



Some suggestions for resolving the problem of sign violations are as follows:

1. The updated Ordinance should explicitly address prohibitions rather than infer them through non-inclusion in the document. It should also clarify definitions of sign types, parameters of size, height, and quantity, the latter especially to wall and window signs, illumination type and intensity consistent with the Lighting Ordinance, and content as it pertains to identification and description of use. Graphics should be utilized within the document whenever possible for clarification.
2. Discretionary review for all signs should be required either as part of a discretionary application or as a separate administrative permit for signage alone. The submittal requirements should include photo simulations, elevations, and site plans demonstrating all existing and proposed signs on site.
3. Temporary signs, to include subdivision signs, should be further defined and allowed only under temporary use permit with a bond posted for their removal.
4. During non-business hours commercial vehicles should be required to be parked behind the commercial building and/or not adjacent to any roadways, so as to prevent them from being used as additional on-site signage. Commercial vehicles parked at home should be garaged and not visible to surrounding neighbors. Magnetic signs could be utilized instead that would allow their removal from vehicles parked during non-business hours.
5. Standards should be specified in areas currently silent under the existing Ordinance, such as multi-tenant commercial sites, temporary construction signs, contractor's signs on residential property, real estate signs, political signs, bus stop shelters, kiosks, and human signs. Real estate standards could involve a multi-business ladder sign program for intersections determined to have a high volume of "for sale" signs.
6. Height limits on free-standing signs that would require them to be no higher than the existing or proposed building height. Incentives could be incorporated to discourage free-standing signs such as additional sign-face square footage for monument signs as opposed to free-standing signs.
7. Off-site billboards, which have been explicitly prohibited in scenic corridors under the General Plan, should be allowed elsewhere along highway corridors with strict size and distance separation requirements, or perhaps not at all. The County could consider implementing its own freeway "logo service" sign program to reduce free-standing sign clutter along exit corridors while promoting tourism and commercial interests. The program could be financially maintained through user fees. Caltrans would require their review and approval prior to installation of all signs adjacent to State highway corridors, even though located out of their right-of-way.

8. An amortization period should be established for signs within the scenic corridor, as required under General Plan Policy 2.7.1.2, as well as for other non-conforming signs. A County compensation fund should be established for the removal of non-conforming signs as required under State law.
9. Specified time limits for removal should be placed on signage that contains copy advertising a use, business or product no longer in existence, or that is left blank or maintained without paid copy.
10. Enforcement procedures should be included that do not require public complaints to initiate action by County officers. Code enforcement strategies can include:
  - a. Notice of non-compliance filed on the subject parcel.
  - b. Stays placed on processing development permits.
  - c. Liability for investigation and enforcement fees.
  - d. Citation and fines.
11. Public notice of updated Sign Ordinance requirements should occur after its adoption.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Provide staff with comments and direction regarding the draft document.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

- Exhibit A: §17.16 Sign Ordinance  
Exhibit B: Planning Director Interpretations