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## Chapter 8. Sign Standards

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### 8.1. Purpose and Intent

A. It is the intent of this chapter to authorize the use of signs whose types, sizes, and arrangements are:

1. Compatible with their surroundings;
2. Preserve the natural beauty of the area;
3. Protect existing property values in both residential and non-residential areas;
4. Prevent the endangerment of public safety;
5. Express the identity of the community as a whole or individual properties or occupants;
6. Legible in the circumstances in which they are seen; and
7. Appropriate to traffic safety.

B. The following regulations are designed and intended to improve the overall aesthetic of the community by preventing over-concentration, improper placement, and excessive height, bulk, and area of signs.

### 8.2. Applicability

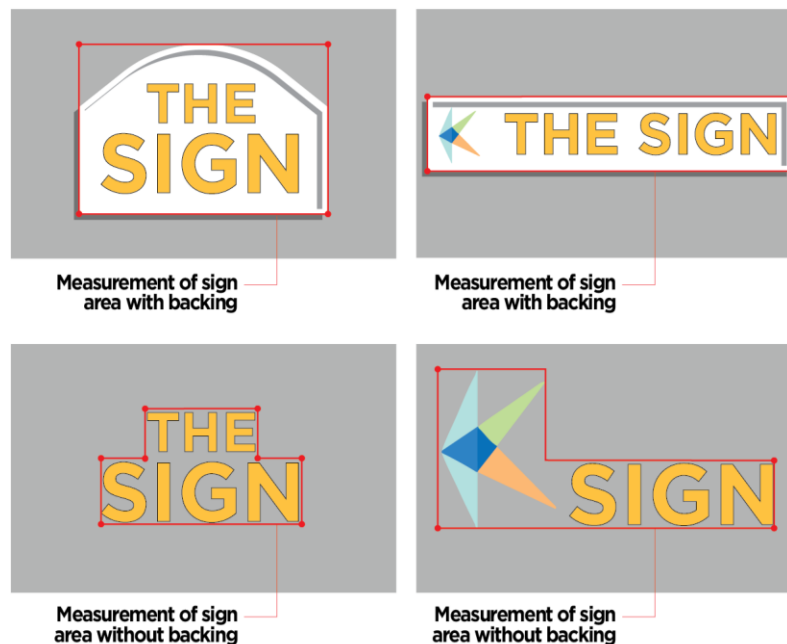
A. No sign shall be erected, altered, constructed, moved, converted, or enlarged except in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and pursuant to the issuance of a sign permit (Section 12.2 (D)(3)).

B. Notwithstanding sub-section “A” above, changing or replacing the permanent copy of an existing conforming sign shall not require a permit, provided the copy does not change the nature of the sign so as to render it in violation of this ordinance.

### 8.3. General Provisions

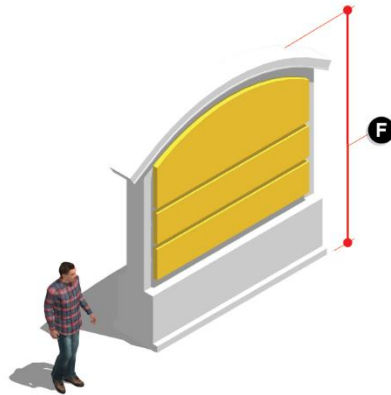
- A. **Scale.** The scale of the sign(s) shall be appropriate for the building on which they are placed. Signs should reflect the proportional and dimensional relationships of the structure. Signs near pedestrian walkways such as pedestrian entrances and arcades should be pedestrian in scale.
- B. **Placement.** Except for government-installed signs, all signs are prohibited from being placed in an easement or public right-of-way, and no sign shall be located within a sight triangle area or so as to impair traffic visibility.
- C. **Maintenance.** Any structurally unsafe sign that endangers public safety shall be immediately removed unless it is repaired and made otherwise to comply with the requirements of this Ordinance.
- D. **Lighting.** All wall or monument signs, if internally lit, must be covered with an opaque acrylic or similarly opaque surface. Exposed neon, argon, LED, or similarly sized tube lighting is allowed; however, each tube must be individually recessed within a channel not exceeding four (4) inches in width that fully cuts off the casting of glare on all sides.
- E. **Computation of Sign Area.**
1. **In General.** The area of a sign face (which is also the sign area of a wall sign or other sign) shall be computed by means of the smallest rectangle that will encompass the extreme limits of the writing, representation, emblem, other display, and any material or color forming an integral part of the background of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the backdrop or structure against which it is placed. Sign area shall include any supporting framework, base, bracing, or decorative fence or wall when such fence or wall otherwise meets the regulations of this Ordinance and is incidental to the display itself, as determined by the Land Use Administrator.

