

All substantive changes are noted in the annotated comments to the right, as shown in red.

**ARTICLE 8**

**SIGNS**

**PART 1                    8-100            STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Signs constitute a separate and distinct accessory use of the land upon which they are located and, therefore, affect the use of adjacent streets, sidewalks, and other public places as well as adjacent private places. The use of signage is an important tool used by the public, private and nonprofit sectors to communicate information to the general public. Recognizing that signage is an important part of a community’s appearance and can be a community asset, all signs should be created and maintained in a manner that enhances the dissemination of information while maintaining the underlying character of a particular area.

Therefore, it is the intent of this Article to establish reasonable regulations to control signs and advertising displays in order to promote the general health, safety and welfare by:

- Protecting and enhancing the character and identity of Fauquier County, in a manner that is consistent with the goals of the Fauquier County Comprehensive Plan; such as that it acknowledges and reinforces the individuality of each service district relative to the rural areas and villages that surround them.
- Supporting business activity, including enhancing the county’s attractiveness to tourists and other visitors as a source of economic development;
- Improving vehicular and pedestrian safety by avoiding saturation and confusion in the field of vision that could result if signs were not regulated.

**PART 2                    8-200            SCOPE OF ARTICLE**

For purposes of this Article 8, a sign shall be defined as: Any writing, letter work or numeral, pictorial presentation, illumination, illustration or decoration, emblem, device, symbol or trademark, flag, banner or pennant, sculpture, or any other device, figure or similar character, including the structure on which such is located, that is used to announce, direct attention to, identify, advertise or otherwise make known anything; and which is sufficiently visible and/or legible from a right-of-way or from an adjoining property.

This Article governs the erection and display of all signs in the County. It shall be unlawful to erect or display, on any building, structure or property any sign unless it is expressly authorized by, is in accordance with and, where applicable, a permit authorizing it has been obtained pursuant to the provisions contained herein.

**The Statement of Intent has been greatly expanded by the Planning Commission and revised to emphasize three key goals of the sign ordinance.**

**PART 3**

**8-300 DEFINITIONS**

1. **Animated Sign:** Animated sign shall mean and include any sign or device to attract attention, all or part of which moves by any means including fluttering, rotating or otherwise moving devices, or is designed to be set in motion by movement of the atmosphere including but not limited to pennants, banners, discs, propellers, and flags, except for those identified in Section 8-400.5 below, regardless of whether said device has written message content. Also, an animated sign shall mean and include any flashing sign or device displaying flashing or intermittent light or lights of changing degrees of intensity, and shall also include any electronically controlled changeable copy sign.
2. **Awning Sign:** A sign attached to or otherwise incorporated within an awning.
3. **Billboard:** A sign that directs attention to a business, commodity, service or entertainment conducted, sold or offered at a location other than the premises on which the sign is located.
4. **Building Mounted Sign:** Any sign attached to and deriving its major support from a building, including any sign located on an awning, or any lettering or logos that are permanently affixed, etched or painted onto a window or door, but excluding projecting signs and temporary window signs.
5. **Changeable Copy Sign:** A sign or portion thereof designed to accommodate message changes composed of characters, letters or illustrations and that can be changed or rearranged either manually or electronically.
6. **Construction Sign:** A temporary sign erected on the premises on which construction is taking place displaying only the names of the architects, engineers, contractors, and the owners and financial supporters having a role with respect to the structure or project on site.
7. **Directional Sign:** An off-premise sign indicating the location and direction to a place, object, project, product or business remote from the property on which such sign is erected or displayed.
8. **Freestanding Sign:** Any sign not attached to a building, including signs incorporated into freestanding walls and fences as well as signs located on vehicles.
9. **Grand-Opening Sign:** A type of temporary sign announcing the opening of a new business, including the re-opening of any existing business which has been closed for a period of at least one month. Transfer of ownership of a business shall not constitute a grand-opening for the purposes of the sign regulations if occurring more than once in a 12 month period.
10. **Home Occupation Sign:** A sign indicating the name and/or occupation of a permitted home occupation use.

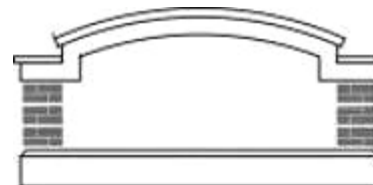
**The section for Definitions has been greatly amended to remove those terms not utilized in the Ordinance, to clarify some existing definitions, and to add other new definitions, such as those for real estate directional sign, sandwich board and vacant property, among others.**

**Animated sign definition – clarification that electronically controlled copy boards are considered to be a type of animated sign.**

**A home occupation sign is also newly defined. There was significant debate among the Planning Commission members as to whether additional sign content, such as phone numbers or email addresses, should be included. As such, an additional provision stating that the byline “by appointment only” has been added to the general regulations for these signs found in Section 8-601.3 below.**

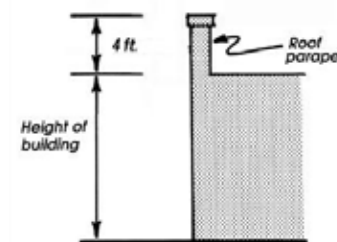
11. Illumination, indirect: A light source that is separate from and external to the sign itself, which casts light onto the surface(s) of a sign from some distance.
12. Illumination, internal: A light source that is located within the interior of a sign, with no part of the lighting element visible, so that such light is emitted through the translucent surface(s) of a sign.
13. Illumination, reverse-lit: A light source that is located behind a sign to create a glow or outline around sign lettering and/or graphics.

14. Monument Sign: A freestanding sign no more than 8 ft. in height supported primarily by an internal structural framework or integrated into landscaping or other solid structural features other than support poles.



15. Multi-family Sign: An identification sign for a multi-family residential use displaying only the name and/or address of such use.
16. Multi-Use Lot: Any building or group of buildings on a single lot containing three or more non-residential tenants.
17. Non-conforming Sign: A sign lawfully erected and maintained prior to the adoption of this Ordinance that does not conform with the requirements of this Ordinance.

18. Parapet Wall: Parapet wall shall mean the extension of the exterior enclosing walls of a building above the lowest point of the roof.



19. Election Sign: A type of temporary sign announcing or supporting candidates or issues in connection with any local, state, or national election.

20. Projecting Sign: A sign attached to a building which extends in excess of 12 inches beyond any vertical surface of the building and which is usually located at right angles to the building.



21. Real Estate Sign: A temporary sign advertising the sale, lease or future use of real estate, placed upon the property so advertised.

22. Real Estate Directional Sign: A temporary off-premise sign indicating the location and direction to a property advertised for sale or lease.

**The Planning Commission is proposing to distinguish between the various types of lighting, and these three definitions, Paragraphs 11 – 13, were created for this purpose. In earlier draft versions of the ordinance, reverse-lit illumination was referred to as “back-lit illumination.” This was changed to avoid confusion with the term “internal illumination.”**

**In the current Zoning Ordinance, the term “shopping center” sign is used for 5 contiguous commercial enterprises containing at 50,000 SF, and shopping centers are eligible for more freestanding signage. To avoid confusion with the separate land use definition of a “shopping center,” the term has been reclassified to a “multi-use lot” and has been expanded to allow fewer tenants the opportunity to gain the additional signage and without the contiguous building area limitation of 50,000 SF.**

23. Roof Sign: Roof sign shall mean any sign or portion of a sign so erected or affixed to a building as to extend above the lowest point of the roof level of a building, including those signs painted on a roof, but excepting any sign attached to a parapet wall that does not extend above the edge of the parapet itself.



