

1 **ARTICLE XI. SIGN REGULATIONS**

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3 **1100 INTENT AND PURPOSE.**

4 The intent of this Article is to promote and protect the public health, welfare, and safety by
5 regulating existing and proposed outdoor advertising and outdoor signs of all types. It is intended
6 to provide content-neutral regulations and should not be applied or enforced based on content.
7 Specifically, this ordinance is intended to:

- 8 (a) Reduce sign or advertising distraction and obstructions that may contribute to traffic
9 accidents,
- 10 (b) Protect commercial property values by creating a more attractive economic and business
11 climate,
- 12 (c) Protect residential property values by creating an attractive aesthetic in residential areas,
- 13 (d) Enhance and protect the physical appearance of the community, and
- 14 (e) Provide fair, equitable, and predictable sign standards.

15 **1101 SCOPE.**

16
17 **1101.1 General.** The requirements of this Code apply to all signs, sign structures,
18 awnings, and other types of sign devices located within the City and the City’s
19 ETJ, except as specified in 1101.2, below.

20
21 **1101.2 Exempt Signs.** The following signs are exempt from the sign regulations
22 contained in this ordinance: Signs of duly constituted government bodies,
23 including traffic regulatory devices, street signs, way-finding signs, and vertical
24 banners attached to utility poles in the public right-of-way; legal notices; warnings
25 at railroad crossings; name or address signs on mailboxes; street numbers;
26 customary warning and no trespassing signs.

27
28 **1102 SEVERABILITY.**

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30 If any word, sentence, section, chapter or any other provision or portion of this Code or rules
31 adopted hereunder is invalidated by any court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining words,
32 sentences, sections, chapters, provisions, or portions will not be affected and will continue in full
33 force and effect.

34
35 **1103 SUBSTITUTION.**

36
37 The regulations in this Article are intended to be content-neutral and apply equally to
38 commercial and non-commercial speech. Non-commercial messages may be substituted for
39 commercial messages on any sign face in accordance with the regulations of this chapter.

40
41 **1104 STATE PRE-EMPTION.**

42
43 Nothing in this ordinance shall contradict any state statute that addresses allowable signage.
44

45 **1105 SIGN DEFINITIONS.**

46 If questions arise related to the interpretation of any of the following definitions, or the
47 classification of a proposed sign in accordance with the following definitions, the City of Lenoir
48 Illustrated Sign Type Design Manual, as may be amended from time to time, is hereby
49 incorporated by reference and shall be used to clarify the intent of the definitions.

50

51 *Abandoned Sign* – A sign that no longer identifies or advertises an ongoing business,
52 product, location, service, idea, or activity conducted on the premises on which the sign is
53 located.

54

55 *A-Frame Sign* – A portable sign capable of standing without support or attachment. Also
56 known as a sidewalk sign or sandwich sign, these signs are frequently used in (but not limited to)
57 areas of high pedestrian activity and often have a chalk board, white board, or other non-digital
58 changeable sign face to display messages that change frequently.

59

60 *Arm Sign* – A sign that would otherwise be considered a projecting shingle sign except
61 that it is attached to or suspended from a T- or inverted L-shaped pole support system that is no
62 taller than 6 ft. and is permanently mounted to the ground rather than being attached to a
63 building.

64

65 *Arterial Street* – For the purposes of determining maximum sign copy area for ground-
66 mounted signs, an arterial street is considered to be any road with 4 or more travel lanes,
67 excluding turn lanes.

68

69 *Awning* – Any frame, either fixed or movable, covered with cloth, aluminum, or other
70 materials that is entirely supported by the exterior wall of a building and projects over windows
71 and doors. Awnings are not integrated into the structure of a building, unlike canopies, marquees,
72 or porticos.

73

74 *Awning Sign* – A sign that is painted, printed, sewed, or otherwise applied on an awning.

75

76 *Banner, Permanent* – A building-mounted banner that is incorporated into the permanent
77 signage allowed for the building, constructed from rigid, weatherproof material, and secured
78 tightly to the building on all edges. Permanent building-mounted banners may be installed
79 perpendicular to the building with a vertical orientation or may be mounted flush to the wall
80 surface.

81

82 *Banner, Temporary* – A temporary sign composed of lightweight, flexible, non-rigid
83 material that is mounted to a pole or a structure at one or more edges either vertically or
84 horizontally.

85

86 *Blade Sign* – a type of projecting sign mounted on a building facade perpendicular to the
87 normal flow of traffic. Blade signs typically have the support structure incorporated into the sign,
88 or have mounting brackets on the top and bottom of the sign.

89

90 *Billboard* – See: Commercial Outdoor Advertising Sign.

91 *Building Frontage, Primary* – See: Frontage, Primary.

92
93
94 *Building Frontage, Secondary* – See: Frontage, Secondary.

95
96 *Building-Mounted Sign* – Any sign that is painted on or attached to any building,
97 including wall signs, awning signs, canopy signs, marquee signs, projecting shingle signs,
98 window signs, and building-mounted permanent banners.

99
100 *Canopy* – Any structural, ornamental roof-like appendage, freestanding or attached to a
101 building, supported by the exterior wall of a building and on columns or entirely on columns, and
102 extending over an entrance doorway.

103
104 *Canopy Sign* – A sign that is mounted on, attached to, or suspended from a canopy.

105
106 *Channel Letters* – Three-dimensional metal or plastic letters and graphics that are
107 individually mounted either flush with a building wall or sign structure or onto a rectangular
108 raceway or channel that provides structural support and screens electrical components. Channel
109 letters may be incorporated into a variety of building-mounted and ground-mounted sign types.

110
111 *Channel Letters, Internally Illuminated* – Channel letters constructed with translucent
112 faces and fitted with internal light sources such that each individual letter or graphic element is
113 illuminated.

114
115 *Channel Letters, Reverse Lit* – Channel letters constructed with lights mounted on the
116 rear of the letter such that the light source is not visible but the light floods the wall or sign
117 surface behind the channel letters creating a negative space at night. Reverse lit channel letters
118 are sometimes called halo letters. It is possible for internally illuminated channel letters to also
119 be reverse-lit.

