CHAPTER 21. SIGNS

21-1. Purpose and findings.

The mayor and city council finds that signs provide an important medium through which persons may convey a variety of messages. However, left completely unregulated, the number, size, design characteristics, and locations of signs in the City can become a threat to public safety as a traffic hazard and a detriment to property values and to the city's general public welfare, as well as create an aesthetic nuisance. The city, further, finds that signs have become excessive and that many signs are distracting and dangerous to motorists and pedestrians, are confusing to the public, and substantially detract from the beauty and appearance of the city. The City finds that there is a substantial need directly related to the public health, safety, and welfare to comprehensively address these concerns through the adoption of the following regulations. The purpose and intent of the governing authority of the City of Tucker in enacting this chapter are as follows:

A. To protect the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of the city, and to implement the policies and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan through the enactment of a comprehensive set of regulations governing signs in the city;

B. To regulate the erection and placement of signs in order to provide safe operating conditions for pedestrian and vehicular traffic without unnecessary and unsafe distractions to drivers or pedestrians;

C. To preserve the value of the property on which signs are located and from which signs may be viewed;

D. To maintain an aesthetically attractive city in which signs are compatible with the use patterns of established zoning districts and the preservation of the city's historical and culturally significant features and landmarks;

E. To maintain a safe and aesthetically attractive environment for the city's residents, workers, and visitors and to improve aesthetics;

F. To establish comprehensive sign regulations that effectively balance legitimate business and development needs with a safe and aesthetically attractive environment for residents, workers, and visitors to the city;

G. To provide fair and reasonable opportunities for the identification of businesses, and to provide for the identification of the availability of products, goods, or services so as to promote the economic vitality of businesses;

H. To ensure the protection of free speech rights under the Georgia and United States Constitutions;

I. To establish a permit system to allow specific types of signs in zoning districts consistent with the uses, intent, and character of those districts;

J. To allow certain signs that are small, safe, unobtrusive, and incidental to the principal use of the respective lots on which they are located, subject to the substantive requirements of this chapter but without a requirement for permits;

K. To provide for temporary signs in limited circumstances;

L. To place reasonable controls on nonconforming signs that are by definition contrary to the public health, safety, and welfare while protecting the constitutional rights of the owners of said nonconforming signs; and

M. To prohibit all signs not expressly authorized by this chapter, to provide for the maintenance of signs, and to provide for the enforcement of the provisions of this chapter.

21-2. Use of graphics.

Illustrations, photos, and graphics are included in this division to illustrate the intent and requirements of the text. In the case of a conflict between the text and any illustrations, photos, or graphics, the text governs.

The following terms have the meanings indicated below as used in this chapter. In addition, words used in the present tense include the future, the singular number includes the plural, and the plural the singular, the words “shall” and “must” are mandatory and not directory, the word “person” includes a firm, organization, partnership, trust, corporation or other legal entity.

Aggregate sign area. The sum total of the sign area of any and all signs for a given lot. Entrance signs and street numbers assigned by the United States Postal Service are excluded from any computation of aggregate sign area.

Animated sign. A sign that has any visible moving part, flashing or oscillating lights, or varying light intensity, visible mechanical movement of any description, or other apparent visible movement achieved by any means that move, change, flash, oscillate, or visibly alters in appearance in a manner that is not permitted by these regulations.

Awning sign. A sign where graphics or symbols are sewn on, printed on, or otherwise adhered to the awning material as an integrated part of the awning itself.

Banner. A piece of fabric or similar material which is attached to a pole, enclosed in a frame, or mounted to allow movement caused by the atmosphere.

Business day. Any day during which city government offices are open for public business. For purposes of this chapter, a “business day” does not include any day during which city government offices are closed after a partial business day due to a holiday, emergency, inclement weather, or the like.

Canopy sign. A sign placed on a canopy so that the display surface is parallel to the plane of the front building facade.

City. The City of Tucker, Georgia.

Construction sign. A temporary sign erected and maintained on premises during permitted construction activity.

Directional sign. An on-site sign on private property, the sole purpose of which is to direct the flow of traffic, transmit parking information, or convey similar information.

Director. The director of the City of Tucker community development department or their designee.

Double-faced sign. A sign which has two display areas placed back to back against each other and the interior angle formed by the display areas is less than 59 degrees, where one sign face is designed to be seen from one direction and the other face from another direction.

Double-post sign. A type of ground sign where the primary support is supplied by two posts positioned no more than 2 inches from the outer edge of the sign face.

DT-districts. The Downtown Tucker Compatible Use Overlay District or the Downtown Tucker Zoning Districts.

DT-1. The Downtown Tucker Compatible Use Overlay District “Neighborhood Zone” or the Downtown Neighborhood district.

DT-2. The Downtown Tucker Compatible Use Overlay District “Corridor Zone” or the Downtown Corridor district.

DT-3. The Downtown Tucker Compatible Use Overlay District “Village Zone” or the Downtown Village district.

Electronic sign. A sign that requires electrical energy that may be changed at intervals by an electronic process or by remote control, or a sign that requires electrical energy and has any of the following: action, motion, changing colors, or videos. Electronic signs are not allowed in the City of Tucker.

Entrance sign. Any ground sign placed at the entrance into a development that either includes two or more lots or exceeds 30 acres in area.

Feather sign. Any shape of lightweight plastic, fabric, or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind, attached to a single pole or staff for support and designed to move in the wind. Feather
flags are prohibited except where permitted by this ordinance as part of a special event.

Flag. A piece of fabric or other flexible material attached to or designed to be flown from a flagpole.

Flagpole. A freestanding structure used for the sole purpose of displaying flags.

Ft. An abbreviation for “foot” and “feet”.

Ground sign. A permanently affixed sign which is wholly independent of a building for support.

Historic sign. A sign deemed by the City to be worthy of preservation by reason of its value to the City of Tucker for one or more of the following reasons:

A. It is an outstanding example of a sign representative of its era;

B. It is one of the few remaining examples of past sign design or style;

C. It is a sign associated with an event or person of historic or cultural significance to the City of Tucker; or

D. It is a sign of aesthetic interest that is continuing to contribute to the cultural or historical development and heritage of the City of Tucker.

