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ARTICLE VI. - SIGNS^[2]

Footnotes:

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Editor's note— Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, adopted May 3, 2010, amended art. VI in its entirety and enacted similar provisions as set out herein. The former art. VI derived from Code 1979, §§ 8-4-81—8-4-53; Code 1998, §§ 106-176—106-180, 106-206—106-210; Ord. No. 1-95, § 8-4-83, adopted Feb. 6, 1995; Ord. No. 18-95, § XI, adopted Nov. 6, 1995; Ord. No. 04-1996, adopted Feb., 5, 1996; Ord. No. 13-96, §§ 8-4-91—8-4-95, adopted May 6, 1996; Ord. No. 22-96, adopted Dec. 2, 1996; Ord. No. 08-97, § II, adopted May 5, 1997; Ord. No. 03-98, adopted Feb. 2, 1998; Ord. No. 10-98, adopted June 1, 1998; Ord. No. 19-98, adopted Dec. 7, 1998; Ord. No. 02-99, adopted Feb. 1, 1999; Ord. No. 07-99, adopted May 3, 1999; Ord. No. 08-99, adopted June 7, 1999; Ord. No. 06-2002, §§ 106-176—106-181, 106-206—106-210, adopted March 4, 2002; Ord. No. 10-2002, §§ 106-176—106-191, adopted June 3, 2002; Ord. No. 03-2003, § 106-177, adopted March 3, 2003; Ord. No. 11-3003, §§ 106-79, 106-80, adopted Aug. 4, 2003; Ord. No. 07-2004, § 106-78, adopted June 7, 2004; Ord. No. 06-2005, § 106-78, adopted Sept. 6, 2005; Ord. No. 04-2007, § 106-90, adopted Feb. 5, 2007; Ord. No. 17-2007, § 106-178, adopted Aug. 13, 2007; Ord. No. 02-2008, adopted Feb. 4, 2008; Ord. No. 03-2008, adopted Feb. 4, 2008; Ord. No. 05-2008, § 106-81, adopted March 3, 2008; Ord. No. 26-2008, § 16-178, adopted Nov. 3, 2008; and Ord. No. 08-2009, part I, adopted May 4, 2009.

Sec. 115-183. - Findings and purpose.

The city finds that signs provide an important medium through which persons may convey a variety of noncommercial and commercial messages. However, left completely unregulated, signs can become a threat to public safety as a traffic hazard and a detriment to property values, as well as create an aesthetic nuisance. By enacting the ordinance from which this article is derived, the City Council intends to:

- (1) Balance the rights of persons to convey their messages through signs and the right of the public to be protected against the unrestricted proliferation of signs;
- (2) Protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens and others within the city;
- (3) Reduce traffic hazards, pedestrian hazards, and other hazards;
- (4) Promote and maintain the aesthetic qualities of the city;
- (5) Protect property values by minimizing the possible adverse effects and visual blight caused by signs;
- (6) Promote economic development;
- (7) Ensure the fair and consistent enforcement of sign regulations;
- (8) Promote the stated purposes of the city ordinance, as amended, which are expressly incorporated herein; and
- (9) Promote the stated purposes of the standard building code, as adopted and modified by the city, which are expressly incorporated herein.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-184. - General provisions.

- (a) The requirements in this chapter shall apply to any sign for which a sign permit is required, or are otherwise regulated by this chapter.
 - (1) It is unlawful for any person to post, display, alter the structure, or erect a sign without a sign permit or temporary sign permit, or as otherwise permitted in this chapter subject to conditions, design regulations and standards.
 - (2) A change to the copy of a sign or advertising device shall not constitute an alteration.

- (b) All applicable wall and ground/monument signage shall meet the building construction requirements of section H of the Uniform Building Code and applicable electrical codes, per subsection 103-56(13) of the Municipal Code as adopted by the city.
 - (1) All permanent ground mounted signage is required to be of monument design with in-ground mounting construction.
 - (2) All monument signs over four feet in height shall be required to provide an engineered seal and apply for a building permit with the Community Development Department of the city.
 - (3) Applicable electrical permits shall be required for panel exchanges and new signs with internal lighting mechanisms.
- (c) Individual or aggregate window signs are limited to 20 percent of the glazed surface area, inclusive of windows and doors, per building, suite or tenant space.
 - (1) Window signs are considered separate from the square footage allocation for wall signs.
 - (2) Hand-written window signage is prohibited.
- (d) Any on-premises sign used to identify or describe a business, a commercial establishment or a nonresidential establishment or any commercial product or service offered therein shall contain the street number, the official street name, and the establishment name in English letters and Arabic numbers of a size equivalent to the predominant size of the letters and numbers on the sign.
 - (1) This section is adopted in order to aid in the identification and location of businesses and other commercial establishments in the city, for police, fire, and other emergency responses, and to avoid confusion and delay in response to such emergencies.
 - (2) This section shall apply to any sign which is erected, constructed, crafted or modified after the effective date of the ordinance from which this subsection is derived (June 7, 1999).
- (e) All on-premises and off-premises signs used to identify or describe a business, a commercial establishment or a nonresidential establishment or any commercial product or service that use words in a language other than English, where the English translation of such words does not appear on the sign, shall be prohibited unless a sworn affidavit is filed with the Community Development Department to provide the city with the complete translation of any foreign words not translated in English on the sign.
 - (1) The affidavit must be from a person other than the owner of the business, or the commercial establishment or nonresidential establishment who is competent to translate the foreign words.
 - (2) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the use of foreign words or characters which are proper nouns which have no English translation as long as they do not contain unconstitutionally obscene language or advertise an illegal activity.
 - (3) This section is adopted in order to aid in the identification of businesses and other commercial establishments in the city, for police, fire, and other emergency responses, and to avoid confusion and delay in response to such emergencies and to protect the public health, morals and welfare from the display of unconstitutionally obscene language and the advertisement of illegal activities.
 - (4) This section shall apply to any signs which are erected, constructed, crafted or modified after the effective date of this subsection [May 3, 2010].
- (f) Two-sided and/or multifaced ground signs, including "V"-shaped signs, are permitted only with the following conditions:
 - (1) Angles of each side do not exceed 60 degrees;
 - (2) Text is limited to placement on only two sign faces;
 - (3) Face on the interior sides of any sign with an open angle of less than 60 degrees must be painted a solid color or stain to match visible portions of sign, and remain void of any decoration, image, logo, text or other identifying features.

