



# *City of Tukwila*

*Department of Community Development*

*Jim Haggerton, Mayor*

*Jack Pace, Director*

CHAIR, GEORGE MALINA, VICE-CHAIR, BILL ARTHUR; COMMISSIONERS, CHUCK PARRISH, ALLAN EKBERG, MARGARET BRATCHER, LYNN PETERSON AND BROOKE ALFORD

Planning Commission  
Sign Code Worksession (2) Agenda  
September 24, 2009 - 6:00 – 9:00 PM  
Tukwila City Hall Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER  
ATTENDANCE  
ADOPTION OF MINUTES – 8-27-09

SIGN CODE UPDATE

- A. Visioning Exercise
- B. Dynamic Signs
- C. Freestanding Signs in Commercial/Industrial Zones
- D. Building Mounted Signs in Commercial/Industrial Zones
- E. Other

Director's Report  
Adjourn

**Dinner will be available at 5:30**

TO: Planning Commission

FROM: Brandon J. Miles, Senior Planner

DATE: September 13, 2009

RE: Sign Code Update  
2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting

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At the next meeting on the sign code update we will begin to discuss sign regulations in commercial and industrial zones as well as discussing dynamic signs in all zones. As the Planning Commission is aware, the City of Tukwila is a unique urban environment. Every day approximately 100,000 people come to the City to work, shop, and play Tukwila is unique in that more people visit the City than actually live here. Signs are an important way to communicate with the traveling public who may not be as familiar with the City than those who live or work here. Signs, when displayed correctly, assist both motorists and pedestrians in locating businesses.

Businesses and property owners in the City are also unique given the size of their commercial operations and businesses. The shopping centers in the Southcenter area are some of the largest operations in King County. As we move through this section of the update the Planning Commission will see how the Sign Code Advisory Committee considered the special character of the City when it adopted its recommendations.

With regards to signs in commercial and industrial zones, signs do not exist in isolation from the urban environment. When correctly installed, signs contribute to the urban environment and exist in harmony with buildings and landscaping. When installed incorrectly, they clash with buildings and landscaping.

When staff worked with the Sign Code Advisory Committee (Committee) we focused on visioning and encouraged the Committee not to get bogged down in details. At the next Planning Commission meeting, staff would like to do some of the visioning exercises that the Committee did as we present the recommendations of the Committee to the Planning Commission. Here are some things to think about regarding signs:

1. What purpose do signs play in commercial and industrial zones?
2. How do signs interact with the other elements of the urban environment (buildings, trees, the roadway, etc)?
3. What are some examples of conflicts between signs and the built environment?
4. What are some existing signs in Tukwila that are reflective of the types of signs we would want to see in the future?
5. Do signs contribute to or diminish safety?
6. Are there cities that set a good example for signage? What does that say about the City?
7. Are there cities that set a bad example for signage? What does that say about the City?

The Committee's vision of the Tukwila they would like to see in the future informed their decisions about individual sign types, sizes and locations. The Committee expressed a desire to have signs that were reflective of top tier commercial/retail environment. They wanted signs that indicated that considerable thought was put in the design by the businesses owner. They often times inquired how eastside communities, such as Bellevue and Issaquah regulated signage and avoided comparisons with south King County cities.

## **Discussion Item #1, Dynamic Signs<sup>1</sup>**

The City currently refers to dynamic signs as animated signs. As part of the update, staff and the Sign Code Advisory Committee are proposing to replace the term “animated” with “dynamic”. The term “dynamic” is more encompassing and would be better to address any future technological changes. Dynamic signs are signs that move or appear to move to individuals who are viewing the sign. There are a variety of technologies that are being utilized for dynamic signs. These technologies include LED displays, TV like images, tri-vision signs, and digital ink. Dynamic signs can also include flashing lights and signs which move due to mechanical manipulation.

The City currently prohibits are dynamic signs<sup>2</sup> with the exception of signs that display time, date, or temperature. However, the City currently has a moratorium on the installation of any sign which displays a moving image showing time, date or temperature. Also, a fixed electronic sign in which the image does not change more frequently than once every 24-hours is not considered a dynamic sign.

There has and will continue to be a push to install dynamic signs in the City. In recent years the technological advancements have lowered the cost for businesses and non-profits to incorporate dynamic displays into their signage.

