

**CITY OF KIRKLAND**

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**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Interpretation File Number 95-4  
**From:** Eric Shields, Director  
**Date:** October 20, 1995  
**Subject:** TEMPORARY COMMERCIAL SIGNS, KZC 100.115

**ISSUES**

Can a temporary commercial sign display the name of the business it is associated with?

How long can a temporary commercial sign be displayed?

Can a permanent sign be constructed of flexible materials?

**INTERPRETATIONS**

In cases where a business has applied for, but not installed, a permanent sign, it is acceptable to allow a temporary commercial sign that includes the name of the business. In other cases, temporary commercial signs may not include the name of the business.

The maximum amount of time a temporary sign may be displayed is 60 days. Temporary commercial signs advertising a special event or condition must be removed at the end of the event or condition they are advertising or within 60 days of first being displayed, whichever comes first.

A permanent sign for a business may not be constructed of cloth, paper, or similar flexible material.

**APPLICABLE CODE SECTIONS**

KZC 5.923 defines a “Temporary Commercial Sign” as follows:

A sign associated with a business; painted on a window or constructed of cloth, paper or similar flexible materials; readily removable; and displaying a temporary commercial message; but not including a real estate, on-site or real estate, off-site sign.

KZC 100.115 states that temporary commercial signs must be on the subject property, entirely attached to a building face or fence, and must be removed at the end of the event or condition they are advertising.

KZC 100.85 lists advertising devices that are prohibited except in specifically identified circumstances. Pennants and banners are prohibited except as permitted under the temporary commercial sign allowances of KZC 100.115 or when used for no more than seven days to announce the grand opening of a business or use.

## **ANALYSES**

The signs listed in KZC 100.115 are permitted in addition to the normal sign area allocation allowed in KZC 100.40. Under KZC 100.40, businesses are granted a certain amount of sign area to advertise their business. A temporary commercial sign is intended to advertise a special event or condition for a business. It is not necessary for a business with a permanent sign displaying its name to include the business name in a temporary sign allowed to advertise a special event or condition. However, prior to a business installing its permanent sign(s), it is acceptable to include the name of the business in a temporary commercial sign. To show that it intends to comply with the regulations of Chapter 100 KZC, a business should submit the appropriate application for its permanent sign(s) prior to displaying a temporary commercial sign that includes the name of the business.

A complete sign permit application takes approximately two weeks to process. Several sign companies have estimated that a typical sign takes from three to six weeks to manufacture. Therefore, 60 days is an adequate amount of time to display a temporary commercial sign to advertise a business that has not yet installed permanent signs. Temporary commercial signs are also allowed to advertise special events or conditions. The intent in allowing temporary commercial signs is that they will be displayed for a limited amount of time. Sixty days is also an adequate amount of time to display a temporary commercial sign advertising a special event or condition. Temporary commercial signs should be removed at the end of the event they are advertising or after 60 days, whichever comes first.

A banner is typically defined as a piece of cloth bearing a motto or legend (The American Heritage Dictionary, Second College Edition). They could also be constructed of paper or other flexible material. The list of prohibited devices in KZC 100.85 includes banners, wind activated devices, and signs that move by electrical or mechanical means. Signs made of flexible materials could move in the wind. Therefore, signs made of cloth, paper, or similar flexible materials which could move in the wind should be prohibited as permanent signs.