

REQUEST FOR PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW

Meeting Date: July 16, 2025

Subject: Unpermitted Nonconforming Downtown Sidewalk Signage

Attachments: Site Images, Public Announcement

Presented by: Andrew Hattori, CED Director

Approved For Agenda By: Andrew Hattori, CED Director

Background:

The City of Toppenish's downtown core currently has a significant amount of nonconforming and unpermitted signage. The installation of this signage is not a new issue, for many years signs have been installed by business owners who likely didn't know that permits were required, which has resulted in our current situation. A special emphasis has recently placed on signage that has been installed in holes within the sidewalk or placed directly on the sidewalk itself. Staff presented examples of unpermitted signage at the June 18, 2025 Planning Commission meeting and stated that they would work with spreading word about signage requirements to local businesses that have such signage present.

Discussion:

It was recently brought to staffs attention that there had been holes drilled into the sidewalk which are currently being utilized for signage, typically "feather" style signage. Additionally, "sandwich" signs have also been placed on sidewalk within the right of way. The Toppenish Municipal Code does not permit any signage at all within public right of way, including sidewalk areas.

Reasons for this include regulations such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), sight visibility, design district, and liability purposes. The placement of tall signs with considerable surface area can impede individuals ability to maneuver along the sidewalk, impact visibility along the street for vehicles and pedestrians, and may cause tripping hazards.

Toppenish's Code Enforcement official has been visiting local businesses as part of a yearly review, for any business that has signage in the right-of-way they were provided the attached Public Announcement detailing that the signage is not allowed and that we would be discussing this at future meetings. Staff will continue to make announcements related to this signage to garner public input. At this time staff wishes to continue discussion on what code requirements can be put in place to ensure safety, cover liability, and comply with various laws and regulations. Example options for this include:

1. Maintaining existing code, all signage within the right-of-way would need to be removed immediately.
 2. Modifying the Municipal Code to include provisions that would allow some signage to remain as they exist.
 3. Modifying the Municipal Code to include provisions that would allow some signage to remain provided they comply with new/additional design requirements.
-

Recommendation: Not Applicable

Public Announcement

**CITY OF
TOPPENISH**
21 West 1st Avenue
Toppenish, WA 98948

To: Valued Business Community

From: Andrew Hattori, CED Director

Date: June 30, 2025

Re: Nonconforming Signage on Sidewalks

The City of Toppenish has noticed varying amounts of signage located on or in the sidewalks outside of businesses. Currently the City does not allow any form of signage to be placed within the right-of-way, this includes the sidewalk and public areas. Some examples of prohibited signage include:

Feather Signs



Sandwich Signs



Currently, our code does not allow these signs and they should be removed.

The City understands the need of advertising for our local businesses and is currently undergoing efforts to find the best solutions that allows for proper signage that does not impact safety, visibility, and open walking spaces. The City of Toppenish Planning Commission will be conducting meetings to discuss potential code options, the next meeting is on **July 16, 2025, located at City Hall at 5:30 PM**, we strongly encourage your participation in the discussion.

For more information regarding signage and the upcoming Planning Commission meeting, please contact:

Andrew Hattori
509-829-4083
Andrew.Hattori@cityoftoppenish.us