

For questions, please contact the **City of Bloomington Planning Division:**

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Sign FAQs

Bloomington requires that property owners obtain a Sign Permit before constructing, enlarging, relocating or altering signs located within the City. The Sign Code provides guidelines regarding the permitted size, placement, construction materials, and location of signs. The Code attempts to balance the needs of businesses with the best interest of the public by promoting an orderly display of signs, and by reducing visual clutter and distractions.

Permit Application Code Requirements:

Bloomington City Ordinance, Chapter 3, Section 3.7

Available online on the City Clerk's webpage at

<http://www.cityblm.org>, "Codes and Ordinances".

What types of sign(s) could my business have?

The Sign Code regulates the size, number, and types of signs by zoning districts; regulations begin in Chapter 3, Section 4. Sign types allowed under various zoning districts may include wall, ground, monument, incidental and awnings. Each type of sign has separate regulations, found in Chapter 3, Section 5. However, no sign may be greater than 300 square feet.

What is the zoning of my property?

To determine the zoning of your property, please visit the official zoning map, available at the Planning and Zoning page of the City website. If you have questions, please contact the Planning Division at (309) 434-2226.

Are there regulations for signs in historic districts?

Yes, signs requiring a permit and located in districts zoned S-4, Local Historic District may require approval by the Historic Preservation Commission before a permit can be issued.

Do I need a permit for a banner or temporary sign?

Yes, most temporary signs including grand opening signs, vinyl banners, pendants, and gas-filled balloons require a temporary sign permit. Temporary Signs may be displayed for a period of 30 days in a calendar year, per property. Permits cost \$20.00 per sign. Banners are limited to 30 square feet.

Signs installed prior to receiving a sign permit, including temporary signs, could result in citations and fines.

Could my business have an electronic message board?

In general, yes, and permits are required to install them. An electronic message board may be used to display different static advertisements with clean transitions between messages. The code does not allow displays and special effects, including transitions, that flash, scroll, scintillate, and/or have moving images or video (Chapter 3, Section 6).

Where can I put my sign?

All signs, even small yard signs, must be located on private property. The City does not allow the placement of signs on public property, in the right-of-way, or in utility and drainage easements. Also, signs should be located to allow visibility at the intersection of streets and driveways.

Are permits required?

The majority of signs require a permit. Chapter 3, Section 8 provides a list of exemption. Some signs may still require a building or electrical permit.

Can I install the sign myself?

Sign Contractors, registered with the City, must perform work requiring a permit. For information about contractor registration, contact the Community Development Department at comdev@cityblm.org

How do I get a sign permit?

A Sign Permit application is required for new signs, temporary signs and for the alteration of existing signs. Staff will review the Sign Permit application for compliance with the requirements of the Sign Code. All permit applications are located on the City's website at the Building Safety homepage.

What do I need to provide with my permit application?

- A completed Sign Permit application form
- The number and size of existing signs on the property
- A site plan (to scale) showing the location of existing and proposed signs.
- Description of electrical components
- Elevations and renderings describing materials and dimensions of proposed signs.
*Plans for larger signs, awnings, and marquees may need to be stamped by a Structural Engineer Certified in the State of Illinois.

In addition to the Sign Permit Application, the following permits may also be required, and may result in additional fees:

- City of Bloomington Building Permit
- City of Bloomington Electrical Permit
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Approval
- Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Approval

What is the fee for a Sign Permit?

The Sign Permit fee is based on the size of the sign and the estimated cost of the project. Chapter 3, Section 3.10.

Cost of Improvement	Fee
Less than \$1,000.00	\$14.00 plus \$0.26 per square foot of sign area
Between \$1,000.00 and \$10,000.00	\$14.00 plus \$7 per thousand of estimated cost over \$1,000.00 plus \$0.26 per square foot of sign area
Greater than \$10,000.00	\$14.00 plus \$4 per thousand of estimated cost over \$10,000.00 plus \$0.26 per square foot of sign area

Checks, cash, and major credit cards accepted.

When is a building or electrical permit required?

Work requiring the addition or alteration of the electrical system will require an Electrical Permit. Building Permits are required for awnings, and may be required for certain roof signs, pole or pylon signs.

When might I need an FAA airspace study?

The erection or alteration of signs taller than 20 feet and located within 20,000 feet of an airport runway, or work that may involve the use of a crane, could require an airspace study. For more information regarding FAA approval, please contact the Central Illinois Regional Airport at (309) 663-7384 or visit www.cira.com.

When do I need an IDOT permit?

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) requires a permit for all Outdoor Advertising Signs (i.e. billboards/off-premise signs) that advertise along a state route. Information about permitting is available on IDOT's website at www.idot.illinois.gov.

How long will it take to review my application?

If the Sign Permit application is complete and all of the supplemental information is provided, City Staff will typically contact you within five to ten business days to let you know that your application has been approved or that more information is needed.

How do I get a final inspection?

Once the sign installation is complete, a final inspection is required. Please contact the Community Development Department at (309) 434-2226 to schedule an inspection.

How long is my Sign Permit valid?

Sign Permits are valid for 120 days following approval. If the sign installation or work is not completed within 120 days, the permit will expire and the City will need to review a new application; additional fees may apply.

What if I close my business or change locations?

When a property becomes vacant or is unoccupied for three (3) months or more, the property owner is required to remove abandoned signs and sign structures (Chapter 3, Section 9.2). The City may issue a citation for abandoned signs.