There are four main reasons that business and non-profits choose to install dynamic signs:

1. To facilitate the display of larger amounts of information within the limited space permitted by a jurisdiction.
2. To enhance the sign's ability to attract attention.
3. To be able to conveniently change message content (i.e. the price of gas or to advertise a special).
4. In some cases to enhance the profitability of the sign itself (i.e. leasing space on signs to advertise goods or services).

When the Committee discussed if dynamic signs should be permitted within the City, they considered two main considerations, safety and aesthetics.

### Safety

Included under tab “E” of your sign code update binder is a report entitled, “*Dynamic Signage: Research Related to Driver Distraction and Ordinance Recommendations*” dated June 7, 2007, prepared by SRF Consulting for the City of Minnetonka, Minnesota. The Committee considered this report when considering the safety issues associated with dynamic signs. The report provided the following recommendations:

1. Drivers who are subjected to information-rich content that is irrelevant to the driving task (such as digital advertising) may be temporarily distracted enough to cause a degradation in their driving performance. The degradation could lead to a crash.
2. The unlimited variety of changing content allows dynamic signage to attract drivers' attention at greater distances and hold their attention longer than traditional static signs.
3. Several studies have found a correlation between crashes and the complexity of the driving environment. For example, crash rates are higher at intersections because of the difficulty of the driving task is increased by the roadway's complexity. Complex driving environments place a high demand on drivers' attention. Introducing a source of distraction in an already demanding driving environment is more likely to result in crashes. This is illustrated by the 1994 Wisconsin DOT study that examined crash rates before and after installation of an electronic sign on a high volume curving roadway. Introduction of this sign was identified as a likely factor in the 80 percent increase in side-swipe crashes that was experienced.

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<sup>1</sup> Supplemental information on dynamic signs can be found under tab “E” of your sign code binder. A memo from the City Attorney's Office is also provided under this tab.

<sup>2</sup> There are several non-conforming dynamic signs within the City. These include the Silver Dollar Casino, Foster High School, and Tukwila Riverside Inn. All three were permitted under different code provisions which are no longer in effect.

4. Many of the studies have noted a correlation between outdoor advertising signs and crash rates, but have not established a casual relationship between the signs and crash rates. Driving is a complex task influenced by multiple factors. It is not necessary to establish a direct causal relationship between outdoor advertising signs and crash rates to show that they can make the driving task less safe. While the research shows that driver distraction is a key factor in many motor vehicle crashes, this often includes many interacting factors that distract drivers. The specific driver distraction danger that advertising signs contribute is difficult to quantify. A study that could control for multiple variables (human factors, vehicle, enforcement, and the roadway environment) would be needed to provide a definitive statement on the level of driver distraction that signs produce. Such a study would likely find that not all advertising signs cause a distraction that would lead to crashes, but some signs in some situations are more likely to contribute to crashes than others.

The Committee was also informed about a safety study that is currently being prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHA). It has been speculated that the report by the FHA will lie to rest the question of whether dynamic signs along streets are safe or not. This report is scheduled for release in the summer of 2010.

In considering the safety impacts of dynamic signs within the City, the Committee examined the possibility that safety concerns would be minimized based on the location of the signs (by zone). The Committee concluded the following with regards to dynamic signs within residential zones:

1. Drivers in residential zones are typically familiar with the area, thus adding additional external distractions such as a dynamic sign may not pose the same safety concerns as adding such signs in commercial and industrial zones.
2. The number of external distractions within residential zones is already severely limited unlike commercial/industrial zones where multiple properties and businesses have signs which compete for the attention of motorist.
3. Residential zones have lower speed limits than commercial/industrial zones. Lower speed limits improve response and stopping time and thus the impact of dynamic signs would be minimized.
4. The size of the dynamic signs would be strictly limited since the size of freestanding and wall signs within residential zones are extremely small (30 square feet for freestanding signs and up to 50 square feet for a wall sign).

One main consideration that the Planning Commission should keep in mind is that while dynamic signs may be safer in residential zones due to the character of the urban environment; the City may want to have caution on allowing any driving distractions near facilities where children may be present. Areas around schools are the places where drivers should be the most focused and outside stimuli could distract drivers.

In 2006, the City permitted Foster High School to install a dynamic sign along S. 144<sup>th</sup> Street. The sign is visible from the intersection of S. 144<sup>th</sup> Street and 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave S. Planning staff reviewed the accident data for the intersection of S. 144<sup>th</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave S to see if there was any change in the number of accidents after the dynamic sign was installed. There has not been an increase in accidents at the intersection since the sign was installed<sup>3</sup>.

