

Amendment 9589

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE WORCESTER ZONING ORDINANCE, ADOPTED APRIL 2, 1991, RELATIVE TO SIGNS

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Worcester as follows:

1. Article IV of the Worcester Zoning Ordinance, adopted April 2, 1991, be and is hereby amended by deleting the existing section six in its entirety and inserting the following new section six as follows:

Section 6 – Signs

A. Purpose and Intent

The purpose of this **Section-6** is to:

1. Promote safety along City sidewalks, streets and highways with respect to signs and effectively control signs in complex driving environments.
2. Effectively regulate the proper maintenance of signs.
3. Provide for the appropriate number, placement, scale, illumination, type and use of signage that:
 - a) Is compatible with the City's built environment including its significant cultural, architectural, and historical resources.
 - b) Is proportional to the building and site upon which it is located.
 - c) Provides adequate identification, direction, and information to vehicles and pedestrians while minimizing clutter, unsightliness, and confusion.
 - d) Recognizes business needs, in particular, those of small local businesses, while balancing the interaction between commercial districts and residential neighborhoods and protecting quality of life.
 - e) Protects important view corridors.
 - f) Recognizes the intrinsic economic value of aesthetics for a community and protects against excessive signage.
 - g) Protects public investment in public spaces, including, but not limited to: streetscapes, public buildings and open space.

- h) Allows for innovative design, recognizes changing technology and promotes effective communication of products, services and ideas.
- i) Recognizes non-accessory signs as a legitimate means of advertising that should respect the quality of life, civic pride, economic prosperity and general welfare of the people who reside, visit, work or conduct business in the City.

B. Administration

1. Permits and Inspections

- a) No sign shall be erected, altered, or relocated without a sign permit issued by the Building Commissioner except for the following signs which do not need permits but shall still comply with the applicable requirements of this section: all temporary signs with the exception of temporary roof signs and temporary signs with an element of motion or internal illumination, accessory instructional signs, and window signs.
- b) No sign shall be erected, enlarged, relocated, or changed from a static sign to a digital display sign prior to submission of the required sign permit application to the Department of Inspectional Services and approval from the Building Commissioner except signs that are exempt from obtaining a building permit per 780 CMR 120.H. Said signs shall comply with all applicable dimensional, installation and operational standards set forth in this ordinance.
- c) Sign permit applications submitted to the Department of Inspectional Services shall include: a plan drawn to scale, structural drawings and specifications of the sign, including, if applicable, foundations and Underwriter's Laboratory certification, as required by the sign permit application.
- d) Non-accessory signs, subject to the rules and regulations of the Outdoor Advertising Board of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, require a special permit from the Special Permit Granting Authority. Special permit applications shall be accompanied by a site plan drawn to scale that meets all applicable requirements set forth for site plans in **Article V, Section-4(B)(7)**.
- e) The Planning Board shall be the Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) for Comprehensive Sign Plan Approval Special Permit (see **Section-6(I)**, below). The Zoning Board of Appeals shall be the SPGA for all other special permits related to signs.

2. Exemptions

This **Section-6** shall not apply to signs erected by the City for the control and direction of traffic or parking; signs or banners erected by the City; signs erected by other authorized governmental agencies or departments; signs not viewable from a street; window displays of products; national flags, state flags, flags of political subdivisions and symbolic flags of an institution or business; historical site plaques; and holiday displays.

3. Maintenance

- a) Signs must be constructed and maintained in accordance with the application and plans submitted with the sign permit application and approved by the Building Commissioner.
- b) The owner of record of the premises where a sign is located and any advertiser, tenant or other person having control of, or substantial interest in said sign, shall maintain the sign in a condition appropriate to its intended use and in compliance with all City standards and applicable building code requirements.
- c) Unless expressly stated otherwise, nothing in this **Section-6** shall be construed to prevent the normal repair or restoration of any part of a legally existing sign when damaged by natural deterioration, storm or other accidental emergency as determined by the Building Commissioner.

4. Enforcement

- a) The Building Commissioner is authorized to order the compliance or removal of any sign erected or maintained contrary to this Ordinance. The Building Commissioner shall serve a written notice of such order by registered or certified mail, or legal process server upon the owner of record of the premises where a sign is located and any advertiser, tenant or other person having control of, or substantial interest in said sign, directing it be brought into compliance or removed within such timeframe as the Building Commissioner deems appropriate under the circumstances.
- b) If such sign is not brought into compliance or removed, as the case may be, with the timeframe established by the Building Commissioner in the order, the Building Commissioner or its agents shall be authorized to enter upon the premises where the sign is located and remove said sign. All reasonable expenses incurred by the City in removing the sign shall be assessed against any person who failed to comply with the Building Commissioner's order and shall constitute a debt due the City recoverable in an action of contract.

- c) This section may also be enforced by civil process, criminal process or by non-criminal disposition as provided in M.G.L. c. 40, §21D and Worcester Revised Ordinances (2008), Chapter18, section 2(b)(5).

C. Definitions

ACCESSORY SIGN: A sign that advertises, directs attention to, or identifies entities, products or activities located or offered on the same property as the sign. Also known as an on-site or on-premises sign.

AWNING: A permanent roof-like structure attached to a building, above storefront windows or entries, extending from an exterior wall of a building and composed of non-rigid materials except for the supporting framework.

AWNING SIGN: A permanent accessory sign attached to the surface of an awning with no part of the sign extending beyond the awning in any way.

BALLOON SIGN: A temporary sign on the surface of or attached in any other manner to a gas-filled balloon tethered in a fixed location.

BANNER SIGN: A permanent or temporary sign made of fabric or other similar non-durable material with no closing framework or electrical components that is supported or anchored on two or more edges or at all four corners to a building. Banners that are displayed lengthwise so that the longer side extends vertically and that are attached to a building at the top and bottom of the banner with permanent brackets shall be considered projecting signs. All other banners shall be considered temporary wall signs.

BILLBOARD SIGN: A non-accessory sign, typically located on a flat panel structure, subject to M.G.L. § 93, sections 29-33.

BUILDING DIRECTORY SIGN: A permanent accessory sign, attached to a building, which identifies the business, owner, address, or occupation of a group of businesses or organizations within one or more buildings.

BUILDING UNIT LENGTH: For the purposes of determining allowable area for signs, building unit length is equivalent to a length of a single tenant space on the first floor of a building.

CANOPY: A freestanding permanent roof-like shelter not attached to or requiring support from an adjacent structure. [i.e., gas stations frequently have a canopy over the fueling pump areas.]

CANOPY SIGN: A permanent accessory sign painted on, printed on or otherwise attached to the surface of a canopy which is otherwise permitted by the ordinance.

CHANGEABLE COPY SIGN, ELECTRONIC: A sign or portion thereof that displays electronic, non-pictorial information in which each alphanumeric character is defined by a small number of matrix elements using different combinations of light emitting diodes (LED's), fiber optics, light bulbs or other illumination devices within the display area. Electronic changeable copy signs include computer programmable, microprocessor or controlled electronic displays. Electronic changeable copy signs include projected images or messages with these characteristics onto buildings or other objects. Also known as electronic message centers.

CHANGEABLE COPY SIGN, MANUAL: A sign or portion thereof which displays information in which each alphanumeric character, graphic or symbol may be changed or re-arranged manually or mechanically with characters, letters, or illustrations without altering the face or the surface of the sign. Said characters, letters or illustrations shall not consist of individually illuminated devices.

CHANNEL LETTERS: Individual letters on a sign separated from each other with no solid background behind the letters.

DIGITAL DISPLAY SIGN: A sign or portion thereof that incorporates light emitting diode (LED), fiber optic or similar technology to allow messages to change.

FLASHING SIGN: An internally or externally illuminated sign or portion thereof that consists of intermittent illumination that changes light intensity in sudden transitory bursts or creates the illusion of intermittent flashing light by streaming graphic bursts or any mode of lighting which resembles scrolling, sparkling or twinkling.

FREESTANDING SIGN: A permanent accessory or non-accessory sign not attached to a building and supported upon the ground, including but not limited to: pole, monument and menu board signs.

FREESTANDING TEMPORARY SIGN: A temporary sign, generally made of non-rigid materials, attached to the ground, generally with poles or braces but which is not permanently supported nor is attached to any building. (See also PORTABLE SIGN).

ILLUMINATED SIGN: A sign which is lit, whether internally or externally.

INSTRUCTIONAL SIGN, ACCESSORY: A permanent accessory sign intended for instructional purposes as determined by the Building Commissioner. Said signage shall not be included in the total permitted wall signage nor shall be counted as a freestanding sign, provided said sign is not larger than necessary to serve the intended purpose and provided said sign is neither in a location nor contains design characteristics that constitute or serve the purposes of identification of products or services.

INSTRUCTIONAL SIGN, NON-ACCESSORY: A permanent non-accessory sign intended to provide instructions or directions, as determined by the Building Commissioner, to a nearby off-site location.

MARQUEE: A permanent canopy-like structure attached to a building with no supporting structure except where attached to the building, composed of rigid materials extending along and projecting beyond the wall of a building.

MARQUEE SIGN: A permanent sign painted on, printed on or otherwise attached to the surface of a marquee generally designed to have changeable copy, either manually or electronically, as permitted by this ordinance.

MENU BOARD SIGN: A permanent sign, not attached to a building, displaying the type and price of goods sold in connection with drive-through services. See also sidewalk sign.

MONUMENT SIGN: A permanent freestanding sign which is anchored to the ground similar to a pylon or freestanding sign but which has a monolithic or columnar line, which maintains essentially the same contour from grade to top and which has a horizontal dimension equal to or greater than its vertical dimensions. Also known as a ground sign.

MOTION SIGN: Any sign containing physical moving parts, including rotating signs but not including digital display.

MULTI-VISION SIGN: Any sign comprised in whole or in part of a series of vertical or horizontal slats or cylinders that are capable of being rotated at intervals so that partial rotation of the group of slats or cylinders produces a different image and when properly functioning allows on a single sign structure the display of multiple images.

