

# East Central Intergovernmental Association

a regional response to local needs



June 10, 2025

Lori Roling, Zoning Administrator  
Jackson County Zoning Department  
201 West Platt Street  
Maquoketa, IA 52060

## RE: Zoning Ordinance Update –

- **Draft of Ch. 6 Definitions – Sign Definitions (06-10-25)**
- **Draft of Section 2.9 Application of District Regulations - Signs (06-10-25)**

Dear Lori,

Attached is the Draft of Ch. 6 Definitions – Sign Definitions (06-10-25) and Draft of Section 2.9 Application of District Regulations - Signs (06-10-25) review and consensus approval by the Zoning Commission at their June 16, 2025 meeting.

## Discussion

Chapter 6 Definitions has been updated with revised and new definitions that support the new regulations in Section 2.9, where current and new sign regulations have been added. The attached REDLINE versions outline the proposed changes, and the CLEAN versions shows the resulting restructure. Major updates proposed are:

- Adding new definitions for signs in Chapter 6.
- Establishing sign regulations and a sign permit in Section 2.9 .
- Grouping sign regulations for all zoning districts in Section 2.9.

## Recommendation

The Commission is asked to review and approve by consensus the Draft of Ch. 6 Definitions – Sign Definitions (06-10-25) and the Draft of Section 2.9 Application of District Regulations - Signs (06-10-25), and then to provide direction to staff for moving forward with the proposal.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Laura Carstens".

Laura Carstens  
Senior Planner

Attachments

**CHAPTER 6. DEFINITIONS**

~~54. —~~ **Signs.** Any device (including but not limited to letters, words, numerals, figures, emblems, pictures, or any part or combination) used for visual communication designed to inform or attract the attention of persons the public and visible to the public right-of-way or other properties. not on the premises on which the sign is located, provided, however, that the following shall not be included in the application of the regulations herein: The list below was moved to Section 2.9

a. Signs not exceeding two (2) square feet in area and bearing only property numbers, post box numbers, names of occupants of premises or other identification of premises not having commercial connotations.

b. Flags and insignia of any government except when displayed in connection with commercial promotion.

c. Legal notices, identification, informational or directional signs erected or required by governmental bodies.

d. Signs directing and guiding traffic and parking on public or private property but bearing no advertising matter.

e. Warning signs, no trespassing, no hunting and similar signs not to exceed two (2) square feet in area located on the premises.

f. Integral decorative or architectural features of buildings, except letters, trademarks moving parts or moving lights.

~~6. —~~ **Sign, Billboard and Advertising.** An advertising sign-device as defined and regulated in Iowa Code Chapter 306C Subchapter II Billboard Control for a business, commodity or service located or offered elsewhere than upon the premises where such sign or billboard is located.

**Sign, Bulletin Board.** Any sign erected by a charitable, educational, or religious institution or public body which is erected upon the same property as said institution for purposes of announcing events which are held on the premises.

~~15. **Signs, Directional-Signs.** A sign that includes information in directing and guiding pedestrian and vehicular traffic, such as enter, exit, parking. Etc. on public or private property. Any sign erected to call attention and direct traffic to businesses located off the primary highway system. Such signs must be placed no more than five (5) miles from the business served and positioned specifically to guide traffic to the service available. Except adjacent to U.S. Highway 61, directional signs must serve businesses in unincorporated areas.~~

**Sign, Double-Faced.** A sign consisting of no more than two (2) parallel or near parallel faces supported by a single structure. Also known as a back-to-back sign.

**Sign, Electronic Message.** A sign which uses an array of electronic illuminated lights, generally controlled by a computer or other electronic programming device to display information or supporting graphics.

**Sign, Free-standing.** A sign anchored directly to the ground or supported by one (1) or more posts, columns, or other vertical structures or supports, and not attached to or dependent for support from any building. Examples include: pole signs, ground signs, and monument signs (see illustrations).



