

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

**SIGN WAIVER AND ADJUSTMENT  
ELIGIBILITY REVIEW AND  
HEARING PROCESS**



### **Sec. 4-4-22. Waivers and adjustments to sign standards.**

The owner of any premises may petition to the Director of the Planning and Development Department a waiver or adjustment of any dimensional or operational standard or requirement set forth in the signs regulations, except as expressly limited or prohibited

### Examples of Limits

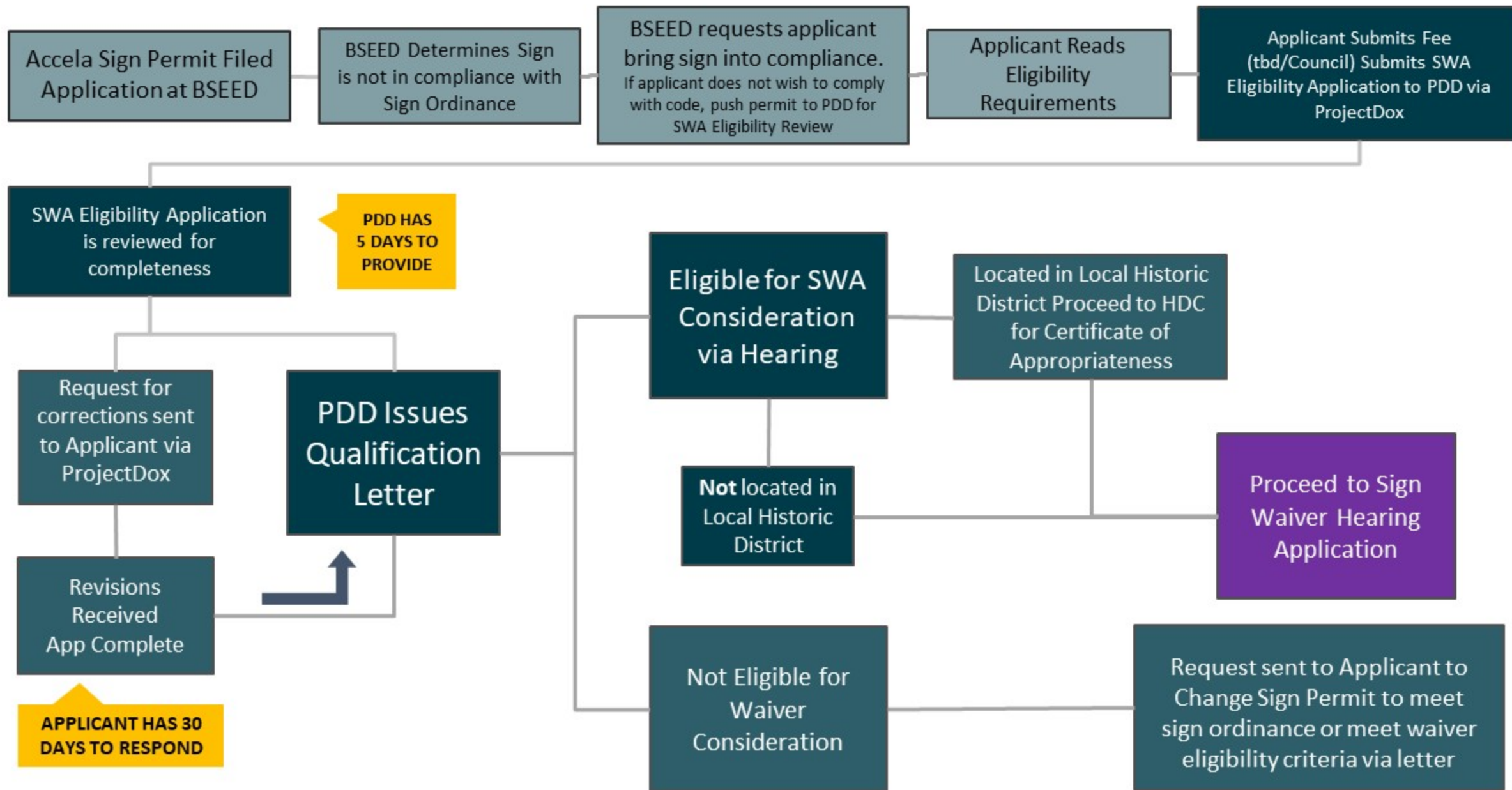
*Sign Size:* Applicants are only eligible to request an adjustment of up to 25% of the maximum allowed size of business signs, per 4-4-62(c).

