

**CITY OF RIVER ROUGE
ORDINANCE 97-412**

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CITY OF RIVER ROUGE AS TO CHAPTER 7 OF TITLE 7 OF THIS CODE. THIS ORDINANCE IS IN REFERENCE TO SIGN LIGHTING AFFECTING RESIDENTIAL AREA & ILLUMINATION.

A COMPLETE COPY OF THIS ORDINANCE CAN BE OBTAINED IN THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE UPON REQUEST.

**CHARLES E. MANLEY
CITY CLERK**

**ADOPTED: JULY 1, 1997
PUBLISHED: JULY 17, 1997**

ORDINANCE NO. 00-412-1

CITY OF RIVER ROUGE WAYNE COUNTY, MICHIGAN

AN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE AND CONTROL SIGNS IN THE CITY OF RIVER ROUGE, TO DESIGNATE VIOLATIONS OF THIS ORDINANCE TO BE MUNICIPAL CIVIL INFRACTIONS, TO PROVIDE FOR CIVIL FINES AND SANCTIONS FOR VIOLATION OF THIS ORDINANCE, TO DESIGNATE AUTHORIZED CITY OFFICIALS TO ISSUE MUNICIPAL CIVIL INFRACTION CITATIONS AND MUNICIPAL CIVIL INFRACTION VIOLATION NOTICES, AND TO REPEAL ALL ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT HEREWITH.

THE CITY OF RIVER ROUGE ORDAINS:

Section 1.00 INTENT.

The intent of this Ordinance is to create a comprehensive, balanced system of regulating signs and, thereby, to facilitate an easy and pleasant communication between people and their environment; to enhance the physical appearance of the City; to make the City a more enjoyable and pleasing community; and to create a more attractive economic and business climate. It is intended by the provisions of this Ordinance to reduce signs and advertising distractions, to eliminate hazards caused by signs being too close to the public rights-of-way, to avoid the confusion of conflicting adjacent signs, to protect property values, and to eliminate obsolete, irrelevant, nonconforming and deteriorated signs. With these purposes in mind, it is the intention of this Ordinance to authorize the use of signs which are:

- Compatible with their surroundings.
- Appropriate to the type of activity to which they pertain.
- Expressive of the identity of individual proprietors or of the development as a whole.
- Legible in the circumstances in which they are seen.

Section 2.00 SHORT TITLE.

This Ordinance shall be known and may be cited as the City of River Rouge Sign Ordinance.

Section 3.00 DEFINITIONS.

Accessory Sign - A sign which is accessory to the principal use of the premises and which relates to the business activity or service conducted on the premises upon which the sign is placed.

Announcement Sign or Bulletin Board - A sign with changeable letters, located on the property of a Place of Worship or school, which provides information relevant to worship services, religious activities or educational activities within a building.

Awning - A metal, wooden, fiberglass, canvas, or other fabric cover fastened to a building, which extends over a porch, patio, deck, balcony, window, door or open space.

Awning Sign - A sign that is printed on, or otherwise affixed to, an awning.

Balloon Sign - One or more balloons, or any other air-filled or gas-filled object used as a sign or as a means of directing attention to any business or profession, or to a commodity or service sold, offered or manufactured, or to any entertainment.

Banner Sign - A sign or display constructed of paper, plastic or fabric of any kind, intended to be hung, either with or without frames.

Billboard Sign - An off-site or non-accessory outdoor sign which advertises a business use or service not conducted on the premises upon which the sign is placed. Billboard structures are generally leased or rented and designed with changeable copy.

Building Inspector - The Building Inspector of the City of River Rouge, or other deputies authorized by the City to enforce this Ordinance.

Canopy - A roof-like structure providing shelter to a public access area, which is either freestanding or is projecting from a building and is supported by structural members. A canopy may be constructed of metal, wood, or any approved fire-retardant material, such as cloth, canvas, fabric, plastic, or any light flexible material which is attached to or constructed on a frame or building.

Canopy Sign - A sign that is printed on or otherwise affixed to a canopy.

Directional Sign - A sign not utilized for advertising purposes, but used to direct vehicular or pedestrian traffic to parking areas, loading areas, or to portions of a building.

Freestanding Sign - A sign attached to the ground by poles or braces and not attached to any building.

Identification Sign or Nameplate - A sign which displays only the name of a person or firm.