MURAL: A noncommercial picture or decoration, typically painted, which is for artistic, cultural or societal purposes. However, a mural is considered a commercial sign if it is related by language, logo or pictorial depiction to the advertisement of any product or service or the identification of any business.

NON-ACCESSORY SIGN: A sign that advertises, directs attention to, or identifies entities, products or activities conducted, sold or offered at a location other than the premises on which the sign is located.(see also Billboard Sign).

OFF STREET PARKING SIGN: A sign whose message is exclusively limited to guiding the circulation of motorists on site to and from parking areas.

PERMANENT SIGN: A sign attached to a building, structure, or the ground and intended for long term use.

POLE SIGN: A freestanding sign supported permanently upon the ground by poles or braces, not attached to any building and which provides air space between the ground and the sign face.

PORTABLE SIGN: A type of temporary freestanding sign capable of being readily moved from one location to another and having no permanent or in-ground supporting structures or braces. This includes sidewalk signs and signs attached to wood, plastic, or metal frames and wheeled trailers, whose primary function is to carry a sign that can be loaned, rented or leased. It excludes signs on cars, trucks, buses, or trailers that identify the owner or products of the owner and whose function includes regular transport operations of the business.

PROJECTING SIGN: A permanent sign which projects from and is supported by a wall or parapet of a building with the display surface of the sign in a plane perpendicular to or approximately perpendicular to the wall. Projecting signs shall also include 1.) banners that are displayed lengthwise, where the longer side of the sign is vertical and attached with two or more permanent brackets, one at the top and one at the bottom of the banner but does not include temporary banner signs and 2) signs suspended from a building overhang (See Definition: SUSPENDED SIGNS).

ROOF SIGN: A permanent or temporary sign which is erected, constructed or maintained above the roof or architectural projection of a building and does not project beyond the wall line of the building.

ROTATING SIGN: A sign or portion of any sign which in any physical part or in total, turns about on an axis, rotates, revolves or is otherwise in motion.

SIDEWALK SIGN: A temporary, portable and self-supporting sign which includes but is not limited to: A-frame or sandwich board signs. Sidewalk signs are located, in whole or in part, on a public sidewalk immediately adjacent to the building or lot for which the sign is intended.

SIGN: Any device consisting of any letter, figure, character, mark, point, design, poster, mural, stroke, stripe, line, trademark, banner, insignia, or other reading matter that is used to attract or direct attention of the public to any object, product, place, activity, facility, event, attraction, person, institution, service organization or business displayed out-of-doors for recognized advertising or identification purposes excluding supporting structure except where the sign structure itself consists of advertising. Window signs located inside a building within three (3) feet of the window, but viewable from a street are also considered a sign.

SUSPENDED SIGN: A type of projecting sign that is suspended from a building overhang either parallel or perpendicular to the building wall.

TEMPORARY SIGN (motion): A sign that is neither permanently attached nor affixed to a building nor permanently anchored in the ground, intended to be displayed for a seasonal or brief activity, including, but not limited to: sales, specials, promotions, grand openings, political signs and lease or vacancy of rental units. It includes temporary banner signs, temporary freestanding signs, portable signs, temporary wall signs,

temporary roof signs, balloon signs and temporary window signs which contain an element of movement, including but not limited to: spinning, rotating, and flapping.

TEMPORARY SIGN (non-motion): A non-motion sign that is neither permanently attached nor affixed to a building nor permanently anchored in the ground, intended to be displayed for a seasonal or brief activity, including, but not limited to: sales, specials, promotions, grand openings, political signs and lease or vacancy of rental units. It includes temporary banner signs, temporary freestanding signs, portable signs, temporary wall signs, temporary roof signs, balloon signs and temporary window signs.

TRI-VISION SIGN: A permanent sign which presents a series of images through mechanical rotation of multi-sided vertical strips, said rotation occurring at regular intervals, presenting a series of static images. Also known as a multi-vision sign.

VIDEO DISPLAY SIGN: A sign that changes its message or background in a manner or method of display characterized by motion or pictorial imagery, which may or may not include text, and depicts action or a special effect to imitate movement, the presentation of pictorials or graphics displayed in a progression of frames which give the illusion of motion, including but not limited to the illusion of moving objects, moving patterns, bands of light, expanding or contracting shapes, not including electronic changeable copy signs. Video display signs also include projected images or messages with these characteristics onto buildings or other objects.

VIEW CORRIDOR: A three dimensional area between a particular vantage point and a particular target object from which the target can be viewed. The width and length of a view corridor varies depending on the distance from and size of the target object.

WALL SIGN: A permanent or temporary sign which is applied, painted on or supported in whole or in part by an exterior wall of a building or structure and does not extend more than fourteen (14) inches from the wall and does not extend beyond the ends of the wall to which it is attached.

WAYFINDING: Signs and graphics used to convey direction and location to travelers.

WINDOW SIGN: A permanent or temporary sign (but excluding merchandise in a window display) that is posted, painted, placed or affixed to the interior of a window. An interior sign that faces a window viewable from a street and located within three (3) feet of the window is considered a window sign for the purpose of calculating the total area of all window signs. The word “window” shall refer to any transparent surface that comprises part of the surface of the wall, including but not limited to glass doors, regardless of its movability.

D. Measurement Standards

1. Determining Sign Area and Dimensions

a) Signs Attached to a Building

- i) For any sign that is framed, outlined, painted or otherwise prepared and intended to provide a background for a sign, the area and dimensions shall include the entire portion within such background or frame.
- ii) The permitted area of signs comprised of individual letters, figures or elements and attached to a building including but not limited to:, awning, building directory, canopy, marquee, roof and wall signs shall be calculated by determining the smallest regular geometric shape (rectangle, circle, trapezoid, triangle, etc.) or combination of regular geometric shapes that encompasses the perimeter of all elements in the display, the frame, and any applied background that is not part of the architecture of the building. When separate elements are organized to form a single sign, but are separated by open space, the sign area and dimensions shall be calculated by determining the geometric shape or combination of shapes which includes all the display areas. Minor appendages to a particular rectangular shape, as determined by the Building Commissioner, shall not be included in the total area of the sign.

b) Freestanding Signs

- i) When two identical sign faces are placed back to back so that both faces cannot be viewed from any point at the same time, and are part of the same sign structure, the sign area shall be computed as the measurement of one of the two faces. When the sign has more than two display surfaces, the area of the sign shall be the area of the largest display surfaces that are visible from any single direction.
- ii) For a freestanding sign, the sign area shall include the frame, if any, but shall not include:
 - aa) A pole or other structural support unless such pole or structural support is internally illuminated or otherwise so designed as to constitute an advertising portion of the sign.
 - bb) Architectural features that are either part of a freestanding structure, and not an integral part of the sign, and which may

consist of landscaping, building or structural forms complementing the site in general.

2. Determining Sign Height

- a) The height of a freestanding sign shall be measured from the base of the sign or supportive structure at its point of attachment to the ground, to the highest point of the sign. A freestanding sign located on an artificial site feature such as a graded earth mound, shall be measured from the grade of the nearest pavement or top of any pavement curb to the highest point of the sign.

3. Determining Building Unit Length to Calculate Allowable Sign Area

- a) Building Unit – A building unit is equivalent to a single tenant space. The length of the tenant space on the first floor shall be the basis for determining the allowable area for wall signs.
- b) Primary and Secondary Building Unit Length – The building unit length shall include the length of the first floor building units of a building facing a street, facing a primary parking area for the building or tenants, or containing the public entrance(s) to the building or building units.
 - i) The primary building unit lengths shall be considered the portion of any building unit length containing the primary public entrance(s) for the building or building units and each building unit length facing a different street.
 - ii) Secondary building unit lengths shall be considered the portion of any building unit length that does not meet the criteria of a primary building unit length but that contains:
 - aa) A secondary public entrance(s) to the building or building units.
 - bb) All building walls facing a primary parking area accessory to the use.
 - cc) All building walls that do not contain accessory parking areas or secondary entrances but that are substantially visible from a street and are not designated as a primary building unit length by **Section-6(D)(3)(b)(i)**, above.

4. Measuring Building Unit Length

- a) Building unit lengths as defined above shall be the sum of all wall lengths parallel or nearly parallel to street frontage excluding any such wall length determined by the Building Commissioner as clearly unrelated to the building unit length criteria.
- b) For buildings with two or more frontages, the length of the wall and allowable sign area shall be calculated separately for each such building frontage.
- c) The building unit length shall be measured from the centerline of the party walls separating the building unit.

5. Measuring Sign Clearance

Clearance is measured from the highest point of the ground directly below the sign to the lowest point on the sign structure enclosing the sign face.

E. Sign Type Regulations

1. Prohibited Signs.

- a. Signs shall not be erected or maintained in any location which will unduly obstruct traffic visibility or reduce visibility at entrances, exits and intersections of a street.
- b. No sign or any part thereof may be affixed within, placed upon or extend across the surface of any part of the traveled way of a street except for decorations or holidays as permitted by state law.
- c. The following signs, permanent or temporary, accessory or non-accessory are prohibited in all districts:
 - i) Abandoned signs.
 - ii) Flashing signs.
 - iii) Signs that contain tri-vision (multi-vision) displays.
 - iv) Temporary signs with digital or electric components.
 - v) Signs illuminated by sparks or open flames.
 - vi) Signs that imitate or resemble official traffic lights, signs or signals or signs that interfere with the effectiveness of any official traffic light, sign or signal.

- vii) Signs shall not be placed on or otherwise attached to
 - aa) Trees, shrubbery, or other natural features.
 - bb) Dumpsters and dumpster enclosures.
 - cc) Publicly owned and maintained street furniture, the surface of public sidewalks, utility poles, utility boxes, and bollards.
 - dd) Windows, doors, fire escapes, or any opening required for ventilation or egress in such a way as to fully cover said features and prevent access. This section shall not be construed to prevent window signs or signs on doors that are permitted when in compliance with this ordinance.
- viii) Temporary signs shall not be placed on permanent freestanding signs or signs attached to a building.
- ix) Temporary signs shall not be placed on fences. Permanent signs are permitted on fences pursuant to **Section 6-(E)(2), Table 4.3.1, Note 29.**

2. Permitted Signs.

Permanent Accessory Signs are permitted in accordance with **Table 4.3.1** below.

