



CITY OF CARSON

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

NEW BUSINESS DISCUSSION: October 28, 2014
SUBJECT: Workshop Regarding Banner and Window Sign Display Periods
APPLICANT: City of Carson
REQUEST: Discuss and consider banner and window sign display periods
PROPERTY INVOLVED: Commercial and industrial properties citywide

COMMISSION ACTION

_____ Concurred with staff
_____ Did not concur with staff
_____ Other

COMMISSIONERS' VOTE

AYE	NO		AYE	NO	
		Chairman Faletogo			Gordon
		Vice-Chair Piñon			Saenz
		Brimmer			Graber
		Diaz			Verrett
		Goolsby			

I. Introduction

In 2011, the City Council approved an ordinance amendment (Ord. No. 11-1475) to change the display period for banners from 60 to 150 calendar days as described in Section 9136.7(C)(1), Signs for Commercial Uses, and Section 9146.7(C)(1), Signs for Industrial Uses, of the Carson Municipal Code (CMC). The ordinance amendment also reinstated missing sections dealing with allowable square footage found in earlier versions of the CMC under Sections 9136.7(B)(2) and 9146.7(B)(2).

This workshop is to provide the Planning Commission with an update on banner and window signs since the 2011 ordinance amendment.

II. Background

The increase in display periods for banners was a result of concerns received by the City that local and small businesses lost revenue during the sluggish economy. Proponents of the ordinance amendment argued that temporary business signs such as banners would help increase customer traffic.

After much discussion, the ordinance amendment was approved, and staff updated the banner permit application (Exhibit No. 1) which can be obtained at the Planning Department or from the City's website. The application details all requirements for appearance, location and display periods.

Window signs are allowed under the Zoning Ordinance, however, are subject to the total allowable sign as described in Sections 9136.7(B)(2) and 9146.7(B)(2). Since all signs are subject to Site Plan and Design Review under Section 9172.23, staff typically requires window signs to be no more than 20 percent of the window coverage. The 20 percent standard is often included in the sign program for commercial centers. It should be noted that window signs in a mixed use district (i.e., Carson Street, Sepulveda Boulevard) must be permanent and cannot exceed 15 percent of the window area.

III. Analysis

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. Staff's concerns include the proliferation of banners as well as identifying both approved and illegal banners. These concerns have been addressed by requiring applicants to keep a copy of the banner permit available at the business as well as limiting the location of the banners. The regulation of window signs is much different because there are no formal standards identified in the CMC with exception to the mixed use districts. Like banners, window signs are also used to advertise special events, products, and promotions.

Since the adoption of Ordinance No. 11-1475, the Planning Division has received 111 applications for banner permits from December 2011 to October 2014. The Code Enforcement (CE) Department has the following comments and recommendations based on Code Enforcement dealings with banners and window signs:

- Businesses continue to put up banners without first obtaining a permit.
- To regulate the display periods, the code should make obtaining a permit the only form of compliance, not removal of the banner.
 - Situation: When CE informs them that a permit is required, businesses will remove them and weeks or days later put it back up without a permit. It then becomes a game of take down & put up later until addressed by CE. The businesses do not obtain a permit and receive free advertisement which is unfair to businesses that abide by the rules.
- The code should be modified such that if a business is issued a notice to obtain a permit, the life of the permit should start the date notice was issued, not the date they come in to obtain permit. This will provide a more accurate time of display.
- Modify the code so that businesses cannot extend their 60 day period each time they take their banner down within the approved 60-day period.
- Code clarity on displaying banners behind buildings.

IV. Conclusion

Previous changes to banner regulations were driven by efforts to provide assistance to local and small businesses during sluggish economic times. The 150-day display period is well beyond what other cities in the South Bay allow and continues to help local businesses advertise for sales and special events.

Banner permits allow the City to verify the appropriateness of size, location and time period for each display, as well as be adequately maintained and not become unsightly.

V. Recommendation

That the Planning Commission:


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



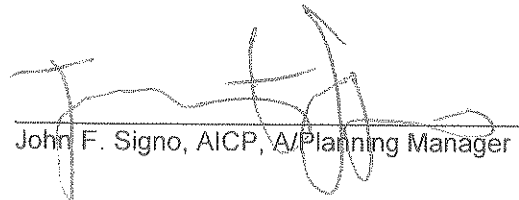
VI. Exhibits

1. Banner Permit Application

Prepared by:


Max Castillo, Assistant Planner

Reviewed by:


John F. Signo, AICP, A/Planning Manager

MC/Workshop_BannersWindowSignPeriods_102814



City of Carson
Planning Division
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Fee: \$50.00

Banner Permit Application

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Displays may be exhibited in connection with grand openings and other special events.
- Requests for such displays shall be submitted in writing to the Planning Division 30 days prior to the event.
Note: If Code Enforcement is involved, the display date will begin from the date of their notice or citation.
- One banner per event. Displays shall provide a minimum of 7 foot clearance, must be adequately maintained, and shall be removed at the end of the approved display date.
- A list of prohibited signs, which are not allowed under any circumstance, can be found on the back of this form.
- All approvals shall be limited to no longer than 60 consecutive days at any one time with a minimum of 30 days in between display periods. A maximum of 150 days of display period is permitted per calendar year. Separate fees shall be paid for each display period. The Planning Division reserves the right not to issue future banner permits if a display period is violated.
- The approved application and site plan must be posted at the business during the approved display period.

Site Address: _____

Business Name: _____ Phone: _____

Applicant Name: _____ Phone: _____

Applicant Address: _____

Main Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Type of Event: _____

Text on Banner: _____

Size of Banner: _____ Color: _____

Location of Banner on Building: ☐ Front ☐ Side ☐ Other _____

Display Dates: Start: _____ End: _____

Notes: _____

Permit to also include: ☐ Streamers ☐ Pennants ☐ Other _____

I have read the general requirements above and agree to comply.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

FOR STAFF USE ONLY		Zone:	Sign Program:	No	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Denied by _____	Comments:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved. Stamp below:			
Number of days remaining for display this calendar year:					

Updated: 1/10/13

EXHIBIT NO. 01