*Figure 8.1: Computation of Sign Area*



2. **Double-Faced Signs.** Where the two (2) faces of a double-faced sign are parallel or the interior angle formed by the faces is 60 degrees or less, only one (1) display face shall be measured in computing sign area. If the two (2) faces of a double-faced sign are of unequal area, the area of the sign shall be measured on the larger face.
    - a. The area of multi-faced signs is calculated based on the principle that all sign elements that can be seen at one (1) time or from one (1) vantage point should be considered in measuring that side of the sign. Consequently, where the interior angle formed by the two (2) faces exceeds 60 degrees, the areas of all faces of a multi-faced sign shall be added together to compute the area of the sign.
  3. **Three-Dimensional Signs.** Spherical, cylindrical, or other three-dimensional signs not having conventional sign faces shall be computed from the smallest shape or shapes which will best approximate the actual surface area of such faces.
- F. **Computation of Sign Height.** The maximum height shall be as measured from surrounding grade to the highest point of the sign, including all supporting framework, base, bracing, or decorative fence or wall.

*Figure 8.2: Computation of Sign Height*



#### 8.4. Signs Not Requiring a Zoning Compliance / Sign Permit

The following types of signs do not require a Zoning Compliance/Sign Permit as outlined in Section 12.2 (D)(3) and may be placed in any zoning district subject to the provisions of this Ordinance and, if required, the issuance of a building permit. There shall be no limit as to the number of such signs on any lot, except as prescribed in this Section. Signs (except government signs) are prohibited from being located within a public right-of-way unless permission has been otherwise granted by the Town of Knightdale, NCDOT, or the General Assembly of North Carolina, as may apply.

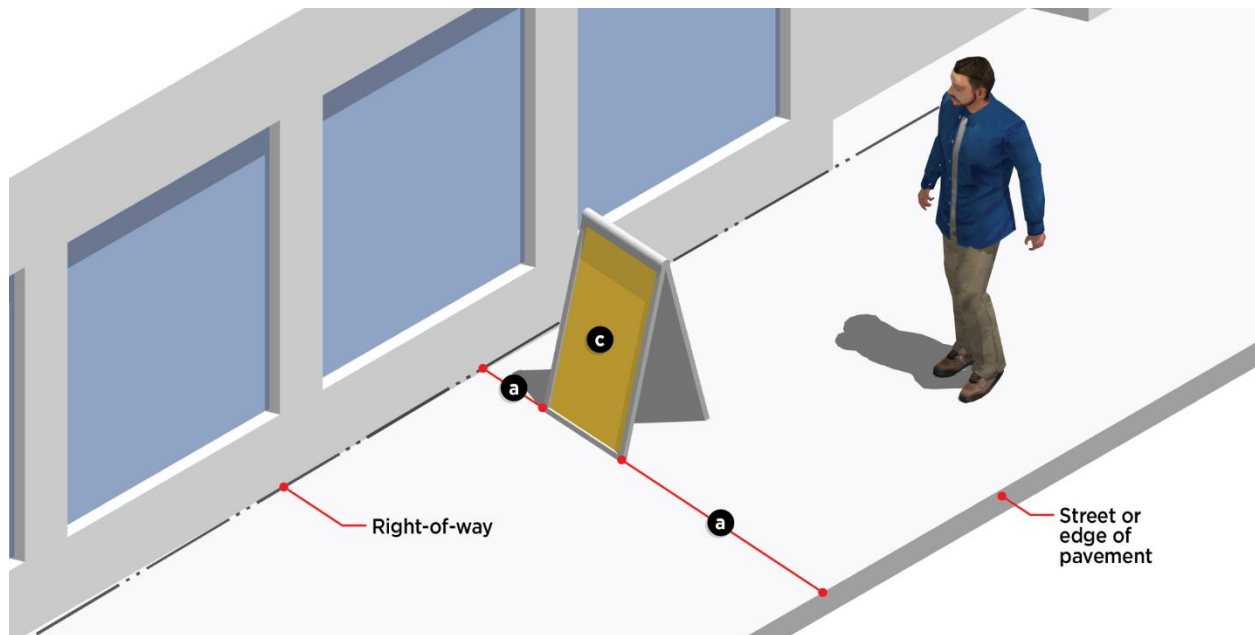
- A. **Ballpark Signage.** Signage within ballfields and sports stadiums that is directed within the facility including, but not limited to, banners, fixed placards, and scoreboards.
- B. **Flags.** Any flag not meeting the standards of this section shall be considered a banner and shall be subject to the regulations in Section 8.7.
1. **Pole Height.** Flags shall not be flown from a pole the top of which is more than forty (40) feet in height.
  2. **Number.** A total of three (3) flags may be flown per site.
  3. **Flags of the United States of America.** Flags shall be flown in accordance with protocol established by the Congress of the United States for the Stars and Stripes.
- C. **Government Signs.** Signs posted by various local, state, and federal agencies.
- D. **On-Site Traffic Directional Signs.** On non-residential lots, signs that are incidental to other signs on the site; are not internally or indirectly illuminated; and direct or guide on-site traffic (i.e. handicapped parking, drive-thrus), prohibit the parking of unauthorized vehicles or provide other incidental information that protects the health, safety, and welfare of the community; are subject to the following standards:
1. **Sign Area.** On-site traffic directional signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet.
  2. **Number of Signs.** A maximum of four (4) on-site traffic directional signs shall be permitted per lot.
  3. **Location.** On-site traffic directional signs shall be located in parking lots and drive aisles in a manner that does not interfere with pedestrian circulation or required landscape areas.
  4. **Signs on Buildings.** Signs up to three (3) square feet not otherwise regulated by this Ordinance are permitted. (Includes Home Occupations)
  5. **Exemptions.** On-site traffic directional signs not visible from a public street or neighboring residence.

