

# Residential Entranceway Signage Guide



Whether you are looking to construct a new sign or upgrade an existing sign at the entryways into a residential subdivision, condominium, or apartment complex, please refer to this handout as a guide to the regulations, process, applications, fees, and most importantly, who to contact for assistance. The process typically starts with a sign permit application, and may include a right-of-way permit, building permit, and submittal of a landscape plan.



For more information,  
visit [cityofnovi.org](http://cityofnovi.org)  
or contact:

Community Development Department – Code Compliance  
City of Novi | 45175 Ten Mile Road | Novi, MI 48375 USA  
t: 248.735.5678

# Sign Regulations

## Number

One ground sign (a sign not attached to any building, supported by a monument placed in the ground surface such that the entire bottom of the sign is affixed to the ground and is not supported by poles, columns, or uprights) is permitted at each entrance to a neighborhood. Two sign faces greater than two feet apart are permitted.

If a neighborhood has a boulevard entrance, one single-face ground sign is permitted on each side of the boulevard.

## Size

Signs shall have a maximum height of 5 feet and a maximum area of 24 square feet. The area of sign is considered the entire area within the smallest circle, triangle, parallelogram, or other geometric shape that encloses the extreme limits of any writing, picture, logo, representation, emblem, or figure of similar character, together with any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate such sign from the background against which it is placed, excluding the necessary supports or uprights on which such sign is placed. Where a sign has two or more faces, the area of all faces shall be included in determining the area of the sign, except that where two such faces are placed back to back and are at no point more than two feet from one another, the area of the sign shall be taken as the area of one face if the two faces are of equal area, or as the area of the larger face if the two faces are of unequal area.

## Location

Signs shall be located at least 10 feet from any street right-of-way and only in yards adjacent to streets at the entrance to the neighborhood or within the median of a boulevard street when a license for such is granted by the City Engineer.

Signs in yards adjacent to the entrance require either a recorded sign easement for the property or a letter of authorization from the property owner for the placement of the sign.

Signs are permitted on a previously approved landscape wall as part of an approved site plan, provided the sign meets the size requirements above. To install a wall larger than the sign requirements, a revised site plan must be submitted for review by the Planning Commission.

Signs must meet corner clearance regulations: walls, plant material, signs or other obstruction to vision above a height of 2 feet shall not be permitted within the clear view zone which is the triangular area formed at the intersection of any existing public street right-of-way lines by a straight line drawn between said right-of-way lines at a distance along each line of 25 feet from their point of intersection. Medians shall be included in this measurement.



## Complete Regulations

Refer to the [Sign Ordinance](#) and [Zoning Ordinance](#) for complete regulations

## Application

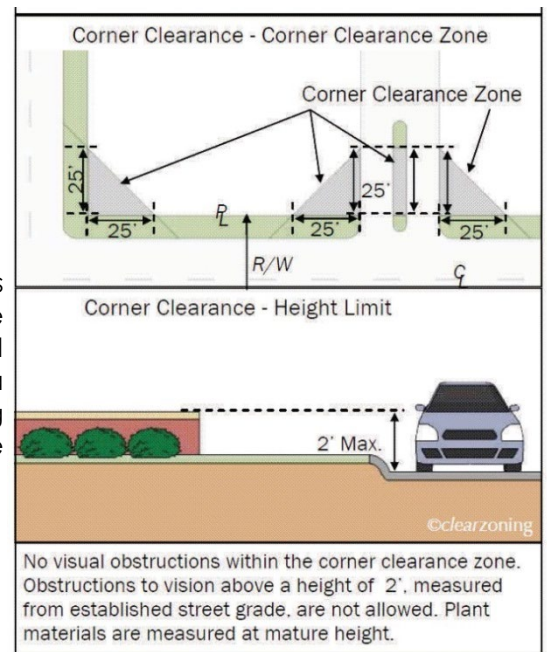
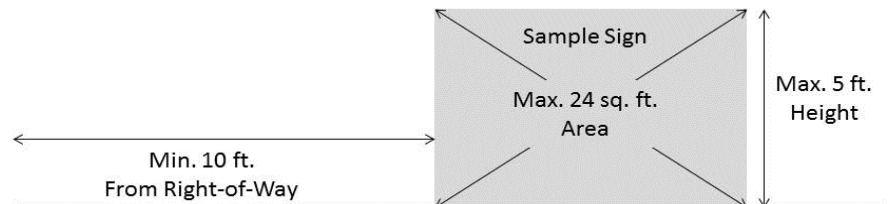
[Sign Permit Application](#) (One application required per sign)

