



Land Use & Environment Committee

Sign Code Update

Agenda Date: 4/18/2018
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File Number: 18-0347

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Title

Sign Code Update

Recommended Action

Committee Recommendation:

Not referred to a committee.

City Manager Recommendation:

Receive the update. Briefing only; No action requested.

Report

Issue:

Whether to receive an update on the draft sign code.

Staff Contact:

Joyce Phillips, Senior Planner, Community Planning and Development, 360.570.3722

Presenter(s):

Leonard Bauer, Deputy Director, Community Planning and Development, 360.753.8206

Background and Analysis:

Work to update the sign code began late in 2016. The sign code needs to be updated to address pertinent court cases, most specifically the US Supreme Court Case of Reed v. Town of Gilbert, Arizona and a Ninth District Court holding that the Reed case does not extend to Commercial Speech. However, the City has other interests in updating the sign code such as simplifying and streamlining the code and addressing new and emerging sign types.

An advisory committee was formed to help identify policy issues that should be addressed and consider potential options. The group was purposefully made up of people with diverse interests and opinions regarding signage. The group has considered commercial and non-commercial speech, temporary and permanent signs, and how to best address issues in a content neutral manner.

The group has met seven times, most recently on April 4, 2018. The last meeting focused on draft code language and suggestions for changes before a public draft is released. Draft code revisions are underway.

Later this spring a public draft will be released. Non-project environmental review, legal review, and public outreach will be needed before a public hearing is scheduled.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

There are neighborhood and community interests regarding signage. A few members of the community or business owners have attended the advisory committee meetings or submitted comments via email over the past year. It is anticipated that once a public draft is made available that more people will begin to provide comments. Staff will continue to meet with organizations with an interest in signs, such as the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations and neighborhoods, Olympia Downtown Alliance, West Olympia Business Association, Chamber of Commerce, the Automall Association, Olympia School District, Capital Mall, residents, and others.

Some concerns expressed to date have included signs in the public rights of way (for both commercial and non-commercial speech), temporary signs for businesses, and the frequency in which a message on an electronic readerboard can change.

Options:

None. Information only.

Financial Impact:

The City entered into a Professional Services Agreement with consultants to assist with the project. The contract was for a maximum of \$40,000 and is included in the Department's budget.

Attachments:

Biggest Policy Changes