

19.11.140 Signs.

A. Objectives. Signs shall be distinctive, finely crafted and designed to enhance the aesthetics of the Town Center and to improve pedestrian and motorist safety. Signs shall be designed for the purpose of identifying the business in an attractive and functional manner and to help customers find the specific business locations; they should not serve as general advertising. The size of signs shall be in proportion to the size of business store frontage. Signs shall be integrated into the building design, compatible with their surroundings and clearly inform pedestrians and motorists of business names, but should not detract from the architectural quality of individual buildings.

B. *Development and Design Standards.*

1. Freestanding Ground Signs.

a. Number. A building or complex may not display more than one ground sign on each street frontage.

b. *Design.* The sign shall be architecturally compatible with the style, materials, colors and details of the building. The sign content should be integrated in one design (in contrast to displaying two or more separate elements). Use of symbols is encouraged.

c. *Size.* All signs shall be:

i. *Proportionate.* Proportionate to the street frontage of the businesses they identify; and

ii. *Maximum Size.* In no case larger than:

(a) *Twenty-five square feet.* A maximum of 25 square feet for individual business ground signs, shopping complex identification ground signs and signs within a 10-foot setback from any property line on a street.

(b) *Fifty square feet.* A maximum of 50 square feet for joint ground signs (identifying more than one business); six square feet for each business included in the complex. When more than five businesses are included in the complex, one additional ground sign may be placed on the street front, if signs are located at least 100 feet apart.

d. *Maximum Height.* The maximum height of any sign within 10 feet from any property line on a street shall be 42 inches. All other ground signs shall be a maximum of six feet in height. The height of a freestanding ground sign is measured from the top of the sign to the existing grade or finished grade, whichever is lower, directly below the sign being measured.

e. Backs of Signs. Exposed areas of backs of signs should be finished to present an attractive appearance.

2. Wall Signs.

a. *Eligibility.* A wall sign shall be granted to commercial uses occupying buildings facing the streets and are limited to one sign per business on each street frontage. Commercial uses occupying a building

adjacent to a driveway shall not qualify for a second wall sign. However, a commercial use occupying a building whose only exposure is from a driveway or parking lot shall be allowed one wall sign. Businesses that demonstrate that the entry off a driveway or parking lot is used by customers shall be eligible for a wall sign.

b. *Size.* All signs shall be:

i. *Proportionate.* Proportionate to the street frontage of the businesses they identify; and

ii. *Maximum Size.* In no case larger than:

(a) *Twenty-five square feet.* Twenty-five square feet for individual business signs.

(b) *Fifty square feet.* Fifty square feet for joint business directory signs identifying the occupants of a commercial building and located next to the entrance.

c. *Determination of Size.* The sign size is measured as follows:

i. *“Boxed” Displays.* “Boxed” display – total area of display including the background and borders.

ii. *Individual Letters and Symbols.* Individual letters and symbols – total combined area of a rectangle drawn around the outer perimeter of each word and each symbol.

d. *Placement.* Wall signs may not extend above the building parapet, soffit, the eave line or the roof of the building, or the windowsill of the second story.

e. *Signs above Window Displays.* When a commercial complex provides spaces for signs above window displays, these signs should be compatible in shape, scale of letters, size, color, lighting, materials and style.

f. *Design Commission Discretion.* If an applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the design commission that a wall sign is creative, artistic and an integral part of the architecture, the commission may waive the above restrictions.

g. *Master Sign Plan.* When multiple signs for individual businesses are contemplated for a major construction project, a master sign plan stipulating the location and size of future signs will be required.

3. *Projecting Signs.*

a. *Sidewalk Clearance.* Projecting signs should clear the sidewalk by a minimum of eight feet.

b. *Maximum Size.* Projecting signs shall not be larger than six square feet.

c. *Projection from Building.* Signs should not project over four feet from the building unless the sign is a part of a permanent marquee or awning over the sidewalk.

d. *Awnings.* Awnings that incorporate a business sign shall be fabricated of opaque material and shall use reverse channel lettering. The design commission may require that an awning sign be less than the

maximum area for wall signs to assure that the awning is in scale with the structure. Back-lit or internally lit awnings are prohibited.

4. Window Signs.
 - a. *Area Limitation.* Permanent and temporary window signs are limited to maximum 25 percent of the window area.
 - b. *Integration with Window Display.* Every effort should be made to integrate window signs with window display.
5. Parking Lot Signs. Signs within parking lots should be limited to those necessary for safety, identification and direction. The code official shall specify required wording for signage identifying public parking required by MICC [19.11.130\(B\)\(2\)](#).
6. Directional Signs.
 - a. *Minimal Number.* To avoid a cluttered appearance, only those directional signs necessary to protect the safety of pedestrians and passengers in vehicles will be allowed. The code official may, however, require directional signs as necessary to provide motorists with required information to find parking area entrances.
 - b. *Size.* These signs shall be no higher than 36 inches and no larger than four square feet.
7. Temporary Signs. Unless prohibited by this chapter, use of temporary signs in the Town Center shall be governed by MICC [19.06.020](#), Temporary signs.
8. Prohibited Signs.
 - a. Roof. Signs mounted on the roof are not permitted.
 - b. Moving Signs. Animated, moving, flashing, blinking, reflecting, revolving, or other similar signs or signs that incorporate these elements are prohibited.
 - c. Pennants and Inflated Signs. Pennants or inflated signs, balloons and figures are prohibited.
 - d. Vehicles. Signs attached to or painted on vehicles parked and visible from the public right-of-way are prohibited if, based on the relative amount of time the vehicle is parked rather than being used as a means for actual transportation, the vehicle's primary purpose is as a stationary sign rather than a means for actual transportation.
 - e. *Phone Numbers.* Phone numbers are prohibited from permanent, exterior signs.
9. Lighted Signs. Lighted signs shall be of high quality and durable materials, distinctive in shape, designed to enhance the architectural character of the building and use LED lights or other minimum wattage lighting, as necessary to identify the facility or establishment. Channel or punch-through letters are preferred over a sign that contains text and/or logo symbols within a single, enclosed cabinet.

