



DATE: March 5, 2021

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: Bruce Ambo, Principal Planner (879-6801; [bruce.ambo@chicoca.gov](mailto:bruce.ambo@chicoca.gov))

RE: Amendments to Exempt Governmental Signs in Chapter 19.74 of Title 19 of the Municipal Sign Code

## SUMMARY

The proposed Sign Code amendments would create new definitions for Governmental Signs and Information Sign Kiosks, exempt these sign types from the sign permit requirements, and add provisions in the Sign Code where none currently exist in the PQ (Public/Quasi Public Facilities) zone. The Informational Sign Kiosk program is an important component of the Downtown Access Action Plan (DAAP) and serves as an economic development tool by providing pedestrian wayfinding signage with information regarding Downtown accessibility, parking, community events, business directory, historical buildings and similar community information. The proposed Sign Code amendments were initiated by Public Works staff as part of the DAAP and at the request of the Downtown Chico Business Association (DCBA). Planning staff added the sign code provision in the PQ zone because none currently exist in the Sign Code.

### Recommendation:

The Community Development Director and Public Works – Engineering Director recommend that the Planning Commission:

- 1) Hold a public hearing regarding the proposed Sign Code amendments to Title 19 of the Chico Municipal Code; and
- 2) Adopt Resolution No. 21-03 recommending City Council adoption of an ordinance to amend Title 19 of the Chico Municipal Code as set forth therein (**Attachment A**).

## BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The Informational Sign Kiosks are an important component in the Downtown Access Action Plan (DAAP, **Attachment B**), particularly as it relates to “Wayfinding and Parking Guidance.” The general concept in wayfinding signage and parking guidance is summarized below:

*“In addition to static wayfinding signage, the City can deliver parking information through multiple outlets including vehicle messaging systems, digital signage, and various websites, including the, Go! Downtown Chico site and other hotel, travel and parking sources. Wayfinding is an integral part of any parking operation. Drivers need to be informed of facility locations, space availability, time restrictions, and parking rates. Navigation from place to place within a parking facility is often overlooked and undervalued. Knowing where one is in a facility, where there are available spaces and knowing how to navigate to those spaces is one of the most fundamental aspects of a successful parking program. The addition of wayfinding signage may significantly improve the ability of a patron to enter, leave and return to a facility. (Chapter 15 - Wayfinding and Parking Guidance)”*

The Informational Sign Kiosks (please see **Attachment C**) are 100% solar powered and provide digital neighborhood news feeds that enable City staff, transit partners, and local businesses to provide real-time updates to their outdoor visitor and local communities about local public health and safety news, city programming, and local business news and events. The signs' sensors are also able to provide (unidentifiable) pedestrian traffic count data. The Informational Sign Kiosks would be installed at various Downtown sidewalk locations (**Attachment D**).

As a matter of minor Sign Code cleanup, staff is recommending that the Community Development Director be allowed to determine sign review parameters in the PQ (Public/Quasi-Public Facilities) zone. The PQ zone includes schools, public facilities and hospitals and does not have signage regulations. The proposed amendments would give the Community Development Director the authority to determine allowable signage “based on comparable sign installations for similar uses, the use of the site, and surrounding zoning districts.”

### **Summary of Proposed Sign Code Amendments**

#### Definitions (CMC 19.74.040)

- Added definitions of “Governmental Sign” and “Informational Sign Kiosk”
- Modified definition of “Electronic Reader Board Sign” to clarify that an Informational Sign Kiosk is not an electronic reader board sign

#### Exemptions from Sign Approval (CMC 19.74.060)

- Added an exemption for Governmental Signs, which includes Informational Sign Kiosks

#### Sign Standards by Zoning District (CMC 19.74.140)

- Added sign review parameters for the Community Development Director in the PQ (Public-Quasi Public) zoning district

### **ENVIROMENTAL REVIEW**

The proposed amendments to Title 19 of the Chico Municipal Code have been determined to be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule Exemption), and pursuant to Section 15311(a) (Accessory Structures – On Premises Signs) of the CEQA Guidelines.

### **DISTRIBUTION**

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### **ATTACHMENTS**

- A. Resolution No. 21-03, Exhibit I
- B. Chapter 15 “Wayfinding and Parking Guidance” and Chapter 16 “Education and Outreach, Downtown Access Action Plan by Dixon Resources Unlimited 3/25/19
- C. Soofa Signs for Cities brochure
- D. Downtown Informational Signage Location Map

**RESOLUTION NO. 21-03**

**RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF CHICO PLANNING COMMISSION  
RECOMMENDING CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL OF  
AMENDMENTS TO EXEMPT GOVERNMENTAL SIGNS IN  
CHAPTER 19.74 OF TITLE 19 OF THE  
CHICO MUNICIPAL SIGN CODE  
(City of Chico)**

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered the various proposed sign code amendments, staff report, and comments at a duly noticed public hearing held in the manner required by law; and

WHEREAS, the proposed sign code amendments would exempt certain governmental signs that are installed in the City right-of-way or on City property; and

WHEREAS, the proposed sign code amendments establish new definitions of Governmental Sign and Informational Sign Kiosk; and

WHEREAS, the proposed sign code amendments would facilitate the installation of the Informational Sign Kiosks in the Downtown area; and

WHEREAS, the proposed sign code amendments have been determined to be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) (General Rule Exemption), and pursuant to Section 15311(a) (Accessory Structures – On Premises Signs) of the CEQA regulations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Chico as follows:

1. The Planning Commission determines:

- A. The proposed sign code amendments are consistent with the General Plan; and
- B. The proposed sign code amendments are consistent with other applicable provisions of the Municipal Code and compatible with the uses authorized in the applicable zoning districts for which the revisions are proposed.

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2. The Planning Commission recommends that the City Council approve the amendments to the Chico Municipal Code as set forth in Exhibit I.

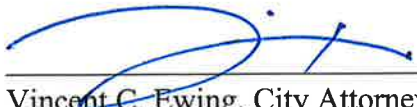
THE FOREGOING RESOLUTION was adopted by the Planning Commission of the City of Chico at its meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 2021, by the following vote:

- AYES:
- NOES:
- ABSENT:
- ABSTAIN:
- DISQUALIFIED:

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce Ambo, Planning Commission Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Vincent C. Ewing, City Attorney\*

\*Pursuant to the Charter of the City of Chico Section 906(e)

## Exhibit I

### Chapter 19.74

#### SIGNS

##### Section:

- 19.74.010 Purpose
- 19.74.020 Applicability
- 19.74.030 General Provisions
- 19.74.040 Definitions
- 19.74.050 Sign review
- 19.74.060 Exemptions from sign approval
- 19.74.070 Comprehensive sign program
- 19.74.080 Prohibited signs
- 19.74.090 Nonconforming signs
- 19.74.100 Abandoned signs
- 19.74.110 General provisions for all signs
- 19.74.120 Standards for specific types of signs
- 19.74.130 Portable signs
- 19.74.140 Sign standards by zoning district

##### 19.74.010 Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide minimum standards to safeguard life, health, property, and public welfare, and to preserve the character of the City by regulating the size, height, design, quality of materials, construction, location, lighting, and maintenance of all signs and sign structures not enclosed within a building, to accomplish the following:

- A. To protect and enhance the character of residential neighborhoods and business areas, open views and vistas, and property values by prohibiting obtrusive and incompatible signs;
- B. To provide a reasonable and comprehensive system of sign controls;
- C. To encourage signs which are well-designed, balanced, and pleasing in appearance, and to provide incentive and latitude for variety, good design relationship, spacing, and location;
- D. To encourage a desirable urban character while minimizing clutter and while recognizing the need for signs as a major form of communication;
- E. To provide for fair and equal treatment of sign users;
- F. To provide for a reasonable period of time for the elimination of nonconforming signs;
- G. To promote public safety by providing that official traffic regulation devices be easily visible and free from any nearby visual obstructions, including blinking signs, excessive number of signs, or signs that in any way resemble official signs;
- H. To eliminate traffic safety hazards to pedestrians and motorists posed by off-site signs bearing commercial messages;
- I. To generally limit commercial signage to on-site locations in order to protect the aesthetic environment from the visual clutter associated with the unrestricted proliferation of signs while also providing adequate channels of communication to the public;

J. To allow the communication of information for both commercial and non-commercial purposes without regulating the content of non-commercial messages;

K. To allow the expression of political, religious, and other non-commercial speech at all times;

L. To protect the investment in property made by persons who choose to live, work or conduct business within the City;

M. To maintain the peace and tranquility of residential zones and neighborhoods by generally forbidding commercial signs at private residences while allowing residents the opportunity, within reasonable limits, to express political, religious, and other non-commercial messages from their homes; and

N. To accommodate the need for signs to direct members of the public to various destinations and places, activities, and uses, in order to provide for maximum public convenience.

Ord. 2443

#### 19.74.020 Applicability.

A. The sign standards provided in this chapter are intended to apply to signs in every zoning district in the City except the TND Zoning District. Signs in the TND Zoning District are regulated by Chapter 19.92. Only signs authorized by this chapter shall be allowed in the zoning districts indicated unless otherwise expressly provided in this chapter.

B. If a new zoning district is created after the enactment of this chapter, the Director shall have the authority to make determinations as to the applicability of appropriate sign regulations in compliance with Chapter 19.02 (Interpretation of Regulations) until this chapter is amended to govern the new zoning district.

C. Signs shall be considered during the City's site design and architectural review process (Chapter 19.18) to ensure that all signs are well-designed, compatible with their surroundings, and do not detract from the overall visual quality of the City.