Illegal sign. Any sign that was erected in violation of the laws, as they existed at the time the sign was built or the sign permit issued, or signs that were not built in conformance with the issued permit.

Illuminated sign. A sign that is lit from a source either internal to the sign or from an external light source directed primarily toward such sign.

In. An abbreviation for “inch” and “inches”.

Lot, substandard. A designated parcel, tract, or area of land created after the time of enactment of this chapter or amendment of this chapter which does not meet the lot area, lot width, or public street frontage and access requirements of this chapter. Such a lot is illegal except where created by governmental action in which case such lot will have the status of a nonconforming lot of record as defined in the city zoning ordinance.

Mtn. Industrial Blvd. Overlay. An abbreviation for “Mountain Industrial Boulevard Overlay district”.

Monument sign. A type of ground sign that is attached to the ground for at least 75% of the width and depth of the sign face.

NL-districts. The Northlake Overlay District or the Northlake Zoning Districts.

NL-1. The Northlake Overlay District “Tier 1” or the Northlake High-Intensity Commercial district.

NL-2. The Northlake Overlay District “Tier 2” or the Northlake Office Park district.

NL-3. The Northlake Overlay District “Tier 3” or the Northlake Employment Center district.

NL-4. The Northlake Overlay District “Tier 2” or the Vista Dale Court district.

Nonconforming sign. Any sign that does not conform to the provisions of this chapter.

Non-residential zoning district. Any of the following zoning districts: NS, C-1, C-2, O-I-T, O-I, O-D, M, and M-2.

Portable sign. Any sign, except a sandwich board sign, which is manifestly designed to be transported, including by trailer or on its own wheels, even though the wheels of such sign may be removed and the remaining chassis or support constructed without wheels is converted to a “T” frame sign or attached temporarily or permanently to the ground.

Primary facade. The building facade that is most nearly parallel to the front lot line, except that, when two or more facades are equally parallel to the front lot line, the primary facade is whichever is closest to the lot line.

Projecting sign. A sign which is attached perpendicular to a building or other structure and extends more than 12 inches horizontally from the plane of the building facade.

Pump-island sign. A sign located under a canopy over pump islands of a service station or convenience store with gas pumps.

Road, accessible. Any road or street that provides a means of ingress and egress to the lot.
Residential zoning district. Any of the following zoning districts: RE, R-LG, R-100, R-85, R-75, R-60, MHP, R-NC, R-SM, MR-1, MR-2, HR-1, HR-2, HR-3, MU-1, MU-2, MU-3, MU-4, and MU-5.

Roof sign. A sign attached to or supported by the roof of a building that extends above the immediately adjacent roof line of the building or a sign that is wholly or partially above the roof line of a building.

Rotating sign. See animated sign.

Sandwich board sign. A portable sign not secured or attached to the ground or surface upon which it is located having two panels hinged at the top and capable of standing on its own frame without external support or attachment. Synonym: "A" frame sign.

Sec. An abbreviation for "Section".

Secondary facade. Any facade that is not the primary facade.

Sf. An abbreviation for "square feet".

Sign. A device, structure or representation for visual communication that is used for the purpose of bringing the subject thereof to the attention of others. A devise, structure, or representation for visual and/or verbal communications associated with and located as part of drive-through facilities are considered signs only if visible from off-site. For purposes of this chapter, the term "sign" includes the structure upon which a sign face is located. Flags and banners are included in this definition only as provided elsewhere herein. Seasonal holiday decorations are not included in the definition of "sign" and are not regulated as such.

Storefront. The ground floor facade of a store, office, or other business.

Street frontage. The lot line that is coincident with any road or street that provides a means of direct ingress and egress to the lot.

Suspended sign. A sign securely suspended above a pedestrian passageway from beneath a canopy or awning and oriented perpendicular to the adjacent building facade.

Tri-faced sign. A sign structure with more than two sign faces situated so that each sign face is facing a different direction.

Wall sign. A sign fastened, placed, or painted upon or parallel to the exterior wall of the structure itself, whether front, rear, or side of the structure.

Window. An opening in the wall of a building for admission of light and air that includes a frame containing and supporting single pieces of glass, sashes, or multiple lites.

Window sign. A sign attached to the exterior or interior face of a window or door, or installed in the interior of a building flush with a window or door, or otherwise intended to be viewed from the outside.

21-4. Sign permit required.

A. Except as specifically excluded from the provisions of this chapter, it is unlawful for any person to post, display, substantially change, or erect a sign without first having obtained a sign permit or any other permit required by this chapter or other ordinances of the City.

B. Existing signs that conform to the provisions of this chapter and would be required to obtain a permit under the regulations of this chapter must register with the director and pay a permit fee. Registration and payment of permit fee must be completed within one year of the effective date of this chapter if such signs do not have a valid permit pursuant to a previous ordinance. The information provided for registration will be the same information required in a permit application under Sec. 21-1.A.1. No permit fee will be required for the registration of existing signs that have a currently valid permit under any previous ordinance regulating signs.

21-5. Owner's consent required.

No sign may be permitted or posted on a property without the consent of the property’s owner or authorized agent. If it is determined that a sign was erected on a lot pursuant to an alleged agent’s incorrect representation that the record owner of the lot, in fact, gave
permission for the erection of a sign, the permit for such sign will be revoked as
provided in Sec. 21-1 A.1.

