

## ARTICLE VIII - SIGNS

### SECTION 801 – PURPOSE & INTENT

*In General.* The regulation of location, size, placement, and certain features of signs is necessary to enable the public to locate goods, services and facilities in the City of Waycross without difficulty and confusion, to improve the general attractiveness of the community, to take advantage of the beauty of the community's natural environment, and to protect property values therein. Signs are recognized as a development standard in keeping with other development standards such as uses permitted, building setbacks, minimum parking requirements, minimum lot size, minimum landscaping, maximum unit density, etc. It is therefore the intention of the City of Waycross to establish regulations governing the display of signs which will:

- A. Promote and protect the public health, safety, and general welfare.
- B. Enhance the economy, business, and industry of the City by promoting reasonable, orderly and effective display of signs.
- C. Restrict signs and lights which increase visual clutter, or increase the probability of traffic accidents by obstructing vision or creating undue visual distraction.
- D. Promote signs which are compatible with their surroundings in terms of zoning, existing land use, and architectural characteristics.

As these or any regulations can only establish the mechanical limits of signs and not enforce a level of visual quality in sign design, anyone planning a sign is strongly encouraged to consider:

- 1. The character of the proposed sign and the audience for which the sign is designed. The applicant is urged to think not only of the sign itself, but also the effects such a sign will have upon the character of the surrounding area.
- 2. The character of the sign structure; that is, the physical means of supporting the sign, and whether that structure could be made an integral part of the sign rather than a separate and frequently distracting element.

Before applying for a permit or erecting an exempted sign, anyone contemplating a sign is also encouraged to contact the Department of Community Improvement of the City of Waycross and/or a private firm or individual engaged in sign/graphic design for advice or assistance in planning a sign.

### SECTION 802 - JURISDICTION

This ordinance shall apply to all properties located within the corporate limits of Waycross, Georgia. This ordinance shall not relate to the copy or message on athletic field scoreboards, official signs of any government, gravestones, or commemorative plaques not defined herein as a sign.

## SECTION 803 - APPLICABILITY OF OTHER CODE REQUIREMENTS

(a) All signs and other advertising structures shall be constructed and/or maintained in strict conformity with the building and electrical codes adopted by the City of Waycross.

b) If any provisions or requirements of this ordinance are found to be in conflict with any other provision or requirement of this ordinance or of any other applicable governmental law, ordinance, resolution, rule, or other governmental regulation of any kind, the more restrictive rule or standard shall take precedence.

## SECTION 804 - VARIANCES

Variations from the provisions of this ordinance may be requested. All such variations shall be considered and decided by the Board of Zoning Appeals in accordance with officially adopted procedures and standards contained in the City of Waycross Zoning Ordinance. Granting of a variance shall not establish precedence in the consideration of any other variance request.

## SECTION 805 - DEFINITIONS

Words and phrases used in this ordinance [section] shall have the meanings set forth in this section. Words and phrases not defined in this section but defined in the zoning ordinance of the city shall be given the meanings set forth in such ordinance. Principles for computing sign area and sign height are contained in this section. Words not defined herein shall be defined in accordance with Webster's Dictionary, latest edition.

Advertise -- To inform; to notify; to announce; or attract public attention in order to arouse desire to purchase or invest.

Advertising Device -- Any structure or device, situated upon or attached to real property, which is erected or intended for the purpose of advertising.

Air and Gas Filled Device -- Any sign using, either wholly or in part, forced air or other gas as a means of supporting its structure.

Animated Sign -- Any sign of which all or any part thereof visibly moves or imitates movement in any fashion whatsoever; and any sign which contains or uses for illumination any light(s) or lighting device(s) which change color, flash or alternate, show movement or motion, or change the appearance of said sign or any part thereof automatically.

Area of Sign (Sign Area) (Copy Area) -- The area within a continuous perimeter enclosing the limits of writing, representation, emblem, or any figure of similar character together with any frame, other material, open space, or color forming an integral part of the display or used to differentiate such sign from the background against which it is placed.

Attention Getting Device -- Any pennant, valance, propeller, spinner, ribbon, streamer, search light, balloon, or similar device or ornamentation designed for or having the effect of attracting the attention of potential customers or the general public.

Banner -- A temporary sign intended to be hung either with or without a frame, possessing characters, letters, illustrations, or ornamentations applied to paper, plastic, or fabric of any kind excluding flags, emblems, and insignia of political, professional, religious, educational, or corporate organizations providing that such flags, emblems and insignia are displayed for non-commercial purposes.

Beacon -- Any light with one or more beams directed into the atmosphere or directed at one or more points not on the same parcel as the light source; also, any light with one or more beams that rotate or move.

Bench Sign -- A sign located on any part of the surface of a bench or seat placed on or adjacent to a public right-of-way.

Blighted or Hazardous -- A sign and/or sign structure which no longer correctly directs or exhorts any person, or advertises a bona fide business, lessor, owner, product, service, or activity available on or off the premises where such sign and/or sign structure is located. Off-premises signs with content denoting availability of advertising space are not considered abandoned.

Building Marker -- Any sign indicating the name of a building, the date and incidental information about its construction, and is cut into a masonry surface or made of bronze or other permanent material.

Building Official -- The Director of Community Improvement of the City of Waycross, or his/her authorized representative.

Building Sign -- Any sign attached to any part of a building, as contrasted to a freestanding sign.

Canopy -- Any permanent roof-like structure, including awnings and marquees, projecting beyond a building or extending along and projecting beyond the wall of a building, generally designed and constructed to provide protection from the weather.

Canopy Sign -- Any sign attached to, or made a part of, the front, side, or top of a canopy.

Commercial Message -- Any wording, logo, or other representation that directly or indirectly, names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service, or other commercial activity.

Commercial/Office Center -- A single parcel of land containing two or more businesses or establishments, including all forms of retail, wholesale, and services.

Construction Sign -- An on-premises sign announcing the proposed or existing construction of a building or project.

Copy -- The wording or graphics on a sign surface in either permanent or removable form.

Directional Sign -- An unofficial or non-standard traffic control sign, containing no commercial message except logos, intended to direct or regulate the movement of traffic and/or pedestrians. This includes but is not limited to "enter," "exit," "drive through," and directional arrow signs. These signs may be freestanding or mounted on a building.

