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<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	Amend Unified Development Ordinance Section 7.4.5, Wall Signs
<b>APPLICABLE CHAPTER(S):</b>	Chapter 7
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	Yates Dunaway (Crosland LLC) on behalf of C4 OP Owner LLC
<b>STATUTORY NOTICES:</b>	Hearing notice published 4/29/2023 in The Lancaster News And 5/03/2023 in Carolina Gateway

All proposed amendments have been processed and notified as required by UDO Section 9.2.15.

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#### PROJECT SUMMARY & PROPOSAL:

On behalf of C4 OP Owner LLC, applicant Yates Dunaway is proposing to amend Chapter 4 and Chapter 7 of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to **modify Section 4.3.2, Highway Corridor Overlay regulations, Section 7.2.6 Bicycle Parking, Section 7.4.5 Signage standards, and Section 10.3 Definitions**. These four (4) requests are related to a proposed development in The Exchange along Hwy 521/Charlotte Hwy, located in the “Neighborhood Mixed Use” category of the Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use map.

This report focuses on the proposed changes to Chapter 7, Section 7.4.5.A.

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#### OUTLINE OF TEXT AMENDMENT:

The applicant has submitted text amendments that are related to the proposed Costco site in The Exchange mixed-use project located on Charlotte Hwy. Staff has arranged the requests based on the UDO Chapter proposed for amendment.

The applicant has also applied for a rezoning for 28 acres to convert from Light Industrial to regional business, which is reported on under case file RZ-2022-0344.

The following section of Chapter 7 is proposed to be amended:

##### **Section 7.4.5.A – Wall Sign Maximum Area**

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#### **Section 7.4.5.A – Wall Sign Maximum Area**

##### **PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT:**

The following section of the UDO is proposed to be amended to allow additional sign square footage for large-scale retailers:

##### **7.4.5 SIGNAGE STANDARDS BY CATEGORY**

**A. ATTACHED SIGN STANDARDS**

	Permitted Location	Maximum Area	Max Height	Other	Max Number
Wall Signs	AR, RR, RN, LDR, MDR, HDR, UR, RUB, PB, HDR  (non-residential uses only, but not Home Occupations)	30 square feet OR 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 50 square ft building maximum	No sign shall extend above the roofline	12-inch maximum protrusion	None. May not exceed maximum calculated square footage on any wall (cannot move allotment from one wall to another)
	NB, INS, RMX, MX, IMX	30 square feet OR 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 50 square foot building maximum.			
	LI, HI, GB, RB	50 square feet OR 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 75 square foot per building maximum, <b>except 400 square feet per building wall maximum for Large-Scale Retailer.</b>			

**RELEVANT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITATIONS:**

***Land Use Element – Community Types***

An important concept introduced during the regional planning process was designating areas based on “community types.” ... The use of community types marks a significant shift in planning practice in the last ten to fifteen years, away from conventional and functional designations that merely specified the use of land and towards a renewed interest in the relationships between land uses and urban design. The objective of this more contextual way of classifying land uses is to produce more economically and environmentally attractive places to live, work and play.

The Future Land Use Category of the subject property is Neighborhood Mixed Use, which corresponds to the Community Type of Walkable Neighborhood. The adopted Comprehensive Plan states that the Walkable Neighborhood Community Type *"is synonymous with the Place Type "Mixed-Use Neighborhood." This is due to its very specific characteristics that set it apart from most other Place Types by virtue of its deliberately structured mix of dwelling types in a development context that often operates through the separation of uses, densities and/or land value. This Place Type and Community Type has its roots in the traditional character of American communities during the early part of the 20th century, and has been revived in recent decades as a relevant option for future development."* The Comprehensive Plan further establishes several possible land use considerations representing typical development in this category which are depicted in the table below.

