

CHAPTER 6:

SIGNS

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Section 6.1 Purpose and Applicability

- A. This Chapter is intended to regulate and control signs and their placement throughout the Town of Granite Quarry and its extraterritorial area for the following purposes:
- To provide a pleasing overall environmental setting and good community appearance, which is deemed vital to the continued economic attractiveness of the Town and its environs;
 - To create a more productive, enterprising, professional business atmosphere;
 - To allow signs appropriate to the planned character and development of each zoning district;
 - To ensure that permitted signs do not become a hazard or nuisance;
 - To promote traffic safety;
 - To prevent the overcrowding of land;
 - To facilitate fire and police protection;
 - To protect and enhance the value of properties; and
 - To promote the public safety and general welfare of the Granite Quarry area.
- B. The provisions of this Chapter shall apply to the construction, erection, alteration, use, type, number, location, size, height, and maintenance of all signs. Except as otherwise provided in this Ordinance, it shall be unlawful for any person to erect, construct, enlarge, move, or replace any sign, without first having obtained a sign permit for such sign from the Zoning Administrator as required by this Ordinance.
- C. The following signs are exempt from the requirements of this Chapter:
1. Wall signs of less than one (1) square foot.
 2. Incidental signs not legible from off-site or a public right-of-way. Examples include gas pump signs, drive-through menu boards, on-site directional signs, and signs within a sports stadium.
 3. Government signs posted or authorized by various local, state and federal agencies in the performance of their duties including providing community information and facilitating economic development. Examples of such signs include regulatory signs, traffic signs, welcome signs, wayfinding signs, bulletin board and directory signs.
 4. Address signs affixed to structures, mailboxes, decorative light posts, driveway entrances, etc., which serve to identify the address of the structure or occupant for the purposes of postal service and emergency E-911 location.
 5. Flags attached to a permanent flag pole that is permanently affixed to the ground provided that there are no more than four (4) flags per lot of record and flags are located outside the public right-of-way unless they are installed by a government entity.

Section 6.2 General Provisions

6.2.1 Sign Design Guidelines

- A. Materials, colors, and shapes of proposed signs should be compatible with the buildings and the surrounding area.
- B. The sign shall not be the dominant feature of its location.
- C. A uniform sign plan shall be required for all office and retail complexes and multi-tenant buildings. All tenants shall comply with the approved uniform sign plan.

6.2.2 Sign Area

- A. For wall signs, placard signs, and window signs, the area of the sign shall be the smallest rectangle that can encompass all letters and logos included in the sign.
- B. For freestanding signs, neighborhood identification signs, banners, and other similar signs, the area shall include the rectangular area of the surface to which the sign is affixed.

6.2.3 Sign Height

The height of a sign shall be measured from the highest point of a sign to the point of ground surface beneath it. Ornamentation such as caps, spires, and finials shall not extend more than two (2) feet from the top of the sign. The use of berms or raised landscape areas is only permitted to raise the base of the sign to the mean elevation of the fronting street.

6.2.4 Sign Setbacks

- A. All signs shall be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from the street right-of-way and adjacent property lines.
- B. At intersections, no sign shall be in the sight triangle as defined by this Ordinance.
- C. No ground sign shall be located within 100 feet of any other ground sign unless the Zoning Administrator determines that practical difficulties exist for locating the sign.

6.2.5 Sign Illumination

Illuminated signs shall conform to the following:

- A. All illuminated signs shall have their lighting directed in such a manner as to illuminate only the face of the sign.
- B. External light sources shall not be visible from the right-of-way nor cause glare hazards to pedestrians, motorists, or adjacent properties.
- C. All lighting shall meet all applicable electrical codes.
- D. A new sign within 100 feet of an existing residential structure shall not be illuminated between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 6:00 a.m.

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E. Lighting for signs shall be maintained and shall not create excessive noise.

