



General Sign Guidelines for Businesses

The full Gig Harbor Municipal Code (GHMC) [17.80 Sign Code](#) is available on The City of Gig Harbor's Website.

General Sign Regulations

A. Motion Signs Prohibited. No sign or any part of a sign shall be designed or constructed to be moving by any means, & shall not contain items such as banners, ribbons, streamers, balloons & spinners. These devices, when not part of any sign, are also prohibited.

B. Exposed Sign Supports. Exposed braces & angle irons are prohibited unless they are a decorative element in the sign structure unless there are no other practical means of supporting the sign.

C. Flashing Signs. No sign shall have blinking, flashing, fluttering or moving lights or other illuminating device which has a changing light intensity or color.

D. International Building Code Compliance. The structure & installation of all signs shall comply with the latest adopted edition of the city's building code. Such sign shall meet all other applicable provisions of this chapter. E. Maintenance Required. All signs, together with all of their supports, braces, guys & anchors, shall be maintained in good repair & in a safe, neat, clean & attractive condition.

F. Illumination Restrictions must conform to GHMC 17.80.060(F)

G. Abandoned Signs. Abandoned signs shall be removed by the owner or lessee of the premises upon which the sign is located after the business or service advertised is no longer conducted on the premises.

H. Color & Material Restrictions. Reflective materials, brilliant luminescent or fluorescent colors shall be permitted for sign graphics & one logo shield per sign face only & may not be used on the background, field, or surface to which graphics or logo shields are applied. Materials which give the appearance of changing color or of movement are prohibited.

I. SR-16 Sign Orientation. Signage shall not be oriented for SR-16 visibility, except as follows:

1. Signage for existing establishments may be oriented to the road or parking lot providing primary access to the customer entrance.

2. Wall signage may be oriented toward designated freeway interchange areas as defined on Exhibit 1, attached to Ordinance No. 788 & available in the city clerk's office, provided all screening or buffering requirements specified in the city's design manual or zoning code are in compliance on the subject site; & provided, that no more than one sign is visible from the interchange for any one business.

J. Wall Graphics. There are no restrictions on wall graphics except as regulated by the city's design manual for color; provided, that they do not constitute advertising of a business, product, service or event normally subject to the provisions for painted signs.

Temporary Signs including A-Boards

GHMC 17.80.110	Residential Zones	Non-Residential Zones
Temporary Sign(s) in Right-of-Way		
Placement	Within 100 feet from approved intersections (see official map of intersections)	
Size	Limit (4) sq. ft. per side, no more than 8 sq. ft. total	Limit (6) sq. ft. per side, no more than 12 sq. ft. total
Height	Do not exceed (3) feet in height from the ground where displayed	
Location	Allowed in highlighted areas identified on Directors Official Map for Temporary Signs NOT IN: roundabouts; medians; shoulders; travel lanes; and areas of the public right-of-way that are not accessible by a sidewalk or pedestrian walking path	
Permit Required	Yes, good for 30 days, permit must be displayed on sign face	
Rules	Sign owner must have permission from the abutting property owner	
Exceptions	Along with the standards above signs on Harborview Drive from Soundview Dr. to Rosedale St., and on North Harborview Drive from Finholm Market to Peacock Hill are authorized to exceed the 100 feet from intersections with an approved encroachment permit in addition to Temporary Sign Permit	
Temporary Sign(s) on Private Property		
Residential Use		
Number of Signs Allowed	Limit (4) signs visible from public right of way per lot	Limit (1) sign visible from public right of way per tenant space of building
Size	Limit to (6) sq. ft. per side, no more than 12 sq. ft. in total	Limit to (6) sq. ft. per side, no more than 12 sq. ft. in total

Height	Do not exceed (6) ft. in height from ground	Do not exceed (3) ft. in height from ground
Permit Required	No Permit Required	
Non-Residential Use		
Number of Signs Allowed	Limit (4) signs visible from right of way per lot	Limit (1) sign visible from right of away per tenant space of building
Size	Total size of all signs combined is limited to (6) sq. ft., in case of double-sided signs, 12 sq. ft. is allowed	Limit to (6) sq. ft. per side, no more than 12 sq. ft. in total
Height	Do not exceed (3) feet in height from the ground where displayed	
Location	NOT IN: roundabouts; medians; shoulders; travel lanes; and areas of the public right-of-way that are not accessible by a sidewalk or pedestrian walking path	
Rules	Must have property owner's consent	
Permit Required	No permit required	

***How do I Apply for a Temporary Sign Permit?**

You can apply on-line at: <https://ci-gigharbor-wa.smartgovcommunity.com/Public/Home>. Your permit is free, issued immediately and good for 30 days. A portion of your permit is to be cut off and taped to your signs to show proof of permit. Portal instructions and more information on Temporary Sign Permits can be found on our website [Temporary Signs](#).

Prohibited Signs

In accordance to GHMC 17.80.120 the following signs are prohibited in the City Limits:

- Signs which by coloring, shape, wording or location resemble or conflict with traffic-control signs or devices
- Signs which the director of public works determines to be a safety hazard for pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Such signs may be removed if they already exist
- Flashing signs or lights
- Signs or parts of signs which revolve or otherwise have mechanical or motorized motion;
- Portable signs exceeding six square feet each side
- Signs attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer parked on public or private property; provided, however, this provision shall not be construed as prohibiting the identification of a firm or its products on a vehicle operating during the normal course of business. Franchised buses and taxis are exempt from this provision
- Any sign affixed to or painted on trees, rocks or other natural features or utility poles
- Roof signs
- Electronic signs
- Signs not meeting the requirements of [GHMC 17.80](#)

Definitions

GHMC17.80.030.40 “Sign” a. Any visual communication device, structure, or fixture which is visible from any public right-of-way or waterway placed for the promotion of products, goods, services, events or to identify a building, using sign graphics or trademarks; or b. Steel, plastic or similar panels displaying corporate colors, logos or trademarks and as are common on corporate signature buildings to give identity to the business (corporate colors which conform to the city’s design manual requirements for color shall be excluded from this definition of a sign); or c. Inflatable figures, balloons (in a display of six or more), festoons, streamers, spinners, product representations and advertisements for services which are attached to a fixed object or stationary vehicle.

GHMC 17.80.030.44 “Temporary sign” means any sign or advertising display constructed of cloth, canvas, light fabric, paper, cardboard or other light materials, with or without frames, intended to be displayed for a limited time only and not permanently attached to a building or site.

