



# Planning Commission Agenda

June 6, 2023  
5:30 pm  
Hybrid Meeting

The Planning Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. The Commission primarily considers plans and regulations relating to the physical development of the city, plus other matters as assigned. The Commission is an advisory body to the City Council.

**Members:** Alyne Hansen (Chair), Tony Zuniga Sanchez (Vice Chair), Tom Dantzler, Karin Ellis, Damiana Merryweather, Jagtar Saroya, Bandhanjit Singh

**Staff Coordinator:** Jenn Kester, Planning Manager

A quorum of the Council may be present.

ITEM	TOPIC	PROCESS	WHO	TIME
1	Call to Order / Roll Call		Chair	5:30 (2 min)
2	Election of Chair	Action Item	Chair	5:32 (3 min)
3	Election of Vice Chair	Action Item	Chair	5:35 (3 min)
4	Approval of the minutes of May 2 and May 16, 2023, meetings.	Review and Approve	Members	5:38 (2 min)
5	Public Comment on items <u>not</u> on the agenda.  <i>Comments on agenda items will be addressed after the staff presentation and Commission discussion on each item below.</i>  <i>See Public Comment Process below.</i>		Chair	5:40 (5 min)
6	Sign Code Amendments: Reorganization and Clean-Up Revisions	Presentation and Discussion	Staff and Members	5:45 (30 min)
7	Sign Code Amendments: Freestanding and Monument Signs	Presentation and Discussion	Staff and Members	6:15 (30 min)
8	CED Staff Report	Briefing	Staff	6:45 (3 min)
9	Planning Commission Comments (including suggestions for next meeting agenda)	Discussion	Members	6:48 (2 min)
10	Adjourn			6:50

*This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid format with in-person and remote options for public participation. The meeting will be broadcast on SeaTV Government Access Comcast Channel 21 and live-streamed on the City's website <https://www.seatacwa.gov/seatvlive>.*

**Public Comment Process:** The commission will hear in-person public comments and is also providing remote oral and written public comment opportunities. All comments shall be

respectful in tone and content. Providing written comments and registering for oral comments must be done by 3:30 pm the day of the meeting. Registration is required for remote comments and encouraged for in-person comments. Any requests to speak or provide written public comments which are not submitted following the instructions provided or by the deadline will not be included as part of the record.

- Instructions for providing remote oral public comments are located at the following link: [Council Committee and Citizen Advisory Committee Virtual Meetings](#).
- Submit email/text public comments to [PCPublicComment@seatacwa.gov](mailto:PCPublicComment@seatacwa.gov). The comment will be mentioned by name and subject and then placed in the committee handout packet posted to the website.

**CITY OF SEATAC**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Minutes of May 16, 2023, Meeting**

**Members present:** Chair Alyne Hansen, Bandhan (Brandon) Singh, Tom Dantzler

**Members absent:** Jagtar Saroya, Damiana Merryweather, Karin Ellis, Vice Chair Tony Zuniga Sanchez

**Staff & Other**

**Present:** Evan Maxim, *CED Director*; Jenn Kester, *Planning Manager*; Laura Stilwell, *Associate Planner*; Barbara Mailo, *Admin 3*

At 5:30 pm, Chair Hansen announced that she will give other members till 5:37pm to show up to the meeting.

At 5:37 pm, Commissioner Singh motioned to adjourn due to lack of a quorum. Commissioner Dantzler second.

Adjournment: 5:37 pm



## MEMORANDUM COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Date: 5/16/2023  
To: Planning Commission (PC)  
From: Laura Stilwell, Associate Planner  
Subject: Code Amendment Briefing: "Sign Code"

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### Purpose

This meeting is meant to provide the Planning Commission an overview of proposed amendments pertaining to reorganization and clean-up revisions in SMC Chapter 15.600, "Sign Code". The intent of these revisions is to improve clarity, consistency, and predictability for applicants and staff.

### Overview of Proposed Reorganization and Clean-Up Revisions

Staff have drafted specific code amendment language to review with the Planning Commission. The potential code amendments have been categorized as follows:

1. Definitions – add application/specificity to chapter statement; remove unnecessary and/or vague definitions (e.g. Dawn to Dusk, Office Building, Penthouse, Single-Occupancy Building, Surface Area);
2. Reorganization – consolidate certain sections for improved clarity and wayfinding;
3. Streamlining – remove additional permit requirements which have never been used and/or enforced;
4. Clarification – add clarifying language to enhance Code users' understanding of requirements.

### Next Steps

If tentative agreement is reached on sign code reorganization and clean-up revisions, staff will bring additional topic-specific changes to the sign code at your next meeting.

### Packet Materials

Proposed code changes

Presentation

# Sign Code Amendments: Clean-Up

Planning Commission  
May 16, 2023



# PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

## PRIORITIES

- Discuss proposed sign code miscellaneous reorganization and clean-up revisions.

## PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

- Solicit feedback for proposed sign code revisions





# SIGN CODE: MISCELLANEOUS REVISIONS



- Definitions
  - Add application/specificity to chapter statement.
  - Remove unnecessary or vague definitions.
- Reorganization.
  - Consolidate or eliminate certain sections for improved clarity and wayfinding.
- Streamlining
  - Remove additional permit requirements which have never been used and/or enforced.
- Clarification
  - Add clarifying language to enhance Code users' understanding of requirements.

## 15.600.015 Definitions

In addition to the land use definitions in Chapter 15.105 SMC, the following definitions apply to this chapter; for any term defined in this section that is also defined in SMC Title 15, the definition in this section shall control. Words not defined herein shall have their common and ordinary meaning.

### Area of Facade

The area of that continuous front, side or back surface, including doors and windows, but excluding any roof area and structures or elevators or air-conditioning equipment thereon; provided, that in the case of a roof sign, the surface area of the facade shall be the area of that continuous front, side or back surface immediately beneath the roof, including doors and windows, but excluding the roof area and structures for elevators or air conditioning thereon.

### ~~Dawn to Dusk~~

~~That time of the day between sunrise and sunset.~~

### ~~Office Building~~

~~An office building as defined by the City of SeaTac Zoning Code.~~





# DEFINITIONS CONT.

## Penthouse

~~A freestanding structure affording protection from the elements to persons or property thereunder.~~

## Single-Occupancy Building

~~A commercial building or structure with one (1) major enterprise. A building is classified as “single occupancy” only if:~~

- ~~A. It has only one (1) occupant;~~
- ~~B. It has no wall in common with another building; and~~
- ~~C. It has no part of its roof in common with another building.~~

## Surface Area

~~See “Area or Surface Area of Sign.”~~

## Surface Area of Facade

~~The area of that continuous front, side or back surface, including doors and windows, but excluding any roof area and structures or elevators or air conditioning equipment thereon; provided, that in the case of a roof sign, the surface area of the facade shall be the area of that continuous front, side or back surface immediately beneath the roof, including doors and windows, but excluding the roof area and structures for elevators or air conditioning thereon.~~



# SIGN CODE: REORGANIZATION

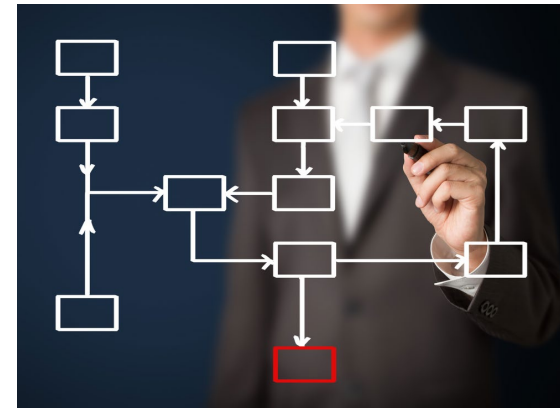
- 15.600.010 Authority, ~~and~~ Application and Exclusions ↑
- ~~15.600.110 Exempt Signs or Displays~~
- 15.600.020 General Sign Provisions
- ~~15.600.180 Requirements Applicable to All Signs~~ ↙

## 15.600.010 Authority, ~~and~~ Application and Exclusions

~~C. Permits shall be required of all signs nine (9) square feet or greater in surface area, and illuminated or electronic signs of any size. Nonilluminated signs less than nine (9) square feet in surface area are not required to obtain a permit, but must meet all requirements of this code. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)~~

## 15.600.020 General Sign Provisions

### A. Requirements Applicable to All Signs.



# SIGN CODE: STREAMLINING

- ~~15.600.150 Billboards~~
- ~~15.600.160 Sign Inventory Survey Costs~~
- ~~15.600.180 Requirements Applicable to All Signs~~
- ~~15.600.210 Appeals~~



# SIGN CODE: CLARIFICATION

## 15.600.050 Single-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs

F. Any daycare facility, bed and breakfast, short-term rental, or specialized instruction school (other than a specialized instruction school located at a former school district facility) within the UL or T zones shall be allowed a nine (9) square foot sign.

H. Internally illuminated signs are not allowed except as permitted and regulated by SMC 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs, for churches, schools, and community uses ~~and agricultural crop sales~~.

## 15.600.140 Nonconforming Signs

A. **General Applicability.** ~~To ease the economic impact of this code on businesses with substantial investment in signs in existence on the date of original adoption of this code, this section provides for a period of continued use of a nonconforming sign in its existing state. During this period, it is expected that the sign may be amortized on Federal income taxes; however, whether it may be so amortized shall not affect the application of this section. Similar treatment is accorded signs in areas annexed to the City after the code's enactment. All nonconforming signs in existence as of the date of original adoption of this code shall be brought into conformity with this code no later than December 31, 2012. This section applies to the maintenance, repair, as appropriate, and removal of nonconforming signs. "Nonconforming sign" means a sign that was legally established, but no longer conforms to the current sign standards of this chapter.~~



## NEXT STEPS

- Continue to draft potential code amendments and present for PC edits and feedback

## LATER STEPS

- Conduct SEPA and Department of Commerce review
- Hold Public Hearing at Planning Commission and make recommendation to City Council
- Bring recommendation to PED
- Bring ordinance to City Council









**Chapter 15.600****SIGN CODE**

## Sections:

15.600.010	Authority, <del>and</del> Application <u>and Exclusions</u>
15.600.015	Definitions
15.600.020	General Sign Provisions
15.600.030	Commercial/Office/Industrial Zone Classification Signs
15.600.040	Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs
15.600.050	Single-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs
15.600.060	Signage – Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria
15.600.070	Secondary Signage
15.600.080	Political Signs
15.600.090	Real Estate Signs
15.600.100	Garage and Yard Sale Signs
<del>15.600.110</del>	<del>Exempt Signs or Displays</del>
15.600.120	Prohibited Signs
15.600.130	Electronic Signs
15.600.140	Nonconforming Signs
<del>15.600.150</del>	<del>Billboards</del>
<del>15.600.160</del>	<del>Sign Inventory Survey Costs</del>
15.600.170	Permits and Fees
<del>15.600.180</del>	<del>Requirements Applicable to All Signs</del>
15.600.190	Administration, Enforcement and Sign Removal
15.600.200	Variance from Sign Code
<del>15.600.210</del>	<del>Appeals</del>

**15.600.010 Authority, ~~and~~ Application and Exclusions**

A. The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all exterior signs visible from public or private streets, and all signs in the interior of a building intended to be viewed from the exterior within the jurisdictional limits of the City, regardless of the type or nature.

B. All signs not specifically defined and allowed or exempted by this code are prohibited. The following are exempted from the regulations and requirements of this chapter, but may be subject to regulation under other portions of the SMC:

1. Traffic or pedestrian control signs or signals, signs in the public right-of-way indicating scenic or historic points of interest, or signs which are erected or placed by or on the order of a public officer in the performance of public duty;
2. Signs required by law;
3. Noncommercial public service signs, providing such signs are nonilluminated, nonelectronic, do not exceed eight (8) square feet in surface area and six (6) feet in height, and are limited to one (1) sign per street frontage;
4. Official public notices, official court notices or official sheriff's notices;
5. The flag of a government, except that this exemption does not include flags of a government or noncommercial institution displayed in a series on a rope, wire or string;
6. Plaques, tablets or inscriptions indicating the name of a building, its date of erection, or other commemorative information, which are an integral part of the building structure or are attached flat to the face of the building, which are nonilluminated, and which do not exceed three (3) square feet in surface area;

7. Nonilluminated “No Trespassing,” “No Dumping,” “No Parking,” “Private Property,” “Fire Lane,” “Handicapped Parking,” and other on-site informational warning signs, which shall not exceed three (3) square feet in surface area;

8. Reasonable seasonal decorations within the appropriate public holiday season. However, such displays shall be removed promptly at the end of the public holiday season;

9. The flag of a commercial institution or noncommercial institution such as a school. No more than one (1) flag (excluding flags of nationality) is permitted per business premises. The flag shall be pole-mounted on one (1) side, not exceed twenty (20) square feet in surface area, nor be smaller than five (5) square feet, and shall be left loose to fly in the breeze. The flag shall be mounted at a minimum distance of twelve (12) feet, as measured from the street elevation to the lowest point of mounting;

10. Sculptures, fountains, mosaics and design features which do not incorporate advertising or identification;

11. Sandwich-board signs worn by a person while walking the public ways of the City;

12. Existing theater marquees (monument and/or building-mounted);

13. Reasonable, nonilluminated temporary decorations and signs for the purpose of announcing or promoting a nonprofit sponsored community fair, festival or event. Such decorations and signs may be displayed no more than twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to and during the fair, festival or event. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

~~C. — Permits shall be required of all signs nine (9) square feet or greater in surface area, and illuminated or electronic signs of any size. Nonilluminated signs less than nine (9) square feet in surface area are not required to obtain a permit, but must meet all requirements of this code. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)~~

### **15.600.015 Definitions**

In addition to the land use definitions in Chapter 15.105 SMC, the following definitions apply to this chapter: for any term defined in this section that is also defined in SMC Title 15, the definition in this section shall control. Words not defined herein shall have their common and ordinary meaning.

#### **Animation**

Movement or the appearance of movement of a sign display through the use of patterns of lights, changes in color or light intensity, computerized special effects, video display, or through any other method; except for the scrolling of a static message or scene onto or off a sign board in one (1) direction per message. Note that animation is prohibited per SMC 15.600.120(D), Prohibited Signs.

#### **Area or Surface Area of Sign**

The area of a sign excluding sign support structures, which do not form part of the sign proper or the display. Surface area shall be measured as follows:

- A. The “surface area” of the sign is determined by the height times the width of a typical rectangular sign or other appropriate mathematical computation of surface area for nonrectangular signs.
- B. “Surface area” includes only one (1) face of a double-faced sign where the faces of the sign are parallel. If any face is offset from parallel by more than five (5) degrees, such face shall be counted as a separate surface area.
- C. “Surface area” of a sign with more than two (2) faces, such as a cube or pyramid, shall be calculated as the sum of the surface area of all faces, divided by two (2).
- D. In the event of an irregular, three (3) dimensional object that serves as signage, where the surface area is not readily measurable, the surface area shall be calculated by the largest area of the three (3) dimensional object visible from any one (1) viewing angle.

