



## City of Homer

[www.cityofhomer-ak.gov](http://www.cityofhomer-ak.gov)

## Planning

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# Memorandum 20-081

## PI 20-06

TO: MAYOR CASTNER AND HOMER CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: RICK ABOUD, AICP, MPA, ACTING CITY MANAGER  
DATE: JUNE 15, 2020  
SUBJECT: The provision of additional signage for parking lot identification and certain types of multi-tenant structures

After following up on a business retention and expansion survey, the EDC embarked on an extensive analysis of the needs and recommendations for signage concerns with larger, multi-tenant building. After more review and analysis by the Planning Department and the Planning Commission, a draft ordinance is being recommended for adoption.

The draft ordinance is extensively explained in staff report 20-34. It basically does two things. It allows additional signage for parking lot identification (any business) and it gives a 50% increase in the signage allowed for certain types of multi-tenant structures that have multiple entrances fronting multiple rights-of-way, more than 1 story, or have interior tenants (such as a mall or office building). This addresses a relatively frequent situation where a building with multiple tenants are not able to provide effective signage for all tenants within the current allowances.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the draft ordinance at their June 3, 2020 meeting. The Commission moved with the unanimous consent of the six commissioners present at the public hearing to recommend that the City Council adopt the draft ordinance.

### **Attachments:**

Ordinance

Staff report and corresponding meeting minutes

1 **CITY OF HOMER**  
2 **HOMER, ALASKA**

3 Planning

4 **ORDINANCE 20-xx**

5  
6 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF HOMER, ALASKA, AMENDING  
7 HOMER CITY CODE 21.60 SIGN CODE TABLES 1, TABLE 2 AND 3.  
8

9 WHEREAS, The Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDC) conducted a  
10 Business Retention and Expansion Study, and found that signage was a concern to local  
11 businesses; and  
12

13 WHEREAS, The EDC researched sign issues and recommended code amendments to the  
14 Homer Planning Commission (HPC); and  
15

16 WHEREAS, The 2018 Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 3 Goal 4 Objective B 2 states, “Use  
17 strategies to ensure the character of strip commercial development will make a positive  
18 contribution to the overall character of the community. Strategies include: controls on the size  
19 and appearance of signs, requirements for the landscaping of parking areas, and basic  
20 guidelines regarding building appearance”; and  
21

22 WHEREAS, The HPC considered the sign code amendments and recommended changes  
23 to the sign code, addressing buildings with more than one side with a main entrance,  
24 multistory buildings, buildings with interior tenants, parking lot identification signs, and a  
25 master sign plan process.  
26

27 NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF HOMER ORDAINS:  
28

29 Section 1. Homer City Code 21.60.060(c) Signs on private property, Tables 1, 2, and 3 are  
30 amended:  
31

32 **21.60.060 Signs on private property.**

33 a. Signs shall be allowed on private property in the City only in accordance with Table 1. If the  
34 letter “A” appears for a sign type in a column, such sign type is allowed without prior permit  
35 approval in the zoning district represented by that column. If the letter “P” appears for a sign  
36 type in a column, such sign type is allowed only with prior permit approval in the zoning district  
37 represented by that column. Special conditions may apply in some cases. If the letter “N”  
38 appears for a sign type in a column, such sign type is not allowed in the zoning district  
39 represented by that column under any circumstances. If the letters “PH” appear for a sign type  
40 in a column, such sign type is allowed in the zoning district represented by that column only  
41 with prior approval by the Commission after a public hearing.

42 b. Although permitted under subsection (a) of this section, a sign designated by an “A” or “P”  
43 in Table 1 shall be allowed only if:

- 44 1. The sum of the area of all building and freestanding signs on the lot does not exceed  
45 the maximum permitted sign area for the zoning district in which the lot is located as  
46 specified in Table 2; and  
47 2. The characteristics of the sign conform to the limitations of Table 3, Permitted Sign  
48 Characteristics by Zoning District, and with any additional limitations on characteristics  
49 listed in Table 1 or Table 2.  
50  
51 c. A sign type that is not listed on the following tables is prohibited.  
52

<b>Key to Tables 1 through 3</b>														
RR	Rural Residential	GBD	Gateway Business District											
UR	Urban Residential	GC1	General Commercial 1											
RO	Residential Office	GC2	General Commercial 2											
INS	Institutional Uses Permitted in Residential Zoning Districts (a)	EEMU	East End Mixed Use											
CBD	Central Business District	MC	Marine Commercial											
TC	Town Center District	MI	Marine Industrial											
		OSR	Open Space Recreation											
		PS	Public Sign Uses Permit											
A = Allowed without sign permit														
P = Allowed only with sign permit														
N = Not allowed														
PH = Allowed only upon approval by the Planning Commission after a public hearing.														
For parenthetical references, e.g., “(a),” see notes following graphical portion of table.														
<b>Table 1</b>														
<b>Sign Type</b>	<b>RR</b>	<b>UR</b>	<b>RO</b>	<b>INS (a)</b>	<b>CBD</b>	<b>TC</b>	<b>GBD</b>	<b>GC1</b>	<b>GC2</b>	<b>EEMU</b>	<b>MC</b>	<b>MI</b>	<b>OSR</b>	<b>PS</b>
Freestanding														
Residential (b)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	N	N	N	N	A	PH
Other (b)	N	N	N	P	P	P	P (i)	A	A	A	P	P	N	PH
Incidental (c)	N	N	A (d)	A (d)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	N
<b><u>Parking Lot Identification</u></b>					<b><u>A</u></b>	<b><u>A</u></b>	<b><u>A</u></b>	<b><u>A</u></b>	<b><u>A</u></b>	<b><u>A</u></b>	<b><u>A</u></b>	<b><u>A</u></b>		
Building														
Banner	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Building Marker (e)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N
Identification (d)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N

[**Bold and underlined added.** Deleted language stricken through

Table 1														
Sign Type	RR	UR	RO	INS (a)	CBD	TC	GBD	GC1	GC2	EEMU	MC	MI	OSR	PS
Incidental (c)	N	N	A (f)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	N	N
Marquee	N	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	N
Projecting	N	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	N
Residential (b)	A	A	A	N	A	A	A	N	N	N	N	N	A	N
Roof, Integral	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	N
Suspended	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	N
Temporary (g)	P	P	P	N		P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	N
Wall	A	A	A	A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	A	A
Window	N	N	A	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	N
Miscellaneous														
Flag (h)	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

