variance will result in substantial justice being done, considering the public benefits intended by the regulations, the rights of others whose property would be affected by the allowance of the variance are not impaired, or adversely affect the health, safety and welfare of the public.
 - e. The variance will not be contrary to the purpose and intent of the regulation(s) being considered for the variance.
 - f. The variance granted will be the minimum necessary to allow the applicant to enjoy the same rights as other establishments in the same zoning district, and ensure a reasonable outlet for free speech where no others may reasonably exist.

8.25 CITY COMMISSION HEARINGS AND DECISIONS

- A. Notice regarding a proposed appeal, interpretation (if applicable to a specific property) or variance shall be sent by mail at least fifteen (15) days prior to the City Commission meeting at which the request will be considered, to all property owners of record within three hundred (300) feet of the property in question. The notice shall contain a brief description of the request, the time and place of the City Commission meeting, the hours and location of where the application for appeal, interpretation or variance may be inspected, and the address where written comments may be sent.
- B. Meetings to hear appeals, interpretations, or variances may be held the same evening as the regularly scheduled City Commission meeting, unless a special City Commission meeting is called.
- C. Decisions on appeals, interpretations and variances shall require a majority vote of the full membership of the City Commission, not just a majority of those present.
- D. The City Commission may affirm, annul or modify the order or action of the City Services Department or portion of the regulations of this Chapter.

- E. All decisions of City Commission are final and may not be appealed, except as may be provided by law.
- F. The City Commission in its decisions on appeals, interpretations, and variances the City Commission shall either:
 - 1. Approve the application as presented upon a finding, point by point, that all the criteria in Section 8.24 are met;
 - 2. Subject the approval to certain changes or conditions, such as, but not limited to, changes to sign dimensions or proposed location, changes to materials of the sign or sign base/ framework to be more complementary with the overall site design or character of the area, addition of landscaping around the base of the sign, or changes to sign illumination; or
 - 3. Deny the application.
- G. Any decision of the City Commission shall be in writing and the applicant shall be provided a written explanation of the reasons for the decisions and any conditions attached to an approval.

Section 2. This Ordinance shall be effective on March 30, 2007.

Section 3. Notice of adoption of this Ordinance shall be published within ten (10) days after its enactment by publication of a digest, summary, or statement of purpose of the Ordinance as provided by Chapter VII, Section 7.5 of the Charter of the City of East Grand Rapids.

**NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE
BY THE CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on March 19, 2007, the City Commission of the City of East Grand Rapids adopted an Ordinance that completely restated Chapter 81 of Title VIII of the City Code. The purpose of this Ordinance was to completely restate regulations relating to signs within the City of East Grand Rapids. The major sections of this Ordinance are as follows:

- Sec. 8.11 Intent and Applicability of Sign Regulations
- Sec. 8.12 Definitions
- Sec. 8.13 Exempt Signs
- Sec. 8.16 Signs in Planned Unit Developments
- Sec. 8.17 Signs in Residential Districts
- Sec. 8.18 Signs in the C-1 Commercial District
- Sec. 8.20 Nonconforming Signs
- Sec. 8.23 Removal
- Sec. 8.24 Appeals, Interpretations, and Variances

The full text of the Ordinance is available for inspection by and distribution to the public at the office of the City Clerk. No further or additional publication of this Ordinance is required or contemplated.

CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

By _____
Karen K. Brower
City Clerk