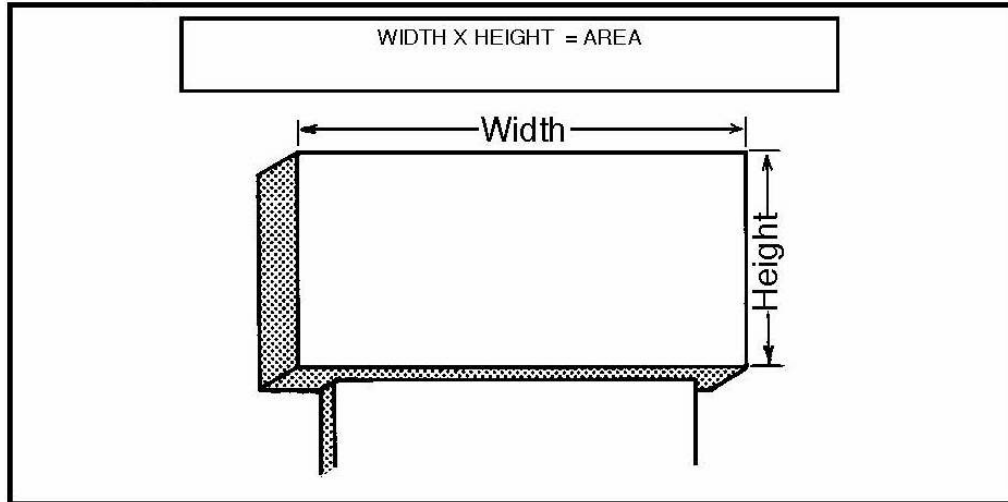


Figure: SIGN SURFACE AREA CALCULATION

Area of Facade

The area of that continuous front, side or back surface, including doors and windows, but excluding any roof area and structures or elevators or air-conditioning equipment thereon; provided, that in the case of a roof sign, the surface area of the facade shall be the area of that continuous front, side or back surface immediately beneath the roof, including doors and windows, but excluding the roof area and structures for elevators or air conditioning thereon.

Awning

A roof-like cover that projects from the wall of a building for the purpose of shielding a door or window from the elements. See Figure: AWNING.

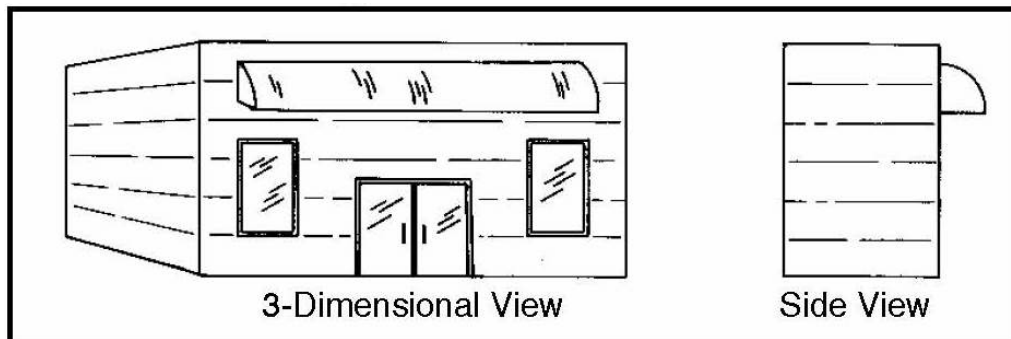


Figure: AWNING

Awning Sign

Any sign erected upon, or against, an awning.

Banner

A sign of a nonpermanent nature constructed of nonrigid materials.

Banner, Decorative Pole-Mounted

A cloth or fabric banner without text or corporate logos mounted to a pole and secured at the top and bottom.

## Billboard

Generally, a large outdoor advertising sign, containing a message, commercial or otherwise, unrelated to the use or activity on the property on which the sign is located, and which is customarily leased for commercial purposes, but not including attached directional signs (not within the billboard face) as defined herein. The approximate sizes of the billboard faces range from twelve (12) to fourteen (14) feet in height and twenty-four (24) to forty-eight (48) feet in width.

## Building-Mounted Sign

A single- or multiple-faced sign of a permanent nature, made of rigid material, attached to the facade of a building or the face of a marquee.

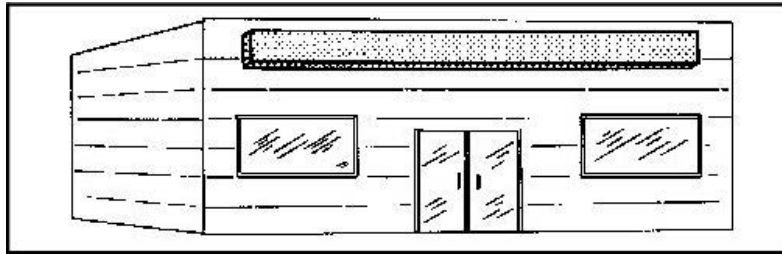


Figure: BUILDING MOUNTED (WALL) SIGN

## Canopy

A freestanding structure affording protection from the elements to persons or property thereunder.

## Canopy-Mounted Sign

Any sign or awning erected upon or against a canopy.

## Community Use

A public community center, library, museum, park, City Hall, fire station or other public use operated for the benefit of the community.

## Construction Sign

An informational sign which identifies the architect, engineers, contractors and other individuals or firms involved with the construction of a building, or announcing the character of the building or enterprise, which is erected during the building construction period.

## ~~Dawn to Dusk~~

~~That time of the day between sunrise and sunset.~~

## Directional Sign

A single- or double-faced sign not exceeding nine (9) square feet in surface area designed to guide or direct pedestrian or vehicular traffic to an area, place or convenience.

### A. Interior Directional Sign

Directional signs oriented to the interior of a site and at least thirty (30) feet from the right-of-way, or not readable from the street.

### B. Perimeter Directional Sign

Directional signs oriented to and readable from the street.

#### Display

The visual information shown on a sign, including text, graphics, pictures, lights and background.

#### Electronic Sign

A sign containing a display that can be changed by electrical, electronic or computerized process. See SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs, for requirements regarding electronic signs.

#### Facade

The exterior wall face of a building, extending from the ground to the top of the parapet or eaves, but not including any portion of the roof. Each side of a building (i.e., each architectural elevation) is considered one (1) facade (see Figure: FACADE). For buildings with more than one (1) occupant, the facade for each occupant shall be that portion of the exterior wall face between the points where the interior walls between tenants intersect with the exterior wall.

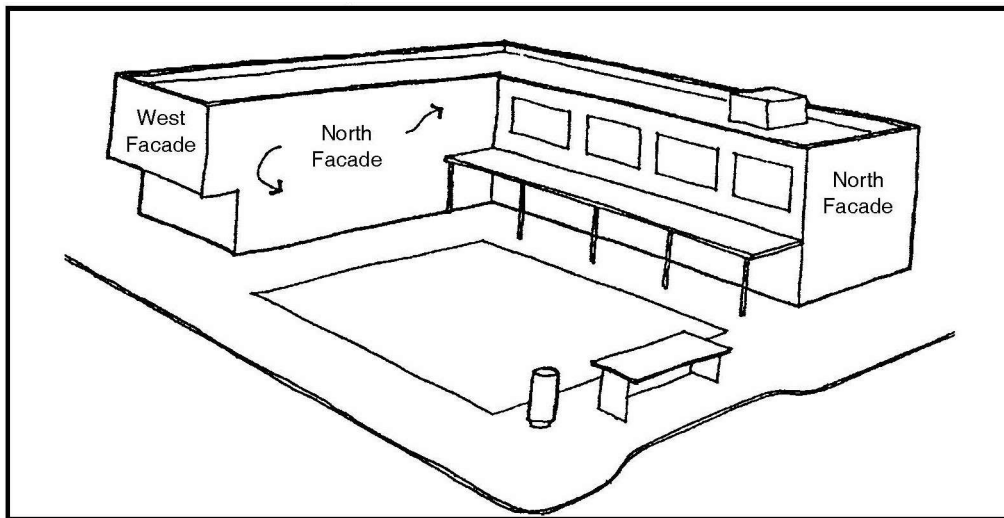


Figure: FACADE

#### Flashing

A sign display that appears for less than one and one-half (1-1/2) consecutive seconds.

#### Freestanding Sign

A sign permanently mounted into the ground, supported by poles, pylons, braces or a solid base and not attached to any building. Freestanding signs include those signs otherwise known as “pedestal signs,” “pole signs,” “pylon signs,” and “monument signs.”

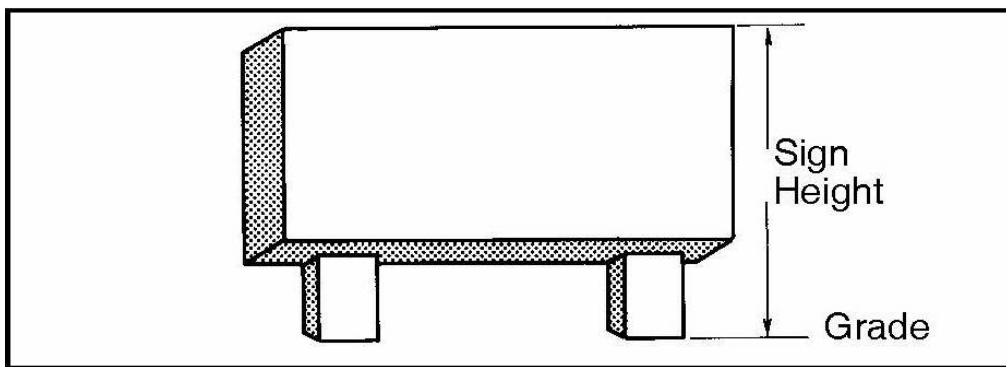


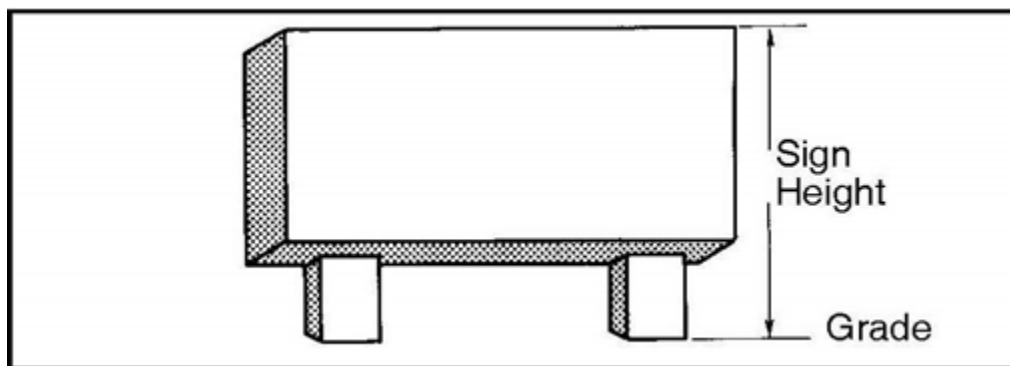
Figure: FREESTANDING SIGN

#### Grade (Ground Level)

The elevation or level of the street (or parking lot) closest to the sign to which reference is made. In cases where the property on which the sign is located is lower than the immediately adjacent street level, the ground level shall be considered the street level to facilitate visibility of signage. In no case shall a sign be higher than twenty-five (25) feet from the lowest grade of the property adjacent to the street level where the sign is proposed.

#### Height of Sign

The vertical distance from the grade to the highest point of a sign or any vertical projection thereof, including its supporting columns, or the vertical distance from the relative ground level in the immediate vicinity.



#### Holographic Display

Any display that creates a three (3) dimensional image through projection. (Note: Holographic displays are prohibited by SMC 15.600.120(F), Prohibited Signs.)

#### Inflatable Object

An inflatable object larger than eighteen (18) inches in diameter, such as a blimp, large air balloon or inflatable sport equipment, used to attract attention to a special event or grand opening.

#### Informational Sign

A single- or double-faced sign not exceeding nine (9) square feet in surface area, intended primarily for the convenience of the public or to ensure the orderly operation of the site, including but not limited to signs designating restrooms, address numbers, hours of operation, business directories, help wanted, public telephone, and instructions regarding parking.



**A. Interior Informational Sign**

Informational signs oriented to the interior of a site and at least thirty (30) feet from the right-of-way or not readable from the street.

**B. Perimeter Informational Sign**

Informational signs oriented to and readable from the street.

**Marquee**

A permanent roof-like structure extending from part of a wall of a building a maximum of six (6) feet and supported solely by the building.

**Marquee Sign**

Any sign that forms part of or is integrated into a marquee and that does not extend above the height or beyond the limits of such marquee. Also considered an extension of a building-mounted sign.

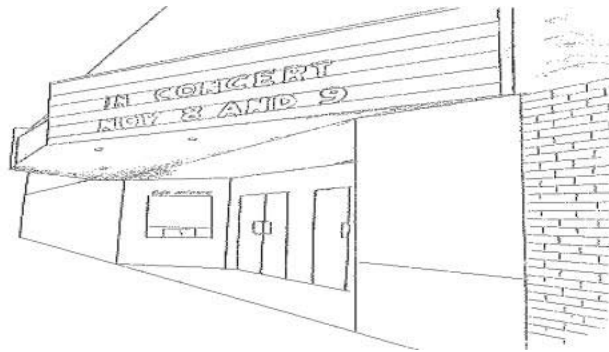


Figure: MARQUEE/MARQUEE SIGN

**Message**

In an electronic sign, a set of sequential displays that convey related information about a product, service or company.

**Monument Sign**

A ground-mounted, fixed sign with a height ranging from five (5) to fifteen (15) feet above the average ground elevation. The base (not included in the sign surface area calculation) is attached to the ground as a wide base of solid construction.

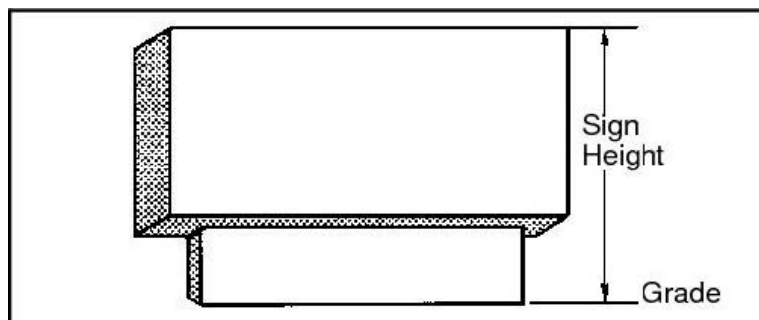


Figure: MONUMENT SIGN

### Multiple Building Complex

A group of structures housing more than one (1) type of retail business, office or commercial venture, and generally under one (1) ownership and control.

### Multiple Occupancy Building

A single structure housing more than one (1) type of retail business office or commercial venture.

### Mural

A design or representation, without letters, numbers, or trademarked graphics, that is painted or drawn on the exterior of a structure facade that does not advertise a business, product, service, or activity of the business contained within the building or structure. A mural may have the signature of the person painting the sign, or copyright ownership of the mural painting.

