REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

Meeting Date: August 18, 2025

Agenda Item: 6C	Prepared by: L. Suzanne Pritchard, PLA, AICP, CFM
Agenda Section: Unfinished Business: Ordinance. First Reading	Date: August 13, 2025
Subject: Amendments to Chapter 23, Zoning, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, addressing the display of outdoor merchandise [ZTX-25-5]	Division: Planning and Development

History:
City Council postponed consideration of the outdoor display ordinance at its July 21, 2025, meeting to allow additional time for review. A workshop was held on August 4, 2025, to discuss the proposal and ensure Council was comfortable with the changes. During the workshop, staff explained the rationale for the ordinance and made minor revisions to more accurately reflect current conditions in the city.

Background:
The City has received complaints about the visual impact of excessive and disorderly outdoor merchandise displays at certain commercial properties along major corridors. A recent example involved a business that, while operational until recently, maintained a cluttered display of yard ornaments, flags, and other goods directly adjacent to the public right-of-way. Although technically permitted under the current ordinance, the scale and placement of these displays created an eyesore along a heavily trafficked area, undermining the City's goals for a clean and cohesive commercial environment. The existing ordinance includes a long list of exceptions and vague placement standards, making enforcement difficult and allowing displays that overwhelm the streetscape.

Proposal:
Staff is proposing a text amendment that revises and clarifies outdoor display standards. It limits the area of permitted displays to no more than 20% of the building's frontage and no more than 10 feet in depth from the building's face. A simplified list of specific exempt uses is retained but relocated for clarity, with grills and crab traps added to the list. Areas under a building overhang or porch are also proposed to be exempt from these regulations. These changes are intended to preserve the character of the City's commercial corridors, support consistent enforcement, and prevent excessive, unregulated outdoor retail activity from recurring.

Planning Commission Action:
The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on June 24, 2025, and voted unanimously to recommend approval of the zoning amendment. There was no public comment.

Recommended Action:
Approve or deny the proposed ordinance on first reading

Reviewed by Department Head	Reviewed by City Manager	Reviewed by City Attorney

Council Action:
Motion By_____ 2nd By_____ To_____

ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH PROVIDING THAT THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA, BE AMENDED BY REVISING CHAPTER 23, ZONING, ARTICLE VII, GENERAL AND SUPPLEMENTAL REGULATIONS, § 23-129.2, OUTSIDE DISPLAYS OF GOODS AND MERCHANDISE OF SAID CODE.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA, IN COUNCIL DULY ASSEMBLED, THAT:

Section 1. That *Sec. 23-129.2. - Outside displays of goods and merchandise*, be revised to read as follows *(new matter underlined, deleted matter struck-through)*.

Sec. 23-129.2. - Outside displays of goods and merchandise.

~~With the exception of automobiles, boats, golf carts, bicycles, recreational vehicles and other transportation vehicles where such is for sale as a principal use, oil and other automobile products located within the pump area at full service gasoline stations, live nursery products, pre-packaged lawn, garden and landscape items such as topsoil, fertilizer, mulch, stone and gravel (excluding tools and equipment) displayed outside, furniture, hammocks and other merchandise made to be used outside, landscape and work trailers, storage sheds, prepackaged firewood, newspaper dispensers, vending machines and Christmas trees from November 1 to December 31, all other goods or merchandise displayed or stored outside of a building shall be so arranged not to obstruct walkways, doorways, parking lots or landscape areas. Additionally, the location of regulated outside displays shall be limited to an area in front of the building not exceeding twenty (20) percent of the linear footage of the building frontage. Additionally, no outdoor display or storage of goods or merchandise whatsoever may occur in association with an indoor flea market, as regulated in article II, section 23-26(2) of this chapter. For outdoor storage regulations concerning Developments of Regional Significance, see section 23-129.5(7).~~

(1) Outside displays shall be limited to an area in front of the building along the primary street frontage, not exceeding 20 percent of that frontage in length and ten feet in depth from the building face, excluding any permanent overhang or porch. Displays located under a permanent building overhang or porch are exempt from these size limits but must maintain a clear, unobstructed pedestrian path to all entrances and exits. All outdoor goods or merchandise shall be arranged to avoid obstructing walkways, doorways, parking areas, or required landscape areas.

(2) No outdoor display or storage of goods or merchandise whatsoever may occur in association with an indoor flea market, as regulated in Article II, Section 23-26(2) of this chapter.

(3) For outdoor storage regulations concerning Developments of Regional Significance, see Section 23-129.5(7).

(4) *Exemptions.* The following uses are exempt from the requirements of this chapter as specified above but remain subject to compliance with all other provisions of this title: Automobiles, boats, golf carts, bicycles, recreational vehicles and other

transportation vehicles where such is for sale as a principal use, oil and other automobile products located within the pump area at full service gasoline stations, live nursery products, pre-packaged lawn, garden and landscape items such as topsoil, fertilizer, mulch, stone and gravel (excluding tools and equipment) displayed outside, outdoor furniture, landscape and work trailers, grills, crab traps, storage sheds, prepackaged firewood, newspaper dispensers, vending machines and Christmas trees from November 1 to December 31.

