

SECTION 10: SIGNS

WHEREAS, signs constitute a form of free speech subject to protection under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution;

WHEREAS, balance is critical in protecting constitutional rights while providing for traffic and pedestrian safety, aesthetics, the prevention of clutter and blight, protection of property values, and economic vitality while meeting the needs of businesses, institutions, neighborhoods and residents;

WHEREAS, the Supreme Court has recognized that the government must speak and in doing so is not regulated as private individuals under the First Amendment. While the Government often speaks directly, its speech can often be found in requirements of law that demand members of a community, residents and property owners to post notices to protect the rights afforded by the government. This form of speech finds protection in recognition of legal requirements that a property owner must post a property against trespassing, solicitors and others to enforce property rights and privacy; or where a property owner must warn of dangers on the property to protect public safety and limit liability such as warning of dangerous animals, high voltage, sinkholes, gun or weapon usage among other dangers. While these postings are sometimes voluntary, all are required by the government to be in a certain form and should constitute the government's speech.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE TOWN OF CAMERON THE FOLLOWING:

1. Purpose. The purpose of this section is as follows.
 - A. To allow businesses, institutions, and individuals to exercise their right to free speech by displaying an image on a sign, and to allow audiences to receive such information.
 - B. To promote and maintain visually attractive residential, agricultural, retail, commercial, historic, open space and industrial districts.
 - C. To provide for reasonable and appropriate communication and identification for on-premise signs in commercial and industrial districts in order to foster successful businesses.
 - D. To encourage the use of creative and visually attractive signs.
 - E. To ensure that signs are located and designed to reduce sign distraction and confusion that may be contributing factors in traffic congestion and accidents, and maintain a safe and orderly pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular environment.
 - F. To protect property values.
 - G. To promote public health, safety, and welfare by avoiding conflicts between signs and traffic control devices, avoiding traffic hazards, and reducing visual distractions and obstructions.

- H. To enable maintenance of rights-of-way and public property.
 - I. To protect and preserve the aesthetic quality and physical appearance of the town.
2. Definitions. As used in this ordinance, the following words, except where the context clearly indicates otherwise, are defined as follows. Where a sign type could be considered a subset of another type of sign, the most specific definition will control the regulatory standards that are applied.
- A. Air-Activated Signs, Moving Signs. Any temporary sign which in part or in total rotates, revolves or other-wise is in motion that is not a flag or temporary blade sign.
 - B. Animated Signs. Any electronic sign displaying flashing, intermittent or color changing light or lighting.
 - C. Awning. An architectural projection that provides weather protection, identity or decoration and is wholly supported by the building to which it is attached. An awning is comprised of a lightweight, rigid skeleton structure over which a covering is attached.
 - D. Balloon Signs, Inflatable Signs. Any air or gas-filled balloon, figure, or object attached by means of a rope or tether to a definite or fixed location.
 - E. Banner Signs. A temporary sign made of flexible materials and supported along more than one side or at two or more corners by staples, tape, wires, ropes, strings or other materials that are not fixed or rigid.
 - F. Blade Signs, temporary. A type of air-activated temporary sign, mounted on a pole perpendicular to the normal flow of traffic.
 - G. Blade Signs, Projecting Signs, permanent. A permanent projecting sign mounted on a building façade that is perpendicular to the normal flow of traffic.
 - H. Canopy. An architectural projection that provides weather protection, identity or decoration and is supported by the building to which it is attached and at the outer end by one or more stanchions attached to the ground. It is comprised of a rigid structure over which a covering is attached. If the stanchions are attached to the building, "Canopy" is indistinguishable from "Awning."
 - I. Canopy Sign. A wall sign that is located on the roof, fascia, soffit or ceiling of a canopy.
 - J. Cornerstone. A ceremonial masonry stone (block) or replica set into a prominent location in the exterior wall of a building. The cornerstone is considered a structural component of the building and is not a sign.
 - K. Electronic Changeable Message. A permanent electronic sign with changeable copy, is programmable, and has a digital display.
 - L. Feather flags. See "blade signs, temporary."
 - M. Flags. Any fabric or other flexible material attached to or designed to be flown from a flagpole or similar device. May include federal, state and local flags as

well as nongovernmental flags, but does not include temporary blade signs otherwise known as feather flags.

