

DEPARTMENT OF  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
CALIFORNIA

1231 I STREET  
ROOM 200  
SACRAMENTO, CA  
95814-2998

November 14, 1989

BUILDING INSPECTIONS  
916-449-5716

City Council  
Sacramento, California

PLANNING  
916-449-5604

Honorable Members in Session:

SUBJECT: Signs On High Rise Buildings (M89-089)

Summary

When the Urban Design Plan was approved in 1987, it permitted logos on high rise buildings. Recently, it has been argued that word name signs should be permitted as a logo if the word name is the company's trademark. It has also been argued that a sign should be permitted if it can be constructed of quality materials in a visually pleasing manner.

On September 19, 1989, the City Council imposed a 60 day moratorium to prohibit signs over 100 feet in height. Council discussion took into consideration recent sign regulations and the heights of signs in suburban areas of the City when setting the height prohibition at 100 feet. During that 60 day period, staff was directed to prepare various alternative for the Council's consideration.

These alternatives are submitted for consideration as follows:

- 1) to permit building base signs only;
- 2) to permit word name signs and logos; on building roof tops and
- 3) to permit logos only on building roof tops.

It is recommended that the City Council direct staff to prepare an ordinance to allow building base signs only; and that the moratorium be extended 180 days to allow preparation of and submittal of an appropriate ordinance for public hearing.

Background

When the Urban Design Plan was adopted in 1987 it was intended to promote quality architecture to enhance the City's beauty and its image. To this end, the City has accomplished improving the architectural quality of new buildings. The massing guidelines require major new buildings to step the tower back as it increases in height capped with a decorative building top or roof structure. This goal is being achieved by significant new projects in the city such as: The Lot A proposals, Library Plaza Tower, Wells Fargo Center, 1215 K Street, and Renaissance Tower. Even smaller scale projects such

as the redesigned 111 Capitol Mall building (reduced from 15 stories to 8 stories) achieves a high quality design with distinctive architecture.

The Urban Design Plan intentionally prohibits word name signs as part of the overall goal to reduce clutter on the City's new skyline. Logos typically occupy a much smaller area than word name signs. In addition, graphic logos are usually more attractive and compatible with the architecture of a building. Pedestrian level elements are also encouraged in the architectural design of a project. This can be further enhanced by incorporating high quality signage closer to the pedestrian level.

Two arguments have surfaced regarding the existing ordinance concerning graphic logo signs. First, some corporations do not have a corporate logo. There is also a certain amount of time needed for a new logo to become identifiable to the general population. Allowing logos only is, therefore unfair to corporations that do not have logos. Second, it is argued that a company's trademark (whether it be comprised of a logo, initials or words) is their logo. For example, sign proponents argue that IBM, EATON, and Capitol Bank, should be considered logos as they are the company's trademark.

Another point of view pertains primarily to word name signs. This view argues that signs constructed of quality materials and designed integrally with the architecture of a building would be an acceptable method of applying signage to a building.

At the September 19, 1989 City Council meeting, the Council established a 60 day moratorium on buildings top signs above 100 feet and directed staff to examine alternatives for City Council consideration. The City has contracted with the firm of Weidner 3, an environmental graphic design firm, to provide technical assistance on the recommended sign program.

#### Alternatives

Three different sign programs or approaches to sign applications on major buildings were examined. Base level signs; word name signs; and, logo signs only. The latter two approaches would be located at the tops of the buildings. The pros & cons of each alternative are presented in Attachment A.

#### High Rise Sign Regulations of other Cities

A survey of high rise sign regulations of other cities was also conducted. Sign regulations varied greatly from city to city from those with limited restrictions, to those that prohibit building top signs. Notable cities with distinctive skylines with highly restrictive sign regulations are summarized below.

<u>City</u>	<u>Regulation</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Honolulu	Prohibit wall signs above 20 feet or 3rd floor, whichever is less. Prohibit pole signs to 16 feet in height.	Sign restrictions originated from the community's concern over potential sign clutter.
Chicago	Discourage signs on high rise buildings through design standards.	Proud of their skyline. Stated that buildings should not be used as corporate billboards.
New York	Signs are restricted in some areas (formal business areas). Signs are not restricted in other areas (entertainment areas such as Times Square).	Indicated that good architecture stands by itself. Most New Yorkers know the buildings by their architecture, not signs.

Portland	Restrict signs through design standards above second story.	Hotels are exceptions
San Francisco	Prohibit signs above 60 feet in height.	No variance option

### Geographic Boundaries

The City of Sacramento is more than just another growing city in California. Sacramento has historic prominence, State Capital status and has caught the interest of national and international businesses. It is a city that is not only growing but, it is growing in a quality manner. New, world class architecture is creating a high quality skyline that is defining a new image for the City.

A principal focal point of the sign issue is Capitol Mall, which is the formal and symbolic entrance to the State Capitol and City. Photographs of the State Capitol and Capitol Mall are used in the print and electronic media more than any other view of the City.

