

**APPLICANT SUBMITAL**

**FILE NO.:** Amendments to the Oregon City Sign Code Chapter 15.28

**APPLICANT:** Oregon City Planning Division  
221 Molalla Ave, Suite 200  
Oregon City, Oregon 97045

**REQUEST:** Adopt amendments to Chapter 15.28 (Signs) of the Oregon City Municipal Code.

**LOCATION:** City-wide. Legislative actions involve the adoption or amendment of the city's land use regulations that affect the entire city or large portions of it.

**BACKGROUND:**

Oregon City's sign code is located in Chapter 15.28 of the Municipal Code. The code regulates the location, number and size of signs in Oregon City. It determines when a sign permit is required, specifies what types of signs are prohibited, and exempts various types of signs from review. Oregon City's current sign code was adopted in 1994 (Ord. # 94-1027). Since its adoption, the only code amendment occurred in 2005 to add Section 15.28.075 – *Signs for listed conditional uses in residential zones* (Ord. 05-1002).

Goal 3 of the 2013-2015 Goals and Priorities of the Oregon City, City Commission was to “Enhance the Livability of the Community” (Exhibit 4). Under this goal, the City Commission identified a need to initiate an aggressive public involvement campaign to update the Oregon City Sign Code. More specifically the goal included the following tasks:

- Complete RFP for public outreach facilitator
- Review, revise, and adopt associated code amendments

The City has proposed a comprehensive rewrite of the City's sign code to create new sign standards that are safe, clear, fair and reflect Oregon City values. Copies of the updated draft code can be found in Exhibit 2.

**DECISION-MAKING CRITERIA:****CHAPTER 17.68 ZONING CHANGES AND AMENDMENTS**

*17.68.010 Initiation of the amendment.*

*A text amendment to this title or the comprehensive plan, or an amendment to the zoning map or the comprehensive plan map, may be initiated by:*

- A. A resolution request by the city commission;*
- B. An official proposal by the planning commission;*
- C. An application to the planning division presented on forms and accompanied by information prescribed by the planning commission.*
- D. A Legislative request by the Planning Division.*

*All requests for amendment or change in this title shall be referred to the planning commission.*

**Applicants Response:** The Oregon City Planning Commission has proposed this Legislative application for amendments to Chapter 15.28 of the Oregon City Municipal Code in response to a request from the Oregon City, City Commission.

**17.68.020 Criteria.**

*The criteria for a zone change are set forth as follows:*

**17.62.020.A.** *The proposal shall be consistent with the goals and policies of the Oregon City Comprehensive Plan.*

**Section 1: Citizen Involvement**

- *Goal 1.1 Citizen Involvement Program- Implement a Citizen Involvement Program that will provide an active and systematic process for citizen participation in all phases of the land-use decision making process to enable citizens to consider and act upon a broad range of issues affecting the livability, community sustainability, and quality of neighborhoods and the community as a whole.*
  - *Policy 1.1.1- Utilize neighborhood associations as the vehicle for neighborhood-based input to meet the requirements of the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) Statewide Planning Goal 1, Citizen Involvement. The Citizen Involvement Committee (CIC) shall serve as the officially recognized citizen committee needed to meet LCDC Statewide Planning Goal 1.*
- *Goal 1.2 Community and Comprehensive Planning - Ensure that citizens, neighborhood groups, and affected property owners are involved in all phases of the comprehensive planning program.*
  - *Policy 1.2.1- Encourage citizens to participate in appropriate government functions and land-use planning.*
- *Goal 1.3 Community Education- Provide education for individuals, groups, and communities to ensure effective participation in decision-making processes that affect the livability of neighborhoods.*
- *Goal 1.4 Community Involvement- Provide complete information for individuals, groups, and communities to participate in public policy planning and implementation of policies.*
  - *Policy 1.4.1 Notify citizens about community involvement opportunities when they occur.*
- *Goal 1.5 Government/Community Relations - Provide a framework for facilitating open, two-way communication between City representatives and individuals, groups, and communities*

**Applicants Response:** As described in the Community Advisory Team report, beginning in July 2012 the City conducted a variety of meetings and open houses to engage the public throughout the development of the sign code amendments. All comments submitted throughout the Sign Code Update process are provided in Exhibit 3.

In addition, City staff sent a request to speak with all neighborhood associations and met with nearly each neighborhood as well as with the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Oregon City, Citizen Involvement Committee, Natural Resources Committee, Historic Review Board, and the Transportation Advisory Committee. Further, multiple Open Houses were held throughout the process and a Community Advisory Team (CAT) was appointed to advise staff. The CAT positions were appointed by the Mayor to represent a variety of interests and met four times in open meetings advertised to the public. All information created in the project was posted to the project website ([www.OCSignCode.org](http://www.OCSignCode.org)) for public review and comment.

