

ARTICLE XIV – SIGNS

Section 14.1 Findings and Objectives

Section 14.1-1. Troup County finds that signs are a proper use of private property, are a means of personal free expression and a necessary component of a commercial environment. However, the number of signs tends to proliferate, with property owners desiring an increasing number and size of signs, leading to cluttered and aesthetically blighted thoroughfares. In addition, the competition among competing sign owners for visibility of their signs contributes to safety hazards for both vehicles and pedestrians and undermines the sign owners' original purpose of presenting a clear message of its idea or identification of its premises.

Section 14.1-2 Troup County finds that the regulation of the size, height, number, location and spacing of signs is necessary to protect the public safety, to assure compatibility of signs with surrounding land uses, to enhance the business and economy of the county, to protect the public investment in the streets and highways, to maintain the tranquil environment of residential area, to promote industry and commerce, to eliminate visual clutter and blight, to provide an aesthetically appealing environment, and to provide for the orderly and reasonable display of advertising for the benefit of all the county's citizens.

Section 14.1-3 Troup County finds that there is a substantial difference between signs erected by public authority and signs erected by private citizens or businesses. Signs erected by public authority are virtually all erected for the purpose of maintaining the public safety either through direct control of traffic or through provision of such type signage as street signs which enable the traveling public to know where they are located and to find where they are going. As such, with the exception of signs identifying government buildings, virtually all government signs are erected purely for public safety purposes. Moreover, their use in the public right-of-way is necessary to ensure their visibility to the motoring public. The county commission finds that public utility signs are frequently of the same nature as those signs erected by governmental entities in that they provide necessary information to safeguard the public from downed power lines and from street excavations. Even where signs serve a propriety purpose, such as identifying markings on utility poles, those signs are marked primarily for the purpose of benefiting the public generally through identification of locations where there may be temporary losses of power.

Section 14.1-4. Troup County finds that some signage has a single targeted function and that identification of such signage by description is impossible without referring to its function. For instance, address numerals are used for the sole purpose of location addresses, which is of benefit to persons looking for those addresses and is essential to public safety personnel responding to emergencies. Subdivision signs at the entrances to subdivisions favor a similar purpose in enabling both the traveling public and emergency personnel to quickly locate subdivision entrances for the purpose of either visitation or responding to emergency calls. While such signage is referenced based upon the function it serves within the context of this ordinance, the bulk of the provisions of this chapter are unrelated to the content of the speech provided and allow maximum expressive potential to sign owners.

Section 14.2 Intent and Purpose

Section 14.2-1 The intent of this ordinance is to further the substantial governmental interests of correcting and avoiding multiple problems that would occur without the regulation of signs.

The regulations contained herein are no more extensive than necessary to serve the substantial governmental interests identified in this ordinance. It is not the intent of this ordinance to apply regulation to signs based upon the message that they convey.

Section 14.2-2. The purposes of this section are:

1. To protect the rights of individuals and businesses to convey their messages through signs;
2. To encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication;
3. To promote economic development;
4. To improve traffic and pedestrian safety as it may be affected by distracting signs;
5. To regulate signs by zoning district, size, height, location on a lot, number, methods of construction, maintenance and illumination;
6. To prevent the destruction of the natural beauty and environment of the county and to maintain and enhance the aesthetic environment of the county;
7. To protect the public health, safety and general welfare;
8. To restrict the continued existence of abandoned or nonconforming signs unless in compliance with the terms of this section and to eliminate, over time, all non-conforming signs; and
9. To insure the fair and consistent enforcement of sign standards.
10. To further the objectives of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Section 14.3 Definitions

(a) *General interpretation.* Except as specifically described herein, all words shall have their customary dictionary meanings. Words used in the present tense include the future tense, and words used in the future tense include the present. Words used in the singular number include the plural, and words used in the plural include the singular. The word "person" includes a firm, corporation, association, organization, trust, or partnership. The word "building" includes "structure". The word "may" is permissive, while the word "shall" is always mandatory. The word "used" or "occupied" as applied to any land or building shall be construed to include the words "intended, arranged, or designated to be used or occupied". Doubt as to the precise meaning of any word used in this ordinance shall be resolved by the board of planning and zoning appeals of the county.

(b) *Specific definitions.*

Abandoned sign. Cessation for a period of six months of the use of a sign by either the owner of the sign or the occupant of the property on which the sign is placed, or through the removal or relocation of the previous occupant of the property, or a sign that has ceased to be used for a period of six months through the removal of its copy or the deterioration of its copy through lack of maintenance, but excluding temporary or short-term period of remodeling, refurbishment or maintenance of the sign.

Accessory use. A sign use which is authorized by virtue of a business operation on a particular site, which shall not require, by implication or otherwise, that the content of any such sign be in any way connected to said business operation.

Animated sign. Any sign which all or any part thereof visibly moves, imitates movement, or changes appearance in any fashion whatsoever. For purpose of this chapter, the transition of a message on a changing sign shall not be considered “animation.”

Awning/canopy sign. Any sign that is a part of, or attached to, an awning, canopy or other fabric, plastic or structural protective cover over a door, entrance, window, or outdoor service area. A marquee is not a canopy.

Banner. Any sign of lightweight fabric or similar material that is intended to be hung either with a frame or without a frame. Neither flags nor canopy signs are considered banners.

Beacon. Any light with one (1) or more beams directed into the atmosphere or directed at one (1) or more points not on the same lot as the light source; also, any light with one (1) or more beams that rotate or move.

Building nameplate. A small plaque, usually made of metal or wood, affixed flush to an exterior wall near the main entrance to a building.

Building sign. A sign that in any manner is fastened to, projects from, or is placed or painted upon the exterior wall, canopy, awning or marquee of a building. The term “building sign” includes but is not limited to the following:

- (1) Awning sign: A sign imposed, mounted or painted upon an awning.
- (2) Canopy sign: A sign affixed to, superimposed upon, or painted on any canopy, such that the sign is mounted in such a manner that a continuous face with the canopy is formed.
- (3) Mansard sign: A sign imposed, mounted or painted upon a mansard and not extending above the top of the mansard.
- (4) Marquee sign: Any sign painted on or attached flat to the face of a marquee.
- (5) Parapet sign: A sign imposed, mounted or painted on a parapet and not extending above the top of the parapet.
- (6) Projecting sign: A sign affixed perpendicularly to a wall and extending more than 12 inches horizontally from the surface of such wall.
- (7) Under-canopy sign: A sign attached to the underside of a marquee or canopy and suspended over a sidewalk, either public or private.
- (8) Wall sign: A sign that is fastened directly to or is placed or painted directly upon the exterior wall of a building, with the sign face parallel to the wall, protruding from the surface of the wall no more than 18 inches and not extending above or beyond the wall to which it is attached.

