

## **ARTICLE VI. SIGNS.**

### **Section 601. Purpose and Scope.**

**601.01.** It is the purpose of this Article to establish regulations for the control of all signs within the City of Auburn. The intent of this Article is to support and promote the use of signs to aid the public in the identification of businesses and other activities, to assist the public in its orientation within the City, to express the history and character of the City, to promote the community's ability to attract sources of economic development and growth, and to serve other informational purposes. Further, it is the intent of this Article to protect the public from the confusion created by the objectionable effects of advertising excesses, from the danger of unsafe signs, and from the degradation of the aesthetic qualities of the City. This Article is not intended to inhibit an individual's right to express non-commercial messages protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

**601.02.** These regulations shall apply to all signs erected, constructed, displayed, painted, maintained, altered, and/or installed in every zoning district in the City, which are designed or intended to be seen by or attract the attention of the public. No sign shall be erected or installed unless it is in compliance with the regulations of this Article.

### **Section 602. Definitions.**

**Banner:** Any sign made of cloth, canvas, plastic sheeting or any other flexible material, which is not rigidly and permanently attached to a building or the ground through a permanent support structure.

**Building Frontage:** See Front or Main Facade definition.

**Building Sign:** A sign displayed upon or attached to any part of the exterior of a building, including walls, doors, parapets, and marquees. Canopy signs, awning signs, projecting signs, and signs suspended from buildings are considered types of building signs. The area of signs on ATM's, kiosks, or similar structures located on a development site shall be deducted from the maximum display area allowed for that site.

**Commercial Message:** Any sign wording, logo, or other representation that, directly or indirectly, names, advertises, or calls attention to a business, product, service, or other commercial activity.

**Commercial Sign:** When describing the content of a sign, a sign advertising, identifying, directing attention to, or otherwise relating to commerce and to property, goods or services for sale, lease, exchange or any other transaction where value is given or received by any party to the transaction.

**Community Event:** Events such as City of Auburn schools events, City-sponsored events such as CityFest, and similar celebrations or commemorations that have significance to the entire community.

**Department:** The City of Auburn Planning Department.

**Development Sign:** Any sign used at the entrance to a subdivision, office park, or similar development that indicates lots being sold, the name of the developer, financial institution or other development parties. Rental or leasing signs are not considered development signs.

**Director:** The Planning Director of the City of Auburn Planning Department or his/her designee.

**Display Area:** The area of a sign or advertising device that can be enclosed or measured by the smallest square, rectangle, triangle, circle or combination thereof, which will encompass the entire sign or advertising device; excluding trim, frame, apron, posts, uprights, braces or other structural members which support it, (See Section 607.04 - Calculation of Display Area).

**Entry Façade:** See Main or Entry Façade definition.

**Erect:** To construct, reconstruct, build, relocate, raise, assemble, place, affix, attach, create, paint, draw, or in any other way bring into being or establish a sign. It shall not include any of the foregoing activities when performed as an incident to change a message on a reader board, or maintain the sign.

**Freestanding Sign:** Any sign supported by structures or supports that are placed on, or anchored in the ground and that are independent from any building or other structure. The posts or other supporting structures shall be considered as part of the sign, except that they shall not be included in computing the sign display area.

**General Business Sign:** Freestanding sign on any individual development site.

**Grade Level:** The finished elevation of the lot or development site upon which the sign is located.

**Main or Entry Façade:** Generally the façade or side of the building that faces the public street, road or highway. In cases where the building is oriented in a manner not parallel to the street, the primary entrance façade is used as the main façade.

**Monument Sign:** A low-profile freestanding sign not visibly supported by poles or posts which is directly attached to the ground.

**Mural:** A sign that consists of graphics or a work of art that is painted, drawn or applied to an exterior wall; does not depict or contain advertising, logos, or images of a product, service, or business; and is a representation of a creative idea that is expressed in a form and manner as to primarily provide aesthetic enjoyment for the viewer rather than to specifically convey a commercial message.

**Noncommercial Sign:** A sign which is not an on-premise or off-premise sign and which carries no message, statement, or expression related to the commercial interests of the sign owner, lessee, author or other person responsible for the sign message. Noncommercial signs include but are not limited to: signs expressing political views, religious views or signs of non-profit organizations related to their tax-exempt purposes.

**Off-Premise Sign:** A sign containing a message unrelated to a business, profession, or activity conducted, or to a commodity or service sold or offered, upon the premises where such sign is located.

**On-Premise Sign:** A sign containing a message related to a business, profession, or activity conducted, or to a commodity or service sold or offered, upon the premises where such sign is located.

**Open Letter Sign:** A sign consisting of a logo or symbol, individual letters or connected lettering mounted on a building in a raceway or similar mounting or on the surface of an integral architectural element, which is a part of the building. Individual letters may be illuminated. The display area of an open letter sign shall not exceed the maximum permitted area for building signs on the property, (See Section 607.04, "Calculation of Display Area").

**Parapet:** A low wall or railing to protect the edge of a platform, roof, or bridge.

**Painted Graphics:** Any mosaic, mural, painting, graphic art technique, or combination thereof placed on a wall and containing no copy, advertising symbols, lettering, trademarks, or other references to the premises or products and/or services offered for sale on the premises.

