

**GRAND TRAVERSE COUNTY  
STREET AND ROAD NAMING AND ADDRESS ORDINANCE  
ORDINANCE No. 11**

**PREAMBLE**

The Board of Commissioners of the County of Grand Traverse has determined that the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the County would be better served by the establishment by County Ordinance of a county-wide street and road naming and addressing system. Such uniform street and road naming and addressing will enable the police and fire agencies, ambulance service, township officials, county administrative services, postal service, and public utilities to more rapidly identify and locate properties within the County.

This ordinance provides for the establishment, control, and regulation of street and road naming and addressing within Grand Traverse County; to provide for a process of re-addressing premises that may have nonconforming addresses; to provide for penalties for the violation of this ordinance, and to repeal any ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith.

**Section I: Name**

This ordinance shall be known and cited as "Grand Traverse County Street and Road Naming and Address Ordinance, Ordinance No. 11."

**Section II: Purpose**

The purpose of this ordinance is to establish a county-wide, with the exception of the city and village municipalities, street and road naming and addressing system in a uniform logical manner; to provide for a central point to issue naming and addressing, and to provide rules and guidelines to facilitate enforcement thereof.

**Section III: Definitions**

- A. "Address" shall mean the name of a public or private street or road, and the number that complies with this ordinance.
- B. "Addressing Authority" shall mean the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners designated County Department responsible for implementing this ordinance.
- C. "Baselines" shall mean both of the following:
  1. "East and West baseline" shall mean a line drawn East and West across the County to divide it into a North and South half. Location of said line to be described as the North line of Town 26 North and the

South line of Town 27 North as established by the General Land Office Survey and certified by the Michigan State Land Office, July 30, 1880.

2. "North and South baseline" shall mean a line drawn North and South across the County to divide it into an East and West half. Location of said line to be described as the East line of Range 11 West and the West line of Range 10 West as established by the General Land Office Survey and certified by the Michigan State Land Office, July 30, 1880.

D. "County Grid System" shall mean and refer to a general East and West and North and South division of Grand Traverse County into four quadrants to facilitate the assignment of identifying numbers, with the provision of allowing one thousand (1,000) numbers per mile for each mile of distance from the base lines as established by the General Land Office Survey and certified by the Michigan State Land Office, July 30, 1880.

E. "Interested party" shall mean emergency services, such as police, fire, or any other emergency services, the owner of premises, occupant of premises, Equalization Department, public utilities, or any other governmental agency.

F. "Local Municipality" shall mean a township located in Grand Traverse County.

G. "Master Street Name Index" shall mean a master list of all road names in Grand Traverse County as approved and maintained by the Addressing Authority.

H. "Person" shall mean an individual, firm, partnership, public corporation, private corporation, nonprofit corporation, limited liability company, or any other type of business entity.

I. "Premises" shall mean any lot or parcel of land owned by any person improved with buildings, whether occupied or not, and to which a street or road number has been assigned.

J. "Private road" shall mean any road, trail, or other type of access utilized for ingress/egress of a premises which is currently not a public road, and is not under the jurisdiction of the Local Municipality or the Road Commission.

K. "Road Commission" shall mean the Grand Traverse County Road Commission.

L. "Street or road name" shall mean any official name as recognized by a Local Municipality or the Road Commission.

#### Section IV: Regulations

A. In General

1. A person shall not name a new street, road, or private road, or change the name of a currently existing street, road or private road, without obtaining the approval of the Addressing Authority.
2. A person shall not assign an address to any premises without obtaining approval from the Addressing Authority.
3. A person shall submit the request for a new road or street name, change in road or street name, or assignment of an address, by submitting a completed application to the Addressing Authority. A person shall also pay an application fee when requesting the assignment of an address or multiple addresses.
  - a.) The Addressing Authority shall prepare and maintain an application form.
  - b.) The application fee shall be set by the Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners.
4. The Addressing Authority shall approve an application for a new road or street name, change in road or street name, or assignment of an address if the application complies with the regulations contained in this ordinance.