Canopy. Any permanent roof-like structure projecting from the wall surface of a building or structure, generally located at or below the roof line and designed to provide shelter from the elements, or a freestanding roof-like structure supported by columns intended to shield a

vehicular driveway or service area from the elements. A canopy shall include all structures commonly known as awnings.

Canopy sign. A sign affixed to, superimposed upon, or painted on any canopy, such that the sign is mounted in such a manner that a continuous face with the canopy is formed.

Changeable copy sign. A sign or portion thereof with characters, letters, or illustrations that can be manually changed or rearranged without altering the face or the surface of the sign. A sign on which the message changes more than once a day shall be considered a changing sign for purposes of this ordinance.

Changing sign. (Digital Multiple Message) A sign that is capable of changing the visible display of words, numbers, symbols, graphics and/or position or format of word messages or other displays when such changes are actuated by any type of remote control or automatic mechanism rather than manually. Changing signs shall include mechanically operated devices which change the message through rotation of any type of panel and signs which are illuminated partially or entirely by a matrix of electronic lamps, movable discs, movable panels, light apertures, the use of light emitting diodes, back lighting, or any other light source that is electronically changed. Any changing sign that includes both mechanical and electronic elements shall be regulated as an electronically changing sign. A sign that changes no more frequently than once every twenty-four (24) hours shall not be considered a changing sign.

Commercial sign. A sign which identifies, advertises or directs attention to a business, or is intended to induce the purchase of goods, property, or service, including without limitation, any sign naming a brand of goods or service and real estate signs.

Copy. The permanent or removable wording or graphics placed on, painted upon, or bonded to the display surface of a sign.

Dilapidated or neglected signs. A sign (including sign structure) is dilapidated or neglected if it manifests the following conditions: rust or holes on or in the sign, or broken, missing, loose or bent parts, faded or flaking paint, or non-operative or partially operative illuminating.

Directory sign. A sign, distinguished from a project entrance sign, which is allowed on a premise with more than one tenant or occupant of a building. It may be freestanding or a building (wall) sign. Such signs are not usually visible from the public street right-of-way of a development which provides initial access to the property, but rather are located within the development, along a driveway, access way, or parking aisle.

Dissolve. A mode of message transition on a changing sign accomplished by varying the light intensity or pattern, where the first message gradually appears to dissipate and lose legibility simultaneously with the gradual appearance and legibility of the subsequent message.

Double-faced sign. A sign structure with two sign faces that are parallel (back-to-back) or that form an angle to one another of no more than 60 degrees, where each sign face is designed to be seen from a different direction.

Face. That portion of a sign upon which the copy is placed, attached, bonded, or painted.

Fade. A mode of message transition on a changing sign accomplished by varying the light intensity, where the first message gradually reduces intensity to the point of not being legible and the subsequent message gradually increases intensity to the point of legibility.

Feather banner. (Blade sign, feather sign, teardrop sign and flag sign). A banner made from lightweight material and attached to a pole that is designed to wave in the wind.

Festoons. Strings or ribbons, tinsel, small flags, pennants, streamers, pinwheels, or other device or long narrow strips of fabric, plastic, or other pliable material designed to move in the wind.

Flag. Any fabric or bunting containing colors, patterns, words, emblems or logos used as a symbol of a government or other entity or organization.

Flashing sign. A sign, the illumination of which is not kept constant in intensity at all times when in use and which exhibits sudden or marked changes in lighting effects.

Freestanding sign (permanent). Any sign (including any associated supporting materials) which is independent from any building and is entirely supported by structures that are permanently placed on or in the ground. The term “freestanding sign” includes but is not limited to the following:

- (1) Monument sign (ground sign). A freestanding sign forming a solid, monolithic structure from the ground to the top of the sign.
- (2) Pole, pylon or stanchion sign. A freestanding sign that is mounted on a freestanding pole, pylon, stanchion, columns, or similar supports such that the bottom of the sign face or lowest sign module is not in contact with the ground.

Freestanding sign (temporary) : A sign device, not otherwise specifically defined and permitted in this ordinance, which involves the expression of any idea. Temporary freestanding sign shall not be in the form of a banner.

Frontage, building. The width in linear feet of the front exterior wall of a particular building in which an establishment is located.

Frontage, road. The width in linear feet of each lot where it abuts the right-of-way of any public street.

Hanging sign. Any sign which is attached to and projects down or hangs from a roof, canopy, or projecting attachment to a wall.

Illuminated signs include but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Internally illuminated means illuminated by an artificial light source from within the sign structure and radiating outward toward the viewer, usually projected through a transparent or translucent sign face.
- (2) Externally illuminated means illuminated only by an artificial light source that is external to, and independent of, the sign structure, and the illumination radiates toward the message area away from the viewer.
- (3) Halo illumination means illumination where the source of light is external and integral to the sign structure; where the resultant illumination radiates toward the viewer, is interrupted by the opaque sign structure, letters, or symbols, and back lights the message area.
- (4) Neon sign means an illuminated sign composed of exposed and visible tubes filled with neon gas, including signs of similar appearance but illuminated by other gases similar to neon.

Incidental sign. A small sign, emblem, or decal no larger than two square feet in area. Such signs are normally located on doors, windows, and gas pumps, or in parking lots or loading areas, may be freestanding or building signs, and are generally not readily visible or legible from public rights-of-way.

Inflatable sign. A sign or similar device that is intended to be expanded by pressurized air or other gas or by mechanical fan for its proper display or support.

Interstate sign. A freestanding sign located immediately adjacent to an interstate highway.

Marquee. A permanent roof-like structure of rigid materials supported by and extending from the façade of a building.

Marquee sign. Any sign painted on or attached flat to the face of a marquee.

Miscellaneous freestanding sign. A freestanding sign, other than a freestanding principal sign, temporary event sign or incidental sign, commonly found on multi-family and nonresidential use properties located at entrance and exit driveways, internal driving lanes, parking lots, designated handicap parking spaces, etc.

