

CHAPTER 450 SIGNS

Section 450.01 Purpose

The following sign regulations are established in order to achieve the following purposes:

- A. To preserve and enhance physical appearance of the Village and its business districts by requiring new and replacement signage which is:
 - creative and distinctive;
 - compatible with the surroundings;
 - appropriate to the type of activity to which it pertains;
 - expressive of the identity of individual proprietors, or of the community as a whole; and
 - appropriately sized in its context, so as to be easily readable.
- B. To reduce distractions and obstructions from signs that would adversely affect traffic safety, and to alleviate hazards caused by signs projecting over or encroaching public ways.
- C. To discourage excessive visual competition in signage and ensure that signs adequately identify uses and activities to the public.
- D. To maintain open spaces, avoid the appearance of clutter, protect property values and prevent nuisances.

Section 450.02 Exempt Signs

The following signs are hereby designated as “exempt signs” and, as such, are subject only to the regulations contained in this Section.

- A. Signs used for safety purposes relative to the repair and maintenance of streets, sidewalks or utilities in a public right-of-way.
- B. Signs and public notices erected or required by governmental bodies, or authorized for a public purpose by any law, statute or ordinance.
- C. Religious or other holiday lights and decorations containing no commercial message when displayed during the appropriate time of year.
- D. Governmental flags. Such flags shall not be flown from a pole that is more than forty (40) feet in height.
- E. Address numbers not to exceed two (2) square feet in area.
- F. Nameplates not to exceed one (1) square foot in area.

- G. Memorial signs, tablets, plaques, building markers or cornerstones not to exceed two (2) feet in area and that are permanently affixed to the building or premises.
- H. Parking control signs and fire lane signs, intended to prohibit or impose conditions upon parking pursuant to state or local law, not to exceed four (4) square feet unless a different size is required by state or local law.

Section 450.03 Prohibited Signs

The following signs are prohibited in all zoning districts.

- A. Signs that rotate, are animated or have the appearance of moving, including signs that contain pennants, ribbons, streamers, spinners or similar devices.
- B. Signs containing flashing, moving, or rotating lights or running lights giving the illusion of movement, with the exception of time and temperature devices.
- C. Portable or moveable signs, except those specifically allowed under Section 450.12.
- D. No sign, except for a traffic, regulatory or informational sign, shall use the words “stop”, “caution”, or “danger” or shall incorporate red, amber, or green lights resembling traffic signals, or shall resemble “stop” or “yield” signs in shape and color.
- E. Inflatable signs and tethered balloons.

Section 450.04 Temporary/Special Events Signs

(No permit required)

A. Temporary Signs on Residential Property

Temporary signs on residential property may be installed as window signs or lawn signs, pursuant to the following:

1. Window Signs

Temporary signs installed as window signs shall be no greater than six (6) square feet in area and no greater than four (4) feet in height. The combined total surface area of all temporary window signs shall be no greater than twelve (12) square feet.

2. Lawn Signs

- a. Temporary signs installed as lawn signs shall be no greater than six (6) square feet in area and no greater than four (4) feet in height. The total combined

- surface area of all temporary lawn signs shall be no greater than twelve (12) square feet.
- b. Temporary lawn signs shall be located a minimum of five (5) feet from the nearest edge of the sidewalk, and shall not be placed within the side yard setback.
3. Temporary commercial signs shall not be permitted on residential property except that one temporary sign promoting a garage sale or similar household sale shall be permitted. Such sign shall be posted on private property.
 4. All temporary signs shall be removed by the owner of the property on which the sign is located within three (3) days after the event, sale of property, completion of construction and/or election etc.