Monument or Ground Sign - A freestanding sign which is permanently fastened to the ground by upright(s), brace(s) or similar object(s), and which is not attached to a building or structure. Any freestanding sign with less than four (4) feet of clearance between the bottom of the sign and the established grade shall be a monument sign.

Off-Site Signs - A sign which is not accessory to the principal use of the premises. Any card, cloth, paper, metal, painted glass, wood, plastic, stone, or other object of any kind or character whatsoever, placed for non-accessory advertising purposes on the ground or on any tree, wall, bush, rock, post, fence, building, structure or thing whatsoever. The term "placed" as used in this definition shall include erecting, constructing, posting, painting, printing, tacking, nailing, gluing, sticking, carving or other fastening, affixing, or making visible in any manner whatsoever to the public.

Pennant Sign - A sign or display consisting of long, narrow, usually triangular flags.

Political Sign - A sign relating to the election of a person or persons to public office, or relating to a political party or a political issue, or relating to a matter to be voted upon at an election.

Portable Sign - A sign which is not permanently fastened to a building, structure, or to the ground.

Projecting Sign - A sign which is permanently fastened to the surface of a wall in such a way that the sign face is perpendicular to the surface of the wall. The sign face shall consist of two (2) sides, mounted flush back-to-back.

Pylon Sign - A freestanding sign which is permanently fastened to the ground by upright(s), brace(s) or similar object(s), and which is not attached to a building or structure. Any freestanding sign with four (4) feet or more of clearance between the bottom of the sign and the established grade shall be a monument sign.

Real Estate Sign - A sign which advertises the particular property upon which it is placed for sale, rent or lease.

Real Estate Development Sign - A freestanding sign informing when a subdivision or other real estate development will commence construction or when it will be available for sale, use or occupancy.

Sign - Any use of words, numbers, figures, devices, designs, logos, trademarks, letters, characters, marks, points, planes, posters, pictorials, pictures, strokes, stripes, lines, reading matter, illuminating devices or paint visible to the general public and designed to inform or attract the attention of persons, including the structure upon which such words, numbers, figures, devices, designs, logos, trademarks, letters, characters, marks, points, planes, posters, pictorials, pictures, strokes, stripes, lines, reading matter, illuminating devices or paint are or may be printed or affixed.

Signable Area - A continuous wall area on a building which is free from windows and doors and major architectural design. So-called mansard roofs may be used for signable area, provided they are within twenty (20) degrees of a vertical plane and wall signs on them are vertical, unless individual letters are used to make up the wall sign.

Subdivision Entrance Sign - A sign depicting the name of a residential, office/service, commercial, or industrial subdivision, and which sign is located at the entrance to said subdivision.

Temporary Sign - A sign that is intended to be erected for only a few days or a few weeks, including portable signs, trailer signs, banners, pennants, or any other sign that is not permanently affixed to a building face or to a pole, pylon, or other support that is permanently anchored to the ground.

Vehicle Business Sign - A vehicle upon which a sign is painted or attached and is parked upon a premises for the intent of advertising. Vehicle business signs shall not include licensed commercial vehicles regularly used to transport persons or property for the operation of the business

Wall Sign - A sign permanently fastened to the wall of a building or structure, or a sign painted on, attached to, or placed flat against the exterior wall surface of any building, no portion of which projects more than twelve (12) inches from the wall.

Window Sign - A sign which is affixed, attached, painted or otherwise placed on or adjacent to the interior of a window in such a manner as to be readily visible from the exterior of the building.

Section 4.00 MEASUREMENT OF SIGN AREA.

- (1) Sign area, unless otherwise noted herein, shall include the total area within any circle, triangle, rectangle, or other geometric shape or envelope enclosing the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblem, or any similar figure or element of the sign, together with any frame or other material forming an integral part of the display, if any, or used to differentiate such sign from the background against which it is placed.
 - (a) In the case of a wall sign in which there is no frame or other material forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate such sign from the background against which it is placed, the envelope shall be around the letters, logos, emblems, figures, pictures, etc.
 - (b) In the case of an awning or canopy sign, where there is no design or envelope forming an integral part of the display which differentiates the sign from the background of the awning material or color, the envelope shall be around the letters, logos, emblems, figures, stripes, etc.
 - (c) For a single-faced sign, the area shall be computed as the total exposed exterior surface in square feet.
 - (d) The area of a double-faced freestanding sign shall be computed using only one face of the sign, provided that the outline and dimensions of both faces are identical and that the faces are back-to-back so that only one face is visible at any given location.
 - (e) In the case of double-faced or multi-faced signs that are arranged so that the faces are greater than twenty-four (24) inches from one another, or signs with any two faces that form a "V" in plan, where the angle of the "V" is greater than fifteen (15) degrees, the area shall be computed by totaling the sign area of all faces of the sign. The area of a cylindrical sign shall be computed by measuring the total area of all signs located on the cylinder.