### Mural Sign

A design, or representation with letters, numbers, or trademarked graphics, that is painted or drawn on the exterior of a structure facade that advertises the business, product, service, or activity contained within the building or structure. A mural sign will include the name of the business or activity being conducted within the building or structure. Off-premises mural signs are not permitted.

### Neighborhood Unit

A section or area within a multi-family development:

- A. Where the section or area is geographically different or separated from other sections or areas in the development; or
- B. Where the dwelling units have characteristics distinguishing them from the dwelling units in other sections or areas of the development.

### Noncommercial Public Service Sign

Noncommercial signs devoted to religious, charitable, cultural, governmental or educational messages.

### ~~Office Building~~

~~An office building as defined by the City of SeaTac Zoning Code.~~

### Parapet

That portion of a building wall which extends above the roof of the building on all building facades (see Figure: PARAPET).

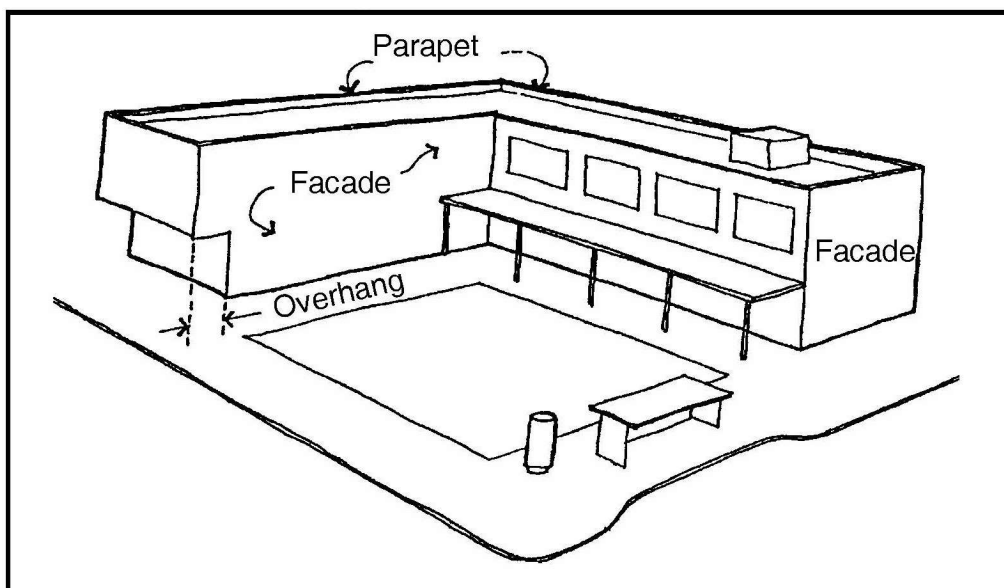


Figure: PARAPET

#### Parapet Sign

Any sign erected upon the parapet of a building, not to exceed the height of any roof structures housing building/ventilation equipment.

#### Pennants

A triangular tapering flag made of any lightweight fabric or other nonrigid material suspended in a series from a rope, wire, or string.

#### Penthouse

~~A structure on top of a building roof which houses an elevator shaft or similar form.~~

#### Political Sign

Signs advertising a candidate or candidates for public elective office or a political party, or signs urging a particular vote on a public issue decided by ballot.

#### Portable Sign

A movable sign that is not permanently attached to a structure or the ground. Portable signs include A-frame signs and signs mounted on a portable base, but not portable readerboards.

#### Porte-Cochere

A covering structure projecting horizontally from and attached to a building, affording protection from the elements; typically used for loading and unloading of vehicles.

#### Primary Sign(s)

All permitted permanent monument/freestanding and building-mounted signs (see SMC 15.600.030, Commercial/Office/Industrial Zone Classification Signs and 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs).

#### Property Line

The line denoting the limits of legal ownership of property.

#### Readerboard

A sign or part of a sign on which the letters are replaceable by manual means, such as changing magnetic letters on a sign board.

#### Roof Sign

A sign or sign structure erected above a roof, parapet, canopy or porte-cochere of a building or structure.

#### Scrolling

The vertical movement of a static message or display on an electronic sign.

#### Secondary Signs

Allowable signage not falling within the definition of a primary sign; includes directional and informational signs, as well as temporary signs and displays (see SMC 15.600.070, Secondary Signage).

#### Sign

All surfaces/structures (permitted, exempt, or prohibited) regulated by this chapter that have letters, figures, design, symbols, trademark or devices intended to attract attention to any activity, service, place, subject, person, firm, corporation, public performance, article, machine or merchandise whatsoever.

#### Sign, Off-Premises

A sign which displays a message relating to a use of property or sale of goods or services at a location other than that on which the sign is located.

#### Sign, On-Premises

A sign which displays a message which is directly related to the use of the property on which it is located.

#### ~~Single Occupancy Building~~

~~A commercial building or structure with one (1) major enterprise. A building is classified as "single occupancy" only if:~~

- ~~A. — It has only one (1) occupant;~~
- ~~B. — It has no wall in common with another building; and~~
- ~~C. — It has no part of its roof in common with another building.~~

#### Subdivision Signs

Signs used to identify a land development of a residential nature.

#### Streamer

A long narrow strip of lightweight fabric or other material suspended in a series from a rope, wire, or string.

#### ~~Surface Area~~

~~See "Area or Surface Area of Sign."~~

#### ~~Surface Area of Facade~~

~~The area of that continuous front, side or back surface, including doors and windows, but excluding any roof area and structures or elevators or air conditioning equipment thereon; provided, that in the case of a roof sign, the surface area of the facade shall be the area of that continuous front, side or back surface immediately beneath the roof, including doors and windows, but excluding the roof area and structures for elevators or air conditioning thereon.~~

#### Temporary Freestanding Sign

A nonpermanent sign securely attached to the ground, intended for use for a limited period of time.

#### Traveling

The horizontal movement of a static message or display on an electronic sign.

#### Window Sign

All signs located inside and affixed to or within three (3) feet of a window of a building, whether temporary or permanent, lighted or unlighted, which may be viewed from the exterior of the building. The term does not include merchandise located within three (3) feet of a window. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

### 15.600.020 General Sign Provisions

#### A. Requirements Applicable to All Signs.

1. **Structural Requirements.** The structure and erection of signs within the City shall be governed by the adopted Uniform Sign Code and Building Code. Compliance with the Uniform Sign Code and Building Code shall be a prerequisite to issuance of a sign permit under SMC 15.600.170, Permits and Fees.
2. **Electrical Requirements.** Electrical requirements for signs within the City shall be governed by Chapter 13.180 SMC, Electrical Code. Compliance with the Electrical Code shall be required by every sign utilizing electrical energy as a prerequisite to issuance of a sign permit under SMC 15.600.170, Permits and Fees.
3. **Sign Illumination.** Illumination from or upon any sign shall be shaded, shielded, directed or reduced so as to avoid undue brightness, glare, or reflection of light on private or public property in the surrounding area, and so as to avoid unreasonably distracting pedestrians or motorists. "Undue brightness" is illumination in excess of that which is reasonably necessary to make the sign reasonably visible to the average person on an adjacent street. Additionally, electronic signs shall meet the standards of SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs.
4. **Sign Maintenance.** All signs, including signs heretofore installed, shall be constantly maintained in a state of security, safety, repair and professional appearance. If any sign is found not to be so maintained or is insecurely fastened or otherwise dangerous, it shall be the duty of the owner and/or occupant of the premises on which the sign is fastened to repair or remove the sign within five (5) days after receiving notice from the City Manager or designee. The premises surrounding a monument sign shall be free and clear of rubbish and any landscaping area free of weeds.
5. **Sign Obstructing View or Passage.** No sign shall be located so as to physically obstruct any door, window or exit from a building. No sign shall be located so as to be hazardous to a motorist's ingress or egress, or visibility of traffic flow during ingress or egress, from parking areas of any way open to the public.
6. **Landscaping for Monument Signs.** All primary monument signs shall include, as part of their design, general landscaping and curbs about their base to prevent automobiles from hitting the sign-supporting structure and to improve the overall appearance of the installation.
7. **Sign Inspection.** All sign users shall permit the periodic inspection of their signs by the City upon City staff request.
8. **Conflicting Provisions.** Whenever two (2) provisions of this code overlap or conflict with regard to size or placement of a sign, the more restrictive provision shall apply. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

**AB. Number of Primary Signs.**

1. Primary signage, consisting of monument/freestanding signage and facade/building-mounted signage, is allowed within the commercial/industrial/office zones, multi-family zones, and for churches, schools and community uses in the single-family residential zones as described in SMC 15.600.030, Commercial/Office/Industrial Zone Classification Signs, 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs, and 15.600.050, Single-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs. Within these zoning classifications, only one (1) monument/freestanding sign is allowed per site, as described in subsection (B) of this section. Each business shall also be allowed the facade signage described within SMC 15.600.030(B)(2) or 15.600.040(B)(2).
2. Where a site has multiple street frontages, one (1) monument/freestanding sign shall be allowed on each street frontage, providing that there shall be a minimum of one hundred (100) feet between each freestanding sign.
3. In a residential site of one hundred (100) dwelling units or greater, where the dwelling units are clustered into defined neighborhood units, one (1) monument/freestanding sign shall be allowed to identify each neighborhood unit containing at least thirty-five (35) residential dwelling units.

**BC. Site.** A site shall be considered to be the largest applicable area of the following:

1. A single business located on one (1) or more tax parcels;
2. Multiple uses sharing the area of one (1) or more tax parcels, whether in a multiple-occupancy building, a multiple-building complex, or other common use of a parcel for business operations.

**CD. Secondary Signage.** Secondary signage shall be allowed in commercial/industrial/office zones, multi-family zones, and for churches, schools and community uses in the single-family residential zones as described in SMC 15.600.070, Secondary Signage.**DE. Street Identification.** Each enterprise, including each building in a multiple building complex, shall display and maintain on-premises street address number identification.**EF. Each Sign Complete.** In no case shall any sign contain a letter, word, or phrase that is continued onto another sign. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)**15.600.050 Single-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs**

- A. In individual dwelling units within the residential UL and T zones, a sign with the occupant's name two (2) square feet is permitted.
- B. Each residential dwelling shall display and maintain on-premises street address number identification.
- C. Each subdivision, development of five (5) or more units in a townhouse zone, or senior citizen multi-family complex is permitted a monument/freestanding sign at its major entrances, not to exceed thirty-five (35) square feet per face and a total of seventy (70) square feet.
- D. Churches, schools, community uses, and agricultural crop sales located within the UL and T zones shall be allowed the signage described and regulated under SMC 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs, and 15.600.070, Secondary Signage.
- E. Any home occupation shall be allowed the signage described and regulated in SMC 15.465.500(C), Home Occupations.
- F. Any daycare facility, bed and breakfast, short-term rental, or specialized instruction school (other than a specialized instruction school located at a former school district facility) within the UL or T zones shall be allowed a nine (9) square foot sign.
- G. Electronic signs are not allowed, except as permitted by SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs.



H. Internally illuminated signs are not allowed except as permitted and regulated by SMC 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs, for churches, schools, and community uses ~~and agricultural crop sales~~.

I. One (1) temporary freestanding sign is allowed while a property is for sale, for rent, or under construction, per SMC 15.600.070(D)(3)(b).

J. Portable off-premises signs on private property no more than four (4) square feet in surface area and two (2) feet in height are allowed with the permission of the owner, if such signs are authorized under SMC 15.600.070(E)(4), grand opening/special events, SMC 15.600.080, Political Signs, SMC 15.600.090, Real Estate Signs, and SMC 15.600.100, Garage and Yard Sale Signs. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

### 15.600.070 Secondary Signage

#### A. General.

1. In addition to the primary signage allowed, the following secondary signage shall be allowed within the parameters specified for each site in the commercial/office/industrial zones, multi-family residential zones, and for churches, schools, community uses, and agricultural crop sales in the single-family residential zones.

2. **Permits.** Signs and displays that meet the standards of this subsection do not require a permit, if they are not illuminated, except that the placement of pole-mounted banners and decorative flags shall be approved through a sign permit to ensure code compliance.

#### 3. Illumination of Secondary Signage.

a. Secondary signage shall not be illuminated, except as set forth in the following section.

b. The following secondary signage may be illuminated; provided, that such illumination is approved through issuance of an electrical permit and meets the standards of SMC 15.600.030(A) for commercial/office/industrial zones and SMC 15.600.040(A) for multi-family zones.

i. Illumination of permanent directional and informational signs.

ii. External illumination of decorative flags.

c. Secondary signage shall not be electronic.

4. Readerboard signs shall not be allowed as secondary signs.

#### 5. Quality and Condition.

a. All signs under this section must appear to be professionally produced and must be maintained in an appearance of newness, free of tears, holes, mold, dirt, decay, chipped paint, fading, sagging, and other signs of wear.

b. The City may, at its discretion, and without notice, remove any temporary or portable sign not in compliance with this section.

B. **Informational Signs.** Informational signs are not included in the number of primary signs so long as the following conditions are met:

1. **Interior Informational Sign.** The sign shall not exceed nine (9) square feet in surface area.

2. **Perimeter Informational Sign.** The sign shall not exceed three (3) square feet in surface area, and the number of perimeter informational signs shall not exceed one (1) per street frontage.

Additional signs oriented to the street may be allowed only if shown to be necessary for safety purposes and granted by the Director.

3. The sign shall be located on the subject site, and meet all other standards of the code. If an informational sign is portable, or constructed of nonrigid materials, it is subject to the limitations on number and placement of portable and banner signs per this section, except that an interior informational sign only may be portable in excess of the limits on portable signs if necessary for orderly site operations.

C. **Directional Signs.** Directional signs are not included in the number of primary signs so long as the following conditions are met:

1. **Interior Directional Sign.** The sign shall not exceed nine (9) square feet in surface area.
2. **Perimeter Directional Sign.**
  - a. The sign shall not exceed six (6) square feet in surface area;
  - b. Business identification shall comprise no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the sign;
  - c. The number of perimeter directional signs shall not exceed one (1) per entrance to a site, except that two (2) such directional signs shall be allowed if necessary for safety and oriented to traffic approaching the entrance from two (2) different directions.

Additional signs oriented to the street may be allowed only if shown to be necessary for safety purposes and granted by the Director.

3. The sign is located on the premises to which the sign is intended to guide or direct pedestrian or vehicular traffic, and meets all other standards of the code. If a directional sign is portable, or constructed of nonrigid materials, it is subject to the limitations on number and placement of portable and banner signs per this section, except that an interior directional sign only may be portable in excess of the limits on portable signs if necessary for orderly site operations.
4. Where a property lacks direct street frontage, an off-premises directional sign may be approved through a variance process described in SMC 15.600.200, Variance from Sign Code.

D. **Temporary Signs, Displays and Other Secondary Signage.** The signage or displays described in this section are allowed within the limits described in each category; provided, that no more than three (3) categories shall be concurrently displayed.