- N. Free-Standing Permanent Signs. Any permanent sign supported wholly or in part by some structure other than a building. Pole signs and ground-mounted signs are types of permanent signs.
- O. Glare. The sensation produced by luminance within the visual field that are sufficiently greater than the luminance to which eyes are adapted which causes loss in visual performance or visibility.
- P. Government Signs. A government sign is a sign that is constructed, placed or maintained by the federal, state or local government or a sign that is required to be constructed, placed or maintained by the federal, state or local government either directly or to enforce a property owner's rights.
- Q. Marquee. A permanent, roofed structure attached to and supported by the building and projecting over public property. Marquees are part of the building. They are distinct from canopies and awnings as those structures are attached to the building but are not structurally part of the building.
- R. Marquee Sign. A wall sign mounted flat against the front face of the marquee and projecting no more than 12 inches from the face.
- S. Monument Signs. A free-standing sign where the base of the sign structure is on or within twelve inches of the ground.
- T. Moving Signs. See air-activated signs and animated signs.
- U. Off-Premise Sign. A sign placed upon a property on which there is no building.
- V. People Sign, Human Billboard, Sign Walker, Sign Twirler. A person who applies a sign to his or her person, or costume, who wears a sandwich board sign, who carries a sign, and who may wear a costume.
- W. Pole Signs. A sign that is mounted on a free-standing pole or other support so that the bottom edge of the sign face is eight feet or more above grade.
- X. Portable Message Sign. A sign whose principal supporting structure is intended, by design and construction, to be used by resting upon the ground for support and may be easily moved or relocated for reuse. Portable signs shall include but are not limited to signs mounted upon a trailer, bench, wheeled carrier, or other non-motorized mobile structure with or without wheels.
- Y. Projected Image Signs. Visual images projected against structures by an external projection device, typically visible at night.
- Z. Projecting Signs. See "Blade sign, projecting signs, permanent."
- AA. Roof Signs. Signs placed on or above rooflines of buildings. Permanent building projections below the top roofline of a building are considered marquees. Signs attached below the roofline on a projection are considered canopies, awnings, or marquee signs.
- BB. Sandwich Board Sign, A- Sign. A type of portable message sign constructed in such a manner as to form an "A".

- CC. Sign. A name, identification, description, display or illustration, which is affixed to, painted or represented directly or indirectly upon a building, or other outdoor surface which directs attention to or is designed or intended to direct attention to the sign face or to an object, product, place, activity, person, institution, organization or business. Signs not exposed to view from a street or public access area are not signs for the purpose of these regulations.
- DD. Snipe Signs. Signs placed upon or attached to any curb, sidewalk, utility pole, post, fence, hydrant, bridge, another sign or other surface, bench, street light, mailbox, or natural objects such as trees or rocks, located on, over or across any public street or public property.
- EE. Temporary Signs. Signs for which the entire structure is temporary or portable. Signs not intended as a permanent installation.
- FF. Utility Pole Signs. A type of snipe sign, typically made of cardboard, attached to public utility such as light poles.
- GG. Vehicle Message Sign. A type of portable message sign that is attached to or painted on an unregistered vehicle that is parked on or adjacent to any property where the principal use of the vehicle is to display the sign and not to be used for transportation.
- HH. Wall Signs. A sign mounted flat against and projecting no more than twelve (12) inches from the wall. Canopy, awning and marquee signs are considered to be types of wall signs.
- II. Window Signs. A sign affixed to the interior or exterior of a window, excluding merchandise so as to attract the attention of persons outside the building.
- JJ. Yard Signs (also known as road signs, lawn signs, election signs, real estate signs). A temporary sign generally designed with metal or wood supports designed to be inserted into a grassed or dirt surface.