B. Temporary Signs on Non-Residential Property

1. Window Signs
 - a. One (1) or more temporary window signs may be displayed on each window on the premise, but the total area of all window signs in any one (1) window shall not exceed seventy-five (75) percent of the area of that window.
 - b. All temporary window signs shall be attached to the interior of the building.
 - c. The combined area of all temporary and permanent window signs in any one (1) window shall not exceed seventy-five (75) percent of the area of that window.
2. Lawn Signs
 - a. Temporary signs installed as lawn signs shall be no greater than six (6) square feet in area and no greater than four (4) feet in height. The total combined surface area of all temporary lawn signs shall be no greater than twelve (12) square feet.
 - b. Temporary lawn signs shall be located a minimum of five (5) feet from the nearest edge of the sidewalk, and shall not be placed within the side yard setback.
3. Special Event or Banner Signs
 - a. Special event or banner signs may not exceed a maximum size of thirty-two (32) square feet in area.
 - b. Special event or banner signs shall be displayed no more than thirty (30) days after placement.
4. All temporary signs shall be removed by the owner of the property on which the sign is located within three (3) days after the event, sale of property, completion of construction and/or election etc. (*Ord. 2017-05, eff. 6/15/17*)

Section 450.05 Signs Requiring Permits

Except as otherwise regulated by Section 450.02, Exempt Signs and Section 450.03 Prohibited Signs, permits are required for the erection of all permanent signs, including murals or works of art that constitute a sign.

A. Sign Permits Required

1. From and after the effective date of this Zoning Code, no person may erect, alter or relocate any of the signs listed in Sections 450.08 and 450.09, except for Temporary Signs, without first obtaining a permit from the Zoning Inspector.
2. Routine maintenance or changing parts of a sign shall not be considered an alteration of a sign, provided that the maintenance or change of parts does not alter the type of installation, surface area, height or otherwise make the sign non-conforming.

B. Issuance of Permits

1. The applicant shall submit the sign application and the appropriate permit fee to the Zoning Inspector for review. Applications shall be on forms prescribed by the Zoning Inspector. At a minimum, all applications shall include a scale drawing specifying dimensions, materials, illumination, letter sizes, colors, support systems, and location on land or building, with all relevant measurements.
2. The Zoning Inspector shall review the application and determine if the proposed sign is in full compliance with the conditions of the Zoning Code. If the proposed sign requires a variance, the Zoning Inspector shall notify the applicant.
3. If the proposed sign is in compliance with all of the requirements of this Zoning Code, the Zoning Inspector shall issue a permit for the proposed sign.
4. If signage is proposed for items requiring site plan review under Chapter 610, the Planning Commission, said site plan will require approval before the Zoning Inspector may issue a zoning permit.

Section 450.06 General Sign Regulations

A. Limitations on Location of Signs

All signs shall be located pursuant to the following.

1. No sign shall be located within or shall obstruct the public right-of-way.

2. No sign shall be affixed to a fire escape, utility pole or structure, or tree, shrub, rock, or other natural object.
3. No sign shall be erected or placed so as to obstruct free entrance and exit from a required door, window or fire escape.
4. Signs shall not be mounted on roofs or extend above the roofline (unless mounted on a parapet wall that extends above the roofline, in which case the sign may not extend above the top of said parapet).
5. Signs shall not cover architectural details such as, but not limited to arches, sills, moldings, cornices and transom windows.

B. Calculating Sign Area

1. Sign measurement shall be based upon the entire area of the sign, with a single continuous perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of the actual sign surface.
2. The sign area shall include the frame, but not the structural supports (for example, brackets, posts, etc.) if such structural supports bear no sign copy and are incidental to the display.
3. For a sign painted on or applied to a building, the area shall be considered to include all lettering, wording and accompanying designs or symbols, together with any background of a different color than the natural color or finish material of the building.
4. For a sign consisting of individual letters or symbols attached to or painted on a surface, building, wall or window, the area shall be considered to be that of the smallest rectangle or other shape which encompasses all of the letters and symbols.
5. Where a sign has two (2) or more faces, the area of all faces shall be included in determining the area, except where the two faces are placed back to back and are at no point more than two (2) feet from each other. In this case, the sign area shall be taken as the area of either face, and if the faces are unequal, the larger shall determine the area.

C. Calculating Sign Height

The height of a sign shall be measured from the base of the sign at its point of attachment to the ground or from the base of the building to which a sign is attached to the highest point of the sign. A freestanding sign on a manmade base, including a graded earth mound, shall be measured from the grade of the nearest street, drive, or parking area.

Section 450.07 Criteria for the Construction and Design of Signs

In addition to ensuring compliance with the numerical standards of these regulations, the Zoning Inspector shall consider the proposed general design, arrangement and placement of the sign according to the following criteria.

