



**Signs**

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**Article  
XII**

DRAFT

**Fort Mill Unified Development Ordinance**

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## Section 12.1 Purpose

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- A. The regulations of this article are intended to protect and promote the public health, safety, convenience, comfort, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the Town of Fort Mill; to maintain and improve the appearance of the community; to conserve community character; to prevent traffic hazards; to provide safe conditions for pedestrians; and to promote economic development by regulating the construction, alteration, repair, maintenance, size, location and number of signs. It is further determined that to allow signs of excessive number and size in the town would unduly distract pedestrians and motorists, create potentially dangerous traffic conditions and reduce the effectiveness of signs needed to direct the public. The regulations of this article are intended to provide reasonable identification for businesses and other uses within the community; but are not intended to serve as a means of advertising.
- B. It is the intent of this article that signs are as much subject to control as noise, odors, debris and like characteristics of a use. In establishing the purpose and objectives of this article, the town has determined that without adequate regulation and design standards, signs could become a nuisance to the town and its citizens. If the appearance of the town is marred by the excessive number, oversized and poorly designed signs, both residential and business property values will be adversely affected.
- C. The general objectives of this article include:
1. Requiring signs to be reviewed for approval prior to installation;
  2. Requiring signs to be properly constructed, installed and maintained;
  3. Controlling the size, location and design of signs so the appearance of such signs will be aesthetically harmonious with the surroundings, encouraging signs that are appropriate to the zoning districts in which they are located;
  4. Encouraging readable signs;
  5. Reducing visual clutter;
  6. Eliminating any conflict that would be hazardous between private signs and public signs including traffic control signs and devices;
  7. Ensuring that signs are located and designed to maintain a safe and orderly pedestrian and vehicular environment; and
  8. Controlling signs located along the interstate system.

## Section 12.2 General Provisions

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The following regulations are applicable to all signs in all zoning districts.

- A. **Definitions.** All terms used in this article shall have the definitions provided in *Appendix A*.
- B. **Applicability.** No sign shall be permitted in any district except as provided in this article. The provisions of this article shall apply to all signs of every nature, whether portable, freestanding or attached, except as otherwise provided, either specifically or by necessary implications.
- C. **Basic Standards.**
1. All signs must be of a professional character, must be erected by a qualified sign erector, and must comply with the provisions of this article. Homemade lettered signs shall not be permitted, whether or not a permit is required.
  2. A maximum of four colors will be permitted on any sign face.
  3. Signs may be externally or internally illuminated, except as otherwise specified.
  4. Signs shall be in harmony with the buildings on the site and shall not detract from the appearance of the general neighborhood in which located or adversely affect property values in the neighborhood.
  5. Signs shall not constitute a traffic hazard or contribute to traffic problems through confusion with traffic control devices, interference with the field of vision of motorists using streets or driveways in the area, or by creating a visual distraction for motorists, and must be legible.

- D. **Clear Vision Triangle.** Signs shall not be placed within a clear vision triangle, required by [Section 9.4 A](#).
- E. **Signs in Public Right of Way.** Signs shall not be placed in any public easement, right-of-way, utility easement, clear vision triangle, or no-build zone, except public or semi-publicly owned signs, such as traffic control signs and town authorized directional signs.
- F. **Official Public Signs Exempt.** Public notices by governmental bodies, and other official signs and notices are exempt from the provisions of this section. The administrator may authorize the erection of other signs reasonably necessary for the regulation of traffic and of parking areas on private property in nonresidential districts. Such signs shall relate only to traffic flow and safety. No such sign shall include advertising material nor shall it be larger than reasonably required for its purpose.
- G. **Measurement.** Signs shall not exceed the maximum sign area allowed for the district in which located. The sign area is to be expressed in square feet, computed to the nearest tenth of a square foot, and shall be calculated as follows:
1. **Area.** The area of a sign shall be measured as the area within a single, continuous perimeter composed of any straight line geometric figure which encloses the extreme limits of writing, representation, emblem, logo or any other figure of similar character, together with any frame or other material or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the background against which it is placed, excluding only the structure necessary to support the sign.
  2. **Double-Faced sign.** The area of a ground or projecting sign that has two (2) or more faces shall be measured by including the area of all sign faces, except if two (2) faces are placed back-to-back and are no more than two (2) feet apart at any point, the area of one face shall be counted toward the maximum size requirement. If the back-to-back faces are of unequal size, the larger of the sign faces shall be counted as the one (1) face.
  3. **Wall sign.** For a sign consisting of individual letters and/or a graphic affixed directly onto a building without a border, the area of the sign shall be computed by measuring the area of the envelope required to enclose the lettering and graphic.
  4. **Height.** The height of a sign shall be measured as the vertical distance from the highest point of the sign to the finished grade of the ground immediately beneath the sign, excluding any artificially constructed earthen berms.
  5. **Multi-Tenant Buildings.** For buildings with multiple tenants, the sign area for wall, projecting, canopy or awning signs shall be determined by taking that portion of the front wall of the building applicable to each tenant and computing the sign requirements for that portion of the total wall.
- H. **Illumination and Movement.** All illuminated signs shall meet the following requirements:
1. Except as otherwise specifically permitted in this article, signs shall not contain any intermittent, moving, blinking, flashing, oscillating, scrolling, or fluttering lights or animated parts; nor shall any device be utilized which has a changing light intensity, brightness of color or give such illusion, except as specifically required for electronic changeable message signs.

