

Chapter 1127: Signage

1127.01 Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to promote the public health, safety, and welfare through the provision of standards for existing and proposed signs of all types. More specifically, this chapter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the First Amendment guarantee of free speech while also:

- (a) Enhancing and protecting the physical appearance of the community;
- (b) Promoting and maintaining visually attractive, residential, retail, commercial, and manufacturing districts;
- (c) Balancing the rights of individuals to convey messages through signs with the right of the public to be protected against the unrestricted proliferation of signs;
- (d) Ensuring that signs are located and designed to reduce sign distraction and confusion that may be contributing factors in traffic congestion and accidents, and maintain a safe and orderly pedestrian and vehicular environment;
- (e) Preventing the erection of structures of any kind that will obstruct sight distance at the intersection of streets, alleys, or driveways;
- (f) Preventing the erection of poorly constructed and unsafely located, posted, or painted signs;
- (g) Providing review procedures that enable the City to comprehensively evaluate the appropriateness of a sign to the site, building, and surroundings;
- (h) Regulating the proper construction, maintenance, safety, and structural soundness, as well as the appearance and attractiveness of signs; and
- (i) Prohibiting all signs not expressly permitted by this chapter.

1127.02 Applicability

- (a) It shall hereafter be unlawful for any person to erect, place, relocate, expand, modify, maintain, or otherwise alter a sign within the corporate limits of the City of Wooster except in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.
- (b) Any sign legally established prior to the effective date of this chapter, and which sign is rendered nonconforming by the provisions herein, shall be subject to the nonconforming sign regulations of Section [1127.12](#), and not the nonconforming structure regulations of [Chapter 1131: Nonconformities](#).
- (c) Architectural features that are either part of the building or part of a freestanding structure are not considered signs and are thus exempt from these regulations. Architectural features include any construction attending to, but not an integral part of the sign, and which may consist of landscape or building or structural forms that enhance the site in general.
- (d) Unless otherwise stated, all permanent signs in the C-4 District shall be required to receive an approved COA by the Design and Review Board prior to the Zoning Administrator making a final decision on the sign permit application. See Section [1105.08](#).

1127.03 Exemptions from this Chapter

The following signs are entirely exempt from this chapter but may require building permits or other permits, as applicable:

- (a) Any signage located inside a building that is not visible from the exterior of the building. Signs in windows that are mounted in such a way as to be viewed from outside the building shall be considered window signs subject to the provisions of Section [1127.10\(b\)](#).
- (b) Interior signs within a stadium, open-air theater, outdoor shopping center, arena or other similar use, which signs are not visible from a public right-of-way or adjacent property, and can be viewed only by persons within such stadium, open-air theater, outdoor shopping center, parks, arena, or other similar use. Signs visible located on structures used for interior signs that are visible from a public right-of-way or adjacent property are subject to the requirements of this chapter;
- (c) Flags that do not contain a commercial message;
- (d) Any works of art that do not contain a commercial message;
- (e) Any sign located on umbrellas or similarly related private patio furniture or seating provided it is located outside of the right-of-way and complies with any other applicable standards of this code;
- (f) Any sign on a truck, bus or other vehicle that is used in the normal course of a business for transportation (See also Section 1127.05.) or vehicle signage required by the State or Federal government;
- (g) Signs installed or required by the City of Wooster, Wayne County, State of Ohio, federal government, or approved transit agency and which sign is allowed pursuant to the latest version of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD);
- (h) Any sign located inside a building that is not visible from outside of the building;
- (i) Any sign located inside a building that is mounted more than three feet beyond a transparent window or door;
- (j) Any signs located on fuel pumps or similar structures that is not legible from the lot line;
- (k) Any warning signs or traffic safety signs required by public utility providers; and
- (l) Any lighting, signs, or related decorations erected on a seasonal basis in observance of religious, national, or state holidays that are not intended to be permanent in nature and which do not contain a commercial message.

1127.04 Administrative Provisions

- (a) A sign permit shall be required for the erection, location, relocation, alteration, or replacement of any sign allowed by this chapter unless otherwise stated.
- (b) All signs shall comply with the requirements of this chapter, regardless if a sign permit is required or not.
- (c) For the purposes of this chapter, sign permits shall be considered zoning certificates and shall be reviewed as such, with the same review criteria, conditions, appeals, etc.. See Section [1105.12](#).
- (d) A sign permit shall be issued only when the Zoning Administrator determines that the proposed application fully complies with the regulations set forth in this Chapter and any other applicable sections of this code.
- (e) Any sign not specifically allowed in the right-of-way pursuant to Section [1127.06\(m\)](#), shall be immediately removed by the City in order to maintain a public right-of-way which is safe and unobstructed.
- (f) A sign permit for a permanent sign shall expire if all work has not completed in compliance with the approved sign permit within one year of the issuance.

- (g) A sign permit for a temporary sign shall expire at the end of the calendar year in which such sign permit was issued.

1127.05 Prohibited Signs

The following types of signs are specifically prohibited within the City of Wooster:

- (a) Any sign that copies or imitates a sign installed by a government agency for official purposes;
- (b) Windblown devices;
- (c) Signs that employ any parts or elements that revolve, rotate, whirl, spin or otherwise make use of motion to attract attention. This shall not include changeable copy signs as allowed in this chapter;
- (d) Signs with moving or flashing lights, except as allowed for electronic message centers in Section [1127.06\(n\)\(4\)](#);
- (e) Flashing, intermittent, or moving signs that flash or move more than once every three seconds, blinker, racer type, animated, whirligig devices, exposed light bulbs, and strings of lights not permanently mounted to a rigid background, and other similar types of attention-getting devices;
- (f) Beacons, spotlights, and searchlights, except for emergency purposes;
- (g) Pennants, ribbons, or streamers;
- (h) Signs that are applied to trees, bus shelters, utility poles, benches, trash receptacles, newspaper vending machines or boxes, or any other unapproved supporting structure, or otherwise placed in the public right-of-way;
- (i) Signs that obstruct or substantially interfere with any window, door, fire escape, stairway, ladder, or opening intended to provide light, air, ingress, or egress to any building;
- (j) Any sign located in a public right-of-way except as provided for in Section [1127.06\(m\)](#);
- (k) Signs which are not securely affixed to the ground or otherwise affixed in a permanent manner to an approved supporting structure unless specifically permitted as a temporary sign;
- (l) Signs mounted on top of a roof;
- (m) Portable signs, not including A-frame or T-frame sidewalk signs;
- (n) Vehicle signs viewed from a public road with the primary purpose of providing signage not otherwise allowed by this chapter. A vehicle sign shall be considered to be used for the primary purpose of advertising if the vehicle fails to display current license plates, inspection sticker, or municipal decal, if the vehicle is inoperable, if evidence of paid-to-date local taxes cannot be made available, or if the sign alters the standard design of such vehicle. Vehicle signs include those attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer. Vehicles or trailers shall not be parked continuously in one location to be used primarily as additional signage. This does not apply to a vehicle parked at a driver's residence and is the primary means of transportation to and from his or her place of employment;
- (o) Balloon signs or air activated graphic; and
- (p) Any sign not specifically allowed by this chapter.

