



MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 7, 2018
TO: City Council
FROM: Ann Siegenthaler, Associate Planner
RE: Sign Code Amendments – City Informational Signs

I. BACKGROUND

This is one of several Sign Code amendments to be brought before Council. The attached amendments include only changes to the City Informational Signs sections of the Sign Code (Chapter 18.44 of the Zoning Code). Earlier amendments proposed for wall signs, window signs, sandwich board signs and general Sign Code cleanup have been removed from this ordinance, so that they may be deliberated by the Council separately.

The City Council originally discussed the proposed amendments at a study session on 5/29/18. The recommended code changes are summarized below.

II. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

The proposed amendments will expand the allowances for “City Informational Signs” on City property, to allow electronic reader boards and remove the height limit as requested by Council.

1. Performance standards for electronic reader boards.

- **Change code to allow ERBS.** Currently, electronic reader board signs (ERBS) are allowed only in the General Commercial and Interchange Commercial zones, in 2 specific locations. The Council expressed a desire to have the ability to install an ERBS on City property. The proposed code language provides for this option.
- **Add standards to address light/glare.** Given the potential impact of ERBS concerning light and glare, additional performance standards for ERBS on City property should be adopted. The current code contains such standards for the General Commercial zone west of the White River (e.g. Old Cannery site). Similar performance standards should be adopted for City ERBS. These standards address:
 - How quickly message changes/rate of change (minimizes “flashing”)
 - Size of the ERBS (mostly aesthetics, if brightness is controlled)
 - Dimming, i.e. the difference in brightness when message displays then fades

- Controlling brightness, i.e. minimize contrast with existing daylight to avoid glare (adjust down at nighttime).

The attached code language is directly from the existing code for ERBS west of the White River (see Old Cannery sign for an example).

2. Allow different sign types - Monument, Freestanding, or Wall Sign.

Currently, only monument signs are allowed (freestanding signs with an enclosed base). The language attached includes the option for a pole sign (freestanding sign on pole or pylons) or a wall sign.

3. Provide flexibility for sign height.

The current code limits city informational signs to height of 6 feet. Staff does not advocate going above 7 feet for a monument sign. That's the typical monument sign height in Sumner (e.g. YMCA monument sign). Pole signs are generally limited to 15-foot height (with exceptions the farther back the sign is placed). The attached ordinance removes the height restrictions as the Council requested.

III. RECOMMENDATION and NEXT STEPS

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the draft ordinance presented in Exhibit A. Because this particular code amendment has not previously had a public hearing, a Council public hearing is recommended prior to Council action. The hearing is scheduled for June 18, 2018.

IV. EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: Draft Ordinance 6/6/18

Exhibit B: Example of ERBS, example of digital message sign