- (g) For properties with multiple road frontages, in association with applications for the principal entry monument sign for an individual freestanding nonresidential building on a lot, or multitenant buildings within a planned commercial center, office/business park or industrial park, a conditional allowance may be granted subject to approval by the Community Development Director or designee on a case-by-case basis. The following conditions must apply for such determination to be made:
 - (1) The road frontage along the roadway with primary vehicular visibility is less than the roadway with secondary vehicular visibility, and the following factors exist:
 - a. The principal building(s) front on, and derive direct access into their parking areas from the roadway with secondary vehicular visibility;
 - b. Direct access into the parking areas of the property are not derived from the roadway with primary vehicular visibility; and
 - c. Due to topographic, right-of-way setback, site layout, building orientation, roadway visibility, or other physical conditions, the primary entry monument sign must be placed on the roadway with primary vehicular visibility rather than the roadway with direct access and building frontage.
 - (2) Upon review and consideration of the above factors, the Community Development Director or designee may grant up to 50 percent of the allowable sign face square footage allocation associated with the lineal roadway frontage of the secondary roadway to be transferred to the sign face square footage allocation associated with the lineal roadway frontage of the primary roadway.
- (h) Signs must be in accordance with the standards and regulations of any zoning overlay district as stipulated in subsection 115-93(k), Redevelopment Overlay Zone (RAOD), or one which may later be adopted, with the exemption of existing signs made non-conforming by enactment of the subject overlay.
- (i) Applicant shall be required to restore the wall/facade material to aesthetic conformance with its original color and texture on the surface area beneath a wall/facade mounted sign which is to be removed, modified or be replaced by a new sign.
 - (1) Improvements must be completed within 30 days of the removal of the existing sign prior to installation of the new signage.
 - (2) Property owner shall be responsible for retrofit of facade surface to original condition in the case of abandoned commercial signs which have been discontinued for a period of more than 90 days and are required to be removed.
- (j) Upon expiration of a special use permit for places of religious worship, property owner shall be required to remove signage identifying name of religious institution within 30 days of vacancy of property.
- (k) The city shall be empowered to remove, or cause to be removed, at the owner's expense, all prohibited signs and/or signs not meeting the requirements and conditions of this chapter.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-185. - Signs exempt from the provisions of this section.

The following types of signs are exempt from the sign permit requirements of this article, unless otherwise expressly prohibited under section 115-186. However, all of these signs shall abide by the height and dimensional requirements as specified in this article and all applicable building codes.

- (a) Nonilluminated temporary freestanding advertising or special message signs located on a residential or nonresidential lot having an aggregate sign area of 16 square feet or less.
 - (1) Acceptable materials include nondurable flexible plastic or corrugated plastic sign face mounted on a nonpermanent metal or wood in-ground support foundation.
 - (2) Each such sign may not exceed four square feet in size;

- (3) Number of signs [is] limited to:
 - a. One temporary sign per detached or attached single-family residential unit on an individual lot.
 - b. For attached multifamily residential properties in the RM and DCD districts, one temporary sign per each 50 linear feet of perimeter roadway frontage, not to exceed four signs total per lot.
 - c. One temporary sign per each suite or tenant space within a multitenant nonresidential commercial center or business park.
 - d. For properties with a freestanding nonresidential building on a single road frontage— One temporary sign per each 50 linear feet of roadway frontage, not to exceed four signs total per lot.
 - e. For properties with a freestanding nonresidential building with multiple road frontages— One temporary sign per each 50 linear feet of roadway frontage on each roadway, not to exceed four signs total per side;
- (4) Height is limited to four feet above the grade level of the adjacent street to which the sign is located or three feet above ground level, whichever is greater.
- (5) No sign shall be located closer than ten feet to the back of curb of a public roadway, and not within the public right-of-way.
- (6) Any commercial message on a sign located on any lot in any residential district must be related to the physical premises on that lot.
 - a. Such a message may be deemed related to the physical premises on the lot if it indicates the provider of services to or regarding the premises.
 - b. Signs in association with a permitted home occupation are prohibited.
 - c. Should any new zoning district be created that incorporates any residential use, this section shall apply to such new district, unless otherwise stated in the ordinance creating the new zoning district.
- (b) Signs for the sole purpose of displaying street numbers as may be required by other code sections and other signs required by law.
- (c) Banners on utility poles for city sanctioned events, as defined by the adopted temporary sign permit policy.
- (d) One official sign per road frontage, as required by the state, identifying vehicle emissions inspection stations licensed by the state.
- (e) Temporary celebratory banners placed on residentially zoned property, limited to no more than 24 square feet in size, individually attached to a pole, mast, arm or other structure, with an effective time limitation of ten days.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-186. - Signs prohibited in city.

