

APPENDIX A:

CAT meeting materials and meeting minutes

1 of 2

Community Advisory Team Meeting #1

Minutes, Agenda and Materials



**Oregon City Sign Code Update
Community Advisory Team Meeting #1
Meeting Summary - DRAFT
September 16, 2013
5:00 – 8:00 pm
City Hall, 625 Center Street**

PARTICIPANTS	Community Advisory Team (CAT)	Oregon City staff and facilitation team
	☒ Dan Dhruva (alternate for Sandi Burley) - Sign Company / Manufacture / Advocate ☒ Mark Evans - Institutional (Faith-based organization / School) ☒ Melissa Hayden - Development / Business ☒ Zach Henkin - Planning Commission ☒ Ed LaPlante - Chamber of Commerce ☒ Bob La Salle - Neighborhood Association/ Citizen Involvement Council ☒ Tom O'Brien - Neighborhood Association/ Citizen Involvement Council ☒ Kathleen Sinclair - City Resident ☒ John Southgate – Main Street Oregon City ☒ Amy Willhite - City Resident ☒ Daryl Winand - Development / Business	☒ Laura Terway, Planner ☒ Jennifer Bragar, City Attorney ☒ Ryan Orth, facilitator (EnviroIssues) ☒ Bridger Wineman, notetaker (EnviroIssues)
OTHERS PRESENT	• Kristine Herman, Clear Channel • Bob Mahoney, Oregon City Planning Commission • Tony Konkol, Community Development Director	
HANDOUTS	Agenda; CAT charter; CAT work plan; Oregon City Sign Code chapter 15.28, feedback form, summary of existing code and comments	

AGENDA TOPICS

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	
	LAURA TERWAY / RYAN ORTH Laura Terway, Oregon City planner, introduced herself as the City's project manager and welcomed attendees. Meeting participants introduced themselves, including City and facilitation team members and Community Advisory Team (CAT).

Project Purpose, CAT Process, and Code Amendment Process	LAURA TERWAY \ RYAN ORTH
	Laura and Ryan summarized the sign code update project purpose and public process. The purpose of the sign code update project is to review the Oregon City sign code and identify any changes that are recommended by community members. The City team presented a CAT process diagram showing project phases of early engagement, recommendations and adoption. City staff has gathered feedback from the community since July through a series of approximately 15 community briefings to consider in developing recommendations. Members reviewed the CAT work plan, outlining topics to be addressed through four CAT meetings between now and December 2013, with draft objectives and topics for each meeting. The objective for CAT meeting #1 is to provide background information and confirm the range of topics the group would like to address. The second meeting will focus on discussion of policy options and guiding principles for key topics. Later CAT meetings will include further discussion on elements of the desired code update. The CAT's overarching goal is to affirm a set of recommendations for City staff as they compile a draft code update for consideration by the Oregon City Planning Commission and City Commission. Laura described the formal code adoption processes. City staff will send a draft code update, informed by the CAT and related community conversations, to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission can make changes and then recommend a package for the City Commission. The adoption processes will provide opportunity for additional public input. Staff will inform the CAT members of these future meetings and hearings and information will also be posted on the project website. The updated code would go into effect 30 days after adoption by the City Commission.
CAT Charter Review and Approval	RYAN ORTH
CAT charter	CAT members discussed their charter, outlining team responsibilities, roles and protocols. There are five ways committee members are asked to help with the sign code update process: • Provide feedback on policy options. • Bring ideas and creative knowledge. • Talk to people in the community who may be interested and bring their perspectives to the group. • Advise staff on their task to make a proposal through the adoption process. • Report to community members and associates the deliberations of this group. The committee will strive to reach consensus on principled recommendations for the sign code update. Staff will further develop recommendations from the CAT to a formal staff recommendation for consideration by the planning and city commissions. The facilitator's responsibility is to help organize a process where members are engaged and accomplish the goals set forth in the bullets above. CAT members discussed proposed ground rules for their meetings: • Openness – CAT members should provide their honest perspectives. Staff will provide information in an open manner.

	• Mutual respect – Hear other opinions and listen to what others say. • Orderly conversation – Let everyone share their perspective by having only one person speaking at a time. Please stay on topic. Materials will be provided to CAT members at least one week in advance. There may be situations where additional materials will be provided at meetings or provided materials are in working draft. Staff will identify these materials in communications with the group. Staff will provide meeting summaries within approximately one week of each meeting for CAT member review. All meeting materials and summaries will be posted to the City’s website ocsigncode.org. CAT members approved the charter, work plan or ground rules.
Legal Considerations for Sign Regulations	JENNIFER BRAGAR
	Jennifer Bragar, Deputy City Attorney, will advise the CAT and the City through the sign code update. Jennifer presented a general overview of applicable sign law, with the following key points: • Local regulation, state and federal law may each regulate signs. • Free speech is strongly protected by the Oregon Constitution. Sign regulations may not consider the content of the sign. • Oregon state law protects the right to free speech on any subject whatever. Oregon law does not allow the distinction between commercial and other speech. • Code that is either overly restrictive or vague may be deemed unconstitutional. • The Federal Highway Beautification Act sets forth particular rules governing advertising on the federal highway system, only applies to highways and other right of ways, and has little applicability in Oregon City. State and local governments may restrict signs which are permitted under the federal law. • State law does not allow restriction on advertising based on content, or with distinctions based on whether goods or services that are advertised are located on- or off-premises. • State law (OMIA) governs signs visible to a traveler on state highways. The City can limit signs which are permitted under OMIA. • The City can adopt reasonable time, place and manner restrictions which are content neutral. • Content neutrality means the municipal sign code may only regulate certain characteristics of signs including dimensions, materials, special districts, number, duration and flashing. City code may not be able to regulate color because it could infringe on copyright and trademarks. • On the subject of art images and signs, the City of Portland was used as an example. In the past the City of Portland tried to ban billboards but allow art murals. Portland has now abandoned that effort due to a court ruling and instead created a new part of the code specifically governing art murals. There are additional requirements for the size and maintenance of the art and that there is no compensation allowed for

Oregon City Sign Code Update Project
Meeting Summary - Community Advisory Team – Sept. 16, 2013

	display of art murals. • Variances or adjustment criteria are permissible but must still remain content neutral. • The group should be careful to clearly state the goals of the code as a court may excise a portion of code or law deemed unconstitutional in consideration of the stated purpose.
Overview of Current Sign Code and Existing Conditions and Summary of Community Feedback	
	Laura and Ryan provided a summary of the current conditions with a virtual tour of signs around Oregon City, coupled with a description of the current sign code and feedback to-date on a range of topics. CAT members asked questions and provided additional comments. A summary of presentation points and member comments by topic are provided, below. The following information is only a summary and does not constitute final recommendations of the CAT.
PERMITTING PROCESS	• The current sign code allows certain signs on private property but not signs, like A-frames, on public property. • The current sign permit process is largely over the counter. Historic districts may require additional review by staff or the Historic Review Board. A change in copy does not require a new sign permit. • A fee is charged for sign permits, and in some cases, building and electrical permits are needed as well. The permit and fee are valid for the life of the sign. • Variances are considered by the Planning Commission according to established criteria.
WALL SIGNS IN COMMERCIAL, OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES	• Wall signs may be up to twice the length of the wall. • The number of signs on a wall is not regulated. • The City does not regulate the distribution of wall signs among tenants in a single building. • As the City is content neutral, murals are considered wall signs. • Suggestions from the community/staff include: ○ The size allowed is sufficient. ○ Distinguish permit signs by tenant space ○ Permit murals separately from wall signs
FREESTANDING SIGNS IN COMMERCIAL, OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES	• Allowed area of freestanding signs depends on frontage. Multiple properties with the same owner can be considered as one. Other dimensional standards apply. • Suggestions from the community/staff include: ○ The number and size of freestanding signs is sufficient. ○ The CAT should consider defining which parts of a sign are considered part

	of its area for regulation purposes. ▪ Count the entire surface of the sign structure as part of the signage area, as good advertising would take advantage of the whole area of the sign, especially if it is a form which adds to a message. • CAT members identified several issues regarding free standing signs: ○ Legibility is not currently a consideration for defining what is considered a sign under the code. ○ Business owners should be left to decide details like the size of text. ○ The code should be clearer about the size of allowed signs. ○ Allow signs larger than those currently allowed. ○ Discussion of the City’s role in educating business leaders on sign best practices for legibility. ▪ Educational materials should be made available at the planning desk. ▪ It may not be the City’s role to educate the community. ▪ It is too late to educate property owners about the choice of sign type at the planning counter because sign design is usually too far along. ○ Free-standing signs are allowed per frontage instead of per driveway. The current area maximum for freestanding signs is confusing because it counts both sides of the sign. In some cases, larger free standing signs should be allowed and the required 50 feet spacing between signs may be unnecessary. ○ Ideally, a business park name should not be counted as part of the sign area when there are other tenants listed under it. But, because of content neutrality, the code cannot differentiate between differently purposed text. ○ Simplicity is important for sign effectiveness.
TEMPORARY SIGNS	• Only one temporary sign is allowed per frontage and its size is limited to 4 square feet. • Suggestions from the community/staff include: ○ The CAT may consider additional temporary signs during elections. ○ The CAT may consider additional temporary signage (for example, when a property is for sale) ○ Some properties around the City have too many temporary signs. • A CAT member commented that temporary signs often advertise vacant space. At larger business and industrial complexes there is probably always an empty space to advertise.
ROOF SIGNS IN COMMERCIAL, OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES	• Roof signs are not very common in Oregon City. Roof signs and freestanding signs are not allowed together. Roof signs are structurally supported by the roof by definition. Other dimensional standards apply.

