

## **ORDINANCE NO. 788**

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON, RELATING TO LAND USE AND ZONING, REVISING THE SIGN CODE TO STATE THE CITY'S INTENT THAT THE CODE IMPLEMENT THE CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, CLARIFY THE SCOPE OF THE SIGN CODE, CLARIFY THE SITUATIONS IN WHICH SIGN PERMITS ARE NOT REQUIRED, AMEND THE DEFINITIONS WITHIN THE SIGN CODE FOR CLARIFICATION AND EASE OF ENFORCEMENT, ADDING NEW DEFINITIONS FOR: AWNING, CABINET SIGN, ELECTRONIC SIGN, EVENT, FESTOON, HOLIDAY, INTERNAL ILLUMINATION, LOGO, LOGO SHIELD, NEON LIGHTING, PAN-CHANNEL, PUBLIC EVENT, RETURNS, SEASONAL DECORATIONS, SIGN GRAPHICS, SILHOUETTE LIGHTING, TRIM CAPS AND WINDOW SIGN; CLARIFYING THE DEFINITION OF A SIGN; CLARIFYING THE SIGN PERMIT PROCEDURES; SETTING FORTH THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH A SIGN VARIANCE MAY BE OBTAINED; GIVING REFERENCE TO THE CITY'S DESIGN MANUAL FOR ILLUMINATION AND COLOR REGULATIONS; CHANGING THE ILLUMINATION RESTRICTIONS ON SIGNS TO ALLOW ILLUMINATION OF ALL SIGN GRAPHICS AS DEFINED AND TO CHANGE THE ALLOWED HEIGHT OF INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED SIGN GRAPHICS; ALLOWING SIGN ORIENTATION TOWARD SR-16 FROM SPECIFIED PARCELS; ELIMINATING THE RESTRICTIONS ON THE NUMBER AND LOCATION OF REAL ESTATE OPEN HOUSE SIGNS; CHANGING THE COLOR AND MATERIAL RESTRICTIONS ON SIGNS TO IDENTIFY WHICH COLORS AND MATERIALS THAT ARE OTHERWISE RESTRICTED THAT MAY BE USED ON LOGO SHIELDS; CHANGING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER SIGN PLANS BY REQUIRING THAT PLANS IDENTIFY SPECIFIC SIGN TYPES FOR MULTI-TENANT BUILDINGS; PROVIDING MASTER SIGN PLAN AMENDMENT PROCEDURES; COALESCING THE CITY'S THREE SIGN DISTRICTS INTO TWO SIGN DISTRICTS; REDEFINING ALLOWABLE WALL SIGNAGE CALCULATIONS; REDEFINING ALLOWABLE WINDOW SIGNAGE; REDEFINING SANDWICH BOARD SIGNS AS PORTABLE SIGNS; PROVIDING PERMIT PROVISIONS FOR BALLOON SIGN DISPLAYS; ELIMINATING AMORTIZATION PROVISIONS FOR NON-CONFORMING SIGNS AND REDEFINING TRIGGERS FOR REMOVAL OF NON-CONFORMING SIGNS; ELIMINATING THE ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES TO ALLOW THE CITY TO ENFORCE THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 17.80 UNDER THE GENERAL ZONING CODE ENFORCEMENT CHAPTER 17.07 GHMC; ADDING PROVISIONS FOR DESIGN REVIEW BOARD CONSIDERATION OF SPECIFIED SIGNAGE OPTIONS; AMENDING THE CAPTION OF GHMC SECTION 17.80; RENUMBERING AND AMENDING SECTION 17.80.015 TO 17.80.020; RENUMBERING AND AMENDING SECTION 17.80.020 TO 17.80.030; RENUMBERING AND AMENDING SECTION 17.80.030 TO 17.80.040 & 17.80.050; REPEALING SECTION 17.80.060; RENUMBERING AND AMENDING SECTION 17.80.031 TO 17.80.060 & 17.80.070; ADDING NEW SECTION 17.80.080; RENUMBERING AND AMENDING SECTION 17.80.033 TO 17.80.090; RENUMBERING AND AMENDING SECTION 17.80.035 TO**

**17.80.100; RENUMBERING AND AMENDING SECTION 17.80.040 TO 17.80.110; RENUMBERING AND AMENDING SECTION 17.80.050 TO 17.80.120 & 17.80.130; ADDING NEW SECTION 17.80.140; RENUMBERING SECTION 17.80.080 TO 17.80.150, TO THE GIG HARBOR MUNICIPAL CODE.**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council finds and declares that outdoor advertising is a legitimate, commercial use of private property adjacent to City street, roads and highways; and

**WHEREAS**, outdoor advertising is an integral part of the business and marketing function, and an established segment of the City's economy which serves to promote and protect private investments in commerce and industry; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has adopted sign regulations in order to safeguard the general welfare of the property owner, to preserve the beauty of the community and to balance this with growth, development and commercial pursuits; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Gig Harbor amended its sign code in June 1995 to bring the sign code into conformance with the Design Element of Gig Harbor's Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the amended sign code has been in effect for a period of over two years, and the City Council has directed the Planning Commission to review the sign code to determine its effectiveness and to address concerns expressed by the business community regarding the restrictiveness and complexity of the sign code; and

**WHEREAS**, two public hearings were held on March 6, 1997 and March 20, 1997 to receive input from the community on the existing sign code, at which time the planning commission listened to over six hours of public testimony which focused primarily on the following 13 issues:

1. Master sign plans.
2. Window signs.
3. National brand product or logo signs.
4. Freeway visibility of signage.
5. Amortization.
6. Illumination restrictions on internally illuminated signs.
7. Inflatable displays.
8. Allowable wall signage.
9. Portable signs.
10. Real Estate Signs.
11. Reader Boards.
12. Sign Areas.
13. Miscellaneous Items. (Clarification of terms, format, and general housekeeping items); and

**WHEREAS**, the planning commission submitted to the City Council a recommended process of addressing the 13 identified issues which allowed the public to submit specific recommendations on any issue under review or to request that additional items be added to the review process, and which allowed public input during scheduled worksession/hearings; and

**WHEREAS**, the planning commission held worksession/hearings over a 7 month period to address concerns and to receive public input; and

**WHEREAS**, public input during the worksession/hearings was submitted by a limited number of individuals, which input was carefully considered by the planning commission and balanced against the goals and policies stated in the City's Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan states several goals and policies relating to maintaining signage as a subordinate element in building design including, but not limited to (a) minimizing sign area in facade design, (b) avoidance of signage as a dominant architectural feature, (c) including corporate or logo panels into signage area calculations, (d) avoidance of covering architectural details, (e) avoidance of signage as a dominant architectural statement, (f) encouragement of sign designs which reflect the building style or period by use of incentives and dis-incentives; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission finds that the solid/void ratio requirements for buildings specified in the Architecture section of the City's Design Manual and also the landscaping requirements specified in Section 17.78 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code provide sufficient interest in building and site designs to assure that signage does not become a dominant statement in the building or site design; and

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan has the stated goal on page 32-33 to avoid flamboyancy in signage by keeping internally illuminated signs subdued through restrictions on sign face illumination; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan on page 33 has the stated goal to coordinate sign designs on multi-tenant buildings through the use of master sign plans designed to allocate signage among tenants and to unify the site design; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan has the stated goal on page 34 to restrict use of off-premise signage and to avoid signage design for viewing beyond the street on which a business is located; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan identifies SR-16 as an enhancement corridor which should require an extensive level of design review; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission recognized that the Growth Management Act requires that any amendments to the City's sign code must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, after carefully evaluating the existing sign code's effectiveness in implementing the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan by reviewing signs installed since the 1995 sign code update was adopted, and also after reviewing concerns over the complexity of some of the language in the existing code, the Planning Commission made the findings in its Resolution No. 5 of 1997 dated December 11, 1997; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission finds that the City has visual integrity which may be threatened by incompatible signage or by inadvertently encouraging removal of the vegetation which provides visual integrity to the City's enhancement corridor by allowing signs oriented to the enhancement corridor which would only be visible if the characteristic vegetation were removed; and

**WHEREAS**, the City Council considered the findings of the Planning Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has proposed amendments to the sign code which reflect its findings stated above and which will further the goals and policies outlined in the City's Comprehensive; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed amendments reflect substantial changes intended to address, to the degree possible, the concerns of the business community and any further changes to relax the City's sign code standards would seriously alter the visual integrity of the City and would not protect the welfare of the citizenry; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed sign code amendments of Chapter 17.80 on December 4, 1997 to accept public testimony on the proposed amendments; and

**WHEREAS**, the City sent copies of the proposed amendments to Section 17.80 to DCTED at least 60 days prior to final adoption as per WAC 365-195-620(1) and RCW 36.70A.106.