1127.06 General Regulations

Unless otherwise specifically stated, the following regulations shall apply to all signs within the City:

- (a) The construction, erection, safety, and maintenance shall comply with all applicable building and electrical codes.
- (b) All signs shall be constructed in a professional manner in conformance with the appropriate building code and other applicable requirements of the City and shall be structurally sound to withstand wind pressures of at least 30 pounds per square foot of surface area.
- (c) No sign or sign structure shall be placed on private or public property without the written consent of the owner or agent thereof.
- (d) All signs shall be located and secured so as to pose no threat to pedestrian or vehicular traffic. All signs shall be subject to the intersection visibility standards established in Section [1115.02\(d\)](#).
- (e) Permanent signs shall be fabricated with rigid materials that are of good quality and good durability.
- (f) All freestanding signs shall be set back from the right-of-way so as to comply with the clear vision triangle requirements.
- (g) Electric signs and all permanent signs involving structural requirements of the building code shall be installed, repaired, altered and serviced only by a contractor licensed to perform such tasks.
- (h) Temporary signs shall be durable and weather-resistant, and fastened or anchored sufficiently, whether attached to the building or positioned in the ground.
- (i) No sign regulated by any of the provisions of this chapter shall be erected in the right-of-way, in proximity to railroad crossings, or at the intersection of any streets in such a manner as to obstruct free and clear vision (See Section [1115.02\(d\)](#)), or at any location where, by reason of the position, shape or color, it may interfere with, obstruct the view of any authorized traffic sign, signal or device.
- (j) No sign or sign structure shall be designed or built in a manner that it may be confused with any authorized traffic sign, signal, or device.
- (k) In the event there is a conflict between the provisions of this section and the provisions of any applicable building codes, the provisions of the applicable building code shall govern.

(l) Substitution with Noncommercial Speech

The commercial message sign area allowed for any permanent sign permitted in this chapter may be substituted with a noncommercial message. A sign permit shall not be required for this substitution if there is no structural change to the sign.

(m) Signs in Rights-of-Way

- (1) Signs shall be prohibited in the right-of-way with the exception of:
 - A. Signs installed by the City, Wayne County, State of Ohio, or approved transit agency that are allowed pursuant to the latest version of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD);
 - B. Any warning signs or traffic safety signs required by public utility providers; or
 - C. Sidewalk signs as allowed in Section [1127.11](#).
- (2) Any sign to be installed in the right-of-way by an agency other than the City shall require prior approval of the City Engineer.
- (3) The City Engineer may remove or cause to be removed any unlawful sign in the public right-of-way.

(n) Illumination

Signs shall be permitted to be illuminated in compliance with the following:

- (1) Light sources shall be shielded from all adjacent buildings and streets.
- (2) Lights shall not be of such brightness so as to cause glare that is hazardous to pedestrians or motorists, or cause reasonable objection from adjacent residential districts.
- (3) In the R-1, R-2, and R-T Districts,
 - A. Temporary signs shall not be illuminated.
 - B. Permanent, freestanding signs shall only be externally illuminated, unless such sign is an electronic message center sign in conformance with Section [1127.06\(n\)\(4\)](#) and any other applicable sections of this chapter.

(4) Electronic Message Centers

Electronic message center signs shall be subject to the following:

- A. Electronic message centers may only be used as part of a window sign, freestanding sign, or drive-through sign in accordance with this chapter.
- B. All electronic message centers shall be set back a minimum of 100 feet from a residential dwelling unit.
- C. Any message change shall be a static, instant message change.
- D. Messages can only change once every three seconds or more.
- E. The transition time between messages shall be less than one second.
- F. All electronic message centers shall contain a default mechanism that will cause the sign to revert immediately to a black screen if the sign malfunctions.
- G. Electronic message center signs shall not operate or project any display between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. when located in a residential zoning district.
- H. The electronic message center shall come equipped with an automatic dimming photocell, which automatically adjusts the display's brightness based on ambient light conditions.
- I. Illumination shall not exceed 0.3 footcandles over ambient lighting conditions when measured at 50 feet in any direction from an electronic message center sign.
- J. Audio emissions from electronic message center signs shall be prohibited.

1127.07 Measurements and Calculations

The following regulations shall control the computation and measurement of sign area, sign height, window area, and building frontage:

(a) Sign Setback

All required setbacks for signs shall be measured as the distance in feet from the applicable lot line, or other stated point of measurement, to the closest point on the sign structure.

(b) Sign Height

- (1) The height of a sign shall be computed as the distance from the base of the sign at normal grade (average grade at the base of the sign) to the top of the highest attached component of the sign. Normal grade shall be construed to be the newly established grade after construction, exclusive of any filling, berming, mounding, or excavating solely undertaken for the purpose of locating or increasing the height of the sign.
- (2) In cases where the normal grade is below grade at street level, sign height shall be computed on the assumption that the elevation of the normal grade at the base of the sign is equal to the elevation of the nearest point of the crown of a public or private street.