21-6. Application information.
A. Applications for sign permits required by this chapter must be filed by the sign
owner or the owner’s agent with the director. The application must describe
and set forth the following:

1. The street address of the lot upon which the sign is to be located, unit
number (if applicable), and a plat map of the lot which bears the
location of the proposed sign, including distances of the sign from
the right-of-way;

2. The name(s) and address(es) of the owner(s) of the lot upon which the
sign is to be placed;

3. Consent of the owner, or the owner’s agent, granting permission for the
placement and/or maintenance of the sign;

4. Name, address, phone number and occupational tax certificate number
of the sign contractor;

5. The type of sign to be erected, the area of the sign, the height of the
sign, the shape of the sign, sign materials, electrical plans showing
how the sign is to be illuminated (if at all), colors, and an explanation of
how the sign is to be mounted or erected, including necessary
structural and construction details (or shop drawings) if appropriate;

6. The size of the lot on which the sign is to be placed;

7. Other materials determined by the director to be necessary to review
the application; and

8. The payment in full of the applicable application fee.

9. An application for ground signs must include either:

   a. A site plan drawn to scale, including a closed boundary survey of the lot gross acreage,
      the proposed location of subject sign, sign and building setbacks, approximate location
      of all ground signs on the lot, aggregate area of existing signs per this ordinance, entrance
driveways from public streets, street rights-of-way, public or private easements, building
locations, gross area of buildings and floor area occupied by subject owner or tenants; or

   b. The director may reduce the area included in paragraph “a” immediately above when a
      reduced area is satisfactory to establish conformance with the requirements of this chapter.

B. The director will develop the forms necessary to facilitate the permit
application process.

C. The applicant must demonstrate that the sign installer holds a valid business
license, except when the application is for a sandwich board sign.

D. The applicant must obtain all other permits or licenses required by City
ordinance, state law, or other regulation. No sign permit will be valid unless all
necessary permits have been obtained by the applicant from the appropriate
authorities and submitted to the City.

E. Each application must contain an agreement to indemnify and hold
harmless the City of all damages, demands or expenses in any manner
caused by the sign or sign structure. Each applicant must present to the
department, on request, a certificate of liability insurance prior to the issuance of
a sign permit.

21-7. Fees.
The cost of a sign permit will be established by the mayor and city council and collected by
the director.
21-8. **Time for consideration and issuance.**

The director must process sign permit applications within 45 business days of the director's actual receipt of a completed application and permit fee. Applications not processed within 45 business days will be deemed approved and a permit will be issued. A sticker or other device bearing the sign permit number must be affixed to the sign structure.

21-9. **Denial and revocation.**

**A. Procedure.** The director will deny permit applications, or revoke existing permits issued under this ordinance, that are found to be or have been:

1. Not in compliance with the provisions of this chapter or other applicable City regulations;
2. In violation of State or Federal laws;
3. Based upon incomplete application information; or
4. Were based upon and/or contain any false material statements.

Notice of a denial of an application or revocation of a permit issued in error under this chapter must either be by hand delivery or by US Postal Service Certificate of Mailing. It must be sent to the address on the permit application or before the forty-fifth business day after the director's receipt of the completed application. If mailed, notice will be deemed to have been given upon the date of mailing in conformity with this section. Any application denied and later resubmitted will be deemed to have been submitted on the date of resubmission.

**B. Appeal.** An applicant whose permit application has been denied or a permittee whose permit has been revoked may appeal the decision of the director to the zoning board of appeals as provided in Chapter 27 (Zoning).

**C. Certiorari.** If an applicant or permittee whose permit has been denied or revoked is dissatisfied with the decision of the zoning board of appeals, that person may file an appeal to the Superior Court of DeKalb County by writ of certiorari as provided by law.

21-10. **Permit expiration.**

A sign permit becomes null and void if the sign for which the permit was issued is not completed and fully installed within six months after the date of issuance. No refunds will be made for fees paid for permits that expired due to failure to erect a permitted sign. If an individual later desires to erect a sign at the same location, a new application must be processed and another fee paid in accordance with the fee schedule applicable at such time.

21-11. **Enforcement and penalties.**

**A.** The City may issue a citation for violation of this chapter by any person, including if applicable, the owner, manager or tenant of the lot upon which a sign is located. Violations may include, but are not limited to, improper installation, improper maintenance, conversion, alteration, or used in violation of this chapter or in violation of any other applicable ordinance, including, but not limited to, building and electrical codes.

**B.** The director or any designated City employee will have the same duties, authority, and obligations regarding access to private property, inspections, including the procurement of inspection warrants provided in Article VI of Chapter 27 of the Code with regard to the enforcement of this chapter.

**C.** Any person violating any provision of this chapter will be guilty of an offense and upon conviction, will be subject to the general penalty provided in Sec. 1-10 of the City Code. Each sign installed, created, erected or maintained in violation of this chapter will be considered a separate violation, and each day of a continued violation for each sign will be considered a separate violation when applying the penalties authorized in Sec. 1-10.

**D.** The city may seek affirmative equitable relief in a court of competent jurisdiction.
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Signs

to cause the removal or repair of any sign in violation of this chapter or other city ordinances.

E. The director or any city employee who operates an authorized City vehicle, or any person contracting with the City for such purpose may, without notice, remove and dispose of any prohibited sign, signal, device, or other structure erected, placed or maintained on the dedicated right-of-way of any public road. Such removal and disposal of a prohibited sign, signal, device, or other structure will not preclude the prosecution of any person for erecting, placing or maintaining such item in the dedicated public right-of-way.

21-12. Prohibited signs.

The following types of signs are not allowed anywhere in the City of Tucker:

A. Signs on the dedicated right-of-way of any public road other than publicly owned or maintained signs and signs pertaining to railroad crossings.

B. Signs that contain words, pictures, statements, or any other materials which are obscene, as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-12-80, as amended;

C. Signs, except flags allowed by Sec. 21-13.B, that simulate an official traffic control device, warning sign, or regulatory sign or which hide from view any traffic control device, signal, or public service sign.