Ord. 2443

#### 19.74.030 General Provisions.

A. **Owner's Consent Required.** The consent of the property owner is required before any sign may be displayed on any real or personal property within the City. In the case of public property, the owner's consent shall be pursuant to a policy adopted by the City Council.

B. **Substitution of Noncommercial Message.** Subject to the owner's consent, a non-commercial message of any type may be substituted for all or part of the commercial or non-commercial message on any sign allowed pursuant to this chapter. Design criteria which may apply to commercial signs, such as color, lettering style or height, and compatibility with other signs on the same parcel or other signs subject to a sign program, do not apply to noncommercial signs even when they are in an area subject to a sign program, master plan or specific plan. No special or additional permit is required to substitute a non-commercial message for any other message on an allowable sign, provided the sign is already permitted or exempt from the permit requirement. When a non-commercial message is substituted for any other message, the sign is still subject to the

same location and structure regulations, such as size, height, illumination, duration of display, building and electrical code requirements, as would apply if the sign were used to display a commercial message or some other non-commercial message. This substitution provision shall prevail over any other provision to the contrary, whether more specific or not, in this chapter and applies retroactively to sign programs, master plans and specific plans which were adopted or approved before this chapter was enacted.

C. Substitution of Commercial Messages. This substitution provision does not automatically allow substitution of one commercial message for another commercial message, nor does it automatically allow free substitution of a commercial message in a place where only a noncommercial message is allowed. Such substitutions, however, may be allowed by other provisions of this chapter. This provision does not, by itself, allow off-site commercial messages to be substituted for on-site commercial messages, however, such substitution may also be allowed by other provisions of this chapter.

D. On-Site and Off-Site Distinction. All distinctions between on-site and off-site signs in this chapter apply only to commercial messages. All such distinctions do not apply to non-commercial messages.

E. Classification of Sign Type and Purpose. Unless otherwise allowed by state or federal law, all references to the specific function, content, or typical uses of an on-site commercial sign are non-binding and shall be deemed directory rather than mandatory.

F. Severance. If any section, sentence, clause, phrase, word, portion or provision of this chapter is held invalid or unconstitutional or unenforceable by any court of competent jurisdiction, such holding shall not affect, impair, or invalidate any other section, sentence, clause, phrase, word, portion, or provision of this chapter which can be given effect without the invalid portion. In adopting this chapter, the City Council affirmatively declares that if it had been made aware of any invalid provision(s) in this chapter, it would have approved and adopted the remaining provisions and that it desires for all valid provisions to remain in full force and effect.

Ord. 2443

#### 19.74.040 Definitions.

The following are definitions of specialized terms and phrases used in this chapter. The definitions are organized in alphabetical order.

**Abandoned Sign.** Any sign (a) located on property that becomes vacant or unoccupied, (b) which pertains to any occupant or business unrelated to the premises' present occupant or business, or (c) which pertains to a time, event or purpose which no longer applies or exists.

**Alteration.** Any change of copy, sign face, color, size, shape, illumination, position, location, construction, or supporting structure of any sign.

**Anchor tenant.** Within a multi-tenant development, up to three tenants that occupy the greatest amount of floor area.

**Animated or Moving Sign.** Any sign which uses movement, lighting, or special materials to depict action or create a special effect to imitate movement.

**Area of a Sign.** See "Sign Area."

**Awning Sign.** Any sign copy or logo attached to or painted on an awning.

Banner, Flag, or Pennant. Any cloth, bunting, plastic, paper, or similar non-rigid material used for signage.

Bench Sign. Copy painted on any portion of a bench.

Blade Sign. A sign oriented perpendicular to the face of the building, typically hung beneath an awning or canopy.

Building/Structure Frontage. That building elevation which fronts on a public street, public parking lot, private parking lot available to the general public, or pedestrian walk where customer access to a structure is available.

Business Frontage. That portion of a building frontage occupied by a single business tenant having a public entrance within the building frontage.

Business Identification Sign. A commercial sign, either wall-mounted or ground-mounted, identifying a use, facility, service, or product which is located, sold, or manufactured on the same premises as the sign. Typically used to identify the name, address, and use of the premises.

Cabinet Sign (Can Sign). A sign which contains all the text and/or logo symbols within a single enclosed cabinet and which may or may not be internally illuminated.

Center Identification Sign. A wall or ground-mounted sign, typically larger and in addition to smaller monument signs, located on a multi-tenant commercial or industrial property. Typically used to identify the name of the center and anchor tenants.

Changeable Copy Sign. A sign designed to allow the changing of copy through manual, mechanical, or electrical means, including time and temperature.

Channel Letters. Three-dimensional, individually cut letters or figures, illuminated or unilluminated, affixed to a structure.

Commercial Sign. Any sign containing a commercial message. Includes all signs not classified as noncommercial signs.

Construction Sign. A temporary sign on real property on which construction of new improvements is occurring. Typically used to identify the developer, contractor, architect, and other parties involved in the construction.

Directional Sign. An on-site sign designed to guide or direct pedestrian or vehicular traffic to uses on the same site.

Directory Sign. A sign listing the persons, activities or tenants located on-site.

Double-Faced Sign. A sign constructed to display its message on the outer surfaces of two identical and/or opposite parallel planes.

Edge of Roof. On a pitched roof, the lowest portion of the fascia board covering the roof rafters or, if no fascia board exists, the lowest point of the roof rafters. On a flat roof, the top of the parapet wall.

Electronic Reader Board Sign. A sign with a fixed or changing display composed of a series of lights, including LEDs and LCDs, but not including time and temperature displays. An Informational Sign Kiosk is not considered an electronic reader board sign (see "Informational Sign Kiosk" definition.

Flashing Sign. A sign that contains an intermittent or sequential flashing light source.

Future Tenant Identification Sign. A temporary sign on a nonresidential construction site. Typically used to identify the future tenant of a property.



Governmental Sign: Any sign approved by the City Council to be installed or erected in the public right-of-way or on City property, including an informational sign kiosk or other signage intended to inform the public.

**Ground-Mounted Sign.** A sign fixed in an upright position on the ground, not attached to any structure other than a framework, pole, or device erected primarily to support the sign. Includes monument signs and pole signs.

**Height of Sign.** The vertical distance from the uppermost point used in measuring the area of a sign to the average grade immediately below the sign, including its base or the top of the nearest curb of the street on which the sign fronts, whichever measurement is the greatest.

**Illegal Sign.** Any sign which does not comply with these Regulations.

Informational Sign Kiosk: A small structure (less than 8 feet in height, 3 feet in width, and 2 feet in depth) located on a public sidewalk or on public property with an electronic or e-ink display screen or screens intended to provide pedestrians with information on city resources, meetings, programming, community events and attractions, wayfinding directions to parking lots, and a directory of nearby shopping and dining establishments.

**Indirectly Illuminated Sign.** A sign whose light source is external to the sign and which casts its light onto the sign from some distance. Also includes reverse channel letter signs with opaque faces.

**Internally Illuminated Sign.** A sign whose light source is located in the interior of the sign so the rays go through the face of the sign, or a light source which is attached to the face of the sign and is perceived as a design element of the sign.

**Logo.** A trademark or symbol of an organization, belief system, or concept.

**Marquee Sign.** A tall roof-like structure projecting over the entrance of an assembly building or hotel and typically containing changeable copy letters.

**Monument Sign.** An independent, freestanding structure supported on the ground, having a solid base as opposed to being supported by poles or open braces.

**Multi-face sign.** A sign displaying information on at least two surfaces, each having a different orientation, or on a curved surface so that the copy or image is different when viewed from different angles.

**Multiple Tenant Site/Center.** A commercial or industrial development consisting of two or more separate businesses that share either the same parcel or structure and use common access and parking facilities.

**Nonconforming Sign.** Any sign which was legally established in conformance with all applicable laws in effect at the time of original installation but which does not conform to the requirements of this chapter or these Regulations.

**Noncommercial Sign.** Any sign which is intended to convey a noncommercial message including, by way of example and not limitation, commentary on social, political, educational, religious, scientific, artistic, philosophical or charitable subjects. This definition also includes signs regarding fund raising or membership drive activities for noncommercial or nonprofit concerns, entities or groups.

**Off-Site Directional Sign.** Off-premise directional signs are intended to provide identification for access to property that does not abut a public or private street and relies on an easement over adjacent property for access.

**Off-Site Sign.** Any sign identifying a use, facility, service, or product which is not located, sold, or manufactured on the same premises as the sign.

**On-Site Sign.** Any sign identifying a use, facility, service, or product which is located, sold, or manufactured on the same premises as the sign.

**Permanent Sign.** A sign constructed of durable materials and intended to exist for the duration of time that the use or occupant is located on the premises.

**Portable Sign.** Any sign that is designed to be transported, including but not limited to signs with wheels removed; with chassis or support constructed without wheels; designed to be transported by trailer or wheels; converted to an A- or T-frame signs; attached temporarily or permanently to the ground, structure, or other signs; and menu and sandwich boards.

**Projecting Sign.** A sign, other than a wall sign, suspended from, or supported by, a structure and projecting outward.

**Property Frontage.** The front or frontage is that side of a parcel or development site abutting a public or private street.

**Reader Board.** A sign designed to allow the changing of copy through manual, mechanical, electronic, or electrical means including time and temperature.

**Real Estate Sign.** A temporary on-site commercial sign, placed on either residential or nonresidential property, during the time period that some or all of that property is being offered for sale, lease, or rent. Typically used to advertise that a property is for sale, lease, or rent, and provide contact information to inquiring parties.

