

Article 8. SIGN ORDINANCE FOR GREENSBORO HISTORIC DISTRICT

Section 39-801 Applicability, Authority, Interpretation, and Enforcement

1. Applicability. This ordinance shall apply to all properties within the Historical Commercial District as established in the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Greensboro, Georgia, as amended, and as such boundaries are established on the Official Zoning Map, Greensboro, Georgia, as may be amended from time to time.

2. Historic Preservation Commission Authority. The Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission, as established in the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Greensboro, Georgia, shall have the authority to review and act upon all applications for the erection of signs and other advertising devices within the B-3, Historical Commercial District, and in addition shall have such other authority as provided in this Ordinance. Decisions of the Historic Preservation Commission relative to this ordinance shall be final; subject however to appeal to the Greensboro City Council as provided in Section 39-802(6) of this ordinance. Signs within the Greensboro Historic Commercial District that are not visible from a public right-of-way are regulated.

3. Interpretation and Enforcement. The Greene County Zoning Administrative Officer shall be responsible for the interpretation of the provisions of this ordinance and for enforcement of this ordinance. A violation of this ordinance is a misdemeanor. Violations shall be enforced in the same manner as violations of the Greensboro Zoning Ordinance.

Section 39-802 Application and Review Procedures for Permanent Signs

- 1. Permit Required.** No person shall erect, alter, or relocate any permanent or temporary sign within the Greensboro Historic Commercial District, without first obtaining a sign permit from the Building Inspector, unless the sign is exempted by Section 39-806 of this ordinance. A sign permit issued by the Building Inspector under the terms of this Ordinance shall be considered to be satisfying the building permit requirement of the Greensboro Sign Ordinance, and for all practical purposes, the sign permit and building permit shall be considered one and the same. Any person, who hangs posts or installs a sign which requires a permit, and who fails to obtain a permit before installing the sign, shall be considered in violation of this Ordinance.
- 2. Permit Approval by Historic Preservation Commission.** Any permit for a permanent or temporary sign within the B-3, Historic Commercial District shall require approval by the Historic Preservation Commission. The Building Inspector shall not issue a sign permit unless it has received prior approval of the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission; provided, however that the Building Inspector may issue a sign permit upon the direction of the Greensboro City Council upon a successful appeal as provided in Section 39-802(6) of this Ordinance.
- 3. Pre-Application Conference.** A pre-application conference with the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission is encouraged in order for the applicant to become

acquainted with application procedures, design standards, and related city ordinances.

4. **Applications.** Applications for sign permits for permanent signs shall be submitted to the Building Inspector and must include the following:
 - A. A site plan drawn to scale which specifies the location of the sign structure, and drawings or photographs which show the scale of the sign in context with the scale of the building if the sign is to be mounted on the building.
 - B. Colored rendering or scaled drawing including dimensions of all sign faces, descriptions of materials to be used, manner of construction and method of attachment, and color samples.
 - C. A complete signage plan for any commercial building which houses more than one business. This must be submitted prior to issuance of a permit for any one sign on the building.
 - D. Appropriate fees as established by resolution of the Greensboro City Council. Completed sign permit applications are to be submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission no later than seven (7) days prior to the Historic Preservation Commission meeting. The staff may assist in the preparation of the application, and shall provide information to applicants on the regulations created by this Ordinance.
5. **Review Procedures.** Completed sign permit applications submitted no later than seven (7) days prior to the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission meeting will be reviewed by the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission at the next regularly scheduled meeting after receipt of the completed application and application fee and either approved, denied or returned with requested modifications. In deciding upon sign applications, the Greensboro Historic Commission should consider the following criteria:
 - A. Whether or not the proposed sign and its characteristics are generally consistent with the aesthetic, historic and architectural themes of properties in the district
 - B. Whether or not the sign facing, structure, design, color, lettering, lettering style, symbols, substance, scale, arrangement texture, materials, area, height, illumination, location and clearance meet the requirements of this ordinance.
6. **Appeals.** Any person adversely affected by any determination made by the commission relative to the issuance or denial of a sign permit may appeal such determination to the governing body. Intention to take an appeal to the Greensboro City Council shall be filed with the Greensboro City Manager in writing within three (3) business days following the denial on the permit. In acting on an appeal, the Greensboro City Council may affirm, reverse, wholly or partly, the decision or determination of the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission, and to that end shall have all of the powers of the Zoning Administrative Officer and Building official and may issue or direct the issuance of a sign permit. A reversal of the Commission's decision shall only be done by the Governing Body, in cases where it is determined that the Commission either abused its discretion in reaching its decision, or it erred in the interpretation of the provisions of this ordinance. Written notification of any such action shall be provided to the applicant and the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission.
7. **Variances.** The Greensboro Historic Preservation is authorized to consider applications for variances to the provisions of this ordinance. The procedure for filing a variance application shall be the same as for variances to the zoning ordinance in the B-3 district; as provided in Article

VHI of the Greensboro zoning ordinance. Variance applications shall be judged based on the criteria for variances to the zoning ordinance, as provided in the Greensboro Zoning Ordinance.

