

Land Use Regulatory Code Sign Code Revisions for Billboards Proposed Amendments

The City of Tacoma's *Comprehensive Plan* and *Land Use Regulatory Code* are developed in compliance with the Washington State Growth Management Act.

The *Comprehensive Plan* is the City's official statement concerning future growth and development and includes goals, policies and strategies for the health, welfare, safety and quality of life of Tacoma. The *Land Use Regulatory Code* consists of development regulations which control land use activities and includes zoning, platting, and shoreline regulations.

**Prepared for
Planning Commission Public Hearing
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Billboard Code Revisions

STAFF REPORT

Applicant:	City of Tacoma, Community & Economic Development Dept
Contact:	Shirley Schultz, 591-5121
Type of Amendment:	Regulatory Code Text Change
Current Land Use Intensity:	City-wide
Current Area Zoning:	City-wide
Size of Area:	City-wide
Location:	City-wide
Neighborhood Council area:	All
Proposed Amendment:	Revising the regulations which apply to billboards (off-premises signs) to permit digital billboards in exchange for a significant reduction in standard billboards.

General Description of the Proposed Amendment:

The proposed amendments apply to the regulation of billboards. Some of the proposed changes apply to all billboards, and others are meant to implement an exchange program whereby digital billboards would be permitted if existing standard billboards are removed and/or permits for standard billboards are relinquished. The framework and impetus for the proposal is a negotiated settlement agreement between Clear Channel Outdoor and the City which was approved by the City Council in 2010. The proposed changes build upon the intent of that Agreement and propose additional performance criteria for both the initial phase of the agreement (the installation of the first 10 digital billboards) and for any future installation of digital billboards.

Billboards are off-premises signs, which means that they are not located on the premises of the use or activity to which the sign pertains. Digital billboards operate like large digital picture frames – a single image is displayed for a certain amount of time, and is then replaced by a different image. As proposed, digital billboards would not be able to have any animation (moving pictures) or flashing lights, like some other electronic signs might have. A billboard “face” is one side of a billboard sign and consists of one screen. A single billboard structure may have more than one face.

The proposed changes would modify the Land Use Regulatory Code (Sections 13.06.520 - .522). In addition to adding new provisions for permitting digital billboards, the proposed changes would modify and add definitions, consolidate and relocate sections for retaining or exchanging billboards, and revise provisions for non-conforming off-premises signs. The proposed changes would apply city-wide; however, they would apply especially to the zoning districts where billboards are currently allowed:

- C-2 (General Community Commercial)
- M-1 and M-2 (Light and Heavy Industrial)
- PMI (Port Maritime Industrial)

Under the current regulations, existing billboards are allowed to relocate within these four zoning districts, subject to certain restrictions which are further discussed below. The proposed regulations would also allow new *digital* billboards to be erected on properties within these four zoning classifications, again subject to certain restrictions. The overall intent of the proposed changes is a substantial reduction in the number of existing billboards, in exchange for allowing the placement of digital billboards. If the program is continued to its fullest extent, the number of billboards within the city could drop from 253 to 38; all of which would be digital billboards. In addition, the digital technology will allow almost instantaneous communication on multiple signs for Amber Alerts and other emergency announcements.

The major components of the changes are set forth in the next few subsections. The following should be read in conjunction with explanatory notes on the Public Review Draft of the code, which is attached as Exhibit A.

Changes to Definitions section and general sign regulations:

1. Currently the definition of “billboard” is related to its content. That is, a billboard is a billboard because it contains a commercial message for a product or service. Billboards may be regulated based on their size or location – but not based on what they say. A new definition is proposed that doesn’t rely on what a billboard says, but more upon where it is and how big it is. The changes to the billboard definition also require changes in several other definitions in the section. Based upon a review of definitions used by other cities, the proposed changes should improve the City of Tacoma regulations, making them more consistent internally and making them more comparable to other cities in the state.
2. Currently, the code only briefly mentions the State regulations regarding signage, in the intent section. The State of Washington has laws and administrative rules related to the federal Scenic Vistas Act, which controls signs that are visible from certain state and federal highways. Off-premises signs and electronic signs require special review and permitting when located in these areas. An additional subsection is proposed that strengthens the reference to State law and notes that, notwithstanding any provision in the City’s Code, State laws apply and may supersede local regulations. This is meant as a reminder to any applicant for a sign in Tacoma that other regulations may apply, depending on the type and location of sign.

Changes to Billboards Section:

1. Substantial changes are proposed to the way the City regulates billboards. In general, introductory phrases have been added to the beginning of each section in order to highlight the purpose of that section. Also, throughout the code, text has been modified to emphasize and regulate the number and size of billboard *faces* rather than referring to faces and structures. Use of a consistent reference throughout streamlines the regulations and allows accurate comparisons between removed signage and installed signage. Language within the code has also been rearranged to place “like with like” – for instance, all the regulations about locations where billboards may be constructed have been grouped together, and all the regulations about performance standards (height, size, etc.) have been situated near each other. Some language has been consolidated as well.
2. A great deal of language relating to the former exchange program has been removed. This deletion updates the code in light of the presently proposed changes, and also puts an end to the system of relocation certificates.
3. The existing cap on the number of billboard faces and total square footage for billboard signs is not proposed to change, nor is the existing 1:1 exchange program for standard billboards. A new section

is proposed for the exchange of standard billboard faces for digital faces. The ratio operates as follows:

Digital Billboards	Existing Faces Removed	Relocation Certificates surrendered	Remaining faces/Certificates
Initial 10	53	100	200/69
Next 7	At least 35	Up to 69	165/0
Final 21	Up to 168	0	0/0

Briefly, for each digital billboard face proposed after the first 10 permitted digital faces, a minimum of 5 standard faces must be removed and relocation certificates surrendered for a total of 15 faces, until all relocation certificates have been remitted. At that point 8 faces must be removed for each digital billboard face constructed. Demolition permits for the faces to be removed must be issued and inspected prior to construction of a new digital billboard face.

4. The first 53 billboard faces to be removed are listed in the settlement agreement and are specified in the draft code revisions. The next 25 faces to be removed are at the discretion of Clear Channel Outdoor according to the terms of the settlement agreement. After that, the proposed changes indicate a priority preference for removals to those faces that are close to residentially zoned areas or other sensitive uses, followed by those which are close to the relocated billboard, and then those which are outside the four allowed zoning districts. This means that, after the initial 78 faces are removed, the first billboards to be removed should be those which are 250 feet or less from a residential zone, school, church, park, open space, or historic district. (There are currently about 100 existing billboards that don't meet these buffering standards.)
5. Performance standards are added to address digital billboard faces and sign lighting. These lighting standards would apply to all digital billboards constructed in the city. They regulate static image time (the amount of time a single picture is displayed on the screen), the transition time between images (to avoid complicated scrolling or animation on the screens), the motion on the screen (none is allowed), and the brightness of the screen. Brightness is proposed to be measured in two ways – first, from a light-meter reading taken from a certain distance from the sign to ensure the sign isn't creating an undue increase in the light levels in the area. The second is a measurement at the surface of the sign and the level of light actually emitted from the device. The operating hours of billboards are also limited. The proposed regulations would require the digital image to be turned off between the hours of 10 pm and 5 am.

These regulations are developed from research of other jurisdictions and are also somewhat based upon industry standards. Traffic safety studies also contribute to these standards, showing how quickly a message may change without becoming a distraction and hazard. Brightness regulations are intended to minimize excess lighting in the vicinity of the sign as well as to avoid glare or nuisance to people who are looking at the sign. All digital billboards will have a light sensor integrated into their electronics which will adjust the brightness of the sign based upon the amount of light in the surrounding area. For example, signs will be brighter on a sunny day than they are during the nighttime hours.

6. No changes are proposed to the existing allowable height and size of billboard structures and faces for the new digital billboards; it was determined that these regulations should be the same for both digital billboards and standard billboards. The maximum height is 30 ft except in PMI (Port Maritime Industrial), where the maximum height is 45 ft. The maximum size of a billboard face is 300 square

feet. It should be noted that the size limits will not apply to the first 10 permitted billboards installed in the special receiving areas (see below).

These regulations on size and height were instituted in the 1980s and have been in place since then. Many billboards which were constructed prior to that date are larger or taller than currently allowed. While many of the billboards located in the city are 288 square feet per face, the larger billboards are 672 square feet per face. For examples of billboards throughout the city, see the document titled “Billboard Tour” on the Planning Division’s website: www.cityoftacoma.org/planning.

7. Dispersal regulations – i.e. how far billboards must be from other billboards – has been simplified from the existing code. The existing code measures dispersal in four different ways: it limits the number of faces within a certain distance, it states that structures must be 100 feet apart, it sets out a minimum “appropriate zoning” distance to locate billboards, and it specifies the appropriate zoning across the street from a proposed billboard face. The proposed language limits billboard faces to 500 feet between faces, unless they are on the same structure, and maintains the existing opposite-side of the street zoning requirement. Dispersal will be calculated on a radius, and might work roughly as shown in the drawing below. The goal of dispersal regulations is to limit the concentration of billboard faces in any one neighborhood. This benefits both the neighborhood (less signage) and also the advertisers and sign company (fewer signs competing for attention).



8. Buffering regulations, meaning how far new billboards must be from “sensitive uses,” are not proposed to change. Currently, the code says that a new billboard face must be located 250 feet from a residential zoning district, a school, park, church, or other public use, and 375 feet from a shoreline district. (For reference, a typical block is about 330 feet by 240 feet.) Those same buffers would apply to digital billboards, except for the first 10 permitted billboards in the special receiving areas. Therefore, even if a billboard was proposed for an appropriate zoning district, like the C-2 district, it could not go everywhere in that district. It would have to be off-set from sensitive uses by 250 feet. The attached map that shows zoning districts (Exhibit C) as dark purple lines also includes the

buffers, with the left over area shown as lavender. These are the areas where a new billboard could be located.

9. Special receiving areas for the first ten (10) digital billboards were determined in the Settlement Agreement. These areas are shown on the map attached as Exhibit B. In these areas – where up to 10 and only 10 digital faces may be located – the standard size regulations do not apply. The agreement states that the first ten digital billboards will be “bulletin” billboards, which are defined as up to 672 square feet. These areas were chosen by both Clear Channel Outdoor and the City Council. Most of the locations already have other billboards, and all of them are along arterials.
10. Under the current code a billboard may be nonconforming to buffering (located too close to a sensitive use), dispersal (located too close to other billboards), zoning (located in the wrong zoning district), and/or performance standards (too big or too tall).
11. Revisions to nonconforming sign regulations are proposed to reflect the changes to the billboard exchange program for digital billboards. Currently, changes to off-premises signs are very restricted; language has been added to allow maintenance and repair or replacement, as well as to allow for installation of digital billboards in compliance with the code. Also, the current code prohibits any new signage on a site where a nonconforming billboard is located. This restriction is regardless of ownership of the site or the buildings on the site – meaning, for instance, if a tenant moving into an existing building wanted new signage at the site, they would be denied permits until the billboard was brought into compliance (typically, removed). The other option for someone requesting signage would be to sign a legal agreement with the City that they would terminate their lease with the billboard company as soon as possible.

The goal of the revised billboard code is to have removal of billboards occur over time and not place the burden of removal on a business owner, who might not have any control over the billboard lease on the property.

The code also requires that, when a site or structure is being substantially altered, nonconforming billboards are brought into compliance or removed. This language will remain in the code, but will be changed to reflect redevelopment thresholds that are in other parts of the zoning code. Specifically, the amount of work that can be completed within a two-year period has been revised to reflect either a “level II” or a “level III” alteration, similar to that level of work which would require compliance with certain design and landscaping standards. This language is consistent with other sections of the zoning code that talk about nonconforming uses and structures and when they need to be brought into compliance.

12. Only minimal changes would be made to the sign code tables. Digital Billboards (other than the initial 10) would only be allowed in the “C-2” General Community Commercial, “M-1” Light Industrial, “M-2” Heavy Industrial, and “PMI” Port Maritime Industrial districts. A map of these zones – including the remaining areas after the existing buffer requirements are applied – is attached as Exhibit C.

Additional Information:

The City of Tacoma made major amendments to its sign code for billboards in the mid-1980s and the mid-1990s. The number of billboards that can locate in the city and their total square footage has been capped since 1988. No new billboards are permitted but existing billboards can be relocated. In the 1997 code changes, the City instituted an exchange program by which a nonconforming billboard could be removed and exchanged for a building permit or a “relocation certificate” in a conforming location.

Billboards and relocation certificates could be transferred to other owners. This means that if someone wants to install a billboard on their property, they must own or purchase another billboard that they can remove.

The 1997 code also instituted an amortization clause which stated that all nonconforming billboards must be removed by 2007.

Currently, there are 253 billboard faces in the City and relocation certificates for 169 more. Approximately 193 of the existing billboard faces are nonconforming for one reason or another.

The sign code placed strict limitations on nonconforming billboards regarding their maintenance and alteration. On sites where billboards were located, other uses were not allowed to have any new signage unless the billboard was removed or a legal agreement was put into place promising the removal of the billboard.

Enforcement of these regulations resulted in a lawsuit in 2007 from the owner of nearly all the billboards and all the relocation certificates, Clear Channel Outdoor. The suit claimed that the City's code was unconstitutional as it was based on the content of the sign, that the adopted amortization provision was not adequate compensation for their billboard inventory and that the Scenic Vistas Act did not allow amortization in the manner dictated by the City's Code. Following more than two years of negotiation, the City Council determined that a legal settlement, which substantially reduces billboards across the City, was in the best interest of the City. The terms of the agreement provide a framework for the proposed revisions to the sign regulations. This Settlement Agreement is available on the Planning Division's website: www.cityoftacoma.org/planning.

The key terms of the agreement set forth the intent and created a framework for the proposed changes. There are two parts to the exchange program for billboards under the agreement: the first ten digital billboard faces and then subsequent digital billboard faces. Many of the standards for the first ten (10) digital billboard faces were set forth in the settlement agreement. These first ten billboard faces will be 672 square feet in area and the possible locations for them are also determined – these locations are referred to in the draft code as the “special receiving areas.” These “special receiving areas” are also shown on the map attached as Exhibit B.

In exchange for permits to install these first ten digital billboard faces, Clear Channel Outdoor will remove 53 faces throughout the city. These 53 faces are located on 33 different structures. In cases where this represents removal of all the faces on a billboard structure, the structure will be removed to ground level. Clear Channel Outdoor will also give up the relocation certificates for 100 billboard faces.

For all billboards which come after the first ten, a permit can be issued for a digital billboard on the condition that at least five faces are removed and enough relocation certificates are given up to total 15 billboard faces surrendered.

Another 25 standard billboard faces will be removed within 5 years after the agreement is executed, whether or not permits for additional digital billboards beyond the first 10 faces are issued.

Per the Agreement, the City is also considering code revisions to regulate certain aspects of digital billboards, including for the initial ten (10) faces, such as regulations regarding lighting, static image time, and emergency communication. These regulations would also apply to subsequent digital billboards if, and when, they are installed. In addition, the proposed regulations would adopt size, height, and location standards for the additional digital billboards (which can be considered a secondary phase).