120
121 *Commercial Outdoor Advertising Sign* – A permanent off-premise sign erected,
122 maintained or used in the outdoor environment for the purpose of providing copy area for
123 commercial or noncommercial messages. Also known as Billboards.

124
125 *Development Site* – A master planned site that consists of one or more parcels or
126 buildings that function together as a single site, often sharing access, parking, and a consistent
127 architectural style.

128
129 *Electronic Message Board* – Any sign that uses changing lights or a digital display to
130 form a sign message or messages wherein the sequence of messages and the rate of change is
131 electronically programmed and can be modified by electronic processes. Electronic Message
132 Boards may be light emitting diode (LED) or liquid crystal display (LCD) boards.

133
134 *Face Change* – Alteration of wording and/or advertising information, including logos, on
135 an existing sign structure, where no change to the size, height, and structural content or support
136 of sign is made. Also referred to as “change of copy” or “change of face.”

137
138 *Frontage, Primary* – The establishment frontage containing a customer entrance that
139 faces and has access to an arterial street or adjacent driveway or parking lot that serves the use.
140 Only one frontage, which must contain a customer entrance, may be counted as primary
141 frontage.

142
143 *Frontage, Secondary* – For buildings that have frontage on more than one arterial street,
144 the secondary frontage is the establishment frontage, other than the primary frontage, which
145 faces and has access to an arterial street or adjacent driveway or parking lot that serves the use.
146 Depending on the number of streets bordering the parcel, a building may have more than one
147 secondary frontage.

148
149 *Ground-mounted Sign* – A ground-mounted sign is any sign that is not affixed to a
150 building and is securely and permanently mounted in the ground. Also known as a ground sign
151 or a freestanding sign.

152
153 *Inflatable Advertising Device* – Any inflated device used to advertise or draw attention to
154 a site – for example balloons, animal figures, or product replications.

155
156 *Marquee* – A permanent, roofed structure attached to and supported entirely by a
157 building, including any object or decoration attached to or part of said marquee, which projects
158 out over a public right-of-way. Marquees frequently have illumination under the structure, as
159 well as architectural embellishments that incorporate lighting.

160
161 *Marquee Sign* – A sign attached to the face of a marquee, frequently containing a
162 changeable copy component. Marquee signs may project above the roof of the marquee.

163
164 *Monument Sign* – A free-standing, ground-mounted sign that has no visible support
165 structures and is no taller than 8 ft. Note: some districts require monument signs to be shorter
166 than 8 ft.

167
168 *Non-Commercial Message* – Any message that does not advertise for a business, good,
169 product, or service and rather displays any type of ideological, religious, or political message or
170 viewpoint. Non-commercial messages are not defined as on-premise or off-premise signs, as they
171 are not related to a particular land use or business.

172
173 *Non-Conforming Sign* – A sign that was legally installed by permit in conformance with
174 all municipal sign regulations and ordinances in effect at the time of its installation, but which
175 may no longer comply with subsequently enacted laws and ordinances having jurisdiction
176 relative to the sign.

177
178 *Non-Residential Zoning District* – Any of the following districts: Office and Intuitional
179 (O&I), Neighborhood Business (B-1), General Business (B-2), Limited Business (B-4),
180 Neighborhood Mixed-Use (B-5), Exclusive Business (B-6), Planned Highway Business (B-7),
181 Light Industrial (I-1), and Heavy Industrial (I-2).

182

183 *Portable Sign* – A sign that is not securely or permanently attached to a building or
184 mounted to the ground.

185
186 *Post and Panel Sign* – A ground-mounted sign that is no more than 6 ft. tall consisting of
187 one or more panels fastened between two posts. Signs that would otherwise be considered post
188 and panel signs but are taller than 6 ft. are regulated as pylon signs.

189
190 *Projecting Shingle Sign* – A type of projecting sign that is suspended from a support
191 bracket mounted perpendicular to a building.

192
193 *Projecting Sign* – A building-mounted sign that projects from the side of the building
194 rather than being mounted with the sign face parallel to the façade of the building. See also
195 projecting shingle sign and blade sign.

196
197 *Push-Through Acrylic Sign Panel* – A type of internally-illuminated sign, where sign
198 elements made of translucent acrylic materials are pushed through a sign cabinet made of
199 aluminum or other opaque material. A light source located within the sign cabinet then
200 illuminates the acrylic components. The illuminated components may be individual letters and
201 graphics, or may be the entire sign face.

202
203 *Pylon Sign* – A free-standing, ground-mounted sign with visible support structure(s) or
204 with the support structure(s) enclosed with a pole cover. Often referred to as a “pole sign.”

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206 *Roof Sign* – Any sign erected upon or against a roof or roof eaves, or on a functional
207 architectural appendage of the roof or roof eaves.

208
209 *Sign* – Any object, display or structure, or part thereof, which is used to advertise,
210 identify, direct, or attract attention to an object, person, institution, organization, business,
211 product, service, idea, event or location by any means, including words, letters, figures, design,
212 symbols, fixtures, colors, illumination, or projected images.

213
214 *Sign Face* – The surface upon, against or through which the sign copy is displayed or
215 illustrated, not including structural supports, architectural features of a building or sign structure,
216 nonstructural thematic or decorative trim, or any areas that are separated from the background
217 surface upon which the sign copy is displayed by a distinct delineation, such as a reveal or
218 border.

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1. In the case of panel or cabinet type signs, the sign face shall include the entire area of the sign panel, cabinet or face substrate upon which the sign copy is displayed or illustrated, but not open space between separate panels or cabinets.
 2. In the case of signs painted on a building, or channel letter signs affixed to a building or structure, the sign face includes the letters and graphic elements and the space between them, but not the open space between separate groupings of sign copy on the same building or structure.
 3. In the case of sign copy enclosed within a painted or illuminated border, or displayed on a background contrasting in color with the color of the building or structure, the sign face

228 shall comprise the area within the contrasting background, or within the painted or
229 illuminated border.