Section 39-803 Sign Types

1. **Types of Signs Allowed.** The following types of signs are allowed subject to the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission review and approval based upon the regulations set forth in this Ordinance:
 - A. **Free-standing Signs.**
 - (1) **Height Limit.** Free-standing signs are limited to low profile signs which may not exceed a height of 5 feet on a monument sign and 8 feet on a single pole sign.
 - (2) **Design.** Free-standing monument signs with solid or enclosed bases are permitted where approved. Signs supported by at least two (2) poles without enclosed bases are also permitted provided that the exposed pole's height does not constitute more than fifty percent (50%) of the overall height (i.e., the height of the open area beneath a sign cannot exceed fifty percent (50%) of the sign's total height). Single pole signs are not considered appropriate in the Historic Commercial District except in the case where a single pole is used in conjunction with a horizontal cross-bar to support hanging signs on one side of the pole only subject to the projection and clearance provisions defined in Section 39-804(10).
 - (3) **Size.** Free-standing signs shall be limited to a maximum of 16' square feet (4'x4') in area, or thirty-two (32) square feet for a double-faced sign. Single pole sign size is limited to 9 square feet (3'x3') area.
 - (4) **Density.** Businesses, projects or parcels are limited to one (1) free-standing sign except that properties with more than 100 (one-hundred) feet of continuous frontage and with more than one entrance may, subject to Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission approval, install a free-standing sign at each entrance, provided that the combined square footage of all free-standing signs does not exceed 32 (thirty-two) square feet, (two 16' square foot signs). Where there is frontage on more than one street, each frontage is treated independently provided that no two signs may be closer than 100 feet to one another. Signage area may not be transferred from one frontage to another.
 - (5) **Location and Orientation.** Free-standing signs are subject to the location requirements of the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission.
 - (6) **Content.** Because it is the City's intent to facilitate traffic flow and avoid traffic hazards caused by confusing or cluttered signage, and because tourists, who may be looking for a specific business name listed in the telephone directory or other promotional advertisements, free-standing signs with a commercial message are permitted for the purposes of identifying the name of the building or business only. Text can include street number.

- B. **Window.** Permanent window signs may be placed in or upon any window, provided that no more than ten percent (10%) of the total transparent area of the window or window(s) combined is obscured.
- C. **Wall Signs.** Wall signs may be placed upon a building provided that they meet the size, material, content; location and other standards of this Ordinance. Wall signs shall be placed so as to utilize existing architectural features of a building without obscuring them. Wall signs shall be oriented toward pedestrians or vehicles within close proximity.
- D. **Projecting Signs.** No single projecting sign may exceed 16 (sixteen) square feet in area or may project more than 36 (thirty-six) inches from the face of the buildings to which it is attached. Projecting signs must have at least eight (8) feet clearance, and cannot be higher than the building to which they are attached. Signs may extend over City property or state right-of-way only with the written approval of the Greensboro City Council.
- E. **Hanging Signs.** A hanging sign may be attached to a building or placed underneath an approved canopy, awning, or colonnade, as long as it does not project beyond the same and is parallel to the building, it must have at least eight (8) feet of ground clearance. Signs may extend over City property or state right-of-way only with the written approval of the Greensboro City Council.
- F. **Awnings.** Awnings are permitted as signage provided they blend with the architecture of the building and do not obscure details of the building. Awnings should serve as an accent to the building's design but should not be the dominant architectural feature. Awnings are counted as signage if they have lettering or other graphics conveying a commercial message or name of a business or product sold in the building to which the awning is attached.
 - (1) **Signage Area.** Only twenty percent (20%) of any one face of an awning may be used for signage regardless of the size of the building facade to which the sign applies.
 - (2) **Material.** Canvas or metal shed awnings are permitted. Material should be high quality, colorfast and sunfade resistant. Vinyl or plastic materials are not considered appropriate.
 - (3) **Color.** Awning colors are generally limited to a single field color with a single contrasting color for lettering and may be used only if they conform to color requirements as specified in Section 39-804(5) of this Ordinance.
 - (4) **Illumination.** Illuminated (back-lit) translucent awnings or translucent letters on opaque backgrounds are not appropriate and are not permitted. Canvas or metal awnings illuminated in the traditional manner with incandescent lighting are permitted.
 - (5) **Clearance and Projection.** Clearance and Projection Awnings must have a minimum of eight (8) feet clearance from the ground to the frame or valance.
 - (6) **Location of Awnings.** Awnings must be located in a traditional manner above doors, and windows. All other locations are prohibited.
- G. **Illuminated Signs.** Illuminated signs are permitted subject to the provisions of Section 39-804(6).
- H. **Neon Signs.** Neon Signs are permitted by variance only. See Section 39-802(7).
- I. **Changeable Copy Signs.** Changeable copy signs may only be used in conjunction with theaters, entertainment facilities, non-profit art galleries, or similar exhibit facilities permitted in the Historic Commercial District.