*Location and Illumination:* Per 4-4-31(c), PDD does not have the authority to waive or adjustment requirements associated with illumination or location permissibility of any type of sign.

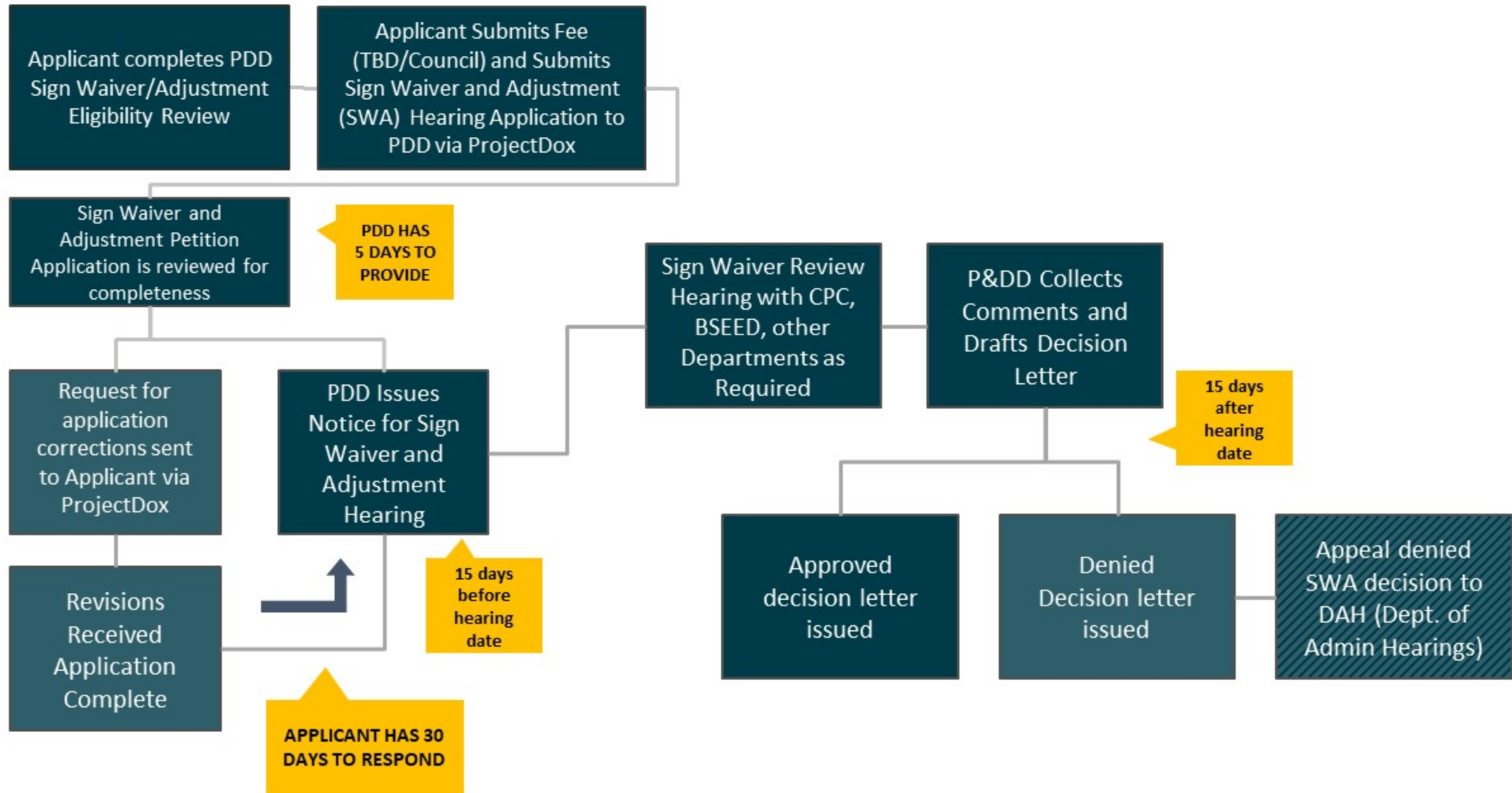
## **Two Step Process**

- 1) Sign Waiver or Adjustment Eligibility Review
- 2) Sign Waiver or Adjustment Hearing