**WHEREAS**, the City Council reviewed, acted upon and invited public participation on the proposed sign code amendments as follows:

1. The City Council held a public hearing on the proposed sign code amendments of Chapter 17.80 on February 11, 1998 to accept public testimony on the proposed amendments.
2. The City Council held a first reading of the proposed amendments of Chapter 17.80 on February 23, 1998, which first reading was continued to March 9, 1998. At both dates of the first reading, the Council agreed upon specific changes to the Planning Commission's recommended amendments to the sign code.
3. The City Council held a second reading of the proposed amendments on March 23, 1998.
4. The City Council held a final public hearing on April 13, 1998 to address the



changes made by the City Council during the first reading of the proposed sign code amendments.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF GIG HARBOR, WASHINGTON, ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:**

Section 1. The caption of Chapter 17.80 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

Chapter 17.80  
SIGN CODE

Sections:

- 17.80.010 Purpose and scope.
- ~~17.80.015~~ 17.80.020 Permits not required.
- ~~17.80.020~~ 17.80.030 Definitions.
- ~~17.80.030~~ 17.80.040 Permit procedures.
- 17.80.050 Variances & Administrative Waivers
- ~~17.80.031~~ 17.80.060 General regulations.
- 17.80.070 Master Sign Plans
- 17.80.080 Sign Districts
- ~~17.80.033~~ 17.80.090 Sign standards for ~~Areas 1 and 2~~ Area 1.
- ~~17.80.035~~ 17.80.100 Sign standards for ~~Area 3~~ 2.
- ~~17.80.040~~ 17.80.110 Temporary signs.
- ~~17.80.050~~ 17.80.120 Prohibited signs.
- ~~17.80.060~~ 17.80.130 ~~Administration and enforcement~~ Nonconforming Signs.
- 17.80.140 Design Review Board Approval
- ~~17.80.080~~ 17.80.150 Liability.

Section 2. Section 17.80.010 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

17.80.010 Purpose and scope.

A. Purpose. It is the purpose of this chapter to promote a quality visual environment by establishing reasonable standards for the size, placement, height and maintenance of outdoor signs, graphics and advertising. It is further intended to encourage quality design and material composition which create an attractive community and business climate. ~~Special emphasis should be placed on achieving harmony with building design, settings and the character of the surrounding areas.~~ by implementing the goals and policies described in the Community Design Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Implementing these goals and policies will assure that signage is in harmony with building designs and the character of the surrounding areas.

B. Scope. This chapter shall not regulate traffic and directional signs installed by a governmental entity; signs not readable from ~~nor intended to be viewed from~~ a public right-of-way or waterway;

interior signs placed more than three (3) feet behind a window or opening of a building unless within an enclosed display window; merchandise displays; points-of-purchase advertising displays on product dispenser machines; national flags; flags of a political subdivision; symbolic flags of an institution; legal notices required by law; barber poles; historic site plaques; gravestones; structures intended for a separate use, such as phone booths, Goodwill containers and recycling containers; or lettering sign graphics or symbols painted directly onto or flush-mounted magnetically onto a motor vehicle operating in the normal course of business. (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995; Ord. 532 § 2, 1988).

Section 3. Section 17.80.015 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

~~17.80.015~~ 17.80.020 Permits not required.

The following shall not require a sign permit; provided however, these exemptions shall not be construed as relieving the owner from the responsibility to comply with the provisions of this chapter or any other law or ordinance.

- A. The changing of the advertising copy or message on a lawfully erected readerboard or similar sign specifically designed for the use of replaceable copy;
- B. Repainting or cleaning of a lawfully erected sign and other normal maintenance which does not involve a change of sign color or design, unless a structural or electrical change is made;
- C. ~~Temporary~~ Seasonal decorations customary for ~~special~~ holidays erected entirely on private property;
- D. On-premises directional signs not exceeding four square feet. The height of the sign shall not exceed four (4) feet and distance from the ground level at the base of the sign to the top of the sign shall not exceed four feet unless it is attached to a wall, in which case the sign must have a maximum clearance of ~~27~~ twenty-seven (27) inches or a minimum clearance as defined in GHMC ~~17.80.035(E)(2)~~ 17.80.090(D)(2) and 17.80.100(E)(2);
- E. ~~Poster signs, per GHMC 17.80.040(B)~~ Non-illuminated window signs conforming to GHMC 17.80.090(C)(2) and 17.80.100(D)(2);
- F. Campaign and political signs, ~~per conforming to GHMC 17.80.040(F) and (G)~~ 17.80.110(D);
- G. One temporary construction sign of up to ~~32~~ thirty-two (32) square feet or one project identification sign, ~~per conforming to GHMC 17.80.040(D)(1)~~ 17.80.110(C);
- H. One wall or projecting gas station price sign or one portable gas station price sign per station limited to a maximum of 30 fifteen (15) square feet total area on all sides per sign face, and no more than two (2) faces. In addition to one wall or projecting gas price sign and in lieu of a portable gas station price sign, one gas price sign may be incorporated into an approved freestanding ground sign, subject to maximum size and height allowances for freestanding signs. Portable gas price signs shall ~~have be limited to~~ a maximum height from the ground of five (5) feet; illumination of portable gas price signs shall be limited to an external source or to an opaque face with illuminated letters sign graphics only;
- I. One lot identification sign per single-family dwelling in the R-1 district with the total area not to exceed two square feet;
- J. ~~One neighborhood identification sign not exceeding a total of 12 square feet on all its faces and~~

~~the height from the base of the sign to the top shall not exceed six feet;~~

~~J. Real Estate signs conforming to GHMC 17.80.110(B).~~

~~K. ~~One nonelectric~~ Non-electric portable signs ~~not exceeding four square feet~~ located on premises conforming to GHMC 17.80.060(H) and 17.80.100(F). (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995; Ord. 532 § 6, 1988. Formerly 17.80.050.).~~

Section 4. Section 17.80.020 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

~~17.80.020~~ 17.80.030 Definitions.

The following definitions shall apply for the purpose of this code:

1. "Abandoned sign" means a sign that no longer correctly identifies, exhorts or advertises any person, business, lessor, owner, product or activity conducted or available on the premises where such sign is located and which has not been changed or removed within one hundred eighty (180) days of a tenancy change; or a sign which is damaged, in disrepair, or vandalized and not repaired within sixty (60) days of the damaging event.
2. "Advertising copy" includes any ~~letters, figures, symbols, sign~~ graphics, background colors, logos or trademarks which identify or promote the sign user or any product or service; or which provides information about the sign user, the building or the products or services available.
3. "Awning" means a shelter projecting from and supported by a structure or building wall and constructed of a rigid supporting framework and a flexible or non-rigid covering.
4. "Awning sign" means a sign applied to or incorporated into the covering of an awning.
- 3 5. "Building" means a roofed and walled structure built for permanent use.
- 4 6. "Bulletin board" means a board or small sign on which notices, community events or hours of operation are posted.
7. "Cabinet sign" means an internally illuminated sign in which a removable sign face (usually with translucent sign graphics) is enclosed on all edges by a metal cabinet. A cabinet sign may be multi-sided.
- 5 8. ~~"Code administrator"~~ "Director" means the city's planning director, ~~or the director's~~ designee, who shall be authorized to administer and enforce all of the provisions of the sign code.
- 6 9. District, Sign.
  - a. "Area 1" ~~These includes those properties situated 300 feet back from the beginning and ending of the Olympic Drive freeway interchange, including those properties located within the Olympic Village and interchange area. in all B-2 zones except the B-2 zone in the vicinity of the Burnham Drive/Harborview Drive junction; and all C-1 zones except C-1 zones in the height restriction area.~~
  - b. "Area 2" includes all properties not defined under Area 1. ~~The Westside business district outside the defined interchange area, the commercial zones on Pioneer Way and Kimball Drive and the commercial zones on the west side of Soundview Drive outside the Olympic Village interchange.~~
  - c. Area 3. ~~The RB-1 zoning district along Soundview Drive, and all other commercial districts and residential areas.~~
- 7 10. "Double-faced sign" means a sign that has advertising copy on opposite sides of a single display surface or sign structure.