If the Agreement is carried out to its fullest extent, the eventual number of billboard faces in Tacoma could be as little as 38. Regardless of future installation of digital billboard faces, there will be a reduction of 78 standard billboard faces within the first five years.

The draft code amendments were compiled based upon research of other cities in Washington and how they regulate billboards and other signs. Additional information was garnered from court cases regarding billboards, and technical information was received from sign companies, billboard owners, and city engineers. Traffic safety measures have been reviewed and incorporated where appropriate in the draft amendments. This research and information was provided to the Planning Commission in their decision-making process to direct the drafting of the code.

Public Outreach:

City staff have met with representatives from the Cross-District Association (Design Committee) and the Community Council – representatives from all the Neighborhood Councils. A general public meeting was held on January 31. Approximately 35 people attended; the notes from that meeting are attached as Exhibit D.

Applicable Provisions of the Growth Management Act (and other state laws):

Sign regulation is a typical part of zoning and land use controls authorized under state law. In addition, the State regulates certain signs that are visible from certain highways. These laws are contained in Chapter 47.42 RCW: Highway Advertising Control Act – Scenic Vistas Act and the implementing rules at Chapter 468-66 WAC – Highway Advertising Control Act. These regulations will further restrict billboards visible from Interstates 5 and 705, as well as State Routes 7 and 16. Nothing in the proposed changes conflicts with these State laws and State regulations will supersede City regulations where applicable.

Applicable Provisions of the Comprehensive Plan:

The *Comprehensive Plan* discusses signage in the context of urban design, aesthetics, and pedestrian orientation in several sections of the *Plan*. In most cases it sets forth goals and policies for integrating signage plans into sub-area development plans, ensuring high quality signage, and encouraging pedestrian-scaled signs in mixed-use districts. Commercial district design goals are to integrate signage into the overall design and scale of the district, and ensuring that commercial district development does not act as a detriment to surrounding neighborhoods. The *Plan* states outright that billboards should be prohibited in the Shoreline districts and freestanding signs should be prohibited in the UCX-TD district (Tacoma Dome Urban Center Mixed-Use).

Individual signs proposed for some of the special receiving areas (specifically, those proposed for location in the UCX-TD between “D” and “G” Streets along Puyallup Avenue) could be seen as in conflict with the stated goal of the *Comprehensive Plan* to not allow freestanding signs in these areas. In addition, to the extent that billboards are considered to be auto-oriented (that is, they are directed toward busy streets and the attention of motorists), it can also be argued that they are not appropriate for location in mixed-use districts generally. Six of the 19 Special Receiving Areas are located in mixed-use districts and one is located in a Downtown district. These proposed locations are along busy arterial streets with high volumes of vehicular traffic. See Exhibit B.

Certain special receiving areas also are located within the required buffer distance from residential districts. Digital billboards placed in these locations may impact the residential area – depending on how the sign is designed and oriented.

In the aggregate, however, the exchange program should result in fewer billboards overall (both digital and traditional) in the city, with fewer billboards located close to residential districts and fewer billboards in all districts – including mixed-use districts. While some areas may be impacted temporarily or permanently by additional billboards, overall the city will see a reduction.

Applicable Provisions of the Land Use Regulatory Code:

The proposed changes to the Land Use Regulatory code are intended to meet the intent of the Settlement Agreement – achieve an overall reduction in the number of billboards in the city by allowing the installation of digital billboards. The proposed changes are limited to Sections 13.06.520-.522, the Sign Code.

The intent of this section of the zoning code is to establish regulations which support land use objectives, to recognize signs as important communication devices, to protect safety and welfare, and to promote an attractive community. The objectives of the section are to provide for uniform and balanced requirements, to ensure compatibility with surroundings, to balance sign users' needs with aesthetics, and to achieve quality design and maintenance for all signs in the city.

The Sign Code is comprised of an intent section, a definitions section, a general regulations section, a section which applies to regulation of signs by type, and a section which applies to signage per district (the tables). Modifications are proposed to each section.

The proposal is intended to better meet the stated intent of the Sign Code by meeting the sign user's need (in this case Clear Channel Outdoor and its clients) and at the same time improving the aesthetics of the community overall. The reduction in the number of billboard faces in the city will benefit neighborhoods throughout the city. In addition, changes proposed to the nonconforming billboards section will remove some of the existing disincentives for sign maintenance and repair. The existing regulations regarding aesthetics are proposed to be somewhat strengthened, as well, and new digital billboards will be controlled for brightness, light pollution, and noise.

The proposal is intended to support the implementation of *Comprehensive Plan* goals for mixed-use centers, as, over time, most the billboards in these areas will be removed in exchange for billboards in other districts. The same can be said for billboards which are located close to residential districts – thus promoting the protection of residential areas as set forth in the *Comprehensive Plan*. Digital billboards will also be regulated so that they do not present a safety hazard – with lighting restrictions, minimum static image times, prohibition of interfering with or imitating a traffic control device, and the like.

Further, the proposed changes to the code should streamline the review of billboards in general. Changes are proposed to simplify the regulations for dispersal (how far billboards have to be from one another), and changes are proposed to the definitions to clarify what a billboard is and remove the focus on content.

Amendment Criteria:

Applications for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulatory Code are subject to review based on the adoption and amendment procedures and the review criteria contained in TMC 13.02.045.G. Proposed amendments are required to be consistent with or achieve consistency with

the Comprehensive Plan and meet at least one of the eleven review criteria to be considered by the Planning Commission. The following section provides a review of each of these criteria with respect to the proposal. Each of the criteria is provided, followed by staff analysis of the criterion as it relates to this proposal.

1. There exists an obvious technical error in the pertinent Comprehensive Plan or regulatory code provisions.

Staff Analysis: There are technical errors and inefficiencies in the current code. The definition of “billboard” is defined by its content. Given court cases about commercial free speech under the Constitution, it has been determined to be an inappropriate definition. Further, there is not adequate distinction between off-premises and on-premises signs. Language regarding billboards is organized poorly – for example, subsections regarding location are not placed together, and redundant language is included and can be consolidated.

2. Circumstances related to the proposed amendment have significantly changed, or a lack of change in circumstances has occurred since the area or issue was last considered by the Planning Commission.

Staff Analysis: An amortization clause was adopted in 1997 stating that all nonconforming billboards were to be removed by August 1, 2007. That clause was challenged when the deadline passed. Court cases regarding commercial free speech, content-based regulation, and property takings have been adjudicated since that time. Pursuant to the legal challenge, and in light of court cases subsequent to the 1997 ordinance, the City Council determined that a settlement was in the best interest of the City.

3. The needs of the City have changed, which support an amendment.

Staff Analysis: The amendment is needed to implement a Settlement Agreement, that compromise which is intended to avoid protracted legal issues.

4. The amendment is compatible with existing or planned land uses and the surrounding development pattern.

Staff Analysis: In most cases, digital billboards are planned to be located where traditional billboards already exist. In all cases, digital billboards are planned for high-traffic locations, along arterial street routes with a high volume of automobile traffic. The initial 10 billboards are not necessarily compatible with the planned development of the area, as some of them are within mixed-use districts; however, the exchange program as a whole is consistent with the intent of the sign code and with aesthetic improvements city-wide.

5. Growth and development, as envisioned in the Plan, is occurring faster, slower, or is failing to materialize.

Staff Analysis: This criterion is not applicable.

6. The capacity to provide adequate services is diminished or increased.

Staff Analysis: This criterion is not applicable.

7. Plan objectives are not being met as specified, and/or the assumptions upon which the plan is based are found to be invalid.

Staff Analysis: The 1997 code changes anticipated exchange of billboards at a 1:1 ratio and the removal of all nonconforming billboards by 2007. Very few billboards have been relocated, and the remaining nonconforming billboards have not been removed.

8. Transportation and and/or other capital improvements are not being made as expected.

Staff Analysis: This criterion is not applicable.

9. For proposed amendments to land use intensity or zoning classification, substantial similarities of conditions and characteristics can be demonstrated on abutting properties that warrant a change in land use intensity or zoning classification.

Staff Analysis: This criterion is not applicable.

10. A question of consistency exists between the Comprehensive Plan and its elements and RCW 36.70A, the County-wide Planning Policies for Pierce County, Multi-County Planning Policies, or development regulations.

Staff Analysis: This criterion is not applicable.

Economic Impact Assessment:

The economic impacts of the proposed amendment are difficult to anticipate and quantify. Certain land owners will lose income as their leases for standard billboards are terminated. Other landowners may receive new leases for digital billboards. In addition, the City will benefit in that digital billboards will be made available for emergency services alerts. The owners of digital billboards will benefit greatly from the increased advertising revenues on digital billboards, which can support several advertisers at once, compared to a traditional billboard with just one advertiser. At the same time, parties wishing to use billboard advertising will benefit from more opportunities on those digital billboards.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the draft amendment (Exhibit A) be released for public review in preparation for a public hearing on March 16, with the recognition that changes may be made to refine the language before a final recommendation is forwarded to the City Council.

Exhibits:

- A. Draft Code Amendments, annotated
- B. Map of Special Receiving Areas for the first 10 digital billboards
- C. Map of allowed zoning districts, with buffers, for subsequent digital billboards
- D. Notes from the public meeting on January 31, 2011



Billboard Code Revisions

DRAFT LAND USE REGULATORY CODE CHANGES

February 22, 2011

These proposed amendments include modifications to the following Sections of *TMC* Title 13, the Land Use Regulatory Code:

13.06.520 – Signs

13.06.521 – General Sign Regulations

13.06.522 – District Sign Regulations

*Note – These amendments show all of the changes to the *existing* land use regulations. The sections included are only those portions of the code that are associated with these amendments. New text is underlined and text that is deleted is shown in ~~strikethrough~~. Additionally, in some cases comments have been included in the right-hand margin explaining the intent of the change or providing additional background.

13.06.520 Signs.

A. Purpose. The purpose of this section is to establish sign regulations that support and complement land use objectives set forth in the Comprehensive Plan, including those established by the Highway Advertising Control Act (Scenic Vistas Act). Signs perform important communicative functions. The reasonable display of signs is necessary as a public service and to the proper conduct of competitive commerce and industry. The sign standards contained herein recognize the need to protect the safety and welfare of the public and the need to maintain an attractive appearance in the community. This code regulates and authorizes the use of signs visible from public rights-of-way, with the following objectives:

1. To establish uniform and balanced requirements for new signs;
2. To ensure compatibility with the character of the surrounding area;
3. To promote optimum conditions for meeting sign users' needs while, at the same time, improving the visual appearance of an area which will assist in creating a more attractive environment;
4. To achieve quality design, construction, and maintenance of signs so as to prevent them from becoming a potential nuisance or hazard to pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

B. Scope.

1. The provisions and requirements of this section shall apply to signs in all zones as set forth in this chapter. Applicable sign regulations shall be determined by reference to the regulations for the zone in which the sign is to be erected.
2. The regulations of this section shall regulate and control the type, size, location, and number of signs. No sign shall hereafter be erected or used for any purpose or in any manner, except as permitted by the regulations of this section.
3. The provisions of this code are specifically not for the purpose of regulating the following: traffic and directional signs installed by a governmental entity; signs not readable from a public right-of-way or adjacent property; merchandise displays; point of purchase advertising displays, such as product dispensers; national flags, flags of a political subdivision, and symbolic flags of an institution or business; legal notices required by law; historic site plaques; gravestones; structures intended for a separate use, such as Goodwill containers and phone booths; scoreboards located on athletic fields; lettering painted on or magnetically flush-mounted onto a motor vehicle operating in the normal course of business; and barber poles.

4. Regulations pertaining to signs in Shoreline Districts are found in Chapter 13.10.

C. Definitions.

Abandoned sign. A sign that no longer correctly directs any person or advertises a bona fide business, lessor, owner, product, or activity conducted or available on the premises where such sign is located.

A-Board sign (sandwich board sign). A sign which consists of two panels hinged or attached at the top or side, designed to be movable and stand on the ground.

Animated sign. A sign that uses movement, by either natural or mechanical means, to depict action to create a special effect or scene.

Architectural blade. A sign structure which is designed to look as though it could have been part of the building structure, rather than something suspended from or standing on the building.

Awning sign. A sign affixed to the surface of an awning and which does not extend vertically or horizontally beyond the limits of such awning.

Banner sign. A sign intended to be hung either with or without a frame, possessing characters, letters, illustrations, or ornamentations applied to paper, plastic, or fabric of any kind.

1. Commercial banner. A banner used for commercial purposes, which includes "For Lease," "Grand Opening," "Sale," etc.

2. Cultural, civic, and educational banner. A banner used for cultural, civic, or educational events, displays, or exhibits.

Blade sign - pedestrian oriented. A double-faced sign intended for pedestrian viewing installed perpendicular to the building facade for which it identifies.

Billboard ~~sign, standard~~. An off-premises sign greater than 72 square feet in size. This type of sign is generally composed of poster panels or bulletins mounted on a building wall or freestanding structure, or painted directly on the wall or freestanding structure. ~~which advertises goods, products, events, or services not necessarily sold on the premises on which the sign is located; however, a person, business, or event located on the premises shall not be identified. The sign may consist of:~~

~~1. Poster panels or bulletins normally mounted on a building wall or freestanding structure with advertising copy in the form of posted paper.~~

This language defines billboard in terms of size rather than content. The definition is also condensed.

Size is referenced to distinguish a billboard from an off-premises directional sign; the smallest billboard is 72 square feet.

Standard billboard is defined to differentiate them from digital billboards for the purposes of the exchange program.

~~2. Painted bulletins, where the message of the advertiser is painted directly on the background of a wall-mounted or freestanding display area.~~

Billboard, digital. An off-premises sign greater than 72 square feet in size, utilizing digital message technology capable of changing the message or copy on the sign electronically. Digital billboards are not considered under the definitions of animated sign, changing message centers, electrical signs, illuminated sign, flashing sign.

Building face or wall. All window and wall area of a building in one plane or elevation.

Center identification sign. Any sign which identifies a shopping, industrial center, or office center by name, address, or symbol. Center identification signs may also identify individual businesses and activities located within the center.

Changing message center. An electronically controlled sign, message center, or readerboard where copy changes of a public service or commercial nature are shown on the same lamp bank (i.e., time, temperature, date, news, or commercial information of interest to the traveling public).

Changeable copy sign (manual). Any sign that is designed so that characters, letters, or illustrations can be changed or rearranged by hand, without altering the face or the surface of the sign (i.e., readerboards with changeable pictorial panels).

Construction sign. A temporary sign giving the name or names of principal contractors, architects, lending institutions, or other persons or firms responsible for construction on the site where the sign is located, together with other information included thereon.

Corporate logo sign. A logo sign consists of a symbol or identifying mark(s) used as part of a corporation identification scheme that is meant to identify a corporation, company, or individual business or organization. Internally illuminated cabinet signs shall not be allowed for use as a logo sign above 35 feet in any of the downtown districts.

Directional sign. Any sign which serves solely to designate the location of any place, area, or business within the City limits of Tacoma, whether on-premises or off-premises.

Directory sign. A sign on which the names and locations of occupants or the use of a building is given.

