

## **Chapter 19.5 ROAD NAME, ROAD SIGN AND ADDRESS DISPLAY ORDINANCE**

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### **Sec. 19.5-27. Purpose and intent.**

The purpose and intent of this ordinance are to provide a uniform system of visible road addresses for all properties and buildings throughout the county in order to facilitate the provision of adequate public safety and emergency response services and to minimize difficulty in locating properties and buildings for public service agencies and the general public.

(Res. of 10-15-01, § 2; Res. of 1-18-11, § 2))

### **Sec. 19.5-28. Definitions.**

The following words and phrases when used in this ordinance shall have the meanings respectively ascribed to them in this section.

*Address Program Administration (APA)* means the planning division with the department of planning and development in conjunction with the Rowan County Telecommunications Department shall be responsible for the administration of this article.

*Block* means a unit of measurement typically defined as five hundred twenty-eight (528) feet (.10 mile) of linear distance for a road consisting of an odd and even numbered side of the road.

*Block range* means systematic division of the linear distance of a road and conversion into a series of blocks.

*Block range inconsistency* means structure or lot that exhibits a road address that does not coincide with the designated block range, e.g. a residential dwelling with a road address of 123 Apple Road is located in the 400 block of Apple Road.

*Driveway* means typically a private means of ingress, egress and regress providing access from a public road or public vehicular driveway to a building, use or structure.

*Duplication* means an instance where a road name and / or road address is utilized more than one (1) time.

*Greenway* means a trail or path used for pedestrian and / or bike travel and / or horseback riding.

*Master Street Address Guide (MSAG)* means the official street list for approved road names and block ranges maintained by Rowan County Telecommunications Department.

*Odd / even conflict* means situations where a structure or lot displays an address in conflict with the established sequence of addresses for a road, e.g. a residential dwelling with a road address of 123 Apple Road is located in evenly numbered side of Apple Road.

*Planning department* means the planning division of the Rowan County Department of Planning and Development.

*Road* means a public or private one-way or two-way road for ingress and / or egress. Such road may be of various types including frontage road, rear access road, road with cul-de-sac, and dead-end road. For purposes of this ordinance, all driveways providing access to any combination of residential, commercial, or industrial property that has three (3) or more structures shall be considered a road.

*Road address* means the combination of numbers and road name assigned by the planning division which uniquely identifies a particular building or lot based on its location within a block range.

*Structure* means any building having a roof supported by columns or walls for the shelter, support or enclosure of persons, animals, chattels, or equipment. When separated by division walls from the ground up without openings, each portion of such building may be deemed a separate building. For the purposes of this ordinance, the term "structure" may also include other manmade structures as determined necessary by the APA. The following are some examples of different types of structures:

- (a) *Camper / recreational vehicles*: Under this ordinance are not considered addressable structures. Campgrounds are addressed by lots, not by structure.
- (b) *Churches / places of worship* mean any building utilized for not-for-profit organizations for the purpose of worship (including their day cares, schools, etc., on its property).
- (c) *Commercial, business, industrial structure* means any building used for profitable gain.
- (d) *Residential structure* means any single-family dwelling meeting N.C. Building Codes having a permanent way of cooking and permanent plumbing.
- (e) *Temporary power service* means power companies require an address to set up power supply. A well or power pole in itself is not an addressable structure, but the county may address the parcel.

*Telecommunication department* means the Public Safety 911 Communications Center.

(Res. of 10-15-01, § 3; Res. of 1-18-11, § 3)

### **Sec. 19.5-29. Official road names, addresses and identification.**

(a) The road names in the MSAG are hereby declared the official names of these roads, unless changed by action of the Rowan County Board of Commissioners. The APA is hereby authorized to determine the need for road name changes and to recommend such changes to the board of commissioners.

(b) The addresses on file and maintained by the planning division shall be the official road address for every structure governed by this ordinance. The APA is hereby authorized to correct road addresses in situations of duplication, inconsistency with block, range, odd / even conflict, etc. No existing road name on file shall be changed unless it is determined by the APA that the proposed change will enhance the purpose and intent of this ordinance, especially in regards to public safety.

(c) A sign showing the official name, state road number and block number shall identify all roads in the county. These road signs shall be placed at all intersections and shall identify both intersecting roads and may be maintained by the maintenance division of the Rowan County Department of Facilities Management under policies as prescribed by the board of commissioners. Private roads with a "dead end" or "no outlet" shall be noted on signs with "Dead End" or "No Outlet" as needed.

