

Draft proposed Sign Ordinance Changes 2025

1. 30-5.L.7.c. Temporary Sign Registration:

- **Current:** All temporary signs, other than Type 1 Freestanding Temporary Signs, shall be registered with the [Development Services Department](#) prior to their placement to ensure compliance with the standards of this section.
- **Proposed:** Remove the registration process requirements.
- **Reason:** The only registration process currently in place is a sign permit application which would need to be adjusted to except non-permit applications. This would also cause the citizens to submit and receive approval for every temporary sign before placing it on a property, except for Type 1 temporary signs. These sign types would include but are not limited to Type 2 Banners, Type 3 Large Construction signs (Coming Soon), Type 4 A-Frame (sandwich boards), and Type 5 *Feather Flags*.
- **Notes:** The Code Enforcement Office has in the past and can continue to regulate these signs on a case-by-case basis. The intent for these signs is that they are temporary in nature and do not require a permit to be placed on a property.

2. 30-5.L.7.d.6. Type 5 Freestanding Temporary Signs:

- **Current:** Feather flags are currently listed as Type 5 Freestanding Temporary Signs.
- **Proposed:** Relocate feather flags back to **30-5.L.8. Permanent Signs.**
- **Reason:** Under our past sign ordinance feather flags were added to establish uniform standards to address the size, height, setbacks from the right-of-way and property line, spacing between flag, and maximum number of flags allowed per parcel. They also required a sign permit because they were considered permanent signs.
- **Notes:** Under the current sign ordinance, these signs are categorized as temporary signs but have no time limit for their display and require registration. This is the same as requiring them to be permitted through the sign permit application process.

3. 30-5.L.5.D. Motion Signs

- **Current:** Under this section “Banners” are called out as prohibited but in section **30-5.L.7.D.3. Type 2 Temporary Signs** they are a permitted temporary sign.
- **Proposed:** Remove the word “Banners” from the prohibited **30-5.L.5.D. Motion Signs** section.
- **Reason:** This will remove conflicting sections of the ordinance.

4. 30-5.L.8.B.4. Directional and Circulation Signage (Permit Required)

- **Current:** Freestanding directional and circulation signage may be established along entranceways, within parking areas, and along internal drives to direct vehicular and pedestrian traffic, subject to the following standards:
 - a. Directional signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet of copy area.
 - b. Signs shall be placed in a manner that does not interfere with site distance requirements or otherwise obstruct visibility.
 - c. No directional signage shall be installed within a public right-of-way,
 - d. Directional signs may be internally or externally illuminated.
 - e. Directional signs shall have a common design, including materials, color, illumination, and typeface.
- **Proposed:** Move this section to **30-5.L.6. Exempt Signs** section.
- **Reason:** Directional signs have been an exempt sign type and have a primary function of providing information over advertising.

5. 30-9.D. Sign, Pole (Definition)

- **Current:** A freestanding sign which is supported from the ground by one or more poles or similar support structures of narrow width (maximum of 20 percent of the width of the sign face). (Not a ground sign).
- **Proposed:** Add the words (which places the copy area of the sign (10) feet or more above grade level) to the end just before (not a ground sign).
- **Reason:** to clarify the difference between a pole and ground sign. Similar wording is used in the definition of a ground sign but knowing to look at that definition has caused some confusion in the past.

6. 30-5.L.8.B.c. Pole Signs

- **Current:** All the information is in text form only.

Pole Signs

1. Permitted Copy Area The maximum permitted copy area for pole signs in each district shall be in accordance with the following:

i. OI, NC, and UC Districts The maximum permitted sign copy area along each frontage shall be one-half square foot (0.5) per linear foot of street frontage, not to exceed 50 square feet.

ii. LC, CC, MU, BP, LI, and HI Districts The maximum permitted sign copy area along each frontage shall be (0.5) per linear foot of street frontage, not to exceed 150 square feet.

iii. Sign Consolidation Incentive In any situation in which multiple pole-signs are permitted on a single parcel and the owner chooses to utilize no more than one (1) pole sign per frontage, the permitted copy area of the sign may be increased by 25%. Any sign erected utilizing this incentive shall be removed or otherwise made conforming to the general standard before additional permitted pole signs may be placed on the parcel or frontage. iii.

2. Maximum Height

i. OI, NC, and UC Districts The maximum permitted height for pole signs is 15 feet.

ii. LC, CC, MU, BP, LI, and HI Districts The maximum permitted height for pole signs is 25 feet.

3. Required Setback Pole signs shall be set back from all adjoining rights-of-way and property lines by a minimum of 5 feet.

4. Changeable Copy Changeable copy area is permitted to occupy up to 30% of the sign face. Either manual changeable copy or electronic changeable copy is permitted. Where changeable copy displays are utilized, the display area shall be installed flush with the sign face.

5. Illumination Only internal illumination is permitted.

6. Supporting Structure Concealment Rectangular covers having a color and finish similar to the main body of the sign shall be installed around each supporting pole from the sign base or grad

- **Proposed:** Use the current text information without change, (except what is already proposed) and convert it into a table format.
- **Reason:** This format makes it simpler for the applicant to quickly obtain size, setback, copy area, and allowable district information without reading through the text.

Pole Signs

1.Example

2.Definition

A freestanding sign which is supported from the ground by one or more poles or similar support structures of narrow width (maximum of 20 percent of the width of the sign face). (Not a ground sign).

