



Background

The City of Concord's last major update to the section of the zoning ordinance that regulated signage was in 2000 with the adoption of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). Over time minor modifications were made to a few sections but the document predominantly remained in its original text.

In the spring of 2015 the City began the process of re-evaluating the sign regulations and creating a new ordinance. The final document addresses new technology in signs, the business community's desire for larger signage, and clarifies the allowance of temporary signage that can often clutter the roadways.

Beyond the need for a general update, Concord and other municipalities in the United States are revising sign ordinances in response to a 2015 US Supreme Court decision that greatly expands the definition of content neutrality in the enforcement of sign regulations. In short, what the sign says, displays, or advertises cannot be taken into account when enforcing regulations of such signage.

FAQs

Can I display temporary signage?

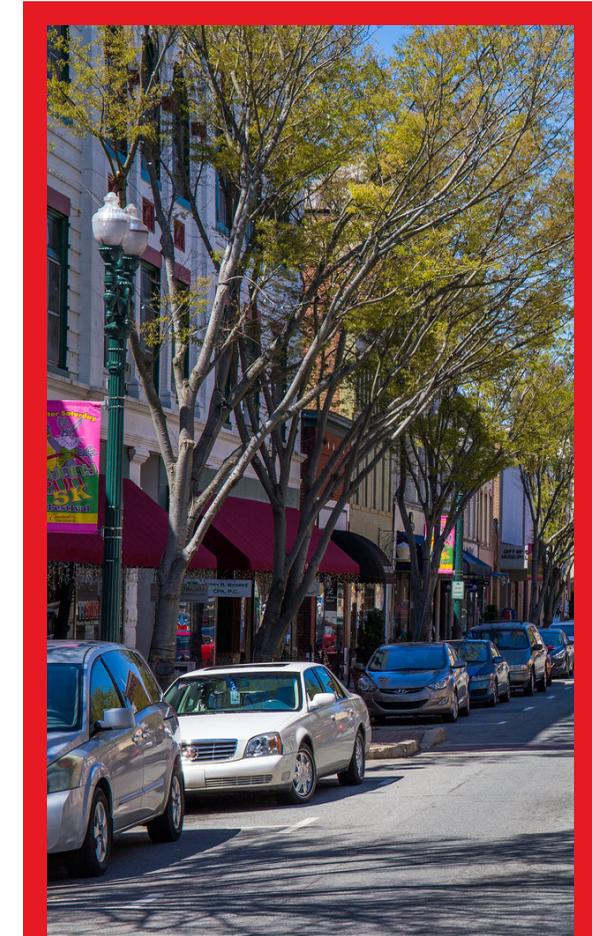
Yes. All properties are permitted to have at least one temporary sign at a time. Depending on the zoning classification, the size, number of signs, and eligible time periods may vary. Check out section 12.3 to determine which category (Type 1, Type 2, Type 3 and Type 4 signage) your property's signage will fall. Pay special attention to section 12.3.9. This suspends regulations for Type 1 signage during certain times of the year.

Do I obtain a temporary sign permit?

No. Temporary signage no longer requires a permit or a fee from the City! However, you must register your temporary sign on the City's website and acknowledge compliance with sign regulations. This new format allows citizens to participate in a cost free honor system while allowing Code Enforcement to track signs that are legally displayed.

Is there any way to increase my amount of permanent signage?

Absolutely! In order to encourage high quality and aesthetically pleasing signage, section 12.4.4 promotes larger sign faces and taller signs for applicants that meet the enhanced design criteria.



December 2016

UPDATED SIGN STANDARDS

CONTACT US



Planning & Neighborhood Development

35 Cabarrus Avenue West
Concord, NC 28025
704.920.5152

concordnc.gov/signs



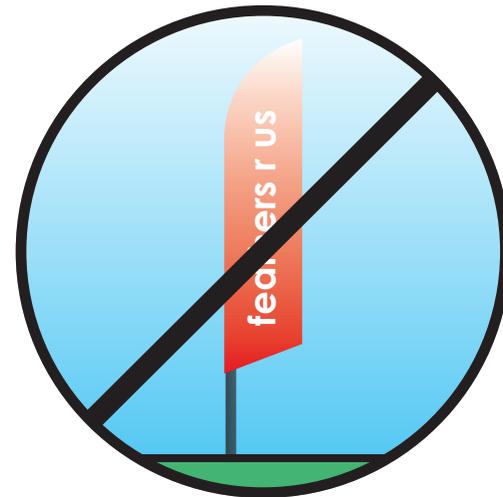
What's New?

Permanent Signage

- The method of calculating permitted sign area is now 8% of the total wall area vs. the old method of 1 s.f. per linear foot of building wall.
- A change in location standards allows signage on walls with a customer entrance, facing a parking area (25% of provided parking) or within 100 feet of a right-of-way.
- Uniformity of wall sign type / materials for developments containing multiple tenant spaces or buildings is now required.
- The use of "cabinet" style wall signage is limited on each site.
- Additional sign area may be increased based on the building size rather than number of tenants.
- Larger signage may be approved in exchange for the use of higher quality sign materials / design standards.
- The maximum changeable copy area is increased to 70% instead of the previous 50%.
- Additional ground signs can be located on limited access highway frontage.
- Consolidated permanent and temporary window sign regulations to allow up to 10% before considering them to be "wall signs" and regulated as such.
- The permitted size for projecting signs has been increased.
- New standards limit comprehensive sign packages to developments of either 10 acres of land or a combined 250,000 of building square footage.
- 2,000 feet of spacing is required between digital billboards.
- A digital billboard may be installed, in exchange for removing two standard billboards.

Temporary Signage

- Classifications have been created of temporary freestanding signs by generic "Type" designation vs. the previous functional classification.
- Regulation of Type 1 freestanding temporary signs (residential uses only) during "election season" as defined in the ordinance, will be suspended.
- Permissible size of temporary wall signs can be increased based on permitted permanent sign size.
- Establishment of registration requirements for certain temporary signs (instead of "permitting").
- Defines and prohibits "Feather Flags, also known as "Feather Banners."



FEATHER BANNERS ARE PROHIBITED!
Effective Date: 07/01/2017

Temporary Signage Self-Registration NO FEE

The updated sign ordinance completely eliminates the requirement of formal permitting and the associated fees for temporary signage. Instead, property/business owners and tenants that wish to display a temporary sign will follow a simple self-registration process.



The City's website features an interactive registration system, accessible at:
concordnc.gov/signs.

1. Click on the link for Temporary Sign Registration.
2. Fill out the required information for the type of sign you wish to register.
3. Read the regulations, including size, location, and time frame for your requested sign.
4. Acknowledge that you have read and agree to the temporary sign regulations.
5. PUT UP YOUR SIGN!

Compliance for Non-Conforming Signs

Non-conforming signs are those that have been legally permitted at some point in time but due to changed sign standards, are not in compliance with the current regulations. These signs are still allowed and may remain as originally permitted but may not be altered. The signs are determined to be legal non-conforming until:

The use of the site/building is discontinued, the use itself is no longer active or ownership changes.

If one or all of the above occurs, the sign must be brought into compliance with the current sign standards. However, repair and maintenance of all signs within the City is required. In fact, if the non-conforming sign is damaged, it may be repaired as non-conforming, as long as damage does not exceed 50% of the replacement value.

If you have a question as to whether your sign is considered legal non-conforming or have questions on whether certain changes are permitted, please contact the City's Planning Department.

Important Dates

11/10/2016
Updated Sign Standards Adopted
by City Council

07/01/2017
Feather Banners Prohibited