

ARTICLE XII

SIGNS

12-1 SIGNS

The purpose and intent of this Article is to recognize that signs serve a legitimate public service and that they complement and support trade, tourism and investment within Shelby. These regulations are intended to establish standards which maximize the effectiveness of permitted signs while limiting visual distraction to motorists and preserving the land values and natural attractiveness of the area.

All signs except those specifically listed in Section 12-1.3 shall be erected, installed, or modified only in accordance with a duly-issued and valid sign permit issued by the Zoning Administrator. Sign permits shall be issued in accordance with the requirements and procedures of Article IV, Permits and Procedures, and the submission requirements of Appendix B. If plans submitted for a zoning, special use, or conditional use permit include sign plans in sufficient detail, as determined by the Community Development Director, that the permit-issuing authority can determine whether the proposed sign(s) comply with the provisions of this Section, then issuance of the requested zoning, special use, or conditional use permit shall constitute approval of the proposed sign(s).

12-1.1 Definitions

Unless otherwise specifically provided, or unless clearly required by the context, the words and phrases defined in this Section should have the meaning indicated when used throughout this Article.

(A) Sign

Any words, lettering, numerals, parts of letters or numerals, figures, phrases, sentences, emblems, devices, designs, or trade names or trademarks by which anything is known (including any surface, fabric or other material or structure designed to carry such devices such as are used to designate or attract attention to an individual, firm, an association, a corporation, a profession, a business, or a commodity or product) which are exposed to public view and used to attract attention.

(B) Static Advertising Signs (Static Billboards)

A sign which publicizes and directs attention to a business, profession, commodity, activity, product, service or entertainment not conducted, sold or offered upon the premises where such sign is located. Advertising information or messages are generally designed so that the copy or poster on the sign can be manually changed. Billboards located within 660 feet of interstate or federally assisted

primary highways are subject to the standards and permitting requirements of the Outdoor Advertising Control Act which is administered by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

(C) Animated Sign

Any sign which flashes, revolves, rotates or swings by mechanical means, or which uses a change of lighting to depict action, or to create a special effect or scene.

(D) Banner

A temporary sign of light weight fabric or similar material which is rigidly mounted to a pole or a building by a rigid frame at two or more edges. National, state or municipal flags, or the official flag of any institution or business shall not be considered banners.

(E) Building Marker

A sign indicating the name of a building and date and incidental information about its construction, which sign is cut into a masonry surface, or made of bronze or other permanent material.

(F) Canopy Sign

Any sign which is a part of or attached to an awning, canopy or other fabric-like or plastic protective structure which is extended over a door, window, or entranceway. A marquee is not a canopy.

(G) Changeable Copy Sign

Any sign on which copy is changed manually and copy is shown on the same sign face such as reader boards with changeable letters or changeable pictorial panels but not limited to the above. Poster panels and painted boards are not changeable copy signs.

(H) Commercial Message

Any sign wording, logo, or other representation that directly or indirectly, names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service, or other commercial activity. This definition does not include company nameplates or logos on instructional signs.

(I) Construction Sign

A sign on a construction site during the period of construction on which is printed or written the name of the owner, developer, contractor, architect, planner, engineer, or development title.

(J) Electronically Controlled Message Sign

A sign on which the copy changes automatically on a lampbank, such that the message or display does not run continuously in the travel mode, and any message or display remains stationary for a minimum of two seconds. Any sign on which the message or display runs continuously in the travel mode and/or on which any message or display does not remain stationary for a minimum two seconds shall be considered a flashing sign.

(K) Flashing Sign

A type of animated sign which contains an intermittent, blinking, scintillating, or flashing light source, or which includes the illusion of intermittent or flashing light, or an externally mounted intermittent light source. An electronically controlled message sign is not a flashing sign.

(L) Freestanding Sign

Any sign which is supported by structures or supports which are placed on, or anchored in the ground, and which structures or supports are independent from any building or other structure.

(M) Governmental Sign

Any sign erected by or on behalf of a governmental body to post a legal notice, identify public property, convey public information, and direct or regulate pedestrian or vehicular traffic.

(N) Identification Sign

A permanent sign announcing the name of a subdivision, manufactured home park, campground/RV park, multifamily or townhouse development, planned unit development, church, school, park or quasi-public structure or facility, and uses permitted in residential zoning districts.

(O) Incidental Sign

A sign which provides only information for the convenience and necessity of the public. Company logos may be displayed on such signs but must not occupy more than 25% of the sign area. Incidental signs include directories, entrance, exit and other necessary directional signs.

(P) Menu Sign

A permanent on-premises sign located at businesses which provide drive-up or drive-through services such as fast food restaurants,

banks, laundries, etc. Menu signs shall be located so as not to create vehicle stacking problems which will interfere with the flow of traffic.

