

## CHAPTER 156

### SIGNS AND AWNINGS

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**156.01 DEFINITIONS.** For use in this chapter, the following terms are defined:

1. "Area" means the display surface included within the framework of any sign, measured from the outside of the framework.
2. "Awning" means drop awnings attached to buildings by means of movable metal frames.
3. "Billboard" means any flat surface 20 square feet or less in area, erected on a framework or attached to posts, buildings or other structures, and used for the display of bills, posters, or other advertising matter, posted, tacked, or fastened thereto.
4. "Ground sign" means any sign the structure of which is erected upon or supported by the ground.
5. "Poster board" means any flat surface over 20 square feet in area, erected on a framework or attached to posts, buildings, or other structures and used for the display of bills, posters, or other advertising matter produced on paper sheets, cloth or other materials and posted, tacked, or fastened thereto.
6. "Projecting sign" means any sign fastened to, suspended from, or supported by a building or structure so as to project from said building or structure at an angle.
7. "Roof sign" means any sign placed on or above the roof of any building or structure.
8. "Sign" means any device or surface on which letters, illustrations, designs, figures or symbols are painted, printed, stamped, raised or outlines or attached in any manner.
9. "Street line" means the place where the public sidewalk begins and the private property line ends.
10. "Wall sign" means any sign with its face parallel to and projecting not more than 12 inches from the wall to which it is attached.

**156.02 PERMIT REQUIRED.** A permit shall be obtained from the City before erecting a projecting sign, roof sign, wall sign (excluding signs painted on walls), billboard, poster board, or ground sign which is over 20 square feet in area. The fee for such permit is \$25.00.

**156.03 NONCONFORMING USES.** This chapter applies to all signs and awnings hereafter erected, relocated, or rebuilt. The lawful use of any sign or awning existing at the

time of the enactment of the ordinance codified in this chapter may be continued although such use does not conform with the provisions of this chapter.

**156.04 OUTDOOR ADVERTISING SIGNS AND BILLBOARDS.** In all districts where permitted, billboards shall be set back at least the height of the sign from inside the right-of-way line of any street or highway; and when at the intersection of streets and/or highways, the setback of any outdoor advertising sign or billboard (not including traffic signs), shall not be less than the required front yard depth for a principal building in such district, from each street and/or highway. All outdoor advertising signs on State principal highways shall conform to the Iowa Department of Transportation Sign Regulations.

**156.05 SPECIAL PROVISIONS.**

1. In R Districts, real estate signs not exceeding six (6) square feet in area, advertising the sale, lease, or rental of buildings or land on which said signs are located, are permitted. Such signs shall be located at least the height of the sign from inside the lot line.
2. In R Districts, announcement signs or bulletin boards may be erected upon the premises of a charitable, religious, or public institution for its own use.
3. In R Districts, identification and home occupation signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area and shall be located at least the height of the sign from inside the lot line.
4. Boarding and lodging houses in an R District may have one advertising sign not exceeding six (6) square feet in area and shall be located at least the height of the sign from inside the lot line.
5. Signs for service clubs and semi-public institutions are permitted, provided that they are located within two (2) miles of the City's corporate limits. Such signs shall conform to the size limitations as provided by the Iowa Department of Transportation. These signs are for the purpose of displaying the emblem of the club or institution, and information on time and location of meetings.
6. In the A-1, C-1, and M-1 Districts:
  - A. Temporary signs advertising the sale or lease of the premises shall not exceed 32 square feet in area.
  - B. Trade, business or industry identification signs are permitted provided that:
    - (1) Signs are located at least the height of the sign from inside the lot line with a maximum height of 35 feet.
    - (2) No sign shall exceed 150 square feet in area.
7. In the C-2 District:
  - A. Temporary signs advertising the sale or lease of the premises shall not exceed 12 square feet in area.
  - B. Trade, business, or industry identification signs are permitted provided that:
    - (1) One freestanding sign per business not to exceed 25 feet in height and 50 square feet per face.

- (2) Signs attached to a building shall not project above the top or ends of the building, or more than 4 feet from the wall of the building.
8. No projecting wall sign shall be attached to a wall of a building at a height less than 10 feet above the sidewalk or ground.
9. No use shall have more than one of each type of sign permitted for that use, although each sign may be a double-faced or back-to-back sign.
10. Illumination of signs and bulletin boards shall be indirect, non-intermittent lighting, provided that time, temperature, weather informational signs, official warning, and regulatory signs shall be exempt from this limitation.
11. All signs shall be maintained in a neat and presentable condition and in the event their use shall cease, they shall be promptly removed.
12. A building permit shall be required for all permanent signs prior to construction or installation.