230

231 *Sign Height* – The vertical distance from the mean grade elevation taken at the fronting
232 street side of a structure to the highest point of a sign or supporting structure, excluding
233 ornamentation such as caps, spires, and finials, as long as such ornamentation does not extend
234 more than one foot beyond the top of the sign. Where berms or raised landscaped areas are used
235 to raise the base of the sign, height will be measured to the mean elevation of the fronting street.

236

237 *Temporary Sign* – A sign intended to display either commercial or noncommercial
238 messages of a transitory or temporary nature. Portable signs or any sign not permanently
239 embedded in the ground, or not permanently affixed to a building or sign structure that is
240 permanently embedded in the ground, are considered temporary signs.

241

242 *Uniform Sign Plan* – A comprehensive signage plan for a parcel or development site that
243 coordinates multiple sign types, locations, and tenants. Uniform sign plans address all of the
244 signage in a development, including the location, number, size, type, and material of signs. Once
245 a uniform sign plan is adopted, individual tenant signs within a particular development are
246 reviewed in accordance with their compliance with that development’s uniform sign plan.

247

248 *Vehicular Sign* – A sign attached to a parked vehicle in public view for the purpose of
249 displaying a message or any sign whose sign face was initially constructed and designed to be
250 placed and/or transported on wheels.

251

252 *Wall Sign* – Any sign that is painted or affixed to the wall of a building with the display
253 surface parallel to the face of the building.

254

255 *Wall Surface Area* – The wall surface area is equal to the total length of the building
256 façades that face a public street or parking area multiplied by the height of the building wall from
257 the lowest adjacent finished grade at the base of the building to the roofline. The wall surface
258 area includes window and door areas, but does not include surface area of features that extend
259 above the roofline, such as parapet walls, chimneys, steeples, or other architectural features.

260

261 *Wind-Blown Advertising Device* – Any cloth, plastic, paper, or similar material used for
262 advertising purposes attached to or appended on or from any structure, staff, pole, line, or
263 framing. Wind-blown advertising devices include but are not limited to pennants, streamers,
264 spinners, pinwheels, windsocks, feather banners, and balloons.

265

266 *Window Sign* – Any sign that is attached to or displayed in a window, including vinyl
267 applications on the window surface and any interior signs that are installed or hung in an interior
268 storefront so as to be visible through the window.

269

270 **1106 PERMITS REQUIRED; EXEMPTIONS.**

271 **1106.1 Permit Required.** Except as otherwise provided in this Article, it shall be unlawful
272 for any person to erect, place, construct, move or replace any sign or cause the same

273 to be done, without first having obtained a zoning permit for such sign from the
274 Planning Department and, as required by the NC State Building Code, building and
275 electrical permits from Caldwell County Building Inspections Department. This
276 requirement also applies to alterations to existing signs that change the size or shape
277 or add an electronic message board or internal illumination.
278

279 **1106.2 Application.** A zoning permit application must include the number, size, location,
280 height, type, illumination, and materials of the proposed signs and all other existing
281 signs on the property and a copy of the uniform sign plan for the development, where
282 applicable. A fee, in accordance with a fee schedule adopted by the City Council,
283 shall be charged for each sign permit issued.
284

285 **1106.3 Copy Changes.** Copy or color change on an existing sign does not require a sign
286 permit; nor does changing or replacing a sign face or panel when such replacement
287 does not require any structural or size modifications.
288

289 **1106.4 Exempt from Permit.** The following signs are allowed without a permit and do not
290 count against the total permitted sign area for a development site:
291

292 (a) Signs located on private property, such that no part of the sign is oriented towards or
293 viewable from a public or private right-of-way or an adjacent property.
294

295 (b) Signs that are located on private property and are visible from a public or private right of
296 way or adjacent properties, but are not illuminated, are no larger than 2 sq. ft., and are not
297 able to be read from the public or private right-of-way or any adjacent property.
298

299 (c) Examples of signs meeting this criteria may include signs that face rear parking areas,
300 signs affixed to gas pumps or merchandise displayed outdoors, signs affixed to shopping
301 cart return stalls, signage oriented towards drive-through lanes that are located to the side
302 or rear of buildings, and signs affixed to internal walls of a building that are not visible
303 through the windows.
304

305 (d) This section does not apply to any type of wind-blown or inflatable advertising devices.
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307

308 **1107 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL DISTRICTS**

309

310 **1107.1 Calculating Sign Copy Area**

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312 The entire sign face, as defined in this Article, shall be used to calculate the sign copy area,
313 except that only one side of a double-faced sign shall be included in calculating the sign copy
314 area, when the sign face is identical on each side and the sign faces are mounted parallel to each
315 other.
316

317 **1107.2 Design And Materials**

318

319 Signs shall be constructed of materials designed to withstand outdoor locations. Permanent sign
320 materials are limited to acrylic, vinyl, glass, plastic (excluding corrugated plastic), metal,
321 treated/painted wood, brick, stone, and similar durable synthetic or natural materials. All
322 requirements of the NC State Building Code shall be met.

323

324 **1107.3 Uniform Sign Plan Required**

325

326 A uniform sign plan shall be required for all developments subject to the design requirements of
327 Section 714 of the Zoning Ordinance, and may be required as a condition of approval for any
328 conditional use permit or conditional zoning request. Uniform sign plans must include an
329 illustrated site plan of all signage, including but not limited to on-site directional/way-finding
330 signs, identification/entrance signs, traffic regulation signage and all tenant signs for the project.

331

332 Uniform sign plans should note location, size, and type for signs – designs and sign faces may be
333 interchangeable once the sign plan is approved. The development plans shall denote maximum
334 total sign areas permitted in this Article for the project. All tenants shall comply with the
335 approved uniform sign plan.

336

337 Master developers are strongly encouraged to adopt a consistent branding/design scheme through
338 the uniform sign plan, using easily recognizable logos, shapes, and designs to add consistency
339 and ease of identification of the development by the public.