24. Sandwich Board Sign: A temporary advertising or business ground sign constructed in such a manner as to form an "A" or a tent-like shape.



25. Sign: Any writing, letter work or numeral, pictorial presentation, illustration or decoration, emblem, device, symbol or trademark, flag, banner or pennant, sculpture, or any other device, figure or similar character including the structure on which such is located, that (a) is used to announce, direct attention to, identify, advertise or otherwise make known anything; and, (b) is visible from a right-of-way or from an adjoining property.

26. Subdivision Sign: Any sign displayed for the purpose of advertising or identifying a housing development or division of land of 10 or more lots.

27. Temporary Sign: Any sign not permanently attached to a structure nor permanently mounted in the ground which can be moved, excluding vehicle signs as defined herein. Such signs may include but shall not be limited to banners, paper or poster signs, and other moveable signs.

28. Temporary Business or Activity Sign: A sign displayed for a seasonal or brief activity such as, but not limited to sales, specials, promotions, events, holidays, auctions, etc.

29. Temporary Civic Sign: A sign displayed to advertise a civic event sponsored by a public agency, school, church, civic-fraternal organization or similar non-profit organizations.

30. Tenant: An individual, partnership or corporation renting, leasing or owning commercial or industrial space that is an individual business so identified by license.

31. Vacant Property: Land that is not used for any purpose. Land proposed for development shall be considered vacant until such time as construction on the property commences under valid permits issued by the County.

32. Vehicle Sign: Any sign that is painted, mounted or otherwise affixed or incorporated into a vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer which identifies a business, product, or service, excluding bumper stickers and small identification signs not exceeding 12 square feet total for the entire vehicle, trailer or semitrailer.

33. Warning Sign: Any sign limited to a message of warning, danger or caution, or the prohibition of trespassing on the property on which such sign is

**A vehicle sign is another newly defined term, which has generated significant debate with both the Sign Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission. The current version of this definition, specifically the exclusion of 12 SF of signage on any vehicle, was proposed by the Planning Commission. It is noted that this is merely the definition of this term and that the more substantive regulations for vehicle signs are found in Section 8-500.9 below.**

located.

34. Window Sign: Any sign that is temporary in nature and is attached to the glass area of a window unit or placed behind the glass of a window unit within 3 feet, or located in such a manner so that it can only be read from out-of-doors.

**PART 4**

**8-400 EXEMPTIONS**

The following signs shall be exempt from the limitations in this Article 8 and shall be allowed without permits provided they violate no other provision of this Ordinance:

1. Signs of a constituted governmental body, including traffic signs and signals or similar regulatory devices, legal devices or warnings at railroad crossings.
2. Any memorial tablets or historic markers erected or sponsored by a public agency.
3. Signs required to be maintained by law or governmental order, rule or regulation.
4. Signs which cannot be seen from a right-of-way or an adjacent property.
5. Flags emblems or insignia, such as that of the United States, the Commonwealth of Virginia, Fauquier County, other counties and states, the United Nations Organization or similar organizations of which this nation is a member, the president or vice-president of the United States, religious groups, civic organizations, service clubs, or similar organizations, provided further that no single flag shall exceed 50 sq. ft. in area and no single lot or business may display more than three such flags.
6. Signs no more than 4 sq. ft. in size which post or display address numbers and/or signs no more than 16 sq. ft., and no more than 6 feet in height, identifying a farm or other place name.
7. Warning signs no more than 2 sq. ft. in size posted by a public utility on a property to identify the location of underground utilities.
8. Warning signs no more than 4 sq. ft. in size, such as “No Trespassing” or “Danger.”
9. Signs no more than 2 sq. ft. in size identifying public conveniences such as public telephones, restrooms, etc., and service conveniences such as freight entrances, delivery entrances, etc.
10. Signs no more than 2 sq. ft. in area and 3 ft. in height indicating “entrance” or “exit” or “drive-through.” Such signs shall not include trade-names, logos or other advertising.
11. One sign, not exceeding 4 sq. ft. in area, at each entrance to an off-street parking area or lot, limited to indicating the regulations in connection with the use of such lot.
12. Any information or directional sign erected by a local government or the

**Exemptions are also listed in the existing Sign Ordinance. These are signs that are allowed on a by-right basis and do not require any permitting.**

**The revised Ordinance is proposing a 50 SF limit on the size of any allowed flag, as well as the limit of 3 such flags per lot or business. There is currently no such limit in the existing Sign Ordinance. Also worth noting is that the Planning Commission wanted to include a further limit on the height of flag poles but these structures are already exempt from all height regulations pursuant to Section 2-506 of the Zoning Ordinance.**

**The farm or place identification sign is also a new element, proposed by the Planning Commission after significant debate. The sign itself is fairly common in Fauquier County and is commonly found in rural areas for both working farms and larger estates. It is noted that a working farm would also be eligible for additional signage pursuant to Section 8-602 below.**

Virginia Department of Transportation.

13. Displays and decorations for events such as religious and national holidays, not advertising a product, service or entertainment.
14. Professional nameplates, not exceeding 2 sq. ft. in area, for the purpose of identifying individuals or businesses operating in a building. Such signs are limited to 1 per business and/or tenant, shall be building mounted and shall be located near the appropriate building entrance.
15. Signs hung underneath porch roofs or arcades, not to exceed 2 sq. ft. in area, for the purpose of identifying individuals or businesses operating in a building. Up to one such sign is allowed per business and/or tenant with a separate building entrance.

**PART 5**

**8-500 PROHIBITED SIGNS AND SIGN ELEMENTS**

The following signs and sign elements are specifically prohibited:

1. Any sign or other device which simulates any traffic control sign, light or device.
2. Any sign located in such a manner as to obstruct or interfere with free and clear vision and traffic circulation on any public right-of-way, entrance way or parking area.
3. Any sign erected or maintained in any location where it prevents or impedes free ingress or egress through any door, window or fire escape route.
4. Billboards and any other off-site sign, except those directional signs and temporary agricultural products signs specifically authorized herein in Section 8-800.
5. Any animated sign, including any changeable copy sign where any element of the sign changes more frequently than once in a 24 hour period. Time and temperature displays with changes alternating on not less than a five-second cycle, and gas price displays with changes to reflect price (but not gas types) are excluded from this prohibition.
6. Roof sign.
7. Any arrangement by exposed tubing or a series of lights in rows, strings, patterns or designs that outline or are affixed to any portion of a building or structure. This prohibition does not apply to exposed tubing or lights which are an integral part of an approved sign or sign structure; nor does this prohibition preclude those holiday displays or decorations as permitted by the provisions of 8-400 above.
8. Exterior signs using exposed neon, argon, or any similar gas to illuminate transparent or translucent tubing or other materials, except for those signs permitted in Section 8-707 below.
9. Any vehicle sign parked within sight of a public or private street is prohibited, except the following:
  - A. Any vehicle sign that is parked to actively receive or provide goods or

