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# CITY OF CHICAGO

## RULES

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### **RULES REGARDING BANNERS**

**UNDER 2-102-030(L); 2-102-030(s); 2-102-040;  
10-8-340**

**LAST UPDATED JANUARY 20, 2014**



BY AUTHORITY VESTED IN THE COMMISSIONER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PURSUANT TO **2-102-030(l)**; **2-102-030(s)**; **2-102-040**; **10-8-340**, THE FOLLOWING RULES REGARDING **BANNER REGULATIONS** ARE ADOPTED HEREIN.

By Order of the Commissioner:

Signed:   
Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld

Date: August 3, 2015

Published: **January 20, 2014**

Effective: **January 20, 2014**



CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**STREETLIGHT POLE BANNER REQUEST REQUIREMENTS**

In order to process your streetlight pole banner request, you must include the following:

1. A written request on your organization's letterhead addressed to **Commissioner Rebekah Scheinfeld, Department of Transportation, Division of Electrical Operations, 2451 S. Ashland Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60608**. Your written request must include the event or organization to be recognized on the banner, the date of the event, and any other significant aspect to your request.
2. A completed Banner Permit Application.
3. A copy of the proposed banner's graphics.

Street pole banner requests can be faxed to Fax #: 312-746-4432. If you have any questions regarding your request, please call Tel #: 312-746-8118.

**Requests that do not include, and comply with, all three of the above requirements are not acceptable.**



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Rebekah Scheinfeld, Commissioner

## Division of Electrical Operations

Robert L. Myers, Managing Deputy Commissioner

2451 S. Ashland Avenue

Chicago IL 60608

Tel: 312-746-4400

Fax: 312-746-4432

### BANNER / DECORATION PERMIT APPLICATION

Name of Organization

Contact

Address

Telephone & Fax #s  Tel:  Fax:

Location of Banners

Ward  Name of Area

Installation Date  Removal Date

Banner Size  Number of Poles

Installation Company

Contact

Address

Telephone & Fax #s  Tel:  Fax:

Remarks

#### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Graphics on File  Date Rec'vd

## AMENDED BANNER REGULATIONS

January 20, 2014

WHEREAS, it is the City's policy to display on its lightpoles only those decorative banners or other decorations that promote or celebrate the City, its civic institutions, or public activities or events in the City of Chicago (and that otherwise promote the corporate interests and welfare of the City); and

WHEREAS, the City displays banners on its light poles for the purposes of enhancing the atmosphere of the street scape through beautiful, festive, and decorative graphics, and celebrating the City in a manner that attracts tourists, inspires citizens, accords with the City's commitment to embracing diversity and respect for all persons, and is suitable for a broad-based audience of all ages; and

WHEREAS, the City accepts donations of decorative banners from private entities where the banners comply with the established criteria and serve to further and/or complement the City's own programs and initiatives in the cultural, charitable, public health, special events, conventions and tourism, economic development and community-building areas; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner also is authorized to promulgate specific rules and regulations to ensure that the display of banners or other decorations on City lightpoles is done in a manner to protect the public safety and welfare;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Rebekah Scheinfeld, Commissioner of Transportation, hereby promulgate the following amended regulations pursuant to Section 10-8-340 of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago:

**I. The following governs all banners or other decorations displayed on City lightpoles:**

The City shall display on its lightpoles only decorative banners or other decorations that promote or celebrate the City, its civic institutions, or large, festive public activities or events in the City of Chicago (and that otherwise promote the corporate interests and welfare of the City).

Banners that "promote or celebrate the City" shall be deemed to include those that promote an organization or program subsidized or sponsored by the city; banners that identify a neighborhood; banners donated by a chamber of commerce or retailers association which promote the neighborhood's shopping district; banners for significant events or institutions that are sponsored by the state or federal government and have unique ties to the City of Chicago; and banners that celebrate significant anniversaries of city businesses and community institutions in increments of 5 years starting with the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary (e.g. 20<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, 35<sup>th</sup>, etc).

"Civic institutions" include significant cultural institutions, such as the Art Institute; important community institutions, such as hospitals, schools and churches; and direct-service charitable organizations, such as the YMCA.

"Public activities or events" means large, festive events that are open to the public generally, for free or for nominal cost; fund-raising events on behalf of (i) not-for-profit charitable organizations which engage in direct-service charitable work, e.g. Boys and Girls Club, or are umbrella fund-raising organizations for such work, e.g., United Way, or (ii) associations devoted to research on and support for patients with various diseases, e.g. the Leukemia Society.