**Section 2: Land Use**

- *Goal 2.2 Downtown Oregon City - Develop the Downtown area, which includes the Historic Downtown Area, the “north end” of the Downtown, Clackamette Cove, and the End of the Oregon Trail area, as a quality place for shopping, living, working, cultural and recreational activities, and*

*social interaction. Provide walkways for pedestrian and bicycle traffic, preserve views of Willamette Falls and the Willamette River, and preserve the natural amenities of the area.*

- *Policy 2.2.5- Encourage the development of a strong and healthy Historic Downtown retail, office, cultural, and residential center.*
- *Policy 2.3.1- Ensure planning for transit corridors includes facilities and access management, aesthetics (including signage and building facade improvements), infill and redevelopment opportunities, high-density residential development, and business assistance to existing businesses.*
- *Goal 2.4 Neighborhood Livability- Provide a sense of place and identity for residents and visitors by protecting and maintaining neighborhoods as the basic unit of community life in Oregon City while implementing the goals and policies of the other sections of the Comprehensive Plan.*
- *Goal 2.5 Retail and Neighborhood Commercial - Encourage the provision of appropriately scaled services to neighborhoods.*
  - *Policy 2.5.1- Encourage the redevelopment of linear commercial corridors in ways that encourage expansion of existing businesses and infill development, and at the same time reduces conflicting traffic movements, improves the aesthetic character of these commercial areas, and encourages trips by transit, bicycling and walking.*
  - *Policy 2.5.3 - Review design standards and the sign code to ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods.*

**Applicants Response:** The proposed signage standards would provide a variety of signage opportunities while balancing neighborhood livability. The proposed code would support downtown Oregon City and other entities by tailoring the standards so they are beneficial to a variety of users and tailored to recognize the different needs throughout the City. The standards were developed through a comprehensive public planning process including inclusion by a wide variety of the public such as neighborhood associations, the Citizen involvement Committee, Main Street Oregon City, signage businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, those within the signage industry, etc.

### ***Section 5: Open Spaces, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Natural Resources***

- *Goal 5.2 Scenic Views and Scenic Sites - Protect the scenic qualities of Oregon City and scenic views of the surrounding landscape.*
  - *Policy 5.2.2 - Maximize the visual compatibility and minimize the visual distraction of new structures or development within important viewsheds by establishing standards for landscaping, placement, height, mass, color, and window reflectivity.*
- *Goal 5.3 Historic Resources - Encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of homes and other buildings of historic or architectural significance in Oregon City.*
  - *Policy 5.3.1- Encourage architectural design of new structures in local Historic Districts, and the central Downtown area to be compatible with the historic character of the surrounding area.*

**Applicants Response:** One of the purposes of the proposed Sign Code is to “Maintain and enhance the scenic and other aesthetic qualities of the city,” and input from a variety of citizens and groups informed the choice of regulation to achieve this goal. In addition, the amended regulations included provisions to ensure maintenance of the integrity of historic areas within the City.

### ***Section 9: Economic Development***

- *Goal 9.1 Improve Oregon City’s Economic Health - Provide a vital, diversified, innovative economy including an adequate supply of goods and services and employment opportunities to work toward an economically reasonable, ecologically sound and socially equitable economy.*
- *Goal 9.2 Cooperative Partnerships - Create and maintain cooperative partnerships with other public agencies and business groups interested in promoting economic development.*

- *Policy 9.2.1 -Seek input from local businesses when making decisions that will have a significant economic impact on them.*
- *Policy 9.2.2- Carefully consider the economic impacts of proposed programs and regulations in the process of implementing the City's Comprehensive Plan*
- *Goal 9.3 Retention of Existing Employers- Retain existing employers, both public and private, and encourage them to expand their operations within the City.*

**Applicants Response:** One of the purposes of the Sign Code is to “Support the economic development of Oregon City businesses”. The development of the sign code included input from a variety of business owners that resulted in provisions to allow a variety of signage types for businesses.

**17.62.020.C.** *The land uses authorized by the proposal are consistent with the existing or planned function, capacity and level of service of the transportation system serving the proposed zoning district.*

**Applicants Response:** The signage regulations proposed do not limit the capacity, function or level of service of the transportation system. The signage proposed within the right-of-way will maintain compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**17.62.020.C.** *Statewide planning goals shall be addressed if the comprehensive plan does not contain specific policies or provisions which control the amendment.*

**Finding: Not Applicable.** The Oregon City Comprehensive Plan addresses the Statewide Planning goals.

## EXHIBITS

1. Proposed Amendments to Chapter 15.28 of the Oregon City Municipal Code
3. 2013-2015 Goals and Priorities of the City Commission
4. Community Engagement Plan
5. Report from the Community Advisory Team (CAT) and Community Engagement