

# City of Corning Sign Regulations

Ordinance No. 623-October 25, 2005  
Resolution No. 10-25-05-01



**Attachment "A"**  
**City of Corning Resolution 10-25-05-01**  
**Outdoor Advertising Sign Regulations**

**Sections:**

- I. Title**
- II. Generally**
- III. Exempt Signs**
- IV. Permitted Outdoor Advertising Signs**
- V. Prohibited Outdoor Advertising Signs**

**I. Title.**

This document shall be known and cited as the "Outdoor Advertising Sign Regulations" of the City of Corning.

**II. Generally.**

- A. The following specific land use regulations are intended to be applied within the various zoning districts of the City of Corning. Whenever conflict occurs between the regulations in this chapter and another, the more restrictive regulation shall apply.
- B. It is unlawful for any person to construct, maintain, display or alter a sign within the City, except in conformance with this chapter and the Uniform Sign Code.
- C. In addition to complying with these regulations, applicants for sign permits may need to acquire sign construction permits issued in accordance with the Uniform Sign Code and are advised to consult with the Corning Building and Safety Department before installing outdoor advertising signage.

**III. Exempt Signs.**

The following signs shall be allowed and shall not be included in the determination of type, number or area of signs allowed in each zone district. Furthermore, no permit for the installation, replacement or refacing of these signs is required.

- A. Official federal, state or local government flags, emblems and historical markers, traffic, directional and information signs and notices issued by any court, person or officer in performance of a public duty or any other sign that is required to be posted by any government agency.
- B. Temporary signs warning of construction, excavation or similar hazards so long as the hazard exists.
- C. One temporary sign per parcel with a display surface of each sign not exceeding 40 square feet per side used to indicate owner, builder, architect and pertinent data regarding building construction on the building site during construction only.
- D. Temporary real estate signs indicating that the property on which the sign is located is for sale, rent or lease. One such sign with a single display surface not exceeding 16 square feet per side is permitted along each street frontage.
- E. Parking lot and other private traffic directional signs, and miscellaneous permanent information signs in Commercial, Industrial or Public zones indicating address, hours and days of operation, menus, or similar information.
- F. Price signs for fuel sales. Not more than 2 price signs for each frontage, with a single display area not exceeding 20 square feet each, or a double display area not exceeding 40 square feet each, located on the premises but not within the public right of way.

- G. Bulletin boards for public, charitable or religious institutions.
- H. Temporary window signs.
- I. Clustered service club signs.
- J. Signs painted on walls which do not exceed the square footage or height that would be allowed for any other type of sign.
- K. Temporary political signs when placed on private property.
- L. Temporary banners, advertisements and directional signs for community activities or events when approved by the City of Corning and located on public property.

#### **IV. Permitted Outdoor Advertising Signs.**

The following outdoor advertising signs, which shall advertise the business or businesses occurring on the site, are permitted.

- A. In R-1 zones:
  - 1.) "Home Occupation" signs that do not exceed 2 square feet in display area.
- B. In R-2, R-3, R-4 zones:
  - 1.) "Home Occupation" signs that do not exceed 2 square feet in display area.
  - 2.) Monument signs displaying the name, address and contact information for the multi-family residential, church or institutional use authorized onsite. Such monument signs shall not exceed four feet in height, or eight feet in width nor 32 square feet of display area per side.
- C. In C-1 zones:
  - 1.) Exterior wall, projecting or suspended signs pertaining to the business or use conducted on the premises, which shall be attached parallel to and not project more than two feet from a wall of a building, or be suspended beneath a canopy which is a structural part of a building, provided that any suspended sign shall be eight feet or more above any sidewalk. No sign shall project above the roof ridgeline of the building on the site, and the sum of the areas of all such signage shall not exceed 15% of the "building face area" to which it is attached. "Building face area" is the product of the height and the width of a building façade where the signage is affixed. Wall-mounted, projecting or hanging signs may be internally or externally illuminated. Floodlights utilized for external illumination shall be directed inward and downward onto the property illuminated.
  - 2.) One freestanding sign per parcel may be permitted upon the securing of a use permit in each particular case. Freestanding signs may not exceed 25 feet in height, or 50 square feet in display area per side in C-1 zones. Freestanding signs shall be placed within landscaped planters sized not smaller than the sum of the display area of the freestanding signage. (Rewrite of 17.18.020.F)
- D. In C-2 zones:
  - 1.) Exterior wall, projecting or suspended signs pertaining to the business or use conducted on the premises, which shall be attached parallel to and not project more than two feet from a wall of a building, or be suspended beneath a canopy which is a structural part of a building, provided that any suspended sign shall be eight feet or more above any sidewalk. No sign shall project above the roof ridgeline of the building on the site, and the sum of the areas of all such signage shall not exceed 20% of the "building face area" to which it is attached. "Building face area" is the product of the height and the width of a building façade where the signage is affixed. Wall-mounted, projecting or hanging signs may be internally or externally illuminated except as provided in subsection 2 below. Floodlights utilized for external illumination shall be directed inward and downward onto the property illuminated.

