

Chapter 17.08 - Definitions.

Add the following definition to Chapter 17.08

"Electronic message center sign" means an electrically activated changeable copy sign having variable message and/or graphic presentation capability that can be electronically programmed by computer or handheld device from a remote location. EMCs typically use light emitting diodes (LEDs) or liquid crystal display (LCD) as a lighting source.

Chapter 17.28 – Development Standards – Signs

17.28.005 - Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to enhance the visual environment of the county by regulating the location size and appearance of signs and outdoor advertising.

17.28.010 - Sign standards.

- A. The light from any illuminated sign shall be so shaded, shielded or directed that the light intensity or brightness will not be a nuisance to surrounding areas. Any externally illuminated sign shall be oriented away from the surrounding residences, and away from streets.
- B. Signs projecting over an internal sidewalk or vehicular traffic area shall be at least eight feet above internal walkways and at least sixteen feet above any area used for vehicular traffic.
- C. Signs are permitted in all zoning districts except for residential districts.

17.28.020 - Temporary signs.

Signage for temporary events is allowed for a period not to exceed three days unless documentation is provided that the temporary event exceeds three days. In no case shall temporary signage be allowed for a period exceeding thirty days annually.

17.28.030 - Outdoor advertising display.

Outdoor advertising displays are permitted in all zones, except residential districts.

17.28.040 - Billboards.

- A. Billboards are allowed in industrial, primary agriculture and agriculture residential zones.
- B. Billboards along state routes are subject to permitting regulation by Washington State Department of Transportation.
- C. Billboards along state scenic/historical routes, outside of the jurisdiction of the Washington State Department of Transportation will be regulated for compatibility with the scenic/historical nature of the route.

17.28.050 - Sign setbacks.

A setback minimum of one foot from the leading edge of the sign to the street right-of-way line, or fifteen feet from the edge of the traveled way, whichever is greater, is required. In no case will signs be allowed to be placed in a location or manner that violates sight distance,

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clear view triangle or clear zone requirements as defined in Walla Walla County Code Title 12 and/or Chapter 3.4 of the Walla Walla County Road Design Standards, as determined by the county engineer.

17.28.060 - Sign height.

- A. For industrial districts a maximum of eighty feet, measured from average grade to the highest point on the sign, is allowed.
- B. For commercial districts a maximum of fifty feet, measured from average grade to the highest point on the sign, is allowed.
- C. For all other districts, a maximum of ~~thirty~~forty-five feet, measured from the average grade to the highest point on the sign, is allowed.

17.28.090 - Prohibited signs.

- A. The following signs are prohibited:
 - 1. Signs on any vehicle or trailer that is parked on public or private property and visible from a public right-of-way for the purpose of circumventing the provisions of this chapter. This provision shall not prohibit signs that are painted on or magnetically attached to any vehicle operating in the normal course of business;
 - 2. Signs that purport to be, are an imitation of, or resemble an official traffic sign or signal, could cause confusion with any official signs, or which obstruct the visibility of any traffic/street sign or signal;
 - 3. Signs attached to utility, street light, and traffic control standard poles;
 - 4. Signs attached to trees or rocks;
 - 5. Swinging projecting signs;
 - 6. Signs, together with their supports, braces, guys and anchors that are not maintained in a neat, clean and attractive condition, free from rust, corrosion, peeling paint or other surface deterioration;
 - 7. Abandoned signs;
 - 8. Flashing, blinking or fluttering parts of signs;
 - 9. Signs that are unsafe or hazardous;
 - 10. Signs on doors, windows, or fire escapes that restrict free ingress or egress;
 - 11. Unique signs unless specifically approved by the regional planning director when deemed necessary. Approval of the sign is based on the effect of the proposed sign not contributing to a cluttered, confusing or unsafe condition, or would not be in conflict with the character of the zoning district;
 - 12. Signs on public property without prior approval;
 - 13. Searchlights or beacons;
 - 14. ~~Changing message centers;~~ [Electronic message center signs which display motion or flashing as part of the sign](#)
 - 15. Any other sign not meeting the provisions of this chapter.

Add new section to Chapter 17.08 for electronic message signs

17.28.100 – Electronic Message Center Signs

- A. Electronic message center signs shall be (conditionally?) permitted in Public Reserve zones in accordance with the limitations of this Chapter and as defined in Chapter 17.08.
- B. Size. One double-faced electronic message sign is permitted per street frontage and shall be 1/2 square foot per foot of street frontage, up to a maximum of 150 square feet per face.
- C. Setbacks. Signs shall meet all setback and sight distance requirements as required in Section 17.25.050.
- D. Signs located adjacent to or across the street from residential zones shall not operate between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.
- E. Signs shall be located on the same site as the use for which it is associated.
- F. Information on the sign shall only include alphanumeric characters, punctuation, static images, graphics, logos and symbols.
- G. All displays shall be static messages only. No video, scrolling, streaming, flashing, or trailing content, animations, or similar displays are permitted.
- H. The change from one message to another shall be no more frequent than once every 8 seconds when along major arterials and 20 seconds along all other roadways, unless otherwise specified by the Director or (hearing examiner).
- I. [Spokane County version] Signs shall not exceed brightness level of 0.3 foot candles above ambient light as measured using a foot candle meter at a preset distance depending on sign size. Measurement distance shall be determined by using the following calculation: the square root of the product area of the sign area times 100. Example: 12 square foot sign $\sqrt{(12*100)} = 34.6$ feet measuring distance. [Snohomish County version] The maximum brightness levels shall not exceed 5,000 nits when measured from sign face at its maximum, during daylight hours. The maximum brightness levels shall not exceed 500 nits when measured from the sign face at its maximum brightness, between sunset and sunrise, as those time are determined by the National Weather Service.
- J. Electronic message signs shall be equipped with a mechanism that automatically adjusts the brightness in response to ambient conditions and equipped with a means to immediately turn off the display if it malfunctions or is not complying with the regulations in this Section. Manual override function shall be accessible to emergency responders.
- A-K. When an electronic message center sign is proposed adjacent to a Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) right-of-way, the County shall coordinate and request comment from the agency.

Commented [LP1]: Should a conditional use permit be required?

Commented [LP2]: The size calculation is the same as the City of Walla Walla, but the maximum size proposed here (150sf) is twice the size of what is allowed under City standards.

Commented [LP3]: Two options for brightness levels.

Commented [LP4]: This may not be necessary here (it is already part of our review process for all signs on highways) but was added to mimic section on Billboards in existing code.