340

341 A uniform sign plan may only be amended by the property owner. Once a uniform sign plan is
342 amended, all existing signage on the property must be brought into compliance with the amended
343 sign plan within 18 months of approval of the sign plan by the Planning Department.

344

345

346 **1107.4 Locational Requirements**

347

348 (a) *On-Premise Only*. All signs must be located on the same site as the business, product, or
349 service they are advertising.

350

351 (b) *Setbacks*. Setbacks shall be measured from the edge of the adjacent right-of-way or
352 sidewalk easement to the outermost edge of the sign structure. Signs shall not be
353 permitted to project into the right-of-way, except for signs within the B-3 zoning district
354 in accordance with the Central Business District Sign Overlay standards.

355

356 (c) *Sight Triangles*. No sign shall be erected that would interfere with the sight triangles at
357 intersections or driveways, in accordance with Section 708 of the Lenoir Zoning
358 Ordinance.

359

360 (d) *Prohibited Locations*. Signs shall not be attached to utility poles, light poles, dumpsters,
361 rocks, trees, or other signs, except as expressly allowed in this ordinance for vertically
362 oriented banners attached to utility poles and light poles.

363

364 **1107.5 Maintenance**

365
366 All signs and all components thereof, including supports, braces, anchors, etc., shall be kept in a
367 good state of repair, in compliance with all building and electrical codes, and in conformance
368 with the requirements of this Ordinance. Any sign which is determined by the Planning
369 Department to be insecure, in danger of falling, or otherwise endangering the public safety shall
370 be immediately removed by its owner unless it is repaired and made to otherwise comply with
371 the requirements of this Ordinance.

372
373 **1107.6 Illumination and Electronic Signs**

374
375 Illuminated and electronic signs, where otherwise permitted by this Article, shall conform to the
376 following:

- 377
378 (a) *External Illumination.* External illumination must be confined to and directed solely at
379 the surface of the sign and shielded to prevent beams, glare, or rays of light from being
380 directed onto any portion of the right-of-way or any adjoining property.
381
382 (b) *Internal Illumination.* The only allowable types of internally illuminated signs are
383 channel letters with translucent faces, reverse lit channel letters, or push-through acrylic
384 sign panels. For reverse lit channel letters, lights must be white. All exposed raceways
385 must be painted to match the finish of the wall behind the sign. Black raceway is suitable
386 on brick walls.
387
388 (c) *Electronic Message Boards.* Electronic message boards are limited to light emitting diode
389 (LED) or liquid crystal display (LCD) boards and shall not contain any scrolling, moving,
390 or animated display. The minimum time between display changes shall be three seconds
391 for on-site commercial signs and eight seconds for billboard signs.
392
393 (d) *Neon Tubing.* Neon and cold-cathode tubing must be fully enclosed, except that existing
394 neon and cold-cathode tubing in signs may be repaired or replaced in accordance with the
395 other requirements of this Article.

396
397 **1107.7 Penalties for Violation.** Violations of this ordinance will be subject to the penalties
398 established in Chapter 1, Section 1-15 of the Lenoir Code of Ordinances.

399
400 **1108 SIGNS IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS**

401 In residential zoning districts (R-R, R-20, R-15, R-12, R-9, and R-6), signs must conform to the
402 following:

- 403
404 (a) On individual lots in residential zoning districts, including detached, semi-detached, and
405 townhome lots, individual signs are limited to 3 sq. ft. with a maximum of 9 square ft. of
406 total sign area permitted per road frontage, per lot. This sign area allowance includes but
407 is not limited to: home occupation signs, lawn signs, real estate signs, contractor signs,
408 and non-commercial signs. Signs may be freestanding, mounted to a permanent building
409 structure or displayed in a window and may be permanent or temporary. These signs do
410 not require a zoning permit.

411
412 (b) Major subdivisions, planned unit developments, multi-family developments, and non-
413 residential conditional uses with an approved conditional use permit located within
414 residential zoning districts are permitted one monument sign not to exceed 32 sq. ft. in
415 area and 6 ft. in height for each separate street entrance (for major subdivisions) or street
416 frontage (for single development sites). Individual principal buildings are also allowed 8
417 sq. ft. of wall signage. All signs permitted by this subsection require approval of a
418 uniform sign plan and a zoning permit.

419
420 (c) Electronic Message Boards and Internal Illumination of signs are prohibited in residential
421 districts.

422
423 **1109 BUILDING-MOUNTED SIGNS – NON-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS.**

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425 FIGURE 1109 details the permitted illumination and maximum copy area for non-residential
426 zoning districts within the City and the City’s ETJ, except for signs in the B-3 district, which are
427 regulated by the Central Business District Sign Overlay (Sec. 1112.1). Any combination of the
428 allowed building-mounted sign types (wall and canopy signs, awning signs, projecting signs,
429 window signs, and building-mounted banners) may be used to reach the maximum allowable
430 copy area, subject to any specific limitations on specific sign types in this Section.
431

FIGURE 1109: Permanent Building-Mounted Sign Regulations by District		
X= Permitted Blank= Prohibited	Maximum Sign Copy Area of Sign Faces per building¹	Illumination Allowed (see Sec. 1107.6)
O&I (Office/Institutional District)	100 sq. ft. or 5% of the wall surface areas facing a public street or parking lot, whichever is greater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and External
B-1 (Neighborhood Business District)	32 sq. ft.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and External light sources
B-2 & B-7 (General/Highway Business Districts)	100 sq. ft. or 5% of the wall surface areas facing a public street or parking lot, whichever is greater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and External • Electronic Message Boards²
B-5 (Neighborhood Mixed-Use District)	16 sq. ft. per façade facing a public street or parking lot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External spot lighting only; maximum 150 watts per side.
B-4 & B-6 (Limited/Exclusive Business Districts)	32 sq. ft. per façade facing a public street or parking lot.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and External
I-1 and I-2 (Industrial Districts)	100 sq. ft. or 5% of the wall surface areas facing a public street or parking lot, whichever is greater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and External • Electronic Message Boards²
<p>1. Where multiple tenants occupy the same building, wall signage shall be allotted to each business through a Uniform Sign Plan, based on the overall signage available for the development. When no Uniform Sign Plan has been approved, signage will be allotted to each business based upon the percentage of the exterior wall surface area of the space occupied by the business.</p> <p>2. Electronic Message Boards must be oriented to face away from any adjacent residential property.</p>		