10. *Street Numbers.*

- a. *Use.* City-assigned street numbers should be installed on all buildings.
- b. *Effect on Permitted Sign Area.* Street numbers will not be counted towards permitted sign area.

11. *Design Commission Discretion.* If an applicant demonstrates to the satisfaction of the design commission that a sign is creative, artistic and an integral part of the architecture, the commission may waive the above restrictions.

12. *Master Sign Plan.* When multiple signs for individual businesses are contemplated for a major construction project, a master sign plan stipulating the location and size of future signs will be required. (Ord. 16C-06 § 2 (Exh. A)).

The Mercer Island City Code is current .

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19.12.080 Signs.

A. Objectives.

1. Signs shall be distinctive in shape, of high quality and durable materials, designed to enhance the architectural character of the building and use the minimum wattage necessary to identify the facility or establishment. Channel or punch-through letters are preferred over a sign that contains the text and/or logo symbols within a single, enclosed cabinet.
2. Signs shall be designed for the purpose of identifying the facility or establishment in an attractive and functional manner and to help customers find the specific establishment and location; signs in residential zones should not serve as general advertising.
3. The size of signs shall be proportional to the size of the building and site.
4. Signs shall be integrated into both the site design and building design, shall be compatible with their residential, office, or business, or public park or open space surroundings, and clearly inform viewers of building or activity use, but shall not detract from the architectural quality of individual buildings or park surroundings.

B. Standards.

1. Freestanding Ground Signs Outside Residential Zones.

- a. *Number.* An individual building or a building complex outside residential zones may display one ground sign on each street frontage.
- b. *Design.* The sign shall be architecturally compatible with the style, materials, colors and details of the building or complex. Use of symbols is encouraged.
- c. *Size.* All signs shall be:
 - i. *Proportionate.* Proportionate to the street frontage of the use they identify; and
 - ii. *Maximum Size.* In no case shall a freestanding ground sign be larger than:
 - (A) Twenty-Five Square Feet. Twenty-five square feet for single-tenant building ground signs and complex identification ground signs. Such signs may be allowed in front or side yard setbacks; or
 - (B) Forty Square Feet. Forty square feet for joint tenant ground signs (identifying more than one facility or establishment within a building or building complex) with six square feet maximum for any one establishment included in a building or building complex; provided, joint tenant ground signs shall be restricted to a maximum of 25 square feet if located within front or side yard setbacks.
- d. *Maximum Height.* The maximum height of any sign within 10 feet from any property line facing a street shall be 42 inches. All other ground signs shall be no higher than six feet.

- e. *Backs of Signs.* Exposed areas of backs of signs should be finished with appropriate color, material or texture to present an attractive appearance relative to the building material, color and texture.
2. *Wall Signs Outside Residential Zones.*
- a. *Number and Eligibility.* An individual building or a building complex outside residential zones may display one wall sign on each street frontage. A business or other use occupying a building whose only entrance is from a driveway or parking lot shall be allowed one wall sign facing that driveway or parking lot.
 - b. *Size.* All signs shall be:
 - i. *Proportionate.* Proportionate to the street frontage of the use they identify; and
 - ii. *Maximum Size.* In no case shall a wall sign be larger than:
 - (A) Twenty-Five Square Feet. Twenty-five square feet for any individual business or other use; or
 - (B) Forty Square Feet. Forty square feet for joint tenant directory signs identifying the occupants of a building or a building complex and located next to the entrance.
 - c. *Determination of Size.* The sign size shall be measured as follows:
 - i. *Boxed Sign Displays:* Total area of a boxed sign display, including the background and borders.
 - ii. *Individual Letters and Symbols:* Total combined area of a rectangle drawn around the outer perimeter of each word and each symbol.
 - d. *Placement.* Wall signs may not extend above the building parapet, soffit, the eave line or the roof of the building, or the windowsill of the second story. Wall signs shall be integrated with the overall building and site design.
 - e. *Master Signage Plan.* When multiple signs for individual businesses in one building or multiple buildings in a complex are contemplated, a master signage plan stipulating the location and size of allowed signs shall be required.
3. *Signs for Non-Single-Family-Dwelling Uses in Residential Zones.* One wall sign and one freestanding ground sign are permitted on each separate public street frontage for non-single-family-dwelling uses in residential zones, such as apartment buildings, hospitals, assisted living and retirement facilities, churches, clubs, public facilities, schools, day cares, pre-schools, park and recreation facilities, assembly halls, libraries, pools or stadiums. A wall sign may be unlighted or exterior lighted, not to exceed 12 square feet. A free-standing ground sign shall be no larger than 18 square feet and shall not exceed a maximum height of 42 inches above grade. The location of any freestanding ground sign shall be subject to all setback requirements for the zone in which the sign is located.