J. Directory Signs. Directory signs shall be permitted to provide information for multi-tenant projects. Multi-tenant projects may have a maximum of thirty-two (32) square feet of signage area to serve as a directory for the project. The contents of such signs shall be limited to the name of the tenants of the project; address or suite number, and telephone numbers. Signs shall be located in the common area of the project and oriented toward a central pedestrian path or common parking area. No rental information, or sales information shall be permitted on the directory sign. A directory sign does not constitute a primary or secondary sign.

K. Menu Display. Menus for restaurants may be displayed on the inside of windows of a restaurant or inside a wall mounted box. The maximum size shall be three (3) square feet. If a display box is used, it must be constructed to coordinate with the building design, must contain a clear face which would protect the menu from the weather and must not extend over public property. Chalk or erasable boards are exempt from a clear face coverage. A menu display does not constitute a primary or secondary sign. If any information other than the menu is incorporated into the menu display, then this would constitute a primary or secondary sign.

L. Special Purpose Signs. Signs and banners promoting events sponsored by civic, charitable, educational, or other nonprofit organizations may be erected on private property up to four (4) weeks in advance of the event being promoted. These signs shall be removed within five (5) days following the conclusion of the event. Signs or banners located on or over public property easements or right-of-way are subject to the requirements of this Ordinance and require approval by the Building Inspector.

M. Temporary Signs. Temporary signs are permitted subject to the requirements of Section 39-805 of this Ordinance.

N. Sandwich Boards. Sandwich Boards are permitted provided they are no larger than six (6) square feet, or two (2) feet by three (3) feet per side. They must be portable made of wooden or metal material, and removed from the sidewalk daily at the close of business. Only one per store front is allowed and placement is to ensure safe passage by shoppers. Coloring must be in keeping with the standards of this Ordinance.

Section 39-802 Design and Location Standards

All regulated signs must comply with the following design standards:

- 1. Size Requirements.** The total area of all permanent signs, including but not limited to freestanding signs, window signs, wall signs, projecting signs, and hanging signs, shall not exceed 32 square feet per business. There shall be no more than one (1) Primary, and one (1) Secondary sign per business. A Secondary sign is one that is smaller than the primary sign.
- 2. Area of Sign.** The area of a sign shall include the entire area within any type of perimeter or border which may enclose the outer limits of any writing, representation, emblem, figure, or character. The area of the sign having no perimeter or border shall be computed by enclosing the entire area within a parallelogram, circle, or triangle of the smallest size sufficient to cover the entire area of the sign and computing the area of that parallelogram, circle, or triangle. The area of the second side of a two-sided sign shall be included when calculating signage area. Where a sign has more than two (2) faces, the total area of the third face and all additional faces shall be included in determining the area of the sign.