### Aesthetic Considerations

When reviewing dynamic sign regulations, the Committee considered the same questions that were discussed earlier regarding signage in general:

1. What purpose would dynamic signs play in commercial and industrial zones, if any?
2. How would dynamic signs interact with the urban environment (buildings, trees, the roadway, etc)?
3. What are some examples of conflicts between dynamic signs and the built environment?
4. What are some existing signs in Tukwila that are reflective of the types of signs we would want to see in the future?

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<sup>3</sup> Staff is not making a conclusion that the sign is safe. There is insufficient data to make any conclusions; staff is simply providing an observation.

5. Do dynamic signs contribute or diminish safety?
6. Are there cities that set a good example for dynamic signage? What does that say about the City?
7. Are there cities that set a bad example for dynamic signage? What does that say about the City?

It is important to remember that we will not be able to regulate content of dynamic signs, nor can we regulate which businesses within certain zones can have them.

### Committee Recommendations

After considering the safety and aesthetic considerations, the Committee provided several recommendations.

1. All Committee members were in favor of continuing to allow dynamic signs within residential zones for institutional uses. The rate of change requirements that were adopted when the Foster High School sign was installed should be incorporated into the sign code for these signs<sup>4</sup>.
2. Some members of the Sign Committee recommended that the City continue its ban on dynamic signs within the City's commercial and industrial zones. Other members of the Committee wanted to possibly see dynamic signs in some areas of the City, most specifically the Urban Center and along Interurban Ave S. The Sign Committee did not support the idea of having dynamic signs located along TIB given the City's goal of redeveloping the area.
3. Where dynamic signs would be allowed restrictions could be placed on the type of dynamic sign and the amount of allowable sign area that is permitted to be dynamic. Those Committee members who supported this option noted that perhaps TV like images could be appropriate. These signs could be approved by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR).
4. One Committee member suggested that within the Urban Center (Southcenter Area) a "theater" district be created which would allow a wide range of dynamic sign options for entertainment uses.

### Staff's Recommendations

Staff concurs with the first recommendation of the Sign Code Advisory Committee. The number of institutional uses within the City's residential zones is minimal and the facilities that would actually be able to afford installing such signs are very few; thus the number of dynamic signs in residential zones would be small. With the appropriate design standards, the safety concerns can be minimized, but not totally eliminated.

With regards to dynamic signs within non-residential zones staff suggests that provisions be adopted to allow small scale mechanical signs or moving neon signs within the Southcenter area. These signs, when done creatively, can add to the visual interest of an urban environment. Such signs should be scaled and directed at pedestrians and not be intended to be directed at motorists. However, other than small mechanical and neon signs, staff recommends that the City continue its current prohibition on dynamic signs. Staff concerns deal mainly with the possible safety concerns that such signs pose. Staff is unable to make a quantitative opinion if such signs would be safe within busy commercial zones. Staff suggests that the Planning Commission table the issue of dynamic signs within commercial and industrial zones until the Federal Government has completed its safety report in 2010. The report should provide clear guidance on the safety of dynamic signs. When the report is released, Staff will discuss the issue of dynamic signs in commercial and industrial zones with the City Council and Planning Commission.

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<sup>4</sup> In August of 2006 the adopted Ordinance #2126 which allowed for electronic reader boards for public facilities. The following criteria applied:

1. The image on the sign may not change more frequently than once every ten seconds;
2. The image must appear and disappear as one image. The image may not appear to flash, undulate, pulse, or portray explosions, fireworks, flashes of light, or blinking or chasing lights, or appear to move toward or away from the viewer, to expand to contract, bounce, rotate, spin, twist, scroll, travel, or otherwise portray movement.
3. If the public facility is located within a residential zone, the use of the electronic portion of the sign is limited to the hours of 7AM to 10PM

Ordinance 2126 sunset exactly one-year after adoption.

Staff is also concerned with the aesthetic impacts associated with certain dynamic signs, such as LED displays and electronic message centers. As the City starts to have residential components in the Southcenter area and TIB area, dynamic signs could impact residential uses (brightness and noise). Additionally, dynamic signs can be associated with commercial areas that are distressed and are not reflective of a premiere retail environment.

It should also be noted that if the City allows dynamic signs within commercial zones, all businesses would likely have the right to install such signs. It would be difficult to limit the use of dynamic signs to certain businesses while preventing other businesses from having them.