54 Notes to Table 1:

- 55 a. This column does not represent a zoning district. It applies to institutional uses permitted  
56 under the zoning code in the RR, UR and RO zoning districts. Institutional is defined as an  
57 established organization or corporation of a public, nonprofit, or public safety/benefit  
58 nature, i.e., schools, churches, and hospitals.
- 59 b. No commercial message allowed on sign, except for a commercial message drawing  
60 attention to goods or services legally offered on the lot.
- 61 c. No commercial message of any kind allowed on sign if such message is legible from any  
62 location off the lot on which the sign is located.
- 63 d. Only address and name of occupant allowed on sign.
- 64 e. May include only building name, date of construction, or historical data on historic site;  
65 must be cut or etched into masonry, bronze, or similar material.
- 66 f. No commercial message of any kind allowed on sign.
- 67 g. The conditions of HCC 21.60.130 apply.
- 68 h. Flags of the United States, the State, the City, foreign nations having diplomatic relations  
69 with the United States and any other flag adopted or sanctioned by an elected legislative body  
70 of competent jurisdiction. These flags must be flown in accordance with protocol established  
71 by the Congress of the United States for the Stars and Stripes. Any flag not meeting any one or  
72 more of these conditions shall be considered a banner sign and shall be subject to regulations  
73 as such.
- 74 i. The main entrance to a development in GBD may include one ground sign announcing the  
75 name of the development. Such sign shall consist of natural materials. Around the sign grass,  
76 flowers and shrubs shall be placed to provide color and visual interest. The sign must comply  
77 with applicable sign code requirements.

78

79  
80

**Table 2. Maximum Total Sign Area Per Lot by Zoning District**

**Table 2 Part A**

The maximum combined total area of all signs, in square feet, except incidental, building marker, and flags (b), shall not exceed the following according to district:

RR	UR	RO	RO (e)	INS (a)	OSR	PS (d)
4	4	6	50	20	4	32

**Table 2 Part B**

In all other districts not described in Table 2 Part A, the maximum combined total area of all signs, in square feet, except incidental, building marker and flags, shall not exceed the following:

Square feet of wall frontage (c):	Maximum allowed sign area per principal building:
750 s.f. and over	150 s.f.
650 to 749	130 s.f.
550 to 649	110 s.f.
450 to 549	90 s.f.
350 to 449	70 s.f.
200 to 349	50 s.f.
0 to 199	30 s.f.

- 81 **1.** In all districts covered by Table 2 Part B, on any lot with multiple principal buildings or  
82 with multiple independent businesses or occupancies in one or more buildings, the  
83 total allowed sign area may be increased beyond the maximum allowed signage as  
84 shown in Table 2 Part B, by 20%. This additional sign area can only be used to promote  
85 or identify the building or complex of buildings.
- 86 **2. In all districts covered by Table 2 Part B, freestanding Parking Lot Identification**  
87 **signs are excluded from calculation as sign area, and are allowed in addition to the**  
88 **freestanding sign per limitation stated in Table 2 Part B(4). One directional**  
89 **parking lot identification sign may be erected without a sign permit if restricted to**  
90 **identifying a parking lot with its owner, operator, or name of the business**  
91 **providing the lot. The sign may include the logo, corporate colors or name of the**  
92 **business but no advertising other than the name of the business shall be included.**

93           **The total sign area shall not exceed six square feet and shall not exceed a sign**  
94           **height of six feet.**

95           **3. In all districts covered by Table 2 Part B, special conditions for additional signage**  
96           **allowance above 150 square feet per building. An allowance for additional signage**  
97           **may be granted by the City Planner for either section (a) or section (b) below.**

98  
99           **a. Multiple-Tenant Buildings which adjoin and have which have more than one**  
100           **entrance for clients that access more than one improved street.**

101           **1. Secondary and tertiary entrances must be commonly used by clients and**  
102           **must access the interior of the building and conversely the entrance**  
103           **must access a parking lot, sidewalk or constructed public road. These**  
104           **entrances are approved at the sole direction of the planning department.**  
105           **Alleys, stairways to upper levels, emergency exits may not apply at the**  
106           **discretion of the Planning Director.**

107           **2. Additional signage is allowed based ½ the allowance on Table 2 part B to**  
108           **existing for each secondary or tertiary street wall frontage. Signage must**  
109           **be placed on the wall face of the building the allowance was based on.**

110           **b. Additional sign allowance for multitenant split level buildings and buildings**  
111           **two or more businesses deep:**

112           **1. In a building that has one frontage, which is the only frontage that has**  
113           **access to a public street, and is split level or is more than one business in**  
114           **depth.**

115           **2. Additional signage is allowed based on ½ the allowance of Table 2 Part**  
116           **B.**

117  
118           **4. In all districts covered by Table 2 Part B, freestanding signs, when otherwise allowed,**  
119           **shall not exceed the following limitations:**

120           **a.**       Only one freestanding sign is allowed per lot, except one freestanding public  
121           sign may be additionally allowed. A freestanding sign may not exceed 10 feet in  
122           height.

123           **b.**       The sign area on a freestanding sign (excluding a public sign) shall be included  
124           in the calculation of maximum allowed sign area per lot and shall not exceed the  
125           following:

126           **i.**       One business or occupancy in one building – 36 sq ft

127           **ii.**      Two independent businesses or occupancies or principal buildings in any  
128           combination – 54 sq ft

129           **iii.**     Three independent businesses or occupancies or principal buildings in any  
130           combination – 63 sq ft

131           **iv.**     Four or more independent businesses or occupancies or principal buildings in  
132           any combination – 72 sq ft

135 Notes to Table 2, Parts A and B

136

137 a. The INS column does not represent a zoning district. It applies to institutional uses  
 138 permitted under the zoning code in the RR, UR and RO zoning districts. Institutional is defined  
 139 as an established organization or corporation of a public, nonprofit, or public safety or benefit  
 140 nature, e.g., schools churches, and hospitals.

