FILE OF THE CITY CLERK

ADMINISTRATION ORDINANCE NO. 11 - 2017

ADMINISTRATION BILL NO. 15 - 2017

INTRODUCED – JUNE 27, 2017

ADOPTED BY COUNCIL – JULY 11, 2017

AN ORDINANCE OF THE LANCASTER CITY COUNCIL ADOPTING A NEW CITY OF LANCASTER SIGN ORDINANCE, CHAPTER 255 OF THE CITY CODE, ESTABLISHING REGULATIONS TO ERECT, ALTER, MAINTAIN OR USE SIGNS INTENDED TO BRING ATTENTION OF ANY SUBJECT MATTER TO THE PUBLIC; REQUIRING SIGN PERMITS OR OTHER APPROVALS FOR CERTAIN SIGNS AS DEFINED AND REGULATED IN THIS CHAPTER; PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SIGN COMMISSION AND DESIGNATION OF A SIGN ADMINISTRATOR; REGULATING SIGN DIMENSIONS, LOCATIONS, ILLUMINATION, MAINTENANCE, AND SAFETY; PERMITTING TEMPORARY SIGNS; REQUIRING DESIGN REVIEW IN CERTAIN DISTRICTS; SETTING FORTH CRITERIA FOR MODIFICATION OF REGULATIONS; PROVIDING FOR VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES; AND PROVIDING FOR THE REPEAL OF CONFLICTING ORDINANCES, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ARTICLE IX, SIGNS, OF CHAPTER 300 ZONING, OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER.

WHEREAS, the 2007 City of Lancaster Comprehensive Plan, *Growing Together*, contains goals, objectives and strategies that promote the protection public health, safety and welfare, and that promote strengthening the City of Lancaster through protection of its historic quality and improved signage; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lancaster Strategic Plan lists under the key focus area of Business Development a strategy to streamline and make less cumbersome the City's approval and permitting process; and

WHEREAS, appropriate sign regulations will enhance the City's economic environment by promoting and regulating signage that enables business and institutions to bring attention to their locations in a manner that is compatible with immediate surroundings; and

WHEREAS, removing sign regulations from the City of Lancaster Zoning Ordinance and establishing a new Chapter 255 in the City Code will promote efficiency and flexibility in the administration and enforcement of City of Lancaster sign regulations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Lancaster as follows:

Section 1. The attached Chapter 255 – Signs, which shall be known and may be cited as "The City of Lancaster Sign Ordinance," shall serve as the City's official sign regulations, replacing Article IX Signs, of Chapter 300, Zoning, of the City Code.

Section 2. It is in the intention of the City Council and it is hereby enacted that the provisions of this Ordinance shall be included in the Code of the City of Lancaster and that section numbering, lettering, or headings shall be modified as required for codification.

Section 3. In the event any provision, section, sentence, clause or part of this Ordinance shall be held to be invalid, illegal or unconstitutional, such invalidity shall not affect or impair any remaining provision, section, sentence, clause or part of this Ordinance, it being the intent of the City that such remainder shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 4. This Ordinance becomes effective within the time provided by law.

Section 5. All ordinances or part of ordinances in conflict with or inconsistent with this Ordinance or amendment thereto are hereby repealed to the extent of inconsistency to give this Ordinance full force and effect.

DULY ORDAINED AND ENACTED this 11th day of July, 2017, by the Council of the City of Lancaster, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in lawful session duly assembled.

ATTEST:

Bernard W. Harris Jr., City Clerk

CITY OF LANCASTER

BY: J. Richard Gray, Mayor

CHAPTER 255 – SIGNS

Article I: General Provisions

§ 255-1 Title.
§ 255-2 Authority.
§ 255-3 Purpose.
§ 255-4 Application.
§ 255-5 Fees.
§ 255-6 Relationship to other laws and regulations.
§ 255-7 Repealer.

§ 255-1 Title.

This chapter shall be known and may be cited as "The City of Lancaster Sign Ordinance."

§ 255-2 Authority.

The City is authorized to adopt this Ordinance pursuant to applicable Pennsylvania law including, but not limited to, 11 Pa.C.S. Section 12435.

§ 255-3 Purpose.

The Council of the City of Lancaster finds and declares that the provisions of this chapter are enacted for the following reasons:

A. To protect public health, safety and general welfare.

B. To protect and enhance Lancaster City's physical attractiveness and historic quality.

C. To enhance Lancaster's economic environment by promoting and regulating signage that enables businesses and institutions to bring adequate public attention to their locations in a manner that is compatible with immediate surroundings.

D. To avoid and reduce sign or advertising distractions and obstructions that may contribute to traffic accidents, create hazards for pedestrians, and impede the travel path for persons with disabilities.

E. To prevent visual blight caused by excessive signage cluttering building façades and public rights-of-way.

§ 255-4 Application.

Within the City of Lancaster signs shall only be erected, altered, maintained or used in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, and shall require sign permits in accordance with the fee schedule established by resolution of City Council. In addition to the sign permit, which addresses compliance with this chapter, a separate building permit, with an additional fee requirement, may be required for electrical signs, for free-standing, projecting, wall, and roof signs, and for other signs of a structural or combustible nature. Both a sign permit as per this

chapter and a building permit shall require the satisfactory completion of an application form as provided by the Sign Administrator and the Codes Compliance Administrator. Permits must be obtained by the installer of the sign or by the property owner/occupant prior to the installation of the sign.