Oregon City Sign Code Update Project

Meeting Summary - Community Advisory Team – Sept. 16, 2013

PROJECTING SIGNS IN COMMERCIAL, OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES	• Projecting signs protrude more than a foot from a building but no more the four feet. They may not be more than 16 square feet. Other dimensional standards apply. They may not go to the edge of the sidewalk or impede walking or driving beneath. One is allowed per business per frontage so tenant space may be distinguished. • A CAT member commented that the 4 foot by 4 foot size limit should be reconsidered. It would be advantageous and visually appealing to allow greater heights.
INCIDENTAL SIGNS IN COMMERCIAL, OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL ZONES	• One additional sign of limited size is allowed per property. This could be allowed as a second free standing sign. It is in a different part of the code which is not as well known. Signs under two square feet in area are allowed and may be used for directional signage in parking lots.
CONDITIONAL USES	• Conditional uses are allowed under certain conditions and go to the planning commission at a public hearing. • Signs for conditions are limited in size, may not be internally illuminated and are required to be constructed of primarily natural materials. Other dimensional standards apply. • A CAT member commented that schools often want communication with parents easily with an electronic message center which is easy to change. The size allowed is pretty short for people in cars to see. Laura responded there have been a fair amount of inquiries about electronic message signs for churches. The high school has a variance for an electronic sign.
RESIDENTIAL SIGNS	• Not more than one wall sign or free-standing sign to be visible from each frontage, and may not be more than 20 square feet. Other dimensional standards apply.
PROHIBITED SIGNS	• The list of signs not permitted was shown. Examples include rotating, revolving, flashing signs, banners, balloons and A-frames. • CAT members commented on electronic sign standards: ○ The group should consider the number and magnitude of changes in the sign industry, like drive through restaurants with banners. Use of LED lighting could let them increase business and get rid of auxiliary signage. The same is true of multi tenant signs using digital displays. The CAT should anticipate where the industry is going with technological change when crafting the code update. There should be a allowance in the code for changing reader boards in a time frame which is less than the 24 hours currently allowed. ○ Modernizing the sign code should include the use of LED. The federal standard is 8 seconds for rotation. • Laura responded that there is not currently a luminosity standard for lighting but it must not be a safety hazard for roadway users. • The CAT suggested that an A-frame may be appropriate on private property (and in the public right-of-way under certain circumstances, such as within multi-use neighborhoods (residential over commercial applications).

Oregon City Sign Code Update Project

Meeting Summary - Community Advisory Team – Sept. 16, 2013

	- A suggestion from the community/staff regarding Banners include: - Banners should be considered in non historic areas for a temporary amount of time.
SIGNS NOT REQUIRING A PERMIT	- Signs not requiring a permit include indoor signs, those less than two square feet, those integrated into a building and those owned by a public agency. [There was also discussion about the exempt from permit allowed sign provided under Section 15.28.060(A). - Two flags are allowed per property without a permit. After two, each flag is considered a freestanding sign. A CAT member commented that there is a question of what is defined as a flag.
SIGNS IN THE RIGHT-OF-WAY	- There are no standards for signs within the right-of-way (land that is not private property). The sign code states that all signs in the right-of-way shall be approved by the City Engineer and there are dimensional standards, etc for the City Engineer to utilize. City staff specifically requests the CAT consider whether and how to create standards for signs in the right-of-way in this advisory process. - Suggestions from the community/staff include: - The signage should not impede within the walkway too much. There must still be compliance with ADA standards, - Require a yearly permit for A-frame signs and have the approval sticker on the permit. - CAT members provided their perspectives regarding signs within the right-of-way - A-frames should be allowed for a temporary amount of time for open houses. - A-frames should be permitted with a time constraint. - Suggestion to require the time is recorded when the A-frame is placed in the public right-of-way. - A-frames in Portland and block the way for disabled people but Oregon City has businesses which are more spread out. - Laura responded that a distance of four feet is currently required for sidewalk clearance (ADA). - Portland A-frames are regulated yearly, but in Oregon City, permits are for the life of the sign. - The difference between commercial and residential use is important. - In some instances, churches may not have their own facilities and may still have advertizing needs for the time they are in session (for example when they meet at a school). - Distinguishing among times could help allow advertising for yard sales and churches.
ENFORCEMENT	The City will enforce the sign code if there is a public danger. Illegal signs can be reported to the city and a list of violations is being compiled. The City can send a letter telling people to take down signs that violate the code. The City has not issued

	fines or gone to court recently. • The City would like a recommendation from the CAT that reflects the level of enforcement that would be amenable to the community. One of the City’s goals is to create a sustainable sign enforcement program. • The CAT will also make recommendations about what to do with nonconforming signs. • CAT members provided comments regarding sign code enforcement: ○ Neighbors are concerned about moving and garage sale signs which remain up after the event has past. There are also real estate signs placed on prominent lots without permission. ▪ Laura said the CAT could talk about the duration for temporary signs to address this since because the City’s regulations have to be content neutral. ○ Members discussed enforcement and grandfathering of existing out-of-compliance signs. Lake Oswego inventoried all the signs in their jurisdiction and wrote a new code which outlawed everything except for monument signs. ○ Signs are expensive and have a long life. The sign code should consider the investment made in signs when considering grandfathering. ○ The CAT could consider different rules for different land uses; commercial, residential and industrial. ○ Contractor signs are self-regulating and come down after a certain amount of time with the exception of “for lease” signs on commercial properties. Real estate signs are self policing as well and probably not a priority for enforcement. ○ Fees for signs should be used for enforcing the sign code and not for other government activities.
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS	• Suggestions from the community/staff include: ○ The feasibility of an annual renewal fee to help remove obsolete signs. ○ Topography and districts of the City are distinct, function differently and should be considered for distinct treatment under the code. • CAT members identified several topics for future discussion, including: ○ Yard sale and political signs which are not removed. ○ Sign maintenance requirements, as many older signs are not maintained. ○ Providing education about the regulations to help improve compliance. Members were encouraged to communicate any additional topics via email.
NEXT MEETING	The next CAT meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 14 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM.



Agenda

Oregon City Sign Code Update
Community Advisory Team (CAT) Meeting #1
September 16, 2013, 5:00 – 8:00 pm
City Hall

1. Introductions
2. Project Purpose, CAT Process, and Code Amendment Process
3. CAT Charter Review and Approval
4. Legal Considerations for Sign Regulations
5. Overview of Current Sign Code and Existing Conditions and Summary of Community Feedback
6. Member Perspectives
 - A. What concerns do you have about signage in Oregon City?
 - B. Are there any specific changes to the code you suggest?

Next Meeting: October 14, 2013, 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Oregon City Sign Code Update Community Advisory Team Meeting #1

Welcome



Agenda

- Introductions
- Project Purpose, CAT Process, and Code Amendment Process
- CAT Charter Review and Approval
- Legal Considerations for Sign Regulations
- Overview of Current Sign Code and Existing Conditions and Summary of Community Feedback
- Member Perspectives
 - What concerns do you have about signage in Oregon City?
 - Are there any specific changes to the code you suggest?

Oregon City Sign Code Update Public Process

Kick off
(summer 2013)

Early Community Engagement



PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Recommendations
(fall 2013/winter 2014)

Community Advisory Team

1 — 2 — 3 — 4

Open House, Community Briefings

Staff Recommendation

Adoption
(spring 2014)

Planning and City Commission Meetings

1 — 2 — 3 — 4

Public Comment

Adopted Updated Code

Work Plan

DRAFT

September 9, 2013

Oregon City Sign Code Update Community Advisory Team Work Plan

Desired outcomes

Community Advisory Team (CAT) members will advise City staff on updates to the Oregon City sign code. Staff will consider CAT recommendations and create proposed amendments to the sign code, incorporating CAT recommendations to the extent practicable.

By the end of its process, it is expected the CAT will have provided input on the following topics:

- Application and permit approval process
 - Discuss the current application process, submittal requirements and permit review.
 - Determine any desired changes to the process of submitting a sign permit application.
- Signage standards
 - Address a comprehensive range of sign types and those currently allowed and prohibited.
 - Projecting signs
 - Wall signs (including murals)
 - Canopy signs
 - Roof signs

Charter and Protocols

Oregon City Sign Code Update Community Advisory Team

**DRAFT Team Charter and Protocols
Aug. 20, 2013**

Preamble

The Oregon City Municipal Code currently places limitations on the type, quantity, size, and material of signage allowed on public and private property. In 1995 and 1999 the City enacted minor updates to the sign regulations; the City's sign regulations have not significantly changed in nearly 20 years. Improvements to the existing code will be considered in the form of updated policies, code language and definitions to better meet the needs of Oregon City residents and businesses now and in the future.

The Community Advisory Team (CAT) has been established to bring community dialogue into the planning process. The team will provide insights, observations and feedback on topics related to signage policy, including the sign application and permit approval process, sign types, design issues (such as sign size, illumination, height, location and timing), definitions, the use of special districts or corridors, etc.