D. Signs that emit or utilize in any manner any sound capable of being detected on any traveled road, highway, or adjacent sidewalk by a person with normal hearing abilities;

E. Signs that interfere with road or highway visibility, or that obstruct or otherwise interfere with the safe and orderly movement of traffic, or that otherwise pose a hazard to traffic due to structural deficiencies in the structure of such signs;

F. Signs erected by nailing, fastening or affixing the sign in any manner to any tree, curb, utility pole, natural feature, or other structure except as may be set forth herein;

G. Animated signs, including rotating or revolving signs (except for time and weather informational signs, official warning and other regulatory signs);

H. Electronic signs;

I. Neon signs;

J. Signs that obstruct any fire escape, any means of egress or ventilation or shall prevent free passage from one part of a roof to any other part thereof, as well as signs attached to any fire escape;

K. Signs that cover and obscure windows, doors, cornices, or other architectural features;

L. Signs that do not conform to applicable building and electrical codes;

M. Signs for which a permit is required that do not display the sign permit number;

N. Monopole signs and other signs with exposed structural supports that are more than 3 feet in height and have post supports larger than 2 inches in diameter or a total of 4 square inches in cross-section area, except for authorized double-post signs in DT districts;

O. Roof signs;

P. Tri-faced signs;

Q. Signs that are in violation of the rules and regulations of any special district or overlay district presently existing or as may later be enacted;

R. Any sign constructed of non-durable material including, but not limited to, paper, cardboard, fabric, or flexible plastic. This provision does not apply to flags, awning signs, or banners which are otherwise allowed by this chapter;

S. Portable signs, except authorized sandwich board signs;

T. Signs attached to, painted on, or otherwise positioned in or on any vehicle or truck, whether having a current license
or not, that is located in view of the street right-of-way when in a location or for a period of time that indicates that the use of the vehicle is for displaying the sign to passing motorists or pedestrians, except that such signs are allowed on a temporary basis in association with a temporary event permit;

U. Signs located on any substandard lot created after the enactment of this chapter unless the substandard lot is created as the result of governmental action;

V. **Abandoned signs in a non-residential zoning district, DT district, and NL district.** Signs (including sign structures) will be deemed abandoned if the use, business, service, or commercial transaction to which it relates has been discontinued for six months. The sign owner must provide proof of continued use within the six month period. Such proof may include, but not be limited to, utility bills, tax records, business licenses, advertisements in dated publications, Insurance policies, leases, receipts, and other appropriate evidence as determined by the director. Furthermore, in reviewing said proof, the director must consider any evidence of vacancy or non-use, including, but not limited to, failure to maintain regular business hours, typical or normal for the use; failure to maintain equipment, supplies or stock-in-trade that would be used for the active operation of the use; failure to maintain utilities that would be used for the active operation of the use; failure to pay taxes, including but not limited to sales tax, workers' compensation taxes, corporate taxes that would be required for the active operation of the use; failure to maintain required local, state or federal licenses or other approvals that would be required for the active operation of the use; failure to maintain applicable business license(s); and other appropriate evidence as determined by the director.

W. Any sign that is structurally unsound or is a hazard to traffic or pedestrians;

X. **Dilapidated or neglected signs.** A sign (including sign structure) will be dilapidated or neglected if it does not present a maintained, neat, and orderly appearance, which may be manifested by the following, including, but not limited to, rust or holes on or in the sign or sign structure; broken, missing, loose, or bent parts; faded or flaking paint; non-operative or partially non-operative illumination (including any light elements within legal non-conforming electronic signs); non-operative mechanical devices; or missing letters in sign copy;

Y. Window shades used as signs; and

Z. Illegal signs.

21-13. **Signs not requiring a permit.**

The following types of signs do not require a sign permit or temporary sign permit from the City in any zoning district.

A. **Public interest signs.**

Signs erected by a public officer in the performance of their duties, including but not limited to: public notices, safety signs, danger signs, official traffic control devices, memorial plaques, and historical markers are exempt from the provisions of this chapter.

B. **Flags.**

1. Flags must be displayed on flagpoles, which may be vertical or mast arm flagpoles. In non-residential districts, DT districts, and NL districts, flagpoles may not exceed the height allowed in the applicable zoning district, or 60 feet, whichever is less. Flagpoles in residential districts may not exceed 25 feet in height or the height of the primary structure on the lot, whichever is less.

2. The maximum dimensions of any flag must be proportional to the flagpole height. The hoist side of the flag may not exceed 20% of the
vertical height of the flagpole. In addition, flags are subject to the following limitations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pole Height (feet)</th>
<th>Flag Size Max. (total square feet)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to 25 ft.</td>
<td>24 sf.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 to 39 ft.</td>
<td>40 sf.</td>
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<tr>
<td>40 to 49 ft.</td>
<td>60 sf.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 to 60 ft.</td>
<td>99 sf.</td>
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3. Each lot is allowed a maximum of three flagpoles.
4. A maximum of two flags is allowed per flagpole.
5. A vertical flagpole must be set back from all lot boundaries a distance which is at least equal to the height of the flagpole.
6. Flags and flagpoles must be maintained in good repair, and to the extent applicable must be in compliance with the building code. Flagpoles with broken halyards may not be used and flags which are torn or frayed may not be displayed.
7. On officially designated city, state, or federal holidays, “1” through “6” immediately above do not apply.

C. Window signs.
1. Window signs may not exceed 30% of the area of the individual window they are located in; and
2. One internally illuminated window sign stating “open” and/or “closed” is allowed per establishment. It may not exceed 5 square feet in area and is included in the 30% window sign area limitation.

D. Residential district signs.
The following signs in residential districts are not subject to the ground sign or entrance sign permit requirements of Sec. 21-14 but are subject to indicated limitations:
1. Lots used for residential purposes other than a multifamily dwelling, mobile home, or townhouse dwelling developments may not have an aggregate sign area greater than 24 square feet per lot.
2. Lots used for multifamily dwelling, mobile home, or townhouse dwelling developments may not have an aggregate sign area exceeding 6 square feet per unit, not to exceed an aggregate of 100 square feet for the development.
3. Signs may exceed a height of 4 feet above the grade level of the adjacent street (as measured from the top of the sign or support included), or a height of 3 feet above ground level (measured from the top of the sign or support structure to ground level), whichever is taller.
4. Signs may not be illuminated.
5. No single sign regulated by “1” through “4” above may exceed 6 square feet in size.