Insert sign measurement graphic

Insert sign height graphic

2. The light source for any externally illuminated sign shall not be directly visible from adjacent streets or property. Exposed neon as part of any sign and/or on the building shall not be permitted. Backlight silhouetted halo letters shall be permitted, provided the light source is fully concealed.
3. For all signs, the level of illumination emitted or reflected from a sign shall not be of intensity sufficient to constitute a demonstrable hazard to vehicular traffic or pedestrians on any right-of-way or parking lot from which the sign may be viewed. All illumination must be of reasonable intensity and shall not spill onto adjacent properties or rights-of-way. Signs adjacent to residential buildings and streets shall not be of such brightness to cause reasonable objection from adjacent residential districts or uses nor to spill light and glare onto adjacent residential properties and structures.
4. Signs shall not be illuminated before 7:00 a.m. or upon opening to the public whichever is earlier, nor more than one-half hour after the close of business to the public or 10:00 p.m., whichever is later, except for signs that face and are visible from Interstate 77.
5. Ground signs abutting a residential district or use shall be at least 25 feet from the property line abutting the residential district or use.
6. Mounted signs must face toward the major traffic arterial access.
7. Signs illuminated by electricity or equipped in any way with electric devices or appliances shall conform, with respect to wiring and appliances, to provisions of the building code relating to electrical installations. All wiring, fittings and materials used in construction, connection and operation of electrically illuminated signs shall be in accordance with the provisions of the National Electrical Code.

#### I. Safety.

1. Signs shall not closely resemble or approximate the shape, form and color of official traffic signs, signals and devices.
2. No sign shall be so placed as to obstruct or interfere with a required doorway, other required means of ingress or egress, or traffic visibility.
3. Signs shall be constructed to withstand a wind pressure of at least 30 pounds per square foot of surface, and shall be otherwise fastened, suspended, or supported so not to be a menace to persons or property.
4. No sign shall be attached to the standard of a ground sign, other than the display surface originally constructed as part of the sign. No sign shall be attached to or painted or otherwise displayed on a light standard, gasoline pump, fence, wall, post or other structure, or to any supporting device, except as specifically authorized in this article.

### Section 12.3 Signs Exempt from Permits

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The following regulations are applicable to all signs exempt from permitting in all zoning districts.

- A. **Exempt Actions.** The following actions shall not be considered to be creating a sign and shall not be required to have a sign permit, unless otherwise specified.
1. Re-lettering and Rewording Changeable Copy. The changing of advertising copy or message, either electronically or manually, on an approved sign, such as a theater marquee, manual or electronic changeable message signs and similar approved signs which are specifically designed for use of changeable copy.
  2. Maintenance. Painting, repainting, cleaning, or other normal maintenance and repair of a sign or sign structure unless a structural change is involved. The changing of sign wording or a sign face is permitted; provided the sign frame and structure do not change.

- B. **Exempt Signs.** Those signs listed in [Table 12-3](#) are allowed in addition to those permanent signs specified in [Table 12-6](#). A sign permit shall not be required for the signs listed in [Table 12-3](#); provided, all other applicable requirements of this article are met.