3. **Signage Plans.** Buildings or clusters of buildings having more than one tenant or use, shall provide a signage plan for the entire structure or project to be reviewed and approved by the Historic Preservation Commission prior to erection of any sign. The signage plan must be designed so that it establishes a common theme or design, uses similar construction methods, has compatible colors, lettering, lettering style, symbols, scale and size of signs and/or identical background. Signage plans for office buildings must have their primary focus on the identification of the building, and individual tenants may be identified by using small lettering on a window or door or directories. Total signage area within the plan is subject to the maximum size limitation of this ordinance. Signage area cannot be transferred to a single building or facade from other buildings in the project.
4. **Sign Materials.** Exposed surfaces of signs may be constructed of metal, glass, stone, concrete, brick, cloth, wood or sand blasted wood.
5. **Color.** Signs must be finished in subdued earthtone color. Earthtones may be deemed in this context to include the full spectrum of soil and clay colors. Spectrums of off-whites to deep browns, and light grays to black provide a wide range of acceptable colors. Brighter colors may be used provided they are imbued with brown or black tones. For example: pink imbued with brown would tend toward mauve and would be acceptable. Bright reds imbued with brown or black tones give a deeper burgundy or maroon color and may also be acceptable. Colors should compliment the color scheme of the building. In no case will Day-Glo, fluorescent, reflective colored materials that give the appearance of changing color or brilliant luminescent colors be permitted.
6. **Illumination.**
 - A. **Externally Illuminated Signs.** Light fixtures for externally illuminated signs must be simple in form and mounted so they do not obscure building ornamentation. The light fixtures should emphasize the continuity of the building surface and should not clutter the building in an unorganized manner. Spot lights and flood lights shall be directed only at the sign surface. Sign lighting should not conflict with traffic signals. Light shall not be directed off the property. No exposed light sources are allowed, and all light sources must be shaded to contain light rays to the sign. Colored lighting is prohibited.
 - B. **Internally Illuminated Signs.** This type of sign is not considered appropriate in the Historical Commercial District and is prohibited.
7. **Reserved.**
8. Only type styles in use in the United States between 1830 and 1910 may be accepted.
9. **Location on Building.** Architectural details of a building often suggest a location, size, or shape for a sign. Signage should compliment the architectural details of the building. Signs should help to establish a visual continuity with adjacent store fronts and relate directly to the store entrance. Signs must be oriented toward pedestrians or vehicles in close proximity. Signs shall be designed and located on the building or on the premises in a manner that is compatible with the mass and scale of the building to which the sign applies. Signs must not obscure architectural details of the building; nor cover doors, windows, or other integral elements of the facade. Signs shall not obstruct view of nearby intersections and driveways.
10. **Projections and Clearance.** No sign may project more than thirty-six (36) inches from the face of a building or pole. Projecting and hanging signs must maintain at least eight (8) feet

of clearance from ground level. Signs may extend over City property only with the written approval of the Greensboro City Council.

Section 39-803 Temporary Signage

1. **Policy.** It is the policy of the City as outlined in this section to restrict the use of temporary signage. Temporary signage is often poorly constructed, poorly maintained, and located in a manner that obscures traffic signs, views of intersections of public and private streets and driveways and tends to depreciate the scenic beauty and quality of life of the community by creating visual clutter. Temporary signage has a place in the community for specialized purposes, such as announcing properties for sale or lease, construction activities, temporary sales, or making political or ideological statements. Temporary signage is permitted for those and similar purposes subject to the regulations of this section.
2. **Temporary Signs.** Temporary signs are those signs which are installed with the intent of displaying them continuously for more than twenty-four (24) hours, but which are not related to a permanent land use on the property, and are not intended to be displayed for more than thirty (30) days. Temporary signs include signs announcing properties for sale, lease or rent, and campaign signs and other similar signs of a non-commercial nature. Temporary signs are permitted subject to the following regulations on placement and location:
 - A. **Size.** Temporary signs shall not exceed three (3) square feet of area on the exposed sign face.
 - B. **Location.** Temporary signs are permitted, provided that they are located a minimum of twenty (20) feet back from the edge of the curb, or edge of pavement where there is no curb, of the street on which the sign fronts. If this twenty (20) foot distance would be within a structure, the sign may be within three (3) feet of the front of the structure. Signs must be parallel to the street on which the building fronts, and placed in front of the front facade with the building as a backdrop. Signs may be positioned in the side yard. Signs may be displayed through windows or other glass areas. On vacant lots, where there is no structure, the sign shall be approximately centered on the lot and shall maintain the twenty (20) foot setback from the edge of the curb or edge of pavement where there is no curb.
 - C. **Height.** No portion of the sign shall extend more than five (5) feet above the existing ground level at the location of the sign. Mounting devices may extend above the sign by not more than six (6) inches.
 - D. **Number.** Only one temporary sign is permitted on any one parcel of property.
 - E. **Mounting Devices.** Temporary signs shall be mounted on hardware of wood or painted metal, and no part of the mounting structure shall be greater than four inches by four inches (4" x 4") in cross section. Mounting hardware shall be painted or stained in earth tones. No message may be written on the mounting hardware, so that the entire message area of the sign is contained on the sign face itself.
 - F. **Lighting Prohibited.** No temporary sign may be illuminated in any manner.

