



# Office of the City Clerk

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## Legislation Details (With Text)

**File #:** SO2018-7004  
**Type:** Ordinance                      **Status:** Passed  
**File created:** 9/20/2018              **In control:** City Council  
**Final action:** 10/31/2018  
**Title:** Amendment of Municipal Code Chapter 17-12 regarding high-rise building signs  
**Sponsors:** Emanuel, Rahm  
**Indexes:** Ch. 12 Signs  
**Attachments:** 1. SO2018-7004.pdf, 2. O2018-7004.pdf

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
10/31/2018	1	City Council	Passed as Substitute	Pass
10/22/2018	1	Committee on Zoning, Landmarks and Building Standards	Recommended to Pass	
9/20/2018	1	City Council	Referred	

### SUBSTITUTE ORDINANCE

#### BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. Section 17-12-0601 of Title 17 of the Municipal Code of Chicago, the Chicago Zoning Ordinance, is hereby amended by inserting the underscored language, and deleting the struck-through language, as follows:

#### 17-12-0601 Sign Area.

*(Omitted text is unaffected by this ordinance)*

#### 17-12-0601-C Individual Letters or Elements.

The area of a sign comprised of individual letters or elements attached to a ~~building~~ building wall is determined by calculating the area of the smallest square or rectangle that can be drawn around the letters and/or elements. Signs consisting of individual letters and/or elements will be measured as one sign when the distance between the letters and/or elements is less than 2 times the dimension of each letter and/or element.

1. Exemption. For high-rise buildings signs, portions of individual letters and/or elements, which collectively form one individual letter sign, may extend beyond the dimensions of the smallest box that encapsulates all other high-rise buildings sign letters and/or elements; provided, (T) the total area of such extensions may not exceed 10% of the square footage contained within such box that encapsulates all other high-rise building sign letters and/or elements and (ii) the total square footage of such individual letter sign and any such extensions under (i) may not exceed the maximum high-rise building sign area square footage allowed at the corresponding building height at which the high-rise building sign is proposed.

Figure 17-12-0601-C1

Not to exceed 10%

*(Omitted text is unaffected by this ordinance)*

SECTION 2. Section 17-12-1000 of Title 17 of the Municipal \*Code of Chicago, the Chicago Zoning Ordinance, is hereby amended by deleting the struck-through language and inserting the underscored language, as follows:

**17-12-1000 Signs in business, commercial, downtown and manufacturing districts.**

*(Omitted text is unaffected by this ordinance)*

17-12-1003-E Sign Area and Height Table. The following standards apply to all permanent signs in B, C, M, DC, DX and DS districts:

<b>Regulation</b>	<b>B1, B2 Districts</b>	<b>DC, DX Districts</b>	<b>B3, C1, C3, DS Districts</b>	<b>C2, M Districts</b>
Maximum Total Sign Area (square feet)	3 x street frontage or 600 whichever is less	5 x street frontage or 800 whichever is less	4 x street frontage or 1,500 whichever is less	5 x street frontage or 1,800 whichever is less
For lots greater than 1 acre in area with multiple street frontages, the Maximum Total Sign Area shall apply per street frontage. High-rise building sign area counts toward maximum total sign area on a zoning lot, except when such zoning lot exceeds 1 acre and has less than 2 street frontages.				
Max. Freestanding Sign Area	50% of Maximum Total Sign Area Limit (above)			
Maximum Freestanding Sign Height (feet)	24; or 35 if located on a zoning lot with more than 75 feet of street frontage on a single street that has a right-of-way width of more than 80 feet; or 50 if located on a zoning lot with more than 150 feet of frontage on a single street with a right-of-way width or more than 80 feet			
Minimum Guaranteed Wall Sign Area for Ground-floor Tenants	32			
Maximum Wall Sign Area -	33% of building wall area			

*(Omitted text is unaffected by this ordinance)*

**17-12-1005-D High-Rise Building Signs.**

1. *No more than one high-rise building sign is allowed on any building building.*
2. The maximum sign face area of a high-rise building sign is limited as follows:

<b>(feet above grade at base of building)</b>	<b>Height of Sign</b>
<i>isq-m</i>	—
	<b>Maximum Area (square feet)</b>
<del>5 x building wall width at mounted sign height</del>	
<del>6 * building wall width at mounted sign height</del>	
<del>7 &gt;^ building wall width at mounted sign height</del>	
	<del>8 x, building wall width at mounted sign height</del>

<b>Height of Sign (feet above grade at base of building)</b>	<b>Maximum Area (square feet)</b>
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150-199	200
200 - 299	300
300-399	400
400 - 499	500
500- 599	600
600 - 649	700
650 - 699	800
700 - 749	900
750 - 799	<b>1,000</b>
800 +	<b>1.100</b>

3. *High-rise building signs must be individual letter signs.*
4. *High-rise building signs may not be attached to roof-mounted structures that exist solely for the purpose of supporting the sign.*
5. High-rise building signs must be located directly below the highest roof line of the building and may not exceed 50% of the wall width at the height the high rise building sign is established, provided that any high-rise building sign installed on the exterior wall of any roof-top mechanical equipment penthouse or other roof-top feature that is integral to the building upon which it is located may not exceed 50% of the wall width of the exterior wall of the building immediately beneath the height at which the high-rise building sign is established.
6. High-rise building signs must be integrated into the total building design to avoid detracting from the visual character of the building.

7. High-rise building signs comprised of more than one individual letter or element shall not have a height measurement that exceeds their width.

*St8^ No projecting signs are allowed as high-rise building signs.*

6t9. High-rise building signs shall be limited to business identification for the principal tenant of the building or, if applicable, the alternate principal tenant. For purposes of this subsection, "principal tenant" means a tenant that occupies or has a signed lease to occupy at least the lesser of 51 % of the building's total floor area or 350,000 square feet of the building's total floor area ~~or more of the floor space in a high rise building~~. If there is no principal tenant, or if the principal tenant informs the Zoning Administrator<sup>^</sup> in writings that it does not wish to display such a high-rise building sign, then an alternate principal tenant may apply to the City for approval of ~~such~~ a high-rise building sign identifying said alternate principal tenant (in place of, and not in addition to, ~~such~~ a high-rise building sign identifying the principal tenant). For purposes of this subsection, "alternate principal tenant" means a tenant which: (i) is the ~~building's~~ building's largest tenant or next-largest tenant if there is no principal tenant, or, if there is a principal tenant, is the next-largest tenant; (ii) maintains the primary offices of its international, national or regional headquarters, or similarly publicly recognized significant business unit(s), in the building; and, (iii) either (a) maintains the primary offices of its chief executive and other executive officers in the building and employs 1,000 individuals nationally, or, (b) if those executive positions are not present in the building then employs at least 1,000 individuals in the building. Any principal or alternate principal tenant must provide the Zoning Administrator with building owner support for such high-rise building sign. Any principal or alternate principal tenant which is issued a high-rise building sign permit must re-certify, at the time of each high-rise building sign permit renewal request, that it adheres to the applicable tenancy requirements in place at the time of the approval of their original high-rise building sign application. Failure to comply with the applicable tenancy criteria will result in the denial of the associated permits to legally maintain a high-rise building sign, regardless of whether that sign is a nonconforming sign with regard to other requirements. ~~meeting all of the following requirements, through proof acceptable to the Zoning Administrator; and (ii) occupies the building as its United States headquarters; and (iii) maintains the primary offices of its chief executive and other executive officers in the building; and (iv) employs at least 1,000 persons in its United States operations; and (v) has operated as a going concern for a period of at least five (5) years prior to the date of application to the City for approval of the sign, either directly or through predecessor entities.~~

*(Omitted text is unaffected by this ordinance)*

SECTION 3. Section 17-12-1100 of Title 17 of the Municipal Code of Chicago, the Chicago Zoning Ordinance, is hereby amended by deleting the struck-through language and inserting the underscored language, as follows:

**17-12-1100 Special sign districts.**

*(Omitted text is unaffected by this ordinance)*

**17-12-1104 Chicago River Corridor Special Sign District.**

17-12-1104-A Boundaries. The Chicago River Corridor Special Sign District consists of: (i) all lots adjacent to the Chicago River from Roosevelt Road on the south to Kinzie Street on the north and Lake Shore Drive (extended) on the east, and (ii) all lots with street frontage on Wacker Drive from Lake Street to Lake Shore Drive (extended).