Directory Sign -- A sign which gives the name and/or occupation of the occupants of a building, or identifies the particular use of a building.

Erect -- To build, construct, attach, hang, place, suspend, paint, or affix.

Establishment -- A commercial, industrial, institutional, educational, office, business, or financial entity.

Flag -- Any fabric, banner, or bunting containing distinctive colors, patterns, or symbols, used as a symbol of a government, political subdivision, or other entity.

Flashing Sign -- (See *Animated Sign* .)

Freestanding Sign -- Any sign which is independent from any building or other structure and is entirely supported by structures that are permanently placed on or in the ground.

Frontage, Building -- The length of an outside building wall facing a street.

Frontage Street -- The length of the property line of any one parcel along a street on which it borders.

Ground Sign -- A freestanding sign which has no air space between the signage copy area and the ground surface.

Historic District -- Any local historic district designated by the City of Waycross, including any National Register historic districts within the city limits.

Historic Sign -- Any animated neon sign over 30 years old, any existing barber pole or any other sign so designated by the Historic Preservation Commission. Extensions, additions and embellishments are not considered part of a historic sign.

Home Occupation Sign -- A wall sign for a legally existing home occupation on residential premises, containing no commercial message except advertising for services legally offered on the premises where the sign is located.

Identification Sign -- A sign depicting the name of a building and/or the address of an establishment on the premises where the sign is located. The name and/or address may be included as part of another signage type.

Illuminated Sign -- A sign which contains an internal source of light or which is designed or arranged to reflect light from an artificial source.

Incidental Sign -- A general information sign that has a purpose secondary to the use of the parcel on which it is located. This includes but is not limited to credit cards accepted, official notice of services as required by law, trade affiliations, business hours, "telephone," "self-service," etc. These signs are typically located on doors, windows or building walls. No sign with a commercial message legible from a position off the parcel on which the sign is located shall be considered incidental.

Mansard Sign -- Any sign attached to or erected within 12 inches of an actual or simulated mansard of a building, with the sign face parallel to the building surface. Since the sign is to be mounted parallel to and within the limits of the building, it is not deemed to be a roof sign.

Moving sign -- (See *Animated Sign* .)

Municipal Sign -- Any sign erected on city-owned property with the consent of the city Building Official.

Nonconforming Sign (legal) -- Any advertising device or sign, including sign structures, which was lawfully erected and maintained prior to the adoption or amendment of this ordinance and which fails to conform to all applicable regulations or restrictions of this ordinance.

Non-Profit Activity -- An activity, project, operation or enterprise of a temporary nature carried on by a corporation or an organization qualified as an exempt organization under applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code.

Off-Premises Sign -- A sign that advertises goods, products, services, facilities, or directs persons to premises other than the premises on which the sign is located. This includes but is not limited to billboards, off-premises directional signs, and signs which generally advertise consumer goods and services (i.e. brands of cigarettes and beverages).

On-Premises Sign -- A sign located on the same premises that the advertised product, service, or other subject matter is located. This does not include signs for generally advertised consumer goods and services.

Painted Wall Sign -- Any sign which is applied with paint or similar substance on the face of a wall.

Parcel (Lot) (Business Lot) -- Any piece, standard lot, or parcel of land, the boundaries of which have been established by a recorded legal instrument, that is recognized and intended as a unit for the purpose of transfer of ownership; said parcel being duly recorded with the Clerk of Superior Court, Ware County and the City of Waycross. A parcel may include more than one contiguously platted lot under common ownership which is identified as a single unit on official tax maps, and in such case the word "parcel" shall refer to that unit of land so identified.

Pennant -- Any lightweight plastic, fabric, or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind, suspended from a pole, rope, wire, or string, often in series, designed to move in the wind.

Permanent Sign -- A sign permanently affixed to a building or to the ground.

Person -- Any association, company, corporation, firm, organization, or partnership, singular or plural, of any kind.

Political Sign -- A temporary sign identifying and urging voter support for or in opposition to a particular issue, political party, or candidate for public office.

Portable Sign -- Any sign supported by its own frame or trailer, with or without wheels, which is designed to be transported from one place to another. This does not include typical sandwich or A-frame signs.

Premises -- An area of land with its appurtenances and buildings which, because of its unity of use, may be regarded as the smallest conveyable unit of real estate.

Principal Building -- The building in which is conducted the principal use of the parcel on which it is located. Parcels with multiple principal uses may have multiple principal buildings. However, storage buildings, garages, and other clearly accessory uses shall not be considered principal buildings.

Projecting Sign -- Any sign affixed to a building or wall which horizontally extends more than 12 inches beyond the surface of such building or wall.

Public Service Sign -- A sign designed to render a public service such as but not limited to "time and temperature" signs and "flashing news" signs.

Real Estate Sign -- A temporary sign erected by the owner, or his/her agent, advertising the real property upon which the sign is located for rent, lease, or sale.

Residential District -- Includes all land zoned RM-75, R-S, R-90, R-75, R-50, R-45, R-75MH, and R-50MH.

Revolving Sign -- (See *Animated Sign* .)

Roof Sign -- Any sign erected, constructed, and maintained wholly upon or over the roof of any building and projecting above the roof line.

Roof Sign, integral -- Any sign erected or constructed as an integral or essentially integral part of a normal roof structure of any design, such that no part of the sign extends vertically above the highest portion of the roof and such that no part of the sign is separated from the rest of the roof by a space of more than six inches.

Setback -- The distance from the property line to the nearest part of the applicable building, structure, or sign, measured perpendicularly to the property line.

Sidewalk, Sandwich or A-Frame Sign -- A sign which is normally in the shape of an "A" or some variation thereof and which is usually two-sided. This includes a sign mounted on an easel.

Sign -- Any identification, description, illustration or device, illuminated or non-illuminated, which is visible to the general public and directs attention to a product, service, place, activity, person, institution, business or solicitation, including any permanently installed or situated merchandise; or any emblem, painting, flag, banner, pennant, balloon or placard designed to advertise, identify, or convey information.

Sign Face -- The portion of a sign on which the copy is placed.