# Sign Waiver and Adjustment (SWA) Hearing: Step 1 Eligibility Review



# Sign Waiver and Adjustment (SWA) Hearing : Step 2 **Hearing Application**



## Applications Submitted via ProjectDox (ePlans)

**detroitmi.gov/BSEED/ePlans**

- Applications can only be accepted if a sign permit has been submitted and reviewed by BSEED staff
- BSEED will inform applicants if or when necessary to apply to PDD



Coleman A. Young Municipal Center  
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 808  
Detroit, Michigan 48226

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### PDD SIGNAGE WAIVER AND ADJUSTMENTS REVIEW APPLICATION (Step 1)

The owner of any premises may, upon petition to the Director of the Planning and Development Department, or the Director's Designee, request the waiver or adjustment of any dimensional or operational standard or requirement set forth in ARTICLE IV REGULATION OF BUSINESS AND ADVERTISING SIGNS, except as expressly limited or prohibited, with which the proposed signage for such premises may not strictly comply.

When submitting this application and fee, PDD will review your request for a sign regulation waiver or adjustment request to ensure the request is within PDD's authority to waive or adjust the regulation, as set forth in Chapter 4 or the signage ordinance. Upon submitting an application for review, PDD will respond within 5 to 10 days with a letter indicating that your request is eligible for a review hearing, or if it is not eligible, an explanation as to why the waiver or adjustment is not eligible for a hearing will be provided.

Please read the summary list of regulations limiting PDD's authority over waivers and adjustments document posted at [www.detroitmi.gov/signwaiver](http://www.detroitmi.gov/signwaiver) before submitting this application.

_____ NAME OF SIGN OWNER	_____ PHONE	_____ SSN
_____ ADDRESS	_____ CITY	_____ STATE
_____ ERECTOR	_____ LICENSE NO.	_____ FED. ID OR SSN
_____ LOCATION	_____ NUMBER	_____ STREET
_____ LOT NO.	_____ SUBDIVISION	

## Public Hearing Notice

15 days prior to hearing, **PDD** will:

- Mail notice to 300 feet
- Post on PDD Website  
[detroitmi.gov/signwaiver](http://detroitmi.gov/signwaiver)
- Email gov.delivery group
- Publish in Legal News

15 days prior to hearing,  
the **Petitioner** will:

- Post notice at site
- Clearly visible from street

## PUBLIC NOTICE



**Name** of petitioner

**Address** of the site

**Description** of the sign waiver or adjustment is sought

**Citation** of the specific provisions seeking waiver or adjustment

**Summary** of the extent to which the proposed sign does not comply with the strict standards and requirements outlined in this article

**Date** and time of the hearing

**Location** / zoom information

**PDD Contact** information for written or verbal comments



### **SWA Approval - where all of the following are true:**

- Following the ordinance as written presents a **practical difficulty** hindering the communicative sign potential
- **No form of alternative signage** could effectively eliminate that practical difficulty
- The proposed sign **will address practical difficulties**
- The proposed sign **will not impact neighboring users**; including, but not limited to value of the land, use, aesthetic value
- The proposed sign **will not create distraction** to, obstruct the flow of, or otherwise harm **pedestrians or motor vehicles** passing within view of the sign; and
- The proposed signage is in general accord with **the spirit and intent** of sign regulations

## **SWA Public Hearings**

Wednesdays at 2pm  
*scheduled as required*

## **Appeals of SWA Decisions**

Made to the Department of  
Administrative Hearings (DAH)



## **Sign Waiver or Adjustment Admin Panel**

Minimally comprised of:

1. PDD Hearing Officer (Design/zoning staff)
2. City Planning Commission staff representative
3. BSEED sign staff representative

Additional SWA Panel reviewers, as needed:

- Historic District Commission if in or adjacent to LHD
- DPW Encroachment Review sign encroaches over a right of way
- DPW Traffic review if within 125 feet of a freeway of the Freeway right-of-way line facing the display side or near MDOT Freeway ramp

### Limits on PDD Waiver Authority

#### Business Signs

- *Sign Size:* Applicants are only eligible to request an adjustment of up to 25% of the maximum allowed size of business signs, per 4-4-62(c).
- *Location and Illumination:* Per 4-4-31(c), PDD does not have the authority to waive or adjustment any requirements associated with illumination or location permissibility of any type of sign.
- *Additional Business Signage:* PDD does not have the authority, per 4-4-63(b), to waive or adjust the standards for additional business signage.