The following types of signs are prohibited everywhere within the city:

- (1) Any sign that, by reason of its shape, position or color, may be confused with an authorized traffic sign or signal.
- (2) Any sign containing the word "stop," "look," "danger," or other similar word that may mislead and confuse traffic.
- (3) Any sign with flashing green, red, amber or other lights that may be confused with a traffic signal.

- (4) Any sign that is attached to a tree, fence post or utility pole, official street sign or marker, traffic pole or similar device, or is attached to or painted on a rock or other natural object.
- (5) Any sign located within a public right-of-way unless it is an official street name sign, traffic sign or signal or other official sign.
- (6) Roof signs, except legal temporary signs.
- (7) Any sign placed or erected on a property without the permission of the owner.
- (8) Signs rotating at greater than six revolutions per minute.
- (9) Advertising or signage displayed on courtesy benches, trash cans and similar devices.
- (10) Animated signs involving motion or sound.
- (11) Exterior exposed neon signs including neon used to attract attention such as outlining a building or building feature.
- (12) Reserved.
- (13) Interior neon signs exceeding four square feet in total dimension that are visible from the public right-of-way, including neon signs located in a window of a building, suite or individual tenant in a nonresidential zone. The permitted four square feet of interior neon signage is included within the allowed 20 percent allocation for window signage.
- (14) Portable, i.e. trailer, sidewalk, sandwich, curb and "A" type signs.
- (15) Multifaced "V"-shaped signs with angles exceeding 60 percent in width.
- (16) Signs which contain words, pictures, or statements which are obscene, as defined by O.C.G.A. § 16-12-80.
- (17) Signs which do not conform to applicable building and electrical codes.
- (18) Streamers and inflatable objects, other than permitted temporary signs.
- (19) Signs advertising a home occupation business conducted on the premises on a residential lot.
- (20) Abandoned commercial signs. Commercial signs (including sign structures) shall be deemed abandoned if the business, service or commercial transaction to which it relates has been discontinued for 90 days.
- (21) Any sign that is structurally unsound, or is a hazard to traffic or pedestrians.
- (22) Dilapidated or neglected signs. A sign (including sign structure) will be dilapidated or neglected if it does not present a neat and orderly appearance, which may be manifested by the following: rust or holes on or in the sign or sign structure; or broken, missing, loose or bent parts; faded or flaking paint; nonoperative or partially nonoperative illuminating or mechanical devices or missing letters in sign copy.
- (23) Signs which interfere with road or highway visibility or obstruct or otherwise interfere with the safe and orderly movement of traffic or which otherwise pose a hazard to traffic due to structural deficiencies in the structure of such signs.
- (24) Signs which advertise any activity, service, or product prohibited by the laws or regulations of the United States or the state or by the ordinance or resolutions of the county. This section shall not prohibit signs promoting the legalization of any matter presently prohibited by federal, state, or local law.
- (25) Signs which obstruct any fire escape, any means of egress or ventilation or shall prevent free passage from one part of a roof to any other part thereof, as well as signs attached to any fire escape.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-187. - Signs permitted in any zoning district.

Matrix 1 identifies the types of signs permitted in the city:

NORCROSS PERMITTED SIGNS					
TYPE OF SIGN PURPOSE OR USE	MAXIMUM HEIGHT	SETBACK FROM RIGHT-OF- WAY	MAXIMUM SIZE PER SIGN ALLOWED	QUANTITY & TYPE PERMITTED	BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED
<i>Signs Requiring Permit from Community Development Department</i>					
<i>Business or institution signs for individual establishments, offices, shops, etc. not within a planned office, commercial or industrial center</i>					
Primary Wall Identification Signage installed on an Individual Building on an Individual Lot.	Not greater than height of wall. May be placed on canopy. Not to extend above roofline.	Located on building facade. Building setback shall apply.	Equal to the width of the face of the building times a factor of two. Unless the building fronts on two or more streets it shall be considered to have only one face. Where frontage on multiple roadways exists, each frontage is allocated a maximum square footage allowance.	Where building has only one face, signage may be placed on the sides of the building but the total signage area shall not exceed the square footage allocation based on the building face alone. Materials include wood, metal or metal laminate (corrugated prohibited) and PVC or similar material encased in a frame structure.	No
Monument Sign— Primary Business Identification for an Individual Building on an Individual Lot.	Six feet above street level or ten feet above ground level.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way, within setback.	1. Not to exceed 50 square feet on one side, maximum two sides, for road frontage up to and not exceeding 500 linear feet. 2. 100 square feet on one side, maximum two sides, for road frontage between 501 and 1,000 linear feet of road frontage. 3. 150 square feet on one side,	One monument sign structure per street frontage, not to exceed maximum square footage as determined by linear roadway footage. <i>*See note for special exemption and conditions as set forth in subsection 115-184(g)</i>	A separate building permit required for monument signs exceeding four feet in height

			maximum two sides, for road frontage between 1,001 and 1,500 linear feet of road frontage.		
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Business or institution signs for individual establishments, offices, shops, etc. within a planned commercial center