#### Note on regulating brightness

Luminance is the measure of the light emanating from an object with respect to its size and is the term to quantify dynamic sign brightness<sup>5</sup>. The unit of measurement for luminance is “nits”, which is the total amount of light emitted from a sign divided by the surface area of the sign (candelas per square meter). Many cities have enacted limitations on the maximum number of nits during both day and nighttime hours. A common range in the daytime is 5,000 to 7,000 nits, while a common nighttime limitation is 500 nits.

The City used to provide a limitation on the number of nits allowed for changing message signs. Yet enforcement of any nit limitation is difficult. The report *Dynamic Signage: Research Related to Driver Distraction and Ordinance Recommendations*, notes:

“Enforcement of these types of regulations is challenging as luminance of electronic signs is very difficult to measure in the field. Typically, sign luminance is measured and calibrated in a controlled factory setting using a spectral photometer to measure the light output”.

Staff strongly suggests that regulations regarding the brightness and illumination standards of dynamic signs **not** be included in the new code.

#### Decision Matrix Tree

In this discussion the Planning Commission should consider the following decision matrix:

1. Should dynamic signs be permitted within the City?
2. If the answer to question 1 is yes, should dynamic signs be considered in all areas of the City?
3. If the answer is yes to question 2, under what limitations (rate of image change, all or part of the sign face) if any?
4. If the answer is no to question 2, in what zones should dynamic signs be permitted and under what limitations?

#### **Discussion Item 2, Freestanding Signs<sup>6</sup>**

Freestanding signs assist motorists and pedestrians in identifying businesses and buildings at a considerable distance from the actual property. Freestanding signs are essential in providing visibility when a building is set back from of the street.

The City existing sign code defines a freestanding sign as a “sign installed on a permanent foundation, not attached to a building or other structure (TMC 19.08.070)”. There are two types of freestanding signs, pole and monument signs, that are found in the City. Pole signs, also known as pylon signs, are sign cabinets raised in the air and supported by one or more pole structures. Monument signs typically have solid bases and are shorter and smaller.

The Committee considered how freestanding signs fit into their vision of the future appearance of Tukwila and made recommendations consistent with that vision. The Committee found that freestanding signs should

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<sup>5</sup> Source: *Dynamic Signage: Research Related to Driver Distraction and Ordinance Recommendations*.

<sup>6</sup> Supplemental information can be found in tab “E” of your sign binder.

be permitted in the City under the new sign code. Additionally, the Committee found that the limitations placed on the number of freestanding signs within the City were too restrictive and provided recommendations to allow more freestanding signs. However the Committee also recommended that pole signs should no longer be permitted within the City.

In crafting its regulations, the Committee focused on safety and aesthetic concerns. It would be helpful to consider the questions posed at the start of this memo and relate them to freestanding signs:

1. What purpose do freestanding signs play in commercial and industrial zones?
2. How do freestanding signs interact with the urban environment (buildings, trees, the roadway, etc)?
3. What are some examples of conflicts between freestanding signs and the built environment?
4. What are some existing freestanding signs in Tukwila that are reflective of the types of signs we would want to see in the future?
5. Do signs freestanding signs contribute or diminish safety?
6. Are there cities that set a good example for freestanding signage? What does that say about the City?
7. Are there cities that set a bad example for freestanding signage? What does that say about the City?



Figure 1: With freestanding signs, its usually the number of signs that creates problems.

***The proposed recommendations of the Committee will make some signs in the City non-conforming. Non-conforming provisions will be discussed at a future meeting. The focus on this topic area should be on new freestanding signs.***

#### Number of Freestanding Signs Permitted Per Premise

Under the current sign code each business is permitted to have one wall sign and a single listing on a freestanding sign. Generally premises (a development composed of one or more parcels owned or managed as a single unit) are allowed one freestanding sign to be shared by all businesses on site. An additional freestanding sign for the premise can be permitted if the following criteria are met:

- The premise has at least 400 feet of frontage along a city street;
- The premise contains at least two detached buildings; and
- There are two unrelated businesses operating at the site.

During the review process, the Committee examined several situations where very large properties are limited in the number of freestanding signs they are permitted. These examples included Parkway

Supercenter, Boeing in the Duwamish Corridor; and the Acura site. These sites, shown in attachments A, B, C, have a considerable amount of street frontage. Additionally, all three have multiple vehicular access points to the premise. The Committee noted that all three properties needed additional signage in order to help the public locate and access the sites.

