

Clearview Digital Signs

What is the proposal?

Digital signs are currently prohibited in the Clearview Rural Commercial zone, although two digital signs that were established before 2013 are currently operating as nonconforming uses.



In February 2019, the council referred a proposal (motion 19-053) to the Snohomish County Planning Commission for review and a recommendation back to the council to **add the Clearview Rural Commercial zone to the list of zones in which digital signs are allowed**, which would permit additional digital signs as well as modifications to the two existing ones.

What is a digital sign?

“Signs” are defined in county code as structures for the display of advertising or structures that either identifies the owner or occupant of, or the sale of goods and services on, the premises on which the structure is located, not including: real estate signs advertising the sale or rent of the property upon which the sign is located; public notice signs required by law; or directional signs ([30.91S.310](#)).

“Digital signs” are defined in county code as signs, or portion of signs, that can be changed by digital message technology or by electrical, electronic, or computerized process, or that displays an electronic visual image ([30.91D.265](#)).

The regulations for signs and digital signs in Snohomish County were adopted in 2013 through [Ordinance 13-073](#), and codified in Chapter [30.27 SCC](#). Those regulations require permits for all new or reconfigured digital signs, prohibit animation; special visual effects of any kind; blinking, flashing; variable lighting; audio; video; 3-D; movies; and the scrolling of messages.

Digital signs are currently allowed in the following zones: Low-Density Multiple Residential, Multiple Residential, Neighborhood Business, Planned Community Business, Community Business, General Commercial, Freeway Services, Industrial Park, Business Park, Light Industrial, and Heavy Industrial.

How is a (digital) sign different than a (digital) billboard?

A **sign** is “a structure for the display of advertising or a structure that either identifies the owner or occupant of or the sale of goods and services on the premises on which the structure is located”.

A **billboard** is a structure for advertising purposes which is not related to things principally located, produced, or existing on the same property as the billboard. Billboards are only allowed in industrial zones.

What other regulations apply to signs in Clearview?

Other than allowing digital signs in the Clearview Rural Commercial zone, the proposal would not make any changes to existing sign regulations, including:

- Signs shall comply with the height regulations of the zone in which they are located. Clearview Rural Commercial zone height limit is 35'. (SCC [30.27.010](#), [30.23.030](#))
- The following are prohibited on all signs: Animation; special visual effects of any kind; blinking, flashing or display lights that go on and off sequentially; variable intensity lighting; audio; video; 3-D; movies; and the scrolling of messages or the continuation of a message from one visual image to another. (SCC [30.27.010](#)(13))
- In the Clearview Rural Commercial zone, signs for identification purposes (i.e. the business name) may have an area not to exceed one square foot for each linear foot of business property frontage. Signs for advertising purposes (i.e. the business sells XYZ product) are limited to 150 square feet, and may be divided into up to four single- or double-faced signs. (SCC [30.27.040](#))
- Digital signs require:
 - Minimum display time of 8 seconds per message, transition time less than 1 second
 - Ambient light monitors and automatic brightness adjustment
 - Maximum brightness of 5,000 nits during the day, 500 nits at night

What are the next steps for this proposal?

March 21 – briefing to the Clearview Community Association at 7:00 p.m. – Horseshoe Grange, 16424 Broadway Ave, Clearview, WA 98296.

March 26 – [Snohomish County Planning Commission](#) public hearing at 5:30 p.m., potential consideration and recommendation to the council

April-May – Potential introduction of the proposed ordinance, County Council committee briefing, and scheduling of county council public hearing.

A Wednesday in May – Snohomish County Council public hearing on the proposal and potential council consideration and action.

How can I provide comment on the proposal?

By email to Contact.Council@snoco.org (direct email to all five councilmembers) or Yorik.Stevens-Wajda@snoco.org (staff will forward to planning commission and county council).

In person on March 21st at 7:00 p.m. at the Clearview Community Association meeting – Horseshoe Grange, 16424 Broadway Ave, Clearview, WA 98296. Council staff will provide a briefing to the community and will hear public comment as time allows, and will summarize feedback to the planning commission and county council.

In person on March 26th at 5:30 p.m. at the Planning Commission's public hearing – County Administrative Building East, 3000 Rockefeller Ave., Everett, WA 98201.

In person at the county council's public hearing, potentially in May. Check the council's [public hearing calendar](#) or provide contact information via one of the above methods to receive notice of the council's public hearing.

By mail at 3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609, Everett, WA 98201.