§ 255-5 Fees.

Sign permit fees shall be paid by the applicant at the time of filing a sign permit application with the Sign Administrator. Application fees for sign permits as per this chapter shall be based upon a schedule established by City Council resolution.

§ 255-6 Relationship to other laws and regulations.

In their interpretation and application, the provisions of this chapter shall be minimum requirements. Wherever the requirements of this chapter are at variance with the requirements of any other lawfully adopted rules, regulations, ordinances, deed restrictions or covenants, the most restrictive, or that imposing the highest standards, shall govern.

§ 255-7 Repealer.

Article IX, Signs, of Chapter 300, Zoning, of the City Code is hereby specifically repealed, as well as all ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith; provided that sign applications currently filed with the Zoning Officer or for which permits have been issued prior to adoption of this Chapter 255 shall be processed and reviewed under the Zoning Ordinance sign regulations in place at the time of sign application. However, the repeal shall in no manner be construed as a waiver, release or relinquishment of the right to initiate, pursue or prosecute, as the case may be, any proceeding at law or in equity, including criminal or civil proceedings, pertaining to any act done which would have constituted a violation of the ordinances or parts of ordinances repealed hereby, or their applicable predecessor ordinances, and all provisions of said repealed ordinances shall remain in full effect and force, and not repealed hereby, as they pertain to said acts.

Chapter 255: SIGNS

Article II: Definitions

§ 255-8 Interpretation.
§ 255-9 Terms defined.

§ 255-8 Interpretation.

A. The language set forth in this chapter shall be interpreted as follows:

(1) Words used or defined in one tense or form shall include other tenses or derivative forms.

(2) Words in the singular number shall include the plural number, and words in the plural number shall include the singular number.

(3) The masculine gender shall include the feminine and neuter. The feminine gender shall include the masculine and neuter. The neuter gender shall include the masculine and feminine.

(4) The word "person" includes individuals, firms, partnerships, joint ventures, trusts, trustees, estates, corporations, associations and any other similar entities.

(5) The word "building" includes the word "structure" and shall be construed as if followed by the words "or a part thereof."

(6) The word "lot" includes the words "plot," "tract," and "parcel."

(8) The words "shall," "must" and "will" are mandatory in nature and establish an obligation or duty to comply with the particular provision. The words "may" and "should" are permissive.

(9) The time within which any act required by this chapter is to be performed shall be computed by excluding the first day and including the last day. The word "day" shall mean a calendar day, unless otherwise indicated.

(10) Any words not defined in this chapter shall be construed as defined in standard reference dictionary usage or other applicable City of Lancaster Ordinance.

§ 255-9 Terms defined.

DISTRICT – A zoning district as described and delineated by the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Lancaster.

SIGN – Any device, structure or material for visual communication that is used to bring the subject or information to the attention of the public. Signs include but are not limited to the following: lettering, pictorial matter, logos, trademarks, borders or other symbols which are applied to a building, located elsewhere on the premises, and/or located in the public right-of-way; signs affixed to windows or glass doors or otherwise internally mounted such that they are

obviously intended to be seen and understood by pedestrian or vehicular traffic outside the building; off-site signs which may be freestanding or affixed to a structure and provide information about a business, organization, activity, or place located elsewhere or to promote a particular ideology; banners, flags, streamers, pennants, spinners, reflectors, ribbons, tinsel, and similar materials, and inflatable objects. Signs do not include the following: architectural features which may be identified with a particular business; signs within a building which are obviously intended to be seen primarily from within the building; display of merchandise either behind store windows or outdoors; and flags and insignia of governments or government agencies or of any civic, educational, or religious organization.

SIGN, ALTERED – Any sign which is physically and/or visually changed, except that signs designed for periodic changes in advertising, such as billboards, business name channel signs or group identity signs, may change and shall not be considered altered signs at the time of such change. A sign permit shall be required for an altered sign.

SIGN ADMINISTRATOR – The municipal employee assigned the responsibility of administering and enforcing this chapter, including but not limited issuance of permits for signs that are in compliance with this chapter and any accompanying rules and regulations, providing administrative support to the Sign Commission, issuing notices of violation for signs installed improperly or without permits, and participating in enforcement proceedings as required.

SIGN, CHANGEABLE MESSAGE – A sign designed with tracks or channels that hold individual letters or symbols or a sign with a writable surface.

SIGN COMMISSION – The three-member review body appointed by the Mayor with approval of City Council and assigned the responsibility of providing design review comments to the Sign Administrator and for serving as the appeals board for requests for modifications from the requirements of this chapter.

SIGN, ELECTRONIC MESSAGE – A sign capable of displaying words, symbols, numbers or images that can be electronically or mechanically changed by remote or automatic means. Illuminated signs which indicate the time, temperature, date or other similar information shall be considered electronic message signs.

SIGN, FLASHING OR INTERMITTENT – Any sign which has a preprogrammed, repetitious cycle with interruption of illumination from one or more sources and varying in intensity from zero (off) to 100% (on) and which has a period of illumination (on phase) that is either the same as, less than or greater than the period of darkness (off phase).

SIGN, ILLUMINATED – A sign which has characters, letters, figures, designs or outlines illuminated by electric lighting or luminous tubes, which are stationary and constant in intensity, as part of the sign, or whose illumination is derived from an external source.