- G. **Color and Materials.** Temporary signs are subject to the Design Standards of Section 39-810.
 - H. **Maintenance.** Temporary signs shall be maintained as provided in Section 39-810 of this Ordinance, and it shall be a violation of this ordinance to permit a temporary sign to fall into disrepair.
 - I. **Exceptions.** Where there are conditions such as heavy vegetation on the property, or extremely steep terrain that makes the sign placement standards of this Section impractical because the sign is not visible from the street, the Greensboro Historical Preservation Commission may grant an exception of the sign setback standards, but not the size or street orientation standards. In no event may temporary signs subject to the setback requirements be placed within the public right-of-way.
3. **Banners Over Public Property.**
- A. **Approval.** All applications to display banners over public property shall be approved as outlined later in this Section.
 - B. **Terms and Conditions.** In order to receive approval to display a sign or banner over public property the applicant shall meet the following terms and conditions.
 - (1) The banner or sign shall only inform the community of an upcoming community event. A community event shall be defined as a public event which is of interest to the community as a whole rather than the promotion of any product, political candidate, religious leader or commercial goods or services.
 - (2) The banner may only be displayed immediately prior to and during a community event which it advertises, and in no case shall the banner be displayed for more than thirty (30) days or more than ten (10) days after the event
 - (3) Banners shall only be displayed at site(s) approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.
 - (4) Reservation of dates for a banner site may be made up to three (3) months prior to the date of display. Site(s) are generally reserved on a first-come, first-served basis; however, preference may be given for recurring annual events, historically or traditionally tied to a specific date, holiday or season. Additionally, a request to advertise the reoccurrence of the same event or same type of event within any one calendar year (i.e., plays or class registrations) may be honored if no request for the banner site for an unrepeatable scheduling is received.
 - (5) All banners crossing over public thoroughfares shall be hung by City personnel, and must meet the following specifications.
 - (a) Maximum banner dimensions over public property shall not exceed four (4) feet by thirty (30) feet
 - (b) Day-glo, or fluorescent colors shall not be allowed.
 - (c) Banners shall be constructed of durable canvas or similar type weather resistant material.
 - (d) Banners must be slit to reduce wind resistance.

- (e) Banners must be reinforced with rope within a casing at the bottom of the banner edge.
 - (f) Each corner of the banner must have a grommet and a lead of one-quarter inch rope from each corner no less than four (4) feet long.
 - (g) Banners must have a minimum of seven (7) grommets (including the two corner grommets) across the top edge, which allows the banner to be attached to a cable.
 - (h) An additional one hundred and fifty (150) feet of one-quarter inch rope is required to hang each banner, and shall be provided to the City by the applicant or sponsor of the banner.
- (6) The primary purpose of banners which extend over public property shall be to advertise and conform of upcoming community events. No more than five percent (5%) of each side of the banner space shall be used for the name or logo of a commercial sponsor.
 - (7) Prices or fees charged for the event shall not be displayed.
 - (8) Banners shall be hung or displayed in a manner that does not interfere with or impede traffic or interfere with or obscure traffic signs or control devices.
 - (9) The owner of a banner shall agree to assume full liability and indemnify the City for any damage to persons or property arising from the display of the banner by the City.
 - (10) If the banner is not picked up from the City by the applicant or sponsor within ten (10) days after it has been taken down, the banner shall become the property of the City and will be disposed of.
 - (11) Banners should be received by the City one week prior to the date of scheduled display. The City is not responsible for any damage that may occur to the banner from any cause.
- C. A fee shall be payable to the City when the banner is dropped off at the City before its reservation commences to cover manpower costs associated with installation and removal of the banner. Said fee shall be set by resolution by City Council.

4. **Banners on City Light Standards.**

- A. **Administration.** The Historic Preservation Commission is authorized to administer the placement of banners on City light standards.
- B. **Approval.** Approval of all applications to display banners on City light standards shall be given by the Historic Preservation Commission only if all conditions in this Article are met.
- C. **Terms and Conditions.** Banners displayed in the City area shall be either (1) those sponsored by, designed for and commissioned by, fabricated for, and installed by the direction of the Historic Preservation Commission, or (2) those sponsored by outside entities (Sponsors) that meet the following terms and conditions.
 - (1) The eligible sponsor must be a non-commercial, profit, non-profit entity whose primary purpose is the offering of cultural, educational, or entertainment enrichment to the community.

- (2) The design of banners must be presented to the Historic Preservation Commission for review and approval. Art work should be of sufficient size and show actual colors and banners material in sufficient detail to adequately represent the proposed final product. Design specifications are specified in paragraph six (6) below.
- (3) The cost of the design and fabrication of the banners is to be borne by the Sponsor. Cost of installation and dismantling will be borne by the organization sponsoring the banners.
- (4) Applications shall be presented to the Historic Preservation Commission in sufficient time to allow the determination of eligibility of the Sponsor, design review, fabrication of the banners and verification of the scheduling of their period of display.
- (5) Sponsors accept that the display period is contingent upon a workable arrangement within the overall schedule of other City banners as well as other commitments to outside Sponsors.
- (6) Prior commitments may preclude the desired display period of an otherwise acceptable Sponsor's banner. The Historic Preservation Commission acknowledges that a Sponsors interest and ability to participate may be contingent upon a minimum period which would warrant the expense of fabrication of the banners. The display period will be on a first-come basis.