1. **Portable Signs on Private Property.** One (1) portable sign per street frontage displayed on the site it advertises, provided it meets the requirements of this section.
  - a. **Size.** The sign may not exceed nine (9) square feet in surface area or three and one-half (3-1/2) feet in height. Only one (1) side of a double-faced temporary portable sign will be counted.
  - b. **Placement.** The sign shall be placed within three (3) feet of a vehicular or pedestrian entrance, and shall not obstruct traffic, pedestrian circulation, or access for the disabled.
  - c. **Hours Displayed.** Portable signs shall be displayed only during the hours of business operation. If displayed after dusk, portable signs shall be displayed only in well-lighted areas.
2. **Building and Fence-Mounted Banners.** One (1) banner per site per street frontage within the following limitations:
  - a. Banners must be constructed of nonrigid materials suitable for an exterior environment, such as fabric, vinyl, or plastic;
  - b. **Size.** Banners may not be greater than thirty-two (32) square feet;
  - c. No banner sign shall be allowed on a street frontage where there is a temporary freestanding sign displayed on that frontage; and

- d. **Placement.** Banners may only be placed in the following manner:
  - i. On buildings, securely mounted at four (4) corners, and not blocking any window;
  - ii. On fences, stretched tightly and fastened at four (4) corners;
  - iii. For a new business only, over an existing monument or fixed sign for a maximum of sixty (60) days.
3. **Temporary Freestanding Sign.** One (1) temporary freestanding on-premises sign per site, per street frontage, under the following circumstances:
  - a. A temporary freestanding sign is allowed for a maximum of sixty (60) days for a new business awaiting permanent signage; or
  - b. A temporary freestanding sign is allowed during the time a property is under construction, remodel, or for sale or rent; and
  - c. No temporary freestanding sign shall be allowed on a street frontage where there is a banner sign displayed on that frontage; and
  - d. Such signs shall be constructed of durable, rigid materials and mounted securely into the ground; and
  - e. In commercial, industrial and multi-family zones, no temporary freestanding sign shall exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in surface area or ten (10) feet in height, nor be located closer than five (5) feet from the property line, or closer than ten (10) feet from the property line of the abutting owner; and
  - f. In single-family residential and townhouse zones, no temporary freestanding sign shall exceed eight (8) square feet of surface area, six (6) feet in height, or be located closer than ten (10) feet from the property line of the abutting owner, except that a new subdivision may be allowed one (1) sign thirty-two (32) square feet in surface area, located no closer than ten (10) feet from the property line of the abutting owner. All signs shall comply with SMC 15.400.350, Sight Distance Requirements.
4. **Pennants.** Pennants without text or logos; provided, that they are made of nonreflective material. The maximum length of all such strings of pennants shall be no greater than the linear footage associated with the perimeter of the site. Each pennant may not exceed twelve (12) inches in height or width. Pennants shall be mounted a minimum of thirteen and one-half (13-1/2) feet above any vehicular way, as measured from the ground level of the vehicular way to the string or rope from which the pennant is suspended.
5. **Strings of Flags.** Strings of flags of a governmental or noncommercial institution; provided, that they are made of nonreflective material. The maximum length of all such strings of flags shall be limited to the linear footage associated with the perimeter of the site. Each flag may not exceed twelve (12) inches in height or width. Strings of flags shall be mounted a minimum of thirteen and one-half (13-1/2) feet above any vehicular way, as measured from the ground level of the vehicular way to the string or rope from which the flag is suspended.
6. **Decorative Flags or Decorative Pole-Mounted Banners.** Decorative flags or decorative pole-mounted banners, but not both, shall be allowed to be displayed on a site.
  - a. **Decorative Flags.** Decorative flags, without text or corporate logos, limited to one (1) flag per fifty (50) feet of street frontage. The allowable number of flags shall be grouped together within fifty (50) feet of an entrance. The flag shall not exceed twenty (20) square feet, nor be smaller than five (5) square feet in surface area, shall be pole-mounted on one (1) side only, shall be no greater in its vertical dimension than in its horizontal dimension, and shall be left loose to fly in the breeze. The flag shall be mounted at a minimum distance of twelve (12) feet, as measured from the street elevation to the lowest point of mounting. The pole shall be a maximum of twenty (20) feet in height.

b. **Decorative Pole-Mounted Banners.** Decorative banners, without text or corporate logos, mounted on poles and secured at the top and bottom, limited to one (1) per fifty (50) feet of street frontage, placed along the street frontage at a minimum distance fifty (50) feet apart. Decorative banners may not be illuminated. Decorative banners may be a maximum dimension of two and one-half (2-1/2) feet wide by six (6) feet high and mounted at a minimum distance of twelve (12) feet, as measured from the street elevation to the lowest point of the banner. The pole shall be a maximum of twenty (20) feet in height.

7. **Special Directional Sign.** One (1) permanent on-site directional sign per street frontage, no greater than nine (9) square feet, which may include business identification up to fifty percent (50%) of the sign.

E. **Grand Opening and Special Event Signs.**

1. Otherwise prohibited posters, banners, strings of lights, clusters of flags, balloons, as limited by subsection (E)(3) of this section, and up to three (3) off-premises portable directional signs as limited by subsection (E)(5) of this section are permitted for four (4) weeks only (twenty-eight (28) consecutive days) to announce the opening of a completely new enterprise or the opening of an enterprise under new management, and for two (2) weeks (fourteen (14) consecutive days) twice per year for any business to advertise a special event or sale; provided, that no site shall have more than four (4) weeks (twenty-eight (28) days) total of grand opening or special event display in any one (1) calendar year.

2. A limit of one (1) inflatable object, such as a blimp or large air balloon, shall be allowed as part of a grand opening or special event, provided such object is attached to the ground and approved by the City for safety purposes as to placement and design. The maximum height of an inflatable object, when installed, shall be thirty (30) feet. A party must submit an application for an inflatable object sign permit at least two (2) weeks prior to the grand opening or scheduled event.

3. Balloons may be displayed only as part of a grand opening or special event, provided they are no greater than eighteen (18) inches in diameter with a tether no longer than thirty-six (36) inches and must be securely attached to a structure. No more than two (2) displays with a maximum of five (5) balloons per display (or ten (10) individual balloons) are permitted per site. ~~Displays are only allowed from dawn to dusk.~~

4. Any grand opening or special event shall register with the City by filing a registration form. All such material shall be removed immediately upon the expiration of the allowed period. Use of the above-described devices within the limits specified shall be an exception to the general prohibition on these devices as set forth in SMC 15.600.120(E). However, such displays are subject to all other code requirements.

5. Three (3) off-premises portable signs advertising the grand opening or special event are allowed; provided, that such signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area nor two (2) feet in height, ~~and shall be displayed only from dawn to dusk.~~

Off-premises grand opening/special event signs may be located on private property with the permission of the owner of the property on which the sign is placed and within the public right-of-way; provided, that the signs do not encroach into a driveway, parking area, sidewalk, pedestrian pathway, vehicular travel lane, median or traffic island, and are at least four (4) feet from the outer pavement edge of a roadway when curb and gutter are not present. No signs shall be posted, tacked, nailed, or in any manner affixed upon any utility pole, tree or public or private sign. (Ord. 18-1001 § 1; Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

**15.600.100 Garage and Yard Sale Signs**

Garage sales, yard sales, and other exempt sales as allowed by SMC 15.465.500(C), Regulation of Home Occupations, shall be allowed the following signage limited to display on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. All signs shall comply with SMC 15.400.350, Sight Distance Requirements.

A. **On-Premises Signs.** Garage sales, yard sales, and other exempt sales shall be allowed the on-site temporary signage not exceeding eight (8) square feet in surface area, or six (6) feet in height.

B. **Off-Premises Signs.** Garage sales, yard sales, and other exempt sales shall be allowed display of three (3) off-premises portable signs; provided, that such signs shall not exceed four (4) square feet in area nor two (2) feet in

height, ~~shall be displayed only from dawn to dusk on the days of the sale,~~ and shall be removed promptly after the close of the sale.

Off-premises garage sale signs may be located on private property with the permission of the owner of the property on which the sign is placed and within the public right-of-way; provided, that the signs do not encroach into a driveway, parking area, sidewalk, pedestrian pathway, vehicular travel lane, median or traffic island, and are at least four (4) feet from the outer pavement edge of a roadway when curb and gutter are not present. No signs shall be posted, tacked, nailed or in any manner affixed upon any utility pole, tree or public or private sign. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

#### **15.600.110 — Exempt Signs or Displays**

The following signs or displays are exempted from coverage under this code:

- A. — ~~Traffic or pedestrian control signs or signals, signs in the public right of way indicating scenic or historic points of interest, or signs which are erected or placed by or on the order of a public officer in the performance of public duty;~~
- B. — Signs required by law;
- C. — ~~Noncommercial public service signs, providing such signs are nonilluminated, nonelectronic, do not exceed eight (8) square feet in surface area and six (6) feet in height, and are limited to one (1) sign per street frontage;~~
- D. — ~~Official public notices, official court notices or official sheriff's notices;~~
- E. — ~~The flag of a government, except that this exemption does not include flags of a government or noncommercial institution displayed in a series on a rope, wire or string;~~
- F. — ~~Plaques, tablets or inscriptions indicating the name of a building, its date of erection, or other commemorative information, which are an integral part of the building structure or are attached flat to the face of the building, which are nonilluminated, and which do not exceed three (3) square feet in surface area;~~
- G. — ~~Nonilluminated "No Trespassing," "No Dumping," "No Parking," "Private Property," "Fire Lane," "Handicapped Parking," and other on-site informational warning signs, which shall not exceed three (3) square feet in surface area;~~
- H. — ~~Reasonable seasonal decorations within the appropriate public holiday season. However, such displays shall be removed promptly at the end of the public holiday season;~~
- I. — ~~The flag of a commercial institution or noncommercial institution such as a school. No more than one (1) flag (excluding flags of nationality) is permitted per business premises. The flag shall be pole mounted on one (1) side, not exceed twenty (20) square feet in surface area, nor be smaller than five (5) square feet, and shall be left loose to fly in the breeze. The flag shall be mounted at a minimum distance of twelve (12) feet, as measured from the street elevation to the lowest point of mounting;~~
- J. — ~~Sculptures, fountains, mosaics and design features which do not incorporate advertising or identification;~~
- K. — ~~Sandwich board signs worn by a person while walking the public ways of the City;~~
- L. — ~~Existing theater marquees (monument and/or building mounted);~~
- M. — ~~Reasonable, nonilluminated temporary decorations and signs for the purpose of announcing or promoting a nonprofit sponsored community fair, festival or event. Such decorations and signs may be displayed no more than twenty one (21) calendar days prior to and during the fair, festival or event. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)~~

#### **15.600.120 Prohibited Signs**

The following signs or displays are prohibited, unless otherwise approved by this chapter. Prohibited signs are subject to removal by the City at the owner's or user's expense. Any existing sign which is prohibited upon the

effective date of this code shall be removed within six (6) months of notification from the City except as provided in SMC 15.600.140, Nonconforming Signs, regarding nonconforming signs.

- A. Signs which purport to be, or are an imitation of, or resemble an official traffic sign or signal, or which bear the words “stop,” “caution,” “danger,” “warning,” or similar words;
- B. Signs which, by reason of their size, location, movement, content, coloring or manner of illumination, may be confused with or construed as a traffic control sign, signal or device, or the light of any emergency (police, fire or ambulance) or radio equipment vehicle, or which obstruct the visibility of any traffic or street sign or signal device;
- C. Signs which rotate or have a part(s) which move or revolve except the movement of the hands of a clock;
- D. Signs that display animation;
- E. Any display or sign not specifically allowed by the sign code, including, but not limited to, strings of lights; ribbons; spinners, twirlers or propellers; flashing, rotating or blinking lights, chasing or scintillating lights; fluttering or moving lights or other illuminating device which has a changing light density or color; lasers; strobes or lights with stroboscopic effect; displays or lights that imitate the appearance of explosions or fireworks; flares; balloons; bubble machines and similar devices of a carnival nature, or containing elements creating sound or smell. Exception: Certain of these devices are permitted on a limited basis as seasonal decorations under SMC 15.600.110(H) or for grand openings of new businesses under SMC 15.600.070(E);
- F. Holographic displays;
- G. Signs identifying, or window signs advertising activities, products, businesses or services which have been discontinued for more than sixty (60) days on the premises upon which the signs are located, and any window signs in excess of the amount of wall signage allowed, or mounted between three (3) feet and seven (7) feet above floor level and obstructing the view through a window;
- H. Private signs on utility poles as prohibited by ~~State law~~ RCW 70.54.090;
- I. Searchlights;
- J. Miscellaneous pole-mounted advertisements;
- K. Signs for which a permit has been granted under conditions with which the permittee does not comply;
- L. Signs for which a permit has been granted and subsequently revoked for cause by the City Manager, or designee;
- M. Signs erected, altered or relocated (excluding copy change) without a permit issued by the City or any other governmental agency as required by law;
- N. Billboards except those qualifying as nonconforming signs pursuant to SMC 15.600.140, Nonconforming Signs;
- O. Roof signs, except as allowed through a variance process by SMC 15.600.200(G)(5);
- P. Off-premises signs, except as allowed for residential real estate open houses (SMC 15.600.090, Real Estate Signs), garage sales (SMC 15.600.100, Garage and Yard Sale Signs) and grand opening/special events (SMC 15.600.070(E)) or through a variance process by SMC 15.600.200(G)(6);
- Q. Signs attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer on public or private property; provided, however, this provision shall not be construed as prohibiting the identification of a firm or its products on a vehicle operating during the normal course of business, or advertising a vehicle for sale if such sign is placed inside the vehicle. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)



**15.600.140 Nonconforming Signs**

A. **General Applicability.** ~~To ease the economic impact of this code on businesses with substantial investment in signs in existence on the date of original adoption of this code, this section provides for a period of continued use of a nonconforming sign in its existing state. During this period, it is expected that the sign may be amortized on Federal income taxes; however, whether it may be so amortized shall not affect the application of this section. Similar treatment is accorded signs in areas annexed to the City after the code's enactment. All nonconforming signs in existence as of the date of original adoption of this code shall be brought into conformity with this code no later than December 31, 2012. This section applies to the maintenance, repair, as appropriate, and removal of nonconforming signs. "Nonconforming sign" means a sign that was legally established, but no longer conforms to the current sign standards of this chapter.~~

**B. Nonconforming Signs.**

1. **Notification of Nonconformity or Illegality.** ~~The Code Administrator shall, as soon as practical, survey the City for signs which do not conform to the requirements of this chapter. Upon determination that a sign is nonconforming or illegal, the Administrator shall use reasonable efforts to so notify, either personally or in writing, the sign user or owner of the sign and, where practical, the owner of the property on which the sign is located of the following; provided, that the business license of the business with which the sign is associated shall be presumed to be the sign user under this code:~~

- a. ~~The sign's nonconformity or illegality;~~
- b. ~~Whether the sign may be eligible for a nonconforming sign permit.~~

~~If the identity of the sign user, owner of the sign, or owner of the property on which the sign is located cannot be determined after reasonable inquiry, the notice may be affixed in a conspicuous place on the sign or on the business premises with which the sign is associated. A file shall be established in the department, and a copy of the notice and certification of posting shall be maintained for records.~~