Purpose of Charter

This charter is intended to provide a clear and mutually agreeable statement of the roles and responsibilities of CAT members and Oregon City staff. It also identifies the way in which the team will

Oregon City Sign Code Update Community Advisory Team Meeting #1

Legal Considerations for Sign Regulations

Presenter: Jennifer Bragar
Deputy City Attorney

September 16, 2013



Federal, State, Local Hierarchy



Federal Law:
United States Constitution
Federal Highway Beautification Act

State Law:
Oregon State Constitution
Oregon Motorist Information Act

Local Regulation:
Oregon City Municipal Code

Federal Law

United States Constitution

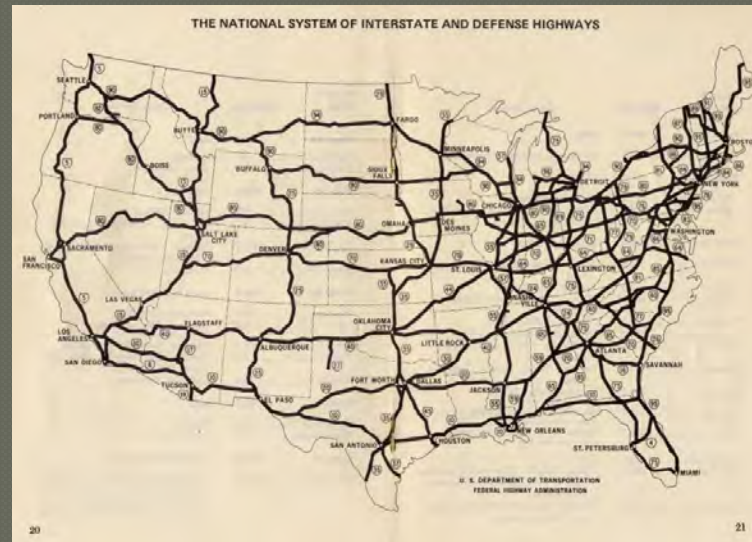
- First Amendment Right to Free Speech balanced against a local government's substantial interest in ameliorating aesthetic and visual clutter – such interests may justify a content-neutral prohibition on the limitation of signs. *Metromedia, Inc. v. City of San Diego* 453 US 490, 532-534 (1981).
- Consider whether regulations are specific enough to avoid constitutional claims for vagueness and overbreadth.



Federal Highway Beautification Act

23 USC 131

- Governs areas along interstate highways – very limited application.
- Regulates signs and displays visible from the main traveled way of the system and erected with the purpose of their message being read from such main traveled way.



Highway Beautification Act Continued

Allows:

- Directional and official notice signs – e.g. natural wonders;
- Signs advertising the sale or lease of property upon which they are located;
- Electronic signs advertising activities conducted on the property on which they are located;
- Landmark signs in existence on Oct. 22, 1965; and
- Availability of free coffee, even if a donation is requested.

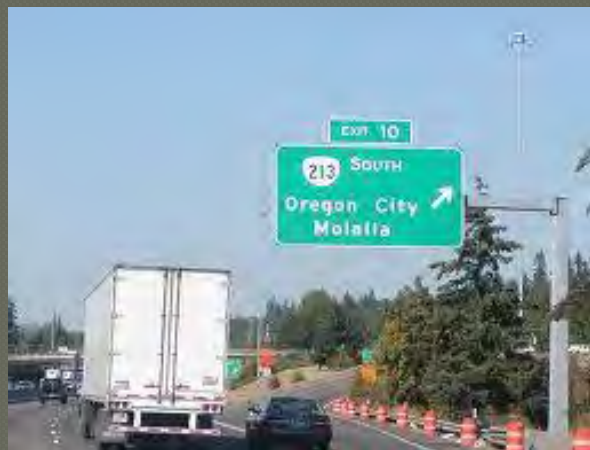
Oregon Constitution – Broad protection of free speech.

Article I, section 8, provides, in part, that “[n]o law shall be passed restraining the free expression of opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write, or print freely on any subject whatever[.]”



Oregon Motorist Information Act (OMIA)

A person may not erect or maintain a sign visible to the traveling public from a state highway, except where permitted outside the right of way of a state highway, unless the sign complies with the provisions of ORS 377.505 to 377.540 and 377.700 to 377.840, and the rules adopted pursuant thereto.



OMIA continued

ORS 377.723 requires an applicant for a sign permit along a state highway to submit an affidavit from the city that certifies the proposed sign would comply with all applicable ordinances, plans, rules and other requirements of the city.

OMIA continued

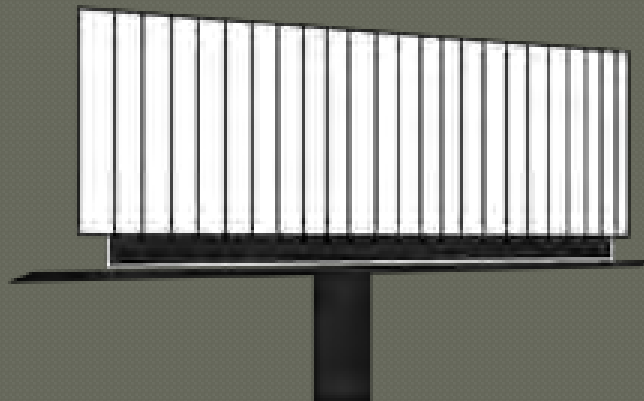
- State law imposes limitations on the form and size of signs for outdoor advertising along state highways under ORS 377.745.
- An outdoor advertising sign may not exceed:
 - (a) A length of 48 feet;
 - (b) A height, excluding foundation and supports, of 14 feet; or
 - (c) A sign area of 825 square feet.

OMIA continued

- **Particular rules govern the determination of dimensions depending on the type of sign.**

- **The exception to the rules:**

A nonconforming outdoor advertising sign in existence on May 30, 2007, may continue to exceed the size limitations established in this section until the sign is reconstructed or relocated, at which time the sign must comply with the size limitations shown on the previous slide.



Take Away

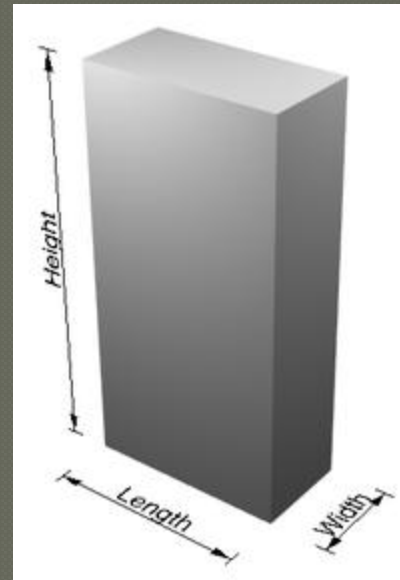
What kinds of regulations may the City adopt without running afoul of federal or state law?

Reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions that make no distinction between on or off premises and are:

CONTENT NEUTRAL

Types of Content Neutral Regulations

- ◉ Dimensions
- ◉ Materials
- ◉ Special Districts
- ◉ Number
- ◉ Duration
- ◉ Flashing



Additional Parameters

- Taking us full circle back to the First Amendment Protection:
 - content neutral time, place, or manner restrictions must directly advance a significant government interest to be constitutional.
- A city's interest in its appearance and the safety of the public are significant and well established.

Questions?

- The City Attorney will be present at all of the CAT meetings.
- Specific questions that arise after this meeting should be directed to staff who will forward pertinent inquiries to the City Attorney.

Oregon City Sign Code Update Community Advisory Team Meeting #1

Signage Standards and Existing Signage in Oregon City

September 16, 2013

The following images are for illustrative purposes.



Signs in Oregon City

Illustrations represent different sign types in commercial zones, including those that are currently allowed (✓) or prohibited (✗) in Oregon City. The requirements for signs and sign types are identified in Chapter 15.28 of the Oregon City Municipal Code.



- ✓ Temporary, incidental, flag, signs carried by a person, not visible from the street, carved into a building, signs required by law.
- ✗ Billboards, animated, on trees or fences, streamers, lights, balloons, pennants, prohibit movement, unmaintained, unsturdy, or large signs on undeveloped property.

For a complete list of allowed and prohibited signs see OCMC Chapter 15.28. This is for illustrative purposes only.

Permit Process



- A majority of sign permits are processed over-the-counter.
- Signs subject to the Historic Overlay District are approved by staff or the Historic Review Board.
- Variances are approved by the Planning Commission.

Definitions



Definitions



Definitions



Wall Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Wall Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Wall Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Wall Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Wall Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Wall Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Wall Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Wall Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Freestanding Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Freestanding Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Freestanding Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Freestanding Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Freestanding Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Freestanding Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Freestanding Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Freestanding Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Roof Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Projecting Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Projecting Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Incidental Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Incidental Signs in Office, Commercial & Industrial Districts



Signs in Residential Districts



Signs in Residential Districts



Signs in Residential Districts



Signs for Conditional Uses in Residential Districts



Signs for Conditional Uses in Residential Districts



Signs not Requiring a Permit



Signs not Requiring a Permit



Signs not Requiring a Permit



Signs not Requiring a Permit



Signs not Requiring a Permit



Signs not Requiring a Permit



Prohibited Signage

- ◉ A-frame signs on private property
- ◉ Banners
- ◉ Flashing, rotating or revolving signs
- ◉ Billboards
- ◉ Signs on trees or fences
- ◉ Multiple temporary signs on a property

Enforcement of the Sign Code

- In this process we would like to identify the amount of enforcement the community desires.

Signs in the Right-of-Way (Street)



Signs in the Right-of-Way (Street)



Signs in the Right-of-Way (Street)



Signs in the Right-of-Way (Street)



Signs in the Right-of-Way (Street)



Signs in the Right-of-Way (Street)



Questions for the CAT

- ◉ What concerns do you have about signage in Oregon City?
- ◉ Are there any specific changes to the code you suggest?