**Whereas exempt signs are allowed by-right and require no permitting, prohibited signs are those types of signs that are not allowed. This section has been amended in that the current prohibition on signs painted on building walls has been removed, several others have been clarified and the provisions for vehicle signs has been added.**

**Under the current Zoning Ordinance, electronic changeable copy signs are prohibited because such are considered to be animated signs. The only exception today is for such signs that display the time and temperature on a minimum 5 second cycle. These revised regulations add another exception for electronic price boards at gas stations and clarifies that an electronic copy sign that does not change more than once in a 24 hour period is NOT an animated sign and is, thereby, allowed.**

**The existing regulations refer only to neon, so this definition has been modified to account for argon and related gases. The current ordinance does allow one small window sign in neon as an exception, and this limitation has been expanded in Section 8-707 below to allow 2 such signs.**



3.	<b>Home Occupation Sign</b>	Yes	One sign allowed per parcel approved for a home occupation, maximum 2 sq. ft. in area and maximum 4 ft. in height. Such sign shall only contain the name and/or occupation of such use and/or that language indicating that visits shall be by appointment only.
<b>EXEMPT SIGNS AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 8-400.</b>			
<b>TEMPORARY SIGNS AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 8-800.</b>			

**8-602 Agricultural Uses (Category 18):**

	Type of Sign	Permit Required?	Within Service Districts	Outside Service Districts
<b>PERMANENT SIGNS</b>				
1.	<b>Freestanding Sign:</b>	Yes	<p>One sign not to exceed 40 sq. ft. in area and 16 ft. in height, except as noted below.</p> <p>For Multi-Use Lots as defined herein, one sign not to exceed 60 sq. ft. in area and 16 ft. in height.</p> <p>Where a property has frontage on multiple streets, an additional sign is allowed along any street where the property has a minimum 200 ft. of frontage and an entrance.</p> <p>The maximum square footage of freestanding signs may be increased subject to the following bonus provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase of 5 sq. ft. of area if the overall height is reduced to 12 feet.</li> <li>• Increase of 10 sq. ft. of area if the sign is designed as a monument sign in accordance with the standards set forth in Appendix D of this Ordinance.</li> </ul>	<p>One sign not to exceed 24 sq. ft. in area and 8 ft. in height, except as noted below.</p> <p>For Multi-Use Lots as defined herein, one sign not to exceed 32 sq. ft. in area and 8 ft. in height</p> <p>Where a property containing a minimum of 100 acres has more than one use and the uses do not share a common entrance, additional signs not to exceed 12 sq. ft. in area and 8 ft. in height are allowed per entrance when located more than 200 ft. apart.</p>
2.	<b>Building Sign:</b>	Yes	Maximum 1 sq. ft. of area for each 1 linear ft. of building frontage, with a minimum of 30 sq. ft. and a maximum of 150 sq. ft. for each tenant.	Maximum 1 sq. ft. of area for each 1 linear ft. of building frontage, with a maximum of 32 sq. ft.
3.	<b>Directional Signs (off-site)</b>	Yes	Maximum of two signs per use, 2 sq. ft. per sign and 6 4 ft. in height with special permit approval pursuant to Article 5.	
<b>EXEMPT SIGNS AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 8-400.</b>				
<b>TEMPORARY SIGNS AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 8-800.</b>				

**8-603 Preschools, Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Colleges, Places of Worship, Museums, Libraries, Fire Stations, Parks and Recreation Facilities, and Fairgrounds:**

	Type of Sign	Permit Required?	Within Service Districts	Outside Service Districts
<b>PERMANENT SIGNS</b>				
1.	<b>Freestanding Sign:</b>	Yes	<p>One sign not to exceed 40 sq. ft. in area and 16 ft. in height, except as noted below.</p> <p>For Multi-Use Lots as defined herein, one sign not to exceed 60</p>	<p>One sign not to exceed 32 sq. ft. in area and 8 ft. in height, except as noted below.</p> <p>Where a property has frontage on multiple streets, an additional such</p>

**There was significant debate among the Planning Commission as to whether additional content, such as phone numbers or email addresses, should be included on home occupation signs. After much debate, the provision stating “by appointment only” has been added.**

**For freestanding signs, a general comment should be made regarding the heights in the proposed draft for uses located within a service district. Both the Sign Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission recommended draft language that lowered the overall height of freestanding signs from 20 feet, which is allowed today in a Commercial or Industrial District, to 15 and 16 feet respectively for those uses located within a service district (the Planning Commission increased the height back to 20 feet but, ultimately, concluded that a height of 16 feet would be appropriate).**

**Keeping in mind that the existing regulations are based on zoning districts and the concept of a sign budget, an agricultural use is currently allowed up to 50 square feet of freestanding signage, with a maximum height of 20 feet, if located in a Commercial or Industrial district. For a multi-use facility, the current allowance is 75 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 20 feet. This area must come out of the overall sign budget for the site. If located in a Rural or Residential zoning district, the same use is only allowed an overall total of 32 square feet for signage, which may be applied in part or entirely towards a freestanding sign, with a maximum height of 10 feet. If an Agricultural use is located within a Commercial Village District, up to 75 square feet of signage may be allowed depending on the overall sign budget, which may be applied in part or entirely towards a freestanding up to 50 square feet in size, with a maximum height of 20 feet.**

**The draft document simplifies the process in that an Agricultural use in a service district gets by-right 40 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 16 feet. For a multi-use facility, the by-right amount is 60 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 16 feet. Up to 10 additional square feet can be granted subject to the bonus provisions identified in the section, which allows additional square footage for a reduction in by-right height.**

**If located outside of a service district, the same use will be eligible by-right up to 24 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 8 feet.**

**Building, or wall, signage is now allowed on a by-right basis with fixed amounts to be based on the width of building façade. This is a departure from the current Zoning Ordinance in which available building signage is based on the balance of the overall sign budget once a freestanding sign, if any, has been deducted.**

**To simplify the discussion, the annotated comments will generically reference all uses in Section 8-602 as “institutional” uses.**

			sq. ft. in area and 16 ft. in height.  Where a property has frontage on multiple streets, an additional such sign is allowed along any street where the property has a minimum 200 ft. of frontage and an entrance.  The maximum square footage of freestanding signs may be increased subject to the following bonus provisions:	sign is allowed along any street where the property has a minimum 200 ft. of frontage and an entrance.
2.	<b>Building Sign:</b>	Yes	Maximum 1 sq. ft. of area for each 1 linear foot of building frontage, with a minimum of 30 sq. ft. and a maximum of 150 sq. ft. for each tenant.	Maximum 1 sq. ft. for each 1 linear foot of building frontage up to a maximum of 32 sq. ft.
3.	<b>Directional Signs (off-site)</b>	Yes	Maximum of two signs per use, 2 sq. ft. per sign and 4 ft. in height, with special permit approval pursuant to Article 5.	
<b>EXEMPT SIGNS AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 8-400.</b>				
<b>TEMPORARY SIGNS AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 8-800.</b>				

As with the Agricultural use regulations above, please keep in mind that the existing regulations are based on zoning districts and the concept of a sign budget. As such, an institutional use is currently allowed up to 50 square feet of freestanding signage, with a maximum height of 20 feet, if located in a Commercial or Industrial district. For a multi-use facility, the current allowance is 75 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 20 feet. This area must come out of the overall sign budget for the site. If located in a Rural or Residential zoning district, the same use is only allowed an overall total of 32 square feet for signage, which may be applied in part or entirely towards a freestanding sign, with a maximum height of 10 feet. If an Institutional use is located within a Commercial Village District, up to 75 square feet of signage may be allowed depending on the overall sign budget, which may be applied in part or entirely towards a freestanding up to 50 square feet in size, with a maximum height of 20 feet. In addition, the current provisions allow places of worship to have an additional freestanding sign up to 32 square feet in size and 10 feet in size, for a changeable bulletin board.