- 8 11. "Electric sign" means a sign or sign structure in which electrical wiring, connections and/or fixtures are used as part of the sign proper.
12. "Electronic sign" means a sign designed to allow changes in the sign graphics electronically.
13. "Event" means a current or planned activity or occurrence which involves a gathering of people or solicits their participation. In this context, an event does not include the commemoration of a holiday.
914. "Facade" means the entire building front or street wall face of a building extending from the grade of the building to the top of the parapet or eaves and the entire width of the building elevation.
15. "Festoon" means a strip or string of balloons which includes clusters or strings of balloons connected to a fixed object or vehicle on at least one end of the festoon.
1016. "Flashing sign" means a sign or a portion thereof which changes light intensity or switches on and off in a constant, random or irregular pattern or contains motion or the optical illusion of motion by use of electrical energy. Changing message centers shall not be considered flashing signs.
117. "Freestanding sign" means a sign supported by a pole(s) or mounted on a sign base and is not connected to or supported by any other structure.
1218. Freeway Interchange Area. The freeway interchange of State Route 16 (SR-16) ~~shall be the area between where the present or designed future on and off ramps to the highway are situated measured between the intersection of the fog line of the exit and on ramps that are near SR-16. This designation applies to those properties situated 300 feet back from the freeway interchange. is illustrated on Exhibit 1 and defines the area where signage may be oriented to SR-16, subject to the provisions of Section 17.80.060(K).~~
19. "Frontage" means the linear distance of property along a street or highway.
1320. "Gas station price sign" means a sign advertising the price of motor fuel and contains no other business advertising.
14. "Grade" means the elevation as measured at the relative ground level in the immediate vicinity of the sign.
21. "Holiday" includes all State holidays as defined under RCW 1.16.050, except Sunday.
1522. "Incidental sign" means a small nonelectric information sign four (4) square feet or less in area which pertains to goods, products, services or facilities which are available on the premises where the sign occurs and is intended primarily for the convenience of the public while on the premises.
23. "Internal illumination" means a source of lighting concealed entirely within a sign which makes sign graphics visible by transmitting light through a translucent or semi-translucent material.
- 16 24. "Institutional sign" means a sign to identify educational, civic and religious institutions.
- 17 25. "Landscaping" means the planned use of trees, shrubs and other living plant materials used in conjunction with a sign and other decorative features.
26. "Logo" means an identifying emblem or insignia containing sign graphics, symbols or colors typically used for identification and/or advertisement.
27. "Logo shield" means a logo contained within an area no greater than four (4) square feet, incorporated into a larger sign face or designed as an individual sign or a component of a sign containing individually mounted sign graphics.
1828. "Lot identification sign" means a sign to identify the occupants of the premises.
1929. "Mansard roof" means a sloped roof or roof-like facade architecturally able to be treated as a building wall.



2030. "Marquee" means a permanent structure attached to, supported by and projecting from a building and providing protection from the weather elements, but does not include a projecting roof. For purposes of this chapter, a freestanding permanent roof-like structure providing protection from the elements, such as a service station gas pump island, will also be considered a marquee. This also includes canopies.

2131. "Neighborhood identification sign" means a sign to identify a particular residential area or development four acres or greater in size.

32. "Neon lighting" means illuminated tubing forming sign graphics or which is otherwise used as an exposed lighting source. For the purpose of this ordinance the term "neon" will be considered a generic term for this type of lighting regardless of the type of fluorescing gas or material contained within the tubing.

22-33. "Neon sign" means ~~illuminated neon tubing~~ neon lighting used to draw attention to a business or building in any manner, including (but not limited to) ~~neon-text, symbols~~ sign graphics, logos or outlining of a building's architectural features. ~~Neon signs shall not flash, oscillate or revolve.~~

23-34. "Off-premises directional sign" means a permanently installed sign which provides directional information to a parcel located in the Gig Harbor area, but not located on the same parcel as the sign in question.

24-35. "Off-premises sign" means a sign relating, through its message and content to a commercial or non-commercial-business activity, use, product or service not available or conducted on the premises on which the sign is erected.

25-36. "On-premises directional sign" means a permanent sign that directs the public to a specific place such as an entrance, exit, or parking or service area, or a particular aspect of a business establishment.

26-37. "On-premises sign" means a sign which carries only advertisements and messages strictly applicable to a lawful use of the premises on which it is located.

38. "Pan-channel" means a sign graphic that is constructed of a three-sided metal channel, usually having a light source contained within the channel. The open side may face inward, resulting in silhouette lighting, or it may face outward to allow full illumination. The open side of the channel may be enclosed with a translucent material.

27-39. "Portable sign" means a free-standing sign made of any material, which by its design is readily movable and is not permanently affixed to the ground, ~~structures or buildings.~~

28-40. "Projecting sign" means a sign which is attached to and projects more than one foot from a structure, building face or marquee.

41. "Public event" means an event held no more than once a year by an individual sponsor, business or agency, and which is on a site normally associated with activities or uses other than the event, and which does not represent or promote a use, product or service normally associated with the site of the event. Special sales or promotions of products or services commonly available on the site, or which are readily available at a permanent outlet or site within the City, do not represent public events.

29-42. "Readerboard" means a sign face designed to hold readily changeable ~~letters~~ sign graphics allowing frequent changes of copy.

43. "Returns" are the exposed sides of pan-channel sign graphics and cabinet signs.



~~30~~ 44. "Revolving sign" means a sign which rotates or turns in a circular pattern.

~~31~~ 45. "Roof sign" means a sign supported by and erected on and above a roof, parapet or fascia of a building or structure (shall not include a sign erected on the face of a mansard roof).

~~32~~ 46. "Sandwich board/sidewalk sign" means a portable sign consisting of two sign faces hinged at the top and separated at the bottom to make it self-standing.

47. "Seasonal decorations" mean temporary decorations for holidays which do not fall under the definition of a sign and which are installed no sooner than thirty (30) days before a holiday and removed no later than five (5) days after the holiday. Decorations which fall under the definition of a sign must conform to all provisions of the sign code.

~~33. "Sign" means any visual communication device, structure, or fixture which is visible from any right of way or waterway and is intended to aid the establishment in question in promoting the sale of products, goods, services, events or to identify a building, using graphics, letters, figures, symbols, trademarks or written copy. Steel, plastic or similar panels displaying corporate colors, logos or trademarks and as are common on corporate signature buildings to give identity to the business shall be considered signage. Corporate colors which conform to design guidelines as may be adopted by the city shall be excluded from this definition. Inflatable displays, figures, , or product representations shall also be considered signage.~~

48. "Sign" means:

(a) any visual communication device, structure, or fixture which is visible from any public right-of-way or waterway placed for the promotion of products, goods, services, events or to identify a building, using sign graphics or trademarks; or

(b) Steel, plastic or similar panels displaying corporate colors, logos or trademarks and as are common on corporate signature buildings to give identity to the business (Corporate colors which conform to the City's Design Manual requirements for color shall be excluded from this definition of a sign); or

(c) Inflatable figures, balloons (in a display of six or more), festoons, streamers, spinners, product representations and advertisements for services which are attached to a fixed object or stationary vehicle.

~~34~~ 49. "Sign area" means the entire area of a sign on which advertising copy, logos, trademarks, and business or corporate colors are to be placed. Sign structures and associated architectural embellishments, framework and decorative features which contain no written or advertising copy, which are not illuminated and which contain no logos or trademarks shall not be included. Sign area shall be calculated by measuring the area of the smallest rectangle, circle, triangle or parallelogram that can be drawn around all parts of the sign from the viewpoint exposing the largest sign surface area, including the sign face background, and including all spaces and voids between or within letters or symbols which comprise a single word, statement, description, title, business name, graphic symbol or message, excluding simple support structures. Sign supporting structures which are part of the sign display shall be included in the area of calculation.

50. "Sign graphics" include all lines, strokes, text, symbols and logo shields applied to a sign surface and does not include the background surface to which they are applied.

51. "Silhouette lighting", sometimes called "halo lighting" means lighting being emitted from the back side of pan-channel sign graphic which has the open side of the channel facing the wall or sign face it is mounted to, thereby silhouetting the sign graphics.

35 52. "Temporary construction sign" means a sign jointly erected and maintained on premises undergoing construction by an architect, contractor, subcontractor and/or materialman upon which property such person is furnishing labor or material.

36 53. "Temporary sign" means any sign or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric, paper, cardboard or other light materials, with or without frames, intended to be displayed for a limited time only and not permanently attached to a building or site.

54. "Trim caps" are the corner trim pieces holding the translucent materials or sign faces on pan-channel sign graphics and cabinet signs.

37 55. "Wall graphics" means a wall sign of which color and form are part of an overall design on the building.

38 56. "Wall plane" includes that portion of a facade which is contained on one general plane. If there is a shift in the facade, forward or back, a new plane is created. A single wall plane may contain windows and doors but it is generally a solid surface; ~~notwithstanding the~~. The fascia of projecting porches or colonnades may be considered part of the wall plane the porch or colonnade projects from for calculating signage area.

39 57. "Wall sign" means a sign attached or erected parallel to and extending not more than one foot from the facade or face of any building to which it is attached and supported throughout its entire length, with the exposed face of the sign parallel to the plane of said wall or facade. Signs incorporated into mansard roofs, marquees or canopies shall be treated as a wall sign. (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995; Ord. 558 § 1, 1989; Ord. 532 § 3, 1988).

58. "Window Sign" means a sign that is mounted on, painted on or attached to a window, or is placed within three (3) feet of the inside of a window or opening, or is within an enclosed display window (i.e., the display area in the window is separated from the main floor area by a wall, curtain or screen).

Section 5. Section 17.80.030 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

~~17.80.030~~ 17.80.040 Permit procedures.

The following regulations shall apply to all signs.

A. Permit Requirements. Signs located on public right-of-way must conform to all provisions of this chapter, except that such signs are exempt from the permit requirements of this section and shall be processed and administered as per Chapter 12.02 GHMC. No sign shall be installed, constructed, painted, structurally altered, posted or applied without first obtaining a sign permit from the ~~code administrator, director,~~ except as allowed under the provisions of Section 17.80.020 or as otherwise ~~unless~~ exempted by this chapter. A separate permit shall be required for each group of signs installed simultaneously on a single supporting structure. Thereafter, each additional sign erected on the structure must have a separate permit.