4. *Signs for Licensed Practitioners or Service Operators in Residential Zones.* Licensed practitioners or service operators in residential zones shall be permitted one unlighted window or wall sign for identification purposes only, bearing only the occupant's name and occupation, not to exceed 72 square inches.
5. *Parking Lot Signs.* Signs within parking lots should be limited to those necessary for safety and identification. Any required signs for individual stalls should be marked on the pavement. Freestanding or wall-mounted signs should not be permitted, with the exception of ADA handicapped accessible parking signs.
6. *Directional Signs.*
 - a. *Minimal Number.* To address safety concerns and avoid a cluttered appearance, only those directional signs necessary to protect the safety of pedestrians and vehicle occupants shall be allowed.
 - b. *Size and Height.* Directional signs shall be no larger than three square feet and no higher than 36 inches above grade.
7. *Temporary Signs.* Unless prohibited by this chapter, use of temporary signs shall be governed by MICC [19.06.020](#), Temporary Signs.
8. *Street Numbers.*
 - a. *Use.* City-assigned street numbers should be installed on all buildings.
 - b. *Effect on Permitted Sign Area.* Street numbers will not be counted towards permitted sign area.
 - c. *Size.* Street numbers for any building or building complex shall be no smaller than six inches in height.
9. *Prohibited Signs.*
 - a. *Roof.* Signs mounted on the roof are prohibited.
 - b. *Projecting Signs.* Projecting signs are prohibited in all zones other than the PBZ. Within the PBZ, projecting signs are permitted subject to the Town Center standards set forth in MICC [19.11.140\(B\)\(3\)\(b\)](#).
 - c. *Window Signs.* Window signs are prohibited in all zones other than the PBZ, except as provided above in MICC [19.12.080\(B\)\(4\)](#). Within the PBZ, window signs are permitted subject to the Town Center standards set forth in MICC [19.11.140\(B\)\(4\)](#).
 - d. *Inflated Signs.* Inflated signs, balloons and figures are prohibited.
 - e. *Internally Lit Signs.* Internally lit signs are prohibited in all zones other than the PBZ. Within the PBZ, lighted signs are permitted subject to the Town Center standards set forth in MICC [19.11.140\(B\)\(9\)](#).
 - f. *Neon.* Neon signs are prohibited.
 - g. *Portable.* Portable signs, such as signs on trailers, are prohibited. This standard is not intended to prohibit A-frame signs as allowed pursuant to MICC [19.06.020](#), Temporary Signs.

- h. *Flashing, Moving or Animated Signs, Etc.* Flashing, moving, animated, blinking, reflecting, revolving, or other similar signs or signs that incorporate these elements are prohibited.
- i. *Off-Premises Signs.* Off-premises signs (signs related to a building, business, tenant or establishment not located on the same premises as the sign) are prohibited.
- j. *Vehicles.* Signs attached to or painted on vehicles parked and visible from the public right-of-way are prohibited if, based on the relative amount of time the vehicle is parked rather than being used as a means for actual transportation, the vehicle's primary purpose is as a stationary sign rather than a means for actual transportation.
- k. *Vending Machines.* Vending machines, such as soft drink or snack machines, shall not be placed where they are visible from the public right-of-way.

10. *Signs for Public Schools in Public Institution Zones.* One wall sign and one freestanding ground sign are permitted for each public school. A wall sign shall not exceed 12 square feet. A freestanding ground sign shall not exceed 18 square feet and shall not exceed a maximum height of 42 inches above grade. A freestanding ground sign shall be set back a minimum of 10 feet from a public right-of-way and 35 feet from abutting properties. Wall and freestanding ground signs shall not have internal lighting, except for an electronic readerboard.

11. *Electronic Readerboards.* A public school may have no more than one electronic readerboard. This electronic readerboard shall count as the wall sign or freestanding ground sign allowed by MICC [19.12.080\(B\)\(10\)](#). Electronic readerboards shall comply with the following:

- a. Electronic readerboards shall be designed and placed to minimize light and glare from being visible to adjacent residential properties.
- b. Electronic readerboards shall dim during twilight and night hours to reduce glare.
- c. Electronic readerboards shall be turned off between 10 pm and 7 am.
- d. The display shall include only static text and/or static graphics. No moving graphics, animations such as flying or fading, video, or blinking/pulsing/strobe effects are allowed.
- e. Each message and/or graphic shall be displayed for at least 10 seconds. The change from one message/graphic to the next may utilize a scrolling or wipe effect, but the effect shall take no more than one second to complete.
- f. Electronic readerboards shall display any message deemed necessary by the City of Mercer Island Emergency Operations Center (EOC) upon request by the EOC. The display of any such message shall be exempt from the requirements of subsections [\(B\)\(11\)\(c\)](#) and [\(B\)\(11\)\(e\)](#) of this section. (Ord. 14C-06 § 7; Ord. 04C-08 § 1).

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19.06.020 Temporary signs.

A. *General Provisions.* All temporary signs in the city are subject to the following conditions:

1. Signs may not be placed on private property without permission of the owner.
2. All signs shall be unlit.
3. Signs shall not obstruct vehicular or pedestrian traffic.
4. It is the responsibility of the person posting a temporary sign to remove it.
5. Except as specified elsewhere in this section, temporary signs shall not exceed 60 inches above the ground and shall not exceed six square feet in area; provided, signs up to 16 square feet in area may be allowed subject to the issuance of a permit from the code official; further provided, both sides of an A-frame sign shall be counted in calculating the sign's area.
6. Signs in Public Rights-of-Way. Signs may not be placed on public property except for publicly owned rights-of-way. In addition to all other applicable conditions, signs placed in rights-of-way shall be subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Signs may be placed on rights-of-way adjacent to a single-family dwelling only with permission of the adjoining property owner.
 - b. Signs shall not create a traffic safety or maintenance problem, and the city may remove and dispose of any signs that do constitute a problem.
 - c. Signs placed on public property shall be freestanding and shall not be attached to any structure or vegetation. Signs attached to utility poles, traffic signs, street signs, or trees are specifically forbidden.
 - d. Signs shall be either an A-frame design or shall be attached to a stake driven into the ground well clear of tree roots, irrigation lines and any other underground vegetation or structures that could be damaged by such a stake.
 - e. A temporary sign, other than a political sign, may only be erected for a maximum of 90 days during any 365-day period.