Sign Number -- For the purpose of determining the number of signs, a sign shall be construed to be a single display surface or device containing elements organized, related, and composed to form a single unit. In cases where material is displayed in a random or unconnected manner, or where there is reasonable doubt as to the intended relationship of such components, each component or element shall be considered to be a single sign. A projecting sign or freestanding sign with identical copy on both sides (faces) of the sign, and both sign faces being less than 36 inches apart, shall be construed as a single sign.

Sign Structure -- Any construction used or designed to support a sign.

Snipe Sign -- A sign of any material whatsoever that is attached in any way to a utility pole, tree, fence, rock, or any other similar object located on public or private property. Snipe signs shall not include "keep out," "posted," or "no trespassing" signs.

Street -- Any public or private right-of-way for vehicular traffic, excluding alleyways, parking lots and driveways.

Street Frontage -- The width in linear feet of a lot or parcel where it abuts the right-of-way of any public street.

Subdivision Sign -- Any sign only designed to identify a subdivision, neighborhood, or residential complex.

Traffic Control Sign -- A standard sign or electronic device (such as a traffic signal, stop sign, one-way, handicap, no parking, fire lane, etc.) for the purpose of directing or regulating traffic and/or pedestrians.

Under Canopy Sign -- A sign that is suspended from the underside of a canopy (including awnings and marquees), is perpendicular to the wall surface of a building, and whose copy is not clearly visible from a public right-of-way.

Unlawful Sign (Illegal Sign) -- Any sign erected without a permit when a permit for the sign was otherwise required by this ordinance or previously adopted ordinance or code; or a permitted sign which has not been properly erected in accordance with its permit application and approved sign permit; or an otherwise lawful and permitted sign which has become hazardous or a nuisance to the public due to poor maintenance, dilapidation, or abandonment, and so declared by the Building Official.

Variable Message Board -- A programmable sign that provides changing information.

Wall Face -- A measurement of area equal to the height of the structure from the ground to the coping or eave of the roof multiplied by the width of the wall associated with the individual business. The wall face is to be measured for each wall independently.

Wall Sign -- Any sign affixed or attached to a wall of a building, extending no more than 12" beyond the wall and which displays only one sign surface.

Window Sign -- Any sign, excluding identification and incidental signs, placed inside or upon a window, containing a commercial message, and intended to be seen from the exterior.

## SECTION 806 – PERMITTING & MAINTENANCE

806.1. *Permit Required.* Except as otherwise provided herein, it shall be unlawful for any person or firm to, or cause to erect, enlarge, move, convert, or replace any sign in the City of Waycross without first obtaining a sign permit from the Department of Community Improvement. This section shall not require a sign permit for the repair or maintenance of a conforming sign for which a permit has already been issued, so long as the sign is not modified in any way different from its original condition, including changes to permanent sign copy. This section shall not require a sign permit for changes to sign copy on any off-premises sign so long as the copy material is lightweight, and does not increase the size of the sign face. A permit shall be required for a new business making any changes on an existing sign.

806.2. *Application.* All applications for sign permits shall be submitted on forms provided by the City to the Department of Community Improvement. The application shall set forth in writing a complete description of the sign and shall include but not be limited to the following information:

- (a) Name, address and telephone number of the sign owner.
- (b) Name, address and telephone number of the sign contractor or installer.
- (c) Name, address and telephone number of the owner of the lot or parcel on which the sign is located, if different from the above.

- (d) Street address and current zoning of the property location for the proposed sign.
- (e) Scale plan and elevation drawings of the proposed sign indicating all applicable dimensions, including the sign's relation to property lines, street rights-of-way, and other structures.
- (f) Construction drawings outlining the scope and structural details of the work to be done, including details of all connections, guy lines, supports, footings, and materials to be used.
- (g) Electrical permit, if applicable.
- (h) Written agreement to indemnify and hold the City harmless for all damages, demands or expenses of every type which may in any manner be caused by the sign or sign structure.
- (i) Landscaping plan for on-premises freestanding signs, when applicable.

*806.3. Fees.* Sign permit fees shall be in accordance with the adopted fee schedule of the City of Waycross.

*806.4 Permit Issuance and Duration.* The Department of Community Improvement shall issue to any applicant, upon receipt of a completed application and accompanying material for a sign which meets the requirements of this ordinance, a written sign permit evidencing compliance with all applicable codes and regulations. The written sign permit, or notification of denial, shall be made available to the applicant within five working days from the date of application. A permit for a permanent sign shall expire and become null and void if construction of the sign has not begun within a period of three months from the date of issuance, and completed within six months from the date of issuance. Issuance of a sign permit shall in no way prevent the Department of Community Improvement from later declaring the sign to be nonconforming or unlawful if upon further review of available information, the sign is found not to comply with the requirements of this ordinance.

*806.5 Identification Label.* After inspection of the sign by an authorized inspector of the City of Waycross, the sign inspector may affix an identification tag bearing the approved sign permit number. The identification tag shall be permanently attached to the sign or its supporting structure in such a manner as to be visible from a street right-of-way.

*806.6. Maintenance.* All signs and required signage landscaping shall be maintained as follows:

- (a) Signs shall be kept clean, neatly painted, and maintained at all times so as not to be detrimental to public health and safety. This includes but is not limited to keeping the sign free from faulty wiring, loose fastenings, and sharp or otherwise dangerous protrusions.
- (b) No trash or rubbish shall be allowed to accumulate in the area around a sign and all weeds shall be kept out. If required landscaping dies, it shall be replaced no later than 30 days after written notification from a designated official of the city.
- (c) Removal of blighted/hazardous signs. Any blighted/hazardous sign(s) and/or sign structure(s) shall be removed by the property owner or sign owner no later than 30 days after written notification from the Building Official or other designated official of the city. This applies to those single use buildings where the entire use of the building is also abandoned or vacant. This does not apply to a parcel in a joined shopping center, where other uses are still maintained, unless the sign is deemed to be a safety hazard and then that sign will be subject the removal requirements. If the property owner or sign owner fails to

comply within 30 days after written notification, the City may cause the removal of the sign at the property owner's or sign owner's expense.

