

City Planning Commission  
Sacramento, California

Members in Session:

SUBJECT: A. Environmental Determination  
B. Sign Ordinance Amendment Relating to  
Freeway-Oriented Signs (M87-014)

SUMMARY: The proposed Sign Ordinance amendment would add language to Division 11 of the Sign Ordinance to permit freeway-oriented attached signs for certain uses located within 660 feet of a freeway. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend adoption of the attached Sign Ordinance amendment by the City Council.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Currently, signs located within 660 feet of a freeway right-of-way are regulated under Division 11 of the Sign Ordinance. This division describes and outlines the size, height and location restrictions on freeway-oriented signs.

The intent of the freeway-oriented sign regulation which was adopted in 1981 was to reduce proliferation of signs which compete for and distract motorists' attentions and to prevent degradation of the City-scape. To accomplish this, the allowed heights for attached signs were reduced to 20 feet and the height of detached signs were reduced to 12 feet. In the past several years the City Council has approved numerous variances to the maximum heights. Recognizing that the variance approvals have set a precedent and a need for a policy change, the City Council directed staff to initiate an amendment to the Sign Ordinance. The current ordinance stipulates:

SECTION 3.192 FREEWAY - OTHER SIGNS

No on-site signs shall be altered or relocated within 660 feet of the exterior right-of-way line of any portion of a freeway or of a route for a freeway which has been adopted by the State Highway Commission, if the copy of such on-site sign is or would be visible by persons traveling on those portions of the freeway or proposed freeway located within 660 feet of the sign, unless such signs comply with all applicable regulations of this Article and with the following additional regulations. Where the regulations of this Section 3.192 conflict with regulations of another Section, the more restrictive regulation shall prevail.

A. Detached Signs in the C-2, C-3, C-4, SC Commercial Zones; M-1 and M-2 Industrial Zones

1. Detached signs shall have a maximum area of 24 square feet.
2. Detached signs shall have a maximum height of 12 feet measured from grade level.
3. Detached signs shall be of a monument type and shall be located within a landscaped planter of at least four-foot radius measured from the perimeter of the sign.

4. Notwithstanding the above, motels, hotels, restaurants and gas stations located in the C-2, C-3, C-4, SC Commercial Zones, M-1 and M-2 Industrial Zones are permitted to have the signage allowed in the Highway Commercial Zone due to the freeway services these uses provide.

B. Detached Signs in the H-C Commercial Zone

1. Detached signs shall have a maximum area of 200 square feet.
2. Detached signs shall have a maximum height of 35 feet.
3. Detached signs shall be constructed in a style and out of materials compatible to the structure located on the same site and shall be located within a landscaped planter of at least a four-foot radius measured from the perimeter of the sign.
4. One detached sign for each developed parcel not exceeding one-square foot of sign area for each lineal foot of street frontage abutting the developed portion of said parcel.

C. Attached Signs in All Zones

1. Attached signs shall have a maximum area of one-square foot for each front foot of first-floor building occupancy provided that in no event shall the total area of attached signs visible by persons traveling on the freeway exceed 200-square feet for each occupancy.
2. Attached signs shall have a maximum height of 20 feet measured from grade level.

As a result of numerous requests for freeway oriented identification signs over 20 feet in height for office buildings which have been denied and subsequently received approval upon appeal to the City Council, both the Commission and planning staff recommend that the Council re-evaluate the City's policy. The City Council has concurred with this recommendation.

The following is a summary of the proposed changes to the Sign Ordinance:

- permits an office building or shopping center structure to have one attached sign over 20 feet in height which is visible from a freeway
- office building signage material, location, size and method of illumination is specified in the ordinance and subject to Planning Director approval to issuance of a sign permit
- shopping center signage subject to a Planning Director's special permit.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: The Environmental Coordinator has determined that the proposed Sign Ordinance amendment is applicable City wide to protect the compatibility of freeway-oriented signs with office and shopping center uses and has filed a negative declaration.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends the following actions:

- A. Ratify the negative declaration.
- B. Recommend adoption of the attached Sign Ordinance amendment and forward to City Council for adoption.