Primary Wall Identification Signage for an Individual Tenant within a Planned Commercial Center.	Not greater than height of wall. May be placed on canopy. Not to extend above roofline.	Located on building facade. Building setback shall apply.	Equal to the width of the face of the tenant space times a factor of two.	Signage may be placed on the sides or rear of the building, but the combined total signage area shall not exceed the square footage allocation based on the width of tenant space formula.	No
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Shared Monument Sign—Primary Business Identification for Multiple Tenants in a Planned Commercial Center.	Six feet above street level or ten feet above ground level.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way, within setback.	<p>1. Not to exceed 50 square feet on one side, maximum two sides, for road frontage up to and not exceeding 500 linear feet.</p> <p>2. 100 square feet on one side, maximum two sides, for road frontage between 501 and 1,000 linear feet of road frontage.</p> <p>3. 150 square feet on one side, maximum two sides, for road frontage between 1,001 and 1,500 linear feet of road frontage.</p>	<p>One monument sign structure per street frontage, not to exceed maximum square footage as determined by linear roadway footage.</p> <p><i>*See note for special exemption</i></p>	A separate building permit required for monument signs exceeding four feet in height
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Business or institution signs for individual establishments and offices, etc. within a planned office center, industrial or business park

Primary Wall Identification Signage for an Individual Tenant	Not greater than height of wall. May	Located on building	Equal to the width of the face of the tenant	Signage may be placed on the sides or rear of the building,	No
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within a Planned Office Center, Industrial or Business Park.	be placed on canopy. Not to extend above roofline.	facade. Building setback shall apply.	space times a factor of two.	but the combined total signage area shall not exceed the square footage allocation based on the width of tenant space formula. Materials include wood, metal (corrugated prohibited) and PVC or similar encased in frame structure.	
Shared Monument Sign—Primary Business Identification for Multiple Tenants in a Planned Office Center, Industrial or Business Park.	Six feet above street level or ten feet above ground level.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way, within setback.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Not to exceed 50 square feet on one side, maximum two sides, for road frontage up to and not exceeding 500 linear feet. 2. 100 square feet on one side, maximum two sides, for road frontage between 501 and 1,000 linear feet of road frontage. 3. 150 square feet on one side, maximum two sides, for road frontage between 1,001 and 1,500 linear feet of road frontage. 	<p>One monument sign structure per street frontage, not to exceed maximum square footage as determined by linear roadway footage.</p> <p><i>*See note for special exemption and conditions as set forth in subsection 115-184(g)</i></p>	A separate building permit required for monument signs exceeding four feet in height
<i>Other signage requiring a sign permit</i>					
Church Bulletin Board—Monument ground sign, with interchangeable letters or panels.	Six feet above street level or ten feet above ground level.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way within setback.	Not to exceed 50 square feet on one side, maximum two sides.	One per property. May be illuminated with indirect lighting only. Electronic readerboard sign prohibited.	A separate building permit required for monument signs exceeding four feet in height
Subdivision, Neighborhood, Planned Shopping Center, Office	Maximum eight feet above street	Minimum ten feet from right-	Each sign face not to exceed 40	Not more than two nonilluminated or indirectly illuminated	A separate building permit required for

Complex, Industrial Park or Business Park Monument Identification Sign.	level or three feet from ground level, whichever is greater.	of-way within setback.	square feet in area.	monument signs per project. Required to be separated by a distance of not less than 300 linear feet between signs.	monument signs exceeding four feet in height
On-Premises Directional Signs, with Company Logo Identification, including Exit/Entrance, Shipping/Receiving, and Do Not Enter.	Four-foot height limitation.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way, within setback.	Not to exceed three square feet in area.	No limit specified. May be mounted on wall, or single pole mounted.	No
<i>Signs Not Subject to a Sign Permit from Community Development Department</i>					
Official street name, traffic direction or other official signs.	Per state and federal regulations.	Permitted in right-of-way.	Per state and federal regulations.	As necessary for public safety, health and welfare.	No
Temporary Single-Family Residential Property Real Estate Signs advertising the sale, lease or rental of property.	Sign face maximum height three feet above ground level.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way within setback.	Not to exceed six square feet.	One per single-family residential property.	No
Temporary Real Estate Signs advertising the sale, lease or rental of property outside of the Traditional Norcross Character Area as established by the 2006 Norcross Architectural and Site Design Standards Manual.	Maximum eight feet above ground level.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way within setback.	Not to exceed 20 square feet per side, or one square foot per five feet of roadway frontage, whichever is less. Maximum two sides per sign.	One sign per road frontage for property as shown on the 2030 Comprehensive Plan or official Zoning Map as other than single-family residential. Double pole support permitted. Single pole support structure prohibited.	No
Temporary Real Estate Signs advertising the sale lease or rental of property within the Traditional Norcross Character Area as established by the 2006 Norcross Architectural and Site Design Standards Manual and design standards in subsection 115-189(d).	Maximum eight feet above ground level.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way within setback.	Not to exceed 20 square feet per side, or one square foot per five feet of roadway frontage, whichever is less. Maximum two sides per sign.	One sign per road frontage for property as shown on the 2030 Comprehensive Plan or official Zoning Map as other than single family residential. Must meet section 115-190 requirements for size, height and maintenance.**	Requires Administrative ARB review and approval. Must meet design standards as set forth in subsection 115-189(d).
Temporary Construction and Development Signs, located on a property under development.	Maximum eight feet above street level or three	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way	Sign may be single- or double-sided, based on	One sign per street frontage. May be illuminated or indirectly illuminated,	No