*806.7. Enforcement.*

- (a) This ordinance shall be enforced as provided by the City Code of the City of Waycross. Each day of violation shall be regarded as a separate offense.
- (b) Removal of Signs. Any of the following signs shall be immediately removed upon notification from the Department of Community Improvement or his/her authorized representative:
  - (1) A sign that is classified as unlawful under the terms of this ordinance.
  - (2) A sign that does not conform to the International Building Code.
- (c) Revocation of Permit. A sign permit shall be revoked if it is found not to be in compliance with this ordinance due to misinformation or significant error on the sign permit application.

SECTION 807 – GENERAL REGULATIONS

*807.1. Prohibited Signs.* The following signs and advertising devices are prohibited within the city limits.

- (a) Signs displaying any words, characters, or illustrations of an obscene, indecent, or immoral nature as defined by the Code of Ordinances of the City of Waycross.
- (b) Signs which advertise or encourage an illegal activity as defined by local, state, or federal laws.
- (c) Animated signs; including those that flash, blink, change image, or show any form of movement, excluding historic signs and those officially designated for public service. Variable message boards are permitted if they meet the conditions set forth in Section 807.7(f).
- (d) Signs that resemble any official traffic control device or emergency vehicle markings.
- (e) Signs which make use of the words "stop," "look," "danger," or any other word, phrase, symbol, or character in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse vehicular traffic.
- (f) Unshielded illuminated devices that produce glare or create a hazard or nuisance to motorists or occupants of adjacent properties.
- (g) Signs or advertising devices attached to any vehicle or trailer parked so as to be visible from a public right-of-way for the purpose of providing advertisements of products, services, or events or directing people to a business or activity, except for a common carrier or other vehicle which is used for daily transportation of merchandise with a valid license plate. Any allowable vehicle or common carrier having a sign attached thereto as a part of the operational structure of the vehicle is to be parked in a legal parking space belonging to the business or on the property to which the sign makes reference. No signs on trailers or other non-motorized vehicles will be allowed under this subsection.
- (h) Snipe signs.
- (i) Roof signs or any non-freestanding sign which extends above the roof line of a building.

- (j) Signs which emit visible smoke, vapor, particles, or odor.
- (k) Signs with lighting or control mechanisms which cause radio, television, or other communications interference.
- (l) Motion picture mechanisms used in such a manner as to permit or allow images to be visible from a public right-of-way or sidewalk.
- (m) Signs located on benches, waste containers, or other forms of street furniture.
- (n) Strings of lights, pennants, or other similar attention-getting devices.

807.2. *Exempt Signs.* Except as otherwise provided, the following on-premises signs may be erected without securing a permit; provided that each is in accordance with the prescribed conditions and all other applicable codes and regulations.

- (a) One professional nameplate for each establishment. Each professional nameplate shall not exceed two square feet in area.
- (b) One separate identification sign for each establishment when affixed to a building wall or window and limited to a maximum size of two square feet. The purpose of the sign is to identify the establishment's street address, suite or unit number, etc.
- (c) Informational bulletin boards for public, charitable, educational or religious institutions when located on the premises of said institution and affixed to a building wall. Bulletin boards may not exceed 32 square feet in area and shall be located at least 15 feet from any property line when said institution is located in a residential district.
- (d) Legal notices and official instruments.
- (e) Flags, cumulatively subject to the maximum area limitations of Table B or C (unless located in commercial or industrial zoning districts), and the following provisions:
  - (1) Limited to singular official flags of each of the following: the United States or other recognized sovereign nation, Georgia, Ware County, City of Waycross, flags which depict affiliation or membership in an off-site non-profit organization (such as FDIC) and do not convey a commercial message, or any other flag sanctioned by the City of Waycross.
  - (2) Flag poles shall not exceed 40 feet in height (total length) and flags must be flown in accordance with standard protocol.
  - (3) Government-owned parcels are exempt from total flag area limitations.
  - (4) In residential districts, flags which do not convey a commercial message and are attached to an occupiable building. These typically include family crests and symbols of hospitality or yearly seasons.
- (f) Decorative flags, banners, and bunting for citywide celebrations, conventions, and commemorations when specifically authorized by the City Manager for a prescribed period of time.
- (g) Holiday lights and decorations.

- (h) One "building marker" per building.
- (i) Non-advertising directional signs or symbols (e.g., entrance, exit, caution, slow, or no trespassing) located on and pertaining to a parcel of private property not to exceed two square feet in area.
- (j) Identification signs at the entrance drive of residences, estates, farms, ranches and plantations which do not exceed two square feet in area.
- (k) One non-illuminated real estate sign per street frontage, each containing a maximum of two sign faces back to back, and provided as follows:
  - (1) Maximum sign area (per face) shall be limited to six square feet in all residential districts, and 32 square feet in all non-residential districts.
  - (2) Multiple listing strips, sale pending, and sold signs may be allowed when attached to a real estate sign and are subject to the same maximum area requirements.
  - (3) One on-premises open house or open for inspection sign, not exceeding two square feet in area, may be allowed in addition to the above area requirements. Similar off- premises signs for directional purposes may be allowed at street intersections on other private properties with the consent of the property owner. These signs may not be erected in a public right-of-way and they must be removed when the premises are no longer open for inspection.
  - (4) All real estate signs shall be removed when ownership or occupancy has changed and the property is no longer for sale, rent, or lease.
- (l) Signs for temporary garage sales, yard sales, and the like, located in residential districts and subject to the following provisions:
  - (1) On-premises signs shall be limited to one per parcel and a maximum area of four square feet.
  - (2) Similar off-premises signs for directional purposes, not exceeding two square feet in area, may be allowed at street intersections on other private properties with the consent of the property owner. These signs may not be erected in a public right-of-way.
  - (3) All signs must be removed at the close of the sale.
- (m) One single-sided construction sign per street frontage located on property where building is actually in progress under a current building permit. This shall be a freestanding sign not to exceed ten feet in height, 12 square feet in all residential districts, 32 square feet in all non-residential districts, and shall be set back at least 5 feet from all property lines. The sign may include the names of persons and firms performing services or labor, or supplying materials to the premises. Such sign must be removed before a certificate of occupancy for any building or structure on the premise is issued.