2. **Signs Eligible for Nonconforming Sign Permit.** ~~With the exceptions herein provided, any on-site primary sign located within the City limits on the date of adoption of this code, or located in areas annexed to the City thereafter, which does not conform with the provisions of this code, is eligible for characterization as a nonconforming sign provided it meets the following requirements:~~

- a. ~~The sign was covered by a sign permit on the date of adoption of this code, if one was required under applicable law; or~~
- b. ~~If no sign permit was required under applicable law for the sign in question, the sign was in all respects in compliance with applicable law on the date of adoption of this code.~~

3. **Signs Not Eligible for Nonconforming Sign Permits.** ~~The following signs shall not be eligible for characterization as nonconforming signs:~~

- a. ~~Prohibited signs, as defined in SMC 15.600.120, Prohibited Signs, except for signs which rotate, as defined in SMC 15.600.120(C).~~
- b. ~~Secondary signage not meeting the code specifications, except for informational and directional signs in compliance with the code at the time of adoption of this code.~~
- c. ~~All signs not eligible for characterization as a nonconforming sign shall be considered illegal.~~

4. **Number of Nonconforming Signs Permitted.** ~~Each sign user within the City having existing nonconforming signs meeting the requirements of SMC 15.600.140, Nonconforming Signs, shall be permitted to designate only one (1) such sign as "nonconforming" for each street upon which the business premises fronts. Such designation shall be made in the application for a nonconforming sign permit.~~

5. **Permit for Nonconforming Signs.** ~~A nonconforming sign permit is required for each nonconforming sign designated under SMC 15.600.140, Nonconforming Signs. The permit (certificate of zone compliance—~~

~~CZC) shall be obtained by the sign user or the sign owner, or the owner of the property upon which the sign is located within sixty (60) days of notification by the City. The permit shall be issued and shall expire at the end of the applicable amortization period prescribed in subsection (D) of this section.~~

~~Applications for a nonconforming sign permit shall contain the name and address of the sign user, the sign owner, and the owner of the property upon which the sign is located and such other pertinent information as the Administrator may require to ensure compliance with the code, including proof of the date of installation of the sign.~~

~~A nonconforming sign for which no permit has been issued within the sixty (60) day period of notification shall within six (6) months be brought into compliance with the code or be removed. Failure to comply shall subject the sign user, owner or owner of the property on which the sign is located to penalties cited in Chapter 15.125-SMC, Code Enforcement.~~

**6B. Loss of Nonconforming Status.** A nonconforming sign shall immediately lose its nonconforming status if:

- a1. The sign is altered in any way in structure or height which is not in compliance with the standards of this chapter; or
- b2. The sign is relocated to a position which is not in compliance with the standards of this chapter; or
- e3. The sign is replaced; provided, that this replacement refers to structural replacement, not change of “copy,” panel or lettering; or
- d4. Any new primary sign is erected or placed in connection with the enterprise using the nonconforming sign; or
- e. ~~No application for a nonconforming sign permit is filed by the sign user, sign owner, or owner of the property upon which the sign is located within sixty (60) days following notification by the City (subsection (B)(1) of this section) that the sign is nonconforming and that a permit must be obtained; or~~
- f5. The loss of legal nonconforming status takes place upon any change in land use or occupancy, or a change in business name, and the sign shall be brought into conformity. Such nonconforming signs shall, within ninety (90) days, be brought into conformity with this code or be removed.

Upon any of the above-referenced circumstances taking place, any permit or designation for what had been a nonconforming sign shall become void. The Administrator shall notify the sign user, sign owner or owner of the property upon which the sign is located of cancellation of the permit or designation and the sign shall immediately be brought into compliance with this chapter and a new permit secured or shall be removed.

**C. Illegal Signs.** An illegal sign is any sign which does not comply with the requirements of this chapter within the City limits as they now or hereafter exist and which is not eligible for characterization as nonconforming under this section.

~~**D. Amortization Period for Nonconforming Signs.** Nonconforming signs, as defined in subsection (B)(2) of this section, for which a nonconforming sign permit has been issued, may remain in a nonconforming state until December 31, 2012. Thereafter, the sign shall be brought into conformity with this code or be removed; provided, however, that the amortization period established by this section may be used only so long as the sign retains its legal nonconforming status.~~

**ED. Nonconforming Sign Maintenance and Repair.** Nothing in this section shall relieve the owner or user of a nonconforming sign or owner of the property on which the nonconforming sign is located from the provisions of this code regarding safety, maintenance and repair of signs, nor from any provisions on prohibited signs, contained in SMC 15.600.120, Prohibited Signs; provided, however, that any repainting, replacement of “copy,” panels and/or lettering, cleaning, and other normal maintenance or repair of the sign or sign structure shall not modify the sign or structure in any way which is not in compliance with the requirements of this code, or the sign will lose its nonconforming status (subsection (B)(6) of this section).

~~F. — **Subsequent Amendments to the Sign Code.** After the date of its initial adoption, if any subsequent amendments to the sign code cause a sign to become nonconforming, the Department shall notify affected business owners and property owners of the new regulations by first class mail based upon active City business license records and King County property records.~~

~~1. — All illegal signs are subject to removal within ninety (90) days;~~

~~2. — All nonconforming signs are eligible for a nonconforming sign permit. The permit shall be applied for by the business owner or property owner and issued by the Department. These signs shall be subject to a nine (9) year amortization period, after which the nonconforming permit will expire and the sign shall be brought into compliance with the code. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)~~

#### **15.600.150 — Billboards**

~~A. — Billboards in existence as of the effective date of this code shall be inventoried and listed as nonconforming signs.~~

~~B. — All leases for billboard locations within the City shall not be renewed from the effective date of this code.~~

~~C. — No new billboards shall be permitted to be constructed or installed within the City. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)~~

#### **15.600.160 — Sign Inventory Survey — Costs**

~~A. — The Code Administrator shall have the authority to assess a five dollar (\$5.00) cost for applicable businesses that did not respond to the sign inventory survey of their sign(s) prior to the effective date of the ordinance codified in this section, but before a date identified in a notice to respond of not less than thirty (30) days after notice; provided, that these businesses pay said five dollar (\$5.00) assessment to the City and submit the requested verification of their sign certification before the date identified in said notice. Thereafter, the Code Administrator shall have the authority to assess a twenty five dollar (\$25.00) cost for applicable businesses who have not participated in or responded to the City's sign inventory survey after the date provided in the notice, and the Code Administrator shall, further, have the authority to complete the sign inventory survey for the signs of such businesses. It is provided, however, that if the affected, nonresponding business owners or operators do not pay the twenty five dollar (\$25.00) cost by the time that the 1995 City of SeaTac business licenses are due or paid, whichever is earlier, then the twenty five dollar (\$25.00) assessment shall be added to and included in the amount to be paid by said business owner or operator for the business's 1995 business license. The notice referred to above shall be mailed, postage prepaid, to the business owner or operator at the address listed on the business license records for the business. Failure of a business owner or operator to comply with this requirement shall constitute a violation of the City Code, enforceable through any and all procedures available for enforcement of City Code violations, as provided in the City Code; provided, that payment of the twenty five dollar (\$25.00) assessment shall constitute full compliance herewith.~~

~~B. — In order to recognize the payments already made by business owners or operators who have complied with the sign inventory survey and paid a five dollar (\$5.00) payment in connection therewith prior to the effective date of the ordinance codified in this section, those business owners or operators shall receive a five dollar (\$5.00) offset against their 1995 business license application fee. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)~~

#### **15.600.180 — Requirements Applicable to All Signs**

~~A. — **Structural Requirements.** The structure and erection of signs within the City shall be governed by the adopted Uniform Sign Code and Building Code. Compliance with the Uniform Sign Code and Building Code shall be a prerequisite to issuance of a sign permit under SMC 15.600.170, Permits and Fees.~~

~~B. — **Electrical Requirements.** Electrical requirements for signs within the City shall be governed by Chapter 13.180 SMC, Electrical Code. Compliance with the Electrical Code shall be required by every sign utilizing electrical energy as a prerequisite to issuance of a sign permit under SMC 15.600.170, Permits and Fees.~~

~~C. — **Sign Illumination.** Illumination from or upon any sign shall be shaded, shielded, directed or reduced so as to avoid undue brightness, glare, or reflection of light on private or public property in the surrounding area, and so as to avoid unreasonably distracting pedestrians or motorists. "Undue brightness" is illumination in excess of that which~~

is reasonably necessary to make the sign reasonably visible to the average person on an adjacent street. Additionally, electronic signs shall meet the standards of SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs.

D.—**Sign Maintenance.** All signs, including signs heretofore installed, shall be constantly maintained in a state of security, safety, repair and professional appearance. If any sign is found not to be so maintained or is insecurely fastened or otherwise dangerous, it shall be the duty of the owner and/or occupant of the premises on which the sign is fastened to repair or remove the sign within five (5) days after receiving notice from the City Manager or designee. The premises surrounding a monument sign shall be free and clear of rubbish and any landscaping area free of weeds.

E.—**Sign Obstructing View or Passage.** No sign shall be located so as to physically obstruct any door, window or exit from a building. No sign shall be located so as to be hazardous to a motorist's ingress or egress, or visibility of traffic flow during ingress or egress, from parking areas of any way open to the public.

F.—**Landscaping for Monument Signs.** All primary monument signs shall include, as part of their design, general landscaping and curbs about their base to prevent automobiles from hitting the sign supporting structure and to improve the overall appearance of the installation.

G.—**Sign Inspection.** All sign users shall permit the periodic inspection of their signs by the City upon City staff request.

H.—**Conflicting Provisions.** Whenever two (2) provisions of this code overlap or conflict with regard to size or placement of a sign, the more restrictive provision shall apply. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

#### **15.600.210 Appeals**

The decision of the Director, approving, approving with modifications, denying a sign permit or interpreting the provisions of the Sign Code may be appealed pursuant to SMC 15.115.070, Appeal Process. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)



## MEMORANDUM COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Date: 6/6/2023  
To: Planning Commission (PC)  
From: Laura Stilwell, Associate Planner  
Subject: Code Amendment Briefing: Freestanding and Monument Signs

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### Purpose

This meeting is meant to provide the Planning Commission an overview of proposed amendments pertaining to freestanding and monument signs in SMC Chapter 15.600, "Sign Code". The intent of these revisions is to improve clarity, consistency, and predictability for applicants and staff.

### Overview of Proposed Freestanding and Monument Signs Revisions

Staff have drafted specific code amendment language to review with the Planning Commission. The potential code amendments have been categorized as follows:

1. Definitions – remove unnecessary definitions (Neighborhood Unit) and add clarifying language to certain definitions (e.g. Freestanding Sign, Monument Sign);
2. Reorganization – consolidate certain sections for improved clarity and wayfinding;
3. Enhanced Regulations – add enhanced design regulations;
4. Clarification – add clarifying language to enhance Code users' understanding of requirements.

### Next Steps

If tentative agreement is reached on sign code reorganization and clean-up revisions, staff will bring additional topic-specific changes to the sign code at your next meeting.

### Packet Materials

Proposed code changes

Presentation

# Sign Code Amendments: Freestanding and Monument Signs

Planning Commission  
June 6, 2023





# PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

## PRIORITIES

- Discuss proposed freestanding and monument sign amendments.

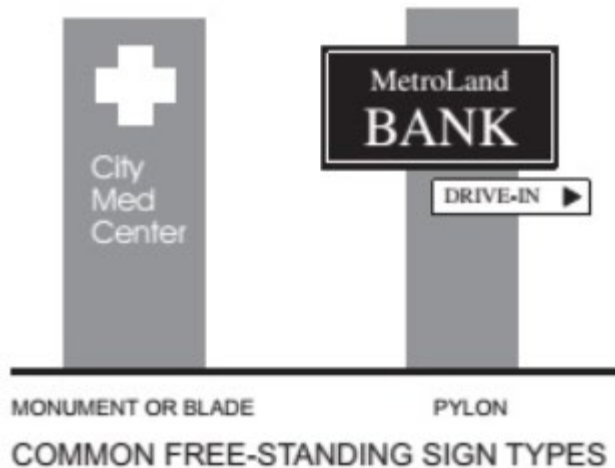
## PURPOSE OF PRESENTATION

- Solicit feedback for proposed sign code revisions





# SIGN CODE: FREESTANDING AND MONUMENT SIGN REVISIONS



- Definitions
  - Revise vague definitions.
- Reorganization.
  - Consolidate or eliminate certain sections for improved clarity and wayfinding.
- Clarification
  - Add clarifying language to enhance Code users' understanding of requirements.
- Enhanced Design Regulations

## 15.600.015 Definitions

### Freestanding Sign

A sign permanently mounted directly into the ground, or supported by one or more poles posts, pylons columns, braces or a solid base other vertical structures or supports, and not attached to or dependent for support from any building. Freestanding signs include those signs otherwise known as “pedestal signs,” “~~pole signs,~~” “pylon signs,” and “monument signs.”



# DEFINITIONS CONT.

## Monument Sign

~~A type of freestanding sign ground-mounted, fixed sign that is above ground level and is attached to the ground by means of a wide base of solid appearance, with no open space between the sign and the ground. with a height ranging from five (5) to fifteen (15) feet above the average ground elevation. The base (not included in the sign surface area calculation) is attached to the ground as a wide base of solid construction.~~

## ~~Neighborhood Unit~~

~~A section or area within a multi-family development:~~

~~A. Where the section or area is geographically different or separated from other sections or areas in the development; or~~

~~B. Where the dwelling units have characteristics distinguishing them from the dwelling units in other sections or areas of the development.~~



# SIGN CODE: CLARIFICATION

## 15.600.020 General Sign Provisions

### A. ~~Number of Primary Signs.~~

1. Primary signage, consisting of monument/freestanding signage and facade/building-mounted signage, is allowed within the commercial/industrial/office zones, multi-family zones, and for churches, schools and community uses in the single-family residential zones as described in SMC 15.600.030, Commercial/Office/Industrial Zone Classification Signs, 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs, and 15.600.050, Single-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs. Within these zoning classifications, only one (1) ~~monument/freestanding sign is allowed per site, as described in subsection (B) of this section.~~ See subsection B of this section for a definition of “site”. Each business shall also be allowed the facade signage described within SMC 15.600.030(B)(2) or 15.600.040(B)(2).
2. Where a site has multiple street frontages, one (1) ~~monument/freestanding sign shall be allowed on at~~ each street frontage, providing that there shall be a minimum of one hundred ~~fifty~~ (100 150) feet between each freestanding sign, drawn in a straight line between the closest edges of the signs.
3. In a residential site of one hundred (100) dwelling units or greater, where the dwelling units are clustered into defined neighborhoods ~~units~~, only one (1) ~~monument/~~ or freestanding sign shall be allowed to identify each neighborhood ~~unit~~ containing at least thirty-five (35) residential dwelling units.