SIGN, ILLUSIONARY MOVEMENT – A sign exhibiting the illusion of movement by means of a preprogrammed repetitious sequential switching action in which illuminated elements of the sign are turned on or off to visually simulate the impression of motion characteristic of chasing, scrolling, running, blinking, oscillating, twinkling, scintillating, expanding or contracting light patterns.

SIGN, NONCONFORMING – Any sign existing at the time of adoption of this chapter or amendment thereto that does not conform in placement, location, area, illumination, type, height or other regulation as set forth in this chapter or accompanying rules and regulations.
SIGN STRUCTURE – Permitted sign structures are defined as follows:

A. ARCADE – A sign which is attached to the underside of the soffit or ceiling of a covered passageway or sidewalk.

B. AWNING – A sign which is painted on, attached to, or otherwise incorporated into the exterior surface of an awning or canopy or other fabric, plastic, or structural protective cover over a door, entrance, window, or outdoor service area and contained entirely within the limits of the awning surface. A marquee is not an awning.

C. BANNER – Any sign of lightweight fabric or similar material that is attached at one or more edges to a pole or a building. . National flags, state or municipal flags, or the official flag of any institution shall not be considered banners; however, flags with advertising, announcements or other messages shall be regulated as banners.

D. BILLBOARD – A large sign constructed with panel board or electronic messaging and with a support frame as an independent structure containing commercial or other advertising regarding commercial activity that takes place off the premises.

E. FREESTANDING – A sign which possesses its own foundation or structure and is not attached to a building or structure. For the purpose of this chapter, a freestanding sign does not include a billboard, monument or sidewalk sign.

F. MARQUEE – A sign which is painted on, attached to, or otherwise incorporated into the exterior surface of a marquee and contained entirely within the limits of the marquee surface.

G. MONUMENT – A structure having its own foundation, independent of other structures or buildings, designed to display one or more signs.

H. PROJECTING – A sign which is attached to the wall of a building and which extends from the face of such wall.

I. ROOF – A sign which is erected wholly on or above the roof or above the parapet wall of a building or structure.

I. SIDEWALK – A sign which is placed on the sidewalk area of the public right-of-way and is not attached to any structure, utility pole or tree.

J. WALL – A sign which is attached to the wall of a building, with the face being in a plane parallel to such wall and not extending more than 18 inches from the face of such wall, or a sign painted on a wall. A sign painted on or otherwise affixed to a window or door shall be considered a wall sign. For the purpose of this chapter, "wall sign" does not include billboards.

SIGN, TYPE – Permitted sign types are defined as follows:

A. BUSINESS SIGN – A sign which directs attention to a business, profession, apartment building or complex, product, service, activity or entertainment sold or offered upon the premises where such sign is located, excluding home occupations.

B. COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING SIGN – A sign used for the display of printed or painted advertising matter which directs attention to a business, product, service, activity or entertainment not necessarily conducted, sold or offered upon the premises where such sign is located.

C. DIRECTIONAL SIGN – A sign or device intended to direct or point toward a place, or object, such as one that indicates the way to a place or object.

D. NONCOMMERCIAL SIGN – A sign containing a noncommercial message constituting a form of personal, political, religious, social or other expression without limit of content, as protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

E PUBLIC SIGN – A sign erected by a public, semipublic, or private agency or entity to promote general health, safety or welfare or to provide information of public interest.

F. TEMPORARY SIGN – An advertising or announcement sign intended to inform the general public of special activities, such as sales days, cultural or entertainment events or charitable affairs.

WRITTEN NOTICE – A notification in writing that is mailed by first class mail specifying a particular action that must occur or an action to be taken to correct a violation.

CHAPTER 255: SIGNS

Article III: General sign regulations

§ 255-10 Computation of sign size.
§ 255-11 Computation of total sign area.
§ 255-12 Dimensions and locations.
§ 255-13 Illuminated signs.
§ 255-14 Maintenance and/or removal.
§ 255-15 Public safety and welfare.
§ 255-16 Temporary signs.

§ 255-10 Computation of sign size.

The maximum size permitted for individual signs is set forth in Article IV District Regulations. The area of an individual sign shall be the area of the smallest rectangle, triangle, or circle that will encompass all elements of the sign, such as letters, figures, symbols, designs, distinguishing colors, or other display, exclusive of supporting structures, unless such supporting structure is illuminated or is in the form of a symbol or contains advertising copy, in which case the supporting structure shall be included in the size computation. In the case of signs that have no definable edges, such as raised letters attached to a building façade or letters and/or symbols painted on a display window, the sign size shall be that area within a single continuous rectangular, triangular, or circular perimeter enclosing the extreme limits of the actual message or copy area and any artwork or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the surface upon which it is placed or painted. For double-faced signs with the identical message on both sides, only one display face shall be measured in computing sign area, provided the sign faces are within one foot of each other, except that sidewalk signs with back-to-back sign faces connected at the apex shall have sign faces within 30 inches of each other at the sign base. Double-faced signs with different messages on either side or with faces more than one foot apart shall be considered as two signs.

§ 255-11 Computation of total sign area.

A lot or lot with structures may have a combination of sign structures and sign types, as defined herein in Article II Definitions. However, in no case shall the total area of all signs exceed the total permitted signage for the lot in accordance with Article IV District Regulations. For the purpose of total permitted sign area on a lot, temporary signs, noncommercial signs, and billboards shall not be counted in computing total square footage of signage.