**Roof Sign.** A sign constructed upon or over a roof, or placed so as to extend above the edge of the roof.

**Sign.** All signs as defined in the Uniform Sign Code.

**Sign Area.** The entire area within a perimeter defined by a continuous line composed of right angles using no more than eight lines which enclose the extreme limits of lettering, logo, trademark, or other graphic representation.

**Temporary Sign.** Any sign fabricated of paper, plywood, fabric, window whitewash, or other light, impermanent material and intended to be displayed unchanged for a temporary period of time.

**Vehicle Sign.** A sign which is attached to or painted on a vehicle or trailer which is parked on or adjacent to any property, the principal purpose of which is to attract attention to a product sold or business located on the property.

**Wall Sign.** A sign which is attached to or painted on the exterior wall of a structure with the display surface of the sign approximately parallel to the building wall.

**Window Sign.** Any sign posted, painted, placed, or affixed in or on any window exposed to public view. Any interior sign which faces any window exposed to public view and is located within three feet of the window.

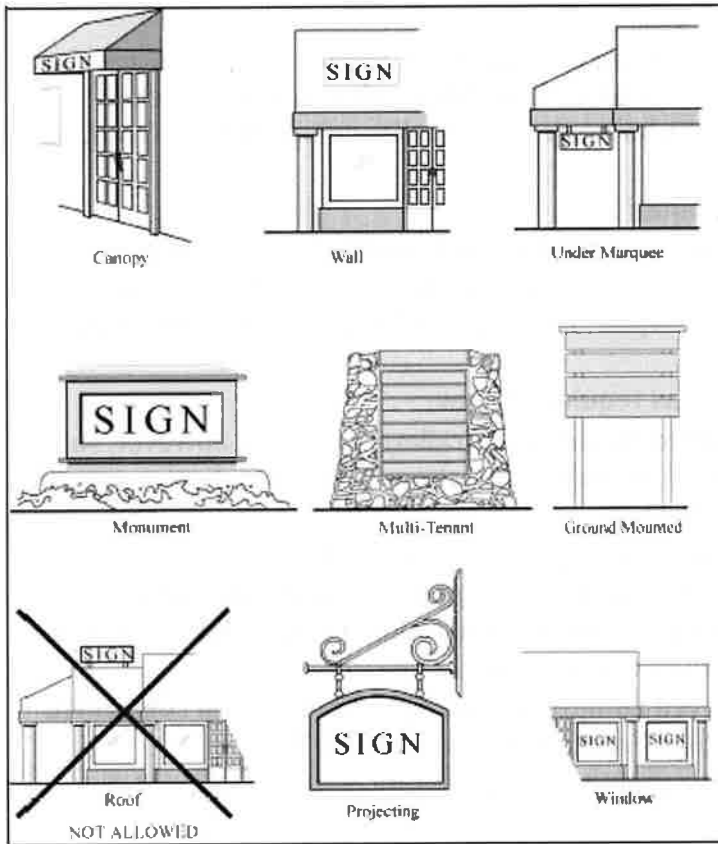


Figure 5-13  
SIGN TYPES

19.74.050 Sign review.

A. Review Required. To ensure compliance with the regulations of this chapter, sign review and approval by the Department shall be required to erect, move, alter, apply, paint, or reconstruct any sign except for signs that are exempt from permits in compliance with Section 19.74.060. Sign approvals are subject to the administrative review provisions of Chapter 19.18 (Site Design and Architectural Review). In most instances, a building permit will be required to erect a sign. In these instances, the permit will be issued by the Public Works Department after review and approval by the Director.

B. Approval of Sign. A sign application shall be approved by the Director, or the architectural review authority for a related project in accordance with Chapter 19.18, provided that the proposed sign is consistent with the provisions of this chapter.

Review of the sign shall include consideration of size, color, material, illumination, location, and other elements of design in compliance with this chapter, including applicable sign design guidelines noted in the City of Chico Design Guidelines Manual and any conditions of approval adopted by the Architectural Review and Historic Preservation Board, Commission, or City Council as part of any approval process.

(Ord. 2443, Ord. 2494 §46)

19.74.060 Exemptions from sign approval.

Sign permits shall not be required for the signs listed in this section. Exempt signs shall not be included in the determination of the total allowable number of signs or total allowable sign area for a site. Such signs, however, may require compliance with building permit regulations.

A. Permanent Signs With No Size Limitation.

1. Signs located within shopping malls or similar areas, where the signs are not visible from any point on the boundary of the premises, shall not be regulated as to size or location or similar provisions contained in this chapter; however, such signs require compliance with building permit requirements;

2. Any sign erected and maintained as required by law;

3. Signs on licensed commercial vehicles, including trailers; provided, however, such vehicles and/or trailers shall not be used as parked or stationary outdoor display signs;

4. Signs attached to bicycles or pedicabs;

5. Bench, bus shelter, and other signs located at designated public transit locations which comply with the criteria established by the relevant transit authority and are internally illuminated only in locations where such illumination is not prohibited by the sign regulations for the underlying zoning district; and

6. Change of copy within an approved Comprehensive Sign Program that conform to the provisions of the Comprehensive Sign Program (Section 19.74.070).

7. Governmental signs in the public right-of-way or on City property that are approved by the City Council.

B. Permanent Signs Limited by Maximum Areas. The following signs are exempt from the requirements of sign permits, subject to the following limitations:

1. Occupant name, street number, and street name signs not exceeding two square feet in area per single-family or multi-family unit;

2. On-site commercial signs on nonresidential property not exceeding two square feet in area located on or immediately adjacent to a primary entrance, typically used to post the name of the business, hours of operation, and other pertinent information;

3. Vehicle and pedestrian-oriented safety and directional signs solely for the purpose of guiding traffic, parking, and loading on private property, and not bearing advertising materials. Maximum sign area shall be four square feet in residential and office residential zoning districts and six square feet in other zoning districts. Maximum height for freestanding signs shall be four feet. Taller signs may be approved by the Director, if visibility and safety will not be impaired;

4. Noncommercial signs located on residential property not exceeding four square feet in area. Such signs shall be limited to a maximum of three feet in height when located in any required setback or sight distance area, or six feet in height if located outside any required setback or sight distance area;

5. On-site commercial signs up to four square feet in area located on gasoline pumps, typically used to identify the brand, type of fuel, and octane rating;

6. Any flag with a noncommercial message, provided that the pole height shall not exceed 25 feet and the length of the flag shall be not more than one-quarter of the height of the pole; and

7. The display of air-filled, rubber latex balloons with an inflated diameter of 12 inches or less by a balloon, florist, or other retail establishment regularly offering balloons for sale to the general public. Such balloons shall contain no commercial message and be securely attached to the structure, including an awning if any, from which sales are offered.

C. Temporary Signs Limited by Size and Period of Display.

1. Small Temporary Commercial Signs on Nonresidential Property. Small temporary commercial signs painted on a window or constructed of paper, cloth, or similar disposable materials and affixed on a window, wall, building surface, or structure on nonresidential property subject to the following limitations:

- a. Signs may be displayed for a maximum of 30 days within a 90-day period;
- b. The total area of all temporary commercial signs shall not exceed 25 square feet per tenant;
- c. The area of temporary commercial signs attached to or painted on windows shall not exceed 33 percent of the window area, except in the DN and DS zoning districts where signs shall not exceed 10 percent of the window area;
- d. Signs shall not be attached to the exterior of windows or doors except painted-on signs; and
- e. Signs shall not be located above the edge of the roof or above the sill of the second-story windows on a multi-story structure.

Temporary commercial signs not meeting these limitations are considered Large Temporary Commercial Signs/Banners and may be approved for a limited period of time, subject to permit approval and the limitations set forth in Section 19.74.120(A).

2. Temporary Business Identification Signs. A maximum of two temporary business identification signs may be displayed until permanent signs can be erected, or when existing permanent signs are obscured due to road construction or other similar conditions, for a period not to exceed 90 days. Maximum sign area is limited to 50 square feet.

3. Real Estate Signs. Real estate signs are allowed on private property in any zoning district subject to the following limitations:

- a. For single-family dwellings and duplexes, one double-faced sign per street frontage not to exceed 4 square feet in area per sign face and seven feet in height;
- b. For multi-family dwellings with three or more units, one double-faced sign per street frontage not to exceed 24 square feet in area per sign face and eight feet in height;
- c. For single-tenant sites on nonresidential property, one double-faced sign per street frontage not to exceed 16 square feet in area per sign face and eight feet in height;
- d. For multi-tenant sites on nonresidential property, one double-faced sign per street frontage not to exceed 32 square feet in area per sign face and eight feet in height. In addition, one sign for each tenant space available not to exceed six square feet in area to be located at the individual tenant space for rent or lease; and
- e. For five or more single-family dwellings or vacant lots on residential property, two single-faced or double faced signs not to exceed 32 square feet in area per sign face and eight feet in height.

4. Future Tenant Identification Signs. Future tenant identification signs may be displayed on a nonresidential construction site, subject to compliance with the following limitations:

a. One sign per street frontage except where a project has in excess of 600 lineal feet of street frontage, one additional sign may be allowed;

b. Signs shall be limited to a maximum of 32 square feet in area and 10 feet in height, or a maximum of 50 square feet in area if combined with a construction sign; and

c. Signs shall be removed upon completion of construction.

5. Construction Signs. Construction signs may be displayed on construction sites, subject to compliance with the following limitations:

a. One sign per street frontage not to exceed 32 square feet in area with a maximum height of 10 feet. Maximum size of 50 square feet in area if combined with a future tenant identification sign; and

b. Signs shall be removed upon completion of construction.