6.2.6 Maintenance and Upkeep of Signs

- A. All signs and all components thereof, including supports, braces, and anchors shall be kept in a good state of repair, in compliance with all building and electrical codes, and in conformance with the requirements of this Ordinance (unless deemed a legal nonconforming sign by Chapter 13 of this Ordinance). Any sign which is determined by the Zoning Administrator or building inspector as being insecure, in danger of falling or otherwise endangering the public safety shall be immediately removed by its owner unless it is repaired and made to otherwise comply with the requirements of this Ordinance.
- B. If a sign advertises a business, service, commodity, attraction or other enterprise or activity that is no longer operating or being offered or conducted, then that sign and sign structure shall be considered discontinued regardless of reason or intent and shall, within 180 days after such discontinuation, be removed by the owner of the property where the sign is located.

6.2.7 Removal of Signs in the Right-of-Way

The Zoning Administrator or his designee may remove and destroy or otherwise dispose of any sign placed on public property or within any right-of-way of any public or private street. Penalties shall be levied for each such sign as outlined in Chapter 15 of this Ordinance.

Section 6.3 Temporary Signs

The provisions of this section shall apply to the placement and display of temporary signage within the Town's jurisdiction. Any temporary sign that does not comply with the provisions of this Section is prohibited. Any sign which is permanently displayed shall comply with the provisions of Section 6.4, Permanent Signs.

A. Common Standards

All temporary signs shall comply with the following common standards:

1. Temporary signs shall not be illuminated or be provided with any electric service.
2. Temporary signs shall not be placed within any public street right-of-way, including within medians, unless expressly permitted by this ordinance or the North Carolina General Statutes.
3. Temporary signs attached to building walls (other than permitted temporary window signs) shall not be placed in a manner that obstructs any window, door, fire department sprinkler connection, or street number sign.
4. Temporary signs shall not be affixed to a permanent sign or its supporting structure, including both building mounted and freestanding permanent signs.
5. Temporary signs shall not be placed in a manner that obstructs clear sight distance

- (within the required sight triangle) for motorists at street intersections or driveways.
6. Temporary signs, other than Type 4 Freestanding Temporary Signs, shall not be placed upon any sidewalk or other pedestrian walkway.
 7. Temporary signs shall not be placed on the roof of a building, or affixed to a motor vehicle, tree, utility pole or street sign.
 8. Where temporary signs are limited in the duration of their display and limited in the total number of displays per calendar year, any required period of separation between such displays shall carry through to the following calendar year, and shall be observed prior to initiating the first allowed display during the new calendar year.
 9. Temporary signs shall be constructed of durable weatherproof materials and shall not be made with unfinished plywood or paper.

B. Freestanding Temporary Signs**1. General Provisions**

The following standards shall apply to all Freestanding Temporary Signs:

- a. Signs shall not be affixed to poles, posts, stakes or other supporting structures that are permanently installed or anchored into the ground through the use of concrete foundations or similar anchoring techniques.
- b. Signs, other than Type 4 Freestanding Temporary signs, shall be set back from the edge of the right-of-way by a minimum of five (5) feet.
- c. No more than one (1) Freestanding Temporary Sign may be displayed on a parcel or group of adjacent parcels under common ownership or tenancy at any given time, regardless of type, unless otherwise expressly permitted.
- d. Signs shall present a finished appearance. Rough cut, unpainted plywood and similar unfinished surfaces shall not be used.

2. Type 1 Freestanding Temporary Signs

Signs in this category consist of small, temporary yard signs that are typically associated with (but not limited to) the advertisement of real estate, political campaigns and meeting announcements. For examples of Type 1 Temporary Freestanding Signs, see Figure 6.1. Such signs are also subject to NCGS 136-32(b).

3. Type 2 Freestanding Temporary Signs

Signs in this category are typically referred to as “banners” that are typically associated with (but not limited to) the announcement of community, sporting and similar special events. This sign type includes horizontal banners mounted to two poles and vertical banners, such as “feather flags” or “shark fins”, that are mounted to a single pole. For examples of Type 2 Temporary Freestanding Signs, see Figure 6.1.

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4. Type 3 Freestanding Temporary Signs

Signs in this category are large temporary signs typically associated with (but not limited to) the advertisement of large tracts of land for sale, construction and development activity or the advertisement of commercial or industrial buildings for sale or lease. For examples of Type 3 Temporary Freestanding Signs, see Figure 6.1.