(Q) Nonconforming Sign

Any sign which does not conform to size, height, location, design, construction, or other requirements of this Ordinance. The nonconformity may result from adoption of this Ordinance or any subsequent amendment.

(R) On-Premises Sign

A sign which publicizes and directs attention to a profession, commodity, activity, product, service or entertainment conducted, sold or offered upon the premises where such sign is located. On-premises signs include pole and ground mounted signs.

(S) Portable Sign

A sign not permanently attached to any surface.

(T) Professional or Occupational Sign or Name Plate

A sign which publicizes and directs attention to a home occupation or to a profession.

(U) Projecting Sign

Any sign which is end mounted or otherwise attached to an exterior wall of a building which forms an angle with said wall.

(V) Real Estate Sign

A sign which advertises the sale, rent, or lease of property.

(W) Sign Area

The area of a sign shall be measured in conformance with the following:

- (1) The area of the face of a sign shall be calculated to include the outermost part which forms the shape or display. Necessary supports and trim moldings shall not be included when calculating the area of the sign. Aprons below advertising signs shall not exceed 3 feet in height. Aprons serve an aesthetic function and shall not be used for any purposes other than to identify, by name, the sign company responsible for the sign.
- (2) In computing the area of a sign, standard mathematical formulas for common regular geometric shapes (triangle, parallelogram, circle and ellipse, or combinations thereof) shall

be used. Only one side of a double-faced sign shall be considered in calculating sign area. Posts supporting elevated signs shall not be included in the sign area calculation.

- (3) In the case of an irregularly shaped sign or a sign with letters and/or symbols affixed to or painted, displayed or incorporated into or upon a wall, canopy, awning or decorative facade of a building, the area of the sign shall be the area within the singular continuous perimeter, outlining the limits of the writing, representation, emblem, or any figure of similar character.
- (4) Back-to-back and V-type signs mounted so as to be connected and not spread more than 15 feet will be considered as one sign location when calculating horizontal separation between signs. Advertising signs (billboards) shall not be stacked, horizontally or vertically.

(X) Sign Height

The vertical distance measured from the ground elevation where the sign is located, to the highest point of the sign except as follows: When the ground elevation is different from the elevation of an adjacent street, the height of a sign shall be measured from the street elevation of the adjacent street at the edge of the pavement.

(Y) Temporary Signs

Temporary signs are those signs which relate to such events as elections, farm auctions, yard sales, agricultural production sales, annual charitable, civic or fraternal events, horse shows, festivals, and home show openings.

(Z) Wall Sign

A sign which is attached to a wall or facade of a building or canopy.

(AA) Warning Sign

Any sign with no commercial message that displays information pertinent to the safety or legal responsibilities of the public such as signs warning of 'high voltage', 'no trespassing', and similar directives.

(BB) Projecting Signs

Wall signs attached flat against a wall may extend not more than twenty-four (24) inches from the wall. Signs projecting from a wall may extend outward from the wall of a building not more than six and one-half (6-1/2) feet and may be located not closer than eighteen (18) inches to a vertical plane at the street curb line. A projecting sign shall not extend above the roof line a distance greater than the height of the roof above the ground level. In no case shall signs project beyond

property lines, except that signs may project over public sidewalks in Central Business Districts provided that the minimum height above grade or sidewalk level of such signs shall be no less than ten (10) feet.

(CC) Sidewalk Sign.

A sign that is a freestanding, temporary sign with no moving parts or lights that is located on a sidewalk.

(DD) Digital Advertising Sign (Digital Billboard) with Electronic/Changeable Face

A sign which publicizes and directs attention to a business, profession, commodity, activity, product, service or entertainment not conducted, sold or offered upon the premises where such sign is located. A digital Advertising sign is a sign which electronically changes the fixed display screen composed of a series of lights, including light emitting diodes (LED's), fiber optics, or other similar new technology where the message change sequence is accomplished immediately. Electronic changeable face outdoor advertising signs include computer programmable, microprocessor controlled electronic or digital displays that display electronic, static images, static graphics, or static pictures, with or without textual information, and tri-vision outdoor advertising signs. Electronic changeable face outdoor advertising signs do not include animated or scrolling images, graphics, video active images (similar to television images), projected images or messages onto buildings or other objects, or static outdoor advertising signs. Billboards located within 660 feet of interstate or federally assisted primary highways are subject to the standards and permitting requirements of the Outdoor Advertising Control Act which is administered by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

(EE) Changing Advertising Signs (Changing Billboards/Trivison Billboards)

A type of electronic changeable advertising sign/billboard composed in whole or in part of a series of vertical or horizontal slats or cylinders that are capable of being rotated at intervals so that partial rotation of the group of slats or cylinders produces a different image and when properly functioning allows up the display of up to three images on a single sign structure at any given time. Billboards located within 660 feet of interstate or federally assisted primary highways are subject to the standards and permitting requirements of the Outdoor Advertising Control Act which is administered by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

(FF) Rotating Sign

Any sign which as whole moves in a revolving or similar manner and serves the same function as an on-premises sign.