The draft document simplifies the process in that all institutional uses in a service district get by-right 40 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 16 feet. For a multi-use facility, the by-right amount is 60 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 16 feet. Up to 10 additional square feet can be granted subject to the bonus provisions identified in the section, which allows additional square footage for a reduction in by-right height.

If located outside of a service district, the same use will be eligible by-right up to 32 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 8 feet.

Building, or wall, signage is now allowed on a by-right basis with fixed amounts to be based on the width of building façade. This is a departure from the current Zoning Ordinance in which available building signage is based on the balance of the overall sign budget once a freestanding sign, if any, has been deducted.

Today, off-site directional signs are only allowed by-right for places of worship. However, the Planning Commission is recommending that all uses be uniformly required to obtain special permit approval for such signs.

**8-604 All other Uses, including Commercial and Industrial Uses and Mixed Residential-Commercial Uses:**

Type of Sign	Permit Required?	Within Service Districts	Outside Service Districts
<b>PERMANENT SIGNS</b>			
1. <b>Freestanding Sign:</b>	Yes	<p>Only allowed where buildings are set back a minimum 15 ft. from the front property line; maximum one sign not to exceed 40 sq. ft. in area and 16 ft. in height, except as noted below.</p> <p>For Multi-Use Lots as defined herein, one sign not to exceed 60 sq. ft. in area and 16 ft. in height.</p> <p>Where a use is located on a property which has frontage on multiple streets, an additional sign is allowed along any street where the property has a minimum 200 ft. of frontage and an entrance.</p> <p>The maximum square footage of freestanding signs may be increased subject to the following bonus provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase of 5 sq. ft. of area if the overall height is</li> </ul>	<p>Only allowed where buildings are set back a minimum of 15 ft. from the front property line; maximum one sign not to exceed 32 sq. ft. in area and 8 ft. in height, except as noted below:</p> <p>In the Residential Zoning Districts, maximum of one sign not to exceed 4 sq. ft. in area and 6 ft. in height.</p> <p>In the CV Zoning District, maximum of one sign no more than 24 sq. ft. in area and 8 ft. in height. In addition, such sign is allowed for buildings located less than 15 ft. from the property line when designed in accordance with the bonus provisions set forth in Appendix D of this Ordinance.</p> <p>In the RA and RC Zoning Districts, lots developed with more than one use which have frontage on more than one street may have an additional 32 sq. ft. sign along any street where the</p>

Again, please keep in mind that the existing regulations are based on zoning districts and the concept of a sign budget. In addition, in the current Zoning Ordinance, such uses are only allowed a freestanding sign if the building is located at least 25 feet back from the front property line; if located closer than 25 feet, then no freestanding sign is allowed. Therefore, any use falling under Section 8-604 is currently allowed up to 50 square feet of freestanding signage, with a maximum height of 20 feet, if located in a Commercial or Industrial district. For a multi-use facility, the current allowance is 75 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 20 feet. This area must come out of the overall sign budget for the site. If located in a Rural or Residential zoning district, the same use is only allowed an overall total of 32 square feet for signage, which may be applied in part or entirely towards a freestanding sign, with a maximum height of 10 feet. If a Section 8-604 use is located within a Commercial Village District today, up to 75 square feet of signage may be allowed depending on the overall sign budget, which may be applied in part or entirely towards a freestanding up to 50 square feet in size, with a maximum height of 20 feet.

The draft document simplifies the process in that any Section 8-604 use in a service district get by-right 40 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 16 feet. For a multi-use facility, the by-right amount is 60 square feet of freestanding signage with a maximum height of 16 feet. Up to 10 additional square feet can be granted subject to the bonus provisions identified in the section, which allows additional square footage for a reduction in by-right height. The minimum building setback has been reduced from 25 feet to 15 feet, which is a relaxation of the current regulations.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reduced to 12 feet.</li> <li>Increase of 10 sq. ft. of area if the sign is designed as a monument sign in accordance with the standards set forth in Appendix D of this Ordinance.</li> </ul>	property has a minimum 200 ft. of frontage and an entrance.
2	<b>Projecting Signs</b>	Yes	Allowed where buildings are located within 15 ft. of the front property line, or in lieu of any freestanding sign authorized above. One projecting sign shall be allowed per tenant not to exceed 12 sq. ft. in area for the first tenant, and 8 sq. ft. for each additional tenant having separate building entrances.	
3	<b>Building Signs:</b>	Yes	<p>Maximum of 1 sq. ft. of area for each 1 linear foot of building frontage, up to a maximum of 150 sq. ft.</p> <p>Where buildings house multiple tenants, frontage is calculated for each tenant separately, with a minimum of 30 sq. ft. and a maximum of 150 sq. ft. for each tenant.</p>	<p>Maximum of 1 sq. ft. of area for each 1 linear foot of building frontage up to a maximum of 32 sq. ft., except as noted below for Residential Districts.</p> <p>In the Residential Districts, a maximum of 8 sq. ft. of area but only in accordance with the bonus provisions found in Appendix D of this Ordinance.</p>
4.	<b>Directional Signs (off-site)</b>	Yes	Maximum of two signs per use, 2 sq. ft. per sign and 4 ft. in height with special permit approval pursuant to Article 5.	
<b>ADDITIONAL SIGNS ALLOWED FOR SPECIFIC USES</b>				
5.	<b>Gasoline Stations</b>	No	Additional 1 sq. ft. of signage allowed on each gasoline pump for purpose of identifying product dispensed.	
		Yes	Additional 10 sq. ft. freestanding sign, maximum 4 ft. in height, for the purpose of displaying fuel price or other products for sale. In lieu of having a separate freestanding sign for this purpose, such sign area may be incorporated into other freestanding signage allowed pursuant to Section 8-604.1 above.	
		Yes	Canopy signs a maximum of 15 sq. ft. in area on each side but not illuminated. The canopy structure itself shall not be designed with more than a single solid color and such panels shall not be illuminated.	
6.	<b>Vehicle Repair Uses</b>	Yes	Signs no more than 1 ft. in height identifying only the special functions of various service bays or areas when erected on the building above the doorways.	
7.	<b>Theaters</b>	Yes	An additional 48 sq. ft. of building sign is allowed for theater uses for the purpose of advertising theater shows or acts; no individual sign shall exceed 24 sq. ft.	
8.	<b>Multi-Use Lots and other developments with multiple buildings.</b>	Yes	As needed to direct the public to individual buildings and/or tenants, as determined by the Zoning Administrator. Maximum of 12 sq. ft. in area and 4 ft. in height.	
9.	<b>Vending Machines</b>	No	Graphics and images which are part of vending machines that dispenses or offers for sale products or services.	
<b>EXEMPT SIGNS AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 8-400.</b>				
<b>TEMPORARY SIGNS AS SET FORTH IN SECTION 8-800.</b>				

**8-605 Vacant Properties:**

Signs on vacant properties shall be limited to directional signs, temporary real estate signs (on and off-site), construction signs, temporary civic signs, and election signs, subject to the limitations for these signs set forth in Section 8-800 below.