**Pole Sign with Electronic Message Sign**



**Ground or Monument Sign**

*Photo Credits: Model Sign Ordinance, Montgomery County Planning Commission, 2014*

**Sign, Government.** A sign, posting, notice, or similar elements placed, installed, or required by law by a city, county, state, or federal governmental agency in carrying out its responsibility to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, or for civic or recreational purposes.

**Sign, Identification.** A sign identifying a specific business, service, activity, or profession, including but not limited to logo, trademark, name, address, and contact information, located on the premises.

**Sign, Illuminated.** A sign with an artificial light source incorporated internally or externally (directly or indirectly) for the purpose of illuminating the sign.

**Sign, Moving.** A sign that conveys its message through rotating, changing, or animated elements by mechanical means or by action of wind currents.

**Sign, Nameplate.** A sign indicating the name, address, and the practice of a permitted occupation.

**Sign, Nonconforming.** A sign that was legally erected prior to the adoption of this Zoning Ordinance but which now violates the regulations of this Zoning Ordinance.

**Sign, Off-Site.** A sign identifying or advertising a business, profession, activity, service, or product that is not located, sold, or produced on the same site or premises as the sign.

**Sign, On-Site.** A sign identifying or advertising a business, profession, activity, service, or product that is located, sold, or produced on the same site or premises as the sign.

**Sign, Projecting.** A sign other than a wall sign that is attached to and projects from a building face.

**Sign, Temporary.** A sign designed or fabricated of materials that advertise or communicate messages that change frequently or that become outdated, are made of materials of relatively low durability, or are intended to be removed or replaced within a period of six (6) months or less.

**Sign, Wall** – A sign attached to and parallel with the side of a building that does not project more than two (2) feet from the building wall.

**Sign, Window** – A sign painted on or installed inside a window for the purpose of viewing from outside the premises.

## CHAPTER 2. ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS

**2.9 Application of District Regulations.** Subject to Section 1.7-20 the regulations and restrictions of this ordinance shall apply as follows:

- A. Regulations to be Uniformly Applied.** The regulations set by this Ordinance shall apply uniformly to each class or kind of use, structure or land, and particularly within each district, except as hereinafter provided.
- B. All Uses, Buildings, and Structures to Conform.** No building, structure or ~~land-lot~~ shall hereafter be used or occupied and no building or structure or part thereof shall hereafter be erected, constructed, reconstructed, moved or structurally altered unless in conformity with all of the regulations herein specified for the district in which it is located.
- C. Height, Density or ~~YardSetbacks~~ Shall Not Be Violated.** No use, building or other structure shall hereafter be erected or altered to exceed the height, to accommodate or house a greater number of families or to have narrower or smaller rear ~~yardsetbacks~~, front ~~yardsetbacks~~, side ~~yardsetbacks~~, street side setbacks, -or- other open spaces, than herein required or in any other manner contrary to the provisions of this Ordinance.
- D. Separate ~~YardSetbacks~~, Open Space and Off-Street Parking Required.** No part of a ~~yard-setback~~ or other open space or off-street parking or loading space required about or in connection with any use, building, or structure for the purpose of complying with this Ordinance shall be included as part of a ~~yardsetback~~, open space or off-street parking or loading space similarly required for any other use, building, or structure.
- E. Minimum ~~Yard-Setbacks~~ and Lot Areas May Not Be Reduced.** No ~~yard-setback~~ or lot existing at the time of passage of this Ordinance shall be reduced in dimension or area below the minimum requirements set forth herein. ~~Yards-Setbacks~~ or lots created after the effective date of this Ordinance shall meet at least the minimum requirements established by this Ordinance.
- F. New Areas.** All territory which may hereafter become a part of the unincorporated area of the County shall be classified in the A-1 Agricultural District until otherwise classified, ~~;~~ provided, however, that the Zoning Commission may recommend the appropriate district classification prior to such territory becoming a part of the County, and upon the holding of a public hearing and approval by the Board of Supervisors, the territory, upon becoming a part of the county, may be immediately so classified.
- F.G. Sign Regulations.** The following provisions, regulations, or exceptions shall apply equally to signs in all zoning districts as hereinafter provided. All signs requiring a permit must be evaluated before issuance of a permit by the Zoning Administrator. No signs will be allowed in the public road right of way except as hereinafter provided.
- 1. Exempted Signs.** The following signs shall be exempt from the sign regulations of this Section:
- a. Nameplate** signs not to exceeding ~~two (2)~~six (6) square feet in area and bearing only property numbers, post box numbers, names of occupants of premises or other identification of premises not having commercial connotations.