12-1.2 Sign Standards

- (A) All pole signs shall be constructed to withstand minimum wind loads as specified by the NC State Building Code. Sufficient documentation shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator for review to assure that wind and stress requirements have been met prior to any permit being issued. Such documentation shall be signed and sealed by a registered North Carolina Architect or Engineer.
- (B) All signs shall be installed and maintained in compliance with the North Carolina State Building Code and the National Electrical Code and shall have appropriate permits and inspections. Electrical signs and fixtures shall bear labels of a nationally accepted testing laboratory.
- (C) All signs shall be maintained in a state of good repair, in compliance with all building and electrical codes and this Ordinance, and shall present a neat, well-kept appearance.
- (D) All lights used for the illumination of a sign shall be shielded so that the light will not shine directly on surrounding areas or create a traffic hazard or distraction to operators of motor vehicles on the public thoroughfares. The Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to order a change in the illumination of any sign that becomes a hazard or a nuisance.
- (E) No illuminated sign, other than professional or occupational signs or nameplates, on-premises signs, incidental signs, back-lit awnings or identification signs shall be permitted within 100 feet of any residential zone. Illuminated signs other than those listed above which are located within 300 feet of a residence or residentially zoned district shall not be illuminated between the hours of 12 midnight and 6 a.m.
- (F) The Zoning Administrator or his authorized representative shall have the authority to order the painting, repair, alteration or removal of a sign, at the expense of the owner of such sign, which shall constitute a hazard to safety, health or public welfare by reasons of inadequate maintenance, dilapidation or obsolescence. The existence of a sign (excluding billboards) or its support structure with no message display for a period of 90 days, shall be justification to declare the sign abandoned and require its removal.
- (G) Any sign erected without proper permits or in violation of this Ordinance shall be brought into compliance within 7 days of notification by the Zoning Administrator or said sign shall be removed immediately.

- (H) Any permitted sign projection over a public sidewalk shall be no lower than 8 feet above the level of the sidewalk nor lower than 14 feet above the level of a vehicular driveway. An encroachment agreement must be obtained from the City of Shelby or the NCDOT, as applicable.
- (I) No sign or sign structure shall be erected, constructed, or maintained so as to interfere with vision clearance along any street or highway or at any intersection of two or more streets or highways. No sign or sign structure may be located within a street or street right-of-way except as allowed over sidewalks in subsection (H).
- (J) Any sign located with a Corridor Protection (CPD) zoning district shall comply with the requirements of Section 10-8.3.

12-1.3 Exempt Signs

The following listed signs are subject to all placement and dimensional requirements of this Section and shall comply with the North Carolina Department of Transportation sight distance and street rights-of-way clearances. The following listed signs shall, however, be exempt from permit and fee requirements, except that any illuminated sign shall require an electrical permit. Exempt signs shall be maintained in good condition and shall not constitute a hazard to safety, health or public welfare. Exempt signs which are found to be in violation shall be ordered corrected or removed.

- (A) Any directional, instructional or warning signs; utility signs; signs for public use; and no trespassing, no hunting, or neighborhood watch signs provided such signs contain no commercial message except for a business logo or name.
- (B) Any sign that is required by law or erected at the direction of a governmental agency.
- (C) Signs erected to regulate traffic.
- (D) Mailboxes, house numbers, nameplates, and building markers not exceeding 4 square feet in area.
- (E) Religious symbols at a place of worship or at a church-owned or operated facility. Such symbols must meet all setbacks and lighting requirements for signs.
- (F) In residential zoning districts, construction signs having a maximum area of 16 square feet and a maximum height of 6 feet and limited to one sign per construction site per street frontage. In nonresidential zoning districts, construction signs having a maximum area of 64 square feet and a maximum height of 10 feet and limited to one sign per construction site per street frontage. Exempt construction signs must be removed within 30 days following the completion of the project.

- (G) Real estate signs having a maximum area of 6 square feet in residential districts and 32 square feet in other districts. Real estate signs are limited to one per site or one per 300' of street frontage.