# SIGN CODE: ENHANCED DESIGN REGULATIONS

## 15.600.020 General Sign Provisions

### A. ~~Number of Primary Signs.~~

**4. Monument Sign Design.** Any monument sign must be “integrated” (that is, all elements of the sign must be incorporated in a single design). Auxiliary projections or attachments not a part of a single design are prohibited, except under the following circumstances:

a. Monument signs shall include design elements that effectively frame the sign on both faces.

Alternatively, signs that have a substantial framing element on one side will meet this provision.

b. Monument signs shall integrate a top, middle, and bottom element. The top could include a distinctive sign cap and/or include the name of a multi-tenant center. The middle can include a consistent framing technique for an individual sign or multiple signs in a multi-tenant center. The bottom could include a distinctive base design with special materials and/or design.

Signs less than six feet tall are exempt from this provision.

c. Monument signs shall include durable high-quality materials such as stone, brick, concrete, or steel and a design that relates to and/or complements the design of on-site buildings and/or is coordinated with other site design elements (such as distinctive lighting, monuments, wayfinding signs).

d. All primary monument signs shall include, as part of their design, general landscaping and curbs about their base to prevent automobiles from hitting the sign-supporting structure and to improve the overall appearance of the installation.



# SIGN CODE: REORGANIZATION

## 15.600.030 Commercial/Office/Industrial Zone Classification Signs

### a. Setbacks.

- i. Interior lots (as per SMC 15.110.030): Five (5) feet from the front property line; ten (10) feet from the side property lines. ~~Exception: Signs may be set back between zero (0) and five (5) feet from the front property line and five (5) feet from the side property line subject to the criteria contained in SMC 15.600.060, Signage—Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria.~~
- ii. Corner lots: Five (5) feet from all property lines. ~~Exception: Signs may be set back between zero (0) and five (5) feet from the front property line subject to the criteria contained in SMC 15.600.060, Signage—Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria.~~
- iii. A sign may be set back between zero (0) feet and five (5) feet from the front property line, provided the applicant provides justification and documented proof that the sign's placement will not hinder vision clearance (as per SMC 15.400.350) for existing and future development on the site.





# SIGN CODE: REORGANIZATION CONT.

## 15.600.040 Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs

- a. Setback: Five (5) feet from the property line. Exception: Signs may be set back between zero (0) and five (5) feet from the front property line, provided the applicant provides justification and documented proof that the sign's placement will not hinder vision clearance for existing and future development on the site subject to the criteria contained in SMC 15.600.060, Signage—Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria.

## ~~15.600.060 Signage—Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria-~~

~~A sign may be set back between zero (0) feet and five (5) feet from the front property line, provided it conforms to all of the following criteria as determined by the Public Works Director and Director-~~

- ~~A. A survey of the location of the front property line, relative to the proposed sign, is prepared, staked in the field, and submitted by a surveyor licensed in Washington State.~~
- ~~B. A sight distance study by a licensed professional engineer verifying that the proposed sign location will not interfere with sight distances of pedestrians and vehicles at a public or private road intersection or at driveway approaches-~~
- ~~C. The sign is not located in an area where road right-of-way may be necessary for future road projects as currently identified by the City's 10-year transportation improvement plan-~~
- ~~D. The sign shall not preclude or interfere with any utility lines located within an easement, including but not limited to public water, sewer, storm drainage, electric, communication, or signalization. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)~~





# NEXT STEPS IN PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW

## NEXT STEPS

- Continue to draft potential code amendments and present for PC edits and feedback

## LATER STEPS

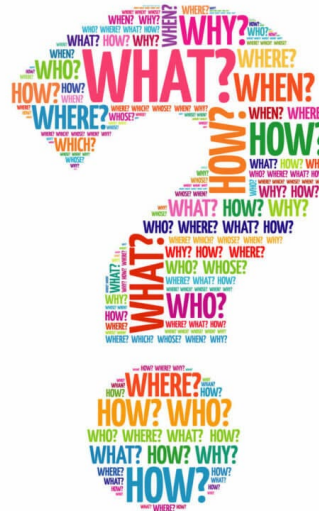
- Conduct SEPA and Department of Commerce review
- Hold Public Hearing at Planning Commission and make recommendation to City Council
- Bring recommendation to PED
- Bring ordinance to City Council



END

## QUESTIONS?

AREAS YOU SEE AS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION IN SIGN CODE DEVELOPMENT?



**Chapter 15.600****SIGN CODE**

## Sections:

15.600.015	Definitions
15.600.020	General Sign Provisions
15.600.030	Commercial/Office/Industrial Zone Classification Signs
15.600.040	Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs
15.600.050	Single-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs
<del>15.600.060</del>	<del>Signage Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria</del>
15.600.180	Requirements Applicable to All Signs

**15.600.015 Definitions**

## Animation

Movement or the appearance of movement of a sign display through the use of patterns of lights, changes in color or light intensity, computerized special effects, video display, or through any other method; except for the scrolling of a static message or scene onto or off a sign board in one (1) direction per message. Note that animation is prohibited per SMC 15.600.120(D), Prohibited Signs.

## Area or Surface Area of Sign

The area of a sign excluding sign support structures, which do not form part of the sign proper or the display. Surface area shall be measured as follows:

- A. The “surface area” of the sign is determined by the height times the width of a typical rectangular sign or other appropriate mathematical computation of surface area for nonrectangular signs.
- B. “Surface area” includes only one (1) face of a double-faced sign where the faces of the sign are parallel. If any face is offset from parallel by more than five (5) degrees, such face shall be counted as a separate surface area.
- C. “Surface area” of a sign with more than two (2) faces, such as a cube or pyramid, shall be calculated as the sum of the surface area of all faces, divided by two (2).
- D. In the event of an irregular, three (3) dimensional object that serves as signage, where the surface area is not readily measurable, the surface area shall be calculated by the largest area of the three (3) dimensional object visible from any one (1) viewing angle.

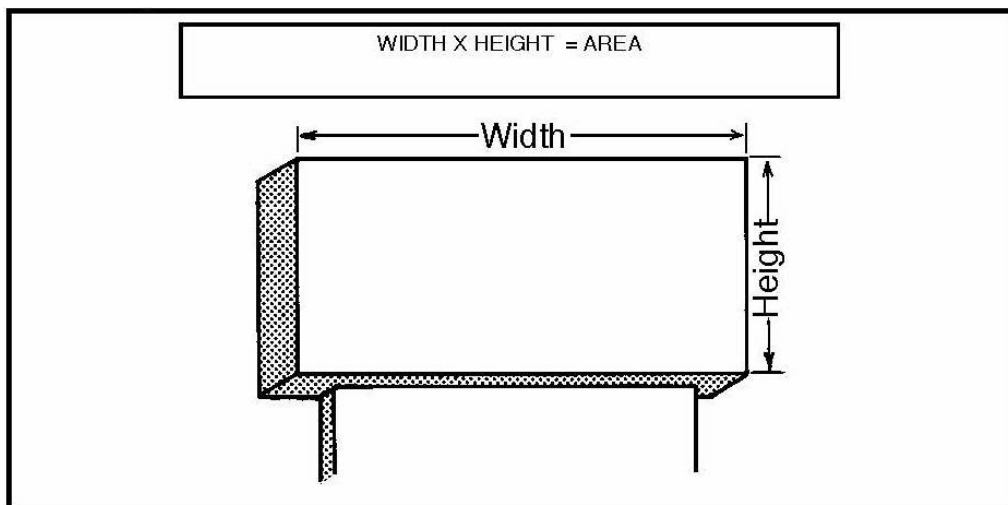


Figure: SIGN SURFACE AREA CALCULATION

### Awning

A roof-like cover that projects from the wall of a building for the purpose of shielding a door or window from the elements. See Figure: AWNING.

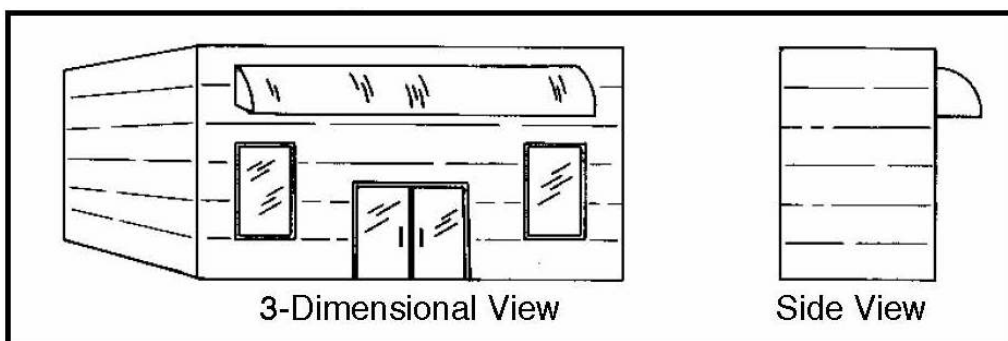


Figure: AWNING

### Awning Sign

Any sign erected upon, or against, an awning.

### Banner

A sign of a nonpermanent nature constructed of nonrigid materials.

### Banner, Decorative Pole-Mounted

A cloth or fabric banner without text or corporate logos mounted to a pole and secured at the top and bottom.

### Billboard

Generally, a large outdoor advertising sign, containing a message, commercial or otherwise, unrelated to the use or activity on the property on which the sign is located, and which is customarily leased for commercial purposes, but not including attached directional signs (not within the billboard face) as defined herein. The approximate sizes of the billboard faces range from twelve (12) to fourteen (14) feet in height and twenty-four (24) to forty-eight (48) feet in width.

### Building-Mounted Sign

A single- or multiple-faced sign of a permanent nature, made of rigid material, attached to the facade of a building or the face of a marquee.

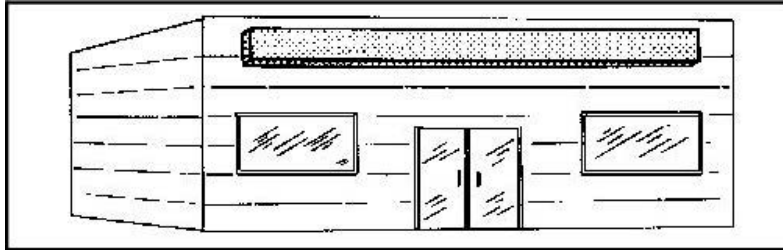


Figure: BUILDING MOUNTED (WALL) SIGN

### Canopy

A freestanding structure affording protection from the elements to persons or property thereunder.

### Canopy-Mounted Sign

Any sign or awning erected upon or against a canopy.

### Community Use

A public community center, library, museum, park, City Hall, fire station or other public use operated for the benefit of the community.

### Construction Sign

An informational sign which identifies the architect, engineers, contractors and other individuals or firms involved with the construction of a building, or announcing the character of the building or enterprise, which is erected during the building construction period.

### Dawn to Dusk

That time of the day between sunrise and sunset.

### Directional Sign

A single- or double-faced sign not exceeding nine (9) square feet in surface area designed to guide or direct pedestrian or vehicular traffic to an area, place or convenience.

#### A. Interior Directional Sign

Directional signs oriented to the interior of a site and at least thirty (30) feet from the right-of-way, or not readable from the street.

#### B. Perimeter Directional Sign

Directional signs oriented to and readable from the street.

### Display

The visual information shown on a sign, including text, graphics, pictures, lights and background.

### Electronic Sign

A sign containing a display that can be changed by electrical, electronic or computerized process. See SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs, for requirements regarding electronic signs.

### Facade

The exterior wall face of a building, extending from the ground to the top of the parapet or eaves, but not including any portion of the roof. Each side of a building (i.e., each architectural elevation) is considered one (1) facade (see Figure: FACADE). For buildings with more than one (1) occupant, the facade for each occupant shall be that portion of the exterior wall face between the points where the interior walls between tenants intersect with the exterior wall.

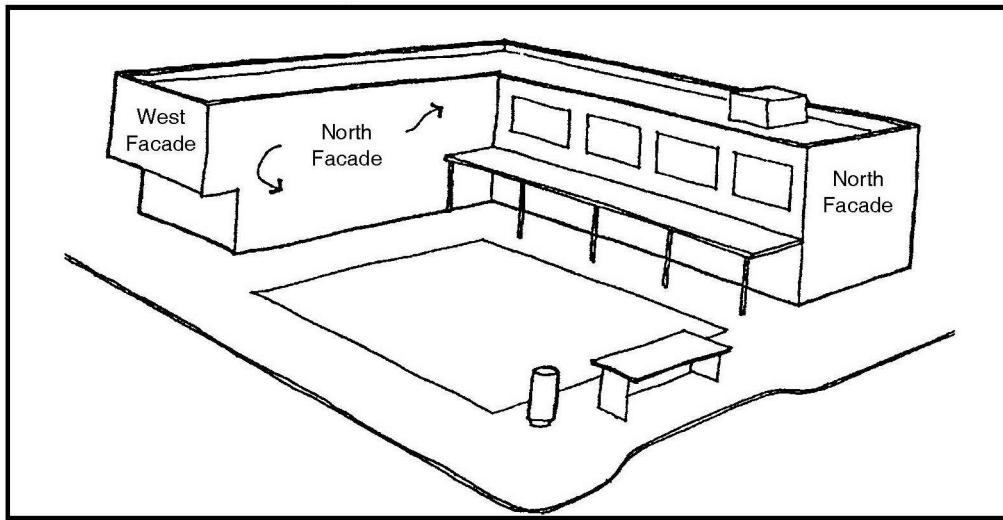


Figure: FACADE

### Flashing

A sign display that appears for less than one and one-half (1-1/2) consecutive seconds.

### Freestanding Sign

A sign permanently mounted directly into the ground; or supported by one or more poles posts, pylons columns, braces or a solid base other vertical structures or supports, and not attached to or dependent for support from any building. Freestanding signs include those signs otherwise known as “pedestal signs,” “pole signs,” “pylon signs,” and “monument signs.”