*Figure 8.3: On-Site Traffic Directional Sign*



- E. **Street Address Signs.** Signs bearing only property identification numbers for first responders to locate the property to respond to any fire or public safety issue. The sign shall serve as a visible street address and identifier for the delivery of mail and official government notification.
1. **Illumination.** Property identification signs may not be illuminated.
  2. **Number.** One (1) sign is permitted per lot frontage.
  3. **Area.** The sign may not exceed two (2) square feet.
- F. **Sandwich Board Signs.** Portable A-frame sign constructed with two (2) faces back-to-back and resting on the ground at an angle to each other not exceeding forty-five (45) degrees.
1. **Districts.** Sandwich board signs are permitted along pedestrian ways in the Residential Mixed-Use (RMX), Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMX), Town Center (TC), and Highway Business (HB) districts subject to the following standards:
    - a. **Location.** A sandwich board must be located within eight (8) feet of a doorway or under the roof line, and shall maintain a minimum five (5) foot wide pedestrian clearance zone along the pedestrian way.
    - b. **Hours.** Sandwich boards may only be displayed during the associated business' hours of operation.
    - c. **Area.** Neither face shall exceed three (3) feet in width or four (4) feet in height.
    - d. **Materials.** The sandwich board frame shall be constructed of a non-reflective material and/or color.

*Figure 8.4: Sandwich Board Sign*



- G. **Street Graphics.** Flags and banners attached to light poles or similar fixtures within public rights-of-way or public buildings and approved by the Public Works Director in accordance with the Town's adopted Street Graphics Policy. Similar graphics may be mounted on private property but may not exceed twelve (12) square feet each in area.

*Figure 8.5: Street Graphics*



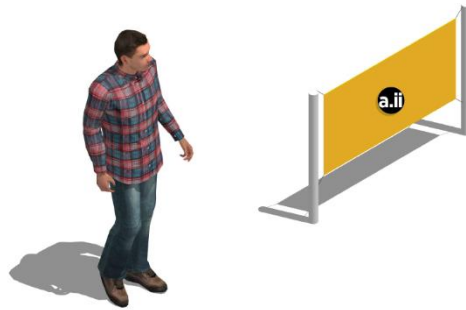
- H. **Temporary Signs.** To prevent the promulgation of temporary signs that are not designed to be long-term additions to the aesthetic environment and which often become unsightly and create visual clutter after exposure to weather and landscape maintenance, no temporary signs shall be located in any right-of-way or attached to structures in any right-of-way such as power poles and street signs, and shall be subject to the following specific provisions:

1. **Construction Site Signs.**

- a. Individual single-family or duplex construction site signs shall:
  - i. Not exceed one (1) sign per lot for which a building permit has been issued;
  - ii. Not exceed four (4) square feet in area;
  - iii. Not be erected prior to issuance of a building permit; and
  - iv. Be removed within thirty (30) days following the issuance of the CO.
- b. Major residential subdivisions, multifamily, mixed-use, or non-residential construction site signs shall:
  - i. Not exceed two (2) signs per construction site;
  - ii. Not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area per sign;
  - iii. Not be erected prior to issuance of a CIP; and
  - iv. Be removed within thirty (30) days following the issuance of the last CO.

- c. For purposes of this section only, “construction site” shall mean the following:
  - i. A major residential subdivision (inclusive of all lots and phases);
  - ii. A multi-family development approved as a single development (inclusive of all lots and phases);
  - iii. Mixed-use or non-residential development approved as a single development (inclusive of all lots and phases).