	feet from ground level, whichever is greater.	within setback.	placement on lot. The combined area of all sign faces on the property may not exceed 180 square feet. Double pole support is permitted. Single pole support structure is prohibited.	giving the names of persons or firms engaged in the undertaking of a project or giving the name of the project or other information pertinent to the project while under construction.	
Temporary Directional or Information Signs of a Quasi-Public Nature.	Sign face maximum height three feet above ground level.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way within setback.	Not to exceed four square feet.	One per property, not to exceed four total.	No
On-Premises Credit Card and Bank Instant Teller Identification Signs, limited to illumination during business hours only.	Mounted on machines or on building at location of machines.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way within setback.	Maximum three square feet per card or six square feet total area.	Number limited by size of each sign, not to exceed six square feet of sign area total.	No
On-Premises Directional Signs, without Company Logo, including Exit/Entrance, Shipping/Receiving, and Do Not Enter.	Four-foot height limitation.	Minimum ten feet from right-of-way within setback.	Not to exceed three square feet in area.	No limit specified. May be mounted on wall, or single pole mounted.	No
Window Signage, including interior neon signage.	Located on glazed surface of building facade.	Building setback shall apply.	Not to exceed 20 percent of glazed window or door surface. Interior neon signage limited to a maximum of four square feet or as allowed per standard proportion above.	Window signage is considered as separate from the total wall signage square footage allocation and is determined based on total square footage of glazed surfaces only.	No
Additional Signage for Convenience Stores and Service Stations with Pump Islands.	Located on canopy face and/or spreader bars on pump.	Building setback for pump island shall apply.	Canopy signs, limited to eight square feet per sign. Spreader bar signs (signs located under canopy over	Two signs per canopy face. Spreader bar, two signs per spreader bar.	No

			pump islands) not to exceed four.		
Wall Signs for Accessory Car Wash Separate from Convenience Store or Service Station on Same Lot.	Not greater than height of wall. Not to extend above roofline.	Located on building facade. Building setback shall apply.	Maximum eight square feet each sign.	Maximum two signs per structure.	No
Note: All signage proposed within the Traditional Norcross Character Area as depicted in the 2006 Norcross Architectural and Site Design Manual is subject to additional design standards per section 185-190.					
* Special Exemption: For properties with multiple road frontages, where the road frontage along the roadway with primary visibility is less than the roadway with secondary visibility, up to 50 percent of the allowable square footage sign allocation from the secondary roadway may be transferred to the primary roadway square footage sign face allocation, subject to approval on a case by case basis by the Community Development Director or designee and establishment of conditions as set forth in subsection 115-184(g).					
** Administrative certificate of appropriateness review and approval required by Community Development Director or designee. Must meet design standards as established in subsection 185-189(d).					

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010; Ord. No. 16-2012, 6-4-2012)

Sec. 115-188. - Temporary signs.

- (a) The following types of signs or advertising devices shall be allowed by issue of a temporary sign permit allowing establishment of this type advertising event. Each temporary sign permit allows for one of the following types of temporary signs per event:
- (1) Balloons or streamers. Inflatable and gas filled devices are prohibited.
 - (2) Flags or banners beyond the limits allowed in section 115-191.
 - a. Banners are limited to 32 square feet in size and may be double sided.
 - b. The location and means of mounting must be clearly depicted on the temporary sign permit application.
 - (3) Noncommercial displays and devices related to religious holiday celebrations such as nativity scenes, colored sashes, Christmas trees, novelty candles and snowflakes, menorahs, etc.
 - (4) Temporary outdoor activity or temporary outdoor retail sales and display events, as regulated in article IX, chapter 8 of the Norcross Municipal Code.
- (b) Temporary signage is limited to a period not exceeding 15 consecutive days.
- (1) Temporary sign permit periods are limited to four times within a calendar year and 90 days between applications, issued for the same business/institution, inclusive of temporary signage in association with a temporary outdoor activity or temporary outdoor retail sales and display event.
 - (2) The 15-day limitation on temporary signage associated with a permitted temporary outdoor activity shall be waived to allow temporary signage to run concurrently only with the permitted term of the specific temporary outdoor activity as stipulated in subsection 8-318(g)(1) of the Norcross Municipal Code, subject to Community Development Director approval.

- (c) A fee as established by the City Council of \$10.00 shall be charged for each temporary sign permit.
- (d) Noncommercial displays and devices related to religious holidays, otherwise in conformance with the regulations outlined in this section, are permitted without need for permit for the immediate seven days preceding, the day of and the day after the holiday.
- (e) The city shall be exempted from temporary sign regulation and fees including, but not limited to: size, placement and duration of display; when displaying informational and directional temporary signs related to city-sponsored and/or city-sanctioned events.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-189. - Billboards.

Billboards shall be permitted subject to the following restrictions:

- (1) Billboards may be permitted within the M-1 district if located on properties that are adjacent to principal arterials, major arterials or state or national highways. Billboards shall be prohibited along Parkways or roads designated as residential arterials as shown in the Gwinnett County Comprehensive Plan.
- (2) Billboards shall not be placed within 500 feet of a dwelling, residential zoning district, city building, church, school, daycare, park, cemetery, or right-of-way of a Parkway.
- (3) No billboards shall be located closer than 1,250 feet from another billboard; except that any billboard located on a parcel of land which is directly adjacent to Interstate 85 shall have a separation of at least 500 feet from any other billboard located on the same side of Interstate 85.
- (4) Billboards shall not be less than 1,250 feet from the limits of any overlay zoning district, including Gwinnett County overlay zoning districts, where they are prohibited, or from any other billboard in any direction, on either side of the same right-of-way or along another right-of-way.
- (5) Billboards shall be completely independent of any building or other structure, excluding the sign structure.
- (6) Billboards shall meet the area, public street frontage, side yard, and rear yard requirements of the zoning district in which located.
- (7) The maximum sign area of all display surfaces shall not exceed 700 square feet per sign structure. For double-faced signs, these maximum sign areas shall apply to each side of the sign structure.
- (8) No billboard shall contain more than one face per side, nor more than two sides; provided, however, that no sign face may be located above another sign face.
- (9) The maximum height and minimum front yard setback from the street right-of-way for billboards are:

Sign Face in One Direction	Maximum Height	Minimum Front Yard Setback
350 square feet or greater	70 feet if adjacent to I-85	75 feet
350 square feet or greater	40 feet (all other roads)	75 feet
300—349 square feet	30 feet	50 feet

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010; Ord. No. 16-2012, 6-4-2012; Ord. No. 03-2013, § 3, 3-4-2013)

Editor's note— Ord. No. 03-2013, § 3, adopted March 4, 2013, changed the title of § 115-189 from "Billboard or oversized signs" to "Billboards."

Sec. 115-190. - Signs in Norcross Traditional Character Area.

In order to provide historical continuity in the geographic area within the city which appears on the U.S. [National] Register of Historic Places and is known as the historical district, all signs located within the Traditional Norcross Character Area per the 2006 Norcross Architectural and Site Design Standards Manual shall be governed by the following provisions:

- (a) A historical district sign, including lighting, should be in keeping with the turn-of-the-century architecture generally represented in the historic district. Such sign should identify the name of the business and/or the product or service provided and should be in proportion with and visually loaded to the architectural character of the building, restrained in size and no larger than necessary for adequate identification.
- (b) All monument signs (ground signs with permanent foundations) must be reviewed and approved by the Architectural Review Board and must obtain a building permit prior to installation.
- (c) In reviewing and approving signs within the Traditional Norcross Character Area, the Community Development Department may refer to the Historic District Study of 1987, the Town Center Study of 2001, and the 2006 Norcross Architectural and Site Design Standards which are incorporated herein by reference.
 - (1) In addition to the requirements set forth in sections 115-185, 115-186 and 115-187, a sign permit shall be obtained by the submission of a drawing or sketch of the proposed signage to the Community Development Department for written approval. Such drawing or sketch shall be of sufficient detail and accuracy to permit an informed review.
 - (2) Prior to the issuance of a permit, the sign permit application shall be approved by the Community Development Department.
 - (3) Denial of the permit may be appealed to the Mayor and Council.
- (d) Temporary real estate signs over four feet in height must apply for administrative certificate of appropriateness approval with the Community Development Director or designee, and meet the following design requirements:
 - (1) The sign face shall keep the same display area square footage;
 - (2) The sign face shall be rotated to present a vertical orientation twice as tall as it is wide;
 - (3) The sign background shall have a darker hue than the lettering on the sign;
 - (4) The sign's posts shall be colored to match the sign background;
 - (5) The applicant shall add newel caps or other decorative tops to the sign posts;
 - (6) The lettering of the sign shall be a script with an historic aesthetic.
- (e) Subject to the grandfather clause provision set forth in subsection (f), the following signs shall not be allowed within the Traditional Norcross Character Area:
 - (1) Signs painted directly on exterior walls of a building or structure.
 - (2) Roof-mounted signs.
 - (3) Outdoor advertising signs (e.g., billboards).
 - (4) Neon signs and other internally lighted signs, with the exception of an internal window sign not to exceed 20 percent of the total glazed area of windows and doors.
 - (5) Reader board or other signs exhibiting motion and electronic text changes.
- (f) The lawful use of any sign existing at the time of the enactment or amendment of this section may be continued, even though such sign does not conform to the provisions of this section,

except that the nonconforming sign shall not be changed, altered or replaced except in conformance with this section.

- (g) One projecting sign per building face shall be allowed for properties in the C3, Central Business district.
 - (1) Projecting signs shall not exceed nine square feet in area and shall be held away from the building no more than six inches and project no more than a total of three and one-half feet or one-quarter of the sidewalk, whichever is less.
 - (2) Projecting signs shall have a minimum clearance of eight feet six inches from the bottom of the sign to the sidewalk.
 - (3) All permitting requirements of this section shall apply to projecting signs.
- (h) City-owned and maintained informational reader boards may be allowed to contain digital messages for the purposes of providing public information in the most efficient and timely manner. The information provided on the reader board shall not contain flashing, animations or movement as part of the message. The reader board revision or new construction shall be reviewed by the Architectural Review Board for a recommendation to the Mayor and City Council.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010; Ord. No. 22-2012, 9-4-2012)

Sec. 115-191. - Flags.

- (a) All flags shall be displayed on purpose-built, professionally fabricated flagpoles, which may be vertical or mast-arm flagpoles.
 - (1) In nonresidential districts, flagpoles shall not exceed the allowed height provided for a structure or building in the applicable zoning district or 50 feet.
 - (2) The flagpoles in residential districts shall not exceed 25 feet in height or the height of the primary structure on the lot, whichever is less.
- (b) Flag dimensions.
 - (1) The maximum dimensions of any flag shall be proportional to the flagpole height.
 - (2) The hoist side of the flag shall not exceed 20 percent of the vertical height of the flagpole.
 - (3) In addition, flags are subject to the following limitations:

Pole Height	Maximum Flag Size (Total Square Feet)
Up to 30 feet	30 square feet
31 to 50 feet	60 square feet
51 feet and greater	150 square feet

- (c) Each lot or parcel shall be allowed a maximum of three flagpoles.
- (d) A maximum of two flags shall be allowed per flagpole.
- (e) Flags displaying a logo, message, statement, or commercial message and banners not meeting the definition of a flag contained herein shall conform to all applicable ordinances pertaining to signs.
- (f) A vertical flagpole must be set back from all property boundaries a distance which is at least equal to the height of the flagpole.