Although the focal point of the City is Capitol Mall, what is done elsewhere in the City has a direct impact on Capitol Mall. If sign regulations are applied only in the Central City and not in the suburbs, it places the Central City projects at a competitive disadvantage relative to building leasing. From a legal point of view, application of sign regulations should be citywide to be equitable. Any regulations applied to Capitol Mall should be applied to other areas of the City. The map on Attachment B indicates potential locations for buildings above 100 feet throughout the City.

Another consideration is that signs on buildings add clutter and create unneeded visual impacts, whether they are located on Capitol Mall, in Point West, or in South Natomas.

In addition, high rise buildings outside of the Central City should be constructed to the same high standards and quality as high rise buildings in the Central City. Therefore, the sign guidelines are recommended to be Citywide.

### Preferred Alternative

Attachment A presents the pros & cons of each alternative sign program. In the staff's judgement, and as evidenced by the success which other cities have had with a restrictive high rise sign policy, the problems related to allowing signs on building tops outweigh the positive aspects. The arguments against roof-top signs relate to:

- (1) contradictions to current Urban Design philosophy,
- (2) inappropriateness to current building design,
- (3) creation of a "carnival" atmosphere,
- (4) size problem
- (5) future visibility problems,
- (6) enforcement problem,
- (7) increased competition,

- (8) changeability problem,
- (9) compromise of architectural design,
- (10) loss of opportunity for improved pedestrian level architecture, and
- (11) short term vs long term gain

Based upon these considerations, staff recommends the City Council select the base level alternative signs program for buildings exceeding heights of 100 feet. This program, and implementing ordinance should apply on a City wide basis.

Policy Consideration

The policies of the Urban Design Plan to enhance the City's image is the primary policy consideration as discussed in detail above.

MBE/WBE Efforts

Any required services would be considerate of MBE/WBE efforts.

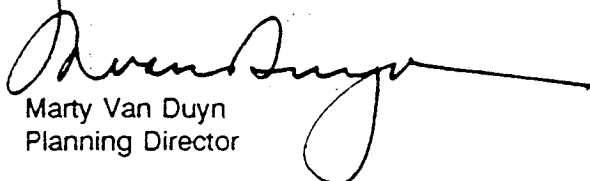
Contact Person

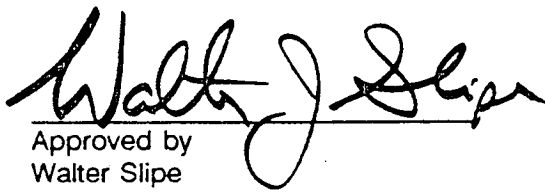
Gene Masuda, Senior Planner or Don Smith, Associate Planner (916) 449-5604.

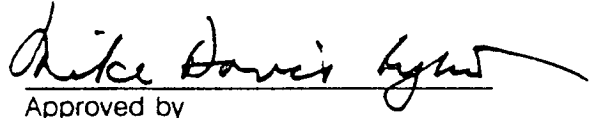
Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council select base level signage alternative, to prohibit signs above the base of a building or to a maximum height of 100 feet as specified in the appropriate standards. Staff also recommends that the Council adopt the attached ordinance extending the moratorium for 180 days to allow review by the City Planning Commission and Design Review Board and return to the City Council with an implementing ordinance. The ordinance shall establish standards for size, materials, colors, lighting, location and number of signs. New standards for free-standing (monument) signs will also be included. In addition, a sign review process for major buildings will be established.

Respectfully submitted,

  
 Marty Van Duyn  
 Planning Director

  
 Approved by  
 Walter Slipe  
 City Manager

  
 Approved by  
 Mike Davis  
 Director of Planning  
 and Development Department



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**ATTACHMENT A**

City of Sacramento  
Department of Planning & Development

**STUDY OF OFFICE TOWER SIGNAGE GUIDELINE ALTERNATIVES**

November 14, 1989

**ALTERNATIVE 1: BASE LEVEL SIGNAGE ONLY**

**Description:**

Location of signs shall be limited to a height of 100 ft. or to the building base, whichever is the lower height. This would include the name of buildings (as opposed to the name of building occupants) as well as building addresses. Building occupants may also display corporate imagery on freestanding signage if landscape design and setback requirements allow.

**Pros**

*Minimization of Sign Clutter:* The visual impact of sign clutter would be kept closer to the street level. Signs would be geared towards pedestrians and street traffic, instead of long range visibility (i.e. from freeways). The integrity of the Sacramento skyline would thus be maintained by keeping the building tops "sign-free", featuring unique architectural designs as called for in the Sacramento Urban Design Plan.

*Possible Long-Term Economic Benefit:* A sign-free skyline could enhance Sacramento's emerging reputation for being a community which sets high standards for development and offers a high quality lifestyle.

*Lessened Competition:* Corporate competition for the grandest, most noticeable sign is curtailed.

