

ARTICLE 18: SIGN STANDARDS

Section 1801: Intent and Purpose

The intent of this Article is to provide a comprehensive system of Sign regulations for Genoa Township that recognizes the necessity and desirability of communication by outdoor Signs while promoting planned graphic signage systems that eliminate visual clutter and confusion within the physical environment. The purpose is to protect property values and the safety and general welfare of the public within Genoa Township by encouraging compatibility between the design and functional nature of the Sign and its location within the physical environment, thus reducing the propensity for traffic accidents and personal hazards caused by distractions, sight obstructions, and unsafe Structures.

Section 1802: General Provisions and Safety Requirements

Prior to occupancy, each Building within Genoa Township shall be identified with street address numbers in numeral form.

Single-family homes shall be identified with reflective address numbers, not less than three (3) inches in height, posted on both sides of the mailbox for that Building. Address numbers may also be posted on the principal residential Structure. For residences located on a Common Access Drive, address numbers shall be located at the split of the drive and also at the street. Common Wall Single-Family Attached Units shall place the address on the fronts of the Building facing the street to show unit numbers contained within that Building. These addresses will also be located on the mailboxes.

Commercial Buildings shall be identified with street numbers not less than six (6) inches in height, which shall be posted on the Structure no more than three (3) feet from the main entrance. Large Buildings containing multiple units shall place the address on the fronts of the Building facing the street to show unit numbers contained within that Building. These addresses will also be located on the mailboxes.

All other Signs erected or located within Genoa Township shall be in conformance with the following requirements:

- 1802.01 Signs shall not be erected within nor project into any public Right-of-Way unless otherwise specified.
- 1802.02 Signs shall not prevent free ingress to or free egress from any door, window, or fire escape.
- 1802.03 Signs shall not obstruct free and clear visibility at any intersection.
- 1802.04 Signs shall not be located or designed so as to interfere with, obstruct the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic control sign, signal, or device.
- 1802.05 Signs shall not make use of rotating, fluctuating, blinking, flashing, or intermittent lights.
- 1802.06 Signs shall not be posted, Attached, or otherwise applied to trees, bus shelters, utility poles, benches, trash receptacles, newspaper vending machines or boxes, or any other unapproved supporting Structure.
- 1802.07 Signs shall not be erected or located upon any property or Building without the consent of the owner(s) or an authorized representative.
- 1802.08 All lighting, indirect or internal, shall consist of constant illumination which is uniform in intensity. All lighting shall be properly directed so as to not create a Nuisance to surrounding properties because of glare.
- 1802.09 All Freestanding Signs shall be set back a minimum of ten (10) feet from the edge of the contiguous street Right-of-Way.
- 1802.10 No part of any Freestanding Sign shall exceed an above grade height of eight (8) feet.
- 1802.11 Wall Signs shall not extend above the junction of any roof and wall.

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- 1802.12 Signs shall not make use of the words "STOP," "LOOK," "DANGER," or other similar words that may mislead or confuse traffic.
- 1802.13 The date each temporary Sign is first displayed and the time period for which the temporary Sign will be displayed shall be legibly marked on the Sign.
- 1802.14 All temporary Signs shall be located at the site or location of the event being promoted.
- 1802.15 There shall be not more than three (3) types nor more than four (4) sizes of lettering used for any Sign including characters or trademarks used for identification.

Section 1803: Signs (No Permit Required)

The following Signs shall be permitted in Genoa Township. No Zoning Permit shall be required for any of the following types of Signs constructed or erected under the terms of this Article:

- 1803.01 Governmental signs for control of traffic and other regulatory purposes, street signs, warning signs, railroad crossing signs, and signs of public service companies for the purpose of safety provided that such signs contain no supplementary advertising;
- 1803.02 Flags, emblems and insignia of any governmental agency or political subdivision;
- 1803.03 Historical signs, commemorative plaques, or corner-stones placed by recognized historical agencies, provided that such signs are less than nine (9) square feet in area and not illuminated;
- 1803.04 Address and name of occupant of premises for a residential Structure, not to include designations as to employment or Home Occupation, and to be limited in size to two (2) square feet; and
- 1803.05 Directional or other incidental signs pertaining to vehicular or pedestrian control on private property provided the said Signs are located outside the Right-of-Way of any public street or road, do not exceed two (2) square feet of area per side and do not interfere or obstruct visibility when entering or leaving said property.
- 1803.06 Temporary Signs
- A) Agricultural Product Signs – Signs identifying the sale of agricultural products such as vegetables, eggs, straw, hay, and seeds grown or produced upon the premises may be temporarily erected upon any Lot during the season in which they are available. The maximum Sign Area permitted for an agricultural product shall be six (6) square feet per side. All Signs shall be set back from the edge of the contiguous street Right-of-Way a minimum of ten (10) feet.
 - B) Community Event Signs – Community events and programs which last for a time period of fourteen (14) days or less and which are sponsored by nonprofit, public, educational, religious and charitable organizations may display four (4) Signs during the event for a time period of fourteen (14) days immediately preceding the commencement of the event. One Sign may be located at the site of the event provided it does not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet in size. All off-site Signs shall not exceed eighteen (18) square feet in size. Each Sign shall be placed at a different site and shall be removed not later than forty-eight (48) hours after the scheduled activity. If the program or event is for a continuing period of time in excess of fourteen (14) days, only one Sign, not larger than ten (10) square feet is permitted and such Sign must be located either at the site of the event or program or at the location of the sponsoring organization.
 - C) Temporary Real Estate Signs – Signs identifying a property for sale, for rent, or lease may be placed on-site until ten (10) days after the property has been closed, sold, rented, or leased. Real estate signs shall not exceed six (6) square feet in area per side. Such Signs shall not be illuminated and shall be set back at least twelve (12) feet from all property lines when not attached flat against a Building.

- D) Political Campaign Headquarter Signs – Each principal Structure shall be limited to one Sign. The size of the Sign shall be limited in area to one (1) square foot per four (4) lineal feet of Building Frontage up to a maximum of twenty-five (25) square feet.
- E) Political Signs or Posters – Such Signs involving any candidate for public elective office or any issues and similar matters to be decided by public election may be erected for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days before or three (3) days after an election. Political signs shall be permitted as Freestanding Signs in all Districts, and shall not be Attached to any Structures including telephone poles, light poles and Fences or located in any manner destructive to public property. The maximum Sign Area shall be six (6) square feet per side within any residential District and twenty (20) square feet per side upon private property in any other District. Political signs shall not be located in or closer than ten (10) feet to the edge of the contiguous public street Right-of-Way.
- F) Special Business Promotions – Signs not greater than four (4) square feet in size which promote special business sales, promotions, or occasions may be displayed for not more than ninety (90) days per calendar year or for more than thirty (30) continuous days. The date each Sign is first displayed and the time period for which the Sign will be displayed shall be legibly marked on the Sign.
- G) Yard or Moving Sales – A Sign advertising the sale of personal property at a garage, yard, porch or moving sale may be temporarily erected on the same Lot as the sale provided such Sign is in conformance with the requirements of Section 1707.

Section 1804: Signs (Permit Required)

The erection or location of any Sign within Genoa Township shall require a permit unless otherwise specified within this Article. Each application for a permit to erect a temporary or permanent Sign shall be accompanied by a drawing showing the design proposed, the size, style, and color of letters, lines and symbols, and method of illumination. In addition the details and specifications for construction shall be described including the exact location of the Sign in relation to the Building and property.

1804.01 Permanent Identification Signs for Non-Residential Uses - Identification Signs shall display only the same address and/or use of the premises upon which the Sign is located or to which it is affixed. Identification Signs shall not contain any advertising of products or changeable copy, nor shall they be portable signs on wheels. Planned Developments and Community Business Districts - Each principal commercial business, office, warehouse, or industrial Structure shall be entitled to one (1) identification Sign, freestanding, wall or window. Each separate commercial business, office, warehouse, or industrial Use within the principal Structure shall be entitled to one (1) Identification Sign, either a Wall or a Window Sign.

- A) The following types of permanent Identification Signs are permitted:
 - 1) Wall;
 - 2) Freestanding; and
 - 3) Window.
- B) The maximum Sign Area per visible side for a Wall Identification Sign shall be one (1) square foot per linear foot of lot Frontage up to a maximum of one hundred (100) square feet per visible side.
- C) The maximum Sign Area for a Freestanding Identification Sign shall be twenty-five (25) square feet per side with the total Sign Area limited to fifty (50) square feet per Sign.
- D) Window Identification Signs shall be limited to one (1) Sign per window. Such Signs may occupy up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the total area of the window but in no case shall such Sign exceed ten (10) square feet in area.