141

142 b. Flags of the United States, the State, the City, foreign nations having diplomatic relations  
 143 with the United States, and any other flag adopted or sanctioned by an elected legislative body  
 144 of competent jurisdiction. These flags must be flown in accordance with protocol established  
 145 by the Congress of the United States for the Stars and Stripes. Any flag not meeting any one or  
 146 more of these conditions shall be considered a banner sign and shall be subject to regulation  
 147 as such.

148

149 c. Square feet of wall frontage is defined as total square footage of wall surface, under the  
 150 roof, that faces the major access or right-of-way of the business. In the case of a business  
 151 located on a corner lot, square footage of wall frontage is the total square footage of wall  
 152 surface, under the roof, on the side of the business with the most square footage.

153

154 d. The PS column does not represent a zoning district. It applies to public signs permitted  
 155 under the zoning code, in all zoning districts.

156

157 e. This RO column applies only to lots in that portion of the RO district that abuts East End  
 158 Road, Bartlett Street, Hohe Street, and Pennock Street. Within this area, there is allowed a  
 159 maximum of 50 square feet total area of all signs (including the ground sign referred to below),  
 160 except incidental, building marker, and flags (see note (b) above). One ground sign, with a  
 161 maximum total area of 16 square feet, will be permitted per lot. Each ground sign shall not  
 162 exceed six feet in height, measured from the base to the highest portion of any part of the sign  
 163 or supporting structure.

164

Table 3. Permitted Sign Characteristics by Zoning District														
Sign Type	RR	UR	RO	INS (a)	CBD	TC	GBD	GC1	GC2	EEMU	MC	MI	OSR	PS (e)
Animated (b)	N	N	N	N	P	P	N	P	N	P	P	N	N	N
Changeable Copy (c)	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	PH
Illumination Internal	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	N
Illumination External	N	N	N	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	N	PH
Neon (d)	N	N	N	N	P	P	N	P	P	P	P	P	N	N

165 Notes to Table 3:

- 166 a. The INS column does not represent a zoning district. It applies to institutional uses  
167 permitted under the zoning code, in the RR, UR and RO zoning districts. Institutional is  
168 defined as an established organization or corporation of a public, nonprofit, or public  
169 safety/benefit nature, i.e., schools, churches, and hospitals.  
170 b. Animated signs may not be neon or change colors or exceed three square feet in area.  
171 c. Changeable copy signs must be wall- or pole-mounted, and may not be flashing.  
172 d. Neon signs may not be flashing and may not exceed 32 square feet.  
173 e. The PS column does not represent a zoning district. It applies to public signs permitted  
174 under the zoning code, in all zoning districts.  
175 [Ord. 14-34 § 1, 2014; Ord. 12-26 § 1, 2012; Ord. 12-01(S)(A) §§ 2 – 6, 2012].  
176  
177  
178

179 Section x: This ordinance is of a permanent and general character and shall be included in  
180 the City Code.

181  
182 ENACTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF HOMER THIS \_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_,  
183 2020.  
184  
185

186  
187 CITY OF HOMER  
188  
189

190  
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192 \_\_\_\_\_  
193 KEN CASTNER, MAYOR  
194

195 ATTEST:

196  
197 \_\_\_\_\_  
198 MELISSA JACOBSEN, MMC, CITY CLERK  
199  
200

201  
202 YES:

203 NO:

204 ABSTAIN:

205 ABSENT:  
206



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First Reading:  
Public Hearing:  
Second Reading:  
Effective Date:  
  
Reviewed and approved as to form:

\_\_\_\_\_  
, City Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael Gatti, City Attorney

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_



# City of Homer

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## Planning

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### Staff Report PL 20-34

TO: Homer Advisory Planning Commission  
THROUGH: Rick Abboud, City Planner  
FROM: Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner  
DATE: June 3, 2020  
SUBJECT: Proposed ordinance to amend HCC 21.60 Sign Code Tables 1, 2 & 3

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**Requested action:** Conduct a public hearing on revisions to the sign code, and forward a recommendation to the City Council.

### **Introduction**

In May 2019, the Economic Development Commission (EDC) identified a need for a change to the sign code. The current sign area total of 150 square feet for large buildings with multiple tenants can make it difficult for tenants to have effective signage. Planning staff has also found it challenging to permit effective signage for tenants in this situation. The Planning Commission worked on this topic in fall 2019. A draft ordinance was provided to the city attorney for review. The draft ordinance is now up for public hearing and a recommendation to the City Council.

There is one component of the Commission's earlier work that was not included in this ordinance. Staff and the Commission had explored the concept of a Master Sign Permit. When a new building was built, a sign plan would be submitted and approved, and thereafter no additional sign permitting would be needed. Upon legal review, the Attorney found the language unclear. Rather than add more unclear language to an already complicated sign code, staff has deleted that part of the draft ordinance. This topic can be revisited in the future if there is further public desire to modify the sign code.

### **Synopsis of Code Changes**

#### **Amendments to Table 1:**

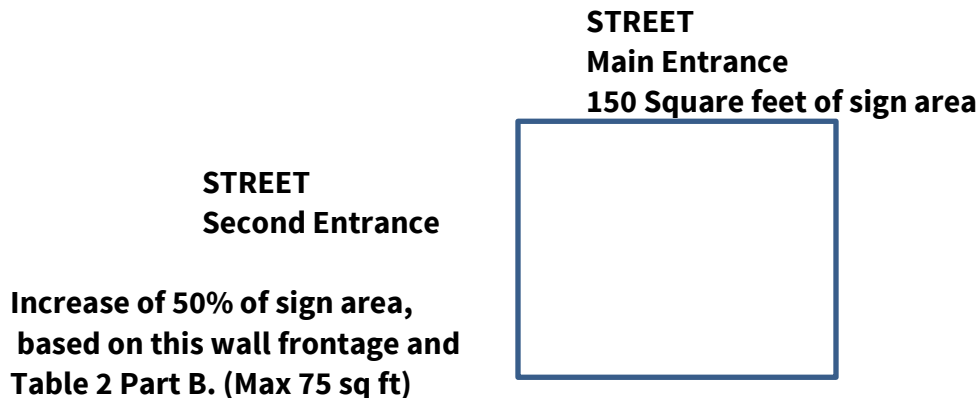
- Adds a Parking lot Identification Sign as a sign type and specifies which zones they are allowed.