- ~~a-b.~~ Flags and insignia of any government except when displayed in connection with commercial promotion.
- ~~c.~~ Legal notices, identification, informational or directional signs erected or required by governmental bodies.
- ~~d.~~ Directional signs not to exceed six (6) square feet directing and guiding traffic and parking on public or private property but bearing no advertising matter; these signs may be placed in required front setbacks.
- ~~b-e.~~ Warning signs, no trespassing, no hunting and similar signs not to exceed two (2) square feet in area located on the premises.
- ~~f.~~ Integral decorative or architectural features of buildings, except letters, trademarks, moving parts, or moving lights.
- ~~e-g.~~ Inside window signs, including but not limited to signs for hours of operation, goods and services, or credit cards accepted.



**Directional Sign**

*Photo Credit: Model Sign Ordinance, Montgomery County Planning Commission, 2014*

## **2. Allowed Signs Not Requiring a Sign Permit.**

- ~~a.~~ Exempted signs as listed in this Section.
- ~~b.~~ For each single-family or two-family dwelling, one (1) nameplate not to exceed six (6) square feet of area for each dwelling unit.
- ~~c.~~ For a multiple-family dwelling, boarding and lodging house, and bed and breakfast home or inn, one (1) identification sign for each such building not to exceed twelve (12) square feet in area.
- ~~a-d.~~ For a home-based business or home industry, one (1) identification sign not to exceed six (6) square feet in area.
- ~~b-e.~~ Church and Public bulletin boards and identification signs at places of assembly, educational institutions, and public buildings and sites not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area in the A-1 and R-1 Districts.
- ~~f.~~ Identification signs for entrances and key facilities in residential subdivisions, mobile home parks, and homeowner/property owner associations not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area and limited to one (1) such sign per street frontage.
- ~~g.~~ Temporary signs advertising the lease or sale of the premises in the A-1 Agricultural, R-1 Residential, and C-1 Highway Commercial Districts not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area, and in the M-1 Limited Industrial and M-2 General Industrial Districts not to exceed twenty-four (24) square feet in area.

## **3. General Regulations.**

- ~~a.~~ All signs requiring a permit shall have an approved permit from the Zoning Administrator before being erected, reconstructed or structurally altered to increase the exterior dimensions or height, or to accommodate a change in use of the building and/or premises or part thereof, in accordance with Section XX of this Ordinance.
- ~~b.~~ All signs shall be maintained in a neat, safe presentable condition and in the event their use shall cease, they shall be promptly removed within thirty (30) days and the surrounding area restored to a condition free from refuse and rubbish.
- ~~c.~~ Any sign not conforming to the provisions of this Ordinance shall be made to conform or be removed in accordance with Section 2.10. Nonconformities of this Ordinance.



- d. Signs shall be located in such a nature as to not obscure or otherwise interfere with the effectiveness of an official traffic sign, signal or device and to not obstruct, or interfere, with the driver's view of approaching, merging, or intersecting traffic, as determined by the Zoning Administrator and the County Engineer.
- e. All signs shall be located in compliance with the setbacks established for all zoning districts except as hereinafter provided.
- f. All signs shall be prohibited on the public road right-of-way with the following exceptions: legal notices, traffic signs, street identification, information or directional signs erected or required by governmental bodies, nameplates on mailboxes, and noncommercial informational signs approved by the Zoning Administrator and the County Engineer.