*Simplified Enforcement:* Enforcement is simplified. Since restrictions regarding sign material, illumination, etc. are "looser" than those applying to building top signs, the potential for inequity and conflict are minimized.

*Incentive for Creativity:* Since corporate images would be seen at a more pedestrian level, this could encourage the design of creative signage which enhances the pedestrian experience. Example: the elegant corporate imagery seen at the base of buildings in the San Francisco financial district.

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*Possible Better Location at Building Base:* There is more likelihood of an aesthetically appropriate area to locate a sign at the base of a building as opposed to the building top area. In the case of new buildings, architectural designs would be less compromised if sign "zones" were designed into the building base than if they were designed into the building top area.

**Cons:**

*Potential Loss of Economic Benefit to Developer:* Developers would not be able to offer potential building occupants the option of long-range and freeway visibility. Whether this would be a short or long term loss is unclear. The elimination of a building top signage option could drive potential tenants into the suburbs, unless the same rules were applied city-wide.

*Limited Visibility:* Signs would not be seen from great distances such as freeways. The identification of "big name tenants", adding credibility to the strength of Sacramento's growing economy, would not be readily seen by potential building occupants.

*Lessened Hotel Visibility:* Hotel signs would be less visible to travellers and tourists from freeways.

**ALTERNATIVE 2: WORD NAME OR LOGO & WORD NAME**

**Description**

Sign on building top (located over 100 ft.) may consist of a corporate word name (example: "Xerox") or corporate word name and logo (example: "First Interstate Bank"). As is currently allowed in the Sacramento Urban Design Plan, signs may also be located at the building base.

**Pros**

*Equity:* This alternative benefits developers by providing a fair system for all building occupants, regardless of the graphic configuration of their corporate "mark".

*Increased Visibility:* Building occupant can be readily identified from the exterior of the building at a height greater than the building base; large letters make corporate identification seen better from a distance, i.e. from freeways.

*Potential Economic Benefit to Developers:* Developers will have a valuable tool to attract potential building occupants. As alleged by the development community, the immediate visibility of "big name tenants" on building tops could provide incentive for occupants to move their businesses to Sacramento.

## Cons

*Contradiction to Current Urban Design Philosophy:* Corporate "marks" which consist of words or words and logos can be obtrusive and add visual clutter to the skyline. This clutter contradicts the basic philosophy behind the Sacramento Urban Design Plan, which promotes high quality architectural design and the development of a well planned urban environment. The Urban Design Plan specifically addresses the issue of protecting Sacramento's unique and beautiful "view corridors and vistas" which would be changed forever by the intrusion of large building top signage. The vista down Capitol Mall to the State Capitol is one of Sacramento's most beautiful and precious commodities; its preservation should be of great concern to the community.

*Inappropriateness On Current Building Designs:* Office buildings designed and constructed during the past several decades included many "refrigerator boxes". The facade of these buildings often included a "band" at the top of the building which was a convenient area to place signage. In fact, in some cases, the building architecture was so bland that the addition of graphics actually enhanced the appearance of the building facade. Architecture has changed since then. New designs have become more sensitive to historic forms, window walls are more articulated, setbacks have been created to preserve light and views, and building rooftops are more highly detailed (in terms of materials, colors and dimensionality) to create their own unique and distinctive image. In many cases, there is simply no place to locate a building top sign, whether it is just a logo symbol or longer word name. In other cases, even though there might be a place to locate a sign, the sign would interrupt the visual rhythm of architectural elements. Examples of architectural designs which present these challenges are: Lot A Proposals, Library Plaza Tower, Renaissance Tower, 1215 "K" Street and 111 Capitol Mall.

*The Creation of a "Carnival Atmosphere" at Night:* If signs are allowed to be illuminated, (i.e. halo or spot lit), the visual clutter of building top signs during the day would transform itself to a "carnival atmosphere" at night. The night skyline of Sacramento would change from the subtle illumination of architectural elements to a billboard of corporate advertising. Illuminated signs will compete with the flood lit Capitol dome and other unique structural features, i.e. Tower Bridge.

*Size Problem:* If word names are allowed at building tops, current guidelines allowing for a logo symbol only would have to be changed to allow for more flexibility regarding sign length and square footage. Letters would have to be large enough to be read from long distances (i.e. freeways). This becomes a problem if an occupant's corporate name is unusually long. The top facade of a building could virtually become completely covered with a sign. Also, because of the current increase in building heights, signs would have to be larger due to their increased distance from ground level.

*Future Visibility Problem:* Over time, as the Sacramento skyline emerges and the Central Business District becomes denser, newer buildings could eventually obscure signage which was formerly visible from long distances.

*Enforcement Problem:* Since each sign design would be subject to evaluation by an Environmental Graphic Design Review Committee (if established), the issue of aesthetic appropriateness is purely subjective and would be subject to constant challenge. What if the typeface of a corporate occupant is extremely ill-formed, out of date and in bad taste? Equity would become a continuous issue.