Permanent Accessory Sign Table – Table 4.3.1

		Signs Attached to a Building						Freestanding Signs				
Sign Type → Requirements↓		Awning & Canopy	Building Directory	Marquee	Projecting	Roof	Wall	Window	Pole	Monument		
Zoning District RS, RL, RG	Allowed?	Y – Awning See Note 2 N – Canopy	Y See Note 2	N	Y See Notes 2 & 4	N	Y See Note 15	Y	Y for Specially Permitted and Permitted Nonresidential Uses in Table 4.1. See Notes 1, 2 23, 26	Y See Note 1,2 & 23		
	Maximum Number	N/A	One (1) per each primary public entrance	N/A	One (1) per primary building unit length. Secondary building unit lengths may have either a projecting or a wall sign but not both.	N/A	Multiple wall signs permitted. See area requirements. Secondary building unit lengths may have a projecting or a wall sign but not both. See Note 13	Multiple window signs permitted. See area requirements.	One (1) double-faced sign per lot. May contain one individual panel or multiple panels.			
	Maximum Area (SF)	Counted towards maximum permitted wall sign area	12 SF See Note 3		16 SF See Notes 7 & 8		24SF or 1 SF per linear foot of building unit length, whichever is greater, for nonresidential, multi-family, and specially permitted uses except as noted in Note 2. 6 SF for all other uses in residential zoning districts Additional wall sign area is permitted for buildings set back 200' or more from the street. See Note 17. See Note 1 & 13	50% of window area (including glass doors) may be covered by temporary or permanent window signs. See Note 20.	20 SF	24 SF	See Note 27	
	Minimum Setback / Length	Awnings that extend over the public sidewalk shall obtain applicable License Commission approval.			Shall not extend more than five (5) ft from the wall to which the sign is attached. Shall provide six (6) inch minimum air space between sign and the building wall. Signs that extend over the public sidewalk shall obtain applicable License Commission approval. See Notes 6, & 9.		The length of each wall sign shall not exceed 80% of the length of each individual tenant's building unit length.	Shall be located on the inside of the window only.	10 ft For freestanding pole signs, setback shall be measured from the pole. See Note 27			
	Maximum Height	N/A		Shall not extend above the roofline or parapet. Provide a minimum of eight (8) ft of clearance above sidewalk and 14 ft above driveway, alley, or other right-of-way.	No wall sign or portion of a wall sign may project above the wall, eave line, roofline or top of a parapet except as noted in Note 14.	N/A						
	Digital Display / Motion Allowed?							N				

Permanent Accessory Sign Table – Table 4.3.1 (continued)

		Signs Attached to a Building							Freestanding Signs	
Sign Type → Requirements↓		Awning Canopy	Building Directory	Marquee	Projecting	Roof	Wall	Window	Pole	Monument
Zoning District BO	Allowed?	Y – Awning See Note 2 N – Canopy	Y See Note 2	N	Y See Notes 2 & 4	N	Y See Notes 15	Y See Note 19	Y SP –in Downtown/ Blackstone Canal and Union Station Sign Overlays.	Y
	Maximum Number	N/A	One (1) per each primary public entrance	N/A	One (1) per primary and secondary building unit length with exception of suspended signs and projecting banner signs which shall be permitted multiple signs provided each individual sign meets applicable area requirements for projecting signs.	N/A	Multiple signs are permitted. See area requirements.		One (1) double-faced sign per lot. May contain one individual panel or multiple panels. See Notes 24 & 25.	
	Maximum Area (SF)	Counted towards maximum permitted wall sign area. Where there is a canopy with no associated building on site, the permitted sign area shall not exceed 2 SF per linear foot of canopy on each side viewable from a different street.	12 SF See Note 3		16 SF See Notes 7 & 8		24 SF or 1.5 SF per linear foot of primary building unit length whichever is greater. Additional wall sign area is permitted for buildings with particular characteristics. See Notes 16, 17, 18 for applicability.	50% of window area (including glass doors) may be covered by temporary or permanent window signs. See Note 20.	24 SF	48 SF
	Minimum Setback / Length	Awnings that extend over the public sidewalk shall obtain applicable License Commission approval.	N/A		Shall not extend more than five (5) feet from the wall on which the sign is attached. Provide six (6) inch minimum air space between wall and building. Signs that extend over the public sidewalk shall obtain applicable License Commission approval. See Notes 6 & 9.		Length of each wall sign shall not exceed 80% of the length of each individual tenant's building unit length.	Shall be located on the inside of the window only.	Five (5) ft from any lot line except where a lot with a freestanding sign abuts a residential district or public park, in which case said sign shall be no closer than ten (10) ft to said abutting lot line. For freestanding pole signs, setback shall be measured from the pole. See Note 24	
	Height	N/A			Shall not extend above roofline or parapet. Provide a minimum of eight (8) ft of clearance above sidewalk and 14 ft above driveway, alley, or other right-of-way except as set forth in Note 5.		No wall sign or portion of a wall sign may project above the wall, eave line, or top of a parapet except as noted in Note 14.	N/A	12 ft See Note 27	

	Digital Display Permitted? Motion Permitted?	N								
Permanent Accessory Sign Table – Table 4.3.1 (continued)										
Signs Attached to a Building									Freestanding Signs	
Sign Type → Requirements ↓	Awning Canopy	Building Directory	Marquee	Projecting	Roof	Wall	Window	Pole	Monument	
Zoning District BL, BG, ML, MG, IP, IN, A	Allowed?	Y See Note 2			Y See Notes 2 & 4	N in A district. SP for roof signs with channel letters in Downtown/ Blackstone Canal and Union Station Overlays. Y in BL, BG, ML, MG IP, IN. See Notes 11 & 12	Y See Note 15	Y See Note 19	Y SP –in Downtown/ Blackstone Canal and Union Station Sign Overlays.	Y
	Maximum Number	N/A	One (1) per each primary public entrance.	One (1) per side of a building viewable from a different street.	One (1) per primary and secondary building unit length with exception of suspended signs and projecting banner signs which shall be permitted multiple signs provided each individual sign meets applicable area requirements for projecting signs.	One (1) per lot. A lot may contain either a roof or freestanding sign but not both. No building shall have both a painted roof sign on a sloped roof and a roof sign that is structurally supported.	Multiple signs are permitted. See area requirements		One (1) double-faced sign per lot. May contain one individual panel or multiple panels. See Notes 24 & 25. A lot may contain either a roof or freestanding sign but not both.	
	Maximum Area (SF)	Counted towards maximum permitted wall sign area Where there is a canopy on site, the permitted sign area shall not exceed 2 SF per length of canopy on each side viewable from different street.	12 SF See Note 3	Counted towards maximum permitted wall sign area.	16 SF See Notes 7 & 8	May be double-sided provided each side faces and is viewable from a different public street. Signs consisting of roof signs painted on a sloped roof shall be counted towards permitted wall sign area. Roof signs with channel letters shall be permitted same area as wall signs. For all other roof signs, the maximum permitted sign area shall not exceed 0.5 times the maximum permitted wall sign allowance. See Notes 17 & 18 which apply to roof signs as well.	In BL, Downtown/ Blackstone Canal Overlay districts: 25 SF or 1.5 SF per linear foot of primary building unit length whichever is greater. In BG, ML, MP, IP, IN, A districts: 25 SF or 2 SF per linear foot of primary building unit length whichever is greater. Additional wall sign area is permitted for buildings with particular characteristics. See Notes 16, 17, 18 for applicability.	50% of window area (including glass doors) may be covered by temporary or permanent window signs. See Note 20.	24 SF for residential uses except as noted in Note 2: Nonresidential uses: 1 tenant – 64 SF 2 tenants – 80 SF 3 tenants – 100 SF 4+ tenants – 140 SF	48 SF for residential uses except as noted in Note 2: Nonresidential uses: 1 tenant – 80 SF 2 tenants – 100 SF 3 tenants – 120 SF 4+ tenants – 160 SF

	Minimum Setback / Length	Awnings that extend over the public sidewalk shall obtain applicable License Commission approval.	N/A	Shall not extend more than five (5) ft from the wall on which the sign is placed. Signs that extend over the public sidewalk shall obtain applicable License Commission approval. Shall provide six (6) inch minimum air space between wall and building. See Note 6 and 9.	The height of a roof sign on a flat roof shall not exceed 33% of the building height. Roof signs shall not project beyond the building face and the length shall not be greater than 80% of the total length of the building where the sign faces. See Note 10	The length of each wall sign shall not exceed 80% of the length of each individual tenant's building unit length.	Shall be located on the inside of the window only.	Five (5) ft from any lot line except where a lot with a freestanding sign abuts a residential district or public park on any lot line, in which case said sign shall be no closer than ten (10) ft to said abutting lot line. For freestanding pole signs, setback shall be measured from the pole. See Note 24
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Permanent Accessory Sign Table – Table 4.3.1 (continued)

Signs Attached to a Building

Freestanding Signs

Zoning District BL, BG, ML, MG, IP, IN, A (Continued)	Sign Type → Requirements↓	Awning Canopy	Building Directory	Marquee	Projecting	Roof	Wall	Window	Pole	Monument
	Maximum Height	N/A		No part of a marquee shall project more than five (5) ft above the roof or parapet line.	Shall not extend above roofline or parapet. Provide a minimum of eight (8) ft of clearance above sidewalk and 14 ft above driveway, alley, or other right-of-way except as set forth in Note 5.	The maximum height of a roof sign above a flat roof shall not exceed 33% of the building height.	No wall sign or portion of a wall sign may project above the wall, eave line, or top of a parapet excepted as noted in Note 14.	N/A	12 ft for signs associated with residential uses. See Note 2. 20 ft for all nonresidential uses with 1-2 tenants 25 ft for all nonresidential uses with 3+ tenants	
	Digital Display Permitted? See Note 28	N		N in A district SP in IN district Y in all other districts		N	N in A district SP in IN district Y in all other districts		N in A district SP in IN district Y in all other districts	
	Motion Permitted	N				N				

Notes to Table 4.3.1

Table 4.3.1 is further modified by **Section-6(K)**, below, Sign Overlay Districts.

