

City of Coconut Creek InterOffice Memorandum

To: Planning and Zoning Board

Date: July 09, 2025

From: Lizet Aguiar, Assistant Director of
Sustainable Development

Subject: Lincoln Service Sign Deviation

Applicant/Agent:	Mark Branchley, Mark Branchley Planning Consultant
Owner:	TT of Sample Inc.
Requested Action/Description:	Sign Deviation
Location:	5501 W. Sample Road
Legal Description:	A portion of Tract "B" of the Commerce Center of Coconut Creek Plat as recorded in Plat Book 131, Page 30 of the Public Records of Broward County, Florida
Size:	9.68+/- gross acres
Existing Zoning:	Infiniti Lincoln of Coconut Creek PMDD (Planned MainStreet Development District)
Existing Use:	Automobile Dealership
Future Land Use Plan Designation:	RAC (Regional Activity Center)
Platted:	Commerce Center of Coconut Creek Plat
Plat Restriction:	487,270 square feet of commercial; 323,389 square feet of office; 199,538 square feet of industrial

Requested Action/Description:

The applicant, Mark Branchley Mark Branchley Planning Consultant, as agent on behalf of the owner, TT of Sample Inc, is requesting two (2) sign deviations for the Lincoln Auto Dealership to be located at 5501 W. Sample Road. Specifically, the applicant is seeking deviations as follows:

- **Service sign**
Sec.13-468.8(b) - proposed at 10 square feet where 8 square feet maximum is permitted.
Sec.13-468.8(d) - proposed to be illuminated where illumination is not permitted.

Findings and Analysis:

The subject property is part of the Infiniti / Lincoln of Coconut Creek PMDD. The Lincoln Auto Dealership received site plan approval from the City Commission on September 14, 2023 to construct a new facility including showroom, service, administrative and sales offices. At the time,

the applicant for the site plan had not yet developed a uniform sign plan as part of the site plan application. Pursuant to Sec.13-471(a)(2), Sign review procedures, at the time of site plan approval or as part of a separate approval process, all projects must submit a uniform sign plan for review that demonstrates how proposed signage shall be integrated throughout the site and compatible with the architectural design of the development. During permit review, staff evaluated proposed signs and determined that the service sign did not meet minimum code requirements. As such, the applicant is seeking two sign deviation approvals for the proposed service sign which are the subject of this application.

The intent of the city sign code is to promote effective communication while minimizing negative impacts to adjacent properties. Specifically, regulations aim to integrate signage with architectural and landscape design, reduce visual clutter, and ensure signs do not create distractions or safety hazards. The sign code sets dimensional and locational standards to ensure that signage is legible, proportional to the site and structures, and consistent with surrounding development. These standards also discourage signage that could be considered a nuisance due to excessive size, illumination, or movement, while allowing for fair and consistent enforcement across the City.

A deviation is a modification of requirements to allow for unusual conditions relating to property or structures where special conditions exist or when literal enforcement of code requirements will result in unnecessary or undue hardship which is non-self-imposed and non-financial. Deviations must not allow a type of sign that is prohibited by code. The deviation process replaces the variance process of Land Development Code Section 13-33, "Variances," as it pertains to signs. Deviation requests are submitted to the Planning and Zoning Board for review and recommendations prior to consideration by the City Commission.

As proposed, the applicant is seeking two deviations for a single sign as listed below:

Service sign

#1 – Sec.13-468.8(b) - proposed at 10 square feet where 8 square feet maximum is permitted.

#2 – Sec.13-468.8(d) - proposed to be illuminated where illumination is not permitted.

The standards for granting a sign deviation are listed in Section 13-473(c). Immediately following each criteria are the applicant's verbatim responses from each section as provided in their formal application followed by staff analysis:

Service Sign

Sec.13-473(c), Standards for granting a sign deviation.

- 1. The deviation must not be contrary to the public interest, and must be in harmony with the general intent and purpose of this subdivision.**

Applicant response:

This deviation complies and promotes both subsections Sec.13-456(d) Purpose and Sec.13-456(d)(4) Intent which encourages effective use of signs as a means of communication and wayfinding functions in the city. This sign that is 2.8 SF larger than the 8 SF maximum certainly does not increase the visual clutter typically caused by the proliferation, improper placement, excessive height and excessive area of signs which may typically compete for the attention of pedestrian and vehicular traffic but is necessary to aid in wayfinding.