<b>Table 12-3, Signs Exempt from Permitting</b>	
<b>Type of Sign</b>	<b>Requirements</b>
Address Sign	Numeral height no greater than six (6) inches for residences and 18 inches for businesses and other nonresidential uses.
Barber Pole	The bottom of the barber pole shall be attached to the building wall and must be at least eight (8) feet from the ground or sidewalk, but the top must be lower than the height of the building. The barber pole must not extend more than 12" from the exterior face of the wall to which it is attached.
Business Identification Sign	An identification sign on or near (above or beside) a public entrance or service entrance to a business in a commercial, or industrial zone is permitted; provided, the sign states only the street address number and name of the business or building. It shall be mounted flush against the wall and shall not exceed three (3) sq. ft. in area.
Commercial Construction Sign	A sign which identifies the architects, engineers, contractors or other individuals and firms involved with the commercial construction project on the premises and/or identifying the project under construction. One (1) sign, not exceeding 48 square feet shall be permitted. The sign shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from any right-of-way line. The sign may be erected when a building permit is issued for construction and shall be removed within 30 days following issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the building or project to which the sign relates.
Damaged Signs (replacement)	A sign, erected under a legally obtained permit, which is subsequently damaged or destroyed by wind, weather, or other accidental event beyond the control of the applicant may be replaced or restored to its original size, shape, and location (as prior to the accident) without obtaining an additional permit; provided, the cost of repair or restoration is less than 30 percent of the cost of replacing the sign. Replacement of a damaged or destroyed sign with a new sign or different size or location from the original sign shall require a permit.
Device Sign	Permanent signs on gas pumps, vending machines or ice containers indicating the contents of such devices; provided, that the sign area of each device shall not exceed three (3) square feet in area and only one (1) sign is permitted per vending machine, gas pump or ice container.
Directional Sign	In order to facilitate traffic movement and minimize confusion, one (1) directional sign, not exceeding two (2) square feet in area and three (3) feet in height, is permitted at each driveway. The sign shall be set back from the right-of-way line and edge of the driveway at least five (5) feet. Only words such as "enter," "exit," "one way," "do not enter," and similar traffic directions may be displayed, along with a logo or trademark up to one-third of the sign area, but not including a name or commercial message.
Employment Sign	"Help wanted" sign soliciting employees for the place of business where posted; provided, the maximum area for the sign shall be three (3) square feet. Employment signs shall not be displayed for more than two (2) consecutive weeks in a 30 day period.
Flag	Flags or insignia of any nation, state, local government, community organization or educational institution or representing a public issue or political statement.
Garage, Yard and Estate Sale Sign	a. A maximum of two (2) signs may be placed off-premise and one (1) on premise; b. The signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area and three feet in height above grade;

<b>Table 12-3, Signs Exempt from Permitting</b>	
<b>Type of Sign</b>	<b>Requirements</b>
	<p>c. The signs shall not be affixed to other signs, utility poles, fire hydrants or trees and shall not be located within a street right-of-way;</p> <p>d. Any person or firm placing the signs shall obtain written permission from the owner or occupant of all properties on which the signs are located;</p> <p>e. The sign shall not be erected more than 48 hours in advance of the sale;</p> <p>f. The signs must be removed within 24 hours following close of the sale; and</p> <p>g. No more than two (2) such sales shall be permitted within a calendar year.</p>
Historic Marker	Historical markers, including plaques or signs describing a property's designation as a historical site or structure, not exceeding two (2) square feet in area; provided, an officially designated state or federal historical marker shall not be subject to a size limitation.
Incidental Sign	Incidental signs, indicating acceptance of credit cards, location of restrooms, restrictions on smoking and restrictions on building entrances or describing business affiliations, not exceeding a total of two (2) square feet each. Up to two signs (2) per business may be displayed attached to a permitted sign, exterior wall, building entrance, or window.
Integral Signs	Names of building, date of erection, monumental citations, commemorative tablets and the like when carved into stone, concrete or similar material or made of bronze, aluminum, or other permanent type construction and made an integral part of the structure.
Interior Sign	Any sign which is located completely within an enclosed building, and is not visible from outside the building or which is primarily directed at persons within the premises where the sign is located.
Murals	Murals not containing any words, logos, products or service representations; provided, any mural that does contain words, logos, product or service representations shall be considered a wall sign and regulated as such.
Nameplate	A nameplate which shall not exceed two (2) square feet in area is permitted for each dwelling unit of a single-family, two-family or multi-family dwelling; identifying only the name and/or address of the occupant and/or approved home occupation.
Parking Signs	Signs for public access to parking shall be set back three (3) feet from the right-of-way and shall solely identify the availability of and access to a designated parking area. Signs shall be a maximum six (6) feet high and six (6) square feet in area. Such signs shall not obstruct the view of traffic entering or leaving the premises.
Political and public Issue Signs	Political and public issue signs shall be confined to private property and not placed within the street right-of-way.
Private Traffic Direction Signs	Signs directing interior traffic circulation within a premise shall be a maximum of three (3) feet high and six (6) square feet in area. Illumination shall be permitted in accordance with <a href="#">Section 12.2 H</a> .
Public Signs	Signs of a noncommercial nature and in the public interest erected by or on the order of the Town of Fort Mill or other county, state or federal authority.
Real Estate Sign	One (1) real estate sign indicating the sale, rental, or lease of the premises, or part of the premises, on which the sign is displayed. The sign shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from the street right-of-way line and shall not exceed a size of four (4) square feet in residential districts or 24 square feet in commercial and industrial districts and for non-residential uses within residential districts. The sign shall be removed within 14 days of the sale, rental, or lease.
Real Estate Open House	<p>a. A maximum of two (2) signs may be placed off-premise and one (1) on-premise;</p> <p>b. The signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area and three feet in height</p>

