



# Memo

FROM THE DESK OF THE ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

To: Planning Commission

Date: October 5, 2013

Re: October 15 Meeting Notes

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REZ 1730 is to change the zoning to Agricultural to allow for the church to use the site. My understanding is that this to provide a space for the Youth Group. I would note that the church is intending to locate next to Industrial, and as such should not be protected from those uses in the future from a potential noisy or smelly user. This same condition existed when the church change the zoning for its primary site several years ago. The site is also within the airport landing zone, but not on the landing/takeoff path. I am comfortable with a recommendation to the board to approve the request.

COM 1733, The sign committee, in the company of the commission will discuss the candidates for consultant on our sign ordinance. This is a decision, not a recommendation. The Board does have financial discretion to enter into the contract with the consultant.

Note that I am on vacation the week prior to the meeting and this is going out earlier than usual. The minutes of the September meeting are not available at this time and will be emailed or at the meeting.

-Woody

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF UNION**  
**Planning Commission**  
**Regular Meeting Agenda**

**Date: October 15, 2013**

**Time: 7:00 p.m.**

**Place: Jameson Hall (5142 Bud St)**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call**

**Approval of minutes for the September 17, 2013 regular meeting**

**Correspondence**

**Approval of Agenda**

**Public Comment: restricted to three (3) minutes regarding issues not on this agenda**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- 1.) **REZ 1730: Public Hearing; Rezoning of property at 1525 Airway Drive from I1 (Light Industrial) to AG (Agriculture) requested by Maranatha Baptist Church on behalf of the Harlan Hall Family Revocable Trust.**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- 1.) **COM 1733 – Sign Committee discussion and recommendation to select sign consultant.**

**Extended Public Comment**

**Adjournment**

## **UNION TOWNSHIP PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE - REZONING**

NOTICE is hereby given that a Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, October 15, 2013 at 7:00 PM at the Union Township Hall located at 2010 South Lincoln Road, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, before the Union Township Planning Commission for the purpose of hearing any interested persons in the following rezoning of property from I1 (Light Industrial) to AG (Agricultural):

Legal description of this rezoning is: T14N R4W SEC 12 WARDS OUTLOTS SUB LOTS 37 & 39

This rezoning is commonly described as: 1525 AIRWAY DR

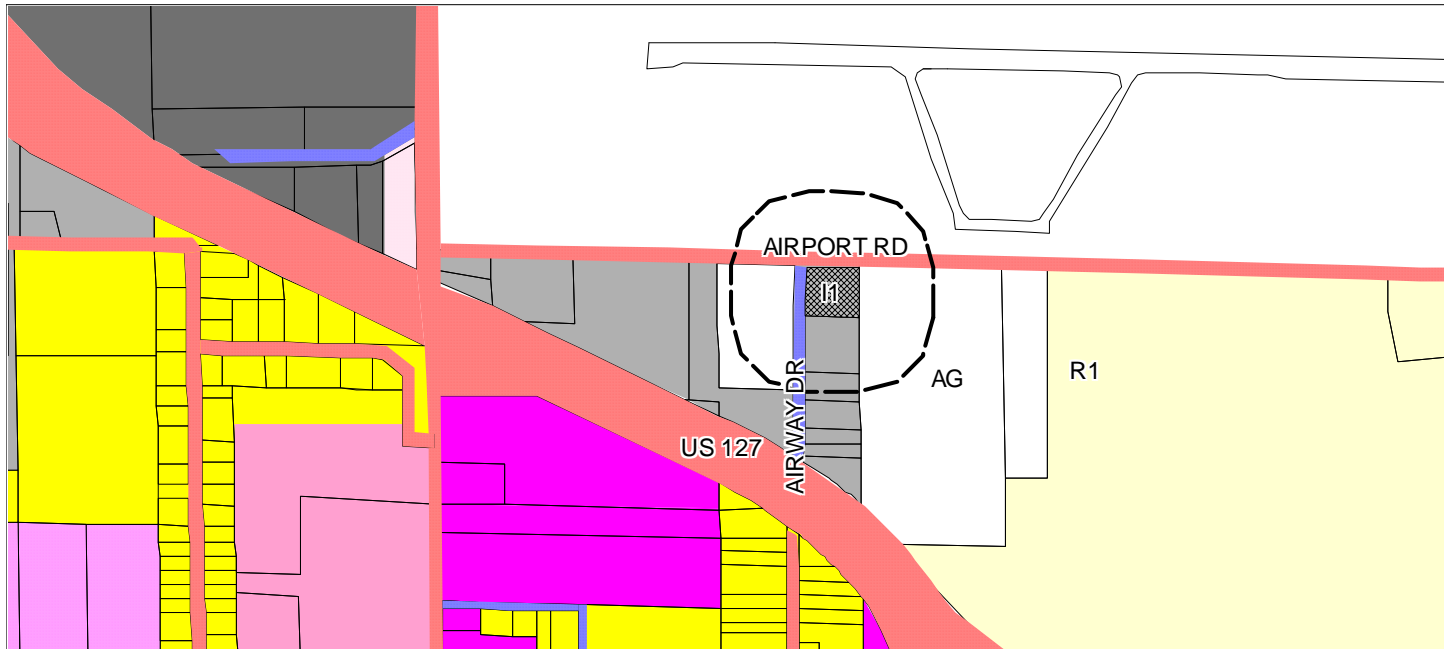
All interested persons may submit their views in person, in writing, or by signed proxy prior to the public hearing or at the public hearing.

All materials concerning this request may be seen at the Union Township Hall, located at 2010 S. Lincoln Road, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please contact the zoning administrator to make arrangements for accessibility and impairment concerns. Phone (989) 772 4600, extension 241.

William Woodruff,  
Zoning Administrator

«PID»  
«Owner»  
«OwnerAddr01»  
«OwnerCity», «OwnerState» «OwnerZip»

PROPERTY BEING CONSIDERED IS CROSS HATCHED (see notice on reverse side)



PID	PropertyAddress	Owner	ZoningCode	OwnerAddr01	OwnerCity	OwnerState	OwnerZip
14-012-20-002-00	1105 S ISABELLA RD	CITY OF MT PLEASANT	AG	320 W BROADWAY	MT PLEASANT	MI	48858-0000
14-012-30-001-00	E AIRPORT RD	SAGINAW CHIPPEWA INDIAN TRIBE	AG	7070 E BROADWAY	MOUNT PLEASANT	MI	48858
14-145-00-044-01	1535 AIRWAY DR	HILLIARD JEFFERY OR STEVE	I1	13779 MAIN ST	BATH	MI	48808-0000
14-145-00-046-00	1526 AIRWAY DR	MARANATHA BAPTIST CHURCH	AG	1526 AIRWAY DR	MT PLEASANT	MI	48858
14-145-00-047-00	1525 AIRWAY DR	HALL HARLAN FAMILY REVOC TRUST	I1	913 E ANDRE	MOUNT PLEASANT	MI	48858
14-145-00-044-03	1575 AIRWAY DR	LEE ROBERT E & HELEN	I1	1575 AIRWAY DR	MT PLEASANT	MI	48858

I CERTIFY THE ABOVE PROPERTY OWNERS WERE MAIL  
A NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING, FILE #1730 ON 9/17/13.

# Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF MICHIGAN

County of Isabella  
County of Gratiot  
County of Clare

}  
SS.

Mark Ranzenberger being duly sworn, deposes and says that he is Online Editor of the MORNING SUN, a public newspaper printed and published by Morning Star Publishing Company, in the Cities of Mt. Pleasant (Isabella County), Clare (Clare County) and Alma (Gratiot County) in said counties and circulated in said cities and counties, that the annexed printed notice was duly printed and published in said newspaper at least 1 in each week for 1 successive week(s), and that the first publication of said notice in said newspapers was on the 22nd day of September, 2013 and that last publication of said notice in said newspapers was on the 22nd day of September, 2013.

  
Mark Ranzenberger

Subscribed and sworn to before me the 23 day of September 2013.

  
Joyce Baker Notary Public

Joyce Baker  
Notary Public of Michigan  
Isabella County  
Expires 6/15/2019

My commission expires \_\_\_\_\_

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William Woodruff,  
Zoning Administrator



**A PROPOSAL TO PREPARE A SIGN ORDINANCE TO REGULATE  
ELECTRONIC MESSAGE CENTER SIGNS FOR UNION CHARTER  
TOWNSHIP**



**SIGN REGULATIONS**

*Submitted by  
MainStreet Planning Company  
September 19, 2013*





Sign Committee  
Union Charter Township  
2010 S. Lincoln Road  
Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858

September 19, 2013

**RE: Sign Regulations**

Dear Committee Members,

In accordance with the submittal requirements of the Township's Request for Proposals Zoning Text Amendments and General Ordinance for Sign Regulations this cover letter contains the following information:

Company name: MainStreet Planning Company  
Web site: [www.mainstreetplanningco.com](http://www.mainstreetplanningco.com)  
Physical Address: 2031 Celadon Drive NE Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
Email address: [tjohnson@mainstreetplanningco.com](mailto:tjohnson@mainstreetplanningco.com)  
Phone: 616-458-3449  
Fax number: 616-988-7409  
Project Manager: Timothy J. Johnson

Information on the qualifications of MainStreet Planning Company, resumes for the Project Team, experience in preparing sign ordinances, references, and samples of our work were submitted to the Township on July 9, 2013.

This Proposal contains our understanding of the project, our approach, specific work tasks to complete the project and project cost.

We would welcome the opportunity to be your partners in this effort and look forward to presenting our qualifications to you in a personal interview.

Sincerely,

  
Timothy J. Johnson PCP  
MainStreet Planning Company

  
Janis N. Johnson AICP  
MainStreet Planning Company





## MAINSTREET PLANNING COMPANY

[www.mainstreetplanningco.com](http://www.mainstreetplanningco.com)

2031 Celadon Drive NE

Grand Rapids, MI 49525

PH: 616-458-3449

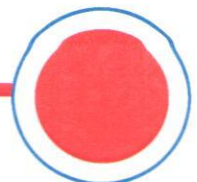
### ❖ **Company Background**

MainStreet Planning Company was founded in March of 1993 with the philosophy of providing quality planning services at a competitive price to townships, cities and villages. We serve as Planner of Record for a number of communities as shown in the client list below. We provide attentive, cost conscious, and efficient planning services and our strengths are in assisting communities in defining community character and providing practical planning and zoning solutions to land use issues. The offices of MainStreet Planning Company are located at 2031 Celadon Drive NE in Grand Rapids Township, just northeast of the City of Grand Rapids. We have a full range of GIS mapping services available.