§ 255-12 Dimensions and locations.

The following regulations and prohibitions shall apply to the various sign structures in all districts where they are permitted:

A. Arcade. The lowest portion of an arcade sign shall be not less than eight feet above the public right-of-way or pedestrian walkway..

B. Awning. The advertising copy of symbols on an awning sign may not exceed 50% of the area of the awning surface on which it is located.

C. Banner. A banner sign affixed to a building wall shall not exceed a height of 25 feet above grade and shall not be less than 8 feet above grade. If attached to a pole or other support structure affixed to a building wall, the support structure shall not project more than four feet from the wall to which it is attached. Banner signs attached to free-standing poles shall be regulated as free-standing signs. For temporary banner signs extending over the public right-of-way, see §255-15 Public Safety and Welfare.

D. Billboard. A billboard shall not exceed 300 square feet, except that a billboard oriented toward U.S. Routes 283 or 30 shall not exceed a maximum size of 672 square feet. A billboard shall not exceed 40 feet in height above the grade level of the street to which it is oriented, , shall not project into any public right-of-way, and shall not be less than 20 feet from any front lot line, not less than 10 feet from any secondary front lot line, not less than 12 feet from any side lot line and not less than 25 feet from any rear lot line. In addition, billboard structures shall contain no more than two sign faces which are parallel, back-to-back, and no more than four feet apart, shall be located no less than 400 linear feet from another billboard along one right-of-way, regardless of the side of the right-of-way and regardless of whether or not located on the same property or in the same district or municipality, and shall be no less than 100 feet from a residential district, except that in districts where permitted, a billboard oriented toward U.S. Route 30 or U.S. Route 283 may have two back-to-back sign faces at an angle not exceeding 45°. Billboards designed to change messages by mechanical or electronic means shall be permitted, provided the interval of change shall be no less than seven seconds. A billboard shall not have a flashing or animated moving electronic message. A billboard shall not be converted to have an electronic display if it is nonconforming in its location or sign area size. All other requirements pertaining to billboards shall apply.

E. Freestanding and monument. Freestanding and monument signs shall not be located within any sight triangle specified by other chapters of the City Code. A freestanding or monument sign shall not exceed 6 feet in height in residential districts and shall not project into any public right-of-way. A freestanding or monument sign shall be located not less than 5 feet from a side or rear lot line nor less than 3 feet from the front lot line. The height of a freestanding or monument sign in nonresidential districts may be increased based upon the following districts and the following distances of setback of the sign from the nearest street right-of-way line. Freestanding inflatable signs shall not be permitted within 20 feet of any public right-of-way.

Freestanding and Monument Sign Maximum Heights						
Setback from Street Right-of-Way Line (feet)	3 to 5	6	7	8	9	10
Maximum Total Height (feet) in C2, C3 or SM Districts	10	13	16	19	22	25
Maximum Total Height (feet) in Other Nonresidential Districts	10	13	16	16	16	16

Monument signs within the buildable area of a lot shall be no taller than 75% of the existing building façade excluding eves and roof areas. For sites with multiple buildings the sign height shall be based upon the average building height of all principal buildings within 75 feet of the proposed sign's location. In no case shall a monument sign exceed 35 feet in height.

F. Marquee. A permanent marquee sign may not exceed 50% of the area of the marquee surface on which it is located.

G. Projecting. A projecting sign shall not exceed a height of 25 feet above grade, shall not be less than eight feet above grade unless over or adjacent to an existing obstruction, shall not project more than four feet from the wall to which it is attached, shall not extend above the roof or parapet level more than three feet, and shall be mounted at right angles to the face of the building, except that a corner lot may have a sign with an angle of 45°.

H. Roof. A roof sign shall not exceed a height of 10 feet above the roof or parapet wall, and shall not project into any public right-of-way or beyond the building wall.

I. Sidewalk. A sidewalk sign shall be placed in front of the building where the business, product, or service being advertised is located and shall not be placed on any sidewalk not adjacent to the location of the advertised entity. The sign shall be placed within the area between 18 inches and 42 inches from the face of the curb, except that if steps or other building elements project into the sidewalk, a sidewalk sign may be placed in that area adjacent to the building, provided that the sign does not extend beyond the steps or other existing building projection. The sidewalk sign shall be placed in a manner that maintains an unobstructed 4-foot wide pedestrian path, unless a wider pedestrian path consistent with the City of Lancaster Sidewalk Ordinance is required by the City Engineer. Sidewalk signs near the curb shall not exceed 36 inches in height and 24 inches in width; sidewalk signs near the property line shall not exceed 60 inches in height and 42 inches in width. The distance between sidewalk signs shall be a minimum 10 feet. In no case shall a sidewalk sign be placed on a public sidewalk in such a manner so as to impede pedestrian travel or cause a hazard to persons with disabilities.

J. Wall. A wall sign shall not project more than 18 inches from the wall, shall not extend beyond any edge of the wall, including the top edge, and shall be parallel to the building wall. Wall signs comprised solely of individual letters affixed to the building wall may be twice the maximum sign size stipulated in Article IV District Regulations. Signs on display windows shall not exceed 50% of the total window area.

§ 255-13 Illuminated signs.

A. Flashing signs or signs with strobe effects shall be prohibited in all districts except that temporary detour or road construction signs may flash warning messages.