5. Type 4 Freestanding Temporary Signs

The category of signs defined as Type 4 Freestanding Temporary signs shall include only those signs which are constructed in a manner that is commonly referred to as an “A-frame” or “sandwich board” sign. The faces of the sign shall be connected at the top by hinges or similar mechanisms and the sign shall be self-supporting when placed in its display position. For examples of Type 4 Temporary Freestanding Signs, see Figure 6.1.

TABLE 6.1: FREESTANDING TEMPORARY SIGN CRITERIA

Criteria	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
Zoning District	Any district	Any district	Any District	Any District
Registration Required	No	Yes	Yes	No
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Use Group for lots or developments of 3 acres or less Vacant or undeveloped properties of 1 acre or less 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Use Group Civic and Government Use Group Institutional Use Group Office and Service Use Group Recreation and Entertainment Use Group Permitted Temporary Use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residential Use Group for lots or developments of greater than 3 acres Vacant or undeveloped properties of greater than 1 acre and with a minimum of 200 feet of frontage on a public right-of-way Properties of greater than 1 acre for which there is a valid building permit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail Use Group Civic and Government Use Group Institutional Use Group Office and Service Use Group Recreation and Entertainment Use Group Permitted Temporary Use
Max. Size ¹ (square feet)	6	24	16	6
Max. Height (feet)	4	Horizontal-6 ft Vertical-8ft	6	4
Number Permitted ²	1	1	1	1 per tenant ⁴
Max. Duration	No Limit	30 days up to 4 times per calendar year with minimum 7 days separation	2 years or following the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy ³	Between daily opening and closing
Mounting	Supported by posts or stakes	Supported by posts or stakes	Supported by a minimum of 2 posts or stakes	A-frame
Material	Rigid	Flexible	Rigid	Rigid
Other	NCGS 136-32 applies within state rights-of-way		Shall not be displayed upon a parcel that contains a permanent freestanding sign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be located on sidewalk if with a minimum 3-foot freestanding sign.

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				<div>clearance</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shall not be placed in a landscaped area or parking area or driveway• Shall not include tract mounted changeable copy• May include chalkboard or dry erase surfaces
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¹The display area may be either single or dual-sided, but shall not consist of more than one (1) distinct component.

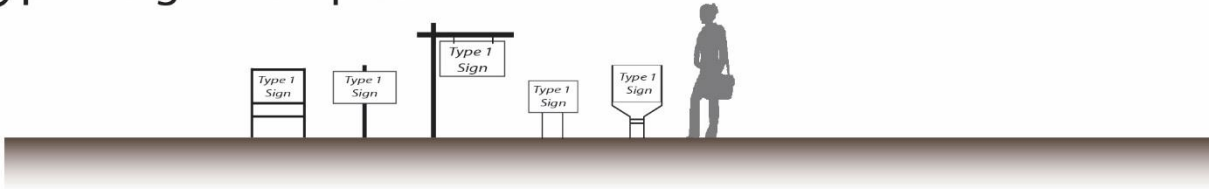
²Per parcel or group of adjacent parcels under common ownership or tenancy

³Provided that this limit shall not be apply if the land, and any building(s) and/or structure(s) upon such parcel or group of parcels is not occupied or in active use for purposes other than a use in the Residential Use Group at any time during the period of display.

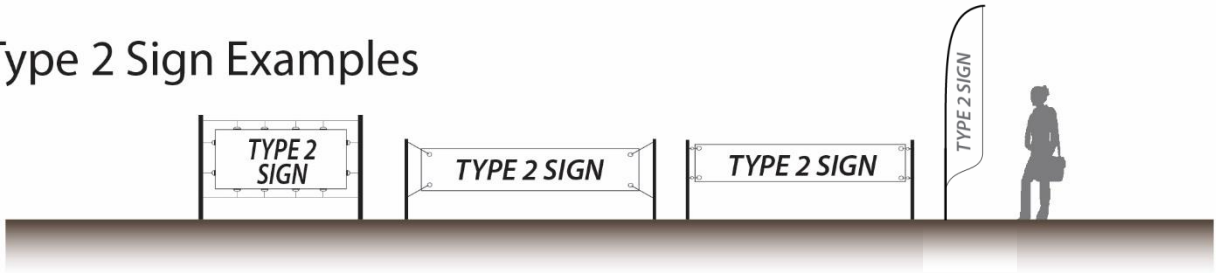
⁴Provided there is a separation of a minimum of 50 feet if there is more than one customer entrance per tenant space.