**Political Signs:** Any temporary sign promoting the campaign of an individual for public office or an advertisement for an amendment or referendum on a public issue.

**Portable Sign:** Any sign not permanently attached to the ground or other permanent structure, or a sign designed to be transported. Portable signs include, but are not limited to, signs on wheels, A-frame or T-frame signs, signs attached to vehicles that are not part of the normal day-to-day operation of a business,

and temporary metal/cardboard/plastic/wood signs inserted in the ground containing a commercial message other than those specifically exempt as listed in Section 603.

**Reader Board:** Permanent sign containing messages in the form of removable letters or copy that is changed electronically. A reader board may be a building sign or an integral part of a freestanding sign.

**Sandwich Board Sign:** A sign of A-frame construction designed for placement on the sidewalk in front of the place of business being advertised, and is generally two (2) sided.

**Vehicle Sign:** Any sign affixed to a vehicle and/or trailer.

**Wind Sign:** Any signs, pennants, flags (other than official flags), ribbons, spinners, streamers or captive balloons, or other objects or materials fastened in such a manner as to move upon being subjected to pressure by wind (natural or otherwise) and drawing attention to a business, product, service or activity whether it contains a message or not.

**Window Sign:** Any sign, picture, symbol, or combination thereof designed to communicate information about a business, commodity, event, sale, or service for the business on which it is located. A window sign shall be mounted on either the inside or outside of the window. Such sign shall be visible from the exterior of the window. Internal signs suspended in such manner as to be visible through a window shall not be considered window signs.

### **Section 603. Exempt Signs.**

Exempt signs are allowed without a sign permit and are not to be included in determinations of the allowable numbers, type and area of signs that require a sign permit unless otherwise noted in this Article. Nothing in this Section shall exempt an individual, who desires to erect a sign from the necessity of obtaining a building permit, should such be required by the adopted building code. Signs exempted in this Section must conform to the standards enumerated and shall not be placed or constructed so as to create a hazard of any kind.

**603.01. Address Numbers.** Address numbers used for the purposes of identifying the E-911 address of a residential or non-residential property are exempt providing they are not part of a building or freestanding sign with other commercial or non-commercial messages or images. An address shown as part of a building or wall sign on a non-residential property shall be counted toward the maximum allowable display area. Incidental signs on residential property identifying the house number, street name and resident's name are also exempt.

**603.02. Community Event Displays.** Temporary decorations, and/or non-commercial signs, such as those associated with City of Auburn school activities, City-sponsored events such as CityFest, celebrations or commemorations that have significance to the entire community. All event notices shall be displayed no earlier than ten (10) days prior to the event and removed within three (3) days of the event's completion.

**603.03. Construction Signs.** Signs used to identify contractors, financial institutions or developers on a site under construction or undergoing modification. Signs are limited to three (3) signs per site and thirty-two (32) square feet in size each. All construction signs shall be removed within fourteen (14) days after the Certificate of Occupancy has been issued. In the case of minor modifications not requiring a certificate of occupancy, i.e. tree removal, painting, landscaping, signs are limited to a display period of fourteen (14) days and the size shall be no greater than six (6) square feet in area. Routine lawn/landscape maintenance is not considered construction activity.

**603.04. Development Signs.** Signs used at the entrance to subdivision, office park, or similar development that indicates lots for sale, the name of the developer, financial institution or other development parties. Signs are limited to thirty-two (32) square feet in size and no more than one sign per development entrance. Signs are to be removed within seven (7) days of the time that all the lots in the development or phase have been sold. Development signs do not include signs for properties that are for

rent, lease, or sale within the development except in those cases where apartments are being converted into condominiums.

**603.05. Directional Signs.** A sign that is designed and erected solely for the purpose of traffic or pedestrian direction and placed on the property which the public is directed. No such sign shall display the name of a product, establishment, service or any other advertising other than a logo. Signs identifying public telephones, trash receptacles, first aid facilities, and shopping cart corrals are considered directional signs. No directional sign shall exceed five (5) square feet.

**603.06. Directory Signs.** A wall-mounted sign, which is not designed or located so as to be legible from any street or adjoining property, listing the businesses, tenants, or activities conducted within a building or group of buildings. Directory signs are limited to one per building and shall not exceed 20 square feet in size.

**603.07. Hazard/Prohibition/Warning Signs.** Signs warning of construction, excavation, or similar hazards. Signs such as “No Trespassing” and “No Parking” as long as they do not contain logos or text advertising a commercial product or activity

**603.08. Help Wanted Signs.** Signs advertising job vacancies for employment opportunities with the business or activity on the property on which the sign is located. Signs are limited to six (6) square feet in size and only one (1) sign shall be allowed per business.

**603.09. Holiday Decorations.** Temporary holiday decorations used to celebrate a single holiday or season.

**603.10. Internal Signs.** Signs not intended to be viewed from public right-of-way and located not to be visible from public right-of-way or adjacent properties, such as signs interior to a shopping center or mall, commercial buildings and structures. Signs located within ball parks, stadiums and similar uses of a recreational or entertainment nature are considered internal signs.