B. Permit Application ~~Procedures. Applications for signs shall be accompanied by~~ A complete application for a sign permit shall consist of:

1. Two site plans showing the location of the affected lot, building(s) and sign(s), showing both existing and proposed signs;

2. Two copies of a scaled drawing of the proposed sign or sign revision including size, height, copy, structural footing details, material specifications, method of attachment, illumination, front and end views of marquees, calculation for dead load and wind pressure, photograph of site and building marked to show where sign or marquee is proposed, and any other information required to ensure compliance with appropriate laws;

3. Written consent of the sign owner and the owner of the building, structure, or property where the sign is to be erected;

4. A permit fee as adopted by resolution of the city council;

5. Documentation demonstrating that the sign installer has a valid Washington State contractor's license when a sign requires a building permit unless the sign is being installed by the owner of the sign.

5 6. Exemptions. The director may waive submission of plans and specifications when the structural aspect is of minor importance.

C. Administrative Permit Processing Requirements. ~~The code administrator shall ascertain that the sign installer has a valid Washington State contractor's license when a sign requires a building permit unless the sign is being installed by the owner of the sign.~~ A sign permit shall be processed according to the procedures in Title 19 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code, and is a Type II permit application.

#### 17.80.050 Variances and Administrative Waivers

~~D A. Variances. Any person may apply to the hearing examiner for a variance from the requirements of this chapter. Variances shall be processed by the code administrator. The hearing examiner shall review a sign variance application in accordance with the applicable procedures established in Chapter 17.10 GHMC. In the examiner's determination whether a sign variance should be granted, the examiner will follow the applicable criteria in lieu of the criteria set forth in GHMC 17.66.030 (B)(1), (2), (3), (4) and (5):~~ A variance may be requested from any requirement in this chapter, with the exception of the requirements described in GHMC Section 17.80.050(B), Administrative Waiver. The variance shall be processed as a Type III application, and the variance criteria described in the Zoning Code (GHMC Section 17.66.030) shall not be used to determine whether a variance may be granted. A variance may be approved if all of the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The granting of the variance would not be materially detrimental to the property owners in the vicinity and the variance sought is of minimum sign size, height, and scope to meet the conditions and needs of the applicant; and

2. The granting of the variance would not be contrary to the objectives of this chapter; and

3. The signage of the property in question cannot be adequately met under the literal interpretation and strict application of the chapter; and

4. The granting of the variance is necessary because of special circumstances relating to property location, topography, shape and size; sight distance and limited view to property.

~~E B. Administrative Waiver - Design Restrictions. Restrictions pertaining to the location of a sign within architectural features of a building or to color of illumination as required in GHMC 17.80.033(B)(2) and 17.80.035(A) 17.80.090(B)(2) and 17.80.100(A) and 17.80.100 (C)(2) shall be observed unless a waiver is granted by the code administrator~~ director. Waivers may be granted by the code administrator director upon a clear demonstration that all of the following conditions apply:

1. The proposed sign design is consistent with ~~design guidelines in place at the time the waiver is requested~~ the City's Design Manual;

2. The building for which the waiver is requested lacks usable wall and/or fascia space common to newer buildings;

~~3. The waiver shall not be granted for the purposes of increasing advertising effectiveness;~~

~~4. 3. If colored illumination other than white or ivory is desired in Area 3 2, the proposed sign is not visible to any residents from residential property within 200 two-hundred (200) feet of the parcel the sign is located on;~~

~~5. 4. All reasonable alternative locations for signage have been explored by the applicant.~~ (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995; Ord. 664 § 4, 1994; Ord. 558 § 2, 1989; Ord. 532 § 4, 1988).

Section 6. Section 17.80.060 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby repealed as follows:

~~17.80.060 — Administration and enforcement.~~

~~The code administrator shall be responsible for enforcing the provisions of this code.~~

~~A. Removal of Signs. The code administrator or the public works director may order the removal of any sign erected, installed or maintained in violation of this chapter. Where there is no immediate threat to public safety or welfare, written notice shall be first given to the sign owner, the sign permittee or the owner of the property where the sign is placed, pursuant to Chapter 15.18 GHMC. Any sign located in the city's right of way which violates this chapter or Chapter 12.02 GHMC shall be subject to immediate removal by the city. Temporary or sandwich board signs removed by the city may be reclaimed by the owner after paying the city's administrative costs associated with storage. Signs not reclaimed after five working days shall be deemed refuse and may be discarded by the city.~~

~~B. Cumulative Civil Penalty. In addition to any other remedy available to the city, a person violating or failing to comply with any of the provisions of this chapter shall be subject to the procedures for violation, hearing and penalties as set forth in Chapter 15.18 GHMC.~~

~~C. Nonconforming Signs.~~

~~1. Nonconforming sign(s) shall be required to be brought into compliance with this chapter upon the earlier occurrence of any of the following events:~~

~~a. Abandonment of the sign or premises;~~

~~b. Destruction of the sign beyond 50 percent of its value;~~

~~c. A change in the use of the property where the sign(s) is located requiring additional permits or approvals from the city; or~~

~~d. On June 1, 2002; provided that such time limitation may be extended for periods not to exceed two years at a time by the administrator upon the granting of a hardship variance as set forth in subsection (C)(2) of this section.~~

~~2. Hardship variances may be granted by the administrator to extend the time period for compliance with subsection (C)(1)(d) of this section, if the administrator finds that all of the following are true:~~

~~a. Strict compliance with the provisions of subsection (C)(1)(d) of this section may impose an undue hardship upon the sign owner. This showing of "undue hardship" may be met, for example, by the sign owner's demonstration that the sign has not fully depreciated for federal income tax purposes.~~



~~A sign owner's expenditures toward improvement or repair of any nonconforming sign shall not be considered by the administrator in the showing of hardship.~~

~~b. Granting of the variance from the provisions of this chapter will not:~~

~~i. Depreciate or damage neighboring property;~~

~~ii. Create a safety hazard; or~~

~~iii. Be contrary to the purposes of this chapter.~~

~~e. The nonconforming sign has been and will be properly maintained. (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995; Ord. 585 § 1, 1990; Ord. 532 § 8, 1988. Formerly 17.80.070.).~~

Section 7. Section 17.80.031 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

~~17.80.031~~ 17.80.060 General regulations.

~~A. Sign District. Three sign districts are created as designated on Map 1. The requirements of this chapter shall be applied to signs in all districts except for the special requirements to be imposed on signs located in each of the three districts.~~

~~B~~ A. Motion Signs Prohibited. No sign or any part of a sign shall be designed or constructed to be moving by any means, and shall not contain items such as banners, ribbons, streamers and spinners. These devices, when not part of any sign, are also prohibited. Balloons may be permitted on signs if they conform to the provisions of Section 17.80.110(F). Limited use of thematic flags, banners and pennants which are complementary to a specific location or structure may be permitted upon approval of the director. This waiver is not intended to permit the use of numerous types of devices which as a result of wind pressure may move to a point of attracting attention of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

~~C~~ B. Exposed Sign Supports. Exposed braces and angle irons are prohibited unless they are a decorative element in the sign structure (e.g., wrought iron "S" curve braces) or unless there are no other practical means of supporting the sign.

~~D~~ C. Flashing Signs. No sign shall have blinking, flashing, fluttering or moving lights or other illuminating device which has a changing light intensity or color; ~~provided, however, temperature and/or time signs that conform in all other respects to this chapter are allowed.~~

~~E~~ D. Uniform Building Code Compliance. The structure and installation of all signs shall comply with the latest adopted edition of the city's building code. Such sign shall meet all other applicable provisions of this chapter.

~~F~~ E. Off-premises Directional Signs. Off-premises directional signs may only be allowed if a variance is granted pursuant to GHMC ~~17.80.030 (D)~~ 17.80.050(A) If more than one business in an immediate area has need for an off-premises directional sign, all must be identified on the same sign.

~~G~~ F. Maintenance Required. All signs, together with all of their supports, braces, guys and anchors, shall be maintained in good repair and in a safe, neat, clean and attractive condition.

~~H~~ G. Illumination Restrictions.

1. Externally illuminated signs. Signs may be externally illuminated and shall conform to the City's Design Manual standards for lighting. The light directed on, or internal to, any sign shall be so shaded, shielded and/or directed so that the intensity or brightness shall not adversely affect



safe vision of operators of vehicles moving on private or public property or pedestrians on a public right-of-way.

