TOWN OF HERNDON, VIRGINIA

TOWN COUNCIL

ORDINANCE

MAY 26, 2026

Ordinance- **to adopt ZOTA #26-01, to amend Chapter 78 (ZONING), ARTICLE XIV (Signs), Section 78-140.4 (Prohibited signs), Section 78-140.6 (General standards for all signs), Section 78-141.8 (Sign Standards for Planned Development—Transit Related Growth Districts), and Article XVIII (Definitions), Section 78-180 (Definitions) to update sections to include standards for signage in the Herndon Transit-Oriented Core (HTOC), provide a nit limit for signage, and include definitions pertinent to signage in the HTOC.**

BE IT ORDAINED by the Town Council of the Town of Herndon, Virginia that:

1. The following sections or provisions of the Herndon Town Code (2000), as amended, are amended and re-ordained as follows:

CHAPTER 78 (ZONING)

ARTICLE XIV. – Signs -

Sec. 78-140.4. - Prohibited signs.

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(a) General prohibitions. In addition to signs prohibited elsewhere in this Code or by applicable state or federal law, the following signs are prohibited:

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(7) Signs painted directly on a building, except in the historic district overlay when approved by the HDRB **or in the Herndon Transit-Oriented Core and Transit Related Growth districts provided all standards delineated in Section 78-140.6 and Section 78-141.8 are met.**

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Sec. 78-140.6. - General standards for all signs.

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(d) *Sign illumination*. Lighting shall be the minimum necessary to be visible at night time and shall not create a distraction or other hazard, such as pinpoint glare, to vehicular traffic and shall conform to the following standards:

(1) *Indirect lighting*. In the case of indirect lighting, the source shall be so shielded that it illuminates only the face of the sign. Indirect lighting shall consist of full cut-off or directionally shielded lighting fixtures that are aimed and controlled so that the directed light shall be substantially confined to the sign to minimize glare, sky glow, and light trespass. The beam width shall not be wider than that needed to light the sign. The light source shall have a neutral hue and be consistent for all fixtures illuminating a single sign.

(2) *Internal and halo illumination*. Internal illumination and halo illumination shall not be permitted to have an illumination spread of more than .05-foot candle at the lot line, shine into on-coming traffic, affect highway safety, or shine directly into a residential dwelling unit. The background of internally illuminated signs shall be designed so that the illumination only penetrates the letters, logos, symbols, or other message copy.

(3) All electronic display signage is limited to a maximum of 100 nits between dusk and dawn.

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Sec. 78-141.8. - Sign standards for planned development— Herndon Transit-Oriented Core and Transit related growth districts.

The general standards of Section 78-140.6 will apply, unless exempted. Each establishment and/or vehicular entrance, pedestrian entrance, or service bay may only use one of the following sign types: sign band, awning sign, or canopy sign. Parapet signs and tower signs are mutually exclusive.

Type	Sign Band	Awning Sign	Canopy Sign
Number	1 per establishment **frontage and/or vehicular entrance, pedestrian entrance, or service bay**	1 per establishment **and 1 per pedestrian entrance**	1 per establishment and 1 per **pedestrian** ~~lobby~~ entrance
Size	1 square foot of sign area for every 1 foot of establishment**, separate vehicle or pedestrian entrance, or service bay;** linear frontage **not to exceed 80% width of frontage, calculated independent of each**	**Maximum** 10**%** ~~percent~~ of awning area (top and valence); maximum 10-inch lettering **height**	**Maximum** 25 square feet; **Maximum width 90% the total width of the canopy; Maximum 18-inch letter height**

Height	~~N/A~~ **Limited to the height of the sign band**	~~N/A~~ **Limited to the height of the awning**	Maximum ~~8~~ **4** feet above canopy
Location	~~Above 1st floor storefront~~ **Between the second floor and ground floor at storefront, vehicle or pedestrian entrance, or service bay**	~~On awning above 1st floor storefront~~ **On ground floor awnings; On top of awning or on the awning valence**	~~On canopy above 1st floor storefront~~ **On top of ground floor canopies**
Illumination	Halo-lit or external	External only; not from underside of awning	External only

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Type	**Projecting Sign**	**~~A-Frame Sign~~**	**Blade Sign**
Number	1 per establishment	~~Unlimited~~	~~1 per building~~ **1 per building corner; under no instance shall two blade signs be viewed simultaneously**
Size	12 square feet **(excluding bracket)**; maximum height is ~~4 feet~~ **3 feet** and maximum width is ~~3 feet~~ **4 feet**	~~12 square feet; maximum width is 3 feet~~	~~60 square feet~~; **Maximum 100 square feet with a maximum interior angle of 45 degrees**; vertical orientation
Height	Minimum ~~9 feet~~ **8 feet** from bottom of sign **to ground**	~~Maximum 4 feet~~	Maximum ~~½ height~~ **2/3 height** of the building
Location	Below sign band	~~In front of establishment and not blocking pedestrian travel~~	On façade or building corner
Illumination	External only	~~None~~	Internal or external