**Figure 8.6: Construction Site Sign**

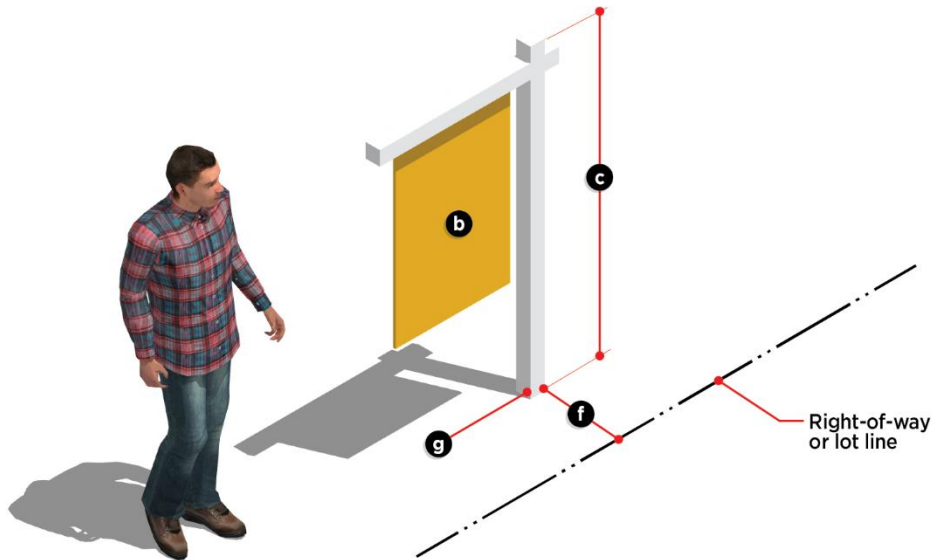


## 2. Temporary Suspended Shingle Post Signs.

- a. **Permitted Districts.** Temporary suspended shingle post signs shall be permitted in residential districts only.
- b. **Sign Area.** The maximum permitted sign area of a temporary suspended shingle post sign shall be six (6) square feet.
- c. **Height.** The maximum permitted height of a temporary suspended shingle post sign shall be six (6) feet.
- d. **Projection.** The maximum projection of the temporary suspended shingle post sign arm shall be three (3) feet.
- e. **Number of Signs.** A maximum of one (1) temporary suspended shingle post sign shall be permitted per lot frontage.
- f. **Location.** Temporary suspended shingle post signs shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet from all property lines, rights-of-way, and utility easements; shall not block points of ingress or egress; or be placed in any sidewalk or pedestrian walkway.
- g. **Other Provisions.**
  - i. Post signs shall be securely anchored into the ground or secured in a portable base designed for such function.
  - ii. Post signs shall not be illuminated.

- iii. Post signs shall be maintained in good condition and shall not sag, lie on the ground, be torn, or otherwise kept in a disorderly state.
- h. **Duration of Display.** Post signs shall be displayed for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days in any calendar year.

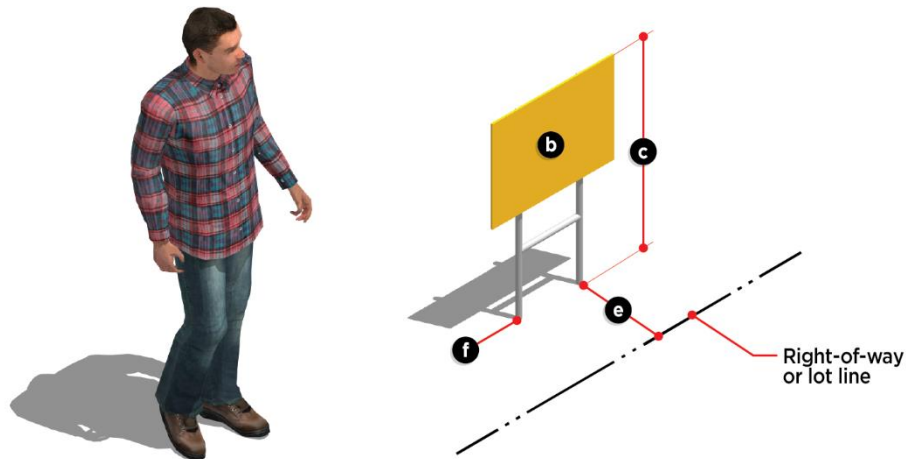
*Figure 8.7: Temporary Suspended Shingle Post Sign*





3. **Yard Signs.** Yard signs shall:
  - a. **Permitted Districts.** Yard signs shall be permitted in residential districts only.
  - b. **Sign Area.** The maximum permitted sign area of a yard sign shall be three (3) square feet.
  - c. **Height.** The maximum permitted height of a yard sign shall be three (3) feet.
  - d. **Number of Signs.** A maximum of three (3) yard signs shall be permitted to be displayed concurrently.
  - e. **Location.** Yard signs shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet from all property lines, rights-of-way, and utility easements; shall not block points of ingress or egress; or be placed in any sidewalk or pedestrian walkway.
  - f. **Other Provisions.**
    - i. Yard signs shall be securely anchored into the ground or secured in a portable base designed for such function.
    - ii. Yard signs shall not be illuminated.
    - iii. Yard signs shall be maintained in good condition and shall not sag, lie on the ground, be torn, or otherwise kept in a disorderly state.

