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**Ordinance No. 395 Regulation of Sign Setbacks in Unincorporated Walla Walla County, modifying Walla Walla County Code Chapter 17.28**

Auditor File Number(s) of document being assigned or released:

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2011-01498 ORD  
02/15/2011 03:30:20 PM Page 1 of 7 Fees: 68.00  
Karen Martin County Auditor, Walla Walla County WA  


**ORDINANCE NO. 395**

**APPROVING A REQUEST BY WALLA WALLA COUNTY REGARDING THE REGULATION OF SIGN SETBACKS IN UNINCORPORATED WALLA WALLA COUNTY, MODIFYING WALLA WALLA COUNTY CODE CHAPTER 17.28.**

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WHEREAS, on August 10, 2010, the Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance 383, which implemented interim development regulations pursuant to RCW 36.70A.390; and

WHEREAS, Walla Walla County Code Section 14.15.030 allows the Board of County Commissioners to amend the County development regulations more than once per year by majority vote of the Board; and

WHEREAS, recent changes to U.S. Highway 12 have changed the traffic patterns near tourism-related industries located on Old Highway 12; and

WHEREAS, current requirements of the Walla Walla County zoning code, Title 17, require signs to be placed 30 feet from the right of way; and

WHEREAS, these restrictions impair the ability of tourism-related industries to direct traffic from the new U.S. Highway 12 to their locations on Old Highway 12; and

WHEREAS, the Board is of the opinion that the interim regulations enacted under Ordinance 383 should be made permanent.

**Now Therefore;**

**Be it Ordained that:**

**Section I. The Board of County Commissioners Makes the Following Findings of Fact:**

1. The Ordinance was sent to the Department of Commerce on August 11, 2010. Expedited review was granted on September 1, 2010.
2. Notices of a Planning Commission Public Hearing were published in the Waitsburg Times on November 17, 2010 and December 22, 2010; the Tri-City Herald on

December 23, 2010; and the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin on November 18, 2010 and December 23, 2010.

3. The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on January 5, 2011.
4. Notices of the Informational Public Meeting were published in the Waitsburg Times, the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin and the Tri-City Herald on January 20, 2011.
5. The Walla Walla Joint Community Development Agency staff held an Informational Public Meeting on January 31, 2011.
6. Notices of a Board of County Commissioners' Public Hearing were published in the Waitsburg Times, the Walla Walla Union-Bulletin and the Tri-City Herald on January 20, 2011.
7. The Board of County Commissioners held the public hearing on January 31, 2011.

**Section II. The Board of County Commissioners Makes the Following Conclusions of Law:**

1. The Board finds that the interim sign ordinance, adopted in August of 2010, should be continued as a permanent change to Walla Walla County Code Title 17.
2. The proposed amendments are in compliance with RCW 36.70A and the Washington Administrative Code.
3. The proposal meets a definable public need.
4. The defined need conforms to policy directives of the comprehensive plan and countywide planning policies.
5. The proposed revisions are consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan and Growth Management Act.
6. The proposed revisions are in the long term interest of the County.

**Section III. Walla County Code Chapter 17.28 is modified as follows:**

**CHAPTER 17.28 - DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS—SIGNS**

17.28.005 - Purpose.

17.28.010 - Sign standards.

17.28.020 - Temporary signs.

17.28.030 - Outdoor advertising display.

17.28.040 - Billboards.

17.28.050 - Sign setbacks.

17.28.060 - Sign height.

17.28.070 - Building permits required.

17.28.080 - Exempt signs.

17.28.090 - Prohibited signs.

17.28.005 - Purpose.

The purpose of this chapter is to enhance the visual environment of the county by regulating the location size and appearance of signs and outdoor advertising. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)

17.28.010 - Sign standards.

A. The light from any illuminated sign shall be so shaded, shielded or directed that the light intensity or brightness will not be a nuisance to surrounding areas. Any externally illuminated sign shall be oriented away from the surrounding residences, and away from streets.

B. Signs projecting over an internal sidewalk or vehicular traffic area shall be at least eight feet above internal walkways and at least sixteen feet above any area used for vehicular traffic.

C. Signs are permitted in all zoning districts except for residential districts. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)

17.28.020 - Temporary signs.

Signage for temporary events is allowed for a period not to exceed three days unless documentation is provided that the temporary event exceeds three days. In no case shall temporary signage be allowed for a period exceeding thirty days annually. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)

(Ord. No. 371, § III(Exh. A, Pt. F), 8-3-2009)

17.28.030 - Outdoor advertising display.

Outdoor advertising displays are permitted in all zones, except residential districts. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)

17.28.040 - Billboards.

A. Billboards are allowed in industrial, primary agriculture and agriculture residential zones.

B. Billboards along state routes are subject to permitting regulation by Washington State Department of Transportation.

C. Billboards along state scenic/historical routes, outside of the jurisdiction of the Washington State Department of Transportation will be regulated for compatibility with the scenic/historical nature of the route. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)

17.28.050 - Sign setbacks.