B. Signs with an electronically changing message shall be allowed in the CB, CB1, C2, C3, CM and SM Districts, provided the following requirements are met:

(1) The sign message does not change more than once every seven seconds or the message is readable in a scrolling fashion; and

(2) No such signs shall be erected within 50 feet of nor be visible from any property or building used in whole or in part for residential purposes if such sign would be likely to disturb the occupants therein.

C. Signs displaying only weather, time, and open or closed information shall not be restricted by this subsection.

D. The lighting of signs shall not create glare for motorists. Any spotlighting of signs shall be aimed and/or shielded to prevent the lighting element from being directly visible to motorists.

E. External lighting focused on a sign shall be permitted, provided that such lighting or fixture housing does not extend more than six feet beyond the sign structure to which it is attached and such illumination is directed upon the face of the sign.

F. Internally lit signs and awnings shall be permitted in nonresidential districts and shall be so shielded so as not to cast direct light onto any part of a property or building used for residential purposes. In residential districts, internally lit signs and awnings shall be permitted, provided that they are not illuminated after 11:00 p.m. or before 7:00 a.m. Except that in the City of Lancaster Historic District, as provided for in City Code Chapter 155, Article I. Historic District, no internally lit sign or awning shall be permitted. No internally illuminated sign shall be so large or bright so as to cause glare or impairment of vision of the driver of any motor vehicle or interfere with the driver's ability to see or read an official traffic sign, device or signal.

G. Neon lighting, tubing and string lights may be used on any permitted sign , except that in residential districts, signs with neon lighting, tubing or string lights shall be located within the interior of the building and shall not be illuminated after 11:00 p.m. or before 7:00 a.m. With the exception of the CB and CB1 Districts, no exterior lighting shall be permitted to outline buildings or structures or parts thereof through the use of exterior neon tubing, strings of lights or other means with the exception of customary holiday decorations, which may be installed 30 days prior to and removed not later than 21 days after the holiday.

H. Internally lit and neon lighting must be UL (Underwriters Laboratory) approved, constructed according to the National Electrical Code adopted by the City of Lancaster, and must be inspected by the City Electrical Inspector prior to being electrified.

§ 255-14 Maintenance and/or removal.

A. All signs, together with all structural apparatus and electrical equipment, shall be kept in safe and operable condition. All signs shall be maintained in a neat, clean and attractive condition, free of rot, missing or broken components or excessive rust. If a sign is damaged, any repair and maintenance must be completed within six months of the damage. In addition, the area around signs shall be maintained in a neat, clean and attractive condition. All signs which are not properly maintained shall be removed by the City if the owner fails to remove them after 30 days written notice.

B. Any sign or sign support structure which has become obsolete due to the discontinuance of a business, service, product or event which it advertises or identifies shall be removed or changed to a blank message within six months of the discontinuance of said business product, service or event.

C. Signs that do not conform to the size, height, or other regulations herein shall be brought into conformity if, for a period of at least six months, the message no longer applies to the activity on the premises.

D. Signs and supporting structures that do not conform to the requirements contained herein may continue to be displayed as long as there is compliance with the following limitations and conditions:

(1) There shall be no expansion or increase in the nonconformity;

(2) The property is being renovated or offered for sale or lease and the sign or sign structure is intended to be used by the new occupant;

(3) The sign was lawfully erected under a prior sign or zoning ordinance.

E. Removal of a sign with historical significance will not be required if the property owner obtains a written determination of the sign's historic significance from the City of Lancaster Historic Preservation Specialist.

F. Nonconforming billboards shall be permitted to continue to exist and shall be regulated in accordance with Chapter 300, Article IV, Nonconforming Lots, Uses and Structures of the City of Lancaster Zoning Ordinance as administered by the Sign Commission.

§ 255-15 Public safety and welfare.

A. No sign shall be placed so as to obstruct any window, door, stairway or other opening intended for ingress or egress or which would obstruct ventilation and/or light.

B. No sign, whether illuminated or not, shall be located in a manner which would confuse, interfere with or obstruct the vision or line of vision between a motorist and an official traffic sign or marking or traffic signal.

C. No sign shall violate the corner visibility provisions set forth in Article VII, § 300-24, of the City Zoning Ordinance.

D. No sidewalk sign shall block the flow of pedestrian traffic or create a hazard for persons with disabilities, nor shall a sign be placed at any bus stop, loading zone, or driveway or obstruct corner visibility for drivers. Furthermore, no sidewalk sign shall be fastened or attached in any manner to any tree, utility pole, parking meter, street sign or other structure.

E. No sign, visible from a public street, except a public sign, shall use the word "stop," "danger," or any other word, phrase, symbol, color, character or representation which could be interpreted by a motorist as being a public safety warning or traffic sign.

F. No revolving beam or beacon of light resembling any emergency vehicle or facility shall be permitted to be erected as part of any sign or window display.

G. In residential districts and in the CB and CB1 Districts, no moving sign or display, such as pennants, spinners, tinsel, signs with physically moving elements, or rotating panel signs, shall be permitted. Flags and banners shall be exempt from this provision.

H. No flashing, illusionary movement or other form of illuminated sign shall be programmed, illuminated or operated in a fashion that would distract or impair a motorist's ability to see or drive safely.