Nit. A standard unit of luminance; a measurement of direct light (i.e. looking directly at the light source), used to describe displays. A “nit” is an amount of emanating light equal to one candela per square meter (cd/m²).

Non-conforming sign. Any sign that was lawfully permitted by the jurisdiction of record at the time and/or was legal at the time of its establishment but does not conform to the provisions of this chapter.

Obscene. Any form of speech which, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest in sex, portrays sexual conduct in a patently offensive way, and which, taken as a whole, does not have serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value. See *Miller V. California*, 413 U.S. 15, 93 S. Ct. 2607 (1973).

Pennant. Any lightweight plastic, fabric, or similar material designed to move in the wind; pennants are often suspended from a rope, wire, or string in series. The term “pennant” shall not include a banner as defined in this chapter.

Portable sign. Any sign to be transported or easily relocated and not permanently attached to the ground, such as but not limited to the following:

- (1) A sign designed to be temporarily placed upon the ground and not anchored to it as otherwise required by the building code;
- (2) A sign mounted on a trailer, with or without wheels.
- (3) For the purposes of this chapter, sidewalk signs, sandwich board signs, banners and feather banners as prescribed herein are not considered portable signs.

Project entrance sign. A permanent freestanding sign located at a discernible entrance from a public or private road into a multi-family development or into a development containing multiple lots or buildings, such as but not limited to a particular residential or commercial subdivision, a business center, office park or industrial park or a mixed use planned center.

Projecting sign. Any sign, containing not more than two (2) faces, which is affixed to the exterior wall of a building or structure in such a manner that the sign face extends outward from the wall surface.

Revolving sign. See Animated sign.

Roof sign. Any sign erected, constructed, or maintained wholly upon or above the roof of any building or structure.

Sandwich board sign (sidewalk sign or A-frame sign). Any moveable sign not permanently secured or attached to the ground or surface upon which it is located, designed to be used on a sidewalk or pedestrian way, including within the public right-of-way, immediately adjacent to a building or structure.

Sign. A lettered, numbered, symbolic, pictorial, illuminated, or colored visual display, device, or communication designed or used for the purpose of identifying, announcing, directing, informing, or bringing to the attention of others the subject thereon, that is visible from the public right-of-way, a driveway or parking lot with access to a public right-of-way, or from an adjacent property, except as specifically noted otherwise in this chapter. For purposes of this chapter, the term “sign” includes but is not limited to “banner”, “balloons”, “flags”, “pennants”, “streamers”, “windblown devices” and “advertising devices.” Furthermore the term “sign”

includes the sign structure, supports, lighting system, and any attachments, ornaments, or other features used to draw the attention of the observers.

Sign structure. Any construction used or designed to support a sign.

Snipe sign. A sign of any material whatsoever that is attached in any way to a utility pole, permanent freestanding sign, tree, fence, rock or other similar object located on public or private property.

Standard Informational Sign. A sign with an area not greater than 32 square feet, with a placard made for short-term use, containing no reflecting elements, flags or projections, and which, erected, stands at a height not greater than 72 inches and is mounted on a stake or metal frame with a thickness or diameter not greater than 1 ½ inches.

Temporary Event. An activity having a specific duration or the end of which is related to a specific action, usually lasting for only a few days or months at a time. Temporary events are included, but not limited to, such activities as:

- a. The offering of a property or premises for sale or rent.
- b. Special business promotions, such as, but not limited to, “grand openings”, “close-out sales”, and seasonal sales events.
- c. Garage/yard sales.
- d. The construction of a building or development project, or the rehabilitation, remodeling or renovation of a building.
- e. A public announcement of a special event or seasonal activity by an individual or a non-profit organization.

Temporary sign. Any sign not permanently affixed to the ground or other permanent structure and designed and intended to be displayed for a limited period of time. This includes, but is not limited to, signs which are designed to be transported regularly from one location to another, signs which are designed with wheels, regardless of whether the wheels remain attached to the sign, signs placed into the ground on a temporary basis or nonpermanent foundation, or signs tethered to an existing structure.

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

Transition. A visual effect used on a changing sign to change one message to another.

Unlawful (illegal) sign: Any sign erected without a permit when a permit for the sign was otherwise required by this ordinance or previously adopted ordinance or code; a permitted sign which has not been properly erected in accordance with the permit application and approved

sign permit; or an otherwise lawful and permitted sign that has become hazardous or a nuisance to the public due to poor maintenance, dilapidation or abandonment.

Wall sign. Any sign attached parallel to a wall, painted on the wall surface, or erected and confined within the limits of an outside wall of any building or structure, which is supported by such wall or building and which displays only one sign surface. Wall signs shall not extend beyond the horizontal roof line or vertical edges of the building.

Window sign. A sign that is placed on or behind a windowpane or glass door and oriented to be viewed from outside the building.

Section 14.4 Application of regulations

Jurisdiction: The provisions of this ordinance shall apply to all signs that are or are intended to be viewed from a public right-of-way, private streets or adjacent property, erected in the unincorporated areas of Troup County, Georgia or specifically exempted from compliance with this ordinance. The provisions of this chapter do not apply to any sign not visible from public or private thoroughfares or adjacent properties and any sign within a business, office, or other totally enclosed area.

Section 14.5 Signs not requiring a permit.

The following are exempt from permitting requirements imposed by this article, but must meet all applicable regulations of this chapter:

- a. Window Displays: Window displays of goods available on a site are not considered to be signs and are exempt from these regulations.
- b. Window Signs: Window signs shall be allowed in the NHC, GC, CA, HC, LC, GI and LI zoning districts provided they do not exceed fifty (50) percent of the total window area.
- c. Brand names and logos: Brand names or logos on products, product containers, or product dispensers (such as, but not limited to, a soft drink machine or gasoline pump) that are an integral part of the product or the product's packaging are not considered to be signs and are exempt from these sign regulations.
- d. Official signs: Signs placed by or at the direction of a governmental body, governmental agency or public authority, such as, but not limited to traffic signs, signals, or regulatory devices or warnings; official emblems, public notices, or official instruments; signs providing directions to specific events or areas of architectural or historic significance or gateways; or other similar governmental signs or devices. Cush signs are authorized within all rights-of-way or other properties controlled by such governmental body, agency, or authority; and at such other locations as a governmental body, governmental agency or public authority may direct.
- e. Street addresses: Numerals displayed for the purpose of identifying property location.
- f. Flags: Flags must meet the following requirements:
 - i. All flags shall be displayed on flagpoles, which may be vertical or mast arm flagpoles. For non-agricultural/non-residential properties, flagpoles shall not exceed the height limit of the applicable zoning district, or 50 feet, whichever is

