



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL
Planning Department

405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-5705

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www.townofchapelhill.org

Unified Sign Plan Application

When a single zoning lot contains more than one principal use or establishment, a Unified Sign Plan is required. A Unified Sign Plan promotes harmonious signage for present and future tenants for the entire zoning lot by specifying consistent placement, size, color, lettering style, and/or materials. For assistance with this application, please contact the Chapel Hill Planning Department at (919) 968-2728 or at planning@townofchapelhill.org. Any persons intending to construct, install, remodel, repair, or alter any property in Chapel Hill, may be required to obtain a Business/Privilege License. The application can be found on the web at the following address: http://www.townofchapelhill.org/index.aspx?page=1199 Please contact the Revenue Collector, 919-968-2759, if you have any questions.

Section A: Property Information

Property Address: []
Project Description: []
Zoning: []

Section B: Applicant Information (for contact purposes)

Name: []
Address: []
City: [] State: [] Zip Code: []
Phone Number: [] E-mail: []

The undersigned applicant hereby certifies that, to the best of his knowledge and belief, all information supplied with this application is true and accurate.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

[] Property Owner [] Contract Purchaser

Name: []
Address: []
City: [] State: [] Zip Code: []
Phone Number: [] E-mail: []

The undersigned property owner(s) or contract purchaser(s) hereby authorize(s) the filing of this application and authorize(s) on-site review by authorized staff.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

What is a Unified Sign Plan?

When there is one business or establishment on a single zoning lot, that business or establishment is required to get an individual sign plan approval. However, when a single zoning lot contains more than one principal use or establishment, Section 5.14.8 of the Chapel Hill Land Use Management Ordinance states that a **Unified Sign Plan** is required:

The owner(s) of the zoning lot shall be responsible for allocating permitted signs and display surface areas among the individual uses or establishments. The sign plan submitted for such zoning lot shall show all signs located or proposed thereon and shall be designed so that all signs are in harmony and consistent with each other. Such a sign plan shall be referred to as a **Unified Sign Plan** for the zoning lot.

Unified Sign Plan applications describe signage for present and future tenants for the entire zoning lot by specifying consistent placement, size, color, lettering style, and/or materials to create harmonious, consistent signage throughout the zoning lot. The applicant should meet with a planner prior to submitting an application for a Unified Sign Plan, to be sure that the proposal will meet the square footage limits for allowable display area.

How long does approval take?

It usually takes longer to develop, review, and approve a Unified Sign Plan application than it takes to develop an individual sign plan application. The fee for a Unified Sign Plan application can be found on the [Planning Department Fee Schedule](#).

When an application for a Unified Sign Plan is accepted as complete, the Planning Department staff will schedule the application for review. The Chapel Hill Land Use Management Ordinance requires that the Planning staff must approve the application as submitted, approve with conditions, or deny the application within 30 working days.

Once approved, a Unified Sign Plan generally serves as a master plan that indicates the size, location and characteristics of all signage on the zoning lot. The Unified Sign Plan does not approve a specific sign. Once a Unified Sign Plan application is approved, an applicant may then apply for specific individual signs that conform to the approved Unified Sign Plan. The application fee for an individual tenant's sign application (in conformance with an approved Unified Sign Plan) can be found on the [Planning Department Fee Schedule](#).

If a future tenant proposes signage that does not conform to the Unified Sign Plan for the zoning lot, an application for a Modification to the Unified Sign Plan must be submitted for review by the Planning Department staff. The application for a Modification to a Unified Sign Plan must clearly explain and illustrate all proposed changes to the approved Unified Sign Plan. The fee for a Modification to a Unified Sign Plan is the same as the fee for an initial Unified Sign Plan application.

What can be on the sign?

The sign will be limited to letters of text that spell out the name(s) of the establishment(s) located on the zoning lot. Registered trademarks, logos, and registered servicemarks may also be displayed, if proof of registration (or application for registration) is provided. A trademark is any symbol, design, word, or letter used by an establishment to distinguish its products from those of its competitors. A servicemark is a trademark for products provided by others, for which a particular establishment is authorized/licensed to provide services.

What is not allowed on a sign?

No sign shall contain flashing lights, other than to display time and temperature. Animated, rotating, or other moving or apparently moving signs shall be prohibited.

The following must be addressed by a Unified Sign Plan:

Section C: Submittal Requirements

- 1. Application Fee ([refer to fee schedule](#)) Fee Paid (\$):
- 2. Site Plan of entire zoning lot (no larger than 8.5 x 11)
- 3. Dimensional information and spreadsheet for signage for all tenant spaces
- 4. Digital files – provide all images, plans, and documents, including sign placement on building elevation

Section D: Project Information

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|---|--|
| <p>6. <i>Overview</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Theme, concept, and style <p>8. <i>Number and Size of Signs</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Allocation of sign area (square footage) for each tenant <input type="checkbox"/> Maximum and minimum sizes of signs <p>10. <i>Materials and Colors</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Copy <input type="checkbox"/> Background <input type="checkbox"/> Returns/Raceways <input type="checkbox"/> Trim | <p>7. <i>Lettering</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Font Style and Size <p>9. <i>Lighting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Type <input type="checkbox"/> Brightness <input type="checkbox"/> Hardware/fixtures <input type="checkbox"/> Color(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Shielding (for illuminated signs) <p>11. <i>Placement</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Centering |
|---|--|

Section E: Ground Sign

- 12. RCD, Floodplains, streams, and Wetlands determination – location or exemption necessary for all submittals
- 13. Site Plan including property boundaries, setbacks, streams, RCD boundaries, floodplain, sight distance triangles, easements, and sign location
- 14. Provide screening for any light fixtures

Section F: Unified Sign Plan Spreadsheet (in square feet)

15. Building Façade Area (BFA) = overall building dimension (length x height) for each building face for which signage is proposed

16. Permitted Sign area is limited to the following:
- 5% of Building Façade Area (BFA) if externally illuminated or not illuminated
 - 2.5% of Building Façade Area (BFA) if internally illuminated

Unified Sign Plan Spreadsheet

BFA		% allowed		= total building façade signage allowed	
Window(s) – sign area limited to 15% of total window area					
Window area				X 15% = total window signage area allowed	