(c) Sign Area

The surface of a sign to be included when computing maximum allowable square footage of sign area shall be calculated as follows:

- (1) When calculating street frontage, only the street frontage that lies in the incorporated area of the City of Wooster shall be used in the calculation.
- (2) For sign copy mounted or painted on a background panel, cabinet, or surface distinctively painted, textured, lighted, or constructed to serve as the background for the sign copy, the sign area shall be computed by means of the smallest square, circle, rectangle, triangle, or combination thereof that encompasses the extreme limits of the background panel, cabinet, or surface. See [Figure 1127-A](#) and [Figure 1127-B](#).
- (3) For sign copy where individual letters or elements are mounted or painted on a building façade where there is no background panel, cabinet, or surface distinctively painted, textured, lighted, or constructed to serve as the background for the sign copy, the sign area shall be computed by means of the combination of the smallest square, circle, rectangle, triangle, or combination thereof that encloses all the letters or elements associated with the sign. See [Figure 1127-C](#). In cases where there are multiple sign elements on the same surface, the Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to determine the outermost boundaries of individual sign elements.
- (4) The calculation of sign area shall not include any supporting framework, bracing, or decorative fence or wall unless such structural support is determined to constitute an integral part of the sign design by means of text or other commercial message, as determined by the Zoning Administrator. See [Figure 1127-A](#).

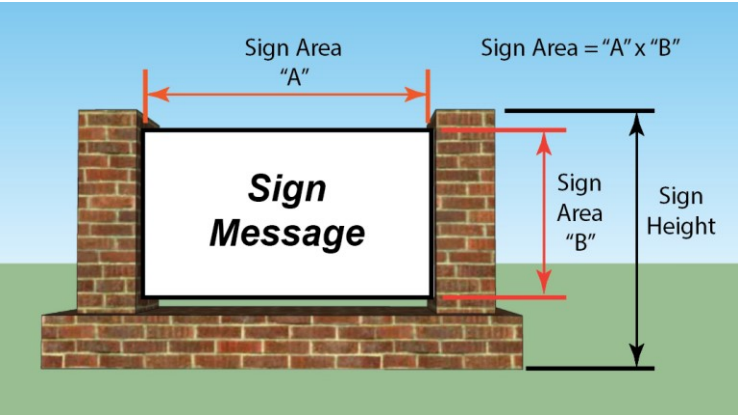


Figure 1127-A: Illustration of sign area calculation for a monument sign with copy on a distinct cabinet.

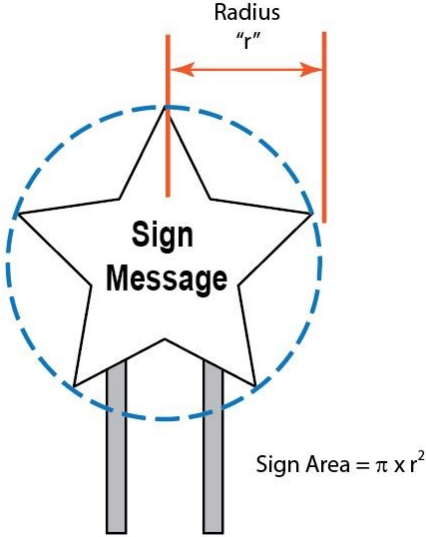


Figure 1127-B: Example of sign area computation by the smallest circle encompassing the extreme limits of the sign message. For the purposes of calculations, pi equals 3.14.



Figure 1127-C: Illustration of sign area calculation for two differently shaped wall signs with individual letters.

- (5) In the case of a three-dimensional sign where the sign faces are not mounted back-to-back, the sign area shall be calculated by the smallest square, rectangle or circle that encompasses the profile of the sign message. The profile used shall be the largest area of the sign message visible from any one point. See [Figure 1127-D](#).

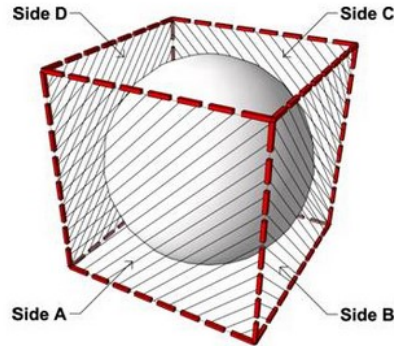


Figure 1127-D: The sign area of a three-dimensional sign is measured measuring the smallest square, rectangle, or circle that encompasses the profile of the sign (illustrated as sides).

- (6) Except for three-dimensional signs, the sign area for a sign with more than one face (multi-faced signs) shall be computed by adding together the area of all sign faces when the interior angle is greater than 30 degrees.
- (7) When two identical, flat sign faces are placed back-to-back or at angles of 30 degrees or less, so that both faces cannot be viewed from any one point at the same time, and when such sign faces are part of the same sign structure and are not more than 12 inches apart, the sign area shall be computed by the measurement of one of the faces. If the two faces are unequal, the sign area shall be calculated based on the larger of the two faces.
- (d) Determining Building Frontage, Building Units, and Building Facades**
- (1) For the purposes of this chapter, the length of the building wall that faces a public street, that faces a parking lot owned or operated by the City of Wooster, or that contains a public entrance to the uses therein shall be considered the building frontage or building facade.
- (2) The calculation of the width or lineal measurement of any façade shall be the measurement of the façade between two side facades. The calculation shall be based on viewing the façade from a 90-degree angle (i.e., straight on), regardless of façade insets, offsets, or angles. See [Figure 1127-E](#).

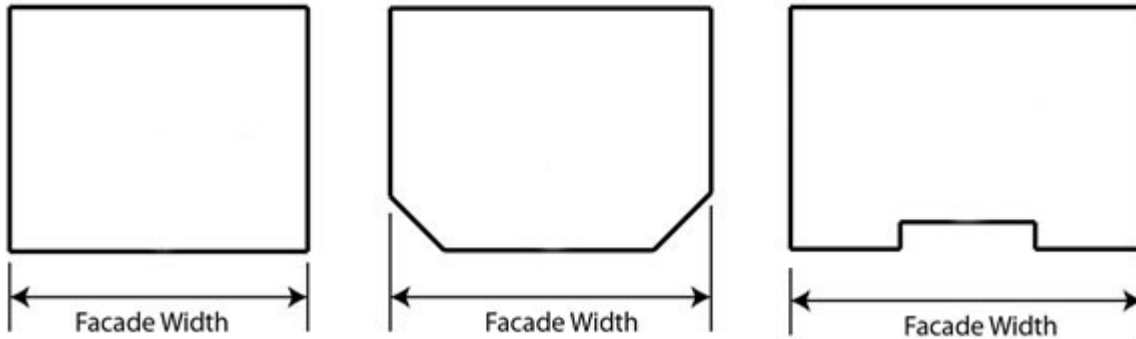


Figure 1127-E: Illustration of façade width measurement on varied façade shapes.