- less. Flagpoles on agricultural or residential properties shall not exceed 25 feet in height
- ii. Flags shall be limited to no more than 60 square feet in area.
- iii. Each single or two-family residential lot shall be allowed one flagpole.
- iv. Each multi-family, institutional, commercial, industrial or mixed-use lot shall be allowed a maximum of three flagpoles.
- v. A maximum of two flags shall be allowed per flagpole.
- vi. 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.
- vii. On officially designated city, state, or federal holidays, there shall be no maximum flag size or number or other limitations of the display of flags.
- viii. This section shall not be construed to restrict the right to display eligible flags as banners as provided elsewhere in this article.
- g. Incidental Signs: Small signs and postings as defined in this Section of no more than 2 square foot, provided that the aggregate of all such signs on a property may not exceed 16 square feet.
- h. Temporary Freestanding Signs: Signs designed for temporary display and not permanently affixed to the ground that do not exceed an aggregate sign area of 9 square feet per lot in all zoning districts. Such signs shall have a maximum height of three feet from ground level and be set back at least two feet from any right-of-way.
- i. Property approved for Agri-Tourism or Rural-Tourism will be allowed signs as permitted in the zoning district and any signage allowed as a condition of the special use permitting process.
- j. Sidewalk and sandwich board signs: Each tenant space is permitted one sandwich board sign subject to the following requirements:
 - i. Each sign shall not exceed 30 inches wide by 45 inches tall.
 - ii. Each sign must be located within 10 feet of the pedestrian entrance of the premises.
 - iii. Each sign shall not obstruct a continuous through pedestrian zone of at least five feet in width.
 - iv. Such a sign may be utilized only during the hours of operation of the store or entity using it and shall be removed during the hours it is closed.
- k. Weekend Signs: Weekend signs shall be allowed, subject to the following requirements:
 - i. Such signs shall be allowed only on Fridays from 12:00 PM through Tuesdays at 8:00 AM.
 - ii. No more than one (1) weekend sign per lot.
 - iii. No sign shall be located on any public right-of-way, and it must be on private property with the consent of the property owner.
 - iv. Signs shall not exceed a maximum area of six (6) square feet each.
 - v. Such signs shall not be illuminated.
- l. Standard Information Signs: Standard Information Signs shall be allowed subject to the following requirements:
 - i. Sign area not to exceed 32 square feet with a placard made for short-term use.
 - ii. No reflective elements, flags or projections.
 - iii. Height not to exceed 72 inches.
 - iv. Mounted on a stake or metal frame with a thickness or diameter not greater than 1.5 inches.

- v. No more than one per road frontage.

Section 14.6 General Regulations

The following standards shall apply unless otherwise specified in this chapter.

- a) A permit shall be required for the erection, alteration or reconstruction of any sign unless otherwise noted in Section 14.5 – Signs Not Requiring a Permit. Permits shall be issued by the Department of Building, Planning and Zoning in accordance with the regulations contained in this Article
- b) Design, material, and maintenance. Any sign not meeting with the following provisions shall be repaired or rebuilt in accordance with the specifications of this Article:
 - a. All signs shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the applicable provisions of the International Building Code and the National Electrical Code.
 - b. The area on private property around the sign on which it is erected shall be properly maintained, clear of brush, trees and other obstacles as to make signs readily visible.
 - c. All burned-out bulbs or damaged panels must be replaced.
 - d. All sign copy shall be maintained securely to the face and all missing copy must be replaced.
 - e. All signs shall be maintained in good structural condition at all times so that the public and traffic safety are not compromised, and
 - f. It shall be the responsibility of the sign owner to maintain and ensure compliance with the provisions of this chapter.
- c) Permanent signs shall be made of high quality durable material. Approved materials are metal with a minimum thickness of six (6) mm, high density urethane (HDU) or wood. If plywood is to be used, it must have exceptionally smooth and weather resistant surfaces, such as those with medium-density overlay (MDO) board. Other high quality materials shall be given consideration, and if of comparable quality and durability may be allowed at the discretion of the county.
- d) Illumination. No sign shall be illuminated by lights that flash, move, change in intensity, or turn on intermittently more than once a day, unless it is a permitted automatic changeable copy sign as allowed in Section 14.8. To prevent glare visible from a public street or adjoining property, the beam of any light shall be directed as not to be visible beyond the sign at which it is directed and the light source shall not be visible from any point on an adjacent property or land of the public right-of-way.
- e) Sign message. In any zoning district, any sign, display, or devise allowed under this article may contain any lawful noncommercial or commercial message except as expressly provided herein. No provision of this article shall be construed to allow regulation of signs based on the content of sign message.
- f) Measurement of Pole Sign and/or Interstate Sign Height: The height of a pole sign and/or interstate sign shall be equal to the vertical distance from the elevation of the centerline of the roadway at the nearest adjacent dedicated public street, to the highest point of the sign structure.

- g) Measurement of a Ground/Monument Sign Height: The height of a ground/monument sign shall be equal to the vertical distance from the average grade at the base of the sign, to the highest point of the sign structure. Any earthen berms and elevated foundations supporting signs, sign posts or other sign supports shall be included in the height of the sign. The ground shall not be altered for the sole purpose of providing additional sign height.
- h) Measurement of Sign Area: The area of a sign is calculated by determining the area of the smallest square or rectangle which encloses the sign face and the structure surrounding the sign face. For example, the pole or base would not be included, but any frame holding the sign face in place would be counted. Only one (1) face of a multi-face of a multi-face sign structure shall be used in computing the sign area. Where a single freestanding structure contains multiple individual signs, the sign area shall be the total gross area in square feet of all signs on the structure.
- i) Building signs.
 - (1) A building sign may not project higher than the wall or surface to which it is attached.
 - (2) A building sign may not project more than 18 inches from the wall surface unless approved as a hanging or projecting sign.
 - (3) Changeable copy signs and changing signs are prohibited as building signs.
- j) Permanent Freestanding signs (monument or pole).
 - (1) Freestanding signs shall be allowed as accessory uses only.
 - (2) Freestanding signs shall be setback at least 15 feet from the curb or edge of pavement of the roadway or two feet behind the right-of-way, whichever is greater.
 - (3) No freestanding sign shall be located within 30 feet of the nearest intersecting point of two street right-of-way lines.
 - (4) Freestanding signs shall be located at least 50 feet from other freestanding signs on the same side of the road.
 - (5) Monument signs located within 100 feet of a public right-of-way shall display the street address of the property, except where the sign is located on property that has more than one street frontage and the property address is assigned from a street other than the street frontage whereupon such sign is erected. Street numbers shall be of contrasting colors against the background, visible from both directions of travel along the street, and no less than six inches nor more than ten inches in height.
- k) Projecting signs.
 - (1) A projecting sign shall not project more than 36 inches beyond the wall to which it is attached.
 - (2) A projecting sign shall be finished on both sides.
 - (3) A projecting sign shall be mounted perpendicularly to the wall.
- l) Gas Canopy Signs: One company logo shall be allowed per street frontage.
- m) Project Entrance Signs. Where permitted, project entrance signs shall meet the following standards:
 - 1) Each project entrance may have no more than one such sign per entrance if double-faced or two signs if attached to symmetrical entrance structures.

