



Town of  
**INDIAN TRAIL**  
north carolina

Indian Trail, North Carolina 28079

Telephone 704-821-5401

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**PLANNING BOARD TRANSMITTAL**

**Planning Board Transmittal for the May 11, 2010 Town Council Meeting**

<b>Reference Name</b>	Case: ZT 2010-004 Sign Ordinance		
<b>PB Meeting Date</b>	April 20, 2010		
<b>Members Present</b>	Chair Whitehurst <input type="checkbox"/>	Gary Vaughn <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vincent Howard <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Vice Chair Cowan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kathy Broom <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Robert Rollins <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	John Simulcik <input type="checkbox"/> (Audience)	Larry Miller <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Robert Wilber <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Case Found Complete</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Motion</b>	Recommend approval as transmitted.		
<b>Member making the motion</b>	Board member Vaughn		
<b>Second the motion</b>	Board member Broom		
<b>Vote</b>	5-2		

**Background**

This is a request to amend Division 900 – Sign Ordinance of the Unified Development Ordinance. This amendment provides specialized sign regulations to meet the needs of the Hwy 74 Business Corridor. The amendment includes expanding the number and size of signs permitted within the corridor. The Planning Board heard this request on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and transmits a recommendation to approve.

**Town Council Action:** *Receive transmittal report and public testimony and:*

1. *Concur with the findings and transmittal of the Planning Board to approve; or*
2. *Concur with findings and approve as modified by Council; or*
3. *Do not make the findings and disapprove the amendment.*

**Planning Board Transmittal** - The Planning Board considered the request to amend the following:

**Freestanding Sign**

Permitted Sign Area and Height-- Highway 74/Independence Boulevard		
Size of Property (acres)	Allowable Sign Area (sq feet)	Maximum Height of Sign (feet)
Less than 1	<del>32</del> 65	20
1.00 to 1.99	<del>42</del> 75	20
2.00 to 2.99	<del>52</del> 75	20
3.00 to 3.99	<del>62</del> 80	20
4.00 to 4.99	<del>72</del> 90	25
5.00 to 5.99	<del>82</del> 100	25
6.00 to 6.99	<del>92</del> 100	25
More than 7	<del>100</del> 128	25

All signs defined by this table shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from the edge of Highway 74 right of way.

The Board voted unanimously to recommend approval as presented.

**Changeable Reader and Message Boards** - These types of signs are proposed to be allowed for commercial businesses within the 74 corridor only. The Board voted to recommend:

1. Both manual boards and LED “Static Message Board” be permitted.
2. Reader and Message Board area allocation:
  - a. Manual Board – 50% of total freestanding sign area;
  - b. LED Static Message Board – 25 % of total freestanding sign area;
3. Change of Message Timing – twice a day.

**Wall Signs** – The Board voted unanimously to allow:

1. Unlimited number of wall signs per business; and
2. Maximum of 10% of wall area calculation for maximum sign area per wall.
3. Extend this modification to all zoning districts.

**Sign Area Calculation** – The Board voted unanimously to allow sign area calculations for Channel Letter signs as follows:

**Channel Letters** - *The area of individually mounted or painted sign letters applied directly to the building face which are not further emphasized by an architectural or painted element of the building shall be calculated as the sum of the area within a series of rectangles which encompasses each individual letter.*



**Definitions** – The Board voted unanimously to:

1. Consolidate sign definitions within Sections 1620 and 1650; and
2. Establish a definition for V-shaped signs - V-Shaped Sign - Any sign which has two (2) faces that are not parallel, (not to include sandwich signs and "A" frame signs). A "V" shaped sign shall not have an included angle of not more than 45 degrees; and
3. Modify definitions tied to the proposed amendment.

**Required Findings**

The Planning Board made the following findings:

1. The proposed UDO amendment is consistent with the following goals:
  - 1.3.1 of the Comprehensive Plan – Land Use; the proposed UDO ordinance amendment of the Town Sign Ordinance intent is to allow for business advertisement promoting economic prosperity while considering compatibility within the Hwy 74 corridor.
2. This UDO amendment is a reasonable request and in the best interest of the public because the amendment provides for sign regulations that are appropriate for the area promoting economic development in keeping with the vision of the 74 Business Corridor identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning Board transmits a recommendation to approve as presented.