City lightpoles shall NOT be used for commercial advertising or for promoting any political or social advocacy organization or political or religious message.

**II. The following additional conditions are imposed on all banner donations and all applications for other lightpole decorations:**

- (1) All potential banner donors must submit an application to the Department of Transportation (the "Department"). Such application must include the name of the donor organization, any sponsoring corporation or organization, the purpose of the banners, a detailed description of the graphics and words on the banners, the period of time for which the banners are donated, and any special request to display the donated banners at specific locations. No substantial changes to the graphics or words of the banner may be made after the banner has been approved. If any changes are made, the Commissioner reserves the right to withdraw the approval to hang the banners.

All potential lightpole decoration donors must submit an application to the Department. Such application must include the name of the donor organization, any sponsoring corporation or organization, a detailed description of the type of decoration to be installed on a lightpole, the period of time for which the decorations are donated, and any special request to display the donated decorations at specific locations. No substantial changes to the decoration may be made after the decoration has been approved. If any changes are made, the Commissioner reserves the right to withdraw the approval to hang the decorations. Examples of such decorations may include garlands, wrapped around the poles; mock trees, bells and bows affixed to the poles.

- (2) Any person or entity donating a decorative banner or lightpole decorations for placement on City lightpoles shall agree in writing to hire a professional company which, without any cost to the City, will hang and remove the banners or other decorations, and the temporary brackets and hardware, according to the time-frame in the Ordinance, and will obtain the necessary street closing permit to do such.

- (3) No banner may be wider than thirty-one (31) inches and no longer than seventy-two (72) inches, except for banners hung in the Central Business District, which shall be no longer than ninety-nine (99) inches and no wider than thirty-one (31) inches when installed on non-ornamental and non-decorative lightpoles, and shall be no longer than seventy-two (72) inches and no wider than thirty-one (31) inches when installed on ornamental or decorative lightpoles, except for the ornamental lightpoles on State Street which shall be no longer than ninety-nine (99) inches and no wider than thirty one (31) inches. All banners must be installed on lightpoles so that the bottom edge of the banners are at least 10 feet off the ground.

In the event that City of Chicago Gateway or Chicago 2000 streetlight poles are installed outside of the Central Business District, banners may be no longer than ninety-eight (98) inches and no wider than thirty-one (31) inches, provided that the poles have the original manufacturers' hardware installed on said streetlight poles.

- (4) All banners ninety-nine (99) inches in length shall be vented so that there are three (3) vents on each banner and all banners seventy-two (72) inches in length shall be vented so that there are two (2) vents on each banner, except that non-vented banners may be allowed where they use a flexible bracket system or other new technology approved in advance by the Commissioner. All banners shall be constructed from canvas or other heavy gauge material

approved by the Department.

- (5) One illustration of a corporation or business sponsoring the cost of a banner for an applicant shall be allowed per banner and the total illustration of the sponsor (including all graphics and/or words) shall be no larger than ten (10) inches in height and thirty-one (31) inches in width and shall be placed at the bottom of the banner. There is no limit on the size of the applicant's name or logo.
- (6) No banners or lightpole decorations shall be affixed to ornamental or decorative light posts, unless the Commissioner determines that the poles are structurally capable of supporting banners or lightpole decorations. No banners or other decorations shall be affixed to posts that bear traffic signals.
- (7) No banners or other decorations shall be displayed on a bridge, nor on any structures connected to a bridge, except for when the Commissioner determines such a placement of banners is the best way to direct people toward the location of a City sponsored program or event and the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation determines it is structurally sound to do so.
- (8) The Commissioner may in his/her discretion limit the number of banners or lightpole decorations allowed to be placed on City light poles under any single permit application.
- (9) The donor shall enter into an agreement with the City indemnifying and holding the City, its officers, agents and employees, harmless from any and all claims arising out of the placement maintenance, use or removal of banners or lightpole decorations, including any claims relating to banners or lightpole decorations or the structures upon which they are hung falling on people or property.
- (10) Permit applications will be accepted by the Department of Transportation, Division of Electrical Operations, up to six (6) months in advance of the permit request period. The City of Chicago will grant conditional approvals, reserving the right to preempt applications for banners paid for and/or designed by the City and all banners promoting City-sponsored events with sixty (60) days notice. If the City does not provide notice within sixty (60) days prior to the date of display, the City waives its preemption right and approval shall be final.
- (11) No banner may remain on lightpoles more than 48 hours after the event advertised in the banner is over. No lightpole decoration may remain on the lightpoles past the date designated on the permit issued by the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation.
- (12) Any application for the placement of banners or other decorations at O'Hare International Airport shall be submitted to the Department of Aviation for their review and are not governed by these rules and regulations.
- (13) An application for a banner that includes a flag or the image of a flag will only be approved if the flag is either the American Flag or the City of Chicago Flag. No other flags or images of flags are permitted.
- (14) The Commissioner has not ever used, and shall not ever use, his authority to waive specific rules

under certain circumstances, as set forth in subsection e. of the Municipal Code of the City of Chicago Section 10-8-340, to waive any of the limitations on the subject matter allowed on decorative banners.

