

SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DIRECTOR'S POLE BANNER PERMITTING GUIDELINES

1.0 PURPOSE, ADMINISTRATION, REFERENCES

The Seattle Transportation (SDOT) Director (herein called "SDOT Director") hereby adopts the following guidelines that provides for the hanging of pole banners on city-owned poles to ensure the integrity of both the infrastructure and other surface street right-of-way features.

- 1.1 Purpose -** The Pole Banner Guidelines, describe the requirements that permittees shall meet when hanging a banner on a pole within the street right-of-way in all city zones.

The guidelines are intended to:

- A. To encourage the diverse use of banners that enhances the visual environment of the city;
- B. To encourage the design of banners that attracts and invites the public's attention;
- C. To promote the enhancement of business districts, nonprofit organizations and neighborhoods by fostering the installation of banners;
- D. To protect the public interest and safety by promoting safe working conditions of utility workers, traffic and fire safety, and preservation of City property;
- F. To provide opportunities for communicating special events of community interest;
- G. To support the installation of banners with sponsorship messages that do not solely advertise a product or service, but rather which use sponsorship to help the groups promote local public events; and
- H. It is further intended to ensure that the proliferation of banners does not contribute to visual blight and that banners are maintained in good condition.

- 1.2 Administration, interpretation, and enforcement -** SDOT Street Use Division interprets, in conjunction with Seattle City Light, and enforces the Pole Banner Guidelines under the authority of the SDOT Director. Street Use Division field inspectors are authorized to interpret and enforce the Pole

Banner Guidelines in the field. SDOT may delegate their authority to interpret and enforce the Director's Guidelines as necessary to other Departments.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to these Director's Guidelines:

2.1 Pole Banner - Pole Banners are vinyl, fabric or cloth (or approved pliable material) hung from a pole in a manner proscribed by these Director's Guidelines that meet size, message and sponsorship requirements.

A Event Banner –

- I. **Event Location Criteria** - The banner must be related to an event taking place within the City of Seattle.
- II. **Event Frequency** - An event banner shall be specific to a time and place for a specific event and a specific time period. An event banner is further defined as a reoccurring event of a short term nature.
- III. **Banner Placement** - Event banners may be posted on any street in the city in Commercial or Industrial zones. They may be allowed in Single Family or Multifamily zones if they are installed on the side of the street directly adjacent to or within a Major Institution or a City-owned open space.
- IV. **Eligible Events** - Event banners may be allowed for the following types of events: cultural, sporting, arts & cultural (including theatrical and musical), parades, festivals, conventions, government initiatives and educational. Event banners that celebrate grand openings or anniversaries are allowed under the same criteria as Identification banners, but for the same limited time as other event banners.
- V. **Banner Messaging** - Sponsorship is allowed on twenty percent of the banner. (See section 2.5 for more information on the definition of sponsorship.) All messaging must be non-commercial in nature.

(Example of an event banner: A Seattle Art Museum visiting exhibit).

B. Identification banner –

- I. **Identification Location Criteria** - Identification banners are specific to a particular geographical site such as a neighborhood or business district, or other eligible identifications as further defined below.
- II. **Banner messaging** - These banners may only state the name of the area/location, but may include branding slogans or logos. No

sponsorship is allowed, and all messaging must be non-commercial in nature.

III. Banner Placement - Because their primary function is to identify a location, identification banners will only be allowed on the block face adjacent to the location being identified. Identification banners may be posted on any street in a Commercial or Industrial zone. They may be allowed in Single Family or Multifamily zones if they are installed on the side of the street directly adjacent to or within a Major Institution or a City-owned open space.

IV. Eligible Identifications - Organizations allowed to install identification banners include: museums, schools, nonprofit arts and cultural organizations, hospitals, Business Districts, Neighborhood Districts, churches, parks, landmarks, sports centers, farmer's markets, theatres, arts centers, landmark or historic districts, government buildings, zoos, aquariums.

(Example of an identification banner: Wallingford Business District)

2.2 Block - For the purpose of this document a block is defined as two opposing "block faces." (An example is the 3300 block of Main Street).

2.3 Commercial zone - Commercial zones shall be defined per Seattle Municipal Code, Title 23.

2.4 Industrial zone – Industrial zones shall be defined per Seattle Municipal Code, Title 23.

2.5 Sponsorship – Organizations may at times have relationships with commercial organizations which they may display on pole banners in the form of sponsorship content. This content must be incidental to the overall banner design. Any corporate recognition or other sponsorship content on any banner will not exceed 20% of the total area of the banner. The logo of a neighborhood group or local business association is not considered sponsorship.

2.6 Non-commercial content - It is not the intention of the City to permit a banner that solely advertises a specific product or service.