**603.11. Nameplates.** A non-electrical sign identifying only the name and occupation or profession of the occupant of a non-residential property on which the sign is located. A nameplate shall not exceed two (2) square feet in size.

**603.12. Official Signs.** Official federal, state or local government traffic, directional and informational signs and notices issued by any court, person, or officer in performance of a public duty. Also, any sign erected by a federal, state, or local government agency for identification purposes at any office, institutional, recreational, or other publicly owned site.

**603.13. Official Flags.** Any federal, state, or local government flags, emblems and/or historical markers and, any flags or insignia of a religious, charitable, fraternal, academic, or civic organization shall be allowed as well as one (1) corporate flag per each lot of record. Official flags must be flown in a manner that meets U.S. Congressional protocol. Failure to display flags in this manner will be a violation of this Ordinance. Site plans shall identify the location of any flagpoles, and no flag pole shall exceed a height of thirty (30) feet.

**603.14. Political Signs.** Political signs are subject to the requirements of Section 8-5 of the Auburn Municipal Code.

**603.15. Real Estate Signs.**

- A. **For Sale Signs.** Temporary signs indicating the property on which the sign is located is for sale, rent or lease. Only one (1) sign is permitted to face each street adjacent to the property.

Maximum allowable sign display area for real estate signs:

Residential – six (6) square feet for one (1) sign or a maximum of twelve (12) square feet for more than one sign.

Non-Residential - 32 square feet.

- B. Model Homes/Open House.** Temporary signs attracting attention to a model home, and open house viewing shall be limited to one (1) sign per property not to exceed six (6) square feet in area. Model home/open house signs shall not be displayed at any time when the property is not available for public viewing.

All real estate signs, including model home/open house signs shall be located only on the property that is for sale, lease, or rent. In no case shall the total number of allowable real estate and model home/open house signs exceed three (3) on any individual property.

- C. Real Estate and Property Management Offices.** Offices for the sale, lease or management of properties may have reader boards, banners or wall signs as long as they are properly permitted according to this Article. Notices of properties for lease or sale shall only contain a generic description of such properties. The use of identifying names or addresses is prohibited since it is off-premise advertising.

All real estate signs shall be located only on the property that is for sale, lease, or rent.

**603.16. Sandwich Board Sign.** Sandwich board signs that meet all of the following criteria may be placed and displayed on a public sidewalk in the UC and CEOD zones:

- A.** A height of no more than four (4) feet;
- B.** Maximum area of any side is eight (8) square feet;
- C.** No illumination;
- D.** Placed in front of the building or leased space during business hours respective to the use in the building or leased space;
- E.** Maintains a clearance on the sidewalk of at least five (5) feet; and,
- F.** Maintains a distance of at least twenty (20) feet from any other sandwich board sign.

**603.17. Vehicle Sign.** Any sign attached to a vehicle or trailer that is used in the normal day-to-day operation of the business advertised on the vehicle. The primary use of any vehicle or trailer, which contains a vehicle sign, must be to serve a useful function in the transportation or conveyance of persons or commodities from one place to another, including transportation to and from work. A vehicle or trailer primarily used for advertising shall not be considered a vehicle or trailer used in the conduct of business and is prohibited. Vehicles or trailers used in the day-to-day operation of the business shall be parked at the loading area, employee entrance, or main entrance to the business advertised on the vehicle. A vehicle parked on the perimeter of a parking lot next to a public street is considered to be advertising and is prohibited

**603.18. Window Sign.** Any sign located on the inside or outside of a window and is visible from the street or adjoining properties. Signs must contain a message related to a business, profession, or activity conducted, or to a commodity or service sold or offered, upon the premises where such sign is located.

#### **Section 604. Prohibited Signs.**

It shall be unlawful to erect, cause to be erected, maintain or cause to be maintained, any sign not expressly authorized by, or exempted from, these regulations. The signs listed below are expressly prohibited in all zoning districts in the City, unless and except for those signs that have been approved in a Master Signage Plan.

- A.** Any freestanding sign, other than a shopping center sign, with a face greater than the square footage specified in Section 605.01.A.
- B.** Signs that are in violation of the building code or electrical code adopted by the City of Auburn.
- C.** Portable signs except those specifically permitted in Section 603.
- D.** Beacons and searchlights.
- E.** Off-Premise signs.
- F.** Flags on commercial property other than official flags.
- G.** Wind signs consisting of one (1) or more flags, pennants, ribbons, spinners, streamers or captive balloons or other objects or material fastened in such a manner as to move freely upon being subjected to pressure by wind (natural or otherwise) whether the sign contains a commercial message or not. Wind signs exclude holiday or community decorations.
- H.** Inflatable signs and tethered balloons and objects animated by forced air.
- I.** A sign that, in the opinion of the Planning Director or Chief Codes Inspector, does or may constitute a safety hazard.
- J.** Any sign which simulates or imitates in size, color, lettering or design any traffic sign or signal, or which makes use of words, symbols or characters in such a manner to interfere with, mislead or confuse pedestrian or vehicular traffic.
- K.** Any signs, other than official traffic control devices, highway identification markers, warning signs, and other official signs, which are erected within the right-of-way of any street or alley. Any sign that is erected or maintained outside the right-of-way and obstructs the vision of pedestrians, cyclists, or motorists traveling on or entering a street, road, or highway. The national standards for sight-distance triangles utilized by the City of Auburn Engineering Department shall be utilized to determine if a sign is creating an obstruction.
- L.** Freestanding signs which project into the public right-of-way.
- M.** Signs consisting of any moving, rotating, flashing, or otherwise animated light or component, except for time and temperature displays, traditional barber poles, and electronic reader boards whose message changes no more often than once every thirty (30) seconds and is static during the display. Changing messages on the electronic reader board shall not scroll, flash or move. A reader board message shall not contain a commercial message other than one relating to the business on which it is located.
- N.** Any sign structure, which supported or supports an abandoned sign and which structure conforms to all applicable terms contained in these regulations shall be allowed to remain in place. However, in the event a sign structure which supported or supports an abandoned sign is inconsistent with any term contained in these regulations (including the