B. *Temporary Signs Allowed in All Zones.*

1. *Temporary, Noncommercial Signs.* Temporary, noncommercial signs are allowed in all zones, subject to the conditions set out in subsection [A](#) of this section and the following conditions:
 - a. Except as allowed in subsection [C](#) of this section, banners, pennants, and other similar attention getting devices are not allowed; provided, such signs may be allowed for community-wide civic activities subject to the issuance of a permit from the code official.

2. *Temporary Commercial Signs.* Temporary commercial signs are not allowed outside of the TC, B and PBZ zones except for real estate signs and garage sale signs.

a. *Real Estate Signs.* Signs advertising the sale, rental, or lease of property are allowed in all zones, subject to the following conditions.

i. One real estate sign per street frontage is allowed on property being offered for sale, rent, or lease.

ii. Three real estate A-frame signs may be posted in the public right-of-way, subject to the conditions set out in subsection [\(A\)\(6\)](#) of this section, for the following purposes:

(a) Advertising a real estate open house at a single-family dwelling; provided, no more than four signs total may be posted for property being sold by the same owner;

(b) Directing the public to a multiple-family dwelling in which there is a dwelling unit available for rental or sale.

iii. Real estate sales and rental signs shall be removed within seven days after the sale or rental of the property being advertised.

iv. Real estate signs in public rights-of-way may be posted only during those hours that a real estate or rental agent is actually present at the property and shall be removed at the end of the open house or when the sales or rental office closes each day.

b. *Garage Sales.*

i. Three signs directing the public to a garage sale may be posted in a public right-of-way subject to the conditions set out in subsection [\(A\)\(6\)](#) of this section.

ii. Garage sale signs may be posted no more than 24 hours before the beginning of the sale and shall be removed at the end of the sale.

3. *Political Signs.* Political signs may be posted in the public right-of-way, subject to the conditions set out in subsection [\(A\)\(6\)](#) of this section.

C. *Temporary Commercial Signs in the TC, B, and PBZ Zones.* Temporary commercial signs in the form of banners, A-frame sandwich boards and streamers are allowed in the TC, B, and PBZ zones; provided, temporary signs shall not be permanently attached to any structure on the site; and further provided, the temporary signs conform to the following conditions:

1. *Banners.*

a. Shall be no larger than 48 square feet; however, no business may display more than 10 square feet of banner per 10 feet of business facade as measured by that portion of the building facing the access street, up to a maximum of 48 square feet, but always in proportion to the business building.

b. Shall be limited to one banner per side of the business as it faces and is accessible to the public.

- c. Shall be attached to the building housing the business.
 - d. May hang for up to 30 days at one time, but no more than a total of 120 days per calendar year on a side of the business designated for display. Any side of a business must be free of any banner for a period of no less than 14 days before the next banner is hung.
 - e. Shall be professionally produced by a person skilled in the art of graphic design.
 - f. Shall be hung in a manner which does not obstruct traffic or a view of any other business.
 - g. Shall be well maintained.
2. *A-Frames*. Each licensed business may post one A-frame sign either on property owned or controlled by the business or in the public right-of-way, subject to the conditions set out in subsection [\(A\)\(6\)](#) of this section; provided, the sign:
- a. Shall not exceed 60 inches above the ground and shall not exceed 24 square feet in area; provided, both sides of the A-frame shall be counted in calculating the sign's area.
 - b. May be used on a daily basis, but only during business hours.
 - c. Shall be located within 100 feet of the business displaying the sign.
 - d. Shall be professionally produced by a person skilled in the art of graphic design.
 - e. Shall be well maintained.
3. *Streamers, Flags, or Pennants Attached to a String or Wire*.
- a. May be used a maximum of two times per year for a maximum of seven days each time.
 - b. Shall be attached to the building housing the business displaying the streamer.
 - c. Shall not obstruct vehicular or pedestrian traffic or obstruct a view of any other business.
 - d. Shall be well maintained.
4. *Other Temporary Signage*. Other forms of portable signs are expressly prohibited. (Ord. 08C-01 § 2; Ord. 02C-05 § 7; Ord. 02C-04 § 9; Ord. 99C-13 § 1).

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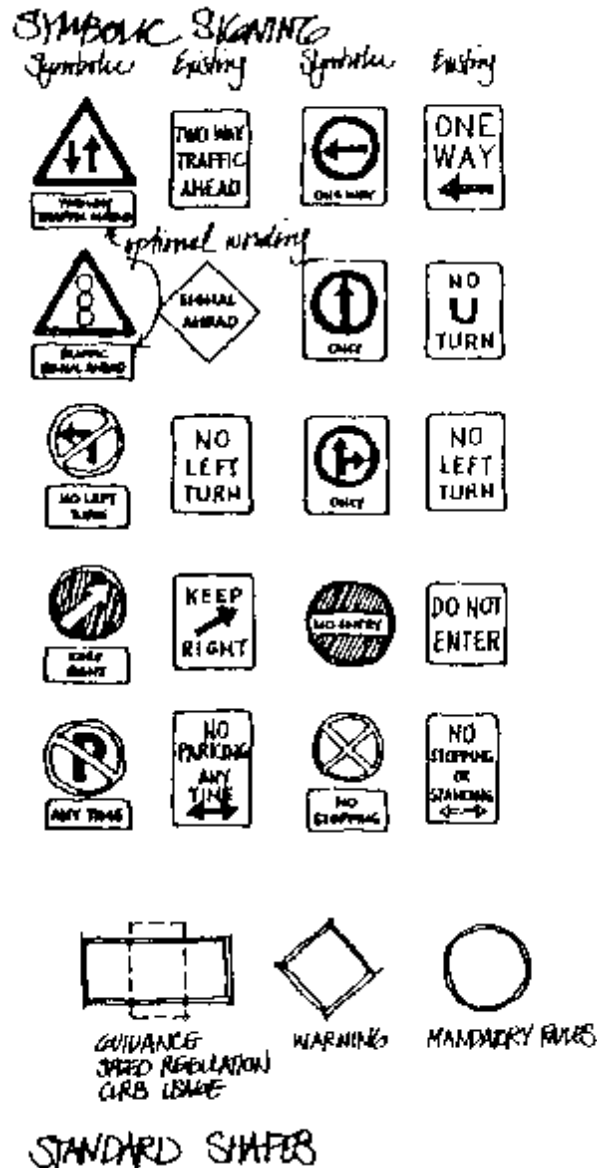
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PUBLIC SIGNING, LIGHTING AND OTHER STREET FURNITURE.