*Figure 8.8: Yard Sign*

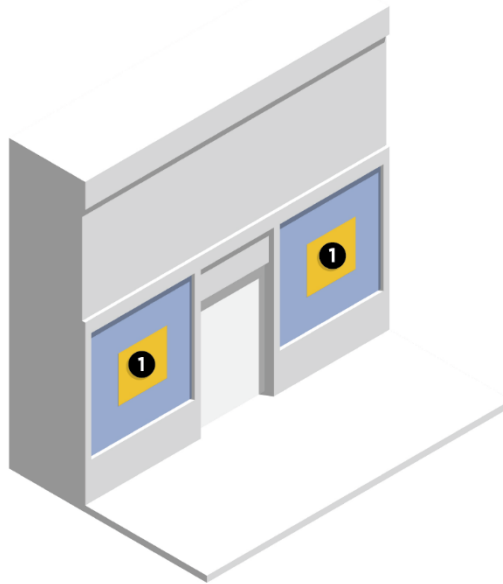


## I. Window Signs.

1. **In General.** Signs placed or painted on the interior or exterior of glass windows or doors shall not cover more than thirty (30) percent of the glass area of the window in which it is displayed. Window Signs that cover more than thirty (30) percent of the window in which it is displayed shall be considered as Wall Signs and shall meet requirements for Wall Signs as outlined in Section 8.5.
2. **Neon Tube Signs/LED Signs.** These signs may only be located on the inside of a window and shall be limited to two (2) per business and cover no more than ten (10) percent of the window in which it is displayed. The permitted sign area of neon tube signs/LED signs shall be counted in aggregate with window signs in general.

*Figure 8.9: Window Sign*

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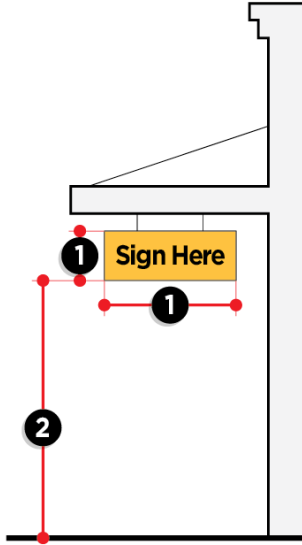


J. Under Awning Signs.

1. **Maximum Dimensions.** sixteen (16) inches high and forty (40) inches wide.
2. **Sign Clearance.** Eight (8) feet

*Figure 8.10: Under Awning Sign*

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## 8.5. Signs Requiring a Permit by District

### A. Primarily Residential Districts (OSP, RR, GR, UR)

Permitted Sign Type(s)	Specific Applicability	Maximum Area	Maximum Height	Maximum Number
Permanent Suspended Shingle Post	For Home Occupation Uses Only	6 sqft	5 ft	1
Monument	Neighborhood Gateways	16 sqft	7 ft	2 per entrance

### B. Mixed-Use Districts (RMX, NMX, TC,) and Civic/Institutional Uses (All Permitted Districts)

Permitted Sign Type(s)	Specific Applicability	Maximum Area	Maximum Height	Maximum Number
Monument	Lots less than 2 acres	25 sqft	4 ft	2*
Monument	Lots equal to or greater than 2 acres	50 sqft	7 ft	2*
Building Wall	Front facades	10% of wall	n/a	1**
Building Wall	All other facades	5% of wall	n/a	1**
* Only one monument sign allowed per lot per street frontage.				
** A maximum of one wall sign shall be permitted per single-tenant building or per individual unit of a multiple tenant building, with the exception of secondary wall signs as detailed in Section 8.6(B).				

### C. Primarily Commercial, Office, and Industrial Districts (HB, BO, MI)

Permitted Sign Type(s)	Specific Applicability	Maximum Area	Maximum Height	Maximum Number
Monument	Lots less than 2 acres	50 sqft	6 ft	2*
Monument	Lots equal to or greater than 2 acres	70 sqft	7 ft	2*
Building Wall	n/a	10% of wall	n/a	1**
* Only one monument sign allowed per lot per street frontage.				
** A maximum of one wall sign shall be permitted per lot street frontage of a single-tenant building or per individual unit of a multiple tenant building, with the exception of secondary wall signs as detailed in Section 8.6(B).				
*** No individual wall sign may exceed one hundred fifty (150) square feet if sign is within one hundred fifty (150) feet of a public right-of-way.				

## 8.6. Signage Types

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### A. Permanent Suspended Shingle Post Signs.

1. All Permanent Suspended Shingle Post Signs shall be located a minimum of five (5) feet behind the street right-of-way.
2. Permanent Suspended Shingle Post Signs shall not be internally illuminated.
3. Permanent Suspended Shingle Post Signs and their supporting posts shall be of a color and material which are similar or complementary to those of the structure housing the subject establishment.