Accessory sign dimensional requirements may be increased or modified by grant of a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals pursuant to **Section-6(J)**, below.

General Notes

Note 1: For the purposes of this subsection, specially permitted uses shall include uses that have obtained a special permit to expand, alter or change a privileged nonconforming use as set forth in Article XVI.

Note 2: Sign type permitted for all uses with the exception of buildings whose primary and sole use is a single, two, three family dwelling, single-family semi-detached or single-family attached dwelling. Buildings that contain nonresidential uses in addition to residential uses (mixed use building) are excluded from this exception. All home occupations are permitted only wall and window signs.

Note 3: Building directory sign area shall not be counted towards maximum permitted wall sign area.

Projecting Signs

Note 4: The sign category "Projecting signs" includes projecting banners that are displayed lengthwise where the longer side of the sign is vertical and attached with two or more permanent brackets, one at the top and one at the bottom of the banner and suspending projecting signs. (See, **Section-6(C)**, above, - Definitions)

Note 5: No projecting sign or portion of a projecting sign may project above the wall, eave line, or top of a parapet wall except in nonresidential zoning districts where said projecting sign is located on the side of a building where the distance between the top of a window and top of the wall of the building is less than three (3) feet, in which case said projecting sign may extend a maximum of three (3) feet above the roofline. In all other cases, projecting signs may only project above the roofline by grant of a Special Permit.

Note 6: Suspended projecting signs shall not extend beyond any part of the building overhang.

Note 7: Projecting Sign Bonus Area: For single-story buildings, where a projecting sign is located on a lot with no permanent freestanding signs and where the total combined area of all permanent wall signs is 50% or less than what would otherwise be permitted, the maximum projecting sign area is 36 SF.

Note 8: Projecting Sign Bonus Area: For multi-story buildings an additional 0.5 SF of projecting sign area may be added to the base projecting sign area allowance for each linear foot of building height.

Note 9: Projecting signs shall not be located closer than fifteen (15) feet from adjacent projecting sign(s) except for projecting banner signs or suspended projecting signs of the same tenant. The length of suspended projecting sign(s) shall not exceed 80% of the building unit length for each tenant if they are parallel to the building wall and shall not extend beyond the building overhang if perpendicular to the building wall.

Roof Signs

Note 10: No roof sign shall be located in such a way as to prevent free passage from one part of the roof to another and shall be located in a plane substantially parallel to the building wall. Roof signs consisting solely of channel letters may project the entire length of the roof but not beyond the building walls.

Note 11: Roof signs shall not consist of internally illuminated cabinets, except for roof signs that consist of individual channel letters which may be internally illuminated.

Note 12: With the exception of roof signs consisting of channel letters, the supporting structure of a roof sign shall be completely enclosed except for vertical poles. No "A" frame structures, guy wires, open framework or similar structure shall be visible from any street, alley or adjacent property.

Wall Signs

Note 13: Home Based Occupation Wall Sign Area: Permitted home-based occupations shall be limited to one (1) wall sign not to exceed six (6) square feet in area.

Note 14: Wall Sign Projection: No wall sign or portion of a wall sign may project above the wall, eave line, or top of a parapet wall except where wall sign is located on the side of a building where the distance between the top of a window and top of the wall of the building is less than three (3) feet, in which case said wall sign may extend a maximum of three (3) feet above the roof line. Wall signs that are permitted to extend above the roof line shall not have frames or bracing systems visible from a public street.

Note 15: Murals: For the purposes of this ordinance, murals are a noncommercial picture or decoration, typically painted, which is for artistic, cultural or societal purposes. (See **Section-6(C)**, above, - Definitions). However, a mural shall be considered a sign if it is related by language, logo, or pictorial depiction to the advertisement of any product or service or the identification of any business. Murals shall be considered wall signs and shall comply with all requirements for wall signs.

Note 16: Wall Sign Area for Secondary Building Unit Lengths: Maximum wall sign area for secondary building unit lengths (see **Section-6(D)(3)**, above - Measurement Standards) shall be equal to 0.5 times the area that would otherwise be permitted for primary building lengths. If the lot on which the building is located contains no permanent roof or freestanding signs, the permitted wall sign area for secondary building lengths shall be the same as permitted by the formula used for primary building lengths.

Note 17: Setback Bonus Area: In residential districts, when a building is set back more than 200' from the street the sign is facing, the maximum permitted sign area shall be 48 SF. In all zoning districts except residential zoning districts, where a building is set back 200 feet or more from an abutting street, the maximum permitted wall sign area for primary building lengths may be increased as follows. For every ten (10) linear feet that the building is set back over 200 feet, the permitted wall sign area may be 1.01 times the allowance set forth in the table above to a maximum of 2.0 times the permitted wall sign area for primary building lengths.

Note 18: Height Bonus Area: For buildings with four (4) or more stories or buildings that exceed 50' in height, additional wall signage area shall be permitted as follows: 1.5 square feet of wall sign area per each linear foot of height of the building. Said bonus area may be aggregated with standard wall sign area or may be used for a separate wall sign.

Window Signs

Note 19: Merchandise shall not be considered signage.

Note 20: The maximum permitted area of temporary and permanent window signs, combined, per floor and per primary and secondary building lengths shall not exceed 50% per story and per building length. This provision shall not be construed to limit window sign area to 50% of each individual window pane.

Freestanding Signs

Note 21: Signs on Vehicles: Signs attached to or painted on a parked motor vehicle or other parked wheeled conveyance, where such vehicle or wheeled conveyance is not used in the regular transport operations of the business owner and is used merely, mainly or primarily as a support structure for the sign shall be subject to the dimensional requirements for freestanding pole signs.

Note 22: Freestanding Menu Board Signs: The maximum permitted sign area, height of sign, and location of freestanding menu board signs shall be considered in conjunction with the special permit considerations for new drive through uses but in no case shall the area exceed 24 SF.

Note 23: A freestanding sign shall be directly supported by poles or foundation supports in or upon the ground. No external cross braces, guy wires, trusses or similar bracing systems shall be used to support freestanding signs.

Note 24: No portion of a freestanding sign shall be in or project over a public right-of-way except for off-street parking signs which may project up to two (2) feet over the street upon obtaining all applicable approvals including License Commission approval.

Note 25: Lots with Frontage on Two or More Streets: Except for residential districts, if a lot has frontage on two (2) or more streets, one freestanding sign is permitted on each side of the lot visible from a different public street. Except for residential districts, where a lot has 300 feet of frontage or greater, one additional freestanding sign shall be permitted. Said signs shall be at least 150' apart. Alternatively, in place of an additional freestanding sign, the total permitted freestanding sign area may be aggregated into one larger sign at the election of the property owner/business provided that the area of any single freestanding sign does not exceed 1.5 times what is otherwise permitted for freestanding signs in that zoning district for the number of tenants on the property.

Note 26: Pole signs shall not have more than two (2) poles as part of its supporting structure.

Note 27: Freestanding sign area and height may be increased 1.25 times the otherwise permitted height and area by grant of a special permit.

Signs with Digital Display

Note 28: The digital display portion of an accessory sign shall be limited to 33% of the permitted sign area. If the sign area is less than what is otherwise permitted by right, the maximum permitted digital display shall still be 33% of that which is allowed by right for the sign type and zoning district. Accessory signs with digital display are limited to one per lot and shall be set back a minimum of 100' from other accessory digital display signs facing the same travel of direction and shall be set back a minimum of 75' from residential districts. Per **Section-6(G)(1)**, below, one sign with digital display is permitted per lot.

Construction Signs and Signs on Fences/ Walls

Note 29: Construction signs shall be considered permanent signs and shall be permitted to be located on fences surrounding construction sites for which a proposed building or use on the site have obtained a building permit and provided that the sign is installed in accordance with **Sectin-6(E)(5(g)(ii))**, below. Permanent signs on fences and walls are permitted and shall count towards the base permitted wall sign area. Signs recognizing sponsors providing contributions of money, goods or services may be erected and maintained on athletic fields at schools and amateur athletic association fields (whether located on public or private property). Signs shall be erected so as to face and be oriented towards the interior of the field and attached to the perimeter fencing of the field's boundaries, but shall not extend above the top of the fencing.

3. Accessory Instructional Signs

a) Placement and Operational Regulations.

- i) Instructional or wayfinding signs shall be permitted in addition to all other signs when they are of such size and location, as determined by the Building Commissioner, that serve an instructional or wayfinding purpose and based on their size, location and intended purpose will not constitute additional signage or advertising.
- ii) Instructional signs shall be permitted without limitation as to number or size and may include the name of the business and logos, provided they are clearly subordinate to wayfinding characteristics.
- iii) Instructional signs shall not be illuminated in residential zoning districts.
- iv) Instructional signs shall not contain motion or digital display.

b) Off-Street Parking Signs

i) Placement and Operational Regulations

- aa) Off-street parking signs designating the entrance or exit of an off-street parking area are permitted in all zoning districts for all uses except where the primary and sole use of the property is a single, two, three-family dwelling, single-family attached or single-family detached dwelling. Buildings that contain non-residential uses in addition to residential uses permitted in the zoning district are excluded from this exception.
- bb) Said signs shall not be illuminated in residential zoning districts.
- cc) Said signs shall not contain motion or digital displays except where off-street parking signs are the primary use of the property. See, **Section-6(E)(4)(b)(i)(dd)**, below.
- dd) Where off-street parking is the primary use of the property and is permitted in Table 4.1 as an allowed use, permitted sign area for the off-street parking use shall be the same as the sign area permitted for freestanding signs for a single-tenant in that zoning district.

ii) Dimensional Requirements

aa) Off street parking signs may extend over the street a maximum of two (2) feet and shall obtain applicable License Commission approval.

bb) Off-street parking signs shall not exceed eight (8) square feet in area and shall not exceed ten (10) feet in height.