#### **Amendments to Table 2 Part B:**

- The table has been organized into numbered sections for easier use.

- Parking lot identification sign regulations have been added.
- A provision has been included to allow larger buildings to have more than 150 square feet of signage, which is the current maximum. The building must be either more than 1 story in height, have interior tenants (such as a mall or office building) or have more than one primary entrance from a different public street, such as a corner lot with main entrances on both streets. Signage could increase up to ½ the amount of sign area determined by Table 2 Part B. Since the maximum sign area in the table is 150 square feet, the secondary wall cannot have more than 75 square feet of signage.
- Example: For buildings on corner lots with more than one main public entrance, additional signage would be based on the building wall frontage, with an increase of up to ½ the amount of sign area determined by Table 2 Part B. Since the maximum sign area in the table is 150 square feet, the secondary wall cannot have more than 75 square feet of signage.

**Example:**



**Planning Staff review per 21.95.040**

21.95.040 Planning Department review of code amendment. The Planning Department shall evaluate each amendment to this title that is initiated in accordance with HCC 21.95.010 and qualified under HCC 21.95.030, and may recommend approval of the amendment only if it finds that the amendment:

- a. Is consistent with the comprehensive plan and will further specific goals and objectives of the plan.

*Staff response: 2008 Comprehensive Plan Chapter 4 Land Use Goal 3 Objective A states: "Create a clear, coordinated regulatory framework that guides development."*

*Implementation strategies include reviewing city plans for consistency and with consideration of operational constraints and community acceptance. The sign code amendments are consistent with and supported by supported by the Comprehensive Plan.*

b. Will be reasonable to implement and enforce.

*This amendment will be reasonable to implement and inforce.*

c. Will promote the present and future public health, safety and welfare.

*This amendment promotes health, safety and welfare by improving wayfinding for parking lots, and allowing more signage for larger buildings, which previously were limited the visibility of tenants.*

d. Is consistent with the intent and wording of the other provisions of this title.

*This amendment is consistent with the intent, wording and purpose of HCC Title 21.*

**Staff Recommendation:** Conduct a public hearing on revisions to the sign code, and forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council.

### **Attachments**

Draft Ordinance 20-xx Signs

Staff Report 19-46

EDC memo of May 8, 2019

HPC minutes of May 15, 2019

Staff Report 19-87

HPC Minutes excerpt 10/16/2019

Staff Report 19-94

HPC Minutes excerpt 11/6/2019



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### Staff Report PL 19-46

TO: Homer Advisory Planning Commission  
THROUGH: Rick Abboud, City Planner  
DATE: May 15, 2019  
SUBJECT: Signage for large structures with multiple tenants

---

**Introduction** The Economic Development Commission (EDC) has identified a need for business owners regarding signage allowance in large structures that house multiple tenants. Planning staff has also found it challenging to permit effective signage for tenants in this situation. I have met with EDC Commissioner Richardson and reviewed some thoughtful input on the subject and have shown initial support for the two concepts presented in the attached memorandum.

**Analysis** The scenario presented deserves attention to consider a formula that is equitable and reasonable to enforce. Currently, we measure signage on the spit boardwalks in relation to the individual business structures and not treated them as one unit, as had been attempted in the past. Large structures may house many tenants and the maximum allowance for the entire structure may inhibit tenants from having effective signage.

I believe it is best to consider the concepts presented and perform a review of best practices for possible incorporation.

**Staff Recommendation** Make a motion to address the issue at future meetings

**Attachments** Memo from EDC.



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## Memorandum

TO: HOMER ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMISSION

THROUGH: JENNY CARROLL, SPECIAL PROJECTS & COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

DATE: MAY 8, 2019

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO CONSIDER AMENDMENT TO SIGN CODE FOR LARGE COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS WITH MULTIPLE BUSINESS TENANTS.

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The Economic Development Advisory Commission is reaching out to you about a deficiency in the sign code as it relates to large, commercial buildings with multiple business tenants. After becoming aware of the issue through comments received in the 2017 Business Retention and Expansion Survey, the EDC began researching the existing Homer Sign Code, interviewing small business owners and talking to Planning Department staff to better understand the issue and develop possible solutions.

The EDC took this topic up at their April 9, 2019 meeting. In summary, the existing sign code provides a mathematical system based on road frontage to regulate signage in the community. This system seems to work well for the majority of businesses in Homer, equitably allotting signage square footage for businesses located in buildings with only one or two business tenants and businesses that are one of a group of small buildings on one commercial property.

Where the code falls short is in allocating adequate signage space to larger commercial buildings that house a larger number of small business tenants. The code provides no provision to increase signage for multi-level buildings or for buildings housing businesses two or more spaces deep from the storefront. This creates a barrier to sign advertising for small businesses located in larger multi-tenant buildings.

Examples of buildings with individual businesses that may have inadequate signage for the number of business that are in the building:

- Point of View Mall [on Lake Street]
- Blue Old Bank Building [corner of Lake Street and East End Road]
- Hillas Building [on Pioneer Ave uphill beside the movie theatre]
- Bypass Mall [on Sterling Highway adjacent to O'Riley's]
- Alderfer Building [on Ocean Drive at Beluga Lake]
- Kachemak Center [on Pioneer Ave between Heath and Lake Street]

It is in Homer's economic interest to develop strategies and actions that support small business retention and expansion.

After their discussion, the EDC passed a motion to 1) share the deficiency with you for your deliberation and 2) recommend sign code amendments to calculate allotted signage above 150 ft<sup>2</sup> to better accommodate the advertising needs of small businesses leasing space in large commercial buildings with multiple business tenants.

Below, the EDC shares two amendment ideas developed by EDC Commissioner Richardson in hopes it is useful in starting the discussion. The EDC has spoken with City Planner Abboud who is also looking into model codes to see what other methods are used to accommodate spatial features of buildings.