**PART 7 8-700 GENERAL REGULATIONS**

All signs authorized by Section 8-600 shall comply with the general regulations set forth in this section, except that:

**For those properties located outside of a service district, the new regulations for freestanding signs vary anywhere from 4 to 32 square feet in size and 6 to 8 in height depending on the Zoning District.**

**Although the existing Zoning Ordinance makes reference to projecting signs, they are not expressly allowed in any district. This has been clarified and projecting signs will be allowed for buildings that are not eligible for a freestanding sign.**

**Building, or wall, signage is now allowed on a by-right basis with fixed amounts to be based on the width of building façade. This is a departure from the current Zoning Ordinance in which available building signage is based on the balance of the overall sign budget once a freestanding sign, if any, has been deducted.**

**In addition, a minimum amount of building signage has been established for multi-tenant buildings to ensure that even those with narrow storefronts qualify. Also, for the first time, a small amount of signage will be allowed for commercial businesses in a Residential District as part of the new bonus provisions.**

**Under the current Zoning Ordinance, canopy signs for gas stations are deducted from the overall sign budget for a site. However, this will change as proposed, in that the same amount of canopy signage will be allowed on a by-right basis. Most importantly, by interpretation, the current Zoning Ordinance does not allow the illumination of the gas canopy itself. This has now been expressly stated in the revised ordinance.**

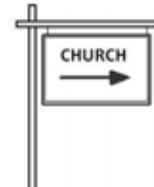
**In the current Zoning Ordinance, the signage on vending machines, and therefore vending machines themselves, are only authorized for service stations. Such machines must be located inside a structure enclosed on three sides. This provision has been relaxed in that only the specific issue of signs on such machines is now addressed in Article 8. That being said, a separate text amendment that deals with vending machines as an accessory use is forthcoming and will deal with many of this issue relating to eligible zoning districts, citing locations, etc.**

1. Signs within the PRD, PCID and PDMU Districts may alternatively be authorized pursuant to the standards set forth in Section 8-1300 for a Sign Design Package.
2. Signs located within a Historic Area Overlay District (HA) are also subject to those limitations found in Section 4-304.15 of this Ordinance.
3. Signs located within the MU-Bealeton District shall comply with the standards set forth in Section 4-917 of this Ordinance, as required pursuant to an approved Code of Development.
4. Existing non-conforming signs shall be allowed to remain, be replaced and be improved pursuant to Section 8-1200.

**8-701**

**Sign Content**

1. Signs shall be limited to identifying or advertising the property, the individual enterprise, the products, services or the entertainment available on the same property where the sign is located, except as explicitly authorized for off-site directional signs.
2. Off-site directional signs shall contain only the name and/or logo of the establishment and a directional arrow unless additional content is authorized by the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) as part of a special permit approval.
3. If a sign is shared by multiple users or tenants, the owner of the property is responsible for determining the allocation of sign area among tenants.
4. Each by-right sign authorized herein may contain any non-commercial content in lieu of, or in addition to, any commercial content.



**The current Zoning Ordinance limits the content of directional signs to the name of the business and an arrow. However, the Planning Commission is recommending that additional content be allowed as part of BZA approval when the special permit is obtained.**

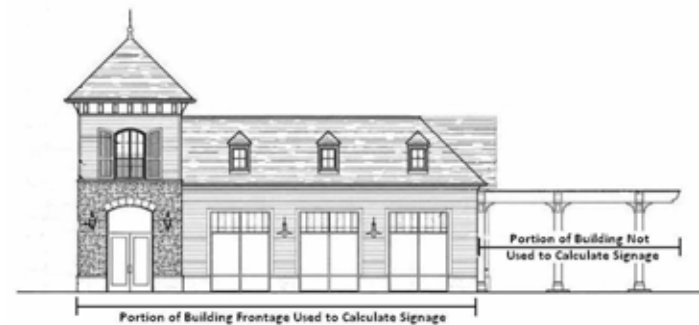
**The issue of regulating content and issues of free speech was widely discussed by the Planning Commission. As such, a majority of the members felt it was necessary to clearly express in the new regulations that non-commercial content could be freely substituted in lieu of other content on any allowable sign type.**

**8-702**

**Calculation of Building Frontage**

For the purpose of these sign regulations, building frontage shall be calculated as follows:

1. Only primary building structures shall be utilized for calculating building frontage. Architectural appurtenances such as canopies, porticos, porches or similar building features shall not be included for purposes of calculating building frontage.



2. Building frontage shall be calculated along the face of the building where the main business entrance or entrances are located. For buildings with corner

entrances, building frontage shall be calculated based on the greater of the two adjacent building facades.



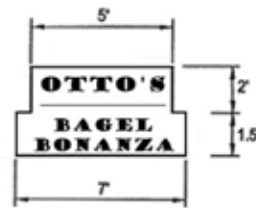
- Where a building has multiple tenant entrances, the building frontage shall be allocated amongst the tenants based on the frontage that tenant occupies. If the frontage is not directly computable for each tenant, then the owner is responsible for distributing the frontage among tenants.



8-703

#### Calculation of Sign Area

The area of a sign shall mean and include the entire area within a single continuous rectilinear perimeter of not more than eight (8) straight lines enclosing the extreme limits of any or all words, representation, symbols or pictorial elements on the face of a sign, provided that:



- For building mounted signs, any distinctive, ornamental or illuminated background which is set apart from a larger surface so that it forms an integral part of the sign, as distinguished from a functional part of the building exclusive of the sign, shall be included in the area of the sign.
- The area of a double-faced freestanding or projecting sign shall be considered to be the area of one face if the faces are parallel to each other and attached back to back, with an interior space between the two faces of less than 24 inches. In those cases where interior space is greater than 24 inches, such space will be counted as a separate face regardless of whether it contains any words, representation, logo or other pictorial elements.
- The area of a freestanding sign shall include the frame and background around such sign, but shall not include the supporting structure or base, provided such structure and base does not exceed 40% of the entire sign area and further provided such structure and base does not in itself function as signage.