2. Internal illumination and neon. Electric signs shall not use incandescent bulbs for internal illumination. Lights on externally illuminated signs shall be so shielded as to contain the light to the sign surface only. Internally illuminated signs shall be limited conform to the following:

a. Individual pan-channel sign graphics and emblems. Sign graphics and emblems (e.g., fully illuminated logo shields) shall not exceed twenty-one (21) inches in height.

b. Individual sign graphics using "halo" or "silhouette" lighting. Sign graphic height shall not be restricted on opaque sign graphics using "halo" or "silhouette" lighting where the light is reflected off the surface to which the sign graphics are mounted.

c. Internal illumination and neon lighting. All sign graphics which are internally illuminated, or illuminated with neon tubing, are limited to no more than twenty-one (21) inches in height, except that illuminated outlines and borders may extend to the height of the sign face. Sign faces may not be internally illuminated and must be sealed at the seams to avoid light leaks. However, design allowances for illuminated sign faces may be approved by the Design Review Board (DRB) under the provisions of Section 17.80.140 if the sign conforms to all of the following criteria:

i. Illumination may be the minimum required to reveal the background color, but no brighter.

ii. Color Value of the sign face shall be limited to the darker values which diminish glare. Intensity (or chroma) shall be dull or weak. These darker hues are naturally more opaque due to their darker values.

d. Internally illuminated awning signs. Awning materials must be totally opaque. Only the sign graphics on an awning may be translucent.

~~individual pan-channel letters or to cabinet or awning signs with individual letters cut out of an opaque sign or awning face. Internally illuminated letters shall be limited to a letter height of 24 inches for the first letter of each word with the remaining letters limited to an 18 inch height maximum. Sign or awning materials must black out all light. Only the text may be translucent. Lighted signs visible from nearby residences shall have low or soft illumination or be shielded in a manner to not adversely affect such residents.~~

F H. Portable Signs. Portable signs shall not exceed 12 square feet in sign area six (6) square feet per side and shall not exceed twelve (12) square feet total. Portable signs shall not exceed four (4) feet in height and not more than one such sign plus one portable sandwich board sign may be displayed per business. Portable signs must be located on the premises to which they relate, except real estate signs and those signs allowed under Section 17.80.100(F).

F I. Abandoned Signs. Abandoned signs shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located after the business or service advertised is no longer conducted on the premises.

J. Color and Material Restrictions. Reflective materials, brilliant luminescent or fluorescent colors shall be permitted for sign graphics and one logo shield per sign face only and may not be used on the background, field, or surface to which graphics or logo shields are applied. Materials which give the appearance of changing color or of movement are prohibited.

K. SR-16 Sign Orientation. Signage shall not be oriented for SR-16 visibility, except as follows:

1. Signage for existing establishments may be oriented to the road or parking lot providing primary access to the customer entrance.

2. Wall signage may be oriented toward designated freeway interchange areas as defined on Exhibit 1, provided all screening or buffering requirements specified in the City's Design Manual or zoning code are in compliance on the subject site, and provided that no more than one sign is visible from the interchange for any one business.

L. Wall Graphics. There are no restrictions on wall graphics except as regulated by the City's Design Manual for color, provided that they do not constitute advertising of a business, product, service or event normally subject to the provisions for painted signs.

#### 17.80.070 Master Sign Plans

K. Master Sign Plan. Before a sign permit can be issued for any commercial multi-tenant building, All commercial buildings shall provide a master sign plan for the entire structure or project a master sign plan shall be developed and approved by the City. Individual buildings on a single site may have separate master sign plans.

A. Required contents of master sign plans. The plan Master sign plans shall indicate the amount and location of signage allocated to each tenant space. The signage plan must be designed so that it establishes a common theme or design, uses similar construction methods, has compatible colors, lettering, lettering style, symbols, scale and size of signs and/or identical background. In addition, master sign plans shall specify from the following list of sign types which sign types are permitted on each building .

1. Individual pan-channel sign graphics - internally illuminated
2. Individual sign graphics - silhouette lighting
3. Individual cut-out sign graphics - no internal light source (e.g., wood, foam, brass)
4. Cabinet signs
5. Sandblasted or carved wood signs
6. Flat wood signs with hand-painted or vinyl graphics.
7. Neon signs
8. Awning signs
9. Fabric signs (e.g., banners)
10. Combination signs - signs which incorporate multiple sign types into one single sign in a specified or pre-determined fashion.(e.g., individual pan-channel sign graphics combined with internally illuminated logo shields or reader lines; cabinet signs with neon mounted to the sign face; wood carved signs combined with metal cut-out sign graphics).
11. Other - The Director may approve other sign types which have specific and unique design characteristics which are visually distinct from other sign types described herein (e.g., mosaic signs, concrete formed signs, etc.).

B. Design limitations. No more than one sign type may be used on any one building, except that up to two sign types plus one combination sign (as described in the above list) are permitted on a single building provided that no more than one sign type is used on any single wall plane, and provided that the separate sign types used on one building have at least two of the following design elements in common with each other:

- a. Common colors on the background or text
- b. Common lettering style.
- c. Common size (e.g., a specified height common to each sign).
- d. Common materials

C. Sign structure color requirements. Regardless of whether one or three sign types are specified, all sign cabinets, trim caps, returns and all sign supports such as poles and braces, shall be of a common color.

D. Approval process. Sign plans shall be approved through the site plan review process except that existing buildings may have sign plans approved administratively by the Director. Owners, or owner's designees, of all All existing multi-tenant projects or buildings shall submit a master sign plan prior to issuance of any new sign permits for said buildings. The Director may approve a master sign plan prepared by an owner or owner's designee.

E. Amendment procedures. Master sign plans shall be amended no more than once every five years, except that a plan may be amended more frequently if all signs approved under an existing master sign plan are in conformance, or are brought into conformance, with the provisions of the amended sign plan.

L. Color Restrictions. "Day glo", fluorescent, or reflective colored materials that give the appearance of changing color or brilliant luminescent colors shall not be permitted. Additional color restrictions are defined for Area 3. Reflective materials, brilliant luminescent or fluorescent colors shall be permitted for sign graphics only. Materials which give the appearance of changing color or of movement are prohibited.

M. Sign Orientation. Signage shall not be oriented for distant viewing. At least 70 percent of the allowed signage for a building shall be oriented to the road or main parking lot the project has direct driveway access to. The remaining signage may be oriented to the building side or rear, provided that the building has road frontage along that side or rear and provided that the signage is not oriented to the freeway or freeway interchange areas. (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995).

Section 8. A new Section 17.80.080 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby adopted to read as follows:

#### 17.80.080 Sign Districts

Two sign districts are created as defined under Section 17.80.030(9). The requirements of this chapter shall be applied to signs in both districts except for the special requirements to be imposed on signs located in each of the two districts.

Section 9. Section 17.80.033 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

#### 17.80.033 17.80.090 Sign standards for Areas 1 and 2 Area 1.

In addition to other applicable requirements of this chapter, signs located in Areas 1 and 2 Area 1 shall conform to the following:

#### A. Freestanding Signs.

1. Height Measurement. Freestanding signs shall be measured from the highest point of the sign to the finished grade at the base of the sign support. Finished grade shall be the final grade approved through the site plan review process and shall not be increased for purposes of increasing overall sign height.

2. Height Standards. Freestanding ground signs shall not exceed eight feet in height.

3. Clearance Standards. Freestanding signs which abut the edge of a sidewalk shall have a maximum clearance of ~~27~~ twenty-seven (27) inches.

4. Maximum Sign Area. Fifty ~~(50)~~ square feet for a single side or ~~100~~ one-hundred (100) square feet total ~~both sides on all sides, not to exceed 50 square feet on any one side,~~ or one square foot of sign area for every three ~~(3)~~ feet of frontage the sign is located on, whichever is less.

5. Location. Freestanding signs may not be located on public property. The placement of freestanding signs shall be in such a fashion and location as to not obstruct the view of signs of adjacent property owners.

6. Density. One freestanding sign shall be permitted on each street frontage of property on which the business is located. Sites on a corner of two public streets may have one sign on the corner instead of a sign for each frontage, subject to approval by the public works director. Commercial properties with more than ~~1,000~~ one-thousand (1,000) feet of continuous street frontage and with more than one ~~(1)~~ entrance may install a freestanding sign at each entrance, provided that no single sign exceeds the maximum sign area described under GHMC ~~17.80.033(A)(4)~~ 17.80.090(A)(4). Where there is frontage on more than one street, each frontage is treated independently.

7. Landscaping. Freestanding signs must be landscaped around the base of the sign.

a. Each sign shall have a landscaped area twice the size of the sign area. The landscaping and sign base shall be protected from vehicles by a six-inch high curb (or equivalent) at least three ~~(3)~~ feet from the sign base.

b. Landscaping shall be installed in the planting season closest to the date of the sign permit issuance. Signs installed after the planting season shall be landscaped by no later than the following planting season.

c. These requirements may be waived by the administrator if the sign is located in an area that is part of an approved overall site landscape plan.