Temporary real estate signs associated with the marketing of a subdivision shall be limited to one sign per subdivision entrance and 32 square feet in area and 6 feet in height. This type of sign must be set back a minimum of 2 feet from all exterior property lines of the subdivision and shall remain clear of the roadway sight distance easement. An additional directory-type sign of the same dimension, height and setback requirements may be located within the interior of a subdivision. Real estate signs must be removed within 30 days following completion of the project or transaction.

- (H) Temporary political signs shall be removed within 30 days following the event or election. Such signs are limited to 16 square feet in area and shall not be illuminated. In residential districts, no more than 1 sign shall be permitted per lot for each candidate or issue. No sign shall be attached to utility poles, traffic regulatory signs, or other publicly maintained structures.
- (I) Works of art with no commercial message.
- (J) Lights and decorations with no commercial message temporarily displayed on traditionally adopted civic, patriotic or religious holidays.
- (K) Hand-carried signs.
- (L) Signs located on the interior of buildings, courts, lobbies, stadiums, or other structures that are not intended to be seen from the exterior of such structures.
- (M) Flags of the United States, State of North Carolina, local governmental jurisdictions, foreign nations, and any other flags adopted or sanctioned by the City.
- (N) Signs affixed to vehicles and trailers used in the normal transport of goods or persons where the sign is incidental and accessory to the primary use of the vehicle or trailer.
- (O) Flags, emblems or insignia of corporate, political, professional, fraternal, civic, religious, or educational organizations.
- (P) Historical or memorial plaques, tablets, or markers.
- (Q) Signs painted or attached to vending machines, gas pumps, ice machines, or similar devices which indicate the contents of the machine, name or logo of supplier, the price or operating instructions.
- (R) Window signs painted on the inside of a window.

- (S) Changing copy of existing sign(s) without enlarging; however, a drawing of the new sign face must be submitted to the Community Development Department prior to changing the sign face.
- (T) Banners on or across public streets upon the approval of the City Manager.
- (U) Temporary signs meeting the requirements of Section 12-1.5 (I).
- (V) Strands of individual, low intensity, white/clear decorative lights are permitted to illuminate outdoor patio spaces during a business's normal operating hours are exempt in the CB zoning district (See Article 12-1.8).

12-1.4 Prohibited Signs

The following signs shall not be permitted, erected or maintained within the Shelby planning and zoning jurisdiction.

- (A) Signs with optical illusions or movement or mechanical movements by any description or other apparent movement achieved by electrical, electronic or mechanical means, except for time, temperature, date signs; traditional barber poles; changing billboards, digital billboards, electronically controlled message signs; and rotating signs.
- (B) Signs with lights or illuminations which flash, move, rotate, scintillate, blink, flicker, vary in intensity, vary in color or use intermittent electrical pulsations, except for: time, temperature, date signs; traditional barber poles; and electronically controlled message signs.
- (C) Strings of light bulbs used in connection with commercial premises for commercial purposes other than traditional holiday decorations, during the appropriate holiday period, except for in the Central Business (CB) Zoning District (See Article 12-1.8).
- (D) Signs painted on or displayed on vehicles or trailers used to serve primarily as a sign in residential districts.
- (E) Signs erected, maintained, painted or drawn on any tree, rock or other natural feature.
- (F) Signs attached to a building which extend vertically above the highest portion of the roof of any structure.
- (G) Signs which obstruct any fire escape, required exit, window, door opening, or wall opening intended as a means of ingress or egress or signs which interfere with any opening required for ventilation.
- (H) Signs which imitate traffic control devices or interfere with any warning or instructional sign.

- (I) Signs which project over a public right-of-way, except that (i) projecting signs shall comply with Section 12-1.1 (BB) of this ordinance and (ii) signs suspended underneath a canopy or awning may be located over a public sidewalk provided that they are at least 8 feet above the sidewalk.
- (J) Portable signs.

12-1.5 Sign Placement, Size, Height, Setback, Separation, Clearances and Construction By Sign Type

(A) Static Advertising Signs (Static Billboards)

- (1) Maximum height: 35 feet. (In the event that unique conditions exist on a site which render the 35-foot maximum height requirement impracticable, the Zoning Administrator may authorize a height not to exceed a maximum height of 45 feet.)
- (2) Minimum separation from another billboard: 1000 feet measured along the same side of the street and 100 feet radius along an intersecting or adjacent street.
- (3) Billboards shall maintain a minimum separation of 50 feet from any residence as measured along the street beginning at a point projected perpendicular from the near side of an existing residence to the street right-of-way and 100 feet from any residential zoning district boundary.
- (4) Maximum sign size:
 - (a) 325 square feet in area.
 - (b) Top outs and side outs are permitted in addition to the above sign area dimensions. Top outs and side outs shall be confined to the immediate plane of the sign and may extend above and/or to the side of the sign face a maximum of two feet. Top outs and side outs shall not exceed a total of 32 square feet in area.
- (5) Minimum setback: No billboard shall be located within a street right-of-way. However, in any area in which a curb or the edge of the street pavement lies less than 5 feet from a street right-of-way, no billboard shall be located closer than 5 feet to such right-of-way.
- (6) No moving, rotating, fluttering, blinking, or flashing elements are permitted.
- (7) Message Duration: The message shall not change more than once within a 24-hour time period.