D. All banners on City light standards shall be hung by City personnel and must meet the following specifications.

- (1) Fabrication, design, and colors are to be approved by the Greensboro Historic Preservation Commission.
 - (2) The dates for the banners to be installed and dismantled will be arranged by the Sponsor and the Historic Preservation Commission.
 - (3) Fabric must be of durable material to withstand heavy winds.
 - (4) Sponsors will pay for art work, banner production, installation and dismantling of banners.
 - (5) A permit shall be obtained from the Building Inspector.
 - (6) The owner of a banner shall agree to assume full liability and indemnify the City for any damage to persons or property arising from the display of the banner by the City.
 - (7) If the banner is not picked up from the City by the applicant or sponsor within ten (10) days after it has been taken down, the banner shall become the property of the City and will be disposed of.
 - (8) Banners should be received by the City one week prior to the date of scheduled display.
 - (9) The City is not responsible for any damage that may occur to the banner from any cause.
5. **Banners on Private Property.** Banners identifying a specific commercial event or sale, and not identifying a particular business shall be subject to the following restrictions: One (1) banner per premise, limited to on-site (i.e., the information on the banner must relate only to the business premises upon which the banner is displayed) banners only, permitted for no more than ten (10) consecutive calendar days, per any given one hundred twenty (120) calendar day period, and banner shall not exceed thirty-five (35) square feet in area. Review and approval is required by the Historic Preservation Commission prior to the issuance of a permit or for display of said banner, and said banner shall be allowed only for one ten-day period within a calendar year. The permit and identifying expiration date shall be displayed in a prominent place.

Section 39-804 Non-regulated Signs

1. **Signs Exempt From Permit Requirement.** The following signs are not subject to a permit requirement and review/approval by the Historic Preservation Commission if the following standards are met. They shall be regulated by the following size and placement standards, block lettering and coloration in accordance with Section 39-804(5) of this Ordinance and shall not be included when calculating permitted sign area for any parcel, use or development.
 - A. **Solicitation Signs.** One "no solicitors" sign, not to exceed one-half square foot, is allowed per major entrance to any building or apartment complex.
 - B. **Hours of Operation Sign.** One "hours of operation" sign is allowed per entryway. Each sign may not exceed one square foot in area. The sign may not be illuminated.
 - C. **Trespassing and Security Signs.** "No trespassing" and security signs may be posted on doors, windows or other property entrances, or on fences or property lines. They may not exceed one square foot in area, and may not be illuminated.
 - D. **Addressing Numbers.** Addressing numbers may be no higher than four (4) inches. When placed on commercial buildings, they may be taken into account in the review of the signage plan.
 - E. **Flags, Symbols, or Insignias.** The flag of the United States, the State of Georgia, or other flags or insignias of governmental entities or agencies may be displayed and not counted as signage.
 - F. **Special Sale Signs.** Merchants may advertise special sales with temporary signs on the inside of windows provided they do not cover more than thirty-three percent (33%) of the window area. (Special sale signs may be displayed two (2) weeks at a time, five (5) times a year.
 - G. **Public Necessity Signs.** Public necessity signs such as rest rooms; no parking and street name signs installed by or with permission of the City are exempt from permit requirements. Approval of the City Manager is required in order to ensure safe placement and prevent unsightly or distracting sign placement.
 - H. **Special Events Fliers.** Fliers or posters advertising special events may be displayed on the inside of windows of businesses, provided the owner of the business approves of the placement. Such posters may be displayed for up to two weeks prior to an event, and must be removed within 48 (forty eight) hours after the event. Posters or fliers may not be attached to the exterior of any building or to telephone/utility poles, or sign posts, or distributed by placement on parked automobiles or on door steps, etc.
 - I. **Historical Markers and Government Signage.** Historical Markers and official government signage are exempt.
2. **Improper Use of Non-Regulated Signs.** If the Historic Commission deems that any business is using non-regulated signage to circumvent any other provision of this ordinance, they shall have the authority to consider such signs as being in violation of this Ordinance.