### B. Wall Signs. Signs erected parallel to the façade of any building or yard wall (Section 7.6) to which it is attached and supported throughout its entire length by the building or yard wall face shall:

1. Preferably be located between the top of the first floor window and the sill of the second floor window, or on a sign frieze area;
2. Project no more than twelve (12) inches from the building wall;
3. Not obscure architectural features;
4. Be integrated with the design of the building;
5. Not cover any window or part of a window; and
6. Not extend above a parapet.
7. Not placed on a roof or mansard roof.

### 8. Number of Signs.

- a. A maximum of one (1) primary wall sign shall be permitted per lot frontage of a single-tenant building or unit of a multi-tenant building.
- b. A maximum of three (3) secondary wall signs may be authorized for buildings with lineal frontage in excess of seventy-five (75) feet by the Land Use Administrator provided such additional signage is:
  - i. In keeping with the overall design and architecture of the building;
  - ii. A minimum of twenty (20) feet from the primary wall sign and other secondary wall signs;
  - iii. A maximum of fifty (50) percent of the size of the primary wall sign;
  - iv. Accessory to the building's primary wall sign; and
  - v. The total area of all primary and secondary wall signs does not exceed the maximum wall sign area as established in Section 8.5.

9. **Alternatives.** The following alternatives are considered as Wall Signs and shall be counted against a façade's maximum permitted area for Wall Signs (Section 8.5):
- a. **Window Signs.** The area of Window Signs (Section 8.4 (I)) that in aggregate exceed thirty (30) percent of the glass area on any building façade. At no time shall the opacity (visibility into the building) be less than fifty (50) percent of the total window area.
  - b. **Awning Signs.** Signs located on an awning are considered Wall Signs and shall be limited to no more than fifty (50) percent of the awning area.
  - c. **Projecting Signs.** A Projecting Sign is considered a Wall Sign, but it may not extend above the soffit, parapet, or eave line, as appropriate, of the building to which it is attached; and shall be limited by the following additional standards:
    - i. Minimum Width of Façade: Twenty (20) feet (not applicable in the TC District);
    - ii. Maximum Dimensions: Projecting signs may not exceed either eight (8) feet in height or three (3) feet in width.
    - iii. Maximum Area: Ten (10) square feet;
    - iv. Maximum Projection from Wall: Four (4) feet; and
    - v. Sign Clearance: Eight (8) feet.

*Figure 8.11: Wall Sign*

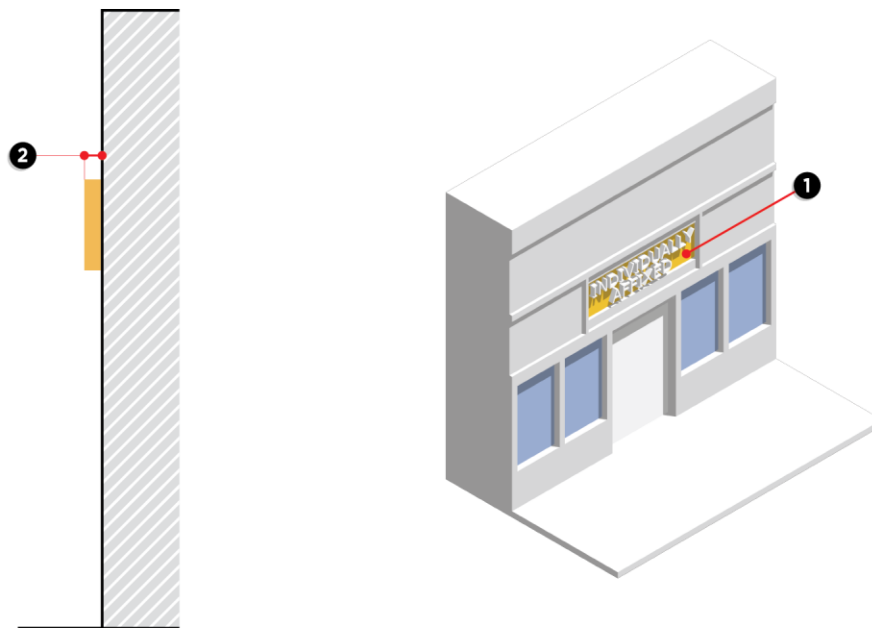
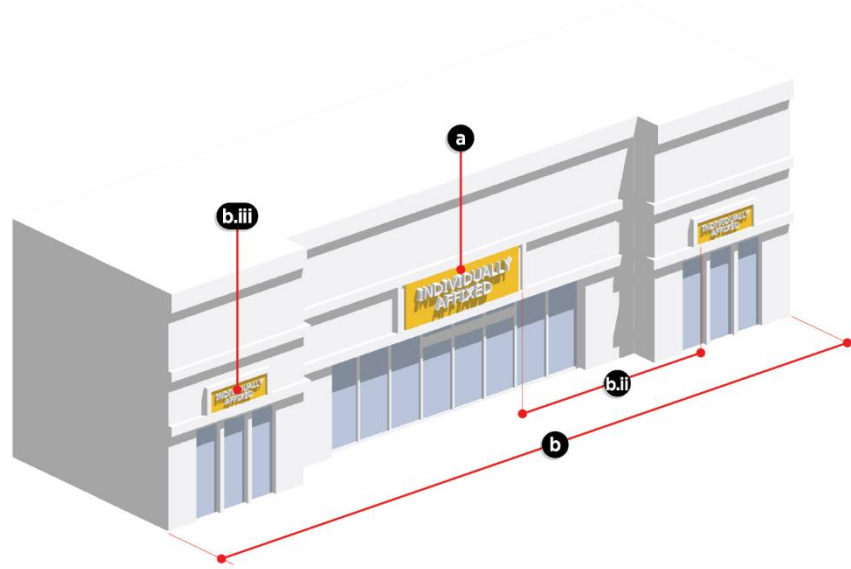
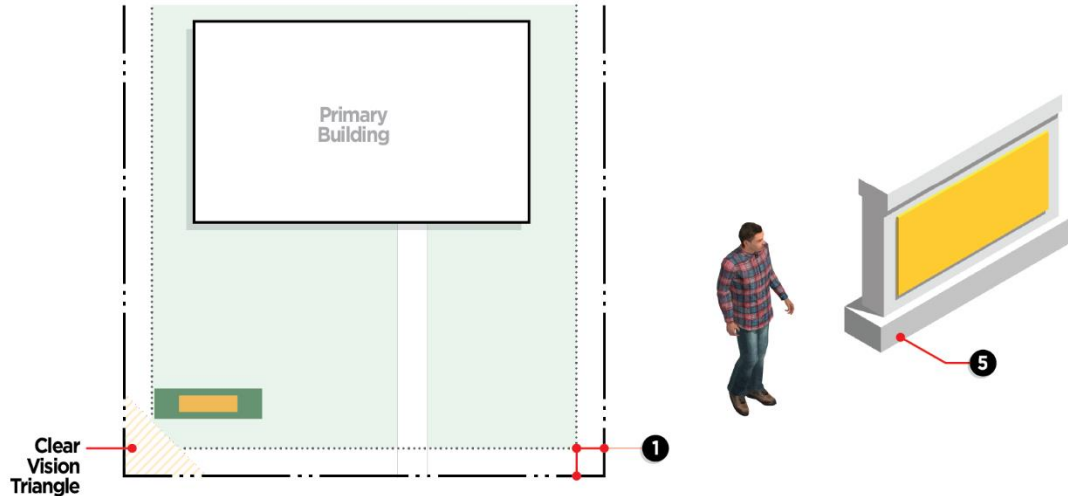


