

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT SIGN REGULATIONS



Building Support Services
150 S York Street
PO Box 1748
Gastonia, NC 28053

Jason Putnam
Code Enforcement Official
(704) 866-6741
(704) 836-0044 fax
jasonp@cityofgastonia.com

Drew T. Pearson, CZO, CFM
Zoning Administrator
(704) 866-6746
(704) 836-0044 fax
drewp@cityofgastonia.com

Signs located in these districts present a special design challenge. Signs using modern materials and construction methods can be well designed or poorly done, as can signs constructed with traditional materials. For this reason, all signs proposed for the district shall first be reviewed and approved by a committee of City staff members called the Design Review Committee. When a sign permit application is submitted to the Inspections Department, the committee will meet within ten working days to review the proposed sign.

Permit and Approvals Required: Whether your sign will be permanently attached to the building wall, painted onto a window, part of an awning, or other type of sign, a permit is required prior to the erection or display of the sign. The first step is to completed an application for the Design Review Committee to review the sign. Once the design or style of sign has been approved, a building permit application should be submitted for the final approval before the sign is installed.

A completed sign permit application must include an application form supplied by the Inspections Division Office, located at 150 South York Street, a detailed scale drawing of the sign indicating its dimensions; letter sizes and fonts; colors; and all materials that will be used in its construction. There must also be a scaled drawing showing the placement of the sign upon the building wall in relationship with building features and any other existing signs. For ground signs, you must submit a site drawing showing the proposed location of the sign.

Internally illuminated Signs: The ordinance allows certain type of signs to be internally illuminated.

Wall Signs: Signage may be attached to any building wall facing a public street or facing a public or private parking lot where customers are allowed to park, and the area of allowed signage on any such wall face shall be calculated separately. Ground floor business fronting along a street are allowed two square feet of sign area for each linear foot of building wall width along said façade up to a maximum of 64 square feet for each façade. Such sign area may be distributed between multiple signs carrying separate messages. The zoning administrator may grant up to 25 additional square feet of signage that would otherwise meet the

standards of this section in order to make use of an historic sign frieze, or on a new building, in the creation of a new sign frieze. In addition to such facades, one identification sign (either single or multi-tenant), up to 32 square feet in size, may be placed on any building wall which is generally perpendicular to the building front face and is placed where it is visible from the street on which building fronts. For separate uses located on upper floors of buildings having only one tenant at the street level, one separate sign of nine square feet or less may be erected. When ground floor and basement uses are not located along the street front, a common tenant directory sign, up to 24 square feet in area, may be allowed by the entrance to such uses.

Directory Signs: Property owners may attach a directory sign not exceeding 9 square feet in area for single tenants nor 24 square feet for multiple tenants for the purpose of posting community notices, flyers, brochures, etc. Directory signs cannot contain any permanent advertising material or verbiage. Directory signs may not be framed or constructed from plastic or unfinished metal.

Ground Signs: Ground signs must not exceed 7 feet in height. The maximum area of a sign for a use, whose primary entrance fronts Franklin Boulevard, is 64 square feet. All others have a maximum square footage of 40 square feet. Ground signs may not be internally illuminated. Ground signs must be located 10 feet from all property lines and outside of sight triangles at street intersections.

Awnings and Hanging Signs: May protrude a maximum of five (5) feet from the building. Eight (8) feet of clearance shall be maintained between the sign and the sidewalk.

Sign proposals are evaluated and approved upon the finding that: the overall design and materials are sympathetic to the historic character of the downtown, the proposal represents an innovative way to achieve quality design with materials and/or techniques that were not generally available in the past and that the sign meets all basic requirements of the zoning ordinance.