### ❖ **MainStreet Planning Company Professional Staff and Areas of Expertise**

**Tim Johnson, PCP:** Zoning ordinances, Master Plans, State of Michigan planning and zoning law, corridor planning, farmland preservation, sign ordinances, development review, training sessions; practical solutions to planning and zoning problems; 31 years as a professional planner. [tjohnson@mainstreetplanningco.com](mailto:tjohnson@mainstreetplanningco.com)

**Janis Johnson, AICP:** Development review; complex zoning questions; cluster (open space) residential development, village design, public participation; recreation planning; 24 years as a professional planner. [jjohnson@mainstreetplanningco.com](mailto:jjohnson@mainstreetplanningco.com)



## Project Understanding

Union Charter Township desires to retain the services of a consultant to assist the Township in reviewing existing zoning ordinance regulations for Electronic Message Center (EMC) signs which are also called LED and changeable message signs, and developing zoning regulations for new EMC signs and a police power ordinance to regulate existing EMC signs.

The Township also desires to complete a review of the current sign regulations to ensure legality and consistency and to identify deficiencies. The consultant will assist the Planning Commission sign ordinance sub- committee in preparing new sign regulations.

With the use of electronic message signs rising in recent years by not only businesses but also churches, schools, hospitals and similar institutional uses, the current Township regulations for such signs do not adequately address such matters as brightness, frequency of sign message, area used for the electronic message, and video signs. All of these characteristics of EMC signs can be distracting to drivers and impact the character of a commercial corridor or a residential neighborhood if not properly regulated.



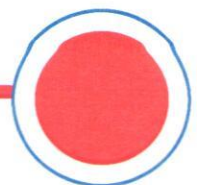
The Township Zoning Ordinance does not permit EMC signs in residential zones for such uses as schools and in fact the Ordinance prohibits in Section 11.6.E *"Illuminated flashing signs which flash, blink, fluctuate, or have chaser, or scintillating ability."*

Planning Commissioners on this sub-committee attended a seminar in 2012 on the Michigan Sign Guidebook presented by Mark Wyckoff which alerted them to other legal issues relating to sign regulations such as content neutrality and the importance of having a substitution clause which permits any commercial sign to be covered or replaced with a non-commercial message.

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## Project Approach

Project Manager Tim Johnson also attended the Sign Guide book presentation and has since assisted a number of municipalities in amending their sign regulations to address EMC signs as well as other sign issues identified in these update efforts. Based on this experience and our understanding of the items presented in the Township's Request for Proposals, the approach of MainStreet Planning Company in assisting Union Township is to:

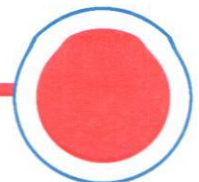




- Promote an understanding by Committee members of the varied technical and legal issues relating to the regulation of EMC signs and signs in general by utilizing the Sign Guidebook to explain these matters, presenting a summary of legal challenges to EMC signs and providing information to help committee members determine appropriate brightness levels of EMC signs.
- **Conduct a Visual Preference Survey to help Committee member discern the likes and dis-likes of EMC and other sign types;**
- An optional bus tour of the Township to view existing EMC signs followed by a discussion to clarify concerns about current signage in the Township and determine how to address these concerns.
- **Inventory existing signs in the Township to provide a basis for preparing new sign requirements and to be able to identify the extent of non –conforming signs which might be created as a result of the new sign rules.**
- Ensure that new sign regulations can be supported by the business community by involving business owners in the Committee process and by having the draft sign ordinance reviewed by the Economic Development Authority;
- Prepare regulations which balance the desires of the community to control aesthetics with the legitimate interests of businesses to promote themselves;
- Ensure that any new regulations are comprehensive, practical and legal;
- **Provide a method, perhaps through a police power ordinance, to bring existing EMC signs into compliance with new zoning regulations ;**
- Review the existing sign regulations for deficiencies, consistency and administrative difficulties and propose amendments to address these matters;
- **Provide illustrations of various sign types and regulations and re-format the sign chapter to aid in sign ordinance administration;**
- Provide regular summaries of proposed sign regulations and the rationale for such requirements to the Planning Commission of items approved by the Sign Committee so the Planning Commission will be fully informed and comfortable with the proposed amendments before holding its public hearing. Township Board members will also receive these summaries and;
- Provide proposed amendments to the Township attorney to ensure their legality.



The following section describes in detail how we intend to accomplish this



## Project Tasks

### ■ **Task 1 Kick Off Meeting with Committee** (Month one)

The first meeting of the Sign Committee will be devoted to its organization including setting up a meeting schedule, discussing the purpose of the Committee and its objectives. At this first meeting MainStreet Planning will also:

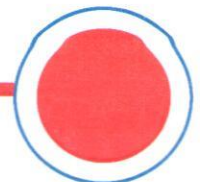
- Present the varied technical and legal issues relating to the regulation of EMC signs and signs in general by utilizing the Sign Guidebook to explain these matters, presenting a summary of legal challenges to EMC signs and providing information to help committee members determine appropriate brightness levels of EMC signs.
- Lead a discussion to list the likes, dis-likes, concerns and issues regarding the current sign regulations.
- Conduct a visual preference session using a slide presentation of sign photographs with Committee members listing their preferences.

*As an alternative to or in addition to the visual preference survey we suggest a Committee bus tour of the Township and portions of the City of Mt. Pleasant to view existing signs for on the spot discussion and evaluation. A separate cost has been provided for this item.*

### ■ **Task 2 Analyze Committee Comments; Prepare List of Amendments and Inventory Existing Signs** (Months one- three)

- Using the information provided by the Committee as well as information provided by the Township Zoning Administrator and relying on our own experience in preparing sign regulations we will prepare **a written analysis of the existing sign regulations** including a list of possible amendments to existing sign regulations for discussion with the Committee.
- As part of this task we will review sign variances requested and granted using the data base provided by the Township in order to help determine what changes to current sign regulations may be necessary.
- Results of the **visual preference survey** or Committee tour will also be prepared.
- Compare the Union Township sign ordinance to the sign regulations in other similar municipalities including the City of Mt. Pleasant.
- If requested by the Committee we will conduct an **inventory of existing signs** using the Township's data base of approved sign permits, maps provided by the Township and performing an actual physical survey of the Township to catalog existing signs not listed in the data base.

The purpose of the inventory is to determine trends and patterns in sign sizes, types, materials and location which will be useful in determining if current sign regulations





should be changed. For example, it may be useful to know what percentage of businesses install the maximum size allowed by the ordinance. If most do not perhaps the maximum size should be reduced. *A separate cost has been provided for this task.*

- Mail relevant information to Committee for review prior to meeting.

### ■ **Task 3 Second Meeting with Committee / Sign Ordinance Outline/ Master Plan** (Month 2 or 3)

Information from Task 2 will be discussed and members will have the opportunity to express additional concerns and ideas on the preparation of the sign regulations. **The result of this meeting will be an agreed upon list of amendments including the goals and objectives of the sign ordinance (none currently exists), chapter outline and list of sign illustrations.**

At this meeting we will review possible changes to the Master Plan to provide support for new sign regulations. The Plan contains references to signs not only on page 95 but more specifically on pages 101 and 104. These latter pages contain the same goal statement relative to creating a plan for re-developing Bluegrass Road. This statement reads: *“Lower the height and number of signs and standardize signage size and placement”*



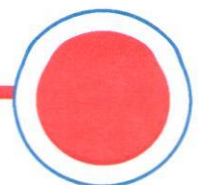
**The sign ordinance update process may be a good opportunity to actually implement this goal by developing specific sign regulations either as part of the zoning ordinance or a police power ordinance for Bluegrass Road. A separate cost for this work would be provided if the Committee decides to pursue this.**

### ■ **Task 4 Committee Work Sessions** (Months 3, 4, & 5)

MainStreet Planning will prepare draft sign regulations based on the results of Task 5 and review these with and revise them as directed by the Committee. Regulations for EMC signs will address such matters as brightness, frequency of sign message, area used for the electronic message, and video signs. We anticipate up to four meetings with the Sign Committee to prepare draft sign ordinance amendments. Drafts will be sent to members in advance of each meeting.

### ■ **Task 5 Keep Everyone Informed** (Months 2- end)

Following each Committee meeting we will prepare a summary of items that the Committee has agreed upon. These will be sent to the Planning Commission and Township Board as well as the





Township Attorney and feedback will be encouraged. Results from the Committee can also be sent to groups or individuals who have a vested interest in the development of this ordinance. Progress reports and summaries can also be posted on the Township web site.

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■ **Task 6 Present to Township Board & Planning Commission** (Month 6)

MainStreet Planning Company will present a draft sign ordinance to the Planning Commission and Township Board either in a joint session or at their regular meetings along with a summary of the major changes and comments from the Township Attorney. We would recommend that a similar presentation be made to the EDA, Chamber of Commerce or other business groups. This presentation can be made by the Zoning Administrator or Sign Committee Chair to reduce consultant cost although MainStreet is certainly available to do so at your request.

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■ **Task 7 Revise Ordinance / Set Public Hearing** (Month 7)

Based on the comments from Task 6 MainStreet Planning will make revisions to the draft ordinance and with the concurrence of the Planning Commission schedule a public hearing. We will assist the Township in publicizing a summary of the proposed ordinance and preparing the notice of the public hearing.

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■ **Task 8 Planning Commission Public Hearing** (Month 8)

MainStreet Planning will present the draft sign ordinance at a Planning Commission public hearing. A summary of the draft ordinance will be prepared for distribution before and at the hearing and a copy linked to the Township web site.

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■ **Task 9 Revise Draft Ordinance/ Planning Commission Approval** (Month 9)

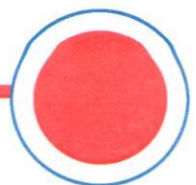
Following the hearing we will make revisions as directed by the Planning Commission so the ordinance can be recommended for approval to the Board.

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■ **Task 12 Adoption by the Township Board** (Month 9 or 10)

We will assist the Zoning Administrator in preparing the recommended sign ordinance for Township Board consideration and will present the sign ordinance amendments to the Board if so requested. Revisions required by the Board will be completed by MainStreet Planning Company. A summary of the final adopted ordinance will be prepared for publication.

