



August 28, 2013

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed new sign code. The Kittitas County chamber of Commerce as well as several businesses in Ellensburg have concerns that the proposed new code will be detrimental to business and feel that the proposed sign code is unacceptable. Furthermore many of our businesses would end up with nonconforming sign whether they have a pole or monument sign. Our primary concerns are outlined below.

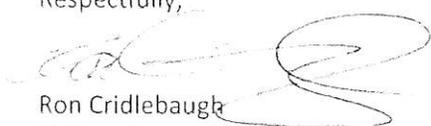
1. Pole signs. In the new code pole signs are no longer allowed as a permitted use unless they are within a half mile of the interstate. We feel that there is an appropriate place and use of pole signs throughout the city. A majority of businesses in Ellensburg use their signs as one of their primary forms of marketing and have invested thousands of dollars in them. There are business owners who choose their specific location and paid a premium for the site based on its location and the ability to install a pole sign. Many of these signs are used to convey marketing messages as well as information about our community festivals and events. Safety is also an issue for some of our businesses on our main arterials that have shallow customer parking lots due to their set back from the street. If monument signs were installed it would remove parking and reduce visibility for customers as they leave the parking lot. Examples of this would be at Ellensburg Agate and Bead or Rodeo City BBQ.

2. Electronic signs. We feel that the size of electronic signs should be increased to at least 10 square feet. This would allow a business to quickly and efficiently change their message. Most of these businesses with reader boards are asked to put community information on them and this would allow them to accommodate that request and still be able to market their business.

3. Sign size. The proposed sizes and heights for signs in the new code are too small and when coupled with some of the landscaping requirements it would render the signs useless. I drove around and measured several monument signs and found that all of the ones I measured would be out of compliance with the new code. An example of a good monument sign that would be out of compliance is the sign for Valley Vision.

In closing I would like to ask the Council to remove section 15.560 signage from the proposed new codes and work with a group of business and property owners to craft a sign code that will work for both the City and businesses located in the City.

Respectfully,

  
Ron Criddlebaugh  
Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce