



CITY OF CARSON

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

NEW BUSINESS DISCUSSION: September 28, 2010
SUBJECT: Workshop regarding long-term temporary business signs
APPLICANT: City of Carson
REQUEST: Discuss and consider requirements to extend banner permits and other long-term temporary business signs
PROPERTIES INVOLVED: Citywide

COMMISSION ACTION

☐ Concurred with staff
☐ Did not concur with staff
☐ Other

COMMISSIONERS' VOTE

AYE	NO		AYE	NO	
		Chairman Faletogo			Graber
		Vice-Chair Park			Saenz
		Brimmer			Schaefer
		Diaz			Verrett
		Gordon			

I. Introduction

On July 20, 2010, at the request of the Mayor, the City Council considered an item to allow long-term temporary business signs for the shopping center at 20761-20775 S. Avalon Boulevard. On August 12, 2010, the City Council Commercial and Public Signage Sub-Committee held a meeting to discuss allowing banners and other business signs to be displayed for an extended amount of time. Currently, Section 9136.7(C) of the Carson Municipal Code (CMC) allows such signs to be displayed for up to 60 calendar days. The Sub-Committee wanted to explore allowing additional time due to economic hardships suffered by many small businesses during the sluggish economy. The issue was referred to the Planning Commission for consideration of an amendment to Section 9136.7(C) of the CMC regarding long-term temporary business signs.

II. Background

On March 4, 2009, the City Council approved Ordinance No. 09-1421 allowing department stores and regional shopping centers with a gross floor area of 100,000 square feet or more located in the CR (Commercial, Regional) zoning district and MUR (Mixed Use Residential) overlay district to have long-term temporary business signs subject to approval by the Planning Division. The Ordinance was specifically designed to address the needs of the applicant, IKEA, as well as the rest of the South Bay Pavilion. In order to erect a long-term temporary business sign, a minimum gross floor area of 100,000 square feet is required. In addition, the property must be located in the CR-MUR-D (Commercial, Regional – Mixed Use Residential – Design Overlay) zoning designation.

On July 20, 2010, at the request of the Mayor, the City Council considered an item to allow long-term temporary business signs for the 15,940-square-foot shopping center at 20761-20775 S. Avalon Boulevard. Although the shopping center is located across from the South Bay Pavilion, it does not qualify for a long-term temporary business sign under the current Ordinance because of the building size and its location outside of a Mixed Use Residential overlay district. The City Council referred the item to the Planning Commission to study and report on amending Section 9136.7(C) of the Carson Municipal Code regarding long-term temporary business signs.

On August 12, 2010, the City Council Commercial and Public Signage Sub-Committee held a meeting to discuss the issue. The Sub-Committee was concerned that many small businesses have lost revenue due to the sluggish economy and that temporary business signs such as banners would help increase customer traffic. The Sub-Committee referred the issue to the Planning Commission for consideration and directed staff to research the actions of local cities to see how they are dealing with this issue.



III. Discussion

Staff has researched neighboring cities to see how they have coped with the effects of the sluggish economy on small businesses. In particular, staff was interested to see if they have considered or adopted ordinance amendments to allow for long-term temporary business signs. Staff found that out of 12 South Bay cities, only Hawthorne considered amending their ordinance to allow for long-term banner display. Redondo Beach has not officially amended their ordinance, but has become more lenient with enforcement due to the economy. The following summarizes staff's findings:

Banners and Temporary Sign Duration for Local Cities

CITY	DURATION	EXTENDED DURATION
CARSON	60 DAYS PER CALENDAR YEAR	CONSIDERING
El Segundo	30 day maximum per period, no more than 120 per calendar year. Announcement or "Coming Soon" sign allowed for a maximum of one (1) year	Not considered
Gardena	Not to exceed 15 consecutive days or 60 total days in any twelve month period	Not considered
Hawthorne	30 days per calendar year, no more than 2 permits issued per year. 30 extra days for Grand Openings only.	Extension considered City Council considered several months ago, however ordinance did not pass.
Hermosa Beach	90 days per calendar year	Not considered
Inglewood	30 day maximum per period, no more than 60 per calendar year	Not considered Requirement for banner permit only recently adopted 5/25/10. Previous honor system was not working.
Lawndale	90 days per calendar year	Not considered
Lomita	Promotional banners may be displayed up to one hundred twenty (120) days per calendar year, but no longer than sixty (60) consecutive days at any one time, and a minimum of thirty (30) days before the next time the banner is displayed	Not considered Per code: There shall be no extensions granted past the one hundred twenty (120) days.
Manhattan Beach	90 days per calendar year	Not considered
Palos Verdes Estates	1 week (maximum 3 times per year)	Not considered
Rancho Palos Verdes	30 day maximum per period, no more than 120 per calendar year	Not considered
Redondo Beach	30 days per calendar year, no more than 2 permits issued per year. No more than 60 days for banners strictly associated with initial grand opening.	Not officially considered They have been more lenient with the code because of the economy, allowing 2 permits per year, 30 days each. Grand opening can add 30 days for a total of 90 days.
Torrance	90 days per calendar year	Not considered Extension beyond 90 days requires approval from Environmental Quality Commission, subject to certain conditions (has never occurred).

The table above shows that Carson's requirements are comparable with other South Bay cities. Seven (7) cities allow 90 calendar days or more; four (4) cities, including Carson, allow up to 60 calendar days; and Palos Verdes Estates had the strictest ordinance requiring banners to be displayed for one week, three times a year.

Staff has also conducted a literature review to see if other cities in the nation have considered long-term temporary business signs. As discussed below, cities across the nation are concerned about the recession's affects on businesses, particularly small businesses. Some cities have adopted a temporary urgency ordinance to allow banners for a longer amount of time.

Summary of Actions Taken by Other Cities in U.S.

SOURCE AND DATE	TITLE / ARTICLE NAME	CITY	SUMMARY
Agoura Hills Patch 7/20/10	Banners Prove Boon to Business	Agoura Hills, CA	Retail advertising banners can display up to four times with a maximum of 10 days per period and 40 days per year. The maximum banner size increased from 20 to 30 square feet. Policy will be reviewed in July 2011.
USATODAY.com 1/6/09	Cities ease signage rules to boost business	Agoura Hills, CA	The City Council decided in 10/09 to waive the fee and expedite permitting for businesses wanting to hang temporary banners advertising sales or special events.
		Boynton Beach, FL	The City Commission is likely by 2/09 to give businesses more time to display a banner, extending the period from 14 to 90 days a year.
		Victorville, CA	The City Council in 6/09 allowed a large commercial center to increase the size of a sign advertising its various businesses by as much as 25%. The council is considering other business strips to do the same by spring.
City of Claremont 11/10/09	Urgency Ord. 2009-19	Claremont, CA	Businesses may request certain exemptions from municipal code; Ord. suspends the development review fee associated with temporary signs; Ord. automatically expire on 12/31/10



SOURCE AND DATE	TITLE / ARTICLE NAME	CITY	SUMMARY
Beacononlinenews.com 5/18/10	DeBary businesses get break on signs during recession times	De Bary, FL	City council decided on 5/5/10: 1. Sign area: 16 square feet max. 2. Regulations apply only to shopping centers and business districts. 3. The signs may be displayed only during business hours. 4. The signs must comply with all other provisions of the sign ordinance. 5. The temporary regulation will expire on 12/31/10.
City Council Agenda Report 6/15/10	Temporary Sign Regulations	Galt, CA	Consideration of temporary regulations; staff recommended upholding current regulations, but gave Council alternatives
Allbusiness.com 7/19/10	OV council will revisit sign code to aid businesses hit by economy	Oro Valley, AZ	Considering nearly two dozen changes that would increase the allowable size, type and number of business signs and the length of time they may be displayed
OCRegister.com	Poll: How much impact from recession?	Orange County	Poll of small businesses and how the economy has impacted sales; 43% indicate recession is the worst they've ever experienced; more than half said 2008 gross revenues were worse than 2007.
Allbusiness.com 1/31/10	'Temporary' banners at issue	Tucson, AZ	Tucson's attempt to update sign ordinance faces opposition from Chamber and small businesses. Loophole in code allows for year-round banners. Council wants 180-day limit but is wary of down economy.
Investopedia.com	The Impact Of Recession On Businesses	n/a	Article indicates smaller businesses may have a harder time surviving a recession. Bankruptcies among smaller businesses may occur at a higher rate than larger firms.
City of Whittier 7/1/09	Whittier city council approves a local economic stimulus and business assistance plan	Whittier, CA	Amendment changing banner duration from 30 days at a time, four times a year to 12 days per month for 2009-10 fiscal year. Amendment allows for an additional 24 days of banner display per year.
Istockanalyst.com 8/18/10	Y.C. lets businesses keep their banners	Yuba City, CA	The Council added another 6 months to a zoning code amendment that temporarily allows businesses to post banners and signs that would otherwise be in violation.

Current CMC Requirement

Section 9136.7(C) of the CMC allows for the temporary display of streamers, banners, pennants, and similar displays for up to 60 calendar days per calendar year per business. Requests must be made to the Planning Division 30 days prior to display. The purpose for allowing "temporary signs" is to allow businesses an opportunity to temporarily advertise special events such as grand openings at their businesses without having to bear the cost of using a permanent sign.

Fairness

The issue of fairness is a concern because the request deals with a particular shopping center, Avalon Plaza, located at 20761-20775 S. Avalon Boulevard. The City Council Commercial and Public Signage Sub-Committee considered including the shopping center in the CR-MUR-D zoning district. However, the shopping center would still not meet the required minimum gross floor area of 100,000 square feet required for a long-term temporary sign. Thus, in order to allow a long-term temporary sign at this shopping center, an ordinance amendment would have to be considered that would potentially affect every shopping center in the City. This may cause a proliferation of temporary signs which could be increasingly harder to enforce, particularly since many businesses do not bother obtaining a permit prior to displaying a banner.

Urgency Ordinance

The Planning Commission could consider an urgency ordinance that would allow temporary signs to be displayed for more than 60 calendar days up to a certain date. As discussed above, this has been considered by other cities throughout the nation. After the urgency ordinance expires, businesses would have to remove their temporary signs and the City would revert to enforcing the standard ordinance.

Enforcement

Staff recommends a procedure in which banners are approved and stamped. The stamp must be displayed on the actual banner to distinguish it from banners that have not been approved. This would make it easier to identify illegal banners and proceed with enforcement.

IV. Conclusion

The Planning Commission should consider the issues discussed in this report as directed by the City Council Commercial and Public Signage Sub-Committee. Although only one other city in the South Bay has considered allowing for long-term display of temporary signs, there are other cities throughout the country that have adopted urgency ordinances to help small businesses endure the weakened economy. If an urgency ordinance is considered, restrictions on the amount of time, placement, etc. should be considered to avoid a proliferation of temporary signs and the costly burden of enforcement.



Recommendation


That the Planning Commission:

- CONSIDER and DISCUSS the information provided for in this workshop.

V. Exhibits

1. Table showing banner permits in the South Bay
2. Various articles and reports collected over the internet

Prepared by:


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Reviewed by:


Sheri Repp Loadman, Planning Officer



Banner Permits (South Bay)					
	Population (2009)	Banner Fee	Number of Banners	Size Requirements	Banner Duration
					Extended Duration
Carson	92,000	\$50	Usually: 2 (one per building frontage facing a street for large properties - no provision in code)	N/A (no provision in code)	60 days per calendar year
Torrance	140,000	\$165	Maximum: 2 (one banner per frontage on two major streets, or residential property on corner lot)	Area: 100 sq ft, Width: 50% of building frontage. Minimum 20 sq ft, Maximum 60 sq ft for buildings at property line. Additional 1 sq ft allowed for every 10ft setback from street, for a max of 100 feet.	90 days per calendar year
Inglewood	112,000	\$50	Multiple allowed, as long as it does not exceed size requirements	50% of total allowable permanent sign area	30 day maximum per period, no more than 60 per calendar year
Hawthorne	84,000	\$250 deposit (forfeited if banner extends beyond 30 days, returned if banner removed after 30 remaining square footage and days). Business License fee separate.	One or more. Each additional banner will be allocated from the remaining square footage and remaining days (e.g. 2 banners, each 37 sf for 15 days)	75 sf or cover no more than 20% of wall segment of any building to which it is affixed	Extension considered by City Council several months ago. Ordinance did not pass.
Redondo Beach	67,000	\$38 + \$200 Deposit (forfeited if banner is removed by city)	One banner only	60 square feet	30 days per calendar year, no more than 2 permits issued per year. 30 extra days for Grand Openings only.
Gardena	58,000	\$38 per banner permit issuance	Multiple banners allowed, no specific criteria (likely one per frontage)	All banners displayed on a given parcel, lot or land use shall count toward the total amount of allowable wall signage.	30 days per calendar year, no more than 2 permits issued per year. No more than 60 days for banners strictly associated with initial grand opening.
					None



	Population (2009)	Banner Fee	Number of Banners	Size Requirements	Banner Duration	Extended Duration
Rancho Palos Verdes	41,000	\$103 per banner permit issuance.	Usually one, even if more than one frontage. No more than 2 simultaneously	32 square feet 1 square foot per lineal foot of leased tenant frontage, less than 20' of lineal tenant frontage is allowed maximum of 20 sf of banner space. In any case, cumulative maximum is 80 sf, 48 sf for single temporary banner.	30 day maximum per period, no more than 120 per calendar year	None
Manhattan Beach	37,000	\$459 total (\$301 bond, \$155 fee)	One or more. Two allowed for corner lots, size proportional to lineal frontage of each side		90 days per calendar year	None
Lawndale	31,000	\$30	One banner only	50 square feet (5 x 10)	90 days per calendar year	None
Lomita	20,000	\$39	Two (2) one for each frontage (facing public right of way?), not to exceed a total of forty-eight (48) square feet of combined area. Neither banner may exceed thirty-two (32) square feet in area	32 square feet	Promotional banners may be displayed up to one hundred twenty (120) days per calendar year, but no longer than sixty (60) consecutive days at any one time, and a minimum of thirty (30) days before the next time the banner is displayed	None [per code: there shall be no extensions granted past the one hundred twenty (120) days]
Hermosa Beach	19,000	\$255 (one fee per year)	One banner only	40% of permanent signage (20 sf min, 100 sf max)	90 days per calendar year	None
El Segundo	16,000	\$135 per application (separate Building & Safety fee based on evaluation)	Multiple allowed (each can be up to 100 sf, provided total does not exceed 5% of building face)	100 square feet per banner (total size must not exceed 5% of building face). Banners over 500 square feet must go to City Council	30 day maximum per period, no more than 120 per calendar year.	None
Palos Verdes Estates	14,000	\$0 (No Fee - banner restricted to two locations only; governmental entities, resident, and non-profits allowed to post)	One banner only	24 square feet (3 x 8)	1 week (maximum three times per year)	None
Rolling Hills	8,000	Prohibited				
Rolling Hills Estates	2,000	Prohibited				

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Cities ease signage rules to boost business

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When David Gwathmey and his wife opened their coffee and wine bar in Alexandria, Va.'s "Old Town" section, he defied a ban on sidewalk signs to try to steer customers their way. Now that the city has eased its restriction, what Gwathmey did surreptitiously, he can do in the daylight. Already, he has seen the difference.

"It definitely drives foot traffic," says Gwathmey, 38, noting that the sign may have boosted the number of weekend visitors to his shop, Grape + Bean, by 20%. "This is a very strong statement and action that supports (the city's) claim to want to support small businesses."

Alexandria is one of several communities that have lifted or are considering loosening restrictions on sidewalk signs and banners to help shore up businesses struggling to survive a recession that has slowed consumer spending and depleted municipal tax revenue.

"We have definitely been touting the advantage of signs for businesses during this downturn in the economy," says David Hickey, director of government relations for the International Sign Association, adding that several communities have become more lenient. "This is a tool that advertisers can use 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and it's often the more cost-effective way to bring in new customers."

Cities that are making or considering changes to sign rules include:

•**Agoura Hills, Calif.** The City Council decided in October to waive the fee and expedite permitting for businesses wanting to hang temporary banners advertising sales or special events. Businesses can take advantage of the changes until Jan. 22, says Nathan Hamburger, assistant city manager.

•**Boynton Beach, Fla.** The City Commission is likely by early February to give businesses more time to display a banner, extending the period from 14 to 90 days a year. "We're expediting it for the benefit of local business stability," says Michael Rumpf, city planning and zoning director.

•**Victorville, Calif.** The City Council in June allowed a large commercial center to increase the size of a sign advertising its various businesses by as much as 25%. The council may allow other business strips to do the same by spring, city spokeswoman Yvonne Hester says. "It's helpful for motorists being able to locate things," she says, "and of course it also helps individual businesses during a tough economic time."

Local governments traditionally regulate the size, number and types of business signs in their communities, aiming to preserve aesthetics and minimizing distractions to motorists. Some planning experts say that relaxing restrictions could be detrimental.

"I don't think compromising your standards on aesthetics ... is necessary to address economic hard times," says Lora Lucero, staff attorney at the American Planning Association. "I hope they're cautious ... because once you've made a change like that, it's very hard to roll back in the future."

Last month in San Angelo, Texas, efforts by planning officials to get the City Council to restrict banners and electronic signs were rejected or questioned, a stance planners say was likely influenced by the economic crisis.

"If the city staff's recommendations to tighten the regulations would've been brought to the City Council three years ago, we would have had a much different outcome," says Shawn Lewis, director of the city's planning and development services.

In Alexandria, the charm of the historic district known as Old Town is key to its bustling tourism industry. There is no neon, and signs are regulated by an architectural review board. That's why the ordinance, passed Nov. 25 by the City Council to allow businesses in the district to place signs along the main thoroughfare of King Street, is significant.

"Times have changed," says Mayor William Euille, adding that the provision, which expires March 15, helps businesses on side streets and those on the upper floors of King Street buildings get noticed by potential patrons. "Because the economy is in a downturn and businesses are experiencing a lower sales volume, the City Council felt that we needed to do something immediately to help these small businesses and retailers."

Alexandria officials are projecting a \$10.5 million revenue shortfall for this fiscal year, which ends in June, and sales tax funds are down 3%. The ordinance is part of a larger campaign encouraging locals to patronize businesses in the city where they live or work and may lead to a more permanent change, such as allowing signs on poles.

"I would say it probably is more urgent than ever," Tara Zimmick-Calico, president of the Old Town Business and

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8/18/2010 2:11 PM


EXHIBIT NO. 2

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OV council will revisit sign code to aid businesses hit by economy

In Oro Valley, a community that bans billboards, sandwich boards, most neon and even garage sale signs, the Town Council is set to tinker with the local sign code.

Recession-stricken businesses are being pinched by the strictness of the current code, say some council members and staff who favor granting temporary relief.

"Some businesses are in what I call survival mode," Amanda Jacobs, the town's development manager, told the council earlier this month.

"They know some signs are prohibited, but they want to keep their businesses going."

A town-sanctioned task force also has been studying possible permanent changes to the code.

The task force is recommending nearly two dozen changes that would increase the allowable size, type and number of business signs and the length of time they may be displayed.

Wall-mounted signs, for example, could be displayed on three outside walls of a building instead of the current two.

Illuminated signs, which now must be turned off one hour after closing, could be turned on at 5 a.m. and left on until 11 p.m.

"Oro Valley has always been known for having the most restrictive sign code in all of Pima County," said Ramon Gaanderse, president of the Northern Pima County Chamber of Commerce and a member of the sign code task force.

The current code prohibits 19 types of signs, including those with balloons or flashing lights, vehicle signs, moving signs that wiggle when filled with air and portable A-frame signs that can be set out along a sidewalk or roadside.

A recent town survey of Oro Valley businesses found most favor allowing A-frame signs, while a similar survey of residents found most against.

The code also restricts the color of large signs. That's resulted, for example, in black or greenish store logos instead of the traditional red ones at entities such as Walgreens, Ace Hardware and Fry's supermarket.

Besides the strict municipal rules for signage, some commercial developments have imposed even tighter standards to try to promote an upscale image.

The Town Council is expected to tackle the topic of temporary relief for businesses at a meeting later this month.

The task force studying possible permanent sign code changes is due to present its final recommendations to the council in September.

Oro Valley resident Zev Cywan, another member of the sign code task force, urged the council at a recent meeting to protect the town's ambiance during its sign code deliberations.

"We still need limitations," Cywan said. "Forty-thousand plus people moved here for a particular kind of atmosphere to live in."

A version of this story also ran in Thursday's Northwest section.



Home / Business / Local

CITY SIGN-CODE CHANGE PROPOSED

But council is wary of rule changes if they hurt small businesses

'Temporary' banners at issue

- Story
- (46) Comments
- Image (3)

Dan Sorenson Arizona Daily Star | Posted: Sunday, January 31, 2010 12:00 am | Comments

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PHOTOS BY BENJIE SANDERS / ARIZONA DAILY STAR Banners are supposed to be temporary, but critics say lax enforcement of the city's current sign code lets businesses keep some up year-round.



'Temporary' banners at issue

A proposed change to Tucson's rules on advertising banners faces an uphill battle with a City Council that says it's wary of hurting small businesses in a down economy.



But the change in banner rules has also become a rallying point for some business leaders - and fighting it is the first push in a Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce effort to loosen the city's overall sign code.

The main point of contention in the proposed changes, set for a public hearing Feb. 18 before the City Council's Citizens Sign Code Committee, is the limiting of banners to 180 days a year. Because of a loophole in the current ordinance, businesses can legally use banners year around.

The current proposed changes before the advisory committee would limit each business's banner to one 90-square-foot sign per street-facing wall for a maximum of 180 days a year.

Former Councilman Steve Leal brought the issue up after neighborhood activists raised concerns about a proliferation of the supposedly temporary signs, particularly at liquor stores in mainly low-income areas.

But two procedural delays by the City Council delayed any chance of action on the proposed changes last year. Leal did not run for re-election and vacated his seat in December.

Councilwoman Regina Romero said last week that she has reservations about the restrictions on banners, although she understands neighborhood groups' concerns about the growing number of banners, particularly for beer at neighborhood convenience and liquor stores.

Romero, who has been targeted along with Councilwoman Karin Uhlich and Mayor Bob Walkup in a fledgling recall effort by business owner Humberto Lopez, said she doesn't want to "handicap business from advertising on the side of their building, especially in this economic climate."

City Councilman Rodney Glassman said he doesn't think there's much sentiment on the current council for doing anything that might restrict small businesses' efforts to survive the economic crisis.

"This mayor and council should be looking at ways to support business in the middle of the recession and support job creation, not oppose it," Glassman said.

The sign-code change has become a cause for some small-business people and the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce.

In the chamber's January newsletter, a piece headlined "Chamber fights to halt Oppressive Sign Code Changes" indirectly pointed out that the current code allows banners and other temporary signs to be used year-round, and said the proposed changes would be a "direct financial hit to many businesses."

The newsletter urged members to show up at the advisory Citizens Sign Code Committee's Jan. 21 meeting and said the chamber staff would be there. But no one from the chamber staff was present at the meeting, nor, apparently, were any chamber members.

"I had a conflicting meeting," chamber government affairs manager Robert Medler said when asked why. But Medler said the chamber not only remains committed to pushing for no further restrictions on banner use, but is working on a pro-business revamp of the entire sign code.

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At the Jan. 21 meeting, members of the advisory committee briefly discussed the original issues that led to the proposed changes.

Committee members said they were assured by police officials that the existing code is adequate for getting late-night businesses to provide clear line of sight from outside the store. They were told officers sometimes have to tell merchants that signs or banners are blocking the view from outside, but that they've never had to push the issue by issuing a citation.

And they said city code-enforcement officials told them they had adequate staffing to enforce existing regulations on the use of banners.

Committee members also discussed whether allowing a banner up year-round, as is the case now, qualified as temporary, or even whether the proposed 180-day limit would fit the spirit of the temporary-banner provision.

With one or more holidays and special events nearly every month, some members questioned whether the series of 45-day permit periods would be adequate to cover all the holidays and events for which a business might have a sale or special event.

A drive around the city's commercial strips suggests an apparent lack of enforcement of the banner regulations. The current code allows a business only one banner for each street-facing wall, but shops with three to five banners are common, and it's not unheard of for relatively small stores to have 10 or more banners.

And banners often stay up year-round, despite the current limit of 45 days for any banner, with a 45-day renewal.

The section of the code concerning temporary banners has a notable hole in it that allows business owners to keep a banner up virtually the entire year, said Glenn Moyer, the planning and sign-code administrator in the city's Development Services.

Moyer said the business owner need only take the banner down momentarily and renew the permit for another 45 days. In practice, he said, city officials do not require the signs to be taken down at all between permit periods. The procedure can be repeated indefinitely, Moyer said. The city's banner-permitting section even sells the \$31.25 permits two at a time.

Moyer said that many businesses likely never even get a permit for the first 45 days, let alone renewals, but he said there was no way to know how pervasive the practice is.

"I can understand (neighbors' concerns) if they have it year-round. If it's year-round, it's not a banner, it's a sign," said Kent Solberg, owner of Kent's Tools, 133 E. Grant Road.

But Solberg doesn't think businesses should have to pay anything for the sign permits. He said he uses banners "once or twice a year when I run a sale," but doesn't get permits.

"I don't think businesses should have to be taxed to use them. I would say in this economy the city should be bending over backwards to accommodate small business."



He said charging for permits amounts to the city's being "penny-wise and dollar-foolish."

And he doesn't see the banners as an aesthetic problem.

"I don't think they make the city look trashy," Solberg said. "They add a little bit of color."

In some cases, the adherence to banner display limitations and the "temporary" nature of the banners is almost laughable. At Exclusive Nail Couture, a stand-alone nail shop in a house in the 700 block of West Irvington Road, roughly half the front of the building - and all the window space - is covered with banners. There's also an A-frame sign advertising barber services near the street, and a large banner on a fence proclaiming "Summer Special!" in January.

To sign critic Mark Mayer, the banners are just raising the "visual noise level" to a point that damages the effectiveness of legal signage.

"There's so much visual noise out there, how do you see the forest through the trees in terms of the signs being meaningful to anybody?" asked Mayer, a billboard-control consultant, city planning commission member and community volunteer with a long history of involvement in local sign issues.

"It gets drowned out. How can you pay any attention to a banner when you have 15, 20 banners draped all over a store?"

On StarNet: Take part in our reader poll on this issue. Find it with this story at azstarnet.com

If you go:

- What: A public hearing on the proposed changes to the banner section of the city's sign code.
- When: 2:30 p.m. Feb. 18, during the Citizens Sign Code Committee's meeting.
- Where: Council chambers at City Hall, 255 W. Alameda St..

Contact reporter Dan Sorenson at 573-4185 or dsorenson@azstarnet.com

Posted in Local, Govt-and-politics, Dan-sorenson on *Sunday, January 31, 2010 12:00 am* Updated: 11:48 am. | Tags: 85701

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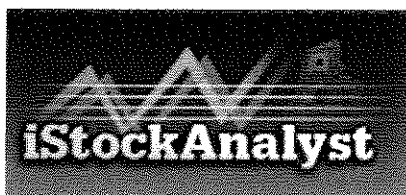
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Y.C. lets businesses keep their banners

Wednesday, August 18, 2010 10:03 AM

(Source: Appeal-Democrat) By Ashley Gebb, Appeal-Democrat, Marysville, Calif.

Aug. 18--Yuba City is sticking with its stance on signage, at least until the economy picks up.

The City Council voted unanimously Tuesday to add another six months to a zoning code amendment that temporarily allows businesses to post banners and signs that would otherwise be in violation of city code.

The city started cracking down on signs last year as part of its corridor enhancement strategy, targeting highways 20 and 99 and then Bridge and Franklin streets with enforcement of the city's sign ordinance. But several business operators spoke out to say it was bad for business and the city reconsidered its stance -- at least temporarily.

In February, council members agreed to loosen restrictions, allowing one sign per business, for six months, in hopes that economic recovery would be on the way by then. At the time they said the program is stepping backward a bit from city goals, but temporary banners are justifiable if they will help increase sales.

The city's sign standards are designed with motorist safety and aesthetics in mind, but business owners say the temporary allowance for such advertising has helped them better survive the downturn during the last six months and will continue to give them a needed boost.

"Businesses want to clean up and they all understand the need to clean our corridors," said Darin Gale, the city's economic development manager.

But the improvements that come from removing illegal signs are not a match for the hardships the economy has thrown at businesses.

The temporary banners and signs can advertise services or specials offered by those businesses.

By extending the temporary allowance, the city is showing its support for the business community, Gale said.

"Although they are trying to make aesthetic improvements in the community, at the same time they are cognizant of the economic downturn," he said.

To date, 16 businesses have applied for and installed temporary banners, and most are reporting to the city that they are having success.

If the economy still has not shown signs of recovering within six months, the council will be able to extend the allowance for another half-year.

The sign ordinance is one step council members have taken in the last year to try to help the community



weather the recession and boost its own economy. They also lowered development fees for homebuilders, offers partial matches for business to improve their facades and is investing in a shop local campaign.

Meanwhile, the city also continues to crack down on illegal signage, most recently targeting Butte House Road and Plumas Street to further its enhancement efforts.

CONTACT Ashley Gebbat 749-4724 oragebb@appealdemocrat.com .

To see more of the Appeal-Democrat, or to subscribe to the newspaper, go to <http://www.appeal-democrat.com>.

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Some economists have jokingly defined a recession like this: If your neighbor gets laid off, it's a recession. If you get laid off, it's a depression. Economists officially define a recession as two consecutive quarters of negative growth in gross domestic product (GDP). The National Bureau of Economic Research cites "a significant decline in economic activity spread across the economy, lasting more than a few months" as the hallmark of a recession.

Both definitions are accurate because they indicate the same economic results: a loss of jobs, a decline in real income, a slowdown in industrial production and manufacturing and a

slump in consumer spending - spending that drives more than two-thirds of the U.S. economy.

In the article we'll explain how the impact of these broad-spectrum slowdowns on both large and small businesses can be very damaging, and in some instances, catastrophic. Some businesses may be affected only moderately, or not at all, if the recession is mild and brief. If the recession lingers and the downturn is widespread, all big businesses - firms publicly traded on major stock exchanges - may ultimately be hurt. (Read about classic examples of economic downturn in [Stagflation](#), [1970s Style](#) and [What Caused The Great Depression?](#))

How a Recession Impacts Large Businesses

Let's take an unnamed Fortune 1000 manufacturer as a typical big business suffering the effects of a recession. What happens to this firm will likely happen to other big businesses as the recession runs its course.

As sales revenues and profits decline, the manufacturer will cut back on hiring new employees, or freeze hiring entirely. In an effort to cut costs and improve the bottom line, the manufacturer may stop buying new equipment, curtail research and development and stop new product rollouts (a factor in the growth of revenue and market share). Expenditures for marketing and advertising may also be reduced. These cost-cutting efforts will impact other businesses, both big and small, which provide the goods and services used by the big manufacturer.

Falling Stocks and Slumping Dividends

As declining revenues show up on its quarterly earnings report, the manufacturer's stock price may decline. Dividends may also slump, or disappear entirely. Shareholders may become upset. They and the board of directors (B of D) may call for a new CEO and/or an entirely new senior management team. The manufacturer's advertising agency may be dumped and a new agency hired. The internal advertising and marketing departments may also face a personnel shakeup.

When the manufacturer's stock falls and the dividends decline or stop, institutional investors who hold that stock may sell and reinvest the proceeds into better-performing stocks. This will further depress the company's stock price. (Learn how understanding the business cycle and your own investment style can help you cope with an economic decline in [Recession: What Does It Mean To Investors?](#) and [Recession-Proof Your Portfolio](#).)

The sell-off and business decline will also impact employer contributions to profit-sharing

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plans or 401(k) plans if the company has such programs in place.

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Credit Impairment and Bankruptcy

Also impacted by the recession is the accounts receivable (AR). The customers of the company that owe it money may pay slowly, late, partially or not at all. Then, with reduced revenues, the affected company will pay its own bills more slowly, late, or in smaller increments than the original credit agreement required. Late or delinquent payments will reduce the valuation of the corporation's debt, bonds and ability to obtain financing. The company's ability to service its debt (pay interest on the money it has borrowed) may also be impaired, eventuating in defaults on bonds and other debt, further damaging the firm's credit rating and preventing further borrowing. (*Debt Reckoning* can teach you how a company's debt is an indicator of financial health.)

Debt will have to be restructured and/or refinanced, meaning new terms will have to be agreed upon by creditors. If the company's debts cannot be serviced and cannot be repaid as agreed upon in the lending contract, then bankruptcy may ensue. The company will then be protected from its creditors as it undergoes reorganization, or it may go out of business completely. (For related reading, see *An Overview Of Corporate Bankruptcy*, *Profit From Corporate Bankruptcy Proceedings* and *Taking Advantage Of Corporate Decline*.)

Employee Lay-offs and Benefit Reductions

The business may cut employees, and more work will have to be done by fewer people. Productivity per employee may increase, but morale may suffer as hours become longer, work becomes harder, wage increases are stopped and fear of further layoffs persists. (Read about how employment statistics influence corporate confidence in *Surveying The Employment Report*.)

As the recession increases in severity and length, management and labor may meet and agree to mutual concessions, both to save the company and to save jobs. The concessions may include wage reductions and reduced benefits. If the company is a manufacturer, it may be forced to close plants and discontinue poorly performing brands. Automobile manufacturers, for example, have done this in previous recessions.

Cuts to Quality of Goods and Services

Secondary aspects of the goods and services produced by the recession-impacted manufacturer may also suffer. In an attempt to further cut costs to improve its bottom line, the company may compromise the quality, and thus the desirability, of its products. This may manifest itself in a variety of ways and is a common reaction of many big businesses in a steep recession. (Learn about the importance of production levels in *Understanding Supply-Side Economics*.)

Airlines, for example, may lower maintenance standards. They may install more seats per plane, further cramming the already squeezed-in passenger. Routes to marginally profitable or money-losing destinations may be cut, inconveniencing customers and damaging the economies of the cancelled destinations.

Giant food purveyors may offer less product, for the same price, in the same size package in which the larger amount was previously sold. Quality may also be reduced. Coffee, for example, may be cut with lesser-quality beans, compromising flavor and driving away cost-conscious consumers with little brand loyalty who have noticed the change. (Read about the importance of standing out from the competition in *Competitive Advantage Counts*.)

Reduced Consumer Access

As firms impacted by the recession spend less money on advertising and marketing, big advertising agencies which bill millions of dollars per year will feel the squeeze. In turn, the decline in advertising expenditures will whittle away at the bottom lines of giant media companies in every division, be it print, broadcast or online. (Read about successful marketing strategies in *Advertising, Crocodiles And Moats*.)

As the effects of a recession ripple through the economy, consumer confidence declines, perpetuating the recession as consumer spending drops. (To learn more, read *Economic Indicators: Consumer Confidence Index (CCI)*.)

A Recession's Impact on Small Businesses

The impact of a recession on small businesses that have annual sales substantially less than the Fortune 1000 and that are not public companies is similar to large businesses. Without major cash reserves and large capital assets as collateral, however, and with more difficulty securing additional financing in trying economic times, smaller businesses may have a harder time surviving a recession. Bankruptcies among smaller businesses may therefore occur at a higher rate than among larger firms.

The bankruptcy or dissolution of a small business that serves a community - a franchised convenience store, for example - can create hardships not only for the small business owners, but for residents of the neighborhood. (Learn how businesses can safeguard their assets in *Asset Protection For The Business Owner*.)

In the wake of such bankruptcies or dissolutions, the entrepreneurial spirit which inspired someone to go into such a business may take a hit, discouraging, at least for a while, any risky business ventures. Too many bankruptcies may also discourage banks, venture capitalists and other lenders from making loans for startups until the economy turns around.

What is the difference between LIBOR, LIBID and LIMEAN? ([view answer](#))

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(Read [Six Steps To A Better Business Budget](#) to learn about an easy but essential process that helps owners keep their small businesses afloat.)

Recessions Don't Last Forever

Recessions come and go and some are more severe and last longer than others. But history shows that recessions invariably end, and when they do, an economic recovery follows.

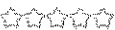

For related reading, see [The Federal Reserve's Fight Against Recession](#).


by **Marc Davis** ([Contact Author](#) | [Biography](#))

Marc Davis is a veteran journalist with more than 20 years experience reporting and writing on business, finance, corporate management and legal subjects. His writing has been published online and in print by Adweek, Arthur Andersen, The Chicago Tribune, Encyclopedia Britannica, Insight Magazine, The John Marshall Law School Magazine, The Journal of the American Bar Association, Rotarian, and numerous other national periodicals and websites.

Davis is also a published novelist. His novel, "Dirty Money", published by Dell, was nominated for an award by the Private Eye Writers of America. He is also the author of non-fiction children's books, including a biography of Florence Nightingale and a history of the Georgia Colony. He was also a former licensed commodity broker at the Chicago Board of Trade.

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JAN NORMAN ON SMALL BUSINESS



News and practical tips for Orange County small business owners

Poll: How much impact from recession?

January 12th, 2009, 6:01 am · 6 Comments · posted by Jan Norman, small-business columnist

Take our poll then find out what other small-business owners are saying:

How much impact is the recession
having on your business?

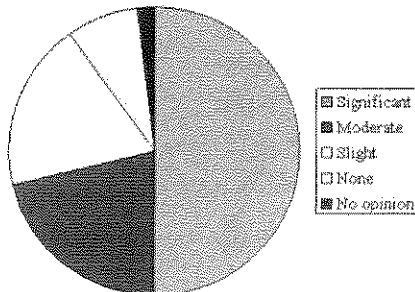
- ☐ Significant impact
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- ☐ Slight impact
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The recession is taking its toll on small businesses, according to several recent surveys.

Impact of Economic Downturn on Business



Nine out of 10 small businesses and self-employed individuals have felt some impact from current economic woes, according to the [National Association for the Self Employed](#) (click on image for a larger view).

In fact, 43% say the recession that started a year ago is the worst they've ever experienced. More than 500 business owners participated in the unscientific online survey.

More than half said their 2008 gross revenues were worse than in 2007, while 24% said they were higher and 18% said there was no change.

However, 54% of respondents said their personal finances have taken a greater hit than their businesses. ([Click here to see all survey results.](#))

In a separate monthly survey, members of the [National Federation of Independent Business](#), expressed the fourth lowest optimism score (an index based on such factors as earnings and hiring plans) in the 35-year history of the survey.

Key to that pessimism was a downturn in earnings in the previous three months (click on image for larger view):

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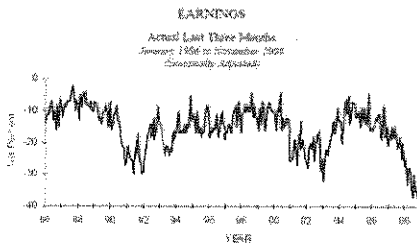
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Local companies

- » Office Depot now sells mail service
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"The small-business economy is weak everywhere," said William Dunkelberg, NFIB chief economist. "Job creation plans were negative in all industries except non-professional services. More owners plan work force reductions than plan to increase employment in all nine census regions."

[Click here](#) to see the entire report (under Small Business Economic Trends)

NASE Executive Director Kristie Darien said, "The current economic slowdown is causing many challenges for micro-businesses. More small-business owners are being faced with difficult choices, such as cutting benefits and compensation for themselves or their employees."

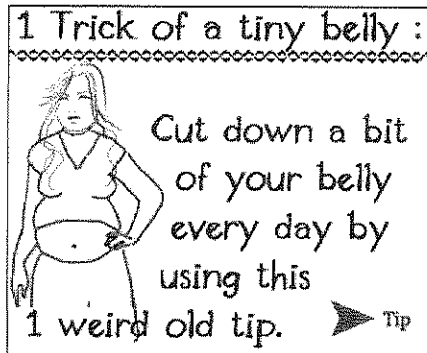
When NASE asked what actions business owners are taking to deal with the difficult economic climate, their top answers (multiple answers allowed):

- 17% Scale back the purchase of inventory or equipment
- 14% use personal savings to shore up the business
- 11% Downsize staff (either layoffs or unfilled vacancies)
- 10% Lower prices of products and/or services
- 9% Cut benefits for myself and/or my employees
- 9% Institute temporary pay cuts for myself and/or my employees
- 9% Increase use of credit cards to assist with cash flow difficulties
- 6% Attempt to obtain loans
- 4% Close the doors of my business
- 11% no change in the way I am conducting business

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- O.C. veterans job fair Wed., May 26
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- 1 in 3 jobless Californians don't get benefits
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- Vote expected on jobless/COBRA extension



Scott says:

January 12, 2009 at 8:46 am

Where I work, we went from 85 employees (July 2007) to less than 40 today. Sales down 40% percent, everybody still working here has received a 15% pay cut, vacation pay cut from two weeks to one week, 5 sick days a year gone, no more 401K matching, no end of year bonus... come March 1, our next open enrollment... no more health insurance.

And.. to top it off, the State of California is going to tax/fee/surcharge me to the bankruptcy....

You figure, well look for a new job. Impossible.. there are none unless I take a huge pay cut! Look for a part time job? None of those either.

meltdown says:

January 12, 2009 at 9:05 am

that earnings chart looks really bad.. We're hitting some fairly new lows..

SEAN IN NEWPORT BEACH says:

January 12, 2009 at 9:36 am

Scott are you in the real estate biz? I'm in the healthcare IT biz myself and we are not getting hit at all. If anything we are outgrowing our britches.

Is unemployment not hitting the Info Tech market segment or am I just in some sort of bubble?

Respondent says:

January 12, 2009 at 9:50 am

The problem which started this mess was people assuming their life status was buying and living like the (Jones's) , yet they expected a high paying job with little or no work effort on their part. Businesses got on the greedy wagon and help fuel this mess. Now folks are paying for their greed.

tmare says:

January 12, 2009 at 10:47 am

Sean, get ready for the hit, I'd definitely call healthcare a bubble that isn't going to last. I think the industry is trying to get it's last digs in because they know the party is coming to end!

Scooby says:

January 12, 2009 at 3:50 pm

Healthcare will be fine. Too many baby boomers getting up there in age. Great field to be in now.

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'Temporary' banners at issue

Jan. 31--A proposed change to Tucson's rules on advertising banners faces an uphill battle with a City Council that says it's wary of hurting small businesses in a down economy.

But the change in banner rules has also become a rallying point for some business leaders -- and fighting it is the first push in a Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce effort to loosen the city's overall sign code.

The main point of contention in the proposed changes, set for a public hearing Feb. 18 before the City Council's Citizens Sign Code Committee, is the limiting of banners to 180 days a year. Because of a loophole in the current ordinance, businesses can legally use banners year around.

The current proposed changes before the advisory committee would limit each business's banner to one 90-square-foot sign per street-facing wall for a maximum of 180 days a year.

Former Councilman Steve Leal brought the issue up after neighborhood activists raised concerns about a proliferation of the supposedly temporary signs, particularly at liquor stores in mainly low-income areas.

But two procedural delays by the City Council delayed any chance of action on the proposed changes last year. Leal did not run for re-election and vacated his seat in December.

Councilwoman Regina Romero said last week that she has reservations about the restrictions on banners, although she understands neighborhood groups' concerns about the growing number of banners, particularly for beer at neighborhood convenience and liquor stores.

Romero, who has been targeted along with Councilwoman Karin Uhlich and Mayor Bob Walkup in a fledgling recall effort by business owner Humberto Lopez, said she doesn't want to "handicap business from advertising on the side of their building, especially in this economic climate."

City Councilman Rodney Glassman said he doesn't think there's much sentiment on the current council for doing anything that might restrict small businesses' efforts to survive the economic crisis.

"This mayor and council should be looking at ways to support business in the middle of the recession and support job creation, not oppose it," Glassman said.

The sign-code change has become a cause for some small-business people and the Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce.

In the chamber's January newsletter, a piece headlined "Chamber fights to halt Oppressive Sign Code Changes" indirectly pointed out that the current code allows banners and other temporary signs to be used year-round, and said the proposed changes would be a "direct financial hit to many businesses."

The newsletter urged members to show up at the advisory Citizens Sign Code Committee's Jan. 21 meeting and said the chamber staff would be there. But no one from the chamber staff was present at the meeting, nor, apparently, were any chamber members.

"I had a conflicting meeting," chamber government affairs manager Robert Medler said when asked why. But Medler said the chamber not only remains committed to pushing for no further restrictions on banner use, but is working on a pro-business revamp of the entire sign code.

At the Jan. 21 meeting, members of the advisory committee briefly discussed the original issues that led to the proposed changes.

Committee members said they were assured by police officials that the existing code is adequate

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for getting late-night businesses to provide clear line of sight from outside the store. They were told officers sometimes have to tell merchants that signs or banners are blocking the view from outside, but that they've never had to push the issue by issuing a citation.

And they said city code-enforcement officials told them they had adequate staffing to enforce existing regulations on the use of banners.

Committee members also discussed whether allowing a banner up year-round, as is the case now, qualified as temporary, or even whether the proposed 180-day limit would fit the spirit of the temporary-banner provision.

With one or more holidays and special events nearly every month, some members questioned whether the series of 45-day permit periods would be adequate to cover all the holidays and events for which a business might have a sale or special event.

A drive around the city's commercial strips suggests an apparent lack of enforcement of the banner regulations. The current code allows a business only one banner for each street-facing wall, but shops with three to five banners are common, and it's not unheard of for relatively small stores to have 10 or more banners.

And banners often stay up year-round, despite the current limit of 45 days for any banner, with a 45-day renewal.

The section of the code concerning temporary banners has a notable hole in it that allows business owners to keep a banner up virtually the entire year, said Glenn Moyer, the planning and sign-code administrator in the city's Development Services.

Moyer said the business owner need only take the banner down momentarily and renew the permit for another 45 days. In practice, he said, city officials do not require the signs to be taken down at all between permit periods. The procedure can be repeated indefinitely, Moyer said. The city's banner-permitting section even sells the \$31.25 permits two at a time.

Moyer said that many businesses likely never even get a permit for the first 45 days, let alone renewals, but he said there was no way to know how pervasive the practice is.

"I can understand (neighbors' concerns) if they have it year-round. If it's year-round, it's not a banner, it's a sign," said Kent Solberg, owner of Kent's Tools, 133 E. Grant Road.

But Solberg doesn't think businesses should have to pay anything for the sign permits. He said he uses banners "once or twice a year when I run a sale," but doesn't get permits.

"I don't think businesses should have to be taxed to use them. I would say in this economy the city should be bending over backwards to accommodate small business."

He said charging for permits amounts to the city's being "penny-wise and dollar-foolish."

And he doesn't see the banners as an aesthetic problem.

"I don't think they make the city look trashy," Solberg said. "They add a little bit of color."

In some cases, the adherence to banner display limitations and the "temporary" nature of the banners is almost laughable. At Exclusive Nail Couture, a stand-alone nail shop in a house in the 700 block of West Irvington Road, roughly half the front of the building -- and all the window space -- is covered with banners. There's also an A-frame sign advertising barber services near the street, and a large banner on a fence proclaiming "Summer Special!" in January.

To sign critic Mark Mayer, the banners are just raising the "visual noise level" to a point that damages the effectiveness of legal signage.

"There's so much visual noise out there, how do you see the forest through the trees in terms of the signs being meaningful to anybody?" asked Mayer, a billboard-control consultant, city planning commission member and community volunteer with a long history of involvement in local sign issues.

"It gets drowned out. How can you pay any attention to a banner when you have 15, 20 banners draped all over a store?"



If you go:

--What: A public hearing on the proposed changes to the banner section of the city's sign code.

--When: 2:30 p.m. Feb. 18, during the Citizens Sign Code Committee's meeting.

--Where: Council chambers at City Hall, 255 W. Alameda St..

Contact reporter Dan Sorenson at 573-4185 or dsorenson@azstarnet.com

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DeBary businesses get break on signs during recession times

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By Pat Hatfield
BEACON STAFF WRITER

posted May 18, 2010 - 2:27:43pm

Text Size

DeBary, like most cities, has codes and ordinances to regulate business signs. The city wants its vistas unblemished by blinking neon signs, snipe signs and temporary banners.

But City Council members have decided shuttered businesses and empty storefronts may be a worse blight.

At its May 5 meeting, the City Council approved temporary rules to allow extra advertising signs.

Some DeBary businesses had already been skirting the rules. When code enforcement staff called this to their attention, they pleaded for relief. Times are tough, the business owners said, and they need help to stay in business.

City Manager Dan Parrott told the City Council local businesses reported their sales dropped as much as 30 percent after they took down extra signs advertising specials. Parrott brought the City Council a proposal for temporarily allowing signs for "specials."

Mayor Bob Garcia said he had enjoyed DeBary Diner's sign advertising a low-cost "Stimulus Breakfast."

City Council Member Jack Lenzen said he thought the new regulations would be a "good compromise" to meet the needs of both citizens and businesses.

The City Council unanimously approved allowing temporary grounds signs through the end of the year.

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There are some limits, including:

1. The area of the sign may not exceed 16 square feet.
2. The regulations apply only to B-3 and B-4 zoning classifications — shopping centers and business districts.
3. The signs may be displayed only during business hours.
4. The signs must comply with all other provisions of the sign ordinance.
5. The temporary regulation will

expire at 11:59 p.m. Friday, Dec. 31.

Business members in the audience at the City Council meeting applauded the unanimous vote.

Susan Livingston, who operates Salon Moxie, said, "This has been a battle for a while. We're thrilled!"

Notwithstanding the recent change, the DeBary Land Development Code permits other kinds of temporary signs, under stringent conditions. These include political signs, holiday signs and promotional signs for charity events.

— pat@beacononlinenews.com



Reader Comments

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MAC | posted May 19, 2010 - 8:53:35pm

I Would Personally Like To Thank The City Of Debary for this Tempory Sign Allowance. In this Present Economic Downtum, Mac's Music appreciate's the City Of Debary helping Aid Small Bussiness in this fashion. For those Citizen's not in favor of this measure, I thank you for your patience, and do understand your concern. Sing-cerly, Mac's Music.

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YES! you can make these

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URGENCY ORDINANCE 2009-19

**AN UNCODIFIED URGENCY ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF CLAREMONT
CALIFORNIA CONCERNING TEMPORARY SIGN REGULATIONS**

WHEREAS, the City's regulatory framework for the type and placement of signs are set forth in Title 18 of the City of Claremont Municipal Code; and

WHEREAS, small businesses are a significant part of California's economy and depend on the ability to advertise goods and services; and

WHEREAS, with the current economic climate, local businesses are suffering economic hardships and wish to use signage for advertisement as opposed to identification only; and

WHEREAS, in order to protect the high aesthetic quality of the community, the City has adopted strict sign rules and regulations; and

WHEREAS, to assist in the future economic recovery of the City, the City has identified the need to provide relief from sign regulations affecting temporary, portable, A-frame signs, temporary banners, and certain window signs; and

WHEREAS, this ordinance is proposed in order to preserve and enhance the economic viability of Claremont's local business community in accordance with the goals and policies contained in the Economic Development/Fiscal Element (Chapter 3) of the 2006 Claremont General Plan; and

WHEREAS, this ordinance is proposed in order to provide for the economic stability of the City and support the ongoing operations of critical local government services; and

WHEREAS, General Plan Policy 3-1.6 provides that the Chamber of Commerce shall be involved in the organization and formation of programs to achieve goals and policies affecting economic development; and

WHEREAS, the Chamber, knowing the business community, deems this proposed ordinance as crucial to the health of the City's businesses; and

WHEREAS, information gathered from the temporary program will assist in the City's long term efforts to revise its sign regulations in the future; and

WHEREAS, California Government Code Section 36937 authorizes the City Council, by a four-fifths vote, to adopt an Urgency Ordinance for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health or safety, which ordinance becomes effective immediately upon passage.

NOW, THEREFORE, THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CLAREMONT DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City Council finds and determines that the regulations set forth in this ordinance are in the best interest of the City and its economic viability as follows:

- A. This ordinance is necessary to assist the local business community during this severe economic time period, particularly during the upcoming 2009 holiday season, by temporarily modifying specific provisions within Title 18 of the Municipal Code, the City's sign code.
- B. Unless the City adopts the modifications contained in this ordinance as an Urgency Ordinance, additional businesses in the community may close due to the lack of sales.
- C. Special action by the City Council in assisting local businesses is warranted as the current economic crisis is the most severe the nation has experienced since the economic depression of the 1930's.
- D. The failure of local businesses will have a negative impact on City revenues, which have already declined significantly during the past year.
- E. In addition to economic impacts to the City, the closure of businesses will result in vacant storefronts, and may lead to a lack of ongoing maintenance and improvements to commercial properties throughout the City, thereby resulting in a loss of community character and vitality.
- F. As properties decline in appearance, centers and commercial areas will lose their appeal to potential customers and further decline, which leads to growing conditions of blight that the City has actively striven to avoid through various programs and economic development efforts.
- G. The immediate need to assist businesses during the upcoming holiday season warrants the adoption of these modifications as an Urgency Ordinance.

Section 2. The City Council finds that this ordinance is exempt under Section 15311 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This section exempts the construction of structures accessory or appurtenant to existing commercial structures, including but not limited to on-premise signs and temporary use items located on public property.

Section 3. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Title 18 of the Claremont Municipal Code, upon application to the City Manager, any property or business owner may request an exemption from Section 18.10.010.M regarding portable A-frame signs, Section 18.025.090 regarding Temporary Banner Signs, and Section 18.025.060.B regarding Accessory Window Signage. Applications shall be made upon forms provided by the Community Development Department. City Manager approval of exemptions hereunder shall comply with written standards established by the City Manager. The City Manager shall have the written standards available to the public within forty eight (48) hours of the enactment of



this ordinance. Any owner of property or business that obtains approval under this ordinance and complies with the written standards shall not be subject to any enforcement action.

Section 4. The City Council hereby suspends the development review fee associated with temporary signs during the time period this Urgency Ordinance is in effect to assist the local business community.

Section 5. The City Manager shall have the authority to revoke any provision of this Urgency Ordinance as he determines necessary to protect Claremont's physical and economic environment.

Section 6. Pursuant to California Government Code Section 36937(b), the City Council hereby enacts this Urgency Ordinance by not less than a four-fifths vote, and in light of the findings set forth in Sections 1 and 2, under the authority granted to it by Article XI, Section 7 of the California Constitution.

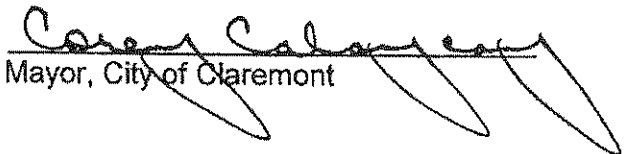
Section 7. If any provision of this Urgency Ordinance or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this ordinance are severable. The City Council hereby declares that it would have adopted this ordinance respective of the invalidity of any particular portion thereof.

Section 8. This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption if adopted by at least a four-fifths vote of the City Council.

Section 9. The provisions contained herein shall automatically expire on December 31, 2010 unless the City Council extends some or all of the provisions prior to the expiration date.

Section 10. The Mayor shall sign this ordinance, and the City Clerk shall attest and certify to the passage and adoption by a four-fifths vote of the City Council, whereupon this ordinance shall take effect and be enforced. Within fifteen days after its passage, it shall be published in the Claremont Courier, a semi-weekly newspaper of general circulation in the City of Claremont.

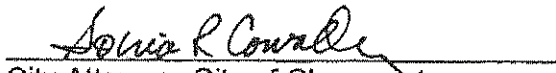
PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 10th day of November, 2009.


Mayor, City of Claremont

ATTEST:


City Clerk, City of Claremont

APPROVED AS TO FORM:


City Attorney, City of Claremont

STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES) ss.
CITY OF CLAREMONT)

I, Lynne Fryman, City Clerk of the City of Claremont, County of Los Angeles, State of California, hereby certify that the foregoing Urgency Ordinance No. 2009-19 was introduced, passed and adopted by said city council, signed by the mayor, and attested by the city clerk of said city, all at a regular meeting of said council held on the 10th day of November, 2009, by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS: PEDROZA, YAO, ELDERKIN, CALAYCAY

NOES: COUNCILMEMBERS: SCHROEDER

ABSTAINED: COUNCILMEMBERS: NONE

ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBERS: NONE



City Clerk of the City of Claremont

For six months after her yoga studio opened, Drorit Rudin struggled to make ends meet. Agoura Hills Power of Yoga ([/listings/agoura-power-of-yoga](#)) is tucked away in a mini mall, set back from Thousand Oaks Boulevard, and she worried that potential customers didn't know her business existed.

Then she decided a colorful sign would help, not knowing she should obtain a city permit first. Within three weeks of displaying her red oval banner streetside, she said, she saw results. After learning that banners were allowed by permit on a temporary basis, she was moved to lobby the city council to extend the ordinance.

"It was the first time I ever made a profit," Rudin said. "I saw a 33 percent increase in just three weeks."

The City Council, at its meeting July 14, approved a renewal of its banner regulations at the recommendation of the Business Task Force and the Economic Development Council. The city will extend the temporary allowance of retail advertising banners for one year to four display periods with a maximum of 10 days per period and 40 days per year. The maximum banner size will increase from 20 to 30 square feet.

In light of the struggling national economy's effect on local businesses, beginning Oct. 22, 2008, the City Council approved three separate resolutions allowing each retail business, including restaurants and hotels, to display a temporary advertising banner. Businesses were allowed to display one temporary advertising banner not to exceed 20 square feet. They were also granted a second weekend per month for outdoor sales, to expire in Jan. 31, 2010.

At the request of the Economic Development Committee, on May 27, 2010, the Business Task Force discussed whether to extend the temporary display ordinance in the city. Its consensus was to support the banners but the council was unsure.

"I understand why the laws are there, and believe me, I like beautiful things, and I love Agoura Hills," Rudin told the council July 14. "I just don't feel that it would really change it too much, especially when you weigh it against how much it would help business owners in this economic environment."

Anthony Martinez of Power of Home in the Agoura Design Center told the council that the advertising displays had helped to double his walk-in clientele. "When the council decided to allow temporary banners, we saw an increase," he said at the meeting. Martinez said he feared that although his home furnishings store was visible from the freeway, without banners sales would suffer.

Martinez and his colleagues at Power of Home first entered the banner debate unwittingly. In November 2009, the chain store had banners, balloons and streamers outside to promote Thanksgiving sales. "We were advised that these were not up to code," Martinez said, "as well as some other signage we had in place."

Soon after, the Agoura Hills Buy Local campaign reached out to tenants in the Agoura Design Center with strategies for local promotion and marketing.

"They mentioned the city of Agoura Hills had recently allowed permits for temporary banners and signs, with restrictions, and all any local business had to do was go to City Hall, apply for the permit and show their sign met the specifications," said Martinez. "We jumped at the opportunity, and saw fantastic results from it."

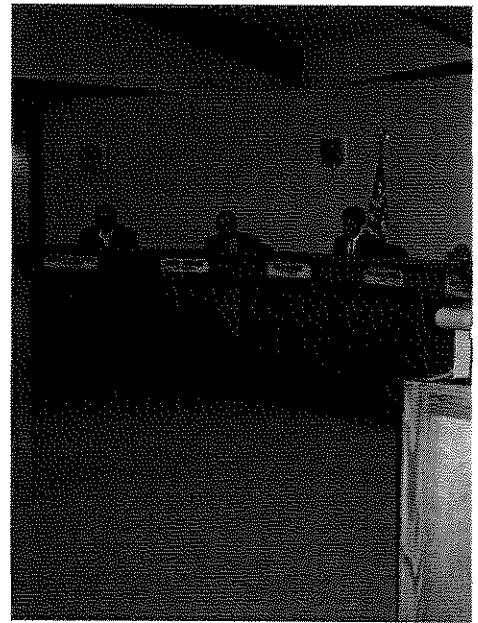
"How will you know when you don't need [the banners] anymore?" Mayor Pro Tem Harry Schwarz asked Martinez.

Martinez replied that he would make the decision based on customer feedback.

The revised policies will continue until July 14, 2011. At that time, the ordinance will be weighed as a middle ground between limiting signage in an effort to keep Agoura Hills beautiful and helping local business owners weather a deep recession.



PHOTOS (3)



The City Council convened on July 14, 2010 for its bi-monthly m

PHOTOS



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Week in Review: Subversion and Song





COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: June 15, 2010
Item Number:

FROM: Curt Campion, Community Development Director 
Prepared By: Sandra Kiriu, Principal Planner 
SUBJECT: TEMPORARY SIGN REGULATIONS--- CITY COUNCIL REQUEST

RECOMMENDATION

Direct staff to continue to enforce the current sign ordinance regulations (Chapter 18.40 of the Galt Municipal Code). *Development of an informational brochure could be included if so directed.* Otherwise, City Council could provide direction for staff to pursue one of the following alternatives:


Alternatives

1. Direct staff to prepare an ordinance creating "temporary regulations" for a limited period of time which would allow less restriction on temporary signs during a selected time period during this economic recession; or
2. Direct staff to prepare an ordinance to permanently amend the temporary sign regulations to be more permissive to temporary signs or to reduce the restriction on the sign message/purpose; or
3. Any other direction deemed appropriate.

SUMMARY

During the May 18th City Council meeting, two concerns were raised about the city's regulations of temporary banners: 1) that perhaps the business community does not understand the temporary sign regulations and needs an easy-to-understand brochure; and 2) that perhaps the City's regulations should be reviewed in light of the current economy. This report explains the current ordinance, compares it to other surrounding cities, and provides City Council with options for consideration. The existing sign regulations are relatively lenient compared to other cities in the area and allow a variety of temporary sign types to be used. The permit process is also simple and inexpensive (\$10). No ordinance changes are recommended, but staff concurs that a simple, fact sheet/brochure about temporary signs may be beneficial to the community.

DISCUSSION

City Manager Approval: 

TYPE OF ITEM:

- ☐ Consent
☒ Departmental
☐ Public Hearing
☐ Redevelopment Agency
☐ Other

COUNCIL ACTION: Approved Denied Revised

Reso No _____ Ord No _____
Moved By: _____
Seconded By: _____
Vote: _____

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Background

At its meeting of May 18, 2010, City Council heard public comments from Reuven Epstein and Jorge Dueñas regarding temporary advertising banners that were recently displayed by several businesses in the community but were found to be in violation of the City's sign ordinance. As a result, Councilmember Haines suggested that staff bring back a report describing the current regulations on temporary signs and identifying some options that Council could consider to help small businesses. City Council concurred in the request, so this staff report is presented in response. Because the focus of the discussion has been on the business community, staff has limited this discussion to commercial/industrial advertising. The topics of political signs, real estate, or residential "temporary signs" are not addressed herein.

Purpose of the Sign Ordinance

Signs in the City of Galt are regulated by Chapter 18.40 of the Galt Zoning Code. The purpose and intent of the Sign Ordinance (§ 18.40.020) is to provide for the use of signs which:

- A. Encourage a desirable urban character consistent with the general plan;
- B. Preserve and improve the appearance of the City as a place to live, work, and visit;
- C. Promote commerce;
- D. Balance the needs of the business and development community to advertise their goods and services with community and planning goals related to streetscape aesthetics and traffic safety;
- E. Provide for fair and equal treatment of sign users;
- F. Provide for eventual elimination of preexisting nonconforming signs on a fair and equitable basis;
- G. Eliminate confusing, distracting, or dangerous sign displays which interfere with vehicular traffic.

The sign regulations were drafted with these goals in mind and the regulations for permanent signs are very generous in terms of overall sign area permitted as well as the size allocations for individual permanent signs. Staff has rarely, if ever, had an applicant complain about the overall size allocation allowed for permanent signage. In fact, most businesses use less than their full advertising allotment.

Permanent business signs are required to be maintained in good condition (§18.40.210) so the visual quality of the community is not compromised. The General Plan Community Character Element, Policy CC-1.9, echoes that sentiment by saying that all signs on existing buildings should be made of durable, high quality materials and that non durable materials shall not be used.

The purpose for allowing additional "temporary signs" in the ordinance was to allow businesses an opportunity to advertise temporary, special events at their business location without having to use their permanent sign area allocation or bear the cost of more permanent sign types for those periodic events. In fact, one of the findings required for the Planning Director to approve a temporary sign permit is that "the sign is temporary in nature (for grand openings, special promotions etc.) and does not constitute regular advertising". This is the main reason that several businesses were contacted by Code Enforcement a few weeks ago to remove their

banners. Those banners simply advertised a product or service offered at the site (tacos, flowers etc.) rather than any special event. In addition, none of those business owners contacted the City to inquire about obtaining a temporary sign permit.

Current Regulations on Temporary Advertising Signs for Business Locations¹

Temporary signs are divided into two general categories:

1. **Temporary signs allowed without a permit**

- a. Window signs for which the aggregate area does not exceed 50% of the area of any single window (so as to maintain visibility for security). *Note that properties in the Downtown Specific Plan area zoned HBD or MU are limited to 25% window coverage;* and
- b. Government or political subdivision flags (limited to 2 flags per lot or integrated development like a shopping center) provided each flag is under 15 square feet in area and not higher than 20 feet; and
- c. Menu boards associated with a drive through restaurant provided they do not include more than 10% advertising content not related to specific menu items.

2. **Temporary signs requiring a permit**

- a. Air balloons, other inflatable devices, beacons. These signs are permitted, with approval of a Temporary Sign Permit, in all non-residential zoning districts.
- b. Banners (defined as any sign of lightweight fabric or similar material that is mounted to any structure, including a pole, at two or more edges). Banners are permitted with approval of a Temporary Sign Permit, in all zoning districts.
- c. Pennant, Pole (defined as a single piece of lightweight fabric, plastic or other material, whether or not containing a message of any kind that is temporarily suspended from a pole and is designed to move in the wind) Permitted with approval of a Temporary Sign Permit, in all residential zoning districts, Highway Commercial (HC) and Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zones only. These signs are typically used by residential developers when advertising model homes. Note that this is different from string pennants (typical in used car lots) which are not permitted anywhere in the City.
- d. Portable signs, which are typically the A or T frame signs, sandwich boards, balloons, or a sign painted on or mounted to a vehicle that is not used in the daily operations of the business on that site. Portable signs are permitted with approval of a Temporary Sign Permit, in all non-residential zoning districts.

¹ This report assumes that the property is not subject to a Master Sign Plan or CC&R's in which the landlord has imposed more stringent restrictions on temporary signs than are permitted by the City. Tenants are advised to first check with their landlords before contacting the City regarding sign opportunities. Property owner approval is required on the permit application.

General Development Standards that Apply to all Temporary Signs

No Off-Site Signage is Permitted. It is important to note that all of these sign regulations refer only to on-site business locations. The City does not allow off-site signs which are classified under the term "billboards." A billboard is defined as "Any freestanding sign or building sign advertising, announcing, or identifying the purpose of a person or entity, or communicating information of any kind to the public, that is located off-premises to the person, entity, or information being advertised, announced, or identified."

In most instances, that distinction is easy to regulate, but there are times when it becomes more of a "gray area" like a shopping center tenant who wants to display a banner or similar sign somewhere else on the shopping center grounds that is off-site to his/her building frontage. Staff has generally taken the stance that the advertising must occur within the tenant's building space (frontage) or else be included on an approved multi-tenant monument sign on the shopping center property.

No Signs in Public Ways. Another requirement for temporary commercial signs is that they are not permitted in public ways. Consequently, temporary signs such as sandwich boards or A frame signs must be located outside of public rights of way including public sidewalks.

Maximum Height. No sign, except for a sign in the HC zone or a flag (max. 20 feet), can exceed the height of the building to which it is appurtenant (GMC 18.40.110).

Specific Development Standards for Temporary Sign Types

The following is a summary of the existing development standards for on-site temporary signs requiring a Temporary Sign Permit:

Sign Type	Max. number of signs	Max.sign size	Max. Height	Display limitations
Air Balloons, Other Inflatables, Beacon	No specific limit	No specific limit	Not to exceed height of building to which it is appurtenant	Can be displayed no more than 5 days in any one year by the same user.
Banner	One per business location.	1 square foot/1 linear foot of building frontage	Not to exceed height of building to which it is appurtenant	It can be displayed no longer than 90 days and a max. of four times during calendar year
Pennant, Pole	Four per model home	15 square feet	20 feet	Duration of model home operation
Portable Signs	No specific limit	No specific limit	Not to exceed height of building to which it is appurtenant	Signs cannot obstruct pedestrian and handicapped accessibility and must be on tenant or owner's property.

Temporary Sign Permit Procedures

In order to obtain a temporary sign permit, an applicant submits a brief application form and a \$10 application fee. The sign permit review fee is \$150 for permanent signs, but staff charges only \$10 for temporary signs. For banners and A-frame signs, which are the most common sign types, the application is a very simple single page and a required sketch of the sign (Exhibit A). For others, there is an existing application in the Sign Permit Package (Appendix 7) which is also very simple. It is 4 pages, but most of that is explanatory text.

The Planning Director is required to approve the sign permit as long as it meets the sign code requirements, it is temporary in nature (for grand openings, special promotions etc.) and does not constitute regular advertising, and if it will be removed after such time as the Planning Director deems appropriate at the time of permit issuance, not to exceed one year (§18.60.30). A temporary sign permit may be renewed up to a maximum of two years if deemed appropriate.

In an effort to inform business owners about the requirements of the Galt sign ordinance as early as possible in the process, there is already an attachment to the business license application titled "Uniform Sign Code" (Exhibit C) which advises applicants that a sign shall not be erected without a permit from the Building Official and also advises them that sign regulations vary by zoning district so they should check with the Planning Department for restrictions. The applicant is required to sign the acknowledgement that they have read and are aware of the regulations, but staff has received very few temporary sign permit applications for processing.

What Are Other Cities Doing?

Like any other zoning regulations, temporary sign rules vary from city to city, but staff's brief research discovered that most of them require that temporary signs only be used for special events/promotions and not for general advertising. As far as types of signs and regulations, Galt is less restrictive than several cities we contacted. Contrary to statements made under public comments at the last two City Council meetings, the City of Lodi does not allow unlimited temporary signs. Staff spoke to the Lodi Planning Department staff and learned that Lodi, in fact, has the most stringent regulations of the cities we contacted because they do not allow any banners or other temporary signs at all.

Citrus Heights is also pretty strict allowing a temporary sign for a total of 30 days per calendar year and subject to a \$150 permit fee. Each business is allowed the additional one time use of a banner but only for the first 30 days after commencement of business. Elk Grove doesn't really distinguish between different types of "temporary signs" (if it's not considered a structure, it's generally considered a temporary sign subject to Planning Director interpretation). They allow temporary signs to be displayed 2 weeks per calendar quarter and most businesses are allowed one temporary building-mounted sign and one temporary freestanding sign per establishment (6 s.f. max. area each) with no permits required. Stockton requires a permit and allows a variety of temporary sign types but limits their display to a maximum of 15 days on six separate occasions within a 12 month period.



Roseville, on the other hand, is more lenient allowing one banner per business with no time limits or message limitations and no fees. Pennants or flags are also allowed with no permit, and A-frame signs are allowed with some locational restrictions.

Rocklin and Willows have both experimented by adopting ordinances that set forth "temporary economic stimulus regulations" for signage. Rocklin's temporary ordinance was effective 5/14/09 through 6/1/10 (and just extended for six more months) while Willows just adopted their temporary ordinance and it will expire 7/1/12. After the expiration date of the ordinances, all temporary signs need to be removed within 10 days or be subject to penalties.