E. Suspended signs.
One suspended sign per tenant or dwelling unit when the area of the sign is less than 6 square feet per side.

F. Street number signs.
Signs for the sole purpose of displaying street numbers as may be required by other ordinances and other signs required by law.

G. Nongovernmental traffic control devices.
Nongovernmental traffic control devices in or adjacent to parking areas and driveways and signs located at railroad crossings.

H. Historic signs.
Historic signs where:
1. The lot, building, or structure where the historic sign is to be located was built before 1950;
2. The owner of the property where the historic sign is to be located has
obtained a certificate of appropriateness authorizing the sign from the City’s historic preservation commission, if such body exists; and

3. A previous sign must have been located on the property before 1950. The historic sign’s former existence, original design, original size, original color(s), original composition, and other original aesthetic qualities of the historic sign must be documented and shown to the director’s satisfaction by photograph(s) or other sufficient evidence as it existed before 1950. The new historic sign must be an exact replica of the pre-1950 sign that was located on the property.

21-14. Signs requiring a temporary sign permit.

The following types of signs require a temporary sign permit from the City in all zoning districts.

A. Banners.

1. Each temporary sign permit authorizes one banner at a time.

2. On lots that do not contain multiple business establishments, banners are allowed for a period not exceeding 14 days and with no more than four such 14-day periods allowed per calendar year per lot.

3. On lots that contain multiple business establishments, banners are allowed for each establishment for a period not exceeding 14 days and with no more than four such 14-day periods allowed per calendar year per establishment.

4. Individual banner permits may be divided into two non-consecutive weeks, provided the dates are stated on the permit.

5. Banner may not exceed 32 square feet in area.

6. No banner must be mounted so as to extend above the horizontal plane of the roof where the building wall and roof meet or shall not extend more than 5 feet above grade when on the ground.

7. Banners must be erected with supports or other means so that they do not sag.

8. Banners must be maintained in good condition as provided for flags in Sec. 21-13.B.

B. Special event signs.

A site holding a valid special administrative permit in any zoning district, or a site containing an authorized use and located in a non-residential zoning district, DT district, or NL district is allowed special event signs, subject to the following requirements:

1. The signs and devices must be constructed of, or must be described as, banners, metal, wood, pennants, flags, feather signs, balloons, or streamers;

2. The maximum size allowance for all the devices and signs may not exceed 150 square feet;

3. The signs may be attached to the exterior wall or walls of a building, no higher than the top of the parapet or roof and may not be placed, located or connected nearer than 50 feet from the center of the street or roadway, or 20 feet from the curb or edge of the pavement, whichever is further from the center of the street or roadway and shall be out of the dedicated right-of-way;

4. The signs must be removed within 48 hours of the completion of the event; and

5. Special event signs may not be used for more than 16 consecutive days.

6. Special event signs may not be used more than two times per calendar year on the same site.

C. Other temporary signs.
The following applies to temporary signs other than banners or special event signs:

1. One sign is permitted per lot, except that corner lots may have one sign located on each adjacent street.
2. Signs may not exceed 32 square feet in area.
3. Signs may not exceed 8 feet in height.
4. Signs may not be illuminated.
5. Signs must be rigid and may not be made of fabric or similar materials.
6. Sign faces must be constructed of materials that present a finished appearance. Rough-cut plywood and plastic are not allowed.
7. Any sign frames must be made of painted or stained wood, anodized aluminum, or metal. Plastic frames are not allowed.
8. Signs must be maintained in good condition as provided for flags in Sec. 21-13.B.
9. Construction signs must comply with the following time limits:
   a. Signs may not be erected until the first development permit for the project has been issued. If development is not begun in 60 days or if construction is not continuously and actively pursued to completion, all signs must be removed.
   b. Signs must be removed when a certificate of occupancy is issued, or when the permanent sign is installed, or when the development permit expires, whichever occurs first.
10. Temporary signs other than construction signs may be used for a period not exceeding 60 consecutive days. Additional posting time may be allowed by the director, provided the temporary activity on the site is continuing.
21-15. Signs requiring a permit.

Signs are allowed by district as set forth in Table 21.1. Specific requirements for each sign are shown on the following pages. All of the sign types show in Table 21.1 require a sign permit.

Table 21.1 Signs Requirement a Permit.

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<th>Residential Zoning Districts</th>
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<th>DT Districts</th>
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<td>Awning Sign, or Canopy Sign, or Wall Sign</td>
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<td>Projecting Sign</td>
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Key: ☐ = Allowed ☐ = Allowed for Nonresidential, Townhouses, and Multifamily Uses Only -- Not Allowed


A. Awning, Canopy, and Wall Signs.

1. Allocation not transferable.

Sign area allocation must be used on the building facade that is used to measure the allocation, and may not be transferred to any other building facade.

2. Primary facades.

Awning signs, canopy signs, and wall signs are allocated a combined sign area of 4 square feet per linear foot of the primary façade.


Awning signs, canopy signs, and wall signs are allocated a combined sign area of 4 square feet per linear foot of any one secondary facade.

4. Maximum combined sign area.

The maximum combined awning sign, canopy sign, and wall sign area along any one façade may not exceed:

a. DT-1, DT-3, NL-4: 32 square feet.

b. Developments under 30 acres in all other districts: 150 square feet.

c. Developments 30 acres or larger in all other districts: 500 square feet.

B. Other signs.

The maximum combined area for signs other than awning, canopy, and wall signs is not regulated except by the dimension requirements for each sign and the number of signs allowed.
21-17. Awning signs.

A. Definition.
A sign where graphics or symbols are sewn on, printed on, or otherwise adhered to the awning material as an integrated part of the awning itself.

B. General provisions.
1. Signs may not extend outside the awning.
2. Only awnings over ground story doors or windows may contain signs.
3. The awning that the sign is attached to must be opaque.
4. Signs may be on the front valance, the side valance, or on the sloping face of the awning.
5. Signs may not be internally illuminated.