(n) Political signs provided as follows:

- (1) The sign shall not be located, in whole or in part, on any public lands or public right-of-way and shall not be attached to any sign or utility pole, rock, or any form of vegetation.
  - (2) Except for signs otherwise used for off-premises advertising, signs shall not exceed six square feet in area in all residential districts and 24 square feet in all non-residential districts
  - (3) The City Building Official or designated representative shall, without notice, immediately remove or cause to be removed any and all political signs in violation of this section. The removal will be at the expense of the candidate and the owner of property on which the sign is located.
  - (4) All political signs must also meet corresponding sign type regulations for the zoning district in which the sign is located. Freestanding political signs are not subject to the maximum number requirements for on-premises freestanding signs.
- (o) Window signs which advertise temporary sales and special promotions for activities, services, goods, or products available within the building. These signs shall still be subject to certain maximum sign area limitations for window signs in Tables B and C.
- (p) Signs incorporated on machinery and equipment at the manufacturer's or distributor's level, and which only identify or advertise the product or service dispensed by the machine or equipment. This includes signs customarily affixed to vending machines, newspaper racks, telephone booths and gasoline pumps.
- (q) One directory sign per building, which contains no commercial messages of any kind, which is attached to the building wall and limited to a maximum of 24 square feet.
- (r) Traffic control signs erected on public or private property which meet Department of Transportation standards and contain no commercial message of any kind. Signs located on private property shall not exceed two square feet.
- (s) Works of art which do not contain a commercial message.
- (t) Signs painted on or otherwise attached to motor vehicles which are not conspicuously parked in proximity to a right-of-way and obviously not parked in such a way as to advertise any business or service to motorists or pedestrians. This may include signs for realtors, delivery trucks, lawn, service, etc.
- (u) Historic Signs.
- (v) Municipal Signs.

*807.3. Location in General.*

- (a) All signs shall be located on and over private property only, except those specifically permitted by this ordinance.
- (b) No sign shall be attached to any utility pole, fence, rock, tree or other form of vegetation.

(c) All signs shall be erected in such a manner as to not interfere with or obstruct the view of any authorized traffic sign, signal, or device.

(d) No sign shall be attached to or placed against a building in such a way as to prevent egress through any door or window required or designed for access to any building; nor shall any sign be attached to or obstruct a fire escape, or interfere with openings required for proper light or ventilation.

(e) All signs shall be located in such a way that they maintain horizontal and vertical clearance from all overhead utilities in accordance with National Electrical Code specifications. In no case shall any sign be installed within three feet horizontally or vertically from an overhead utility line or utility guy wire.

*807.4. Permitted Signs by Type and Zoning District. \*\* (SEE TABLE A) \*\**

*807.5. Maximum Size and Number.*

(a) *Height.* Unless otherwise provided, no freestanding sign shall exceed 35 feet in height.

(b) *Number.* Except for exempted signs listed in Section 8-4.2, freestanding on-premises signs shall be limited to one sign per street frontage per parcel. In the case of multiple street frontages, the freestanding sign on the primary street frontage (as designated by the property owner) shall comply with the maximum sign areas listed in Tables B and C. Freestanding signs on secondary street frontages shall be permitted and shall not exceed 1/2 of the maximum sign areas listed in Tables B and C. Secondary freestanding signs shall be oriented for viewing from the secondary street and shall be located a minimum distance of 1/2 the secondary lot frontage from the primary street's right-of-way line. In the case of two intersecting street frontages, and at the Building Official's discretion, freestanding signs for both the primary and secondary frontages may be combined into a single freestanding sign at 1 1/2 times its maximum permitted sign area, only if the sign is located near the corner of the property and oriented so that it is easily viewed from both street frontages. There is no limit on number of other sign types (unless otherwise provided), only limits on total sign areas.

(c) *Sign area, single-use parcels.* Except for the exempted signs listed in Table B, the maximum total area for all signs on each parcel shall not exceed the "Maximum Total Square Feet" listed in Table B. This includes both on-premises and off-remises signs. The maximum total area for all signs of each sign type (including the exempted signs listed in Table B) on each parcel shall be as indicated in Table B.

(d) *Commercial/Office Centers.* Building signs for each establishment shall be limited to the maximum sign areas listed in Table C. Establishments within the center which front or face more than one street frontage shall not be entitled to additional sign square footage. These establishments may elect to have signs facing each street; however, the total sign square footage for each establishment shall remain the same. Sign area allowances are non-transferable from one establishment to another.

(e) *Sign Area and Height Computations.* The following principles shall control the computation of sign area and sign height.

- (1) *Area of Single-faced Signs.* The area shall be computed by means of the smallest square, circle, rectangle, triangle, or combination thereof that will encompass the extreme limits of the writing, representation, emblem, or other display, together with any material or color forming an integral part of the background of the display or used to differentiate the sign from the backdrop or structure against which it is placed, but not including any supporting framework, bracing, or

decorative fence or wall when such fence or wall otherwise meets zoning ordinance regulations and is clearly incidental to the display itself.

- (2) *Area of Multifaced Signs.* The area shall be computed by adding together the area of all individual sign faces visible from any one point. When two identical sign faces are placed back to back, so that both faces cannot be viewed from any point at the same time, and when such sign faces are part of the same sign structure and are not more than 36 inches apart, the two faces shall be considered one sign and the sign area shall be computed by the measurement of one of the faces.
- (3) *Height.* The height of a freestanding sign shall be computed as the distance from the base of the sign at normal grade to the top of the highest attached component of the sign or sign structure, whichever is higher. Normal grade shall be construed to be the lower of: (1) existing grade prior to construction or (2) the newly established grade after construction, exclusive of any filling, berming, mounding, or excavating solely for the purpose of locating the sign. In cases in which the normal grade cannot reasonably be determined, sign height shall be computed on the assumption that the elevation of the normal grade at the base of the sign is equal to the elevation of the nearest point of the crown of a public street or the grade of land at the principal entrance to the principal structure on the lot, whichever is lower.