<b>Table 12-3, Signs Exempt from Permitting</b>	
<b>Type of Sign</b>	<b>Requirements</b>
Sign	above grade; c. The signs shall not be affixed to other signs, utility poles, fire hydrants or trees and shall not be located within a street right-of-way; d. Any person or firm placing the signs shall obtain written permission from the owner or occupant of all properties on which the signs are located; d. The sign shall not be displayed for more than eight (8) hours per day; and e. The signs must be removed within one (1) hour following closing of the open house.
Religious Symbols	Religious symbols incorporated into the architecture on places of worship or structures owned and operated by religious organizations shall not be considered a sign unless accompanied by text.
Residential Contractor	One (1) temporary sign identifying the contractor performing major home repairs or remodeling such as roofing, siding, landscaping and similar work of limited duration. The sign shall be a maximum of four (4) square feet in area and three (3) feet in height. It shall be located on the premises where the work is being performed and shall be removed within two (2) weeks of completing the work.
Scoreboards	Used in conjunction with a sports field owned by a governmental unit, school or bona fide sports organization, such as a little league or youth soccer. The scoreboard shall be single sided and have a maximum height of 20 feet to the top of the scoreboard and a maximum area of 100 square feet.
Sign on Vehicle	Signs on a bus, truck, trailer, or other vehicle while operated and used for transport in the normal course of business or activity, provided that the primary use of the vehicle shall not be for the purpose of advertising a business.
Temporary Window Sign	a. The total area of all signs within one (1) foot of the window shall not obscure more than 25 percent of the window area.
Traffic Control Sign	Traffic or other municipal signs, legal notices, danger signs and such temporary emergency or non-advertising signs, or private traffic control signs which conform to the requirements of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices and as may be approved by the administrator.
Warning Sign	Publicly authorized warning signs, such as no trespassing, warning of electrical currents or animals, provided the sign does not exceed two (2) square feet in area.

## **Section 12.4 Prohibited Signs**

The following signs are prohibited in the Town of Fort Mill:

- A. Any sign not specifically permitted.
- B. Abandoned signs that identify an activity, business, use, product or service no longer conducted or available.
- C. Bench signs.
- D. Billboards.
- E. Off-premise signs, except as otherwise specifically permitted by this article.
- F. The use of trucks, cars, trailers, aircraft, boats or similar vehicles as signs is prohibited when the vehicle is parked on public or private property within 50 feet of any property line abutting a public street, except for those:
  1. Lawfully parked overnight or during non-business hours in a place not visible from a public street or designated truck parking or loading area;
  2. Making deliveries, sales calls or other customary practices relating to doing business;

3. Making trips to transport persons or property;
4. Used in conjunction with active construction operations on the site; or
5. Passenger vehicles, pick-up trucks and vans containing signs that do not exceed 16 square feet in area painted on or permanently affixed to the doors or integral body panels and such vehicles are of a size that can fully fit within a standard parking space.

G. Roof signs.

H. Search lights, “twirling signs”, balloons, other gas-filled figures, strings of light bulbs, pennants or streamers: provided, this shall not be construed to prohibit decorations related to the observance of traditional national, state or local holidays or special events of national, state or local significance.

I. Signs that are held by or supported by a person for commercial advertising purposes.

J. Portable signs, except as allowed under **Section 12-5**.

K. Miscellaneous signs and posters visible from a roadway that are tacked, pasted or otherwise affixed to the walls of buildings or structures or on trees, poles, posts, fences or other structures.

L. Signs or any portion of a sign or sign structure which moves or assumes any motion or gives the illusion of movement, unless specifically permitted by this article.

M. Signs bearing or containing statements, words or pictures of an obscene, pornographic, or immoral character.

N. Signs painted on or attached to any fence or wall which is not structurally a part of a building.

O. Signs that emit audible sound, odor or visible matter.

## Section 12.5 Temporary Signs

The following signs shall be allowed at any location within the Town of Fort Mill upon application for and issuance of a sign permit, unless otherwise specified.