#### B. Wall Mounted Signs.

1. Total Area. Painted or attached signs on any wall shall not exceed ~~the following ratios:~~

~~Area 1 Two square feet of sign area to one lineal foot of commercial building front or 50 square feet of sign area, whichever is greater, is allowed each business provided that signage does not exceed 10 percent of the wall plane it is mounted to.~~

~~Area 2 One and one half square feet of sign area to one lineal foot of commercial building front, provided that signage does not exceed 10 percent of the wall plane it is mounted to.~~

3 percent (3%) of the wall plane the sign is mounted to, except that signage covering up to ten percent (10%) of a wall plane is allowed if the wall plane conforms to all solid/void ratio requirements specified in the City's Design Manual, and if all on-premise yards on the side of the building the sign faces conform to all landscaping provisions of the City's Design Manual and of Chapter 17.78. In no case may a single sign exceed one-hundred (100) square feet.



2. Architectural Details. Signs may not cover or obscure important architectural details of a building such as stair railings, turnings, windows, doors, decorative louvers, or similar elements intended to be decorative features of a building design. Signs must appear to be a secondary and complementary feature of the building facade. Wall signs must be located within architectural signs bands or other blank spaces which visually frame the sign. Blank wall sections above or between windows and doors, for example, may provide an effective location for signage. Signs hanging between pillars and archways may also be an effective design solution. However, to avoid a "maxed out" appearance, signs shall be no larger than ~~70~~ seventy percent (70%) of the width or height of the blank wall space or fascia the sign is mounted to so as to leave reveal on all sides of the sign and to maintain an appropriate balance between the sign and wall. For example, a pillar between a door and window which is ~~30~~ thirty (30) inches wide may have a sign which is ~~24~~ twenty-one (21) inches wide.

3. Height Restriction. Wall signs shall not project above roof lines or fascia boards.

#### C. Window Signs.

1. ~~Allowed Size.~~ Illuminated Window Signs. ~~Where a window sign is utilized in place of a wall sign, the area standards contained in GHMC 17.80.033(B)(1) shall apply.~~ Illuminated window signs shall conform to the total wall sign area standards in 17.80.090(B) and shall conform with all master sign plan requirements in 17.80.070.

2. Non-illuminated Window Signs. Non-illuminated window signs are allowed in addition to the standards in 17.80.090(B), provided that they do not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the nominal window size (i.e., the window size as specified by the manufacturer). Additionally, non-illuminated window signs are not required to conform to the design standards of master sign plans.

~~2. Extra Sign Allowed.~~ In addition to the area requirements of GHMC 17.80.033(B)(1), businesses are allowed one painted window sign identifying the business. The maximum area of these signs is six square feet.

~~3. Second Story Signs.~~ Window signs above the first floor are not included in the maximum sign area of a site, and are allowed to businesses located above the first floor with a maximum area of one square foot of sign area for each lineal foot of window frontage.

#### D. Projecting Signs.

1. Surface Area. Projecting signs are limited to ~~32~~ thirty-two (32) square feet total both sides. Projecting sign area shall be deducted from the allowable wall signage determined under GHMC ~~17.80.033(B)(1)~~ 17.80.090(B)(1).

2. Clearance Requirements. All projecting signs must be at least eight (8) feet above sidewalks and walkways and ~~15~~ fifteen (15) feet above vehicular ways.

3. Maximum Projection. Projecting signs shall have a maximum width of three (3) feet with a maximum clearance of six (6) inches from the building wall.

4. Design Restriction. Projecting signs may not be cabinet-type signs and may not be internally illuminated.

~~E. Sidewalk/Sandwich Board.~~ One sidewalk or sandwich board sign per business building entrance (not to exceed one sign per business) may be permitted subject to the following:

~~1. Location.~~ If allowed in public right of way such as a sidewalk, sandwich board signs shall be located next to the sidewalk curb edge in such a manner so as not to interfere with the opening of car doors, bus stops, loading zones, car or pedestrian traffic, as approved by the public works



director. No sign may be located so as to create a traffic safety hazard by interfering with the vision of drivers entering or leaving the premises.

2. Hours of Display. Signs shall be located directly in front of the sponsoring business, within 12 feet of the building entrance and during business hours only.

3. Owner Liability. Owners of such signs shall assume liability for damage resulting from their use and shall provide the city with an appropriate legal document holding the city harmless for such resulting loss.

4. Allowed Size. Maximum allowable sign area shall be 12 square feet total both sides. Such signs shall have a maximum height of three feet and width of two feet located in front of the business.

5. Signs in Public Right of Way. In order to place a sandwich board or portable sign in the public right of way, the sign owner must comply with the requirements of this chapter as well as the requirements of Chapter 12.02 GHMC, Right of Way Permits.

F. Wall Graphics. There are no restrictions on wall graphics provided that they do not constitute advertising of a business or product normally subject to the provisions for painted signs. (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995).

Section 10. Section 17.80.035 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

~~17.80.035~~ 17.80.100 Sign standards for Area ~~3 2~~.

The following sign standards shall apply:

A. Illumination. When illumination is desired in Area ~~3 2~~, the city encourages use of external light sources subject to the provisions of GHMC ~~17.80.031(H)~~ 17.80.060(G)(1). ~~Internally illuminated signs are permitted~~ Internal illumination is permitted on all signs except neighborhood identification signs, subject to the provisions of GHMC ~~17.80.031(H)~~ 17.80.060(G)(2). ~~except that illuminated text must be a light color contrasted against a dark background.~~ Internally illuminated sign graphics are limited to white or ivory colors if the proposed sign is visible from residential property within 200 feet of the parcel the sign is located on;

B. Freestanding Signs.

1. Height Measurement. Freestanding signs shall be measured from the highest point of the sign to the finished grade at the base of the sign support. Finished grade shall be the final grade approved through the site plan review process and shall not be increased for purposes of increasing overall sign height.

2. Height Standards. Freestanding ground signs shall not exceed six ~~(6)~~ feet in height.

3. Clearance Standards. Freestanding signs which abut the edge of a sidewalk shall have a maximum clearance of ~~27~~ twenty-seven (27) inches.

4. Maximum Sign Area. Twenty-four ~~(24)~~ square feet for a single side or ~~48~~ forty-eight (48) square feet ~~for both total on all sides~~. If a carved or sandblasted wooden sign is used, freestanding signs may be ~~30~~ thirty (30) square feet for a single side or ~~60~~ sixty (60) square feet total on all sides ~~both sides~~.

5. Location. Freestanding signs may not be located on public property. The placement of freestanding signs shall be in such a fashion and location as to not obstruct the view of signs of

adjacent property owners.

~~6. Density. One freestanding sign shall be permitted on each street frontage of property on which the business is located. Sites on a corner of two public streets may have one sign on the corner instead of a sign for each frontage, subject to approval by the public works director. Commercial properties with more than 1,000 feet of continuous street frontage and with more than one entrance may install a freestanding sign at each entrance, provided that no single sign exceeds the maximum sign area described under GHMC 17.80.035(B)(4). Where there is frontage on more than one street, each frontage is treated independently.~~

6. Density. Freestanding signs shall be limited to the following number and locations::

a. Commercial. One freestanding sign shall be permitted on each street frontage of property on which the business is located. Sites on a corner of two public streets may have one sign on the corner instead of a sign for each frontage, subject to approval by the public works director. Commercial properties with more than one-thousand (1,000) feet of continuous street frontage and with more than one entrance may install a freestanding sign at each entrance, provided that no single sign exceeds the maximum sign area described under GHMC 17.80.100(B)(4). Where there is frontage on more than one street, each frontage is treated independently.

b. Residential. One freestanding neighborhood identification sign is permitted at each entrance to a residential neighborhood.

7. Landscaping. Freestanding signs must be landscaped around the base of the sign.

a. Each sign shall have a landscaped area twice the size of the sign area. If a carved or sandblasted wooden sign is used, landscaping may be reduced by ~~50~~ fifty percent (50%) for all grade level landscaping, or by ~~75~~ seventy-five percent (75%) if landscaping is contained in a raised planter around the base of the sign. Raised planters must be at least ~~18~~ eighteen (18) inches high. Planter and organic materials shall be installed within ~~30~~ thirty (30) days of sign installation. The landscaping, sign base or planter shall be protected from vehicles by a six inch high curb stop or sidewalk edge at least three feet from the planter base.

b. Landscaping shall be installed in the planting season closest to the date of the sign permit issuance. Signs installed after the planting season shall be landscaped by no later than the following planting season.

c. These requirements may be waived if the sign is located in an area that is part of an approved overall site landscape plan.

#### C. Wall Mounted Signs.

~~1. Total Sign Area. Painted or attached wall signs must meet each of the following size criteria:-~~

~~a. Allowed Signage per Facade. The combined area of wall signs on a given facade shall not exceed one square foot of sign for every lineal foot of commercial wall upon which it is mounted.~~

a. Allowed Signage per Wall Plane. Total allowed signage in Area 2 shall not exceed three percent (3%) of the wall plane the sign is mounted to, except that signage covering up to eight percent (8%) of a wall plane is allowed if the wall plane conforms to all solid/void ratio requirements specified in the City's Design Manual, and if all on-premise yards on the side of the building the sign faces conform to all landscaping provisions of the City's Design Manual and of Chapter 17.78.

b. Individual Sign Size. No single wall sign shall exceed 50 fifty (50) square feet.