#### 807.6 *Sign Setbacks.*

- (a) Unless otherwise provided, no freestanding or portable sign at its nearest point shall be closer than five feet (vertical line ground distance) from a street right-of-way line or property line.
- (b) All freestanding signs containing copy area between a height of three (3) feet and ten (10) feet above ground shall be located within the triangular area formed by the intersection of the street right of way lines, or the intersection of a street right of way line with a driveway pavement edge (or such lines extended in case of a rounded corner) which bound said lot and a line connecting a point on each right of way line which is 25 feet from the point of intersection. Sign supports in excess of two (2) feet in diameter or which cumulatively provides less than 70 percent visibility, shall be subject to the same setback requirement.

#### 807.7 *Special Signage Types.*

- (a) *Portable Signs.* In addition to all permitting procedures and other applicable regulations of this ordinance, all existing and future portable signs shall comply with all of the following:
  - (1) Portable signs shall be limited to one per parcel and shall only be used in lieu of a permanent freestanding sign for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days from the date of permit issuance, or until the permanent sign is installed, whichever comes first.
  - (2) Portable signs shall not be erected or placed in a required parking space and must be securely tied down in accordance with the International Building Code.
  - (3) All existing portable signs shall be removed within ninety (90) days from the effective date of this ordinance.
  - (4) There is to be a maximum of one (1) portable sign per parcel as defined by Section 805 of this ordinance.

(5) If lighted, portable signs shall be internally lit, and:

a. Must have UL label, or equivalent.

b. Electrical service must be provided from a building in accordance with all applicable electrical codes and shall be approved by the Building Official in accordance with Sections 7-101 (c) (3), 7-107 (c), and 11-39 of the City of Waycross Code of Ordinances.

(b) *Banners.* One banner may be allowed on a temporary basis for a maximum of 240 days per calendar year upon obtaining a special banner permit. A permit shall be for a 60 day period. An applicant, at the time of making an application, shall select one of the following options per calendar year:

A. Banner displayed 60 days; banner removed 60 days.

B. Banner displayed 60 days; banner removed 30 days.

C. Banner displayed concurrently, without removal, not exceeding 240 consecutive days. A special banner permit must be obtained each 60-day period. All banners under any of the above stated options must comply with the following limitations:

(1) Each business location shall be limited to four permits per calendar year and banner display shall not exceed the total of 240 days in one calendar year.

(2) Banners must be physically attached to a building or some other permanent structure which requires a building permit for construction excluding a freestanding sign.

(3) With a special banner permit, banners will be allowed over and above the wall signage maximum of the business; banner area shall not cumulatively exceed 100 square feet or 50 percent of the total wall signage maximum allowed for the business, whichever is more restrictive.

(4) Said banner shall be professionally printed and shall be limited to one message or product per banner.

(c) *Menu Signs at Drive-through Restaurants.* Two signs per drive-through traffic lane may be used to display menus for restaurant drive-through windows. Each sign shall not exceed 28 square feet in area, seven (7) feet in height, and if illuminated, the sign must be internally lit.

(d) *Subdivision Signs.* Subdivision signs and any accompanying landscaping shall not be located in a public right-of-way.

(e) *Special Temporary Signs and Devices.* The following signage types shall be permitted with a special temporary sign permit for periods up to 30 days after which time said temporary sign or device must then be removed for at least 30 days before another permit may be issued to same business or non-business parcel:

(1) A-frame, sandwich type, sidewalk or curb sign within a commercial zoning district. Signs may be two-sided and shall be limited to six square feet per side. Maximum height shall be three feet above the sidewalk or ground and shall be located within ten feet of the entrance

of the building. A-frame signs shall be located so as to not obscure safe vision of vehicular or pedestrian traffic. One A-frame sign may be allowed for each entrance to the building or business.

- (2) Search lights and beacons used for special promotions and attracting attention to a new business "grand opening." For each such event, prior written notice shall be given to officials of the Waycross Airport Authority. Such devices shall not create a nuisance or interfere with vehicular traffic, and shall adhere to all applicable regulations of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Said signs may be permitted for periods not to exceed ten consecutive days. In the event an objection for some valid reason is filed by the Waycross Airport Authority, the ten-day permit may be denied.
- (3) Tethered balloons or other inflatable signs.
- (f) *Variable Message Boards.* One variable sign message board will be permitted in C-1 or C-2 or C-4 zoning only in conjunction with a freestanding sign. The square footage on the variable message board will be included in the total allowable size of the freestanding sign and shall meet the following requirements:
  - (1) A variable message board shall change messages no more than 12 times per minute.
  - (2) Messages shall not be illuminated by blinking, intermittent, or flashing lights.
  - (3) Only white, amber, red, or green lights shall be allowed.
  - (4) Any such sign shall contain a default design that will freeze the sign in one position if a malfunction occurs.

*807.8. Landscaping.* All permanent on-premises freestanding signs shall have a landscaped area at the base of the sign which is a minimum three feet wide on each side, and at least the length of the sign. The landscaping shall consist of a dense vegetative ground cover or a minimum one shrub per three linear feet of landscaped area on each side of the sign. Landscaped areas containing shrubs greater than three feet high shall be located a minimum of 20 feet from the intersection of two-street right-of-way lines, or the intersection of a street right-of-way line with a driveway pavement edge. Landscaped areas shall be maintained in good condition at all times. Off-premises signs shall be exempt from landscaping requirements.

*807.9. Off-premises Advertising.* Unless otherwise provided, off-premises signs shall be subject to all of the following requirements in addition to all other applicable requirements of this ordinance. Where these are in conflict, the following requirements shall apply.

- (a) Off-premises advertising shall be limited to freestanding signs as permitted in Table A of this ordinance and shall not be permitted in commercial/office centers.
- (b) Setbacks shall be a minimum 25 feet (vertical line ground distance) from street right-of-way lines, ten feet from side or rear property lines, and 100 feet from all residential zoning district boundaries.
- (c) All off-premises signs shall be located a minimum of 1,250 feet measured along the same side of the road to which it faces, and 500 feet measured as a radius from any other off-premises sign, regardless of location.

(d) Structural elements of off-premises signs which contain no sign copy, including rear sides of billboards, shall be uniform in color.