**The current Zoning Ordinance calculates area by drawing a box around the extreme limits of a sign, which results in a loss of area when unusual fonts or shapes are incorporated into a design. However, staff is proposing to utilize what is referred to as the 8-line rule, which allows more flexibility to obtain a more accurate area of a particular sign, especially those that are largely text driven such as channel lettering. It will result in additional building signage for businesses. ses.**

8-704

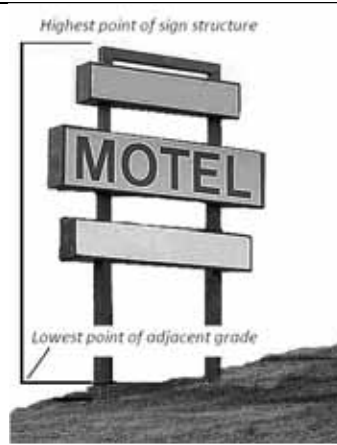
#### Sign Height

The height of a sign shall be measured from the lowest adjacent grade to the highest point on the sign or sign structure. Artificially increasing the height of the sign by berming or mounding dirt or other material at the sign base is prohibited. If the normal grade cannot be reasonably determined, sign height

**The current Zoning Ordinance does not contain any language limiting the size of the supporting structure or base of a sign.**

shall be calculated using the grade of the nearest point of a street or entrance into the property, whichever is lower, as the base elevation for the sign.

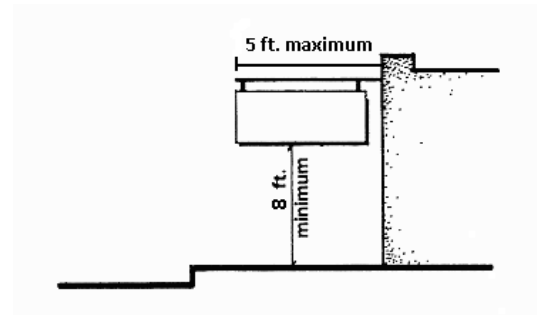
For purposes of this Article 8, sign height, as defined herein, applies only to freestanding and projecting signs.



8-705

#### Sign and Lettering Dimensions

1. Freestanding Sign: the long dimension shall not exceed the short dimension by a ratio of more than 3:1, unless sign is less than 4 ft. in height and set back from the property line a minimum of 15 ft., in which case the ratio shall not exceed 20:1.
2. Projecting Sign: shall project no more than 5 ft. from the building wall.



8-706

#### Sign Location

1. No sign shall project over any public street, highway, alley, sidewalk or other public right-of-way except that wall signs and projecting signs may project up to 24 inches into a public right-of-way, when allowed by the Virginia Department of Transportation, and unless such projection would cause hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
2. All signs shall be located as to provide a minimum clearance of 8 feet above any walkway and 16 ft. above any driveway or other vehicular travelway.
3. Freestanding signs:
  - A. Shall not project beyond any property line.
  - B. Shall not be located within 2 ft. of any building.
  - C. Shall not be located within 2 ft. of the curb line of a service drive or travel lane.
  - D. Shall be set back a minimum of 5 ft. from any front property line and a distance equal to the height of the sign from any side or rear property line.
4. Building signs:

**This language is also not in the existing Zoning Ordinance but by interpretation artificially created grade has never been allowed to be utilized in measuring height. This provision is now codified in the new regulations.**

**The current Zoning Ordinance prohibits the location of all signs within a side or rear yard setback area but there is no front setback requirement from a front property line. This has been relaxed and signs must meet a side or rear setback equal to their overall height. In addition, a small front yard setback of 5 feet has also been established for visibility concerns.**

- A. May be located anywhere on the surface of the building provided they do not project more than 15 inches from the building.
- B. May be located on the vertical face of an awning provided they do not project above or below the lower edge of the awning, and that such signage is not illuminated.
- C. May not extend above the lowest point of a roof, except, when on a parapet wall.

8-707

**Color and Illumination Limitations**

1. General Standards for All Signs:
  - A. All illuminated signage shall meet the lighting performance standards of Section 9-1000.
  - B. Lettering or symbols shall constitute no more than 40% of the surface area of any sign.
  - C. The illumination of home occupation signs is prohibited in all zoning districts.
2. Additional Standards Within Service Districts:
  - A. Internal, indirect, and reverse-lit illumination is permitted.
  - B. Internally illuminated signs shall consist of lettering, symbols and/or logo on an opaque background to ensure that illumination is limited to such lettering, symbols and/or logo. However, this provision shall not apply to changeable copy signs or the changeable copy portion of any permitted sign.
  - C. No illuminated sign shall be located within 50 ft. of a residential or rural zoning district boundary. Illumination of any advertising sign in a commercial or industrial district located within 300 ft. of any residential or rural district shall be extinguished between midnight and 7:00 a.m. except for any time during that period when the use is open for business.
  - D. No exposed neon may be utilized in signage except that a business establishment may have up to two (2) signs utilizing exposed neon, placed inside a window, and totaling no more than 4 sq. ft. in combined size, in conformance with the provisions found in Section 8-800.4.
3. Additional Standards Outside Service Districts:
  - A. Indirect and reverse-lit illumination is allowed in all areas outside of a service district; internal illumination is prohibited.
  - B. Any sign illumination shall be extinguished between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 7:00 a.m. except for any time during that period when the use is open for business.
  - C. Sign colors shall not be vivid or fluorescent and the sign itself shall be dull in finish.

**This section on color and illumination has been completely restructured by the Planning Commission but it is important to note that there are very few substantial changes in this section beyond the current County policies on color and illumination. The significant change comes in the establishment of 3 different types of illumination, which were defined and discussed in Section 8-300 above. In addition, please note that there is now a distinction made between service district and non-service district areas – similar to that in the Section 8-600 regulations.**

**This particular provision, 8-707.1.B, is referred to as the 40% rule and is in the current Zoning Ordinance. It was recommended for deletion by the Signage Advisory Committee but was put back into the document by the Planning Commission. Staff and the Planning Commission largely agree that this provision is self regulatory in that most signs are designed in a manner that could easily satisfy this requirement. However, it is problematic for designs that are logo driven, such as the Target Corporations “bulls’ eye” logo or channel lettering.**

**This provision, 8-707.2.B, is also in the current Zoning Ordinance and the Sign Advisory Committee objects to its continuation in the new regulations on the basis that it is unenforceable and rarely applied today. However, similar provisions are utilized by other jurisdictions in Virginia and staff believes that the resulting effect actually makes the sign content easier to read at night as it is more striking in contrast against a dark sky background.**

**The current ordinance does allow one small window sign in neon as an exception, and this limitation has been expanded by the Planning Commission to allow 2 such signs.**

**This standard, 8-707.3.B, represents the most significant change in the Planning Commission’s version of this section. Under the current Zoning Ordinance, while internal illumination is largely prohibited in the Rural and Residential districts, it is allowed for Commercial and Industrial uses. This will change under the revised regulations and internal illumination will be prohibited for those properties outside of a service district. However, indirect lighting is still allowed by-right in these areas and reverse-lit signs will also be allowed.**

**PART 8**

**8-800 TEMPORARY SIGNS**

In addition to the permanent signage authorized under Section 8-600, temporary signage shall be allowed for all uses in all districts as set forth in the table below:

	Type of Sign	Permit Required?	Within Service Districts	Outside Service Districts
1.	<b>Real Estate Sign: (on-site)</b>	No	One sign not to exceed 6 sq. ft. in area and 4 ft. in height. However, if such sign is set back a minimum of 50 ft. from the front property line, then the size may be increased to 12 sq. ft. in area with a 6 foot maximum height.  Where a lot has frontage on multiple streets, an additional sign is allowed along any street where the property has a minimum 200 ft. of frontage.  In addition, for multi-family housing developments containing multiple buildings, one sign not to exceed 32 sq. ft. in area and 8 ft. in height is permitted. Such signage shall be removed after 75% of all available housing units have been sold.	
2.	<b>Real Estate Directional Sign: (off-site)</b>	Yes	A maximum of 2 off-site signs, size not to exceed 2 sq. ft. in area and 4 ft. in height with length of display time not to exceed 90 days per year.  For commercial developments containing multiple buildings, mixed use developments or multi-family housing developments that have frontage on an arterial or freeway but are accessed via adjoining roadways of a lower classification, 1 off-site sign not to exceed 24 sq. ft. in area and 6 ft. in height is permitted. Such signage shall be removed after the final Certificate of Occupancy has been issued for commercial and mixed use developments, or 75% of all available housing units have been sold for multi-family housing developments.	
3.	<b>Construction Sign:</b>	Yes-No	Up to 4 signs each a maximum of 4 sq. ft. in area and 4 ft. in height; alternatively, a single sign up to 32 sq. ft. in area and 6 ft. in height is allowed collectively for all eligible entities. Signs may only be displayed while work is being done on-site under a valid permit issued by the County, and shall be removed within 30 days following the issuance of a final Certificate of Occupancy.	
4.	<b>Window Signs</b>	No	No more than 30% of the area of any individual window unit on the ground floor may be covered with such signs.	No more than 15% of the area of any individual window unit on the ground floor may be covered with such signs.
5.	<b>Temporary Business/Activity Sign:</b>	Yes	A single building mounted sign not to exceed 24 sq. ft. in area, for a period not to exceed 14 days, up to 6 times per year.  In addition, a single building mounted sign not to exceed 50 sq. ft. in area or 8 ft. in height is permitted to announce a grand-opening of a business for a 30 day period, as defined in Section 8-300.	
6.	<b>Temporary Agricultural Products Sign:(on-site)</b>	No	A single sign not exceeding 12 sq. ft. in area and 8 ft. in height for the purpose of advertising agricultural products sold on the subject property. Provided, however, such sign is only displayed during the days when such products are available for purchase and that no temporary business/activity signs as authorized by Section 8-800.5 above and no permanent freestanding sign as authorized by Section 8-602.1 have been permitted and/or installed on the property.	
7.	<b>Temporary Agricultural Products Sign: (off-site)</b>	Yes	One sign not exceeding 6 sq. ft. in area and 4 ft. in height for the purpose of advertising local agricultural products offered for sale sold on site; provided, however, that such sign is only displayed during the season when such products are available for purchase, up to 4 times per year, for a maximum of 30 days per allowable time.	
8.	<b>Sandwich Board Sign</b>	No	A single sign not to exceed 6 sq. ft. in area and 3 ft. in height is permitted for those buildings located within 25 ft. of the front property line. Such sign can only be displayed during business hours in a location that does not impede pedestrian traffic.	
9.	<b>Temporary Civic Sign</b>	Yes	One sign up to 32 sq. ft. in area and 8 ft. in height is allowed to promote off-site civic, philanthropic, educational or religious activities up to 4 times per year, for a maximum of 30 days per allowable time; only one such sign may be displayed at a time.	

**For real estate signs, the sign area will remain the same in the new ordinance but the by-right height is proposed to be reduced from 6 feet to 4 feet.**

**The current Zoning Ordinance allows a single construction sign with a maximum area of 12 square feet and a maximum height of 10 feet; additional signs area allowed at 4 square feet in area with a maximum 6 feet of height. The proposed regulation keeps the similar framework but by-right height is reduced, although the overall area for the single construction sign has increased to 32 square feet.**

**Currently, windows signs are only allowed for service station uses with no limit on window coverage. This has been expanded to allow all land uses window signage with some limitation placed on the amount of window area that can be covered, depending on whether a property is inside a service district.**

**Business activity signs represent the most common temporary sign used by businesses. Today, two such signs are allowed per year, with a maximum display time of 30 days each, with a maximum area of either 32 of 50 square feet. Although the overall by-right size has been reduced in the new provisions, which were recommended by the Sign Advisory Committee, the trade off is that these are allowed on a more frequent basis. Although a permit is required for tracking purposes, staff does not intend to charge a fee for it.**

**This type of temporary sign, which is allowed off-site, was proposed by the Planning Commission exclusively to promote local agricultural businesses.**



1. All temporary signs shall be removed within a period of 10 days following the vacation of the premises by such business or occupation.
2. Building mounted signs shall be refaced with blank panels or entirely removed within a period of 60 days following the vacation of the premises by such business or occupation.
3. For freestanding signs, including those displaying the names of multiple tenants, the faces of such signs shall be removed and replaced with blank paneling within a period of 60 days following the vacation of the premises by such business or occupation.

If such signs are not removed as prescribed herein, the Zoning Administrator, after written notice, may cause such removal and charge the cost to the owner of the premises.

**8-1102**

**Responsibility for Removal of Temporary Signs**

1. Temporary signs for events must be removed within 7 days after the event, or by the time-frame authorized on the permit, whichever occurs first.
2. Temporary election signs must be removed within 15 days of announced results.
3. All other temporary signs must be removed by the time-frame authorized on the permit for the temporary sign.
4. Persons responsible jointly or severally for the removal of a temporary sign are the occupant of the premises on which it is located, the owner of the sign, the owner of the premises on which the sign is located, and/or the person responsible for its erection. For temporary signs promoting civic events, persons responsible also include the club or organization officers, committee chairman or committee members for the event.

**8-1103**

**Public Safety Hazard**

The Zoning Administrator or his/her representative may remove any sign constructed or placed on a property in violation of Sections 8-500.2 or 3, that creates a public safety issue by simulating a traffic control device, blocks vision clearances within or into and out of a property, obstructs or interferes with on-site circulation or traffic on public streets, or blocks or impedes free ingress and egress through any door, window or fire escape route.

**8-1104**

**Maintenance and Condition of Signs**

Any sign which becomes a safety hazard or which is not generally kept in a reasonable state of good repair, and is not, after 30 days written notice to the owner or permittee, put in a safe and good state of repair, is hereby declared a public and private nuisance and may be removed or abated by the Zoning Administrator or his/her authorized representative. Any sign which in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator constitutes an immediate or imminent danger to life or property may be caused to be immediately removed or put in safe condition. The County may collect the cost of such removal or abatement from the owner or permittee.



the Zoning Administrator.

7. A non-conforming sign that is damaged or destroyed to more than 50% of its appraised value may not be repaired or replaced; extent of damage to be determined by the Building Official. If the extent of damage is less than 50% of its appraised value, then such sign may be replaced or restored, provided that such work is completed within 2 years after the date of damage or destruction.

**PART 13**

**8-1300 PLANNED DEVELOPMENT MIXED USE  
(PDMU), PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
(PRD), AND PLANNED COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL  
(PCID) ZONING DISTRICTS**

**8-1301**

Planned district zoning allows mixed land use types in one project and often have different signage requirements than do single land use districts and small acreage sites developed at one time. Part 8-1200 provides an opportunity for the mixed use developments located in the PDMU, PRD, PCID and MU Districts to develop a Signage Design Package based on the standards set forth below. A Signage Design Package is not required in these districts, and where no such package has been approved by the County for a development in the PDMU, PRD or PCID districts, signs shall be allowed in these districts pursuant to the prior provisions of this Article.