Electrical sign. A sign or sign structure in which electrical wiring, connections, and/or fixtures are used as any part of the sign.

Flashing sign. An electrical sign or portion which changes light intensity in sudden transitory bursts, but not including signs which

Digital billboard is defined for the purposes of the exchange program, and is based on location (off-premises), size, and technology.

Digital billboards have specific standards and do not have the same regulations as other types of changing message signs.

appear to chase or flicker and not including signs where the change in light intensity occurs at intervals of more than one second.

Freestanding sign. A permanently installed, self-supporting sign resting on or supported by means of poles, standards, or any other type of base on the ground.

Frontage.

1. Freestanding sign. For the purpose of computing the size of a freestanding sign, frontage shall be the length of the property line parallel to and abutting each public right-of-way bordered.

2. Building mounted sign. For the purpose of computing the size of building mounted signs, frontage shall be the length of that portion of the building containing the business oriented onto a right-of-way or parking lot. For a business with more than one frontage, the largest frontage with a public entrance shall be used.

Graphics. An aggregate of designs, shapes, forms, colors, and/or materials located on an exterior wall and relating to or representing a symbol, word, meaning, or message.

Ground sign. A sign that is six feet or less in height above ground level and is supported by one or more poles, columns, or supports anchored in the ground.

Identification or directory sign. A combination sign used to identify numerous buildings, persons, or activities which relate to one another, which is used as an external way-finding for both vehicular and pedestrians traffic.

Illuminated sign. A sign designed to give forth any artificial or reflected light, either directly from a source of light incorporated into or connected with such sign or indirectly from a source intentionally directed upon it, so shielded that no direct illumination from it is visible elsewhere than on the sign and in the immediate proximity thereof.

Incidental sign. A small sign intended primarily for the convenience and direction of the public on the premises, which does not advertise but is informational only, and includes information which denotes the hours of operation, telephone number, credit cards accepted, sales information, entrances and exits, and information required by law. Incidental information may appear on a sign having other copy as well, such as an advertising sign.

Landscaping. Any material used as a decorative feature, such as planter boxes, pole covers, decorative framing, and shrubbery or planting materials, used in conjunction with a sign, which expresses the theme of the sign but does not contain advertising copy.

Marquee sign. A sign attached to and made part of a marquee. A marquee (or canopy) is defined as a permanent roof-like structure attached to and supported by the building and projecting beyond a building, but does not include a projecting roof.

Multiple business center. A grouping of two or more business establishments which either share common parking and/or access drives on the lot where they are located or which occupy a single structure or separate structures which are physically or functionally related or attached. In order to be considered a separate business establishment, a business shall be physically separated from other businesses; however, businesses which share certain common internal facilities, such as reception areas, checkout stands, and similar features shall be considered one business establishment.

Mural. A decorative design or scene intended to provide visual enjoyment that is painted or placed on an exterior building wall. A mural contains no commercial messages, logo, or corporate symbol.

Nonconforming sign. A nonconforming sign shall mean any sign which does not conform to the requirements of this section.

Neutral surface. The building surface, cabinetry, and opaque surfaces which are not an integral part of the sign message.

Off-premises sign. A permanent sign not located on the premises of the use or activity to which the sign pertains.~~A sign that identifies or gives directional information to a commercial establishment not located on the premises where the sign is installed or maintained.~~

Removes the regulation of content from the definition.

Off-premises open house or directional sign. A sign advertising a transaction involving:

1. A product sold in a residential zone;
2. A product that cannot be moved without a permit; and/or
3. A product with a size of at least 3,200 cubic feet.

On-premises sign. Any sign identifying or advertising a business, person, activity, goods, products, or services primarily located on the premises where the sign is installed or maintained.

Parapet. A false front or wall extension above the roof line.

Person. Person shall mean and include a person, firm, partnership, association, corporation, company, or organization, singular or plural, of any kind.

Political sign. A temporary sign which supports the candidacy of any candidate for public office or urges action on any other matter on the ballot in a primary, general, or special election.

Portable sign. Any sign not permanently attached to the ground or a building. (Includes A-frame, sandwich boards, and portable readerboards.)

Projecting sign. A sign, other than a wall sign, which is attached to and projects from a structure or building face.

Public Facility. Any facility funded in whole or part with public funds, which provides service to the general public, including, but not limited to, public schools, public libraries, community centers, public parks, government facilities, or similar use.

Public information sign. A sign erected and maintained by any governmental entity for traffic direction or for designation of, or direction to, any school, hospital, historical site, or public service, property, or facility. Public signs include those of such public agencies as the Port of Tacoma, Pierce Transit, the Tacoma School District, and the MetroParks Tacoma.

Readerboard. A sign consisting of tracks to hold letters, which allows for frequent changes of copy; usually such copy is not electronic.

Real estate sign. Any sign which is only used for advertising the sale or lease of ground upon which it is located or of a building located on the same parcel of ground.

Repair. To paint, clean, or replace damaged parts of a sign, or to improve its structural strength, but not in a manner that would change the size, shape, location, or character.

Roof line or ridge line. The top edge of the roof or top of a parapet, whichever forms the top line of the building silhouette.

Roof sign. Any sign erected upon, against, or directly above a roof or parapet of a building or structure.

Rotating signs. Any sign or portion thereof which physically revolves about an axis.

Searchlight. An apparatus for projecting a beam or beams of light.

Sign. Any materials placed or constructed, or light projected, that (a) convey a message or image and (b) are used to inform or attract the attention of the public, but not including any lawful display of merchandise. Some examples of "signs" include placards, A-boards, posters, murals, diagrams, banners, flags, billboards, or projected slides, images or holograms. The applicability of the term "sign" does not depend on the content of the message or image conveyed.~~Any object, device, display, structure, or part thereof, which is used to advertise, identify, direct, or attract attention to a product, business, activity, place, person, institution,~~

Refines the definition of sign to a generally-accepted standard definition. Notes that the content of a sign has nothing to do with its regulation.

~~or event using words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, colors, illumination, or projected images.~~

Sign area. The total area of a sign, as measured by the perimeter of the smallest rectangle enclosing the extreme limits of the letter, module, or advertising message visible from any one viewpoint or direction, excluding the sign support structure, architectural embellishments, decorative features, or framework which contains no written or advertising copy. (Includes only one side of a double-faced sign, unless noted otherwise.)

1. Individual letter signs, using a wall as the background without added decoration or change in wall color, shall be calculated by measuring the smallest rectangle enclosing each letter. The combined total area of each individual letter shall be considered the total area of the sign.
2. For a multiple face sign, the sign area shall be computed for the largest face only. If the sign consists of more than one section or module, all areas will be totaled.
3. Neutral surfaces (i.e., graphic design, wall murals and colored bands), shall not be included in the calculation. (See definition of "Neutral Surface.")
4. The area of all regulated signs on a business premises shall be counted in determining the permitted sign area.

Sign height. The vertical distance measured from the adjacent grade at the base of the sign to the highest point of the sign structure; provided, however, the grade of the ground may not be built up in order to allow the sign to be higher.

Sign structure. Any structure which supports, has supported, is designed to support, or is capable of supporting a sign, including a decorative cover.

Street. A thoroughfare which provides the principal means of access to abutting property.

Swinging sign. A sign installed on an arm or spar that is fastened to an adjacent wall or upright pole, which sign is allowed to move or swing to a perceptible degree.

Temporary off-premises sign. An off-premises advertising sign attached to temporary fencing during the time of construction.

Temporary sign. An on-premises sign, banner, balloon, pennant, valance, A-board, or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, fabric, paper, cardboard, plywood, wood, wallboard, plastic, sheet metal, or other similar light material, with or without a frame, which is not permanently affixed to any sign structure and which is intended to be displayed for a limited time only.

Under-marquee sign. Signs or other information-conveying devices that are affixed to the underside of a marquee and project down from the bottom of the marquee.

User. A user shall be understood to mean the lessee or purchaser of any sign.

Unlawful sign. Any sign which was erected in violation of any applicable ordinance or code governing such erection or construction at the time of its erection, which sign has never been in conformance with all applicable ordinances or codes.

Wall sign (fascia sign). A sign painted on or attached to or erected against the wall of a building with the face in a parallel plane of the building wall.

Warning Sign. Any sign which is intended to warn persons of prohibited activities such as “no hunting” and “no dumping.”

Window sign. A sign painted on, affixed to, or installed inside a window for purposes of viewing from outside the premises.

13.06.521 General sign regulations.

A. Administration.

1. Land Use Administrator. The Land Use Administrator shall interpret, administer, and enforce the sign code in accordance with Chapter 13.05.

2. Building Official. The Building Official shall issue all permits for the construction, alteration, and erection of signs in accordance with the provisions of this section and related chapters and titles of the Tacoma Municipal Code (see Chapter 2.05). In addition, all signs, where appropriate, shall conform to the current Washington State Energy Code (see Chapter 2.10), National Electrical Code, and the National Electrical Safety Code. Exceptions to these regulations may be contained in the Tacoma Landmarks Special Review District regulations, Chapters 1.42 and 13.07.

3. Applicability. All new permanent signs, painted wall signs, and temporary off-premises advertising signs require permits. Permits require full conformance with all City codes, particularly Titles 2 and 13. Signs not visible from a public right-of-way or adjacent property are not regulated herein, but may require permits pursuant to the provision of Title 2.

4. In addition to and notwithstanding the provisions of this section, all signs shall comply with all other applicable regulations and authorities, including, but not limited to, Chapter 47.42 RCW: Highway Advertising Control Act – Scenic Vistas Act and Chapter 468-66 WAC – Highway Advertising Control Act.

States that regardless of the Tacoma Municipal Code, there are other permits and review that may be required under state and federal law.

B. Exempt signs. The following signs shall be exempt from all requirements of this section and shall not require permits; however, this subsection is not to be construed as relieving the user of such signage from responsibility for its erection and maintenance, pursuant to Title 2 or any other law or ordinance relating to the same.

1. Changing of the advertising copy or message on a sign specifically designed for the use of replaceable copy.
2. Repainting, maintenance, and repair of existing signs or sign structures; provided, work is done on-site and no structural change is made.
3. Signs not visible from the public right-of-way and beyond the boundaries of the lot or parcel.
4. Incidental and warning signs.
5. Sculptures, fountains, mosaics, murals, and other works of art that do not incorporate business identification or commercial messages.
6. Signs installed and maintained on bus benches and/or shelters within City right-of-way, pursuant to a franchise authorized by the City Council.
7. Seasonal decorations for display on private property.
8. Memorial signs or tablets, names of buildings and date of erection, when cut into any masonry surface or when constructed of bronze or other incombustible material.
9. Signs of public service companies indicating danger and aid to service or safety.
10. Non-electric bulletin boards not exceeding 12 square feet in area for each public, charitable, or religious institution, when the same are located on the premises of said institutions.
11. Construction signs denoting a building which is under construction, structural alterations, or repair, which announce the character of the building enterprise or the purpose for which the building is intended, including names of architects, engineers, contractors, developers, financiers, and others; provided, the area of such sign shall not exceed 32 square feet.
12. Window sign.
13. Political signs, as set forth in Title 2.
14. Real estate signs, 12 square feet or less, located on the site. Condominiums or apartment complexes shall be permitted one real estate sign with up to 12 square feet per street frontage. Such sign(s) may be used as a directory sign that advertises more than one unit in the complex.

15. Off-premises open house or directional signs, subject to the following regulations:

a. The signs may be placed on private property or on the right-of-way adjacent to said private property, with the permission of the abutting property owner. The signs shall be displayed in such a manner as to not constitute a traffic hazard or impair or impede pedestrians, bicycles, or disabled persons. If either condition is not met, the abutting property owner or the City may remove the sign.

b. Signs shall not be fastened to any utility pole, street light, traffic control device, public structure, fence, tree, shrub, or regulatory municipal sign.

c. A maximum of three off-premises open house or directional signs will be permitted per single-family home. One additional open house or directional sign identifying the open house shall be permitted at the house being sold.

d. Signage shall not exceed four square feet in area per side (eight square feet total) and three feet in height. Off-premises open house or directional signs shall not be decorated with balloons, ribbons, or other decorative devices.

e. Signage shall only be in place between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., when the seller of the product, or the seller's agent, is physically present at the location of the product.

f. Each off-premises open house or directional sign that is placed or posted shall bear the name and address of the person placing or posting the sign in print not smaller than 12 point font. The information identifying the name and address of the person placing or posting the sign is not required to be included within the content of the speakers' message, but may be placed on the underside of the sign or in any other such location.

g. New plats may have up to a maximum of eight plat directional signs for all new homes within the subdivision. New plat directional signs shall identify the plat and may provide directional information but shall not identify individual real estate brokers or agents. New plat directional signs shall be limited in size and manner of display to that allowed for off-premises open house or directional signs. Off-premises open house or directional signs shall not be permitted for new homes within new plats.

h. A maximum of three off-premises open house or directional signs shall be allowed per condominium or apartment complex.

16. Professional name plates two square feet or less.

17. Changing plex-style faces in existing cabinets; provided, work is done on-site without removing sign.

C. Prohibited signs. The following commercial signs are prohibited, except as may be otherwise provided by this chapter:

1. Signs or sign structures which, by coloring, wording, lighting, location, or design, resemble or conflict with a traffic control sign or device, or which make use of words, phrases, symbols, or characters in such a manner as to interfere with, mislead, or confuse persons traveling on the right-of-way or which, in any way, create a traffic hazard.
 2. Signs which create a safety hazard by obstructing the clear view of pedestrians or vehicular traffic, or which obstruct a clear view of official signs or signals.
 3. Signs, temporary or otherwise, which are affixed to a tree, rock, fence, lamppost, or bench; however, construction, directional, and incidental signs may be affixed to a fence or lamppost.
 4. Any sign attached to a utility pole, excluding official signs as determined by Tacoma Public Utilities.
 5. Signs on public property, except when authorized by the appropriate public agency.
 6. Signs attached to or placed on any stationary vehicle or trailer so as to be visible from a public right-of-way for the purpose of providing advertisement of services or products or for the purpose of directing people to a business. This provision shall not apply to the identification of a firm or its principal products on operable vehicles operating in the normal course of business. Public transit buses and licensed taxis are exempt from this restriction.
 7. Roof signs, except where incorporated into a building to provide an overall finished appearance.
 8. All portable signs not securely attached to the ground or a building, including readerboards and A-frames on trailers, except those allowed by the regulations of the appropriate zoning district.
 9. Abandoned or dilapidated signs.
 10. Portable readerboard signs.
 11. Inflatable signs and blimps.
 12. Off-premises sign, except pursuant to Section 13.06.521.L and M.
- D. Special regulations by type of sign. In addition to the general requirements for all signs contained in this section, and the specific requirements for signs in each zone, there are special requirements for the following types of signs:
1. Wall signs.
 2. Projecting signs.
 3. Freestanding signs.
 4. Marquee signs.
 5. Under-marquee signs.

- 6. Canopy and awning signs.
- 7. Temporary signs.
- 8. Off-premises directional signs.
- 9. Billboards ~~(outdoor advertising sign).~~

The special requirements for these signs are contained in subsections E through M of this section.