## Fee

\$75

## Inspections

One final inspection once sign is complete (plus any applicable building, engineering, or right-of-way inspections)



For more information, contact:

**Deborah Martinez** | Community Development Department

City of Novi | 45175 Ten Mile Road | Novi, MI 48375 USA

e: [dmartinez@cityofnovi.org](mailto:dmartinez@cityofnovi.org) t: 248.735.5671

# Engineering Regulations

## Right-of-Way (ROW) Permits

If the sign will be located or any work will be completed in the public ROW (the boundary between private property and the public lands under the legal control of the agency having jurisdiction over a road), a permit will be required from the City of Novi's Engineering Division. An additional permit may be required from the Road Commission for Oakland County for ROWs under their jurisdiction ([see map here](#)). The Engineering Division can review the application and determine if permits are required from other agencies. A sketch showing the location of the sign is required with the permit application.

## Breakaway Design

All signs located within the ROW shall be designed to be crashworthy. The sign shall include breakaway devices that are designed and constructed to break or yield when struck by a vehicle. This can be accomplished by designing the signs to be as lightweight as possible and with a breakaway plane near the ground surface to protect motorists in case of a crash.

## Sight Distance

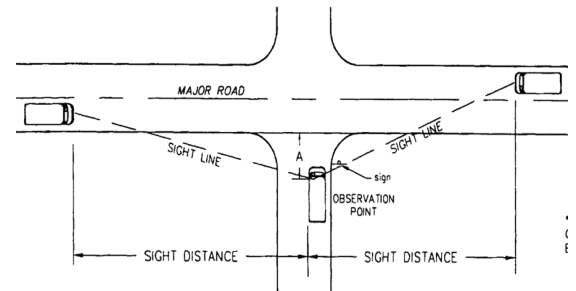
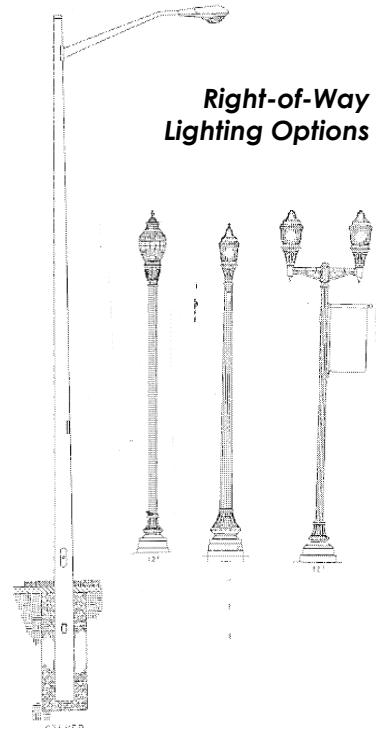
Signs shall not be placed in a location such that they impede sight distance. Sight distance is the length of the sight line over which an object is visible to a driver. The minimum sight distance is set by the ordinance as illustrated below. Please contact the Department of Public Services for more information.

## Lighting

Any lighting in the ROW will require coordination with the City of Novi and DTE Energy. Four pre-determined light fixtures are available to choose from, including three decorative and one overhead fixture, which will be installed by DTE Energy in accordance with the street light policy.

## Subdivision Sign License Agreement

When a sign is located within the ROW, a subdivision sign license agreement must be completed and signed by the City and subdivision, which specifies that maintenance of the sign is the responsibility of the subdivision. The license agreement requires the licensee to procure and maintain general liability insurance, naming the City of Novi as an additional insured. The Engineering Division will provide a copy of the license agreement as part of the ROW process.