17-12-1104-B Regulations and Standards. The following standards apply to signs within the Chicago River Corridor Special Sign District. These sign regulations are supplemental standards that apply in addition to existing zoning regulations.

1. ~~Maximum Area for Signs.~~ The maximum area for all signs shall be in strict compliance with the maximum total sign area standard of the zoning district, or in the case of a planned development, the zoning district applicable to the subject property immediately before approval of the planned development, ~~before the planned development was' created, except that the maximum area for high rise building signs shall be as set forth in subsection 17-12-1104 B-2.~~

~~2. High-Rise Building Signs.~~ ~~High rise building signs shall:~~

~~*Fa) comply with subsections 17-12-1005 Dm. f3). M). (5) and (6):*~~

~~b) count towards the maximum total allowable sign area;~~

~~c) *be located directly below the highest roofline of the building:*~~

~~d) not be illuminated, except that the letters may be halo lit; and,~~

~~e) not exceed a maximum sign face area as follows:~~

**Maximum Sign Face Area**

~~250 square feet~~

~~350 square feet~~

~~450 square feet~~

~~500 or more feet~~

3t2. Limitation on Signs above a Certain Height. Except as provided for high-rise building signs in subsection 17-12-1104 B(2)(e) 17-12-1005-D(2), no sign shall be located more than two stories above grade on any building side that is adjacent to the Chicago River.

*4.-Projections. All signs must be affixed on building walls parallel to the property line, and no sign may project more than 12 inches from the building's facade.*

£3. Prohibited Signs. The following types of signs are prohibited within the Chicago River Corridor Special Sign District:

- a) *banners;*
- b) *neon signs (neon tubing may be used as a source of light when completely shielded and not visible from the Chicago River, public streets, sidewalks or alleys);*
- c) *flashing signs;*
- d) *dynamic image display signs;*
- e) *roof signs;*
- f) *painted wall signs;-a&&*
- g) off-premises signs; and
- h) *projecting signs.*

6A Show Windows. Show windows may be used for regularly changed display of merchandise sold in the building. Signs may not be applied to more than 15% of any single window. Window lettering that is less than 2 inches in height and that is limited to information such as a building's address, hours of operation, product information, and logos will not be counted towards the percentage.

7t5\_. Awning Signs. Signs on awnings count toward the maximum allowable sign area and must be affixed flat to the surface thereof, must be non-illuminated, and may indicate only the name and or address of the establishment. Further, no such sign may extend vertically or horizontally beyond the limits of the awning. Letter size placed on any awning may not exceed 9 inches in height or width. All awnings must be retractable (fabric or canvas) and may project no more than 6 feet over the sidewalk. No awning may be installed with vertical supports, and back-lit or internally-lit awning signs are prohibited.

8^6. Temporary Signs. Temporary signs, such as grand opening signs, but specifically excluding signs advertising merchandise or special sales, may be permitted for a period not to exceed 6 weeks. In addition, temporary signs may be installed on construction barricades during a building's construction, for a period not to exceed 24 months. Signs placed on construction barricades may not be placed more than 20 feet above grade and may not exceed 8 feet in height.

Reasonable time extensions for temporary signs may be granted by the Zoning Administrator upon written request. Temporary signs do not count toward the maximum allowable sign area.

9t7. In the event there is a conflict between this section and other provisions of the code, the more restrictive shall apply.

+9t8\_, No member of the city council or other municipal officer shall introduce, and no committee of the city council shall consider or recommend, any ordinance or amendment thereto, including any council order pursuant to Section 13-20-680, that is contrary in any way to any of the requirements of this section.

*(Omitted text is unaffected by this ordinance)*

SECTION 4. To the extent that any ordinance, resolution, rule, order or provision of the Municipal Code of Chicago, or any portion thereof, is in conflict with any provision of this ordinance, the provisions of this ordinance shall control. The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be separate and severable. The invalidity of any provision of this ordinance, or the invalidity of the application thereof to any person or circumstance, shall not affect the validity of the remainder of this ordinance, or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances.

SECTION 5. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect upon passage and approval.