CONCEPTS



Public signing, street furniture and lighting elements should reinforce and clarify the predominantly natural, informal, residential character of the Island instead of dominating or detracting from it. Appropriate street furnishings can do much to make the Island environment more legible, expressive, pleasant and engaging as well as establish a “sense of place” about the Island as a whole or a particular area within it. Public signing can more effectively and uniformly reveal the function, form and activities of the Island and clarify its overall environment. “Out-of-control” signing, lighting and furnishings – ones that are in conflict with the surroundings – obscure the meaning of the environment as often as they clarify it.

Public signing, street furniture and lighting should be evaluated on the basis of 1) does it detract from the overall environment and 2) does it provide the type of information which clarifies and reinforces the environment of Mercer Island and provides the necessary guidance and orientation to the user.

GUIDELINES

Public Signing

Shape and color are the primary means of distinguishing the type of message for the driver in motion. The basic shapes are 1) the circle: mandatory rules; 2) the rectangle: guidance, speed regulations, and curb usage; and 3) the diamond: warning. Two nonconforming signs are the octagonal “stop” sign and the triangular “yield” sign.

Shape combined with color indicate a specific class of message. The red circle is used for prohibiting signs, i.e., no entry, no parking, etc. The green circle is used for permitted turning rules. The yellow diamond indicates warning. Blue rectangles give local guidance and green rectangles are used for distant guidance.

The use of symbolic signs as patterned after the international traffic symbols is gaining acceptance in this country. The 1971 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices shows increased reliance on symbols with minimal word use as a transition toward a more uniform and better understood system of symbolic signing. There is no doubt that symbols, once accepted by the general public, offer greater clarity and legibility than the current, lengthy verbal directives in use. Because properly designed symbolic signing is more readily perceived and comprehended than its verbal counterpart, the number of necessary signs may be significantly reduced.

Mercer Island is, in a sense, a fairly remote community that does not receive a great deal of outside traffic, and for this reason has the need for relatively few public signs as compared to a community such as Burien or Renton which cater to a great number of outside visitors. This has a distinct advantage not only in keeping signs to a minimum, but also in introducing changes to an existing signing system.

Curb Usage Signs



EXAMPLES OF CURB USAGE SIGNS

Curb usage signs (no parking, bus stop, loading, etc.) although classified as Regulatory Signs, are not as important to traffic safety as other regulatory and warning signs, and thus offer a chance to introduce purely symbolic signing without compromising user safety.

The diagonally slashed red circle is an internationally accepted prohibitive symbol and is included in the Manual as acceptable signing for prohibiting truck and bicycle entry. The slashed circle, in conjunction with perhaps limited wording, may be used as the basis for most of the curb usage signing needed, within the Business District. (See diagrams.)

Warning Signs

Warning signs are primarily placed for the protection of the driver who may not be acquainted with the road conditions which may be potentially dangerous. Warning signs indicate crossings, curves, impending signals, slippery conditions etc. The majority of warning signs are diamond shaped with a black legend and yellow background. They are often used in conjunction with a rectangular verbal guidance sign.

Other Regulatory Signs

Other than the curb usage signs previously discussed, the major regulatory signs applicable to the Island are the stop, yield, speed limit, and turning signs. (See diagrams.) The signing for I-90 is not addressed by these guidelines.

Guide Signs

Guide signs are used to inform the motorist of interesting routes, destination, parks, trails, historic sites, etc. Because of the great familiarity of most users with the Island and its facilities, most standard guide signs are not needed on the Island and their use should be discouraged in order to maintain roadside signs to a minimum.

GUIDELINES

GOAL:

Encourage the development and use of an overall, uniform signing system in keeping with national safety standards and representative of the Island Community that will:

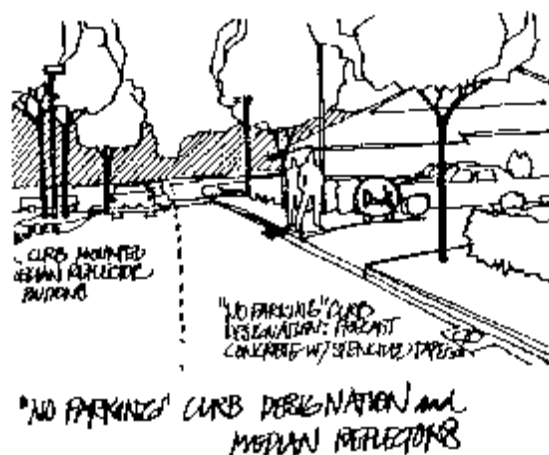
INTENT:

1. Emphasize symbols as opposed to the worded message.
2. Lend itself to combined or joint mounting so that the overall numbers of separate parts and separate signs may be reduced.
3. Lend itself to a uniform system of mounting.
4. Utilize light standards as supports for signing and light signalization where appropriate.
5. Be legible at the speed and distance at which it is placed to be seen.
6. Employ minimum sizes as determined by safety requirements.