**Table 12-5 Temporary Signs**

Type of Sign	Requirements
Promotional signs, banners and displays	<p>Within any commercial or mixed use district, in accordance with the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A temporary sign permit shall be obtained from the administrator;</li> <li>b. The sign may be displayed for a maximum of 30 days;</li> <li>c. No more than two (2) temporary signs shall be permitted for any business, organization or property within a calendar year and at least 30 consecutive days shall elapse between the end of one (1) permit period and the start of the second.</li> <li>d. Materials of community interest may be erected within a street right-of-way or across a public street, causeway or walkway; provided, the town manager approves the display and all materials are erected by a licensed, bonded and insured installer approved by the manager.</li> <li>e. Materials shall be of a quality, size and installation as to not cause litter, hazard or obstruction.</li> <li>f. All such signs, banners, displays and material shall remain the responsibility of the permit holder who shall be responsible for any damage, injury, or expense incurred by the town.</li> <li>g. If damaged or deteriorated, the material shall be removed immediately.</li> </ol>
Subdivision or Multi-Family Development Sign	<p>Within any zoning district, one (1) temporary subdivision or multiple-family development sign may be permitted per street frontage, in accordance with the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. A temporary sign permit shall be obtained from the administrator;</li> <li>b. Maximum sign area shall not exceed 32 square feet of area;</li> <li>c. Minimum setback distance from any right-of-way and adjoining property line</li> </ol>

**Table 12-5 Temporary Signs**

Type of Sign	Requirements
	shall be 10 feet; and d. The temporary sign permit shall expire 12 months from the date it is issued or until the project is 85 percent occupied, whichever is greater.

## Section 12.6 Permitted Signs by District

- A. **Permitted Signs.** The following signs are permitted in combination, unless noted otherwise, in each district, subject to the requirements described in Table 12-6, issuance of a sign permit and all other applicable regulations.
- B. **Number.** For non-residential uses in any commercial, mixed use and industrial district, a maximum of two (2) types of signs listed in Table 12-6 and three (3) total signs shall be permitted on any lot, regardless of the number of tenants, unless otherwise specified in Table 12-6.

**Table 12-6 Signs By District**

R-25, R-15, R-5, RT-8 and RT-12 Residential Districts	
<b>Permitted Home Occupation Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per dwelling
Size	Two (2) sq. ft. maximum
Location	Façade of dwelling
<b>Development Gateway and Entry Sign</b>	
Number	Two (2) per development entry, one on opposite sides of the entry drive
Size	32 sq. ft. maximum
Location	15 ft. setback from all lot lines
Height	Six (6) ft. maximum
<b>Ground Sign for Non-Residential Principal Use</b>	
Number	One (1) per street frontage, two (2) maximum
Size	32 sq. ft. maximum
Location	10 ft. setback from front lot line, 50 ft. setback from all other lots lines
Height	Six (6) ft. maximum
<b>Wall Sign for Non-Residential Principal Use</b>	
Number	One (1) per street frontage, two (2) maximum
Size	10 percent of wall area to which it is attached, not to exceed 100 sq. ft.
Location	Mounted flat against the wall
Other	A wall sign shall not extend past the edge of the wall to which it is affixed nor extend above the roof line of a building.
<b>Manual or Electronic Changeable Message Sign for Non-Residential Principal Use</b>	
Number	One (1) per lot or parcel, integrated within a permitted wall or ground sign
Size	Maximum size no greater than 50 percent of the area of the sign within which it is integrated and shall be counted as part of the total permitted sign area of that sign.
Location	Shall be integrated into a permitted ground or wall sign; provided, no electronic changeable copy sign shall be located within 50 feet of a side or rear lot line or within 150 feet from a dwelling unit. Electronic changeable message signs shall not be located within any designated historic district or on any designated historic property.
Other for electronic changeable message signs	a. Each message appearing on a digital sign shall remain fixed for a minimum of 10 seconds, and message changes shall be instantaneous. Roll, splice, unveil, venetian, zoom, fade, dissolve, exploding, scroll and other methods of transition between messages shall not be permitted.