3. Examples of Temporary Signs.



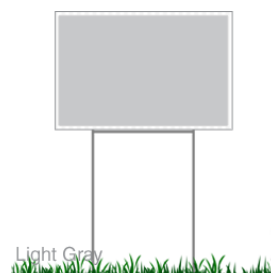
Figure 1 Blade Signs, Feather Flags



Figure 2 Sandwich Board Sign



Figure 3 Portable Sign



4. Examples of Permanent Sign Designs

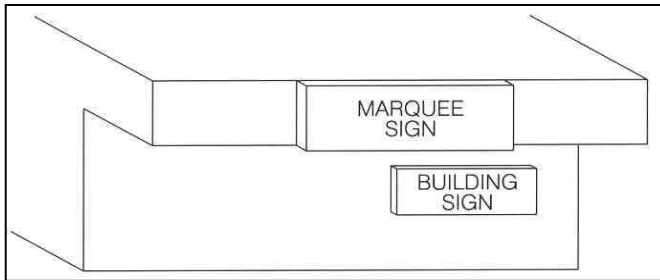


Figure 1 Building Signs

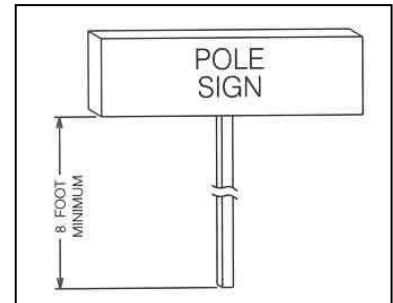


Figure 2 Pole Sign

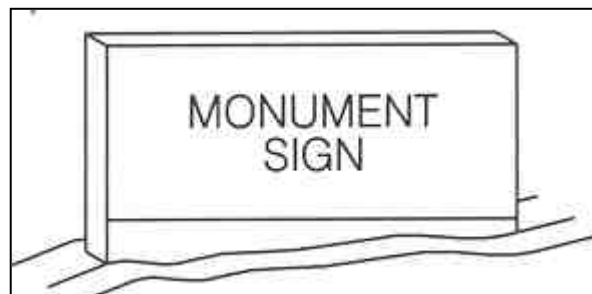
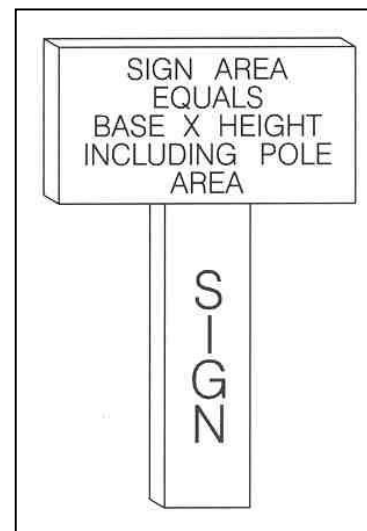
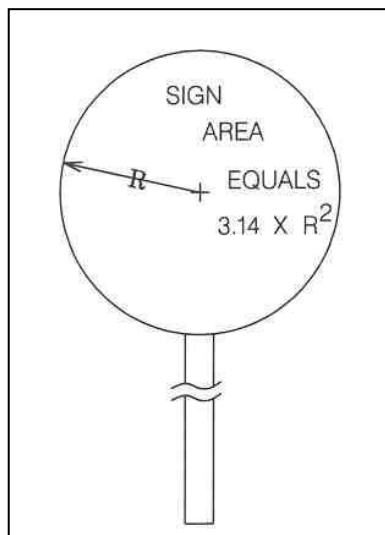
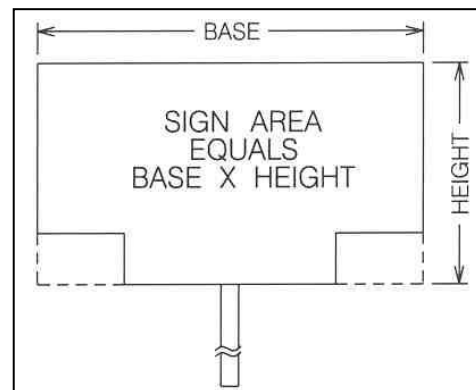
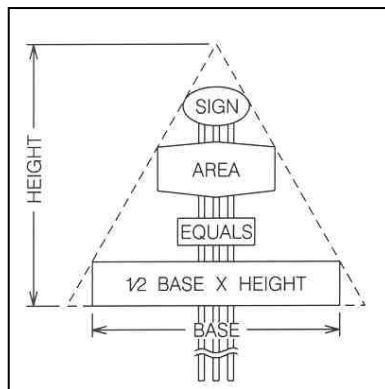