- (15) A hanging banner that develops holes, becomes frayed, or otherwise falls into a state of disrepair, must be removed by an approved banner company.

**III. The following guidelines govern the display of banners or other decorations paid for and/or designed by the City and all banners promoting City-sponsored events ("City banners"):**

Note: As used in these Regulations, "City" is deemed to include all City departments and also other local governmental entities which serve and are located in the City, such as the Chicago Park District and the Chicago Board of Education.

- (A) The City department or governmental entity seeking to display banners or other decorations must submit an application to the Commissioner of Transportation. Generally, the above regulations which specify the appearance of donated banners, i.e. their size and the types of words and graphics allowed, shall apply to City banners and other decorations as well.

- (B) Where a City department or governmental entity is sponsoring and/or promoting an event for the public's benefit and enjoyment, and where corporate or business sponsors are making a significant financial contribution to underwrite such event, the Commissioner may allow some leeway as to the size and placement of the sponsors' names and logos on the banners. In no event, however, may a single sponsor's name and graphic take up more than 25% of a banner, nor may the total space devoted to numerous sponsors' names and graphics take up more than 40% of a banner. Applications for banners or other decorations for City-sponsored events should be submitted to the Commissioner before any promises are made to City sponsors and before production begins.

- (C) These regulations do not apply to banners, other decorations, or other signs that are posted by the City within the grounds of a City-sponsored event in connection with corporate sponsorship agreements, both during the event itself and for a reasonable amount of time necessary to prepare for and clean up after the event. City lightpoles on City streets are deemed to be "within the grounds" of a City event only when (a) such streets are closed off for an event, (b) the event is occurring on both sides of such street, or (c) on one side of the street where that side of the street is the perimeter of an event which is not fenced off or closed off in any way other than by the perimeter of the street. In addition, where prior to the enactment of this regulation, a sponsorship agreement provided a corporate sponsor with the right to display its banners or other decorations on City streets during the time between City-sponsored events, the Commissioner may allow such use of City lightpoles during the life of the existing agreement.

- (D) In the Theatre District, where the City has devoted extensive public monies to the public purpose of revitalizing the downtown area by developing a concentration of world class theaters, the Commissioner shall allow banners or other decorations that promote the City's theaters and the district by promoting their shows and the theaters. The "Theatre District" shall mean that area bounded by the east and west sides of Michigan Avenue on the east, both sides of Wacker Drive on the north and the west, and the north and south sides of Congress Parkway on the south.



- (E) Given the City's significant economic interest in drawing and retaining certain large conventions that bring vitality to the tourist sector and revenue to the City, banners that promote such conventions as part of a broader public relations campaign, such as the "We're Glad You're Here!" program, shall not be considered as commercial in nature, but rather as banners that "promote the City."

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rebekah Scheinfeld  
Commissioner  
Department of Transportation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## BANNER COMPANIES

### **A-Action Advertising**

Merilyn Rutsky  
2420 S. Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60616  
Tel: 312-791-0660  
Fax: 312-791-0625

### **Bannerville USA**

Ken Sitkowski  
8168 S. Madison  
Burr Ridge, Illinois 60527  
Tel: 630-455-0304  
Fax: 630-455-0314

### **Frank O. Carlson & Co., Inc.**

Dave Carlson  
3622 S. Morgan Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60609  
Tel: 773-847-6900  
Fax: 773-847-6924

### **Chicago Event Graphics, Inc.**

David Smykowski  
400 N. Hart Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60622  
Tel: 312-997-2406  
Fax: 312-997-2408

### **Folger's Flag & Decorating**

Deb Folger  
2748 York Street  
Blue Island, Illinois 60406  
Tel: 708-388-1598  
Fax: 708-388-9997

### **WGN Flag & Decorating Co.**

Carl Porter  
7984 S. Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60617  
Tel: 773-768-8076  
Fax: 773-768-3138