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**Increased Competition:** Once words or words and logos are allowed to be displayed on building tops, there is the potential problem of increased competition for who has the most prominent and visible sign. Architectural standards could decline until sign controls are ineffective.

**Changeability Problem:** Since words or words and logos would span a significant amount of building facade at the building top, the problem of changeability becomes an issue. If a building occupant creates a sign which is physically integral with the building facade (i.e. letters sandblasted into granite), what happens if and when the building is sold (i.e. Wells Fargo buying Crocker Bank), or, if the building occupant updates its graphic image? (See example below) A potential problem is that the Sacramento skyline could be "stuck" with inappropriate and outdated signs at building tops for many years. Attempts to replace integrally designed signs may include placing "canned box" units over the old sign thereby negating the original well-designed integral sign. The cost of replacing signs integral to the building may be exorbitantly high and difficult to accomplish (Example: Removing engraved granite panels) Removing old signs also leaves holes and outlines of the old signs on buildings.



OLD LOGO



NEW LOGO

**Possible Compromise of Architectural Design:** Once words or words and logos are allowed on building tops, there is the potential problem that architects will be encouraged to design office buildings with specific areas at building tops which are intended for the application of signage. This idea is antithetical to the current Urban Design Plan which encourages the unique design of "decorative and distinctive rooftops" which complement and enhance the surrounding historical buildings and the emerging Sacramento skyline.

**Cost to City of Sacramento:** Although processing fees paid by building occupants would cover much of the cost of reviewing each submitted sign design program, the City would still absorb additional costs incurred by staff involvement in a more complex review process. Current processing fees would increase in order to cover the costs of an Environmental Graphic Review Committee. Additional workload would also be placed on City staff.

**Short Term vs. Long Term Gain:** Allowing words or words and logos at building tops might provide some economic gain for Sacramento. Whether this gain would be long or short term is hard to say. World class cities like New York, Chicago and San Francisco do not currently allow building top signage. San Francisco is benefiting from the long-term gain of this policy. It has one of the most highly photographed skylines in the world, due not only to the obvious beauty of the natural surroundings but to the integrity of the architecture. A "clean skyline" and uncluttered vista of the State Capitol might well prove to be a long-term and more lasting gain to the Sacramento economy.



**ALTERNATIVE 3: LOGO ONLY**

**Description**

Sign on building top (located over 100 ft.) may consist of a corporate logo only. The word "logo" is currently defined as a graphic symbol which does not incorporate letterforms that spell a word. Note that signs may also be located at the building base .

This definition of a "logo" is currently being challenged by developers and building occupants who contest that distinct corporate graphic images which contain letterforms (whether or not they spell a word) *should* be considered "logos". The diverse corporate images shown below illustrate that the current definition used by the City is probably too restrictive and will be subject to continuous challenge in the years to come.



**IBM**  
Unique letterforms which represent an abbreviation, not a word



**EATON**  
Unique letterforms which create a distinctive graphic image while still spelling a word



**GILLETTE**  
Highly abstracted letter "G"



**SHELL**  
Representational logo



**NORTH AMERICAN VAN LINES**  
Symbolic logo

Due to this problem regarding the definition of a logo, Alternative No. 3 is not a viable alternative.

**Pros**

*Smaller Area than Word Sign:* Logos would occupy a smaller area than word signs, so clutter would be minimized.

*Integration With Architecture:* Since logo symbols generally occupy a smaller area than word signs, it is more likely that the sign will integrate with the architecture of the building top area. If done in good taste and if the logo is aesthetically pleasing, it is possible that a logo can become a "jewel-like" embellishment to the building architecture.

**Cons**

**NOTE:** Many of the "cons" presented here are similar to those presented for the previous alternative, "Word Name or Logo & Word Name". Obviously, due to the fact that logos are likely to be visually less obtrusive than word signs, the arguments concerning aesthetic impact carry a little less weight. However, the basic concepts remain the same.

*Lack of Equity:* The problem of defining a "logo" is discussed under "Description". As previously discussed, this alternative for allowing symbol logos only has the potential for "opening up a can of worms"; indeed, this is currently proving to be the case. There is a potential for lawsuits as occupants argue that their corporate word "marks" *should be considered* as symbol logos even though they contain letterforms which spell words.

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**Possible Increase in Logo Size:** Since the design of many symbol logos are quite detailed (especially those which are pictorial), there is the potential problem that they must become quite large in order to be discernible (see examples below). This again would add to the visual clutter of the skyline.



ALDUS



RIVER CITY BANK

**Contradiction to Current Urban Design Philosophy:** Although to a lesser degree than signs which consist of words or words and logos, those which are *logo symbols only* can also be obtrusive and add visual clutter to the skyline. This clutter contradicts the basic philosophy behind the Sacramento Urban Design Plan, which promotes high quality architectural design and the development of a well planned urban environment. The Urban Design Plan specifically addresses the issue of protecting Sacramento's unique and beautiful "view corridors and vistas" which would be changed forever by the intrusion of large building top signage. The vista down Capitol Mall to the State Capitol is one of Sacramento's most beautiful and precious commodities; its preservation should be of great concern to the community.