- (3) For multi-tenant buildings, the portion of a building that is owned or leased by a single occupant or tenant shall be considered a building unit. The building frontage for a building unit shall be measured from the centerline of the party walls defining the building unit.
 - (4) The primary facade shall be the portion of a frontage that serves as the main access point to a building or building unit. A site or building will be considered to have secondary facade when any of the following site/building characteristics are present:
 - A. The subject site is a corner lot;
 - B. The primary parking area is not located adjacent to a public street; or
 - C. The building or unit has walls with public ingress and egress that do not face the public street.
 - (5) When a site has primary and secondary facade as defined herein, the Zoning Administrator shall determine which wall shall be the primary building facade and which wall(s) shall be the secondary building facade. Only one outside wall of any business shall be considered its primary facade.
- (e) **Determining Window Area**
- The window area of a building shall be the total glass area of windows on the building frontage. For the purposes of determining window area for ground floor occupants, the ground floor shall be considered to be no more than 15 feet in height above grade. See [Figure 1127-F](#).



Figure 1127-F: The window area is illustrated within the dashed line area for the two storefronts in the above image.

1127.08 Permanent Signs Permitted in PD Districts

All development in a PD District shall be subject to the standards of this chapter unless otherwise modified through the PD review and approval process. In general:

- (a) Single-family residential uses and public and institutional uses in a PD shall comply with the sign requirements of the R-1 District.
- (b) Multi-family residential uses in a PD shall comply with the sign requirements of the R-3 District.
- (c) Commercial and office uses in a PD shall comply with the sign requirements of the C-2 District.
- (d) Industrial uses in a PD shall comply with the sign requirements of the I-1 District.

1127.09 Permanent Signs in Agricultural and Residential Districts

The following are the permanent signs allowed in AG, R-1, R-2, R-T, R-3, R-4, and R-5 zoning districts:

(a) Signs for Individual Dwellings

- (1) One wall sign is permitted on each individual lot used for residential purposes provided the sign is mounted flush to the façade of the principal dwelling and does not exceed two square feet.
- (2) Such sign may also be permanently attached to a window.
- (3) The sign shall not be internally or externally illuminated.
- (4) A sign permit shall not be required for this type of sign.

(b) Signs at Entrances

Two wall signs or one permanent freestanding monument sign may be permitted for any subdivision or multi-family dwelling development that contains 20 units/lots or more provided that the signs meets the following requirements:

(1) General Standards

- A. Each sign may have a maximum sign area of 36 square feet.
- B. No such sign or any portion of the structure shall exceed six feet in height.
- C. The sign may only be illuminated through an external light source.

D. The sign shall be an on-premise sign.

(2) Monument Sign

- A. A maximum of one freestanding monument sign may be permitted for each entrance to the subdivision or development on a collector or arterial street, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- B. In all cases, the sign shall be set back a minimum of 3 feet from the right-of-way and 10 feet from any lot lines.
- C. The monument sign shall have a maximum of two sign faces, mounted back-to-back.
- D. If an applicant proposes to use a monument sign, no wall signs, as allowed in Section [1127.09\(b\)\(3\)](#), below, shall be permitted.

(3) Wall Signs on Entry Fences or Walls

- A. A maximum of two wall signs may be permitted for each entrance to the subdivision or development on a collector or arterial street, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- B. If two signs are utilized, the signs shall be separated by a minimum of 50 feet.
- C. The signs shall be mounted to a decorative wall or fence that generally runs parallel with the street.
- D. If an applicant proposes to use wall signs, no monument sign, as allowed in Section [1127.09\(b\)\(2\)](#), above, shall be permitted.

(c) Signs for Nonresidential Uses in Residential Zoning Districts

- (1) One permanent freestanding monument sign may be permitted on a lot containing a nonresidential use in a residential zoning district provided the sign meets the following requirements:
 - A. In all cases, the sign shall be set back a minimum of 3 feet from the right-of-way and 10 feet from any lot lines.
 - B. The maximum sign area shall be 36 square feet.
 - C. A maximum of 50 percent of the monument sign area may be devoted to manual changeable copy.
 - D. If the sign is accessory to a use listed as a public and institutional use in [Table 1109-1](#), an electronic message center may be used instead of the manual changeable copy sign area allowed above. All electronic message centers shall comply with the requirements of Section [1127.06\(n\)\(4\)](#).
 - E. No such sign or any portion of the structure shall exceed six feet in height.
 - F. The sign may only be illuminated through an external light source.
- (2) One additional monument sign shall be permitted for a lot with a lot frontage that exceeds 500 feet. Such sign shall comply with Section [1127.09\(c\)\(1\)](#), above. For corner lots, each street frontage shall be calculated separately. Freestanding signs on the same lot shall be separated by a minimum of 100 feet, as measured along the street right-of-way line. For corner lots, both sides of the intersection shall be used in measuring spacing.
- (3) Building signs shall be permitted for all nonresidential uses in a residential district in the same manner as permitted for nonresidential uses in the C-1 District. This shall not apply to signs located on lots used exclusively for residential dwellings where signage is controlled by Section [1127.09\(a\)](#).

1127.10 Permanent Signs in Nonresidential Districts

The following are the permanent signs allowed in CF, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, I-1, I-2, and I-3 zoning districts:

(a) Signs for Residential Uses in Nonresidential Districts

Buildings, developments, subdivisions, or any portions thereof, that are 100 percent residential in any nonresidential district, shall be subject to the permanent sign allowances established in Section [1127.09](#). Buildings or a single lot with a mixture of residential and nonresidential uses shall be permitted signs in accordance with this section.