sign face area for sign replacement yielded by the frame), then the sign structure and frame shall be either altered to comply with the terms contained herein or removed by the owner of such structure or property.

- O.** Strips or strings of lights outlining property lines, sales area, rooflines, doors, windows, wall edges or other architectural features of a building. This prohibition does not include holiday decorations and community decorations. This prohibition does not include neon lighting on buildings. If neon is used to depict wording or logos, it will be calculated as part of the overall allowable signage.
- P.** Signs on public land, other than those erected at the direction or with the permission of a public authority.
- Q.** Signs that emit audible sound, odor, visible matter such as smoke or steam, or involve the use of live animals.
- R.** Signs or sign structures that interfere in any way with free use of any fire escape, emergency exit, or standpipes, or that obstruct any window to such an extent that light or ventilation is reduced to a point below that required by any provision of these regulations or any other regulation of the City of Auburn.
- S.** Signs that are of such intensity or brilliance as to cause glare or impair the vision of motorists, cyclists, or pedestrians.
- T.** Signs that contain any lighting or control mechanism that causes unreasonable interference with radio, television, or other communication signals.
- U.** Signs placed upon light poles, benches, bus shelters, waste receptacles or shopping cart corrals except those which identify the use of the object on which they are placed, i.e. "Cart Return," or "Bus Stop." Identification of an on-premise activity displayed on cart corrals is allowed but counts toward the maximum allowable square footage of signage allowed on the premises.
- V.** Signs erected on public utility poles, even if they are located on private property other than signs erected by a public authority for public purposes.
- W.** Signs, other than historical markers or those identifying a natural feature, painted on or attached to trees, rocks, or other natural features.
- X.** Signs visible from a public right-of-way that use the word "stop" or "danger" or otherwise present or imply the need or requirement of stopping, caution, the existence of danger, or which for any reason are likely to be confused with any sign displayed or authorized by a public authority.
- Y.** Any sign mounted to the structural roof or applied to the roof including painted signs.
- Z.** Signs projecting above the building roof or parapet line.
- AA.** Signs that have become deteriorated or damaged to an extent that the cost of the reconstruction or restoration of such signs is in excess of 50 percent of its replacement value exclusive of foundations.
- BB.** Signs lettered in a crude or amateurish fashion.
- CC.** Signs on any broadcasting or telecommunications tower or any antenna other than appropriate hazard/warning signs.

- DD.** Signs identifying a home-based business (home occupation).
- EE.** Vehicles or trailers (operable or inoperable) which contain advertising and are not used in the daily conduct of business. Vehicles or trailers used in the day to day operation of the business shall be parked in the loading area, employee entrance, or main entrance to the business advertised on the vehicle or trailer. A vehicle or trailer parked on the perimeter of a parking lot next to a public street shall be considered advertising and is prohibited.
- FF.** Murals

**Section 605. Permitted Signs.**

**605.01. Freestanding Signs.** All freestanding signs shall consist of or be covered entirely in masonry, stone, wood, stucco, fiberglass, or decorative metal such that metallic structural elements are not visible. For the purposes of this Section, paint of any kind including textured or rubberized paint shall not qualify as a cladding material. No freestanding sign shall be erected in a public drainage and/or utility easement, without written permission in the form of a hold harmless agreement from the City Engineer and/or the Water Resource Management Director. All freestanding signs require a footing inspection by the City of Auburn's Building and Codes Inspection Division for compliance with the International Building Code as adopted by the City.

- A. General Business Signs.** Freestanding signs on any individual development site shall not exceed 100 square feet in area for one sign or 130 square feet in area for two (2) signs, unless specifically allowed or further limited by this Section. The combined height of the base and sign shall not exceed 16 feet in height. Freestanding signs are limited to one (1) per parcel, unless otherwise allowed by this Section. Such signs shall have a minimum setback of ten (10) feet from any side lot line and ten (10) feet from the front or any street property line. On existing development sites where the minimum side lot line and/or minimum front property line setback cannot be met, the Planning Director or his/her designee may reduce the minimum setbacks so that the development site may accommodate a freestanding sign. No portion of a freestanding sign shall project into the public right-of-way. Those electing to erect signs no more than 12 feet in height may increase their allowable sign area to 120 square feet or 150 square feet for two (2) signs on corner or double frontage lots.