**The Creation of a "Carnival Atmosphere" at Night:** If signs are allowed to be illuminated, (i.e. halo or spot lit), the visual clutter of building top signs during the day would transform itself to a "carnival atmosphere" at night. Although the visual impact of logo signs seen at night would be less obtrusive than longer and larger word signs, the night skyline of Sacramento would change from the subtle illumination of architectural elements to a billboard of corporate advertising. Illuminated signs will compete with the flood lit Capitol dome and other unique structural features, i.e. Tower Bridge.

**Inappropriateness On Current Building Designs:** Office buildings designed and constructed during the past several decades included many "refrigerator boxes". The facade of these buildings often included a "band" at the top of the building which was a convenient area to place signage. In fact, in some cases, the building architecture was so bland that the addition of graphics actually enhanced the appearance of the building facade. Architecture has changed since then. New designs have become more sensitive to historic forms, window walls are more articulated, setbacks have been created to preserve light and views, and building rooftops are more highly detailed (in terms of materials, colors and dimensionality) to create their own unique and distinctive image. In many cases, there is simply no place to locate a building top sign, whether it is just a logo symbol or longer word name. In other cases, even though there might be a place to locate a sign, the sign would interrupt the visual rhythm of architectural elements. Examples of architectural designs which present these challenges are: Lot A Proposals, Library Plaza Tower, Renaissance Tower, 1215 "K" Street and 111 Capitol Mall.

**Enforcement Problem:** Since each sign design would be subject to evaluation by an Environmental Graphic Design Review Committee (if established), the issue of aesthetic appropriateness is purely subjective and would be subject to constant challenge. What if the typeface of a corporate occupant is extremely ill-formed, out of date and in bad taste? Equity would become a continuous issue.

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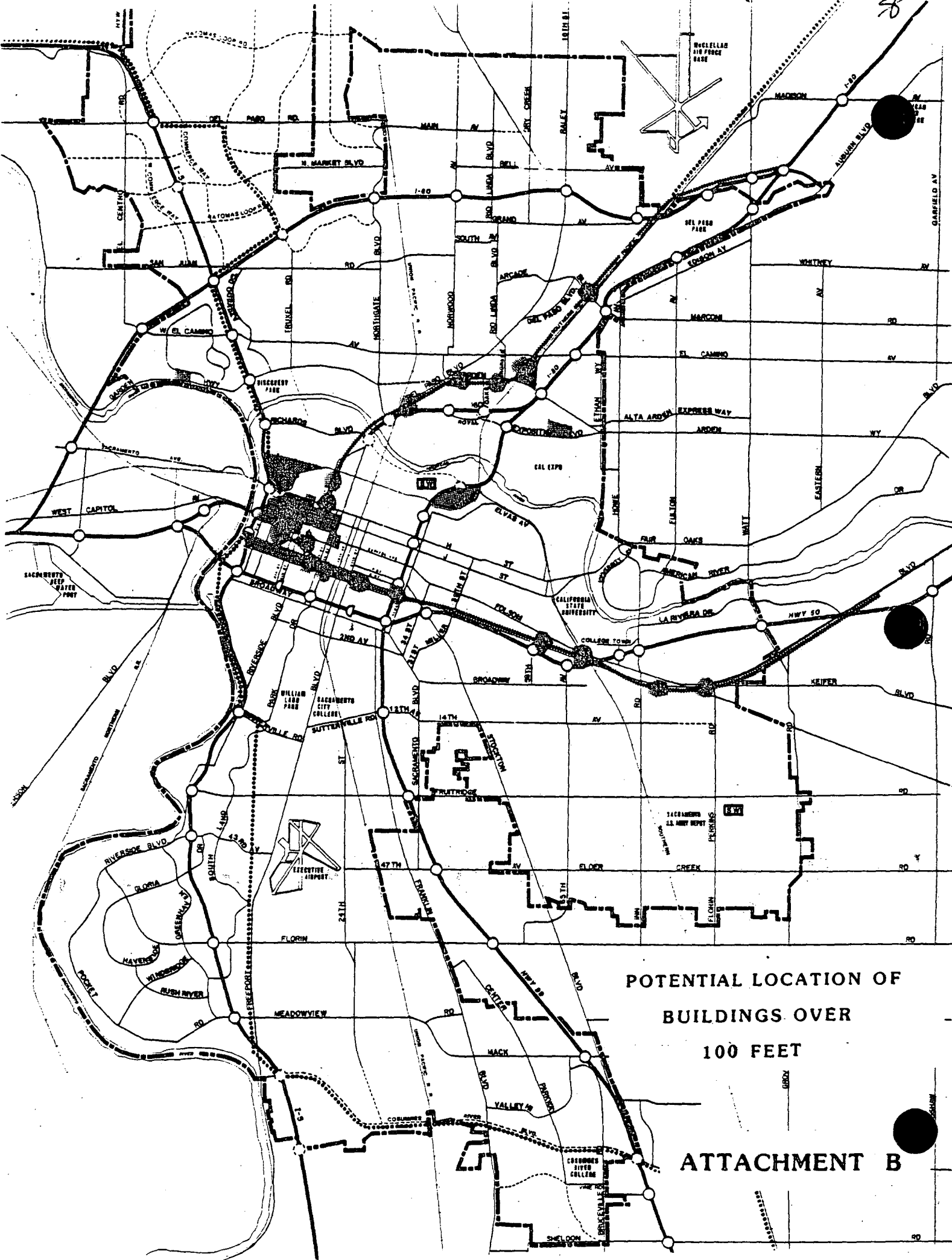
*Increased Competition:* Once the emerging Sacramento skyline begins to take form, there is the potential problem of increased competition for who has the most prominent and visible sign, even if the sign consists of a symbol logo only. Architectural standards could decline until sign controls are ineffective.