**Table 12-6 Signs By District**

	<p>b. Scrolling or traveling displays or the vertical movement of a static message or display on an electronic changeable message sign shall not be permitted.</p> <p>c. Display brightness shall be adjusted as ambient light levels change and shall be subject to review and regulation, as determined by the planning director.</p> <p>d. Illumination shall be no greater than 7,500 nits during daylight hours and 500 nits during evening hours.</p> <p>e. LED and digital signs shall contain a malfunction display lock default design that will freeze the sign in one position if a malfunction occurs or in the alternative shut down.</p> <p>f. The electronic display background color tones, lettering, logos, pictures, illustrations, symbols, and any other electronic graphic or video display shall not blink, flash, rotate, scroll, change in illumination intensity, or otherwise change in outward appearance, except when the message or display is changed to another message or display. In no case shall white be used as the background color on any part of the electronic display portion of the sign.</p> <p>g. To reduce the potential negative effects of light and glare on nearby residential properties, the background of the electronic display portion of any sign located within 200 feet of a dwelling unit shall be a dark color and all lettering, graphics and symbols shall be a muted color approved as part of the sign permit. White shall not be permitted.</p>
<b>DC, Downtown Core District</b>	
<b>Wall Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per street frontage, two (2) maximum
Size	For a single business located on a separately described lot, 10 percent of wall area to which it is attached, not to exceed 32 sq. ft. For each business located within a single structure occupied by more than one (1) business, the cumulative total for all signs shall not exceed 15 percent of building wall area and no more than 25 sq. ft. for each business.
Location	Mounted flat against the wall
Other	A wall sign shall not extend past the edge of the wall to which it is affixed or extend above the roof line of a building.
<b>Canopy, Projecting, Marquee or Awning Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per business
Size	32 sq. ft. maximum for marquee signs, eight (8) sq. ft. maximum for all others
Location	Four (4) ft. maximum projection for projecting signs
Height	Eight (8) ft. minimum between sidewalk or grade and the bottom of the sign.
<b>Window Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per street frontage
Size	25 percent of the window surface to which it is attached
Location	On the inside surface of the window
Other	May be internally illuminated. Neon lighting shall be permitted.
<b>LC and GC Commercial Districts</b>	
<b>Ground Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per street frontage, two (2) maximum
Size	32 sq. ft. maximum
Location	15 ft. setback from all lot lines
Height	Six (6) ft. maximum
<b>Wall Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per street frontage, two (2) maximum
Size	For a single business located on a lot, 10 percent of wall area to which it is attached,

<b>Table 12-6 Signs By District</b>	
	but not to exceed 150 sq. ft.
	For each business located within a single structure occupied by more than one (1) business, the cumulative total for all signs shall not exceed 15 percent of building wall area and no more than 32 sq. ft. for each business.
Location	Mounted flat against the wall
Other	A wall sign shall not extend past the edge of the wall to which it is affixed nor extend above the roof line of a building.
<b>Canopy, Projecting, Marquee or Awning Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per business
Size	48 sq. ft. maximum for marquee signs, eight (8) sq. ft. maximum for all others
Location	Three (3) ft. maximum projection for projecting signs
Height	Eight (8) ft. minimum between sidewalk or grade and the bottom of the sign.
<b>Business Center Ground Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per street frontage, two (2) maximum, no other freestanding signs allowed for individual businesses
Size	64 sq. ft. maximum
Location	10 ft. from all lot lines and outside of clear vision triangle.
Height	8 ft. maximum
<b>Development Gateway and Entry Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per development entry
Size	48 sq. ft. maximum
Location	15 ft. setback from all lot lines
Height	Six (6) ft. maximum
<b>Manual or Electronic Changeable Message Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per lot or parcel, integrated within a permitted wall or ground sign
Size	Maximum size no greater than 50 percent of the area of the sign on which it is integrated and shall be counted as part of the total permitted sign area of that sign.
Location	Shall be integrated into a permitted ground or wall sign; provided, no electronic changeable copy sign shall be located within 50 feet of a side or rear lot line or within 100 feet from a dwelling unit.
Other for electronic changeable message signs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Each message appearing on a digital sign shall remain fixed for a minimum of 10 seconds, and message changes shall be instantaneous. Roll, splice, unveil, venetian, zoom, fade, dissolve, exploding, scroll and other methods of transition between messages shall not be permitted.</li> <li>b. Scrolling or traveling displays or the vertical movement of a static message or display on an electronic changeable message sign shall not be permitted.</li> <li>c. Display brightness shall be adjusted as ambient light levels change and shall be subject to review and regulation, as determined by the planning director.</li> <li>d. Illumination shall be no greater than 7,500 nits during daylight hours and 500 nits during evening hours.</li> <li>e. LED and digital signs shall contain a malfunction display lock default design that will freeze the sign in one position if a malfunction occurs or in the alternative shut down.</li> <li>f. The electronic display background color tones, lettering, logos, pictures, illustrations, symbols, and any other electronic graphic or video display shall not blink, flash, rotate, scroll, change in illumination intensity, or otherwise change in outward appearance, except when the message or display is changed to another message or display. In no case shall white be used as the background color on any part of the electronic display portion of the sign.</li> <li>g. To reduce the potential negative effects of light and glare on nearby residential</li> </ol>