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In addition to the standards in Figure 1109, the following specific standards shall apply to building-mounted signs, as follows:

- (a) *Awning Signs* – Signs must be painted, stamped, perforated, stitched, or otherwise applied directly onto the awning, except for signs hung below awnings from the internal structural support system. Signs that project out from or above an awning are prohibited.
- (b) *Projecting and Hanging Signs* – Signs that project out from a building (with copy area oriented at an angle rather than being parallel to the building façade) or that are hung from or project below awnings, canopies, marquees, or overhangs must maintain a minimum

443 clearance of 7 ft. from the lowest part of the sign (including sign support systems) to the
 444 finished grade of any sidewalk or internal pedestrian walkway and a minimum clearance of
 445 12 ft. to the finished grade of any vehicular area.

446
 447 (c) *Wall and Canopy Signs that Project above Rooflines* – Signs attached to building walls,
 448 parapet walls, or canopies must not project more than 2 ft. above the highest part of the
 449 building, canopy, or parapet wall.

450
 451 (d) *Window Signs* – The aggregate total area of window signs must not exceed 25% of the
 452 window area in any single building facade.

453
 454 (e) *Permanent Building-Mounted Banners* – Permanent Building-Mounted Banners that are
 455 securely mounted to a wall in a perpendicular, vertical orientation to the wall surface or flush
 456 against the wall surface are permitted as permanent signs in accordance with the other
 457 requirements for permanent building-mounted signs in this Article, with the following
 458 additional requirements:

- 459 1. Rigid, weatherproof panel construction is required.
- 460 2. Banner must be installed and secured tightly to the building. No loose, non-secure
 461 attachments are allowed.
- 462 3. Permanent banners installed perpendicular to the wall surface must have sleeves to mount
 463 to a top and bottom armature, consisting only of steel tubing, spaced apart to ensure rigid
 464 installation. No loose, flapping or hanging banners are allowed. No such banner shall
 465 project out from the building façade greater than 3 ft.

466
 467 **1110 GROUND-MOUNTED SIGNS – NON-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS.**

468 FIGURE 1110 details the permitted ground-mounted sign types, illumination, and maximum
 469 copy area for non-residential zoning districts within the City and the City’s ETJ, except for signs
 470 in the B-3 district, which are regulated by the Central Business District Sign Overlay (Sec.
 471 1112.1). A maximum of one ground-mounted sign is allowed per street frontage, per parcel or
 472 development site. The maximum size of the sign shall be determined based on the characteristics
 473 of each street frontage and each permitted sign must be located on and oriented towards the
 474 applicable street frontage. Parcels or development sites with more than one driveway entrance,
 475 when such entrances are separated by a distance of at least 400 linear ft., are permitted one
 476 additional ground-mounted sign. The signs must be separated by at least 350 ft.

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FIGURE 1110: Ground-Mounted Sign Regulations by District

X= Permitted Blank= Prohibited	Maximum Sign Copy Area (per street frontage, per sign)	Illumination Allowed (see Sec. 1107.6)	Pylon Signs (max height 15 ft.)	Monument Signs (max. height 8 ft.)	Arm Signs (max. height 6 ft.)	Post and Panel Signs (max. height 6 ft.)	Incidental Signs (max. height 3 ft.)
O&I (Office/Institutional)	32 sq. ft.	Internal and External		X	X	X	X

District)							
B-1 (Neighborhood Business)	32 sq. ft.	Internal and External.		X	X	X	X
B-2 & B-7 (General/Highway Business Districts)	Arterial frontage – 50 sq. ft. ¹ All other road frontage – 32 sq. ft.	Internal and External Electronic Message Boards ²	X	X			X
B-5 (Neighborhood Mixed-Use District)	16 sq. ft.	Internal and External		X	X	X	X
B-4 & B-6 (Limited/Exclusive Business Districts)	Arterial frontage – 50 sq. ft. ¹ All other road frontage – 32 sq. ft.	Internal and External Electronic Message Boards ²		X	X	X	X
I-1 and I-2 (Industrial Districts)	Arterial frontage – 50 sq. ft. ¹ All other road frontage – 32 sq. ft.	Internal and External Electronic Message Boards ²	X	X		X	X

1. Parcels or development sites with arterial frontage with at least 50,000 sq. ft. gross floor area are allowed one sq. ft. of sign area for each linear foot of lot frontage, with a maximum of 200 sq. ft.
2. Electronic Message Boards must be oriented to face away from any adjacent residential property.

478 In addition to the standards in Figure 1110, the following specific standards shall apply to
479 ground-mounted signs, as follows:

480
481 (a) *Pylon Signs* – Pylon signs are subject to the following restrictions:

- 482
- 483 1. **Maximum Height.** The maximum height shall be 15 ft., except that free-standing signs on
- 484 arterial frontages for parcels or development sites with at least 50,000 sq. ft. of gross
- 485 floor area are allowed a maximum height of 25 ft.
- 486 2. **Setbacks.** All pylon signs shall be set back a minimum of ten feet from the right-of-way
- 487 of any adjacent public street and five ft. from interior side or rear lot line.
- 488 3. **Design Requirements.** Pylon signs with visible support structures shall be designed with a
- 489 single pole support with a maximum width of 12 inches. Single pole supports wider than
- 490 12 inches or multiple pole supports shall be wrapped or enclosed with a cover that is
- 491 integrated into the sign and finished to match the materials of the principal buildings.

492
493 (b) *Monument Signs* – Monument signs are subject to the following restrictions:

- 494
- 495 1. **Maximum Height.** The maximum height for monument signs in non-residential districts
- 496 is 8 ft.
- 497 2. **Setbacks.** Minimum setback for monument signs in all districts is 0 ft. from the right-of-
- 498 way of any adjacent public or private street and five ft. from interior or rear lot lines,
- 499 except that signs must be setback from the centerline of any street a minimum of half of

500 the minimum required right-of-way width. All signs must be located outside of sight
501 triangles.