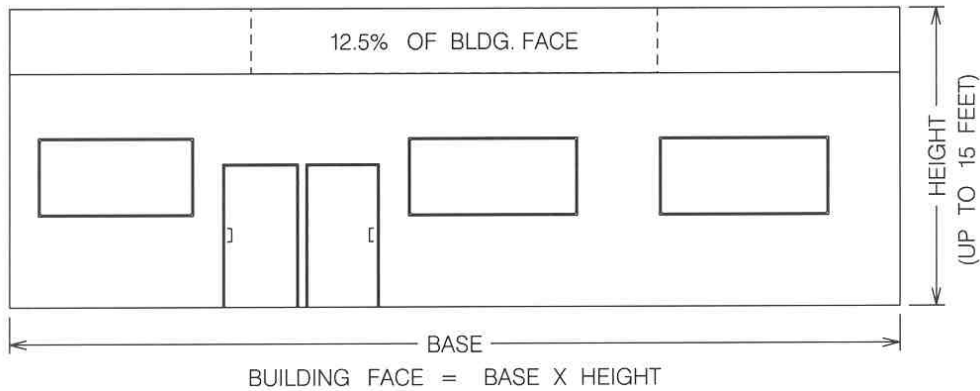
Figure 3 Monument/Ground Sign

5. Substitution Clause. Signs containing noncommercial speech are permitted anywhere that commercial signs are permitted, subject to the same regulations applicable to such signs.
6. Severability Clause. If any part, section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, phrase, clause, term, or word in this code is declared invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the validity or enforceability of the remaining portions of the code.
7. Prohibited Signs. Unless such signs serve a governmental purpose as identified in 100.59.8, the following signs are prohibited in the Town of Cameron.
 - A. Roof Signs.
 - B. Snipe Signs, including utility pole signs except on mailboxes in the Agriculture Overlay District.
 - C. Simulated public safety, warning or traffic signs.
 - D. Animated and Electronic Message Signs that change more frequently than every 8 seconds.
 - E. Motion signs including air-activated, balloon signs and temporary blade signs.
 - F. Vehicle message signs.
 - G. Signs located within sight triangles of intersections.
 - H. Signs emitting glare that causes discomfort or pain or reduces visibility.
 - I. Flags consecutively strung together.
 - J. Obscene signs.

- K. Off-premise signs greater than 32 square feet.
 - L. Projecting signs less than 84" (7 feet) in height.
 - M. Blade signs (feather flags)
 - N. Window signs exceeding 25% coverage of the interior or exterior windows
8. Signs for Governmental Purposes. These regulations are not intended to and do not apply to governmental signs as defined in Section 2.P. The inclusion of "government" in describing some signs does not intend to subject the government to regulation, but instead helps illuminate the type of sign that falls within the immunities of the government from regulation.
9. Calculations and Measurements Necessary to Determine Sign Dimensions.
- A. Sign areas shall be computed as shown below. The area of unusually shaped signs shall be determined by the area contained within the shape of the sign.