C. Sign area allocation.
See Sec. 21-16.

D. Dimensions.
Area of individual sign:
   a. DT-1, DT-3, NL-4: max. 32 sf.
   b. Developments under 30 acres in all other districts: max. 150 sf.
   c. Developments 30 acres or larger in all other districts: max. 500 sf.
   ▲ Sign width (% of awning width): max. 80%
   Projection from façade: max. 6 ft.

E. Number of signs.
1. One awning sign, or one building canopy sign, or one wall sign is allowed along per establishment along its primary facade.
2. One awning sign, or one building canopy, or one wall sign is allowed per establishment along its secondary facade.

A. Definition.
A sign affixed to, superimposed upon, or painted on any roof or roof-like structure which is extended over a sidewalk, walkway, or vehicle access area.

B. General provisions.
1. Signs cannot extend outside the overall length or width of the canopy. However, a canopy sign may extend above or below the canopy.
2. Raceways are permitted for signs extending below or above the canopy. Otherwise, raceways are not permitted and the sign must be flush with the canopy face.
3. Signs may not extend above the height of the building, including any parapet wall.
4. Signs may not be located on a roof.

C. Sign area allocation.
See Sec. 21-16.

D. Dimensions.
Area of individual sign:
a. DT-1, DT-3, NL-4: max. 32 sf.
b. Developments under 30 acres in all other districts: max. 150 sf.
c. Developments 30 acres or larger in all other districts: max. 500 sf.

Ⓐ Sign width (% of canopy width): max. 80%
Ⓑ Clear height above sidewalks or other non-vehicular areas: min. 8 ft.
Ⓒ Clear height above parking, driveways, or other vehicle access: min. 14 ft.
Projection from building façade: max. 6 ft.

E. Number of signs.
1. One awning sign, or one building canopy sign, or one wall sign is allowed along per establishment along its primary facade.
2. One awning sign, or one building canopy, or one wall sign is allowed per establishment along its secondary facade.
3. One canopy sign is allowed per street frontage on canopies covering vehicle fueling areas. Signs must be within the limits of the canopy covering the pump and may not exceed 6 square feet.
21-19. Wall signs.

A. Definition.
A sign fastened, placed or painted upon or parallel to the exterior wall of the structure itself, whether front, rear or side of the structure.

B. General provisions.
1. Signs must be securely fastened to the building surface.
2. Signs may not extend above the height of the building, including any parapet wall.
3. Signs may not be located on a roof.

C. Sign area allocation.
See Sec. 21-16.

D. Dimensions.
Area of individual sign:
- a. DT-1, DT-3, NL-4: max. 32 sf.
- b. Developments under 30 acres in all other districts: max. 150 sf.
- c. Developments 30 acres or larger in all other districts: max. 500 sf.

- Sign width (% of wall width): max. 80%
- Projection from façade: max. 2 feet.

E. Number of signs.
1. One awning sign, or one building canopy sign, or one wall sign is allowed along per establishment along its primary facade.
2. One awning sign, or one building canopy, or one wall sign is allowed per establishment along its secondary facade.
3. One wall sign is allowed per facade of an on-site accessory drive-through car wash building. However, no more than two total signs may be provided and the combined area of both signs may not exceed 5 square feet. This area is not included in the sign area allocation above.
21-20. Projecting signs.

A. Definition.
A sign which is attached perpendicular to a building or other structure and extends more than 12 inches horizontally from the plane of the building facade.

B. General provisions.
1. Signs must be securely fastened to the building surface.
2. Signs may not extend above the height of the building, including any parapet wall.
3. Signs may not be located on a roof.

C. Sign area allocation.
See Sec. 21-16.

D. Dimensions.

- Area of individual sign: max. 9 sf.
- Projection from façade: max. 2 feet.
- Clear height above sidewalks or other non-vehicular areas: min. 10 ft.
- Clear height above parking, driveways, or other vehicle access: min. 14 ft.

E. Number of signs.
1. One projecting sign is allowed along per establishment along its primary facade.
2. One projecting sign is allowed per establishment along its secondary facade.

A. Definition.
A type of ground sign that is attached to the ground for at least 75% of the width and depth of the sign face.

B. General provisions.
1. Signs must have a base made of brick or stone. Any framework must also be made of brick or stone.
2. Signs must display the address of the property. Where multiple addresses exist, the highest and lowest address numbers must be identified. This does not apply to any ground sign where the sign is located on property which has more than one street frontage and the property address is assigned from a street other than the street frontage where the ground sign is erected. Numbers must be a minimum of 8 inches in height and be visible from both directions of travel.
3. Sign must be set at least 10 feet from electrical transmission lines.
4. Signs allowed for primary facades must be placed between the primary frontage and the street the primary facade faces.
5. Signs allowed for secondary facades must be placed between the secondary facade and the street the secondary facade faces.
6. No lot may have more than a combined total of one monument sign or double-post sign that is oriented towards travelers along the same street.

C. Sign area allocation.
See Sec. 21-16.

D. Dimensions.
Area of individual sign:
- DT districts: max. 90 ft.
- Developments under 30 acres in all other districts: max. 150 sf.
- Developments 30 acres or larger in all other districts: max. 270 sf.

A Sign width: max. 15 ft.
B Sign height:
- DT districts: max. 8 ft.
- Developments under 30 acres in all other districts: max. 12 ft.
- Developments 30 acres or larger in all other districts: max. 20 ft.
C Sign must incorporate a base between 2 and 4 feet in height

E. Number of signs.
One ground sign is allowed per street that the lot has frontage on.

A. Definition.
A type of ground sign where the primary support is supplied by two posts positioned no more than 2 inches from the outer edge of the sign face.