Section 2. That the North Myrtle Beach Planning Commission has provided the required public notice of this request and has held the necessary public hearings in accordance with applicable State Statutes and City Ordinances.

DONE, RATIFIED AND PASSED, THIS _____ DAY OF_____, 2025.

_____
Mayor Marilyn Hatley

ATTEST:

_____
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

_____
City Attorney

FIRST READING: 8.18.2025
SECOND READING: _____

REVIEWED:

_____
City Manager

ORDINANCE: _____

6B. ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT ZTX-25-5: City staff has initiated a text amendment revising the display of outdoor merchandise.

Background:
The City has received complaints about the visual impact of excessive and disorderly outdoor merchandise displays at certain commercial properties along major corridors. A recent example involved a business that, while operational until recently, maintained a cluttered display of yard ornaments, flags, and other goods directly adjacent to the public right-of-way. Although technically permitted under the current ordinance, the scale and placement of these displays created an eyesore along a heavily trafficked area, undermining the City's goals for a clean and cohesive commercial environment. The existing ordinance includes a long list of exceptions and vague placement standards, making enforcement difficult and allowing displays that overwhelm the streetscape.

Proposed Changes:
Staff is proposing a text amendment that revises and clarifies outdoor display standards. It limits the area of permitted displays to no more than 20% of the building's frontage and no more than 10 feet in depth from the building's face. A simplified list of specific exempt uses is retained but relocated for clarity. These changes are intended to preserve the character of the City's commercial corridors, support consistent enforcement, and prevent excessive, unregulated outdoor retail activity from recurring.

The proposed amendment addresses a section in *Chapter 23, Zoning, Article VII. – General and Supplemental Regulations* and would appear in the Ordinance as follows (new text underlined, removed text truck-through):

Sec. 23-129.2. - Outside displays of goods and merchandise.
~~With the exception of automobiles, boats, golf carts, bicycles, recreational vehicles and other transportation vehicles where such is for sale as a principal use, oil and other automobile products located within the pump area at full service gasoline stations, live nursery products, pre-packaged lawn, garden and landscape items such as topsoil, fertilizer, mulch, stone and gravel (excluding tools and equipment) displayed outside, furniture, hammocks and other merchandise made to be used outside, landscape and work trailers, storage sheds, prepackaged firewood, newspaper dispensers, vending machines and Christmas trees from November 1 to December 31, all other goods or merchandise displayed or stored outside of a building shall be so arranged not to obstruct walkways, doorways, parking lots or landscape areas. Additionally, the location of regulated outside displays shall be limited to an area in front of the building not exceeding twenty (20) percent of the linear footage of the building frontage. Additionally, no outdoor display or storage of goods or merchandise whatsoever may occur in association with an indoor flea market, as regulated in article II, section 23-26(2) of this chapter. For outdoor storage regulations concerning Developments of Regional Significance, see section 23-129.5(7).~~

(1) Outside displays shall be limited to an area in front of the building not exceeding a length of twenty (20) percent of the linear footage of the building frontage, and a depth not exceeding 10 feet extending out from the building front. All goods or merchandise

displayed or stored outside of a building shall be so arranged to not obstruct walkways, doorways, parking lots or required landscape areas.

(2) No outdoor display or storage of goods or merchandise whatsoever may occur in association with an indoor flea market, as regulated in article II, section 23-26(2) of this chapter.

(3) For outdoor storage regulations concerning Developments of Regional Significance, see section 23-129.5(7).

(4) *Exemptions.* The following uses are exempt from the requirements of this chapter as specified above but remain subject to compliance with all other provisions of this title: Automobiles, boats, golf carts, bicycles, recreational vehicles and other transportation vehicles where such is for sale as a principal use, oil and other automobile products located within the pump area at full service gasoline stations, live nursery products, pre-packaged lawn, garden and landscape items such as topsoil, fertilizer, mulch, stone and gravel (excluding tools and equipment) displayed outside, outdoor furniture, landscape and work trailers, storage sheds, prepackaged firewood, newspaper dispensers, vending machines and Christmas trees from November 1 to December 31.

According to § 23-4, *Amendments*, of the Zoning Ordinance, the advertisement requirement for Zoning Ordinance amendments is 15 days, and that advertisement notice has been met. The amendment is presented to the Planning Commission for a recommendation that will be forwarded to City Council at their next meeting scheduled for July 21, 2025.

Planning Commission Action:

The Planning Commission may recommend approval, recommend approval with modifications and/or conditions, or recommend denial of the proposal as submitted.

Alternative Motions

1) I move that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the zoning ordinance text amendment [ZTX-25-5] as submitted.

   OR

2) I move that the Planning Commission recommend denial of the zoning ordinance text amendment [ZTX-25-5] as submitted.

   OR

3) I move (an alternate motion).