A. Construction Standards

1. All signs shall be constructed in conformance with the appropriate building code and other applicable requirements of the Village.
2. All signs shall be structurally sound so as to pose no threat to pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Signs shall be fabricated on and of material that is of good quality and durability.
3. All signs shall be rigidly secured and no sign shall swing from a bar, crane, awning or other sign. No part of any sign shall be revolving, oscillating or otherwise be designed to move.

B. Design Criteria

1. The lettering shall be large enough to be easily read, but not overly large or out of scale with the building or site.
2. The number of items, letters, symbols and shapes shall be consistent with the amount of information that can be comprehended by the viewer, reflect simplicity, avoid visual clutter and improve legibility.
3. The shape of the sign shall be simple, and the sign should be consolidated into the minimum number of elements.
4. The size, style and location of the sign shall be appropriate to the activity of the site.
5. The sign shall complement the building and adjacent buildings by being designed and placed to enhance the architecture. The sign shall also have a minimum of advertising and reflect the primary purpose of identifying the name and type of establishment.
6. Instructional signs shall contain the minimum information and the minimum area necessary to convey the message and instruct the viewer in the safe and efficient use of the facility.

C. Illumination of Signs

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

- a. Whenever external illumination is used for a sign, the source of light shall be located, shielded and directed in such a manner that the light does not shine or cause glare onto any surrounding public street or private residence.
 - b. The lighting of any sign shall not be of such brightness so as to cause glare that is hazardous or a nuisance to pedestrian or vehicular traffic. *(amended by Ord 2020-49, eff. 1/14/21)*
2. Signs shall not be lighted to obstruct traffic control or any public information signs.
 3. Signs shall not be internally illuminated. *(enacted by Ord 2020-49, eff. 1/14/21)*

Section 450.08 Signs Permitted in Residential Districts (O-C, R-R, R-1 and R-2)

Schedule 450.08 Number and Dimension Requirements

	Maximum Area Per Sign	Maximum Height	Number
1. Permanent signs serving residential uses	2 sq.ft.	3 ft.	2 per lot
2. Identification or Directory signs for public and institutional uses	24 sq.ft.		1 per street frontage
3. Signs serving home occupations	2 sq.ft.	3 ft.	1 per lot
4. Temporary signs	6 sq.ft. ^(a)	4 ft.	See Section 450.04 A
5. Parking control or directional signs	4 sq.ft.	4 ft.	1 per entry or exit drive serving parking lot

Notes:

- (a) See Section 450.04 A.

Section 450.09 Signs Permitted in the V-C, C-1 and I Districts

See Schedule 450.09.

Schedule 450.09 Number and Dimension Requirements

	Maximum Area Per Sign	Maximum Height	Number
1. Identification or Directory signs for public and institutional uses	24 sq.ft.	6 ft.	1 per street frontage
2. Business Directory or Identification signs	1.5 sq.ft. ^(a)		2 per street frontage

(a) Attached to buildings	1.5 sq.ft. ^(b)	6 ft.	
(b) Permanent window signs	25% of total window area	6 ft.	
(c) Freestanding signs	24 sq.ft.	12 ft.	1 per building
(d) Directory signs	16 sq.ft.	6 ft.	1 per street frontage
3. Auxiliary entry sign (wall sign only)	Width of customer entrance	2 ft.	1 per business
4. Parking control or directional signs	4 sq.ft.	4 ft.	1 per entry or exit drive serving parking lot
5. Temporary signs	See Section 450.04 B	See Section 450.04 B	See Section 450.04 B

Notes:

^(a) The maximum area of all signs shall not be more than one and one-half (1 ½) square feet of signage per lineal foot of building frontage, up to a maximum of fifty (50) square feet in the V-C and C-1 Districts and one hundred (100) square feet in the I District.

^(b) The maximum area of all signs attached to the building shall not be more than one and one-half (1 ½) square feet of signage per lineal foot of building frontage, up to a maximum of fifty (50) square feet in the V-C and C-1 Districts and one hundred (100) square feet in the I District.