- (g) Flags and flagpoles shall be maintained in good repair, and to the extent applicable shall be in compliance with the building code. Flagpoles with broken halyards shall not be used and flags which are torn or frayed shall not be displayed.
- (h) On officially designated county, state, or federal holidays, there shall be no maximum flag size or number or other limitations on display.
- (i) This section shall not be construed to restrict the right to display eligible flags as banners or noncommercial signage, as provided elsewhere in this article.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-192. - Nonconforming signs.

- (a) The lawful use of a permanent sign existing at the time of the adoption of the ordinance from which this article is derived may be continued in nonconformance with the requirement of this article, except that the nonconforming sign shall not be enlarged, altered, modified, improved or rebuilt.
 - (1) A nonconforming sign may be repaired to the extent necessary to maintain it in a safe condition and neat and orderly appearance.
 - (2) A change in the advertising message on the sign shall not constitute an alteration or modification of the sign.
 - (3) Routine maintenance and changing of copy shall be permitted as long as such maintenance or changing of copy does not result in or change the shape, size or design.
- (b) No structural repair or change in shape, size or design, shall be permitted except to make a nonconforming sign comply with all requirements of this chapter or to render the sign structurally sound.
- (c) A nonconforming sign may not be removed by an act of the owner and later replaced by another nonconforming sign.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-193. - Illumination of signs.

- (a) No sign shall give off light which glares, blinds or has any other such adverse effect on traffic or adjacent properties.
 - (1) The light from an illuminated sign shall be established in such a way that adjacent properties and roadways are not adversely affected and that no direct light is cast upon adjacent properties and roadways.
 - (2) No illuminated sign shall be constructed or maintained within 75 feet of the property line of any single-family residential lot.
- (b) No sign shall have blinking, flashing, or fluctuating lights or other illuminating devices which have a changing light intensity, brightness or color.
- (c) Colored lights shall not be used at any location or in any manner so as to be confused with or construed as traffic control devices. Neither direct nor reflected light from primary light sources shall create a hazard to operators of motor vehicles.
- (d) Signs located within any residential district may only be indirectly illuminated.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-194. - Maintenance and appearance of signs.

- (a) All signs shall be maintained in good condition, so as to present a quality and orderly appearance.

- (1) Signs shall be considered neglected or dilapidated signs if the following conditions are present: rust or holes on or in the sign or sign structure; broken, missing, loose or bent parts; faded or flaking paint; nonoperative or partially nonoperative illuminating or mechanical devices; or missing letters in sign copy.
 - (2) The Community Development Department, after due notice, may have any sign removed which shows gross neglect or becomes dilapidated.
- (b) The Community Development Director or designee shall give the owner ten days' written notice to correct the deficiencies or to remove the sign or signs. If the owner refuses to correct the deficiencies or remove the sign, the Community Development Director or designee may have the sign removed at the expense of the owner.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-195. - Sign permit—Application information and requirements.

Applications for sign permits required by this chapter shall be filed by the sign owner or the owner's agent upon official forms with the Community Development Department.

- (a) The application shall describe and provide the information requested on the sign permit application and as stipulated by this chapter including, but not limited to, the following information:
 - (1) The street address of the property upon which the sign is to be located and a plat map of the property which bears an indication of the proposed location of the sign. In the absence of a street address, a method of location acceptable to the Community Development Department shall be used.
 - (2) The width of the face of the building or length of road frontage at the proposed location, as applicable.
 - (3) The name and address of the owner of the real property upon which the subject sign is to be located.
 - (4) Consent of the owner, or the owner's agent, granting permission for the placement or maintenance of the sign, if the applicant is not the owner or the owner's agent.
 - (5) Name, address, phone number and business license number of the sign contractor.
 - (6) The type of sign to be erected, the area of the sign, the height of the sign, the shape of the sign, and an explanation of how the sign is to be mounted or erected.
 - (7) Identification of any existing signage on the property, and dimensioned size.
 - (8) The distance of the sign from the closest adjacent sign in either direction. In the case of a billboard sign, the distances as set forth in section 115-189 must be provided.
 - (9) The size of the parcel on which the sign is to be placed.
 - (10) A dimensioned drawing or similar depiction of the proposed signage, including: height, width, construction materials, source of illumination, colors, and placement on the structure or position on the lot.
- (b) A separate building permit is required for monument signs over four feet in height and billboard signs.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-196. - Sign permit application—Time for consideration.

- (a) The city shall process all sign permit applications within 30 business days of the city's actual receipt of a completed sign permit application and a sign permit fee.
- (b) The sign permit fee shall be established by the Mayor and Council.

- (c) The Community Development Director or designee shall give notice to the applicant of the decision of the city by hand delivery or by mailing a notice by certified mail, return receipt requested. To the address on the sign permit application on or before the 30th business day after the city's receipt of the completed application.
 - (1) If mailed, the notice shall be deemed to have been given upon the date of mailing in conformity with this section.
 - (2) If the city fails to act within the 30-day prescribed period, the permit shall be deemed to have been granted.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-197. - Application—Denial and revocation.