* * *

L. Off-premises directional signs. Special regulations governing off-premises directional signs are as follows:

- 1. Off-premises directional signs shall be limited to a maximum of 15 square feet in area and 6 feet in height.
- 2. Off-premises directional signs shall contain only the name of the principal use and directions to the use in permanent lettering.
- 3. Off-premises directional signs shall be placed on or over private property, except that business district identification signs may be located and comply with the applicable requirements of Title 9.
- 4. Off-premises directional signs are permitted when on-premises signs are inadequate to identify the location of a business. If applicable, only one such sign shall be allowed.

M. Billboards ~~(outdoor advertising signs).~~ Special regulations governing billboards are as follows:

- 1. a. New Billboard Faces. No new billboards shall be allowed in the City, unless the applicant for a new billboard reduces the total number of billboards and relocation permits in existence as of June 1, 2011. New billboards will only be allowed in receiving areas designated in M.11, below. For purposes of this regulation, “reduce” shall mean to relinquish relocation permits held by an applicant and/or physical removal of billboard faces and related structures prior to the issuance of any permit to construct a new billboard.

~~Any person, firm, or corporation who maintains billboard structures and faces within the City of Tacoma shall be authorized to maintain only that number of billboard structures and faces that they maintained on April 12, 1988, except for transfers permitted in subsection 1.c of this section. A person who maintains any such billboard structures and faces may, thereafter, relocate a billboard face or structure to a new location as otherwise authorized by this section. No other billboards shall be authorized, and there shall be no greater total number of billboard structures and faces within the City than the number that were in existence on April 12, 1988.~~

~~That number of structures and faces shall include those for which permit applications had been filed prior to April 13, 1988. As~~

Clarifying text has been added, and text has been consolidated.

Emphasis is being taken off structures and limited more to faces, so that equivalent comparisons can be made.

In light of the revised exchange program and new dates, unnecessary and repetitive language and explanation has been removed.

~~unincorporated areas are annexed to the City of Tacoma, the total number of billboard structures and faces in that area will constitute an addition to the number authorized in the City of Tacoma.~~

~~bb. Exchange of standard billboard faces. Upon removal, to be confirmed by a site inspection, of an existing standard billboard face ~~or structure~~, a relocation ~~building~~ permit shall be issued authorizing relocation of the face ~~construction of a billboard face at~~ ~~to~~ a new site. Building permits shall not be extended beyond their normal expiration date. ~~There shall be no time limit on the billboard owner's eligibility to utilize such relocation permits. In the event that a billboard owner wishes to remove a billboard and does not have immediate plans for replacement at a new location, an inactive relocation permit shall be issued. There shall be no time limit on the activation of the inactive permit and such permits are transferable. The application for a relocation permit shall include an accurate site plan and vicinity map of the billboard face or structure to be removed, as well as a site plan and vicinity map for the new location. Site plans and vicinity maps shall include sufficient information to determine compliance with the regulations of this chapter. The above provisions shall not apply to billboards whose permit applications were applied for prior to April 13, 1988, and not erected, unless the applicants or owners agree within 60 days to have such billboards, subject to all the provisions of this chapter.~~~~

~~e. Relocation permits shall be transferable upon the billboard owner's written permission.~~

~~d. Exchange of digital billboards. A digital billboard permit may be issued with the condition that construction may begin upon removal, to be verified by a site inspection, of at least five (5) existing standard billboard faces and exchange of up to ten (10) relocation permits (or any combination of at least 5 existing faces with an adequate number of relocation permits to equal at least 15). If the applicant does not have relocation permits, eight (8) faces shall be removed.~~

~~d. In no case shall the number of billboard faces or structures increase, and the square footage of billboard sign area to be relocated shall be equal to or less than the square footage of billboard sign area to be removed.~~

~~e. Removal priorities. The removed billboards shall be those which are nonconforming to the buffering standards in subsections 9 and 10, below. If no billboards remain nonconforming to buffering standards, the billboards to be removed shall be those which are nonconforming to the dispersal standards from the new billboard as set forth in subsection 7, below. If the new billboard meets~~

The intent of the changes is that the inventory of "banked permits" goes away; therefore no new ones should be issued. When a billboard owner wants to exchange a nonconforming for a conforming billboard, they will get the building permit immediately, and it will have the normal life of a building permit (6 months) or be permitted.

This text has been deleted because it's a general requirement of all sign permits and repeating here is not necessary.

Digital billboards can be exchanged differently, with a different removal ratio.

This language has been relocated to (1.a) above.

This language has been clarified. The language regarding the accumulation of permits has been deleted. As that is already implied in earlier sections. Also, it does not apply to the exchange program for digital billboards.

dispersal standards, the billboards to be removed shall be at the discretion of the owner and may be located anywhere in the City.

f. Demolition permits. Removal of all faces from a billboard structure shall also require the issuance of a demolition permit for the structure itself, and removal of billboard faces (and their associated structures, if necessary) shall be completed prior to the installation of construction of relocated billboard faces. Structures, when removed, shall be removed to grade and the grade restored at the site. or structures. The billboard owner shall have the right to accumulate the amount of square footage to be allowed, at the owner's discretion, to new sign faces and structures permitted under this chapter.

2. Maintenance. All billboards, including paint and structural members, shall be maintained in good repair in compliance with all applicable building code requirements. Signs shall be kept clean and free of debris. The exposed area of backs of billboards must be covered to present an attractive and finished appearance.

3. Aesthetics. The following standards apply to all billboards.

a. Each sign structure must, at all times, include a facing of proper dimensions to conceal back bracing and framework of structural members and/or any electrical equipment. During periods of repair, alteration, or copy change, such facing may be removed for a maximum period of 48 consecutive hours.

b. No more than two billboard faces shall be located on a single structure.

c. Billboard faces located on the same structures shall be back-to-back with the two faces at no greater than a 30 degree angle from each other..

4. Landscaping. The following standards apply to all billboards installed after {the adoption of this code}.

a. No code-required landscaping may be diminished for the installation of a billboard.

b. The base of the billboard support shall be surrounded with a 5-foot-wide landscaping buffer composed of trees, shrubs, and groundcover.

c. Any alteration to any street tree (removal or pruning) is subject to city review and approval.

5. Lighting.

a. No flashing signs shall be permitted.

b. Signs shall not imitate or resemble traffic control devices.

Additional sections are included regarding aesthetics.

Limits the number of faces. Typically only two, but this language places that limit and prohibits three faces in a triangle.

The City has a permit/review process for any removal or pruning of street trees. (TMC 9.18 and 9.20)

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c. All images shall be static; no animation or motion pictures are allowed.

d. For digital billboards, the minimum static image time is 8 seconds.

e. For digital billboards, the maximum transition time for images is 2 seconds.

f. Brightness, foot-candles. Digital Billboards shall not operate at brightness levels of more than 0.3 foot candles above ambient light, as measured at the following distances, depending on the size of the Digital Billboard sign face:

<u>Face Size</u>	<u>Distance to be measured perpendicular to the pole:</u>
<u>Up to 300 square feet-</u>	<u>150'</u>
<u>300 – 672 square feet</u>	<u>250'</u>

Brightness may be measured at any time and from any location at the identified distance and shall not exceed the prescribed levels.

g. Brightness, intensity levels. The digital sign may not display light of excessive intensity or brilliance to cause glare or otherwise impair the vision of the driver. Digital sign light intensity exceeding the following intensity levels (nits) constitutes “excessive intensity or brilliance.”

INTENSITY LEVELS (NITS)

<u>Color</u>	<u>Daytime</u>	<u>Nighttime</u>
<u>Full Color</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>500</u>

Prior to the issuance of a sign permit, the applicant shall provide written certification from the sign manufacturer that the light intensity has been factory pre-set not to exceed 5,000 NITS and that the intensity level is protected from end-user manipulation by password-protected software or other method as deemed appropriate by the City Engineer.

h. Each digital billboard must have a light sensing device that will continuously adjust the brightness as ambient light conditions change.

i. Each digital billboard must have a “fail safe” that turns the screen to black in the case of malfunction.

j. Prior to final inspection approval, the applicant shall provide proof that all lighting levels and specifications in this section have been field-verified by a special inspector.

k. Billboards shall not be illuminated between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.

Some of this language is currently in the code about lighting.

Additional language that applies to digital billboards controls the brightness and the digital display time.

Transition time is controlled to prohibit scrolling, overly-long fading, and other methods which have the potential to be distracting.

This language is intended to provide another way to measure brightness and ensure that there is no glare.

The City has hired a professional lighting specialist to review and refine section g. This language will change in the final amendment, but any resulting language will assure that the intent (reducing light pollution and glare, avoiding hazards) of sections f and g is met.

~~6. Size. The maximum area of any one sign face shall be 300 square feet, except for digital billboards in the Special Receiving Areas set forth in (11), below, where the maximum area is 672 square feet, with a maximum vertical sign face dimension of 12.5 feet and maximum length of 25 feet, inclusive of any border and trim, but excluding the base or apron, supports, and other structural members; provided, cut-outs and extensions may add up to 20 percent of additional sign area.~~

Simplifies the regulation for sign size.

~~9. Rooftop (billboard) signs are prohibited.~~

This text has been deleted because *all* rooftop signs are prohibited.

~~107. Height. The maximum height of all billboard signs shall be 30 feet, except in the PMI District, where the maximum height shall be 45 feet. For the purpose of this section, height shall be the distance to the top of the normal display face from the main traveled way of the road from which the sign is to be viewed.~~

This text has been moved from a different location and two subsections have been combined.

~~48. Dispersal.~~

~~a. Not more than a total of four billboard faces attached to not more than two support structures shall be permitted on both sides of a street within any distance of 1,000 feet measured laterally along the right of way, with a minimum of 100 feet between such structures. Billboard faces not located on the same structure shall be a minimum of 500 feet apart.~~

Simplifies the regulation for dispersal, results in essentially the same dispersal standards.

~~b. There shall be at least 300 linear feet of land, which is properly zoned, which permits billboards on one side of the street in order to erect one billboard structure on that side of the street. There shall be at least 600 linear feet of land, which is properly zoned, which permits billboards on one side of the street in order to erect more than one billboard structure on that side of the street.~~

“b” is deleted because with other dispersal and buffering regulations it doesn’t affect placement of billboards.

~~e.b. The property on the opposite side of the street from the proposed billboard location must also be properly zoned to permit billboards.~~

~~5. The maximum area of any one sign shall be 300 square feet, with a maximum vertical sign face dimension of 12.5 feet and maximum length of 25 feet, inclusive of any border and trim, but excluding the base or apron, supports, and other structural members; provided, cut-outs and extensions may add up to 20 percent of additional sign area.~~

This text (5 & 6) has been moved to a different location.

~~6. Indirect or internal lighting shall be the only allowable means of illumination. No flashing signs shall be permitted.~~

~~79. Buffering – sensitive uses. No billboard shall be located on, in, or within 250 feet of:~~

~~a. A residential district;~~

b. Any publicly-owned open space, playground, park, or recreational property, as recognized in the adopted ~~“Recreation and Open Space Facilities Plan,”~~ “Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element” of the Comprehensive Plan, as amended;

Name change.

c. Any church or school; or

d. Any designated historic district, whether on the federal, state, or local register of historic properties.

~~8.10. Buffering – shoreline districts.~~ No billboard shall be located on, in, or within 375 feet of any shoreline district.

11. Location – special billboard receiving areas. In addition to the standards set forth in the district sign tables (Section 13.06.522) which state that billboards are allowed in the C-2, M-1, M-2, and PMI districts, digital billboards shall also be allowed as follows.

These are the specified receiving areas in the Settlement Agreement, and are shown on the attached map.

a. Limit on number of faces in special receiving areas. A maximum of 10 total faces may be located in the following areas.

Only 10 digital billboards may be allowed in these areas.

b. Exception to certain performance standards. In the following locations, the regulations of Sections M.8 and M.9 (buffering and dispersal) above, and Section 13.06.522.a (sign tables), do not apply.

These billboards are not subject to the regulations for dispersal or buffering because their locations have been established by agreement.

c. Special receiving areas defined. The special receiving areas are designated as follows:

(1) Portland Avenue and Puyallup Avenue. 600 feet to the north, south, east and west of the center point of the intersection of Portland and Puyallup Avenues.

(2) Puyallup Avenue. Along Puyallup Avenue from the midpoint of the intersection of Puyallup Avenue and D Street to the midpoint of the intersection of Puyallup Avenue and L Street.

(3) Pacific Avenue. Pacific Avenue from the midpoint of the intersection of Pacific Avenue and S. 23rd Street to the midpoint of Pacific Avenue and S. 30th Street.

(4) 6th Avenue and Division Avenue. From the midpoint of the intersection of 6th Avenue and Division, 600 feet northeast on Division Avenue, 525 feet to the west on 6th Avenue, east on 6th Avenue to N. Grant Street and 300 feet north and south on S. Sprague Avenue.

(5) 6th Avenue and Junett Street. 150 feet to the east and west of the midpoint of the intersection of 6th Avenue and Junett Street.

(6) 6th Avenue and Union Avenue. 150 feet in all directions from the midpoint of the intersection of 6th Avenue and Union Avenue.

(7) 6th Avenue between S. Pearl Street to the east and S. Mildred Street to the west. From the midpoint of the intersection of 6th Avenue and S. Pearl Street to the midpoint of 6th Avenue and S. Mildred Street.

(8) S. Union Avenue and S. 23rd Street. S. Union Avenue 150 feet north and 900 feet to the south of the midpoint of the intersection of S. Union and S. 23rd Street.

(9) S. Union Avenue and Center Street. 150 feet to the north, east and west of the midpoint of the intersection of S. Union and Center Street and 300 feet south of said intersection on S. Union Avenue.

(10) S. Union Avenue. 300 feet in all directions from the midpoint of the intersection of S. Pine Street and Center Street.

(11) S. 38th Street and S. Pine Street. 450 feet east and west from the midpoint of the intersection of S. 38th Street and S. Pine Street and 300 feet north and south from the midpoint of said intersection.

(12) S. Tacoma Way and S. Pine Street. 450 feet in all directions from the midpoint of the intersection of S. Tacoma Way and S. Pine Street.

(13) Steele Street and S. 38th Street. 150 feet from the midpoint of the intersection of Steele Street and N. 38th, to the north on S. Idaho Street, 450 feet from said midpoint to the east and west on S. 38th Street, all of S. Steele Street and the north portion of Tacoma Mall Boulevard from Steele Street on the west and 375 feet east of S. State Street.

(14) West End of S. 56th Street. South 56th Street between the midpoint of the intersection of S. 56th and S. Tyler to the midpoint of the intersection of S. 56th and Burlington Way to the East.

(15) S. 56th Street and S. Tacoma Way. 300 feet in all directions from the midpoint of the intersection of S. 56th Street and S. Tacoma Way.

(16) S. 74th Street and S. Tacoma Way. 450 feet in all directions from the midpoint of the intersection of S. 74th Street and S. Tacoma Way.

(17) S. 74th Street and S. Tacoma Mall Boulevard. S. 74th Street between the midpoint of the intersection of S. 74th and S. Wapato Street, and the midpoint of the intersection of S. 74th and S. Tacoma Mall Boulevard.