I. No flag or banner attached to a free-standing pole shall be placed within, on or upon any sidewalk right-of-way, with the exception of a governmental flag or banner, nor shall any flag or banner be attached to any tree, utility pole, sign post or other structure within the sidewalk right-of-way. An application for a banner spanning a street right-of-way shall first be submitted to the City Engineer for review and approval. The City Engineer shall determine the minimum height above grade and an appropriate length of time for display and may require that insurance and particular fastening methods are employed to secure the public safety.

§ 255-16 Temporary signs.

A. Temporary signs shall not be attached to a tree, fence, utility pole or other object not intended for the use as a sign facility unless authorized by the City Engineer or Bureau of Police, such as temporary no-parking or parade route signage, provided that such signage is attached with rope, string or twine, and that nails, tacks, staples or similar fastening methods shall not be used., All signage shall be removed upon completion of the activity or within 48 hours.

B. Temporary special advertising or business signs and temporary public signs, including, but not limited to, signs announcing to the general public any special events, such as commercial sales days, cultural or entertainment attractions, or charitable activities, shall be permitted to be displayed by any business or entity in any district for a single period not to exceed 30 calendar days. Temporary signs shall not be displayed for more than 90 days during one calendar year upon any lot.

C. No temporary special advertising or business sign shall exceed the maximum business sign size permitted in the district where it is located, nor shall the total area of such temporary signs on a lot exceed the maximum business sign area per lot. Temporary signs will not be included in the maximum business sign area calculation.

CHAPTER 255 SIGNS

Article IV: District Regulations

§ 255-17 Signs allowed in all districts without permits.
§ 255-18 Signs allowed in all districts with permits.
§ 255-19 Signs permitted in certain districts.
§ 255-20 Design review.
§ 255-21 Modification of district regulations.

§ 255-17 Signs allowed in all districts without permits.

A. Contractors' signs - Signs of contractors, architects, engineers, builders, mechanics or other artisans performing work on a property provided that the size of such sign shall not exceed 12 square feet, not more than one sign for each such contractor, architect, builder, mechanic or other artisan shall be erected on any one property, and that such signs shall be removed within 5 days after the completion of work. For projects containing more than 20,000 square feet of floor area and where four or more contractors or trades are involved, a single sign may be displayed advertising all participants up to a maximum of 64 square feet. If the larger, multiple listing sign is used, smaller individual signs shall be prohibited. If a building fronts on two or more streets, a project sign may be displayed on each frontage

B. Historic signs - Signs identifying historical points of interest, places, events, or people provided that the sign shall not exceed 12 square feet in area and shall be no closer than five feet from adjoining property lines. The size and location of any sign placed within the right-of-way of any public street or public alley shall require the approval of the City Engineer.

C. Identification signs for residential and related uses - Signs displaying the street number or name of the occupant of the premises, or signs identifying a home occupation, including a day care home, provided that the sign shall not exceed 2 square feet, except that a sign for a day care home shall not exceed 4 square feet.

D. Noncommercial signs – Signs containing noncommercial messages constituting a form of personal, political, religious, social or other expression and that are not advertising a product or service, provided that the sign has no internal illumination and the total area of all noncommercial signs on a single property shall not exceed 12 square feet.

E. Official signs - Official highway route number signs, street name signs, and other official directional and traffic signs may be erected and maintained in the interest of public safety or for traffic regulation.

F. Park and open space signs – Signs identifying public parks and recreation areas shall not exceed 75 square feet.

G. Real estate development and promotion signs - Signs advertising the sale, development or proposed development of real property by a builder, contractor, developer, or other persons interested in such sale or development, provided that the size of such sign shall not exceed 32 square feet, not more than one such sign shall be erected for each 500 feet of street frontage, and that such sign shall be removed within 20 days after the last

dwelling or other permitted use has been initially occupied. If a sign is advertising the development of more than 20,000 square feet of building floor area, the maximum sign area shall be 96 square feet along each street frontage.

H. Real estate "For Rent" and "For Sale" signs - Signs advertising the sale or rental of real property, or signs indicating that such property has been rented or sold, provided that the area of such sign shall not exceed 12 square feet, not more than one such sign shall be placed on any property held in single and separate ownership, and such signs shall be removed promptly within 20 days after the actual rental or sale of the property has been completed. If a sign is advertising the availability of more than 10,000 square feet of building floor area, the maximum sign area shall be increased to 50 square feet along each street frontage. Also, any existing lawful sign may be temporarily changed in message to advertise the availability of the property for sale or rental.

I. Temporary business or advertising signs - Temporary signs advertising grand openings, special sales and events, provided such signs do not exceed the maximum permitted sign size for the premises as stipulated in § 255-19, are installed on the premises in accordance with § 255-12 Dimensions and Location, and provided said signage is removed within 30 days of its placement or erection.

J. Temporary public signs - Temporary signs announcing a campaign, drive, or event of a civic, philanthropic, educational, religious or other organization, provided such sign shall not exceed the greater of 50 square feet in area or the maximum size business sign permitted in the district as stipulated in § 255-19 and shall be removed immediately upon the completion of the campaign, drive or event.

K. Trespassing and other similar signs - Trespassing signs or signs indicating the private nature of a road, driveway, or premises; and signs prohibiting or otherwise controlling soliciting, fishing or hunting upon a particular premise may be erected and maintained provided that the size of any such sign shall not exceed 4 square feet.