3.0 REQUEST FOR A POLE BANNER PERMIT

3.1 A request for a permit and completed permit application submittals shall be directed to the Seattle Department of Transportation, Street Use Division Permit counter located in the Seattle Municipal Tower, Suite

2300, 700 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104. The permit counter is open 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. Monday-Friday.

The Street Use, Annual Permit Division may be reached by telephone at 206-684-5267, via email at AnnualPermits@Seattle.gov or via the web at: http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/stuse_annual.htm

- 3.2** Applications may be submitted by one of the following methods:
 - A.** Mail in application to SDOT, Attn: Annual Permits, PO Box 34996, Seattle WA 98124-4996
 - B.** Email an application to AnnualPermits@Seattle.gov, or;
 - C.** Hand deliver to the Street Use permit counter located in the Seattle Municipal Tower, Suite 2300, 700 Fifth Avenue

- 3.3** The permit application submitted by the permittee shall include the following items and may include other information as requested by Street Use Division:
 - A.** A Street Use permit application.
 - B.** A diagram or map of the specific poles to be used. Note the pole numbers (located on the street-side of the pole) to be used and the streets on which the pole is located on the map
 - C.** Insurance documentation (see Client Assistance Memo 2102).
 - D.** A proof of the banner design, including the actual colors to be used and the banner size.
 - E.** The specifications for the bracket installation system.

- 3.4** Pole banner permits will be issued on a first-come-first-served basis. However, if multiple requests are received for a particular pole or location, a lottery shall be conducted or a rotational schedule shall be developed and implemented by SDOT Street Use Division.

- 3.5** Requests may not be submitted more than 90 days prior to the installation date.

- 3.6** Most poles are pre-approved for a banner that is 30” horizontal x 60” vertical and are considered standard installation. Exceptions may be requested for either larger or smaller banner sizes and may be approved on a case by case basis. The requested banner size shall be noted on the application. Street Use shall be notified promptly if the banner size has been revised.

4.0 IDENTIFICATION OF ELIGIBLE POLES

- 4.1** Poles eligible for pole banner installations in the Central Business District (from Interstate 5 west to the Elliot Bay and from Denny Way south to

Royal Brougham Street) are identified with a three inch round magenta sticker bearing the initials PBA, denoting Pole Banner Approved.

- 4.2 Poles that are not currently pre-approved within the CBD with PBA stickers will not be allowed for banner installations. An applicant may request the review of the pole's eligibility if it does not have a PBA sticker and the pole conforms to the pole banner guidelines.
- 4.3 Poles outside of the CBD which are not pre-approved may be requested and the request will be reviewed with the permit application.
- 4.4 The following items will assist in identify eligible poles for pole banner installations (see Section 6.0 for more details):
 - 4.4.1 Banners shall not be installed on poles with vehicular or pedestrian signal equipment.
 - 4.4.2 Wood poles which support street lights only are generally eligible for banner installations.
 - 4.4.3 Banners shall not be installed on Metro poles or poles with Metro attachments without prior approval from Metro.

5.0 ISSUANCE OF A POLE BANNER PERMIT

- 5.1 All permits will be issued at the discretion of the Street Use Division. Questionable permit applications may be reviewed by committee to determine permissibility.
- 5.2 A maximum of four contiguous city blocks may be included in each permit. Requests for usage of additional block would require additional St. Use permits for the project. Street Use Division staff may amend this increment in a permit to more fairly recover the cost of the permit if a city block or blocks on the permit do not include a representative number of eligible street light poles.
- 5.3 Some poles may not be able to accommodate the requested size or mounting height of the banner. In this case alternate size and placement may be required.

6.0 PLACEMENT OF BANNERS ON POLES

- 6.1 Only those permitted by these Guidelines or their authorized agents and authorized City of Seattle employees shall place banners on a city owned utility poles.
- 6.2 Banners may be hung on poles under the following height conditions:

A. Banners that are attached on the sidewalk side of the pole shall be a minimum of 8' above the sidewalk and must be 18" back from curbface.

B. Banners that are attached on the curb side of a pole shall be a minimum of:

- 8' above the sidewalk surface, and shall be a minimum of 18" clear from the face of the curb.
- No lower than 14' over parking lane or when closer than 18" clear from the face of the curb;
- No lower than 16.5' if portions of the banner hang over travel lane.

C. Visibility of downstream signage and signals must be considered.

6.3 Banners shall not be installed on poles with vehicular or pedestrian signal equipment.

6.4 Banners shall maintain a minimum of 3' vertical clearance below any luminaries from where the ballasts connect to the poles.

6.5 Banners shall not be mounted less than 2' above an existing sign. Banners shall not interfere with the visibility of traffic signals or signs or identified historic or artistic installations.