(b) Window Signs

Window signs do not require a sign permit provided they comply with the following standards:

- (1) Window signs shall not occupy more than 30 percent of the window area of any ground floor window areas. See Section [1127.07\(e\)](#) for locations used in the calculation of sign area. The sign area is based on the window area, regardless of the presence of an awning.
- (2) For a multi-story building, each occupant above the ground floor shall be permitted one window sign for each individual tenant provided the sign does not exceed six square feet or 25 percent of the area of the window in which the sign is placed, whichever is smaller.
- (3) Window signs may be temporarily or permanently attached.
- (4) For each ground floor tenant, one window sign with a maximum sign area of two square feet may be comprised of an electronic message center. This sign shall be calculated as part of the total area of window signs allowed.

(c) Building Signs

Building signs are permitted on all principal structures in accordance with the following:

- (1) The building sign area allowed in [Table 1127-1](#) shall include the total amount of all awning, canopy, marquee, projecting, hanging, or wall signs on each façade wall. Standards for each individual building sign type are established in this section.
- (2) Building signs shall also be subject to any applicable standards for building sign types in Section [1127.10\(c\)\(8\)](#).
- (3) Building signs shall not extend above the top of the roofline of the building to which it is attached.
- (4) Building signs may not be attached to mechanical equipment or roof screening.
- (5) Building signs shall not include electronic message centers.
- (6) **Size**
 - A. [Table 1127-1](#) establishes the maximum amount of sign area for all building signs permitted on the primary facade of a building based on the district, building, and/or use that they serve.
 - B. An applicant may provide additional building signage for all the secondary facades as follows:
 - i. The maximum total amount of building signs permitted on all of the secondary facades shall be equal to 100 percent of the amount of signage allowed on the primary façade.

- ii. No single secondary façade may have more than 50 percent of the building sign area allowed for all of the secondary facades as established in Paragraph [1127.10\(c\)\(6\)](#), above.
- iii. The building signage allowed on the secondary facades may not be placed as additional building signs on the primary façade.
- C. There is no maximum number of building signs but the total square footage of building signs located on a single façade shall comply with the requirements of this section.
- D. The amount of building signs permitted shall be based on the façade width of the principal building regardless if the signs are to be attached to gas pumps, gas pump islands, or similar accessory structures.
- E. The maximum building sign area provided for in this section shall apply to signage with a commercial message. See Section [1127.10\(c\)\(8\)A.ii](#) for wall signs permitted without a commercial message.

TABLE 1127-1: MAXIMUM BUILDING SIGN AREA ALLOWANCE PER FAÇADE		
Building Type/Occupancy	CF, C-1, and C-4 Districts	C-2, C-3, I-1, I-2, and I-3 Districts
Single-Tenant or Multi-Tenant Buildings [1]	1.5 square foot of sign area per lineal foot of façade width	2.0 square foot of sign area per lineal foot of façade width
Large-Scale Nonresidential Buildings with a Single Tenant [2]	Not Applicable	The sign area shall not exceed 5 percent of the total facade area and shall not exceed 35 percent of the height of the facade, as measured from the bottom most point of the message to the top most point of the message. [3]
Notes:		
[1] For buildings with multiple tenants, the ratio shall be applied to each lineal foot of building facade width assigned to each individual tenant.		
[2] Large-scale nonresidential buildings shall be defined as a building with a single tenant that exceeds 200,000 square feet of gross floor area.		
[3] Signs shall be limited to wall signs only. If the owner wants to utilize other building sign types, the maximum sign allowance shall be the same for single-tenant or multi-tenant buildings.		

(7) Sign Bonuses for Large Building Setbacks

The maximum allowable area for a building signs may be increased by 10 percent for each 100 feet or fraction thereof of building setback when the principal building is located more than 100 feet from the principal street on which the building is located and the building is visible from the street, not to exceed 20 percent of the maximum allowable.

(8) Standards for Permanent Building Sign Types

A. Wall Signs

i. Wall Signs with a Commercial Message

- a. Wall signs shall be mounted on or flush with a wall and shall not protrude more than 24 inches from the wall or face of the building to which it is attached.

- b. A wall sign may be painted directly on a building wall, mounted on the façade wall, or mounted on a raceway.
- c. Any wall sign, except for signs painted directly onto the wall, shall be mounted so there is a minimum clearance of eight feet above the sidewalk and 16 feet above any driveway or vehicular use area.
- d. Permanent signs that are attached to gas pumps, gas pump islands, or similar structures, that can be read or understood from a public street by most persons of normal vision shall be considered a wall sign for the purposes of this chapter and shall be based on the wall sign allowance for the principal building.
- e. Cabinet style wall signs are prohibited in landmark districts or on landmark properties.
- f. Wall signs in the landmark districts may be illuminated through the following methods, if approved as part of the Certificate of Appropriateness:
 - 1. Indirect lighting methods such as gooseneck lighting;
 - 2. Individual reverse channel letters (halo-lit or reverse-lit);
 - 3. Individual channel letters with transparent plastic covering to shield the source of illumination; and
 - 4. Neon, however the neon tubes shall not be directly visible.
- g. In all other districts, signs may be internally or externally illuminated.

ii. Wall Signs without a Commercial Message

Permanent wall signs that do not contain a commercial message may be considered in accordance with the following regulations:

- a. The wall sign shall require an approval of a sign permit. If the sign is proposed for a Landmark building or for a building in a Landmark District, the sign shall also require an approval of a certificate of appropriateness, subject to all applicable review criteria and standards.
- b. Only signs permanently painted directly onto a wall are permitted.
- c. External illumination may be approved as part of the development plan and/or certificate of appropriateness review but any such illumination shall be through indirect lighting methods such as up-lighting or gooseneck lighting.
- d. The sign shall not obstruct any architectural features, windows, doors, points of access, or other similar elements of the building.
- e. The sign may only be permitted on secondary facades.
- f. The sign shall not cover more than 75 percent of the applicable facade.

B. Awning, Canopy, or Marquee Signs

Any canopy, awning, or marquee sign allowed pursuant to this section shall comply with the following standards:

- i. Signage shall not cover more than 50 percent of any individual awning, canopy, or marquee with a maximum of 20 square feet per individual awning.

- ii. All components of the awning, canopy, or marquee shall have a minimum height clearance of eight feet from the sidewalk.
- iii. Marquee signs may include manual changeable copy signs.