- 2.) Exterior wall, projecting or suspended signs within "Priority Zone 1" as identified in the Corning Façade Improvement Program Design and Financial Workbook (dated July 1999) shall not be internally illuminated, except that "neon" signage is permitted.
  - 3.) One freestanding sign per parcel which may not exceed 35 feet in height, nor 75 square feet per side in display area. Freestanding signs shall be placed within landscaped planters sized not smaller than the sum of the display area of the freestanding signage. Freestanding signs placed within "Priority Zone 1" as identified in the Corning Façade Improvement Design and Financial Workbook (dated July 1999) shall not be internally illuminated, except that "neon" signage is permitted.
  - 4.) A second freestanding sign on a single parcel or a single sign exceeding the height or area limit may be permitted upon approval of a use permit.
- E. In C-3, CH, SPMU, M-1 & M-2 Zones:
- 1.) Exterior wall, projecting or suspended signs pertaining to the business or use conducted on the premises, which shall be attached parallel to and not project more than two feet from a wall of a building, or be suspended beneath a canopy which is a structural part of a building, provided that any suspended sign shall be eight feet or more above any sidewalk. No sign shall project above the roof ridgeline of the building on the site, and the sum of the areas of all such signage shall not exceed 25% of the "building face area" to which it is attached. "Building face area" is the product of the height and the width of a building façade where the signage is affixed. Wall-mounted, projecting or hanging signs may be internally or externally illuminated. Floodlights utilized for external illumination shall be directed inward and downward onto the property illuminated.
  - 2.) One freestanding sign per parcel which may not exceed 45 feet in height, nor 120 square feet per side in display area. Freestanding signs shall be placed within landscaped planters sized not smaller than the sum of the display area of the freestanding signage.
  - 3.) A second freestanding sign on a single parcel or a single sign exceeding the height or area limit may be permitted upon approval of a use permit.
  - 4.) On properties within 1000 feet of the Interstate 5 right of way, one freestanding freeway oriented sign per parcel. Signs within Highway 99-W Specific Plan Area must conform to the Design Guidelines of that document.
- F. In all commercial or industrial zones: one freestanding "portable sign" per operating business, conforming to the following requirements:
- 1.) The sign may be no higher than 5 feet above grade.
  - 2.) The sign may be no wider than 3 feet and is limited to a maximum of 15 square feet of display area per side.
  - 3.) Portable signs must be placed within 2 feet of the curb and must provide at least 5 feet of pedestrian path between the sign and the nearest wall.
  - 4.) Portable signs shall not be closer than 20 feet to the next nearest portable sign.
  - 5.) Portable signs may not obstruct vehicle sight distance by placing a sign too close to a street corner.
  - 6.) If located on public property is subject to enforcement of Public Works Director.
  - 7.) May be displayed only during operating business hours.
  - 8.) Must be stabilized to resist wind.

## **V. Prohibited Outdoor Advertising Signs**

The following signs are prohibited within the City of Corning:

- A.) Off-premises signs, including billboards.
- B.) Dangerous or hazardous signs, as determined by the Building Official.
- C.) Obsolete signs which advertise a business no longer operating on the site.
- D.) Signs erected at or near the intersection of any street or driveway so as to obstruct free and clear vision.
- E.) Roof signs where the highest point of the sign exceeds the highest point of the roof to which it is affixed.
- F.) Political signs on public property.
- G.) Signs that do not comply with these regulations.
- H.) Signs Mounted on Vehicles. No person shall park any vehicle, equipment (cranes or boom trucks), or trailer on a public right-of-way, on public property, or on private property so as to be visible from a public right-of-way that has attached thereto or located thereon any sign or advertising device for the basic purpose of providing advertisement of products and services or directing people to a business or activity located on the same or nearby property. This section is not intended to apply to standard advertising or identification practices where such signs or advertising devices are painted on or permanently attached to a business or commercial vehicle.