3.Zoning Districts Were Permitted

C D	A R	S F- 15	S F- 10	S F- 6	MR -5	M H	OI	N C	LC	C C	M U	DT 1, DT 2	UC	BP	LI	HI
N o	N o	N o	N o	N o	No	No	Ye s	Ye s	Ye s	Ye s	Ye s	Yes	Ye s	Ye s	Ye s	Ye s

4.Copy Area Max (SQFT)

OI	NC	UC	LC	CC	MU	BP	LI	HI
50	50	50	150	150	150	150	150	150

5.Permitted Height.

OI	NC	UC	LC	CC	MU	BP	LI	HI
15	15	15	25	25	25	25	25	25

Req Setback.

- Pole signs shall be set back from all adjoining rights-of-way and property lines by a minimum of 5 feet.

5.Copy Area Compliance

- In the OI, NC, and UC zoning districts the maximum sign copy area shall be one-half square foot (0.5) per linear foot of street frontage, not to exceed 50 square feet.
- In the LC, CC, MU, BP, LI, and HI zoning districts the maximum sign copy area shall be one-half square foot (0.5) per linear foot of street frontage, not to exceed 150 square feet.

6. Sign Size Incentives

- In any situation in which multiple pole-signs are permitted on a single parcel and the owner chooses to utilize no more than one (1) pole sign per frontage, the permitted copy area of the sign may be increased by 25%. Any sign erected utilizing this incentive shall be removed or otherwise made conforming to the general standard before additional permitted pole signs may be placed on the parcel or frontage.

7.Additional Information

- Only internal illumination is permitted.
- Rectangular covers having a color and finish similar to the main body of the sign shall be installed around each supporting pole from the sign base or grade to the bottom of the sign. The cumulative width of the covers shall be a minimum of 20% and maximum of 50% of the width of the sign.
- Changeable copy area is permitted to occupy up to 30% of the sign face. Either manual changeable copy or electronic changeable copy is permitted. Where changeable copy displays are utilized, the display area shall be installed flush with the sign face.

7. 30-5.L.8.A.5. Wall Signage (Add New Section) Non-residential uses within Residential Districts

- **Current:** Wall signs are not permitted under this section except for Home Occupation Signage.
- **Proposed:** Add this wording to a new section (Non-residential uses in residential districts may have one wall sign not to exceed (32) square feet in copy area. The sign may be externally or internally illuminated when facing a public or private right-of-way. When facing a residentially zoned property or use within (50) feet of the property line no illumination is permitted.
- **Reason:** Non-residential uses in residential districts like churches and daycares would be permitted to have both ground and wall signs. This was permitted under the past ordinance as well.

8. 30-5.L.8.A.6. Governmental Uses (Add New Section) Non-residential uses within Residential Districts

- **Current:** No exceptions for governmental uses like fire or police stations, resource centers, recreation centers, or schools.
- **Proposed:** Governmental uses including but not limited to fire or police stations, resource centers, recreation centers, and public or private schools licensed through the State of NC, may follow all signage regulations as listed for the O&I zoning district.
- **Reason:** The current sign requirements would make most government uses listed non-conforming because the past sign ordinance allowed for both small pole and wall signage for these uses.

9. 30-5.L.8.B.2.a.1. Building Mounted Signage

- **Current:** Permitted Number of Signs
 - i. **Single Occupancy Buildings**
No more than one (1) building mounted sign, excluding window signs, may be displayed per street frontage; provided that a projecting sign mounted on the corner of a building shall not count toward the maximum number of building mounted signs permitted per frontage.
 - ii. **Multiple Occupancy Buildings**
No more than one (1) building mounted sign, excluding window signs, may be displayed per tenant space; provided that a projecting sign mounted on the corner of a building shall not count toward the maximum number of building mounted signs permitted per frontage.
- **Proposed:**
- **Option 1:** No more than (1) building mounted sign excluding window signs, may be displayed per building evaluation.

- **Option 2 (Recommended):** Remove the limit on the number of signs and use a total square footage for the building. **OI, NC, and UC 50 square feet total.** The remaining non-residential zoning district would be 500 square feet total (**Note: this is the way it done under the past sign ordinance**).
- **Option 3:** Limit the overall number of signs per building to between 3 and 5 with no limit on the total square footage per building. This would use the 1 square foot per 1 linear or 10% of the wall area rule to regulate the sign size.
- **Reason:** One sign per street frontage has caused an influx of variance request as the way this section is worded, it only allows for one sign from all wall mounted sign types. Most businesses currently have more than one wall mounted sign and new businesses usually request the same. This also has an effect particularly to fueling stations with free standing fuel canopy's as only one sign may be placed per street frontage.

10. 30-5.L.8.B.2.c.6. (Add New Number) Canopy and Awning Signs

- **Current:**
 1. Canopy and awning signs may be painted or printed upon a canopy or awning or may be attached, provided such attached sign shall be affixed flat to the surface of the canopy or awning completely within the limits of the canopy or awning.
 2. Canopy and awning signs may only be externally illuminated.
 3. Under-canopy, canopy soffit, or ceiling signs shall be hung beneath a canopy so that the copy or display shall be perpendicular to the building wall. Signage shall be permitted along the edge of a canopy provided the [sign copy](#) shall not extend in any direction above, beyond or below the canopy edge. The fringe or drip-flap portion of a canvas awning shall be considered as a canopy edge.
 4. Signage shall be permitted above the edge of the canopy on the protection covering of the canopy provided the signage is within the parallel edges of the protective covering and is an integral part of the protective covering or is applied directly thereto.
- **Proposed:** Add number 5. Except that free standing canopies may have (2) wall signs with a copy area of (1) square foot per (1) liner foot of the elevation that the sign is placed on.
- **Reason:** Currently the limit of one wall mounted sign per street frontage requires the applicant to choose to either place a sign on the building or on the canopy. If the business fronts on only one street then only one sign may be placed.