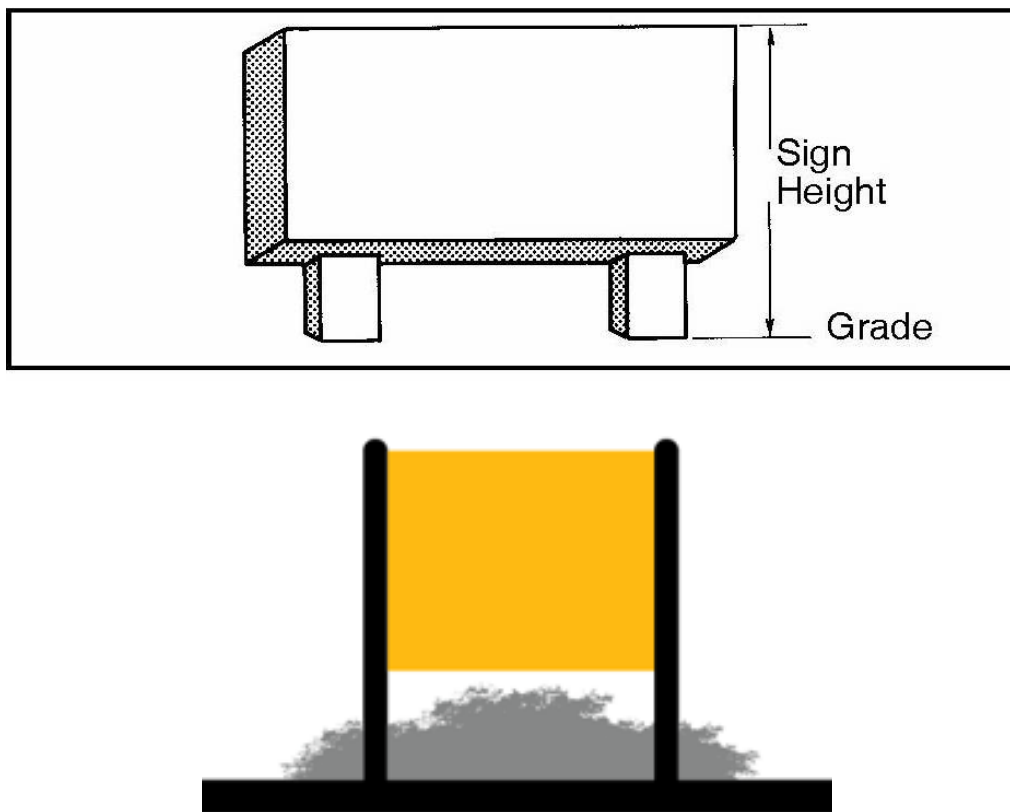


Figure: FREESTANDING SIGN

#### Grade (Ground Level)

The elevation or level of the street (or parking lot) closest to the sign to which reference is made. In cases where the property on which the sign is located is lower than the immediately adjacent street level, the ground level shall be considered the street level to facilitate visibility of signage. In no case shall a sign be higher than twenty-five (25) feet from the lowest grade of the property adjacent to the street level where the sign is proposed.

#### Height of Sign

The vertical distance from the grade to the highest point of a sign or any vertical projection thereof, including its supporting columns, or the vertical distance from the relative ground level in the immediate vicinity.

#### Holographic Display

Any display that creates a three (3) dimensional image through projection. (Note: Holographic displays are prohibited by SMC 15.600.120(F), Prohibited Signs.)

#### Inflatable Object

An inflatable object larger than eighteen (18) inches in diameter, such as a blimp, large air balloon or inflatable sport equipment, used to attract attention to a special event or grand opening.

#### Informational Sign

A single- or double-faced sign not exceeding nine (9) square feet in surface area, intended primarily for the convenience of the public or to ensure the orderly operation of the site, including but not limited to signs designating



restrooms, address numbers, hours of operation, business directories, help wanted, public telephone, and instructions regarding parking.

#### A. Interior Informational Sign

Informational signs oriented to the interior of a site and at least thirty (30) feet from the right-of-way or not readable from the street.

#### B. Perimeter Informational Sign

Informational signs oriented to and readable from the street.

##### Marquee

A permanent roof-like structure extending from part of a wall of a building a maximum of six (6) feet and supported solely by the building.

##### Marquee Sign

Any sign that forms part of or is integrated into a marquee and that does not extend above the height or beyond the limits of such marquee. Also considered an extension of a building-mounted sign.



Figure: MARQUEE/MARQUEE SIGN

##### Message

In an electronic sign, a set of sequential displays that convey related information about a product, service or company.

##### Monument Sign

A type of freestanding sign ~~ground mounted~~ that is above ground level and is attached to the ground by means of a wide base of solid appearance, with no open space between the sign and the ground. ~~with a height ranging from five (5) to fifteen (15) feet above the average ground elevation. The base (not included in the sign surface area calculation) is attached to the ground as a wide base of solid construction.~~

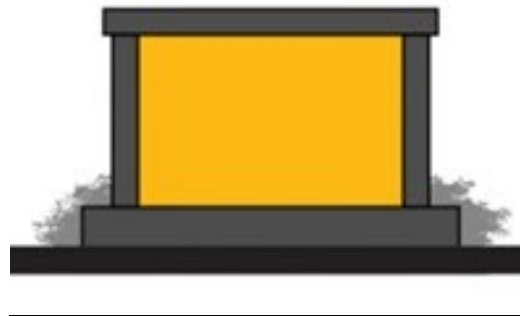
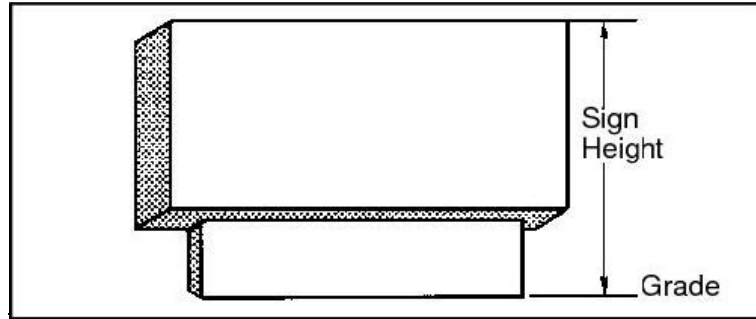


Figure: MONUMENT SIGN

#### Multiple Building Complex

A group of structures housing more than one (1) type of retail business, office or commercial venture, and generally under one (1) ownership and control.

#### Multiple Occupancy Building

A single structure housing more than one (1) type of retail business office or commercial venture.

#### Mural

A design or representation, without letters, numbers, or trademarked graphics, that is painted or drawn on the exterior of a structure facade that does not advertise a business, product, service, or activity of the business contained within the building or structure. A mural may have the signature of the person painting the sign, or copyright ownership of the mural painting.

#### Mural Sign

A design, or representation with letters, numbers, or trademarked graphics, that is painted or drawn on the exterior of a structure facade that advertises the business, product, service, or activity contained within the building or structure. A mural sign will include the name of the business or activity being conducted within the building or structure. Off-premises mural signs are not permitted.

#### Neighborhood Unit

~~A section or area within a multi-family development:~~

~~A. Where the section or area is geographically different or separated from other sections or areas in the development; or~~

~~B. Where the dwelling units have characteristics distinguishing them from the dwelling units in other sections or areas of the development.~~

### Noncommercial Public Service Sign

Noncommercial signs devoted to religious, charitable, cultural, governmental or educational messages.

### Office Building

An office building as defined by the City of SeaTac Zoning Code.

### Parapet

That portion of a building wall which extends above the roof of the building on all building facades (see Figure: PARAPET).

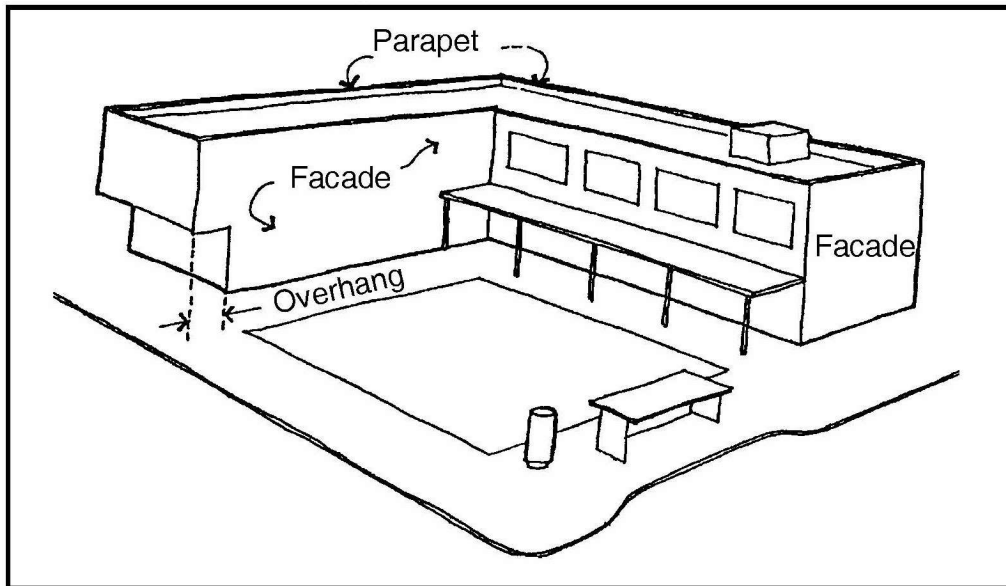


Figure: PARAPET

### Parapet Sign

Any sign erected upon the parapet of a building, not to exceed the height of any roof structures housing building/ventilation equipment.

### Pennants

A triangular tapering flag made of any lightweight fabric or other nonrigid material suspended in a series from a rope, wire, or string.

### Penthouse

A structure on top of a building roof which houses an elevator shaft or similar form.

### Political Sign

Signs advertising a candidate or candidates for public elective office or a political party, or signs urging a particular vote on a public issue decided by ballot.

### Portable Sign

A movable sign that is not permanently attached to a structure or the ground. Portable signs include A-frame signs and signs mounted on a portable base, but not portable readerboards.

### Porte-Cochere

A covering structure projecting horizontally from and attached to a building, affording protection from the elements; typically used for loading and unloading of vehicles.

### Primary Sign(s)

All permitted permanent monument/freestanding and building-mounted signs (see SMC 15.600.030, Commercial/Office/Industrial Zone Classification Signs and 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs).

### Property Line

The line denoting the limits of legal ownership of property.

### Readerboard

A sign or part of a sign on which the letters are replaceable by manual means, such as changing magnetic letters on a sign board.

### Roof Sign

A sign or sign structure erected above a roof, parapet, canopy or porte-cochere of a building or structure.

### Scrolling

The vertical movement of a static message or display on an electronic sign.

### Secondary Signs

Allowable signage not falling within the definition of a primary sign; includes directional and informational signs, as well as temporary signs and displays (see SMC 15.600.070, Secondary Signage).

### Sign

All surfaces/structures (permitted, exempt, or prohibited) regulated by this chapter that have letters, figures, design, symbols, trademark or devices intended to attract attention to any activity, service, place, subject, person, firm, corporation, public performance, article, machine or merchandise whatsoever.

### Sign, Off-Premises

A sign which displays a message relating to a use of property or sale of goods or services at a location other than that on which the sign is located.

### Sign, On-Premises

A sign which displays a message which is directly related to the use of the property on which it is located.

### Single-Occupancy Building

A commercial building or structure with one (1) major enterprise. A building is classified as "single-occupancy" only if:

- A. It has only one (1) occupant;
- B. It has no wall in common with another building; and
- C. It has no part of its roof in common with another building.

### Subdivision Signs

Signs used to identify a land development of a residential nature.

### Streamer

A long narrow strip of lightweight fabric or other material suspended in a series from a rope, wire, or string.

### Surface Area

See “Area or Surface Area of Sign.”

### Surface Area of Facade

The area of that continuous front, side or back surface, including doors and windows, but excluding any roof area and structures or elevators or air-conditioning equipment thereon; provided, that in the case of a roof sign, the surface area of the facade shall be the area of that continuous front, side or back surface immediately beneath the roof, including doors and windows, but excluding the roof area and structures for elevators or air conditioning thereon.

### Temporary Freestanding Sign

A nonpermanent sign securely attached to the ground, intended for use for a limited period of time.

### Traveling

The horizontal movement of a static message or display on an electronic sign.

### Window Sign

All signs located inside and affixed to or within three (3) feet of a window of a building, whether temporary or permanent, lighted or unlighted, which may be viewed from the exterior of the building. The term does not include merchandise located within three (3) feet of a window. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

## 15.600.020 General Sign Provisions

### A. ~~Number of Primary Signs.~~

1. Primary signage, consisting of monument/freestanding signage and facade/building-mounted signage, is allowed within the commercial/industrial/office zones, multi-family zones, and for churches, schools and community uses in the single-family residential zones as described in SMC 15.600.030, Commercial/Office/Industrial Zone Classification Signs, 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs, and 15.600.050, Single-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs. Within these zoning classifications, only one (1) ~~monument/freestanding sign~~ is allowed per site, ~~as described in subsection (B) of this section.~~ See subsection B of this section for a definition of “site”. Each business shall also be allowed the facade signage described within SMC 15.600.030(B)(2) or 15.600.040(B)(2).
2. Where a site has multiple street frontages, one (1) ~~monument/freestanding sign~~ shall be allowed on each street frontage, providing that there shall be a minimum of one hundred ~~forty~~ fifty (100 150) feet between each freestanding sign, drawn in a straight line between the closest edges of the signs.
3. In a residential site of one hundred (100) dwelling units or greater, where the dwelling units are clustered into defined neighborhoods ~~units~~, only one (1) ~~monument/~~ freestanding sign shall be allowed to identify each neighborhood ~~unit~~ containing at least thirty-five (35) residential dwelling units.
4. **Monument Sign Design.** Any monument sign must be “integrated” (that is, all elements of the sign must be incorporated in a single design). ~~Auxiliary projections or attachments not a part of a single design are prohibited, except under the following circumstances:~~

a. Monument signs shall include design elements that effectively frame the sign on both faces. Alternatively, signs that have a substantial framing element on one side will meet this provision.

b. Monument signs shall integrate a top, middle, and bottom element. The top could include a distinctive sign cap and/or include the name of a multi-tenant center. The middle can include a consistent framing technique for an individual sign or multiple signs in a multi-tenant center. The bottom could include a distinctive base design with special materials and/or design.

Signs less than six feet tall are exempt from this provision.

c. Monument signs shall include durable high-quality materials such as stone, brick, concrete, or steel and a design that relates to and/or complements the design of on-site buildings and/or is coordinated with other site design elements (such as distinctive lighting, monuments, wayfinding signs).

d. All primary monument signs shall include, as part of their design, general landscaping and curbs about their base to prevent automobiles from hitting the sign-supporting structure and to improve the overall appearance of the installation.

B. **Site.** A site shall be considered to be the largest applicable area of the following:

1. A single business located on one (1) or more tax parcels;
2. Multiple uses sharing the area of one (1) or more tax parcels, whether in a multiple-occupancy building, a multiple-building complex, or other common use of a parcel for business operations.

C. **Secondary Signage.** Secondary signage shall be allowed in commercial/industrial/office zones, multi-family zones, and for churches, schools and community uses in the single-family residential zones as described in SMC 15.600.070, Secondary Signage.

D. **Street Identification.** Each enterprise, including each building in a multiple building complex, shall display and maintain on-premises street address number identification.

E. **Each Sign Complete.** In no case shall any sign contain a letter, word, or phrase that is continued onto another sign. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

### 15.600.030 Commercial/Office/Industrial Zone Classification Signs

A. **General.**

1. This section regulates signs in the following zones: NB, CB, CB-C, RBX, I, and O/CM.
2. **Illumination.** Monument/freestanding and building-mounted signs in the commercial/office/industrial zones may be illuminated through internal and external illumination; provided, that such illumination does not create glare on adjacent properties or traffic corridors, and that the following conditions are met:

a. **Internal Illumination.** Internal illumination shall be allowed; provided, that if the sign is located adjacent to or across from a single-family zone, one (1) of the following methods shall be used:

- i. Only the lettering and symbols on the sign shall be illuminated; or
- ii. If the entire cabinet is illuminated, the background shall be a dark shade or color that minimizes glare, with the foreground (letters and symbols) being light or contrasting.

b. **External Illumination.** If external illumination is used, documentation shall be provided that clearly shows that light or glare from the external illumination will not impact traffic corridors or adjacent properties. The type of external illumination shall be approved by the Director prior to issuance of a sign permit.