502 3. Design Requirements. Monument signs shall have fully enclosed support structures and
503 be finished to match the materials of the principal buildings.

504
505 (c) *Arm Signs/Post and Panel Signs* – Arm signs and post and panel signs are subject the
506 following restrictions:

- 507
508 1. Maximum Height: 6 ft.
509 2. Maximum sign face area (per sign): 16 sq. ft.
510 3. Setbacks. Minimum setback for arm signs and post and panel signs is 0 ft. from the right-
511 of-way of any adjacent public or private street and 5 ft. from interior or rear lot lines,
512 except that signs must be setback from the centerline of any street a minimum of half of
513 the minimum required right-of-way width. All signs must be located outside of sight
514 triangles.

515
516 (d) *Additional/Incidental Ground-Mounted Signs*. Ten percent of the sign area permitted for
517 ground-mounted signs may be allowed for additional signs to facilitate safe and efficient
518 flow of vehicular and pedestrian traffic within a development site. This allotment of sign area
519 is in addition to the maximum area permitted for ground-mounted signs. Signs allowed under
520 this subsection must conform to the following standards:

- 521
522 1. Maximum Height – 3 ft.
523 2. Minimum Setback – 0 ft.
524 3. All signs must be located on private property and must conform to all standards for
525 other permanent ground-mounted signs.

526
527

528 **1111 PORTABLE AND TEMPORARY SIGNS – NON-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS**

529 The sign regulations in this section are intended to allow for limited portable and temporary
530 signs in order to reduce roadside sign clutter that contributes to a less desirable aesthetic and an
531 overly distracting environment for motorists. The following regulations apply in all non-residential
532 zoning districts within the City and the City’s ETJ, except for signs in the B-3 district, which are
533 regulated by the Central Business District Sign Overlay (Sec. 1112.1).

534
535 **1111.1 General Requirements**

- 536 (a) All temporary and portable signs allowed under this section are prohibited from having
537 any type of illumination (internal or external).
538
539 (b) Electronic message boards are not permitted as portable or temporary signs.
540
541 (c) Signs in violation of this Section, upon notification of the violation via a written letter or
542 posting on the property by the Planning Department, must be removed within 48 hours of
543 the receipt of such notice.

544
545 **1111.2 Freestanding A-Frame Signs**

546

547 Freestanding A-frame signs (sometimes called sidewalk signs or sandwich signs) are permitted
548 in all non-residential districts, subject to the following rules:

- 549
- 550 (a) One A-frame sign per business.
 - 551 (b) Maximum 8 sq. ft. per sign face.
 - 552 (c) Signs shall not impede normal pedestrian or vehicular traffic or accessibility or be located
553 within a required sight triangle.
 - 554 (d) Signs shall not be located within any public or private right-of-way, except in the Central
555 Business (B-3) zoning district.
 - 556 (e) Signs must be removed daily.
- 557

558 **1111.3 Temporary Signs**

559 Properties that are for sale, for lease, under construction, or hiring new employees are permitted
560 to erect a maximum of one temporary ground-mounted or building-mounted sign per street
561 frontage, per parcel, as follows:

- 562
- 563 (a) Maximum sign area of 32 sq. ft. per sign
 - 564 (b) Illumination is prohibited.
 - 565 (c) Temporary signs must be removed within 5 days of their purpose being exhausted.
 - 566 (d) Signs must be constructed of rigid, weather-proof materials. Banners, flags, cardboard,
567 untreated plywood, or corrugated plastic signs are not allowed under this section.
 - 568 (e) Signs must be securely placed, but not be permanently anchored to the ground.
 - 569 (f) Signs must be located on private property.
- 570

571 **1111.4 Temporary Banners**

572

573 Temporary banners are allowed with an approved zoning permit, subject to the following
574 restrictions:

- 575
- 576 (a) An application for a zoning permit must be filled out for every banner, subject to the
577 approved fee schedule.
 - 578 (b) A single temporary banner may be displayed no more than twice per calendar year, for a
579 maximum duration of 30 days each time. For multi-tenant buildings, wall-mounted
580 banners in accordance with these restrictions may be permitted per business. Ground-
581 mounted banners are limited per parcel or development site. Where a parcel or
582 development site has frontage on more than one road, a single banner per road frontage
583 may be allowed under the same zoning permit.
 - 584 (c) No banner shall exceed 32 sq. ft.
 - 585 (d) Banners must be attached to the wall of a principal structure or securely anchored in a
586 landscaped area outside of the right-of-way. No loose, non-secure attachments are
587 allowed.
 - 588 (e) No banner shall be attached to a roof structure.
 - 589 (f) The owner or manager of a shopping center or other multi-tenant development may
590 choose to further restrict the placement of banners within an approved Uniform Sign
591 Plan, or specify other restrictions for individual businesses. When no specific restrictions

592 for banner placements exist in the Uniform Sign Plan for a multi-tenant development,
593 each business shall be permitted temporary banners as allowed in this section.

594

595 **1111.5 Windblown and Inflatable Advertising Devices**

596

597 Windblown and Inflatable advertising devices are allowed with an approved zoning permit
598 subject the following restrictions:

599

- 600 (a) Limited to two times per calendar year per parcel or development site.
- 601 (b) Windblown and inflatable advertising devices shall be allowed for a period not to exceed
602 30 days for each event, with a minimum duration of 30 days between installations. In no
603 instance shall outdoor advertising devices be permitted for greater than 30 consecutive
604 days.
- 605 (c) An application for a zoning permit shall be submitted and approved by the Planning
606 Department prior to the installation of any outdoor advertising devices.
- 607 (d) Inflatable devices, except for balloons attached to merchandise, are limited to one device
608 per parcel or development site per event, at a maximum height of 20 ft. or no taller than
609 the building, whichever is greater.
- 610 (e) There is no limit on the number of windblown devices per event.
- 611 (f) All outdoor advertising devices must be located on private property, outside of site
612 triangles, and be setback a minimum of 10 ft. from the right-of-way and from any
613 adjoining property. No placement shall block safe and efficient ingress/egress or on-site
614 circulation for vehicles and pedestrians, nor shall any entrance or exit to a building be
615 blocked.
- 616 (g) No blinking lights, flashing, moving, or animated signs are allowed.