#### Sign Code Committee's Recommendation, Number of Freestanding Signs Permitted per Premise

Given the examples given above, the Committee recommended that additional freestanding signs be permitted. Consensus was reached to allow each premise to have one freestanding sign for every 400 feet of linear frontage on a public or quasi-public street. However, in order to qualify for the additional freestanding signs the property must contain multiple vehicular access points<sup>7</sup>. For example, a property that contains 1600 linear frontage would be permitted four freestanding signs, however if the site only had three driveways then only three signs could be installed. At a later meeting, after this topic had been discussed, there was some discussion about allowing a freestanding sign for every street that a premise bordered regardless of whether there was a vehicular access point on that street.

The Committee assumed that new signs would be monument style signs which will be discussed later in this memo. Additionally, the Committee reasoned that in exchange for allowing more signs, the City would require that the signs have a smaller area.

#### Staff Recommendation, Number of Freestanding Signs Permitted per Premise

Staff recommends that the Citizen Advisory Committee's consensus recommendation be adopted into the sign code regarding the total number of signs permitted.

#### Style of Freestanding Signs

The Committee also discussed the style of freestanding sign that they would like to see in the City. The Committee found that pole signs often conflict with landscaping leading property owners to remove trees or have them topped. The Committee found that monument signs and trees had fewer conflicts. Additionally, they thought that monument signs assist in improving the streetscape and contribute to the high class retail environment they envisioned for Tukwila.

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<sup>7</sup> Access points are regulated by the City of Tukwila Public Works Department with specific safety standards regulating the location of the access points in relation to intersections and sight distance.



**Figure 2: Example of Pole Sign**

The Committee also found that the City should modify its setback requirements to better accommodate monument signs. Currently, freestanding signs must be set back one foot for every foot in height of the sign. The Committee found that such prescriptive requirements limit flexibility and often times encourage property owners to install tall signs.

#### Sign Code Committee's Recommendation, Style of Freestanding Signs

The Committee strongly supported allowing only monument style signs in the City. Attachment D shows the type freestanding signs envisioned and not envisioned by the Committee under the news sign code. The Committee recommended that freestanding signs be no taller than five feet tall. Other than height, the Committee did not provide specific development standards for freestanding signs and instead relied on staff to craft those regulations after the Committee provided direction.



**Figure 3: Example of Monument Sign**

Staff Recommendation, Style of Freestanding Sign

Staff supports moving to monument only for freestanding signs in the City. Staff has provided specific design recommendations for the Planning Commission to consider.

Height

Staff is concerned about the maximum height requirement of five feet. The following inventory was conducted by City staff to evaluate the design standards of existing monument signs in the City<sup>8</sup>:

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<sup>8</sup> Some of the signs included in the inventory may not be permitted under the new code. Measures to deal with these signs will be handled as part of the non-conforming section of the new sign code.

S97-102

1083 Andover Park E.



Height: 5'6"  
Area: 68 sf.

S06-021

17500 Southcenter Parkway



Height: 15'  
Area: 90 sf.

S06-060

16600 West Valley Highway



Height: 10'  
Area: 32 sf.

S07-029

220 Strander Boulevard



Height: 8'9"  
Area: 70 sf.

S07-050 350 Midland Drive



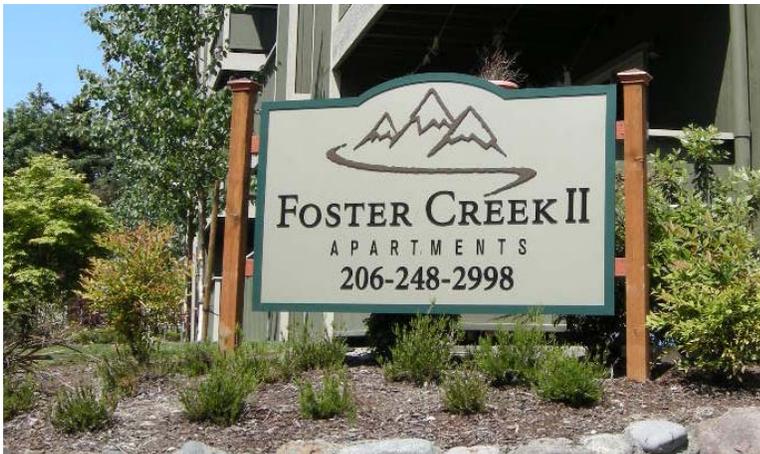
Height: 6'  
Area: 21 sf.