4. Temporary Signs

a) Placement and Operational Regulations for all Temporary Signs:

i) Temporary signs shall not contain digital display nor shall they be internally illuminated. Temporary motion signs are not allowed, except that a temporary freestanding sign may have an element of motion, or be internally illuminated in nonresidential zoning districts, provided a sign permit has been obtained, the sign meets the applicable setback requirements set forth in **Section-6(E)(4)(b)(ii)** and the sign is turned off at the close of business, if applicable.

ii) For the purposes of this **Section-6**, temporary banner signs, except for banner signs as described in **Section-6(E)(2)(d)**, that contain permanent brackets and are displayed lengthwise, shall be considered temporary wall signs.

iii) No lot shall contain both a temporary freestanding sign anchored in the ground and a portable sign.

iv) Temporary signs shall be displayed in conjunction with seasonal and brief activities.

b) Temporary signs are permitted as set forth in **Table 4.3.2**. The Notes to **Table 4.3.2**, provided at the end thereof, modify the permitted temporary signs as shown on **Table 4.3.2** and have the same force for regulating uses in each zoning district that **Table 4.3.2** has.

c) Temporary Noncommercial Signs

i) Notwithstanding the provisions of **Section-6(E)(4)(b)**, above, and **Table 4.3.2**, in RS, RL, and RG zoning districts, with the exception of non-residential uses, multi-family uses, and those uses listed under **Table 4.1**. –General Uses, any number of temporary noncommercial wall signs shall be permitted per lot, provided that

the total area of all temporary noncommercial signs on the lot is not greater than sixty-four (64) square feet and no single temporary noncommercial sign face is greater than thirty-two (32) square feet.

- ii) Notwithstanding the provisions of **Section-6(E)(4)(b)**, above, and **Table 4.3.2**, RS, RL and RG zoning districts, non-residential uses, multi-family uses and those uses listed under **Table 4.1** – General Uses, any number of temporary noncommercial freestanding and temporary noncommercial wall signs shall be permitted, provided that the total area of temporary freestanding signs is not greater than sixty-four (64) square feet and the total area of temporary noncommercial wall signs is not greater than sixty-four (64) square feet or two percent (2%) of the building face, whichever is greater.
 - iii) Notwithstanding the provisions of **Section-6(E)(4)(b)**, above, and **Table 4.3.2**, in BO, BL, BG, ML, MG, IP, IN, and A zoning districts, any number of temporary noncommercial freestanding signs shall be permitted per building unit length, provided that the total area of temporary noncommercial freestanding signs is not greater than sixty-four (64) square feet and that the total area of temporary noncommercial wall signs is not greater than sixty-four (64) feet or two percent (2%) of the building face, whichever is greater.
 - iv) In all zoning districts, the permitted allowances for temporary noncommercial freestanding and wall signs are in addition to the permitted allowances for temporary signs set forth in **Table 4.3.2**.
- d. Temporary Signs with Commercial Messages are permitted in accordance with **Table 4.3.2** below.

Table 4.3.2 - Temporary Accessory Signs with Commercial Speech

	Temporary Signs Attached to a Building			Temporary Freestanding Signs			
	Sign Type → Requirements↓	Roof	Wall / Banner – See Note 1	Window	Freestanding anchored in ground	Portable See Note 5	Sidewalk
Allowed?	N	Y					N
Maximum Number	N/A	One (1) per lot.	Multiple. See area requirement.	Maximum one (1) freestanding sign per lot. See Note 6			
Maximum Area (SF)		24 SF for general, non-residential, specially permitted, multi-family uses or 2% of building face whichever is greater. See Note 3.	50% of window area (including glass doors) for combined temporary and permanent signs. See Note 7	12 SF			
		Six (6) SF for all other uses in residential zoning districts					
Maximum Setback		N/A		Shall not extend over the sidewalk or street	5 ft	Minimum four (4) ft of clearance on sidewalk	
Maximum Height		Cannot extend over roofline	N/A	6 ft	6 ft	4 ft	
Other		N/A					Sidewalk signs shall be permitted only during operating hours of the establishment.

Zoning District
RS, RL, RG

Zoning District
BO, BL, BG, ML, MG, A, IN, IP

Table 4.3.2 (continued) Sign Type → Requirements↓	Temporary Signs Attached to a Building			Temporary Freestanding Signs			
	Roof	Wall / Banner – See Note 1	Window	Freestanding anchored in ground	Portable See Note 5 & 6	Sidewalk See Note 5 & 6	Freestanding with motion – See Note 2
Allowed?	N for BO Y for BL, BG ML, MG. See Note 4	Y					
Maximum Number	One(1) per lot	Two (2) per building unit length.	Multiple. See area requirement.	Maximum one (1) freestanding sign per each side of a lot visible from a different public street. See Note 5.			
Maximum Area (SF)	Equal to the permitted permanent roof sign area.	Forty (40) SF total or 2% of building face whichever is greater.	Maximum 50% of window area (including glass doors) may be covered by temporary & permanent signs See Note 7.	24 SF	12 SF	24 SF	
Minimum Setback	N/A			Shall not extend over the sidewalk or street	5 ft	Four (4) ft of clearance on sidewalk	Front yard setback for the district or ten (10) ft whichever is greater.
Maximum Height	Equal to permitted permanent roof sign height.	Cannot extend over roofline		6 ft	4 ft	6 ft	
Other	Limited to no more than 90 days of display within a 365 day period. Required to obtain a permit from Inspectional Services. No lot shall contain both a permanent & temporary roof sign.	N/A	Shall be located on the inside of the window.	N/A	Motion signs shall be permitted to have motion only during operating hours of the establishment. Sidewalk signs shall be permitted only during operating hours of the establishment.		

Notes to Table 4.3.2

Note 1. For the purposes of this article, temporary banner signs except for banner signs described in **Section-6(E)(2)(d)** which contain permanent brackets and are displayed lengthwise shall be considered temporary wall signs.

Note 2. Temporary freestanding motion signs are temporary freestanding signs that contain an element of movement such as spinning, rotating, flapping, etc.

Note 3. Includes privileged nonconforming uses that have obtained a Special Permit.

Note 4. Temporary roof signs are prohibited in Union Station, Blackstone River Parkway, and Blackstone Canal Sign Overlay Districts.

Note 5. In all zoning districts for all uses that are permitted to have a portable sign, lots are limited to one portable sign. In no case shall lots contain both a freestanding sign and a portable sign. Portable signs may include manual changeable copy but shall not contain electronic, flashing, moving parts or digital display. Portable signs shall not consist of non-rigid signs taped or attached by other means to the portable sign structure. The text copy, symbols shall be an integral part of the portable sign.

Note 6. Temporary portable and sidewalk signs are permitted for all uses in all districts as set forth in the table above with the exception of buildings whose primary and sole use is a single, two, three family dwelling, single family semi-detached or single family attached dwelling. Said uses are permitted one freestanding temporary sign anchored in the ground. Buildings that contain permitted general uses, and multi-family dwelling uses or nonresidential uses in addition to residential uses (mixed use building) are excluded from this exception. This exclusion does not apply to home occupations.

Note 7. The combined area of temporary and permanent window signs on each of the building floor and along each primary and secondary building length shall not exceed 50% of the available window area per story and per building length. This provision shall not be construed to limit sign area to 50% of each individual window panel.

e) Other Temporary Signs

- i) Temporary Signs on Canopies. For businesses with canopies, including but not limited to automobile refueling stations, the supporting structure of the canopy may contain a maximum of two (2) wall signs totaling no more than 24 square feet of temporary signage located on the canopy post(s). If temporary signage is placed on the canopy structure, temporary wall signs shall not be placed on the walls of the property's other building(s).

5. Pedestrian Friendly Sign Area Bonus

Installation, Operational, & Dimensional Regulations:

In addition to the accessory signs permitted elsewhere in this **Section-6(E)**, additional accessory sign area is permitted in BO, BL, BG, ML, MG and IN zoning districts as follows:

- a) Privately maintained planter box. One additional temporary or permanent accessory sign shall be allowed to be attached to the surface of one side of a privately maintained planter box located on site so long as the planter box is at a minimum three (3') wide and three (3') feet tall and is maintained with live plantings at least six (6) months a year and provided that the planter box is not required as a condition of approval of an SPGA in association with relief from full compliance with landscaping per the ordinance.
- b) Privately Maintained Street Furniture. One additional temporary or permanent accessory sign shall be allowed to be attached on privately provided and maintained street furniture, such as benches. Private benches or other street furniture shall be located on private property unless necessary approvals from the License Commission and/or the Department of Public Works and Parks have been obtained, as applicable.
- c) Privately Maintained Bicycle Racks. One additional temporary or permanent accessory sign shall be allowed to be located on bicycle racks that provide bicycle parking for three or more bicycles; said sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet. Said signs may be double sided.
- d) Pedestrian friendly sign bonus area may be reduced or eliminated upon determination by the Building Commissioner that the planter boxes, street furniture or bicycle racks are not being properly maintained.

- e) The total sign length for pedestrian friendly bonus signs shall not exceed 80% of the supporting structure; i.e. the length of one side of the planter box or length of the street bench.
- f) Signs permitted under this section shall not consist of non-rigid signs taped or attached by other means to the structure. The text, copy or symbols shall be an integral part of the sign structure; in this case, the street furniture, planter box, bicycle rack, etc.

6. Non-accessory Signs

This section pertains to non-accessory signs including non-accessory instructional and billboard signs. All non-accessory signs shall comply with M.G.L Chapter 93, Sections 29-33 and amendments thereto.