CRITERIA:

Curb Usage Signs: Curb usage signs pertain mostly to the Business District. There are various other locations on the Island where “no parking” signs are used, but they are relatively few. Bus zone symbols may be used Island wide. Stopping or standing regulations may be particularly applicable at schools and other public facilities.

The spacing of “no parking” signs should not exceed 150 feet, and should in all cases be governed by what is a reasonable sight distance in each particular situation. “No parking” signs should be placed so that they are readily apparent from cross streets that enter in mid-block. Signs may occur at random spacing as determined by visibility and available mounting. Within the Business District, two signs per block may suffice.



Parking and other curb usage signs should be incorporated as part of the signing mounted on light standards within the Business District and in all other locations where possible in order to keep the number of upright posts at a minimum. The “no parking” sign/symbol may be the dominant element on all curb usage signs, with other

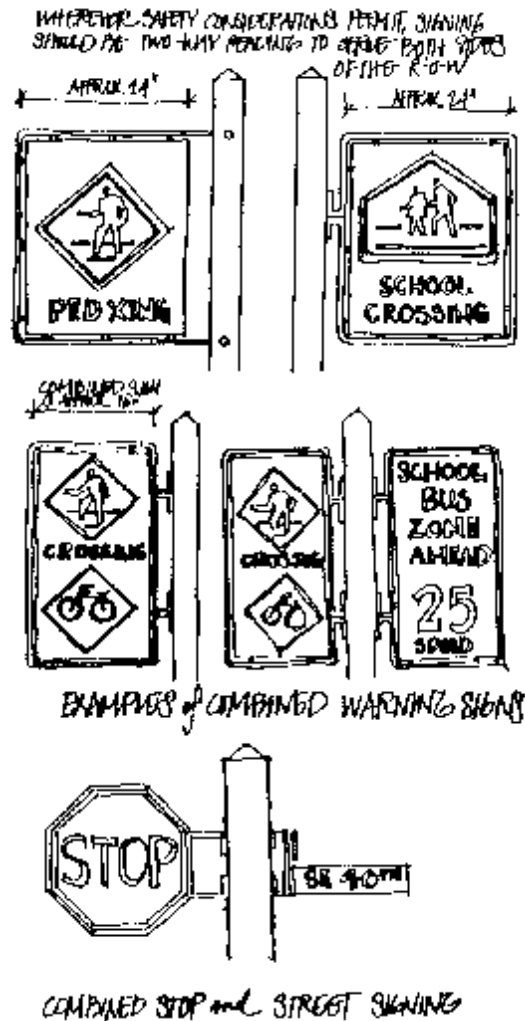
uses such as truck load, bus zone, taxis only, etc., indicated by word message as part of the “no parking” sign. Symbols may be used to specifically indicate the permitted usage for a bus zone, taxi zone, etc., that are based on the open green circle which is the standard symbol signifying permitted use.

An alternative approach to posting “no parking” areas within the Business District would be to post only those limited areas where parking is allowed, providing a general “no on-street parking” sign/symbol is adequately displayed or incorporated as part of the gateway signing at key entry points to the Business District. In this case the positive green circle would be the basic symbol employed.

“No parking” designations within the Business District may also be incorporated by means of curb markings, striping, or by the use of the slashed red circle symbol as part of the curb shoulder. In this case the “no parking” designation should be used at approximately 40-50 foot intervals.

Reflector buttons for medians should be made a part of the curb. Use of upright reflector mounts should be discouraged.

Warning Signs: The use of warning signs should be kept to a minimum because their unnecessary use tends to lessen their impact. This is particularly true in the case of Mercer Island where the majority of motorists are very familiar with existing conditions. Low speeds, as well as a uniform, consistent, uncomplicated backdrop, such as that along the majority of the right-of-ways, present additional reasons for further reducing warning sign usage and sign size.

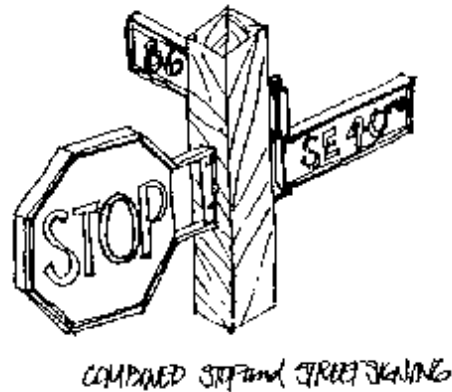


The color coding and diamond outline are of particular importance for easy identification of these signs, while the image in this case is of secondary importance.

Wherever safety considerations permit, the size of all signs and accompanying verbal guidance should be reduced in size as permitted by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control. Use of symbols that offer greater legibility along with smaller size should be employed. Warning signs for trail crossings should be combined with actual trail signs wherever possible, particularly along the rural right-of-ways. The incorporation of the diamond warning symbol and verbal guidance message as a part of a rectangular background should be considered for it has distinct advantages for establishing a uniform mounting system and for the incorporation of additional signs.

Regulatory Signs: The majority of regulatory signs are rectangular with the long axis being vertical. Two notable exceptions are the octagonal "stop" sign and the triangular "yield" sign. Minimum size standards have been established for both "stop" and "yield" signs which are permitted on low volume local streets and secondary roads. These should be employed throughout the Island.

Where their use is necessary, turning signs should employ the green circle with arrow symbol as opposed to the purely verbal black and white signs. Turn prohibition signs should employ the red circle.



Speed limit signs should be kept at minimum permitted sizes, and where permissible they should be combined with other roadside signing.

Guide Signs: The only guide sign currently in use is the bicycle route sign marking an officially designated bicycle trail. The use of these signs will most likely increase as new bicycle trails and types of facilities are developed. New symbolic signing may be developed for bicycle route markers as well as designated viewpoints or trailheads. Signing should be kept at minimum sizes, used only where essential to differentiate the facility or identify its location, and mounted jointly with other signing wherever possible.