Staff analysis:

Staff concurs. The requested deviation is consistent with the overall intent of the City's sign regulations by supporting effective communication without contributing to visual clutter or an excessive number of signs. When considering the building setback, the modest increase in

sign area and illumination will enhance wayfinding for on-site users rather than attract attention from the adjacent roadways.

2. Approval of the deviation will not adversely affect the character of the surrounding development or applicable uniform sign plan.

Applicant response:

Approval of the deviation will not adversely affect the character of the surrounding development, the surrounding commercial corridors of St Rd 7, Sample Road or Banks Road or an applicable uniform sign plan. In fact, the increase from a conforming 8SF to 10.8 SF and subtle internal illumination will never be noticed as its location is so far removed from the viewing public on said roadways and difficult to see because of existing plant material as stated in the above Justification narrative.

Staff analysis:

Staff concurs. The proposed service sign is located over 300 feet from the public right-of-way and oriented inward toward the site, minimizing its visibility from surrounding roadways and adjacent sites. The increase in sign area and internal illumination is not anticipated to affect the visual character of the area or conflict with any other approved uniform sign plans.

3. The literal interpretation and application of the sign regulations will deprive the applicant of sign visibility or effectiveness shared by other property owners.

Applicant response:

The literal interpretation and application of the sign regulations will deprive the applicant of reasonable sign visibility or effectiveness shared by other property owners. This small illuminated sign's significant setback of 316' from Sample Road is more than three times the normal viewing distance of typical commercial wall signs from public rights of way. Reasonable sign visibility and sign identification effectiveness can be better promoted by this deviation approval.

Staff analysis:

Staff concurs. The substantial setback from Sample Road, combined with landscape and vehicle display obstructions, limits visibility. When compared to other commercial properties with more direct frontage, the proposed increase in area and illumination will increase the effectiveness of the signage helping compensate for the large setback conditions.

4. Approval of a deviation will not degrade the area involved or be detrimental to public welfare.

Applicant response:

Approval of a 2.8 SF deviation and internally illuminated sign deviation certainly will not degrade the area involved or be detrimental to the overall public welfare of Coconut Creek or surrounding communities. It will only be a wayfinding benefit for only those who enter the property with the intent for automobile related transactions.

Staff analysis:

Staff concurs. The deviation is minimal in scope and limited to a single, site-oriented wall sign intended to assist visitors once they have entered the property. It is not expected to create negative impacts to surrounding properties, roadways or the general public.

5. One (1) of the following conditions are satisfied:

- a. Conditions exist that are not the result of the applicant's actions, such that a literal enforcement of the regulations involved would result in unnecessary or undue hardship; or
- b. There is something unique about the land, building or site configuration that would cause the signage permitted by this sign code to be ineffective in identifying a use or structure that would otherwise be entitled to a sign.

Applicant response:

The following conditions outlined in 5a. do indeed exist:

Several findings have been presented herein that site conditions do exist that the literal enforcement of the sign regulations would result in an unnecessary and undue hardship for the applicant. The sign's location is virtually invisible to the motoring public along the abutting commercial corridors because of its significant setback and the viewing blockage of plant material as well as vehicle retail parking display areas. Both the square foot deviation and illuminated sign deviation are wayfinding enhancements to assist visitors and patrons once they enter the parcel looking for the appropriate automotive services.

Staff analysis:

Staff concurs. The physical characteristics of the site, including depth, setback, and existing landscaping, create a lack of visibility into the site that are not the direct result of the applicant's actions. Literal enforcement of the sign code would limit the sign's function for on-site wayfinding. These circumstances meet both criteria 5(a) and 5(b).

Staff Recommendation:

City staff has reviewed the application and finds the proposed deviation requests consistent with Section 13-473(c) of the City of Coconut Creek Land Development Code, subject to the following conditions:

1. Outstanding DRC comments remain effective throughout the development review process and must be addressed prior to issuance of a building permit.
2. Any changes to the signage shall require review and approval through the City's standard sign review process.

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Attachments:

Aerial Photo
DRC Report
Exhibit