<b>Table 12-6 Signs By District</b>	
	properties, the background of the electronic display portion of any sign located within 200 feet of a dwelling unit shall be a dark color and all lettering, graphics and symbols shall be a muted color approved as part of the sign permit. White shall not be permitted.
<b>Menu Board</b>	
Number	One (1) per drive-thru lane
Size	32 sq. ft. maximum
Location	In the rear yard and adjacent to the drive-in or drive-thru lane, but no closer than 100 feet to any residential district or residential use in a mixed use district if a speaker is located in conjunction with the menu board
Height	Eight (8) ft. maximum
<b>NMU, CMU, TOMU Mixed Use Districts</b>	
<b>Residential Uses and Institutional Uses Allowed in a Residential District</b>	
Permitted signs	Same as listed in this table for the Residential Districts
<b>Business Uses</b>	
Permitted signs	Same as listed in this table for LC and GC Commercial Districts
<b>LI Industrial District</b>	
<b>Ground Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per street frontage, two (2) maximum
Size	32 sq. ft. maximum
Location	10 ft. setback from all lot lines
Height	Six (6) ft. maximum
<b>Wall Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per street frontage, two (2) maximum
Size	Ten (10) percent of wall area to which it is attached, not to exceed 100 sq. ft.
Location	Mounted flat against the wall
Other	A wall sign shall not extend past the edge of the wall to which it is affixed nor extend above the roof line of a building.
<b>Business Center Ground Sign</b>	
Number	One (1) per property, no other freestanding signs allowed for individual businesses
Size	64 sq. ft. maximum
Location	10 ft. from all lot lines and outside of clear vision triangle.
Height	Eight (8) ft. maximum

## Section 12.7 Sign Permits

No sign described in this article whether permanent or temporary, shall be erected, constructed, altered, relocated, repaired or replaced within the limits of the town by any person, firm or corporation until a permit has been issued by the administrator, except as otherwise provided in this article. All sign permits shall be valid for a period of one (1) year from the date of issuance, and shall thereafter be void if the approved sign is not erected within that time period. All sign applications shall be submitted by the property owner.

## Section 12.8 Application Procedure

- A. **Application Requirements.** An application shall be submitted to the administrator on a form for that purpose, along with a required application fee as established by the town council. All sign applications shall include the following information:
1. Location of building, structure or lot on which the sign is to be erected or attached.
  2. Detailed colored drawing to illustrate the dimensions, design, materials and structure of each sign.

3. Site drawing to scale, showing the property boundaries, street right-of-way line, curb line, building location, access drives and location of all ground, directional, menu or other sign proposed to be located on the ground. The setback dimension from the right-of-way line and the curb line to the nearest edge of the sign shall be shown on the site plan.
  4. Photographs of the property or building upon which the sign is to be erected or attached.
  5. Building elevations, illustrating the position of wall, awning, projecting or other signs to be mounted on the building.
  6. Plans, specifications and method of construction for attachment to the building or in the ground.
  7. Name and address of the sign erector.
  8. Any electrical permit required and issued for such sign.
  9. Specifications for electronic changeable message signs, including brightness levels (day and night), automatic dimming mechanism, display colors and other relevant information.
  10. Other information that the administrator may require to ensure full compliance with this and all other applicable laws of the town and State.
- B. **Approval.** The administrator shall make a decision on an application within seven (7) days of submission. The administrator shall approve the application and issue a sign permit if it is determined that the application fully complies with the requirements of this article.

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## Section 12.9 Inspection and Maintenance

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- A. **Inspection.** Signs for which a permit is required may be inspected periodically by the administrator for compliance with this ordinance and other codes of the Town of Fort Mill.
- B. **Removal of Signs.** The administrator may order the removal of any sign erected or maintained in violation of this article. Thirty (30) days' written notice to remove the sign or to bring it into compliance shall be given to the owner of a permanent sign or a notice of such violation placed on the building, structure, premises, or sign in violation. Three (3) day notice shall be given for temporary or portable signs. The administrator may remove a sign immediately and without notice if, in his/her opinion, the condition of the sign presents an immediate threat to the safety of the public. Any sign removed by the administrator, pursuant to the provisions of this section shall be held by the town for redemption by the owner. To redeem, the owner shall pay all costs incurred by the town for removal. Should the sign not be redeemed within 30 days of its removal, it may be disposed of in any manner deemed appropriate by the administrator and the costs incurred for its removal shall be assessed to the owner on the property tax roll. The cost of removal shall include any and all incidental expenses incurred by the town in connection with the sign's removal.
- C. **Maintenance.** Signs which are no longer functional or are in disrepair for more than 60 days, shall be removed, at the expense of the property owner, within 30 days following notice of non-compliance. The property owner shall be notified by certified mail. Failure to comply will automatically revoke the permit after noncompliance has been determined by the administrator and notice has been given to the property owner as reflected by the records of the administrator. If the sign is not removed within 30 days, the administrator shall cause the sign to be removed and assess the cost of removal against the property.
- D. **Obsolete Signs.** A sign shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located when the business or use which it identifies is no longer conducted on the premises. If the owner or lessee fails to remove it, the administrator shall give the owner 30 days' written notice to remove it. If the owner fails to comply with this notice, the administrator shall cause the sign to be removed at cost to the owner. Where a successor to a defunct business agrees to maintain the sign(s) as provided in this article, this removal requirement shall not apply. The new sign user shall notify the administrator's office, in writing, of this change. No new sign permit shall be required unless the sign is altered or relocated contrary to the provisions of this article. The administrator shall be notified in any matters relating to sign relocations.