**Contact**

Shelley DeHart, AICP  
Planning Director  
[srd@planning.indiantrail.org](mailto:srd@planning.indiantrail.org)  
(704) 821-5401 ext. 225

**Attachments**

Attachment 1 – Planning Board Report for April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010  
Attachment 2 – Draft Ordinance





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**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

<b>Case: ZT 2010-004 UDO Amendment – Sign Ordinance</b>		
<b>Reference Name(s)</b>	Amending Division 900 – Sign Ordinance	
<b>Applicant</b>	Town of Indian Trail	
<b>Submittal Date</b>	March 4, 2010	
<b>Location</b>	Hwy 74	
<b>Tax Map Number</b>	N/A	
<b>Recommendations &amp; Comments</b>	<b>Planning Staff</b>	Recommend approval of the proposed UDO amendments to the Town Council

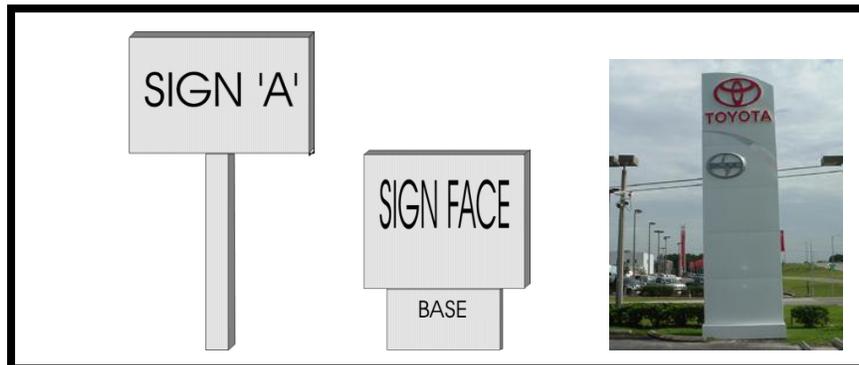
**Executive Summary:**

This is a request to amend Division 900, Sign Ordinance, of the Unified Development Ordinance. This amendment provides specialized sign regulations to meet the needs of the Hwy 74 Business Corridor. The amendment includes expanding the number and size of signs permitted within the corridor.

**Analysis**

The sign ordinance has endured many amendments over the past years in an attempt to balance aesthetics and the needs of our business community especially within the Hwy 74 Business Corridor. Staff receives reoccurring comments and request to evaluate our current sign regulations by the business community in the area related to:

- Number of wall signs authorized;
- How the signs are measured;
- Sign area allocation for single tenant freestanding signs (Example “A”) and
- Reader Boards or Message Boards (LED and Manual – Example “B”)



Example “A” – Freestanding Signs



Example “B” Changeable Copy Message or Reader Board Signs

In addition of gathering data from adjacent jurisdictions, this amendment has required education and study of the factors that affect signage. Staff has been working with the signage business community on the factors that affect business signage. The Basic Design Elements are:

- *Type of Right-of-Way adjacent to properties (Number of lanes);*
- *Speed (MPH)*
- *Reaction Time*
- *Distance Traveled during Reaction Time*
- *Letter Height*
- *Total Sign Area (Compatibility with surrounding area)*

### Application to the Highway 74 Corridor

The Hwy 74 Business Corridor is the largest of the Town’s economic business corridors. It represents over a 1000 acres with the potential build-out of 5.3 million square feet of commercial development. To determine the basic sign design elements for this area for Freestanding Signs, an evaluation of current and future elements are necessary:

Elements	Current	Future
Right-of-way	4-lane	6-lane
Speed	55 mph	45 -55 mph
Reaction Time (based on mph)	10 seconds	11 seconds
Distance Traveled (Reaction Time)	733 feet	806 feet
Letter Height	15 inches	16 inches
Sign Area (Surrounding Use)	120 sq. ft.	130 sq. ft.

Based on the design elements for the corridor, staff provides the following comparison for your review. These jurisdictions were chosen based on application of their sign ordinance on the same road (Hwy 74).