MAJOR THROUGH ROAD POSTED SPEED IN MPH	SUBDIVISION STREETS RESIDENTIAL DRIVEWAYS COMMERCIAL DRIVEWAYS	
	2 LANE IN FEET	MULTI LANE
25	260	280
30	310	340
35	360	400
40	410	450
45	460	510
50	510	560
55	560	620

**Guide for Corner Sight Distance**

### Complete Regulations

Refer to the [Design and Construction Standards](#) for complete regulations

### Application & Fee

Novi ROW Permit is initiated with the Sign

Application (waived for subdivision entranceway signs)

\$100

[Oakland Co. ROW Permit Application](#) (for entrances on County roads only)

\$100

### Inspections

One final ROW inspection (if applicable)

For more information, contact:

**Jeff VanCurler** | Department of Public Works

City of Novi | 45175 Ten Mile Road | Novi, MI 48375 USA

e: [jvancurler@cityofnovi.org](mailto:jvancurler@cityofnovi.org) t: 248.735.5625



# Sign Foundation Regulations

## Composition

Construction materials and sign structures shall be of the quality and grade as specified for structures in the state construction code.

## Fastenings

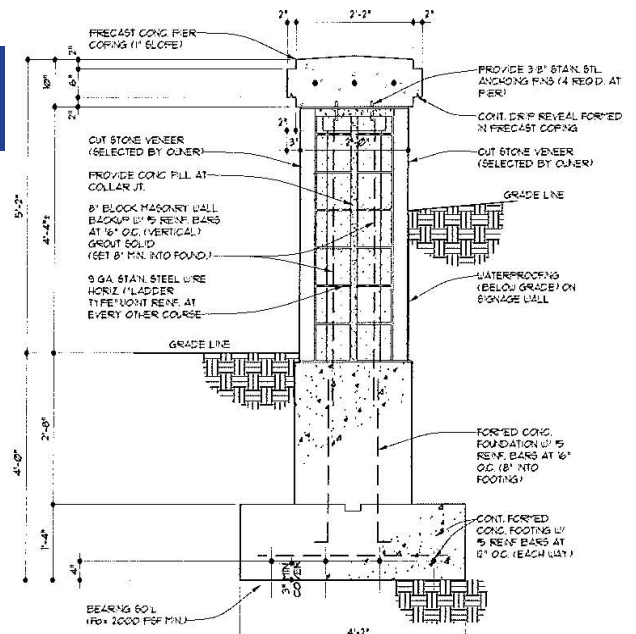
Signs erected to masonry, concrete, or steel shall be safely and securely fastened thereto by means of metal anchors, bolts, or approved expansion screws of sufficient size and anchorage to support safely the loads applied. All building fastenings must be of noncorrosive materials. Lightweight sign letters may be attached by means of an approved adhesive.

## Lighting

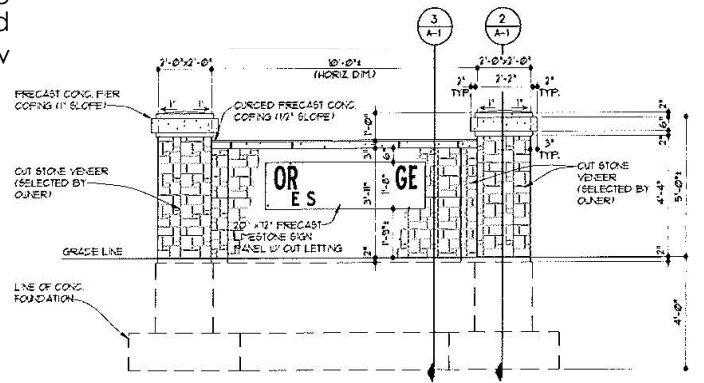
Signs may be illuminated internally or externally but shall be either enclosed or directed away from roadways, traffic areas, and adjacent residential properties. Sign lighting should be focused on the sign to avoid stray lighting, and shall not be arranged to shine into the night sky. Any new lighting will require an electrical permit.

## Windloads

For the purpose of design, wind pressure shall be taken upon the gross area of the vertical projection of all signs and sign structures at not less than 15 pounds per square foot for those portions above the ground.



