

A wooden signpost with a scroll containing text. The signpost is made of light-colored wood and has a scroll attached to it. The scroll is held in place by two metal fasteners on the left and right sides. The text on the scroll is centered and reads: "SIGN ORDINANCE", "STUDY SESSION", and "APRIL 12, 2022". The signpost is supported by a wooden post that is partially obscured by a pile of green grass and yellow rocks at the base. The background is white, and the foreground is a wooden floor.

SIGN ORDINANCE

STUDY SESSION

APRIL 12, 2022

CURRENT ORDINANCE

- Adopted 1967, many sections never updated
- Legal challenges: Reed v. Town of Gilbert- protection of First Amendment
- Additional modernization of City's sign ordinance with Council direction

Sign ordinance goals:

1. Support local business
2. Prevent blight/visual clutter
3. Capacity to enforce





How does Watsonville want to look?



REED V. TOWN OF GILBERT

- US Supreme Court found that ordinances cannot treat signs differently based on their content
- Gilbert regulated the size and length of time allowed for signage based on the type of sign: political, religious, commercial, etc.
 - Religious signs could only be a certain size, and posted for 12 hours
 - Political signs could be bigger, and posted for 5 months



EFFECT ON SIGN ORDINANCES

- Cannot distinguish among non-commercial sign types (political, religious, ideological)
- Ordinance can regulate:
 - Size
 - Building materials
 - Lighting
 - Moving parts
 - portability
- Location (public/private property)
- Commercial / residential property
- Number of signs allowed
- On- and off-site signs
- Advertising a 1-time event

“If you have to read the sign to enforce the code, then it’s content based.”

SECTIONS SUBJECT TO REED V. GILBERT DECISION

Watsonville Municipal Code Section	Suggested Revision
8-6.112 – Obscene Matter	Revise language re: what constitutes “obscene”
8-6.119 – Political Signs	Strike language re: limitations on size
8-6.116 – Vehicular Signs	Revise language re: signs on vehicles or strike all together
8-6.120 through 122 – Signs regulated by district	Consider revision of sign regulations to be uniform regardless of the district in which they are located
8-6.124 through 132 – types of signs	A revision should be made to make the regulations consistent regardless of what type of sign it is
8-6.205- Exemptions	Revise to update exempted signs for free speech, including real estate and political signs
Article 4 re Signs in Central Business District	Ensure this article is consistent with 8-6.120 through 122

ADDITIONAL MODIFICATIONS

- Monument/freestanding signs
- Temporary signs
- Electronic message boards
- Sidewalk signs
- Permit process and modifications



Pylon Sign
Height: 35 feet



Monument Sign
Height: 12 feet

FREESTANDING/MONUMENT SIGNS

	Capitola	Santa Cruz	Scotts Valley	Salinas	Watsonville
Sign area	60 sf	150 sf	100 sf	50 sf	200 sf
Height	8 feet	35 feet	12 feet	20 feet	35 feet
# allowed	1 per frontage	1 per frontage	1 per frontage	2 per site	1 per parcel

TEMPORARY SIGNS

- Watsonville: 30 days, 30 square feet
- Consider: 60 days
- Sandwich signs on public/private property



SIDEWALK SIGNS



- Should we allow them?
 - For special events only?
 - Private property only?
 - Ability to enforce?

ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARD SIGNS



ELECTRONIC MESSAGE STANDARDS

- **Considerations:**
 - Allow or prohibit?
 - Size and height limitations (ancillary to main sign?)
 - Limitation on brightness
 - Limitation on the speed in which messages change
 - Require separation between electronic signs on the street (only 1 sign per 1,000 feet of street frontage?)

TIERED APPROVAL/MODIFICATIONS

- No sign specific modifications currently in Code
- Propose allowance of modifications to standards by Planning Commission
 - The type of sign allowed in nonresidential zoning districts (e.g., awning signs, monument signs).
 - Requirements for temporary signs.
 - The maximum permitted sign area up to a 25% increase.
 - The maximum permitted sign height up to a 25% increase.



**DISCUSSION/
STAFF
DIRECTION**

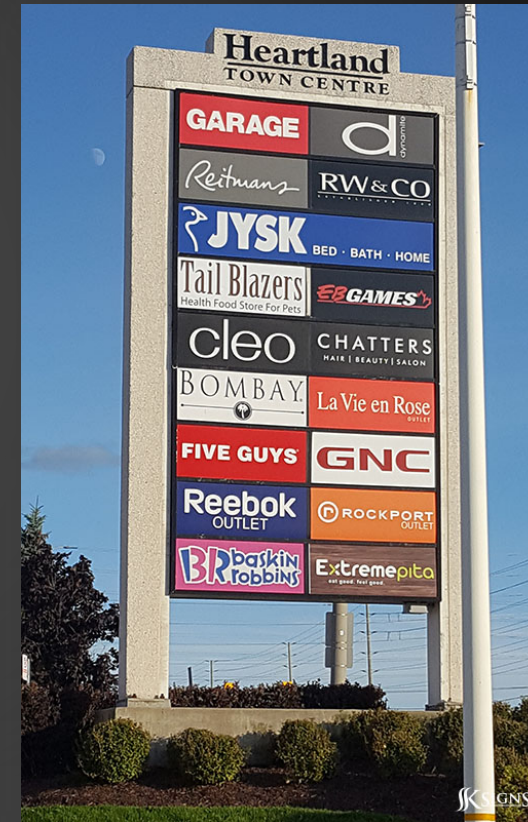
MONUMENT SIGNS

- Monument signs:
 - How tall?
 - How many?
 - How much sign area?
 - Existing is 200 sf



PYLON SIGNS

- Do we allow them near the freeway only?
- Separation requirement for pylon signs?



TEMPORARY SIGNS

- Allow for up to 60 days?
- Allow sidewalk signs?
 - Private property only?
 - On a temporary basis only?



ELECTRONIC MESSAGE BOARDS

- Should these be allowed or prohibited?
 - If allowed:
 - Size and height limitations (ancillary to main sign?)
 - Limitation on brightness
 - Limitation on the speed in which messages change
 - Require separation between electronic signs on the street (only 1 sign per 1,000 feet of street frontage?)

PERMIT PROCESS

- Should we allow a modification process for signage?
- If yes, should Planning Commission be the approving body?
- What should be allowed to be modified?
 - The type of sign allowed in nonresidential zoning districts (e.g., awning signs, monument signs)?
 - Requirements for temporary signs?
 - The maximum permitted sign area up to a 25% increase?
 - The maximum permitted sign height up to a 25% increase?

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