



CITY OF CHICAGO



CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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 Tom Carney, Department of Transportation, Division of Electrical Operations, 2451 S Ashland Avenue, Chicago, IL 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 emailed to: cdotbanners@cityofchicago.org. If you have any questions regarding your request, please send an email to: cdotbanners@cityofchicago.org or call: 312-746-4070.

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

AMENDED BANNER REGULATIONS
January 16, 2020

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, Gia Biagi, 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 20th anniversary (e.g. 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 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 with 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 Apromote the City.

Gia Biagi

Commissioner
Department of Transportation

Date



Department of Transportation

Tom Carney, Commissioner

Division of Electrical Operations

Art Rodriguez, Deputy Commissioner

2451 South Ashland Avenue

Chicago, IL 60608

312-746-4070 / cdotbanners@cityofchicago.org

Banner/ Decoration Permit Application (Version: 6/17/2024)

Organization/ Applicant Information -

Name of Organization -

Street Address -

City, State, Zip -

Contact Name -

Contact Phone Number -

Contact Email Address -

Banner Information -

Name of Event/ Purpose of Banners -

Location of Banners -

Installation Date

Removal Date -

Banner Company Information -

Banner Company -

Street Address -

City, State, Zip -

Contact Name -

Contact Phone Number -

Contact Email Address -

Additional Information -

FOR DEO USE ONLY-

Application ID#

10-8-340 Donation of promotional decorative lightpole banners and decorations.

a. The commissioner of transportation may accept donations of decorative banners or other decorations designed to be placed on lightpoles. Such donations may be permanent or for a limited amount of time. The city may use its lightpoles to display donated banners, or any other city-owned or controlled banners, that the commissioner determines will promote or celebrate the city, its civic institutions, or public activities or events in the City of Chicago and that he or she finds otherwise will promote the corporate interests and welfare of the City of Chicago.

b. The commissioner of transportation may delegate the authority to hang and remove decorative banners or other decorations. Such authority may be delegated by issuance of a permit to a permit applicant and shall be limited to a period of 60 days, except that for the central business district, approval shall be limited to a period of 30 days. Upon application, permits may be renewed for additional such periods in the discretion of the commissioner. No permit shall be renewed where another entity has requested that its donated banner or other decoration be hung at such location or during such time period or where an event referred to in the donated banner is over; except that the commissioner shall have the discretion to determine that in certain commercial areas, the corporate interests and welfare of the City of Chicago are best served by neighborhood identifier banners or other banners that promote the City of Chicago or certain streets or districts of interest, and renewal of permits for such banners may be given precedence over other requests.

The commissioner shall give notice, by facsimile to the ward office, of all permit applications to the alderman in the ward in which permission to have the banner or other decoration displayed has been requested. The alderman shall have ten business days to give the commissioner, in writing, any specific objections to the locations, dates, and number of the proposed displays, and if the proposed location is in a residential neighborhood, his or her opinion on whether banners or other decorations are suitable in that area.

For purposes of this section, "central business district" shall mean that portion of the city bounded on the west by the east and west side of Halsted Street, on the north by the north and south sides of Division Street, on the east by Lake Michigan, and on the south by the north and south sides of Roosevelt Road.

Any person or entity who hangs a banner or other decoration on a city lightpole without first obtaining approval from the commissioner, or who violates any condition of the commissioner's approval, shall be fined \$100.00 per pole, per day.

No donated banner or other decoration may be hung unless the donor hires a professional company to hang and remove the banners or other decoration. Banners, brackets and hardware must be taken down within 48 hours after the expiration of the permit approving the hanging of the donated banner or other decoration, or within less time upon notice from the commissioner. Any banner company which fails to remove a donated banner or other decoration within such time period shall be fined \$100.00 per pole, per day, and shall be liable to the city for the cost of removing such banner or other decoration. In addition, any banner company shall be liable to the city for the cost of repair of any damage to city lightpoles caused by the hanging, presence or removal of any banner or other decoration placed by such company.

c. No professional banner company may hang any banner or other decoration on any city lightpole until it has furnished the commissioner with proof of insurance, which must evidence that the company has procured commercial general liability insurance with limits of not less than \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence for bodily injury, personal injury, and property damage, which shall cover any damage caused by the hanging, maintenance or removal of the banners or other decoration on city lightpoles. The City of Chicago shall be named as an additional insured on a primary, noncontributory basis for any liability arising directly or indirectly from the permittee's operations. Upon receipt of proof of insurance, the commissioner shall transmit a copy of such proof to the department of finance risk manager.

d. In addition to the requirements stated above, the donor shall indemnify, defend and hold the city, and its officers, agents, assignees and employees, harmless from any and all claims arising out of the placement of, maintenance of, use of or removal of banners or other decoration, including without limitation any claims relating to banners (or structures upon which they are hung) falling on people or property.

e. The commissioner of transportation shall promulgate rules and regulations governing the display of banners or other decoration to protect public safety and welfare, including ensuring against fire hazards, traffic problems, and visual blight. Such rules shall include, but are not limited to specifications as to the number, size, materials, printing processes, supporting structures, and hanging and removal. The commissioner shall have the authority, however, to waive specific rules when (1) the banner or other decoration substantially complies with the rules; (2) prior to the enactment of this ordinance, the donor previously had displayed such banner on city lightpoles, pursuant to the commissioner's permission; and (3) the commissioner determines that the waiver will not have any adverse effect on public safety and welfare. The commissioner also shall have the authority to determine that the display of decorative banners is unsuitable in certain residential areas.

f. Each ward superintendent, and such other employees of the department of transportation as the commissioner of transportation shall designate, shall have the powers of members of the police force to serve process or notice within the city for the violation of this section. A copy of such designation, and any amendments thereto, shall be kept by said commissioner and shall be available to the public upon request. The powers granted hereunder are expressly limited to the service of such process or notice, and this subsection shall not be construed as granting additional law enforcement power.

(Added Coun. J. 11-7-90, p. 23101; Amend Coun. J. 7-31-96, p. 26980, § 2; Amend Coun. J. 5-17-00, p. 32989, § 1; Amend Coun. J. 4-14-10, p. 88490, § 1; Amend Coun. J. 10-28-15, p. 11951, Art. VI, § 29; Amend Coun. J. 11-16-16, p. 37901, Art. II, § 30)

Editor's note – Coun. J. 11-7-90, p. 23101, repealed a former § 10-8-340, which pertained to circus and menagerie parades.