About the Project

After nearly 20 years without a significant change, Oregon City is updating sign regulations to better meet the needs of Oregon City residents and businesses now and into the future.

The type, quantity, size, location, and material of signage can shape how you feel about a location. For example, if there are too many signs you may think of a street as cluttered. Conversely, a lack of signage may make it difficult to find your destination. The municipal sign code regulates signage on private property including:

- Sign types (freestanding, wall, A-frame, banner, etc.)
- Sign size and height
- Number of signs on private property
- Illumination and movement of signs
- Sign material

Please note the City will not consider regulations regarding the content of a sign because the City cannot legally do so. Impermissible content-based regulations include anything that focuses on the message of the sign such as "For Sale," or any social or political commentary. In order for this project to be

successful, we need your help! We want to obtain feedback from a range of stakeholders throughout the process to help inform community-backed recommendations.

Project Schedule

During the summer of 2013, the project team will begin to gather the community's opinion regarding the sign code update and work with the Mayor to establish a Community Advisory Team (CAT).

In fall 2013, the CAT will review community feedback and technical research to develop sign code policy options. The options will be refined through CAT's meetings and shared online, at an open house and other community briefings. CAT members will make a recommendation to Oregon City staff, who will consider this and other public comments to identify a final draft of sign code amendments.

Draft sign code amendments developed by staff will be reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Commission at a series of public meetings. The review will include opportunities for written and in-person comment. The staff recommendation may be refined through the process before the Sign Code Update is adopted in summer 2014. This schedule is subject to change and will be updated, as necessary.



Signage can help shape the character of a city.

Get Involved

We need your help to update the City's sign regulations.

- Follow project updates at **OCSignCode.org**
- Attend a community briefing or open house meeting
- Apply for membership on the Sign Code Community Advisory Team **by August 16th**
- Submit comments online, by letter or email.

Stay Informed

Visit www.OCSignCode.org, or contact Laura Terway, Project Manager, at 503.496.1553 or lterway@orc.org to discuss the project or provide comments.

Current Sign Regulations in Oregon City



The Sign Code Update Project is an opportunity to partner with the community to determine if any changes to the regulations are needed.

Images represent different sign types in commercial zones, including those that are currently allowed in Oregon City.

Prohibited signs include: A-frames, banners, billboards, animated, streamers, lights, balloons, pennants, unmaintained, unsteady, large signs on undeveloped property or signs on trees or fences.

A complete list of allowed and prohibited signs are identified in Chapter 15.28 of the Oregon City Municipal Code.



Canopy Sign



Interior Sign



Temporary Sign



Freestanding Sign



Projecting Sign



Wall Sign

Signs in Oregon City

Illustrations represent different sign types in commercial zones, including those that are currently allowed (✓) or prohibited (✗) in Oregon City. The requirements for signs and sign types are identified in Chapter 15.28 of the Oregon City Municipal Code.



✓ Temporary, incidental, flag, signs carried by a person, not visible from the street, carved into a building, signs required by law.

✗ Billboards, animated, on trees or fences, streamers, lights, balloons, pennants, prohibit movement, unmaintained, unsturdy, or large signs on undeveloped property.

For a complete list of allowed and prohibited signs under the current code, see OCMC Chapter 15.28. This is for illustrative purposes only.

Chapter 15.28 SIGNS

Sections:

[15.28.010 Purpose and scope.](#)

[15.28.020 Definitions.](#)

[15.28.030 Permit required.](#)

[15.28.040 Variances.](#)

[15.28.050 Prohibited signs.](#)

[15.28.060 Signs not requiring a permit.](#)

[15.28.070 Signs in residential zones.](#)

[15.28.075 Signs for listed conditional uses in residential zones.](#)

[15.28.080 Signs in office, commercial and industrial zones.](#)

[15.28.090 Nonconforming signs and their removal.](#)

[15.28.100 Conflict and severability.](#)

[15.28.110 Violation—Penalty.](#)

15.28.010 Purpose and scope.

This chapter regulates the erection placement and maintenance of signs to protect and enhance public health, safety, welfare and property, more specifically to:

A. Purpose.

1. Allow those signs compatible with the character and uses allowed in the zoning district in which they are located;
2. Maintain the effectiveness of traffic signs;
3. Prohibit certain signs or portions thereof, which conflict with the safe movement of people and emergency services, constitute a public nuisance or hazard, are of unsafe construction, or which demand attention by their dominating size or appearance of motion;
4. Maintain and enhance the scenic and other aesthetic qualities of the city.

B. Scope. All signs, including sign structures and display areas or building walls with lettering on them shall be erected and maintained only as provided by this chapter, except for the following:

1. Signs not visible from either a public right-of-way or property of different ownership, provided such signs shall be erected and maintained in accordance with applicable law;
2. Signs owned and maintained by governmental agencies;
3. Signs lawfully erected in the public right-of-way in accordance with applicable state and local laws and regulations;
4. Signs inside a building, except for strobe lights or floating lights visible from a public right-of-way, private road or other private property; and

Title 15 - BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 15.28 SIGNS

5. Signs carved into or part of materials which are an integral part of a building.

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.020 Definitions.

For the purposes of this chapter:

"Abandoned sign" means a sign that does not have copy on the display surface for a period of six months or more, including an obsolete sign.

"Billboard" means a sign with a display surface area of three hundred square feet or more.

"Display surface area" means the total area of a sign that is available for displaying advertising or an informational message, subject to the provisions of this chapter.

"Erect" or "erected" means to construct, build, assemble, alter, place, affix, attach, create, recreate, paint, draw or in any way bring into being or establish.

"Free-standing sign" means a sign supported from the ground by its own structure.

"Fence" and "fencing" mean any barrier or section thereof, other than a wall, designed to delimit a boundary or provide a visual screen.

"Frontage" means the continuous distance along one street right-of-way line of one premises, provided such street is improved for public travel.

"Grade" means the level of the nearest sidewalk or road pavement.

"Incidental sign" means a sign identifying or advertising associated goods, products, services or facilities available on the premises, including but not limited to, trading stamps, credit cards accepted, brand names or price signs.

"Maintain," "maintained" or "maintaining" means activities, such as upkeep and repair of signs or sign structures and the replacement of sign messages or advertisement displayed on a sign, and an activity by which a sign or sign structure are permitted to exist.

"Natural materials" means wood, stone, brick and rock or any combination thereof.

"Obsolete sign" means a sign that calls attention to a business or other activity or a profession, commodity, product, service or entertainment no longer carried on, produced, sold or offered.

"Premises" means a lot or number of lots on which are situated a business, or a building or group of buildings designed as a unit.

"Projecting sign" means a sign projecting more than one foot from the wall of a building.

"Roof sign" means a sign erected or maintained wholly upon or over the roof of any building with the principal support on the roof structure.

"Sign" means any sign, display message, emblem, device, figure, painting, drawing, placard, poster, billboard or other thing that is designed, used or intended for advertising purposes or to inform or attract the attention of the public, and the term includes the sign structure, display surface and all other component parts of a sign; when dimensions of a sign are specified, the term includes panels and frames; and the term includes both sides of a sign of specified dimensions or display surface area.

"Sign face" means the total of display surface area visible from one side of a sign.

"Sign official" is the person designated by the city manager to enforce the provisions of this chapter, including the review of permit applications, the interpretation of the provisions of this chapter and the issuance of permits.

Title 15 - BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 15.28 SIGNS

"Temporary sign" means a sign that will become obsolete after the occurrence of an event or series of events. Temporary signs include, but are not limited to, for sale and lease signs, garage sale signs and political campaign signs.

"Traffic control sign or device" means an official route marker, guide sign, warning sign or sign directing or regulating traffic or pedestrians which has been erected by or under order of the city of Oregon City, the state or federal governments.

"Wall" means a masonry structure.

"Wall sign" means a sign erected on a wall.

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.030 Permit required.

- A. Permit Required. No sign shall be erected or maintained except as provided by this chapter and a permit has been issued by the sign official. This permit requirement applies to all signs, except those specifically exempt by a provision of this chapter and signs existing on the date of adoption of the ordinance codified in this chapter which shall be subject to subsection D of this section.
- B. Permit Application. Application for a sign permit shall be made in writing upon forms furnished by the sign official. A permit application fee shall accompany the application for it to be processed by the city. The amount of the fee shall be proportionate to the value of the sign proposed and shall be calculated according to a permit fee schedule adopted by resolution of the city commission.

The application shall include all plans and information necessary to establish that the proposed sign complies with all applicable requirements of this chapter and applicable buildings, structural and life safety codes. The permit shall be valid if the sign is erected and maintained in compliance with city code, and the applicant did not misrepresent or falsify any information supplied in the application. Any permit issued under this chapter shall be void if no substantial physical action be taken, in accordance with any conditions of the permit and the applicable requirements of this chapter, within ninety days following the date of its issuance. Any permit issued under this chapter shall remain in effect as long as the sign is maintained in compliance with any permit conditions and all applicable provisions of this chapter.