Non-Accessory Instructional Signs and Non-Accessory Billboard Signs shall be erected in accordance with the requirements set forth in **Table 4.3.3**, below.

Non-Accessory Sign Table – Table 4.3.3						
Sign Type →	Requirements↓	Non-Accessory Freestanding Billboard	Non-Accessory Wall Billboard	Non-Accessory Roof Billboard	Non-Accessory Instructional See Note 11	
Zoning District RG, RL, RS, BO, A	Allowed?	N				
Zoning District BL & IN	Allowed?	N			Special Permit	
	Maximum Number	N/A			1 per lot. No lot shall contain both a non-accessory instructional sign and a non-accessory billboard sign.	
	Maximum Area (SF)				8 SF	
	Maximum Height (ft)				10 ft	
	Minimum Spacing (ft)				Ten (10) ft from any residential lot line. Five (5) ft to any other lot line. Fifteen (15) ft from other accessory signs including accessory instructional signs	
	Maximum Length (ft)				N/A	
	Digital Display Motion Allowed?				N	
	Other				May be a separate wall or freestanding sign or may be attached to an existing accessory freestanding sign.	

Non-Accessory Sign Table – Table 4.3.3 (continued)

Sign Type →	Requirements↓	Non-Accessory Freestanding Billboard	Non-Accessory Wall Billboard	Non-Accessory Roof Billboard	Non-Accessory Instructional See Note 11
Zoning District BG, MG, IP	Allowed?	Special Permit			
	Maximum Number	1 per lot No lot shall contain both a non-accessory instructional sign and a non-accessory billboard sign.			One (1) per lot. No lot shall contain both a non-accessory instructional sign and a non-accessory billboard sign.
	Maximum Area (SF)	825 SF per side along I-290, I-190, and Rte 146. 300 SF along all other highways. See Note 1	25 SF or 2.0 SF per linear foot of primary building unit length whichever is greater with sign area bonus for buildings setback more than 200' from street and buildings 50' or higher. See Notes 3 and 4	0.5 times the permitted accessory wall sign area.	8 SF
	Maximum Height (ft)	See Note 2	See Note 2. Cannot extend above roof line or beyond the sides of the walls to which it is attached.	Cannot exceed allowed height for accessory roof signs	10 ft
	Minimum Spacing (ft)	300 ft minimum between non-accessory billboard signs when measured along the same side of a street with the exception of spacing between non-accessory billboard sign structures which contain digital display facing the same traveled way which shall provide a minimum of 1,000 ft. Spacing between a static non-accessory billboard and a non-accessory billboard with digital display shall be a minimum of 300 ft when measured along the same side of the street.			Ten (10) ft from any residential lot line. Five (5) ft to any other lot line. Fifteen (15) ft from other accessory signs including accessory instructional signs
	Maximum Length (ft)	Sixty (60) ft. and cannot exceed 80% of total building length.			
	Digital Display / Motion	Y- Digital Display (entire area) N – Motion			N
	Other	See Notes 5-10			May be a separate wall or freestanding sign or may be attached to an existing accessory freestanding sign.

Non-Accessory Sign Table – Table 4.3.3 (continued)

Sign Type →	Requirements↓	Non-Accessory Freestanding Billboard	Non-Accessory Wall Billboard	Non-Accessory Roof Billboard	Non-Accessory Instructional See Note 11
Union Station/Downtown, Blackstone Canal and Blackstone River Parkway Sign Overlay Districts	Allowed?	N	Special Permit	N	Special Permit
	Maximum Number	N/a	One (1) per lot No lot shall contain both a non-accessory instructional sign and a non-accessory billboard sign (freestanding, wall, or roof).	NA:	One (1) per lot. No lot shall contain both a non-accessory instructional sign and a non-accessory billboard sign.
	Maximum Area (SF)		25 SF or 2.0 SF per linear foot of primary building unit length whichever is greater with sign area bonus for buildings setback more than 200' from street and buildings 50' or higher. See Notes 3-4.		8 SF
	Maximum Height		See Note 2. Cannot extend above roof line or beyond sides of the wall to which it is attached.		10 ft
	Minimum spacing		Between static non-accessory billboard signs when measured along the same side of a street - minimum of 300 feet. Between non-accessory billboard sign structures which contain digital display -minimum of 1,000 feet on both sides of the street.		10 ft from any residential lot line. 5 ft to any other lot line. 15 ft from other accessory signs including accessory instructional signs
	Maximum Length		60 ft. and cannot exceed 80% of total building length.		N/A
	Digital Display / Motion		Y- Digital Display (entire area) N – Motion		Ten (10) ft from any residential lot line. Five (5) ft to any other lot line. Fifteen (15) ft from other accessory signs
	Other		See Notes 5-0		May be a separate wall sign or freestanding sign or may be attached to an existing freestanding sign.

Notes to Table 4.3.3

Note 1. In determining whether a non-accessory freestanding billboard sign is located along I-290, I-190 and Rt. 146, said sign shall be located no further than 660 feet from the edge of the right of way of at least one (1) of the above referenced highways.

Note 2. The maximum height for non-accessory freestanding and roof billboards shall be determined by the Special Permit Granting Authority pursuant to the special permit criteria set forth in **Section-6(J)**, below.

Note 3. Where a building is set back 200 feet or more from an abutting street, the maximum permitted non-accessory wall sign area may be increased as follows. For every ten (10) linear feet that the building is set back over 200 feet, the permitted non-accessory wall sign area may be 1.01 times the allowance set forth in the table above to a maximum of 2.0 times the permitted wall sign area for primary building lengths.

Note 4. Height Bonus Area: For buildings with four (4) or more stories or buildings that exceed 50' in height, additional non-accessory wall signage area shall be permitted as follows: 1.5 square feet of wall sign area per each linear foot of height of the building.

Note 5. The supporting structure of a non-accessory roof sign shall be completely enclosed except for vertical poles. No "A" frame structures, guy wires, open framework or similar structure shall be visible from a street, alley or adjacent property.

Note 6. All dimensions shall include border, trim, cutouts or extensions, but shall exclude base, apron, supports and structural members and temporary cutouts.

Note 7. Back-to-back and "V-type" signs shall be considered as one structure and the maximum area, length, and height shall be allowed for each side, provided however, that for "V-type" signs the width of the angle between the signs shall be limited such that both sides cannot be viewed from one travel direction.

Note 8. Non-accessory billboard signs and/or their supporting sign structures shall not be located in such a manner as to obscure or otherwise interfere with the effectiveness of an official traffic sign, signal or device, or obstruct or interfere with the driver's visibility of approaching, merging or intersecting traffic.

Note 9. Where non-accessory roof and wall billboard signs are located on a building; the building itself shall be considered the sign structure.

Note 10. No non-accessory billboard or portion thereof may turn on an axis, rotate, revolve or otherwise physically move.

Note 11. Non-Accessory Instructional Signs are permitted as set forth in the table above for the purpose of providing wayfinding information along commercial corridors to identify the location of off-site businesses.

F. Illumination

1. All lighting used to illuminate signs shall be installed so that direct or reflected rays from such lighting shall not cause a public nuisance to adjacent lots or abutting streets. No open spark or flame may be used for lighting purposes.
2. Illuminated signs in BL and BO zoning districts shall be turned off at the close of posted business hours.
3. Internal illumination of signs is permitted for all permanent signs with the exception of the following signs which shall be externally illuminated only:
 - a) Signs in residential districts for all uses, including privileged nonconforming uses and uses permitted by special permit.
 - b) Roof Signs, except for roof signs that consist of individual channel letters which may be internally illuminated.
4. Temporary signs shall not be internally illuminated with the exception of temporary freestanding signs in nonresidential districts provided they meet the requirements set forth in **Section-6(E)(4)(b)**, **Table 4.3.2**, above.

G. Digital Display

Any accessory or non-accessory sign utilizing digital display technology, in whole or in part, in addition to the specific dimensional and location requirements set forth with respect to sign type shall meet the following requirements:

1. Placement and Operational Regulations:
 - a) All digital display signs are prohibited in residential, BO, and Airport zoning districts. In all other districts, one digital display sign is allowed per lot.
 - b) In BL, BG, MG, ML, and IP zoning districts, digital display signs may be located on wall signs, marquee signs, freestanding pole or monument signs, projecting and permanent window signs but are prohibited on, portable, temporary, awning, canopy, projecting banner, suspended signs and roof signs.
 - c) In IN zoning districts, digital display signs are permitted by grant of a special permit from the Special Permit Granting Authority only. See, **Section-6(J)**, below – Special Permit Approval Criteria.

- d) Duration. In all districts the full digital image or any portion thereof shall have a minimum duration of 10 seconds. No portion of the image may scroll, twirl, change color, imitate movement in any manner, or meet the characteristics of a flashing sign.
- e) Transition. In all districts where the digital display sign or any portion thereof changes, the change sequence shall be accomplished by means of nearly instantaneous re-pixelization (less than one second). Messages shall not fade in or fade out, or have the appearance of dissolving.
- f) Brightness and Dimming Control.
 - i) The maximum luminance level for all accessory and non-accessory signs with digital display shall not exceed 350 (cd/m²) nits from sunset to sunrise and 6,000 (cd/m²) nits from sunrise to sunset.
 - ii) Luminance levels shall be set using the following measurement methodology:
 - aa) Allow the digital sign to “burn in” for at least 100 hours.
 - bb) Use a luminance meter with a field of view of 2 degrees.
 - cc) Ensure no ambient background area of additional light source beyond the billboard is included in the field of view of the luminance meter.
 - dd) Take the measurement with the operator standing at the edge of the traveled way, in a direct line, and at a longitudinal distance from the digital sign determined by a formula shown as: $x=28a$ meters where x is the longitudinal distance from the digital sign and a is the short dimension of the sign.
 - ee) If the longer axis of the sign is greater than 1.5 times the shorter axis, take a series of measurements and average the results to determine a mean luminance for the entire sign face.
 - ff) Measurements shall be made while the sign display is white to present the maximum luminance values.
 - gg) Because LEDS have higher light output at lower temperatures, measurements should be made within predefined and consistent ambient temperature ranges.

