

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Why is there a sign ordinance in the first place?

The intent of the sign ordinance is to regulate signs and outdoor advertising in order to minimize their harmful effects on the public health, safety and welfare. The regulations have been developed to prevent sign clutter, conflicts between adjacent land uses, and safety hazards to pedestrians and motorists. As a side benefit, the regulations also improve the community's appearance.

### Do I need a permit to install a sign?

Yes, you must obtain a sign permit from the City to install most outdoor signs. The City needs to confirm that your sign is consistent with the sign ordinance. The application fee is \$100.

A City permit is also required for most temporary signs. The application fee is \$50.

### Are any other approvals needed?

Yes, because downtown Linden is also a State-Registered Historic District, state law requires that the Linden Historic District Commission review and approve outdoor signage. The application fee is \$50.

### How long does the review take?

The Historic District Commission meets once a month and the City Sign Review Committee meets once a week. Thus, the time-frame is dependent upon when the

application is submitted in relation to the next available meeting.

### How do I report a sign that I believe is in violation of the sign ordinance?

Contact the City Building Inspector at (810) 735-7980 to report the violation.

### What can I do if my proposed or existing sign does not meet the ordinance requirements?

Variance requests for non-conforming signs may be heard by the Board of Appeals. Requests are subject to specific standards as defined in the variance application.

### What should I do if I have an illegal sign at my business?

If no permits exist, you may either remove the sign, or apply for a permit. The permit will be granted if the size and other factors are allowed by the ordinance. If the existing sign does not meet the ordinance, you'll be required to remove it or alter it to meet the law. If you fail to take action to correct or remove illegal signs, you will receive a citation from the City Building Inspector.

### How can I find out if any of my existing signs are illegal?

The existing signs on your business may remain if they were installed with permits. If you cannot find permits in your files, you can check the files at City Hall.

# BUSINESS OWNER'S GUIDE TO THE CITY OF LINDEN SIGN ORDINANCE

## CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT EDITION

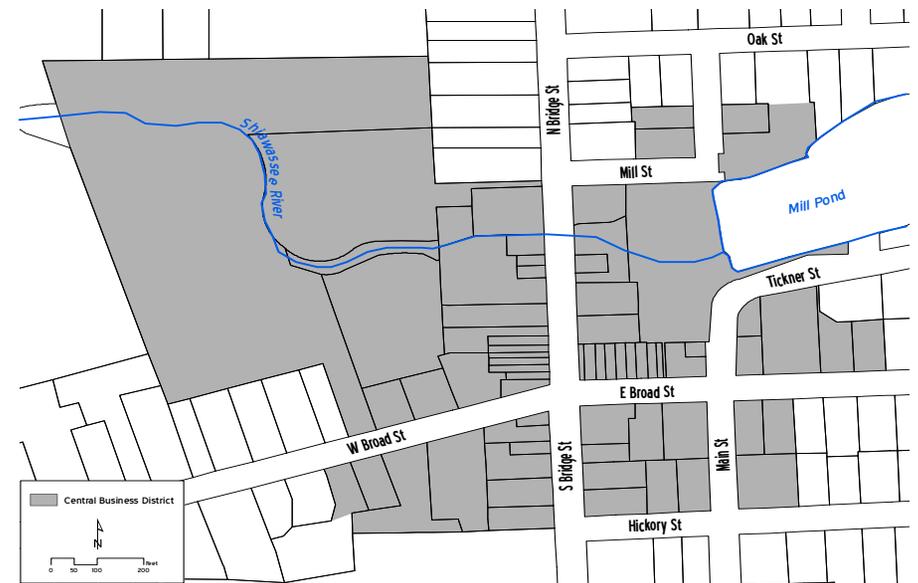
Exterior signage within Linden's Central Business District is regulated by the City's sign ordinance, a section of the City's zoning ordinance.

The complete sign ordinance is long and technical. This publication summarizes the key regulations and answers some of the most frequently asked questions about signs in non-technical terms. Please note that this edition only applies to properties located within the Central Business District (see map below).

This publication should only be used as a general guide and is not a substitute for a careful review of the sign ordinance itself. The complete text of Linden's sign ordinance is available on the "downloads" page of the City's website at:

[www.lindenmi.us/downloads.asp](http://www.lindenmi.us/downloads.asp)

We recommend that you always talk to a City staff member before designing, purchasing or installing any signs at your property. For more information, contact City Hall at (810) 735-7980.



# SIGN REGULATIONS IN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

## BUSINESS ADVERTISING SIGNS (PERMITS REQUIRED, UNLESS SPECIFIED)



### Ground Signs

- One ground sign is allowed and can be no taller than 4 feet and no larger than 20 square feet.
- A second ground sign may be permitted for lots fronting two public roads.



### Wall Signs

- Up to two wall signs are allowed per business, but no more than one per wall.
- The area of a wall sign can't exceed 10% of the wall area or 45 square feet, whichever is less.
- If two wall signs are installed, the area of the two wall signs in combination can't exceed 60 square feet.

### Canopy Signs

- Letters, graphics or logos may not cover more than 20% of the canopy surface or 45 square feet, whichever is less.
- A canopy sign is not allowed on a wall that includes a wall sign.



### Projecting Signs

- Up to two projectings are allowed per business, but no more than one per wall.
- The sign can't be more than 5 square feet in area.

### Window Signs

- The size of window signs can't exceed 30% of the area of all ground floor windows. Window signs can't cover more than 50% of any single window.
- One "open" sign (may be illuminated) is allowed and does not require a permit. However, the sign can't be larger than 2 square feet in area or have more than 2 colors.



### Sandwich Signs

- One sandwich sign is allowed per business.
- The sign can have two faces, each no more than 10 square feet in area.

## TEMPORARY SIGNS (PERMITS REQUIRED, UNLESS SPECIFIED)

### New Business Start-Up Signs

- For new businesses, a temporary sign advertising the business may be allowed for up to 45 days.

### Banner Signs

- One temporary banner sign is allowed per business for up to 30 days and no more than 4 times per calendar year.
- The sign can't exceed 20 square feet in area and neither the height nor the width can exceed 10 feet.

### Weekend or Holiday Banner Signs

- A weekend or holiday banner sign may be allowed and does not require a permit.
- The sign can only be erected after the opening of business on the weekend or holiday and must be removed prior to the end of business on the weekend or holiday.
- The sign can't exceed 20 square feet in area and neither the height nor the width can exceed 10 feet.

## PROHIBITED SIGNS

- Balloons, pennants, streamers, ribbons, pinwheels and searchlights
- Electronic changeable copy signs, except for an indication of time and/or temperature
- Illuminated window signs except for one "open" sign
- Signs mounted to roofs
- Signs featuring animation or movement (moving parts, flashing lights, etc.)
- Signs which advertise a business or activity which is not conducted on the property
- Signs attached to a marquee
- Signs which are broken or structurally unsafe

## EXEMPT SIGNS (NO PERMITS REQUIRED)

The signs listed below are exempt from the regulations of the sign ordinance and do not require permits.

- Nameplates, not exceeding 2 square feet
- Political signs, erected no more than 36 days prior to an election
- Directional signs, not exceeding 2 square feet in size and containing no advertising
- Real estate signs, not exceeding a height of 6 feet and 32 square feet of display area
- Incidental signs, such as credit card decals and business hours of operation.