Mounting: All signing should be uniformly mounted. Signs should be mounted in conjunction with lighting standards and should be integrated with other signing wherever possible. Signs should be mounted in conformity with height and setback requirements. Upright posts should be of wood, stained in dark or neutral colors. The back sides of all one-face reading signs and metal mounting frames should be anodized or painted to closely match the color of the wood.

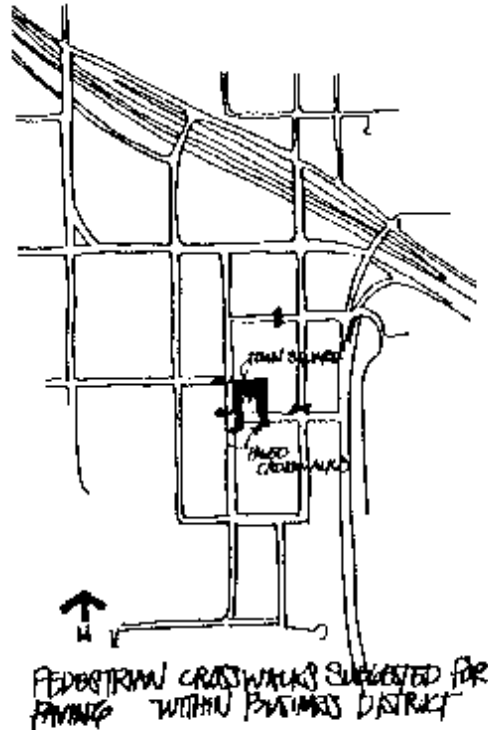
Street Name Signs: A distinct, well designed system of street name signing could do much to give Mercer Island special identity. The mounting and upright post should be compatible with that used for other public signing. The letter type should be picked for legibility and clarity. Value contrast as opposed to color should be emphasized to facilitate readability. Another alternative would be to incorporate the message "dead end" or an appropriate symbol as part of the street name sign with no change in color. A graphic symbol that is representative of the Island could be incorporated into all street name signs and used consistently to graphically convey "Mercer Island" in other locations, such as the gateway signing to the Business District.

An alternate to the use of the diamond "dead end" signs could be the color coding of street name signs for those streets that terminate as dead ends. For example, all through street name signs could be dark brown with white lettering; all "dead end" name signs could be signal yellow with black lettering.

Crosswalks: The major pedestrian crosswalks within the Business District should be indicated by a differentiation of pavement as opposed to striping. The pavement should be complementary to that used for adjoining sidewalks as well as pavement within the future town square which the majority of these crossings adjoin. It is the intent that

paving within the town square as well as other pedestrian precincts, be of a unit type material such as concrete pavers, brick, tile, etc.

Lighting



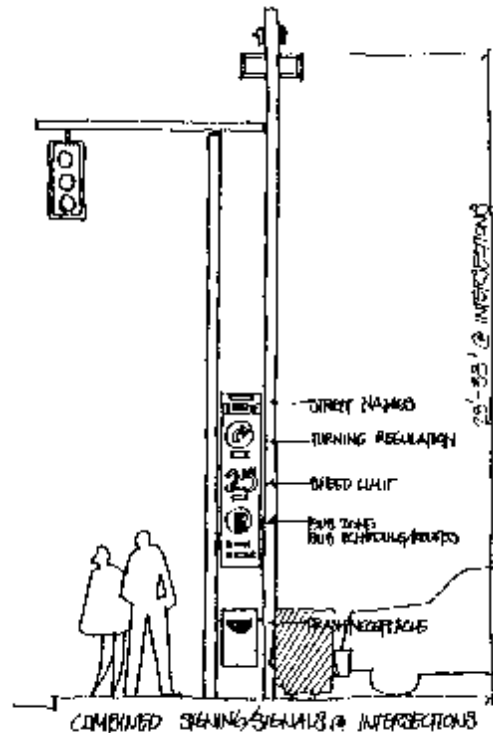
GOAL:

Provide safety for vehicular traffic and pedestrians.

INTENT:

Provide the amount and quality of light as recommended by recognized standards while satisfying the other goals included here. Within the Business District an average of 1.2 f.c. may be used, which is the IES Handbook recommendation for “major” roadways in business districts not classified as downtowns. An average rating is not significant. The minimum level and contrast between minimum and maximum as perceived over time is more important, particularly along the rural right-of-ways. Incident light along commercial streets is a significant contributor to the amount of light perceived by the driver or pedestrian and should be considered as part of the overall light level.

CRITERIA:



a. Light Levels: The minimum light level provided by street lights within the Business District at a point furthest away from the light source should not be less than .2 f.c. and the maximum should not exceed about 5 f.c., the average level of light should be approximately 1.2 f.c. to 2 f.c. including a maintenance factor of 60 percent.

b. Increase lighting levels at intersections, crosswalks and driveways to 2 times minimum, that of the remainder of the street or about 4 f.c. average at intersections within the Business District. Light should be uniform at intersections and of a contrasting color to mid-block areas.

GOAL:

Enhance the directional quality of the street.

INTENT:

1. Give character and scale to the street and emphasize the street corridor's directional quality through lighting pattern, scale of the light standards, and increased light levels at points of increased decision making for the driver.
2. Reduce area wide lighting and restrict it to the corridor.
3. Focus on the enhancement of the landscape and reinforce one's perception of the streetscape as a continuum of related elements building a total image.

CRITERIA:

1a. Emphasize the street as a corridor by focusing the lighting totally on the street and pedestrian ways. Minimize spilling-over light onto adjacent properties, except at driveways.

1b. At intersections and along major pedestrian routes in the Business District add pedestrian lighting integrated with the street lighting system. Light fixtures should be at a comfortable height to the pedestrian, approximately 10-15 feet high.