B. Street and Road Name; Criteria

1. The Addressing Authority shall not approve a change in the name of a currently existing named road or street without the applicant submitting proof that the person has obtained approval of the name change from the Local Municipality or the Road Commission.
2. The Addressing Authority's review and acceptance of a new street or road name into the Master Street Name Index is based on the following criteria:
  - a.) Duplicate names, as already established and approved existing streets or roads, will not be accepted.
  - b.) Duplicate names, as already established and approved existing streets or roads, with a differing suffix will not be accepted.
  - c.) Names having the same or similar pronunciation, as already established, and approved existing streets or roads, will not be accepted.
  - d.) Names with unconventional complicated spelling will not be accepted.

- e.) Names containing more than seventeen (17) letters and spaces combined will not be accepted.
- f.) Names utilizing special or foreign language characters will not be accepted.
- g.) Names which include the words “North”, “South”, “East”, or “West” within the body of the name will not be accepted.
- h.) A road name that contains a number shall be spelled out, and be a whole number only.”

C. Private Road Name; Criteria

- 1. The criteria listed in Section IV. B. shall apply to naming of private roads.
- 2. In addition to meeting the requirements of Section IV. B., to name an unnamed private road, or to change the name of an existing named private road, which accesses an existing named public road the applicant shall comply with the following procedures:
  - a.) The applicant shall install road signage within sixty (60) days of private roads acceptance and approval by the Local Municipality. The applicant shall install signage that complies with this ordinance and all standards, rules or ordinances of the Road Commission and Local Municipality.
  - b.) The applicant shall provide written proof to the Addressing Authority that the Local Municipality formally approved of the new name, or changed name, of the private road.
- 3. The Addressing Authority shall assign a new private road name in one or both of the following situations:
  - a.) Where more than three premises share a common unnamed private road access;
  - b.) Where land is planned for development into site condominiums, a licensed mobile home park, planned unit developments, surveyed split approvals, or other similar types of developments.

D. Addresses; Criteria for New Addresses

- 1. The Address Authority shall assign addresses by referring to both baselines.
- 2. The Addressing Authority shall assign even numbers to premises located on

the right side of a street or road, and odd numbers on the left side of a street or road as a person faces away from the baselines.

3. The Address road name shall only contain alphabetic letters. The Address street number shall be Arabic whole numbers and not be spelled out, or contain fractional numbers or decimal numbers.
4. If there are existing numbers bordering the proposed site, a number may be assigned which falls within the existing numbers based on the distance between those numbers and the proposed number.
5. For corner lot structures where the front door faces the street, an address may be assigned from that front door provided there is an unobstructed view of the structure, and access for an emergency vehicle to park and use that front door.
6. Buildings with interior access to the various occupants such as apartment buildings, group housing units or office buildings with suites shall have one address. Individual dwellings or units within the building shall be assigned suffix letters or numbers by the applicant.
7. Buildings with separate exterior ground access to the various occupants such as duplexes, divided apartment buildings, condo buildings, and strip malls, shall have separate address numbers to the service door entrances to occupant areas

#### E. Display of Addresses

1. All premises and mailboxes shall bear a distinctive road or street number in accordance with the approved addresses maintained by the Addressing Authority. A Master Street Name Index shall also become an operative part of the Ordinance, which shall be updated periodically, and shall rule as to spelling.
2. Owners of any premises shall place upon the road or street front of such premises distinctive and legible street numbers, adjacent to the driveway, and on the front of the premises.
3. Numbers on mailboxes and on the premises shall be displayed in such manner as to be plainly visible from road traffic lanes in either direction of approach. The numbers shall be of a contrasting or reflectorized color to their background and shall be not less than four (4) inches in height.
4. Numbers in block or script displayed on building fronts shall be of a contrasting color to their background, and shall be not less than four (4) inches in height.

5. Where there is no mailbox on the premises, or the numbers on the road or street front of the premises cannot be read from the road or street, then any owner of the premises shall place a post of suitable strength, construction and a minimum of four (4) feet in height, measured from the ground up, adjacent to the driveway of the premises. Such numbers shall be of a contrasting or reflectorized color to their background and shall not be less than four (4) inches in height.
6. Where the mailbox is located on a road or street other than on the road or street of the premises as numbered, the mailbox shall show both the number assigned, and the road or street name of the premises in contrasting or reflectorized color to their background, which shall be not less than one (1) inch in height.
7. Grouping of mailboxes shall be permitted, but the grouping shall be in sequential order according to the assigned number.