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## Project Management

### **Project Management**

Tim Johnson, PCP, of MainStreet Planning Company will serve as project manager, attending all meetings and the public hearing as well as preparing the actual ordinance language. Janis Johnson AICP will assist in preparing ordinance language.

### **Township Staff Assistance**

Assistance from Union Township Staff will include providing information on sign variance requests, maps of the Township, mailing addresses for committee members and arranging for meeting times and venues. If a bus trip is selected Staff may be asked to arrange this with ICTC.

### **Project Schedule**

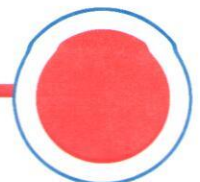
We propose to have a Draft Sign Ordinance prepared for review by the Planning Commission within six months of the startup assuming timely review by the Sign Committee. The actual adoption of the Ordinance will likely take approximately two to three months beyond that point

### **Meetings**

We have budgeted for a total of nine meetings with the Sign Committee, Planning Commission and Township Board. If we are requested by the Township to attend additional meetings these will be charged on a time and expense basis.

### **Products**

The adopted sign ordinance will address the issues and concerns brought forth during the process. The ordinance will contain drawings, pictures or photographs as necessary to illustrate sign types and requirements. The adopted ordinance will be provided in electronic form to the Township in a format compatible with the existing zoning ordinance.



## Project Cost

1. For Tasks 1-12 as described above the cost shall not exceed **\$ 11,800.00**
2. To conduct a sign inventory as described in Task 2 above the cost shall not exceed **\$1,500.00**
3. For the Optional Bus Tour as described in Task 1 above the cost shall not exceed **\$800.00** plus the cost of bus rental.





## Related Experience

MainStreet Planning Company has assisted a number of municipalities in updating their sign regulations to meet new sign technology such as electronic message centers, to comply with the legalities of sign regulation such as the regulation of political signs, to regulate temporary signs and to prepare entirely new sign ordinances. Following is a list of our most recent experience which is relevant to our proposal to assist Union Township.

### ■ **Wayland Township, Allegan County -2012**

Prepared a completely new sign ordinance to replace one that was well over 20 years old. Added over 40 new sign definitions and regulations for electronic message center signs to include dwell time, brightness and current EMC signs as well as off premise signs for farm products and portable signs.

Contact: Nellie Montague, Planning Commission Secretary  
Phone: 269-672-5037  
Email: [bodyshop@wildblue.net](mailto:bodyshop@wildblue.net)

### ■ **Lowell Township, Kent County – 2012 and 2006**

Assisted Planning Commission in developing regulations for electronic message center signs. Added definitions and new requirements for billboards to address brightness, dwell time, movement of images, prohibition on a white background and conversion of existing static billboards to EMC's. In 2006 prepared new regulations to govern portable /temporary signs. Regulations addressed size of temporary sign, length of time a temporary sign may be displayed, whether banners, pennants, streamers, strings of lights, and balloons, should be allowed as temporary signs and lighting of temporary signs.

Contact: Dave Simmonds, Commission Chair  
Phone: 616-956-8241  
Email: [dave.simmonds@farmersinsurance.com](mailto:dave.simmonds@farmersinsurance.com)

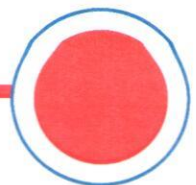
### ■ **City of Hastings, Barry County – 2010**

Updated EMC sign regulations to add new definitions including definition of video display sign as well as dwell time, brightness, size and wall signs.

Contact: Jeff Mansfield, City Manager  
Phone: 269-945-2468  
Email: [jmansfield@hastingsmi.org](mailto:jmansfield@hastingsmi.org)

### ■ **City of Greenville, Montcalm County – 2010**

Prepared new requirements for EMC signs. **To help Commissioners understand brightness of EMC signs MainStreet Planning arranged for a lighting demonstration from a billboard**



**company at the Commission meeting.** Also reviewed and updated regulations for portable signs, wall signs, window signs and signs for multi-tenant buildings.

Contact: Dave Ralph, Commission Chair

Phone: 616-754-8811

Email: [jpsrockford@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jpsrockford@sbcglobal.net)

■ **City of Ionia – 2008**

Working with a sign committee composed of planning commissioners, elected officials and business owners, MainStreet Planning Company prepared a completely new general law sign ordinance. Conducted a visual sign preference survey and bus tour of the City to help committee members understand existing sign characteristics of the community and determine regulations to avoid creating an abundance of non-conforming signs and new signs to be allowed. New regulations addressed EMC's, almost 50 new sign definitions, abandoned signs, permitting process, portable signs including balloon signs, political signs and sign rules for each zoning district and added multiple illustrations of sign types. New ordinance created a Sign Board of Appeals and MainStreet Planning Company conducted a training seminar to acquaint Board members with the new ordinance.

Contact: Jason Eppler, City Manager

Phone: 616-527-4170

Email: [JEppler@ci.ionia.mi.us](mailto:JEppler@ci.ionia.mi.us)





## Sample Work by MainStreet Planning Company

### PROPOSED AMENDMENTS FOR READER BOARD SIGNS, WINDOW SIGNS, DEFINITIONS & WALL SIGNS

**Definition: DD. Nit:** A unit of illuminative brightness equal to one candela (12.5 lumens or 1.16 foot candles) per square meter, measured perpendicular to the rays of the source.

**SECTION 5** Section 20.07 **SIGNS PERMITTED IN ALL DISTRICTS**, is hereby amended to **ADD** Section 20.07.E, Requirements for Reader Boards.

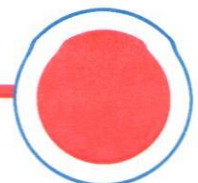
E. All wall and freestanding signs in all zoning districts may include reader boards subject to the following regulations:

1. A **reader board** shall not consist of more than 50 percent of the allowable sign area except for signs which are 32 sq. ft. or less in area.
2. The dwell time, defined as the interval of change between each individual message, shall be at least 5 seconds and a change of message must be accomplished within one second or less. The dwell time shall not include the one second or less to change the message.
3. An electronic reader board sign shall not exceed a maximum illumination of 6500 nits (candelas per square meter) during daylight hours and a maximum illumination of 325 nits (candelas per square meter) between dusk to dawn as measured at the sign's face at maximum brightness.

However, even if such signs comply with the nit requirements above such signs shall not, in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator: be brighter than is necessary for clear and adequate visibility; be of such intensity or brilliance as to impair the vision of or be a distraction to a motor vehicle driver with average eye sight or to otherwise interfere with the driver's operation of a motor vehicle or; be of such intensity or brilliance that it interferes with the effectiveness of an official traffic sign, device, or signal.

Prior to the issuance of a sign permit for an electronic message board the applicant shall provide to the Zoning Administrator certification from the manufacturer of the sign that the illumination settings for the sign comply with the maximum illumination requirements of this Section 20.07 E.

4. An electronic reader board shall be equipped with a brightness control sensor that allows for the brightness to automatically adjust to the surrounding light conditions.
5. Electronic message board signs legally in existence upon the effective date of this Section 20.07 E shall be required to comply with the illumination and message display requirements of this Section within 60 days from the effective date of this Section.



### Figure 3 – Reader Board Sign

For complete regulations see section: 8(b)

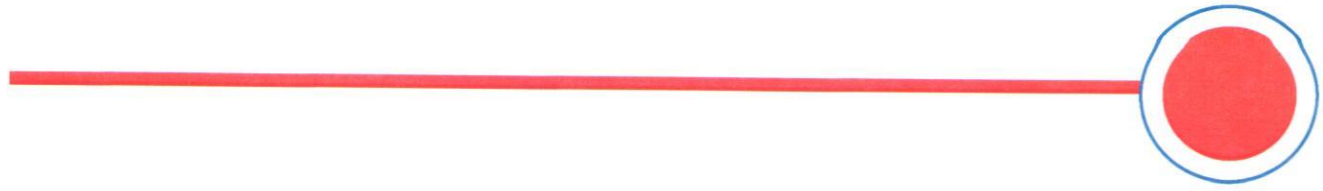
Max Reader Board Size:

- If total sign area is 50 sq. ft. or less, not more than 75% of sign
- If total sign area is more than 50 sq. ft., not more than 50% of sign



No scrolling, animated, or flashing text

Copy shall not change faster than every 4 seconds



**C L A R I O N**



Proposal For:

September 19, 2013

# **UNION TOWNSHIP SIGN REGULATIONS**





Clarion Associates  
621 Broadway, Suite 2250  
Denver, Colorado 80293  
Phone 303.830.2890  
Fax 303.860.1809

Planning and Zoning  
Growth Management  
Real Estate Consulting  
Market Analysis  
Appraisal



(VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS)

September 19, 2013

Mr. William Woodruff  
2010 S. Lincoln Rd.  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

**RE: Union Township Sign Regulations**

Dear Mr. Woodruff:

As a follow-up to the qualification statement we submitted in July, Clarion Associates is now pleased to submit this detailed proposal and budget to prepare exceptionally user-friendly, well-organized, and graphically rich sign regulations for Union Township. We applaud the RFP focus on short, concise, proposals (and the use of recycled materials – which is our policy). With that in mind, we have not repeated all of information contained in our qualification statement, but have focused on addressing the specific items listed as criteria for selection in the RFP.

Clarion Associates is a nationally recognized land-use consulting firm with extensive experience in preparing zoning ordinances, design standards, and sign codes for communities of all sizes and types across the country. Since our founding in 1992, Clarion has assisted over 130 communities in the U.S. and Canada (including Detroit, Kalamazoo, and Ann Arbor, Michigan) to implement efficient, attractive, effective, and understandable land use regulations that achieve their planning goals. Many of these assignments have included updating and revising sign codes to address EMCs, on-site digital signs, and temporary signs, and to ensure that the resulting codes fully comply with First Amendment and federal and state Due Process requirements. Recent clients for our sign regulation drafting expertise include Philadelphia; Pittsburgh; Fort Wayne/Allen County, Indiana; and Thornton, Colorado. More information about our firm is available at [www.clarionassociates.com](http://www.clarionassociates.com).

