



City of Grand Forks Staff Report

Planning and Zoning Commission – September 6, 2017

City Council – September 18, 2017

Agenda Item: 3-6 (Final) Final approval of an ordinance to amend the sign code.

Submitted by: Brad Gengler, City Planner

Staff Recommended Action: Reconsider final approval of an ordinance amending Section 18-0301 Signs, of the Grand Forks City Code.

Committee Recommended Action: Motion by Reichert, second by Matejcek, to table the ordinance for one month and ask the City Attorney to draft a revised ordinance. Motion carried unanimously.

Council Action: Tabled Indefinitely.

UPDATE: On Monday, August 21, 2017, based on the advice of the City Attorney, the City Council tabled final approval of this item and referred it back to the Planning and Zoning Commission for reconsideration. The City Attorney expressed concerns relating to the restrictions placed on the content of the subject signs. Attached is the current code amendment under review.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF FACT:

- Ordinance amendments require two actions by both the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council.

SUPPORT MATERIALS:

- Current amendment language. (subject to further review by the City Attorney).
- Existing regulations for electronic signs.
- Sign diagram.

- (4) Signs permitted in R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5 and R-M. No on-premises business sign, nameplate sign, or home occupation sign shall be erected except the following:
- (I) Free standing signs, as defined herein, are permitted for churches, schools, non-profit charitable organizations and other public institutions. The sign may be an electronic changeable copy sign subject to the provisions below:
- (a) The sign is subject to approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. A notice must be sent to all property owners within 200 feet of the proposed sign ten (10) days prior to the Planning and Zoning Commission.
 - (b) One (1) freestanding sign as defined herein is permitted per property with a maximum of 3 sides.
 - (c) The overall area of the sign structure shall not exceed fifty (50) square feet.
 - (d) The sign shall not exceed eight (8) in height.
 - (e) The maximum allowable sign surface area shall not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet per side, excluding the sign support structure. In addition, the electronic message board portion of the sign is limited to fifty (50) percent of the sign surface area.
 - (f) Off-premise advertising is prohibited.
 - (g) The display area and each portion thereof must be static for at least eight (8) seconds between static displays. The messages displayed on multi-sided signs must be the same.
 - (h) Any part of the electronic sign must be oriented to avoid any glare on adjacent property.
 - (i) The following display features and functions are prohibited: scrolling, traveling, flashing, spinning, rotating, fade, dissolve, any other moving effects, and all dynamic frame effects or patterns of illusionary movement or simulated movement.
 - (j) Electronic messages displayed on the sign shall be limited to white text with a black background.

(EXISTING)

(JJ) *Electronic changeable copy sign provisions.*

1. *General operational standards.*

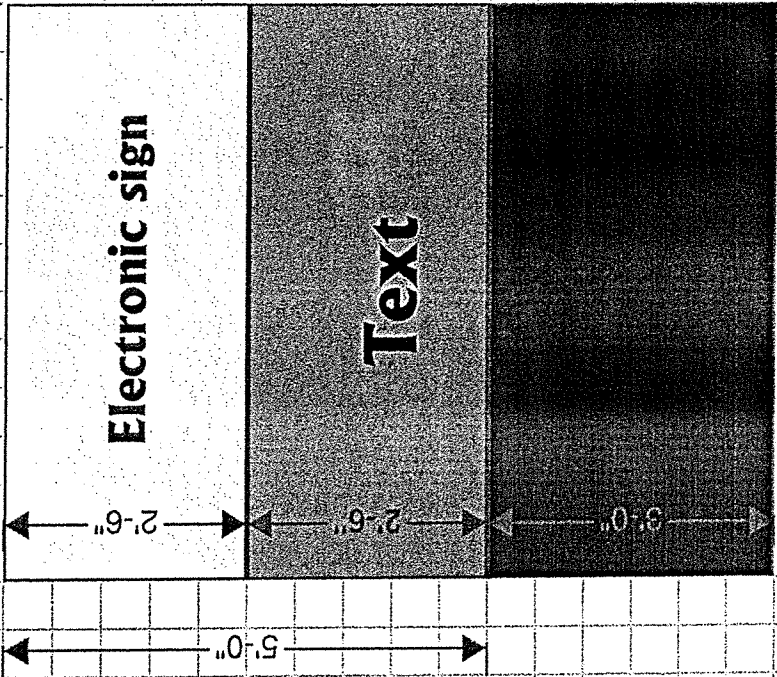
A. All electronic changeable copy signs must meet the following general operational standards:

- (1) *Orientation.* Except for provided herein, when located within one hundred fifty (150) feet of a residentially used lot in a residential zone, any part of the electronic sign **must be oriented to avoid any glare on adjacent property.**
- (2) *Setback from other electronic changeable copy signs.* Electronic changeable copy signs must be separated from other electronic changeable copy signs **by at least thirty-five (35) feet.**
- (3) *Dimmer control.* Electronic changeable copy signs must have an automatic dimmer control to automatically reduce the illumination at night and during times of reduced ambient light.
- (4) *Streaming video.* No streaming video shall be displayed, excluding type I and type II event center signs.
- (5) *Location.* No sign shall be maintained at any location where by reason of its position, size, shape, color or brightness it may obstruct, impair, obscure, interfere with the view of, or be confused with any traffic control sign, signal or device or where it may interfere with, mislead or confuse traffic.
- (6) *Audio or pyrotechnics.* Audio speakers and any form of pyrotechnics are prohibited.
- (7) *Rotating signs.* Except for multi-vision signs, no sign shall have rotating or moving parts.

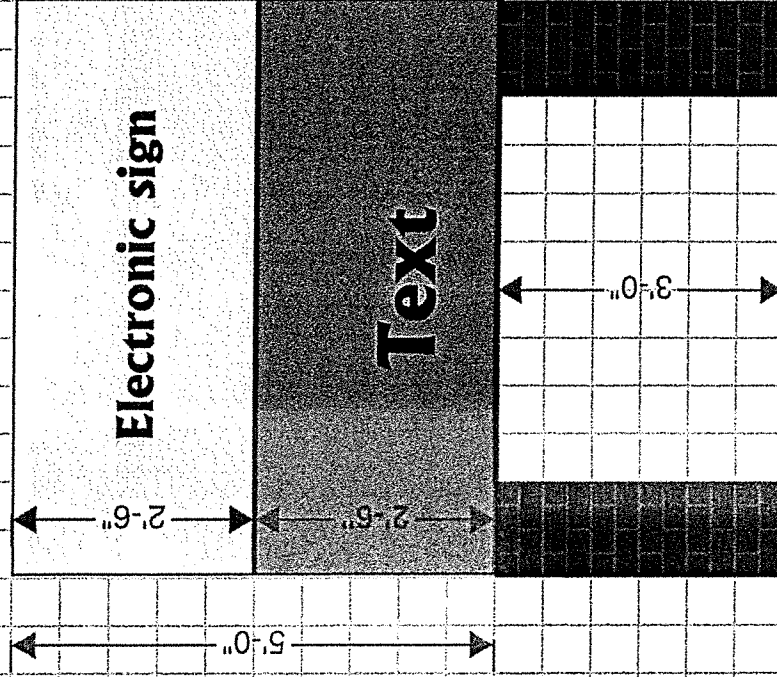
2. *Specific provisions.*

A. *Electronic changeable copy signs, on premises.*

1. *Duration.* All signs must have a minimum duration of **one (1) second**.
2. *Text.* Text messages and background graphics may scroll in a consistent and predictable manner.
3. *A multi-vision sign.*
 - (a) *Default mechanism.* All signs must be equipped with a properly functioning default mechanism that will stop the sign in one (1) position should a malfunction occur.
 - (b) *Duration.* The display area and each portion thereof must be static for at least six (6) seconds between static displays. Transition time must be no longer than two (2) seconds



Or



As discussed on 6-30-17

Max Height	= 8 feet
Total area	= 50 sf
Total sign area	= 32 sf
Max electronic sign area	= 50% of total sign area

Black background and white letters on electronic portion

Example signs	
Height	= 8 feet
Electronic sign area	= 15 sf (2.5" x 6')
Static sign area	= 15 sf (2.5" x 6')
Total sign area	= 30 sf (base not included)

Black background and white letters on electronic portion