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1804.02 Permanent Identification Signs for Residential Subdivisions - Recorded residential subdivisions may be permitted Freestanding Identification Signs as a Conditional Use subject to the following:

- A) Such Signs shall be limited to one (1) to two (2) entrances along major thoroughfares and shall not obstruct the visibility at any intersection;
- B) Such Signs shall contain only the name of the subdivision that they identify, shall not exceed six (6) feet in height, and shall be landscaped;
- C) The applicant shall submit a plan for the perpetual maintenance of such Signs, identifying the responsibilities of the applicant, the public, the landowner, or other parties. Such plan shall be subject to approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals;
- D) The Board of Zoning Appeals may limit the size of such Signs so as to ensure the scale of such Signs is compatible with the residential character of the area. The maximum size of such a Sign shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet per side;
- E) Non-residential Uses Within Residential Districts - Identification Signs shall be Attached to the Structure that houses the Use or Uses identified on the Sign. Such Signs shall be non-illuminated and shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area. No Freestanding Identification Sign shall be used for a nonresidential Use within any residential District except as provided herein.

1804.03 Advertising Signs - Advertising Signs direct attention to a Use, commodity, or service. Such Signs may be located on or off the premises where services are sold within a Planned Commercial-Office District, Community Business District, or Planned Industrial-Warehouse District.

- A) An Advertising Sign located on the premises where services are sold must conform to the following requirements:
 - 1) Such a Sign must be either a Wall or Window Advertising Sign;
 - 2) One Advertising Sign shall be permitted for each principal Structure; and
 - 3) The Sign shall not exceed ten (10) square feet in area.
- B) An Advertising Sign located off of the premise where such services are sold must conform to the following requirements:
 - 1) Such a Sign must be a Freestanding Sign;
 - 2) Not more than one (1) Advertising Sign shall be permitted per Lot;
 - 3) The Sign shall not exceed forty-eight (48) square feet in area; and
 - 4) Any existing Sign larger than forty-eight (48) square feet in area that has been erected prior to the enacting of this code amendment shall be permitted to remain as a Nonconforming Use, in accordance with the provisions of Section 2503, Nonconforming Uses of Land, of this code amendment.

1804.04 Bulletin Boards - Bulletin Boards with changeable copy shall be permitted for the following Uses provided such Signs shall meet the other requirements of this Article and not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet per side with total Sign Area limited to sixty-four (64) square feet per Sign:

- A) Churches;
- B) Public parks, playgrounds and community centers;
- C) Publicly owned and operated Buildings and facilities;
- D) Schools and colleges for academic instruction; and
- E) Golf courses, Clubs, and other recreational facilities.

1804.05 Temporary Signs Requiring a Permit

- A) Construction signs - Signs identifying a construction project may be temporarily erected upon the same Lot as the project. Such Signs shall be permitted only for the length of the construction project or for one year, whichever is shorter. Any extension past the one-year time shall be subject to approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals. Construction signs shall contain only the name of the construction project, the construction firm(s), the engineer, the architect, and/or the subcontractors involved in the project. Only one (1) construction sign shall be permitted per project. Maximum Sign Area permitted shall be three (3) square feet for each Dwelling Unit for residential Structures up to a maximum of twenty (20) square feet per side for all principal Structures. All Signs shall be set back from the edge of the contiguous street Right-of-Way a minimum of fifteen (15) feet.
- B) Special Event Signs - Information Signs advertising a grand opening, a seasonal event, a special sale, or any other similar special event may be temporarily located upon the premises on which the event is to take place for a period not to exceed seven (7) days within any thirteen (13) week period. The maximum Sign Area permitted for special event Signs shall not exceed a display area of one hundred (100) square feet. All Signs shall be set back from the edge of the contiguous street Right-of-Way a minimum of ten (10) feet.
- C) Real Estate Signs - On parcels exceeding fifteen (15) acres, one (1) Sign not to exceed twenty (20) square feet per side is allowed. Where a parcel has Frontage on two (2) or more roads, one Sign may be permitted on each road on review of the Zoning Inspector. Such Signs shall not be illuminated and shall be set back at least twelve (12) feet from all property lines when not attached flat against a Building.
- D) Subdivision Sale Signs - Signs providing information on the sale of Lots within an approved and recorded subdivision may be placed upon the property until such time as ninety percent (90%) of the Lots within the subdivision are sold. Subdivision sale signs shall contain only the name of the subdivision, the name of the owner, the name of the developer, and information regarding the price, terms, and the location and phone number of the sales office. All such Signs shall be set back a minimum of ten (10) feet or the total number of square feet of Sign Area, whichever is greater. The maximum Sign Area shall be twenty (20) square feet per side.
- E) Model Home Signs - Signs identifying a properly permitted model home unit where a sales office is operating and information on the sale of Lots is provided may be placed upon the property until such time as the model home is sold and reconverted for use as a residential Structure. Model home signs shall contain only the name of the subdivision and model home or information center general identification, information regarding the hours of operation and other pertinent contact information, including the phone number of the sales office. All such Signs shall be set back a minimum of ten (10) feet or the total number of square feet of Sign Area, whichever is greater. The maximum Sign Area shall be twenty (20) square feet per side.