(18) S. 72nd Street and S. Hosmer Street. That portion of S. 72nd Street between I-5 and the midpoint of the intersection of S. 72nd and S. Alaska Street and S. Hosmer Street 300 feet south of S. 72nd

Street and the midpoint of the intersection of S. Hosmer and S. 72nd.

~~9. Rooftop (billboard) signs are prohibited.~~

~~10. The maximum height of all billboard signs shall be 30 feet, except in the PMI District, where the maximum height shall be 45 feet. For the purpose of this section, height shall be the distance to the top of the normal display face from the main traveled way of the road from which the sign is to be viewed.~~

~~11. Billboard signs which advertise a business, event, or person located on the same premises as the billboard sign shall be considered an on-premises sign and must meet all criteria for the location of on-premises signs.~~

N. Nonconforming signs. It is the intent of this subsection to allow the continued existence of legal nonconforming signs, subject, however, to the following restrictions:

1. No sign that had previously been erected in violation of any City Code shall, by virtue of the adoption of this section, become a legal nonconforming sign.

2. No nonconforming on-premises sign shall be changed, expanded, or altered in any manner which would increase the degree of its nonconformity, or be structurally altered to prolong its useful life, or be moved, in whole or in part, to any other location where it would remain nonconforming. However, a legal nonconforming on-premises sign may be altered if the degree of nonconformity for height and sign area is decreased by 25 percent or greater. For purposes of this subsection, normal maintenance and repair, including painting, cleaning, or replacing damaged parts of a sign, shall not be considered a structural alteration.

3. A nonconforming off-premises sign shall not be changed, expanded, moved, or altered in any manner which would increase the degree of its nonconformity, unless the alteration is to change a standard billboard to a digital billboard in compliance with this section. For purposes of this subsection, normal maintenance and repair, including painting, cleaning, or replacing damaged parts of a sign, shall not be considered an alteration.

~~34.~~ Any sign which is discontinued for a period of 90 consecutive days, regardless of any intent to resume or not to abandon such use, shall be presumed to be abandoned and shall not, thereafter, be reestablished, except in full compliance with this chapter. Any period of such discontinuance caused by government actions, strikes, material shortages, acts of God, and without any contributing fault by the sign user, shall not be considered in

This text reiterates a definition and is not necessary in this part of the code.

Nonconforming off-premises signs can be maintained. Essentially this is the same as what (2) says but now specific to off-premises for clarity.

calculating the length of discontinuance for purposes of this section.

45. Any nonconforming sign damaged or destroyed, by any means, to the extent of one-half of its replacement cost new shall be terminated and shall not be restored.

56. All existing billboards within the City which are not in compliance with the requirements of this section on July 22, 1997, are considered to be nonconforming billboards. Nonconforming billboards shall be made to conform with the requirements of this section under the following circumstances:

a. When ~~any new sign for which a sign permit is required by this section is proposed to be installed~~ any substantial alteration is proposed for a building on a premises upon which is located a nonconforming billboard, the billboard shall be removed or brought into conformance with this section for each new sign installed for a particular business. “Substantial alteration” means all alterations within a two year period whose cumulative value exceeds 200% of the value of the existing structure, as determined by the applicable Building Code

b. Whenever a building, or portion thereof, to which a nonconforming billboard is attached (such as upon the roof or attached to a wall), is proposed to be expanded or remodeled, all nonconforming billboards shall be removed or brought into compliance with this section if the value of the alteration is greater than or equal to 50 percent of the assessed value of the existing building within any two-year period. ~~Whenever a building, or portion thereof, upon which is located a nonconforming rooftop (billboard) sign is proposed to be expanded or remodeled, all nonconforming rooftop billboard signs located on that portion of the building being remodeled or expanded shall be removed or brought into compliance with this section if such expansion or remodel adds to the building the lesser of:~~

~~(1) Twenty percent or more of the floor area of the existing building;~~

~~(2) One thousand square feet floor area; and~~

~~(3) A value for the new construction or remodeling greater than or equal to 50 percent of the assessed value of the existing building.~~

~~e. Whenever any modification is to be made to the structure, frame, or support of any nonconforming billboard sign, such nonconforming billboard sign shall be removed or brought into conformance with this section.~~

~~d. Whenever the facade of a building upon which is located a nonconforming billboard wall sign is remodeled or renovated, all~~

Revised because this presents a burden to property owners and proposed tenants/development over which they may have no control. In light of affirmatively removing billboards with exchange program, becomes less necessary to have this in place to remove nonconforming billboards. Now removal is tied to a major remodels (“Level III”) as used elsewhere in the code.

This language now applies to billboards attached *anywhere* on a building, not just rooftop or the remodeled facade.

This language is consistent with language elsewhere in the TMC, called a “Level II Alteration”, which triggers compliance with other regulations such as landscaping and design.

This language is deleted because it’s a disincentive for maintenance.

Combined into (a), above.

~~nonconforming billboard wall signs located on the portion of the facade being renovated shall be brought into conformance with this section.~~

~~6. The provisions of subsection 5 shall control, except in those instances where an applicant or owner can demonstrate that there exists a binding contract to allow a billboard sign that contains financial penalty provisions for early termination or the absence of termination provisions in the contracts with billboard companies. In those instances, a permit may be issued on the condition that when the contract for the billboard expires, or an option for renewal occurs, the billboard will then be removed, pursuant to subsection 5 above.~~

~~a. To insure compliance with this section, the property owner shall enter into an agreement with the City that identifies the termination date of the contract to allow the billboard and a provision that, if the billboard is not removed, the sign permit issued pursuant to this section will be revoked and the sign will be removed, pursuant to subsection c below.~~

~~b. This provision shall only apply to contracts entered into prior to the adoption of these regulations (July 22, 1997).~~

~~e. Any business owner or property owner seeking to obtain a sign permit for a property that has a nonconforming billboard located on it, and can demonstrate that there are either penalty provisions or the absence of termination provisions in the contracts with billboard companies in the City, shall apply for approval in accordance with the following procedures:~~

~~(1) Application. Prior to installation of a sign, the property owner shall apply for a sign permit with Building and Land Use Services. A complete application shall include a properly completed application form, structural plans, and fees, as prescribed in subsection c.(2) below.~~

~~(2) Fees. An applicant shall pay a fee for the inspection, notification, recording, and enforcement related to the continuation of nonconforming billboards, pursuant to Section 2.09.080, and is in addition to any other required fees.~~

~~(3) Concomitant agreement. Prior to the approval of the sign permit, the property owner shall execute a concomitant agreement with the City. Such agreement shall be in a form as specified by Building and Land Use Services, and approved by the City Attorney, and shall include, at a minimum: (a) the legal description of the property which has been permitted for the sign permit; and (b) the conditions necessary to apply the restrictions and limitations contained in this section. The concomitant agreement~~

Since the section above about no signs being allowed on a site where there's a nonconforming billboard is deleted, this section is no longer necessary.

~~will be recorded prior to issuance of a sign permit by Building and Land Use Services. The concomitant agreement shall run with the land until the nonconforming billboard is removed from the property. The property owner may, at any time, apply to Building and Land Use Services for a termination of the concomitant agreement. Such termination shall be granted, upon proof that the business sign no longer exists on the property or upon proof that the nonconforming billboard no longer exists on the property.~~

~~(4) Permit issuance. Upon receipt of a complete application, application fees, completed concomitant agreement, and upon approval of the structural plans, a sign permit shall be approved.~~

~~(5) Violations. A violation of this section regarding provision of ownership shall be governed by Section 13.05.100.~~

~~(6) Amortization. All legal nonconforming billboard signs shall be discontinued and removed or made conforming within ten years from the effective date of this section, on or before August 1, 2007, and all billboard signs, which are made nonconforming by a subsequent amendment to this section, shall be discontinued and removed or made conforming within ten years after the date of such amendment (collectively the “amortization period”). Upon the expiration of the amortization period, the billboard sign shall be brought into conformance with this section, with a permit obtained, or be removed. Nonconforming billboard signs that are removed prior to the end of the amortization period shall be given an inactive relocation permit, pursuant to subsection M.1.b. of this section.~~

O. Sign variances. Refer to Section 13.06.645.B.5.

13.06.522 District sign regulations.

[See table.]

The following pages show the changes proposed for the district sign tables.

Billboard Code Revisions

Section 13.06.522.J	DCC, DMU	WR	DR
Signage Allocation			
Total sign area allocation for signs attached to buildings and freestanding signs	Each business, 1-1/2 square feet per 1 foot building or street frontage on which the sign(s) will be located (area is calculated from frontage occupied by the business it identifies).	Same as DCC.	1 square foot per 1 foot of building frontage occupied by the business.
Signs Attached to Buildings			
Maximum number	Each business allowed 2 signs per frontage, but no more than 3 signs total for the business, no maximum number for public facility over 5 acres.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Maximum area per sign	Non-residential, 150 square feet per sign. Public facility over 5 acres, 300 square feet. Residential, 20 square feet.	Non-residential, 200 square feet per sign. Residential, 20 square feet.	Non-residential, 100 square feet per sign. Residential, 20 square feet.
Minimum sign area	First floor, 30 square feet. Second floor, 25 square feet.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Wall	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.E shall apply. Shall not exceed 35 feet above grade level, except for 1 corporate logo sign of 150 square feet allowed per building above 35 feet. Public facility over 5 acres not limited to 35 feet above grade.	Same as DCC.	Same as WR, except no corporate logo allowed.
Awning, canopy, marquee, under marquee	Provisions of Sections 13.06.521.H, I, and J shall apply.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Projecting	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.F shall apply with one per building allowed if no freestanding sign exists on the same frontage, shall not extend above 35 feet. Public facility over 5 acres not limited to 35 feet above grade.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Blade	1 per business, shall not exceed 8 square feet per side, shall be illuminated only by indirect lighting, maximum projection of 3-1/2 feet, maximum wide thickness of 12 inches, and shall maintain a minimum clearance of 8 feet above the sidewalk. Area increase of 25% when using symbolic shape, rather than rectangle or square.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Rooftop signs	Prohibited.	Prohibited.	Prohibited.
Billboards	Prohibited except as provided in 16.06.521.M	Prohibited. Same as DCC	Prohibited. Same as DCC
Freestanding Signs			
Maximum number	1 per street frontage, per site not use and no more than 2 per site. 1 per street frontage(s) for public facility over 5 acres.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Maximum area per sign	30 square feet. 300 square feet for public facility over 5 acres.	100 square feet.	30 square feet.

Billboard Code Revisions

Section 13.06.522.J	DCC, DMU	WR	DR
When not allowed	When building signage exceeds the sign area limit, not allowed on the same frontage as a projecting sign.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Maximum height	6 feet. 30 feet for public facility over 5 acres.	20 feet.	6 feet.
Directionals	Shall be limited to 4 feet in height.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Setback	None, but signs shall be on private property.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Billboards	Prohibited.	Prohibited.	Prohibited.
Sign Features			
Lighting	Indirect, flood lighting, internal illumination, neon, and bare bulb allowed.	Same as DCC.	Bare bulb illumination prohibited.
Rotating, animated	Allowed.	Same as DCC.	Prohibited.
Flashing	Prohibited.	Prohibited.	Prohibited.
Changing message center	Allowed.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Temporary Signs			
A-boards	1 permitted each business, shall not exceed 12 square feet in area nor 4 feet in height and shall not be placed on sidewalks less than 12 feet in width.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Banners	1 banner per business with a 60 square feet maximum displayed no longer than 6 months per year. Banners for cultural purposes shall not exceed 400 square feet and are not limited in number or duration.	1 banner per business with a 60 square feet maximum displayed no longer than 6 months per year.	Not allowed.
Flags	Shall be on private property, no advertising allowed except logos.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Window signs	Exempt, but shall not exceed 25 percent of the window area.	Same as DCC.	Same as DCC.
Searchlights, beacons	1 allowed per site, displayed no longer than 7 days per year. No restrictions during an event for public facility over 5 acres.	Same as DCC.	Prohibited.
Temporary off-premises advertising signs	Section 13.06.521.C shall apply, except public facility sites in DCC shall be allowed temporary advertising signs of 32 square feet, including banners not to exceed 160 square feet, attached to temporary fencing during the time of construction.	Prohibited.	Prohibited.

Billboard Code Revisions

Section 13.06.522.K	C-2, CIX, CCX, UCX, UCX-TD, M-1, M-2, PMI	C-1
Signage Allocation		
Maximum total sign area	Wall signage, 1 square foot per 1 linear foot of the building frontage with the public entrance. Freestanding signage, 1 square foot per 1 linear foot of street frontage(s).	Same as C-2.
Signs Attached to Buildings		
Maximum number	3 per business, 25 percent allocation allowed on building wall(s) without a public entrance. (Note: 50 percent is allowed provided only 2 signs are installed at the business.) No maximum number for public facility over 5 acres.	Same as C-2.
Maximum area per sign	200 square feet. 400 square feet for public facility over 5 acres.	100 square feet.
Minimum sign area	Each business allowed 30 square feet regardless of frontage.	Same as C-2.
Wall	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.E shall apply.	Same as C-2.
Awning, canopy, marquee, under-marquee	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.H, I, and J shall apply.	Same as C-2.
Projecting	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.F shall apply, maximum projection 6-1/2 feet. Single business, in lieu of freestanding sign. Multi-business, not allowed.	Same as C-2.
Blade	1 per business, maximum 8 square feet per side, illuminated only by indirect lighting, maximum projection of 3-1/2 feet, maximum wide thickness of 12 inches, and shall maintain a minimum clearance of 8 feet above the sidewalk. Area increase of 25% when using symbolic shape, rather than rectangle or square.	Same as C-2.
Roof signs	Prohibited.	Prohibited.
Billboards	Allowed only in C-2, M-1, M-2, and PMI. Provisions of and as provided in Section 13.06.521.M shall apply.	Prohibited <u>except as provided in 16.06.521.M.</u>
Freestanding Signs		
Maximum number	1 per street frontage, each 300 feet considered separate street frontage, corner sites require a minimum 300 feet on both frontages for an additional sign.	Same as C-2.
Maximum area per sign	200 square feet (additional 100 square feet allowed for name of shopping center), sites with freeway frontage shall not exceed 75 percent of the maximum allowed. 400 square feet for public facility over 5 acres.	100 square feet.
When not allowed	No freestanding sign shall be on same frontage as a projecting sign.	Same as C-2.
Maximum height	35 feet maximum; signs located 300 feet or less from residential district shall not exceed height of building it identifies. Sign height for site with freeway frontage is prohibited to exceed height of building it identifies. 45 feet for public facility over 5 acres.	6 feet for sites with less than 100 feet of frontage, 15 feet for sites with frontage between 100 feet and 300 feet, no sign shall exceed the height of the building it identifies.
Directionals	Shall be limited to 4 feet in height, except 15 feet shall be allowed in PMI.	Same as C-2.