(d) Owners and / or developers of subdivision roads subject to section 5.4 [subsection 19.5-30(4)] shall be responsible for the purchase of road sign(s) at a cost established by the board of commissioners. Should an individual or group of citizens petition to change the name of a road, that individual or group shall be responsible for the purchase of new road sign at a cost established by the board of commissioners. Signs shall be purchased from the planning division.

(e) Road name signs shall be uniform throughout the county in accordance with the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways 2009 edition, as amended.

(f) Due to confusion for public safety personnel, it shall be unlawful to display a road sign and / or road address which has not been approved by the APA, e.g., only those roads identified in the MSAG and / or on file with the planning division.

(Res. of 10-15-01, § 4; Res. of 1-18-11, § 4)

### **Sec. 19.5-30. Road naming and petitioning process.**

Roads that have no name on file in the MSAG may be assigned an official name through the process established in this section. Furthermore, existing roads that present complications for emergency response efforts or confusion to the general public may have their name changed or modified pursuant to the provisions of this section.

A road naming petition must be completed for naming and signage. The following criteria must be met for a road name to be approved and entered into the system:

The petition may include three (3) possible names and can only be processed with a majority of all adjoining property owner's signatures if initiated by the public (if the petition is initiated by the APA it may receive special consideration (see below section 5.2.c.1, 2 [19.5-30(2)(c)1., 2.]). The APA shall check all road names submitted for acceptance in the E-911 road name system. If at least one (1) name is approved then the process will continue. Unanimous petitions will be processed by the APA and nonunanimous petitions will continue through the public hearing process.

The APA has the authority under special circumstances to name any road with less than three (3) structures to carry out the purpose and intent of this ordinance.

(1) *Public hearing and notice.* Prior to naming, renaming, or reassignment of addresses to any roads within the jurisdiction of this article, the board of commissioners may conduct a public hearing on the matter. At least ten (10) days prior to the hearing, notice of the time, place and subject matter shall be prominently posted at the county courthouse, in at least two (2) public places in the township(s) where the road is located and publish a notice of such hearing in a newspaper of general circulation in the county. After naming or renaming a road, or assigning or reassigning road numbers on a road, notice of the action shall be given to the local postmaster with jurisdiction over the road.

(2) *Petition process.* All property owners adjoining a road proposed for naming or changing shall be notified by the planning division of the intent. Road name petitions returned to the planning division will be categorized and processed as follows:

(a) *Unanimous petitions.* Petitions having one hundred (100) percent of property owners' signatures in this category may be accepted and approved by the planning division. Planning staff shall notify owners / residents of the acceptance and a right to appeal address changes in this category. If no appeal is received within (ten) 10 days of notice, the road address change will be authorized. Any appeal to the road naming petition within ten (10) days will require a public hearing by the board of commissioners.

(b) *Majority petitions.* Petitions having a majority of property owners in agreement as to a proposed road name choice. Fifty (50) percent plus one (1) of the property owners along the road to be named or changed shall constitute a majority. Petitions in this category may be approved by the board of commissioners following a public hearing.

(c) *Special consideration.* Petitions in this category do not qualify as either a unanimous or majority due to (a) less than majority property owner's signatures, or (b) lack of a submittal. Petitions in this category will be processed as follows:

1. *Less than majority.* All property owners along the road to be named will be notified by the planning division of the proposed road name choice. The owner will also be informed that no additional petitions will be accepted for consideration. Final action on the petition will be taken by the board of commissioners at a public hearing.

2. *Lack of submittal.* Failure to return a road naming petition within thirty (30) days to the planning division shall indicate that property owners along the road to be named are in general agreement with the name proposed by the planning division. Final action will be taken by the board of commissioners following a public hearing.

(3) *Address reassignment.* Due to duplication, block range inconsistency, odd / even conflict or other types of address anomalies, including public safety and emergency response issues, the APA is authorized to reassign an address. Property owners and occupants of the structure(s) to be reassigned addresses shall be notified by the planning division of the intent and rationale for change. Procedures for adoption of the address reassignments shall be as defined in section 5.2.A [subsection 19.5-30(2)(a)] and enforced based on section 9E [section 19.5-34(e)].

(4) *Subdivision roads.* New roads in subdivisions, constructed or dedicated after these amendments, may obtain administrative approval for road name choices from the planning division provided the choices are in accordance with section 5.5 [19.5-30]. Requests to reserve road names must be submitted in writing and dated. Reserved road names will be held for one

(1) year. The road names shall be depicted on the final plat recorded with the Rowan County Register of Deeds.

(5) *Proposed road names.* Road names proposed for consideration may not be duplicated elsewhere in the county or sound deceptively similar to an existing road name. The use of specific names of individuals or property owners along the road is discouraged. Directional identifiers and thoroughfare abbreviations (see appendix B) may not be used in conjunction with an existing root name for consideration as a proposed road name.