Section 39-805 Prohibited Signs and Signage Illumination

1. **Prohibited Signs.** No person shall erect, alter, maintain, or relocate a sign as specified in this Section.
 - A. **Signs Creating Traffic Hazards.** No sign shall be erected at or near any public street or the intersection of any streets in such a manner as to create a traffic hazard by obstructing vision or at any location where it would interfere with, obstruct the view of, or be confused with any authorized traffic sign.
 - B. **Hazardous Signs.** No sign shall be erected or maintain which, due to structural weakness, design defect, or other reason, constitutes a threat to the health, safety and welfare of any person or property.
 - C. **Signs Resembling Traffic Signals or Signs.** No sign shall be constructed, erected, or maintained which purports to be or resembles an official traffic sign or signal except those signs officially authorized by the City of Greensboro or other governmental entities.
 - D. **Flashing Signs or Lights.** Any sign which contains an intermittent or flashing light source, or which includes the illusion of intermittent or flashing lights by means of animation, or an externally mounted intermittent light source. Flashing light sources are prohibited.
 - E. **Electronic Message Signs.** A permanent free-standing roof, wall, or other sign which changes copy electronically using switches and electric lamps. Automatic changing signs, such as public service, time, temperature and date signage are prohibited.
 - F. **Off-Premise Signs and Billboards.** A permanent outdoor advertising sign which advertises goods, products, or services not sold on the premises on which the sign is located.
 - G. **Roof Signs.** Any signs erected partly or wholly on or over the roof of a building, including ground signs that rest on or overlap a roof. signs mounted anywhere on a mansard roof are not allowed.
 - H. **Animated Signs.** A rotating or revolving sign, or signs where all or a portion of the signs moves in some manner.
 - I. **Wind Signs.** Any propeller, whirling, or similar device which is designed to flutter, rotate, or display other movement under the influence of the wind. This shall include "gasoline flags" or banners.
 - J. **Bench Signs.** Any outdoor bench or furniture with commercial signage.
 - K. **Mobile or Portable Signs.** A sign not permanently attached to the ground or building, except for public necessity signs and temporary signs as allowed by this Ordinance only during business hours.
 - L. **Vehicle Signs.** Roof or antenna mounted signs on automobiles, except for student driver signs used for the sole purpose of advertising. Vehicle signs may be allowed on the sides of vehicles used for deliveries or other non-advertisement functions, but they may not be illuminated.
 - M. **Home Occupation Signs.** Business identification sign for a home occupation.
 - N. **Video Sign.** Animated visual messages which are projected on screen.
 - O. **Illuminated Awnings.** Illuminated (back-lit), translucent, awnings are not considered appropriate and are prohibited.
 - P. **Inflatable Signs or Displays.** Any inflatable object used for signage or promotional purposes.

Section 39-806 Removal of Unsafe, Non-conforming, Illegal and Abandoned Signs

1. **Abatement or Removal of Unsafe or Dangerous Signs.** A sign which has been determined to be unsafe by the Building Inspector must be repaired or made safe or removed by the sign owner or property owner within five (5) working days after receipt of notice from the City. Failure to make such repairs or remove the sign upon order of the Building Inspector is considered a violation of this Ordinance.
2. **Phase Out.** A twelve month period will be allowed for phasing out non-conforming signage, giving business owners time to make arrangements.
3. **Destruction of Non-Conforming Signs.** No sign which is not in conformance with this ordinance shall be repaired or restored after having been damaged to the extent of more than fifty percent (50%) of its value immediately prior to the event causing the damage or destruction.
4. **Alteration or Non-Conforming Signs.** Non-conforming signs may be maintained and repaired, provided that the alteration and repairs are for the purpose of maintaining the sign in its original condition. Alterations to a non-conforming sign which change the use, content, color, lighting, or appearance of a non-conforming sign are subject to design review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission, but in no case shall a non-conforming sign be conveyed to a new tenant, and the phase out period of the sign shall not be extended.
5. **Abatement and Removal of Illegal and Abandoned Signs.** The Building Inspector is authorized on his own initiative, or after direction by the Historic Preservation Commission, to remove illegal and abandoned signs, provided the sign owner or property owner fails to remove the sign or make it conform within thirty (30) days of the date written notification of an illegal sign is provided to the sign owner or property owner.

Section 39-807 Maintenance and Inspection of Signs.

1. **Responsibility of Owner.** It is the affirmative obligation of the owner of every sign erected to maintain that sign and to keep it in a good state of repair at all times. Upon discovery of a sign in need of maintenance, the Building Inspector shall give written notice to the owner of the sign or the owner of the property on which the sign is located if the owner of the sign itself cannot be determined. This notice shall state the item or items requiring repair or maintenance. The owner shall have thirty (30) days in which to repair the sign before a citation is issued. It shall be unlawful, after the thirty (30) days notice has expired, for any person to display a sign in any of the following conditions:
 - A. Lettering or other elements of the sign have become detached and have fallen off the sign or become misaligned;
 - B. Painted surfaces on the sign have begun to peel, flake over a substantial portion of the sign, or have faded or oxidized to an extent that the sign no longer displays the colors approved by the Historic Preservation Commission as shown on the approved sign permit.
2. **Building Official Inspection.** The Building Official shall inspect on his own initiative or as directed by the Historic Preservation Commission, signs regulated by this Ordinance to

ascertain whether the signs have been adequately installed and adequately maintained to minimize risks to the public.