6. Temporary Noncommercial Signs. Temporary signs with noncommercial messages may be displayed on private property, with the property owner's permission, subject to compliance with the following limitations:

a. On residential property, up to four single-faced or double-faced signs not exceeding four square feet of surface area per sign face may be displayed for up to 120 days in any calendar year. Such signs shall be limited to a maximum of three feet in height if located in any required setback or sight distance area, or six feet in height if located outside any required setback or sight distance area.

b. On nonresidential property, an unlimited number of single-faced or double-faced signs not exceeding 32 square feet per sign face may be displayed for up to 120 days in any calendar year. Such signs shall be limited to a maximum of three feet in height if located in any required setback or sight distance area, or six feet in height if located outside any required setback or sight distance area. These signs are allowed in addition to the substitution of noncommercial messages for commercial messages as established in Section 19.74.030(C).

7. Small Temporary Commercial Signs on Residential Property. Small temporary commercial signs may be displayed during an allowed temporary commercial use of residential property, including uses authorized in Section 19.22.020(F) (Garage and Yard Sales in Residential Zones), subject to compliance with the following limitations:

a. One single-faced or double-faced sign up to four square feet in surface area per sign face shall be allowed;

b. The sign shall be limited to a maximum of three feet in height if located in any required setback or sight distance area, or six feet in height if located outside any required setback or sight distance area;

c. The sign shall be located onsite; and

d. The sign shall only be displayed for the duration of the allowed temporary commercial use of the property.

8. Other Similar Temporary Signs. Other similar temporary signs may be displayed on private property, if the Director makes the following findings:

- a. The signs are substantially similar to other signs allowed in the zoning district in terms of area, height, location, illumination, and other objective characteristics;
- b. The signs do not obstruct any required sight distance area, block any required path of travel, or otherwise create a safety hazard;
- c. The signs are not otherwise prohibited, such as off-site signs, signs in the public right-of-way, or commercial signs on residential property;
- d. The signs are displayed for a limited period of time consistent with other similar allowed temporary signs in the zoning district; and
- e. The signs are consistent with the purpose and general provisions of this chapter.

If there is any dispute as to whether a particular sign falls within this category, the Director shall document these findings in writing.

Ord. 2443

19.74.070 Comprehensive sign program.

A. Purpose. The purpose of a Comprehensive Sign Program (“CSP”) is to integrate a project's signs with the design of its structures into a unified architectural statement. Additionally, a CSP is intended to provide a means for flexible application of these sign regulations for multi-tenant projects in order to encourage maximum incentives and latitude in the design and display of signs and to achieve, not circumvent, the intent of this chapter.

B. Applicability. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter, a Comprehensive Sign Program may be approved by the Board for the following project types:

- 1. Multiple commercial tenants, or mixed-use projects, developed as a unit on adjacent parcels and located in a commercial zoning district;
- 2. A multi-tenant industrial or office project developed as a unit on adjacent parcels and located in an industrial zoning district; and
- 3. Multiple commercial tenants, or mixed-use projects, located on adjacent parcels within the same city block and under common ownership within the DN (Downtown North) and DS (Downtown South) zoning districts.

A Comprehensive Sign Program may authorize deviations from the development standards for signs for the zoning district in which the project is located, except that the total maximum sign area allowed by this chapter shall not otherwise be exceeded. Standards for signs provided in this chapter shall serve as a reference along with any design guidelines adopted by the City.

C. Application Requirements. The following information is required for submittal of an application to the Board for a Comprehensive Sign Program:

- 1. Plans, to scale, to include the following:
  - a. Sign details indicating sign area, dimensions, colors, materials, letter style, proposed copy, letter height, and method of illumination for all signs;
  - b. Site plan indicating the location of all existing and proposed signs with sign area dimensions;
  - c. Building elevations with sign location depicted and dimensioned; and

d. A summary table showing the complete sign program and total square foot area of all signs.

2. A statement explaining how revisions, modifications, or replacement of tenant signs will be implemented to limit the possibility of holes being left in the structure's exterior by mounting brackets, electrical connections, or similar items; and

3. Any supplemental information required by the Director.

D. Lessees to be Made Aware of the Comprehensive Sign Program. Lessees within developments governed by an approved Comprehensive Sign Program shall be made aware of the program in their lease and their responsibility to follow the approved Comprehensive Sign Program.

E. Findings. In approving a Comprehensive Sign Program, the Board shall make all of the following findings in addition to those required by Chapter 19.18:

1. The proposed Comprehensive Sign Program is consistent with the purpose and intent of this chapter;

2. The signs are visually related to other signs included in the Comprehensive Sign Program and to the structure and/or developments they identify and to surrounding development;

3. The Comprehensive Sign Program accommodates future revisions which may be required due to changes in use or tenants; and

4. The Comprehensive Sign Program complies with all of the standards of this chapter, including the maximum overall sign area allowable, except that flexibility is allowed with regard to individual sign area, number, location, and/or height to the extent that the Comprehensive Sign Program will enhance the overall development and will more fully accomplish the purposes of this chapter.

F. Revisions to Comprehensive Sign Programs. Revisions to a Comprehensive Sign Program may be approved by the Director if it is determined that the revision is minor and that the intent of the original approval, and any conditions attached thereto, are not affected. For revisions that would substantially deviate from the original approval, an application to modify the Comprehensive Sign Program shall be required.

Ord. 2443

#### 19.74.080 Prohibited signs.

The following signs are inconsistent with the purposes and standards of this chapter and are, therefore, prohibited in all zoning districts:

A. Any sign not in compliance with the provisions of this chapter;

B. Abandoned and/or dilapidated signs and sign structures;

C. Animated, moving, flashing, blinking, reflecting, revolving, or any other similar signs;

D. Banners, streamers, and pennants, except as specifically allowed by the provisions of Section 19.74.060 (Exemptions from sign approval);

E. Bench signs, except at approved bus passenger loading areas;

F. Changeable copy signs, including reader boards, except when on the same property as an assembly use or when specifically allowed by state or federal law;



- G. Electronic reader board signs, except as provided by Section 19.74.120(K) (Changeable Copy Signs, Reader Boards, and Digital Reader Boards);
  - H. Inflated signs, balloons, and figures, except as provided in Section 19.74.060 (Exemptions from sign approval);
  - I. Signs which are obscene, defamatory, or contain fighting words;
  - J. Off-site signs not specifically allowed by the provisions of this chapter, including billboards, digital billboard displays, and outdoor advertising, except signs located at designated public transit locations;
  - K. Painted signs on fences or roofs;
  - L. Roof signs extending above the edge of the roof of a structure;
  - M. Signs erected in a manner that any portion of their surface or supports will interfere in any way with the free use of any fire escape, exit, or standpipe or obstruct any required ventilator, door, stairway, or window above the first story;
  - N. Signs emitting audible sounds, odors, or visible matter;
  - O. Vehicle signs attached to or painted on motor vehicles that are parked on or adjacent to property for more than 48 consecutive hours;
  - P. Signs erected in a location or manner which obstructs a required sight distance area or otherwise creates a traffic hazard as determined by the Public Works Director; and
  - Q. Signs on which resemble official traffic control signs.
- (Ord. 2443, Ord. 2494 §47; Ord. 2503 §1)

#### 19.74.090 Nonconforming signs.

A nonconforming sign is any permanent or temporary sign which was legally established and maintained in compliance with the provisions of all applicable laws in effect at the time of original installation but which does not now comply with the provisions of these Regulations. Nonconforming signs shall comply with Chapter 19.08 (Nonconforming Structures, Uses, and Parcels) and Section 19.74.100 (Abandoned signs).

A. Annexed areas. Except as otherwise provided in this section, all signs in areas annexed to the City after the date of adoption of this chapter which do not conform to the provisions of this chapter shall be regarded as nonconforming signs which may remain under the provisions of Chapter 19.08 (Nonconforming Structures, Uses and Parcels) and Section 19.74.100 (Abandoned signs).

B. Historic Signs, Exception. Historic signs, including those no longer advertising a product or service available onsite, may remain and may be protected pursuant to Chapter 19.37 (Historic Preservation).

C. Maintenance and Repair. Nonconforming signs and sign structures may be maintained and repaired in compliance with Section 19.08.030 (Restrictions on nonconforming structures and uses).

Ord. 2443

#### 19.74.100 Abandoned signs.

A sign, including the structural support, shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located if the premises are vacant for more than one year.

If the owner or lessee fails to remove the sign, the Building Official shall give the owner 30 days' written notice to remove it.

Ord. 2443

#### 19.74.110 General provisions for all signs.

A. Maintenance of Signs. All signs and supporting hardware, including temporary signs, shall be maintained in good repair and function properly at all times. Signs which are not properly maintained and are dilapidated shall be deemed to be a public nuisance.

When existing signs are removed or replaced, all brackets, poles, and other supports that are no longer required shall be removed. Any unpainted areas shall be painted to match the adjacent portion of the building or sign support structure.

#### B. Measurement of Sign Area.

1. The surface area of a sign shall be calculated by enclosing the extreme limits of any writing, logo, representation, emblem, or other display within a single continuous perimeter composed of squares or rectangles with no more than eight lines.

2. Supporting framework or bracing that is clearly incidental to the display itself shall not be computed as sign area.

3. If the sign consists of more than one section or module, all of the area, including the area between the sections or modules, shall be included in the computation of sign area.

4. Double-faced (back-to-back) freestanding signs shall be regarded as a single sign only if the distance between each sign face does not exceed two feet. However, each sign face shall be considered a separate sign for the purpose of calculating sign area.