Reader boards shall be integrated into the structure of the freestanding sign and count toward the maximum allowable display area. Electronic reader boards are allowed so long as the message stays stationary and does not change more often than every 30 seconds. During message changes the words may not scroll, flash, or rotate.

The height measurement of signs on property lying below the grade of the street shall be taken from the adjacent curb elevation or in the absence of a curb, the street centerline elevation.

Any berming or filling solely for the purpose of locating the sign shall be computed as a part of the sign height.

- B. Shopping Center Signs.** For the purposes of this Section, the term "Shopping Center" shall be inclusive of "Shopping Centers" and "Neighborhood Shopping Centers" as defined in Articles II and IV respectively. Additionally, for the purposes of this Section, a development site must consist of at least three (3) individual businesses and a minimum of 15,000 square feet of gross building area may be considered a shopping center.



***Strip Mall Shopping Center***

A shopping center with 15,000 to 29,999 square feet of gross building area shall be allowed one (1) sign. The total area of said sign shall not exceed 120 square feet. Said shopping centers located on corner or double frontage lots shall be allowed two (2) freestanding signs. The combined area of these signs shall not exceed 150 square feet. The combined height of the base and sign shall not exceed 20 feet in height.

***Neighborhood Shopping Center (small)***

A shopping center with 30,000 to 64,999 square feet of gross building area shall be allowed one (1) sign. The total area of said sign shall not exceed 200 square feet. Said shopping centers located on corner or double frontage lots shall be allowed two (2) freestanding signs. The combined area of these signs shall not exceed 250 square feet. The combined height of the base and sign shall not exceed 20 feet in height.

***Neighborhood Shopping Center***

A shopping center with 65,000 to 99,999 square feet of gross building area shall be allowed one (1) sign. The total area of said sign shall not exceed 350 square feet. Said shopping centers located on corner or double frontage lots shall be allowed two (2) freestanding signs. The combined area of these signs shall not exceed 450 square feet. The combined height of the base and sign shall not exceed 30 feet in height.

***Community Shopping Center***

A shopping center with 100,000 to 499,999 square feet of gross building area shall be allowed one (1) sign. The total area of said sign shall not exceed 500 square feet. Said shopping centers located on corner or double frontage lots shall be allowed two (2) freestanding signs. The combined area of these signs shall not exceed 625 square feet. The combined height of the base and sign shall not exceed 35 feet in height.

***Regional Shopping Center***

A shopping center with 500,000 to 999,999 square feet shall be allowed freestanding signs not to exceed 750 square feet. Said shopping centers located on corner or double frontage lots shall be allowed freestanding signs not to exceed 950 square feet. The shopping center may have a total of three (3) signs, with no sign larger than 400 square feet in area. The combined height of the base and sign shall not exceed 35 feet in height.

***Super Regional Shopping Center or Mall***

A shopping center or mall with 1 million or more square feet of gross building area shall be allowed freestanding signs not to exceed 1,000 square feet. Said shopping centers located on corner or double frontage lots shall be allowed freestanding signs not to exceed 1250 square feet. The shopping center may have a total of four (4) signs, with no sign larger than 500 square feet in area. The combined height of the base and sign shall not exceed 45 feet in height.

All Shopping Center signs shall be set back a minimum of ten (10) feet from any side lot line and a minimum of ten (10) feet from the front or any street property line. No portion of a freestanding shopping center sign shall project into the public right-of-way.

The height measurement of signs on property located below the grade of the street shall be taken from the adjacent curb elevation or in the absence of a curb, the street centerline elevation.

Any berming or filling solely for the purpose of locating the sign shall be computed as a part of the sign height.

A summary of the sign requirements for Shopping Centers is shown below:

Type of Shopping Center	Gross Building Area	Permitted Sign Area (One Sign)	Permitted Sign Area on corner lots (Two Signs)	Permitted Sign Height	Side lot line and ROW setback
Strip Mall Shopping Center	15,000 – 29,999	120 sq. ft.	150 sq. ft.	20'	10'
Neighborhood Shopping Center (small)	30,000 – 64,999	200 sq. ft.	250 sq. ft.	20'	10'
Neighborhood Shopping Center	65,000 – 99,999	350 sq. ft.	450 sq. ft.	30'	10'
Community Shopping Center	100,000 – 499,999	500 sq. ft.	625 sq. ft.	35'	10'
Regional Shopping Center	500,000 – 999,999	750 sq. ft.	950 sq. ft.*	35'	10'
Super Regional Shopping Center	1 million or more	1000 sq. ft.	1250 sq. ft.**	45'	10'

\*shopping center is allowed three (3) signs with no sign larger than 400 square feet in area

\*\*shopping center is allowed four (4) signs with no sign larger than 500 square feet in area

**C. Interstate Signs.** In addition to the allowable freestanding general business signage for any nonresidential development site, an interstate sign may also be erected provided that;

1. Any portion of the development site lies within an area of 1,000 feet from the center point of the centerline of the interstate overpass. One (1) interstate sign with a maximum area of 250 square feet and a maximum height of 60 feet may be erected; or
2. Any portion of the development site lies within an area of one (1) mile, (5,280 feet) from the center point of the centerline of the interstate overpass **and** whose development site abuts the right-of-way of the interstate. One (1) sign with a maximum area of 130 square feet and a maximum height of 30 feet may be erected. Such signs must be located only along the property edge abutting the interstate right-of-way and must be positioned as to be read from the interstate. The maximum setback from the interstate right-of-way shall not exceed 20 feet.