Section 450.10 Standards for Specific Types of Permitted Signs

A. Awning or Canopy Signs

1. No portion of a canopy or awning sign shall be less than seven and one-half (7 ½) feet above the level of the sidewalk or other public thoroughfare over which it projects.
2. No portion of a canopy or awning may extend more than five (5) feet from the building facade.

B. Freestanding Signs

1. Freestanding signs shall be located a minimum of five (5) feet from the nearest edge of the sidewalk, or front property line if there is no sidewalk, and shall not be placed within the side yard setback.
2. Freestanding signs shall be located in a landscaped base.

C. Off-Premise Signs

1. Permanent informational and directional signs containing no advertising are

permitted to direct traffic flow, to indicate parking areas, or to provide other essential information to guide vehicular or pedestrian traffic flow. These signs shall not be larger than two (2) square feet in size.

2. Off-premise signs to locate businesses are only permitted as part of the permanent Business Directory Boards erected by the Village.

D. *Projecting Signs*

1. No element of a projecting sign, including any support structure or cables, shall extend above the cornice line of the building to which it is attached.
2. Projecting signs shall extend no more than three (3) feet from the facade of the building.
3. The maximum area of projecting signs shall be no more than eight (8) square feet.

E. *Wall Signs*

1. A wall sign shall project no further than twelve (12) inches from the wall on which it is mounted.
2. A wall sign cannot be located above the cornice line or second floor window line, whichever is lower.

F. *Window Signs*

1. A permanent window sign must be located on the window and be contained within a single window. A sign will also be considered a window sign if it is located within six (6) feet inside the window.
2. The total combined area of temporary and permanent window signs shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of the area of the window through which the signs may be seen.

Section 450.11 Special Conditions for Automotive Fuel Stations

- A. Matter appearing on gasoline pumps as purchased or installed shall not be considered a sign for the purposes of this Zoning Code.
- B. In addition, to all other signs permitted by this Zoning Code, an Automotive Fuel Station may display one (1) sign, not larger than four (4) square feet above each pump island stating whether the area is a “self-service” or “full service” area and the current price per gallon of the gasoline sold at the station.

Section 450.12 Special Sign Regulations for the Village Center District

- A. Signs accessory to residential uses in the V-C District shall comply with Section 450.08.
- B. There shall be no more than three (3) types of signs employed per building regardless of the number of occupancies.
- C. Each ground floor occupant of a building may display two (2) signs per street frontage. Each occupant in an upper level of a building may display one sign per street frontage.
- D. *Location*
 - 1. Signs should be concentrated near the pedestrian level.
 - 2. The upper facades of buildings should not be cluttered with signs.
 - 3. Wall signs identifying commercial establishments shall generally be placed within an information band immediately above the storefront. The information band should be confined to the vertical distance separating windows on the ground and second floors.
- E. Signs on adjacent storefronts within the same building shall be coordinated in height and proportion, and should be encouraged to use the same signing format.
- F. *Materials*: The use of wood and metal signs is strongly encouraged.
- G. *Colors*: Colors should be chosen to complement, not clash with the façade color of the building.
- H. *Size*: The size of signs should be restricted to ensure that they do not overpower the facades to which they are affixed.
- I. *Portable or Moveable Signs on Main Street*
 - 1. Portable or movable signs are only permitted in the Commercial District of the Village Center District. The Commercial area of the Village Center District has a pedestrian orientation and therefore, the smaller, personal scale of the freestanding, movable sign may be appropriate.
 - 2. In this area, portable or movable signs made only of wood and/or metal and plastic standing on legs, that do not exceed four (4) feet in height as measured from the sidewalk and six (6) square feet in area may be allowed by special permit.

3. A maximum of one (1) portable or movable sign is allowed per business. This sign must be located on the premises of the business. This sign may be located on the sidewalk directly in front of the premise only during business operating hours.
4. Parking of advertising vehicles prohibited. No person shall park and place any vehicle or trailer on a public right of way or private property so as to be visible from a public right of way, which is attached thereto or located thereon any sign or advertising device for the purpose of providing advertisement to a business or activity located on the same or other property. This section is not meant to prohibit normal parking, nor vehicular signage such as a sign attached to a bus nor a sign lettered on a business motor vehicle unless the vehicle is parked and placed to be visible from the public right of way so as to provide additional signage for the business. (*Ord. 2017-05, eff. 6/15/17*)

Section 450.13 Private Signage Agreements

Nothing in this Chapter or elsewhere in this Zoning Code shall prevent any building owner or association of merchants from establishing any lease or other form of agreement containing sign regulation which are more stringent than those set forth in this Zoning Code.