~~A. For industrial and commercial districts a~~ A setback minimum of five feet one foot from the leading edge of the sign to the street right of way or property line, or 15 feet from the edge of the traveled way, whichever is greater, is required. In no case will signs be allowed to be

placed in a location or manner that violates sight distance, clear view triangle or clear zone requirements as defined in Walla Walla County Code Title 12 and/or Chapter 3.4 of the Walla Walla County Road Design Standards, as determined by the County Engineer.

~~B. For all other districts a minimum of thirty feet from the leading edge of the sign to the street right of way or property line, whichever is greater, is required. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)~~

17.28.060 - Sign height.

A. For industrial districts a maximum of eighty feet, measured from average grade to the highest point on the sign, is allowed.

B. For commercial districts a maximum of fifty feet, measured from average grade to the highest point on the sign, is allowed.

C. For all other districts, a maximum of thirty-five feet, measured from the average grade to the highest point on the sign, is allowed. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)

17.28.070 - Building permits required.

Building permits are required for billboards, outdoor advertising displays and signs. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)

17.28.080 - Exempt signs.

A. Signs exempt from the above standards include:

1. Signs not exceeding two square feet in area and bearing only property numbers, post box numbers, names of occupants of premises, professional or announcement signs or other identification of premises not having commercial connotations.

2. Real estate signs not exceeding six square feet in area, advertising the sale or rental of premises or land upon which they are erected.

3. Flags and insignias of any government except when displayed in connection with commercial promotion.

4. Legal notices identification, information, or directional signs erected or required by governmental bodies.

5. Integral decorative or architectural features or buildings, except letters, trademarks, moving parts, or moving lights.

6. Signs directing and guiding traffic and parking to private property, but bearing no advertising matter.

7. Banners, streamers or emblems over or across any street, alley or part thereof that causes no nuisances or hazard to the vehicle or pedestrian traffic. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)

17.28.090 - Prohibited signs.

A. The following signs are prohibited:

1. Signs on any vehicle or trailer that is parked on public or private property and visible from a public right-of-way for the purpose of circumventing the provisions of this chapter. This provision shall not prohibit signs that are painted on or magnetically attached to any vehicle operating in the normal course of business;



2. Signs that purport to be, are an imitation of, or resemble an official traffic sign or signal, could cause confusion with any official signs, or which obstruct the visibility of any traffic/street sign or signal;
3. Signs attached to utility, street light, and traffic control standard poles;
4. Signs attached to trees or rocks;
5. Swinging projecting signs;
6. Signs, together with their supports, braces, guys and anchors that are not maintained in a neat, clean and attractive condition, free from rust, corrosion, peeling paint or other surface deterioration;
7. Abandoned signs;
8. Flashing, blinking or fluttering parts of signs;
9. Signs that are unsafe or hazardous;
10. Signs on doors, windows, or fire escapes that restrict free ingress or egress;
11. Unique signs unless specifically approved by the regional planning director when deemed necessary. Approval of the sign is based on the effect of the proposed sign not contributing to a cluttered, confusing or unsafe condition, or would not be in conflict with the character of the zoning district;
12. Signs on public property without prior approval;
13. Searchlights or beacons;
14. Changing message centers;
15. Any other sign not meeting the provisions of this chapter. (Ord. 269 (part), 2002)

#### **Section IV Severability.**

If any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause or phase of this ordinance is declared unconstitutional or invalid for any reason, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining parts of this ordinance.

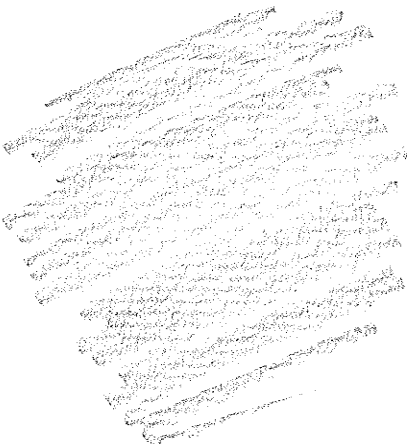
#### **Section V. Effective Date.**

This ordinance is effective as of the date of signing

#### **Section VI. Publication.**

This ordinance will be published by an approved summary consisting of the title.

**Passed** by the Walla Walla County Board of County Commissioners in regular session at Walla Walla, Washington, then signed by its membership and attested by its Clerk in authorization of such passage this 14<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2011.



Perry L. Dozier  
Perry L. Dozier, Chairman, District 2

Gregg C. Loney  
Gregg C. Loney, Commissioner, District 1

Gregory A. Tompkins  
Gregory A. Tompkins, Commissioner, District 3

Constituting the Board of County Commissioners of Walla Walla County, Washington

Attest:

Connie R. Vinti  
Connie R. Vinti, Clerk of the Board

Approved as to form

Jesse D. Nolte  
Jesse D. Nolte, Deputy Prosecuting Attorney