B. General provisions.
1. Post supports must be between 4 and 6 inches in width or diameter. When square posts are used, a nominal 4 x 4-inch post may be used.
2. Sign faces must be constructed of materials that present a finished appearance. Rough-cut plywood and plastic are not allowed.
3. Sign frames must be painted or stained wood, anodized aluminum, or metal. Plastic frames are not allowed.
4. Signs must display the address of the property. Where multiple addresses exist, the highest and lowest address numbers must be identified. This does not apply to any ground sign where the sign is located on property which has more than one street frontage and the property address is assigned from a street other than the street frontage where the ground sign is erected. Numbers must be a minimum of 8 inches in height and be visible from both directions of travel.
5. Signs must be set at least 10 feet from electrical transmission lines.
6. Signs allowed for primary facade must be placed between the primary facade and the street the primary facade faces.
7. Signs allowed for secondary facade must be placed between the secondary facade and the street the secondary facade faces.
8. No lot may have more than a combined total of one monument sign or double-post sign that is oriented towards travelers along the same street.

C. Sign area allocation.
See Sec. 21-16.

D. Dimensions.
Area of individual sign:
   a. DT districts: max. 90 ft.
   b. Other districts: max. 150 sf.
Sign width: max. 15 ft.
Sign height:
   c. DT districts: max. 8 ft.
   d. Other districts: max. 12 ft.

E. Number of signs.
One ground sign is allowed per street that the lot has frontage on.
21-23. Sandwich board signs.

A. Definition.
A portable sign not secured or attached to the ground or surface upon which it is located having two panels hinged at the top and capable of standing on its own frame without external support or attachment. Synonym: “A” frame sign.

B. General provisions.
1. Signs may not be located in a public right-of-way.
2. Signs may not exceed 3.5 feet in height and 7 square feet in area (per side).
3. Signs must be removed and placed indoors at the end of each business day.
4. Signs may not obstruct vehicular, bicycle or pedestrian traffic and must comply with ADA clearance and accessibility.
5. Sign faces must be constructed of materials that present a finished appearance. Rough-cut plywood and plastic are not allowed.
6. Sign frames must be painted or stained wood, anodized aluminum, or metal. Plastic frames are not allowed.
7. Signs may not be illuminated.

C. Sign area allocation.
See Sec. 21-16.

D. Dimensions.
Area of individual sign: max. 7 sf. per side
A Sign height: max. 42 in.

E. Number of signs.
One sandwich board sign is allowed per establishment.

A. Definition.
Any ground sign placed at the entrance into a development that either includes two or more lots or exceeds 30 acres in area.

B. General provisions.
1. Signs must conform to the general provisions for ground signs.
2. Signs must conform to the illumination requirements for ground signs in the applicable zoning district.
3. Signs may not be located on any lot containing a detached single-family dwelling. Signs in detached single-family dwelling developments must be placed on land owned by a homeowners association.

C. Sign area allocation.
See Sec. 21-16.

D. Dimensions.
Area of individual sign:
   a. Developments under 30 acres: max. 32 sf.
   b. Developments 30 acres or larger: max 300 sf.

A  Sign width: max. 15 ft.
B  Sign height:
   c. Developments under 30 acres: max. 8 ft.
   d. Developments 30 acres or larger: max 20 ft.

E. Number of signs.
One entrance sign is allowed at each street entrance or driveway into the sign, but no two entrance signs for the same development may be placed less than 500 feet apart along the same external street.
21-25. Directional sign.

A. Definition
An on-site sign on private property, the sole purpose of which is to direct the flow of traffic, transmit parking information, or convey similar information.

B. General Provisions
1. Signs must be set at least 10 feet from electrical transmission lines.

C. Sign Area Allocation
See Sec. 21-16.

D. Dimensions
   1. Area of individual sign: max. 6 sf.
   2. A Sign width: max. 3 ft.

E. Number of Signs
Two directional signs are allowed for every curb but may exceed a total of eight per lot.
21-26. **DT districts.**

The following additional standards and restrictions apply in DT districts.

**A. Prohibited signs.**

The following signs are prohibited in addition to those prohibited by Sec. 21-12:

1. In DT-1 and DT-3, internally illuminated signs, including internally illuminated cabinet signs, except as allowed for window signs stating “open” and/or “closed”.
2. In all DT districts, back-lit channel signs.

**B. Ground signs.**

When the building is less than 5 feet from a public right of way, no ground sign may be placed between the building and said right-of-way.

21-27. **NL districts.**

The following additional standards and restrictions apply in NL districts.

**A. Wall signs.**

1. Wall signs must be channel cut letters applied directly to the facade.
2. Wall signs may not exceed 8 inches in depth.

**B. Ground signs.**

Ground signs must be externally illuminated using ground-mounted floodlighting.

21-28. **Mountain Industrial Boulevard Overlay.**

The following additional standards and restrictions apply in the Mountain Industrial Boulevard Overlay.

**A. Sandwich board signs.**

Sandwich board signs must be placed with 5 feet of a building entrance.

**B. Wood and Flexible plastic.** Wood and Flexible plastic are prohibited for use in permanent signs in non-residential zoning districts.

21-29. **Signs setbacks.**

**A.** No sign may be in required interior side yards, required rear yards, or required buffers.

**B.** Signs must conform to the sight visibility triangle requirements of Sec. 5.3.3 of the Zoning Ordinance.

**C.** Signs must be located to provide enough vertical clearance for safe, convenient and unobstructed passage for pedestrians and vehicles.

**D.** Signs must be set back at least 5 feet from any right-of-way.

21-30. **Measurements.**

**A. Computation of sign area.**

1. For wall signs, awning signs, and canopy signs and consisting of freestanding letters or logos, sign area is calculated as the total area of the smallest single rectangle, circle, or square that fully encloses all the letters and images.

2. For signs on a background, the entire area of the background is calculated as sign area, including any material or color forming the sign face and the background used to differentiate the sign from the structure on which it is mounted. For ground signs, entrance signs, projecting signs, and sandwich board signs, sign area includes the face of the structure that the message is affixed to, not including any street number, supports, base, apron, bracing, or other structural members.

3. The sign area for double-faced signs is computed as the side of the sign with the largest sign face.

**B. Measurement of ground sign height.**

1. When the ground level at the ground sign’s base is higher than the level of the adjoining street pavement, the height of a sign is measured from the ground level at the base to the
highest point of the sign or supporting structure.