Billboard Code Revisions

Section 13.06.522.K	C-2, CIX, CCX, UCX, UCX-TD, M-1, M-2, PMI	C-1
Off-premises directionals	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.L shall apply, except 25 square feet shall be allowed in PMI with a maximum height of 15 feet and a maximum number of four per business.	Same as C-2.
Setback	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.G shall apply, minimum 200 feet separation from other freestanding signs, sites with freeway frontage shall locate signs on the abutting parallel frontage, no signs shall be allowed adjacent to the freeway.	Same as C-2.
Billboards	Allowed only in C-2, M-1, M-2, and PMI. Provisions of Section 13.06.521.M shall apply.	Prohibited.
Sign Features		
Lighting	Indirect, flood lighting, internal illumination, neon and bare bulb allowed.	Bare bulb illumination prohibited.
Rotating, animated	Allowed.	Prohibited.
Flashing	Not to exceed 15 percent of sign face, nor visible within 400 feet of residential zone.	Prohibited.
Changing message center	Allowed.	Same as C-2.
Temporary Signs		
A-boards	1 per business, on private property, 12 square feet per side, 4 feet height.	Same as C-2.
Banners	1 per business, 60 square feet maximum, 6 months per year. Banners for cultural purposes shall not exceed 400 square feet and are not limited in number or duration.	Prohibited.
Flags, pennants	Shall be on private property, no advertising allowed, except logos.	Same as C-2.
Window signs	Exempt, but shall not exceed 25 percent of the window area.	Same as C-2.
Searchlights, beacons	One allowed per site, displayed no longer than 7 days per year. No restrictions during an event for public facility over 5 acres.	Prohibited.
Temporary off-premises advertising signs	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.C shall apply, except public facility sites in UCX-TD shall be allowed temporary advertising signs of 32 square feet each, including banners not to exceed 160 square feet, attached to temporary fencing during the time of construction.	Prohibited.

Billboard Code Revisions

13.06.522.L	T, NCX, URX, Non-Residential Districts with VSD	HM, HMX
Signage Allocation		
Maximum total sign area	1-1/2 square feet per 1 linear feet of building frontage abutting a street frontage, applies to the first 50 feet, with 1/2 square foot per 1 linear foot of building frontage over 50 feet.	HM and HMX sign regulations for use by hospitals only, all other uses in HM and HMX to follow T sign regulations.
Signs Attached to Buildings		
Maximum number	2 per primary frontage (1 may be ground sign), 1 per perpendicular frontage(s), 1 per alley frontage with a public entrance.	One per elevation.
Maximum area per sign	Shall not exceed size allocation on primary frontage, 50 square feet on perpendicular frontage(s), 25 square feet on alley frontage, 10 square feet on upper story or basement uses.	Identification signs at 75 square feet. Directional signs at 25 square feet.
Minimum sign area	30 square feet, except for upper story or basement uses.	
Wall	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.E shall apply.	Same as T.
Awning, canopy	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.J shall apply.	Same as T.
Marquee, under-marquee	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.H and I shall apply.	Same as T.
Projecting	40 square feet with frontage of at least 25 feet and not allowed on alleys, provisions of Section 13.06.521.F shall apply.	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.G shall apply.
Roof signs	Prohibited.	Same as T.
Billboards	Prohibited.	Same as T.
Freestanding Signs		
Maximum number	1 per site, sign area shared with building sign allocation (not allowed on an alley).	1 per right-of-way frontage or 1 per access, regardless the number of major accesses on one right-of-way frontage.
Maximum area per sign	30 square feet.	Identification or directory signs at 50 square feet. Directional signs at 25 square feet.
When not allowed	When the building signage has utilized the allowed sign area for wall signage or when a projection sign exists on the site.	N/A.
Maximum height	6 feet.	Identification or directory signs at 15 feet.
Directionals	Shall be limited to 4 feet in height.	Shall be limited to 6 feet in height.
Setback	None, but signs shall be on private property.	Same as T.
Billboards	Prohibited <u>except as provided in 16.06.521.M.</u>	Same as T.
Sign Features		
Lighting	Indirect, flood lighting, or internal illumination allowed. No bare bulb illumination allowed. All external lighting to be directed away from adjacent properties to minimize effects of light and glare upon adjacent uses.	Same as T.

Billboard Code Revisions

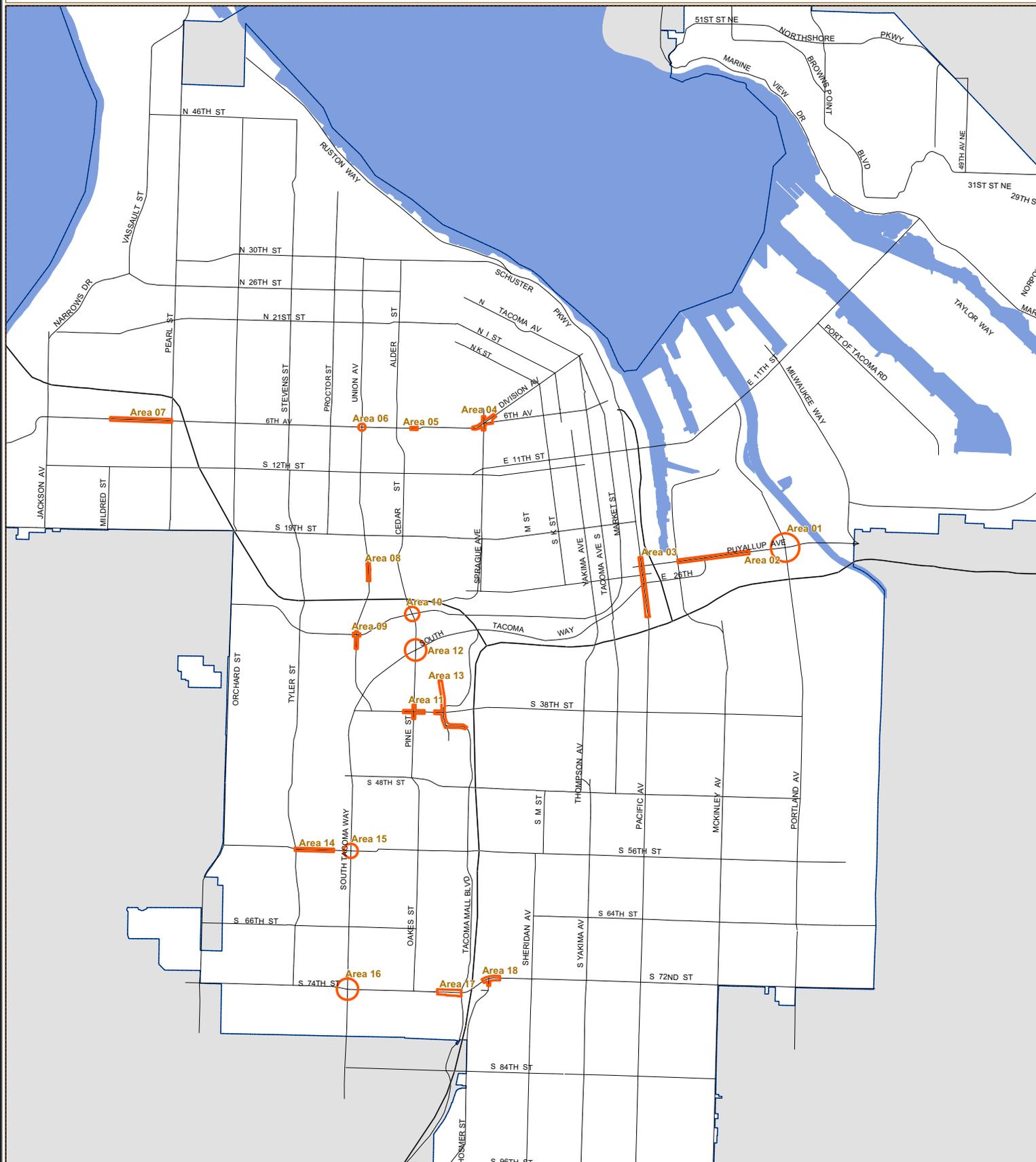
13.06.522.L	T, NCX, URX, Non-Residential Districts with VSD	HM, HMX
Rotating, animated	Prohibited.	Same as T.
Flashing	Prohibited.	Same as T.
Changing message center	Allowed.	Same as T.
Temporary Signs		
A-boards	1 per business, on private property, 12 square feet per side, 4 feet height.	Prohibited.
Banners, pennants	Prohibited.	Banners allowed at 30 square feet.
Flags	Prohibited, except for the national flag, state flag, flags of other political subdivisions.	Same as T.
Window signs	Exempt, but shall not exceed 25 percent of the window area.	Same as T.
Incidental public service signs	Less than 4 square feet, contains no advertising, intended to provide messages such as "no parking," "exit," "entrance," etc.	Same as T.
Searchlights, beacons	Prohibited.	Same as T.

Section 13.06.522.M	PDB	RCX
Signage Allocation		
Maximum total sign area	Single business (wall signs), ½ square foot per 1 linear foot of building frontage.	1 square foot per 1 linear foot of building frontage abutting a street frontage, applies to the first 50 feet, with 1/2 square foot per 1 linear foot of building frontage over 50 ft.
Signs Attached to Buildings		
Maximum number	Single business, 1 per elevation, 2 total. Multi-business, 1 per business.	2 per primary frontage (1 may be a ground sign), 1 per perpendicular frontage(s), 1 per alley frontage with a public entrance.
Maximum area per sign	Single business, 75 square feet per elevation, total 150 square feet for all signs. Multi-business, 20 square feet.	30 square feet maximum on perpendicular frontage(s), but not to exceed size area allocation, 10 square feet on alley frontage, upper story and basement uses.
Minimum sign area	Single business, 30 square feet each business regardless of frontage. Multi-business, 20 square feet each business regardless of frontage.	20 square feet each business regardless of frontage.
Wall	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.E shall apply.	Same as PDB.
Awning, canopy, marquee, under-marquee	Provisions of Section 13.06.521.H, I, and J shall apply .	Same as PDB.
Roof signs	Prohibited.	Prohibited.
Billboards	Prohibited <u>except as provided in 16.06.521.M.</u>	Prohibited. <u>Same as PDB</u>

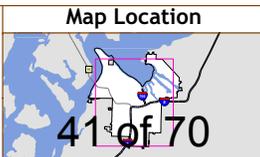
Billboard Code Revisions

Section 13.06.522.M	PDB	RCX
Freestanding Signs		
Maximum number	1 per site (single or multi-business) located in landscaped area.	1 per site (not allowed on an alley).
Maximum area per sign	30 square feet.	25 square feet.
Maximum height	6 feet.	4 feet.
Directionals	Shall be limited to 4 feet in height.	Same as PDB.
Setback	Minimum 5 feet from property lines.	None, but signs shall be on private property.
Billboards	Prohibited.	Prohibited.
Sign Features		
Lighting	Indirect, flood lighting, or internal illumination allowed. No bare bulb or neon illumination allowed. All external lighting shall be directed away from adjacent properties to minimize effects of light and glare upon adjacent uses.	Same as PDB.
Rotating, animated	Prohibited.	Same as PDB.
Flashing	Prohibited.	Same as PDB.
Changing message center	Allowed.	Prohibited.
Temporary Signs		
A-boards	Prohibited.	1 per business, on private property, 12 square feet per side, 4 feet in height.
Banners, pennants	Prohibited.	Prohibited.
Window signs	Exempt, but shall not exceed 25 percent of the window area.	Same as PDB.
Flags	Prohibited, except the national flag, state flag, flags of other political subdivisions.	Same as PDB.
Incidental public service signs	Less than 4 square feet, contains no advertising, intended to provide messages such as “no parking,” “exit,” “entrance,” etc.	Same as PDB.
Searchlights, beacons	Prohibited.	Prohibited.

Special Receiving Areas



Legend
 Digital Billboards Receiving Areas



City of Tacoma
 Community & Economic Development Department
 GIS Analysis & Data Services

This drawing is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. It is to be used for study purposes only.



Community Meeting

POTENTIAL REVISIONS TO THE SIGN CODE FOR BILLBOARDS
JANUARY 31, 2011

Exhibit D

SUMMARY

The public meeting format was designed to inform the public about potential revisions the sign code for billboards and to allow attendees the chance to share their thoughts or ideas on the information presented. The room was set up with two informational stations which included four large maps detailing the 18 potential locations for digital billboards (also potential locations for the 10 new billboards or 'receiving areas'), the 53 existing billboard faces to be removed, the current billboards within the city, and where billboards are currently allowed.

There were approximately 35 meeting attendees. Attendees were given approximately one-half hour to review the content of the maps on display, to sign in, and to engage in informal conversation with City Staff and representatives from Clear Channel prior to the start of the presentation.

At approximately 5:30 PM the formal presentation began and lasted until about 5:50 PM. During the presentation, Shirley Schultz, Principal Planner from the City of Tacoma, and Shelley Kerlake, the attorney advising the City on this process, presented the background, existing conditions, and the potential outcomes of the process which are dependent on the Planning Commission and community input.

A time for questions and answers followed the presentation and lasted until about 6:30 PM. In general, the major concerns or questions posed were:

- Light emissions- especially during the darker hours
- Traffic impacts- safety issues
- The allowed height of new billboards
- The perceived negative aesthetic qualities of billboards
- The likelihood of eliminating all billboards within the city
- If the City can determine which of the billboards can come down
- How to regulate the billboards going forward

Additional comments received from meeting attendees were:

- That priority should be given to billboards in residential areas for removal
- Impact of light and glare of existing billboards in residential area is negative
- Urged to continue with only allowing currently allowed square footage of billboard faces

The participants were informed when and how they can receive more information and how they can participate in the process moving forward. The meeting was concluded when all of the participants left at around 6:45 PM.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING & QUESTION/ANSWER SESSION

POTENTIAL REVISIONS TO THE SIGN CODE FOR BILLBOARDS

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, March 16, 2011 5:00 pm City Council Chambers
Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 1st Floor

If you are interested in learning more about the proposed changes prior to the public hearing, please attend the Question and Answer Session, where staff will provide a detailed explanation of the proposed changes and answer questions.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION WITH STAFF

Wednesday, March 9, 2011 6:00 pm City Council Chambers
Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, 1st Floor

WHAT IS BEING CONSIDERED?

The Tacoma Planning Commission is considering revisions to the City's billboard regulations which would allow for the installation of a limited number of digital billboards in certain areas in exchange for the removal of a substantial number of traditional billboards. In addition, the Commission is considering revisions regarding the allowed size, location, brightness, hours of operation, and other standards for digital billboards. While new digital billboards would be allowed only in certain areas, the proposed changes would apply city-wide and could result in the removal of existing billboards from many different areas.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC HEARING?

The Planning Commission is seeking public comment on these potential code changes. You received this notice because you or a group you belong to has been identified as a potentially interested party.



WHERE CAN I GET ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

Additional information, including the complete text of the proposed revisions, the staff report, maps showing the areas where new digital billboards would be allowed and the first group of existing billboards that would be removed, and the environmental determination, is available from the Community and Economic Development Department at the address to the right, at all branches of the Tacoma Public Library, and on the Planning Division website:

www.cityoftacoma.org/planning (click on “Billboard Regulations”)

HOW DO I PROVIDE COMMENTS TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION?

You can testify at the hearing or provide written comments using the return address on this card no later than 5:00 pm on **Friday, March 25, 2011** or by facsimile at (253) 591-2002 or via e-mail at planning@cityoftacoma.org.