**4. Sign Measurements.** For regulating signs as described in this Zoning Ordinance the following shall apply:

- a. Area. Computation of sign area shall include the combination of the writing, emblem, illustrations, or other display, together with any background material or color forming an integral part of the display, but not including the supporting framework. On a multi-face sign the area is computed only from one face. Where the frame or cabinet is not in the shape of a rectangle, square, triangle or circle, the sign face area shall be determined by calculating the area of an imaginary rectangle drawn around the frame or cabinet (see illustration).
- b. Height. Height shall be measured from the average ground level exclusive of any fill, berm, mounds, or excavation solely for locating the sign, to the highest point of the sign, or support structure, whichever is taller (see illustration).
- c. Projection. Any building sign extending more than six (6) inches from the wall to which it is attached shall provide clearance of at least eight (8) feet above walkways and at least fifteen (15) feet above driveways.
- d. Setback. The setback of a sign is measured from the property line to the line projected to the ground plane of the nearest portion of the sign.
- e. Number of Faces. No sign shall have more than two (2) faces. Sign faces shall be parallel, unless determined by the City to be consistent with the architectural character of the building.



**Sign Area and Height Calculations**

Photo Credit: Model Sign Ordinance, Montgomery County Planning Commission, 2014

**5. Sign Permit.** A sign permit shall be obtained from the Zoning Administrator before any sign or sign structure shall be erected, reconstructed or structurally altered to increase the exterior dimensions or height, or to accommodate a change in use of the building and/or premises or part thereof. Any maintenance item such as a new sign panel, sign structure and other repair items which do not enlarge the sign or change the height or location, shall not require a sign permit. Sign permits must be approved before the beginning of construction, and shall be issued in accordance with this Ordinance. A certificate of compliance shall be issued after the lawful erection or alteration of the sign is completed and inspected by the Zoning Administrator in

accordance with this Ordinance. A record of all certificates of compliance shall be kept on file in the Office of the Zoning Administrator, and copies shall be furnished upon request to any person having a proprietary, or tenancy interest in the sign affected.

**2.6. Sign Permit Required for Billboard and Advertising Signs.** These signs are prohibited in the R-1 Residential District. These signs are allowed in the A-1 Agricultural, C-1 Highway Commercial, M-1 Limited Industrial, and M-2 General Industrial Districts, provided that:

- a. They are not within two-hundred fifty (250) feet of a highway intersection, highway structure, residence, park, school, cemetery, or public or semi-public building.
- b. They are not within three hundred (300) feet of another billboard or advertising sign facing the same direction.
- a-c. ~~No billboard or advertising sign~~ They shall exceed seven hundred fifty (750) square feet in area per face or twenty-five (25) feet in height.
- b-d. They comply with Iowa Code Chapter 306C Subchapter II Billboard Control and meet other sign regulations pursuant to Iowa Department of Transportation guidelines.



#### ***Sign Examples in Jackson County***

**A. Billboard and advertising sign:**  
off-site, free-standing, back-to-back faces, external illumination

**B. Trade, business, or industry identification signs:** on-site, free-standing, double-faced, internal illumination, electronic message sign

**C. Governmental directional signs:**  
exempt

Photo credit: ECIA, 5/13/2025

**7. Sign Permit Required for Trade, business, or industry identification signs** ~~for permitted principal uses, accessory uses and special exception uses of this district identifying~~ These allowed signs identify the business, firm or service located on the site or premises, provided that:

- a. In the A-1 Agricultural District:
  - i. One (1) sign not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area for that use on each street or road frontage; however, each sign may be a double-faced or back-to-back sign.
  - ii. Such signs shall be located at least twenty (20) feet from any lot line or not more than five (5) feet from the main building.
  - iii. Illumination of signs and bulletin boards shall be indirect, non-intermittent lighting.
- b. In the R-1 Residential District:
  - i. One (1) sign not to exceed four (4) square feet in area for that use on each street or road frontage; however, each sign may be a double-faced or back-to-back sign.