Walkable Activity Center: Land Use Considerations		
Condominium / Apartment	Professional Office	Movie Theatre
Live/Work Unit	Government Building	Pocket Park
Community-wide Commercial	Church/School	Farmers' Market
Restaurant	Library	

The Neighborhood Mixed-Use Future Land Use Category covers the upper half of the Panhandle, terminating at Waxhaw Highway (Route 75). The Neighborhood Mixed Use Future Land Use Category and Walkable Neighborhood Community Type are intended to be compatible with the existing suburban character of the area.

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#### DISCUSSION:

Signage is very important to a business. Too little, and you might lose opportunities for sales; too much, and the community may complain about visual clutter. Good sign code balances the needs of both the business and the residents.

At the May 4 workshop, the Planning Commission expressed interest in finding a way to relate the Costco request to other large-scale businesses (retail and grocery) in the Indian Land area. Staff compiled the information gathered in the table below.

It's worth noting that none of these facilities have signage on all four sides, and that few counties or municipalities allow every wall to have signage as the applicant requested.



<u>Store</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Sq Ft*(area)</u>	<u>Wall Signage*(Front)</u>	<u>Distance*from 521</u>	<u>Zone</u>
ALDI	9553 Charlotte Hwy	18,000	30 sq ft x 2	125 ft	RB
Food Lion	8175 Charlotte Hwy	46,000	175 sq ft	325 ft	PDD
Harris Teeter	6271 Carolina Commons Dr	54,000	215 sq ft + 30 sq ft	375 ft	PDD
Lowes Home Improvement	181 Fort Mill Hwy	150,000	500 sq ft + 50 sq ft + 100 sq ft	750 ft	RB
Publix	8360 Charlotte Hwy	52,000	200 sq ft	700 ft	GB
Walmart Supercenter	10048 Charlotte Hwy	165,000	150 sq ft	800 ft	RB

*\*all measurements are rounded off and approximate; signs on one side of the building except for ALDI (two faces)*

*-Harris Teeter and Lowes have signage on multiple entrances, and all are on the same side of the building*

Some additional information to help put the sign request in perspective:

- The sign area requested per wall is 400 square feet.
  - The area of a regular digital billboard (monopole, one face) is 400 square feet.
  - The UDO currently limits billboards in Lancaster County at 150 square feet.

Staff agrees that the signage allowance needs to be somewhat proportionate to the wall. Staff disagrees that the request is in line with Walmart and Lowes Home Improvement (see above).

The applicant's justification reads, in part, that "Applicant seeks relief from the HCO's requirement that the Large-Scale Retailer building front on the highway corridor and that the planned building will be located some distance back from the highway." This is a self-created issue and would not be an applicable explanation in other situations, as in when a request creates a non-conformity. The Indian Land sign survey (in the table above) has many examples of businesses located farther from the Hwy 521 corridor and utilizing less wall-mounted signage than requested.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff would advise an alternative total square footage measurement for wall signage per large-scale retail site and a limitation on the number of walls where the signs may be installed/displayed. Changes are provided below (with additions underlined).

**7.4.5 SIGNAGE STANDARDS BY CATEGORY**

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	NB, INS, RMX, MX, IMX	30 square feet OR 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 50 square foot building maximum.			
	LI, HI, GB, RB	50 square feet OR 1 square foot per linear foot of building wall, whichever is greater. 75 square foot per building maximum, <u>except maximum 400 square feet each on a maximum of two walls (totaling 800 square feet per project) for Large-Scale Retailer.</u>			

**APPLICANT'S RESPONSE TO STAFF'S PROPOSAL:** The applicant accepts staff's alternative.

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**PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:** The Planning Commission motion to recommend approval of the alternative proposed by staff passed 6-0. The ordinance that accompanies this staff report is the one proposed by staff and accepted by the applicant.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Application
2. Proposed Text Amendment

**STAFF CONTACT:**

Allison Hardin, Interim Planning Director  
[ahardin@lancastersc.net](mailto:ahardin@lancastersc.net)