Section 5.00 SPECIFIC REGULATIONS.

(1) Announcement Signs or Bulletin Boards.

- (a) Shall not exceed thirty-six (36) square feet in area
- (b) Shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height from grade.

(2) Awning or Canopy Signs.

- (a) An awning or canopy sign may be used to display the name of the firm, the address or a symbol, or type of business, and shall be placed only on the principal front of the building.
- (b) An awning or canopy sign shall be permitted in lieu of a permitted wall sign.
- (c) An awning or canopy sign shall not exceed one (1) square foot for each linear foot of store frontage on which the sign is to be placed, or twenty (20) square feet, whichever is greater. In no case shall an awning or canopy sign exceed one-hundred

(100) square feet in the Industrial Districts or one-hundred-fifty (150) square feet elsewhere.

- (d) A minimum vertical clearance of fourteen (14) feet shall be provided beneath any awning or canopy sign which projects over a parking area or driveway. In all other areas, a minimum vertical clearance of eight (8) feet shall be provided beneath an awning or canopy.

(3) Directional Signs.

- (a) Directional signs shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area, and shall not exceed three (3) feet in height.
- (b) At-grade directional signs painted on or adhered to the surface of paved areas are exempt from these standards.
- (c) All directional signs required for the purpose of orientation, when established by the City, County, State or Federal government, shall be permitted.

(4) Identification Signs or Name Plates.

Identification signs shall be limited to:

- (a) One (1) unlit freestanding or wall-mounted sign for a permitted home occupation.
- (b) One (1) unlit wall-mounted identification sign shall be permitted for each approved professional office.
- (c) An identification sign shall not exceed two (2) square feet in display area. Such wall-mounted signs shall not extend outward more than two (2) inches from the surface of a wall on the subject structure. Freestanding identification signs shall not exceed three (3) feet in height.

(5) Monument Signs or Ground Signs.

- (a) Monument signs shall not exceed sixty-four (64) square feet in display area. If the Planning Commission determines that architectural features of the sign, such as wood, rock or brick framing, are in harmony with the surrounding area and the principal structure, the architectural features of the sign shall not count as part of the display area.
- (b) Monument signs, including the architectural features, shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.
- (c) The City of River Rouge encourages the erection of monument signs, rather than pylon signs.

(6) Off-Site Signs, including Billboards.

- (a) The maximum size of a billboard sign shall not exceed one hundred and fifty (150) square feet in display area. The height-to-width or width-to-height ratio of the sign

display area shall not exceed 2-to-1.

- (b) The maximum height of a billboard sign shall not exceed twenty (20) feet.
- (c) A billboard sign shall only be permitted as a Special Land Use on land located within the General Commercial and Industrial Zoning Districts when such district abuts a State highway. Such signs shall not be approved unless the Commission finds the sign consistent with the standards of Section 1313(2) of this Ordinance.
- (d) A billboard shall not be located closer than one thousand (1,000) feet to any other billboard sign.
- (e) All other off-site signs shall be subject the City of River Rouge Zoning Ordinance, Section 1313. Such off-site signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.
- (f) These provisions may be varied by the Board of Zoning Appeals for a specific sign according to the requirements of Section 9.00 of this Ordinance.

(7) Political Signs.

- (a) Political signs may be located in any district, provided that permission has been obtained from the property owner.
- (b) Political signs shall be erected no earlier than forty-five (45) days prior to the election and shall be removed within ten (10) days after the election or primary.
- (c) All candidates for political office and property owners shall be responsible to remove their political signs within the time frame cited in Section 5.00(7)(b).

(8) Portable Signs.

- (a) Portable signs are hereby prohibited, regardless of form, size, character or placement, unless otherwise specifically permitted within this Ordinance.

(9) Projecting Signs.