The height measurement of interstate signs shall be measured from the elevation of the interstate highway grade at the center point of the overpass. The elevation of the interstate highway grade at the center point of the overpass located at South College Street, Exit 51, is 518 feet. The elevation of the interstate highway grade at the center point of the overpass located at Bent Creek Road, Exit 57, is 664 feet.

- D. Freestanding Signs in the Urban Core.** Existing freestanding signs, at the time of adoption of this ordinance (April 15, 2008), are allowed to remain in the Urban Core (UC) district. However, should any changes be made or are requested to be made to the existing sign, the sign must meet the following requirements. Freestanding signs in the Urban Core (UC) district are limited to an area of 32 square feet and shall not exceed eight (8) feet in height. All structural elements of the sign must be covered entirely with materials that correspond to the building materials and to the materials listed in the Urban Core District Development and Design Standards (See Section 516.02), such as but not limited to brick, limestone, or stucco. Such signs shall have a minimum setback of ten (10) feet from any side lot line and ten (10) feet from the front or any street property line. No portion of a freestanding sign shall project into the public right-of-way.

**605.02. Menu Boards.** A permanent sign, which is not designed or located so as to be legible from any public right-of-way, depicting products that can be purchased on the property for which it is located (i.e. fast food restaurants) and is part of a drive-through service. Menu boards must be noted on the sign permit, but the size does not count against the allowable square footage of a freestanding sign.

**605.03. Subdivision Identification Marker.** A sign marking an entrance from a perimeter road to a residential subdivision, office park, or industrial park. Subdivision markers may be a single sign or a pair of signs. A subdivision marker shall contain no advertising other than the name of the residential subdivision, office park, or industrial park. No subdivision marker shall be located within the public right of way and must be within the perimeter of the subdivision. If such sign is to be placed within a dedicated drainage or utility easement, a hold harmless agreement must be sought from the City Engineer and/or the Water Resource Management Director, prior to the issuance of a sign permit. Size shall be limited to 100 square feet in total display area at each entrance from a perimeter road and shall be ground-mounted or monument style.

**605.04. Building Signs.** Building signs on any single development site shall not exceed a total of two (2) square feet per linear foot of the main or entry façade. Multi-story structures with outside entrances to businesses on each floor may multiply the allowable building signage area by the number of floors. Multi-story buildings with interior entrances and hotel/motel businesses are not allowed to apply the multiplier. Building signs on development sites located in the College Edge Overlay (CEOD) and the Urban Core (UC) districts shall be governed under the regulations as set forth in Section 515 and Section 516, respectively. Prorating of allowable building signage amongst building tenants shall be the responsibility of the owner or property manager, not the Auburn Planning Department.

**605.05. Multi-Family Residential Signs.** Permits are required for all signs located on multi-family residential properties whether on a single lot or on multiple lots under the same ownership and/or management and/or development name. The following requirements apply to multi-family residential sites:

- A. Wall Sign - 32 square feet; or,
- B. Freestanding Sign - 32 square feet.
- C. One sign of either type is allowed at each entrance from a public street or perimeter road.

**605.06. Banners.** Banners, as defined in this Article, require a permit prior to display, (See Section 608.02).

#### **Section 606. Master Signage Plan.**

**606.01. Purpose and Intent.** The purpose of this section is to offer incentives to sign users particularly on larger sites or groups of sites to plan and design signs that are compatible with the buildings on the site thus enhancing the appearance of the site and of the streetscape that includes it. This section sets out specific criteria for review and incentives for compliance. Consideration of design

issues necessarily requires some exercise of judgment within the specific criteria set out in this section, but decisions rendered by utilizing these review criteria shall be objective.

**606.02. Applicability.** A Master Signage Plan may be submitted for any shopping center, multi-tenant commercial/retail development, business park, industrial park, or mixed-use development located in any of the following zoning districts: Commercial Conservation (CC), Comprehensive Development District (CDD), Limited Development District (LDD)\*, and the Planned Development District (PDD).

*\* Neighborhood Shopping Centers Only*

**606.03. Procedure.** All Master Signage Plans shall be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

- A. A written application meeting all requirements, as set forth in this Section, shall be submitted to the Planning Department for their review. The application shall be subject to approval or disapproval by the Planning Commission.
- B. If the application is complete, it shall be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Planning Commission occurring at least 14 days after the submission of the complete application. If it is incomplete, it shall be returned to the applicant with a specific list of the items that are incomplete.
- C. If a Master Signage Plan application is denied, the applicant may submit a new application after having followed the re-hearing provisions set forth by the Planning Commission.