- (8) Illumination: Any illumination devices shall be effectively shielded so as to prevent beams or rays of light from being directed at any portion of a street or highway. Illumination intensity or brilliance shall not cause glare or impair the vision of motorists and shall not interfere with any driver's operation of a motor vehicle.
- (9) Historic District: No outdoor advertising sign shall be located within a historic district, or within 500 feet of a national register historic district or any officially designated historic landmark.
- (10) Minimum separation from utility lines shall be in compliance with the requirements of the utility provider having jurisdiction.
- (11) All structures, blank surfaces, backs, and supports shall be uniformly painted in a neutral finish when exposed to any street and shall be maintained in good repair.
- (12) Minimum requirements contained within the North Carolina Outdoor Advertising Control Act (North Carolina General Statute 136-126 et seq.) which are more stringent or in addition to those contained in this Section shall apply.

(B) On-Premises Signs (freestanding pole or ground mounted on-premises signs)

- (1) Maximum height:
 - (a) In RO and NB zoning districts: No maximum height requirement.
 - (b) In CB zoning districts: 8 feet.
 - (c) In CPD zoning districts: 12 feet.
 - (d) In GB and GB2 zoning districts: 50 feet.
 - (e) In LI and GI zoning districts: No maximum height requirement.
- (2) Maximum sign area:
 - (a) In RO zoning districts: 20 percent of the maximum allowable wall sign area (1 square foot of wall sign area per LF of building wall adjoining a street) or 100 square feet, whichever is less. However, the minimum guaranteed freestanding sign area at any individual premises is 24 square feet.
 - (b) In NB zoning districts: 2 square foot of sign area per LF of building wall adjoining a street or 100 square feet,

whichever is less. This is a maximum sign area for all on-premises and wall signs. Thus, the maximum allowable amount of on-premises sign area is also dependent upon the amount of sign area devoted to any existing or proposed wall sign.

- (c) In CB zoning districts: 25 percent of the maximum allowable wall sign area (3 square foot of wall sign area per LF of building wall adjoining a street)) or 150 square feet, whichever is less..
 - (d) In CPD zoning districts: See Section 10-8.3.
 - (e) In GB and GB2 zoning districts: 3 square foot of sign area per LF of building wall adjoining a street or 300 square feet maximum. This is a maximum sign area for all on-premises and wall signs. Thus, the maximum allowable amount of on-premises sign area is also dependent upon the amount of sign area devoted to any existing or proposed wall sign.
 - (f) In LI and GI zoning districts: maximum 150 square feet. This sign area is not aggregate to the total sign area allowed.
- (3) Maximum number of freestanding or ground mounted on-premises signs per parcel: 1 sign per adjoining public street frontage.
 - (4) Minimum setback: No on-premises sign shall be located within a street right-of-way. However, in any area in which a curb or the edge of the street pavement lies less than 5 feet from a street right-of-way, no on-premises sign shall be located closer than 5 feet to such right-of-way.
 - (5) Minimum separation from utility lines shall be in compliance with the requirements of the utility provider having jurisdiction.
 - (6) No unfinished surfaces or structures shall be exposed on on-premises signs.

(C) Wall Signs (including canopy, awning and building facade signs)

- (1) Maximum area:
 - (a) In RO zoning districts: 1 square foot of wall sign area per LF of building wall adjoining a street, less the amount of any existing or proposed on-premises sign area.

- (b) In NB zoning districts: 2 square foot of sign area per LF of building wall adjoining a street, less the amount of any existing or proposed on-premises sign area.
 - (c) In CB zoning districts: 3 square foot of wall sign area per LF of building wall adjoining a street, less the amount of any existing or proposed on-premises sign area.
 - (d) In CPD zoning districts: See Section 10-8.3.
 - (e) In GB and GB2 zoning districts: 3 square foot of sign area per LF of building wall adjoining a street or 300 square feet maximum, less the amount of any existing or proposed on-premises sign area.
 - (f) In LI and GI zoning districts: For buildings 50,000 square feet or more, 20 percent of the street facing wall, for all sides of the building.
 - (g) In all districts: Sign footage permitted per building side may not be used on other than that building side (no transfers or cumulative totals).
- (2) The maximum projection of a wall sign shall not exceed 12 inches.
 - (3) The height of a wall sign shall not exceed the height of the building or canopy facade.