5. Where a sign consists of one or more three-dimensional objects (i.e., balls, cubes, clusters of objects, sculptures, or statue-like trademarks), the sign area shall be measured as their maximum projection upon a vertical plane.

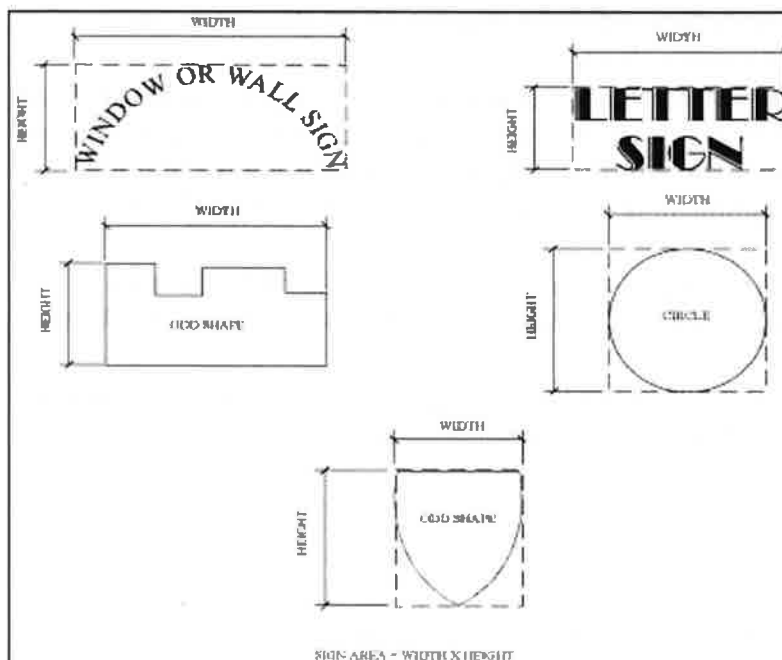


Figure 5-14

MEASUREMENT OF SIGN AREA

C. Illumination of Signs. The artificial illumination of signs, either from an internal or external source, shall be designed to eliminate any negative impacts on surrounding rights-of-way and properties. The following standards apply to all illuminated signs:

1. External light sources shall be directed and shielded to limit direct illumination of any object other than the sign;
2. The light from any illuminated sign shall not be of an intensity or brightness which will interfere with the reasonable enjoyment of residential properties in direct visual proximity to the sign;
3. No sign shall have blinking, flashing, or fluttering lights or any other illuminating device which has a changing light intensity, brightness, or color;
4. No colored lights shall be used at any location or in any manner so as to be confused or construed as traffic control devices;
5. Neither the direct nor reflected light from primary light sources shall create a hazard to operators of motor vehicles;
6. No reflective-type bulb or lamp which exceeds 125 lumens shall be used on the exterior surface of any sign so as to expose the face of the bulb or lamp to any public rights-of-way or adjacent property; and
7. Light sources shall utilize energy-efficient fixtures to the greatest extent possible.

Ord. 2443

19.74.120 Standards for specific types of signs.

A. Large Temporary Commercial Signs/Banners. Large temporary commercial signs and/or banners not meeting the exemption criteria in Section 19.74.060(C) may be displayed on nonresidential property for a limited period of time, subject to approval of a permit from the Department. Such signage may consist of balloons, buntings, portable or mobile signs, banners, flags, posters, pennants, ribbons, streamers, and similar articles, and are subject to the following conditions:

1. Such signage shall only be permitted on nonresidential properties;
2. Such signage shall only be permitted for a maximum of four time periods in any calendar year with such signage permitted for no more than 10 consecutive days per time period. Provided, however, that each time period shall be separated by a minimum of 30 days and that such signage may be permitted for no more than a total of 20 days in any calendar year;
3. Such signage shall be installed or displayed on-site;
4. Such signage shall not be installed or displayed so as to obstruct any required sight distance area, block any required path of travel, or otherwise create a safety hazard;
5. Balloons and other inflatable devices authorized by this section shall not exceed three feet in any single dimension;
6. No part of the signage shall exceed the maximum height of buildings on the site; and
7. Prior to installation or display of such signage, a permit shall be obtained from the Department. Up to four time periods may be authorized by a single permit.

B. Awning signs. Awning signs may be placed on the face of an awning in a flat position, in a plane approximately parallel to the plane of the building wall to which the awning is attached. Awning signs may project over the public right-of-way to the same extent that the awning projects over the public right-of-way.

1. Signs on awnings shall only be located on building frontages, including those fronting a parking lot or pedestrian way.

2. Signs on awnings are limited to ground-level occupancies only.

3. All internal illumination for awnings shall only be directed downward.

C. Freestanding Signs.

1. Signs are allowed only for frontages adjoining a public or private street.

2. There shall be a minimum of 75 feet between any two freestanding signs on adjoining sites to ensure adequate visibility for all signs. The Director may waive this requirement in situations where its enactment would be impractical due to the locations of existing signs on adjacent properties.

3. Signs shall not project over public property, vehicular easements, or rights-of-way. Signs shall not obstruct traffic safety sight areas.

4. Landscaping shall be provided at the base of the supporting structure equal to twice the area of one face of the sign. For example, 30 square feet of sign area equates to 60 square feet of required landscaped area.

D. Marquee Signs.

1. Signs shall be mounted only on the front and sides of a marquee, or suspended below.

2. Signs shall not project more than 6 inches from the face of the marquee.

3. Signs shall not extend more than 18 inches above the top of the marquee.

4. A clear distance of 8 feet shall be maintained from the lowest part of a suspended sign to the ground below.

E. Off-Site Directional Signs. Off-site directional signs are intended to provide identification for access to property that does not abut a public or private street and relies on an easement over adjacent property for access. In these cases, one off-site directional sign may be allowed subject to the approval of a sign permit and the following limitations:

1. Signs shall not exceed four square feet per face and not more than two sign faces where the access serves a single parcel or occupant;

2. Signs shall not exceed six square feet per face and not more than two sign faces where the access serves two or more parcels or occupants;

3. Signs shall not exceed three feet in height;

4. Signs shall be placed within the limits of the access easement serving the property and only if authorized by the easement or underlying property owners;

5. Any illumination of off-premises directional signs shall be indirect;

6. Signs shall contain only the property address, project name (if any) or name of occupants, and directional symbols; and

7. Signs shall be located so as to not interfere with clear sight distances required for safe access.

F. Projecting Signs and Three-Dimensional Expressions.

1. Signs shall only be located on ground-level building frontages with customer access.
2. Signs shall be double-faced or otherwise detailed on all sides visible to the public.
3. Consideration shall be given to existing signs on adjoining businesses so that visibility is not blocked.
4. No sign shall project above the edge of the roof of a structure or a sill of a second-story window.
5. All signs shall have a minimum vertical clearance of eight feet from the ground to the bottom of the sign or sign structure.
6. No sign shall project within two feet of a curb line.
7. The maximum thickness of a projecting sign shall not exceed that required for construction purposes.
8. Signs may be illuminated by indirect light sources only which shall be shielded to limit the spread of light only to the sign surface.
9. Three-dimensional, sculptural, or similar artistic structures that express a theme or message may be approved by the Board in addition to or in lieu of other signage in compliance with size and lighting regulations of the underlying zoning district.

G. Theater Signs.

1. Theater Identification Signs. Theaters and other approved assembly uses may be provided with identification signs of the same type, design, height, and size as the identification signs authorized by this chapter for the particular zoning district in which the theater is located.
2. Cases For Temporary Signs. Theaters and other approved assembly uses may also display temporary signs in permanently-mounted glass cases or other similar enclosures. Such cases shall count as part of the maximum allowed permanent sign area as established for that zoning district.

H. Wall Signs.

1. Signs shall be located only on building frontages unless specifically approved by the Director.
2. Signs shall not project from the surface upon which they are attached more than required for construction purposes and in no case more than 12 inches.
3. Signs shall not project above the edge of the roof of a structure.

I. Window Signs.

1. Signs shall be allowed only on windows located on the ground level and second story of a building frontage.
2. Signs shall be permanently painted or mounted on the inside of windows and doors.
3. Signs shall not occupy more than 25 percent of the window area of any one window including permanent and temporary signs. In the DN and DS zoning districts, signs may not occupy more than 10 percent of the area of any one window.

J. Automobile Dealership Business Identification Signs.

1. One ground-mounted business identification sign not exceeding 20 feet in height is permitted per automobile dealership, subject to compliance with all other design standards in Section 19.74.120(C).

2. The sign area shall not exceed 100 square feet for one face, or 200 square feet for two or more faces. This sign area shall count against the maximum sign area for the dealership as established in 19.74.140.

K. Changeable Copy Signs, Reader Boards, and Digital Reader Boards.

1. Such signs shall only be allowed on nonresidential property which contains an approved assembly use, when specifically allowed by state or federal law, or in the CS zoning district.

2. The area of such signs shall count towards the maximum allowed sign area for the site, and meet other applicable sign standards provided in Table 5-8 (Sign Standards by Zoning District).

3. Any digital reader boards shall display static (unanimated) images and/or copy. For the purposes of this section, static images and/or copy shall be defined as those which are changed no more than once per ten seconds.

4. Digital reader boards shall not be brighter than the illumination limit recommended by the International Sign Association (ISA) for Electronic Message Center signs, or 0.3 footcandles above ambient light when measured at the recommended distance as set forth by the ISA. Digital reader boards shall be equipped with a photocell, timer, or other similar device which automatically dims the display during nighttime hours to prevent glare impacts to motorists.