(e) Off-premises signs may be allowed to have up to four (4) rotating faces (such as tri-vision) provided the following conditions are met:

- 1) Each sign must remain fixed at least ten seconds;
- 2) When a message is changed, it shall be accomplished in three seconds or less;
- 3) No such sign shall be placed within 5,000 feet of another multi-message sign on the same side of the highway;
- 4) Any such sign shall contain a default design that will freeze the sign in one position if a malfunction occurs;
- 5) Any maximum sign limitation shall apply independently for each side of a multi-message sign; and
- 6) Only white, amber, red or green lights shall be allowed.

#### *807.10. Nonconforming Signs.*

(a) *Repairs and maintenance.* Any legal nonconforming sign may be repaired or restored to its original condition, subject to all of the following:

- (1) The cost of the repairs or the restoration does not cumulatively exceed 50 percent of its total replacement cost. Accumulation shall begin with the effective date of this ordinance.
- (2) The repairs or restoration do not involve any change from its original permanent copy.
- (3) The repairs or restoration remain subject to all other applicable regulations.

(b) *Compliance for single-use parcels.* All legal nonconforming on-premises signs located on a single-use parcel shall be removed or altered to conform with all existing sign regulations upon any of the following:

- (1) The issuance of a sign permit for any new additional sign, or changes to an existing sign which result in an increase to the sign's total copy area.
- (2) The issuance of a sign permit for changes in permanent sign copy to an existing on-premises sign, which exceeds the 50 percent cumulative total of sign areas for all legally existing on-premises signs normally requiring a permit under this ordinance. Accumulation shall begin with the effective date of this ordinance.

(a) *Compliance for commercial/office centers.* Legal nonconforming signs located in commercial/office centers shall be removed or altered to conform with all existing sign regulations in the event the following should occur:

- (1) For nonconforming freestanding signs, the issuance of a sign permit for a new freestanding sign.
- (2) For nonconforming building signs for a particular establishment, the issuance of any sign permit for that particular establishment, excluding repairs and maintenance.

## SECTION 808 - SPECIAL DISTRICT REGULATIONS

*808.1. Historic District.* Off-premises and portable signs are prohibited in historic districts. On-premises signs located or maintained within the city's designated historic districts shall comply with the following regulations in addition to other requirements of this ordinance. Where these regulations conflict with other regulations of this ordinance, the most restrictive shall take precedence:

(a) *Certificate of Appropriateness.* All signs otherwise requiring a sign permit, including banners, shall also require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission in accordance with the provisions of the Historic District Ordinance. They are subject to all criteria for issuance of the certificate and the following special provisions for the below-listed sign types. All other sign types shall follow provisions described elsewhere in these regulations, and are also subject to the criteria for issuance of the certificate. Where these are in conflict with the Certificate of Appropriateness, the criteria for issuance of the certificate shall take precedence.

- (1) *Wall Signs.* One wall sign shall be permitted along the primary side (designated main entrance) of a building and shall be limited to a maximum size of the greater of: 50 square feet, or one square foot per two linear feet of building frontage; not to exceed 125 square feet. Wall signs on secondary street frontages shall be permitted and shall be limited to the same maximum size limitations; but in no case shall exceed 50 square feet.
- (2) *Freestanding Signs.* One freestanding sign shall be permitted for each street frontage, per parcel of land. Maximum height shall be ten feet from ground level for each sign. Maximum total sign area shall be 40 square feet for the primary street frontage (as designated by the property owner), and 20 square feet for any secondary street frontage.
- (3) *Canopy Signs.* One canopy sign shall be permitted along the primary side (designated main entrance) of a building and shall be limited to a maximum size of 12 square feet.
- (4) *Projecting Signs.* Projecting signs shall be mounted perpendicular to a building front with a maximum projecting length of five feet. The minimum height shall be eight feet from ground level and the maximum total area of all projecting signs shall be 20 square feet per parcel.

(b) *Approval of Historic Preservation Commission.* All signs located within historic districts shall require review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission prior to issuance of a sign permit. In addition to the other requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness, the following information shall be submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission:

- (1) Name, address, and telephone number of both the sign owner and the sign builder or erector.
- (2) Sketch showing the layout and dimensions of the proposed sign.
- (3) Site plan with dimensions showing the sign's location in relation to nearby buildings, structures, and streets.

- (4) Photograph showing the sign's location and adjacent properties.

*808.2. Downtown Central Business District (C-4) and Mixed Use District (MU).* In order to promote a pedestrian-oriented market area in the downtown district, A-frame, sandwich type, sidewalk and easel signs may be permitted on the sidewalk in front of the respective business during business hours only. These may be two-sided and shall be limited to six square feet per side. Maximum height shall be five feet above the sidewalk and minimum setback shall be two feet from the street curb. They shall be located so as to not obstruct safe vision of vehicular or pedestrian traffic. These signs shall be subject to all other applicable regulations.

TABLE A  
PERMITTED SIGNS BY TYPE AND ZONING DISTRICT

SIGN TYPE	Zoning District										
	R	O	M	C-1	C-2	C-4	IP	LI	GI	CN	MU
Freestanding Signs <sup>i</sup>											
On-Premise	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Off-Premise	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	S	S	-	-
Building Signs (on-premise only)											
Building Marker (historical) <sup>ii</sup>	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Canopy	-	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	-	S
Identification <sup>iii</sup>	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Incidental <sup>iv</sup>	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Projecting	-	-	-	-	S	S	S	S	S	-	-
Mansard	-	-	-	S	S	S	-	-	-	-	-
Roof	-	-	-	S	S	-	S	S	S	-	-
Under Canopy	-	S	S	S	S	S	-	-	-	-	S
Wall <sup>v</sup>	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
Window	-	-	-	S	S	S	-	-	-	-	-
Miscellaneous Signs											
Directional	-	-	-	-	S	-	-	-	-	-	-
Banners <sup>vi</sup>	-	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	-	S
Flags <sup>vii</sup>	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Portable <sup>viii</sup>	-	-	-	-	S	S	-	-	-	-	-
Subdivision	S	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Construction	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

KEY

R = All residential zoning districts (RM-75, RS, R-90, R-75, R-50, R-45, R-75MH, R-50MH and R-50HD)