- iii) In addition to the maximum luminance levels set forth in **Section-6(G)(1)(f)(i)**, above, all displays should adjust brightness intensity according to ambient light conditions to ensure optimum legibility.
- iv) No digital display shall be erected without an automatic light sensing device such as a light detector or photocell by which the sign's brightness can be dimmed when ambient light conditions darken.
- v) Legally preexisting nonconforming signs with digital display shall be operated in conformance with the operational standards set forth in the ordinance except that in the absence of a light sensing device, sign owners shall ensure signs are dimmed to meet brightness standards or shall be turned off from sunset to sunrise.
- g) Sequential messages are prohibited. All electronic display frames shall be complete messages and shall not require or induce drivers to watch a sign for several seconds, including signs with visual stories, signs carrying messages that are delivered through a sequence of displays or flashing messages.
- h) Upon malfunction, the sign's digital message display shall become static immediately.
- i) Fluctuating or Flashing Illumination. No portion of any sign may fluctuate in light intensity or use intermittent, strobing or moving light or light that changes in intensity in sudden transitory bursts, streams, zooms, twinkles, sparkles or in any manner creates the illusion of movement.
- j) Signs with digital display shall contain no video display as defined in **Section-6(C)**, above.
- k) Signs with digital display where the digital display portion of the sign is twelve (12) square feet in area or less are exempt from operational standards for signs with digital displays with the exception of **Section-6(G)(1)(f)**, above, relative to brightness and dimming control.

2. Dimensional Requirements

- a) Area. Digital display signs, other than non-accessory billboard signs, shall have a maximum digital display area of 33% of the permitted sign area for that sign. If the total proposed sign area is less than that which is otherwise permitted by right, the proposed digital display shall still be permitted to be 33% of that which is allowed by right for the sign type and zoning district.

- b) Setbacks. The edges of all digital display signs shall be located a minimum of 75 feet from abutting residential dwellings. When located within 150 feet of a residential use in a residential zone, all digital display portions of the sign shall be oriented so that no portion of the sign is visible from an existing primary residential structure on that lot.
- c) Spacing. Accessory digital display signs shall be separated from other digital display signs by at least 100 feet. Spacing between non-accessory signs with digital display is regulated by **Section-6(E)(6)**, **Table 4.3.3**, above.
- d) Special Permit criteria for reviewing Digital Display Signs – see, **Section-6(J)(7)**, below.

H. Motion

Any accessory or non-accessory sign utilizing motion, in whole or in part, in addition to the specific dimensional and location requirements set forth with respect to sign type, shall meet the following requirements:

1. Motion signs are prohibited in residential, BO, IN, and Airport zoning districts. In all other districts, one motion sign is allowed per lot.
2. In BL, BG, MG, ML, and IP zoning districts, motion signs may be located on accessory, permanent freestanding pole or monument signs and projecting signs but are prohibited on all other signs with the exception of temporary freestanding signs that meet setback requirements set forth in **Section-6(E)(5)(c)(iii)**, above.
3. Motion signs that malfunction shall cease operating immediately.
4. Motion signs shall contain no digital display.
5. In BL zoning districts, motion signs shall be turned off at the close of business hours.

I. Comprehensive Sign Plan Approval

In order to encourage the thoughtful integration of signage into major commercial and mixed use development site planning, to provide flexibility for such sites with respect to signs, and to streamline sign permitting, applicants with proposed sites that contain combined building footprints of 50,000 square feet or greater in commercial or mixed use development may submit a Special Permit application to the Planning Board for Comprehensive Sign Plan Approval.

1. Application Requirements

The Comprehensive Sign Plan may be submitted in conjunction with Definitive Site Plan review and shall, at a minimum, include a site plan drawn to scale, with a north arrow, prepared by a registered engineer showing the following:

- a) Boundary lines of the lot, frontage and other dimensional setbacks of proposed structures on site.
- b) Proposed contours of the site.
- c) All vehicular and pedestrian ways throughout the site including parking areas as well as the surrounding street network.
- d) Location of all existing and proposed signs including proposed instructional signs and existing or proposed non-accessory signs.
- e) Dimensions of all signs including sign area, height, spacing, clearance, and setbacks as applicable.
- f) Sign table showing total area of all existing and proposed signage on site.
- g) Existing and proposed landscaping in relation to proposed structures and signage.
- h.) Existing and proposed illumination for signs including whether illumination will be external or internal.
- i) Existing and proposed signs with digital display including proposed dimensions of digital display and equipment brochures showing ability to comply with operational standards of the ordinance.

The applicant shall also provide photo simulations of existing and proposed signs superimposed on buildings to show what will be viewable any street within 300' if installed.

2. Application Review

In reviewing the proposed Comprehensive Sign Plan, the Planning Board shall not impose more restrictive requirements than otherwise permitted by this Ordinance but may permit an additional number of signs or allow for the increase in sign height or sign area for one or more signs. Such relief shall be granted based on the characteristics of the site, proposed structures, surrounding street and pedestrian network, existing and

proposed landscaping, lighting and other design elements. The Planning Board may require, in its discretion, removal of existing privileged nonconforming signs.

3. Special Permit Approval Review Criteria. See **Sections-6(J)(2) and 6(J)(8)**, below.
4. Modifications to Approved Comprehensive Plan.

Once a Comprehensive Sign Plan has been approved, subsequent applications for specific signs shall be reviewed administratively by the Building Commissioner when the proposed sign is in compliance with the approved Comprehensive Sign Plan. Any modifications that propose an increase in the number, size, height, a change in location of a freestanding sign closer to residential lots or the addition of digital display that was not initially approved by the SPGA under the comprehensive sign plan shall require an amendment to the special permit. Minor modifications including a reduction in size, number or height or change in text, colors or materials shall not require an amendment to the special permit.

J. Special Permit Approval Criteria

1. The following signs shall require a special permit:
 - a) Accessory Signs for which dimensional relief is sought
 - b) Permanent Accessory Freestanding Pole and Roof Signs with Channel Letters in Union Station Sign Overlay District
 - c) Permanent Accessory Freestanding Pole Roof Signs in Downtown/Blackstone Canal Overlay District
 - d) Digital Display Signs in IN Zoning Districts
 - e) Comprehensive Sign Plan Approval
 - f) Non-Accessory Instructional Signs
 - g) Non-Accessory Billboard Signs (Freestanding, Roof and Wall)

After notice, public hearing and due consideration of the evidence submitted, including the reports and recommendations of city departments, the SPGA, in addition to the special permit criteria under **Article II**, may grant a special permit as set forth above, provided it additionally makes the appropriate findings set forth below.

2. General Special Permit Approval Criteria for Accessory Signs:
 - a) All other permanent and temporary accessory and non-accessory signage on site are in compliance with zoning requirements including provisions that govern the removal of abandoned signs.
 - b) The proposed sign in addition to other signs on site does not create unnecessary visual clutter or constitute signage overload for the lot or surrounding neighborhood and street.
 - c) The proposed sign does not substantially block visibility of signs on abutting lots.
 - d) The proposed sign does not substantially block solar access of abutting residential dwelling windows.
 - e) The proposed illumination is appropriate to the site and is appropriately located with respect to the surrounding neighborhood.
 - f) Whether any proposed digital display is appropriate with respect to the proposed sign scale and location.
 - g) The proposed sign does not derogate from the purposes and intent of this **Section-6** and this Ordinance.
3. Special Permit Approval Criteria to Modify Dimensional Requirements of Accessory Signs:

In addition to the criteria set forth in **Article II** and **Section-6(J)(2)**, above, the SPGA shall consider whether:

- a) The proposed sign is substantially in compliance with other dimensional requirements applicable to the proposed sign.
- b) The area, height, and setbacks of the proposed sign are of an appropriate scale within the context of the site including the building and the topography of the site and in relation to surrounding buildings, lots and streets.
- c) Signs attached to a building: The proposed sign support structure is appropriate to the design and scale of the building including proposed brackets and proposed spacing between the sign and the wall. It is preferred that supporting sign structure does not extend above the roofline or parapet or if the proposed sign structure does extend above the roofline or parapet that it is adequately screened from abutting lots and any abutting residential dwellings in the same building.

- d) **Projecting Signs:** For proposed projecting signs that exceed maximum permitted area, the available wall space, shape and location of the building and lot with respect to abutting buildings and streets substantially limits opportunities for wall signage or freestanding signs visible to passing pedestrians or vehicles.
 - e) **Freestanding Signs.** For proposed freestanding signs that the height, size, scale, illumination, digital display, location, and any proposed landscaping around the sign are appropriate to the site, surrounding neighborhood, street, and lot.
4. Special Permit Approval Criteria for Permanent Accessory Freestanding Pole and Roof Signs with Channel Letters in Union Station Sign Overlay District (See, **Section-6(K)**, below):

In addition to the special permit criteria set forth in **Article II** and **Section-6(J)(2)**, above, the SPGA shall consider whether:

- a) The proposed freestanding or roof accessory sign will substantially obscure the view of Union Station from any location within the street (includes sidewalks).
 - b) The proposed sign does not detract from the purpose of the Union Station Sign Overlay District.
5. Special Permit Approval Criteria for Permanent Freestanding Pole Signs in the Downtown/Blackstone Canal Sign Overlay District (See, **Section-6(K)**, below):

In addition to the special permit criteria set forth in **Article II** and **Section-6(J)(2)**, above, the SPGA shall consider whether:

- a) The available wall space, shape, and location of the building for which the sign is intended substantially limits opportunities for signage attached to the building.
- b) The freestanding sign has sufficient landscaping.
- c) The freestanding sign negatively impacts access to or number of off-street parking spaces provided on site.
- d) The proposed sign does not detract from the purpose of the Downtown/Blackstone Sign Overlay District.