(Ord. 2443; Ord. 2503 §2)

19.74.130 Portable signs.

A. Portable Signs Outside of Downtown. Portable freestanding signs are permitted in all commercial and industrial zoning districts, except DN and DS zoning districts, subject to the following conditions:

1. One portable sign per parcel frontage is allowed. Portable signs may be placed off-site on an adjacent parcel or within 300 feet of the business being advertised, with the consent of the property owner. No more than one sign per parcel frontage, however, is allowed at any one time.

2. Portable signs shall not be placed in the public right-of-way, attached or secured to private property, or placed in landscape planters, over any utility box, or within 36 inches of a fire hydrant.

3. Portable signs shall be constructed of wood (or other sturdy material) and metal hardware, and all surfaces shall be coated with paint, varnish, or other durable finish. All portable sign copy shall be neat and legible. Portable signs shall have no electric, mechanical, or fixed attachments, including objects that move with the wind.

4. A portable sign may be displayed only during the hours that the business being advertised is open to the public and shall be removed from public view at all other times.

5. The maximum height of a portable sign shall be four feet. The area of each sign face shall not exceed 16 square feet. Two-sided signs shall not exceed 32 square feet in size for both faces combined. A portable sign which meets the standards of this section shall not be calculated in the total allowable sign area for the business being advertised or the parcel upon which it is located.

6. All portable signs shall be properly maintained pursuant to Section 19.74.110.

B. Portable Signs Within Downtown. Pedestrian-scale portable signs are permitted within the DN and DS zoning districts, subject to the following conditions:

1. One portable sign is allowed per business or tenant.
2. Portable signs shall be self-supporting, and of sufficient weight such that the sign remains upright and in the same position for the entire time the sign is displayed. No portion of the sign or supporting device shall be placed or driven into the ground. Signs and supporting devices shall be maintained in good condition at all times and shall be constructed out of quality weather-resistant materials normally used in professional signage.
3. Portable signs shall be limited to no more than four square feet of sign area per face. Signs may be either single-faced or double-faced. The area of the portable sign shall be allowed in addition to the maximum sign area for permanent signs on the property.
4. Portable signs shall be limited to no more than 42 inches in height.
5. Signs and supporting devices may not contain brochure boxes, tear-off flyers/coupons, or any similar type of attachment. No balloons, flags, pennants, or similar devices may be attached to a sign or supporting device.
6. Signs must contain, in legible font, on an area no less than two inches by three and one-half inches (business card size), the name, mailing address, and contact phone number of the individual responsible for the sign.
7. The sign may be displayed only during the hours that the business being advertised is open to the public and shall be removed from public view at all other times.
8. Portable signs shall be placed onsite, shall not block any accessible path of travel, and shall not create a tripping hazard or other hazardous condition. Exception: Portable signs may be placed in designated locations within the public right-of-way only if a permit authorizing such placement is issued to a particular business or tenant pursuant to the regulations in Title 14.

Ord. 2443

#### 19.74.140 Sign standards by zoning district.

The sign standards set forth in this section are intended to apply to signs in every zoning district in the City. Only signs authorized by this section within a particular zoning district shall be allowed in that zoning district unless otherwise expressly provided in this chapter. Signs permitted in the PQ (Public/Quasi Public Facilities) zoning district shall be subject to the Community Development Director's determination based on comparable sign installations for similar uses, the use of the site, and surrounding zoning districts.

Ord. 2443

#### TABLE 5-8

#### SIGN STANDARDS BY ZONING DISTRICT

Note: To view Table 5-8 in PDF, please click [TABLE 5-8](#)

#### A. Signs Permitted in the Residential (RS, R1, R2, R3, and R4) Zoning Districts

**City of Chico, CA**

# **Downtown Access Action Plan**

**March 25, 2019**

**Prepared by: Dixon Resources Unlimited**

The complete copy of the Downtown Access Action Plan may be reviewed and downloaded at the following link: [https://www.chico.ca.us/sites/main/files/file-attachments/downtown\\_access\\_action\\_plan.pdf?1575399725](https://www.chico.ca.us/sites/main/files/file-attachments/downtown_access_action_plan.pdf?1575399725)



## 15. Wayfinding and Parking Guidance

The signage and parking brand should be consistent throughout Chico, including sign format, symbols and fonts. The City currently has some public parking signs mounted at the parking lots throughout downtown that are effective (Image 26). Similar branding and design should be carried throughout all parking and wayfinding signage. Adopting a unified parking brand provides an improvement to the overall customer experience. The City should also be sure to expand the public parking branding to future shared parking agreement locations. For shared parking agreements, the parking brand/signage should be required in conjunction with the terms and conditions of the agreement. Signage is also important for conveying messages to drivers. Time limits, pricing and requirements such as back in parking should be clearly communicated to the drivers as they approach the parking spaces.



Image 26. Chico Public Parking Sign

In addition to static wayfinding signage, the City can deliver parking information through multiple outlets including vehicle messaging systems, digital signage, and various websites, including the, Go! Downtown Chico site and other hotel, travel and parking sources. Wayfinding is an integral part of any parking operation. Drivers need to be informed of facility locations, space availability, time restrictions, and parking rates. Navigation from place to place within a parking facility is often overlooked and undervalued. Knowing where one is in a facility, where there are available spaces and knowing how to navigate to those spaces is one of the most fundamental aspects of a successful parking program. The addition of wayfinding signage may significantly improve the ability of a patron to enter, leave and return to a facility.

Vehicle counting systems coupled with automated wayfinding systems are helping to revolutionize how the public utilizes parking resources. Integrating these systems with everyday phone and mapping applications has provided drivers with the ability to plan their parking experiences before leaving their homes, enabling them to make more informed decisions about how to get to their destinations and evaluate alternative modes of transit. Dynamic signage allows the City to redirect patrons toward alternative, underutilized parking locations. The City should consider installing occupancy count technology in the surface lots and garages located throughout downtown.

Space indicators provide in-depth data with the ability to show parking occupancy by level and by row within each level. This type of system can mitigate congestion at the entrance of the garage and also throughout each level and row. However, instead of installing a sensor per space, a more cost effective approach would be to include a sensor at the entrances/exits of each location or at each level of the garage for a level count.

This information can be provided by technology such as in-ground or above ground loops, or by camera-based sensors. Ultimately, the simplest and most cost-efficient method to provide real-time occupancy is to show one aggregate count for available spaces throughout the entire garage. This communicates the most useful information to drivers at the lowest price. The City should consider starting with facility-wide occupancy counts to begin with, and later expand to level or row-based counts in the future if there is significant congestion within the garage. The exception to this would be for nesting any permit parking or reserved areas, as to not inflate the public parking availability on signage.

Automated Parking Guidance System (PGS) signs can promote parking availability and mitigate congestion in the vicinity of parking facilities. The PGS/wayfinding signage can indicate parking lot status (open/closed), space availability (Full/Available or the number of spaces available), event parking details, alternative parking areas, and targeted messaging. This methodology allows drivers to prepare their direction of travel upon approach, thereby reducing traffic flow impact, discouraging backups, and addressing maximum capacity concerns.



Image 27. San Jose Parking Guidance Signage

A useful example of clear directional wayfinding that has been successfully implemented is in the City of San Jose, CA, displayed in Image 36. The City's integrated approach highlights where parking is located and the number of available parking spaces at each location. In addition, positioning of the signage is equally important. Motorists exiting the major interstate highway are immediately met with clear wayfinding signage, signaling the locations of available parking opportunities prior to entering the downtown district.

Once the real-time occupancy information is collected, transmitting it to digital wayfinding signage located throughout the garage, the surrounding streets and/or a website/application is relatively simple. Most vendors that provide the counting hardware described above will be able to provide additional digital signage and an API that will allow the data to be used in websites and applications. In addition to basic signage, supplementary signage can typically be

purchased. The pricing on this signage depends on the sign and the application for it, hence the significant price range.

A critical component of any technology installation, especially a PGS solution, is maintenance and upkeep. If a PGS is installed, it is recommended that a responsible party (i.e., subcontractor) be designated and held accountable for system upkeep. If this support is to be a subcontracted service, performance standards should be defined and incorporated into the vendor service agreement with performance penalties for system support failures.

If the City prefers, a basic integrated independent mobile application (provided by the PGS system provider) can be developed. The overall cost of the mobile application development does vary depending on the type of information to be displayed, any specific branding or graphics requirements, and additional features such as find my car, directions, traffic information, parking reservations, or 3<sup>rd</sup> party integrations. If the City was to invest in an interactive City-developed website or application, the cost could be significant based upon the overall web design and features. However, there are several existing, free parking availability and guidance applications, such as Inrix (formerly ParkMe) and Parkopedia, that leverage available public parking information using an interactive parking application.

A growing number of parking vendors are delving into the mobile application space, many utilizing web applications that can feed from open source data platforms. Real-time data can be integrated with several existing parking applications. To stay competitive in today's market, most parking technology vendors recognize that an open platform is necessary.

Parking and transportation data can be directed to popular mapping applications such as Google Maps and Waze. Many municipalities understand that sharing data with any platform will allow the information to reach a broader audience, thus improving the overall operation

and user experience. Because applications like Google Maps and Waze have such a large user base, it may not be valuable for the City to compete by introducing a standalone Chico mobile application. Some municipalities aim to create their own mobility applications; however, this can be a significant undertaking and often requires a costly software development process that must be maintained and supported on an ongoing basis.