FIGURE 6.1: TEMPORARY SIGN TYPE EXAMPLES

Type 1 Sign Examples



Type 2 Sign Examples



Type 3 Sign Examples



Type 4 Sign Example



C. Building Mounted Temporary Signs

1. *Window Signs (temporary).*

Signs temporarily attached or temporarily painted to a window or door, announcing sale or special features shall be permitted provided they do not exceed 50% of the area of said window or door. Signs that exceed 50% of the area of said window shall be treated as wall signs. **MAXIMUM COVERAGE:** 50% of window area

2. Banners.

A banner may be hung securely against a wall face.

- **MAXIMUM SIZE:** 24 SQUARE FEET
- **MAXIMUM NUMBER:** 1 PER TENANT
- **MAXIMUM TIME:** NOT TO EXCEED A 30 DAY PERIOD, 4 TIMES PER CALENDAR YEAR.

Section 6.4 Permanent Signs

6.4.1 Signs Permitted by Zoning District

Sign Type	RR	RL	RM	RH	OI	NB	CB	HB	LI	HI	PUD
Development Entrance	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL				XL
Primary Ground	XL	CL	CL	CL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	CL
Directional Ground					XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	
Transitional Multi-Tenant Ground					XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	
Driveway Entrance Signs	XL	CL	CL	CL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	CL
Building Mounted Signs	XL	C	C	C	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL	XL

Legend:

X= Sign Allowed

C= Sign for Civic Uses only

L= Illumination Allowed

6.4.2 Sign Requirements by Type

A. Development Entrance Sign

- **MAXIMUM SIZE:** 32 square feet (area may be split between two (2) signs on either side of entrance)
- **MAXIMUM HEIGHT:** 6 feet tall
- **MAXIMUM NUMBER:** One (1) per street frontage entrance, except that maximum area may be split between two (2) signs on either side of the entrance

B. Primary Ground Sign

- **MAXIMUM SIZE:** Maximum sign area is 32 square feet. For multi-tenant signs, four (4) square feet per tenant may be added up to a maximum of 64 square feet.
- **MAXIMUM HEIGHT:** 10 feet tall in OI, NB, CB, HB, LI, & HI districts & 6 feet tall in RR, RL, RM, RH, & PUD districts
- **MAXIMUM NUMBER:** 1 per street frontage
- **OTHER:** Primary ground signs shall be monument style with the bottom of the sign portion of the structure beginning no more than three (3) feet from the ground. Developments with two (2) or more tenants shall utilize a multi-tenant sign. The total area of ground signs may be up to 50 percent changeable copy or electronic reader board.

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C. Directional Ground Sign

Directional ground signs are allowed for entities not located on the main business corridor of Salisbury Avenue. The sign must be located on property adjacent to property upon which the entity is located within 400 feet.

- **MAXIMUM SIZE:** Maximum sign area is 24 square feet.
- **MAXIMUM HEIGHT:** 6 feet tall
- **MAXIMUM NUMBER:** 1 per parcel
- **OTHER:** Directional ground signs shall be monument style with the bottom of the sign portion of the structure beginning no more than three (3) feet from the ground. Developments with two (2) or more tenants shall utilize a multi-tenant sign. The total area of ground signs may be up to 50 percent changeable copy or electronic reader board. A signed letter of permission to install the sign from the property owner must accompany the sign permit request.

D. Transitional Multi-Tenant Ground Sign

When a business, organization, or other entity opens in a location where there is an existing yet non-conforming sign and the sign ordinance does not allow an additional sign per property, a transitional multi-tenant ground sign shall be permitted. Transitional conforming ground signs may be placed on multi-tenant property where there is an existing single tenant non-conforming ground sign in use. The transitional multi-tenant sign installation may use any configuration that will allow future space for all other tenants within the maximum area and height requirements of a multi-tenant ground sign.