B. **Standards.**

1. **Monument and Freestanding Signs.** Any monument or freestanding sign must be “integrated,” that is, all elements of the sign must be incorporated in a single design. Auxiliary projections or attachments not a part of a single design are prohibited. Poles or other supports must be architecturally covered, painted, or otherwise treated to prevent weathering, and to coordinate with the design of the sign.

a. **Setbacks.**

i. Interior lots (as per SMC [15.110.030](#)): Five (5) feet from the front property line; ten (10) feet from the side property lines. ~~Exception: Signs may be set back between zero (0) and five (5) feet from the front property line and five (5) feet from the side property line subject to the criteria contained in SMC 15.600.060, Signage—Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria.~~

ii. Corner lots: Five (5) feet from all property lines. ~~Exception: Signs may be set back between zero (0) and five (5) feet from the front property line subject to the criteria contained in SMC 15.600.060, Signage—Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria.~~

iii. A sign may be set back between zero (0) feet and five (5) feet from the front property line, provided the applicant provides justification and documented proof that the sign’s placement will not hinder vision clearance (as per SMC [15.400.350](#)) for existing and future development on the site.

b. Maximum height: Fifteen (15) feet.

c. Maximum surface area:

i. Eighty-five (85) square feet;

ii. The size of electronic monument or freestanding signs is limited by SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs.

2. **Building-Mounted Signs (Including Parapet, Awning, Marquee, Porte-Cochere, and Canopy-Mounted Signs).** The surface area of any building-mounted sign shall not exceed the figures derived from the following schedule. The size of electronic signs for building-mounted signs is limited by SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs.

Surface Area of Facade	Maximum Sign Surface Area
Less than 100 sf	30 sf
100 – 199 sf	35 sf + 11% of facade area over 100 sf
200 – 499 sf	40 sf + 12% of facade area over 200 sf
500 – 999 sf	80 sf + 11% of facade area over 500 sf
1,000 sf or greater	10% of facade

Additionally, the following conditions apply:

a. In multiple occupancy buildings, the facade area for each tenant or user is derived by measuring only the surface area of the exterior facade of the premises actually used by the tenant or user. The sign displayed by the tenant or user must be located on the facade that was used to determine the size of the sign, except as provided in this section.

b. Unused sign surface area for a facade may be used by any tenant or user within the same multiple occupancy building if:

i. The applicant files with the City a written statement signed by the tenant or user permitted to utilize that sign area under this code permitting the applicant to utilize the unused sign surface area that is directly related to the tenant.



- ii. The display of a sign on that facade by the secondary sign user will not create a significant adverse impact on dependent sign users of that facade.
- iii. The display of a secondary sign is necessary to reasonably identify and locate the use, and the provisions of this code do not provide the use with adequate sign display options.
- c. **Sign Height – Parapet Signs.** The height of any building-mounted/canopy sign or parapet sign shall not extend above the highest exterior wall of the building. Additionally, no parapet can be extended above the highest roof ventilation structure.
- d. No sign shall be mounted on top of a marquee, porte-cochere, canopy, roof, or other similar structure.
- e. Any building-mounted sign, including any marquee sign, or awning sign attached to a building, shall not project more than six (6) feet from the face of the building to which the sign is attached. Any structural supports shall be an integral part of the design or concealed from view.
- f. All parapet, marquee, and awning signs must be manufactured in such a way that they appear to be a part of the building itself.
- g. Any sign mounted to the facade of a freestanding canopy structure or the facade of a porte-cochere extending more than six (6) feet from a building shall not exceed thirty (30) inches in height.

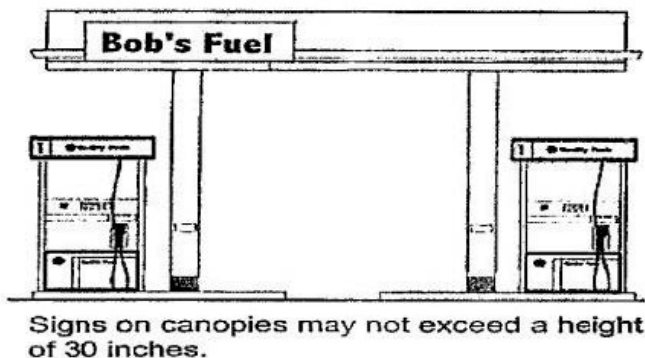


Figure: CANOPY

- h. Window signs shall be considered building-mounted signs for the purposes of this section, and shall be counted as part of the aggregate sign surface area allowed. Window signs shall not be mounted between three (3) feet and seven (7) feet of floor level on any floor of a building, unless such signage does not obstruct visibility through the window.
- i. Decorative lighting including neon and other accent lighting, and any lighted canopy or building panel, shall be considered a building-mounted sign for the purposes of this section, and shall be counted as part of the aggregate sign surface area allowed.
- j. The width of any decorative lighting strip or accent shall be considered to extend six (6) inches beyond the limits of the actual strip, or accent, where the light flow is unencumbered in that direction.
- k. In no case may the maximum sign surface area permitted on a building facade be exceeded. (Ord. 17-1023 § 1; Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

#### 15.600.040 Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs

- A. **General.** This section applies to:

1. Multiple-family buildings and any commercial use, church, school or community use located in the T, UM, UH and O/C/MU zone classifications.
2. A sign in these classifications may be internally illuminated, provided that:
  - a. The maximum size allowed for an internally illuminated sign shall be twenty-five (25) square feet.
  - b. The background of any internally illuminated sign shall be dark with only the letters or message of the sign illuminated.
  - c. Neon signage shall not be allowed.
  - d. Internal or external illumination shall not create glare on adjacent traffic corridors.
3. See SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs, for separate size and other limitations regarding electronic signs.
4. The light source for any externally illuminated sign shall be shaded, shielded, directed or reduced so that the light source is not visible from a public street or adjoining residential property. If external illumination is used, documentation shall be provided that clearly shows that light or glare from the external illumination will not impact traffic corridors or adjacent properties. The type of external illumination shall be approved by the Director prior to issuance of a sign permit.

#### B. Standards.

1. **Monument and Freestanding Signs.** The following limits shall apply to monument and freestanding signs:
  - a. Setback: Five (5) feet from the property line. Exception: Signs may be set back between zero (0) and five (5) feet from the front property line, provided the applicant provides justification and documented proof that the sign's placement will not hinder vision clearance for existing and future development on the site subject to the criteria contained in SMC 15.600.060, Signage—Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria.
  - b. Maximum sign height:
    - i. Fifteen (15) feet – primary sign.
    - ii. Six (6) feet – neighborhood unit sign.
  - c. Maximum surface area:
    - i. Thirty-five (35) square feet for multi-family uses;
    - ii. Thirty-five (35) square feet for any nonresidential use not on an arterial street;
    - iii. Sixty (60) square feet for any nonresidential use fronting on a minor or collector arterial street as defined within the City of SeaTac Comprehensive Plan;
    - iv. Eighty-five (85) square feet for any nonresidential use fronting on a principal arterial street as defined in the City of SeaTac Comprehensive Plan;
    - v. See SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs, for size limitations on electronic signs;
    - vi. Twenty (20) square feet for neighborhood unit signs.
2. **Building-Mounted Signs (Including Parapet, Awning, Marquee, Porte-Cochere, and Canopy-Mounted Signs).** The surface area of any building-mounted sign shall not exceed the figures derived from the following schedule. The size of electronic building-mounted signs is limited by SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs.

Surface Area of Facade	Maximum Sign Surface Area
Less than 100 sf	21 sf
100 – 199 sf	21 sf + 9% of facade area over 100 sf
200 – 499 sf	30 sf + 10% of facade area over 200 sf
500 – 999 sf	60 sf + 9% of facade area over 500 sf
1,000 sf or greater	10% of facade

Additionally, the following conditions apply:

- a. In multiple occupancy buildings, the facade area for each tenant or user is derived by measuring only the surface area of the exterior facade of the premises actually used by the tenant or user, and the sign displayed by the tenant or user must be located on the facade used to determine the size of the sign, except as provided in this section.
- b. Unused sign surface area for a facade may be used by any tenant or user within the same multiple occupancy building, if:
  - i. The applicant files with the City a written statement signed by the tenant or user permitted to utilize that sign area under this code permitting the applicant to utilize the unused sign surface area.
  - ii. The display of a sign on that facade by the nondependent sign user will not create a significant adverse impact on dependent sign users of that facade.
  - iii. The display of the nondependent sign is necessary to reasonably identify the use, and the provisions of this code do not provide the use with adequate sign display options.
- c. **Sign Height – Parapet Signs.** The height of any building-mounted/canopy or parapet sign shall not extend above the highest exterior wall of the building. Additionally, no parapet can be extended above the highest roof ventilation structure.
- d. No sign shall be mounted on top of a marquee, porte-cochere, canopy, roof, or other similar structure.
- e. Any building-mounted sign, including any marquee sign, or awning sign attached to a building, shall not project more than six (6) feet from the face of the building to which the sign is attached. Any structural supports shall be an integral part of the design or concealed from view.
- f. All parapet, marquee, and awning signs must be manufactured in such a way that they appear to be a part of the building itself.
- g. Any sign mounted to the facade of a freestanding canopy structure or the facade of a porte-cochere extending more than six (6) feet from a building shall not exceed thirty (30) inches in height.
- h. Window signs shall be considered building-mounted signs for the purposes of this section, and shall be counted as part of the aggregate sign surface area allowed. Window signs shall not be mounted between three (3) feet and seven (7) feet of floor level on any floor of a building, unless such signage does not obstruct visibility through the window.
- i. Decorative lighting including neon and other accent lighting, and lighted canopy or wall panels, shall be considered a building-mounted sign for the purposes of this section, and shall be counted as part of the aggregate sign surface area allowed.

- j. The width of any exposed neon sign, and any decorative or accent lighting where the light flow is unencumbered by a cover shall be considered to extend six (6) inches beyond the limits of the actual sign, strip, or accent, where the light flow is unencumbered in that direction.
- k. In no case may the maximum sign surface area permitted on a building facade be exceeded. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

**~~15.600.060 Signage Zero (0) to Five (5) Feet Front Property Line Setback Criteria~~**

~~A sign may be set back between zero (0) feet and five (5) feet from the front property line, provided it conforms to all of the following criteria as determined by the Public Works Director and Director.~~

- ~~A. A survey of the location of the front property line, relative to the proposed sign, is prepared, staked in the field, and submitted by a surveyor licensed in Washington State.~~
- ~~B. A sight distance study by a licensed professional engineer verifying that the proposed sign location will not interfere with sight distances of pedestrians and vehicles at a public or private road intersection or at driveway approaches.~~
- ~~C. The sign is not located in an area where road right of way may be necessary for future road projects as currently identified by the City's 10-year transportation improvement plan.~~
- ~~D. The sign shall not preclude or interfere with any utility lines located within an easement, including but not limited to public water, sewer, storm drainage, electric, communication, or signalization. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)~~

**15.600.050 Single-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs**

- A. In individual dwelling units within the residential UL and T zones, a sign with the occupant's name two (2) square feet is permitted.
- B. Each residential dwelling shall display and maintain on-premises street address number identification.
- C. Each subdivision, development of five (5) or more units in a townhouse zone, or senior citizen multi-family complex is permitted a ~~monument~~ freestanding sign at its major entrances, not to exceed thirty-five (35) square feet per face and a total of seventy (70) square feet.
- D. Churches, schools, community uses, and agricultural crop sales located within the UL and T zones shall be allowed the signage described and regulated under SMC 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs, and 15.600.070, Secondary Signage.
- E. Any home occupation shall be allowed the signage described and regulated in SMC 15.465.500(C), Home Occupations.
- F. Any daycare, bed and breakfast, or specialized instruction school (other than a specialized instruction school located at a former school district facility) within the UL or T zones shall be allowed a nine (9) square foot sign.
- G. Electronic signs are not allowed, except as permitted by SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs.
- H. Internally illuminated signs are not allowed except as permitted and regulated by SMC 15.600.040, Multi-Family Residential Zone Classification Signs, for churches, schools, community uses and agricultural crop sales.
- I. One (1) temporary freestanding sign is allowed while a property is for sale, for rent, or under construction, per SMC 15.600.070(D)(3)(b).
- J. Portable off-premises signs on private property no more than four (4) square feet in surface area and two (2) feet in height are allowed with the permission of the owner, if such signs are authorized under SMC 15.600.070(E)(4), grand opening/special events, SMC 15.600.080, Political Signs, SMC 15.600.090, Real Estate Signs, and SMC 15.600.100, Garage and Yard Sale Signs. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)

**15.600.180 Requirements Applicable to All Signs**

- A. **Structural Requirements.** The structure and erection of signs within the City shall be governed by the adopted Uniform Sign Code and Building Code. Compliance with the Uniform Sign Code and Building Code shall be a prerequisite to issuance of a sign permit under SMC 15.600.170, Permits and Fees.
- B. **Electrical Requirements.** Electrical requirements for signs within the City shall be governed by Chapter 13.180 SMC, Electrical Code. Compliance with the Electrical Code shall be required by every sign utilizing electrical energy as a prerequisite to issuance of a sign permit under SMC 15.600.170, Permits and Fees.
- C. **Sign Illumination.** Illumination from or upon any sign shall be shaded, shielded, directed or reduced so as to avoid undue brightness, glare, or reflection of light on private or public property in the surrounding area, and so as to avoid unreasonably distracting pedestrians or motorists. "Undue brightness" is illumination in excess of that which is reasonably necessary to make the sign reasonably visible to the average person on an adjacent street. Additionally, electronic signs shall meet the standards of SMC 15.600.130, Electronic Signs.
- D. **Sign Maintenance.** All signs, including signs heretofore installed, shall be constantly maintained in a state of security, safety, repair and professional appearance. If any sign is found not to be so maintained or is insecurely fastened or otherwise dangerous, it shall be the duty of the owner and/or occupant of the premises on which the sign is fastened to repair or remove the sign within five (5) days after receiving notice from the City Manager or designee. The premises surrounding a monument sign shall be free and clear of rubbish and any landscaping area free of weeds.
- E. **Sign Obstructing View or Passage.** No sign shall be located so as to physically obstruct any door, window or exit from a building. No sign shall be located so as to be hazardous to a motorist's ingress or egress, or visibility of traffic flow during ingress or egress, from parking areas of any way open to the public.
- F. ~~**Landscaping for Monument Signs.** All primary monument signs shall include, as part of their design, general landscaping and curbs about their base to prevent automobiles from hitting the sign supporting structure and to improve the overall appearance of the installation.~~
- G. **Sign Inspection.** All sign users shall permit the periodic inspection of their signs by the City upon City staff request.
- H. **Conflicting Provisions.** Whenever two (2) provisions of this code overlap or conflict with regard to size or placement of a sign, the more restrictive provision shall apply. (Ord. 15-1018 § 1)