

**City/County
Planning Division**

**Billings
Metropolitan
Planning
Organization**

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Sign Companies
Applicants, Agents

RE: Code Interpretation – Attached Signs for Multi-Tenant and Single Tenant Buildings

It has come to the attention of Planning Staff that several applicants and companies are mis-interpreting the new sign code for Attached Sign budgets in particular for multi-tenant buildings.

This letter is an official **Code Interpretation** issued by the Zoning Coordinator and will be the official interpretation of this part of the sign code from this date forward.

The code has defined in Section 27-1405.B several types of **Attached Signs**. These include:

- Wall Signs
- Projecting Signs
- Awning Signs
- Canopy Signs
- Marquee Signs
- Window Signs

Each type of **Attached Sign** is specifically allocated in Tables for each zone district or group of zone districts in Code Section 27-1407.

One type of **Attached Sign** – the **Wall Sign** type – has an established total maximum area for each building frontage – the façade that faces a street. The total maximum for the Wall Sign type area applies to the entire building frontage – not tenant by tenant. The maximum Wall Sign type area is either 20% of the wall area or 250 square feet in most commercial zone districts. This is specified in Section 27-1407, subsections A through G.

Other **Attached Sign** area – e.g. projecting signs, awning signs etc. – are NOT included in this total maximum Wall Sign area for a building frontage.

There is one exception – any Window Sign that exceeds 25% of the architecturally distinct window area will count towards the Wall Sign total maximum area – but only the area that is above the 25% maximum.

Example: Window area is 100 sf; window sign area is 32 sf – only 7 sf of the window sign area counts towards the total maximum wall sign area for the building frontage.

Existing single tenant or multi-tenant buildings that exceed the total maximum Wall Sign area by more than 20% will not be allowed to replace Wall Signs or add any new Wall Signs. Wall Sign faces may be replaced but the physical wall sign cabinet/letters cannot be removed and replaced. Section 27-1403.B.1 – Major Nonconforming sign.

Existing single tenant or multi-tenant buildings that exceed the total maximum Wall Sign area by 20% or less are allowed to replace Wall Signs with new Wall Signs that do not exceed the same sign area as the one removed – like-for-like for sign area. Section 27-1403.B.2 – Minor nonconforming sign.

Applications for new Wall Signs will need to provide information on the amount of existing Wall Sign area on the building frontage and whether a Wall Sign cabinet is being removed or replaced. Applications without this information will be considered incomplete until the information is submitted.

Please review the Tables in Section 27-1407 and the descriptions of Attached Signs in 27-1405.B.

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Zoning Coordinator



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