## POTENTIAL METHODS FOR ALLOTTING SIGNAGE ABOVE 150 SQUARE FEET

### Method 1 – Calculation by Secondary and Tertiary Entrances on Public Right of Way

- Buildings that have more than one entrance for clients, where the entrance is accessed by a separate public right-of-way that is bordered by a maintained road. The following criteria will be:
  - A separate sign permit by the city must be issued in addition to the original permit
  - Secondary and tertiary entrances must be commonly used by clients and must access the interior of the building and conversely the entrance must access a parking lot, sidewalk or road. These entrances are approved at the sole direction of the planning department. Alleys, stairways to upper levels, Emergency Exits likely do not apply.
  - Additional Square footage is applied to existing city allotment chart by  $\frac{1}{2}$  [half the amount allotted on the chart]
  - For example, a building with 200 x 12 feet [greater than 750] of wall frontage on a main road are allotted 150 square feet of sign space. With two other public accesses of secondary and tertiary frontage measuring 80 feet by 20 feet [greater than 750] on the east side of the building and 80 feet by 20 feet [greater than 750] on the west side of the building.
    - 2400 square feet = 150 square feet original signage
    - East side 1600 square feet = secondary allotment  $150 \text{ sq feet} / 2 = 75 \text{ square feet}$
    - West side 1600 square feet = tertiary allotment  $150 \text{ sq feet} / 2 = 75 \text{ square feet}$
  - Total of 300 square feet of signage approved.



### Method 2 – Split Level Buildings and Buildings Two or More Businesses Deep

- Buildings that have more than one entrance for clients, where the building is split level or two or more businesses deep.
  - In a building that has one frontage, which is the only frontage that has access to a public street, and is split level or is more than one business in depth – the owner may apply for additional signage if Method 1 above does not provide additional signage.
  - Additional Square footage is applied to existing city allotment chart by  $\frac{1}{2}$  [half the amount allotted on the chart]

- If the building is split level, then the larger of the two levels will be applied to the original allotment and smaller level will be assigned additional sign square footage based on a calculation of the surface area of the smaller level divided by two.
  - Such as if 150 square foot would be allotted for the largest level, then 75 square feet is added to the original allotment for a total of 225 square feet of signage.
- If the building is more than one business deep, and at least two businesses are not represented by the frontage calculation, then  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the original frontage calculation will be applied to the original frontage allotment. Therefore, if the original frontage gained the building 150 square feet of signage – 75 square feet would be added for a total of 225 square feet.



Thank you and the Planning Department staff for giving this your consideration. Please alert us to any worksessions you may have on this topic. Commissioner Richardson and potentially other EDC Commissioners would like to attend.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Economic Development Advisory Commission recommends that the Advisory Planning Commission pass a motion to review options and amend the Sign Ordinance to address the deficiency in the current code as it relates to larger commercial buildings that house several small business tenants.



City Planner Abboud reviewed Staff Report 19-45 explaining that in a technical rewrite of the Homer City Code in 2008 there was inadvertently a change in the definition of medical clinic. He would like to get something on the books right now that allows clinic in CBD out right and they can leave the size requirements, etc., to the CUP process. Currently only professional office is allowed and this does not allow medical clinics. They can then permit medical clinic outright.

City Planner Abboud brought forth points on medical clinics in the Residential Office district. He responded to a question on the ramifications to eliminating the term medical clinic would result in the requirement to make amendments to Professional Office. He commented on an instance when at one time there was a dispensary or pharmacy in the RO. The district was changed to RO because of demand and if the need is there the demand will grow and sometime in the future will change to possibly CBD because of the changes in the nature of the district.

Commissioner Banks reiterated the need for the change in the CBD by having the commission make a motion on amending City Code to add allowing Medical Clinics in the CBD and outlining the process that would be required to effect that change. He questioned if the Commission could address the medical district overlay at the same time.

City Planner Abboud explained that the Commission will have to follow the process on the remand first and appeal if that happens before addressing those changes.

Commissioner Highland pointed out that they would have to have a public hearing at the next meeting then it would go to City Council and they would not approve it until their meeting in July.

HIGHLAND/BANKS MOVED TO ADD MEDICAL CLINIC TO THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AS A PERMITTED USE.

There was a brief discussion on the amendment being the most reasonable.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

**B.** Staff Report 19-46, Sign Ordinance

Chair Venuti introduced the item by reading of the title.

City Planner Abboud stated that he appreciated the work done by Dr. Richardson and advocacy on the recommendations that were proposed. He acknowledged the difficulties with the

current sign code and commented on two of the proposed recommendations that were presented.

Discussion ensued and the following points and comments were made:

- Building owner responsibility on signage allotment
- Allowance of signage for buildings that face multiple streets, dual level building signage
- Interior tenant signage allotment
- View sign code from Gilbert, Arizona which can be used as a guideline
- Previous work and education done by Planning staff and Commissioners
- Educating the public
- Signage types and measurement of light, electronic sign messages
- Not wanting an ugly clutter of signs, issues with signage sizes and what that actually looks like

Commissioner Highland favored having a short discussion on the issue as a courtesy to see what was possible.

Chair Venuti noted that a recommendation to motion this to a future meeting.

Commissioner Banks commented that they currently have several items on their worklist and did not think that they should hold worksessions during the summer and recommended that they address this in the fall.

Commissioner Smith requested input from City Planner Abboud on that recommendation.

City Planner Abboud responded that they are waiting on some items but that a response should be motioned as a courtesy.

Commissioner Petska-Rubalcava mentioned the previous presentation on Wayfinding and Trail signage and asked about combining those two things as they promote business also which provides a better gateway.

City Planner Abboud did not want to combine those two things as he believed that they can allow that type of signage without messing with the city code.

Commissioner Smith recommended putting this in a worksession in September.

Commissioner Banks agreed with the suggestion of adding it to the worklist and they can address the topic.

SMITH/HIGHLAND MOVED TO ADD THIS TO A WORKSESSION ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2019

↑  
There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

**INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

A. City Manager's Report for the May 13, 2019 Homer City Council meeting

**COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

**COMMENTS OF THE STAFF**

Deputy City Clerk Krause inquired about using monument signage noting that several businesses could be advertised on that type of sign for a multi tenanted building.

City Planner Abboud responded that they do allow that type of signage. He then reminded the Commissioners to read the administrative law decision on the Medical Clinic. He noted the good information and decisions and how they need to make decisions defensible. He has also arranged to have the City Attorney perform some training at a worksession.

City Planner Abboud responded to question on the status of the Wayfinding that it was presented to Council but it is awaiting funding. He provided a bit of history on the Wayfinding idea and ended that it currently is in Council's hands for funding.

City Planner Abboud responded that if the commission would like to go there and address the issues regarding the clear cutting they can go there.

City Planner Abboud assured Commissioner Smith that the property owners are getting well above value for their properties, noting he is aware of who is buying up the property so they should not worry about it.

**COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Highland inquired about the status of the Wayfinding plan and would not like to see the EDC go ahead on signs without input from the Commission. She then questioned the clear cutting of the lot on the way up West Hill and is cringing and waiting for someone to question who authorize that to be done. She wish that they have something that addressed that issue and is really concerned about improving the aesthetics.

Commissioner Smith commented on the topic of establishing a Medical District and it has come to his attention that the more of those properties that changeover are they in effect



# City of Homer

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## Planning

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### Staff Report PL 19-87

TO: Homer Advisory Planning Commission  
THROUGH: Rick Abboud, City Planner  
FROM: Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner  
DATE: October 16, 2019  
SUBJECT: Sign Code

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#### Introduction

In May, the Economic Development Commission (EDC) identified a need for business owners regarding signage allowance in large structures that house multiple tenants. Planning staff has also found it challenging to permit effective signage for tenants in this situation. The Planning Commission determined they wanted to work on this topic in the fall.

There main gist of the EDC comments address allowed signage on some of our community's larger buildings, where the building is two stories, or has more than one main entrance – such as on a corner lot. The EDC offers two solutions for determining how much signage a building can have, called “Method 1” and “Method 2.” (Attached)

Staff would also like to briefly touch on allowing additional freestanding signs, and parking lot identification. Examples for each scenario will be provided at the meeting.

#### Analysis

Current Code – Table 2 Part B (see attachments), lists the square feet of wall frontage of the building, and the corresponding allowed signage PER BUILDING. Emphasis is added because if there is more than one structure, each structure is allowed signage according to the calculated wall frontage. For example, a Spit boardwalk with 10 buildings can have a separate sign allowance for each building. But a strip mall with interior tenants, or two story structure with 10 tenants is limited to a maximum of 150 square feet of signage. The sign code was amended in 2012 to allow the per building sign allowance, but no solution was adopted for multitenant buildings.

#### Proposed solutions

*Method 1: Corner lots.*

There are a few buildings in Homer that are large, and are located on corner lots. A clear example is Kachemak Center at the corner of Pioneer, Heath and Lake St (Subway, Summit

Physical Therapy are current tenants). Signage has long been a problem at this location. The building has great street traffic, but for the size of the structure and number of tenant spaces, 150 square feet of signage across three walls for the whole property is inadequate. Method 1 would grant additional signage on the east and west sides of the building, because they each front a maintained street. The amount of signage would be limited to ½ the allowance on the front (75 feet each).

**Analysis:** Method one provides a solution for side entrances.

**Staff comment:** What about just applying the existing wall frontage rules to the side of the building? Again this is for corner lots with multiple tenants and a public entrance on more than one face of the building. There are a handful of properties this applies to. Staff will provide examples at the meeting.

**Question 1 for the Commission:** Would you allow a second freestanding sign on the property? Perhaps if it was serving the secondary entrance? (Again, only talking about corner lots in this discussion)

*Method 2: Multi-story buildings and/or more than 1 interior tenant.*

This proposal is trickier and may have some unintended consequences. This method addresses multi-story buildings, or buildings where there are tenants with interior only access. Examples include the Kachemak Center basement, the building on Sterling Highway where the toy store and Thai restaurant are (345 Sterling Highway), and the Hillas Building at 126 W Pioneer Ave (next to the movie theater). Additional signage, in the amount of half the base allowance, would be granted to the structure. For a the Hillas building, if the current allowable signage is 150 square feet, that would increase by 50%, or 75 square feet, for a new total of 225 square feet. It would be up to the building owner to allocate the signage among the tenants, and could include a combination of wall and freestanding signage. (HCC already has limits on the size of the freestanding sign – no changes are under consideration.)

There is potential with this method that some really large signs could be put on a building, to the detriment of the smaller tenants. Larger communities address this by having an overall sign plan for the whole structure, so there is a cohesive plan starting from building design and construction. The concept of a unified permit up front is something we can explore, but regulating sign dimensions and proportions on a building is probably beyond the level of regulation our community desires, and beyond the level of service our department can provide. Staff just wants the Commission to be aware each solution may also have some unintended consequences. Staff continues to think through method two.

**Question 2:** Any comments or concerns on method 2?

### **Parking Lot entrance/exit signs**

This is a small point, but we have a few locations in the City where the primary entrance may have a freestanding sign, but a secondary entrance on another street is not allowed to have a logo or commercial message. Example; the main Safeway entrance is clearly defined on the Sterling Highway. Same with Wells Fargo. But if you are driving on Hazel Ave, its not as clear which businesses are served by which driveway. It is legal to have an entrance or exit sign, but that sign can't include the logo or business name. Staff researched Port Townsend WA, which has code language addressing this situation. Staff offers this idea for discussion.

#### Port Townsend

A. Parking Lot Identification Signs. Parking lot identification signs may be erected without a sign permit if restricted to posting regulations regarding the use of the lot and to identifying a parking lot with its owner, operator, or name of the business providing the lot. No advertising other than the name of the business shall be included. The total sign area for parking lot identification signs shall not exceed 32 square feet for each 1,000 square feet of parking lot area and each sign face shall not exceed six square feet; provided, that each lot shall be allowed at least one parking lot identification sign; and provided further, that these restrictions may be exceeded to the extent required by any applicable laws of the state. Parking lot identification signs shall not exceed a sign height of six feet;

**Staff comment:** Port Townsend has many small parking lots; a sign per 1,000 square feet of parking lot area is way more than we need in Homer. But the idea of at least one sign per parcel could assist with wayfinding. For example, the Chamber of Commerce is easily seen from the Sterling Highway. But the Ohlson Lane Entrance, where day parking for RV's is offered, would be an appropriate place for a clear entrance sign. Other examples could be the Safeway entrance on Hazel Ave, or the college entrance on Kachemak Way.

**Question 3:** What does the commission think about exploring parking lot signage? If there is consensus on this topic, staff can do further research and create a proposal.

### **Staff Recommendation**

#### **Commission discuss the following questions and provide feedback**

1. Should an additional freestanding sign be allowed for a secondary entrance? Perhaps for a total of two freestanding signs per lot?
2. Any comments or concerns on method 2?
3. What does the commission think about exploring parking lot signage?

**Next Steps:** Staff will listen to Commission discussion and comments, and provide additional information as requested. Eventually, an ordinance will be drafted with proposed changes.

**Attachments**

1. Table 2 – HCC 21.60
2. May 8, 2019 EDC memo to HPC
3. May 15, 2019 PC minutes excerpt

**Table 2 Part B**

In all other districts not described in Table 2 Part A, the maximum combined total area of all signs, in square feet, except incidental, building marker and flags, shall not exceed the following:

Square feet of wall frontage (c):	Maximum allowed sign area per principal building:
750 s.f. and over	150 s.f.
650 to 749	130 s.f.
550 to 649	110 s.f.
450 to 549	90 s.f.
350 to 449	70 s.f.
200 to 349	50 s.f.
0 to 199	30 s.f.

Motion carried.

## **VISITORS/PRESENTATIONS**

### **REPORTS**

A. Staff Report 19-86, City Planner's Report

City Planner Abboud provided a summary of Staff Report 19-86. He provided comment on the following items:

- Public Hearing at the next meeting on the ordinance placing a moratorium on Profession Offices and Medical Clinics in Residential Office District
- Received the decision notice this afternoon that the City has prevailed on the appeal hearing for the Remand  
If nothing further comes about they will be able to start talking about creation of a medical district at the December meeting.
- They have prevailed on the Windjammer CUP appeal on all counts

Commissioner Rubalcava volunteered for the December 9, 2019 City Council meeting

Commissioner Highland requested clarification from the chair to speak on the City Manager's Report.

Chair Venuti responded that it was on the agenda under informational items and that comments or questions should be done at that time.

A brief discussion was entertained on the basis and reasoning to place a moratorium on applications for Medical Clinics.

City Planner Abboud provided clarification on the appeal process remaining for the Windjammer CUP 14-05.

### **PUBLIC HEARING(S)**

### **PLAT CONSIDERATION**

### **PENDING BUSINESS**

A. Staff Report 19-87, Sign Code

Chair Venuti introduced the item by reading of the title into the record.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen reviewed Staff Report 19-87 using visual components on the overhead monitors as samples of the proposed code changes. She noted some of the previous



work done on the sign code in 2012 that applied to businesses on the Spit. She reviewed the three recommendations from staff and requested input from the Commission.

Large Businesses (buildings) on Corner Lots with multiple entrances – Example used was Kachemak Center

The Commission recommended that if additional free standing signage is permitted that there should be a specific distance between the signs.

Adding the staff recommendation of 75 sf was acceptable to the Commission

Corner Lots, Smaller Buildings, two stories

Staff recommended allowing 50% of existing to a maximum of 225sf that a building owner would be responsible for dividing among tenants.

Parking lot Entrance or exit signage with logo or colors

The Commission agreed that they would like further information on this concept. It was agreed that it would not be a widely used signage but could be implemented for businesses that may have multiple accesses referring to the Kachemak Center as an example.

Commissioner Highland offered comments on the controversy experienced during the previous sign code amendments and that every business owner wanted the biggest sign possible.

City Planner Abboud responded to Commissioner Davis' inquiry about Sign Design review and the recommendations make to applicants regarding signage design.

Staff will provide specifics for the commission to review at the next meeting.

B. Staff Report 19-88, Permitting

Chair Venuti introduced the item by reading of the title into the record.

City Planner Abboud reviewed Staff Report 19-88 for the Commission. He requested the Commission to amend the draft ordinance to remove Lines 44-47 for the following reasons:

- Driveways are permitted by Public Works Department
- Entrances are self-explanatory
- Asbuilt survey shows the site plan and parking areas are quite easily figured
- Proof of compliance with applicable building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and other such codes are governed by the State and the planning staff is not trained to enforce this. A building inspector would be required as well as developing building codes. He is not sure who the legitimate authority is to provide this information.
- Additionally the State Fire Marshal would sign off on commercial projects and that information would be required to be submitted with the application.
- It would be another sheet a paper that is retained by the Planning Department but have no use to the department



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### Staff Report PL 19-94

TO: Homer Advisory Planning Commission  
THROUGH: Rick Abboud, City Planner  
FROM: Julie Engebretsen, Deputy City Planner  
DATE: November 6, 2019  
SUBJECT: Sign code update

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### Introduction

Staff has refined the ideas presented at the last meeting. Please ask any questions or recommend changes. When the Commission is done with discussing this staff report, the next step is for staff/attorney to prepare an ordinance for public hearing.

### Analysis

There are five areas of code this staff report addresses

1. Creates an allowance for a parking lot identification sign. Code already allows for “entrance” or regulatory signage, but does not allow for business identification.
2. Additional freestanding sign for parcels with more than one access street.
3. Additional sign allowance for multitenant, multiple street access buildings (corner lots)
4. Additional sign allowance for split level buildings and buildings two or more businesses deep
5. Creation of an Optional Master Sign Permit Plan

### Parking lot and freestanding signs

Staff note: staff recommends adding only one of these to city code. Parking lot identification would increase ease of wayfinding in our community. Additional freestanding signs could increase sign clutter and may not be effective business signage. Staff recommends allowing parking lot signage

#### 1. Parking Lot Identification Signage

*Concept:* One directional parking lot identification sign may be erected without a sign permit if restricted to identifying a parking lot with its owner, operator, or name of the business providing the lot. The sign may include the logo, corporate colors or name of the business but no advertising other than the name of the business shall be included. The total sign area shall not exceed six square feet and shall not exceed a sign height of six feet.

**Staff Recommendation 1: Move to amend the sign code to include allowance for one parking lot identification sign per parcel.**

**2. Additional Freestanding sign**

Concept: Each multiple-tenant building is permitted one freestanding sign on each street on which it adjoins and has access. Such signs shall be at least 75 feet apart, measured in a straight line from the base of the sign.