F. Change of an Existing Address; Nonconformity; Address Review Committee; Appeal

1. When an Interested Party identifies a potential nonconforming address, he or she shall report it to the 911/Central Dispatch Director who shall perform a thorough investigation of the potential nonconforming address.
2. If the investigation reveals a nonconforming address, the 911/Central Dispatch Director shall confer with the Addressing Authority who both shall determine to change the address so that it conforms to the requirements of this ordinance.
3. In cases where the Addressing Authority and 911/Central Dispatch Director determine that an address will be changed, the Addressing Authority shall send a written notice to the affected owner and occupant of the premises notifying them of the new address. In addition, the notice shall contain all of the following:
  - a.) An explanation of the reason for the address change;
  - b.) A statement that the owner or occupant may contest the determination of the change of address by an appeal to the Address Review Committee;
  - c.) An explanation that for the appeal to be heard by the Committee, the owner or occupant must hand deliver, mail or email an appeal in writing within thirty (30) days of the date of the initial written notice of the address change.

4. The Grand Traverse County Board of Commissioners shall establish an Address Review Committee composed of the following individuals or their designees:
  - a.) Grand Traverse County Administrator;
  - b.) Grand Traverse County Construction Code Director;
  - c.) A representative from the Grand Traverse County Road Commission;
  - d.) A representative from the Home Builders Association of the Grand Traverse Area, Inc.;
  - e.) A representative from the Builders Exchange of Northwest Michigan.
5. The Address Review Committee shall meet as required to hear appeals, and the County Administrator shall serve as the Chair of this Committee.
6. The Address Review Committee shall have the purpose of reviewing and ruling on appeals to changes to existing addresses that do not conform to the requirement of this ordinance.
7. The Address Review Committee shall hear the appeal of an owner or occupant within thirty (30) days after he or she files a written appeal with the Address Authority.
8. After the Address Review Committee takes input from the Interested Party, the owner or occupant of the premises, the 911/Central Dispatch Director, the Address Authority, and other individuals, the Committee shall determine if first, there is a nonconforming address, and second, that the nonconforming address meets both of the following:
  - a.) The nonconforming address unreasonably interferes with accurate dispatch and response of emergency vehicles; and
  - b.) The nonconforming address unreasonably interferes with County services, which would affect the community's health, safety and welfare;
9. If the Address Review Committee determines that both a nonconformity exists, and that all the criteria found in Paragraph F. 8. a.) through b.) have been met, it then shall uphold the determination to change the address. The Address Review Committee's determination is final and it shall not be reconsidered.

#### Section V: Penalty

- A. Any person violating the provisions of this ordinance shall be subject to a municipal civil infraction violation. Each day that a violation continues is a separate municipal civil infraction violation. Sanctions for each violation shall include a fine of not more than One Hundred and no/100 Dollars (\$100.00) costs, damages and injunctive orders as authorized by State Statute.

B. In addition to the imposition of the foregoing fines, penalties, and other legal remedies, the Sheriff's Office and such other officers as the County Board of Commissioners may designate, may cause the proper posting of numbers, and the cost thereof assessed against the owner of such premises.

**Section VI: Miscellaneous**

A. This ordinance, as amended and restated, shall take effect thirty (30) days after publications as required by law. All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with any of the provision of this ordinance are hereby repealed.

B. This ordinance shall not supersede any existing city or village authority for street numbering, but shall be in addition to, and not in conflict with all other laws and ordinances respecting street and road numbering.

C. The provisions of this ordinance are hereby declared to be severable, and if any clause, sentence, word, section, or provision is declared void or unenforceable for any reason by a court of competent jurisdiction the remaining portions of said ordinance shall remain in force.

/s/ Rob Hentschel  
Chairperson Board of Commissioners  
County of Grand Traverse

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