## **Appendix B Road Suffixes and Accepted\* Abbreviations**

The suffixes and abbreviations listed below have been agreed upon by both municipal and county officials as the accepted list of suffixes for use in the naming of roads. Also, from this point forward the following rules shall apply:

- (1) Under no circumstances shall "Extension" (abbreviated Ext) be considered a viable road suffix.
- (2) Road suffixes may not be used in the proper name of the road.
- (3) Directional prefixes may not be used in the proper name of the road. (i.e., can be N Main St but cannot be North Main St).
- (4) Numeral wording used in the proper name of the road must be spelled out (i.e., can be First Run Ln but cannot be 1st Run Ln).
- (5) Duplicate proper road names (with regard to pronunciation as well as spelling) are not permitted, regardless of road suffix.

Road Suffix	Accepted Abbreviation	Road Suffix	Accepted Abbreviation	Road Suffix	Accepted Abbreviation	Road Suffix	Accepted Abbreviation
Alley	Aly	Drive	Dr	Pike	Pike	Terrace	Ter
Annex	Anx	Expressway	Expy	Place	Pl	Trace	Trce
Avenue	Ave	Freeway	Fwy	Point	Pt	Trail	Trl
Boulevard	Blvd	Highway	Hwy	Ramp**	Ramp	Way	Way
Causeway	Cswy	Lane	Ln	Road	Rd	Greenway	Grwy
Circle	Cir	Loop	Loop	Run	Run		
Court	Ct	Parkway	Pkwy	Street	St		

\* The accepted abbreviations given are drawn from United States Postal Service Publication 28, "Postal Addressing Standards".

\*\* "Ramp" added on April 3, 2001 to cover interstate on / off ramps.

## Secondary Unit Designators and Accepted\* Abbreviations

Secondary Unit Designator	Accepted Abbreviation	Secondary Unit Designator	Accepted Abbreviation	Secondary Unit Designator	Accepted Abbreviation
Apartment	Apt	Lot	Lot	Slip	Slip
Basement	Bsmt	Lower	Lowr	Space	Spc
Building	Bldg	Office	Ofc	Stop	Stop
Department	Dept	Penthouse	Ph	Suite	Ste
Floor	Fl	Pier	Pier	Trailer	Trlr
Front	Frnt	Rear	Rear	Unit	Unit
Hangar	Hngr	Room	Rm	Upper	Uppr
Lobby	Lbby	Side	Side		

\* The accepted abbreviations given are drawn from United States Postal Service Publication 28, "Postal Addressing Standards".

(Res. of 10-15-01, § 5; Res. of 1-18-11, § 5)

### **Sec. 19.5-31. Address Assignment procedures.**

(a) *General.* Addresses not occurring in municipalities were generally assigned based on building location using a block range of one-tenth mile. As a general rule, all odd-numbered addresses reside on the east side of the road for those roads running north / south and on the south side for those running east / west.

New addresses will be visually compared with adjacent addresses for accuracy and completeness and forwarded to the E911 center.

(b) *New roads.* Addresses for new roads will be assigned using the one-tenth of a mile block according to distance of the lot / structure from the intersection of the connecting road. Structures will be addressed based on driveway access to the main road. Structures on a corner of two (2) roads will also be addressed based on driveway access to the main road. APA has the authority to change and / or modify this rule to meet the intent of this ordinance. New roads will be assigned a number beginning with either 100 or 1000. New roads intersecting with existing roads at the 1000 block or higher will be assigned beginning with 100. New roads intersecting with existing roads at the 900 block or lower will be assigned beginning with 1000.

Addresses will be assigned in sequential order with odd addresses on the left and even on the right beginning from the intersection of the major connecting road / street.

(c) *Existing road.* New addresses will be assigned on existing roads according to the same one-tenth mile block. If the numerically assigned address is in conflict with existing addresses on that road then the APA may adjust the new address to conform to a consistent address within that road.

If a new address cannot fit into the existing address scheme of the road, and the inconsistency of addresses is determined to be a public danger, the APA may reassign addresses in order to create a consistent range of addresses for that road.

(d) *Greenways.* Under this ordinance all public walking, biking, horseback riding, or hiking trails will be considered greenways and can be addressed if deemed necessary by the APA. Greenways will use the suffix of GRWY for mapping and addressing purposes. Greenways must be assigned addresses in one-tenth mile increments. Example: (A trail that is one (1) mile long will be addressed from 100—1000, etc.). Signage will be required with lettering visible on both sides of the sign in contrasting colors, and will be posted along the right-hand side of the trail from the starting point. Signs will be furnished by the county for county greenways. Payment for signage for private property will be the responsibility of the developer. At no time will any structures be addressed off of a greenway.