- (a) The sign display area shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet. A bracket or mount for a projecting sign shall not extend further than forty-eight (48) inches from the wall. The face of such sign shall not project more than forty-eight (48) inches from the wall upon which the sign is mounted and thirty-six (36) inches in height. In no case shall any part of such sign project above the roof line.
- (b) A minimum vertical clearance of fourteen (14) feet shall be provided beneath any projecting sign which projects over a parking area or driveway. In all other areas, an eight (8) foot minimum vertical clearance, measured from the ground to the bottom of the sign, shall be provided.
- (c) Projecting signs may be permitted to extend into the air space of City-owned rights-of-way, provided that such extension does not interfere with the use of such rights-of-way or adversely impact upon the health, safety or welfare of the City.

(10) Pylon Signs.

- (a) Pylon signs shall not exceed sixty-four (64) square feet in sign area.
- (b) Pylon signs must have a minimum clearance of six (6) feet from the bottom of the sign face to the grade level.
- (c) Pylon signs shall not exceed fifteen (15) feet in height. For shopping centers with over 75,000 square feet of gross building floor area, pylon signs may exceed the fifteen (15) foot height limitation; however, in no case shall a pylon sign exceed twenty (20) feet in height and one hundred (100) square feet in sign area.

(11) Real Estate Signs.

- (a) One (1) unlit real estate sign shall be permitted which advertises the sale, rental, or lease of the premises or property upon which said sign is located.
- (b) One (1) unlit sign indicating a building is "open" for inspection shall be permitted for the duration of the open hours.
- (c) In residential districts, no such sign shall exceed eight (8) square feet in display area.
- (d) In non-residential zoning districts, such signs shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in display area.
- (e) All such signs shall be removed within seven (7) days after the property has been rented, leased or sold, or the title is otherwise transferred.

(12) Real Estate Development Signs.

- (a) Real estate development signs shall be permitted for each development in which lots are still available. No such sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in sign area and eight (8) feet in height.
- (b) Such sign shall be removed within seven (7) days after all of the units or lots on that site have been sold or leased.
- (c) A real estate development sign shall not be allowed to occupy the property for more than two (2) years, except when an extension is granted. One (1) year extensions may be granted by the Planning Commission.

(13) Subdivision or Apartment Entrance Signs.

- (a) A subdivision or apartment entrance sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in sign display area. If the Planning Commission determines that architectural features of the sign are in harmony with the surrounding area and the principal structure, the architectural features of the sign shall not count as part of the display area.
- (b) A subdivision entrance sign, including its architectural features, shall not exceed

six (6) feet in height.

- (c) A subdivision entrance sign may be located in a traffic island at the entrance of a subdivision, if the Planning Commission determines that the sign will not obstruct motorist vision.

(14) Temporary Signs.

- (a) A temporary sign shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in display area. Freestanding temporary signs shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height.
- (b) The Building Inspector may issue a permit, upon his/her own authority, to businesses, organizations or groups to display a temporary sign for a specific cause, function or activity. A maximum of two (2) temporary sign permits shall be permitted at any one location during a calendar year, with a combined permitted display time not exceeding thirty (30) days. This shall not apply to political signs.
- (c) Banners, pennants, spinners, streamers, balloons and other windblown signs or displays are permitted only for non-profit, institutional or community activities or events, when specifically approved by the City Council. These displays or signs are also permitted for new businesses for a period of time not to exceed thirty (30) days. The displays or signs must be erected no sooner than thirty (30) days prior to the opening of the business and removed no later than thirty (30) days after the opening of the business.

(15) Vehicle Business Signs.

- (a) Vehicle business signs are prohibited within the City.

(16) Wall Signs.

- (a) A wall sign shall not project more than twelve (12) inches horizontally beyond the wall of a building.
- (b) A wall sign shall be used to display the name of the firm, the address or a symbol, or type of business.
- (c) Wall signs shall not project above the highest point used to measure the height of the building or structure.
- (d) A wall sign shall not exceed one (1) square foot for each linear foot of store frontage on which the sign is to be placed, or twenty (20) square feet, whichever is greater. In no case shall a wall sign exceed one-hundred (100) square feet in the Industrial Districts or one-hundred-fifty (150) square feet elsewhere.

(17) Window Signs.

- (a) Window signs shall not occupy more than twenty (20%) percent of the total window area.