~~e. Allowed Signage per Wall Plane. Wall signage may not exceed 10 percent of the wall plane or surface it is mounted to (see definition of wall plane).~~

~~d. c. Increased Size Option.~~ If a carved or sandblasted wooden sign is used, the sign size may be increased by ~~20~~ twenty percent (20%) of its underlying allowable sign area.

~~e. d. Size Restriction.~~ Wall signs must meet the ~~70~~ seventy percent (70%) space coverage allowances described under the surface coverage requirements in GHMC 17.80.035(C)(2) 17.80.100(C)(2).

2. Architectural Details. Signs may not cover or obscure important architectural details of a building; they should appear to be a secondary and complementary feature of the building facade. Wall signs must be located within architectural signs bands or other blank spaces which visually frame the sign. Blank wall sections above or between windows and doors, for example, may provide an effective location for signage. However, to avoid a "maxed out" appearance, signs shall be no larger than ~~70~~ seventy percent (70%) of the width or height of the blank wall space or fascia the sign is mounted to so as to leave reveal on all sides of the sign and to maintain an appropriate balance between the sign and wall. For example, a pillar between a door and window which is ~~30~~ thirty (30) inches wide may have a sign which is ~~24~~ twenty-one (21) inches wide.

3. Height Restriction. Wall signs shall not project above roof lines or fascia boards.

#### D. Window Signs.

1. ~~Allowed Size. Illuminated Window Signs. Where a window sign is utilized in place of a wall sign, the area standards contained in GHMC 17.80.035(C)(1) shall apply. Illuminated window signs shall conform to the total wall sign area standards in 17.80.100(C)(1) and shall conform with all master sign plan requirements in 17.80.070.~~

2. Non-illuminated Window Signs. Non-illuminated window signs are allowed in addition to the standards in 17.80.100(C)(1), provided that they do not exceed 50 percent (50%) of the nominal window size (i.e., the window size as specified by the manufacturer). Additionally, non-illuminated window signs are not required to conform to the design standards of master sign plans.

~~2. Extra Sign Allowed. In addition to the area requirements of GHMC 17.80.035(C)(1), businesses are allowed one painted window sign identifying the business. The maximum area of these signs is six square feet.~~

~~3. Second Story Signs. Window signs above the first floor are not included in the maximum sign area of a site, and are allowed to businesses located above the first floor with a maximum area of one square foot of sign area for each lineal foot of window frontage.~~

#### E. Projecting Signs.

1. Surface Area. Projecting signs in Area ~~3~~ 2 are limited to ~~32~~ thirty-two (32) square feet total for both sides. Projecting sign area shall be deducted from the allowable wall signage determined under GHMC 17.80.035(C)(1) and (D)(1) ~~respectively~~ 17.80.100(C)(1).

2. Clearance Requirements. All projecting signs must be at least eight (8) feet above sidewalks and walkways and ~~15~~ fifteen (15) feet above vehicular ways.

3. Maximum Projection. Projecting signs shall have a maximum width of three feet with a maximum clearance of six inches from the building wall.

4. Design Restriction. Projecting signs may not be cabinet-type signs and may not be internally illuminated.

F. ~~Sidewalk/Sandwich Board. Portable Sign.~~ One (1) portable sidewalk or sandwich board sign per

customer building entrance (not to exceed one sign per ~~tenant~~ thirty (30) feet of building frontage) shall may be permitted subject to the following:

1. Location. Signs shall be located on the premises or directly in front of the sponsoring business at a point on the sidewalk right-of-way which is closest to the building entrance. Signs shall be located in such a manner so as not to interfere with the opening of car doors, bus stops, loading zones, car or pedestrian traffic. No sign shall be located so as to create a traffic safety hazard by interfering with the vision of drivers entering or leaving the premises. No sign shall obstruct or impair access to a public sidewalk, public or private street or driveway, traffic control sign, bus stop, fire hydrant, or any other type of street furniture, or otherwise create a hazard, including a tripping hazard.

2. Hours of Display. Signs may be displayed during business hours only.

3. ~~Owner Liability. Owners of such signs shall assume liability for damage resulting from their use and shall provide the city with an appropriate legal document holding the city harmless for such resulting loss.~~

~~4.3. Allowed Size-Height. Maximum allowable sign area shall be 12 square feet total both sides. height of portable sidewalk signs shall be three (3) feet. All other size requirements of portable signs described in Section 17.80.060(H) shall apply.~~

~~5.4. Signs in Public Right-of-Way. Right-of-Way Permit. In order to place a sandwich board or portable sign in the public right-of-way, the sign owner must comply with the requirements of this chapter as well as the requirements of Chapter 12.02 GHMC, Right-of-Way permits.~~

~~G. Wall Graphics. There are no restrictions on wall graphics provided that they do not constitute advertising of a business or product normally subject to the provisions for painted signs. (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995).~~

Section 11. Section 17.80.040 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

17.80.040 17.80.110 Temporary signs.

Except for business signs described under subsection A of this section and balloon signs described under subsection F of this section, no permit is required for temporary signs. Temporary signs are not allowed to continually advertise goods, services, political messages or events on a site; permanent signs shall be used for that purpose. Temporary signs located within public right-of-way shall be subject to the requirements of Chapter 12.02 GHMC.

A. Exterior Business Signs. Such signs include grand opening signs, sale signs, promotional signs, quitting business signs, and other nonpermanent exterior signs used by businesses. Exterior business Business signs shall be limited to ~~20~~ twenty (20) square feet in size. No more than one ~~(1)~~ exterior business sign may be displayed at any one time for any one business or tenant. Exterior business Business signs may be displayed for no more than ~~60~~ sixty (60) cumulative days per calendar year.

A permit is required for each exterior business sign.

~~B. Poster Signs. Notwithstanding the business sign restrictions in subsection A, each business may~~



~~continually display temporary poster type signs. Poster signs are allowed on the inside of windows only.~~

**CB. Real Estate (On-Premises and Off-Premises Signs).**

1. Residential "For Sale", "For Rent" and "Sold" Signs. Such signs shall be limited to one sign per street frontage not to exceed six (6) square feet in sign area per side, placed wholly on the property for sale, and not to exceed a height of six (6) feet. One off-premises "For Sale" or "For Rent" sign no larger than two (2) square feet and no further from the subject house than the nearest arterial street intersection is permitted. No more than one (1) "For Sale" or "For Rent" sign may be used at any street intersection for any one developer, broker, seller or owner. No off-premises "Sold" signs are allowed. All real estate signs shall be removed within five (5) days of the final sale or rental.

If a development or subdivision with more than eight (8) parcels or units has more than ~~50~~ 25 percent (25%) of the parcels or units for sale at any one time by a single or joint developer, agent, or seller, signage shall be limited to one (1) project identification sign, no larger than ~~32~~ thirty-two (32) square feet, at the subdivision or project entrance with a map showing available lots or units by number. Each lot or unit may have a corresponding number sign not exceeding one (1) square foot.

2. Residential Directional "Open House" Signs. "Open House" signs are permitted only during daylight hours and when the broker/agent or seller is in attendance at the property for sale. No such sign shall exceed ~~five~~ six (6) square feet in sign area per side. The sign may be placed along the periphery of a public right-of-way, provided it does not interfere with traffic safety, but it may not be attached to a utility pole or traffic safety device.

3. Undeveloped Commercial and Industrial Property "For Sale or Rent" Signs. One sign per street frontage advertising undeveloped commercial property for sale or for rent is permitted while the property is actually for rent or sale. The sign shall not exceed ~~32~~ thirty-two (32) square feet in sign area per side and six (6) feet in height.

4. Developed Commercial and Industrial Property "For Sale or Rent" Signs. Such signs shall be limited to one (1) sign per street frontage not to exceed sixteen (16) square feet in sign area per side, placed wholly on the property for sale, and not to exceed a height of six (6) feet.

**DC. Construction Signs.** Sign copy shall be limited to information about a building under construction or being remodeled. Maximum duration shall be until construction is completed or one year, whichever is shorter. Maximum area shall be ~~32~~ thirty-two (32) square feet.

**ED. Campaign/Political Signs.** Campaign/political signs may be posted on private property or on the planting strip between the sidewalk and the street, ~~which~~ when such planting strip is immediately adjacent to the sign owner's property, provided that it does not present a safety hazard to pedestrian or vehicular traffic. ~~These signs may be posted for a period not to exceed 90 days.~~ If related to an event or election, such signs shall be removed within seven days after the event or election. It shall be the responsibility of the property owner, tenant or candidate to remove such signs as required by this section. Maximum sign area shall be ~~12~~ twelve (12) square feet. Maximum height shall be ~~three~~ six (6) feet.

**FE. Seasonal Decoration Signs and Signs Advertising a Public Event.** Maximum duration shall be from one month before the event to five days after the event. Because public events are allowed on a limited time basis and on sites not normally associated with the event, public event signs may be



located off-premise within the City right-of-way, subject to the provisions of Chapter 12.02 GHMC, Right-of-way permits, or within the windows of buildings, subject to the building owner's approval and all other window sign requirements. Signs shall be removed by the promoters of the event, or the city will remove such signs at the promoter's expense. (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995; Ord. 558 § 3, 1989; Ord. 532 § 5, 1988).