If you have additional questions please feel free to contact Shirley Schultz, Principal Planner, at:

(253) 591-5121

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The City has made a preliminary determination that this proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the environment and has issued a preliminary Determination of Environmental Non-Significance (DNS) after review of a completed environmental checklist, a copy of which is available upon request. Comments on the preliminary determination must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on **Friday, March 25, 2011**. The City may reconsider or modify the preliminary determination in light of timely comments. The preliminary determination will become final on April 1, 2011, unless modified.

The City of Tacoma does not discriminate on the basis of handicap in any of its programs or services. Upon request, special accommodations will be provided within five (5) business days by contacting the City Clerk's Office at 591-5171 (voice) or 591-5058 (TDD).



PLANNING COMMISSION
747 MARKET STREET – ROOM 1036
TACOMA WA 98402
(253) 591-5365

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Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance

**City of Tacoma –Land Use Regulatory Code
Proposed Amendments to Sign Regulations
SEPA File Number: SEP2011-40000158817**

TO: All Departments and Agencies with Jurisdiction

SUBJECT: Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance

In accordance with WAC 197-11-340, a copy of the Preliminary Determination of Environmental Nonsignificance for the project described below is transmitted:

Applicant: City of Tacoma Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402
(253) 591-5365

Proposal:

The proposed Amendment would revise three sections in Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code (i.e., 13.06.520 Signs, 13.06.521 General Sign Regulations, and 13.06.522 District Sign Regulations) as they pertain to the regulation of billboards within the City of Tacoma. The revisions will include consideration of an agreement that has been developed between the City Council and Clear Channel Outdoor and will include allowing the installation of digital billboards in exchange for the removal of a substantial number of static billboards. More specifically, the Land Use Regulatory code changes may include changes to height, size, location and other standards for digital billboards.

Copies of the complete text of the proposed revisions are available from the Community and Economic Development Department at the below address and may also be viewed and downloaded at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning

Location: City of Tacoma

Lead Agency: City of Tacoma

Determination of Nonsignificance

SEP2011-40000158817

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City Contact: Cheri Gibbons
Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402
(253) 591-5379

The lead agency for this proposal has made a preliminary determination that this project does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2) (c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request. This Preliminary Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) is issued under WAC 197-11-340(2). **Comments must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on March 25, 2011. The Responsible Official will reconsider the DNS based on timely comments and may retain, modify, or, if significant adverse impacts are likely, withdraw the DNS. Unless modified by the City, this determination will become final on April 1, 2011.**

There is no administrative appeal for this determination. Appeals must be filed in conjunction with appeals of the adopted amendments to the Growth Management Hearings Board; appeals shall be taken in accordance with procedures and limitations set forth in RCW 43.21C.075 and WAC 242-02. In addition to Growth Management Hearings Board requirements, a copy of the appeal shall be filed with the Community and Economic Development Department, 747 Market Street, Tacoma, Washington 98402.

The Puyallup Tribe is notified that this initiates the consultation process.

Responsible Official: Ryan Petty

Position/Title: Director, Community and Economic Development Department

Signature: _____



SEPA Officer Signature: _____



Issue Date: **February 23, 2011.**

Comment Deadline: **5:00 p.m., March 25, 2011**

NOTE: The issuance of this Preliminary Determination of Nonsignificance does not constitute project approval. Future project applicants must comply with all other applicable requirements of the City of Tacoma and other agencies with jurisdiction prior to receiving development permits.

Determination of Nonsignificance

SEP2011-40000158817

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- c: Tacoma Community and Economic Development Department, Elton Gatewood, Reuben McKnight, Shirley Schultz
Kenyon Disend, PLLC., Shelly M. Kerslake, 11 Front Street, South, Issaquah, WA 98027
Clear Channel Outdoor, Michael Mayes, Real Estate Manager, 3601 Sixth Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98134
Metro Parks, Lois Stark, 4702 South 19th Street, Tacoma, WA 98405
Nature and Environment Advisory Council, Terry Larson, 808 North Ainsworth Ave., Tacoma, WA 98403
Pierce Transit, Monica Adams, Land Use Review, PO Box 99070, Lakewood, WA 98499
Port of Tacoma, Jason Jordan, P.O. Box 1837, Tacoma, WA 98401
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Bill Sullivan, Natural Resources Director, 3009 E. Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, David Duenos, Building Official, 3009 E. Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA. 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Judy Wright, Historic Preservation,, 3009 E. Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA. 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Jeffrey Thomas, Fisheries, 3009 E. Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA. 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Theodora Wallace, Land Use Manager, 3009 E. Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA. 98404
Puyallup Tribe of Indians, Andrea George, Attorney, 3009 Portland Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98404
Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, Sherrilyn Reed, EH-3128 – 3629 South D Street, Tacoma, WA 98418
Tacoma Pierce County Health Department, Brad Harp, EH-3128 – 3629 South D Street, Tacoma, WA 98418
Tacoma Public School District, Pete Wall, 3323 South Union Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98049
Washington Department of Ecology, SEPA Unit, P.O. Box 47703, Olympia, WA 98504
Department of Transportation, Dale Severson, P.O. Box 474400, Olympia, WA 98504
Washington State Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation, Gretchen Kaehler, P.O. Box 48343, 1063 S. Capital
Way, Suite 106, Olympia, WA 98501

File: Building and Land Use Services

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

*City of Tacoma
Land Use Regulatory Code
Proposed Amendments to the Sign Code for Billboards*

**SEPA File Number:
SEP2011-40000158817**

February 2011

**Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402-3793
253-591-5365**

ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

City of Tacoma Land Use Regulatory Code:
Proposed Amendments to Chapter 13.06.520, .521, .522, - Sign Code for Billboards

2. Proponent/applicant:

City of Tacoma
Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402-3793

3. Contact:

Cheri Gibbons, Associate Planner
City of Tacoma
Community and Economic Development Department
747 Market Street, Room 345
Tacoma, WA 98402-3793
Phone: (253) 591-5379
Fax: (253) 591-5433
E-mail: cgibbons@cityoftacoma.org

4. Date checklist prepared: February 17, 2011

5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Tacoma
Community & Economic Development Department

6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

The schedule for the 2011 Sign Code Update encompasses the following milestones:

January 2011-March 2011:	Analysis of the proposed amendments
January-March 2011:	Public review of the proposed amendments
March 16, 2011:	Planning Commission public hearing
March 25, 2011:	Public comment deadline
April 2011:	Planning Commission makes recommendations to the City Council
April -May 2011:	City Council review of the Commission's recommendations
May 2011:	City Council public hearing
June 2011:	City Council considers adoption of the proposed amendments
July 2011:	Adopted amendments take effect

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

Land Use regulations are amended periodically, consistent with the State Growth Management Act. The proposed changes will apply to future billboard installation and removals and will provide the basis to evaluate and regulate future digital and traditional billboard development proposals.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

Environmental analysis has been completed in association with previous ordinances to the Land Use Regulatory Code relative to billboards. Specifically, a Determination of Nonsignificance was issued on June 6, 1988, in association with Ordinance 24230 which created the City's billboard regulations. The previous ordinances which have amended the sign code relative to billboards are as follows:

- Ordinance 24230, adopted November 15, 1988
- Ordinance 26101, adopted July 22, 1997
- Ordinance 26411, adopted April 27, 1999

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

There are no known applications; however, future development applications for the installation or removal of billboards would be subject to the approved changes to the Land Use Regulatory Code.

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

The proposed amendments to the Land Use Regulatory Code will be adopted by the City Council by ordinance, i.e. through the legislative process. Future development applications for billboards will be subject to the amended regulations and be approved through issuance of various permits and approvals as required.

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site.

The proposed Amendment would revise three sections in Title 13 of the Tacoma Municipal Code (i.e., 13.06.520 Signs, 13.06.521 General Sign Regulations, and 13.06.522 District Sign Regulations) as they pertain to the regulation of billboards within the City of Tacoma. The revisions will include consideration of a settlement agreement that has been developed between the City Council and Clear Channel Outdoor and will include allowing the installation of digital billboards in exchange for the removal of a substantial number of static billboards. More specifically, the Land Use Regulatory Code changes include changes to height, size, location and other standards for digital billboards.

Copies of the complete text of the proposed revisions, including maps where applicable, are available from the Community and Economic Development Department at the address shown

on the cover page and at all branches of the Tacoma Public Library. The proposed revisions may also be viewed or downloaded at www.cityoftacoma.org/planning (Click on "Billboard Regulations").

The regulations will be in effect throughout the City and are not specifically related to any one property, project, or site.

12. Location of the Proposal: (Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s).)

The proposed amendment entails only a non-project action and affects properties throughout the City of Tacoma. The responses provided from this point forward imply city-wide applicability, unless otherwise specified.

13. Assessor Parcel Number:

Affected parcels are located throughout the city and are too numerous to list.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS

1. Earth

a. General description of the site (underline one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other:

Topography within the city is widely varied, ranging from large flat areas to areas of significant steep slope. Overall, the city can be described as hilly and/or rolling.

What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

The highest point in the City is Indian Hill in NE Tacoma (Orca, Galleon, & Tower Drive) at 552 feet. The lowest point is sea level (Puget Sound). The steepest areas are the bluffs that are adjacent to the Narrows and Commencement Bay. There are areas within the City which contain slopes that exceed 100%.

b. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.

The soils in Tacoma consist of gravel, sand, clay, silt, peat, and muck. There are no known areas of prime farmland or agricultural soils.

c. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity?

Tacoma is designated as a Zone 3 Seismic Hazard Zone, as is the entire Puget Sound region. This designation is based on life safety and the potential for property damage as a result of seismic activity. Zone 1 includes those areas that are least likely and Zone 4 includes those that are most likely to experience injury and/or building damage as a result of a seismic event. The City's geologically hazardous areas are generally mapped in the Environmental Policy Element of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

- d. Describe the purpose, type and approximate quantities of filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.**

No grading or filling is proposed by this non-project action. Site-specific impacts of any filling or grading will be assessed as part of the review of a future billboard proposal.

- e. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.**

This proposal is a non-project action. Erosion controls based on the City's adopted stormwater manual and development codes will be made a requirement by the City at the time of permit approval and construction. All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development.

- f. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?**

The proposal is a non-project action. Calculations of impervious surfaces would be prepared and evaluated at the time of development application review.

- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any:**

The proposed amendment is a non-project action. Future billboard development proposals will be required to meet the grading and erosion control requirements of the City of Tacoma at the time of development.

2. Air

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities, if known.**

The proposal is non-project action. Emissions could occur during construction of billboards.

- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.**

No.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any.**

N/A

3. Water

- a. Surface**

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.**

Most of Tacoma is on a peninsula surrounded on the west by portions of Puget Sound, including the Narrows, and on the east by Commencement Bay. Additionally there are several lakes, including Wapato Lake, Snake Lake, and China Lake; numerous streams

and rivers such as the Puyallup River, Swan Creek, Puget Creek, and Hylebos Creek; and, a significant number of seasonal and perennial streams and wetlands.

- 2) Will the project require any work in or adjacent to (within 200 feet) of the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.**

Does not apply; this proposal is a non-project action. New billboards are prohibited within shoreline areas, and it is extremely unlikely that a proposed billboard would meet the criteria for a critical area development permit – thus prohibiting a new billboard in a wetland/stream or its buffer.

- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.**

Does not apply; this proposal is a non-project action.

- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities, if known.**

Does not apply; this proposal is a non-project action. However, it is extremely unlikely that construction of a billboard would result in any impacts to surface water.

- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year flood plain? If so, note location on the site plan.**

The 100-year flood plain within the city includes the following areas: Puyallup River; an area of the Tide-flats near SR-509 and Portland Avenue; an area of the Tide-flats near Taylor Way, Alexander Avenue and SR-509; the creek area east of Portland Avenue between I-5 and S. 56th Street; the Larchmont Playground area near S. 84th Street and Pacific Avenue; the area near S. 84th and S. Hosmer Streets; the Wapato Lake area near S. 72nd Street and Sheridan Avenue; the Flett Creek area near South Tacoma Way and S. 74th Street; the China Lake Park area near S. 19th Street and SR-16; and, the Titlow Park area near 6th Avenue and the BNSF railroad tracks.

- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.**

Does not apply; this proposal is a non-project action. However, it is extremely unlikely that the construction of a billboard would result in such discharges.

b. Ground:

- 1) Will the ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharged to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities, if known.**

The proposal does not involve ground water withdrawal or discharge. All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development.

- 2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any. For example: domestic sewage, industrial, containing the following chemicals . . . agricultural; etc. Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served, if applicable, or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

This proposal is a non-project action. However, it is extremely unlikely that the construction of a billboard would result in such discharges.

c. **Water Runoff (including storm water):**

- 1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

The storm drainage system impacts from the installation of billboards that occur will be evaluated at the time of development proposal(s). Mitigation may be required in accordance with City regulations, including the *City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual*.

- 2) Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters?

This proposal is a non-project action. Stormwater runoff would need to comply with City regulations, including the *City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual*, at the time of development.

- d. **Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any.**

City ordinances require any proposed development meet the City's stormwater requirements found in the *City of Tacoma Stormwater Management Manual*, including applicable Department of Ecology Best Management Practices (BMPs).

4. **Plants**

- a. **Check or circle types of vegetation found on the site.**

- deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
 evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
 shrubs
 grass
 pasture
 crop or grain
 wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other
 water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
 other types of vegetation

- b. **What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?**

Proposal is a non-project action. No specific removal of plants is planned. Impacts will be reviewed at the billboard development proposal stage, and any removed landscaping will be required to be replaced.

c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

Threatened or endangered species known to be found within the City include:

None known.

This proposal involves a non-project action. All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:

The proposal involves a non-project action. The code revisions include requiring screening and other landscaping to address site aesthetics. The proposed code also prohibits the removal and pruning of street trees to enhance visibility of a billboard.

5. Animals

a. Underline any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site:

Birds: hawk, heron, bald eagle, songbirds

other: seagulls, crows, pigeons

Mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver

other: squirrel, raccoon, opossum, rabbit, rodents, dogs, cats

Fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring

other:

b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.

The proposal involves a non-project action. Commencement Bay provides habitat for a wide variety of fish species. Threatened or endangered species within the City vicinity could include:

Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*)

Streaked horned lark (*Eremophila alpestris strigata*)

Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus (=Salmo) tshawytscha*)

Chum salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*)

Bocaccio rockfish (*Sebastes paucispinis*)

Canary rockfish (*Sebastes pinniger*)

Yelloweye rockfish (*Sebastes ruberrimus*)

Puget Sound Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus (=Salmo) mykiss*)

Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*)

Humpback Whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*)

Killer Whale (*Orcinus orca*)

Steller Sea Lion (*Eumetopias jubatus*)

Oregon Spotted Frog (*Rana pretiosa*)

The Pacific Pond Turtle (*Actinemys marmorata*)

Western Pocket Gopher (*Thomomys mazama*)

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

The City of Tacoma is within the Pacific Flyway for migratory birds. Migrating species of geese and ducks can be found in Wapato Lake, other lakes, ponds, wetlands, and waterways of Tacoma, as well as the Puyallup River. Juvenile salmon migrate along the shorelines of Commencement Bay, the Puyallup River, and Port waterways. Adult salmon, including listed Puget Sound Chinook and Bull trout migrate along the shorelines and within Commencement Bay to the Puyallup River, port waterways, Hylebos Creek, Puget Creek, Wapato Creek, and Leach Creek.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any.