- C. Appeals. Any person aggrieved by a decision of the sign official may appeal the decision to the planning commission. Any such appeal shall be in writing and be received by the city recorder no later than ten days after the date the challenged is final. The appropriate appeal fee established by resolution of the city commission shall accompany the appeal. Proceedings before the planning commission shall comply with the provisions of [Chapter 17.50](#) of this code, including the provisions relating to city commission review of planning commission decisions involving conditional use permits.
- D. Permits for Signs Existing on the Effective Date of These Regulations. Signs existing on the effective date of these regulations shall also be required to obtain a permit within one hundred twenty days of the date these regulations become effective. No fee shall be charged for such permit and the sign official shall, within sixty days of the effective date of these regulations, give written notice of the requirement for permits and shall provide permit forms on request. Any such existing sign for which a permit has not been obtained within one hundred twenty days of the effective date of these regulations shall be deemed an unlawful use.

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.040 Variances.

- A. Grounds for Variance. Upon application by an applicant, the planning commission may grant a specific variance from provisions of this chapter provided all of the following circumstances exist:

Title 15 - BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 15.28 SIGNS

1. Exceptional or extraordinary circumstances apply to the property that do not apply generally to other properties in the same area or vicinity. Such conditions may be the result of an unusual location or orientation of the applicant's building, topography, vegetation or other circumstance over which the applicant has no control;
 2. The variance is necessary for the preservation of a right of the applicant substantially the same as is possessed by the owners of other property in the area or vicinity;
 3. The authorization of the requested variance will not be materially detrimental to, or conflict with, the purposes of this chapter or be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the area or vicinity, or the public way, in which the property is located; and
 4. The variance requested is the minimum variance necessary, to alleviate the identified hardship.
- B. Variance Fee. At the time of application for variance from the provisions of this chapter, the applicant shall pay a fee in accordance with the fee schedule established and amended from time to time by the city commission and on file with the city recorder.
- C. Procedure. A variance application shall be treated in the manner provided by [Chapter 17.50](#) of this code with respect to zoning variances.

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.050 Prohibited signs.

It is unlawful for the following signs to be erected or to be maintained except as otherwise provided in this chapter:

- A. Billboards;
- B. A sign that interferes in any way with a traffic control sign or device or prevents clear and unobstructed view of official traffic control signs or devices or approaching or merging traffic;
- C. A sign that contains, includes or is illuminated by any flashing or revolving, rotating or moving light or moves or has any animated or moving parts. This subsection does not apply to traffic control signs or devices;
- D. A sign with lighting which is not effectively shielded as to prevent beams or rays of light from being directed at any portion of the main traveled right-of-way of a state highway, or is of such low intensity or brilliance as not to cause glare or to impair the vision of the driver of a motor vehicle or otherwise to interfere with the operations thereof;
- E. A sign located upon a tree, or painted or drawn upon a natural feature;
- F. An obsolete sign;
- G. Portable signs, A-frame signs, sandwich boards, tent signs, streamers, strings of lights, balloons, hulas, banners or pennants, excepting traditional holiday decorations; and except as provided in [Section 15.28.010\(B\)](#);
- H. A sign that obstructs free ingress to or egress from any door, window or fire escape, alley, drive or fire lane, or is attached to a fire escape;
- I. A sign erected or maintained on public property or within the public right-of-way without permission of the public body having jurisdiction;
- J. A sign not able to withstand a wind pressure of twenty pounds per square foot of exposed surface, or is insecurely erected, or is constructed so as to constitute a fire hazard;
- K. A sign not maintained in a safe, neat, clean and attractive condition and in good repair;
- L. Any sign larger than four square feet on an undeveloped lot or parcel of property;

Title 15 - BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 15.28 SIGNS

M. A sign not otherwise in compliance with any provision of this code, Oregon law or the terms and conditions of any valid sign permit issued under this chapter;

N. Signs on fences or fencing.

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.060 Signs not requiring a permit.

In any zoning district, the following signs may be erected and maintained without a permit, so long as they comply with all applicable provisions of this chapter and are not illuminated;

- A. One temporary sign per street frontage of property under a single ownership provided such a sign does not cause a public safety hazard or nuisance, has no more than two faces, and that no sign face exceeds four square feet in area;
- B. Signs carved into a building or which are part of materials that are an integral part of the building not exceeding ten square feet in area. This subsection does not include signs painted on the sides of buildings;
- C. A single sign where the display surface area does not exceed two square feet;
- D. Window signs situated on the indoor-side of a window or door;
- E. Flags, limited to two per premises;
- F. Signs attached to, or carried by, a person;
- G. Signs required by law or legal action, including but not limited to, signs warning of hazardous or dangerous conditions on a premises and land use application and hearing notice signs.

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.070 Signs in residential zones.

- A. Signs Allowed. In the R-10, R-8, R-6, RC-4, R-6/MH and RA-2 zoning districts, the following signs are allowed:
 - 1. All signs allowed without permit as provided by this chapter so long as the requirements of this subsection are met;
 - 2. Permitted signs so long as a permit is first obtained as required by this chapter, and the requirements of this subsection are met.
- B. Display Requirements. All signs in the residential zones listed in this section must comply with the following requirements:
 - 1. Not more than one wall sign or free-standing sign to be visible from each frontage, with no more than three frontages. Wall signs shall be measured by the outer limits of the lettering, illustration or other display;
 - 2. Maximum twenty square feet of area per sign face;
 - 3. Not to exceed ten feet in length;
 - 4. Five feet maximum height above grade;
 - 5. Primarily constructed of natural materials;
 - 6. Sign shall be setback from the street as determined by the sign official, but not more than ten feet from the street right-of-way;

Title 15 - BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 15.28 SIGNS

7. If illuminated, the source of illumination shall be external to the sign and directed or shielded so as to not shine directly onto any neighboring structure.

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.075 Signs for listed conditional uses in residential zones.

- A. For conditional uses in residential zones, a sign that meets the following standards shall be allowed provided a permit is first obtained as required by this chapter:
 1. One wall sign per frontage is allowed. Additionally, one free-standing sign per conditional use is allowed;
 2. Maximum thirty-two square feet of area per sign face;
 3. Not to exceed ten feet in length;
 4. Eight feet maximum height above grade;
 5. Primarily constructed of natural materials or similar products, such as wood, stone, brick or metal;
 6. If illuminated, the source of illumination shall be external to the sign and directed or shielded so as to not shine directly onto any neighboring structure.

(Ord. 05-1002, 2005)

15.28.080 Signs in office, commercial and industrial zones.

- A. Signs Allowed. In the LOC, LO, NC, HC, LC, C, CBD, M-1 and M-2 zoning districts, the following signs are allowed:
 1. All signs allowed without permit as provided by this chapter, so long as the requirements of this subsection are met;
 2. Wall signs, so long as a permit is first obtained as required by this chapter and the display surface area is no larger than two square feet for each lineal foot of the wall on which the sign is erected;
 3. Free-standing signs, so long as a permit is first obtained as required by this chapter and the following standards are met:
 - a. Number. One free-standing sign shall be permitted for each street frontage of a premises, provided minimum subdivision lot frontage of thirty feet is met. No free-standing sign shall be permitted on the same frontage where there is a projecting or roof sign. Free-standing signs on the same premises but on different frontages shall be separated by a minimum of fifty feet distance.
 - b. Area. Where the street frontage is less than fifty feet, the maximum display surface area shall not exceed fifty square feet, with twenty-five square feet maximum area per sign face. Where the street frontage is greater than fifty feet but less than two hundred feet, surface display area shall not exceed one hundred square feet, with fifty square feet maximum area per sign face. Where the street frontage is two hundred feet or greater, the surface display area shall not exceed three hundred square feet, with a maximum area of one hundred fifty square feet per sign face. In no case shall any sign have a surface display area in excess of three hundred square feet.
 - c. Projection. Free-standing signs shall not project over a public right-of-way.

Title 15 - BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 15.28 SIGNS

- d. Clearance. A minimum clearance of ten feet from grade shall be maintained over pedestrian or vehicular areas, fourteen feet over areas of truck access.
- e. Horizontal Dimension. The greatest horizontal dimension shall not exceed twenty feet for any free-standing sign.
- f. Height. The height of any free-standing sign shall not exceed twenty-five feet above grade, plus five feet for each two hundred feet, or portion thereof, frontage in excess of two hundred feet frontage. In no event shall any sign exceed thirty feet in height.

The following table summarizes free-standing sign area and height limits:

Street Frontage (in feet)	Maximum Display Surface Area (square feet)	Maximum Area of Any One Sign Face (square feet)	Maximum Height (in feet)
Up to 50	50	25	25
50 —200	100	50	25
201+	101—300	51 —150	30

- 4. Roof Signs. Roof signs are allowed so long as a permit is first obtained as required by this chapter and the following standards are met:
 - a. Number. Maximum one roof sign is permitted for each premises, and shall be permitted instead of a projecting sign or free-standing sign.
 - b. Area, projection, clearance, horizontal dimension and height shall be within the limits set for free-standing signs. Stamped approval of a licensed civil or structural engineer may be required due to stresses put on the building. No roof sign shall be erected without approval of the fire marshal after a finding that the size, type and location of the sign will not substantially interfere with fire fighting;
- 5. Projecting Signs. Projecting signs are allowed so long as a permit is first obtained as required by this chapter and the following standards are met:
 - a. Number. One projecting sign may be permitted for each business frontage. No projecting sign shall be permitted for the same business frontage where there is a free-standing or roof sign.
 - b. Area. Sign area shall not exceed sixteen square feet per sign face, with total area of all faces not to exceed thirty-two square feet.
 - c. Projection. Maximum projection from a building wall shall be four feet. No sign shall project within two feet of the curb line.
 - d. Vertical dimension. The greatest vertical dimension of a projecting sign shall not exceed four feet; provided, however, for any reduction in projection, the sign may be increased in height a like distance. The maximum projection above the wall on which the sign is erected shall be one foot, and the visible supporting structure shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible consistent with safe structural support.