F. Balloon signs. Such signs include display of six (6) or more balloons, either individually or as festoons, connected to one or more fixed objects or vehicles. Balloon sizes shall not exceed eighteen (18) inches in any dimension. Balloon signs may be displayed for no more than sixty (60) cumulative days per calendar year. A permit is required for each balloon sign display.

G. Temporary window signs conforming to Section 17.80.020(E).

Section 12. Section 17.80.050 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

~~17.80.050~~ 17.80.120 Prohibited signs.

The following signs are prohibited:

A. Signs which by coloring, shape, wording or location resemble or conflict with traffic-control signs or devices;

B. Signs which the director of public works determines to be a safety hazard for pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Such signs may be removed if they already exist;

C. Flashing signs or lights;

D. Signs or parts of signs which revolve or otherwise have mechanical or motorized motion;

E. Portable signs exceeding six square feet each side;

F. Signs attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer parked on public or private property; provided, however, this provision shall not be construed as prohibiting the identification of a firm or its products on a vehicle operating during the normal course of business. Franchised buses and taxis are exempt from this provision;

G. Off-premises signs, except as specifically allowed in this chapter;

H. Any sign affixed to or painted on trees, rocks or other natural features or utility poles;

I. Roof signs;

~~J. All readerboard signs, including portable readerboard signs except such signs used for theaters or public schools;~~

~~K. Signs that display the symbol, slogan or trademark of national brands of soft drinks or other products that do not form the bulk of the business transacted on the premises;~~

J. Electronic signs

~~L K.~~ Signs not meeting the requirements of this section. (Ord. 691 § 1, 1995; Ord. 558 § 4, 1989; Ord. 532 § 7, 1988. Formerly 17.80.060.).

Section 13. A new Section 17.80.130 is hereby added to the Gig Harbor Municipal Code as follows:

17.80.130 Nonconforming signs.

A. A sign is legally nonconforming if it is out of conformance with this code, and:

1. The sign was lawfully erected in compliance with the applicable sign ordinance of the city or county which was effective at the time of sign installation, and a valid permit for such sign exists;  
or

2. The sign was erected prior to January 1, 1992.

B. A sign must be brought into compliance with the requirements of this code unless it conforms to Section 17.80.130(A).

C. Changes to the sign face and sign graphics may be made to a legally nonconforming sign except that such changes must conform to this code as to colors, sign graphics, materials, and illumination. A permit for such changes must be obtained.

D. A legal nonconforming sign shall be brought into compliance with this ordinance or shall be removed if:

1. The sign is abandoned; or

2. The sign is damaged in excess of fifty percent (50%) of its replacement value, unless said destruction is the result of vandalism or intentional destruction or removal by someone not authorized by the sign owner; or

3. The owner seeks to change the sign structure supporting, holding, or surrounding the sign, other than minor maintenance or repair.

4. The tenant space(s) to which the sign applies is undergoing an expansion or renovation which increases the size of the tenant space floor area or site coverage area by twenty percent (20%) or more, unless the sign is brought into conformance under the provisions of Section 17.80.130(E).

5. The building to which the sign applies is demolished.

E. An owner of a nonconforming sign may, under the provisions of Section 17.80.140, request the Design Review Board (DRB) to approve a design allowance deeming the sign conforming if the DRB makes all findings of fact specified for the following sign types:

1. Signs attached to buildings.

a. The sign is not a dominant feature on a blank wall, but is positioned within architectural features of a building specifically designed and intended for signage, such as parapets, sign bands, or fascias, or is positioned between other architectural features such as doors, windows or projections which provide architectural relief and detailing.

b. The sign is smaller than the architectural space the sign fits within so as to leave wall reveal around all sides of the sign.

c. The sign face conforms to all restrictions on background illumination and sign color.

d. The sign is consistent with the intent and general scope of the sign code and Design Manual standards.

2. Freestanding signs.

a. The sign has design features which reflect design elements of surrounding structures, or the sign is incorporated into a landscaped area with large and mature plantings which provide a backdrop to the sign and which are at least as tall as the sign.

b. The sign has the characteristics of a monument sign rather than a pole sign (e.g., the base of the sign support where it meets the ground is at least as wide as the sign face).

c. The sign is consistent with the intent and general scope of the City's sign code and

Design Manual standards.

Section 14. A new Section 17.80.140 is hereby added to the Gig Harbor Municipal Code to read as follows:

17.80.140 Design Review Board Approval.

Those sections of this chapter which require a determination by the Design Review Board shall be processed as a design allowance in accordance with GHMC Chapter 17.98.035, and not as a design variance.

Section 15. Section 17.80.080 of the Gig Harbor Municipal Code is hereby renumbered and amended to read as follows:

~~17.80.080~~ 17.80.150 Liability.

This chapter shall not be construed to relieve from or lessen the responsibility of any person owning, building, altering, constructing, or removing any sign for damages to anyone injured or damaged either in person or property by any defect or action therein, nor shall the city, or any agent thereof, be held as assuming such liability by reason of permit or inspection authorized herein or a certificate of inspection issued by the city or any of its agents. (Ord. 532 § 9, 1988).


Section 16. Severability. If any section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance should be held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of any other section, sentence, clause or phrase of this ordinance.

Section 17. Effective Date. This ordinance shall take effect and be in full force five (5) days after publication of an approved summary consisting of the title.

Section 18. Transmittal to DCTED. The Planning Director is hereby directed to send a copy of the final ordinance as adopted by the City to DCTED within ten days after adoption (WAC 365-195-620).

Section 19. Copies to County Assessor. The Planning Director is hereby directed to send a copy of the final ordinance as adopted by the City to the Pierce County Assessor, pursuant to RCW 35A.63.260.

APPROVED:

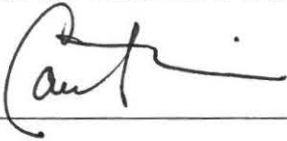
  
Gretchen A. Wilbert, Mayor

ATTEST/AUTHENTICATED:

  
MOLLY TOWSLEE, CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY:

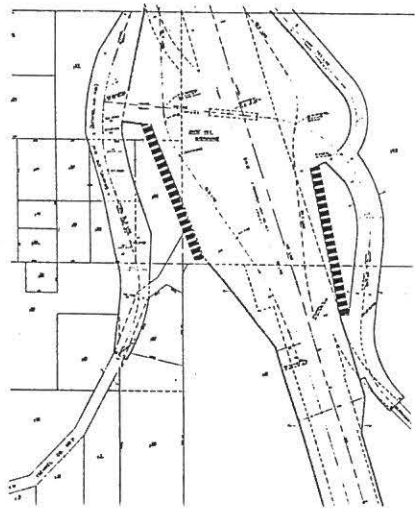
BY 

FILED WITH THE CITY CLERK: 1/7/98  
PASSED BY THE CITY COUNCIL: 4/13/98  
PUBLISHED: 4/29/98  
EFFECTIVE DATE: 5/4/98  
ORDINANCE NO: **788**



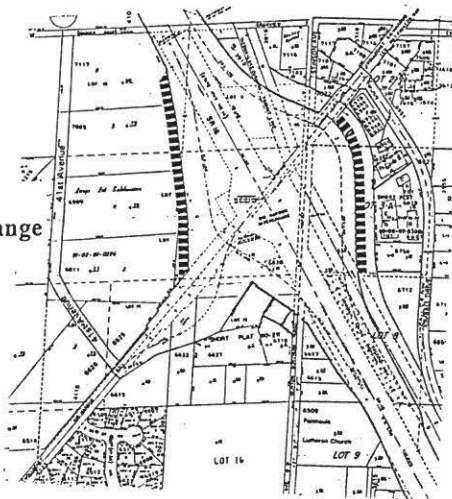
EXHIBIT 1  
OF  
ORDINANCE NO. 788

FREEWAY INTERCHANGE AREAS

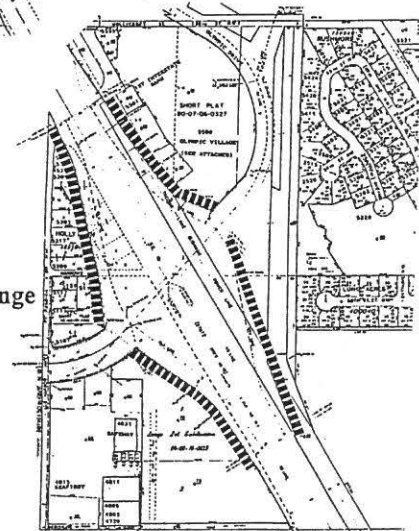


Swede Hill Interchange

Wollochet/Pioneer Interchange



Olympic Drive Interchange



■■■■■ Indicates frontages where sign orientation is permitted, subject to GHMC Section 17.80.060(K).