~~iii.~~ ii. Such signs shall be located at least twenty (20) feet from any lot line or not more than five (5) feet from the main building.

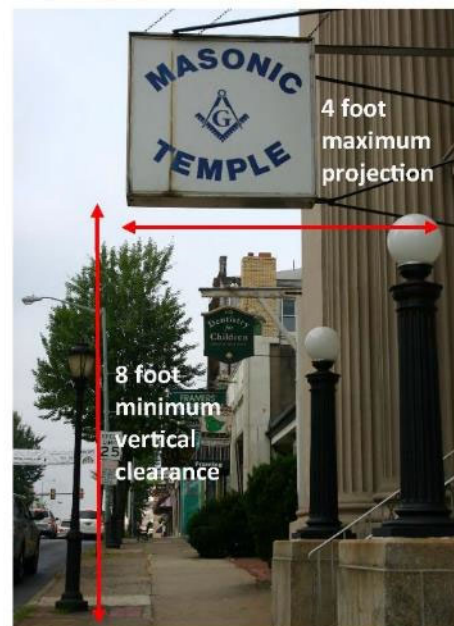
iii. Illumination of signs and bulletin boards shall be indirect, non-intermittent lighting.

b.c. In the C-1 Highway Commercial District:

- i. One (1) free-standing sign per business not exceeding twenty-five (25) feet in height and one hundred (100) square feet per face;
- ii. One (1) signs per business mounted or painted on the wall of a building shall not cover more than twenty (20) percent of the wall of the building in which they are located, or one hundred (100) square feet, whichever is smaller;
- iii. The total combined area of all signs shall not exceed two hundred (200) square feet per business or more than one (1) square foot of sign area for every lineal foot of lot frontage, whichever is greater.
- iv. No sign shall be located in, overhang or project into a required side or rear yard, but permitted signs may be placed in a required front yard.

c.d. In the M-1 Limited Industrial and M-2 General Industrial Districts:

- i. One (1) free-standing sign per business shall not exceed thirty-five (35) feet in height and one hundred (100) square feet per face;
- ii. One (1) signs per business mounted or painted on the wall of a building shall not cover more than twenty (20) percent of the wall of the building in which they are located, or two hundred (200) square feet, whichever is smaller;
- iii. No sign shall be located in, overhang or project into a required side or rear yard, but permitted signs may be placed in a required front yard.
- ii. In the M-2 District only, signs attached to a building shall not project above the height of the building, or more than four (4) feet from the wall of the building and shall not have more than one hundred (100) square feet of area (see illustration).



#### **Projecting Sign**

- **Maximum 4-foot projection from building wall**
- **Minimum 8-foot clearance above walkways**
- **Minimum 15-foot clearance above driveways**

Photo Credit: Model Sign Ordinance, Montgomery County Planning Commission, 2014

~~A-1: 1. Directional signs as defined not to exceed 150 square feet in area only along U. S. Highway 61 or 32 square feet in area elsewhere in the county, provided that no business shall have more than three (3) such signs in all districts combined.~~

~~R-1: 4. Directional signs as defined not to exceed 3 square feet in area, provided that no business shall have more than 2 such signs in all districts combined and that effective traffic guidance cannot be attained without sign placement in an R-1 zone.~~

## CHAPTER 6. DEFINITIONS

**Signs.** Any device (including but not limited to letters, words, numerals, figures, emblems, pictures, or any part or combination) used for visual communication designed to inform or attract the attention of the public and visible to the public right-of-way or other properties.

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**Sign, Electronic Message.** A sign which uses an array of electronic illuminated lights, generally controlled by a computer or other electronic programming device to display information or supporting graphics.

**Sign, Free-standing.** A sign anchored directly to the ground or supported by one (1) or more posts, columns, or other vertical structures or supports, and not attached to or dependent for support from any building. Examples include: pole signs, ground signs, and monument signs (*see illustrations*).