- E. **Unsafe Signs.** Should any sign be or become insecure or in danger of falling or become otherwise unsafe, the owner or persons maintaining the sign shall, upon receipt of written notice from the administrator, proceed immediately to put it in a safe and secure condition or remove it.
- F. **Regular Maintenance.** Every sign and all the supports, braces, guys and anchors thereof, shall be kept in repair and, unless made of non-corroding material, shall be thoroughly and properly painted regularly. The administrator may order removal or compliance of any such signs that are not, in the judgement of the administrator, maintained in accordance with the conditions of this section.
- G. **Alterations.** The following regulations shall apply to alterations:
  - 1. No sign shall hereafter be altered, rebuilt, enlarged, extended or relocated except in conformity with the provisions of this article, and then not until a permit has been issued by the administrator.
  - 2. The repainting of signs shall not be deemed to be an alteration within the meaning of this section.

### **Section 12.10 Enforcement**

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The administrator shall monitor signs permitted under this article. Enforcement action may be taken where the requirements of this article are not met.

- A. If the owner, permit holder, or person maintaining the sign or premises fails to comply with such notice by the date of reinspection, or cannot be found or his whereabouts cannot be ascertained with reasonable diligence, in addition to the penalties provided in **Section \*\*\***, the administrator may cause the sign to be removed or altered to comply with the order at the expense of the permit holder, owner or person maintaining the premises. If the permit holder, owner or person maintaining the premises fails to pay the town for the expenses of removal or alteration, the full amount of costs shall be added to the property tax bill of the owner of the premises where the sign is located as a lien on the property.
- B. If a violation of a provision of this article is repeated within 60 days of a previous violation of the same provision, the subject sign may be seized immediately and a charge assessed for removal without additional notification.
- C. Fees for removal shall be immediately due and payable to the Town of Fort Mill. Notice of such assessment shall be given to the property owner mailing the notice to the address utilized for tax billing purposes and by posting a notice of assessment at the subject premises where the sign owner and property owner are the same. All assessments not paid within 10 days after such mailing and posting shall be placed on the property tax bill and collected as other taxes are collected or as a lien on the property.
- D. The town may also collect such costs together with interest through a civil action in the appropriate court of law having jurisdiction and seek such additional orders from a court of competent jurisdiction as may be necessary from time to time in order to enforce the provisions of this article.
- E. Every owner or occupant of real estate in the town impliedly grants a license to the administrator and municipal employees to enter upon real property in the town without the consent of the owner or user for the purposes of fulfilling the provisions of this article.

### **Section 12.11 Nonconforming Signs**

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- A. Any lawfully existing sign that does not conform to the provisions of this article, either in existence prior to the date of adoption of this article or located in areas annexed thereafter, shall be deemed a nonconforming sign.
- B. A nonconforming sign shall not be relocated or replaced unless it is brought into compliance with the provisions of this article.
- C. A nonconforming sign shall only be maintained or repaired in the following manner:
  - 1. The size and structural shape shall not be changed or altered, except to remove entire elements thereby reducing the overall size.

2. The copy may be changed (including changeable message signs and change of sign face); provided, the change applies to the original use associated with the sign. Any subsequent owner or user shall bring the sign into compliance, except if the subsequent owner or user was also the lessee.
3. In the case where damage occurs to the sign, the owner or the owner's authorized representative shall, within 14 days of the damage, schedule a meeting with the administrator for the purpose of establishing whether the sign was damaged to the extent of 30 percent or more of replacement value. Based on that determination, an application for a permit must be submitted by the owner or the owner's authorized representative within 30 business days from the date of the pre-application meeting. Where the damage to the sign is less than 30 percent of its replacement value, the sign shall be repaired to its original configuration within 45 days from the date the sign permit is issued. If the damage is greater than 30 percent of its replacement value, the sign shall be removed in its entirety within 30 days from the date of damage and any subsequently erected sign must comply with the requirements of this article.

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