- 2) The sign must be constructed of brick, stone, masonry or equivalent architectural material and be monument-style or integral to walls/fencing separating the project from the street.
 - 3) The maximum face area shall not exceed 40 square feet.
 - 4) The height of the structure shall not exceed eight feet including embellishments which shall not extend more than two feet above the main body of the structure.
 - 5) Signs shall not be internally illuminated.
 - 6) Signs shall be located a minimum of 15 feet from the edge of a street or two feet behind the right-of-way, whichever is greater.
- n) Miscellaneous Freestanding Signs: Accessory uses on multi-family lots to include MHP and CRVP zoned lots, non-residential lots and lots with public and institutional uses, subject to the following regulations:
- a. Within the area between a street right-of-way line and the minimum building setback required from that street right-of-way line on the property, the following applies:
 - i. Permanently installed miscellaneous freestanding signs may be located only within three feet of driveways or curb cuts that provide access into or from the property.
 1. There shall be no more than two such signs per driveway or curb cut and each such sign shall not exceed six square feet in area nor more than three feet in height.
 - ii. Miscellaneous freestanding signs located farther from the street than the minimum building setback from that street right-of-way line on the property, shall be allowed provided that such signs are no more than six square feet in area nor more than six feet in height.
 - iii. Directory signs for multi-family lots to include MHP and CRVP zoned lots are permitted provided they do not exceed four square feet each nor six feet in height.
 - iv. Display boards located next to drive-thru lanes. Such signs are permitted provided they do not exceed 8 feet in height or 32 square feet in area.
 - v. Miscellaneous Freestanding Signs will be permitted as part of the overall site design review process for new and expanded development.

Section 14.7 - Interstate Signs.

1. Interstate Signs will be allowed on I-85 only, according to the latest version of the adopted quadrant map. The following standards must be met:
 - a. The property shall be at least a one acre lot and must be zoned GC or GI.
 - b. The maximum sign height shall be 75 feet.
 - c. The surface area of the sign shall not exceed 400 square feet per sign face, and not more than 800 square feet of total sign area when all sign faces are combined.
 - d. The location of each interstate sign shall be set back not more than 100 feet from I-85, but at least 10 feet from I-85 and 40 feet from all other property lines.
 - e. No freestanding interstate sign shall be located within 50 feet of another freestanding sign.

- f. The face of each sign shall be perpendicular to the centerline of the interstate nearest to its location. No sign shall have more than 2 faces.
- g. Interstate signs shall not be changing signs.
- h. All interstate signs must be permitted by Troup County Building, Zoning and Planning Department in accordance with this section as well as the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Section 14.8 Changing Signs (Digital Multiple Message)

Changing signs or signs employing changing sign technology shall be allowed exclusively within the G-C, G-I or L-I, zoning district as a portion of a conforming, freestanding sign and are allowed on property used for public or institutional use regardless of zoning district. In no case are changing signs allowed on roads designated as Scenic Corridors in this ordinance, as amended. Changing Signs are further subject to the following requirements:

- (1) Each message displayed on any changing sign display shall remain static for at least thirty (30) seconds following the completion of its transition from the previous message. As used in this subsection "static" shall mean a display that is fixed in one (1) position with no portion of the display being in motion or changing in color or light intensity.
- (2) When a message is changed mechanically, the transition between a complete static display of the previous message and a complete static display of the next message shall be accomplished in three (3) seconds or less. The transition period shall be measured as that period between any movement of any part of the display of the previous message and the time that the display of the next message is fully static.
- (3) When a message is changed electronically, the transition between a complete static display of the previous message and a complete static display of the next message shall be accomplished in two (2) seconds or less. The transition period shall be measured as that period between the time that the previous message is static and fully illuminated and the next message is static and fully illuminated.
- (4) No changing sign may include animated, flashing, full-motion video or other intermittent elements. The transition period between two fully illuminated static messages displayed in an electronically changed sign shall not be considered an intermittent element so long as the purpose of the changing light intensity is to fade or dissolve into the next message.
- (5) No changing sign may have any type of changing effect on the border of the sign that is not fully integrated with a static message display and which does not transition to the next static message display in the same manner as the rest of the display.
- (6) No display or other effect from any electronically changed sign shall cause a glare or other condition that impairs the vision of the driver of any motor vehicle or which otherwise interferes with the safe operation of a motor vehicle.
- (7) Message transitions achieved by means of the scrolling of the letters, numbers or symbols shall be completed within two (2) seconds and shall remain static for at least sixty (60) seconds following the completion of the transition from the previous message.

- (8) All signs shall appropriately adjust display brightness as ambient light levels change so that the brightness of the display does not cause a glare or other condition that impairs the vision of the driver of any motor vehicle or which otherwise interferes with the safe operation of a motor vehicle. The maximum illumination, intensity, or brightness of electronic signs shall not exceed 5,000 nits (candelas per square meter) during daylight hours, or 500 nits (candelas per square meter) between dusk to dawn. The sign must have an automatic phased proportional dimmer control, photocell or other light sensing device, or a scheduled dimming timer, or another approved device, which produces a distinct illumination change that reduce nighttime brightness levels (compared to daytime brightness levels). The applicant shall provide written certification from the sign manufacturer that the light intensity has been factory pre-set or can be programmed not to exceed the levels specified in this subsection; end-user manipulation of pre-set levels or to exceed those specifications herein shall not be permitted. Unless another industry standard is accepted, the measurement for purposes of this paragraph shall be at any point ten (10) feet from the surface of the changing sign.
- (9) No malfunction of a changing sign shall cause a glare or other condition that impairs the vision of the driver of any motor vehicle or which otherwise interferes with the safe operation of a motor vehicle.
- (10) Any changing sign currently in existence shall comply with the regulations of this part. If a changing sign currently in existence cannot meet these requirements due to the limitation of the technology being employed, the owner of the sign shall be allowed to continue the existing use upon a showing, satisfactory to the director, that the requirements of this part cannot be met.