*Changeability Problem:* If a building occupant creates a sign which is physically integral with the building facade (i.e. logo sandblasted into granite), what happens if and when the building is sold (i.e. Wells Fargo buying Crocker Bank), or, if the building occupant updates its graphic image? The potential problem is that the Sacramento skyline could be "stuck" with inappropriate and outdated signs at building tops for many years. Attempts to replace integrally designed signs may include placing "canned box" units over the old sign thereby negating the original well-designed integral sign. The cost of replacing signs integral to the building may be exorbitantly high and difficult to accomplish (Example: Removing engraved granite panels) Removing old signs also leaves holes and outlines of the old signs on buildings.

*Future Visibility Problem:* Over time, as the Sacramento skyline emerges and the Central Business District becomes denser, newer buildings could eventually obscure signage which was formerly visible from long distances.

*Possible Compromise of Architectural Design:* Even though a symbol logo sign is likely to take up less space than a word sign, there is still the potential problem that architects will be encouraged to design office buildings with specific areas at building tops which are intended for the application of signage. This idea is antithetical to the current Urban Design Plan which encourages the unique design of "decorative and distinctive rooftops" which complement and enhance the surrounding historical buildings and the emerging Sacramento skyline.

*Short Term vs. Long Term Gain:* Allowing symbol logos at building tops might provide some economic gain for Sacramento. Whether this gain would be long or short term is hard to say. World class cities like New York, Chicago and San Francisco do not currently allow building top signage. San Francisco is benefiting from the long-term gain of this policy. It has one of the most highly photographed skylines in the world, due not only to the obvious beauty of the natural surroundings but to the integrity of the architecture. A "clean skyline" and uncluttered vista of the State Capitol might well prove to be a long-term and more lasting gain to the Sacramento economy.



POTENTIAL LOCATION OF  
BUILDINGS OVER  
100 FEET

ATTACHMENT B

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LAW OFFICES OF  
GREGORY D. THATCH  
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SACRAMENTO, CA 95814  
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GREGORY D. THATCH  
LARRY C. LARSEN  
PATRICIA E. CURTIN

October 31, 1989

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DELBERT L. SPURLOCK, JR.

HAND DELIVERED

Marty Van Duyn, Planning Director  
CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
1231 I Street, Suite 300  
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: CAPITOL MALL SIGNAGE ORDINANCE

Dear Marty:

As you are aware, this firm represents Wells Fargo Bank. I am writing to you with respect to the study which the Planning staff is conducting in order to make a recommendation to the City Council regarding an ordinance for Capitol Mall signage.

We have had several discussions over the past several weeks regarding this matter. Thus, I know that you and your staff are aware of my client's concerns, interests and recommendations regarding this pending ordinance. In our most recent conversation, you suggested that I forward to you a list of factors or considerations which our client believes are appropriate considerations in addressing Capitol Mall signage. These include the following:

1. The signage should be part of the overall architectural plan or design for the structure. In so doing, the signage will be a consideration from the outset and will be appropriately included in the design.

2. The signage should be permanent. This might include incorporation of the signage into the building structure itself.

3. The signage should be made from materials which are consistent with the materials utilized in the building structure. In so doing, the signage will prove to be more aesthetically pleasing and should blend nicely with the building.

4. Appropriate consideration should be given to buildings which are owner occupied. This, combined with the incorporation of the signage directly into the building structure, will add to the permanence of the signage and reduce concerns regarding frequent changes in signage.

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Marty Van Duyn, Planning Director  
October 31, 1989  
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Wells Fargo Bank has identified preliminary plans for the Capitol Mall signage. We believe that those plans are clearly consistent with the recommendations outlined above. The signage has been a consideration of the architects, HOK, since the inception of the design. As such, the signage has been directly incorporated into that design. Similarly, the signage is a permanent part of the building. The proposed signage is carved or etched directly into the granite facade of the structure. The signage consists of the natural granite facade of the building combined with an overlay of gold leaf. Finally, Wells Fargo Bank is an owner of the building and will be a major occupant of the building.