S07-079 14081 58th Avenue S.



Height: 4'6"  
Area: 23 sf.

S08-003 15036 Macadam Road S.



Height: 5'  
Area: 24 sf.

S08-044

2800 Southcenter Mall



Height: 10'2"  
Area: 40 sf.

S08-065

17250 Southcenter Parkway



Height: 7'4"  
Area: 49 sf.

S08-106 3724 S. 154th Lane



Height: 4'6"  
Area: 26 sf.

S09-019 760 Andover Park West



Height: 6'  
Area: 56 sf.

S09-025 3610 S. 158th St.



Height: 6'  
Area: 25 sf.



Height: 5'
Area: 20 sf.

As can be seen in the above inventory, many of the monument signs shown exceed the five foot height limit recommended by the Committee. Some of these signs are well designed and in staff's opinion the City should encourage their placement as an alternative to pole signs. Staff recommends that the freestanding sign height range between five and eight feet. The specific maximum would be based on the amount of linear frontage. Height would be defined by measuring the sign from the lowest grade along the sign base to the highest portion of the sign structure.

Area and width

The City's existing sign code provides area restrictions on the sign based on the total linear frontage of the property where the sign is located. Essentially, the larger the property the more sign area permitted. The maximum permitted size for a freestanding sign is 100 square feet for one side and 200 square feet for all sides. As noted, the Committee recommended that more signs be permitted, but that the signs be smaller. The City's current sign code does not provide a specific limitation on the width of a freestanding sign. In order to prevent long narrow signs, staff proposes that a maximum width of 15' be adopted.

Permitted Sign Size:

Total ROW of Parcel	Allowable Sign Area <sup>9</sup>	Allowable Sign Structure Size <sup>10</sup>	Maximum Height	Number of Signs
< 200 feet	24 sq. ft.	40 sq. ft.	5 feet	1
200-399 feet	36 sq. ft.	54 sq. ft.	6 feet	1
400-599 feet	50 sq. ft.	70 sq. ft.	7 feet	1
600-799 feet	60 sq. ft.	80 sq. ft.	7 feet	1
800-999 feet	66 sq. ft.	88 sq. ft.	8 feet	2, if there are two entrances.
1000 feet and over	72 sq. ft.	96 sq. ft.	8 feet	One for every 400 feet of linear frontage, sign must be at an entrance.

Monument sign width cannot exceed 15 feet.

Setback

<sup>9</sup> Sign area is that portion of the sign devoted to the actual message, logo, or business name.

<sup>10</sup> Structure size is the entire area of the support structure for the sign. For example, if the sign had a base, that area would be calculated in the structure size, but would not necessarily be included as sign area.

As noted, the City's current sign regulations require that a sign be set back from all property lines a distance equal to its height. A five foot tall sign is required to be setback five feet from all property lines; a six foot sign is required to be setback six feet and so on. Staff concurs with the conclusions of the Committee that the current setback requirements are problematic. Staff recommends that all signs be placed at least five feet from all property lines, regardless of height. This figure was determined by examining the side and rear setback requirements of the City's existing zoning categories. In most zones, the side and rear setback is between five and ten feet. The front setback in all zones is greater than five feet; however in order for the sign to be visible it must be near the street. A five foot setback would allow the sign to be visible, while maintaining a small open space between the property and the City's right of way. Provisions would also be made to ensure that the sign does not hinder line of sight for motorists and pedestrians.

## Freestanding Signs

### Freestanding Signs, Decision Matrix

Staff is requesting that the following questions be answered regarding the placement of freestanding signs:

1. Should freestanding signs continue to be permitted within the City?
2. Under what circumstances should additional freestanding signs be permitted?
3. Should the City move to monument only for freestanding signs?
4. What design standards (height, area, width, setbacks, etc) should be required for new freestanding signs in the City?

### Discussion Item 3, Building Mounted Signs<sup>11</sup>

The Committee found that building mounted signs play an important role for Tukwila businesses and has recommended that the City continue to permit building mounted signs. The Committee also explored how building mounted signs can add visual interest within the City's commercial areas. The City's existing sign code does not have a category referring to building mounted signs; instead signs attached to buildings are called "wall" signs. Staff is proposing to refer to all signs attached to buildings as building mounted signs. The term is more encompassing and can provide more flexibility in the type of signs permitted.