**156.06 MOVABLE AWNINGS.** Movable awnings supported throughout on metal frames may extend over the sidewalk portion of a public street a distance not to exceed two-thirds of the width of the sidewalk space, provided that every such awning frame shall be not less than seven feet, six inches from the sidewalk immediately below and that any fringe attached to the awning is not less than seven feet from the sidewalk immediately below.

**156.07 WALL SIGNS.**

1. Signs placed against the exterior walls of buildings shall not extend more than one foot from the wall surface to which they are attached.
2. Wall signs attached parallel to the face of a building shall not exceed 50 square feet in area, for any 22 feet of frontage on the building, nor shall more than one of these signs be attached to each face of the building.
3. Wall signs shall not extend beyond the ends of the wall surface on which they are placed.
4. Wall signs shall be securely attached to structural members of buildings with metal brackets, expansion bolts, through bolts or lag screws.

**156.08 PROJECTING SIGNS.**

1. Signs fastened to, suspended from, or supported by a building or structure so as to project from said building or structure at an angle shall not extend more than four feet beyond the street line, provided that signs not exceeding two feet in height supported directly on marquees may extend to the permissible outer limits of the marquees.
2. Projecting signs shall not contain an exposed surface area on side exceeding 30 square feet.
3. Projecting signs shall have a clear space of not less than ten feet below all parts of the sign, provided that signs which extend two feet or less from the building and which contain three square feet or less of exposed surface area on one side may have a clear space of not less than eight feet below all parts of the sign. Projecting signs extending into the limits of an alley shall have a clear space of not less than 16 feet above the alley grade.

4. The distance between the parallel surfaces of a double faced sign shall not exceed one foot.
5. All projecting signs shall be securely supported by metal brackets attached to the walls of the building with through bolts, expansion bolts, or lag screws, and shall be firmly braced and held in place by means of soft iron or steel cables, provided with turn buckles for tightening when so required. Projecting signs that are permitted to extend above the parapet walls may be attached to brackets fastened to the roof by means of through bolts but shall not be attached to any part of a wall above the point of bearing of the roof joists or rafters. Turnbuckles and connections in rods and cables shall be provided with closed eyelets, welded or forged.
6. Swinging signs are not permitted.
7. Projecting signs shall be erected, constructed, and maintained in a safe and stable manner. They shall be able to support their own weight safely and in addition be able to resist safely a horizontal wind pressure of 30 pounds per square foot of exposed area. The unit stress values used in the design of supporting members shall be 50 percent of the allowable unit stress values generally used for such materials.

#### **156.09 POSTER BOARDS AND GROUND SIGNS.**

1. Poster boards or ground signs exceeding 20 square feet in area are prohibited in the following locations:
  - A. Over or on any street line or easement.
  - B. Within 500 feet of any railroad crossing, where the sign will interfere with or obstruct the view of persons approaching the railroad crossing.
  - C. Within 200 feet of any street intersection where the sign will interfere with or obstruct the view of persons approaching the street intersection.
  - D. In any location where the sign will interfere with the lighting of any street, alley or public place or interfere with any public utility service.
2. Poster board, the supporting structure of which rests upon the ground, or ground signs, shall not exceed 20 feet in height above the ground on which they rest.
3. An open space at least three feet high shall be maintained between the poster board or ground sign and the ground.
4. All poster boards and ground signs shall be constructed and supported to withstand a horizontal wind pressure of 30 pounds per square foot of surface. All structural parts, posts and braces shall be able to withstand all induced stresses using unit stress values of 50 percent of the allowable unit stress values commonly used for such materials.

#### **156.10 ROOF SIGNS.**

1. Signs that are placed above or supported on the top of a building or structure shall be constructed of incombustible materials; however, the moldings and cappings may be of wood.
2. Roof signs shall be set back not less than eight feet from the street line or building line and shall be not more than 16 feet in height above that part of the roof on which they rest.

3. Roof signs shall not be supported by wooden beams, wooden braces, or other combustible material.
4. Roof signs shall be so constructed and anchored that they will withstand a wind pressure of not less than 30 pounds per square foot of exposed surface.

**156.11 ILLUMINATED SIGNS.** Whenever any sign is illuminated by electricity or equipped in any way with electrical devices, these devices shall conform in all respects to the ordinances of the City.

**156.12 MEANS OF EGRESS.** Signs shall not be so placed as to obstruct or interfere with a required doorway, window, fire escape, passageway to a fire escape or other means of egress.

**156.13 INSPECTION.** The Council is authorized to have signs and awnings inspected, to notify owners of changes and repairs needed, and to order removal of signs or awnings not conforming to this chapter. The Council may revoke or cancel a permit if requirements of this chapter are not met.

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