Respectfully submitted,



Art Gee  
Principal Planner

AG:kh

Attachment

# ORDINANCE NO.

ADOPTED BY THE SACRAMENTO CITY COUNCIL ON DATE OF

An ordinance adding Section 3.192-C-3 of the Sign Ordinance of the City of Sacramento, Ordinance No. 2868, Fourth Series, relating to Freeway-Oriented Signs (MB7-014)

Be it enacted by the Council of the City of Sacramento:

## SECTION 1:

Section 3.192-C-3 is hereby added to the Sign Ordinance of the City of Sacramento, Ordinance 2868, Fourth Series, to read as follows:

(3) Attached signs for office buildings shall be permitted as follows:

### A. Materials, Construction and Design

1. Signs may be constructed of solid metal individual letters, marble, granite, ceramic tile or other comparable materials which are complimentary to the material of the building exterior. Examples of acceptable metal materials are chrome, brass, stainless steel or fabricated sheet metal. Plastic or wood signs are specifically prohibited.
2. Individual solid metal letters shall be applied to the building face with a non-distinguishable background. Letters shall be pegged-out from the building face at least one and one-half (1-1/2) inches and be reverse pan channel construction in one of the following:
  - a) fabricated aluminum letters with a polished chrome plated finish in fourteen (14) gauge aluminum with three (3) inch returns; or
  - b) fabricated polished brass letters with clear lacquer finish in fourteen (14) gauge brass plate with three (3) inch returns; or
  - c) fabricated sheet metal letters painted Dourandodic Bronze #313 or semi-gloss enamel in fourteen (14) gauge sheet metal with three (3) inch returns. If painted, only subdued hues or color tones may be used. Examples of such color tones are dark blue, rust, green, brown and black.

### B. Number

One (1) sign per building of freeway frontage above twenty (20) feet in height. If the building has multiple freeway frontage, the applicant/owner may select which building face on which to attach the sign.

C. Illumination

1. Letters may be internally illuminated to create a halo back-lighted effect or non-illuminated. Internally illuminated letters shall be lighted with white neon tubing and thirty (30) milliamperes transformers.
2. Lighting shall not produce a glare on other properties in the vicinity and the source of light shall not be visible from adjacent property or a public street.
3. Internally lit plastic signs are prohibited.

D. Location

1. Signs must be attached to and parallel to a building face. A sign may not project above the wall on which it is located.
2. Signs may be located any where on face of building subject to D. 3 below and may be oriented toward the freeway.
3. A sign may be located in the "upper signage area." "Upper signage area" shall be defined as the area bounded by 1) the top of the windows of the tallest floor of the building; 2) the building parapet line; and 3) the two vertical edges of the building face on which the sign is attached.

E. Wording and Logos

A sign may consist of a company logo and/or a company name. No other wording is permitted.

F. Maximum Signage

A maximum area of one-square foot for each front foot of first-floor building occupancy provided that in no event shall the total area of an attached sign exceed 200 square feet.

G. Review and Approval

Proposed signs shall be subject to review and approval by the Planning Director prior to issuance of building and/or sign permits.

- (4) Attached signs for shopping centers shall be permitted as follows:

Signage for shopping center uses shall comply with (3) D and (3) E. For the purpose of this section "shopping center" shall be defined as a retail commercial business consisting of three (3) or more retail tenants having shared parking facilities. In addition, the shopping center signage shall comply with the following standards:

A. Maximum Signage

Attached signs shall have a maximum area of one-square foot for each front foot of first-floor building occupancy provided that in no event shall be the total area of attached signs visible by persons travelling on the freeway exceed 200 square feet.

B. Number of Signs

One (1) sign per building and no more than two (2) signs per site to be located above twenty (20) feet in height.

C. Prohibited Signs

No attached sign shall in any manner identify a specific product(s) to be sold on the site. Sign may consist of a company logo and/or a company name only.

D. Materials and Design

All attached signs shall be constructed in a manner which is compatible with the design and materials of the structure on which it is to be affixed.

E. Review and Approval

Proposed signs shall require a Planning Director's Special Permit pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 15.H.