

Sign Ordinance Summary

Detroit City Council

February 7, 2019

Overview

- Ordinance addresses both off-premises (advertising) and on-premise (business) signage.
- It consolidates both forms of signage regulation into a single chapter of the City Code.

Off-Premise Signage Regulations in the Central Business District

Guiding Principles

- Today, off-premises advertising wall signs are prohibited in the CBD.
- The proposed ordinance lifts that ban while following these guiding principles:
 1. Providing **equitable opportunities** for building owners.
 2. Establishing **clear, objective process** for permitting advertising signage.
 3. Promoting an **aesthetically attractive** downtown.

Key Provisions

- Establish a hard cap of 60 total licenses for wall signs in the CBD, split between two tiers:
 - Local advertising signs (up to 500 SF)
 - Super-advertising signs (1,200-5,000 SF)
- 25 licenses allocated for local advertising signs, 35 licenses allocated for super-advertising signs
- First-come, first-served online application process
- Applicant must surrender any/all current wall sign permits in order to be granted license under new ordinance.

Key Provisions

- Five-year license term. Applicants may apply for new licenses following first-come, first-served process mirroring initial awards.
- Advertising signage moved from zoning (which provided permanent entitlements) to licensing section of City Code.
 - This is necessary to allow for licenses with fixed terms – thus allowing:
 - More equitable opportunities for building owners and sign companies.
 - The community and policymakers to address signage concerns.

Additional Details

- Only one sign permitted per premises (i.e., parcel)
- Additional coverage requirements:
 - Local advertising signs must not exceed 80% of the area of the facade to which it is affixed.
 - Super-advertising signs must not exceed 60% of the area of the façade to which it is affixed.
- Building owners must apply for license, in partnership with licensed and insured advertising company.
- Limits on dynamic (e.g., digital) and illuminated signs.

Heritage Signs

Newly defined and exempt from being obsolete and mandatory removal.



Woodward North Corridor - Dynamic signs may not be above 25', may not be animated, and must operate as static signs between 2 am and 6 am.