Figure 8.12: Secondary Wall Signs



- C. **Monument Signs.** Monument Signs are monolithic structures in which the bottom (base) of the sign is flush with the ground. These signs shall:
1. Be located a minimum of ten (10) feet from all property lines, rights-of-way, and utility easements;
  2. Not block points of ingress or egress;
  3. Not be placed in any sidewalk or pedestrian walkway;
  4. Maintain a fifteen (15)-foot side yard setback if the side lot line abuts a residential district;
  5. The base of monument signs, including all structural components, shall extend horizontally from the sign face a minimum of ten (10) percent and a maximum of twenty-five (25) percent of the width of the sign face. The base of monument signs shall be constructed from masonry. The masonry shall match the primary façade or brick and/or stone when the primary façade is not constructed of a masonry material.
  6. **Alternatives.**
    - a. A Suspended Shingle Post Sign (Section 8.4 (2)(H)) may be substituted for a Monument Sign but shall meet all height and area requirements as provided in Section 8.5A.

*Figure 8.13: Monument Sign*





## 8.7. Banners

Banners may be permitted via the submission of a temporary banner permit form to the Land Use Administrator.

1. **Wall Mounted Banner Signs.** Temporary signs permitted in conjunction with any multifamily, mixed-use, or nonresidential use.
  - a. **Area.**
    - i. The maximum permitted sign area of wall-mounted banner signs in any residential district or the NMX or TC Districts shall not exceed two and one-half (2.5) percent of the total area of the face of the wall on which the sign is to be located.
    - ii. The maximum permitted sign area of wall-mounted banner signs in the HB, BO, MI, or MQ Districts shall not exceed five (5) percent of the total area of the face of the wall on which the sign is to be located.
  - b. **Height.** No wall-mounted banner sign shall protrude above the highest roofline or above the top of the parapet wall or mansard roof.
  - c. **Number of Signs.** A maximum of one (1) wall mounted banner sign shall be permitted per lot frontage of a single-tenant building or unit of a multi-tenant building.
  - d. **Location.** Wall-mounted banner signs shall be affixed to a building.
  - e. **Projection.** Wall-mounted banner signs shall be affixed flat against the building to which they are mounted.