C. Projecting or Hanging Signs

- i. Only one projecting or one hanging sign shall be permitted for each tenant on each street frontage where the tenant has building frontage.
- ii. A projecting sign shall be perpendicular to the wall of the building to which it is attached and shall not extend more than four feet from the façade wall to which it is attached.
- iii. A hanging sign may be attached to the ceiling of an outdoor arcade or underneath a canopy, awning, or marquee if it complies with the sign area, height, and clearance standards of this section.
- iv. Projecting and hanging signs shall maintain a minimum six-inch clearance from the façade of any building.
- v. Decorative supporting structures for projecting signs are encouraged and shall not count toward the maximum square footage of signs allowed, however, in no case shall the supporting structure exceed six square feet.
- vi. The maximum sign area shall be 10 square feet.
- vii. All components of the projecting sign shall have a minimum clearance of eight feet above a sidewalk or any walkway and a maximum height of 14 feet.
- viii. Projecting signs shall not be internally illuminated.
- ix. Projecting and hanging signs must be suspended from brackets approved by the Building Official and contain no exposed guy wires or turnbuckles.
- x. Projecting or hanging signs may extend into the right-of-way up until one-foot setback from the back of the curb.
- xi. If such projecting sign is illuminated it shall be by indirect lighting methods such as gooseneck lighting.

(d) Permanent Freestanding Signs

Permanent freestanding signs permitted in nonresidential districts shall comply with the following regulations:

- (1) Only one freestanding sign shall be permitted on any lot unless otherwise provided for in Section [1127.10\(d\)\(4\)](#).
- (2) Such freestanding signs shall comply with [Table 1127-2](#).
- (3) **Electronic Message Centers**
 - A. Electronic message centers may only be used on signs in the C-2, C-3, I-1, I-2, or CF Districts in compliance with Section [1127.06\(n\)\(4\)](#) and any other applicable standards of this chapter.
 - B. The size of an electronic message center sign shall not exceed 50 percent of the applicable maximum area permitted or 40 square feet, whichever area is less.
 - C. The area of an electronic message center sign shall be included in the applicable maximum sign area allowed pursuant to [Table 1127-2](#).

TABLE 1127-2: PERMANENT FREESTANDING SIGNS				
District	Maximum Sign Area (Square Feet)	Maximum Sign Height (Feet)	Minimum Setback from a ROW	Minimum Setback from Side Lot Line [4]
CF, C-1, or C-4 Districts [1]	30 [2]	6 Feet	3 feet	10 Feet
C-2 District	40 [3]	12 Feet	3 feet	10 Feet
C-3 District	55 [3]	15 Feet	3 feet	10 Feet
I-1, I-2, or I-3 Districts	40 [3]	8 Feet	3 feet	10 Feet

[1] Not permitted on the site when the building is setback less than 10 feet from the street right-of-way.
 [2] When all buildings on a lot have a combined floor area greater than 10,000 square feet, the maximum sign area may be increased by one square foot for every 7 feet of lot frontage that exceeds 200 feet. In no case shall the sign area exceed 200 square feet.
 [3] When all buildings on a lot have a combined floor area greater than 10,000 square feet, the maximum sign area may be increased by one square foot for every 5 feet of lot frontage that exceeds 200 feet. In no case shall the sign area exceed 200 square feet.
 [4] When the lot line is located adjacent to a residential zoning district, the minimum setback shall be 30 feet.

(4) Additional Freestanding Signs for Large Lots

The maximum sign area allowed in [Table 1127-2](#) may be distributed to one or more freestanding sign(s) for each 250 feet of lot frontage or fraction thereof. For example, a lot with 400 feet of frontage would be permitted to have two freestanding signs provided the total aggregate sign area does not exceed the maximum sign area allowed in [Table 1127-2](#). See

[Figure 1127-G](#).

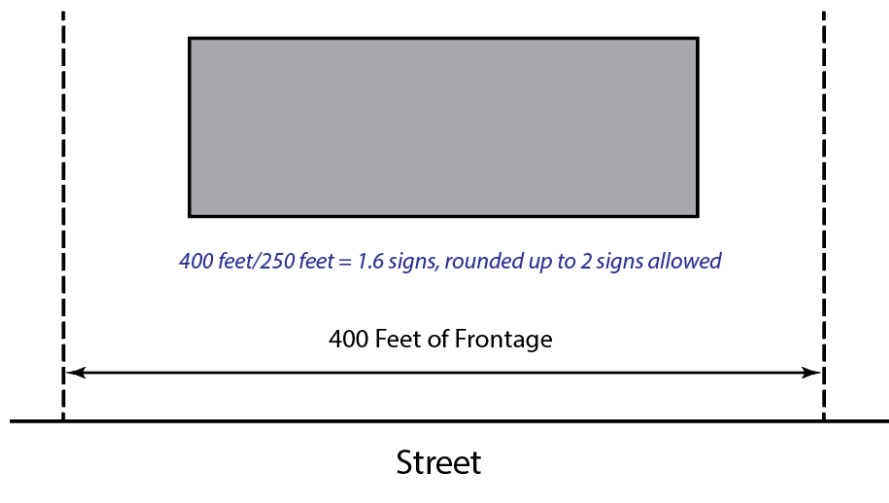


Figure 1127-G: Illustration of additional freestanding signs for large lots.

(5) Signs on Lots with Multiple Public Street Frontages

For lots that have frontage on multiple public streets, each street frontage shall be calculated separately and signage shall be allowed in accordance with the following:

- A. The allowable sign area permitted by this section may be distributed to one or more freestanding sign(s) for each 250 feet of lot frontage or fraction thereof.