	Minimum	Maximum
Indian Trail	32 sq. ft	128 sq. ft (acreage)
Matthews	50 sq. ft +	100 sq. ft * (linear frontage)
Monroe	60 ft. (10' per additional acre)	150 sq. ft (acreage)
Charlotte	100 sq. ft.	128 sq. ft. (Type of Road)

This table reveals that our allocation is the smallest amount allocated adjacent to Hwy 74. Further, the Town of Matthews allocation of 50 sq. ft. of sign area is based on a property only having 39 linear feet of frontage. Their Planner indicated the lot frontages adjacent to Hwy 74 a typically a minimum of 100 linear feet which qualifies for the 100 sq. ft. allocation. Based on the data revealed for basic design elements and the jurisdictional comparison, staff recommends the Board consider the following:

Permitted Sign Area and Height-- Highway 74/Independence Boulevard		
Size of Property (acres)	Allowable Sign Area (sq feet)	Maximum Height of Sign (feet)
Less than 1	<del>32</del> 65	20
1.00 to 1.99	<del>42</del> 75	20
2.00 to 2.99	<del>52</del> 75	20
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More than 7	<del>100</del> 128	25

All signs defined by this table shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from the edge of Highway 74 right of way.

### Changeable reader and message boards

These types of signs are proposed to be allowed for commercial businesses within the 74 corridor only. They are typically regulated as follows:

- Size based on a percentage of allowable freestanding sign area. The percentage varies from a 25% minimum to 100%.
- Location – this restriction is applied by Zone
- Use – They are typically restricted to commercial and institutional such as church or school.
- Manual or LED type of sign.
- Message change restriction – this ranges from one message per 24 hours, twice a day, to 1 minute minimum.

Jurisdiction	Size	Location	LED?	Timing
Charlotte	Maximum 25% 100% for Movie Theater	Business Dist.	Yes	1x/day
Matthews	50%	Business – No DT	Yes	2x/day
Stallings	100%	Business	Yes	N/A
Indian Trail Proposed	25% for LED 50% for Manual	Hwy 74 Only Only on freestanding signs	Yes	1x/ 5 - 10 minutes?

## Wall Signs

Jurisdiction	Number of wall signs	Sign Area Allocations
Charlotte	No maximum number	10% of each wall area
Matthews	Three total	80 square feet combined
Monroe	No maximum number	60 sq. ft
Indian Trail – current	2 – if freestanding is used	10% of primary entrance wall – shared
<b>Indian Trail proposed</b>	<b>No Limit</b>	<b>10% of each wall area</b>

### Sign area Measurement

Our current ordinance requires we draw a box around everything which is an antiquated form on sign measurement. Staff recommends the following:

**Channel Letters** - *The area of individually mounted or painted sign letters applied directly to the building face which are not further emphasized by an architectural or painted element of the building shall be calculated as the sum of the area within a series of rectangles which encompasses each individual letter.*



**All other wall mounted signs** - *the area shall be calculated as the area of one geometric shape that best fits the sign which encompasses the extreme limits of each individual sign face, including all background visible from any direction at one time;*



### Required Findings

Staff is of the opinion the following findings can be made to support this amendment:

1. The proposed UDO amendment is consistent with the following goals:
  - 1.3.1 of the Comprehensive Plan – Land Use; the proposed UDO ordinance amendment of the Town Sign Ordinance intent is to allow for business advertisement promoting economic prosperity while considering compatibility within the Hwy 74 corridor.
2. This UDO amendment is a reasonable request and in the best interest of the public because the amendment provides for sign regulations that are appropriate for the area

promoting economic development in keeping with the vision of the 74 Business Corridor identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

**Planning Board Action Required**

The Planning Board is required to consider the proposed amendment and after deliberations, consider the draft findings and recommend to approve, approve with modifications, disapprove, or request it be tabled for more information.

**Staff Contact**

Shelley DeHart

Planning Director

[srd@planning.indiantrail.org](mailto:srd@planning.indiantrail.org)

TOWN COUNCIL ATTACHMENT 2- DRAFT ORDINANCE



**Section 1** – Finds the required findings and approves ZT 2010-004 as modified thereby amending Division 900 – Sign Ordinance incorporated herein as Exhibit – A.

**Section 2** – Chapter 1620 – General Definitions is thereby amended as incorporated herein as Exhibit – B.

**Section 3** – Chapter 1650 – Sign Definitions is hereby amended as incorporated herein as Exhibit - C

**Section 4** - This ordinance shall be effective immediately upon adoption.

SO ORDAINED THIS 11th DAY OF MAY, 2010.

THE TOWN COUNCIL OF INDIAN TRAIL

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Honorable John J. Quinn, Mayor

Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Trena Sims, Deputy Town Clerk