## V. SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

### A. GENERAL SIGNS.

#### 1. General Sign Policies

- Signs should be designed and located to be compatible with their surroundings in terms of size, shape, color, construction materials, legibility, and illumination.
- Signs should enhance a structure's architecture and not dominate the elevation on which it is placed. Signs should be consistent with the proportions and scale of the elements within the structure's facade.
- Monument signs or sign walls are the preferred alternative for business identifications. Where several tenants occupy the same site, individual wall mounted signs or hanging signs are appropriate in combination with a monument sign identifying the business park complex and address.

#### 2. General Sign Implementation Measures

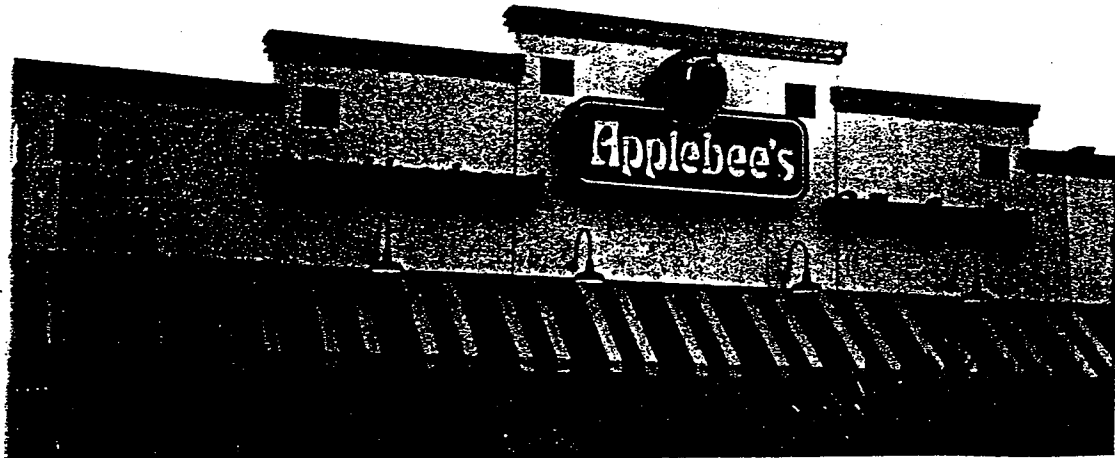
- Sign creation should take into consideration location and placement, construction materials, legibility, and illumination.

### B. SIGN LOCATION AND PLACEMENT.

#### 1. Location and Placement Policies

- Study the facade of the structure to determine if there are any architectural features or details that suggest a location, size or shape for the sign(s). Such features include: bands or frames of brickwork, cornice lines, indentations or projections in the face material, gaps between columns, or other permanent features.

Sign location and placement.



**2. Location and Placement Implementation Measures**

- Do not locate signs so that they cover architectural features, such as decorative columns or cornice bands, that may be important to the structure's overall design.
- On a building wall, locate a project identification sign no higher than twenty-five feet. This sign shall not be designed to identify an individual tenant or business in a building, unless the entire building is occupied by one business. Signs should not extend above the roof at the top of the wall.

*Not Recommended.*



- Hanging signs: An alternative to parapet or wall signs, signs may be hung underneath and parallel to pedestrian walkways, facing out towards parking areas. When used, these signs should be hung between columns and oriented towards parking areas. The use of these signs may be limited: the Mediterranean and Spanish Mission style design theme arcades' are characterized by curved archways. However, if architectural design allows, this is the preferred alternative to parapet or wall signs in multi-tenant retail commercial structures.
- Monument signs and sign walls on solid bases are preferred over pole mounted signs. These signs should be placed far enough back from intersections and access drives so that drivers' sight is not blocked from traffic or pedestrians.

Sign wall location and placement.





- Monument signs or sign walls should be placed at key entryways.

Monument sign location and placement.



C. SIGN COLOR.

1. Color Policies

- Sign color should be taken into consideration when designing signs for a project.