(D) Professional or Occupational Name Plates and Incidental Signs

- (1) Maximum sign area: 3 square feet.
- (2) Maximum height: 30 inches if ground mounted, signs in this category may also be mounted against the structure.
- (3) Minimum setback: No sign shall be located within a street right-of-way. However, in any area in which a curb or the edge of the street pavement lies less than 5 feet from a street right-of-way, no on-premises sign shall be located closer than 5 feet to such right-of-way.
- (4) Maximum number of signs per establishment: 1

(E) Identification Signs

- (1) Maximum sign area:
 - (a) 12 square feet for signs identifying multifamily and townhouse developments under 2 acres in size, boarding

and rooming houses, manufactured home parks, and bed and breakfast in nonresidential districts,

- (b) 120 square feet for signs identifying subdivisions and multifamily and townhouse developments over 2 acres in size.
 - (c) 60 square feet for signs identifying clubs and other recreational facilities, schools, church bulletin boards, and nonresidential uses allowed in residential districts.
- (2) Maximum height:
- (a) 8 feet for signs identifying subdivisions and multifamily and townhouse developments over 2 acres in size.
 - (b) 6 feet for all other types of identification signs.
- (4) Minimum setback:
- (a) Subdivision median identification signs: All median sign layouts for existing or proposed city-maintained streets must be approved by the City Engineer. Median signs located within existing or proposed state-maintained streets must be approved by the NCDOT.
 - (b) All other types of identification signs: no sign shall be located within a street right-of-way. However, in any area in which a curb or the edge of the street pavement lies less than 5 feet from a street right-of-way, no on-premises sign shall be located closer than 5 feet to such right-of-way.
- (4) Maximum number of signs per adjoining street frontage:
- (a) Signs identifying subdivisions and multifamily and townhouse developments over 2 acres in size: one per street entrance.
 - (b) All other types of identification signs: one.

(F) Menu Signs

- (1) Maximum sign area: 45 square feet.
- (2) Maximum height if ground mounted: 8 feet.
- (3) Minimum setback from all property lines: 5 feet.
- (4) Maximum number of signs per business establishment: 1.

(G) Portable Signs

Portable signs are prohibited in all zoning districts. Existing portable signs previously considered non-conforming signs shall be allowed to remain until December 31, 2015.

(H) Shopping Center Identification Signs

In GB and GB2 districts, one shopping center identification sign is permitted for each shopping center. The maximum freestanding sign area shall be 300 square feet for centers containing 15 or fewer stores or businesses and 400 square feet for centers containing more than 15 stores or businesses. The maximum wall sign square footage is 1.5 square feet of sign area per LF of the width of the establishment at the front building wall. Shopping center identification signs are not subject to the aggregate sign area limitations of this Section. See Section 10-8.3 for multi-tenant developments located within CPD zoning districts.

(I) Temporary Signs

- (1) Maximum sign area: 32 square feet.
- (2) Maximum height: 8 feet.
- (3) Temporary sign permits may be issued for 30 days. Temporary signs, including banners, may only be used during that 30 day period. Temporary signs must either be removed after 30 days or owner must acquire another 30 day permit.
- (4) Banners shall not be used as permanent signs.

(J) Sidewalk Signs

- (1) May be located in the CB Zoning District on sidewalks with a width greater than five (5) feet.
- (2) Maximum Sign Area: Twelve (12) Square Feet.
- (3) Maximum Height: Six (6) Feet.
- (4) Number per Business: One (1).
- (5) May be displayed during business hours.
- (6) Must be located in a manner that maintains a five (5) foot clear travel path for pedestrians.

(K) Digital Advertising Signs (Digital Billboards) with Electronic/Changeable Face