Title 15 - BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 15.28 SIGNS

- e. Clearance. A minimum clearance of ten feet from grade shall be maintained over pedestrian or vehicular areas, fourteen feet over areas of truck access.
 - f. Separation. The minimum distance from another projecting sign shall be twenty feet in the same horizontal plane.
 - g. Projecting signs on other project structures: awnings, marquees, canopies, false fronts and wall extensions, safely constructed and approved by the building code official, may extend beyond the limits for projecting signs. Projecting signs on such structure, shall not exceed the limits as to number, area, projection, vertical dimension, clearance and separation as provided for any projecting sign. The only exception shall be for those instances in which a projecting structure would prohibit a projecting sign within sight of pedestrians; in these instances, the clearance under the marquee or other permanent structure may be reduced to eight feet;
6. Incidental Signs. One additional sign is allowed per premises, so long as a permit is first obtained as required by this chapter, is allowed. An incidental sign may be a free-standing or wall sign, but in either case, shall meet all provisions for such signs, excepting area. The surface display area of an incidental sign shall not exceed thirty-two square feet, and no sign face shall exceed sixteen square feet.

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.090 Nonconforming signs and their removal.

- A. Signs lawfully erected and maintained as of the date of the adoption of this chapter, but which do not meet the requirements of this chapter, shall be regarded as nonconforming signs which shall be lawful if a permit for the same is obtained under [Section 15.28.030](#) and may be continued for a period not to exceed ten years from the date of adoption of this chapter for the purpose of amortization of investment. Relief from this provision may be sought from the planning commission by following the procedures of [Section 15.28.040](#) for a longer amortization period, upon a showing that the applicant requires a longer period in which to amortize its investment in the sign in question. In the case of an application for a longer amortization period for an alleged nonconforming billboard, the applicant must prove, at a minimum, that the sign structure cannot reasonably be used for a sign with an area smaller than three hundred square feet.
- B. Signs located on premises annexed into the city after the effective date of the ordinance codified in this section and which signs do not comply with the provisions of the ordinance codified in this section, shall be brought into compliance with the ordinance codified in this section within a period of time not to exceed six months after the effective date of annexation; provided, however, that a landowner may, within thirty days of annexation, request a variance as provided in subsection A of this section.
- C. Any sign which is structurally altered, relocated or replaced shall immediately be brought into compliance with all applicable provisions of this chapter; provided, however, that a landowner may, within thirty days of annexation, request a variance as provided in [Section 15.28.040](#)
- D. All existing signs or portions thereof prohibited in [Section 15.28.050](#), except subsection A, shall be removed or altered to comply within six months from the date of adoption of this chapter.
- E. Within one year from the date of adoption of this chapter, the sign official or an authorized representative may inspect any sign regulated hereunder. The sign official shall have right of reasonable entry onto private premises to enforce the provisions of this chapter. After inspection, a notice shall be issued to the owner of the sign or property that lists the signs and identifies those signs which, in the opinion of the sign official, need repair or modification to bring them into compliance with this chapter and those which are in violation of the provisions of this chapter and must be removed, including the expiration of the grace period for the particular sign. The sign official

Title 15 - BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

Chapter 15.28 SIGNS

may repeat such on-site inspections, with reasonable notice, from time to time as deemed necessary to enforce the provisions of this chapter.

- F. Any sign regulated under this chapter found to be in violation of this chapter shall be deemed a nuisance. Violation of the provisions of this chapter shall constitute a civil infraction, subject to the code enforcement procedures of Chapters [1.16](#) and [1.20](#)

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.100 Conflict and severability.

In the event any provision herein is found to be in conflict with any zoning, building, fire safety, health or other code provisions of the city, the provision which establishes the higher standard for the promotion and protection of the health, safety and welfare of the people shall prevail.

A finding by a court of competent jurisdiction that any portion of this chapter is invalid shall not invalidate the remaining portions. A permit issued pursuant to this chapter does not grant any authority to violate any other law or regulation that may apply.

(Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

15.28.110 Violation—Penalty.

In addition to any other provisions hereof, it is unlawful for any person to maintain a sign or advertising structure in violation of the provisions of this chapter. Violation of any provision of this chapter is subject to the code enforcement procedures of Chapters [1.16](#), [1.20](#), [1.24](#).

(Ord. 99-1004 §27, 1999; Ord. 94-1027 §1 (part), 1994)

Topic	Summary of existing code	Summary of issues and comments from City Staff and the Public
Code administration		
Application and Permit Issuance	The applicability of the sign code is addressed in OCMC 15.28.010. Permit application process is addressed in OCMC 15.28.030 and 15.28.040. A majority of sign permit applications are approved over-the-counter without a waiting period. Signs subject to compliance with the Historic Overlay District are approved by staff or the Historic Review Board. Signs are not reviewed in conjunction with the Site Plan and Design Review process.	The City has a policy that a change of copy does not require a sign permit.
Variance	Per OCMC 15.28.040, the planning commission may grant a specific variance from provisions of this chapter provided all of the following circumstances exist: 1. Exceptional or extraordinary circumstances apply to the property that do not apply generally to other properties in the same area or vicinity. Such conditions may be the result of an unusual location or orientation of the applicant's building, topography, vegetation or other circumstance over which the applicant has no control; 2. The variance is necessary for the preservation of a right of the applicant substantially the same as is possessed by the owners of other property in the area or vicinity; 3. The authorization of the requested variance will not be materially detrimental to, or conflict with, the purposes of this chapter or be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the area or vicinity, or the public way, in which the property is located; and 4. The variance requested is the minimum variance necessary, to alleviate the identified hardship.	
Definitions	The existing code includes supporting definitions, included in OCMC 15.28.020.	- Suggestion to review definitions so they are content neutral (such as the definition of incidental sign or obsolete sign). - Suggestion to review the definition of a sign.
Enforcement	OCMC 15.28.090 addresses nonconforming signs and their removal.	- The City will seek to achieve the level of enforcement desired from the public. - Broad desire for active code enforcement has been expressed. - Suggestion for use of fines to fund code enforcement, rather than fees. - Both complaint-based and active City enforcement has been suggested. - Some policy has been suggested for “grandfathering” of existing signs. - Suggestion for the use of trained volunteers to enforce code so that it is more community-driven and cost-effective. - Suggestion to have a permit sticker would then be posted on the front of temporary signs which includes a removal date.
Fees	Sign permit fees are calculated using a base fee as well as charging a portion of the construction cost. Fees for Sign Variances are provided.	- The City typically does not ask for verification of the construction cost. - It is not well explained that the sign permit fee is a one-time fee and is good for the life of a sign. - Suggestion to reduce fees. - Suggestion to require a low-cost, yearly renewable sign permit. - Significant changes to sign code could be expensive for businesses to comply with. - A suggestion to adopt a cheaper fee for temporary signs.
Special Districts	The current sign code refers to outdated zones. For example, only 3 of the 9 zoning designations referenced in 15.28.080.A are used by the City as current zoning designations. The sign code was never updated when the zoning designations were changed in 2004.	- The zoning designations referenced in the sign code should be updated. - There has been general support for context-based standards. Areas identified for unique treatment include: - Commercial areas (shopping centers versus other commercial settings) - Downtown - Corridors

Topic	Summary of existing code	Summary of issues and comments from City Staff and the Public
Signage Standards		
Wall Signs in Office, Commercial and Industrial Zones	Per OCMC 15.28.080.A.2, buildings are allowed twice the length of the wall for total signage on the wall.	• The City has not experienced many requests for signs larger than permitted. • When there is a multi-tenant building, it is often difficult for the applicant to figure out the total square footage of existing signage. The City has heard suggestions from the public to change the code so the size is calculated based on the tenant space. • There has been some desire to allow murals which exceed the maximum size for wall signs. This would have to be content neutral.
Freestanding Signs in Office, Commercial and Industrial Zones	Allowable freestanding sign heights and display area are identified in OCMC 15.28.080. One freestanding sign is allowed per frontage and the size is based upon the length of the frontage.	• The City has not experienced many requests for signs larger than permitted. • Multiple tax lots under the same ownership have been considered as one larger lot for purposes of allowing larger freestanding signs. • The code does not currently define how we calculate the boundaries of a sign. The lettering is generally used. This may not be appropriate for all signs. • Suggestion to review the 50’ spacing requirement.
Roof Signs in Office, Commercial and Industrial Zones	Per OCMC 15.28.080.A.4, one roof sign is allowed for each premises, in place of a free standing or projecting sign. Area, projection, clearance, horizontal dimension and height shall be within the limits set for free-standing signs.	
Projecting (Blade) Signs in Office, Commercial and Industrial Zones	Per OCMC 15.28.080.A.5. a. Number. One projecting sign may be permitted for each business frontage. No projecting sign shall be permitted for the same business frontage where there is a free-standing or roof sign. b. Area. Sign area shall not exceed sixteen square feet per sign face, with total area of all faces not to exceed thirty-two square feet. c. Projection. Maximum projection from a building wall shall be four feet. No sign shall project within two feet of the curb line. d. Vertical dimension. The greatest vertical dimension of a projecting sign shall not exceed four feet; provided, however, for any reduction in projection, the sign may be increased in height a like distance. The maximum projection above the wall on which the sign is erected shall be one foot, and the visible supporting structure shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible consistent with safe structural support. e. Clearance. A minimum clearance of ten feet from grade shall be maintained over pedestrian or vehicular areas, fourteen feet over areas of truck access. f. Separation. The minimum distance from another projecting sign shall be twenty feet in the same horizontal plane. g. Projecting signs on other project structures: awnings, marquees, canopies, false fronts and wall extensions, safely constructed and approved by the building code official, may extend beyond the limits for projecting signs. Projecting signs on such structure, shall not exceed the limits as to number, area, projection, vertical dimension, clearance and separation as provided for any projecting sign. The only exception shall be for those instances in which a projecting structure would prohibit a projecting sign within sight of pedestrians; in these instances, the clearance under the marquee or other permanent structure may be reduced to eight feet;	• The projection limitations may be problematic when a building is adjacent to the front property line, such as downtown. • Suggestion to consider printing on an awning as a wall sign and not a projecting sign. • Suggestion to review the 20’ spacing requirement. • Suggestion to review the 10’ clearance over pedestrian or vehicular areas and 14’ over areas of truck access. • The projecting signs on project structures section appears to be contradictory.
Incidental Signs in Office, Commercial and Industrial Zones	OCMC 15.28.080.A.6 provides for one additional freestanding or wall sign per premises. The sign must meet all provisions for such signs, excepting area. The surface display area of an incidental sign shall not exceed thirty-two square feet, and no sign face shall exceed sixteen square feet.	• This section is not easy for the public to find. • Suggestion to review the number of free-standing signage allowed within large shopping centers and for drive thru facilities. • Suggestion to remove this section and add provisions for one additional freestanding sign or a larger wall area for signage.