2 SECTION THRU WALL PIER  
SCALE: 3/4" = 1'-0"



A FRONT OF WALL ELEVATION  
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

## Complete Regulations

Refer to the [Sign Ordinance](#) for complete regulations

## Application

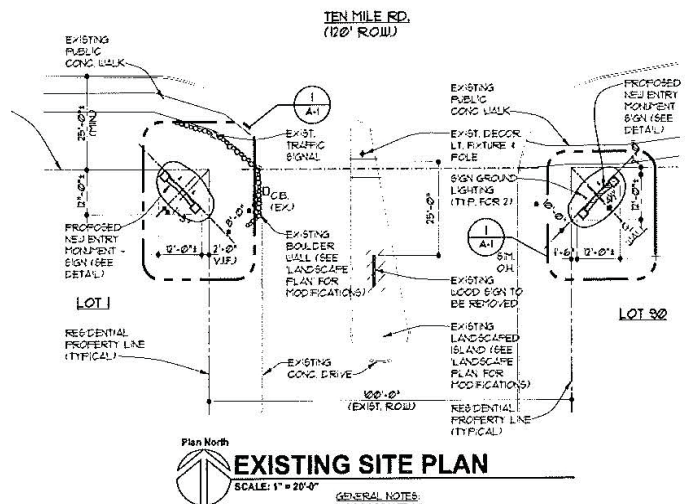
- [Building Permit Application](#)
- [Electrical Permit Application](#)

## Fee

Building Permit: Varies, starting at \$180  
Electrical Permit: Varies, starting at \$70

## Inspections

Building: One for footing and one for final  
Electrical: Up to two for rough/underground and final



Plan North  
EXISTING SITE PLAN  
SCALE: 1" = 20'-0"

Sample details and site plan for a proposed sign location outside of the corner clearance zone or right-of-way



For more information contact:  
**Chris Weber** | Community Development Department  
City of Novi | 45175 Ten Mile Road | Novi, MI 48375 USA  
e: [cweber@cityofnovi.org](mailto:cweber@cityofnovi.org) t: 248.347.0434 f: 248.735.5600

# Landscape Regulations

## Island Plantings

Islands must be landscaped. If an island is to be re-landscaped by the subdivision association, a landscape plan shall be submitted to the City for administrative approval.

At least 75% of the island must be landscaped with a mixture of shrubs, groundcover, perennials, and ornamental grasses, along with canopy and subcanopy trees in accordance with the minimum planting area widths in the table to the right.

## Maintenance

Maintenance of the island is the responsibility of the subdivision association. All landscaping must be irrigated.

For more information, contact:

**Rick Meader** | Community Development Department  
 City of Novi | 45175 Ten Mile Road | Novi, MI 48375 USA  
 e: [rmeader@cityofnovi.org](mailto:rmeader@cityofnovi.org) t: 248.735.5621

Tree Species Type	Tree Lawn Size
<b>Small Tree</b> (Subcanopy Deciduous)	4 to 6 ft.
<b>Medium Tree</b> (Subcanopy & Canopy Deciduous)	6 to 8 ft.
<b>Large Tree</b> (Canopy Deciduous)	Greater than 8 ft.

# Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Regulations

## Application

If the regulations of the sign ordinance are not met, applicants may petition the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) for a variance from the regulations. In order to seek a variance, a sign permit must be submitted and denied. Then a ZBA application, fee, and a copy of a scaled drawing indicating location, overall dimension, and sign verbiage must be submitted. If needed, a pre-ZBA application meeting can be scheduled by contacting Sarah Fletcher in Community Development.

## Meeting

The ZBA generally meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Completed applications are due six weeks prior to the meeting. Applicants should be prepared to explain the nature of the practical difficulty at the ZBA meeting.

**Complete Regulations**  
 Refer to the [Zoning Ordinance](#) for complete regulations

**Application**  
[ZBA Application](#)

**Fee**  
 \$330

**Standards for Granting a Sign Variance**

1. The request is based upon circumstances or features that are exceptional and unique to the property and do not result from conditions that exist generally in the City or that are self-created.
2. The failure to grant relief will unreasonably prevent or limit the use of the property and will result in substantially more than mere inconvenience or inability to attain a higher economic or financial return.
3. The grant of relief will not result in a use of structure that is incompatible with or unreasonably interferes with adjacent or surrounding properties, will result in substantial justice being done to both the applicant and adjacent or surrounding properties, and is not inconsistent with the spirit of the ordinance.



For more information, contact:  
**Sarah Fletcher** | Community Development Department  
 City of Novi | 45175 Ten Mile Road | Novi, MI 48375 USA  
 e: [sfletcher@cityofnovi.org](mailto:sfletcher@cityofnovi.org) t: 248.347.0459