Section 450.14 Maintenance

All signs shall be maintained in accordance with the following:

- A. The property owner shall maintain the sign in a condition fit for the intended use and has a continuing obligation to comply with all building code requirements.
- B. Each sign shall contain the name, address and telephone number of the firm or person responsible for erecting the sign. Such information shall be placed on the frame or other structural supports and be large enough to be read by a person standing on the ground, sidewalk or parking lot nearest the sign.
- C. If the sign is deemed by the Zoning Inspector to be in an unsafe condition, the owner of the business shall be immediately notified, in writing, and shall immediately correct the unsafe condition or remove the sign. If the correction is not made, the Village may institute injunction, mandamus, abatement or other appropriate action to cause removal or alteration to comply with this regulation.
- D. Whenever any sign, either conforming or nonconforming to these regulations, is required to be removed for the purpose of repair, re-lettering or repainting, the same may be done without a permit or any payment of fees provided that all of the following conditions are met.
 1. There is no alteration or remodeling to the structure or the mounting of the sign itself.

2. There is no enlargement or increase in any of the dimensions of the sign or its structure.
 3. The sign is accessory to a legally permitted, conditional or nonconforming use.
- E. Any sign now or hereafter existing that no longer advertises a bona fide business shall be removed by the owner, agent or person having beneficial use of the building or structure within thirty (30) days after written notification from the Zoning Inspector.

450.15 Special Recognition Signs.

- A. The Village of Mantua will accept the donation of signs for notable academic, athletic and band achievements made by students within the Crestwood School District. The signs will be provided to the Village Administrator along with appropriate documentation identifying the sponsor. Such signs to be displayed at a single location selected by the Mantua Village Council for a specially erected monument capable of displaying up to 9 recognitions.
- B. Special Recognition signs will be 16" x 20" or 18" x 24" and shall be constructed to the standards specified in the Ohio Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. All sign proposals must be submitted to the Village Administrator for pre-approval prior to having the sign made. The Village Administrator will present the application to Village Council. The Village Council must adopt a resolution acknowledging the achievement prior to its being approved for inclusion/erection on the aforementioned monument.
- C. Once displayed, a recognition sign can remain a maximum of 12 years provided it remains in good condition. Once a sign becomes damaged, worn or deteriorated the Village Administrator will contact the sponsor or the sponsor's family and provide them with a 30 day window to either have the sign replaced or the Village Administrator will remove the sign. Should a 10th sign be proposed, the oldest sign will be replaced.
- D. The Village Administrator will return any sign that is removed to the original sponsor or their family. (*Ord. 2017-05, eff. 6/15/17*)

Section 450.16 Alteration and Removal of Nonconforming Signs

Any nonconforming sign lawfully existing at the time of adoption or subsequent amendment of this Chapter may remain except as qualified below:

- A. Other than sign maintenance, no nonconforming sign shall be reconstructed, remodeled, relocated or changed in size or content to show a new trade name, different words, letters or numbers, new design, different colors or different logo, unless such action will make the sign conforming in all respects.

- B. Nothing in this Section shall be deemed to prevent keeping in good repair a nonconforming sign, including sign maintenance, repainting, replacement of broken or deteriorated parts of the sign itself. Supporting structures for nonconforming signs shall not be replaced, unless such replacement will make the sign and sign structure conforming in all respects.
- C. A nonconforming sign or sign structure which is damaged or destroyed to an extent exceeding fifty (50) percent of its value, it shall be removed and shall not be reconstructed or replaced unless such action makes the sign and sign structure conforming in all respects.
- D. A nonconforming sign or sign structure shall be removed when the use to which the nonconforming sign is accessory is vacant for ninety (90) consecutive days.