While this approach is innovative, staff notes that the reduction in regulations was not that significant in either jurisdiction. The only restrictions that were really temporarily revised involved removing the time limit for display of certain temporary signs (generally 90 days per year in Rocklin and up to the City's discretion in Willows) and removing the requirement for a sign permit or fee for these type of signs. Willows also allowed two portable off-premises signs (that are otherwise prohibited by Code) per business location.

ALTERNATIVES

City Council asked staff to bring back options for consideration:

1. **Enforce the existing Galt Sign Ordinance (Staff Recommendation).** *In accordance with Mr. Epstein's suggestion at the May 18th Council meeting, staff could also prepare an informational brochure on temporary signs if that is the direction of City Council.*

In staff's experience, it takes a long time for the community to get used to sign regulations so it would be especially difficult to obtain compliance in the community if the rules are now modified, even on just a temporary basis. Galt's temporary sign regulations and minimal \$10 permit fees are already more generous than many communities in the area. By continuing enforcement of the existing regulations, the word will eventually get out to business owners that their advertising must comply with the City of Galt sign ordinance and there are no exceptions. Consistent sign enforcement can also help local businesses by minimizing the visual clutter and distractions that keep customers from seeing anyone's advertising messages. If local businesses know what the rules are and have a reasonable expectation that those rules will apply to everyone, it makes a level playing field for business competition.

It is also important to remember that the sign regulations are also put in place to protect the property rights and interests of the non-business community and to protect public safety. Local residents and property owners have their own expectations about the visual character of the community in which they live and work. For the most part, allowing a proliferation of temporary signs is going to be detrimental to the aesthetics of a community. Aesthetic quality is a very subjective term, but as one commenter to the City of Rocklin news article about their temporary sign ordinance extension wrote, "One of the reasons we chose to live in Rocklin was the well kept environment. When businesses start making parking lots look like a circus it does not make me want to go there".

Staff's concern about safety is twofold: when temporary signs are not correctly installed and secured, they can be hazardous to pedestrians and vehicles. Signs can fall off a building, be a trip hazard on a sidewalk, or become airborne in the wind. In addition, temporary signs can

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cause a distraction to drivers by dividing their attention between the traffic conditions and the sign messages that are often difficult to read because they are waving in the wind or the type is too small to be read quickly from a moving vehicle.

2. **Consider a Temporary "Economic Stimulus" Sign Ordinance.** Although not recommended by staff, this option would provide an opportunity to modify the temporary sign regulations for a limited time period in acknowledgement of the current economic conditions. If selected, staff would request general guidance from City Council on what issues should be addressed in the proposed ordinance (waiver of permits, fees, allowing temporary signs to be used as general advertising instead of for special events etc.). There would be a cost to the City associated with this option because of the staff time involved to research and write the ordinance and public hearing notices, staff reports, and CEQA compliance. It would also require 2 public hearing notices (Planning Commission and City Council) at 1/8 page each. It is also assumed that there would probably be another staff report at the end of the time period to consider an extension of the ordinance which would also require public hearing notices and meetings.

3. **Consider a Permanent Sign Ordinance Amendment.** If City Council feels the current ordinance regulating temporary signs is too restrictive, please provide direction as to what elements should be revisited and staff will come back with a draft zoning code amendment for your consideration to permanently modify the sign ordinance. The same cost considerations would apply as in Alternative 2 except that there would be no time extension option at the end.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Alternative 1 would have minimal financial impact except for staff time and materials to prepare the informational brochure (if so directed). That cost is estimated at \$560 for an assumed 8 hours of work and miscellaneous initial materials. Printing costs are not included.

Alternatives 2 and 3, as outlined above, would basically constitute a zoning text amendment which has been determined to cost \$4,855 in the Galt fee schedule (including CEQA Exemption). For Alternative 2, a potential time extension request at the end of the term would generate additional costs for notice and public hearing assumed to be another \$4,855. These costs do not include other administrative staff time such as the City Attorney or City Manager.

ATTACHMENTS

- Exhibit A: Temporary Banner Permit Application
- Exhibit B: Sign Code business license application attachment (existing)



City Galt
Community Development Department
**Temporary Banner
Sign Permit**

\$10.00 Application Fee
Receipt #
Date Received

APPLICATION

Site Address _____ Bldg. # _____ Suite _____

Name of Business _____

Applicant _____ Phone # _____

Property Owner _____ Phone # _____

Message on Banner _____

Frontage (width of building's front side facing street) in feet _____

Proposed Size of Banner _____ Requested Display Period _____
(Size cannot exceed 1 sq. ft. per lineal foot of building frontage) (See Footnotes)

Proposed location of Banner on site _____
(Submit sketch showing proposed location)

I, _____, hereby agree to maintain the Temporary Banner in good condition
(Applicant)
during its display period, and further agree that the Banner will be removed from the site no later than 5:00 p.m.
on the expiration date cited below.

Signature

(For City Use Only)

Application is hereby approved to allow the above Temporary Banner to be displayed until _____

Date

Approval is subject to the following conditions (if applicable):

Development Standards:

1. Maximum of one (1) banner per business location with approval of Temporary Sign Permit.
2. Maximum display period of three (3) months per banner.
3. Maximum display of four (4) different banners in any one calendar year.
4. Banner site can't exceed 1 sq. ft per lineal foot of building frontage.

Authorized Signature

EXHIBIT A



UNIFORM SIGN CODE

Section 301: Permits Required

A sign shall not hereafter be erected, re-erected, constructed, altered or maintained, except as provided by this code and after a permit has been issued by the Building Official. A separate permit shall be required for a sign or signs for each business entity, and a separate permit shall be required for each group of signs on a single supporting structure. In addition, electrical permits shall be obtained for electric signs.

Each sign application shall include the dimensions, construction materials, details of attachment to structure (which may require engineering), colors and design of lettering.

Sign regulations vary according to individual zoning districts. Therefore, the applicant should review the regulations in the appropriate zone district with the Planning Department prior to submittal of a sign permit application.

The application shall be submitted to the Planning and Building Department for review and approval in accordance with the Galt Municipal Code.

I have read and I am aware of the sign regulations.

BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICANT SIGNATURE

DATE

EXHIBIT B
Attachment to Business License
Applications



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JULY 1, 2009



Contact: Jeff Collier
Director of Community Development
(562) 464-3380

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**WHITTIER CITY COUNCIL APPROVES A LOCAL ECONOMIC STIMULUS
AND BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PLAN**

Permit Fee Reductions Effective July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010

WHITTIER, CA. — The Whittier City Council has approved a Local Economic Stimulus and Business Assistance Plan (Plan) which includes nine economic development activities. The Plan was designed to help stimulate the local economy and help businesses survive during the recession.

Some of the activities are temporary for the 2009-2010 fiscal year only—July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010—to immediately assist businesses save money. Some programs in the Plan are new and will be on-going such as the Storefront Glass Replacement Program within Uptown Whittier which will help storefront retail businesses as well the overall improvement and elimination of blight in Uptown.

Most activities, including the fee reductions and subsidies, are effective beginning July 1, 2009. Two activities—display of temporary banners and the 18-month automatic extension of entitlements—will be effective beginning August 27th (date the Ordinance becomes effective) and the Glass Replacement Program will be available by September 1st, 2009.

Following are brief summaries of each activity:

1. **Zoning Entitlement Application & Building Permit Fees (temporary):** A 50% subsidy in permit fees for zoning entitlements and building permits are being offered for commercial projects within three Redevelopment Project Areas that have a minimum valuation of \$10,000.

The intent of the fee subsidies is to incentivize property owners to make improvements to their properties that may have been deferred because of limited funds. Developers considering new projects may also take advantage of the temporarily subsidized fees and help stimulate more development in the Redevelopment Projects Areas.



2. **Banner Permit Processing & Review Fees Reduction (temporary):** Fee reductions will also apply to banner permit processing and review. The fees will be reduced from \$152 to \$25—a potential savings of up to \$300 per business—through the end of the fiscal year 2009-10.
3. **Revise Terms for Display of Temporary Banners (temporary):** The Whittier Zoning Code has been amended from allowing temporary signs such as “Sale” banners to be displayed for 30 days at a time, four times a year to allow banners to be displayed for up to 12 days per month through the end of the 2009-10 fiscal year. This would allow for more frequent banner use but for shorter periods of time and provide for an additional 24 days of banner display per year.

The new time limits are better suited to meet the needs of most businesses during this economic downturn. Most businesses do not have specials and sales that last for 30 days at a time and businesses can select the days and weekends to display the banner to coincide with their in-store specials and sales.
4. **Facilitate and Fund Business Assistance Seminars (on-going):** The City’s Economic Development staff will collaborate with various organizations to conduct workshops that are relevant and beneficial to local businesses. The City has designated \$5,000 to help pay for guest speakers such as retail consultants that will provide technical assistance to businesses.
5. **Partner with Local Universities and Colleges to Serve as a Resource to the Business Community (on-going)**
6. **Establish an Economic Development Team and Revise the Business Visitation Program (on-going)**
7. **Storefront Glass Replacement Program (on-going):** The Council directed staff to finalize a \$5,000 grant program for business and property owners to replace damaged storefront glass and install anti-graffiti film. It is expected this program will be available by September 1st, 2009 for Uptown businesses and property owners. The program may be expanded to other areas of the city next fiscal year (July 2010).



8. **Increase the Buy Whittier Policy Margin to 2% (on-going):** The City has increased the margin for preferential treatment for bids from Whittier businesses from 1% to 2%. If a Whittier business is placing a bid on a service for the City of Whittier and is within 2% of the lowest price (bid) then, under this Buy Whittier policy, the service or purchase shall be made from the Whittier business.
9. **Extension of Development Entitlements (temporary):** The Whittier Zoning Code has been amended to allow an automatic 18-month time extension beyond the initial two-year approval period for zoning entitlements, in lieu of the one-year extension, for a maximum entitlement of three and a half (3½) years.

The City wants to assist businesses in good standing, therefore, businesses or property owners with Code Enforcement or "Stop Work" citations will not be eligible for any of the activities under the Plan until violations have been corrected.

For complete details on the Local Economic Stimulus and Business Assistance Plan call the City of Whittier Community Development Department at (562) 464-3380.

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