617

618 **1111.6 Flags/Balloons Attached To Merchandise.**

619 Balloons, flags, pennants or other graphics attached to items displayed outdoors and sold on the
620 premises are permitted within non-residential districts, subject to the provisions of this
621 ordinance, provided that they do not exceed 2 sq. ft. each or interfere with visibility in sight
622 triangles.

623

624 **1111.7 Non-commercial/Ideological Messages on Temporary Signs**

625 In addition to the other signs permitted under this ordinance, a maximum of 9 sq. ft. of temporary
626 signage shall be allowed per parcel, per road frontage in non-residential districts for non-
627 commercial messages. Signs allowed under this subsection may be any material, including
628 corrugated plastic, provided such signs are removed prior to becoming torn, tattered, or
629 otherwise deteriorated. No individual sign shall be larger than 3 sq. ft. This provision is enacted
630 in addition to the requirements for other types of signs in order to protect the availability of such
631 signs as a method for free expression. Such signs do not require a permit and must be located on
632 private property outside of required sight triangles.

633

634 **1112 SPECIAL SIGN OVERLAY DISTRICTS**

635

636 **1112.1 Central Business District Sign Overlay.**

637 Within the Central Business District (B-3 Zoning District), only the following sign types are
638 permitted, in accordance with the specified locational and dimensional regulations:
639

Figure 1112.1: Permitted Sign Types and Regulations in the B-3 zoning district					
Sign Type	Permitted Locations	Maximum Number	Maximum Area	Maximum Height	Permitted Illumination (see Sec. 1107.6)
Wall signs and Projecting Signs ¹ (other than blade or shingle signs, which are described below)	Facades facing a public street	2 per wall	10 percent of wall area not to exceed 50 sq. ft. (total area of all signs)	Not above parapet wall	Internal and external. Electronic Message Boards are only allowed outside of the National Register District.
	Facades facing an alley or parking lot	2 per wall	16 sq. ft. (total area of all signs)		
Signs hung under awnings, canopies, and marquees	Signs must be perpendicular to the building and the lower edge of the sign must be at least 7 ft. above the surface of the sidewalk.	1 per storefront (where a tenant occupies more than one storefront or has a second entrance, a second sign is allowed)	3 sq. ft. (per sign)	N/A	External
Awning Signs	Awning signs cannot project out from or above an awning	1 per awning	10 sq. ft.	N/A	External
Blade Signs or Projecting Shingle Signs	Street-level only; when sign projects over public sidewalk, a minimum distance of 7 ft. from the sidewalk to the lowest part of the sign must be maintained. Maximum projection from façade is 3 ft.	1 per storefront, per facade	6 sq. ft.	Top of sign may not exceed 15 ft. tall, measured from the adjacent grade of the sidewalk.	External
Canopy Signs	Attached to the face of the canopy.	1 per canopy	10 sq. ft.		Internal and external
Marquee Signs	Attached to the face of	1 per side of the	Total combined	N/A	Internal and external light

	the marquee, but may project above the roof of the marquee.	marquee	area of all marquee signs: 20 sq. ft.		sources
Window Signs	First Floor Windows	1 per window	20% of total window area	N/A	Internal and external light sources
	Upper floor windows	1 per window	50% of window	N/A	Internal and External light sources
Ground-Mounted Signs	Same permitted sign types, locations, and sizes as the B-6 Exclusive Business District.				
Freestanding A-frame Signs	Public sidewalks immediately in front of the business advertised, provided the placement does not impede pedestrian traffic or interfere with pedestrian/vehicle site triangles.	1 per street frontage	8 sq. ft. per sign face	4 ft.	None
Temporary Banners (building mounted only) ²	Facades facing a public street, alley, or parking lot	1 per street frontage	32 sq. ft.	Not above the parapet wall	None
Temporary Advertising Devices	Prohibited in the B-3 district, except on public property as a part of an approved Special Event permit.				None
Other Temporary Signs	(a) Properties that are for sale, for lease, under construction, or hiring new employees are permitted two additional temporary window signs per building façade, for a maximum total additional temporary sign area of 32 sq. ft. (b) A maximum of 8 sq. ft. of temporary signage shall be allowed per parcel for non-commercial messages.				None
<p>1. Permanent building-mounted banners, when oriented vertically (either flush mounted or projecting), may be used in lieu of other wall and projecting signs, when the total number of signs and area does not exceed the allowances prescribed above.</p> <p>2. Temporary banners may be displayed no more than twice per calendar year, for a maximum duration of 30 days each time and must have an approved permit.</p>					

640 **1113 COMMERCIAL OUTDOOR ADVERTISING SIGNS (BILLBOARDS)**

641 *[Editor's Note, not for codification: These regulations remain unchanged from the existing*
642 *adopted regulations. They have been re-numbered.]*

643
644 Billboards shall be permitted only in the General Business (B-2), Light Industrial (I-1), and
645 Heavy Industrial (I-2) zoning districts and shall be regulated in accordance with the following
646 provisions in addition to other requirements of this ordinance.

647
648 **1113.1 Types of Signs Permitted**
649 All billboards shall have a single pole or mono-pole support constructed of steel, and steel
650 framing. A maximum of two sign faces may be permitted on such support provided that back of
651 the sign faces are separated by an angle not exceeding 45 degrees. Double-stacked signs, side-
652 by-side signs, and signs involving the motion of single or multiple messages are not permitted.

653
654 **1113.2 Separation**
655 Billboards shall be separated by a minimum of 600 ft. on the same side of a roadway, and 300 ft.
656 on the opposite side of a roadway. This distance shall be measured along the edge of the adjacent
657 roadway.