- B. The total area of all freestanding signs shall comply with [Table 1127-2](#).
 - C. Two signs may be aggregated into a single sign provided that the area of any freestanding sign face shall not exceed 175 percent of the maximum area permitted for a single sign.
- (6) Freestanding signs on the same lot shall be separated by a minimum of 200 feet, as measured along the street right-of-way line. For corner lots, both sides of the intersection shall be used in measuring spacing.
 - (7) On corner lots, freestanding signs shall comply with the minimum sign setback from both street rights-of-way, as set forth in [Table 1127-2](#), and shall comply with Section [1115.02\(d\)](#).
 - (8) When a freestanding sign is permitted on a site that has more than one occupant, it is the property owner's responsibility to determine if the sign area shall be devoted to identification of the building, the anchor occupant, all occupants, or some combination thereof.
- (9) Landscaping Permanent Freestanding Signs**
- A. All permanent freestanding signs shall be located in a landscaped area equal to or larger than the total sign area of the applicable sign. Such landscaped area may be an area that fulfills any landscaping requirements of this code.
 - B. The landscaped area shall include all points where sign structural supports attach to the ground.
 - C. Exposed sign foundations shall be constructed with a finished material such as brick, stone, or wood, or be screened with evergreens to the top of the anchor bolts.

(e) Signs at Driveway Entrances or Intersections

Permanent signs shall be permitted near driveway entrances to a street and at intersections of internal drives under the following provisions:

- (1) Driveway signs shall comply with the intersection visibility requirements of Section [1115.02\(d\)](#), but in no case shall the sign be set back more than 25 feet from the driveway entrance or intersection of internal drives.
- (2) Signs at driveway entrances or intersections are prohibited in the C-4 District.
- (3) Up to two driveway signs may be permitted per individual driveway or internal intersection.
- (4) Driveway signs may not exceed six square feet in area and four feet in height.
- (5) Driveway signs may be internally or externally illuminated.
- (6) Driveway signs shall not be included in the total calculated allowed signage for a property under the remainder of this chapter.

(f) Drive-Through Signs

- (1) Up to two freestanding drive-through signs shall be allowed for each waiting lane in a drive-through facility provided the total aggregate sign area of all drive-through signs, for each facility, does not exceed 72 square feet. In no case shall a single drive-through sign exceed 36 square feet in sign area.
- (2) If a drive-through sign is completely screened from view from any right-of-way or adjacent residential uses, there shall be no maximum sign area.
- (3) Drive-through signs shall only be permitted in a side or rear yard.

- (4) Drive-through signage shall not be included in the total calculated allowed signage for a property under the remainder of this chapter. Any signs attached to a wall of building or the structure shall be calculated as part of the building signage allowance in Section [1127.10\(c\)](#).
- (5) No drive-through sign shall exceed seven feet in height measured from the grade of the adjacent driving surface to the top of the sign.
- (6) If the drive-through signs are located in the side or rear yard, they may be 100 percent electronic message center subject to Section [1127.06\(n\)\(4\)](#) and only in the C-2 and C-3 Districts.
- (7) Drive-through signs may be internally or externally illuminated.

1127.11 Temporary Signs

The following temporary signs shall be permitted anywhere within the City provided they meet the established standards.

(a) Standards that Apply to all Temporary Signs

- (1) Temporary signs shall not be mounted, attached, affixed, installed, or otherwise secured in a manner that will make the sign a permanent sign.
- (2) No temporary sign shall be mounted, attached, affixed, installed, or otherwise secured so as to protrude above the roofline of a structure.
- (3) Unless otherwise specifically stated, temporary signs shall not be illuminated.
- (4) No temporary sign shall require a foundation, support, wiring, fittings, or elements that would traditionally require a building permit or electrical permit.
- (5) All temporary signs shall be secured in such a manner as to prevent swinging or other significantly noticeable movement resulting from the wind that could pose a danger to people, vehicles, or structures.
- (6) Mobile signs on wheels, runners, casters, parked trailers, parked vehicles, or other temporary or movable signs shall not be permitted unless otherwise specifically stated in this chapter.
- (7) Because of the nature of materials typically used to construct temporary signs and to avoid the unsightliness of deteriorating signs and all safety concerns which accompany such a condition, temporary signs shall be removed or replaced when such sign is deteriorated.
- (8) Unless otherwise stated, a sign permit for temporary signs shall be required for temporary signs that exceed 12 square feet.

(b) Temporary Signs without a Commercial Message

Temporary signs without a commercial message do not require a sign permit provided they comply with the following standards:

- (1) Temporary signs that do not contain a commercial message shall not be posted in any place or in any manner that is destructive to public property including, but not limited to, rights-of-way, utility poles, public trees, etc.
- (2) Temporary signs that do not contain a commercial message shall still be required to comply with the intersection visibility requirements. See Section [1115.02\(d\)](#).
- (3) The maximum height of temporary signs without commercial speech shall be six feet unless it is a banner sign mounted to a structure, in which case, the banner sign shall not be mounted above the roofline or the top of the structure.

- (4) Such signs shall be limited to yard signs or banner signs.

(c) Temporary Signs in Agricultural and Residential Zoning Districts

The following are the temporary signs with a commercial message allowed in AG, R-1, R-2, R-T, R-3, R-4, and R-5 zoning districts, as well as on lots used for residential-only purposes in PD Districts:

- (1) Up to two temporary signs with a commercial message are permitted on each lot in a residential zoning district, including any lot used for residential-only purposes in a PD District.
- (2) The signs are limited to yard signs, banner signs, or signs posted in a window subject to the sign-specific standards in Section [1127.11\(e\)](#).
- (3) The maximum sign area for each sign shall be six square feet with a maximum height of four feet.
- (4) A temporary yard sign shall be set back a minimum of three feet from all lots lines and rights-of-way.
- (5) For properties that are five acres or larger, one of the temporary yard signs permitted by this section may have a maximum sign area of 24 square feet with a maximum height of eight feet. Such sign shall be set back 10 feet from all lot lines.
- (6) In lieu of the above regulations, any nonresidential use located in a residential zoning district shall be permitted to have temporary signs with a commercial message in the same size, height, and manner as temporary signs allowed in the C-1 District, pursuant to this section.

(d) Temporary Signs in Nonresidential Zoning Districts

The following are the temporary signs with a commercial message allowed in CF, C-1, C-2, C-3, C-4, I-1, I-2, and I-3 zoning districts, as well as nonresidential uses in PD Districts:

- (1) Up to 12 square feet of temporary signs is permitted year-round, without time restrictions, provided the signs are of the following type, subject to the standards for each specific type of sign:
 - A. A-Frame or T-Frame sidewalk signs;
 - B. Banner signs; and
 - C. Temporary yard signs.
- (2) **Limited Temporary Sign Allowance**
 - A. In addition to the temporary signage allowed year-round, each lot in shall be permitted the use of additional temporary signage on a limited time basis.
 - B. Each lot is permitted to have an additional 24 square feet of temporary signs for a period of 30 consecutive days, up to four times per calendar year.
 - C. The limited temporary sign allowance may include any of the following sign types subject to any applicable standards established for each sign type in this chapter.
 - i. Banner signs;
 - ii. Temporary window signs; and
 - iii. Temporary yard signs.