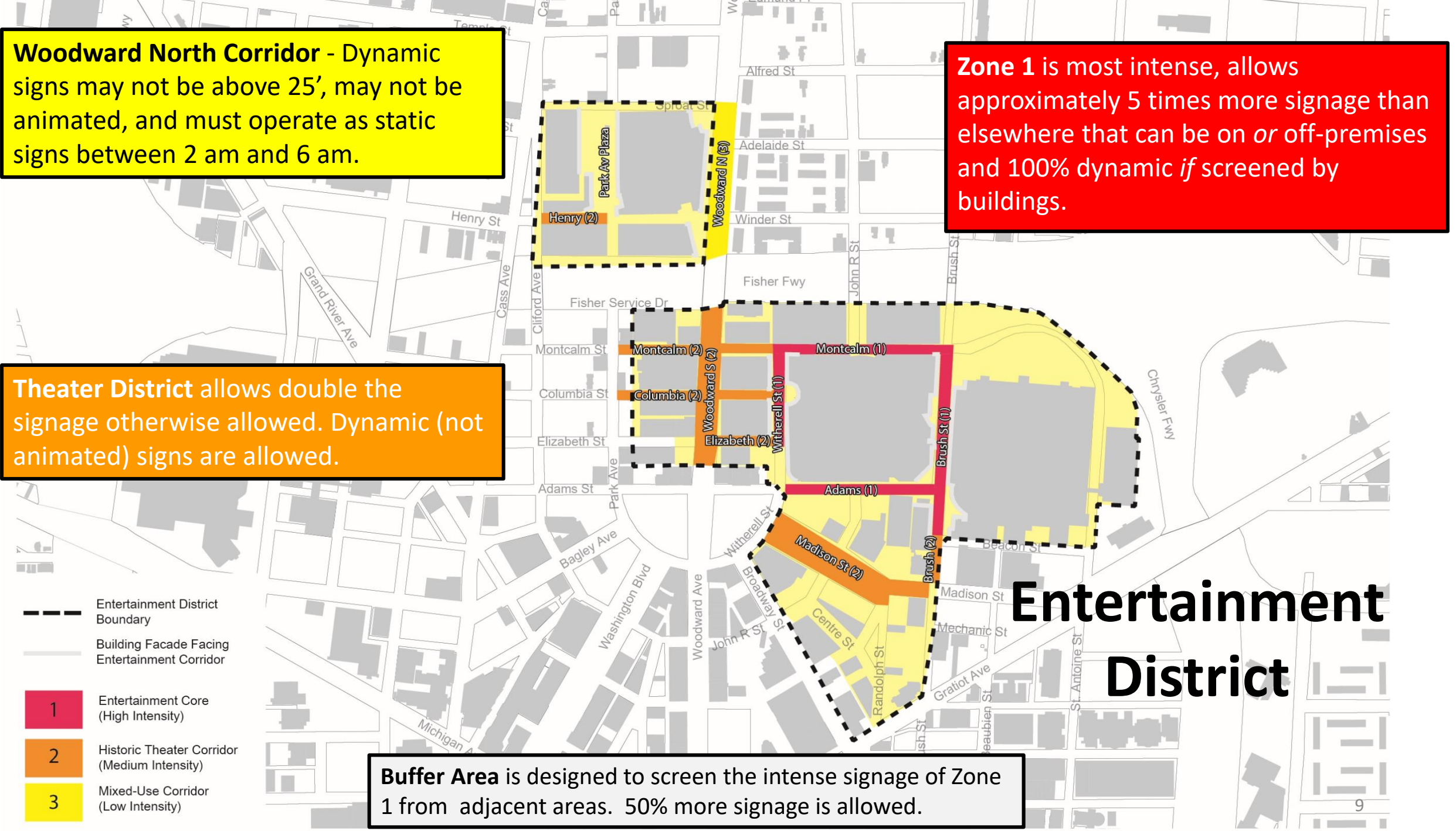
Zone 1 is most intense, allows approximately 5 times more signage than elsewhere that can be on *or* off-premises and 100% dynamic *if* screened by buildings.

Theater District allows double the signage otherwise allowed. Dynamic (not animated) signs are allowed.

- Entertainment District Boundary
- Building Facade Facing Entertainment Corridor
- 1 Entertainment Core (High Intensity)
- 2 Historic Theater Corridor (Medium Intensity)
- 3 Mixed-Use Corridor (Low Intensity)

Buffer Area is designed to screen the intense signage of Zone 1 from adjacent areas. 50% more signage is allowed.

Entertainment District



Enforcement

- BSEED Director may waive requirements upon making 8 required findings. Appeals made to Department of Appeals and Hearings.
- Violations become blight violations.
- Locations may only receive license if in compliance with all zoning conditions, property maintenance codes, and OCFO verifies that all taxes and assessments are current.

Off-Premise Signage Outside the Central Business District

Key Provisions

- Spacing between advertising signs (currently no distinction):
 - 1,000' between non-internally illuminated signs facing the same direction
 - 1,750' between dynamic or internally illuminated signs facing the same direction.
- Lifts ban on advertising in the Grand Boulevard loop.

Sponsored Art and Murals



Painted side-wall signs are newly created and permitted on the wall(s) of 1 or 2 story buildings that have a vacant lot next to them.



Sponsorship signs are permitted where there is substantial outdoor public art that was paid for by a third party.

On-Premise Business Signage (Citywide)

Key Provisions

- On-premise business signage is currently permitted. The proposed ordinance clarifies and modifies certain size and visual criteria.
- The goal is to provide for a safe, well-maintained, vibrant and attractive City.



Buildings above 100' in height in CBD may display a **high-rise business sign**.

Roof signs are currently prohibited. This ordinance would allow them everywhere except on low-density residential or medium-density residential/mixed use properties and may be dynamic.