- (1) Zoning District Permitted: GB, LI, and GI
- (2) Maximum Height: 35 feet. (In the event that unique conditions exist on a site which render the 35-foot maximum height requirement impracticable, the Zoning Administrator may authorize a height not to exceed a maximum height of 45 feet.)
- (3) Minimum separation from another billboard: 1000 feet measured along the same side of the street and 100 feet radius along an intersecting or adjacent street.
- (4) Billboards shall maintain a minimum separation of 50 feet from any residence as measured along the street beginning at a point projected perpendicular from the near side of an existing residence to the street right-of-way and 100 feet from any residential zoning district boundary.
- (5) Maximum sign size:
 - (a) 325 square feet in area.
 - (b) Top outs and side outs are permitted in addition to the above sign area dimensions. Top outs and side outs shall be confined to the immediate plane of the sign and may extend above and/or to the side of the sign face a maximum of two feet. Top outs and side outs shall not exceed a total of 32 square feet in area.
- (6) Minimum setback: No billboard shall be located within a street right-of-way. However, in any area in which a curb or the edge of the street pavement lies less than 5 feet from a street right-of-way, no billboard shall be located closer than 5 feet to such right-of-way.
- (7) Sign Support: Freestanding with unipole construction only.
- (8) No moving, rotating, fluttering, blinking, or flashing elements are permitted. No animation, video, audio, pyrotechnic, or bluecasting components are permitted
- (9) Message Duration: Advertising messages or information shall remain in a fixed, static position for a minimum of (8) seconds. The change sequence must be accomplished within an interval of two (2) seconds or less.
- (10) Illumination

- (a) The outdoor advertising sign shall have an automatic dimmer (factory set to the illumination intensities set below) and a photo cell sensor to adjust the illumination intensity or brilliance of the sign so that it shall not cause glare or impair the vision of motorists, and shall not interfere with any driver's operation of a motor vehicle. The sign shall not exceed a maximum illumination of 7,500 nits (candelas per square meter) during daylight hours and a maximum illumination of 500 nits between dusk to dawn as measured from the sign's face at maximum brightness.
 - (b) Any external illumination devices shall be effectively shielded so as to prevent beams or rays of light from being directed at any portion of a street or highway, or any residential use.
- (11) Historic District: No outdoor advertising sign shall be located within a historic district, or within 500 feet of a national register historic district or any officially designated historic landmark.
 - (12) System Malfunction: Electronic changeable face outdoor advertising signs shall contain a default design that will freeze the sign in one position with no more than a maximum illumination of 500 nits if a malfunction occurs.
 - (13) Minimum separation from utility lines shall be in compliance with the requirements of the utility provider having jurisdiction.
 - (14) All structures, blank surfaces, backs, and supports shall be uniformly painted in a neutral finish when exposed to any street and shall be maintained in good repair.
 - (15) Minimum requirements contained within the North Carolina Outdoor Advertising Control Act (North Carolina General Statute 136-126 et seq.) which are more stringent or in addition to those contained in this Section shall apply.

(L) Changing Advertising Signs (Changing Billboards/Trivision Billboards)

- (1) Zoning District Permitted: GB, LI, and GI
- (2) Maximum Height: 35 feet. (In the event that unique conditions exist on a site which render the 35-foot maximum height requirement impracticable, the Zoning Administrator may authorize a height not to exceed a maximum height of 45 feet.)
- (3) Minimum separation from another billboard: 1000 feet measured along the same side of the street and 100 feet radius along an intersecting or adjacent street.

- (4) Billboards shall maintain a minimum separation of 50 feet from any residence as measured along the street beginning at a point projected perpendicular from the near side of an existing residence to the street right-of-way and 100 feet from any residential zoning district boundary.
- (5) Maximum sign size: 325 square feet in area.
- (6) Minimum setback: No billboard shall be located within a street right-of-way. However, in any area in which a curb or the edge of the street pavement lies less than 5 feet from a street right-of-way, no billboard shall be located closer than 5 feet to such right-of-way.
- (7) Message Duration: Advertising messages or information shall remain in a fixed, static position for a minimum of (8) seconds. The change sequence must be accomplished within an interval of two (2) seconds or less.
- (8) Illumination: Any illumination devices shall be effectively shielded so as to prevent beams or rays of light from being directed at any portion of a street or highway. Illumination intensity or brilliance shall not cause glare or impair the vision of motorists and shall not interfere with any driver's operation of a motor vehicle.
- (9) Historic District: No outdoor advertising sign shall be located within a historic district, or within 500 feet of a national register historic district or any officially designated historic landmark.
- (10) System Malfunction: Electronic changeable face outdoor advertising signs shall contain a default design that will freeze the sign in one position with no more than a maximum illumination of 500 nits if a malfunction occurs.
- (11) Minimum separation from utility lines shall be in compliance with the requirements of the utility provider having jurisdiction.
- (12) All structures, blank surfaces, backs, and supports shall be uniformly painted in a neutral finish when exposed to any street and shall be maintained in good repair.
- (13) Minimum requirements contained within the North Carolina Outdoor Advertising Control Act (North Carolina General Statute 136-126 et seq.) which are more stringent or in addition to those contained in this Section shall apply.