- (a) *Procedure.* The city shall deny sign permits to applicants that submit applications for signs that do not comply with the provisions of this chapter, incomplete applications, and applications containing any false material statements.
 - (1) Violation of any provision of this article and any other applicable state law or city ordinance shall be grounds for revoking a permit granted by the city for the erection of a sign.
 - (2) Should it be determined that a sign permit was issued pursuant to an incomplete application or an application containing a false material statement, or that a permit has been erroneously issued in violation of this article, the Community Development Department Director shall revoke the permit.
 - (3) Should the Community Development Department Director deny or revoke a permit the reasons for the denial or revocation of the permit shall be stated in writing and hand delivered or mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the address on the sign permit application on or before the 30th business day after the city's receipt of the application.
 - (4) Any application denied and later resubmitted shall be deemed to have been submitted on the date of resubmission, instead of the date of the original submission.
 - a. A resubmitted application to rectify dimension and/or design considerations shall be considered a continuation of the original sign application, unless the applicant has constructed or installed the sign which was denied.
 - (5) No permit shall be denied or revoked, except for due cause. The term "due cause" means the violation of the provision of this article, state or federal law, or the submission of an incomplete application or an application containing false material statements.
 - (6) The applicant has the right to request a hearing before a hearing officer designated by the city.
 - a. The applicant shall be given ten days to file a request for an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals after receipt of the denial or revocation notice from the city.
 - b. When a timely appeal has been filed, the city shall schedule the appeal before the Zoning Board of Appeals within 30 days.
 - c. The date may be rescheduled by agreement of the city.
- (b) *Appeal.* In the event an applicant, property owner or designated representative whose permit has been denied or revoked is dissatisfied with the decision of the Zoning Board of Appeals, the applicant, property owner or designated representative may appeal the decision by filing a petition for writ of certiorari to the superior court of the county in the manner provided by law.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-198. - Sign permit—Expiration.

A sign permit shall become null and void if the sign for which the permit was issued has not been completed, erected and installed within six months after the date of issuance of the permit.

- (a) No refunds will be made for permit fees paid for permits that expired due to the failure to erect a completed permitted sign within the prescribed period.
- (b) If at a later time an individual desires to erect a sign at the same location, a new application must be processed and another fee paid in accordance with the fee schedule applicable at that time.

(Ord. No. 08-2010, part I, 5-3-2010)

Sec. 115-199. - Solicitation of motoring public prohibited.

No operator, employee or representative of the operator of any business coming under this article shall solicit directly from the motoring public.

(Ord. No. 17-2011, 10-3-2011)

Sec. 115-200. - Electronic message boards.

Electronic message boards are permitted only in the locations described in this section and only after site plan approval from the Community Planning and Development Director. The mayor and council may request a hearing to review the site plan and sign permit.

- (a) *Definitions.* [The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this subsection, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:]

Sign, animation means the use of movement or some element thereof, to depict action or create a special effect or scene.

Sign, electronic message board (EMB) means an on-premises electrically activated changeable sign whose variable message and/or graphic presentation capability can be electronically programmed by computer from a remote location. EMBs typically use light emitting diodes (LEDs) as a lighting source.

Sign area means the allowed sign area and setback requirements for electronic message boards shall be as noted in section 115-187 of the sign ordinance.

- (b) *Permitted zoning districts.* Electronic messaging signs are permitted in the following zoning districts:

OI—Office institutional district

C1—Neighborhood business district

C2—General business district

C3—Central business district

M1—Light industry district RAOD—Redevelopment area overlay district

Electronic message boards are prohibited in all other zoning districts within the City of Norcross not called out above except for the following:

- (1) Within residentially zoned areas, electronic messaging signs may be used by elementary and secondary public and private schools; churches and other nonprofit and governmental buildings provided the signs meet the following criteria:

- a. Must be set back 150 feet from a residential dwelling unit, unless the residential use is fully screened from the sign unit in which case the distance may be reduced at the discretion of the director of planning and development.
 - b. The signs must be programmed to be turned off between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
 - c. The signs must meet all other requirements of this section.
- (c) *Sign types to utilize electronic message boards.* Electronic messaging may be an element of a monument, freestanding, or window sign.
- (d) *Size and location requirements.* Electronic message boards shall meet the size and placement requirements of this article with the exception that electronic message boards shall not be allowed as off-premises advertising devices.
- (e) *Duration of display:*
 - (1) Any electronic message displayed shall remain unchanged for a minimum of 15 minutes prior to switching messages.
 - (2) The following display types are prohibited:
 - a. Animation is prohibited;
 - b. Flashing, blinking, fade in, fade out or scrolling text is prohibited; and
 - c. Video images are prohibited.
- (f) *Intensity of light:*
 - (1) The maximum luminance produced by the sign shall not exceed three-tenths foot candles greater than the ambient light level.
 - (2) The light level produced by the sign shall be measured using the following equation based on typical sign-to-viewer distance: the square root of the product of the sign area and 100. Example using a 12 square-foot sign:
 $\sqrt{(12 \times 100)} = 34.6$ feet measuring distance.
 - (3) Automatic dimming capability shall adjust the signs illumination to the ambient light at all times of the day or night.
- (g) *Default control:*
 - (1) The sign shall be equipped to freeze the display in one position if a malfunction occurs.
 - (2) The sign must also be equipped with a means to immediately discontinue the display if it malfunctions.
 - (3) The sign owner must immediately stop the display when notified by the director of planning and development that the sign is not complying with the standards of this article.

([Ord. No. 04-2015](#), § I, 5-4-2015)