**Pole Sign with Electronic Message Sign**



**Ground or Monument Sign**

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**Sign, Identification.** A sign identifying a specific business, service, activity, or profession, including but not limited to logo, trademark, name, address, and contact information, located on the premises.

**Sign, Illuminated.** A sign with an artificial light source incorporated internally or externally (directly or indirectly) for the purpose of illuminating the sign.

**Sign, Moving.** A sign that conveys its message through rotating, changing, or animated elements by mechanical means or by action of wind currents.

**Sign, Nameplate.** A sign indicating the name, address, and the practice of a permitted occupation.

**Sign, Nonconforming.** A sign that was legally erected prior to the adoption of this Zoning Ordinance but which now violates the regulations of this Zoning Ordinance.

**Sign, Off-Site.** A sign identifying or advertising a business, profession, activity, service, or product that is not located, sold, or produced on the same site or premises as the sign.

**Sign, On-Site.** A sign identifying or advertising a business, profession, activity, service, or product that is located, sold, or produced on the same site or premises as the sign.

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**Sign, Wall** – A sign attached to and parallel with the side of a building that does not project more than two (2) feet from the building wall.

**Sign, Window** – A sign painted on or installed inside a window for the purpose of viewing from outside the premises.

## CHAPTER 2. ZONING DISTRICT REGULATIONS

**2.9 Application of District Regulations.** Subject to Section 1.20 the regulations and restrictions of this ordinance shall apply as follows:

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- B. All Uses, Buildings, and Structures to Conform.** No building, structure or lot shall hereafter be used or occupied and no building or structure or part thereof shall hereafter be erected, constructed, reconstructed, moved or structurally altered unless in conformity with all of the regulations herein specified for the district in which it is located.
- C. Height, Density or Setbacks Shall Not Be Violated.** No use, building or other structure shall hereafter be erected or altered to exceed the height, to accommodate or house a greater number of families or to have narrower or smaller rear setbacks, front setbacks, side setbacks, street side setbacks, or other open spaces, than herein required or in any other manner contrary to the provisions of this Ordinance.
- D. Separate Setbacks, Open Space and Off-Street Parking Required.** No part of a setback or other open space or off-street parking or loading space required about or in connection with any use, building, or structure for the purpose of complying with this Ordinance shall be included as part of a setback, open space or off-street parking or loading space similarly required for any other use, building, or structure.
- E. Minimum Setbacks and Lot Areas May Not Be Reduced.** No setback or lot existing at the time of passage of this Ordinance shall be reduced in dimension or area below the minimum requirements set forth herein. Setbacks or lots created after the effective date of this Ordinance shall meet at least the minimum requirements established by this Ordinance.
- F. New Areas.** All territory which may hereafter become a part of the unincorporated area of the County shall be classified in the A-1 Agricultural District until otherwise classified; provided, however, that the Zoning Commission may recommend the appropriate district classification prior to such territory becoming a part of the County, and upon the holding of a public hearing and approval by the Board of Supervisors, the territory, upon becoming a part of the county, may be immediately so classified.
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  - 1. Exempted Signs.** The following signs shall be exempt from the sign regulations of this Section:
    - a. Nameplate signs not to exceed six (6) square feet in area and bearing only property numbers, post box numbers, names of occupants of premises or other identification of premises not having commercial connotations.

- b. Flags and insignia of any government except when displayed in connection with commercial promotion.
- c. Legal notices, identification, informational or directional signs erected or required by governmental bodies.
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- f. Integral decorative or architectural features of buildings, except letters, trademarks, moving parts, or moving lights.
- g. Inside window signs, including but not limited to signs for hours of operation, goods and services, or credit cards accepted.