Clarion Director Donald Elliott is the contact person for this proposal, and is duly authorized to make the representations and to commit the firm to the services and budget contained in this proposal. Mr. Elliott will serve as the day-to-day project manager for this work, and can be reached at [delliott@clarionassociates.com](mailto:delliott@clarionassociates.com). The additional contact information requested in the RFP is contained in the letterhead above.

We are excited about working with Union Township on this important project. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or comments, or if you need additional information to evaluate this proposal.

Sincerely,

Don Elliott, FAICP  
Director

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# 1. Scope of Work

Clarion Associates has developed a national reputation for drafting clear, effective, and defensible sign regulations that are tailored to achieve local planning goals and well-integrated with other local codes and ordinances. That is our strength. Although we appreciate the value of sign inventories, we understand that is an alternate task under this RFP and we are not proposing to create the sign inventory. All aspects of the following scope are open to negotiation – as is the corresponding draft budget presented below.

## 1.1 Initial Reviews

- At the outset, we will review the current sign regulation ordinance, master plan, and database of sign permits and variances as described in items Tasks 3.1 and 3.2 on page 3 of the RFP. All of our regulatory projects begin with a careful understanding of the current situation, including the variety of ways the community has been working around the problems of its current regulations. Our review will include an on-line review meeting with Union Township staff to confirm that our understandings of the operation of the current codes and plan directions are correct.
- If the project support Focus Group has not already been created, its structure and membership, as well as other aspects of public involvement, will be finalized through on-line meetings at this time.

## 1.2 Focus Group / Goals and Objectives

Clarion Associates will then make our first visit to Mt. Pleasant to:

- Meet for the first time with the Focus Group (described below) to present the results of Task 1.1 and identify their goals for the project. Draft project Goals and Objectives will be presented at this time and finalized as outlined below.
- Take a tour of the Township with staff (and members of a the Focus Group if desired) to view examples of signs that are consistent or inconsistent with the community's planning goals, or that present difficult problems of interpretation or enforcement under the current ordinance, or that generated significant controversy in the community.

- Conduct a public meeting (see below) to present the results of Task 1.1, as well as issues identified during the tour, and to gather public comments on how the sign regulations should be modified. During this meeting, Clarion Associates will present photos and graphics of new / challenging sign types and issues (particularly for EMS) to help the public visualize the differences between various types of signs and refine our understanding of what types of changes are needed.
- Conduct a follow-up work session with the Focus Group to review the results of the tour and public meeting, and to finalize the Goals and Objectives of the project based on that feedback.
- The results of this first visit and first round of input will be documented in a Direction Memorandum that will guide the later stages of the project.

### 1.3 Staff Draft / Review

- Clarion Associates will then prepare a Staff Draft of the new sign regulations and police powers ordinance for review by staff. All changes from the current regulations will be footnoted or redlined. We will then make a second trip to Union Township to review this draft with staff to ensure that facts and understandings about the operation of the current code are accurate. We will also meet again with the Focus Group (and other stakeholders if requested) to indicate how we have balanced the competing interests at play in sign regulations, and to gauge their levels of comfort with those tradeoffs, and so see if additional changes in direction are necessary.
- We will then correct the draft and release a Public Draft of both ordinances for posting on the Township's web site and distribution to the public. Clarion Associates will make a third visit to Mt. Pleasant to present the draft to Township staff, the Focus Group, and the public. Our presentations will highlight changes from the current regulations and explain the rationale behind the new provisions. In our experience, it is better to present a draft and organize public input and reaction around specific draft language than to have pre-drafting work sessions at a conceptual level. Sign codes are highly detailed, and -- once initial direction on key issues has been obtained in Task 1.2 -- there is little value in convening additional discussions on conceptual (How bright? How big? How tall?), since public

reaction and satisfaction will turn on the acceptability of the detailed regulations rather than agreements on a concept.

## 1.4 Revise / Graphics

- Clarion Associates will then revise the Public Draft of the sign regulations and police power ordinance into a Hearing Draft and will insert illustrations regarding sign definitions, sign dimensions and measurements, spacing measurements (if applicable) and lighting levels. In our experience, medium sized communities often find 20-30 graphics useful to illustrate the operation of signage controls. The Hearing Draft will retain all of the footnotes and annotations of changes from the current regulations, but will modify them as necessary to enable the Focus Group and the public to identify any changes between the Public Draft and Hearing Draft.

## 1.5 Adoption

- We will then prepare all materials necessary to support adoption hearings before the Union Township Planning Commission and Board of Trustees. We will make our fourth and fifth trips to Mt. Pleasant to attend these meetings, present the new regulations and ordinance, and answer questions about the content and the reasons behind the changes.

Throughout this process, Clarion Associates will be pleased to meet with any appointed or elected officials, board, commissions, or other stakeholders during our scheduled visits to Union Township. Although this scope of services includes five trips, some of those trips involve multiple meetings with boards, commissions, and stakeholders. If the Township believes that additional trips are necessary, we are happy to negotiate those at the time the project scope is finalized.

## 2. Community Involvement

The most effective means of community involvement differ significantly between planning and zoning projects, and also differ significantly between sign code projects and other development code projects. Sign code projects – more than almost any other form of regulatory work – lend themselves to strong emotions from a wide variety of stakeholders and to broad statements of stakeholder desires

that may or may not be practical or legal. Positional posturing – i.e. taking a strong position in order to have more room to compromise later – is often involved. Efficient project management requires that we:

- Conduct a very open, inclusive, and well publicized process of Focus Group, stakeholder, and public consultation up front;
- Document that we have heard the various perspectives and desires;
- Create an early understanding that all sign codes involve compromises between competing values; and then
- Move on to drafting.

After initial input has been received, the most valuable input in a sign code project occurs when all parties have draft language in hand and can target their comments to their agreement or concern with specific parts of the draft. This focuses everyone’s attention on specific proposed controls and the degree of change from the current regulations and reduces opportunities for positional posturing.

To achieve this goal, Clarion Associates will begin with a well-publicized initial visit with multiple opportunities for input, including:

- Initial meetings with a broadly representational Focus Group (including representatives from on-site sign industry, off-site sign industry, and temporary sign industry, neighborhoods, business associations, civic appearance groups and the public);
- The creation of project-related content for posting on the Township’s web site.
- On-line surveys tailored to the different audiences listed above, plus Township staff;
- Individual meetings with different stakeholder groups identified by Township staff (with our guidance as to key groups if desired);
- A public meeting to gather broad input, and to ensure that the public understands the emerging Goals and Objectives of the project.
- While we are happy to create Facebook and Twitter accounts to provide additional avenues for input, our experience is that those are not very helpful. Sign regulations do not lend themselves to the types of “sound bite” comments that are generally generated through those forms of media.



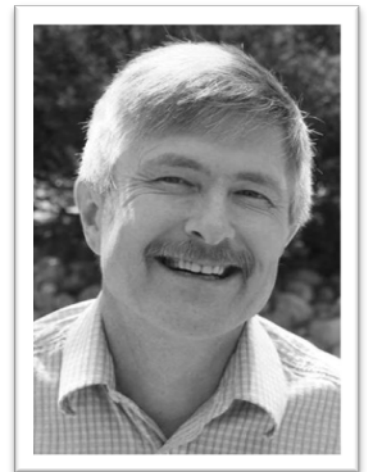
Following our initial visit, we will return to Mt. Pleasant to discuss the Staff Draft, present the Public Drafts, and to participate in the adoption process based on the Hearing Drafts. At each of these points we will make ourselves available to present the current state of the draft regulations, to explain any remaining areas of disagreement, and to highlight changes from the current regulations to any stakeholders or interest groups identified by Township staff. Each visit (other than the discussion of the Staff Draft) will include a public meeting and then an update to the Focus Group on comments made at that public meeting.

### 3. Project Manager / Staff Experience and Availability

#### Donald L. Elliott, FAICP

#### Clarion Director / Project Manager

Don Elliott is a Director with Clarion Associates. His practice focuses on innovative and award winning land development regulations, land planning and zoning, and growth management. Prior to joining Clarion, Mr. Elliott was Project Director for the Denver Planning and Community Development Office and was responsible for the Gateway Project and the Downtown Zoning Project. Mr. Elliott teaches graduate level courses on Land Use Regulation and Urbanization in Developing Countries at the University of Colorado School of Architecture and Planning. He is the author of *A Better Way to Zone* (Island Press, 2008), and a co-author of *The Rules that Shape Urban Form* (APA, 2012) and *The Citizens Guide to Planning* (APA, 2009). Mr. Elliott has a Master's Degree in City and Regional Planning from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, a Juris Doctor degree from Harvard Law School, and a Bachelor of Science in Urban Planning and Policy Analysis from Yale University.



#### Representative Major Projects

- Project Manager, Philadelphia, PA, New Sign and EMS Code
- Project Manager, Fort Wayne/ Allen County, IN, New Sign and EMS Controls
- Project Manager, Thornton, CO, Sign Code Review
- Project Manager, sign regulation updates as part of complete zoning and development codes for Arvada, Mesa County, and Pitkin County, CO; Detroit and Kalamazoo, MI; Youngstown, Dublin, and Hamilton, OH; Duluth, MN, and Cedar Rapids IA.



## Chad Meadows, AICP Associate

Chad Meadows is an Associate with Clarion Associates with more than ten years of experience in land use issues, and focuses primarily on planning, zoning, and growth management. Mr. Meadows has been responsible for conducting complex projects as a public sector planner and for public sector clients. He has also worked in the private sector on telecommunications projects. Prior to joining Clarion Associates, he oversaw the Land Development Ordinance Update in Cary, North Carolina, and worked on growth management issues in the Florida Keys. Mr. Meadows has a Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Portland State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography from the University of North Carolina.

### Representative Major Projects

- Sign regulations and graphics as part of development code rewrites for Rock Hill, SC; Herndon, VA; Alachua, FL; Henrico County, VA; Portsmouth, VA; Mooresville, NC; Franklin, TN; Falls Church, VA; Folly Beach, SC.

## 4. Experience with Sign Regulations

### Philadelphia, Pennsylvania New Sign Code

Between 2008 and 2011 Clarion Associates served as the lead consultant (with eight subconsultants) to draft a New Zoning Code for the City of Philadelphia. Following the unanimous approval of the New Zoning Code by the Philadelphia City Council in



December 2011, Clarion Associates worked with the city's Sign Working Group to develop revised sign regulations for the city. Key issues involved updating the city's "cap-and-replace" system for off-premises signs, developing a sign credit transfer program for removal of obsolete billboards, setting new lighting intensity and image timing standards for digital signs, addressing the

conversion of static to digital sign faces, developing a transferrable sign credit program for use when off-premises signs are removed, simplifying the city's many specialized commercial corridor sign controls, regulating first and second floor commercial window signage, updating temporary signage regulations, and adding graphics to illustrate sign types and measurements.

## Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

### Electronic Sign Regulations

Clarion Associates, in association with Clanton Associates, was retained by the City of Pittsburgh to review draft electronic sign regulations that had generated a good deal of controversy. During Task One, Clarion and Clanton produced a detailed memo regarding current trends and best practices



across the United State regarding electronic sign regulations. This included a review of provisions recommended by the sign industry. The memo focused on issues such as sign location, motion, brightness, size, and control/enforcement and surveyed recent developments in cities such as Seattle, Denver, and Minneapolis. Clarion/Clanton also conducted a field review of existing electronic/non-electronic signs, measuring and assessing brightness with city staff. The firm then prepared an in-depth review of the draft sign regulations and recommended extensive revisions. After conducting public meetings and extensive interviews with stakeholders including sign companies, Clarion drafted new regulations that are currently under consideration by the city planning commission and city council.

## Fort Wayne/Allen County, Indiana

### Legislative Streamlining Project

With a population of 250,000, Fort Wayne is the second largest city in Indiana, and surrounding Allen County is the largest geographic county in the state. In 2011, the city and county initiated a joint program to make Fort



Wayne "the best place to start and grow a business." Clarion Associates was retained to perform several key elements of that initiative – helping to streamline and integrate the county signage, subdivision, zoning, and other

development ordinances. One major project component was entirely new (and aligned) sign codes for the city and county, including new digital on-site and off-site sign controls, new temporary sign regulations consistent with recent First Amendment “time, place, and manner” decisions, controls for new types of signs (blade signs, banners, marquees, projected images, murals, etc.), revised size, height, and location requirements for almost all types of signs, and the design of a new “cap-and-replace” system.

## Thornton, Colorado Sign Code Review

Thornton is a fast-growing residential suburb located on the I-25 corridor north of Denver. The city experienced extremely high levels of entry home development through



the 1980s and 1990s. In 2011, staff prepared draft revisions to the city’s sign code designed to address new types of signage and to ensure that the code was not unreasonably restricting business advertising. Clarion Associates was retained to review the draft the sign code, identify any First Amendment or Due Process concerns, and suggest revisions based on best current practices in other cities.

## 5. Past Performance / References

Clarion Associates has an enviable reputation for successful project completion and very satisfied clients. The requested references are provided below:

- Natalie Shieh, Assistant Director, Philadelphia Zoning Code Commission – [Natalie.shieh@phila.gov](mailto:Natalie.shieh@phila.gov) – 215-683-4652
- Daniel Sentz, Senior Planner and Project Manager, City of Pittsburgh – [Dan.sentz@city.pittsburgh.pa.us](mailto:Dan.sentz@city.pittsburgh.pa.us) – 412-255-2200
- Kim Bowman, Director, Allen County Department of Planning Services – [Kimbowman@allencounty.us](mailto:Kimbowman@allencounty.us) – 260-449-7678
- Margaret Emerich, Thornton City Attorney – [Margaret.emerich@cityofthornton.net](mailto:Margaret.emerich@cityofthornton.net) – 303-538-7210
- Tammara Tracy – Rezone Indy Project Manager – [ttracy@indy.gov](mailto:ttracy@indy.gov) – 317-327-7834



## 6. Cost to Provide Services

Our proposed budget for the services requested in the RFP – but not including the sign inventory – are shown below. All aspects of the budget, and the scope of services to which it relates, are negotiable.

<b>Union Township Sign Regulations Proposed Budget</b>			
<b>TASK</b>	<b>Don Elliott</b>	<b>Chad Meadows</b>	<b>TASK TOTALS</b>
Hourly Rate	\$200	\$125	
<b>1. Initial Reviews</b>			
Task Hours	8	16	
Task Fees	\$1,600	\$2,000	\$3,600
<b>2. Focus Group / Goals and Objectives</b>			
<i>Prep and initial 3 day visit</i>	32	32	
<i>Summary memorandum</i>	4	8	
Task Hours	36	40	
Task Fees	\$7,200	\$5,000	
Travel Expenses - 1 Trip	\$500	\$500	\$13,200
<b>3. Draft / Review</b>			
<i>Preparing Staff Draft</i>	48	56	
<i>Review with Staff</i>	16	0	
<i>Prepare &amp; Present Public Draft</i>	24	32	
Task Hours	88	88	
Task Fees	\$17,600	\$11,000	
Travel Expenses - 2 Trips	\$1,000	\$500	\$29,600
<b>4. Revise / Graphics</b>			
Prepare Hearing Draft	16	16	
Insert Graphics	8	16	
Task Hours	24	32	
Task Fees	\$4,800	\$4,000	\$8,800
<b>5. Adoption</b>			
Task Hours	32	0	
Task Fees	\$6,400	\$0	
Travel Expenses - 2 Trips	\$1,000		\$7,400
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$62,600</b>

09.18.13  
Proposal to Prepare



# Sign Regulations

Charter Township of Union, Isabella County, Michigan

September 18, 2013

Sign Committee  
Charter Township of Union  
2010 S. Lincoln Road  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

**Subject: Sign Regulations**

Members of the Sign Committee:

We are honored to have been qualified by the Planning Commission to submit this proposal to prepare sign regulations for the Charter Township of Union. As our qualifications indicated, we have had many successful experiences drafting and implementing sign regulations in communities similar to Union Township.

Our strategy for developing high quality sign regulations for Union Township includes significant input from the Sign Committee and other stakeholders. The input process includes Focus Groups and Visual Preference Surveys, which we have used in the past with great success. Having this critical input will assist us in the creation of sign regulations that permit reasonable exposure for businesses while preserving community character.

Patrick Sloan will be the Project Manager, and have chief responsibility for completing the work. Patrick is meticulous in his approach; you can be assured every detail will be addressed in the ordinances. In addition to his experience drafting sign ordinances, Patrick has had hands-on experience in enforcement, giving him a better understanding of sign issues.

We recognize the challenges created by the emergence of Electronic Message Centers (EMCs) and we are ready to work with Union Township to develop effective regulations that permit reasonable advertising, promote community character, and comply with First Amendment court decisions on signage. A sign code update we recently prepared for the City of Medina, Ohio was cited by the American Planning Association, particularly because of the standards for electronic message centers (EMCs) and animated signs. Medina's sign code includes content-neutral regulations such as limits on frequency of copy change and illumination.

We are certain that no other firm can provide the value that we can. We encourage you to examine the project examples previously submitted in our qualifications and to check with our references. We are excited to work with the Township on this project, and we look forward to meeting with you and other community leaders in the near future.

Respectfully submitted,

**McKENNA ASSOCIATES**



Christopher J. Doozan, AICP, PCP  
Senior Vice President – **CONTACT PERSON**

**Physical/Mailing Address**

235 East Main Street, Suite 105  
Northville, MI 48167  
cdoozan@mcka.com  
(248) 596-0920  
(248) 596-0930

Enclosure

# Executive Summary

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF UNION, ISABELLA COUNTY, MICHIGAN

SIGN REGULATIONS

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

## Firm and Experience

McKenna is the Midwest's leading community planning firm whose primary service is assisting communities with planning, zoning, economic development, and landscape architecture since 1978. The firm's professional staff of 30 plus has strong planning and zoning capabilities with extensive success throughout Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois. We appreciate this opportunity to submit our proposal to prepare sign regulations for Union Township.

## Duration

We estimate that the project duration will be **8 months** from authorization. This schedule can be adjusted, depending on the chosen number of meetings and scope of the project.

## Key Professionals

### Project Director

Christopher J. Doozan, AICP, PCP, Senior Vice President

### Project Manager

Patrick J. Sloan, AICP, Principal Planner

### Project Planner

Christopher Khorey, AICP, Associate Planner

### Graphic Designer

Carrie Wakulat, Senior Graphic Designer

## Meetings

Based on an estimated 8-month schedule from authorization to adoption, we estimate holding the following **8 meetings**. These meetings are included in the lump sum fee, and additional meetings will be invoiced on a per-meeting basis.

### Working Meetings

- 1 Kick-off meeting with staff
- 1 Sign Committee meeting  
(Review critique of existing ordinance and sign inventory)
- 1 Sign Committee meeting  
(Visual Preference Survey Results, Recommendations)
- 1 Sign Committee meeting to review first draft of ordinances

### Planning Commission Meetings

- 1 Planning Commission meeting to review first draft of ordinances
- 1 Planning Commission meeting to review revised draft ordinances
- 1 Planning Commission meeting to hold the public hearing on the ordinances

### Presentation Meeting

- 1 Township Board meeting to present final draft for the First Reading

## End Products

Final Drafts of the Zoning Ordinance text amendment and companion police power Ordinance (Word and .pdf)  
Digital versions of all graphic content in the ordinances (in a digital format acceptable to the Township)

## Professional Fee

Lump Sum Fee, excluding Sign Inventory: **\$24,980.**

OPTIONAL Sign Inventory: **\$2,995.**

Additional meetings or services beyond the scope of this proposal will be provided at an hourly rate in accordance with McKenna's attached Professional Fee Schedule.