The proposal is a non-project action. Billboard proposals would be reviewed for compliance with City ordinances including the Critical Areas Protection Ordinance. A Habitat Zone map is established in the Environmental Policy Element of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Also, wetlands and streams of local significance are established in the Tacoma Municipal Code and the Environmental Policy Element.

6. Energy and Natural Resources

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs:

The proposal is a non-project action. Future digital billboards will use electricity.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

This proposal is a non-project action. All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any.

The proposal is a non-project action. All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development. Digital billboards will be required to "power off" several hours a day; while the purpose of this is not energy conservation, off time will reduce energy usage.

7. Environmental Health

a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

This proposal is a non-project action. Specific hazards will be assessed at the billboard development stage. At billboard development stage, all requirements of the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department and Washington Department of Ecology (and if applicable, the Environmental Protection Agency, if the site is located within the Ruston/North Tacoma Superfund Study Area) will be complied with. In addition, the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department will provide general requirements regarding development of the site that shall be met by the applicant. The manufacturer and owner of digital signs will be responsible for

compliance with all applicable regulations regarding electronic waste resulting from the use of these signs.

1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.

None; proposals are non-project actions.

2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:

Existing federal, state, and local laws are expected to mitigate potential environmental health hazards from billboard developments that would occur under the proposed revised regulations. This issue would be evaluated at the development proposal stage. Demolition permits for removed billboards (both standard and digital) will specify proper disposal or recycling of all waste.

b. Noise

1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project, (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

The predominant sources of noise in Tacoma are vehicular traffic and aircraft over flights. Noise is also present in the industrial areas of the city and adjacent to the mainline train tracks. This proposal is a non-project action.

2) What types of levels would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or long-term basis (i.e., traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site.

This proposal is a non-project action. Noise would occur when a future digital billboard project is under construction, and potentially during its operation, and would be required to comply with the City's adopted Noise Ordinance, *TMC* 8.122.

3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any.

Noise impacts will be evaluated at the billboard proposal stage and mitigation required in accordance with City ordinances.

8. Land and Shoreline Use

a. What is the current use of the site?

The proposal entails only a non-project action and affects properties throughout the City of Tacoma and is not site-specific.

b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.

Portions of the city have been used for agricultural purposes in the past but there are no indications of recent agricultural uses and there are no significant commercial agricultural uses currently operating in the city.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

The proposal entails a non-project action and affects properties throughout the City of Tacoma and is not site-specific.

d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

This proposal is a non-project action. Installation of digital billboards requires the demolition of existing traditional billboards at specified ratios. The first 10 will result in the demolition of 53 structures, thereafter, for each digital billboard constructed, at least 5 standard billboard faces will be removed. All removals will require appropriate demolition permits.

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

The proposal entails only a non-project action and affects properties throughout the City of Tacoma and is not site-specific. There are 19 areas identified as possible locations for first 10 faces. Zoning is for those 19 areas is as follows:

- “R-2” – Single-Family Dwelling
- “R4L-PRD” – Low-Intensity Multifamily, Planned Residential Development
- “RCX” – Residential-Commercial Mixed-Use
- “WR” – Warehouse Residential
- “NCX” – Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use
- “CCX” – Community Commercial Mixed-Use
- “UCX-TD” – Urban Center Mixed-Use/Tacoma Dome
- “C-2” - General Community Commercial
- “M-1” – Light Industrial
- “M-2” – Heavy Industrial

Future billboards are only permitted in the following zoning districts:

- “C-2” – General Community Commercial
- “M-1” – Light Industrial
- “M-2” – Heavy Industrial
- “PMI” – Port Maritime Industrial

f. What is the current *Comprehensive Plan* designation of the site?

The proposal entails only a non-project action and affects properties throughout the City of Tacoma and is not site-specific. The Plan designation for the 19 sites is either Low, Medium or High Intensity. The Plan designation for the areas in the four zoning districts where relocated billboards may be allowed is either Medium or High Intensity

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

The shoreline master program designates areas 200 feet landward of the ordinary high watermark as within various shoreline environment classifications (e.g. ‘urban’, ‘natural’, and ‘conservancy’) and within specific shoreline zoning districts, S-1 to S-14. This proposal is not site-specific. No billboards are permitted within shoreline districts.

- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.**

This proposal is a non-project action and specific impacts to critical areas associated with billboards will be assessed at the project review and approval stage.

- i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?**

N/A

- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?**

Proposal is a non-project action.

- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any.**

No specific measures are needed or proposed at this time.

- l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land use and plans, if any.**

The proposed changes to the Regulatory Code have been reviewed for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Individual locations where digital billboards have been proposed may be inconsistent with goals and policies for pedestrian-oriented development and for neighborhood aesthetics; however, in the aggregate, the removal of a substantial number of billboards will further the goals of the Plan.

Other than the first 10 faces, new digital billboards will be subject to dispersal requirements and buffering from sensitive uses.

9. Housing

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**

No new units of housing are proposed.

- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.**

Does not apply.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any.**

All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development.

10. Aesthetics

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?**

The proposal is a non-project action. The height of new billboards constructed pursuant to the revised ordinance will be limited to 30 feet in all districts except the PMI District where the maximum height will be 45 feet.

b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

The proposal is a non-project action. All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development. While views in individual areas may change, overall there will be a significant reduction in the number of billboards in the city. In most cases new billboards will be located where a billboard already exists, and no new billboards will be allowed in shoreline areas or in view-sensitive overlay areas. No significant impacts are expected on a city-wide basis.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any.

Billboard height, lighting, size, and location will be regulated in the code to control adverse impacts to the surrounding area. City-wide the amended regulations will result in fewer billboards. New billboards will be subject to both dispersal criteria (distance from other billboards) and buffering criteria (distance from sensitive uses). Future billboards will be located in commercial and industrial areas.

11. Light and Glare

a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

The proposal is a non-project action. New billboards permitted pursuant to the revised regulations will be internally illuminated (digital LED technology). The regulations will impose controls on billboards brightness, adjustable/ambient lighting, and pollution. Billboards will also be turned off during the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m.

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

Billboards permitted pursuant to the revised regulations will be designed to avoid glare and distraction for drivers through limits placed on sign intensity, brilliance, and image duration. Such standards include not allowing flashing images or allowing images to imitate traffic control devices. In addition, prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant will be required to provide certification that the intensity does not exceed the limits set in the ordinance, to the approval of the City Engineer. Further, no significant changes to currently-allowed heights are proposed. The height of new billboards constructed pursuant to the revised ordinance will be limited to 30 feet in all districts except the PMI District where the maximum height will be 45 feet.

c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

The proposal is a non-project action. Billboards installed pursuant to the regulatory changes will not be impacted by light or glare from other sources. Digital billboards will be equipped with ambient light sensors which will adjust the brightness of the signs in accordance with surrounding conditions.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any.

This is a non-project action. Billboards permitted pursuant to the revised regulations will be designed to avoid glare and distraction for drivers through limits placed on sign intensity, brilliance, and image duration. Such standards include not allowing flashing images or

allowing images to imitate traffic control devices, for example. In addition, prior to the issuance of a sign permit, the applicant will be required to provide certification that the intensity does not exceed the limits set in the ordinance, to the approval of the City Engineer. Billboards will also be turned off during the hours of 10:00 p. m. and 5:00 a.m.

12. Recreation

a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

Various recreational opportunities exist throughout the city, including parks, trails, playfields, shorelines, and cultural facilities. These are described in the Open Space Habitat and Recreation Element of the *Comprehensive Plan*. The majority of new billboards will be required be buffered from recreational uses to avoid aesthetic impacts or view blockage.

b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

Does not apply. Billboards will not displace any recreational uses.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any.

The proposal is a non-project action. Buffering of 250 feet from recreational uses will apply.

13. Historic and Cultural Preservation

Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site?

The proposal is a non-project action.

Citywide, there are over 1,100 sites, structures, properties and buildings listed on the national, state, and Tacoma Registers of Historic Places as either individual properties or within one of Tacoma's six historic and conservation districts. Approximately 130 of the properties are individually listed. The Old City Hall District is listed on the national, state and Tacoma registers of historic places and contains approximately 60 individual properties (approximately 47 buildings). The Union Station District is listed on the national, state and Tacoma registers of historic places and contains approximately 51 individual properties (approximately 32 buildings). The Union Station Conservation District is listed on the Tacoma register of historic places and contains approximately 70 individual properties (approximately 50 buildings). The Salmon Beach Historic District is listed on the state historic register.

a. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archaeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site.

The proposal is a non-project action. Landmark buildings in Tacoma depict the history of the city from the 1880s to the present. Architectural surveys conducted between 1981 and the present have identified approximately 1,600 properties that are potentially eligible for listing.

The area in which the City of Tacoma is located also has many locations of ethnographic, scientific, and cultural importance. Archaeological site records for the Tacoma area are maintained by the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

b. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any.

The proposal is a non-project action. The proposed revised regulations limit billboard faces to 500 feet between faces unless they are on the same structure and implements separation calculated on a radius. While two of the proposed areas for new billboards may extend to or within historic areas, the majority of new billboards will be required to be buffered from historic districts.

14. Transportation

a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

Public streets serve the entire city. There are over 15 major north-south arterials and over 17 east-west arterials that provide access throughout the City of Tacoma. These arterials provide primary access to a complete grid of minor arterials and local access roadways as well as to major regional freeways including two interstate freeways (i.e., I-5 and I-705) and four State routes (i.e., SR-509, SR-16, SR-167, and SR-7).

b. Is site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

Local and regional transit services are available citywide, through Pierce Transit and Sound Transit. Pierce Transit provides local bus service throughout the city. Approximately 30 Pierce Transit bus routes provide access throughout Tacoma and between Tacoma and Lakewood, Parkland, Steilacoom, Puyallup, Sumner, Buckley, Bonney Lake, Federal Way, SeaTac International Airport, Auburn, Olympia, and Seattle. Within the City of Tacoma, there are five transit centers, including Tacoma Community College, Tacoma Mall, Downtown Tacoma, Tacoma Dome Station, and 72nd & Portland.

Sound Transit's Regional Express, Link Light Rail, and Sounder Commuter Rail also operate in Tacoma.

c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?

This proposal is a non-project action and does not include the construction or removal of parking.

d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

This proposal is a non-project action and no new roads, streets or improvements to existing roads or street would be required. All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development.

e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

New billboards will be located in the vicinity of transportation facilities – generally along heavily-traveled automobile routes.

- f. **How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur.**

The proposal is a non-project action and new billboards would not generate new trips.

- g. **Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any.**

The proposal is a non-project action.

15. Public Services

- a. **Would the project result in an increased need for public services (i.e., fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.**

The proposal is a non-project action. All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development.

- b. **Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.**

The proposal is a non-project action. All proposed billboards will be required to comply with all applicable code requirements at the time of development.

16. Utilities

- a. **Underline utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.**

The proposal is a non-project action. Site specific utility needs will be assessed at the project stage.

- b. **Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.**

The proposal is a non-project action. Specific utility services will be identified and evaluated at the time of future development application review.

C. SIGNATURE

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: _____

Cheri Gibbons
Cheri Gibbons, Associate Planner

Date: _____

2/18/2011

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR NONPROJECT ACTIONS

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment. When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal that would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

The adoption of the proposed Land Use Regulatory Code amendment is not likely to result in increases in such discharges, emissions, hazardous substances, or noise.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

Existing City, State and Federal regulations will be applied at the time of a billboard proposal.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

The amendment to the Land Use Regulatory Code is unlikely to have a significant impact on plants, animals, fish, or marine life. Each project developed under the proposed amendment will be reviewed at the time of a sign permit application and if required, mitigation for impacts to natural areas (steep slopes, streams, wetlands, and associated buffers) will be part of the approval process.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

No billboards will be permitted in shoreline or critical areas. Landscaping will be required at the base of new billboards and any alteration to street trees (removal or pruning) will be subject to city review. Each project developed under the proposed amendment will be reviewed at time of permit application and if required, mitigation will be imposed to address any potential negative impacts to critical areas and to plants, animals, fish, and marine life.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

The proposed amendment to the Land Use Regulatory Code is unlikely to significantly impact energy and natural resources. Digital billboards require more energy than unlit billboards but may be equivalent to floodlit billboards. However, increases, if any, are not expected to be significant.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

None proposed.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as

parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

The proposed amendments would not directly affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated for governmental protection

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

The Tacoma Land Use Regulatory Code includes standards to protect environmentally sensitive areas and areas designated for governmental protection when site-specific development is proposed. Additionally, related State and Federal regulations may apply. billboard proposals will be reviewed concerning the applicability of local, state and federal regulations and measures imposed to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts. The majority of new billboards will be buffered from sensitive uses, including historic districts and open space/habitat areas by at least 250 feet.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

The proposed amendment has the potential to change existing land uses (i.e. allowing billboards in areas where they are currently not allowed) which may be in conflict with the *Comprehensive Plan*. The *Comprehensive Plan* discusses signage in the context of urban design, aesthetics, and pedestrian orientation in several sections of the *Plan*. In most cases it sets forth goals and policies for integrating signage plans into sub-area development plans, ensuring high quality signage, and encouraging pedestrian-scaled signs in mixed-use districts. The *Plan* states outright that billboards should be prohibited in the Shoreline districts and freestanding signs should be prohibited in the UCX-TD district (Tacoma Dome Mixed-Use Urban Center).

Individual signs proposed for some of the Special Receiving areas (specifically, those proposed for location in the UCX-TD between “D” and “G” Streets along Puyallup Avenue) are in conflict with the stated goals of the *Comprehensive Plan*. To the extent that billboards are considered to be auto-oriented, it can also be argued that they are not appropriate for location in mixed-use districts. Six of the 19 Special Receiving Areas are located in mixed-use districts and one is located in a Downtown district. These proposed locations are along busy arterial streets with high volumes of vehicular traffic.

The exchange program should result in fewer billboards overall (in the city, with fewer billboards located too close to residential districts and fewer billboards in all districts – including mixed-use districts. No new billboards are allowed in any Shoreline District. While some areas may be impacted temporarily or permanently by additional billboards, overall the city will see improvement.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

New billboards will be subject to both dispersal criteria (distance from other billboards) and buffering criteria (distance from sensitive uses). Future billboards will be located in commercial and industrial areas. The exchange program should result in fewer billboards overall in the city, with fewer billboards located too close to residential districts and fewer billboards in all districts – including mixed-use districts. While some areas may be impacted temporarily or permanently by additional billboards, overall the city will see improvement.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

Digital billboards require more energy than unlit billboards but may be equivalent to floodlit billboards. However, increases, if any, are not expected to be significant.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

This is a non-project action.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

The proposal will not conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements. New language is proposed as part of the amendment to reference the Washington State Scenic Vistas Act and its applicability to certain signs (billboards and on-premises signs) throughout the city.

