

AMENDED DECORATIVE SIGN POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

WHEREAS, it is the City of Charlotte's policy to display on lightpoles, utility poles, and other structures in the rights-of-way only those decorative signs or other decorations that promote or celebrate holidays and seasons, the City, its civic institutions, or public activities or events in the City (and that otherwise promote the corporate interests and welfare of the City); and

WHEREAS, the City displays decorative signs and decorations in the rights-of-way for the purposes of enhancing the atmosphere of the streetscape through beautiful, festive, and decorative graphics, and celebrating the City in a manner that attracts tourists, inspires citizens, accords with the City's commitment to embracing diversity and respect for all persons, and is suitable for a broad-based audience of all ages; and

WHEREAS, the City accepts donations of decorative signs and decorations from private entities where the signs and decorations comply with the established criteria and serve to further and/or complement the City's own programs and initiatives in the cultural, charitable, special events, conventions and tourism, economic development and community-building areas; and

WHEREAS, the Director of Transportation also is authorized to promulgate specific policies and guidelines to ensure that the display of decorative signs or other decorations in the rights-of-way is done in a manner to protect the public safety and welfare.

I. The following governs all decorative signs or other decorations displayed in the rights-of-way:

The City shall display in the rights-of-way only decorative signs or other decorations that promote or celebrate the City, its neighborhoods, civic institutions, or public activities or events in the City.

Signs that "promote or celebrate the City" shall be deemed to include those that: promote a program or activity of the City; promote an organization or program subsidized or sponsored by the city; identify a neighborhood; promote commercial district; promote significant events or institutions that have unique ties to the City of Charlotte; and that celebrate significant anniversaries of city businesses and community institutions in increments of 5 years starting with the 20th anniversary (e.g. 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, etc).

"Civic institutions" include significant cultural institutions and activities/events; important community institutions, such as hospitals, professional and amateur sports teams/events, colleges and schools; and direct-service charitable organizations, such as the YMCA and the United Way.

"Public activities or events" means large, festive events that are open to the public generally, for free or for nominal cost; fund-raising events on behalf of (i) not-for-profit charitable organizations which engage in direct-service charitable work, or are umbrella

fund-raising organizations for such work, or (ii) associations devoted to research on and support for patients with various diseases.

Rights-of-way shall NOT be used for commercial advertising or for promoting any political or social advocacy organization or political or religious message.

II. The following additional conditions are imposed on all signs and decoration donations:

- (A) All potential sign donors must submit an application to the Department of Transportation (the "Department"). Such application must include the name of the donor organization, any sponsoring corporation or organization, the purpose of the sign, a detailed description of the graphics and words on the sign, the period of time for which the signs are donated, and any special request to display the donated signs at specific locations. No substantial changes to the graphics or words of the sign may be made after the sign has been approved. If any changes are made, the CDOT Director reserves the right to withdraw the approval to display the sign.

All potential decoration donors must submit an application to the Department. Such application must include the name of the donor organization, any sponsoring corporation or organization, a detailed description of the type of decoration to be installed, the period of time for which the decorations are donated, and any special request to display the donated decorations at specific locations. No substantial changes to the decoration may be made after the decoration has been approved. If any changes are made, the CDOT Director reserves the right to withdraw the approval to hang the decorations. Examples of such decorations may include garlands, wrapped around the poles; mock trees, bells and bows affixed to the poles.

- (B) Any person or entity donating a decorative sign or decorations shall agree in writing to hire a professional company which, without any cost to the City, will hang and remove the signs or other decorations, and the brackets and hardware, according to the time-frame in the Ordinance, and will obtain the necessary street closing permit to do such.
- (C) Approved banner size, material, and placement on pole is dependent upon location and pole structure. All banners will be installed on street light utility poles only.
- (D) Banner construction and fasteners will be evaluated and stipulated on a case-by-case basis.

No banner or street light or utility pole decoration shall: (1) move mechanically or in any other way other than by natural causes, (2) be lighted or flash, (3) make noises.

- (E) One illustration of a corporation or business sponsoring the cost of a sign for an applicant shall be allowed per sign and the total illustration of the sponsor shall not exceed 15% of the total banner space in the design.
- (F) No pole to pole attachments are allowed.
- (G) No signs or other decorations shall be affixed to posts that bear traffic signals.
- (H) The CDOT Director may in his/her discretion limit the number of signs or light pole decorations allowed to be placed under any single permit application.
- (I) The donor shall enter into an agreement with the City indemnifying and holding the City, its officers, agents and employees, harmless from any and all claims arising out of the placement maintenance, use or removal of signs or decorations, including any claims relating to signs or decorations or the structures upon which they are hung falling on people or property.
- (J) Proposed donations may be made up to nine months in advance of the display request period.
- (K) No temporary sign may remain more than 48 hours after the event advertised in the sign is over. No decoration may remain past the date designated on the permit issued by the CDOT Director.
- (L) Any application for the placement of signs or other decorations at the Charlotte-Douglas International Airport shall be submitted to the Department of Aviation for their review and are not governed by these rules and regulations.
- (M) A hanging banner that develops holes, becomes frayed, or otherwise falls into a state of disrepair, must be removed by an approved banner company.

III. The following guidelines govern the display of signs or other decorations paid for and/or designed by the City and all signs promoting City-sponsored events ("City banners"):

Note: As used in these Regulations, "City" is deemed to include all City departments.

- (A) The City department seeking to display signs or other decorations must submit an application to the Department of Transportation Director. Generally, the above regulations shall apply to City signs and other decorations as well.
- (B) These regulations do not apply to signs or other decorations that are located within an area permitted through the City's public assembly ordinance (Article

XI, Chapter 19 of the Charlotte City Code).