Topic	Summary of existing code	Summary of issues and comments from City Staff and the Public
Signs in Residential Zones	OCMC 15.28.070.B identifies the display requirements as: Display Requirements. All signs in the residential zones listed in this section must comply with the following requirements: 1. Not more than one wall sign or free-standing sign to be visible from each frontage, with no more than three frontages. Wall signs shall be measured by the outer limits of the lettering, illustration or other display; 2. Maximum twenty square feet of area per sign face; 3. Not to exceed ten feet in length; 4. Five feet maximum height above grade; 5. Primarily constructed of natural materials; 6. Sign shall be setback from the street as determined by the sign official, but not more than ten feet from the street right-of-way; 7. If illuminated, the source of illumination shall be external to the sign and directed or shielded so as to not shine directly onto any neighboring structure.	• The code provides a single set of dimensional standards despite the type of sign (wall, freestanding, roof, etc).
Signs for Conditional Uses in Residential Zones	OCMC 15.28.075.A identifies the display requirements as: 1. One wall sign per frontage is allowed. Additionally, one free-standing sign per conditional use is allowed; 2. Maximum thirty-two square feet of area per sign face; 3. Not to exceed ten feet in length; 4. Eight feet maximum height above grade; 5. Primarily constructed of natural materials or similar products, such as wood, stone, brick or metal; 6. If illuminated, the source of illumination shall be external to the sign and directed or shielded so as to not shine directly onto any neighboring structure.	• Requests to allow LED signs for uses within this category such as churches and schools.
Signs Not Requiring a Permit	15.28.010 and 15.28.060 provide for signs not requiring a permit, including: • One temporary sign per street frontage (no more than two faces not exceeding four square feet in area each). • Signs carved or integrated into a building (not including painted signs) • A single sign where the display surface area does not exceed two square feet • Window signs situated on the indoor-side of a window or door • Flags, limited to two per premises • Signs attached to, or carried by, a person • Signs required by law • Signs not visible from the street or another property • Signs owned/maintained by government agencies	• Requests to regulate interior/window signs, while others suggest this type of sign remain exempt. • Suggestion to not allow handheld signs, while others suggest this type of sign remain exempt. • Suggestion to have a time limit on temporary signs. A Dislike for “clutter” caused by signs that aren’t taken down in a timely manner was expressed. • Suggestion to allow a greater number and size of political signs during election season.

Topic	Summary of existing code	Summary of issues and comments from City Staff and the Public
Prohibited Signage	Prohibited signs are identified in OCMC 15.28.050 including: A. Billboards; B. A sign that interferes in any way with a traffic control sign or device or prevents clear and unobstructed view of official traffic control signs or devices or approaching or merging traffic; C. A sign that contains, includes or is illuminated by any flashing or revolving, rotating or moving light or moves or has any animated or moving parts. D. A sign with lighting which is not effectively shielded as to prevent beams or rays of light from being directed at any portion of the main traveled right-of-way of a state highway, or is of such low intensity or brilliance as not to cause glare or to impair the vision of the driver of a motor vehicle or otherwise to interfere with the operations thereof; E. A sign located upon a tree, or painted or drawn upon a natural feature; F. An obsolete sign; G. Portable signs, A-frame signs, sandwich boards, tent signs, streamers, strings of lights, balloons, hulas, banners or pennants, excepting traditional holiday decorations; H. A sign that obstructs free ingress to or egress from any door, window or fire escape, alley, drive or fire lane, or is attached to a fire escape; I. A sign erected or maintained on public property or within the public right-of-way without permission of the public body having jurisdiction; J. A sign not able to withstand a wind pressure of twenty pounds per square foot of exposed surface, or is insecurely erected, or is constructed so as to constitute a fire hazard; K. A sign not maintained in a safe, neat, clean and attractive condition and in good repair; L. Any sign larger than four square feet on an undeveloped lot or parcel of property; M. A sign not otherwise in compliance with any provision of this code, Oregon law or the terms and conditions of any valid sign permit issued under this chapter; N. Signs on fences or fencing.	• Comments include desire to remove exiting billboards or not allow new billboards. • Concern was expressed about the legality of signage used for advertising real estate, including freestanding sign posts and framed signs, and event signage (open house A-frames and directional signs). • Comments reiterate the need to keep signs from interfering with traffic operations. • Moving/Changing signs were identified as distracting by the public. Suggestion to clarify the amount of time needed before a message may change. The City has a policy that it allows electronic signs, provided the text does not change more than once a day. • “Undeveloped” is not currently defined in code. • Signs not able to withstand a wind pressure of twenty pounds per square foot of exposed surface, or is insecurely erected, or is constructed so as to constitute a fire hazards cannot be easily measured and an alternative test was suggested. • Suggestions to allow A-frame signage on property, while others suggest maintaining the prohibition on these signs. Some feedback states that there are too many A-frame signs, still others support A-frames in commercial areas (one per business) with a permit. • Many comments have been received that there are too many banners in the City and they are on display too long. Suggestions to allow banners with a permit for a specified amount of time (such as 30 days, 4 times a year) as they are important to businesses. Suggestion to not allow banners in historic districts.
Signs in the Right-of-Way (Street)	Signs within the pubic right-of-way are currently not regulated in our sign code (15.28.010.B.3). They are regulated by the City Engineer. There are no written standards stating when signage should be allowed in the public right-of-way.	• There is a desire by the City residents, and businesses to create standards for signs within the right-of-way, provided: ○ Signs don’t obstruct the sidewalk for pedestrians ○ There are uniform standards • It was suggested signs should not be allowed on barricades or railings • It was suggested the City allow street light banners and banners that extend across the street. • Concern was expressed that A-frame signage in the public right-of-way is important to direct customers to businesses and important to downtown.
Other	The sign code regulates the number, size, placement and materials of signs in residential and commercial areas under OCMC 15.28.070, 15.28.075, and 15.28.080.	• Sign qualities are inconsistent. • There is a balance to be struck between signs that are funky and cool, others are annoying. • Too many signs (both in commercial areas and temporary signage in the public right-of-way) create clutter. • Signs should be well maintained. • Request signs that are readable and colors that are easy to see. • Urban renewal Main Street grants produced signs that are not tacky. • We need dark sky-friendly lighting. • Historical markers should be consistent. • Do not like how Lake Oswego required all monument signs. • There are too many flags around the City.

Community Advisory Team Meeting #2

Minutes, Agenda and Materials



**Oregon City Sign Code Update
Community Advisory Team Meeting #2
Meeting Summary
October 14, 2013
5:00 – 7:00 pm
City Hall, 625 Center Street**

PARTICIPANTS	Community Advisory Team (CAT)	Oregon City staff and facilitation team
	☒ Sandi Burley - Sign Company / Manufacture / Advocate ☒ Mark Evans - Institutional (Faith-based organization / School) ☒ Melissa Hayden - Development / Business ☒ Zach Henkin - Planning Commission ☒ Ed LaPlante - Chamber of Commerce ☒ Bob La Salle - Neighborhood Association/ Citizen Involvement Council ☒ Bob Mahoney (alternate for Tom O'Brien) - Neighborhood Association/ Citizen Involvement Council ☒ Kathleen Sinclair - City Resident ☒ Jonathon Stone (replacing John Southgate) – Main Street Oregon City ☒ Amy Willhite - City Resident ☒ Daryl Winand - Development / Business	☒ Laura Terway, Planner ☒ Jennifer Bragar, Assistant City Attorney ☒ Ryan Orth, facilitator (EnviroIssues) ☒ Bridger Wineman, notetaker (EnviroIssues)
OTHERS PRESENT	• Bob Cochran, Clackamas Community College • Kristine Herman, Clear Channel	
HANDOUTS	Agenda; Draft Code Concept (Oct. 7); Zoning descriptions; Public comments and comments from CAT (Sept. 17 – Oct. 14)	

AGENDA TOPICS

WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND AGENDA OVERVIEW		LAURA TERWAY / RYAN ORTH
	Laura Terway and Ryan Orth welcomed attendees. Meeting participants introduced themselves, including Community Advisory Team (CAT) members, City staff and facilitation team.	