**606.04. Submission Requirements.** The application for approval of a Master Signage Plan shall contain at least the following information. Where the application is submitted simultaneously with an application for site plan approval, or where there is an approved site plan for the area for which the application for a Master Signage Plan is filed the Master Signage Plan may refer to portions of the site plan application or approved site plan for related requirements.

- A. An accurate site plan of the development site at such scale as the Planning Director may reasonably require;
- B. A proposed design plan showing signage design at a scale of 1/2" = 1 ft;
- C. Location of buildings, parking lots, driveways, and landscaped areas on such development site;
- D. Computation of the maximum area of all signs, the height of signs, and the number of detached signs allowed on the development site including incentives authorized below;
- E. Listing of the materials proposed for all sign structures and sign surfaces;
- F. Listing of the proposed style and color pallet for all signs (e.g., letter colors, background colors, and text font);
- G. An accurate indication on the site plan of the proposed location of each present and future sign of any type requiring a permit;
- H. The Master Signage Plan shall be signed by all owners or their authorized agents.

**606.05. Amendments.** A Master Signage Plan may be amended by filing a new Master Signage Plan that conforms to all requirements of this section in effect at the time of submittal. Any such amendment shall be subject to the approval of the Planning Commission.

**606.06. Provisions for Nonconforming Signs.** A Master Signage Plan for a property already containing signs on the date of submission of the application shall include a schedule for bringing all signs on the development site into conformance with the Master Signage Plan by a specified date. The conformance schedule included in such Master Signage Plan shall be considered a condition of approval of the Master Signage Plan.

**606.07. Incentives.** To encourage the use of Master Signage Plans, and thus to improve the appearance of signage within individual projects, the following incentives which involve deviations from the regulations that would otherwise apply in Article VI of the Zoning Ordinance shall apply:

- A. The area shown on the Master Signage Plan shall all be considered on-premises for purposes of determining whether a sign is off-premises;
- B. The sign size and area for any freestanding sign (other than monument signs) may be increased to 120% of the sign size and area that would otherwise be allowed in accordance with Article VI;
- C. The sign size and area for any monument sign may be increased to 130% of the sign size and area that would otherwise be allowed in accordance with Article VI.

#### **Section 607. Design, Construction, and Maintenance of Signs.**

**607.01. Compliance with Building and Electrical Code Requirements.** All permanent signs and the illumination thereof, shall be designed, constructed and maintained in conformity with the applicable provisions of the International Building Code adopted by the City of Auburn. All freestanding signs must have a clearance from the Building and Codes Inspection Division prior to the issuance of a sign permit by the Planning Department. Wherever there is inconsistency between this Ordinance and the building or electrical code, the more restrictive requirement shall apply.

#### **607.02 . Illumination Standards.**

- A. Sign lighting shall not be designed or located to cause confusion with traffic signal or similar warning signs.
- B. Devices that illuminate a sign or signs shall be placed and shielded so that direct light shall not be cast into the eyes of pedestrians, cyclists or motorists entering or using a street, road or highway.
- C. The illumination of signs shall comply with the lighting standards as set forth in the International Building Code adopted by the City.

#### **607.03. Placement and Clearance Standards.**

- A. No freestanding sign shall project into a public right-of-way. All freestanding signs shall be setback at least ten (10) feet from all side lot lines and any lot line adjacent to a public right-of-way.
- B. No freestanding sign shall be located in a public drainage or utility easement without written permission, in the form of a hold harmless agreement, from the City Engineer and/or the Water Resource Management Director prior to the issuance of a sign permit.

Where a sign is double facing and only one face can be viewed from a single location on a roadway, the display area shall be the area of one sign face. Where a sign has two (2) or more faces that can be viewed

from a single location or has an angle greater than 45 degrees, the display area of all such faces shall be included in determining the total display area of the sign.

**607.04. Calculation of Display Area.** The display area of a sign or advertising device is measured by the smallest square, rectangle, triangle, circle or combination thereof, which will encompass the entire sign or advertising device; excluding trim, frame, apron, posts, uprights, braces or other structural members which support it.

Where a sign is double facing and only one face can be viewed from a single location on a roadway, the display area shall be the area of one sign face. Where a sign has two (2) or more faces that can be viewed from a single location, the display area of all such faces shall be included in determining the total display area of the sign.

Open-lettered sign display area shall be measured by the number of square feet in the smallest rectangle, within which all letters, logos, symbols or other elements of the sign can be enclosed, multiplied by a factor of 0.8.

When a sign is in the form of a three-dimensional object, the area shall be determined by drawing a square, rectangle, triangle, circle or combination thereof, which will encompass the projected image of the sign and multiplying that area by two (2). The “projected image” is that image created by tracing the largest possible two-dimensional outline of the sign.

**607.05. Relationship to Building Features.**

- A. Signs mounted to the structural roof or applied to the roof including painted signs are prohibited.
- B. Window signs are exempt.
- C. Interior signs displayed in a manner that they are visible from a public right-of-way or adjoining properties are prohibited. (See also Window Signs).