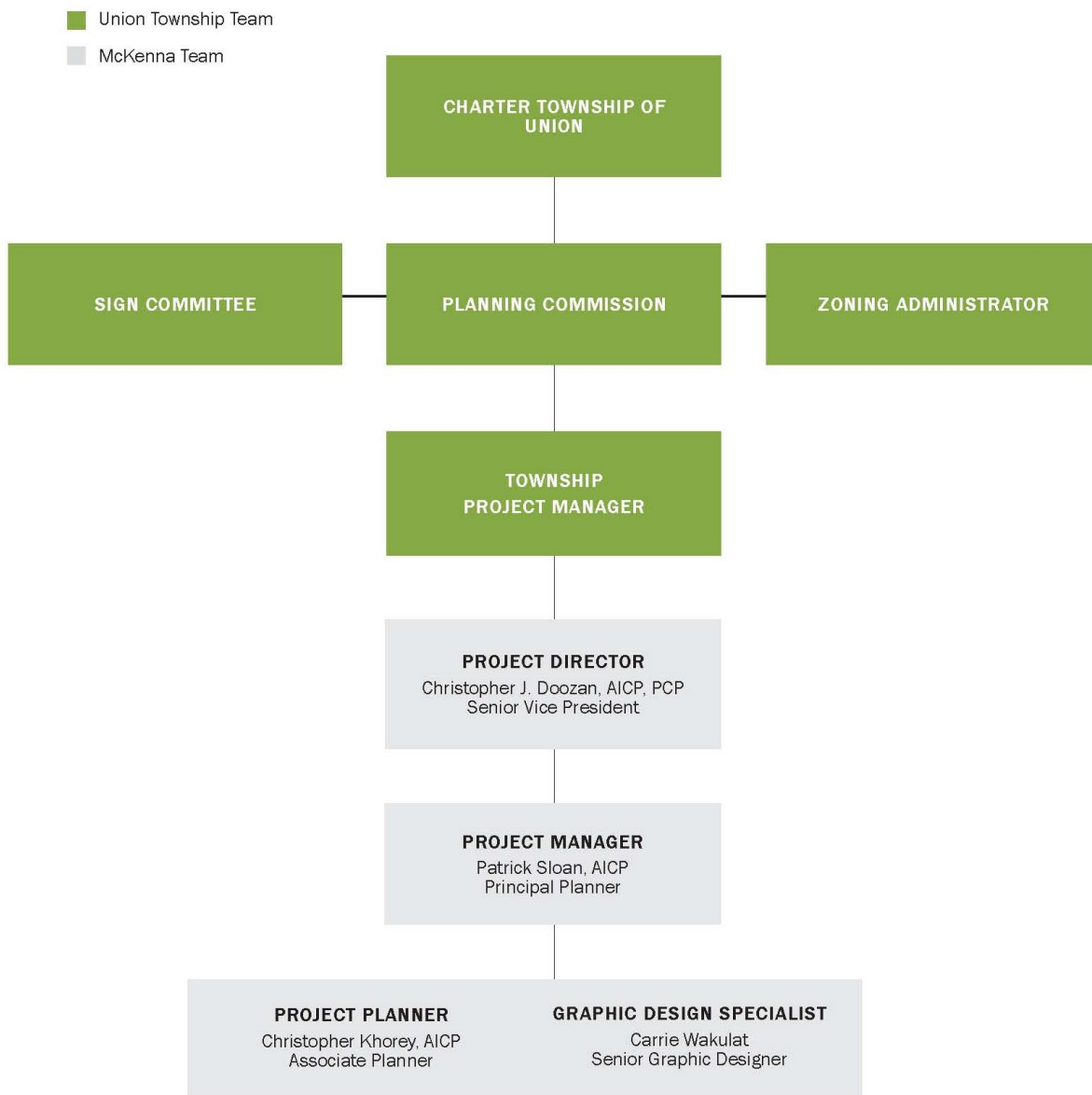


# Personnel Qualifications and Project Management

We have assembled an outstanding project team for the Union Township Sign Regulations project. The resumes of the team members were included in the qualifications previously submitted. Based upon our experience writing sign regulations and zoning ordinances for similar communities, as well as our hands-on intimate knowledge of development codes and regulations, we can begin tackling the important tasks involved in upgrading the sign regulations immediately. This project team has worked together many times before to successfully complete similar projects.

## Project Management - Sign Regulations

Charter Township of Union, Isabella County, Michigan



# Scope of Services

The Union Township sign regulation project will tap into several key assets that are characteristic of McKenna Associates' work:

- McKenna offers a time-tested systematic ordinance development process that involves all stakeholders.
- The ordinance format will be tailored to the Township's needs (such as, for codification).
- McKenna ordinances are known for their organization and ease of use.
- Unique to McKenna is a Quality Assurance Program, consisting of 10 core quality management elements, described later in this proposal.
- McKenna has assigned its top planners with knowledge of sign law to work on the sign ordinances for Union Township.
- By including a graphic designer on the project team, McKenna assures that the ordinances will be graphically oriented.

The following Scope of Services will make use of these assets and the talents of our professional planners to successfully achieve the goals of Union Township:

**Step 1: Kick-off Meeting with Township's Project Manager and Township Staff.** McKenna will schedule a meeting with the Township Project Manager and Township staff to review and finalize the scope of services, clarify goals and objectives, identify primary contact persons, schedule meetings, and identify key concerns with the existing sign regulations, including regulations of Electronic Message Center (EMC) signs.

**Step 2: Review Township's Existing Sign Regulations Master Plan and Database.** McKenna will complete a detailed review of the existing sign regulations, associated definitions, and database of sign permits and ZBA decisions. After reviewing this information, we will provide a written analysis with observations about the technical and legal deficiencies of the existing regulations. For example, we will identify current sign regulations that are content-based and could be subject to a First Amendment legal challenge.

McKenna will also include an analysis of whether the current sign regulations meet the Township's planning and development goals and objectives, as described in the Master Plan. If an amendment to the Master Plan is warranted, we will provide suggested language.

Finally, the written analysis will include a discussion of best practices and examples of elements of effective sign ordinances applicable to Union Township, including EMC's. This information will be presented at a meeting to the Sign Committee.

**Step 3: Sign Inventory (Optional).** Having a detailed inventory of existing commercial signs in Union Township that includes such information as sign type, area, height, setback, and location will greatly help the Township evaluate how its proposed regulations will affect existing signs. Conducting field inventory of every commercial sign in Union Township would add a considerable amount of time and expense to the project. We believe the most effective way to complete and inventory would start with review of Township sign permit records,

*There is a delicate balance between the needs of business to advertise and be seen and the aesthetic goals of the community.*

*As a precursor to the preparation of a new sign ordinance, key stakeholders will be surveyed to help the project team gain insight into sign-related issues in Union Township.*

*Temporary signs are often used to advertise special business promotions or community events, but they can cause clutter and blight.*

*Signs are essential for the economic health of the community. A well-placed, right-sized, readable sign attracts business.*



supplemented by field investigation. The primary purpose of the field investigation would be to take photographs of a sufficient sample of signs so that participants in the sign ordinance re-write process obtain a good sense of what the statistics mean using real-life examples. The end product of this effort would be 1) an Excel spreadsheet containing the inventory, separated into categories by type, size, etc., 2) sign photographs, and 3) written analysis. Ultimately the primary goal of the sign inventory is to gather enough information so that the Sign Committee and other participants can identify sign “success” and “failures;” such information will provide direction needed to draft new regulations.

**Step 4: Stakeholder Input.** McKenna will facilitate up to four (4) stakeholder input sessions, which would be held on the same day. Each session will consist of two (2) parts, a visual preference survey and a focus group, as follows:

- A. Focus Group Meetings:** McKenna will conduct a series of 2-4 focus groups with key pre-selected stakeholder groups. The purpose of the focus groups is to allow us to conduct a targeted discussion of sign-related issues that are important to each stakeholder group. Each focus group would last approximately one (1) hour, and will cover both scripted questions developed by McKenna and Township staff prior to the focus groups as well as spontaneously generated questions based on the discussion in each focus group. The makeup of each focus group will be determined by McKenna and Township.

Potential focus group members include:

- a. Elected Officials, Planning Commissioners, ZBA members, and the Sign Committee
- b. Township staff, including the Zoning Administrator
- c. Business and property owners
- d. Citizens and other stakeholders

The Township Project Manager would be welcome to attend one or all focus group meetings. An understanding and consensus of interests and concerns must be developed. Failure to do this can make for contentious regulations and continuing enforcement problems.

- B. Visual Preference Survey.** It is difficult to comprehend the results of sign regulations with just words. Is a 48 sq. ft. wall sign that much different from a 32 sq. ft. sign? What is reasonable: 15%, 25%, 30% window coverage? What is an appropriate ground sign height: 5 ft., 10 ft., 15 ft.? To answer these and other questions, McKenna proposes to conduct a Visual Preference Survey as part of the Focus Group meetings.

McKenna will assemble a PowerPoint presentation to show numerous individual sign photos. Focus Group participants will be asked to score each sign on a 5-point scale, ranging from TOTALLY DISLIKE (1) to OUTSTANDING (5). The score cards will then be compiled and averaged for each focus groups. The goals of this exercise are: 1) to determine if there is consensus regarding most liked and most disliked signs. Lack of consensus pinpoints areas where special attention is required as the ordinance is drafted, and 2) to translate written sign regulations into meaningful, real-life examples, providing a greater understanding of the regulations.



Window Sign



Blade Sign

McKenna will present the results of the Visual Preference Survey at a meeting to the Township Project Manager, Township staff and the Sign Committee, and draw conclusions. McKenna will utilize the Survey results and input from staff and the Sign Committee to discuss initial recommendations related to: types (including EMC's), numbers, dimensions, height, location and other standards associated with signs permitted in various parts of the Township.

**Step 5: Prepare Detailed Outlines.** McKenna has found that prior to drafting any ordinance it is best to prepare a detailed outline, which shows how ordinance sections are going to relate to each other. The outlines for the Zoning Ordinance and police power ordinance will also identify proposed graphics that will be used in the ordinances; graphics are an essential element of sign ordinances prepared by McKenna. McKenna will seek approval of the outlines from the Township Project Manager and Township staff before proceeding onto the next step – drafting the ordinance regulations for the Zoning Ordinance and police power ordinance. It is at this point in the process that we work with the Township to decide on the layout and format of these ordinances.

**Step 6: Draft the Ordinance Regulations.** Based on the approved outlines and the information gathered from the Focus Groups and Visual Preference Survey, McKenna will prepare the first draft of the Zoning Ordinance text amendment and police power sign ordinance. These ordinances will address the Township's concerns with respect to aesthetics, legal issues, nonconforming signs, and EMC's (including placement, light intensity, and frequency of message change). McKenna will meet with the Sign Committee to review and refine the first draft of these ordinances.

**Step 7: Review First Drafts with Planning Commission.** McKenna will present the first draft of the ordinances to the Planning Commission for review and comment. McKenna and Township staff will compile comments from the Planning Commission to allow McKenna to make revisions, if necessary, prior to the next meeting with the Planning Commission.

**Step 8: Review Revised (Final) Drafts with the Planning Commission.** McKenna will return to the Planning Commission to present the revised drafts for review and comment. If necessary, McKenna will make subsequent revisions.