**Directional Sign**

*Photo Credit: Model Sign Ordinance, Montgomery County Planning Commission, 2014*

## **2. Allowed Signs Not Requiring a Sign Permit.**

- a. Exempted signs as listed in this Section.
- b. For each single-family or two-family dwelling, one (1) nameplate not to exceed six (6) square feet of area for each dwelling unit.
- c. For a multiple-family dwelling, boarding and lodging house, and bed and breakfast home or inn, one (1) identification sign for each such building not to exceed twelve (12) square feet in area.
- d. For a home-based business or home industry, one (1) identification sign not to exceed six (6) square feet in area.
- e. Public bulletin boards and identification signs at places of assembly, educational institutions, and public buildings and sites not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area in the A-1 and R-1 Districts.
- f. Identification signs for entrances and key facilities in residential subdivisions, mobile home parks, and homeowner/property owner associations not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area and limited to one (1) such sign per street frontage.
- g. Temporary signs advertising the lease or sale of the premises in the A-1 Agricultural, R-1 Residential, and C-1 Highway Commercial Districts not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet in area, and in the M-1 Limited Industrial and M-2 General Industrial Districts not to exceed twenty-four (24) square feet in area.

## **3. General Regulations.**

- a. All signs requiring a permit shall have an approved permit from the Zoning Administrator before being erected, reconstructed or structurally altered to increase the exterior dimensions or height, or to accommodate a change in use of the building and/or premises or part thereof, in accordance with Section XX of this Ordinance.
- b. All signs shall be maintained in a neat, safe presentable condition and in the event their use shall cease, they shall be promptly removed within thirty (30) days and the surrounding area restored to a condition free from refuse and rubbish.
- c. Any sign not conforming to the provisions of this Ordinance shall be made to conform or be removed in accordance with Section 2.10. Nonconformities of this Ordinance.



- d. Signs shall be located in such a nature as to not obscure or otherwise interfere with the effectiveness of an official traffic sign, signal or device and to not obstruct, or interfere, with the driver's view of approaching, merging, or intersecting traffic, as determined by the Zoning Administrator and the County Engineer.
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- b. Height. Height shall be measured from the average ground level exclusive of any fill, berm, mounds, or excavation solely for locating the sign, to the highest point of the sign, or support structure, whichever is taller (*see illustration*).
- c. Projection. Any building sign extending more than six (6) inches from the wall to which it is attached shall provide clearance of at least eight (8) feet above walkways and at least fifteen (15) feet above driveways.
- d. Setback. The setback of a sign is measured from the property line to the line projected to the ground plane of the nearest portion of the sign.
- e. Number of Faces. No sign shall have more than two (2) faces. Sign faces shall be parallel, unless determined by the City to be consistent with the architectural character of the building.



**Sign Area and Height Calculations**

*Photo Credit: Model Sign Ordinance, Montgomery County Planning Commission, 2014*

- 5. Sign Permit.** A sign permit shall be obtained from the Zoning Administrator before any sign or sign structure shall be erected, reconstructed or structurally altered to increase the exterior dimensions or height, or to accommodate a change in use of the building and/or premises or part thereof. Any maintenance item such as a new sign panel, sign structure and other repair items which do not enlarge the sign or change the height or location, shall not require a sign permit. Sign permits must be approved before the beginning of construction, and shall be issued in accordance with this Ordinance. A certificate of compliance shall be issued after the lawful erection or alteration of the sign is completed and inspected by the Zoning Administrator in

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6. **Sign Permit Required for Billboard and Advertising Signs.** These signs are prohibited in the R-1 Residential District. These signs are allowed in the A-1 Agricultural, C-1 Highway Commercial, M-1 Limited Industrial, and M-2 General Industrial Districts, provided that:
- They are not within two-hundred fifty (250) feet of a highway intersection, highway structure, residence, park, school, cemetery, or public - building.
  - They are not within three hundred (300) feet of another billboard or advertising sign facing the same direction.
  - They shall exceed seven hundred fifty (750) square feet in area per face or twenty-five (25) feet in height.
  - They comply with **Iowa Code Chapter 306C Subchapter II Billboard Control** and meet other sign regulations pursuant to Iowa Department of Transportation guidelines.