**When the pole area constitutes more than just support*



- B. The measurement of frontage necessary to determine the area of free-standing signs is the horizontal distance between the side lot lines as measured at the front setback. When a corner lot allows for two free-standing signs, the calculations shall be based off of each frontage. If a corner lot elects to place one sign at the corner, the sign size may be based off of the longest side.
- C. The measurement of building frontage necessary to determine allowable wall signage shall be based off of the frontage of the building dedicated to the particular use for which the sign is requested.
- D. Sign height for free-standing signs shall not extend above the maximum roof height of the building or higher than 25' from grade, whichever is less.

10. Temporary Sign Regulations by District

The following table reflects temporary signs allowed by district subject to time and manner regulations. "P" denotes the sign type is allowed. "X" denotes the sign type is not allowed. Sign types not included in the table are presumed to be disallowed unless addressed elsewhere in this article.

Table 10

Sign Types	RA	R-20	MHP	RNR	HBD	B
Banner	P	P	X	P	P	P
Construction Fence Wraps	P	P	P	P	P	P
Flags	P	P	P	P	P	P
People	X	X	X	X	P	P
Portable Message	X	X	X	P	P	P
Projected Image	P	P	P	X	X	P
Sandwich Board	X	X	X	X	P	P
Yard Signs	P	P	P	P	P	P
Window	P	P	P	P	P	P

Signs						
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11. Number, duration and location of temporary signs. For the purposes of this section, the following districts are deemed to be residential zoning districts: RA, RA-20, MHP, and RNR. All remaining zoning districts - HBD and B - are deemed to be commercial districts.

A. Residential Districts: The following numbers of signs and their allowed duration is identified below. Temporary signs not listed below are not allowed.

Table 11.1

Sign Type	Number	Duration	Size	Permit Required
Construction Fence Wrap	1 per fence	*	After 24 months, maximum size is 24 square feet*	Permit required 24 months from installation of sign*
Flags	3	Unlimited.	Maximum of 15 square feet each with pole height not to exceed 20 feet in height. Only one may be pole mounted.	No
Projected Image**	1	1 month, continuous. Not more than 3 months per year.	Shall not exceed the size of the wall space against which it is projected.	No
Yard Signs	1 per 5 acres or portion thereof	Unlimited.	Maximum of 12" x 18" for properties less than 5 acres in size. Maximum of 32 square feet for properties greater than 5 acres in size.	No
Window Signs	1 per residence	Unlimited.	Not more than 25% cover	No

*Fence wraps displaying signage when affixed to perimeter fencing at a construction site are exempt from zoning regulation pertaining to signage under this Article until the certificate of occupancy is issued for the final portion of any construction at that site or 24 months from the time the fence wrap was installed, whichever is shorter. If construction is not completed at the end of 24 months from the time the fence wrap was installed, the town may regulate the signage but must continue to allow fence wrapping materials to be affixed to the perimeter fencing. No fence wrap affixed pursuant to this subsection may display any advertising other than advertising sponsored by a person directly involved in the construction project and for which monetary compensation for the advertisement is not paid or required. N.C. Gen. Stat. §160A-381.

** Projected image signs are not allowed in the R-NR Zoning District.

B. Commercial Districts. The following numbers of signs and their allowed duration is identified below. Temporary signs not listed below are not allowed.