**Step 9: Planning Commission Public Hearing and Recommendation.** McKenna will attend the public hearing of the Planning Commission to present the final drafts for review and to answer questions.

**Step 10: Presentation to the Township Board of Trustees.** As the final step in the process, McKenna will present the final draft to the Township Board of Trustees to answer any questions and initiate the official ordinance adoption.

*Electronic Message Center (EMC) signs, LED billboards, and on-premise digital signs are the newest types of signs to be considered in sign ordinances.*

*Some communities strive for signs that are well-integrated into the building and site design to create a unified and harmonious appearance.*

*A good sign ordinance must deal with several issues: number, location, size, height, lighting, legibility and landscaping.*

*From a legal perspective, the most important reason to regulate signs is to improve traffic safety.*

*Content-neutrality is essential to avoid a legal challenge.*



# Proposed Work Schedule

We anticipate completion of the Zoning Ordinance text amendments and police power sign ordinance within **8 months** of approval by the Township to proceed, in accordance with the following schedule:

TASK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Kick-Off Meeting with Township Project Manager and Township Staff								
Review Existing Sign Regulations and Master Plan								
Sign Inventory (OPTIONAL)								
1 <sup>ST</sup> Subcommittee Meeting to review sign critique and inventory								
2 <sup>nd</sup> Subcommittee Meeting to review Visual Preference Survey Results, Recommendations								
Prepare Detailed Outlines of Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment and Police Power Sign Ordinance								
Draft New (First) Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments and Police Power Sign Ordinance								
3 <sup>rd</sup> Subcommittee Meeting to review first drafts								
Review First Drafts with Planning Commission								
Review Revised Drafts with Planning Commission								
Planning Commission Public Hearings and Recommendations								
Presentations to Township Board of Trustees								
<b>MEETINGS</b>								
Kick-off Meeting (1)	•							
Subcommittee Working Meetings (3)			•	•	•			
Planning Commission Meetings (3)					•	•	•	
Township Board Meeting (1)								•

• = MEETINGS

# Fee

## Services Included in Scope of Services

McKenna will prepare the Zoning Ordinance amendments and police power Sign Ordinance for a lump sum fee of **\$24,980**. At the Township's option, we will complete a Sign Inventory for a lump sum fee of **\$2,995**.

The following is a breakdown of individual fees for each step in our scope of services, including the optional Sign Inventory. To best meet your needs, we can work with you to customize our proposed scope of services to eliminate, add, or modify elements, with our overall fee being adjusted accordingly.

1.	Kick-off Meeting with Township Staff	\$1,130
2.	Review City's Existing Sign Regulations and Master Plan	\$2,860
3.	Sign Inventory (OPTIONAL)	\$2,995
4.	Facilitate Focus Group Meetings	\$2,270
5.	Visual Preference Survey	\$1,450
6.	Survey Results, Recommendations	\$1,100
7.	Prepare Detailed Outline	\$1,400
8.	Draft Zoning Ordinance Amendment and Police Power Sign Ordinance	\$8,390
9.	Review First Draft with Sign Committee	\$1,300
10.	Review First Draft with Planning Commission	\$1,300
11.	Review Revised (Final) Draft with Planning Commission	\$1,900
12.	Planning Commission Public Hearing	\$ 700
13.	Presentation to Township Board of Trustees	\$1,180

The above fees reflect all professional fees, meetings, travel and reproducible expenses outlined in this proposal. Additional meetings or services beyond the scope of the proposal will be provided at an hourly rate in accordance with McKenna's Professional Fee Schedule, below.

## Professional Fee Schedule

Effective through June 30, 2014

Professional Classification	Rate Per Hour
President	\$135.00
Executive or Senior Vice President	\$130.00
Vice President	\$125.00
Director	\$120.00
Senior Principal or Manager	\$110.00
Principal	\$97.00
Senior	\$78.00
Associate	\$68.00
Assistant	\$55.00
Aide	\$44.00
Administrative Assistant	\$42.00

# Capacity of Firm

## McKenna Standards, Quality Assurance and Management

Quality assurance is accomplished around 10 core quality standards. Under the direction of a Project Director, McKenna's Project Manager will apply these standards to management of the project.

### Quality Standards

1. **Client Service** – Building partnerships and satisfying Township expectations.
2. **Client/Project Team** – Project manager-led teams with project roles, and thoughtful allocation of resources.
3. **Scope/Deliverables** – Identifying and tracking fulfillment of project scope and deliverables.
4. **Work Tasks** – Identifying and monitoring work tasks and work flow.
5. **Schedule** – Identifying time frames and milestones, and progress reports with the Township.
6. **Cost Accounting** – Project Manager establishes budgets, invoicing and monitoring plan with Project Director.
7. **Contracts/Negotiations** – Preparing contracts, subcontracts and any amendments.
8. **Technical/Production/Communication** – Meeting technical and document production and communication requirements.
9. **Quality Management** – Project Director manages the quality of our services.
10. **Communications** – Ensuring ongoing formal communication with the Township and team.

### Project Manager

Each Project Manager tailors the program for each project individually, to ensure the standard of quality established by each client is achieved. The program is flexible, and can be adapted to meet the needs of large or small projects, and across discipline lines.

### Accountability

Communication is a most effective element in producing a successful project. Project teams hold regular work plan reviews with the project manager, task assignees, the department heads and others with a role in the project. Accountabilities are clearly identified and communicated, so that each project team member knows what is expected and is held accountable.

### Targets

McKenna targets individual performance improvements using clearly defined roles and accountabilities for each professional involved in the project. Targets are available as a reference for setting goals and monitoring performance against standards and measurements.

### Effectiveness

The effectiveness of our overall Quality Management Program as demonstrated by previous work has shown that all personnel are aware of the professional, technical and ethical requirements of each project. Responsibility for implementation of the plan is team-wide under the direction of the Project Director. The Project Manager addresses the short- and long-term issues underlying the project. Project Managers also develop technical standards for the specific project, and procedures for implementing quality management, including a plan for timely completion of the project, while maintaining professional performance levels.



Marquee Sign

## Client Satisfaction

A client satisfaction form is provided at significant milestones as a continuing quality control measure. Our level of performance is graded and we make necessary adjustments.

## Change Management

McKenna project managers anticipate change into all projects and factor change into project plans and budgets.

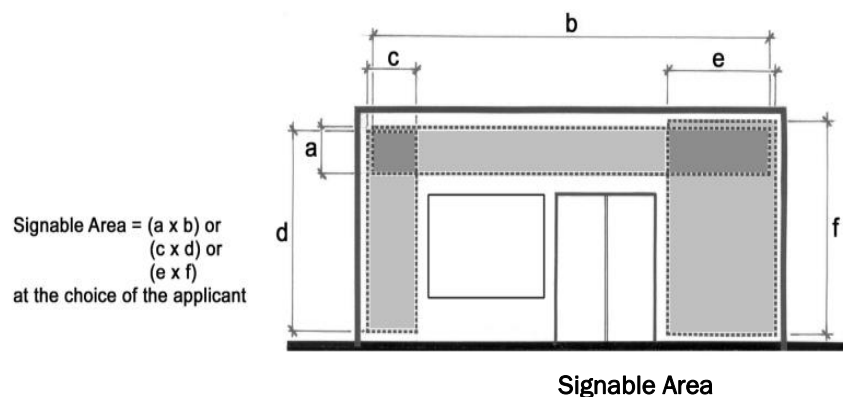
## American Planning Association Code

McKenna project managers apply the following “Technical Standards of Professional Practice” of the American Planning Association.

1. Meet standards of care
2. Maintain adequate documentation
3. Be responsible for technical competence
4. Possess, maintain and upgrade qualifications specific to project.
5. Avoid errors of commission and omission
6. Practice with due diligence
7. Present reliable information and disclose substantial deficiencies
8. Perform required investigation
9. Explain cause and effect relationships
10. Consider rational alternatives
11. Avoid misleading communication
12. Substantiate findings and recommendations

## Ethics and Professional Conduct

McKenna project managers follow the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct of the American Institute of Certified Planners.





# Experience and Case Histories

On this and the following pages are descriptions and examples of several recently completed McKenna sign ordinances. Many of the examples illustrate how tables, graphics, and cross-references can simplify ordinances and make them much more effective and user-friendly. The sign regulations for Union Charter Township will incorporate similar formatting. Cut sheets for some of these projects, as well as cut sheets for other select projects, are included at the end of this document.

## City of Medina, OH

### Project: Sign Code Update

McKenna worked with City staff and a Steering Committee of diverse stakeholders to develop a complete Sign Code Update. The City was in need of sign regulations that maintained content neutrality and addressed advances in sign technology. Among other things, McKenna provided additional sign definitions, electronic message center sign standards, and comprehensive design standards for commercial area signs. The resulting Sign Code has proved to be a much easier document to administer than previous versions.

The Medina Sign Code was cited by the American Planning Association as a good ordinance to follow, particularly because of the standards for electronic message centers and animated signs.

**Contact:** **Gregory Hannan, AICP**  
Planning Director  
City of Medina  
132 N. Elmwood Ave.  
Medina, OH 44256  
(330) 722-9023



## Charter Township of Lyon, Oakland County, MI

### Project: Sign Regulations within the Zoning Ordinance

Lyon Township is a growing community with a population of 14,545, located in southwest Oakland County. The Township has four distinct sign districts: signs for highway-oriented businesses (mostly industrial), signs regulated within a planned development, commercial corridor signs, and signs for the older part of the community, known as New Hudson. The challenge with Lyon Township's sign regulations, which are in the zoning ordinance, is to treat each of these districts fairly, and in a way that the ordinance is not too complex. One technique to help readers understand the ordinance was through use of photographs.

Working with McKenna, the Township recently updated its sign regulations. A steering committee was formed, composed of two Township Trustees, planning commission members, and DDA members. To initiate the process, surveys were mailed to business people and residents to achieve an understanding of their perceptions of sign deficiencies or adequacies.

**Contact:** **Lannie Young**  
Township Supervisor  
Charter Township of Lyon  
58000 Grand River Ave.  
New Hudson, MI 48165  
(248) 437-2240



## City of Williamston, MI

### Project: Zoning Ordinance and Form-Based Standards

McKenna worked with the City of Williamston to develop a new Zoning Ordinance. Williamston is transitioning from a developing community to a developed community, and is beginning to deal with the implications of redevelopment while protecting the town character. Signs have a huge impact on town character. In Williamston, signs are addressed in the Zoning Ordinance.