2. Color Implementation Measures

- Too many colors used simultaneously can confuse and negate the message of a sign. Limit the total number of colors to two or three on any one sign. Small accents of several colors can make a sign unique and attractive, but the competition of large areas of many different colors decreases readability.
- Contrast is an important influence on the legibility of signs. Light letters on a dark background or dark letters on a light background are most legible.
- Bright day-glo (fluorescent) colors should be avoided as they are distracting and do not usually blend well with colors on structures or other background colors.
- Sign colors should complement the colors used on the structures and the project as a whole. Monument signs and sign walls should have the same or similar color treatment as the building structure it represents.

## D. SIGN CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS.

### 1. Construction Policies

- Sign materials should be compatible with the design theme and use of materials on the building where the sign is to be placed. For example, the use of a chrome and glass contemporary sign on a Mediterranean or Spanish Mission style building would be inappropriate.

### 2. Construction Implementation Measures

- All signs shall be designed free of bracing, angle-iron, guy wires, cables or similar devices.
- The selected materials should contribute to the legibility of the sign. For example, glossy finishes are often difficult to read because of light and glare.
- The use of individually mounted channel letters is encouraged.

Individually mounted channel letters.



- Internally lighted plastic faced cabinet signs should incorporate light colored letters on a dark opaque background or dark letters on a light background.

Internally lighted plastic faced cabinet signs.



- Neon tubes are a popular sign material and can contribute to the night time ambiance of an area. However, not more than one wall mounted neon sign should be used on the same facade of a building because of their brightness and attention attracting properties.
- Monument signs and sign walls shall be constructed of the same or similar materials and colors as the building structure. These signs should be enhanced using brick, cobblestones, etc. and landscaping that have been incorporated into the overall architectural theme.

## E. SIGN LEGIBILITY.

### 1. Sign Legibility Policies

- Signs should be simple in design and easy to read.

Sign legibility.

HARD TO  
READ

Discourage typefaces  
which are hard to read

B

Avoid overly ornate or  
highly stylized lettering

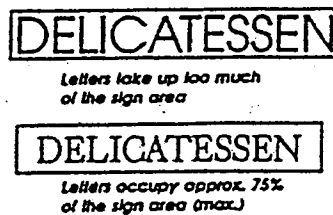
F  
M

Utilize simple serif  
or sans serif typefaces

## 2. Sign Legibility Implementation Measures

- Signs should use a brief message. The fewer the words, the more effective the sign. A brief succinct message is easier to read and looks more attractive.
- Crowding of letters, words or lines will make a sign more difficult to read. The number of lettering styles and amount of copy kept to a minimum. Letters should not occupy more than 75 percent of sign panel area.

Sign legibility.



- Limit the number of lettering styles used on a sign to increase legibility. As a general rule, limit the number of letter types to no more than two for small signs and up to three for larger signs.
- Avoid faddish typefaces. These typefaces are usually difficult to read.

## F. SIGN ILLUMINATION.

### 1. Sign Illumination Policies

- Illumination should enhance sign design, color, and lettering, and not act as an advertising tool.

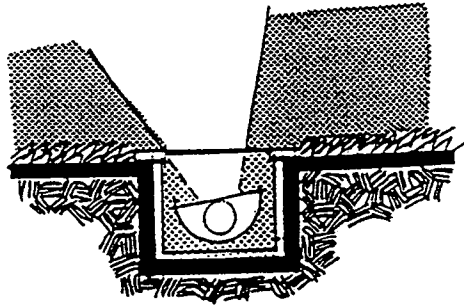
### 2. Sign Illumination Implementation Measures

- Reflective, fluorescent, and primary colors should be avoided.
- Direct and indirect lighting methods are allowed provided that they are not unnecessarily bright.

## SIGN DESIGN GUIDELINES

- Sign walls should be illuminated by an indirect source of light. This is usually best because the sign's construction will be more compatible and integrated with the building's architecture.

Sign with indirect light source.



- Whenever indirect lighting fixtures are used (fluorescent or incandescent), the light source shall be shaded, shielded, subdued or directed so that the intensity of the light does not impact surrounding properties. Signs should be lighted only to the minimum level required for nighttime readability.
- For hanging signs underneath pedestrian arcades or covered walkways, lighting fixtures must be concealed in the architecture away from pedestrian view.
- Monument or sign walls shall either be illuminated by an indirect and concealed lighting source or back lit letters may be used.
- Exposed raceways behind individual letter signs tend to emphasize the mechanics of the sign rather than the message. This type of sign is strongly discouraged. Signs should be designed to conceal electrical raceways.

Sign illumination - exposed raceways.



Sample sign types.