(M) Rotating Signs

- (1) Permitted Zoning Districts: GB, GB2, LI, and GI Zoning Districts.
- (2) Maximum height: 25 feet.
- (3) Maximum sign area: 3 square foot of sign area per LF of building wall adjoining a street or 300 square feet maximum. This is a maximum sign area for all on-premises and wall signs. Thus, the maximum allowable amount of on-premises sign area is also dependent upon the amount of sign area devoted to any existing or proposed wall sign.
- (4) Maximum RPM: 6 RPM (revolutions per minute)
- (5) Maximum number of freestanding or ground mounted on-premises signs per parcel: 1 sign per adjoining public street frontage.
- (6) Minimum setback: No on-premises sign shall be located within a street right-of-way. However, in any area in which a curb or the edge of the street pavement lies less than 5 feet from a street right-of-way, no on-premises sign shall be located closer than 5 feet to such right-of-way.
- (7) Minimum separation from utility lines shall be in compliance with the requirements of the utility provider having jurisdiction.
- (8) No unfinished surfaces or structures shall be exposed on on-premises signs.

12-1.6 Nonconforming Signs

It is the intent of this Ordinance to permit signs which were lawful before the effective date of this Ordinance to remain in service. Specific provisions regarding nonconforming signs are delineated in Section 6-7.

12-1.7 Noncommercial Messages

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Article, any sign, display or device allowed under this Article may contain, in lieu of any other copy, an otherwise lawful noncommercial message that does not direct attention to a business operated for profit or to a commodity or service for sale. Such sign, display, or device shall, however, comply with the area, lighting, height and other requirements of this Article.

12-1.8 Decorative Lights

In the CB zoning district, strands of individual, low intensity, white/clear decorative lights are permitted to illuminate outdoor patio spaces during a business's normal operating hours.

**Table 12-1-1
Table of Permitted Signs By Type of Sign**

Sign Type	Residential Districts	RO	NB	CB	GB	GB2	CPD	LI	GI
Static Advertising (Static Billboards)*					X			X	X
On-Premises		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Wall Sign		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Professional or Occupational Nameplate, Incidental	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Portable									
Identification	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Menu		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Construction	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Real Estate	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Temporary	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Exempt	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sidewalk Sign				X					
Digital Advertising (Digital Billboards)					X			X	X
Changing Advertising (Changing Billboards/Trivision Billboards)					X			X	X
Rotating Signs					X	X		X	X
Decorative Lights				X					

Notes:

X = Indicates permitted with sign permit.
Blank = Indicates not permitted.

* Advertising signs in this category shall also comply with the permit procedures contained in the current edition of the North Carolina Department of Transportation outdoor advertising manual.

Table 12-1-2

Summary Table of Sign Standards By Sign Type

Sign Type	Maximum Sign Area	Maximum Sign Height
Billboards	325 sq. ft.	35 ft.
Professional Occupational Incidental	3 sq. ft.	2.5 ft.
Identification	12 sq. ft. multifamily/townhouses, mobile home parks, etc.	6 ft.
	120 sq. ft. S/D & multifamily over 2 acres	8 ft.
	60 sq. ft. all other uses	6 ft.
Temporary	32 sq. ft.	8 ft.
Menu	45 sq. ft.	8 ft.
Shopping Center	GB, GB2: Freestanding: 300 sq. ft. w/ 15 or less store 400 sq. ft. w/ more than 15 stores	No maximum No maximum
	Wall Sign: 1.5 sq. ft. per LF of width of establishment at the front building wall	
	CPD: 150 sq. ft.	12 ft.
Wall	RO: 1 sq. ft. per LF of wall area	
	NB: 2 sq. ft. per LF wall area*	
	CB: 3 sq. ft. per LF wall area	
	GB, GB2, LI, and GI: 3 sq. ft. per LF wall area*, ****	
	LI and GI: For buildings 50,000 sq. ft. or more: 20% of the street facing wall, for all sides of the building.	
	CPD: 1.5 sq. ft. per LF wall area	
Freestanding	RO: 20% of wall sign area or 100 sq. ft.**	No maximum
	NB: 2 sq. ft. per LF wall area or 100 sq. ft.***	No maximum
	CB: 25% of wall sign area or 150 sq. ft.	8 ft.
	GB and GB2: 3 sq. ft. per LF wall area*** or 300 sq. ft.	50 ft.
	LI and GI: 150 sq. ft.	No maximum
	CPD: 48 sq. ft. w/multiple tenants 36 sq. ft. w/o multiple tenants	12 ft. 12 ft.
Sidewalk Sign	12 sq. ft.	6 ft.

* Less the amount of any existing or proposed freestanding sign area.

** The minimum guaranteed freestanding sign area at any individual premises in RO is 24 sq. ft.

*** Less the amount of any existing or proposed wall sign area.

**** Except for in LI and GI zoning districts where buildings are 50,000 sq. ft. or more.