Table 11.2

Sign Type	Number	Duration	Size	Zoning Permit Required
Banner	1	30 days	24 square feet	Yes
Construction Fence Wrap	1 per fence	*	After 24 months, maximum size is 24 square feet*	Permit required 24 months from installation of sign*
Flags	3	Unlimited	24 square feet each with pole height not to exceed 25 feet in height.	No
People	No Limit	Unlimited	Unlimited	No
Portable Sign, No lights	1	21 days	4' x 6'	Yes
Projected Image	1	1 month, continuous. Not more than 90 days per year.	Shall not exceed the size of the wall space against which it is projected.	No
Sandwich Board	1 per business on property	Daily. Must be removed at the end of each business day	Maximum size of 2' x 4' per side	No
Yard Signs	1 per lot or 1 per 400 linear feet of frontage.	30 continuous days	4 square feet	No
Window Signs	Unlimited	Unlimited	Shall not cover more than 25% of each individual window inclusive of internal and external signage	No

*Fence wraps displaying signage when affixed to perimeter fencing at a construction site are exempt from zoning regulation pertaining to signage under this Article until the certificate of occupancy is issued for the final portion of any construction at that site or 24 months from the time the fence wrap was installed, whichever is shorter. If construction is not completed at the end of 24 months from the time the fence wrap was installed, the town may regulate the signage but must continue to allow fence wrapping materials to be affixed to the perimeter fencing. No fence wrap affixed pursuant to this subsection may display any advertising other than advertising sponsored by a person directly involved in the construction project and for which monetary compensation for the advertisement is not paid or required. N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann §160A-381.

- C. Agricultural Sign Overlay District. Properties located in the RA Zoning District shall comply with the regulations of temporary signs in Residential Districts with the exception of the following which are allowed to encourage the sale of agricultural products and promote agri-tourism.

Table 11.3

Sign Type	Number	Duration	Size	Permit Required
Yard Signs	3 per lot	Unlimited*	2 square feet	No
Snipe sign	Unlimited on mailbox only subject to acceptance by post office. Not allowed elsewhere on property.	Unlimited	1 square foot each	No

*Yard Signs shall be removed when businesses close for the season. Yard signs are subject to regulation by NCDOT. It is the responsibility of the sign owner to demonstrate to NCDOT that their requirements have been met.

- D. Temporary yard signs must be placed at least thirty feet (30') from the centerline of the road that divides the lane of traffic closest to the property boundary. The purpose is to ensure that the signs are not in the way of vehicles mowing rights-of-way.

12. Permanent Signs. Permanent signs in all commercial districts and permanent ground-mounted signs for subdivisions, apartment complexes, mobile home parks or neighborhoods are required to have a permit prior to installation. All other permanent signs are not required to have a permit.

- A. Residential Districts. The following permanent signs are permissible in residential zoning districts.
- Wall signs. 1 wall sign per structure is allowed maximum of 1 square foot in size. No permit is required.
 - Ground-Mounted Signs. 1 ground-mounted sign is allowed per lot, maximum of 2 square feet in size. No permit is required.
 - Ground-Mounted: Subdivision, Apartments, Mobile Home Parks or Neighborhood. 1 ground mounted sign to be placed at the entrance to subdivisions, apartment complexes, mobile home parks or established neighborhoods not to exceed 32 square feet in size per side per face for a total of 64 square feet.

B. Commercial Districts.

The following table reflects permanent signs allowed by commercial district. For the purpose of this section, the HBD and B Zoning Districts are considered commercial/business districts. "PwP" denotes the sign type is allowable with a permit. "P" denotes the sign type is allowable without a permit. "X" denotes the sign type is not allowed. Sign types not included in the table are presumed to be disallowed unless addressed elsewhere in this Article.

Table 12.1

Sign Types		HBD	B2
Building:			
	Wall	PwP	PwP
	Marquee	PwP	PwP
	Canopy	PwP	PwP
	Awning	PwP	PwP
Ground-Mounted:			
	Monument	PwP	PwP
	Pole	PwP	PwP
	Electronic Messaging*	X	PwP
	Additional SF Allowed and Amount**	P 10 SF	P 10 SF

*Animation and special effects shall not be used when changing the message on an electronic message sign.

**The purpose of the additional square footage is to provide for signs such as "entrance", "exit", directional arrows, etc.

- a. The following table shall be used for signs in the Business District when the property is adjacent to business or industrial uses.

Table 12.2 Basic Design Elements for Business Districts adjacent to business or industrial uses.