Section 1805: Nonconforming Signs

- 1805.01 The continuance of an existing Sign that does not meet the regulations and requirements of this Article shall be deemed a nonconforming Sign that shall terminate upon abandonment. A Sign shall be considered abandoned:
- A) When the Sign is associated with an abandoned Use;
 - B) When the Sign remains after the termination of a business. A business has ceased operations if it is closed to the public for at least two (2) years;
 - C) When the Sign together with all supports, braces, guys and anchors is not kept in a proper state of preservation or repair; or
 - D) When the Sign and the immediately surrounding premises is not maintained by the owner or person in charge thereof in a clean, sanitary and inoffensive condition free and clear of all obnoxious substances, rubbish and weeds.

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- 1805.02 A nonconforming Sign shall not be structurally relocated or replaced unless it is brought into compliance with the provisions of this section
- 1805.03 A nonconforming Sign shall be maintained or repaired in accordance with the following provisions:
- A) The size and structural shape shall not be changed or altered. The copy may be changed provided that the change applies to the original Nonconforming Use associated with the Sign and that the change is made by the owner of the Sign at the time the Sign becomes nonconforming; the copy area shall not be enlarged. Any subsequent owner or user shall bring the Sign into compliance within thirty (30) days.
 - B) In case damage occurs to the Sign to the extent of fifty percent (50%) or more of either the Structure or the replacement value of the Sign, the Sign shall be brought into compliance. Where damage to the sign is less than fifty percent (50%) of the Structure or its replacement value, the Sign may be repaired within sixty (60) days. If not repaired, it must be removed.

Section 1806: Prohibited Signs

- 1806.01 Streamers, spinners, banners, strings of lights, and other similar devices are prohibited.
- 1806.02 Changeable copy shall be prohibited on any Sign except as permitted on Bulletin Boards regulated by Section 1804.04.
- 1806.03 Portable signs that can be moved from one location to another without any change in its structural components or members, including trailer signs are prohibited.
- 1806.04 Message centers, flashing Signs, moving Signs, and the animation of Signs are prohibited.
- 1806.05 Outdoor advertising displays and/or Billboards are prohibited except for those advertising devices regulated by Section 519.20 of the Ohio Revised Code.
- 1806.06 Signs mounted upon the roof of any Building or Structure are prohibited.
- 1806.07 The use of Building walls for display of advertising is prohibited.
- 1806.08 "A" frame Signs are prohibited.
- 1806.09 Air activated attraction devices are prohibited.
- 1806.10 Signs or advertising erected and maintained on trees or painted or drawn upon rocks or other natural features are prohibited.
- 1806.11 Signs painted directly upon the roof of any Building or Structure are prohibited.
- 1806.12 Projecting Signs are prohibited.

Section 1807: Removal of Signs

All Signs erected within Genoa Township under this Zoning Resolution are subject to inspection, whether a permit is required or not prior to erection.

The Zoning Inspector or designee shall cause to be removed: any Sign that endangers the public safety by reason of its location and placement; an abandoned Sign that no longer applies to the property on which it is situated; a dangerous or materially, electrically or structurally defective Sign; or a Sign for which no required permit has been issued.