Section 14.9 Temporary Signs requiring a Permit

Temporary signs to include banners (includes definition of feather banners) and portable signs are allowed as indicated on Table 14.11 and in conformance with the following regulations:

1. Location:
 - a. All temporary signs must be set back at least 15 feet from the edge of the street pavement or 2 feet behind the right-of-way, whichever is greater.
 - b. A temporary sign must be located at least ten (10) feet from any other sign.
 - c. A temporary event sign shall be erected and maintained only with the permission of the owner of the property on which the sign is to be located.
2. Permit Required:
 - a. A temporary sign permit and fee shall be required for the signs allowed in this section.
3. Size:
 - a. Banners: Banners may not exceed twenty-four (24) square feet.
 - b. Portable Signs: Portable signs may not exceed thirty-two (32) square feet.
4. Number of signs (not exempt from permitting requirements)
 - a. Only two signs (2) related to each temporary event may be located on a lot at any one time.

5. Duration:

- a. Each lot that can have a temporary event sign under this section may have a permitted sign for thirty days in duration and may be approved four times per calendar year. The 30 days may not be in succession.
- b. A new business may place one (1) temporary sign prior to opening which provides information such as name, opening date, now hiring, etc. Sign shall be removed prior to occupying the building for business purposes. The sign shall be no larger than six (6) feet in height and twenty-four (24) square feet in sign area.

Section 14.10– Signs allowed per zoning district (Table 14.10)

ZONING DISTRICTS	AG	AGR, RR, LR, LRR,SFMD, USD	MHP	MFR, CRVP	NHC	GC, CA, HC, LC, GI, LI
FREESTANDING SIGNS, Permanent						
One Use on Property						
Allowed in Zone	Yes *Public and Institutional use follow GC regulations	Yes *Public and Institutional Use follow GC.	Yes	Yes Monument Only	Yes (Monument Only)	Yes
Permit Required	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Max. # allowed	One per road frontage, not to exceed 2 per parcel.	One	One	One	One per road frontage, not to exceed 2 per parcel.	One per road frontage, not to exceed 2 per parcel.
Max. Height	6'	3'	6'	8'	10'	25' Pole 15' Monument
Max. Area (sq.ft)	16 Sq.Ft. Double Faced	6 Sq.ft. Double faced	6 sq.ft. Double face	16 sq.ft. Double face	72 sf per sign	Pole- Max.=100 sf Monument-Max. 150 sf
Internal Lighting	NP	NP	NP	NP	P	P
External Lighting	P	NP	NP	P	P	P
Changing Sign	Public and Institutional Use Only, Up to 25% of square footage of sign. Not allowed on Scenic Corridor Roads.	Public and Institutional Use Only, Up to 25% of square footage of sign. Not allowed on Scenic Byway Roads.	NP	NP	Up to 25% of square footage of sign	Up to 50% of square footage of sign
Multiple Tenant Uses						
Allowed in Zone	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Yes(Monument Only)	Yes
Permit Required					Yes	Yes
Max.# allowed.					One per road frontage, not to exceed 2 per parcel.	One per road frontage, not to exceed 2 per parcel.
Max. Height					15'	25' Pole 15' Monument
Max. Area (sq.ft.)					150 sf per sign	Pole – Max.=150 sf Monument-Max.=200 sf
Internal Lighting					P	P
External Lighting					P	P
Changing Sign					Up to 25% of square footage of sign	Up to 50% of square footage of sign
ZONING DISTRICTS	AG	AGR, RR, LR, LRR, SFMD,USD	MHP	MFR, CRVP	NHC	GC,CA,HC,LC,GI,LI
BUILDING SIGNS						
Wall, Canopy and Awning						
Allowed in Zone	Yes	Public and Institutional Use Only	Yes Office	Yes Office	Yes	Yes
Permit Required	Yes- Public and Institutional Use only.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Size Allocation (Max. area sf. or Max. percent of wall area)	24 sf per road facing wall.	24 sf per road facing wall	24 sf per road facing wall	24 sf per road facing wall.	10 %	10% of wall for each individual business, with a maximum 200 sq.ft.
Internal Lighting	NP	NP	NP	P	P	P
External Lighting	P	NP	NP	P	P	P
Changing Signs	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP	NP

Projecting Signs						
Allowed in Zone	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed
Permit Required				Yes	Yes	Yes
Max.# allowed				1 per structure	1 per street facing wall	1 per street facing wall
Max.area (sq.ft.)				6	16	16
Internal Lighting				NP	P	P
External Lighting				P	P	P

ZONING DISTRICTS	AG,	AGR, RR, LR, LRR, SFMD, USD	MHP,	MFR CRVP,	NHC	GC, CA, HC, LC, GI, LI	Section
TEMPORARY SIGNS*							14.9
Banners							
Allowed in Zone	Allowed	Allowed in Public and Institutional Use only.	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	Allowed	
Permit Required	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Max. # allowed	1 per lot	1 per lot	1 per lot	1 per development	1 per lot	1 per lot	
Max. Size Allowed	24 SF	24 SF	24 SF	24 SF	24 SF	24 SF	
Duration	30 days once per quarter	30 days once per quarter	30 days once per quarter	30 days once per quarter	30 days once per quarter	30 days once per quarter	
Portable Signs							
Allowed in Zones	Allowed in Public and Institutional Use Only	Allowed in Public and Institutional Use Only	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Not Allowed	Allowed	
Permit Required	Yes	Yes				Yes	
Max. # allowed	1 per lot	1 per lot				1 per lot	
Max. Size Allowed	32 SF	32 SF				32 SF	
Duration	30 days once per quarter	30 days once per quarter				30 days once per quarter	
Internal Lighting	NP	NP				NP	
External Lighting	NP	NP				NP	

Section 14.11– PUD zoning district

For the purposes of this ordinance, any property in the PUD zoning district will be classified as a residential district. However, based on the site plan approved by the Board of Commissioners, the Senior Building Official/Zoning Administrator shall designate specific areas, within the PUD zoning district, as commercial and industrial, when such areas have the characteristics of a commercial or industrial district.

