



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

**Department of Planning and Development**

D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE  
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR  
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Application Number:** 3004544  
**Applicant Name:** Olivia Voigts For Clear Channel Outdoor  
**Address of Proposal:** 719 – 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION**

Land Use Application to allow a single-faced, externally illuminated 45’ by 60’ wall mounted, off-premise advertising sign (billboard) with an overall height of 60-feet above ground level. Sign will face in a southerly direction.

The following approval is required:

**SEPA - Environmental Determination** - Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

**SEPA DETERMINATION:** [ ] Exempt [X] DNS [ ] MDNS [ ] EIS  
[ ] DNS with conditions  
[ ] DNS involving non-exempt grading, or demolition, or another agency with jurisdiction.

**BACKGROUND DATA**

Site and Vicinity Description

The proposal site is located in the DOC 1 U/450'U zone: Downtown Office Core 1, with a structure height limit of 450 feet. The site is near the corner of Fourth Avenue and Columbia Street. The existing structure on the property, constructed in 1919, is presently developed as a parking garage. The proposed sign will be directly facing a surface parking lot.

Properties surrounding the site are zoned DOC 1/U450'U, except to the south across Third Avenue and across Cherry Street, where the zoning is DMC/340'/290-400: Downtown Mixed Commercial, with a structure height limit of 340 feet. Surrounding development consists of various retail, office, parking, and residential uses typical of downtown neighborhoods.

### Proposal Description

The applicant proposes to install and maintain a single-faced off-premise advertising sign (billboard) on the southerly wall of the 719 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue structure. The upper edge of the proposed wall sign will not exceed 60 feet in height, and the total area of the sign face will not exceed 288 square feet of copy (12 feet wide by 24 feet deep). The sign face will be oriented in a southerly direction, with the display surface to be externally illuminated.

### Public Comments

No comments were received during the public comment period for this project, which ended on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

### ANALYSIS - SEPA

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2006. The information in the checklist, project plans, and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority.

The Overview Policy states in part: "where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation" (subject to some limitations). Under certain limitations or circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7), mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts is appropriate.

### Short-term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality due to suspended particulates from construction activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; increased noise from vehicles, construction equipment, and construction; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources. Due to the short term and minor nature of construction impact associated with the construction of the sign, no mitigation is warranted by SEPA policies.

### Long-term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts include minor ongoing use of electricity to light the sign faces, and increased traffic, noise, and vehicular emissions from the monthly copy posting and routine maintenance visits. The long-term and use-related impacts are minor, and therefore no mitigation is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

The Sign Code (SMC 23.55) regulates the location, size, and other characteristics of off-premise signs and provides sufficient mitigation for the following impacts:

### Cumulative Impacts

The revised Seattle Sign Ordinance has reduced the number of billboard advertising signs permitted in a given area of the City by modification of the sign dispersion standards. Sign dispersion standards limit the number of signs by requiring a minimum separation between signs and permitting a maximum number of signs in a one-half mile distance. According to SMC 23.55.014 E, the number of advertising or off-premise sign faces is limited to two signs within 300 lineal feet, with a minimum separation of 100 feet between sign structures, when counting both sides of the street. According to DPD records and site observation, there are no other signs within 300 feet. Also, the proposed sign is a relocation of Sign No. 482 from another location pursuant to SMC Section 23.55.014 A. The dispersion requirements and zoning standards were further reviewed by the DPD sign inspector and the proposed sign has been found to show compliance with the applicable requirements. Therefore, no further mitigation pursuant to SEPA is warranted.

### Light and Glare

The Sign Code also limits fluorescent lighting of off-premise advertising signs to one watt per square foot of sign area (23.55.014 E) and requires that light sources be shielded so that direct light is not visible on adjacent properties (23.55.016). The sign face is approximately 12 feet high by 24 feet in length and will rise above the existing street level to a maximum of 60 feet. The proposed sign will be illuminated by fluorescent light that will be obliquely directed towards the sign face and shielded to minimize glare. Lighting periods will be limited to dusk to midnight and 6 a.m. to dawn. Light and glare impacts are sufficiently mitigated by the Sign Code lighting standards and the applicant's proposal to limit hours of illumination. Thus, no additional light and glare mitigation measures are necessary.

### **DECISION - SEPA**

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C), including the requirement to inform the public agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.
- Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.

**CONDITIONS - SEPA**

None.

Signature:           (signature on file)            
Joan Carson, Land Use Planner  
Department of Planning and Development

Date: July 27, 2006