*Figure 8.14: Wall Mounted Banner*



## 8.8. Prohibited Signs and Devices

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- A. Animated Signs. Signs with flashing or reflective disks, and signs with flashing lights or lights of changing degree of intensity or color and animated, rotating, moving, or apparently moving signs, including electronic message boards.
- B. Billboards.
- C. Pole Signs.
- D. Portable Signs: (except Sandwich Board Signs as permitted in Section 8.4(F)), including any sign whose sign face was initially constructed and designed to be placed and/or transported on wheels, regardless if said sign face is removed from its base and placed on or in the ground so as to otherwise classify said sign as a "free-standing" sign as herein defined.
- E. Vehicular Signs, except signs painted on or permanently attached to commercial vehicles.
- F. Signs that extend above a parapet.
- G. Signs that are placed on a roof or mansard roof.
- H. Off-Premise Signs.
- I. Obstructive Signs.
  - 1. Any sign that obstructs the view of bicyclists or motorists using any street, approach to any street intersection, or which interferes with the effectiveness of or obscures any traffic sign, device, or signal.
  - 2. Any sign (other than a government sign), banner, or display placed on any curb, sidewalk, post, pole, hydrant, bridge, tree, or other surface located on, over, or across any public street or right-of-way.
  - 3. Any sign located in such a way as to intentionally deny an adjoining property owner visual access to an existing sign on their property.
- J. Specific Devices.
  - 1. Lighter-Than-Air. Sign devices consisting of balloons, blimps, or similar types of lighter-than-air objects, shall be prohibited, except those which are subject to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations.
  - 2. Windblown. Sign devices consisting of streamers, pennants, windblown propellers, strung light bulbs, flutter/feather flags, sun blades, and similar installations.
  - 3. Imitative. Signs which contain lights, rotating disks, words, or other devices not erected by a public authority which may be erroneously construed as government signs or emergency warning signs.
- K. Outline Lighting.
- L. All other signs not expressly permitted in this Ordinance.

## 8.9. Sign Illumination

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- A. All lighting shall be in conformance with Chapter 7.
- B. All lighted signs shall have their lighting directed in such a manner as to illuminate only the face of the sign. Lighting fixtures used to illuminate an outdoor advertising sign either shall be by directed ground lighting or mounted on the top of the sign and shall comply with shielding requirements. All lighted signs shall meet all applicable Electrical Codes.
- C. No sign within one-hundred (100) linear feet of a pre-existing residential building footprint may be illuminated between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 6:00 a.m. A residence shall be deemed "pre-existing" for purposes of this Chapter if it has a valid building permit in effect for construction of said structure or if construction of said structure was complete on or prior to the effective date of this provision.

## 8.10. Safety, Maintenance, and Abandonment

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- A. Every sign and all parts thereof, including framework, supports, background, anchors, and wiring systems shall be constructed and maintained in compliance with the North Carolina Building Codes.
- B. All signs, for which a permit is required, together with all supports, braces, guys, and anchors shall be kept in proper repair in accordance with the provisions of this Chapter. When not galvanized or constructed of approved corrosion resistive, noncombustible materials, signs shall be painted when necessary to prevent corrosion, rust, peeling paint, and excessive fading. Failure of owners to keep signs maintained in good mechanical and visual repair shall be deemed a violation of this Chapter.
- C. It shall be the duty and responsibility of the owner or lessee of every sign to maintain the immediate premises occupied by the sign in a clean condition, free of rubbish. Any landscaping surrounding the sign shall be kept trimmed and in good repair. If the landscaping installed at the time of sign approval dies, said landscaping shall be replaced within ninety (90) days.
- D. Every existing sign shall be subject to an inspection whenever the Land Use Administrator deems it necessary. In the event an inspection demonstrates that repairs, and/or maintenance is necessary, the sign owner shall be notified and required to complete said repairs and/or maintenance within thirty (30) days of notification. The Land Use Administrator is authorized to grant one thirty (30) day extension, if, upon written request, it is deemed necessary due to extenuating circumstances.
- E. If the Land Use Administrator shall find that any sign is unsafe or not secure, or is a threat to the public safety, or was, after the adoption of this Chapter constructed, erected, or maintained in violation of the provisions of this Chapter, they shall give written notice per the provisions of this UDO. Such notice shall specify the manner in which the sign is unsafe or in violation of this Chapter.
- F. If the Land Use Administrator finds a sign unsafe and an immediate peril to persons or property, they shall act to have the sign removed or altered summarily and without notice at the owner's expense. Such sign may be removed or altered by the Town and a lien placed on the property for the full cost of such action, including administration, legal, and overhead costs.
- G. Sign copy shall be removed and in the case of a wall sign, the building façade shall be repaired, by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located when the use which the sign is associated is no longer conducted on the premises. The sign copy shall be removed within thirty (30) days of when the use ceases to operate. If the owner or lessee fails to remove the sign copy, the Land Use Administrator shall give the owner thirty (30) days written notice to remove it. Upon failure to comply with the notice, the Land Use Administrator may have the sign removed at the owner's expense.