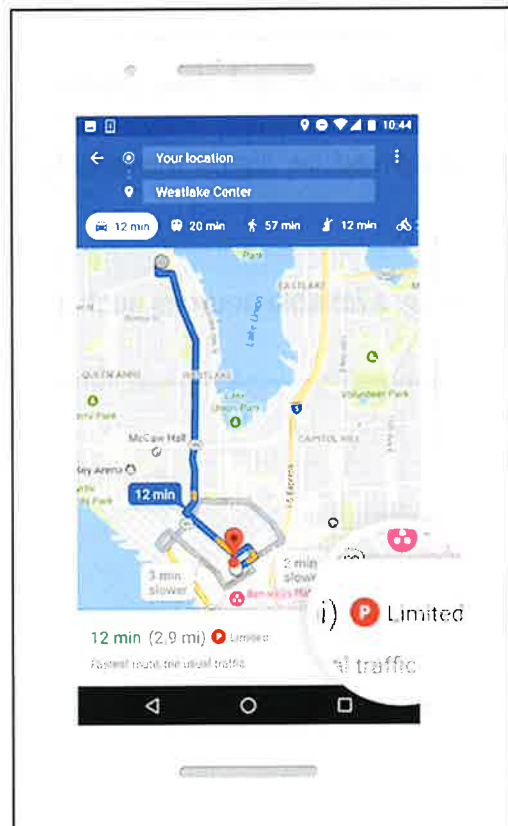


Image 28. Google Maps Parking Information

Implementing this solution on-street can be challenging. A significant number of sensors and/or cameras would be required to manage guidance on a space by space basis, especially without parking meters. In the future if the City does implement paid parking, the City could attempt to predict occupancy based on meter payment data. However, not all drivers will pay for the meter – a portion of the drivers may not comply, and there are often a significant number of ADA placard holders that can skew the occupancy and payment data. This is why some parking technology companies attempt to use a predictive algorithm to estimate which areas are likely to have spaces available. Regardless of the approach, there are different issues with accuracy and users are guided based upon the probability of available parking and should not be directed to a specific parking space.

## Implementation Guide

### Short-Term Steps:

- A. Expand parking signage branding to all parking locations in Chico for consistency.
  - i. Could also be used as City parking brand which should be on all shared parking facilities and educational materials.
- B. Evaluate PGS and occupancy counting vendor technology options.
- C. Consider piloting occupancy counting technology in one or two of the parking lots or the garage.
  - i. Facility-wide space counts are recommended.

### Mid-Term Steps:

- D. Upon completion of a successful pilot, the City should consider implementing occupancy counting and PGS technology at all off-street parking locations.
  - i. Loop systems and optical sensors can provide real-time occupancy counts. This is the simplest and most cost-effective method of aggregating the number of available spaces throughout a lot. The loop system would be installed at the ingress and egress points of the lots, and software algorithm uses a simple formula based on the total inventory of the lot to determine how many spaces are available at any time.
  - ii. Occupancy data can be displayed via the internet for real time parking availability information.
  - iii. The number of available spaces should be displayed on digital messaging monument signage.

### Long-Term Steps:

- E. Continue to integrate the City's occupancy data with publicly available sources such as Google Maps and Waze.

## 16. Education and Outreach

To successfully implement the recommendations throughout the DAAP such as parking zones, parking rate adjustments, and employee permits, the City should launch education and outreach programs to inform the public about upcoming program changes. The City should utilize all available community resources to help push information into the community. The DCBA, surrounding Neighborhood Associations, and the Parking/Access Resource Committee (P/ARC) can assist by coordinating stakeholder outreach and distributing parking information to business owners, employees, and residents.

The P/ARC is a volunteer citizens group formed in June 2014 to work with and assist city staff to implement existing recommendations for improving downtown parking and access. As of Summer 2015, the City is working with the P/ARC on a number of planned initiatives as prescribed by the Access Plan. The P/ARC offers a Go! Downtown Chico website with information about downtown driving, parking, walking, biking, and public transit in downtown Chico.



Figure 9. Go! Downtown Chico Parking Webpage

The parking page on the website includes a wealth of information about the City's smart parking meters, parking facilities, permits, and parking violations. Additionally, the website has a frequently asked question page that can be used to inform visitors and residents about why the City has made changes to the parking program. This website is an effective resource

for the City to broadcast important information about the parking program. The website also incorporates branding in a similar style to the existing parking lot signage. This style of font and branding should ideally be carried over into all City outreach materials for consistency. In the future, the City should consider working with the P/ARC to include additional details about parking meter rate adjustments, mobile payment information, and any future



Image 29. Park Smart Branding

occupancy data. If the City invests in any occupancy counting technology, real-time occupancy data can be displayed on this website for trip planning purposes. For example, the City of San Jose has an interactive parking map on their website along with real-time parking availability data (Image 30).

Parking Garage Data			
Open spaces in the city owned parking garages in downtown San ...			
Garage Name	Garage Status	Available Visitor Spaces	Total Visitor Spaces
Fourth Street Garage	Open	84	150
City Hall Garage	Open	103	302
Third Street Garage	Open	107	134
Market San Pedro Square Garage	Open	305	445
Convention Center Garage	Open	443	510
Second San Carlos Garage	Open	120	220

Image 30. San Jose Parking Data

Additionally, due to California State University at Chico's (CSUC) close proximity to downtown, it will be important for the City to provide regular information to students. The Go! Downtown Chico website does have a page for students and employees, however the information is not tailored to either group. Each year when new students come to CSUC and Chico for the first time, the City should maintain active lines of communication with CSUC and include students in any outreach campaigns when changes to the parking program in the City will have an impact on student parking habits. It will be important to proactively promote information to students on a frequent basis to ensure that new students are fully informed of parking regulations and policies. Ideally, the City should create a pamphlet that can be distributed by CSUC to all incoming students. This would also give the City an opportunity to promote any student discount or incentive programs if desired.

### Off-Campus Parking

The [City of Chico](#) offers multiple parking locations throughout downtown.

- [City of Chico Downtown Parking Lot Locations](#) (Metered parking: cost estimated at \$.50 per hour. Cost may vary depending upon the type and location of a metered space)
- [City of Chico Parking Fees and Rates](#) (For parking cost information, please contact the [City of Chico Finance Department](#) at 530-879-7300)

Currently, the CSUC website does not link students to the P/ARC's Go! Downtown Chico website for parking information. The off-campus parking information provided by CSUC is minimal. The website links students to the City's official website homepage, an outdated parking map, and to the 2008 Parking Fees and Rates fee schedule document (Image 31). These

Image 31. CSUC Off-Campus Parking Information

documents are challenging to navigate and understand. Ideally, the Go! Downtown Chico website information should be incorporated. The City should work with CSUC on an ongoing basis to ensure that the parking information on their website is up to date.

Beyond using informational websites, there are a number of outreach strategies the City can use. Successful education and outreach campaigns in other municipalities have included social media pages, online video instructions, flyers, press releases, and field parking ambassadors to assist with education and demonstrations. A useful example is the City of Sacramento's online pricing sheet that explains its tiered pricing program using easy to understand graphics (Image 32). This sheet includes instructions on how to understand signage, how to pay for parking, including mobile payment information, and how the pricing structure works for different tiered zones. The sheet is also branded with the "SacPark" brand that is included on all parking outreach materials and signage. The City of Sacramento even has an instructional video posted on its website to demonstrate how to use its smart meters.



When communicating to the residents and the public about the parking program, it will be important for the City to explain the program purpose, goals, and benefits of any changes. The City should define and communicate its overall parking ethos.

Image 32. SacPark Parking Information

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) has an effective example<sup>4</sup> on their website about the importance of managing on-street parking:

*“Parking is a key piece of the transportation puzzle. As a limited resource that’s often in high demand, SDOT manages on-street parking to: balance*

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/transportation/permits-and-services/permits/parking-permits>

competing needs (transit, customers, residents, shared vehicles), move people and goods efficiently, support business district vitality, and create livable neighborhoods”

“The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) manages street parking to support a vibrant city with connected people, places, and products. Curb space used for on-street parking (as well as transit, deliveries, and many other things) is a limited resource in high demand. So, we carefully balance competing needs in order to move people and goods efficiently, support business district vitality, and create livable neighborhoods. That’s why we regulate curb space, install and maintain paid parking, loading, and short-term access in business districts as well as restricted parking zones in residential areas.”