We are somewhat concerned that part of the staff analysis may attempt to address the ground floor signage of the building together with the proposed top floor signage. We ask that this not be done and believe that such an analysis is inappropriate. Ground floor signage is well controlled by current ordinances. Wells Fargo Bank intends to comply with these ordinances. The special and separate issue to be addressed here is the top floor signage. Moreover, it is important to recognize that the ground floor signage will address the retail operations of Wells Fargo Bank. The proposed top floor signage only utilizes the words "Wells Fargo". As such, it is intended to identify the building and complex itself, that being the Wells Fargo Center. The retail operation on the ground floor is a tenant of the building and its signage program will be addressed in that manner by the ownership of the building. The City, too, should recognize this fact in its analysis.

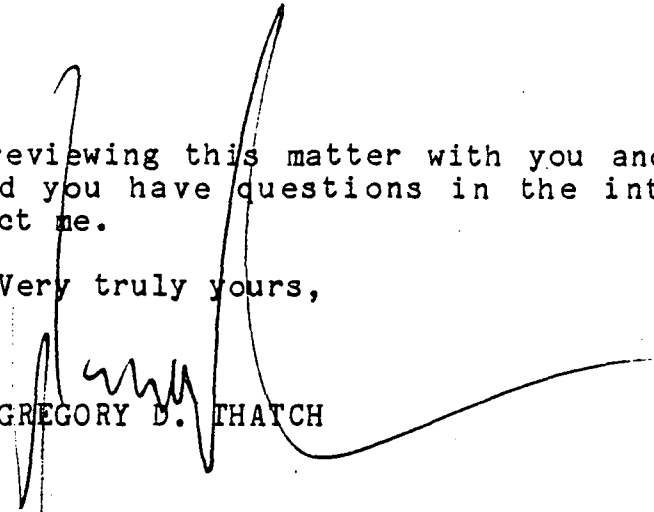
It is generally accepted by all of those involved, - the building ownership, the architects, and the City staff - that the Wells Fargo project is truly a quality project and an excellent addition to downtown Sacramento. We assure you that Wells Fargo shares with the City the concern over the proper development and aesthetic quality of Capitol Mall. In fact, Wells Fargo has supported the City's consideration of a Capitol Mall signage program. Wells Fargo is committed to working with the City to maintain and enhance the quality of this vital downtown area. Its significant investment in developing what will clearly be Sacramento's premiere high rise office complex is a demonstration of Wells Fargo's commitment to the future of the City. We submit that the top floor signage proposal is consistent with this commitment.

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Marty Van Duyn, Planning Director  
October 31, 1989  
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I look forward to reviewing this matter with you and your staff. As always, should you have questions in the interim, please feel free to contact me.

Very truly yours,



GREGORY D. THATCH

GDT/ja

T1793.LTR

cc: Hil Dufresne, Senior Project Manager  
Rob Paratte, Vice President  
David Martinez, Deputy City Manager  
Mike Davis, Director of Planning & Development

2250 Rockwood Drive  
Sacramento, Calif. 95864  
October 27, 1989

CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
CITY PLANNING DIVISION

OCT 30 1989

RECEIVED

Letters to the Editor  
Sacramento Bee  
2100 Q St.  
Sacramento, Calif.

Dear Sir:

I would appreciate your printing the attached letter on this timely issue which will greatly effect the appearance of our lovely city.

Please note that there is a public hearing on this issue on November 1 so would appreciate it appearing prior to that date.

I have no connection whatsoever with the Wells Fargo Bank but am an active volunteer with the Sacramento Tree Foundation concerned about keeping our city beautiful. I am not officially speaking for the Tree Foundation on this issue but am aware that most of our Board of Directors would agree with me on this issue.

Thanking you,

*Ted Robinson*

Theodore M. Robinson  
485-3575

Copy to Don Smith, City Planning Dept.



In my travels around the world I have found that the beautiful cities of the world are those that maintain their trees and control their signs. Sacramento is one of the most beautiful cities in the country because to date it has tried to do this. If we are to retain this beautiful community we citizens must be quick to congratulate those developers who would enhance it and condemn those who would trash it.

Starting with the old pony express riders, the Wells Fargo Bank has a long history in Sacramento. They have now introduced a plan to our City Planning Commission to build an elegant new headquarters building on Capitol Mall that will be the crowning jewel of that lovely entrance to our city. For this and the many jobs it will bring to our area they are to be congratulated.

Their plan includes a brace of handsome palm trees to showcase their main entrance similar to those used at Fashion Island, Newport Beach, possibly the most elegant business park in America. The rear, or L St. side of their building, will be extensively landscaped with trees and they even plan a number of trees on their lower roof tops. This will match our Capitol Park in bringing much needed greenery to our downtown area.

