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SIGNS – PERMANENT, TEMPORARY & BANNER

The Sign Code (LOC Chapter 47) allows temporary and permanent signs to be displayed in the City. The purpose of the Sign Code is to ensure that signs are constructed, erected and maintained in a safe manner that does not create visual distractions for motorists. It also helps our community maintain a neat, clean, orderly and attractive appearance. This handout gives an overview of some of the regulations of the Sign Code.

WHAT IS A SIGN?

The definition of a sign is very broad. A sign is any "device, structure, or fixture which incorporates graphics, symbols, or written copy visible to the public...(which is) intended to communicate information."

SIGN CONSULTATION SERVICE

The Sign Code can be very complex. The allowable sign type, color, size and placement can vary based on the zoning of a property, the size of the property, and the design of the existing building(s) and sign(s) on or adjacent to the property. In addition, certain properties may have sign programs that were adopted as part of the original development of the site. **Before designing your permanent, temporary, incidental or banner sign, please consult the Planning and Building Services Department. This consultation is free and is intended to help business owners save time and money.**

PERMANENT SIGNS

Generally, a sign permit and fee are required for permanent signs installed in both residential and non-residential zones. While a sign permit is also required for a change of copy, there is no fee if there has been no change of use, occupancy, or ownership. Permanent signs must be designed to be compatible with other nearby signs, other elements of street and site furniture, and with on-site and adjacent structures. Compatibility is determined by the relationships of the elements of form, proportion, scale, color, materials, surface treatment, overall sign size and the size and style of lettering. Please refer to LOC 47.10.

INCIDENTAL SIGNS

In each zone, permanent incidental signs are allowed without a permit or fee. These include public signs, signs cut into masonry, flags displayed from a flagpole, and other small signs placed on a property, on a building or in a window. Size limitations apply - please refer to LOC 47.06.205. These signs must also meet the compatibility standard as described above.

TEMPORARY SIGNS

Temporary signs are allowed in all zones with limits on the size, placement, duration and manner in which a sign is displayed; generally, there is no permit or fee required. Temporary signs can include window signs, signs attached to the side of a building, and signs attached to stakes and driven into the ground. Please refer to LOC 47.08.300 for regulations on the time, place and manner for temporary signs. Temporary signs that advertise a special event or store opening, such as a banner, require a Temporary Sign Permit and fee.

PORTABLE SIGNS (A-FRAME OR "SANDWICH BOARD" SIGNS, ETC.)

This type of temporary sign is only allowed under the following restrictions (1) only on Sundays between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., (2) only in residential zones, and (3) only in the public right-of-way. LOC 47.08.300(2)(c) describes in detail the restrictions on placement, contact information, design and size of these signs. Improperly placed portable signs are subject to collection and retrieval, as described below. Please also refer to "Temporary Signs in the Right-of-Way" brochure.



TEMPORARY SIGN COLLECTION AND RETRIEVAL

The Sign Code prohibits signs that extend into or over the public right-of-way (except for over-the-street banners and A-frame signs, as described in this handout). The following guidelines generally are used to determine the location of the public right-of-way. All signs should be placed behind these items and on private property.

- Water meters, utility boxes, utility lines/overhanging wires
- Traffic signals, traffic signs, street lights, fire hydrants
- Road medians and landscape islands
- Sidewalks and streets unless posted as private
- Property pins noting the edge of the public right-of-way.

Signs placed in the public right-of-way, other than those allowed above, are subject to removal, retrieval fees, and/or a Notice of Civil violation, citation and fine.

OVER-THE-STREET BANNERS

Special event sign banners are temporary banners that are hung over the roadways to advertise upcoming events in or near Lake Oswego. Pole locations for these banners are along State Street and Boones Ferry Road. Permission from ODOT, PGE and/or Qwest is required prior to submitting the Temporary Sign application and fee to Lake Oswego's Engineering Department. Please visit the following link for contact information and procedures for applying for a temporary over-the-street banner: <http://www.ci.oswego.or.us/publicworks/special-event-sign-banners-over-roadway>

Note: This handout summarizes only portions of the Sign Code and is intended to be used solely as an informal discussion document. As such, it should not be relied on as a guarantee that a particular sign could be approved or denied. Please refer to Chapter 47 of the Lake Oswego Development Code for the original code sections and contact the Planning and Building Services Department of the City of Lake Oswego for more information.