6. Special Permit Approval Criteria for Permanent Accessory Roof Signs with Channel Letters in the Downtown/Blackstone Canal Sign Overlay District (See, **Section-6(K)**, below):

In addition to the special permit criteria set forth in **Article II** and **Section-6(J)(2)**, above, the SPGA shall consider whether:

- a) The proposed roof signs with channel letters are appropriate to the site and character of the site and surrounding neighborhood.
- b) The proposed size, height, and illumination are appropriate for to the site and surrounding neighborhood.
- c) Adequacy, arrangement, location and appearance of all proposed permanent signs.
- d) The proposed sign does not detract from the purpose of the Downtown/Blackstone Sign Overlay District.

7. Special Permit Approval Criteria for Digital Display Signs in IN Zoning Districts.

In addition to the special permit criteria set forth in **Article II** and **Section-6(J)(2)**, above, the Special Permit Granting Authority shall consider:

- a) The impact to vehicular safety with respect to the sign's location in relationship to areas of increased driving complexity, including but not limited to: road curves, merge or lane drops, presences of official signage and/or intersections.
- b) The impact and appropriateness of the proposed sign with respect to the overall campus and any abutting historic structures.

8. Special Permit Approval Criteria for Comprehensive Sign Approval

In addition to the special permit criteria set forth in **Article II** and **Section-6(J)(2)**, above, the SPGA shall consider the following:

- a) Whether number, size, height, illumination, and proposed digital display are appropriate to the site and surrounding neighborhood.
- b) Whether proposed instructional signs are well-placed and suitable in number and size.

- c) Adequacy, arrangement, location and appearance of all proposed permanent signs.
- d) Protection of adjacent or neighboring lots against glare, unsightliness
- e) Relationship between signs and proposed landscaping on site.
- f) Whether requested relief for one or more proposed signs with respect to number, dimensional requirements, or digital display is necessary because of site specific conditions and allows for more creative, well-placed signage that directs vehicles and pedestrians safely to the site and throughout site.

9. Special Permit Approval Criteria for Non-Accessory Instructional Signs

In addition to the special permit criteria set forth in **Article II** and **Section-6(J)(2)**, above, the SPGA shall consider whether:

- a) The available wall space, shape, and location of the building or site for which the sign is intended to provide additional directional signage substantially limits opportunities for on-site wall signage or freestanding signs visible to passing pedestrians or vehicles and/or would contribute unnecessarily to sign clutter.
- b) The proposed non-accessory instructional sign shall enhance safe driving by providing appropriate wayfinding information at a key decision making point.
- c) The area and height of the proposed non-accessory instructional sign is of an appropriate scale in relation to the building and site, other signage on site, and surrounding buildings, lots, and street.

10. Special Permit Approval Criteria for Non-Accessory Billboard Signs

- a) In addition to the special permit criteria set forth in **Article II** and **Section-6(J)(2)**, above, for static and digital display non-accessory signs, the SPGA shall consider the impact to vehicular safety with respect to the sign's location in relationship to areas of increased driving complexity, including but not limited to: road curves, merge or lane drops, presence of official signage and/or intersections.
- b) Whether the height of the proposed non-accessory freestanding sign, including its sign face and supporting sign structure is no more than is necessary to ensure it is viewable by its primary audience along a given roadway.

11. Special Permit Approval Criteria for Reconstructed, Modified and/or Relocated Non-Accessory Billboard Signs
 - a) In addition to the special permit criteria set forth in **Section-6(J)(10)**, above, the SPGA shall consider:
 - i) When located in a sign overlay district, the non-accessory billboard sign as reconstructed, modified, and/or relocated shall not detract from the purposes and intent of said overlay district as set forth in **Section-6(K)**, below.
 - ii) A relocated non-accessory billboard sign shall not cause, or substantially increase existing spacing or setback nonconformities.

K. Sign Overlay Districts

1. Purpose/Establishment of the Blackstone River Parkway Sign Overlay District
 - a) To preserve the National Heritage Corridor, restore the landscape and prevent incompatible uses within this parkway area. The Blackstone River Parkway Sign Overlay District is hereby established and shown on the Official Zoning Map.
2. Purpose/Establishment of the Downtown/Blackstone Canal Sign Overlay District
 - a) To protect the sense of place and character of the Downtown/Blackstone Canal District, including its dense network of urban streets and high concentration of historically and architecturally significant sites. The Downtown/Blackstone Canal Sign Overlay District is hereby established and shown on the Official Zoning Map.
3. Purpose/Establishment of the Union Station Sign Overlay District
 - a) To protect the sense of place and orientation that is provided by preserving the visibility, from multiple vantage points throughout the city, of this iconic historically and architecturally significant building. The Union Station Sign Overlay District is hereby established and shown on the Official Zoning Map.
4. For the purposes of protecting view corridors in the City of Worcester from visual clutter, non-accessory roof or freestanding billboard signs shall not be permitted within the Union Station Sign Overlay District, the Downtown/Blackstone Canal Sign Overlay District or the Blackstone River Parkway Sign Overlay District.

5. Accessory, permanent freestanding pole and accessory permanent roof signs with channel letters are permitted by grant of a special permit in the Union Station Sign Overlay District and the Downtown/Blackstone Canal Sign Overlay District. (See special permit criteria in **Section-6(J)**, above.)

L. Pre-existing, Nonconforming Signs

1. General Provisions

- a) Nonconforming signs shall be maintained in good condition.
- b) A nonconforming sign shall not be altered, modified or reconstructed except,
 - i) When such alteration, modification or reconstruction would bring the sign into conformance with these regulations; or
 - ii) When the alteration, modification or reconstruction relates to the replacement of a sign panel, individual letters and logos with the same area, or repainting a sign face, and does not involve changes to the structure, framing, erection or relocation of the sign unless such changes conform to **Section-6(L)(1)(b)(i)**, above.
 - iii) When the alteration, modification or reconstruction is sought to repair a nonconforming non-accessory billboard sign damaged or destroyed by an act of nature or accidental casualty, provided the alteration, modification or reconstruction is completed within one (1) year after the damage occurs. The sign, as a result of the alteration, modification or reconstruction, shall not be more nonconforming. Provided, however, the right to alter, modify, or reconstruct under the provisions of this paragraph shall be subject to the issuance of a special permit from the SPGA pursuant to the criteria set forth in **Section-6(J)(11)**, above.
 - iv) When the alteration, modification or reconstruction is to effect the relocation of a nonconforming non-accessory billboard sign to a nearby location on the same lot. Any such alteration, modification, or reconstruction shall not increase the dimensional area of the sign and shall be subject to the issuance of a special permit from the SPGA pursuant to criteria set forth in **Section-6(J)(11)**, above.
- c) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary elsewhere in this Ordinance, the following signs must come into compliance with the requirements of **Article IV, Section-6** by the following dates.

- i) Temporary Signs – August 1, 2011;
- ii) Temporary Window Signs – August 1, 2011 and
- iii) Operational standards of signs with digital display – November 1, 2011.

2. Conversions from Static to Digital Display for Nonconforming Signs

- a) If a digital sign is authorized in the underlying district, either as of right or by special permit, a pre-existing, nonconforming accessory static sign may be converted to a digital sign, by right or upon receipt of a special permit, whichever is applicable. As converted, the sign must comply with the dimensional, spacing and setback requirements of this ordinance and the provisions of **Section-6(G)(1)(d)-(k)**, above.
- b) If a digital sign is authorized in the underlying district, either as of right or by special permit, a pre-existing, nonconforming non-accessory static sign may be converted to a digital sign only upon grant of a special permit subject to the approval criteria set forth in **Article II, Section-6(2); Article IV, Section-6(J)(2) and (J)(6)**. Furthermore, as converted, the sign must comply with the dimensional, spacing and setback requirements of this ordinance and with the provisions of **Section-6(G)(1)(d)-(k)**, above. Structural and framing changes incidental to and necessary to the conversion of a sign from static to digital are permitted notwithstanding anything to the contrary above.

3. Nonconforming Instructional Signs

- a) All other pre-existing, permanent accessory or non-accessory instructional signs that are nonconforming as a result of this ordinance shall be removed upon verification that any of the following conditions have been met:
 - i) The object to which the instructional sign refers has been abandoned or is no longer sold or carried on, whether generally or at the particular premises.
 - ii) The instructional sign has not been repaired or maintained after written notice from the Building Commissioner in accordance with **Section-6(B)(4)**, above.

M. Substitution of Messages

A noncommercial message of any type may be substituted for any duly permitted or allowed commercial message or any duly permitted or allowed noncommercial message, provided the sign or sign structure is legally compliant with the terms of this Ordinance. Such substitution of message may be made without any additional approval or permitting. This provision prevails over any more specific provision to the contrary contained in this **Section-6**. The purpose of this provision is to prevent any inadvertent favoring of commercial speech over noncommercial speech, or favoring of any particular noncommercial message over any other noncommercial message. This provision does not create a right to increase the total amount of signage on a property, nor does it affect the requirement that a sign be properly permitted. This provision does not authorize the substitution of an offsite (non-accessory) commercial message in place of an onsite (accessory) commercial message.

2.. Article I, Section 2 of the Worcester Zoning Ordinance, adopted April 2, 1991, be and is hereby amended by deleting the following definitions in their entirety:

SIGN;
SIGN, ACCESSORY;
SIGN, AREA OF;
SIGN, AWING;
SIGN, BANNER;
SIGN, FREESTANDING;
SIGN, GROUND;
SIGN, ILLUMINATED;
SIGN, MOTION;
SIGN, MURAL;
SIGN, NOM-ACCESSORY;
SIGN, PORTABLE;
SIGN, PROJECTING;
SIGN, ROOF;
SIGN, TEMPORARY;
SIGN, WALL; and
SIGN, WINDOW.

**In City Council April 26, 2011
Passed to be ordained by a yea and nay vote of Nine Yeas and No Nays**

A Copy. Attest: David J. Rushford
David J. Rushford
City Clerk