2. When the ground level at the ground sign’s base is lower than the level of the adjoining street pavement, the height of a sign is measured from the level of the closest adjoining street pavement to the highest point of the sign or supporting structure.

3. The level of the ground may not be altered in such a way to provide additional sign height.


A. The City finds that nonconforming signs may adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare. Such signs may adversely affect the aesthetic character of the city and may adversely affect public safety due to the visual impact of said signs on motorist and the structural characteristics of said signs.

B. Any nonconforming sign that is not used or leased for a continuous period of six months may not be reused for sign purposes unless and until it fully conforms with the terms and requirement of this chapter.

C. Illegal signs must be removed within 30 days of notice from the City.

D. Except as provided for in “E” immediately below, no structural repairs or changes in shape, size, or technology on any nonconforming sign is permitted except to make a nonconforming sign comply with all requirements of this chapter. Routine maintenance and changing of copy is permitted as long as such maintenance or changing of copy does not result in or change the shape, size, or technology. Signs which are structurally unsound or present a hazard to persons or property must be removed within five days upon notification by the City.

E. A nonconforming sign structure may not be replaced by another nonconforming sign structure, except that a nonconforming sign may be rebuilt where the original sign structure has been damaged or destroyed by nature or an act of God. No such replacement structure may have a sign area or height greater than the original structure.

21-32. Illumination.

Illumination of signs must be in accordance with the following requirements.

A. Location restriction.

No internally illuminated sign may be constructed or maintained within 75 feet of any single-family lot property line.

B. Prohibited light sources.

The following light sources are not allowed:

1. Blinking, flashing, and chasing.
2. Bare bulb illumination.
3. Colored lights used in any manner so as to be confused with or construed as traffic control devices.
4. Direct reflected light that creates a hazard to operators of motor vehicles.

C. Brightness.

The light from any illuminated sign must not be of an intensity or brightness that will interfere with the peace, comfort, convenience, and general welfare of residents or occupants of adjacent properties.

D. Internal illumination.

1. Channel letters may be internally lit or white backlit.
2. For internally illuminated signs on a background, the background must be opaque and a contrasting color.
3. Light emitting diodes (LED)’s are allowed as a light source in a manner that the LED is behind acrylic, aluminum or similar sign face and returns in such a manner that the LED module light sources are not visible from the exterior of the sign.

E. External illumination.
1. Lighting directed toward a sign must be shielded so that it illuminates only the face of the sign and does not shine directly onto public right-of-way, the sky, or adjacent properties.

2. Projecting light fixtures used for externally illuminated signs must be simple and unobtrusive in appearance, and not obscure the sign.

F. Raceways and transformers.

1. If a raceway is necessary, it must not extend in width or height beyond the area of the sign.

2. A raceway must be finished to match the background wall or canopy, or integrated into the overall design of the sign.

3. Visible transformers are not allowed.

21-33. Building code.

To the extent that it is not inconsistent with this chapter, the most current published edition of the Standard UCC Building Code and other building and construction codes as adopted and modified by the City and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs are incorporated as a part of this chapter as if fully restated herein for the same purposes stated in Sec. 21-1 and for the same purposes for which the Standard UCC Building Code was promulgated and enacted, which purposes are expressly incorporated herein.

21-34. Zoning ordinance.

Except as provided elsewhere in this section, to the extent that it is not inconsistent with this chapter, the Zoning Ordinance, as amended including, but not limited to definitions of terms contained therein is incorporated as a part of this chapter as if fully restated herein for the same purposes stated in Sec. 2-11 and for the same purposes for which the Zoning Ordinance and any amendments thereto, were adopted, which purposes are expressly incorporated herein. However, to the extent that any regulations governing any zoning overlay district now existing or later enacted conflict with this article, the rules of the zoning overlay district will control.

21-35. Variances.

A. Where a literal application of this article, due to special circumstances, would result in an unusual hardship in an individual case, a variance may be granted by the zoning board of appeals after receiving evidence that the applicant meets all of the following criteria:

1. Exceptional conditions regarding the lot size, shape or topography of the lot where the sign is to be located, which are not applicable to other lands or structures in the area;

2. Granting the variance would not confer on the applicant any significant privileges which are denied to others similarly situated;

3. The exceptional circumstances are not the result of action by the applicant;

4. The requested variance is the minimum variance necessary to allow the applicant to enjoy the rights commonly enjoyed by others similarly situated;

5. Granting of the variance would not violate more than one standard of this chapter; and

6. Granting the variance would not result in allowing a sign that interferes with road or highway visibility or obstruct or otherwise interfere with the safe and orderly movement of traffic.

B. No variance may be granted to increase the aggregate area of signs permitted on a lot.

C. No variance may be granted to allow a prohibited sign.


A. On developments 30 acres or larger, the community development direction may approve alternative sign materials when said materials are part the development’s overall design program.
B. Applicants shall submit evidence of the development's overall design program, which may include, but is not limited to, a master sign plan, architectural pattern book, renderings, or other items conveying the development’s character and design to the Director's satisfaction.

C. Alternative compliance may not be used to:

1. Permit a materials that is specifically prohibited by this chapter, or

2. Permit a sign that is prohibited by Sec. 21-12.

21-37. Severability.

In the event any section, subsection, sentence, or word of this chapter is declared and adjudged to be invalidated or unconstitutional, such declaration or adjudication will not affect the remaining portions of this chapter, which will remain in full force and effect as if such portion so declared or adjudged unconstitutional were not originally part of this chapter, even if the surviving parts of the chapter result in greater restrictions after any unconstitutional provisions are stricken. The mayor and city council declares that it would have enacted the remaining parts of this chapter if it had known that such portion thereof would be declared or adjudged invalid or unconstitutional. The mayor and city council declares its intent that should this chapter be declared in part or in whole, signs are to be subject to regulations applicable to "structures" contained in other ordinances, including the Zoning Ordinance.