- **MAXIMUM SIZE:** Maximum sign area is 32 square feet. For multi-tenant signs, four (4) square feet per tenant may be added up to a maximum of 64 square feet.
- **MAXIMUM HEIGHT:** 10 feet tall
- **MAXIMUM NUMBER:** 1 per street frontage
- **OTHER:** Transitional multi-tenant ground signs shall be monument style with the bottom of the sign portion of the structure beginning no more than three (3) feet from the ground. Developments with two (2) or more tenants shall utilize a multi-tenant sign. The total area of ground signs may be up to 50 percent changeable copy or electronic reader board. The in-use non-conforming business may become part of the conforming multi-tenant sign only after removal of the nonconforming sign.

MULTI-TENANT GROUND SIGN EXAMPLE



E. Driveway Entrance Signs.

Signs that are located at driveway entrances to indicate the location of vehicular entrances and exits for a property.

- MAXIMUM SIZE: 4 square feet
- MAXIMUM HEIGHT: 3 feet tall
- MAXIMUM NUMBER: 2 per entrance/exit

F. Building Mounted Sign Requirements

The following shall be included in the permanent building sign category:

- Standard Wall Signs (flush signs and channel letters)
- Canopy signs
- Awning signs
- Blade signs (projecting and suspended)
- Permanent window signs



Standard Wall Sign



Blade Sign



Canopy Sign



Awning Sign and Window Sign

1. The following regulations apply to all building mounted signs:
 - MAXIMUM SIZE: 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall fronting on a street. Blade signs shall not exceed 4 square feet.
 - MAXIMUM NUMBER: Up to 4 may make up the allowable area per tenant
 - PROJECTION: Maximum projection from the wall face shall meet the following standards for each sign type:
 - Standard: 12 inches
 - Projecting: 5 feet (perpendicular to building)
 - Suspended: Shall not extend beyond canopy or awning edge (perpendicular to building)

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- Bottom of the sign shall be at least 8 feet above the ground immediately below it. The height of the top edge of the signboard or bracket shall not exceed the height of the wall from which the sign projects.
- OTHER: Building mounted signs shall front on a public street or face a parking lot where a main building entrance is located. Building mounted signs may front a railroad track if the building wall is visible from a street across the track. Signs shall not extend above the parapet or eave of the building or extend into the street right-of-way.

Section 6.5 Prohibited Signs

- A. Any sign which the Zoning Administrator determines obstructs the view of bicyclists or motorists using any street, approach to any street intersection, or which interferes with the effectiveness of or obscures any traffic sign, device, or signal shall be prohibited.
- B. Illuminated, highly reflective signs, or spot lights which hamper the vision of motorists or bicyclists.
- C. Signs not erected by a public authority which may be erroneously construed as government signs or emergency warning signs. An example of this is a sign which contains a picture of a traffic sign plus the word "Stop", "Yield", etc.
- D. Any sign located outdoors which interferes with free passage from or obstructs any fire escape, downspout, window, door, stairway, ladder, or opening intended as a means of ingress or egress or providing light or air.
- E. Any sign (other than a government sign), banner or display placed on any curb, sidewalk, post, pole, hydrant, bridge, tree, or other surface located on, over, or across any public street or right-of-way, unless otherwise permitted.
- F. Any sign located to intentionally deny an adjoining property owner visual access to an existing sign.
- G. Flashing signs, signs with flashing or reflective disks, signs with flashing lights or lights of changing degree of intensity or color.
- H. Illuminated tubing or strands of lights except between November 15 and January 15.
- I. Portable or temporary signs except as permitted by Section 6.3.
- J. Facsimile signs, three-dimensional objects, or human figures which may or may not contain advertising matter, and may or may not contain information about products sold on the premises, and is located in such a manner as to attract attention.
- K. Parked vehicles with messages (exempting vehicles with commercial advertising which are used regularly and customarily to transport persons or property for business).
- L. Rotating signs, other than on-premise rotating identification names which contain a logo

and/or business name on it.

M. Roof signs.

N. Pole Signs.

O. Billboards (off-premises advertising).

P. Signs placed on property without permission of its owners or agent.

Q. Inflatable signs including inflated balloons having a diameter of greater than two (2) feet.

R. Any sign whose sign face was initially constructed and designed to be placed and/or transported on wheels, regardless if said sign face is removed from its base and placed on or in the ground so as to otherwise classify said sign as a "freestanding" sign as herein defined.

S. Other signs not expressly permitted in this Ordinance.