PARKING NOT ALLOWED		PARKING SOMETIMES ALLOWED	
<p><b>ALLEYS</b> Do not park or stop in alleys. Commercial vehicles may load/unload for up to 30 minutes.</p> <p><b>STOP, YIELD, CROSSWALKS</b> Do not park within 30 feet of Stop and Yield signs, nor within 20 feet of a crosswalk.</p> <p><b>DRIVEWAYS</b> Do not park within 5 feet of driveways. Residents/property owners may paint curb yellow for 5 feet on each side of driveway.</p> <p><b>FIRE HYDRANTS</b> Do not park within 15 feet of hydrants.</p> <p><b>SIDEWALKS AND PLANTING STRIPS</b> Do not park on sidewalks, the planting or paved strip between the sidewalk and street.</p>	<p><b>TOW-AWAY ZONES</b> Do not stop in these zones or in any zones painted red.</p> <p><b>NO PARKING ZONES</b> Do not park in these zones.</p> <p><b>TEMPORARY NO PARKING ZONES</b> Do not park here during the posted dates and times. Call Customer Service Bureau for questions at (206) 684-CITY.</p> <p><b>OTHER DESIGNATED ZONES</b> Do not park in bus zones, taxi zones, charter bus zones, or carshare zones.</p> <p><b>COMMERCIAL AND LARGE-SIZED VEHICLES</b> Do not park a truck/trailer over 80 inches wide on any street or alley, except in Industrial Zones, between midnight and 6 AM.</p>	<p><b>PARKING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES</b> Do not park in designated disabled parking or use a permit unless: 1) you or your passenger has a disability, and 2) your vehicle displays a valid disabled placard, license plate, or tab. The fine for improper use is up to \$450.</p> <p><b>PAID PARKING</b> Payment is required at pay station or by phone. Blue signs with an 'Alter 5' symbol indicate a 3-hour time limit after 5 PM. Green signs indicate a better value with a lower rate or longer time limit allowed.</p> <p><b>RESTRICTED PARKING ZONE (RPZ)</b> If your vehicle has an RPZ permit, you may park along signed RPZ streets for up to 72 hours. If not, you are limited to the time posted. Call: (206) 684-5086.</p> <p><b>PEAK HOURS</b> Do not park during the posted times, or your vehicle will be towed. Restricted hours vary so check signs carefully.</p> <p><b>TIME-LIMITED AREAS</b> Park up to posted time limit. You must then move your vehicle off the block (both sides of the street); for example, to the next block or around the corner.</p>	<p><b>LOAD AND UNLOAD</b> All vehicles may load/unload during posted hours. (Curb color: yellow.)</p> <p><b>PASSENGER LOAD</b> All vehicles may stop for 3 minutes to pick up and drop off passengers during posted hours. (Curb color: white.)</p> <p><b>TRUCK LOAD AND UNLOAD</b> Only truck-licensed vehicles may load/unload during posted hours. (Curb color: yellow.)</p> <p><b>COMMERCIAL VEHICLE LOAD ZONES (CVLZ)</b> Only commercial vehicles may load/unload up to 30 minutes. Either payment is required or a valid CVLZ permit. Call: (206) 684-5103. (Curb color: yellow.)</p> <p><b>OTHER SITUATIONS</b> <b>LICENSE PLATES AND TABS</b> Do not park on-street with missing front or rear license plates, or with expired tabs.</p> <p><b>72-HOUR RULE</b> Do not park your vehicle on the same block for more than 72 consecutive hours, or the vehicle will be considered abandoned and may be ticketed or towed.</p>
<p>5 ft      15 ft      20 ft      30 ft</p> <p>driveway      fire hydrant      crosswalk      stop/yield sign</p> <p>HOW CLOSE CAN I PARK?</p>			

Image 33. Seattle DOT: "Can I Park Here?" Brochure Excerpt

SDOT is also effective in using positive wording to communicate parking regulations. Seattle’s “Can I Park Here?” brochure shifts the focus to what is allowed instead of what is prohibited (Image 33). It concisely identifies signage information, how to avoid parking tickets, and how to “Park Like a Pro.” Additionally, it is a one-stop shop for parking information and resources with regard to paying parking tickets, digital tools, and contacts.



Seattle has also implemented the “Play Like a Parking Pro” program. Using Monopoly-style card signage, along with a series of funny informational videos, the City communicates new parking program changes and regulations. This campaign is meant to educate drivers about the parking system, so they can park smart, understand the rules, and use tools like mobile payment and online maps to improve their experience. By taking a fun approach to an educational campaign, the City improves the overall perception of parking while providing useful information. The City uses playful flags along with Monopoly signage at its meters (Images 34 and 35).



Image 34. Seattle Parking Flag



Image 35. Play like a Parking Pro Flyer

When the Portland Bureau of Transportation implemented their mobile payment application, called “Parking Kitty”, a successful education and outreach campaign included the collaboration with iAmMoshow, the “Cat Rapper”. The City released a humorous music video with the Cat Rapper

promoting the mobile payment application. The YouTube video has over 20,000 views and it was broadcast in the news as well. The parking zone map uses Parking Kitty logos, and the City even sells Parking Kitty branded T-shirts. The City of Chico could consider taking a creative approach to promoting parking information to make the parking experience fun and positive.



Image 36. Parking Kitty Music Video



Image 3637. Parking Kitty Zone Map

## Implementation Guide

### Near-Term Steps

- A. The City should include the established parking brand on all outreach materials as well as any signage, parking meters, and equipment to maintain program cohesiveness.
- B. Flyers should be mailed out to residents, business owners, and employees with information about any upcoming parking program changes. Additionally, all information should be available on the City website and any business community webpages, including DCBA and P/ARC websites. For example, if the City implements parking rate changes, information should include what the rate increase is going to be, the date that the rate is scheduled to change and the intended purpose of the rate change. Any information about residential or employee permits should also be incorporated into the City's education and outreach campaign. Flyers should incorporate the City's parking brand, which will help to provide residents and employees with a familiar marker when visiting downtown.
  - i. The program purpose should focus on program benefits and improving the visitor experience in Chico through effective parking management. Parking should be simple, easy to find, and easy to purchase.
  - ii. The City should consider using positive language to communicate parking regulations.
- C. The City should host forums for public feedback and comments in preparation for the implementation of any program changes. This will allow the City to incorporate public feedback into any implementation actions.
- D. Reach out to CSUC to inform campus communities on parking program changes.
  - i. Consider developing informational pamphlets to be distributed to all incoming students.
  - ii. The City should proactively work with CSUC to ensure that the CSUC website is up to date with Chico parking information.

### Long-Term Steps:

- E. Continue to use DCBA, PARC and Neighborhood Associations to provide information to stakeholders.
- F. Continue to collaborate with CSUC on parking and transportation solutions for accessing Downtown Chico.



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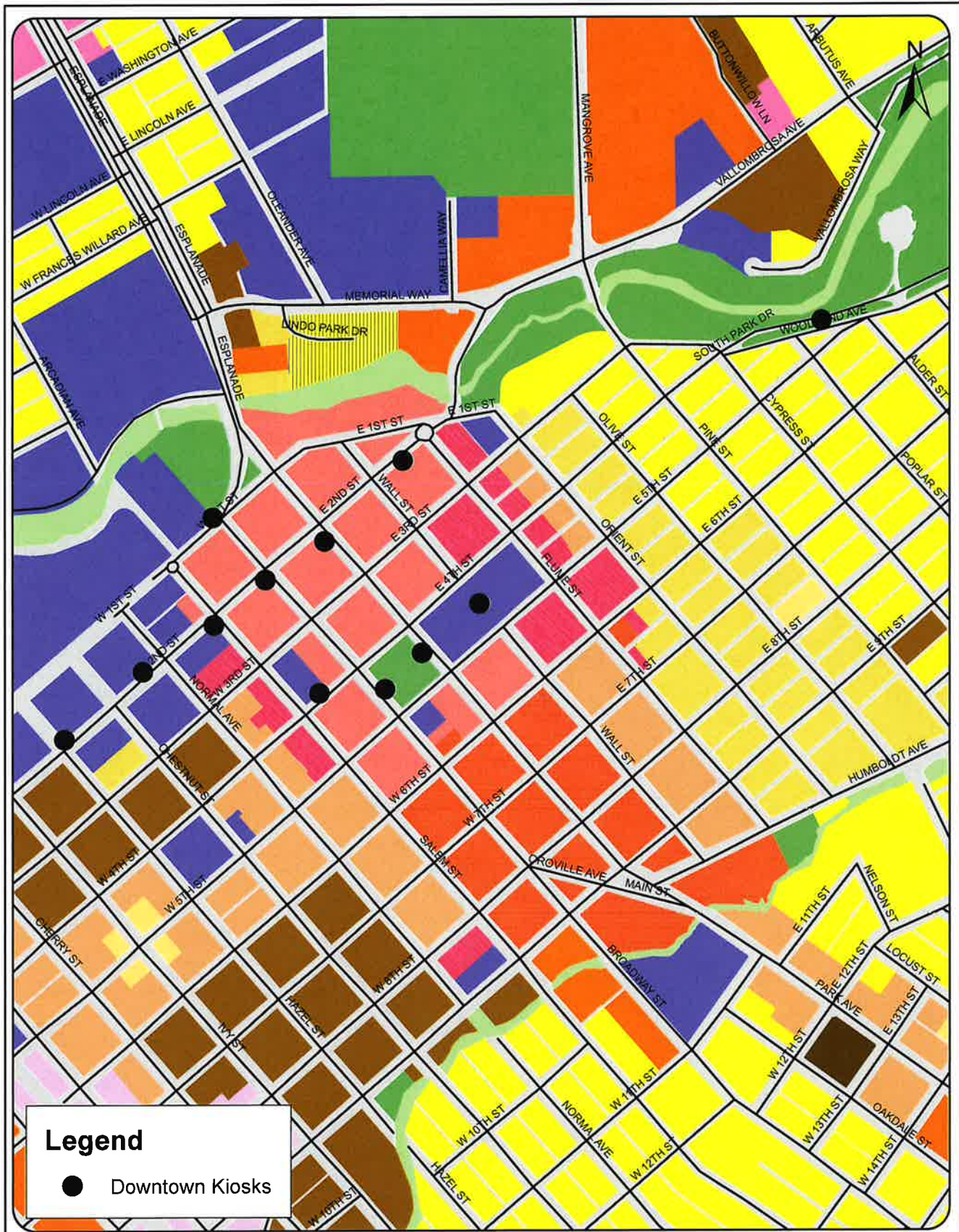
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Attachment D



**Legend**

- Downtown Kiosks



**CITY OF CHICO**  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
ENGINEERING DIVISION  
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Chico, California 95926

**DOWNTOWN KIOSKS  
SOOFA LOCATION MAP**

**PROJECT LOCATION**  
KIMBERLY SCHATZ  
FEBRUARY 2021