- (3) There shall be no maximum number of signs provided the aggregate total square footage of sign does not exceed the amount allowed in this section unless limited by the sign type standard in Section [1127.11\(e\)](#).

(e) Standards for Temporary Sign Types

(1) A-Frame or T-Frame Sidewalk Signs

- A. There shall be no time limit for sidewalk signs with the exception that the sign shall only be placed outside during the hours of the establishment's operation.
- B. Only one sidewalk sign is allowed for any one business establishment at one time and shall be located within five feet of such business.
- C. Such signs shall not exceed three feet in height or two feet in width.
- D. The sign may be located on a public or private sidewalk or walkway provided it is placed on pavement and not in any landscaped areas or on pavement used for vehicles (e.g., driveways and parking lots).
- E. If the sign is placed on a sidewalk or walkway, the sign can only be placed where the paved sidewalk or walkway width, not including curb top, is at least seven feet wide. The width and placement of the sign shall be such so that there shall be a minimum width of four feet of clear and passable sidewalk or walkway for pedestrians.
- F. The sign must be free-standing and shall not be affixed, chained, anchored, or otherwise secured to the ground or to any pole, parking meter, tree, tree grate, fire hydrant, railing, or other structure.
- G. The sign must not obstruct access to parking meters, bicycle racks and other features legally in the right-of-way.
- H. The sign must not interfere with the opening of car doors in legal spaces, or with the operation of wheelchair lifts and ramps, cab stands, loading zones or bus stops.
- I. The sign shall be internally weighted so that it is stable and windproof.
- J. The City of Wooster shall be held harmless from any liability resulting from accident or injury caused by the placement and/or maintenance of such sign.

(2) Banner Signs

- A. Banner signs may be attached to a building, fence, or other similar structure. Banner signs attached to posts and mounted in a yard or landscaped area shall be regulated as a temporary yard sign.
- B. The maximum height standard for temporary signs shall not apply to a banner sign but such signs shall not be mounted in a manner that extends above the roofline of a building or the top of the structure on which it is mounted.
- C. For zoning permit applications related to the establishment of a new use within an existing building where there is existing permanent sign, a banner sign may be approved for up to 60 consecutive days to cover the existing permanent signs. Such banner sign shall not exceed the sign area of the permanent sign and shall require a sign permit.

(3) Yard Signs

- A. There shall be no maximum number of yard signs provided the aggregate total square footage of all yard signs does not exceed the maximum sign area allowed in this section.
- B. There shall be a maximum of two faces to the sign, mounted back-to-back.
- C. The maximum height shall be six feet.

1127.12 Nonconforming Signs

- (a) Any sign that was lawfully in existence at the time of the effective date of this code, or amendment thereto, that does not conform to the provisions herein, shall be deemed a legal nonconforming sign and may remain on a lot of record except as qualified in this subsection. No legal nonconforming sign shall be enlarged, extended, structurally altered, or reconstructed in any manner, except as allowed for in this section and the nonconforming structure regulations in Section [1131.06](#) shall not apply.
- (b) Legal nonconforming signs shall be maintained in good condition pursuant to Section [1131.09](#), and may continue until such sign is required to be removed as set forth in this chapter.
- (c) A legal nonconforming sign shall not be structurally altered, relocated, or replaced unless it is brought into compliance with the provisions of this chapter, except as otherwise permitted in this chapter.
- (d) If a sign face and/or its support is damaged to the extent where the repair cost exceeds 50 percent of the replacement cost of the sign, the sign shall be removed or brought into compliance with this chapter. If the repair costs do not exceed 50 percent of the replacement cost of the sign, the sign may be repaired, subject to approval by the Zoning Administrator.
- (e) A legal nonconforming sign shall immediately lose its legal nonconforming status, and therefore shall be brought into conformance with this chapter or removed, when any of the following occur:
 - (1) The size or shape of the sign is changed;
 - (2) The building to which the sign is accessory is renovated or remodeled to the extent that more than 50% of the gross floor area is removed or replaced, or otherwise affected by renovation or remodeling;
 - (3) The sign is removed voluntarily;
 - (4) The sign is damaged by more than 50 % of the replacement cost as stated in Section [1127.12\(d\)](#); or
 - (5) The building is expanded and the total sign area permitted for the expanded building is more than 50% greater than the existing sign area.

1127.13 Maintenance

All signs shall be maintained in accordance with the following:

- (a) The property owner, occupant, or other person responsible for the sign shall maintain the sign in a condition fit for the intended use and he/she shall have a continuing obligation to comply with all building code requirements.

- (b)** If the Zoning Administrator finds that any sign is unsafe, insecure, a menace to the public, or constructed, erected, or maintained in violation of the provisions of this Code, notice shall be given in writing by the Zoning Administrator to the owner. The owner of the sign shall, within 48 hours of such notification, correct such unsafe condition or remove the sign. If the correction has not been made within the allotted forty-eight hours, the sign may be removed or altered by the City to comply with these regulations at the expense of the owner or occupant of the property upon which the sign is located. The Zoning Administrator may cause any sign, which, in the City's opinion, creates a danger to persons or property to be removed immediately and without notice.
- (c)** The Zoning Administrator may order any sign to be painted or refurbished whenever needed to keep the sign in a neat and safe condition. All supporters, guys, braces and anchors for such signs shall be maintained in a safe condition.
- (d)** If any sign shows evidence of a lack of maintenance, or other violation of this chapter, such sign shall be removed by the owner, agent, or person having the beneficial use of the building, structure, or land upon which such sign is located, within 10 business days after written notice by the Zoning Administrator. Failure to comply with this provision shall be deemed a violation of this code, subject to [Chapter 1133: Enforcement and Penalties](#).