Materials	N/A	~~Wood and/or metal frame; chalk or marker board copy area~~	N/A

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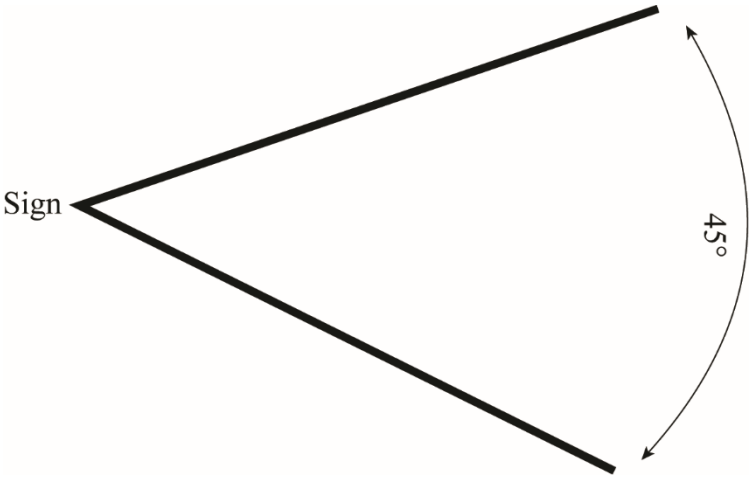

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66 *Maximum Multi-faced Sign Angle*

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Type	**~~Monument Sign~~ Freestanding Sign (Primary)**	**~~Parapet Sign~~**	**Freestanding Sign (Secondary)**	**~~Tower~~ Parapet Sign**	**Tower Sign**	**~~Freestanding (non-monument)~~**
Number	~~1 per street frontage~~ **1 per block frontage**	~~1 per building~~	**2 per block frontage**	1 per building ~~when building is minimum 80 feet in height~~ **and only on buildings of 60 feet or taller**	**Up to 2 per building with no more than 1 per elevation on properties abutting the Dulles Toll Road**	~~1 per street frontage~~
Size	Maximum ~~36 square feet~~ **32 square feet** per sign	~~Maximum 60 square feet~~	**Maximum 18 square feet per sign, vertical orientation, scaled for**	Maximum 150 square feet	**250 square feet maximum per sign when building is a minimum of 14 stories or**	~~Maximum 18 square feet~~

			pedestrian messaging		**minimum 180 feet in height; 150 square feet maximum per sign when building is minimum 6 stories or minimum 80 feet in height**	
Height	Maximum 8 feet	~~N/A~~	**Maximum 8 feet**	N/A	**On the parapet or top level of the building in an area designed to accommodate signage**	~~Maximum 8 feet~~
Location	~~Maximum 1 per each street frontage~~ **5' Min. from ROW, Entrances and corners; placement may not break the plane of the façade; limited to frontage on public and private streets**	~~On parapet~~	**Maximum 2 per block frontage, 5' minimum from public ROW and from building facades**	~~At the top of the building~~ **On the parapet or top level of the building**	**Visible from the Dulles Toll Road; On the south facing building elevation, left half of the east facing building elevation, or right half of the west facing building elevation**	~~Maximum 1 per each street frontage~~
Illumination	Internal halo-lit or external	~~Internal halo-lit or external~~	**Internal halo-lit or external**	Internal halo-lit or external	**Internal halo-lit or external**	~~Internal halo-lit or external~~

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Type	**Plaque**	**Projecting Banner Sign**	**A-Frame Sign (Sandwich Board)**
Number	**1 per business**	**Unlimited number; Limited to 1**	**Unlimited**

		business per block frontage	
Size	Maximum 4 square feet; Maximum 2 feet in height	24 square feet; 4 feet maximum projection; maximum height 10 feet	12 square feet; maximum width is 3 feet
Height	N/A	Limited to ground, 2nd, or 3rd floors	Maximum 4 feet
Location	On façade	1 spaced every 15 feet minimum	In front of establishment outside pedestrian passage
Illumination	External only	None	None
Materials	N/A	Durable exterior commercial grade fabric	Wood and/or metal frame; chalk or marker board copy area

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1. Sign Band
2. Awning Sign
3. Canopy Sign
4. Projecting Sign
5. Blade Sign
6. Freestanding Sign (Primary)
7. Freestanding Sign (Secondary)
8. Tower Sign
9. Plaque
10. A-Frame Sign

**Parapet Sign and Projecting Banner Sign not pictured*

Sign types in the Herndon Transit-Oriented Core and Transit related growth districts.

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CHAPTER 78 (ZONING)

ARTICLE XVIII. – DEFINITIONS-

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Sec. 78-180. - Definitions.

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Frontage. For a parcel or lot that abuts street **(public or private)**, common area parcel or other defined land area:

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Sign related terms. The following definitions pertain to signs and signage in all zoning districts:

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(5) *Building frontage*. ~~Building frontage means the length of the exterior wall of a building which physically encloses usable interior space and faces a public right-of-way.~~ **The linear distance of a building, measured along the exterior wall which faces a public right-of-way, or private street, abutting the parcel of land on which the building is located, except as provided in Article XIII, Signs.**

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(10) Dulles Toll Road tower sign - A wall-mounted sign intended for visibility along the Dulles Toll Road.

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(26) Plaque – A small, low-profile, wall-mounted nonelectric tablet intended for pedestrian scaled messaging and associated with business entrances.

(27) Projecting banner sign – A sign supported by poles or brackets that extends out from the face of a building made of flexible material such as canvas.

~~(25)~~ **(28)** *Projecting sign.* Projecting sign means any sign, affixed to a building **below the sign band**, supported only by the wall on which it is mounted, and oriented perpendicular to the wall plane on which it is anchored.

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(33) Sign band – A wall-mounted sign installed above a storefront, vehicular or pedestrian entrance, or service bay affixed to an area designed specifically to contain signage.

2. This ordinance shall be effective on and after the date of its adoption.