	Bob Cochran, observing the meeting, introduced himself as the Dean of Campus Services at Clackamas Community College and provided comments for consideration of city staff and the CAT through the sign code update process. The Community College is aware that the surrounding community is not always informed of community-oriented events held at the college including performances, sporting events and career and benefits fairs, among others. There are also messages the college must communicate to students and staff, like campus closures and registration dates. The college has a very large frontage and two entrances. The property is zoned institutional. The administration is interested in using electronic signage, similar in size to the sign at Oregon City High School, in addition to the existing signs, to communicate multiple messages daily to the community.
REPORT ON COMMENTS RECEIVED SINCE LAST MEETING	
	CAT members provided additional comments following the September CAT meeting which have been shared with the group. Since the last meeting, project staff also met with the Oregon City Transportation Advisory Committee. Compiled comments were provided in advance of the meeting and are posted to the project website, http://www.ocsigncode.org. No new comments were received through the website.
PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: SIGNS BY ZONE GROUPING	
	LAURA TERWAY \ RYAN ORTH
INTENT OF SIGN STANDARDS	Statements summarizing the intent of the sign code were shared with CAT members, developed based on the purpose statement of the current code and feedback heard so far: • Preserve and enhance the image and identity of Oregon City. • Be compatible with the character of the zoning district and its allowed uses. • Support the economic development of Oregon City businesses. • Promote public safety through design. • Provide guidelines for good design at reasonable costs and with multiple options. A CAT member proposed the list include a point additional language that the code be “clear and concise.”
SIGN APPLICATION BY ZONE	A draft code concept was developed based on comments received from presentations and community briefings, the project website and through the CAT process so far. Details were provided in the Draft Code document. The draft code concept is intended to help organize and advance the CAT’s discussion on the code update. The draft code concept considers five groups of zones which were assembled due to their shared characteristics in regard to signage considerations. Each zone group included elements of the proposed sign code, highlighting changes proposed to the existing code. Further changes and refinements are expected through additional iterations of the proposal, in response to CAT and community feedback, to form the CAT’s recommendation. CAT members were reminded that their recommendations will inform an update of the sign code that city planning staff will submit to the Planning Commission and City Commission as part of the formal code update process. CAT members were encouraged to consider the usefulness and form of the code groupings used, confirm that previous feedback was accurately captured in the proposal and provide

	additional comments. Several points were addressed concerning zoning and the sign code: • Zoning provides a forward-looking mechanism through which to express the sign code. Current land use do not always reflect uses allowed by the zoning code. No zoning changes will be proposed through this project. • There is a variance process established in the current code with clear and objective standards. • New construction in a historic district would go through design review by Oregon City staff or the Historic Review Board.
RESIDENTIAL ZONE GROUPING	Residential zones are characterized by residential uses, along with conditional uses such as churches and schools. Signage in these areas is limited in quantity, scale and location and primarily seasonal and temporary. Home occupations in areas zoned residential may have permitted permanent signs. CAT members directed staff that conditional uses should have different sign requirements from residential properties. CAT members provided the following comments about signage in residential zones: Free standing signs • Limits should be placed on the brightness and spacing of electronic signs in residential areas where they are generally used by churches and schools to advertise events. • The height limit for wall and freestanding signs for conditional uses should be expanded from 8 to 15 feet. Temporary signs exempt from permits on private property (Examples include real estate and yard sale signs) • The proposal to allow temporary signs just twice a year is too limiting for churches and schools. • CAT members discussed whether a time limit should be instituted for real estate signs, including suggestions both for limited display duration and comments that temporary signs do not need a time limit. • Additional temporary signage on private property should be allowed around election season. • A definition of temporary signage should be identified. • Placement of signs around intersections and driveways should be considered. The current code requires that views at intersections are not obstructed, but obstructed views at driveways should be considered as well. • The proposal should allow A-frame signs on private property to advertise real estate open houses, home studios and similar events and uses. While real estate open houses generally occur at particular times, home business which could benefit from temporary signs might operate daily. • Real estate signs should be considered a separate category in the sign code. This is accommodated in the current code which allows one temporary sign per frontage. Signs not requiring a permit/Prohibited Signs

	- Banners are not currently defined in the code and should be included in the revised code. - Lights and holiday decorations are not currently regulated in the sign code and should remain excluded. Temporary sign in the public right of way - Some explanation of the boundaries of the public right of way should be provided for the public.
MULTI-FAMILY, SMALL COMMERCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ZONE GROUPING	The multi-family, small commercial and institutional zone group is characterized by multi-family and smaller scale commercial development near single-family zones as well as major public institutions, government facilities and parks. Sign types in this area include convenience needs for residents, adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and institutional uses. CAT members agreed that the number of signs should be allocated based on frontage with a limit on the maximum number of signs per property. Other comments from CAT members included: - Large institutions do not fit well in this category unless the number of signs is allocated based on property frontage or number of entrances. - Currently permitted signs for properties with small street frontages are too constrictive and should be expanded. - Digital signs should be allowed as they are beneficial for community messaging, promoting events and public safety. - Signage is needed at multifamily and institutions for civic and emergency services and for traffic flow.
MIXED USE, DOWNTOWN AND CORRIDOR ZONE GROUPING	The mixed use, downtown and corridor area includes critical transportation corridors, land uses including high-volume establishments and areas where a mix of high-density residential, office and small-scale retail uses are encouraged along with multistory residential uses. Some areas included in this group have land uses currently which do not reflect the zoning, but may in the future. The group also agreed too many signs in a single stretch of street create a cluttered effect. Flags, banners and A-frames all contribute to clutter and should be regulated together by allowing a maximum total number of temporary signs. Additional comments from CAT members included: - There should be consideration of mixed use areas where real estate signs for residential uses should be allowed along with commercial temporary signs. - Additional height should be allowed to create vertical projecting signage to add visual interest to the streetscape.
INDUSTRIAL	The industrial zone is characterized by larger properties with industrial uses and outdoor storage. CAT members did not provide specific comments on proposed sign code for industrial-zoned properties.
COMMERCIAL, CAMPUS AND EMPLOYMENT	Properties in the group of zones including commercial, campus and employment are often larger and include uses such as shopping centers, retail/office campuses or light manufacturing.

	CAT members provided the following comments: • Menu boards and way finding signs should not count against the number of signs otherwise allowed on a property. • Billboards should be permitted in specific commercial and industrial zones, but not on all of the major arterials. • A-frames should be allowed in this zone group for use by retail which serves industrial uses, like delis and coffee shops.
SIGN CONSIDERATIONS ACROSS ZONES	CAT members expressed interest in discussing murals and possible regulation of signs on commercial vehicles at future meetings. Murals and undeveloped lots may need to be defined in the sign code. CAT members commented that the descriptor “TV Type Signs” used in the draft code is mislabeled because these types of signs do not necessarily use moving images. They often cycle through static content. The industry term for this type of sign is “Electronic Message Center”, or EMC. CAT members asked about inflated “air dancer” signs often seen at auto dealerships. These types of signs are considered balloons and are not permitted in the current sign code. CAT members also asked about signs attached to people. Handheld signs are currently except from the code. Some CAT members commented that these signs, especially those that move, are distracting. Other members commented that limiting handheld signs may be perceived as limiting rights to speech. CAT members agreed that tall, “feather”-type flags should be prohibited. The group felt that feather-type flags are overused and when left up for an extended period they fade and become unattractive. Eliminating these types of flags/banners while continuing to allow national and team-style flags will require a definition of flags in the code, including dimensions. CAT members would like to simplify the zone groupings presented in the draft proposal. It may be simpler to consider proposing different requirements for residential zones while all other zones to share the same set of regulations. Lot size or frontage is an effective mechanism for determining the appropriate size and number of signs across non-residential zones.
ITEMS FOR CONTINUED DISCUSSION	CAT members and staff identified several issues for further discussion, including: • Enforcement of the sign code: Oregon City has a strong business community which could be leveraged to help promote compliance with the code. Web-based reporting of non-compliant signs should be considered. • Signs behind a window are not restricted in the current code across all zones, but signs painted on the outside are regulated. • The language used in the updated sign code should be clear and understandable. One member suggested that an ad-hoc review committee be formed to ensure the code is clear. CAT members were encouraged to communicate additional comments to staff before the November meeting.

Next Steps and preview open house / meeting #3	LAURA TERWAY \ RYAN ORTH
	Staff will provide a revised proposal for review ahead of the next CAT meeting, scheduled for Nov. 18, 2013. The agenda will also address enforcement-related topics. A public open house will be held from 5:00 – 7:00 PM, immediately before the next CAT meeting, which is scheduled for 7:00 – 9:00 PM. CAT members were encouraged to arrive between 6:00 and 6:30 so public comments and CAT member comments on the revised code proposal can be captured before the CAT meeting begins. Staff will not bring proposals which have not been reviewed by the CAT to the open house. All materials presented to the public will first be provided to the CAT so members have an opportunity to comment. Materials from the first two meetings will be provided to the public. A flier announcing the open house will be distributed and provided to CAT members who are asked to circulate it among their interested acquaintances.