L. Vacant lot or open space signs - Total signage on vacant lots or open space shall not exceed in total square footage the lesser of 50 square feet or 1.5 times the lineal feet of the lot line on each lot frontage. Signs advertising the sale or lease of the lot shall be in accordance with § 255-17. H.

§ 255-18 Signs allowed in all districts with permits.

A. Identification signs for commercial uses – Signs identifying a permitted commercial use of the premises, provided that the total square footage of all signs, excluding temporary signs, shall not exceed the total permitted signage as per § 255-19.

B. Identification signs for churches, schools, and other institutions - Signs identifying a church, school, or other permitted institutional building or use, excluding hospitals, which are regulated by § 255-19.J. Signs Permitted in HC and DF Districts. The maximum total area of all signs oriented toward the primary front property line shall not exceed 1.5 square foot of signage for each linear foot of primary building frontage, provided that the maximum size of one sign shall not exceed 75 square feet. For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allocated an additional 75 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

C. Direction signs - Signs which are used for directing patrons, members, or clients to locations off the main traveled streets, provided that such sign shall indicate only the name and direction of a business, service or facility, shall not exceed 6 square feet, with the exception of the HC District, which shall have a maximum 20 square feet, and shall not be located within the lines of any public right-of-way without approval of the City Engineer.

§ 255-19 Signs permitted in certain districts.

A. Signs permitted in R1 and R2 Districts. In the R1 and R2 Districts, only those signs listed in § 255-17 and § 255-18 shall be permitted. Identifications signs for a permitted or nonconforming commercial use shall not exceed a total square footage of 20 square feet.

B. Signs permitted in all other districts. In addition to the signs listed in § 255-17 and § 255-18, all other districts shall be permitted to have business or commercial advertising signs as provided for below. For the purpose of calculating maximum sign area or sign size, all business signs and commercial advertising signs are included, provided that signs listed in § 255-17 and billboards shall not be included in these calculations. Total maximum sign area per business or commercial property will be determined by multiplying the number of square feet of signage permitted for each lineal foot of primary building frontage in each district times the width of the primary frontage of a building containing a principal use. Maximum sign size for wall signs comprised solely of individual letters affixed to the building wall may be twice the maximum sign size stipulated below. Maximum signage for outdoor commercial uses, such as self-service gasoline stations or motor vehicle sales, will be determined by applying the sign square footage-lineal foot of frontage ratio established for each zoning district to the total lineal feet of lot frontage.

C. Billboards. Billboards shall be permitted in the C3, CM, and SM Districts and regulated in accordance with § 255-12.C.

D. Signs Permitted in R3 District

(a) Type – Business signs

(b) Structure – Wall, projecting, free-standing, awning, sidewalk

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage – 0.75 square foot for each lineal foot of building frontage for single use or multi-use lots, not to exceed a total of 24 square feet.

(d) Maximum Sign Size – 24 square feet

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots – For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted an additional 24 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

E. Signs Permitted in R4 and RO Districts

(a) Type – Business signs

(b) Structure – Wall, projecting, free-standing, monument, awning, sidewalk

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage – 1.0 square foot for each lineal foot of building frontage for single use or multi-use lots, not to exceed a total of 40 square feet.

(d) Maximum Sign Size – 30 square feet

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots – For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted an additional 30 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

F. Signs Permitted in PO District

(a) Type –Business signs, commercial advertising signs.

(b) Structure –Wall, projecting, free-standing, monument, arcade, awning

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage – 1.0 square foot for each lineal foot of building frontage for single use lots; 1.5 square feet per lineal foot for multi-use lots.

(d) Maximum Sign Size –50 square feet

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots – For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted an additional 50 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

G. Signs Permitted in the MU, C1 and C2 Districts

(a) Type – Business signs, commercial advertising signs

(b) Structure – Wall, projecting, free-standing, monument, arcade, awning, marquee, roof, sidewalk

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage – 1.5 square foot for each lineal foot of building frontage for single use lots; 2.0 square feet per lineal foot for multi-use lots.

(d) Maximum Sign Size – 50 square feet

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots – For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted an additional 50 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

H. Signs Permitted in CB and CB1 Districts

(a) Type – Business signs

(b) Structure – Wall, projecting, free-standing, monument, awning, arcade, marquee, sidewalk

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage – 1.5 square feet for each lineal foot of building frontage for single use lots; 2.0 square feet per lineal foot for multi-use lots.

(d) Maximum Sign Size – 50 square feet

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots – For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted an additional 50 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

I. Signs Permitted in C3 District

(a) Type – Business sign, commercial advertising signs, billboards as per § 255-12.C.

(b) Structure – Wall, projecting, free-standing, monument, roof, awning, arcade, marquee

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage – 1.5 square feet for each lineal foot of building frontage for single use lots; 2.0 square feet per lineal foot for multi-use lots.

(d) Maximum Sign Size – 100 square feet if the building is less than 300 feet from the property line. For building greater than 300 feet from the property line, the maximum size shall be 200 square feet.

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots – For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted an additional 100 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

J. Signs Permitted in HC and DF Districts

(a) Type – Business signs

(b) Structure – Wall, projecting, free-standing, monument, arcade, awning, marquee

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage – 1.0 square feet for each lineal foot of building frontage

(d) Maximum Sign Size – 75 square feet

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots – For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted an additional 75 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

K. Signs Permitted in CM District

(a) Type – Business signs, commercial advertising signs, billboards as per § 255-12.C.