6.6 Banners hung on Metro poles shall not be placed within 10' of Metro power lines. No banners shall be hung on Metro feeder poles. Installation on Metro poles requires Metro's approval prior to SDOT permit issuance. It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain approval from Metro. Metro can be contacted at: Alex Wolak 206-684-1361.

6.6 A banner program installed on contiguous blocks shall be installed at the same height from pole to pole, when possible.

7.0 INSTALLATION DEVICES/POLE BANNER BRACKETS

7.1 The banner shall be mounted on aluminum, steel or fiberglass poles using the Kalamazoo Banner Works "BannerFlex Bracket System" or approved equal. For mounting on wood streetlight poles, lag bolts must be used. The lag bolts must be the same diameter or 1/16 – inch less than the bolt hole diameter and shall be galvanized or stainless steel and be a minimum of 4 inches in length. Once installed on wood streetlight poles, the mounting hardware shall be left in place. The use of clamps or banding on wood poles is not permitted.

- 7.2 The cable tie wrap shall have no slack or sleeve the banner onto the lower fiberglass rod so that the banner is taut and smooth.
- 7.3 Only plastic or plastic coated anti-theft cables on the top bracket shall be allowed. Any metal connection pieces on the anti-theft cable shall be wrapped with plastic tape to prevent abrasive contact with the pole.
- 7.4 To ensure the lower connection from the banner grommet to the fiberglass rod has a maximum 100 pounds breaking strength, the cable tie wrap shall be Thomas and Betts Model #TY528M, or approved equal.
- 7.5 All metal shall be corrosion proof, i.e., stainless steel, aluminum, etc.
- 7.6 Permittees are responsible for removing installation brackets at the time the permit expires. Brackets may remain on city poles for others to use, however the original permittee vests no rights to their use.
- 7.7 Brackets installed on approved wood poles may not be taken down after the permit period has expired. These brackets may be used by other parties in the future. The original permittee vests no rights to their use. Failed brackets on wood poles must either be replaced or holes in the pole must be treated and plugged to prevent decay per Seattle City Light instruction.
- 7.8 It is the responsibility of the permittee to repair any damage to the pole or surface of the pole due to the pole banner and/or bracket installation.

8.0 SIZE OF BANNERS

- 8.1 Standard banner size is 30” horizontal by 60” vertical.
- 8.2 Maximum dimensions for a banner may not exceed 3’ horizontal by 12’ vertical.

9.0 DURATION OF PERMIT

- 9.1 Event banners permits may be hung for a maximum of 30 days prior to an event and must be removed within 5 days of the end date of the event (including installation/removal). Events may last in duration less than six months.
- 9.2 Identification banners may be permitted for a period of up to one year and may be renewed annually.

10.0 BANNER MESSAGE

- 10.1** The banner message must be approved by the SDOT Director or his/her designees.
- 10.2** Messages that are political or controversial in nature or messages that are personal in nature will not be allowed.
- 10.3** Messages promoting hate speech or criminal behavior under federal, state or local laws will not be allowed.
- 10.4** Messages shall not create confusion with traffic signals or signs by including words on a banner such words as STOP, YIELD, SLOW, etc. Neither shall the banner contain icons of any traffic signaling, colorations or instructions.

11.0 SPONSORSHIP

- 11.1** No sponsorship on any banner shall cover more than 20% of the total square footage of the banner. The square footage of the sponsorship is calculated by measuring the font, logo, or color block of the content.
- 11.2** Sponsorship name or icon font shall not be larger than the font of the event or identification name on the banner.

12.0 BANNER MAINTENANCE

- 12.1** The banner and the brackets shall be maintained in good condition by the permittee. The owner shall commit to inspecting the banner periodically throughout the permit term. Banners or brackets damaged or in poor condition shall be removed by the permittee.
- 12.2** Damaged brackets on wood poles shall be replaced by the permittee or removed and the remaining holes in the poles shall be treated and plugged per SCL instruction.
- 12.3** A requirement of banner installation may be that banners out of compliance with the Director's Guidelines must be first taken down or corrected before a new banner program may be installed.

13.0 REQUEST FOR EXCEPTION

- 13.1** Request for exceptions to the Guidelines may be made in writing at the Street Use counter when applying for original permit, or upon renewal of

an annual permit, to the attention of the SDOT Street Use Right-of-Way Manager.

- 13.2** SMC 15.04.112 Decisions--Review or Reconsideration. Any person may make a written request for review or reconsideration to the SDOT Director within 10 days after a decision has been made.

14.0 FEE STRUCTURE

- 14.1** The fees for this permit type are adopted in the Street Use Permit Fee Schedule which is adopted by the Seattle City Council.

15.0 INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

- 15.1** Please refer to SDOT Client Assistance Memo (CAM) 2102.