Section 14.12 - The following signs shall be prohibited in the county:

- (a) Any sign not specifically identified in this chapter as a permitted sign.
- (b) Abandoned signs.
- (c) Animated and flashing signs. Signs (excluding changing signs) that flash, blink, rotate, revolve, or have moving parts or visible bulbs, and signs containing reflective elements that sparkle in the sunlight or otherwise simulate illumination during daylight hours.
- (d) Dilapidated signs. Signs that are dilapidated or in such condition as to create a hazard, nuisance or to be unsafe or fail to comply with any provision of the building code.
- (e) Fringe, streamers, pennants, air or gas filled figures, search lights, beacons and other similar temporary event signs.
- (f) Light strands. Series, lines or rows of lights supported by cables or other physical means.

- (g) Obscene signs. Obscene signs, as defined by the state at O.C.G.A. § 16-12-80, as amended.
- (h) Obstructions. No sign shall obstruct any fire escape, window, door, or opening usable for fire prevention or suppression, or prevent free passage from part of a roof to any other part thereof. No sign shall extend above a parapet wall, be affixed to a fire escape, or interfere with any opening required for ventilation. No sign shall interfere with road or highway visibility or obstruct or otherwise interfere with the orderly movement of traffic or pedestrians. No sign shall pose a hazard to traffic or pedestrians due to structural deficiencies of such sign.
- (i) Portable signs except as specifically authorized in Section 14.9.
- (j) Banner signs (to include feather banner signs) except as specifically authorized in Section 14.9.
- (k) Private signs placed on public property. Any sign posted or erected on public rights-of-way or any other public property except as authorized by the governmental body, agency or public authority having jurisdiction over such property.
- (l) Roof signs. This prohibition does not apply to the face of a parapet wall, provided that the sign must not extend above the top of the parapet wall.
- (m) Snipe signs.
- (n) Sound or smoke emitting signs. A sign that emits or utilizes in any manner any sound capable of being detected on any traveled road or highway by a person with normal hearing, or a sign that emits smoke, vapor or odors.
- (o) Signs advertising illegal activity. Signs that advertise an activity illegal under state or federal law.
- (p) Any sign attached to, or placed on, a vehicle or trailer parked on public or private property, except for signs meeting the following conditions:
 - a. The primary purpose of such vehicle or trailer is not the display of signs.
 - b. The signs are magnetic, decals or painted upon an integral part of the vehicle or equipment as originally designed by the manufacturer, and do not break the silhouette of the vehicle.
 - c. The vehicle and/or trailer is in operating conditions, currently registered and licensed to operate on public streets when applicable, and actively used or available for use in the daily function of the business to which such signs relate.
 - d. The vehicle is parked in a legal parking area, on a lot with an active business license.
- (q) Vehicles and trailers used primarily as static displays, advertising a product or service, utilized as storage, shelter or distribution points for commercial products or services for the general public.
- (r) Signs imitating public warning or traffic devices.
 - (1) Any sign that displays intermittent lights resembling the flashing lights customarily used in traffic signals or in police, fire, ambulance, or rescue vehicles, and any sign that uses the words “stop”, “go”, “slow”, “caution”, “danger”, “warning” or other message or content in a manner that might mislead or confuse a driver.
 - (2) Any sign that uses the words, slogans, dimensional shape or size, or colors of governmental traffic signs.

- (3) No red, green, and yellow illuminated sign shall be permitted within 300 feet of any traffic light.
- (s) Window signs. Window signs on residential properties and individual or aggregate window signs exceeding 50 percent of the window area per building elevation for all other districts.
- (t) Signs located in the right-of-way.

Section - 14.13 Non-conforming Signs

Signs that, on the effective date of this ordinance, were approved and legally erected under previous sign restrictions, and have become non-conforming with respect to the requirements of this ordinance, may continue in existence subject to the remaining provisions of this section.

- (a) Signs shall not be repaired, rebuilt, replaced or altered except in conformity with this chapter after damage exceeding 50 percent of the signs' replacement cost at the time of damage.
- (b) Signs shall not be enlarged or altered in a way that would increase the nonconformity of the sign.
- (c) Existing signs which were legally erected but which have become non-conforming and which do not meet the setback requirements of this ordinance due to road widening should be moved to meet the setback requirement of this ordinance but shall not be increased in size, shape or changed in any manner except as to become conforming.
- (d) The right to continue use of a nonconforming sign is extinguished upon change in ownership of the parcel upon which said nonconforming sign is located.
- (e) A non-conforming sign shall not be replaced by another non-conforming sign, except that the substitution or interchange of poster panels, painted boards or de-mountable material on non-conforming signs shall be permitted. A change in the mode of message conveyance (i.e. from screen-print panel to LED) shall not be permitted on a non-conforming sign.
- (f) Minor repairs and maintenance of non-conforming signs such as electrical repairs or lettering repair shall be allowed. However, no structural repairs or changes in the size or shape of the signs shall be permitted except to make the sign comply with the requirements of this ordinance.
- (g) Portable signs, banners, and other signs allowed under this chapter which are not fixtures or freestanding signs are considered personal property, unattached to the real property on which they are placed, and thus have no nonconforming or grandfather rights under this section.
- (h) A nonconforming sign shall not be rebuilt or otherwise re-established after its use has been discontinued for more than 90 days.
- (i) This section shall not apply to any sign which according to the application of state or federal law or rule is allowed to remain or to be rebuilt or reconstructed, unless just compensation is paid.
- (j) In all zoning districts, signs shall be removed which:
 1. Were illegally erected or maintained with respect to prior ordinances.
 2. Are made of paper, cloth or non-durable materials, except as otherwise permitted by this ordinance.
 3. Are located in the public right-of-way, except as otherwise permitted by this ordinance.