Unfortunately, at the request of some of the local residents living in that area our Planning Commission is asking them to put stores on the L St. side instead. This despite the fact that stores in this area have mostly failed in the past due to lack of public support. As a believer in the free enterprise system I find it difficult to agree that a city can force a private company to do something that will result in a loss that must be passed on to it's investors. As a volunteer for the Sacramento Tree Foundation I think we need the addition greenery downtown that Wells Fargo is willing to provide at their expense. There is ample shopping for local residents on K St., one short block away. If you are in agreement I would encourage you to call Don Smith of the City Planning Dept. on 449-5957 or attend the Planning Commission hearing on this subject at 1231 I St. at 6PM this Wednesday, Nov. 1.

There is one facet of the Wells Fargo plan that I, and I think most Sacramentans, disagree with. It calls for putting a six foot rooftop sign with their name at the top of their building. Fortunately our Planning Commission realizes this will set a dangerous precedent that will soon be followed by requests for rooftop signs by every other building on the Mall and throughout the city. We would soon look like another Coney Island. A meeting has been scheduled for 7:30PM on November 14 at City Hall, 915 I St., by the City Council to discuss the overall rooftop sign issue. I urge you to attend if you want to avoid our beautiful Capitol city becoming "Junk City USA". Wells Fargo can better be identified with a handsome street level sign at their entrance. I urge each of you to call your City Concilman/woman with the message that you support the trees but oppose

the signs. Our community will be more beautiful because  
you did.

Ted Robinson

F. JAMES RYBKA, M. D., F. A. C. S.  
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PLASTIC SURGERY

October 20, 1989

CITY OF SACRAMENTO  
CITY PLANNING DIVISION

OCT 30 1989

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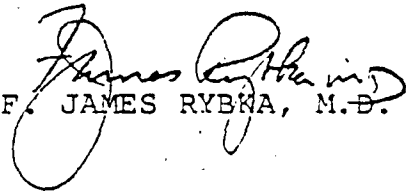
The Editor  
Sacramento Bee  
P.O. Box 15779  
Sacramento, Calif. 95852

Dear Sir:

It is interesting that the debate at the City Planning Commission over not permitting neon signs on top of Sacramento's new tall buildings just happens to coincide with the large colored picture of Sydney, Australia that appears in the Travel Section of the Bee this weekend. In that nighttime photo of Sydney which is positioned around one of the most beautiful harbors in the world, we see the city's magnificent illuminated opera house in the foreground. But then competing in the background are tall skyscrapers which have unimaginative flat tops and advertising for "Sony," "Hitachi," and a host of other companies and banks. It cheapens what otherwise would have been a magnificent city view. More power to the Planning Commission to keep our city free from such signage. It also will encourage the architects of the buildings to do something more attractive with the capping than just have a square top.

My next campaign is to go after the billboards along Route 80 in West Sacramento as you enter the city.

Yours truly,

  
F. JAMES RYBKA, M.D.

FJR/jl

cc: Planning Commission

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# ORDINANCE NO.

ADOPTED BY THE SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL

ON DATE OF \_\_\_\_\_

**AN ORDINANCE PROHIBITING FOR 180 DAYS THE INSTALLATION OF SIGNS MORE THAN 100 FEET IN HEIGHT ON BUILDINGS, AND DECLARING THIS ORDINANCE AN EMERGENCY TO TAKE EFFECT IMMEDIATELY**

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO:**

SECTION 1.

The City Council makes the following findings and determinations concerning the need for this ordinance:

1. High-rise office tower development activity in the City has increased dramatically in the last two years. This activity has included many requests for relaxation of sign control for signs on high-rise office towers. Moreover, the Planning Division anticipates additional such requests as such development activity continues to increase.
2. The Planning Division staff has informally commenced a study of the desirability and effectiveness of the City's high-rise office tower existing sign regulations, including the feasibility and advisability of prohibiting all signs above 100 feet in height on such buildings. The Planning Division has recommended that a more complete study be undertaken, and the City Council concurs in the need for such a study. In order to prohibit the installation of signs which might conflict with the recommendations of such a study and any resulting regulations, it is necessary to adopt this ordinance temporarily prohibiting such signs, pending the adoption of an implementing ordinance.

SECTION 2.

Notwithstanding any provision of the Sacramento City Code or Zoning Ordinance of the City of Sacramento to the contrary, for a period of 180 days no sign shall be installed on any building within the City at a height greater than 100 feet and no permit shall be issued therefor.

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**FOR CITY CLERK USE ONLY**

ORDINANCE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_

8

SECTION 3. Emergency

This ordinance is an emergency ordinance to take effect immediately. The facts constituting the emergency are the need to temporarily prohibit immediately the issuance of any permit for, and the installation of any sign which may be contrary to the sign study and sign regulations which may result therefrom, referred to in Section 1.

DATE PASSED FOR PUBLICATION:

DATE ENACTED:

DATE EFFECTIVE:

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY CLERK

**FOR CITY CLERK USE ONLY**

ORDINANCE NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE ADOPTED: \_\_\_\_\_