### Limits on PDD Waiver Authority

#### Temporary Signs

- *Sign Size*: For temporary signs, not including construction signs, for sale or lease signs, and portable signs, applicants are eligible to request an adjustment of up to 25% for the maximum allowed size.
- *Additional Temporary Signage*: PDD does not have the authority to waive or adjustment any requirements associated with the additional temporary sign allowances per 4-4-183 (b). Including:
  - Premises listed for sale or lease
  - Premises with open building or construction (temp. construction sign)
  - Portable signs

### Limits on PDD Waiver Authority

#### Dynamic Signs

- *Sign Size:* Applicants are only eligible to request an adjustment of up to 40% of the maximum allowed size of a dynamic sign, per 4-4-66(b).
- *Sign Location:* Dynamic signs are permissible only in low-density commercial/institutional sign districts and high-density commercial/industrial sign districts. Per 4-4-31(c), this location restrictions cannot be waived.
- *Animation:* Dynamic signs may be animated only in the Central Business District. Per 4-4-31(c), this location restrictions cannot be waived.

### Limits on PDD Waiver Authority

#### All Signs

- *Location and Illumination:* PDD does not have the authority, per 4-4-31(c), to waive or adjust any requirements associated with illumination or locational permissibility of any type of sign.
- *Special Zoning Districts:* Per Sec. 4-4-20(b), PDD is not able to accept or hear a sign waiver or adjustment petition for signs located within Special Zoning Districts that require City Council Approval per Chapter 50 Zoning (PD, PC, PCA, SD5)
- *Entertainment District:* PDD does not have the authority, per 4-4-82(c), to waive or adjust the boundaries of the Entertainment District.

## **Advertising signs**

Additional review

## All Advertising Signs

**BSEED** must first conduct **findings** outlined in **4-4-102**, **summarized** as follows:

DPW	PDD	CFO	BSEED	BSEED	BSEED
The sign will not impair safety or motorists and pedestrians	The sign is not detrimental to natural or architectural esthetics or features	Owner/Applicant of site is in good standing with the City for any property tax, income tax, personal tax, or special assessments	Owner/Applicant of site is in good standing with Building Construction and Property Maintenance codes and Chapter 50, Zoning	The sign is in compliance with all spacing, setback, height, clearance, size, and other dimensional and operational standards set forth in this division	Submission of all approvals by federal, state, or local governmental agency that may be necessary for sign, including, but not limited to, MDOT or HDC



### **Permits for new or altered Advertising Signs outside of the CBD (Central Business District) must first:**

- 1) Satisfy all of the finings conducted by BSEED outlined in previous slide, Sec 4-4-102
- 2) Secure approval via PDD's Waiver and Adjustment petition process, per 4-4-22

### Limits on PDD Waivers

*Dimensional Requirements:* Applicants are only eligible to request an adjustment of up to 10% of the following, per 4-4-109.

An application for an advertising sign seeking an adjustment of more than 10% of the following measurements will not be accepted for a hearing:

- Spacing between signs (4-4-103),
- Setback from premises boundary (4-4-104),
- Height and clearance of signs (4-4-105),
- Area of sign (4-4-106), and
- Landscaping (4-4-107)

### **Limits on PDD Waivers**

#### **Advertising Signs in the CBD (Central Business District):**

- Applicants are not eligible to request a waiver for the standards for local or super advertising signs or for any standards related to public art, per 4-4-130.
- This includes size of the sign, spacing requirements, or illumination.
- Applications requesting these types of waivers for advertising signs inside the CBD will not be accepted for a hearing.

## **SWA Public Hearings**

Wednesdays at 2pm  
*as required*

*please visit*  
**[detroitmi.gov/signwaiver](https://detroitmi.gov/signwaiver)**  
*or email*  
**[signwaiver@detroitmi.gov](mailto:signwaiver@detroitmi.gov)**



**THANK  
YOU**