1c. Emphasize the lighting at intersections by changing the color of the light to warmer tones either by changing the type of lamp or the color of the lens.

2. Lighting standards should be not more than 20-24 feet high between intersections and 28-33 feet high at intersections in the Business District and along urban right-of-ways. Rural right-of-way standards should not exceed 16 feet; suburban right-of-ways should not exceed 22 feet. The lighting fixtures and standards are elements of a continuum of parts constituting the streetscape including trees, signs, roadway, automobile and people, which together form a spatial territory. Subjectively, not measurably, if the lights are raised above their critical heights they go beyond the bounds of the territory, break the tension formed between parts, and disassociate themselves from the other elements. The road user at this point no longer perceives the lights as a cooperative part of the total streetscape.

3a. Placement of lights should complement street tree spacing.

3b. Light underneath portions of the trees with approximately 10 percent up-light of the street lighting system. (This portion may be increased as the trees mature).

GOAL:

Relate lighting to other public elements of the street.

INTENT:

Reduce the number of competing elements in the streetscape and through integrated design, relate, in terms of common or complementary materials, systems and scale, the lighting system to traffic signals, signing and street furniture.

CRITERIA:

a. Combine the traffic signals on the same standard or standard system as the general intersection lighting.

b. Integrate signing, street signing and directional signals with the lighting standards throughout the Business District, at major intersections and at other locations if appropriate.

c. All light standards should be of the same material, preferably wood.

d. Overhead traffic signalization should be kept at a minimum.

Street Furniture

GOAL:

Develop furnishings that are compatible and consistent with the surrounding “streetscape” and the overall Island environment.

INTENT:

1. Provide appropriate street furnishings where needed.
2. Encourage pedestrian use of the right-of-way.
3. Enhance the street scene.

CRITERIA:

The street furniture elements addressed by these guidelines are bus shelters, seating, guardrails, bollards, fire hydrants, signal control boxes, and trash receptacles.

Bus Shelters: Bus shelters should be installed at major collecting points where sufficient use justifies their location or at locations that are served by several transit routes. Joint use between public and school transit stops should be encouraged. Bus shelters should not occur on highly developed residential streets or restricted right-of-ways where they may infringe on adjoining private development. Shelters should be sited to give easy access and visibility of the right-of-way, protection from prevailing weather, rain, and sun. Seating should be incorporated as part of the shelter. For the Business District or at other major locations, appropriate trash receptacles should be provided.

The existing bus shelter in the 4800 Block of East Mercer Way is an excellent example of a rural shelter in terms of materials, scale, color, and orientation. It is of a sufficient size to provide adequate protection from the weather. It incorporates seating. Its roof form is pleasing and in keeping with residential housing, and it has a sense of overhead structure that implies “shelter”. The scale and color of the structure are good due to the use of natural unit materials. The above criteria should be applied to the development of future bus shelters or a prototype shelter for the Island.

Bus stop locations within the Business District should be located to take advantage of the existing shelter and seating provided by adjoining buildings, such as the National Bank of Commerce. This particular type of pedestrian oriented street frontage development should be encouraged throughout the District, in which case the bus shelters would not be a necessity. The location of separate shelters within the Business District, as it exists, may only reinforce the preponderance of very small structures and very large parking lots.

Seating: Seating may be incorporated into the proposed joint pedestrian/bicycle paths proposed along arterials such as Island Crest Way to serve transit and school bus patrons, or as resting stops for bicyclists, pedestrians, etc. Care should be taken to locate seating sufficiently set back from the roadway and in areas where it does not conflict with adjoining development. Materials should be of wood, either natural or stained in dark or neutral colors.

Guardrails: Guardrails that are used for street ends, undeveloped right-of-ways, and other similar locations where their use is more symbolic than safety-oriented should be of wood, either natural or stained in dark or neutral colors. Reflector buttons may be incorporated as part of the guardrail for night-time visibility.

In locations where wood guardrails do not suffice because of safety requirements, a planting hedge may be employed as a visual screening device. Where screening is not feasible corten may be employed as the rail. If existing speed limits are maintained on the Island, the use of such guardrails should be limited to Island Crest Way and I-90.

Bollards: Bollards may be used for marking street ends, roadways, and undeveloped right-of-ways particularly where unimpeded pedestrian traffic is desirable. Bollards may be used as a means of separating bicycle and vehicular traffic where curbing is not appropriate, and may be employed at intersections that are crossed by bicycle paths/lanes as a means of preventing vehicle entry. Bollards should be of wood, either natural or stained in dark or neutral colors.

Bollards used for the protection of fire hydrants should be left as natural concrete with the use of reflector buttons for night-time visibility. The use of bollards to protect stop signs or other signage posts should be kept to a minimum; where bollards are absolutely essential for safety purposes, they should be treated as above.

Fire Hydrant: Hydrants should be uniformly painted. Hydrants within the Business District should be undergrounded.

Signal Control Boxes: Control boxes should be located to allow screening by planting buffers.

Trash Receptacles: Trash receptacles should be incorporated as part of the overall streetscape elements. Their main use would be in the Business District, at bus stops and shelters, and other public facilities. Receptacles should be of a size that does not dominate the streetscape elements, and should conform to the State Litter Control Law. They should be attached to existing light standards or other appropriate elements, and should be free of the ground. Metal, perforated metal, or wire mesh may be used. Color may be chosen to blend with existing street elements or used as a contrast to them,

The Mercer Island City Code is current through Ordinance 19C-13, passed October 15, 2019.

Disclaimer: The City Clerk's Office has the official version of the Mercer Island City Code. Users should contact the City Clerk's Office for ordinances passed subsequent to the ordinance cited above.

City Website: www.mercergov.org

City Telephone: (206) 275-7600

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