**Staff Recommendation 2:** Do not add this to city code. There are very few locations that would meet the separation requirement. A parking lot identification sign would be a less visually obtrusive, and still enhance wayfinding for drivers.

**3. Multiple-Tenant Buildings which adjoin and have which have more than one entrance for clients that access more than one improved street.**

Concept: Allow for additional signage above 150 square feet per building, in the above conditions.

- A.** Secondary and tertiary entrances must be commonly used by clients and must access the interior of the building and conversely the entrance must access a parking lot, sidewalk or road. These entrances are approved at the sole direction of the planning department. Alleys, stairways to upper levels, Emergency Exits likely do not apply.
- B.** Additional signage is allowed based  $\frac{1}{2}$  the allowance on Table 2 part B to existing per secondary or tertiary street wall frontage. Signage must be placed on the wall face of the building the allowance was based on.

Example: a building with 200 x 12 feet [greater than 750] of wall frontage on a main road are allotted 150 square feet of sign space. With two other public accesses of secondary and tertiary frontage measuring 80 feet by 20 feet [greater than 750] on the east side of the building and 80 feet by 20 feet [greater than 750] on the west side of the building.

- 2400 square feet = 150 square feet original signage
- East side 1600 square feet = secondary allotment  $150 \text{ sq feet} / 2 = 75 \text{ square feet}$
- West side 1600 square feet = tertiary allotment  $150 \text{ sq feet} / 2 = 75 \text{ square feet}$
- Total of 300 square feet of signage approved.

**Staff Recommendation 3:** Move to amend the sign code to include allowance for additional signage on secondary or tertiary building walls.

- 4.** Additional sign allowance for multitenant split level buildings and buildings two or more businesses deep

**Concept:** Allowance for additional signage for multitenant buildings that have more than one entrance for clients, where the building is split level or two or more businesses deep.

- In a building that has one frontage, which is the only frontage that has access to a public street, and is split level or is more than one business in depth – the owner may apply for additional signage if #3 above does not provide additional signage. (Staff note: a parcel can only get additional signage by one method - i.e. more than one access, multi-story, or interior tenants. Will work out details of technical language with the attorney.)
- Additional signage is allowed based on ½ the allowance of Table 2 Part B.

**EDC Example:** If the building is split level, then the larger of the two levels will be applied to the original allotment and smaller level will be assigned additional sign square footage based on a calculation of the surface area of the smaller level divided by two. Such as if 150 square foot would be allotted for the largest level, then 75 square feet is added to the original allotment for a total of 225 square feet of signage.

**Staff comment:** This is too specific, and there may be unintended consequences. In cases where the upper story has more wall face due to the peak of a roof, the signage could appear ‘top heavy’ on the structure. Further, some of the signage might be used on another side of the structure. The simplest way to administer this code change would be to grant the additional sign allowance and let the building owner determine how and where it will be used among the tenants. Homer has only a few buildings that would use this additional signage allowance.

- If the building is more than one business deep, and at least two businesses are not represented by the frontage calculation, then ½ of the original frontage calculation will be applied to the original frontage allotment. Therefore, if the original frontage gained the building 150 square feet of signage – 75 square feet would be added for a total of 225 square feet.

**Staff comment:** Very few structures in Homer would qualify for this allowance (ie interior tenants). Most multitenant buildings with interior spaces have more than one story, or are on a corner lot, and would use one of those methods for additional signage. But it is a good idea to include in code as this situation could occur.

**Staff Recommendation 4:** Move to amend the sign code to allow additional signage for multitenant split level buildings and buildings two or more businesses deep

##### 5. Creation of an Optional Master Sign Permit Plan

**Concept:** Create a mechanism in code for an optional permanent approval of multitenant building signage. This would be an approval of the overall area of signage,

and allow a land lord to assign each unit wall and freestanding signage area and location. When a new tenant comes in to learn about sign regulations, planning staff would provide the master permit information on how much and the location of their approved signage. No new sign permit application, signed by the land owner, would be required. The tenant can then move forward with sign plans that fit within the already approved parameters. Staff would not review the proposed new signage, unless requested by the tenant.

If another building tenant is out of compliance, staff and the land lord can work on that violation independently of other tenants. Ideally the sign information would also be included in lease documents so tenants would know up front when they enter into a lease agreement.

This amendment would require staff and landlord effort to set up for a building, but should save staff and businesses time in the long term. Several multitenant buildings have frequent tenant changes, such as the Hillas building, and it would be much easier to administer the sign code with a master permit.

**Staff Recommendation 5:** Move to amend the sign code to create a code provision for an optional master sign permit plan

### **Conclusion**

Staff recommends the Commission review and discuss items 1-5, and make recommendations accordingly. Staff does not recommend applying an additional freestanding sign on a lot (#2).

Move to amend the sign code to:

1. Include an allowance for one parking lot identification sign per parcel.
2. *(excluded)*
3. Include an allowance for additional signage on secondary or tertiary building walls.
4. Allow additional signage for multitenant split level buildings and buildings two or more businesses deep
5. Create a code provision for an optional master sign permit plan

Motion carried.

## **PLAT CONSIDERATION**

### **PENDING BUSINESS**

- A. Staff Report 19-94, Sign Code

Chair Venuti introduced the item by reading of the title into the record.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen reviewed Staff Report 19-94 and provided clarification on if one motion or individual motions were required and also what the process would be to follow-up.

BENTZ/RUBALCAVA MOVED TO ADOPT STAFF REPORT 19-94 AND AMEND THE SIGN CODE TO CREATE CODE PROVISION FOR AN OPTIONAL MASTER SIGN PERMIT PLAN AND INCLUDE OPTIONS ONE, THREE AND FOUR.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

- A. City Manager Report for October 28, 2019 City Council Meeting

#### **COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

#### **COMMENTS OF THE STAFF**

City Planner Abboud had no additional comments.

Deputy City Clerk Krause stated that the issue of parking on the Spit has been before the Parks Commission and that since 2007 parking issues have been on the Port and Harbor Commission agendas.

Deputy City Planner Engebretsen stated that 99.9% of the written and public testimony were problem solving and looking at the big picture and not attacking the individual project and in