658
659 **1113.3 Setback Requirements**
660 Billboards shall maintain a minimum setback from interior property lines a distance not less than
661 the height of the sign. Billboards shall maintain a minimum setback from all rights-of-way such
662 that the outermost edge of the sign is not less than 10 ft. from the right of way, and any support is
663 not less than 25 ft. from the right-of-way.

664
665 **1113.4**
666 Separation from Advertised Use - Billboards must be a minimum of 1,000 ft. from the advertised
667 business.

668
669 **1113.5 Maximum Size**
670 The maximum size of a billboard shall be 300 square ft. along two-lane roadways, and 380
671 square ft. along roadways with more than two lanes, excluding turn lanes. The maximum size
672 includes any border, trim or decorative embellishments, but excludes the base, apron, supports,
673 and other structural elements. This measurement shall only include one side or face of the sign.

674
675 **1113.6 Dimensions**
676 The maximum height permitted for any billboard shall be 30 ft. measured from ground directly
677 beneath it. The maximum width or length of any billboard shall not exceed 37 ft.. These
678 dimensions shall include all structural elements of the sign.

679
680 **1113.7 Topographic Exceptions**
681 Where topographic conditions preclude the placement of a billboard in compliance with the
682 height limitations of this ordinance, such sign may exceed the height limitations to the extent that
683 the bottom of the sign is at least 10 ft. above the closest roadway surface.

684
685 **1113.8 Non-Conforming Billboards**

686 Non-conforming billboards which are damaged, dilapidated, or otherwise pose a threat to public
687 safety due to disrepair shall not be repaired or replaced unless located in the B-2, I-1 or I-2
688 zoning districts. Such billboards shall only be replaced with steel mono-pole supports and steel
689 framing.

690
691 **1113.9 Zero Growth Policy** - The total number of billboards within the Lenoir City limits and
692 the City's Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (64) shall not increase following the adoption of this
693 ordinance. Any nonconforming billboard that is removed for any reason shall only be replaced in
694 conformance with this ordinance. Furthermore, no billboards shall be permitted or replaced in
695 the Billboard Exclusion Zone, as designated on the Lenoir Zoning Map. In general this zone
696 includes the area along U. S. Highway 321 from U. S. Highway 64 to Seehorn Street, and the
697 area along Harper Avenue from U. S. Highway 321 to Ridge Street.

698
699 **1114 PROHIBITED SIGNS AND SIGN TYPES.**

700 The following signs and sign types are prohibited.

- 701
- 702 (a) Signs on any public right-of-way or easement, except as expressly permitted in this
703 Article. The City reserves the right to remove and destroy any sign placed within the
704 public right-of-way or easement without notice.
705
 - 706 (b) Signs in any location that obstruct a motorist's vision of traffic control signals, other
707 vehicular traffic, or pedestrian traffic. Any sign determined by the Planning Department
708 to be obstructing the view of bicyclists or motorists using any street, approach to any
709 street intersection, or which interferes with the effectiveness of or obscures any traffic
710 sign, device, or signal is prohibited.
711
 - 712 (c) Highly reflective signs or spotlights, which hamper the vision of motorists, bicyclists, or
713 pedestrians. Signs with intermittent lights resembling flashing lights customarily associ-
714 ated with danger, emergency vehicles or for navigation purposes, and/or located and so
715 illuminated as to provide a background of colored lights blending with traffic signal
716 lights to the extent of confusing a motorist are prohibited. This includes signs that use
717 strobe lights and/or mirrors.
718
 - 719 (d) Signs not erected by a public authority that contain lights, words, language and/ or other
720 devices that may be erroneously construed as government signs, traffic regulatory, or
721 emergency warning signs.
722
 - 723 (e) Any sign that interferes with free passage from or obstructs any fire escape, downspout,
724 window, door, stairway, ladder, or opening intended as a means of ingress or egress or
725 providing light or air.
726
 - 727 (f) Flashing signs, rotating signs, signs with flashing or reflective disks, signs with flashing
728 lights or lights of changing degree of intensity or color or signs with electrically scrolled
729 messages.
730
 - 731 (g) Vehicular signs and all portable signs, except as explicitly allowed in Sec. 1111.

- 732
733 (h) Any sign advertising a product or business no longer available on the property containing
734 the sign or advertising for a product or business located on an off-premise site, except as
735 explicitly allowed by this ordinance. Abandoned signs must be removed within 30 days
736 of cessation of the business or activity that the sign advertised.
737
738 (i) Any sign that emits smoke, visible vapors, particles, sound or odor is prohibited. Open
739 flames used to attract public attention to a place of business or to an advertising sign shall
740 not be permitted.
741
742 (j) Roof signs.
743

744 **1115 NON-CONFORMING SIGNS.**

745 **1115.1 Non-Conforming Signs.** Any sign deemed by the Planning Department to be legally
746 non-conforming will be allowed to remain if in good repair, but shall not be:

- 747 (a) changed to another non-conforming sign;
748 (b) structurally altered to prolong life of the sign;
749 (c) expanded;
750 (d) re-established after removal; or
751 (e) re-established after damage or destruction if estimated expenses of reconstruction
752 exceeds 60% percent of the tax value of the sign.
753

754 **1115.2 Removal of Non-Conforming Signs Upon Substantial Improvement.** Non-conforming
755 signs must be removed or modified to conform to this sign ordinance upon “substantial
756 improvement” (as defined in Article IV of the Zoning Ordinance) of any parcel or development
757 site.
758

759 **1115.3 Non-Durable Non-Conforming Signs.** Any non-conforming sign made of paper, cloth,
760 cardboard, corrugated plastic, or other temporary or non-durable material shall be removed
761 within three (3) months from the effective date of this ordinance.
762

763 **1115.4 Amortization of Non-conforming Freestanding Signs.** Freestanding or ground signs in
764 excess of 50 ft. in height shall conform to the height, area and setback provisions of this
765 ordinance by June 30, 2021.