A = Allowed without sign permit

S = Allowed only with sign permit

- = Not allowed

**TABLE B**  
**MAXIMUM SIGN AREA (SQ. FT.) BY SIGN TYPE AND ZONING DISTRICT**

SIGN TYPE	Zoning District											
	R	O	M	C-1	C-2	C-4	IP	LI	GI	CN	MU	
<b>Freestanding Signs <sup>ix</sup></b>												
On-premise <sup>x</sup>	20	20	20	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Off-premise	-	-	-	-	300	-	-	300	300	-	-	-
<b>Building and Miscellaneous Signs</b>												
Directional <sup>xi</sup>	-	-	-	-	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wall, Canopy, Mansard, Projecting (combined)	32	32	32	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Under Canopy	-	6	6	6	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	6
Window (which requires a permit)	-	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Portable	-	-	-	-	32	32	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maximum Total Square Feet (for all of the above)	64	64	64	350	350	350	350	350	350	150	150	150
<b>Signs Exempt from Above Totals</b>												
Building Marker (historical)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Flags	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	60
Identification	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Incidental	2	2	2	2	2 <sup>xii</sup>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Subdivision	32 <sup>xiii</sup>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**KEY**

R = All residential zoning districts (RM-75, RS, R-90, R-75, R-50, R-45, R-75MH, R-50MH and R-50HD)

- = Not allowed

\* = For each building side, the greater of either (a) or (b)

(a) 50 square feet

(b) One square foot per linear foot of building frontage, not to exceed 250 square feet

+ = Window signs requiring a sign permit are subject to the “Maximum Total Square Feet” requirement for each parcel. All window signs combined (permitted and exempt) shall not exceed 30% of total window surface or 100 square feet, whichever is less.

**TABLE C**  
**MAXIMUM SIGN AREA (SQUARE FOOTAGE) BY SIGN TYPE AND ZONING DISTRICT**  
**COMMERCIAL/OFFICE CENTERS**

SIGN TYPE	ZONING DISTRICT				
	(M) (O)	C-1	C-2	C-4	MU
<b>Signs for Entire Commercial Center</b>					
Freestanding <sup>xiv</sup>	32 <sup>xv</sup>	32 <sup>o</sup>	100 <sup>xvi</sup>	100 <sup>xvi</sup>	100 <sup>xvii</sup>
Directional	-	-	12	-	-
<b>Building Signs (for each establishment)</b>					
Wall, Canopy, Mansard (combined)	32	*	*	*	32
Window (which require a permit)	-	+	+	+	-
Under Canopy <sup>xviii</sup>	6	6	6	6	6
Sidewalk Signs <sup>xvii</sup>	-	-	-	12	12
Maximum Total Square Feet <sup>xix</sup>	50	100	100	100	50
<b>Signs Exempt from Above Totals</b>					
Building Marker	4	4	4	4	4
Flags <sup>xx</sup>	60	60	60	60	60
Identification <sup>xxi</sup>	2	2	2	2	2
Incidental <sup>xxii</sup>	2	2	2	2	2
Portable <sup>xxiii</sup>			32	32	

**KEY**

- = Not allowed

\* = For each , the greater of either (a) or (b)

(a) 50 square feet

(b) One square foot per linear foot of building frontage, not to exceed 250 square feet

+ = Window signs requiring a sign permit are subject to the “Maximum Total Square Feet” requirement for each parcel. All window signs combined (permitted and exempt) shall not exceed 30% of total window surface or 100 square feet, whichever is less.

<sup>i</sup> Signs are only allowed on non-residential or multi-family uses.

<sup>ii</sup> May include only the building name, date of construction or historical data on historic site.

<sup>iii</sup> Only the name of the building and/or address of the establishment allowed on the sign.

<sup>iv</sup> No commercial message of any kind is allowed which is legible from any location off the parcel on which the sign is located.

<sup>v</sup> Signs are only allowed on non-residential or multi-family uses.

<sup>vi</sup> Subject to special regulations for banners as described in this ordinance.

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- <sup>vii</sup> Subject to special regulations for flags as described elsewhere in this ordinance
- <sup>viii</sup> Subject to special regulations for portable signs as described in this ordinance.
- <sup>ix</sup> One variable message board will be allowed per property provided it represents at least 10% but not more than 25% of the maximum sign area allowed in the zoning classification. Permits for variable message boards shall not be granted for properties currently having illegally, non-conforming signs until or unless said non-conforming signs are removed or replaced.
- <sup>x</sup> Parcels with multiple street frontages may be permitted secondary freestanding signs at one-half the maximum sizes shown in addition to the primary freestanding sign. However, except for commercial centers, secondary signs are subject to the “Maximum Total Square Feet” requirements for each parcel.
- <sup>xi</sup> These signs may be freestanding or mounted on a building or wall and there may be more than one sign per parcel. Each sign shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) square feet. If freestanding, the sign shall be limited to a maximum height of 2 ½ feet. The sign shall contain no advertising.
- <sup>xii</sup> Gasoline stations shall be allowed up to one-hundred (100) square feet
- <sup>xiii</sup> Overall height shall be limited to a maximum of five (5) feet.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Parcels with multiple street frontages may be permitted secondary freestanding signs at one-half the maximum sizes shown in addition to the primary freestanding sign. However, except for commercial centers, secondary signs are subject to the “Maximum Total Square Feet” requirements for each parcel.
- <sup>xv</sup> Plus five (5) square feet per tenant when tenant identification panels are included. The sign shall be limited to a height of eight (8) feet and in no case shall the total sign area exceed 50 square feet.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Plus fifteen (15) square feet per tenant when tenant identification panels are included.
- <sup>xvii</sup> Limited to sandwich, A-frame or ease signs. See special district regulations for C-4 Central Business District
- <sup>xviii</sup> Plus five (5) square feet per tenant when tenant identification panels are included. The sign shall be limited to a height of eight (8) feet and in no case shall the total sign area exceed 50 square feet.
- <sup>xix</sup> Maximum of one (1) Under Canopy sign per street frontage, per establishment.
- <sup>xx</sup> Per establishment for all above building signs.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Subject to special regulations for flags as described elsewhere in this ordinance
- <sup>xxii</sup> For each establishment.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> For each establishment.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Total square footage of any portable sign not to exceed 32 square feet.