Section 39-808 Definitions

1. For purposes of this Ordinance, the following words shall be defined as specified in this section:
 - A. **Abandoned Sign.** Any sign applicable to a use which has been discontinued for a period of three (3) months.
 - B. **Alterations.** Alterations as applied to a sign means change or rearrangement in the structural parts or its design, whether by extending on a side, by increasing in area or height; or in moving from one location or position to another.
 - C. **Area of Sign.** The area of a sign shall include the entire area within any type of perimeter or border which may enclose the outer limits of any writing, representation, emblem, figure, or character. The area of the sign having no perimeter or border shall be computed by enclosing the entire area within a parallelogram or triangle of the smallest size sufficient to cover the entire area of the sign and computing the area of the parallelogram, circle or triangle.
 - D. **Banner.** Banners shall include signs, posters and banners and their common definitions.
 - E. **Building Face or Wall.** All window and wall area of building in one place or elevation.
 - F. **Canopy.** A roofed structure constructed of fabric or other material placed so as to extend outward from a building providing a protective shield for doors, windows, and other openings, supported by the building and supports extended to the ground directly under the canopy or cantilevered from the building.
 - G. **Changeable Copy Sign.** A sign which is characterized by changeable copy, whether insert sign said is free-standing or wall sign, or whether said sign projects from and is supported by building.
 - H. **Community or Civic Event.** A community or civic event shall be defined as a public event which is of interest to the community as a whole rather than the promotion of any product, political candidate, religious leader or commercial goods or services.
 - I. **Directional Sign (Guide Signs).** Signs which serve as directional guides to recognized areas of regional importance and patronage. To clarify and define such areas of regional importance and patronage, two (2) types of areas are intended to be included:
 - (1) Recreational and entertainment centers of recognized regional significance.
 - (2) Historical landmarks.
 - J. **Free Standing Sign or Monument Sign.** A sign which is supported by one or more uprights or braces which are fastened to, or embedded in the ground or a foundation in the ground. Free-standing signs refer to on-premise advertising or project identification signs for the purpose of this Ordinance.

- K. **Height of Sign.** The height of a sign is the vertical distance measured from the ground plane to the top of the sign, including the air space between the ground and the sign.
- L. **Hours of Operation.** A sign which displays hours of operation, including "open" and "closed" signs.
- M. **Low Profile Sign.** An on-premise identification sign having a maximum height of five (5) feet
- N. **Master Identification Sign.** A sign which identifies only the name and/or logo and/or address of a commercial complex, the owner and tenants thereof
- O. **Non-Conforming Signs (legal).** Any advertising structure or sign which was lawfully erected and maintained prior to such time as it came within the review of this Ordinance.
- P. **On-Premise or Business Identification Signs.** A sign which directs attention to a business, commodity, service, industry or other activity which is sold, offered, or conducted on the premises upon which the sign is located, or to which it is affixed.
- Q. **Projecting Sign.** A sign attached to a building or other structure and extending in whole or in part more than six (6) inches beyond any wall of the building or structure.
- R. **Public Property.** Public property shall mean any property owned by a governmental entity.
- S. **Signs.** A sign shall mean and include every advertising message, announcement, declaration, demonstration, display, illustration, insignia, surface or space erected or maintained in view of the observer thereof for identification, advertisement, or promotion of the interest of any person, entity, product, or service. The definition of sign shall also include the sign structure supports, lighting system, and any attachments, ornaments or other features used to draw the attention of observers.
- T. **Signage Plan.** A plan designed to show the relationship of signs for any cluster of buildings or any single building housing a number of users or in any arrangement of buildings or shops which constitute a visual entity as a whole.
- U. **Solicitation Sign.** Sign used to advise solicitors that they are not welcome on the property.
- V. **Special Purpose Sign.** Sign of a temporary nature other than those established by a business; for the purpose of advertising a special event pertaining to drives or events of a civic, philanthropic, educational, or religious organization.
- W. **Special Sale Sign.** Temporary signs used to advertise a special sale on the premises.
- X. **Structure.** The supports, uprights, bracing, guy rods, cables, and framework of a sign or outdoor display.
- Y. **Temporary Sign.** A sign which is intended for use during a specified limited time. Temporary signs, as defined by this Ordinance, shall include real estate signs and construction signs, and sandwich boards.
- Z. **Theater.** A permanent structure with changeable letters, which is used to advertise theater events.

- AA. **Wall Sign.** A sign with messages or copy erected parallel to and attached to or painted on the outside wall of a building and extending not more than six (6) inches from the wall.
- BB. **Window Sign.** A sign adjacent to or installed upon a window for the purpose of viewing from outside of the premises. This term does not include merchandise displayed.

(Effective 7/6/99)