

# Zoning Code- Title 17 Sign Regulations Amendments

**PUBLIC MEETING**

**November 19, 2020**



Baltimore City Department of Planning

## Zoning 101

- **Zoning** is a tool local governments use to regulate the use of land and buildings.
- A **Zoning Code** is a law passed by local governments regulating the size, type, structure, nature and use of land or buildings.
- Zoning also regulates such things as parking and signage as well.
- Title 17 is part of the zoning code.



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### Why did we rewrite so soon after new code?

- Conform the Zoning Code to a 2015 Supreme Court case, known as Reed v. Town of Gilbert.
- Jurisdictions may not use content as a factor in their code or have temporary signs.
  - Proposed title governs signs by form, size and placement.
  - In other words signs can be described by district and type but not what is on them.

### Why amend now?

- Some items were not resolved in the 2018 legislation and carry over.
- Last almost 2 years watching how it functions to determine tweaks.
- Based on experience, interpretation issues and informal feedback on needed fixes.



# **Summary: Existing Regulations from 2018/2019 Signage Rewrite**



# ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

## Sign Types in the Existing Code

### Requirements By Sign Type (Subtitle 4)

- A-Frame
  - Alcoholic Beverage and Cigarette Advertising Signs (generally prohibited)
  - Awning or Canopy Signs and Open-Structural Framework Signs
  - Banner Signs
  - Billboards
  - Electronic Signs
  - Freestanding Signs
  - Moving or Flashing Signs
  - Obscene Signs (generally prohibited)
  - Portable Signs (generally prohibited)
  - Projecting Signs
  - Roof Signs
  - Wall Signs
  - Window Signs
- Provisional Fence Signs are allowed, but no Subtitle 4 standards.

## Title 17 Subtitles and Tables in Existing Code

Subtitle 1: Purpose of Title; Definitions

Subtitle 2: Placement, Design and Construction

Subtitle 3: Sign Dimension Measurement Methodology

Subtitle 4: Requirements By Sign Type

Subtitle 5: Areas of Special Signage Control

Table 17-201: Sign Regulations

Table 17-306: Maximum Cumulative Area of Signs



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### *Subtitle 4 - Requirements by Sign type*

- The section is broken down by defined sign types and establishes special standards or rules for each type.
- The ability to do a sign on a lot is determined by both underlying zoning and use category. Table 17-201 shows which signs you can do in which zoning category, but subtitle 4 details which use categories can have which sign type.
- Outlines where the sign is allowed (ie. types of uses)
- Subtitle 4 may have additional placement standards, illumination standards or construction standards.
- To be used in conjunction with Table 17-201: Sign Regulations.



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

**TABLE 10-301: COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS – PERMITTED AND CONDITIONAL USES**

USES	DISTRICTS								USE STANDARDS
	C-1	C-1YC	C-1E	C-2	C-3	C-4	C-5		
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>									
Day-Care Home: Adult or Child	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Per § 14-310
Dwelling (Above Non-Residential Ground Floor)	P	P							
Dwelling: Live-Work	P	P							
Dwelling: Multi-Family	P	CB							
Dwelling: Rowhouse	P	P							
Dormitory									
Fraternity or Sorority House	CO	CO							
Residential-Care Facility (16 or Fewer Residents)	P	P							
Residential-Care Facility (17 or More Residents)	CO	CO							
Rooming House	CB	CB							
<b>INSTITUTIONAL</b>									
Community Center									
Cultural Facility	CB	CB	CB	CB	P			P	Per § 14-308
Educational Facility: Commercial-Vocational					CB	P	P	P	
Educational Facility: Post-Secondary	CB	CB	CB	P	P	P	P		
Educational Facility: Primary and Secondary	CB	CB	CB	CB	CB			P	
Government Facility	CB	CB	CB	CB	CB	CB	CB		
Homeless Shelter						CB	CB	CB	
Hospital					CB	CB	CB	P	
Place of Worship	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Per § 14-332

**§ 17-414. ROOF SIGNS.**

(A) *WHERE ALLOWED.*

ROOF SIGNS ARE ALLOWED AS FOLLOWS:

- (1) IN A RESIDENTIAL USE CATEGORY, ONLY ON MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS WITH 100 OR MORE UNITS; AND
- (2) IN ALL OTHER USE CATEGORIES, ON ALL USES FOR WHICH THE SIGN IS OTHERWISE ALLOWED UNDER THIS TITLE.



# ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

## Table 17-201

TABLE 17-201: SIGN REGULATIONS							
(ADDITIONAL SIGN STANDARDS ARE LOCATED IN TITLE 17)							
SIGN TYPES BY ZONING DISTRICT		ZONING DISTRICT REQUIREMENTS			AREA OF SPECIAL SIGNAGE CONTROL (ASSC)		
	APPROVAL METHOD	MAXIMUM AREA PER SIGN	HEIGHT AND LOCATION REQUIREMENTS	MAXIMUM QUANTITY	SIGN TYPES ALLOWABLE FOR ASSC DEVIATION	MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE DEVIATION FOR HEIGHT AND AREA	QUANTITY DEVIATION
<b>R-1A THROUGH R-4</b>					NOT ELIGIBLE		
Freestanding (Monument)	A	32 sq. ft.	Maximum 6 ft.	1 per lot			
Provisional Fence Sign	A		Maximum 12 ft.				
Wall Sign (Ground Floor and Above Ground Floor)	A	18 sq. ft.		1 per lot			
<b>R-5 THROUGH R-8</b>					NOT ELIGIBLE		
A-Frame	A	8 sq. ft. per side	Maximum 4 ft.	1 per lot			
Awning or Canopy Sign and Open- Structural Framework Sign	A	2 sq. ft. per width of canopy or frame		1 per lot			
Banner Sign (Projecting)	A	12 sq. ft.		2 per lot			
Freestanding Sign (Monument)	A	32 sq. ft.	Maximum 6 ft.	1 per lot			
Provisional Fence Sign	A		Maximum 12 ft.				
Wall Sign (Ground Floor and Above Ground Floor)	A	18 sq. ft.		1 per lot			
<b>R-9 THROUGH R-10</b>					NOT ELIGIBLE		
A-Frame	A	8 sq. ft. per side	Maximum 4 ft.	1 per lot			





## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### Table 17-201 cont'd

<i>C-4 (cont'd)</i>	APPROVAL METHOD	MAXIMUM AREA PER SIGN	HEIGHT AND LOCATION REQUIREMENTS	MAXIMUM QUANTITY	SIGN TYPES ALLOWABLE FOR ASSC DEVIATION	MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE DEVIATION FOR HEIGHT AND AREA	QUANTITY DEVIATION
Wall Sign (Above Ground Floor)	A	2 sq. ft. per linear foot of building frontage		1 per interior lot/ 2 per corner lot	X	50%	Per Approved Signage Plan
Window Sign	A	No more than 25% of each window area	Ground floor and second floor only	2 windows per street frontage	X	50%	Per Approved Signage Plan
<b>C-5-DC</b>							
A-Frame Sign	A	8 sq. ft. per side	Maximum 4 ft.	1 per tenant with direct ground floor access/ Corner tenant 1 per street frontage			
Awning or Canopy Sign and Open- Structural Framework Sign	A	2 sq. ft. per width of canopy or frame		2 per lot	X	75%	Per Approved Signage Plan
Banner Sign (Pole Mounted))	A	32 sq. ft.		1 per lot	X	75%	Per Approved Signage Plan
Banner Sign (Projecting)	A	32 sq. ft.		4 per lot	X	75%	Per Approved Signage Plan
Banner Sign (Wall Mounted)	A	120 sq. ft.	Below parapet	1 per lot	X	75%	Per Approved Signage Plan
Billboard	ASSC Only				X	75%	Per Approved Signage Plan
Electronic Sign (Category I)	A	15 sq. ft.	Per sign type used	1 per lot	X	75%	Per Approved Signage Plan
Electronic Sign (Category II)	A	50 sq. ft.	Per sign type used	2 per lot	X	75%	Per Approved Signage Plan
Electronic Sign (Category III)	ASSC Only	750 sq. ft.	Per sign type used		X	75%	Per Approved Signage Plan
Electronic Sign (Category IV)	ASSC Only	5,000 sq. ft.	Per sign type used		X	75%	Per Approved Signage Plan



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### Table 17-306

- Table 17-306 Maximum Cumulative Area of Signs is the “budget”. It tells you how much signage you can do on a lot.
  - Only for zoning districts that allow ASSCs.
  - Follow the column based on the largest sign in your ASSC signage plan.
- Benefit and Rationale of this table:
  - With the addition of very large electronic signs this table regulates “over-signage” on most buildings and lots.
  - The larger the electronic signs allowed through a signage plan, the less amount of “other” signage is allowed on a lot.
  - Encourages the lot owner to prioritize signage on their lot.



# ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

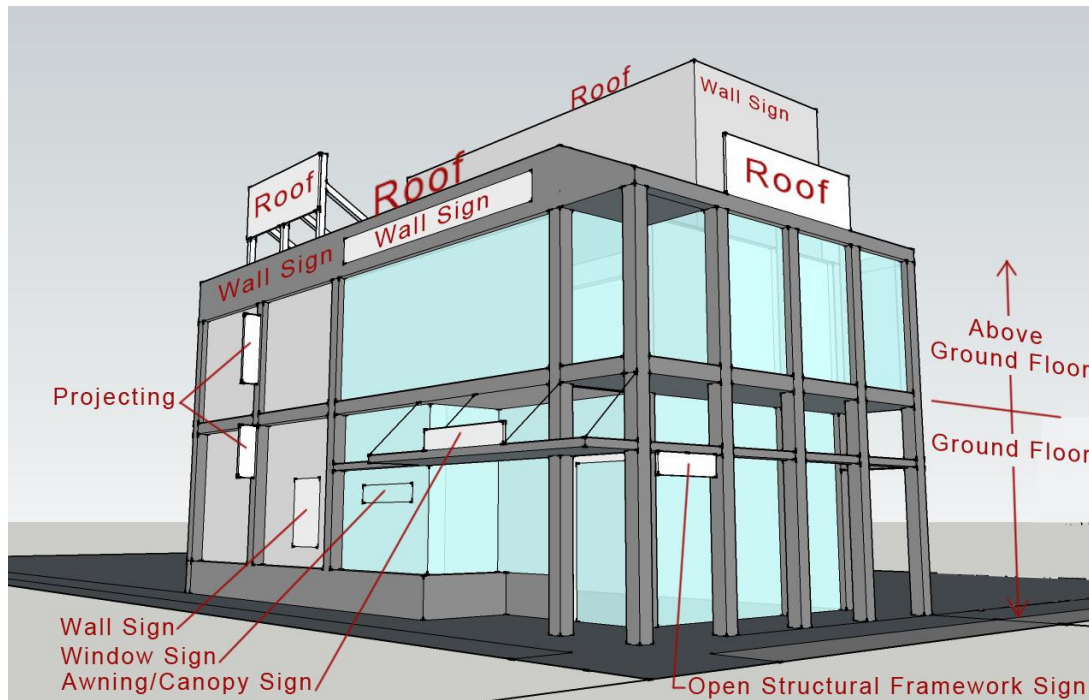
## Table 17-306

TABLE 17-306 MAXIMUM CUMULATIVE AREA OF SIGNS						
ZONING DISTRICT	MAXIMUM AREA PER LOT BY INCLUDED SIGN TYPES					
	PROPERTIES OUTSIDE OF AN AREA OF SPECIAL SIGNAGE CONTROL	PROPERTIES WITHIN AN AREA OF SPECIAL SIGNAGE CONTROL*				
	ALL NON-ELECTRONIC SIGN TYPES AND ELECTRONIC SIGN CATEGORIES I AND II	ALL NON-ELECTRONIC SIGN TYPES AND ELECTRONIC SIGN CATEGORIES I AND II	ALL NON-ELECTRONIC SIGN TYPES AND ELECTRONIC SIGN CATEGORIES I, II AND III	ALL NON-ELECTRONIC SIGN TYPES AND ELECTRONIC SIGN CATEGORIES I, II, III AND IV	ALL NON-ELECTRONIC SIGN TYPES AND ELECTRONIC SIGN CATEGORIES I, II, III, IV AND V	MAXIMUM PERCENTAGE DEVIATION FOR AREA
C-1	100 sq. ft.	100 sq. ft.	-	-	-	25%
C-1-E	100 sq. ft.	100 sq. ft.	-	-	-	25%
C-1-VC	75 sq. ft.	75 sq. ft.	-	-	-	25%
C-2	225 sq. ft.	225 sq. ft.	500 sq. ft.	-	-	25%
C-3	450 sq. ft.	450 sq. ft.	-	-	-	25%
C-4	450 sq. ft.	450 sq. ft.	-	-	-	25%
C-5-DC	1200 sq. ft.	1200 sq. ft.	1,750 sq. ft.	7,000 sq. ft.	13,000 sq. ft.	50%
C-5-IH	1200 sq. ft.	1200 sq. ft.	1,750 sq. ft.	-	-	50%
C-5-DE	1000 sq. ft.	1000 sq. ft.	1,500 sq. ft.	-	-	50%
C-5-HT	750 sq. ft.	750 sq. ft.	-	-	-	50%
C-5-TO	1000 sq. ft.	1000 sq. ft.	1,500 sq. ft.	6,000 sq. ft.	-	50%
C-5-HS	750 sq. ft.	750 sq. ft.	900 sq. ft.	-	-	50%



ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

Example of Sign Types and Consider Maximum Total Area Allowed On A Lot



Baltimore City Department of Planning



# 2021 Proposed Amendments



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### Specific Areas of Focus

- Conditional Signs to BMZA
- Electronic Signs for institutions and historic structures
- Measurement Methodology for Quantity
- Allowing Sign Area Splits for Freestanding and clarifications for Wall sign splits
- Painted Signs
- Definition Clarification for Ground Floor/ Above Ground Floor
- Any updates to tables



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### *Conditional Signs to Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals*

- Not a new concept, but was removed.
- These amendments would reintroduce the concept to the code and modify several Titles to define, place in the text for findings of fact and evaluation procedures.
- Would also allow for the introduction of “CB” into Table 17-201 to denote a sign type is conditional to the Board.



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### *Subtitle 3 - Sign Dimension Measurement Methodology*

- Updates to define how to measure quantity and maximum area in Table 17-201.
- Adds in measurement “exemptions” for:
  - Signs required by the Building Code and life safety; and
  - Splits in wall signs and freestanding signs





## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### Electronic Signs

- Allow Category I (max 15 sqft.) electronic signs to institutional uses in the residential zoning categories. Modifies Table 17-201 and the “Where Allowed” section in Subtitle 4.
- Allow electronic signs on canopies for historic theater buildings that have had historic/existing canopy structures.
  - Modifications will be made to the Awning/Canopy Signs and Electronic Signs in Subtitle 4.



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### *Splitting Max Area for Wall Signs*

- The ability exists for wall signs in certain zoning categories, but will expand the categories and uses (ie Grocery Stores in C-2 of a certain size).
- The amendments will clarify this ability as an exemption from the measurement methodology for certain categories.
- Clarifies the inability to go to BMZA to increase the area and then split the signage.



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### Clarifying and Splitting Max Area for Freestanding Signs

- Add ability that exists for wall signs to split freestanding signs.
- Ability would be granted for drive-thru facilities only in certain zoning categories.
- The amendments will clarify this ability as an exemption from the measurement methodology for certain categories.
- Clarifies the inability to go to BMZA to increase the area and then split the signage.
- Clarifies that maximum area of multiple signs cannot be combined into one large sign.



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### *Adding Painted Signs (mural signs)*

- Add painted signs as a specific type. Amendments will:
  - Define Painted Signs
  - Add in standards in Subtitle 4
  - Add in measurement methodology
  - Add to table 17:201 (which categories, how big, how many, etc.)
- Measurement Methodology will clarify how to measure signage portion and not the “art” portion.
- Definition will focus on painted signs as a composition that is not affixed, but applied directly to with certain mediums.



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### Clarifying Ground Floor/Above Ground Floor

- Some zoning categories combine the amount of wall signage for the entire building and others allow different amounts based on ground floor and above ground floor.
- Issue is that larger single story buildings may need larger amount of wall signage than what is currently allowed, but users like having the automatic allotment of signage for ground floor retail in mixed-use multi-story buildings.



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### *Clarifying Ground Floor/Above Ground Floor*

- Add in definitions to subtitle 1 of Title 17 clarifying the intent that above ground floor does not include decorative parapets and other structures that extend beyond the roof line, nor does it include interior loft spaces or mezzanines.
- Clarify in measure methodology what the combined language means.
- May add in an exemption for larger single story buildings with a certain amount of street frontage in categories where the allotment is combined (ie grocery stores in C-1).



## ZONING CODE- TITLE 17 SIGN REGULATIONS AMENDMENTS

### Timeline :

- November 19, 2020- Public Informational Meeting
- By early December 2020- will put out presentation for public comment and give 2 week comment period.
- January/February- Finalize Drafting Legislation
- Late 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2021- Introduce Legislation