Remembering the visioning exercise at the start of this memo and relating it to building mounted signs:

1. What purpose do building mounted signs play in commercial and industrial zones?
2. How do building mounted signs interact with the urban environment (buildings, trees, the roadway, etc)?
3. What are some examples of conflicts between building mounted signs and the built environment?
4. What are some existing building mounted signs in Tukwila that are reflective of the types of signs we would want to see in the future?
5. Do building mounted signs contribute or diminish safety?
6. Are there cities that set a good example for building mounted signage? What does that say about the City?
7. Are there cities that set a bad example for building mounted signage? What does that say about the City?

Attachment E shows the examples of building mounted signs that the Committee recommended allowing under the new sign code. The types of signs permitted will provide flexibility to businesses while also improving the streetscape.

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<sup>11</sup> Additional information is found under tab "E" of your sign code binder.



**Figure 4: Example of a wall sign. A wall sign is flush mounted to a building.**

As noted, the City's existing sign code refers to signs attached to a building as a "wall" sign. Under the City's existing sign code most businesses are permitted one wall sign. An additional wall sign can be obtained if the business is not listed on a freestanding sign. Only one wall sign is permitted per exposed building face.



**Figure 5: Example of a "roof" mounted sign.**

The size of an individual wall sign is based on total wall area of the business that is installing the sign. The following table is used to determine the maximum size.

Area (LXH)-Sq. Ft. Exposed Building Face	Total Permitted Area of the Sign-Square Feet
0-500	.05 x exposed building face (EBF) in sq. ft.
501-1500	25+.04 x (EBF-500)
1501-3000	65+.03 x (EBF-1500)
3001-5000	110+.02 x (EBF-3000)
Over 5000	150 square feet (maximum)

The Committee explored how building mounted signage could be used to foster other City objectives such as the Tukwila International Blvd Design Guidelines and the future Southcenter Plan. The design objectives for both areas call for buildings to be located near the streets.

### Sign Code Committee Recommendations

The Committee as a whole had the following recommendations regarding building mounted signs:

1. The number of building mounted signs would be independent of the number of freestanding signs allowed on the premise.
2. The types of building mounted signs would be expanded to include a wide variety of sign types that foster a lively urban environment. Attachment F shows the type of signs contemplated by the Committee.
3. Each business would be permitted one sign for each wall that contains a public entrance. The Southcenter Plan calls for entrances to be located along public and private streets. However, the business may also have an entrance from a parking area in the rear of the building. In such examples, the business could have two building mounted signs.
4. Certain small scale signage, such as blade signs, would be permitted outright if the project complies with certain development requirements, such as constructing awnings on a building.

The Committee was split on when additional building mounted signs should be permitted for individual businesses. As noted, the Committee recommended that a building mounted sign be permitted for each public entrance for the business. However, some committee members thought that additional building mounted signs should be permitted if the business fronts on multiple public streets even if an entrance is not provided. Other Committee members thought that an additional building mounted sign should be allowed in exchange for the building complying with certain design standards. Essentially, building mounted signs could not be located on blank walls or on walls that did have public entrances.



**Figure 6: Example of projecting sign.**

### Staff's Recommendation

Staff concurs with the four consensus recommendations provided by the Committee. Staff suggests that additional building mounted signs be permitted when a project provides transparency, overhead weather protection, plaza areas, and/or pedestrian connections.

It is important to note, that the recommendations of the Committee and staff will permit more signs than are currently allowed under the City's sign code.

#### Building Mounted Signs, Decision Matrix

1. Should building mounted signs be permitted within the City?
2. What types of building mounted signs should be permitted? Review attachment F.
3. How many building mounted signs should be permitted per business?
4. What criteria should be used in determining the number of signs permitted per business?

Please note, that staff will prepare specific development standards for building mounted signs after the Planning Commission has provided direction on what styles they wish to see in the City.

#### Attachments:

- Attachment A: Aerial Photo of Parkway Supercenter Site
- Attachment B: Aerial Photo of Boeing Property in Duwamish
- Attachment C: Aerial Photo of Acura Property
- Attachment D: Examples of Monument Signs
- Attachment E: Examples of Building Mounted Signs
- Attachment F: Generic Examples of Building Mounted Sign Types