#### **Sign Examples in Jackson County**

**A. Billboard and advertising sign:** off-site, free-standing, back-to-back faces, external illumination

**B. Trade, business, or industry identification signs:** on-site, free-standing, double-faced, internal illumination, electronic message sign

**C. Governmental directional signs:** exempt

*Photo credit: ECIA, 5/13/2025*

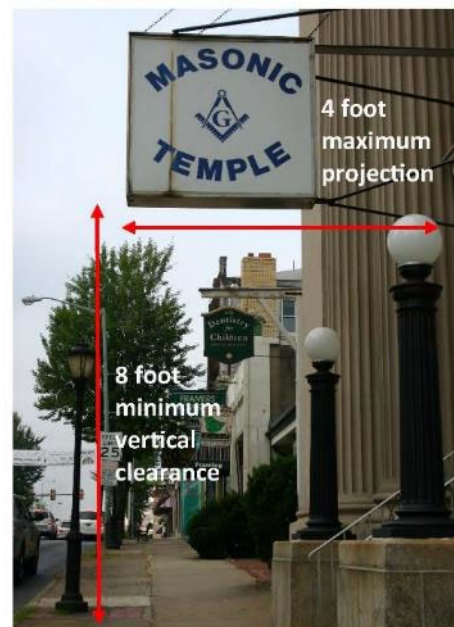
7. **Sign Permit Required for Trade, business, or industry identification signs.** These allowed signs identify the business, firm or service located on the site or premises, provided that:
- In the A-1 Agricultural District:
    - One (1) sign not to exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area for that use on each street or road frontage; however, each sign may be a double-faced or back-to-back sign.
    - Such signs shall be located at least twenty (20) feet from any lot line or not more than five (5) feet from the main building.
    - Illumination of signs and bulletin boards shall be indirect, non-intermittent lighting.
  - In the R-1 Residential District:
    - One (1) sign not to exceed four (4) square feet in area for that use on each street or road frontage; however, each sign may be a double-faced or back-to-back sign.
    - Such signs shall be located at least twenty (20) feet from any lot line or not more than five (5) feet from the main building.
    - Illumination of signs and bulletin boards shall be indirect, non-intermittent lighting.

c. In the C-1 Highway Commercial District:

- i. One (1) free-standing sign per business not exceeding twenty-five (25) feet in height and one hundred (100) square feet per face;
- ii. One (1) sign per business mounted or painted on the wall of a building shall not cover more than twenty (20) percent of the wall of the building in which they are located, or one hundred (100) square feet, whichever is smaller;
- iii. The total combined area of all signs shall not exceed two hundred (200) square feet per business or more than one (1) square foot of sign area for every lineal foot of lot frontage, whichever is greater.
- iv. No sign shall be located in, overhang or project into a required side or rear yard, but permitted signs may be placed in a required front yard.

d. In the M-1 Limited Industrial and M-2 General Industrial Districts:

- i. One (1) free-standing sign per business shall not exceed thirty-five (35) feet in height and one hundred (100) square feet per face;
- ii. One (1) sign per business mounted or painted on the wall of a building shall not cover more than twenty (20) percent of the wall of the building in which they are located, or two hundred (200) square feet, whichever is smaller;
- iii. No sign shall be located in, overhang or project into a required side or rear yard, but permitted signs may be placed in a required front yard.
- iv. In the M-2 District only, signs attached to a building shall not project above the height of the building, or more than four (4) feet from the wall of the building and shall not have more than one hundred (100) square feet of area (*see illustration*).



***Projecting Sign***

- ***Maximum 4-foot projection from building wall***
- ***Minimum 8-foot clearance above walkways***
- ***Minimum 15-foot clearance above driveways***

*Photo Credit: Model Sign Ordinance, Montgomery County Planning Commission, 2014*