(b) Structure – Wall, projecting, free-standing, monument, awning, marquee, roof, sidewalk

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage - 1.0 square feet for each lineal foot of building frontage for single use lots; 1.5 square feet per lineal foot for multi-use lots.

(d) Maximum Sign Size – 75 square feet if the building is less than 300 feet from the property line. For a building greater than 300 feet from the property line, the maximum size shall be 150 square feet.

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots – For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted an additional 75 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

L. Signs Permitted in SM District

(a) Type – Business signs, commercial advertising signs, billboards as per § 255-12.C.

(b) Structure – Wall, projecting, free-standing, monument, awning, marquee, roof

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage – 1.5 square feet for each lineal foot of building frontage for single use lots; 2.0 square feet per lineal foot for multi-use lots.

(d) Maximum Sign Size – 150 square feet if the building is less than 300 feet from the property line. For a building greater than 300 feet from the property line, the maximum size shall be 300 square feet.

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots - For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted an additional 150 square feet of signage, provided that the additional signage is oriented toward the additional street.

M. Signs Permitted in the CO Campus Overlay District

(a) Type – Business

(b) Structure – Wall, projecting, free-standing, arcade, awning, marquee and roof

(c) Maximum Sign Area per Primary Building Frontage – 1.5 square feet for each lineal foot of building frontage for single use lots; 2.5 square feet per lineal foot for multi-use buildings.

(d) Maximum Sign Size – 75 square feet if visible from a public street. Wall signs comprised solely of individual letters affixed to the building wall may be twice the maximum size allowed in (c).

(e) Corner and Double Frontage Lots – For each additional street frontage, the property shall be allotted and additional 50 square feet of signage, provided that the signage is oriented toward the additional street.

(f) Campus Directional Signs – Signs intended to direct persons to campus facilities shall be free-standing and not exceed eight feet in height and not more than 20 square feet in area. No more than two directional signs shall be permitted per

building or location such as an athletic field. Directional signs shall be in addition to the maximum sign area as per (c).

(f) Campus Identification Signs – In addition to the permitted signage for buildings, the campus may have one free-standing sign at each public vehicular entrance and one for a single pedestrian entrance. Campus identification signs shall be limited to 80 square feet.

(g) Electronic Message Board or Illuminated Signs – One sign shall be permitted for each principal building provided the sign is located at least 100 feet from an adjacent residential district. When an electronic or internally illuminated sign is part of a campus identification sign, the total signage of the campus identification sign shall not exceed 80 square feet per sign side and the two faces shall be in compliance with § 255-10. Computation of individual sign size.

(h) Free-standing and Monument Signs – All free-standing signs shall meet the height and setback requirements of this chapter as well as any sight triangle requirement.

§ 255-20 Design review.

A. Historic District. No sign permit shall be issued for a sign located within the City of Lancaster Historic District prior to the review and comment of the Historical Architectural Board of Review (HARB) and issuance of a certificate of appropriateness by the Lancaster City Council.

B. CB and CB1 Districts. No sign permit shall be issued for a sign within the CB and CB1 Districts, excluding the Historic District, prior to the review and approval of the Sign Commission. The review by the Sign Commission shall not apply to signs allowed by § 255-17. No sign permit shall be issued for signs found to be unacceptable by the Sign Commission. Any appeal of the Sign Commission's decision shall be made to City Council.

§ 255-21 Modification of district regulations.

A. Sign Administrator – The Sign Administrator may grant modification requests for increases in the size of individual signs when the applicant illustrates that the larger sign is appropriate to the size of the building and/or its proximity to the public right-of-way as well as its context in the immediate neighborhood, provided that the increase does not exceed the maximum allowed size by more than 25 percent.

B. Sign Commission – The Sign Commission may grant modifications for the following when it determines that there is no detrimental impact on public health, safety and welfare and that the modification will have no negative impact on the building, lot, or immediate neighborhood:

(1) Requests that exceed the limitation for approval by the Sign Administrator;
(2) Requests that have been denied by the Sign Administrator;
(3) Requests to exceed the total allowed signage;
(4) Requests for modifications of regulations other than sign size.

C. Appeals – Except as provided in Section 255-20 B, any and all appeals from any decision of the Sign Commission may be taken in accordance with the Local Agency Law of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to the Court of Common Pleas of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.

Article V: Violations and Penalties

A. The Sign Administrator shall give written notice to any person violating any provision of this chapter, with such notice stating the corrective action to be taken and the deadline for compliance.

B. Failure of any person violating any provision of this chapter to comply with the written notice shall, upon conviction thereof in a summary proceeding, be fined not less than $100 nor more than $300 for each violation and, in default of any fine so imposed, shall be imprisoned for a period not to exceed 10 days for each violation. Any person submitting false information to the Sign Administrator for any purpose under this article shall, upon conviction thereof in a summary proceeding, be fined not less than $500 nor more than $1,000 for each violation and, in default of any fine so imposed, shall be imprisoned for a period not to exceed 10 days for each violation. Any sign contractor erecting a sign in violation of this Ordinance, shall, upon conviction thereof in a summary proceeding, be fined not less than $500 nor more than $1,000 for each violation and, in default of any fines so imposed, shall be imprisoned for a period not to exceed 10 days for each violation.