**607.06. Maintenance.** All signs, including their supports, braces, guys and anchors, electrical parts and lighting fixtures, and all painted and display areas, shall be maintained in accordance with the International Building Code adopted by the City of Auburn. All signs and their components shall be maintained in good repair, free of rust, peeling, fading, broken or cracked panels, and broken or missing letters. Vegetation must be properly maintained and no condition shall be allowed that would constitute a fire, safety, or health hazard.

**607.07. Abandoned Signs.**

- A. Except as otherwise provided in this article, any sign or sign structure identifying a previous use or activity that has not occupied the site for a period greater than sixty (60) days, does not maintain a current business license or pertains to a time, event or purpose which no longer applies, shall be deemed abandoned. Any abandoned sign shall be prohibited and shall be removed by the owner of the sign or the owner of the property within 60 days. The removal of a frame of an abandoned sign shall not be required, if it conforms to all applicable terms contained in these regulations (including the sign face area for sign replacement yielded by such frame).
- B. Any sign structure, which supported or supports an abandoned sign and which structure conforms to all applicable terms contained in these regulations shall be allowed to remain in place. However, in the event a sign structure which supported or supports an abandoned sign is inconsistent with any term contained in these regulations (including the sign face area for sign replacement yielded by the frame), then the sign structure and

frame shall be either altered to comply with the terms contained herein or removed by the owner of such structure or property.

## **Section 608. Permitting and Enforcement/Administration.**

### **608.01. Permits for Permanent Signs.**

- A. Applicability.** No person shall erect, alter, relocate, repair, replace the face of, or change a sign without first obtaining a permit, except for the following actions which shall not require a permit:
1. Changing the copy, announcement or message on a reader board sign;
  2. Cleaning, painting, or comparable maintenance of a sign that does not alter the size, image or message of the sign;
  3. Erecting a sign for which a permit is not required in accordance with Section 603, "Exempt Signs" of this Ordinance.
- B. Procedure.** All sign permits shall be procured in accordance with the following procedure:
1. A written application shall be submitted to the Planning Department for review and processing. The Planning Department, only upon determination that all requisite documentation and fees accompany the application form, will accept the application. The application shall include supplementary information as may be specifically requested by the Planning Department to determine compliance with these regulations.
  2. The Planning Department shall review the application, plans, and specifications to determine whether the proposed sign conforms to all applicable requirements of these regulations.
  3. Following review and determination as to conformance with these regulations, the Planning Department shall either approve or deny the application for the sign permit. In case of denial, the Planning Department shall specify the section or sections of these regulations with which the proposed sign is not in conformance.
  4. An application may be amended within thirty (30) days of the application date to include additional signs. Additional fees shall be charged if the additional signs exceed the size limitations for fee category. After thirty (30) days, a new sign permit shall be required for any sign constructed and all fees shall be required.
  5. Freestanding signs will require a footing inspection by the Building and Codes Inspection Division unless such inspection is specifically waived by an Inspector.
  6. Failure to obtain a permit prior to installing, changing, or erecting a sign shall result in the doubling of the permit fee.
- C. Submission Requirements.** No request for a sign permit shall be considered complete until all the following has been submitted to the Planning Department.

1. The application form shall be submitted with all required information completed by the applicant. The application form is available from the Planning Department.
2. Plans and specifications for the proposed sign shall be submitted, drawn to scale, and include the following:
  - a) Site plan of development site showing location of any freestanding sign(s) including any easements, public rights-of-way, property lines, buildings, sight distance triangles and other signs on the property;
  - b) Main or entrance façade including linear dimension;
  - c) Dimensions and elevations (including message) of all signs;
  - d) Dimensions of any supporting structures;
  - e) Maximum and minimum height of sign, as measured from finished grade;
  - f) For illuminated signs, indicate type and placement of illumination;
  - g) Inventory of number, type, location, and display area of all existing signs on the same property and/or building on which the sign is to be located.
  - h) Clearance by the Building and Codes Inspection Division for any freestanding sign.
3. The applicant shall be required to pay an application fee according to the current schedule of fees established by the Auburn City Council for the particular category of application. This fee is nonrefundable irrespective of the final disposition of the application.
4. A sign permit shall be valid for a period of 180 days after issuance. Failure to install the sign within the allotted time period shall void the permit and necessitate reapplication.

**608.02. Permits for Banners.** Permits for banners, as defined in this Article, are required. A banner without a permit shall be in violation of this Section and subject to immediate removal.

Banners are subject to the following requirements:

- A. Each banner must have its own permit.
- B. Banners for a single address are limited to three (3) banners per calendar year. After three (3) permits have been issued, no additional permits shall be issued for the remainder of the calendar year.
- C. Display period for a banner permit shall not exceed 30 calendar days from the date of issuance of the permit or date of initial display. Periods of display without a valid banner permit will count against future banner permits and treated as a violation of this Ordinance.



- D.** Banners must contain a message related to a business, profession, or activity conducted or to a commodity or service sold or offered, upon the premises where such sign is located.
- E.** Banners shall be limited to a maximum size of 50 square feet.
- F.** Community Decorations, as described in this Article, are exempt as long as they do not contain a commercial message.
- G.** Banners must be attached to buildings or other structures on the property and cannot be attached to freestanding signs, utility poles, fences, or attached to or suspended between stakes or poles driven into the ground.