The McKenna team helped the City radically alter the face of the Ordinance. The document was better organized so that similar standards and restrictions were located in the same section. Charts, figures, and tables were used liberally to help simplify the Ordinance and allow users to more efficiently find the information they seek. Headers, footers, and links were used throughout the document to allow readers to navigate throughout the document easily. A .pdf version was created for posting on the City's website.



**Contact:**            **Alan Dolley**  
City Manager  
City of Williamston  
161 E. Grand River Ave.  
Williamston, MI 48895-1497  
(517) 655-2774

## Champion Township, Trumbull County, OH

### Project: Electronic Message Center Sign Text Amendments

McKenna worked with the Zoning Commission to develop changeable copy and electronic message center sign regulations. The Township was being flooded with requests for such signage and did not have any regulations addressing the technologically-advanced sign type.

**Contact:**            **Ms. Sally Berkhouse**  
Zoning Secretary  
Champion Township  
149 Center St. East  
Warren, OH 44481  
(330) 847-6117 (Twp. Zoning Office)



# City of Streetsboro, OH

## Project: Zoning Code Update (including Sign Regulations)

McKenna assisted the City of Streetsboro with its Zoning Code Update, including sign regulations.

McKenna planners worked with City staff and a steering committee to develop a Zoning Ordinance Update that corrected discrepancies and conflicting text and afforded City staff the ability to efficiently and thoroughly administer clear and concise regulations. The sign regulations were revised to ensure content neutrality and permit electronic message center signs with reasonable limitations. Sign definitions were added and supplemented to remove vague and ambiguous language. Below is a sample table of Type of Sign Permitted by Zoning District.

USE	Residential/Special Districts								Nonresidential Districts					
	O-C	R-R	R-1	R-1A	R-2	R-3	R-4	R-G	O	B-N	B	B-R	D	I-1
Building Mounted Sign	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	■	■	■	■	■	■
Ground Sign	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	■	■	■	■	■	■
Development Entrance Sign	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
On-Site Directional Sign						◆			■	■	■	■	■	■
Building Directory Sign						◆			■	■	■	■	■	■
Window Sign									◆	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Temporary or Special Event Sign	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

**Key:** ■ Permitted for all uses ◆ Permitted for some uses. Refer to sign design standards.

Standards addressing temporary sandwich board signs were developed in response to input provided by business owners throughout the update process. Additional provisions were also added to regulate abandoned signs. The resulting sign regulations provided the City with a reasonable balance between business interests requesting increased visibility, while ensuring that visual clutter and traffic safety were given proper consideration.

**Contact:** **Mr. John H. Cieszkowski, Jr.**  
 Director of Planning, Zoning and Economic Development  
 City of Streetsboro  
 9184 St. Rt. 43  
 Streetsboro, OH 44241  
 (330) 626-4942 ext. 128





PROPOSAL

# CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF UNION SIGN REGULATIONS

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

*Large Firm Resources. Personal Attention.*



ROWE PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICES COMPANY

127 S. Main Street  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
989.772.2138  
www.rowepsc.com





# ROWE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES COMPANY

*Large Firm Resources. Personal Attention. <sup>sm</sup>*

September 19, 2013

Union Charter Township Sign Committee  
2010 S. Lincoln Road  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858

RE: Sign Regulations

ROWE Professional Services Company appreciates the opportunity to submit this proposal to provide assistance with the township's efforts to update the sign provisions of the zoning ordinance. As demonstrated in our previously provided statement of qualifications, our in-depth experience with sign regulations and zoning ordinance administration and our office's close proximity to the project area will be assets to this project.

Following, please find a revised scope based on the additional parameters provided by the township. Our schedule and pricing are based on this revised scope.

ROWE has extensive experience in the development of zoning ordinances and sign ordinances, with 30 years of experience working with Michigan counties, townships, villages, and cities on planning and zoning issues. Our staff has assisted 29 municipalities with rewriting or amending their zoning ordinances, most of which involved updating sign provisions, and have also worked on revisions to five stand-alone sign ordinances. In addition, I've had the opportunity to participate as reviewer in the development of the Michigan Sign Guidebook for Scenic Michigan released in 2012, and have conducted two ROWE Community Education Seminars on addressing digital signs in local ordinances.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit this proposal. We look forward to discussing it with you. Please feel free to contact me at (989) 772-2138 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,  
**ROWE Professional Services Company**

**J. Douglas Piggott, AICP, PCP**  
Planner / Project Manager  
127 S. Main Street  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858  
Phone: (989) 772-2138

[www.rowepsc.com](http://www.rowepsc.com)

**Leanne H. Panduren, PE**  
Vice President / Civil Utilities Division Manager

Fax: (989) 773-7757



# ***Sign Regulations Proposal***

## ***Scope of Work***

ROWE's proposed project approach assumes that while the primary concern of the township is with the regulation of Electronic Message Center (EMC) signs, that the project is also intended to address any other identifiable issues with the current ordinance, particularly with regards to administration and enforcement. Through its decision to have the selected consultant work with a subcommittee that will include citizens as well as staff, planning commission members, and township board members, the township has demonstrated a commitment to open up the planning process which will help ensure the resulting regulations take into account the concerns of a range of stakeholders in the community.

## **Sign Inventory**

ROWE proposes to conduct a sign inventory to determine the current type, size (approximate), overall height, setbacks, location, and imagery of signs in the township's commercial areas. The inventory would be completed using staff from ROWE's Mt. Pleasant office. The data would be recorded into a report classifying existing signs based on zoning, use, and street type and in an Excel spreadsheet.

## **Technical Analysis**

ROWE staff will prepare a technical analysis of potential issues based on:

- The data from the sign inventory
- A review of the current sign regulations
- A review of surrounding jurisdiction sign regulations

- A review of master plan recommendations regarding signage
- Preliminary comments regarding current signage regulations from city staff and the subcommittee
- An analysis of technical and current legal issues
- A review of sign permits approved and variances applied for in the past 15 years

## **Formulate Goals and Objectives**

ROWE will review the technical analysis with the sign subcommittee to identify goals and objectives for the project. ROWE will present the recommendations of the sign subcommittee to the planning commission for a determination of the issues to be addressed in the update.

## **Focus Group / Visual Preference Survey / Tour**

The township's RFP indicates that part of the public input should be through the use of a focus group, but since we anticipate that the sign subcommittee will include stakeholders from local businesses, residents, and sign companies that a separate focus group is not necessary. ROWE will conduct a visual preference survey meeting that will be open to the general public to participate in to test the support for the preliminary goals developed for the process, and a bus tour of the township's business areas to identify signage concerns, as well as examples of preferred signage in the community.

## **Draft Ordinance Language**

ROWE will draft ordinance language based on the direction provided by the planning commission and present it to the sign subcommittee for comments. The drafting process will concentrate on keeping regulations as clear and simple as possible with the



# Sign Regulations Proposal

use of tables and illustrations wherever appropriate. Draft language will be presented to the planning commission along with the advisory committee comments and will be revised based on planning commission suggestions.

### Public Review Process

Although the Planning Commission is not required to hold a public hearing on the general police powers ordinance portion of the project, because the two set of ordinances are interconnected, we are proposing that their public hearing review both.

We recommend that the township board then hold a public hearing on both before taking final action on each.

ROWE will attend both public hearings to answer any questions regarding the proposed changes.

### Final Product

ROWE will provide the township with one photo-ready copy of the ordinance as well as a digital copy in both MS Word and .pdf formats.

### Schedule for Completion

ROWE anticipates the project will take nine months and include a kick-off meeting, three meetings with the sign subcommittee, three meetings with the planning commission, one visual preference meeting, a bus tour, and two public hearings.

Steps	Month								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Kick-off meeting with planning commission / sign subcommittee	●/▲								
Sign inventory									
Preparation of technical analysis									
Develop preliminary goals and objectives with sign subcommittee			●						
Planning Commission reviews and approves goals and objectives				▲					
Visual preference meeting					◆				
Bus tour									
Review of public input and determination of changes to ordinance by sign subcommittee					●				
Draft ordinance language									
Review draft language with sign subcommittee						●			
Review draft language with planning commission						▲			
Preparation of pre-public hearing draft									
Review by Planning Commission and approval of public hearing draft							▲		
Public hearing								▲	
Adoption									■
Final product									
Subcommittee Meetings = ●    Planning Commission Meetings = ▲    Township Board Meetings = ■    Other Meetings = ◆									



# Sign Regulations Proposal

## Cost to Provide Services

Work Items	Staff Hours	Meetings	Cost
Kick-off meeting with planning commission / sign subcommittee	6	1	\$570
Preparation of technical analysis	35		\$3,000
Develop preliminary goals and objectives with sign subcommittee	6	1	\$570
Planning commission reviews and approves goals and objectives	7	1	\$600
Visual preference meeting	21	1	\$1,870
Bus tour*	4	1	\$380
Review of public input and determination of changes to ordinance by sign subcommittee	6	1	\$500
Draft ordinance language	16		\$1,600
Review draft language with sign subcommittee	6	1	\$500
Review draft language with planning commission	4	1	\$380
Preparation of pre-public hearing draft	6		\$500
Review by planning commission and approval of public hearing draft	4	1	\$380
Public hearing	4	1	\$380
Adoption	4	1	\$380
Final product	7		\$450
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>\$12,060</b>

\*Arrangement for, and cost of the bus used for this portion of the project would be the responsibility of the township.

ROWE proposes to bill on a monthly basis following completion of each of the milestones listed above, with the final 10% held until completion of the project and approval by the city. However, ROWE is willing to consider alternative billing arrangements preferred by the city.

Billing will be lump sum per milestone. All miscellaneous costs, including mileage, postage, and reproduction, are included in these costs and will not be billed as “extras.” If, in ROWE’s opinion, the city requests work outside the scope of the proposal, ROWE will be responsible for notifying the city, submitting an estimate for the additional work, and obtaining city approval before undertaking the additional work.

Optional Sign Inventory	Staff Hours	Meetings	Cost
Sign inventory	30	1	\$2,800

Position	Hourly Rate
Planners	\$90-\$95
Landscape Architect	\$107
CAD	\$79
Clerical	\$53
Graduate Engineer	\$90