Number of Lanes Speed Limit		Max # of Items of Information on Sign	Wall Signs (Entire Wall Front)		Ground Signs		Projecting Signs	Roof Signs
# of Lanes	Speed Limit (MPH)		Max Area	Height	Max Area	Height	Max Area	Not Permitted
2	25	15	10%	N/A	12 SF	12 FT	8 SF	Not Permitted
2	35	15	10%	N/A	30 SF	16 FT	25 SF	Not Permitted
2	45	15	10%	N/A	50 SF	16 FT	Not Permitted	Not Permitted
2	55	15	10%	N/A	75 SF	20 SF	Not Permitted	Not Permitted
4	55 and above	15	10%	N/A	90 SF	20 SF	Not Permitted	Not Permitted

- b. The following table shall be used for signs in the Business district when the adjoining property is surrounded by institutions, residences or rural uses.

Table 12.3 Basic Design Elements for Business Districts adjacent to institutional, residential and rural uses.

Number of Lanes Speed Limit		Max # of Items of Information on Sign	Wall Signs (Entire Wall Front)		Ground Signs		Projecting Signs	Roof Signs
# of Lanes	Speed Limit (MPH)		Max Area	Height	Max Area	Height	Max Area	Not Permitted
2	25	15	10%	N/A	6 SF	10 FT	6 SF	Not Permitted
2	35	15	10%	N/A	25 SF	12 FT	20 SF	Not Permitted
2	45	15	10%	N/A	35 SF	14 FT	Not Permitted	Not Permitted
2	55	15	10%	N/A	70 SF	16 SF	Not Permitted	Not Permitted
4	55 and above	15	10%	N/A	65 SF	16 SF	Not Permitted	Not Permitted

13. Illumination

- A. Illuminated signs are permitted only on non-residential properties, or where approved as part of unified signage in a Planned Development approved through Special Use District Zoning.
- B. Illuminated signs erected in a commercial district contiguous to a residential district shall be so shielded or directed so that light brightness shall not exceed one (1) foot-candle at the property boundary.
- C. No illumination or glare shall be emitted directly onto a public street or roadway so as to constitute a hazard or impediment to motorist or public safety.
- D. No revolving or rotating beam or beacon of light shall be permitted as part of any sign.
- E. Flashing signs and flashing lighting shall not be permitted upon a sign.
- F. Electronic message signs are allowed where permitted provided the message does not change more frequently than every eight (8) seconds and the message completes the change within 2 seconds. Only one electronic message sign per lot is allowed.
- G. No exposed reflective or incandescent bulb shall be used on the exterior surface of any sign so as to expose the face of the bulb, light or lamp to any public street or adjacent property.
- H. Tube lights on the outside of windows are not allowed. Tube lights on the inside of windows are allowed in the B Zoning District but are limited to the maximum window coverage of twenty-five (25) percent. They may not flash.

14. Signs Regulated by Other Agencies. It is the responsibility of the sign owner to ensure that the requirements of signs regulated by other agencies, such as but not limited to NCDOT and the Moore County Board of Elections, are satisfied. It is not the intent of this ordinance to regulate the standards of those agencies.

15. Special Use Zoning Districts for Planned Developments. A Master Sign Plan shall be approved for Planned Developments as part of Special Use Zoning District approval process by the Board of Commissioners. The plan shall substantially conform to the requirements of table 12.3, Sign Regulations with the overall objective being unified signage. The Board of Commissioners may exercise flexibility in sign placement as part of the approval process.

16. Discontinuation of use. When a sign ceases use, the support structure may remain as long as it is in good condition and does not present a threat to public health, safety or welfare. Electronic signs are to be turned off. Sign faces shall either be reversed to the blank side or painted a solid color. A boot or sock may be used to cover the sign face for a period not to exceed six months. The property owner is responsible for ensuring that the signs are discontinued in accordance with this guidance.