Section - 14.14 Administration and Enforcement

- (a) *Permit required.* Except as exempted from obtaining a permit, all persons desiring to post, install, erect, display, expand, relocate or substantially change a sign regulated by this chapter within the county, shall first obtain a sign permit and all other permits required for the desired structure in accordance with county ordinances. A change in the copy of a sign shall not constitute a substantial change. However, a change in the mode of message conveyance (i.e. from screen-print panel to LED) shall be considered a substantial change requiring a sign permit.
- (b) *Application requirements.* Applications for sign permits, along with the non-refundable application fee, shall be submitted by the sign owner or the owner's agent to the building official on the form furnished by the county. Only complete applications will be accepted. Applications shall include the following:
- (1) The street address of the property upon which the sign is to be located. In the absence of a street address, the parcel identification number as assigned by the Troup County Tax Assessor shall be given.
 - (2) The name(s) and address(es) of all owners of the real property upon which the sign is to be located.
 - (3) The name, address, contact information and occupational tax certificate number and issuing jurisdiction of the sign contractor/installer.
 - (4) Written consent of the owner or owner's agent specifically granting permission for the placement of the sign as proposed.
 - (5) The types of sign, height, face area and total cost of sign construction or installation.
 - (6) For free-standing signs, a site plan, drawn to scale, showing the location of the proposed sign in relation to property and right-of-way lines (or edge of pavement, as appropriate), acreage of the parcel, location of driveways and parking spaces, public or private easements, and building locations.
 - (7) For building signs, a to-scale drawing or photo-simulation of the building face upon which the proposed sign is to be installed showing the placement of the sign upon the building, dimensions of the wall and sign and its height from ground level.
 - (8) Construction and/or fabrication details of the proposed sign, including certification as to conformance with all structural and wind-load resistive standards of the building code by a qualified structural engineer, or prepared using standard drawings prepared by a structural engineer or other qualified professional meeting, or exceeding all requirements of the building code, if applicable.
 - (9) Whether or not the sign is to be illuminated and the method of illumination.
- (c) *Time for consideration and issuance of permit.* The county shall process all sign permit applications within 30 business days of the county's actual receipt of a complete application and application fee for a sign permit. Revisions or amendments to an application shall extend the review period to 20 business days from the date of submission of the revision or amendment. Revisions or amendments received after the issuance of a permit shall constitute a new application.
- (1) The building official shall reject any application as incomplete that does not include all items required for a sign permit application as set forth under subsection (b) of this section.

- (2) The building official shall reject any application containing false material statements or omissions. Any rejected application later resubmitted shall be deemed to have been submitted on the date of resubmission instead of the original date of submission.
 - (3) Within 30 business days of receipt of a complete application, the building official shall:
 - a. Issue the permit; or
 - b. Inform the applicant in writing of the reasons why the permit cannot be issued.Failure of the building official to act on a sign permit within thirty (30) days shall result in a denial of the application.
 - (4) Upon determination that the application fully complies with the provisions of this chapter, the building code, and all other applicable laws, regulations and chapters of the county code, the sign permit shall be issued by the building official.
 - (5) If it is determined that the application does not fully comply with the provisions of this chapter, the building code and all other applicable laws, regulations and chapters of the county code, the building official shall reject the application and notify the applicant of the decision and reason(s) for the denial of the permit. The building official shall give such notice in writing by hand delivery, mail, e-mail or fax using the contact information provided on the application. The notice shall be post-marked or otherwise date-stamped on or before the 30th business day following the date of the completed application's receipt by the county. A denial pursuant to this section shall be appealable pursuant to the appeal procedures of this chapter.
- (d) *Permit fees.* A sign permit shall not be issued unless the appropriate permit fees, as established by the county commission, have been paid. No refunds of permit fees will be made for sign permits that expired due to failure to erect the subject sign. If a person desires to erect a sign in the same location as for any expired permit, a new application must first be processed and another fee paid in accordance with the fee schedule applicable at such time.
- (e) *Expiration of permit.* A sign permit shall become null and void if the sign for which the permit was issued has not been completed and fully installed within six months of the date of issuance, provided, however, that a 90-day extension shall be granted if a written request for extension is received by the building official prior to the expiration date of the initial permit.
- (f) *Appeals.* Appeals from an administrative decision by the building official may be made by any person aggrieved, or by any officer, department, or board or bureau of the county affected by any decision of the building official or other county official based on this chapter. Such appeal shall be taken and exercised in accordance with the appeal provisions for the zoning ordinance for the county as contained in this Code as the same may now exist or hereafter be amended. Any such appeal shall be to the board of zoning appeals and planning commission, which shall hear and decide whether there is an error in any order, requirement, decision or determination made by the building official or other county official based on this chapter.

Section - 14.15 Variances

- (a) *Application.* A request for a variance to the provisions of this chapter may be initiated by a property owner or his authorized agent by filing an application with the Senior Building Official.

- (b) *Application requirements.* The application shall be on a form provided by the Department of Building, Zoning and Planning and accompanied by an elevation drawing and/or plot plan, drawn to scale, showing the dimensions and arrangement of the proposed sign. The Senior Building Official may require other information about the variance requested and its relationship to the surrounding properties. Variance applications shall be accompanied by a fee as established by the governing body by resolution from time to time.
- (c) *Procedure.* Upon the filing of any complete application for a variance, a public hearing shall be scheduled and held by the Board of Zoning Appeals (the Board). Public notice of the variance application shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the local jurisdiction at least fifteen (15) days prior to the scheduled public hearing of the Board. Such notice shall state the purpose, location, time and date of the public hearing, and the nature of said application.
- (d) *Authority.* The Board shall have the authority to grant variances to this chapter, upon application by a property owner and after receiving comments by the staff and after holding a public hearing.
- (e) *Criteria for action upon variance application.* In acting upon variances, the staff shall submit written findings and the Board shall consider the following criteria and the extent to which they support or fail to support the sign variance application:
 - a. Where there are unusual, exceptional or extraordinary circumstances or conditions pertaining to the property that do not apply generally to other property in the same vicinity or use district, and such conditions are not the result of the owner's or occupant's own actions. Such conditions may include topography, unique natural conditions, surroundings of the subject property, or the size or peculiar shape of the lot.
 - b. As a result of such unusual circumstances or conditions, there is an unnecessary hardship or practical difficulty that renders it difficult to carry out the provisions of this chapter.
 - c. The authorization of such variance will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to property in the vicinity or district in which property is located, and the variance will be in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the provisions of this ordinance.
 - d. The variance is the minimum variance that will make possible the legal use of the sign.
 - e. The variance is not a request to permit a type of sign which otherwise is not permitted in the zoning district involved.
- (f) *Appeals.* Any applicant aggrieved by the decision of the Board shall seek judicial review by filing for a writ of certiorari in the superior court of Troup County within thirty (30) days of the decision.