**8-1302**

**Limitations for a Signage Design Package**

1. No sign or sign element prohibited pursuant to Section 8-500 shall be allowed.
2. No monument sign shall exceed 90 sq. ft. in area or 8 ft. in height.
3. No freestanding sign shall exceed 60 sq. ft. in area or 15 ft. in height.
4. No freestanding sign shall be allowed for any building located within 25 ft. of the property line.
5. Individual freestanding signs shall not be allowed for uses where multiple buildings or uses are located on a lot.
6. No more than one-freestanding sign per lot shall be allowed for single use lots, and no more than one free-standing sign per frontage for multi-use lots.
7. No temporary sign shall exceed 32 sq. ft. in area or 8 ft. in height or be allowed for more than 30 days.
8. No off-site signage shall be authorized by a sign package outside the area covered by the Signage Design Package.
9. The locational limitations of 8-706 shall apply.
10. Color, font types and sizes, and materials shall be utilized to unify sign formats, with individual purchasers or lessees of project property able to use their own corporate colors or logos within the formats specified.

**8-1303**

**Required Elements of Signage Design Package Submission**

A Signage Design Package shall establish the size, height, number, type and character of signs permitted. These elements shall be graphically presented in the Sign Design Package, including graphic scale comparisons of proposed signs with a normal human figure. All proposed sign formats will be dimensioned. Colors, type fonts, and construction materials to be used will be specified for all proposed signs, including identification of sign poles, supports, panels, attachments, lettering and visible base materials.

**8-1304**

**Additional Requirements for Property Owners' Association**

Signage Design Packages must be included in the property owners' association

**The existing Zoning Ordinance regulations for special districts include a series of limitations as to the types, amounts and designs of signs in such areas. In general, these new provisions attempt to simplify this process by allowing more flexibility in deciding what is appropriate in such areas during the Signage Design Package approval process.**

documents.

**8-1305**

**Permitting Requirements**

1. No sign approved under a Signage Design Package shall be erected or displayed without a current and valid permit issued by the Zoning Administrator, except for the following types of temporary signs:
  - A. On-site real estate signs
  - B. Window signs
  - C. Sandwich Board signs
  - D. Political signs
2. An applicant for a sign permit that has an approved Signage Design Package shall obtain written approval from the property owners association that the proposed sign is in conformance with the approved Signage Design Package before applying for a County sign permit; such approval shall be included in the permit submission.

**8-1306**

**Approval Process for Signage Design Package**

1. The Planning Commission is the approval authority for Signage Design Packages.
2. A public hearing, in accord with Section 15.2-2204 of the Code of Virginia, is required before Planning Commission approval of any Signage Design Package.
3. The Department of Community Development staff shall have 60 days for review of the proposed Signage Design Package prior to scheduling it for Public Hearing.
4. Planning Commission Actions: The Planning Commission can approve the Signage Design Package as submitted, deny approval of the Package for failure to meet minimum requirements of this ordinance or the standard set forth below, or approves the Package with modifications that will make it consistent with this ordinance and standard set forth below.

Standard for Approval of the Design Signage Package:

The proposed signage shall be in scale and harmonious with the proposed development and with the broader context of surrounding development, with signage located and sized as to ensure convenience to the visitor, user or occupant of the development while not adding to street clutter or otherwise detracting from the planned nature of the development and the purposes of architectural and urban design elements of the project.

5. Procedures for Amendments to an Approved Signage Design Package
  - A. The Zoning Administrator can administratively approve minor changes and the addition of new sign elements that follow the approved signage format from the approved Signage Design Package.
  - B. Major changes to approved signage formats, as defined by the Zoning Administrator, or additions of a large number of new sign formats, will require approval of the Planning Commission. A public hearing on the amendments or additions to a previously approved Signage Design Package

is required, following the process set forth above. Individual owners may not apply for amendments to a Signage Design Package unless the Property Owner's Association joins the application in support of the amendment.

**PART 14                      8-1400                      OFF-SITE SUBDIVISION SIGN**

Notwithstanding any other limitation of this section or of this Article related to off-site signs or signs in the right-of-way, the Zoning Administrator may approve an Administrative Permit authorizing a subdivision sign or a multi-family sign to be located on property owned by the County or the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) where:

1. The property is located immediately adjacent to the subdivision or multi-family residential use and its entrance road.
2. The sign is set back from any sidewalk or edge of pavement and meets all clear zone requirements as required by VDOT, and does not violate any line of sight requirements as determined by the Zoning Administrator in consultation with VDOT.
3. The location of the sign would not conflict with use planned for the property by the County or VDOT.
4. The applicable property owners' association or appropriate management agent has executed an agreement with the owner of the right-of-way related to the proper maintenance of the sign and property, and to remove the sign should the owner determine that the property is needed for a road, street or highway or any use connected with such road, street or highway.
5. The sign is a monument sign no greater than 4 ft. in height, and constructed of brick, concrete, stone, or other natural materials.

**PART 15                      8-1500 SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS**

1. Notwithstanding any provisions of this Zoning Ordinance to the contrary, the Board of Supervisors may approve signs in the Commercial, Industrial and Special Districts that are not in accordance with the standards set forth in Part 6 above by approval of a Special Exception. In considering a request for such special exception, the Board may approve or deny the request in accordance with the general standards for Special Exceptions set forth in Section 5-006 of this Ordinance, and by consideration of the following, provided, however, that the total permitted sign area not be increased by more than one hundred percent (100%), the total area for any one sign not exceed the allowable limits already set forth in Part 6 above for particular permitted sign types, and that such approval shall permit only those sign types that are allowed within a particular district as set forth in Part 6 above:
  - A. The nature of the proposed use, including such factors as whether the use is a destination or one that relies more on drive-by visibility; and
  - B. The character of the existing area and the impact on the visual appearance of adjacent and nearby properties and rights-of-way, particularly entrances to the County from the interstate highways or surrounding jurisdictions, and the major streets leading from those entrances; and

**The proposed section on Special Exceptions has been largely abolished. Under the current Zoning Ordinance, the following Special Exceptions are allowed:**

- 1. An increase in signage for Traditional Mixed Use development by approval of a special permit or special exception, taking into consideration the location of development, site specific needs for such signage, surrounding uses, the Comprehensive Plan and good zoning practices.**
- 2. An increase in signage to a maximum of 150 square feet, with no single sign exceeding 32 square feet, for a Farm Supply Establishment with approval of a special permit, when the business is on an arterial and taking into consideration the visibility of the business and safety issues.**
- 3. An increase in signage for buildings over 100,000 square feet in area with approval of a special exception.**

**These provisions are all proposed to be eliminated in the new regulations and only the special exception related to doubling allowable signage will be retained, with modification and clarifications.**

<p>C. Whether a unique situation exists, causing a need that is not recurring in nature; and</p> <p>D. The area's designation in the County's Comprehensive Plan; and</p> <p>E. The existence of a special visual obstruction or difficulty in locating the use, making the application of the general provisions of this section too restrictive.</p>	
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