(Res. of 10-15-01, § 6; Res. of 1-18-11, § 6)

### **Sec. 19.5-32. Administration and jurisdiction.**

(a) The APA will be responsible for the interpretation and administration of this ordinance, including:

- (1) Assigning all numbers for properties and buildings required to have a road address.
- (2) Maintaining address records of each building and responding to public inquiries regarding address records.
- (3) Recommending and administering change of existing addresses when necessary to facilitate sequential house numbers along a road and shall be enforced by section 9E [subsection 19.5-34(e)].
- (4) Designating individual unit addresses within the multiple housing or commercial units in conformity with this ordinance.
- (5) Assisting the public in complying with the requirements of this ordinance.

(b) This ordinance shall apply in all areas of the county not within a municipality.

(Res. of 10-15-01, § 7; Res. of 1-18-11, § 7)

### **Sec. 19.5-33. Display of road address numbers.**

(a) Officially assigned road address numbers must be clearly displayed so that the location can be identified easily from the road. Numbers on mailboxes only do not meet the intent of this ordinance.

- (1) The official address number must be displayed on the front of a building or at the entrance to a building which is most clearly visible from the road from which it is addressed during both day and night.

(2) If a building is more than seventy-five (75) feet or is not clearly visible from any road, the address number shall also be displayed, a minimum of four (4) inches in height within a three-foot perimeter at the end of the driveway or easement nearest the road that provides access to the building. A site inspection may be required by the APA to confirm the purpose and intent of this ordinance is met.

(b) Numerals indicating the address number of a single-family dwelling shall be at least four (4) inches in height and shall be posted and maintained so as to be legible from the road.

Numerals for multiple dwelling units and nonresidential buildings shall be at least six (6) inches in height and shall be placed on the front of the building facing the road or on the end of the building nearest the road.

(c) Numerals must be of contrasting color to the background and be of durable substance and mounting so as to withstand continual weatherization.

(d) Campgrounds shall be assigned a single address from the main road [by] which it is accessed. All lots shall be numbered throughout the park in accordance with the planning division regulations and must match Rowan County Tax Administration Department records. The address number of the campground shall be prominently displayed at the entrance of the park in six-inch reflective numbers. Each lot shall be clearly displayed with four-inch numbers with contrasting colors so as to be legible from the interior park drive. The park owner will be responsible for displaying all of the assigned numbers throughout the park.

(e) The APA will have the right to authorize and approve alternate methods of displaying house numbers which meet the intent of this ordinance when strict adherence to these standards cannot reasonably be met.

(Res. of 10-15-01, § 8; Res. of 1-18-11, § 8)

### **Sec. 19.5-34. Enforcement.**

(a) No building permit shall be issued until an official house number has been assigned for a lot.

(b) No certificate of occupancy (CO) will be issued until road address numbers are properly displayed in accordance with this ordinance.

(c) Failure to remove a displayed sign or address number which has not been authorized by the APA (including address reassignment in section 5.3 [subsection 19.5-30(3)]) after a ten-day written notice shall be a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to two hundred dollars (\$200.00) and the cost of removing any unlawful sign or address. The existence of this penalty is exclusive of any remedies for enforcement as otherwise provided by law per violation.

(d) It shall be unlawful for any person to erect, remove or deface any road name sign contrary to the provisions of this ordinance and / or be in possession of any such road name sign; provided prior written consent for possession from the APA is first obtained. The violation of any provision of this ordinance may be a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to two hundred dollars (\$200.00) and the cost of repairing or replacing any road sign removed or defaced. The existence of this penalty is exclusive of any remedies for enforcement as otherwise provided by law per violation.



(e) Failure to post or the removal of an assigned building number unless immediately replaced or repaired after a thirty-day written notice may be a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to fifty dollars (\$50.00) and the cost of replacing any address on any building. The existence of this penalty is exclusive of any remedies for enforcement as otherwise provided by law per violation.

(f) Owners or occupants of buildings already constructed which do not comply with this ordinance will be notified and requested to meet these requirements within sixty (60) days from the date of the notification. A warning notice will be issued after sixty (60) days if the requirements have not been met. If the owner or occupant does not comply voluntarily with this ordinance within thirty (30) days of delivery of a warning notice by registered or certified mail or by hand delivery to the building in violation, enforcement action pursuant to G.S. 153A-123 may be initiated.

(Res. of 10-15-01, § 9; Res. of 1-18-11, § 9)