

6/01

SEATTLE TRANSPORTATION DIRECTOR'S RULE 01-1

Rule Proposed by: Seattle Transportation (SeaTran)

Subject: SeaTran Review Process for Sign Kiosks Proposed in the Right-of-Way

Index: Sign Kiosks/Procedural Requirements

Code and Section References: SMC 3.02.030, 3.12.020, 15.12.010, 23.84.036, and Seattle Municipal Code Chapters 15.32, 11.50, and 23.55

Type of Rule: Procedural Rule

Ordinance Authority: SMC 3.02.030 and 3.12.020

Departmental Approval by:



Daryl Grigsby, Director of SeaTran

Date: 7/23/01

BACKGROUND

Communities may want to locate sign kiosks in sidewalk areas where there are high levels of pedestrian activity. Seattle Transportation (SeaTran) issues Street Use permits for improvements made in right-of-way areas, including sidewalks. While there are general guidelines for the review of proposed changes to sidewalk areas, there is not at present a formal set of guidelines for the review and approval of sign kiosks.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Rule is to present the standards, requirements, and process for SeaTran review of proposals for placement of sign kiosks in the right-of-way.

This Rule:

- outlines elements considered in SeaTran's review of sign kiosks;
- clarifies the responsibilities of those submitting kiosk proposals for SeaTran review and approval; and
- clarifies the responsibilities of SeaTran in the review of sign kiosk proposals.

ORGANIZATIONS AFFECTED

Seattle Transportation (SeaTran)

Department of Design, Construction, and Land Use (DCLU)

Department of Neighborhoods (DON)

Department of Parks and Recreation

POLICY

SeaTran is responsible for managing and controlling public right-of-ways, including sidewalks, to preserve their use as pedestrian walkways and to protect public safety.

DEFINITIONS

A **sign kiosk** is a small, freestanding sign structure used for posting small signs.

Right-of-Way means a strip of land platted, dedicated, condemned, established by prescription or otherwise legally established for the use of pedestrians, vehicles, or utilities.

Street Use Permit reviews are performed by SeaTran for proposed changes in the right-of-way. This review focuses on the location and structural design of proposed changes. Street Use Permit reviews are performed to facilitate projects in the right-of-way that are of safe design and will not present problems of:

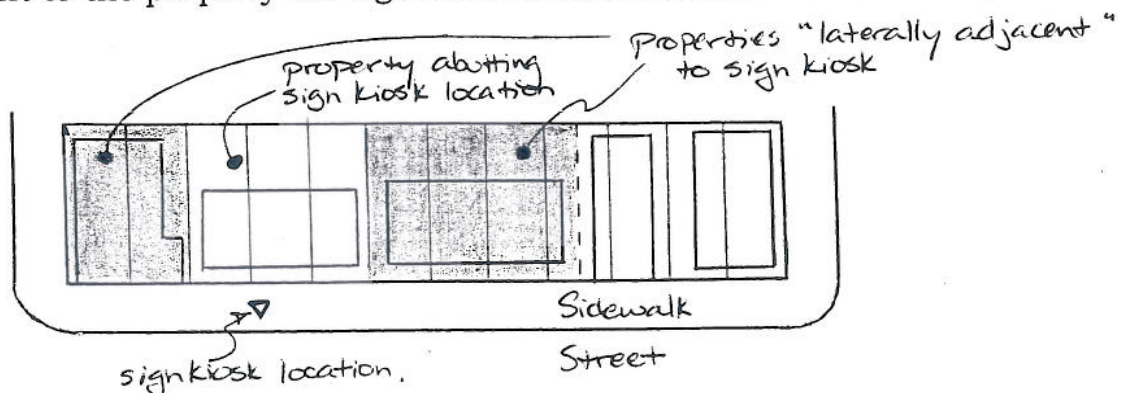
- traffic flow or access for street users.
- maintenance or liability to the City.
- access to utilities.

Additionally, the Street Use Permit review process is intended to:

- ensure that those who may be affected by proposed changes – nearby property owners, businesses, and residents – have notice of proposed street changes and time to: understand the proposed changes; to offer input into their shaping; and take a position on them.
- maintain a record of improvements in the right-of-way.
- coordinate the review of proposed improvements by pertinent City agencies and departments.

When a Street Use Permit is issued by SeaTran for a sign kiosk in the public right of way, the Street Use Permit is also the sign permit required under SMC 23.55.015.

In this document, **laterally adjacent property** means the properties along the same side of the street as a proposed sign kiosk and that are adjacent to the property the sign kiosk would abut (see sketch below).



RULE

The SeaTran approval process for sign kiosks proposed in the right-of-way is in two general parts. One relates to the safety and maintenance-related review performed by SEATRAN. The second part pertains to required proposal review by other City departments. Depending upon proposed design and location, this could include review by the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) or Seattle Design Commission. In some instances, this will also be extended to include review by recognized preservation districts, the Department of Parks and Recreation, or other departments.

Requirements for Submitting Sign Kiosk Proposal

Requirements for Initial Proposal Review. SeaTran is responsible for the review and approval of sign kiosks proposed in the right-of-way. A Street Use Permit is required for placement of a sign kiosk in the right-of-way. When submitting a sign kiosk proposal to SeaTran for Street Use Permit review, the proposal must include the following:

- the applicant's name and phone number. This is the contact person SeaTran will be working with for processing the permit.
- if the proposal is community-sponsored, the name of the sponsoring community organization(s).
- a readable, dimensioned drawing showing the proposed location for the project.
- approval, in writing, from the abutting property owner(s) for the work's installation.
- specific plans for the design of the sign kiosk.

Plans for proposed sign kiosks must meet the standards for design and location presented in the Land Use Code, including SMC 23.55.015.

There are fees for sign kiosk review and permitting. The amount of the review fee may vary with the size, design, and location of the proposal. This fee covers project review and inspection costs. The review fee is paid when the sign kiosk proposal is submitted to SeaTran for formal review.

The fee for the permit, itself, is paid at the time the permit is issued. The amount of this fee is presented in the publication of "Street Use Permits" maintained in SeaTran's Street Use Office. This is a one-time fee.

Community Support and Information. The effect of the proposed sign kiosk on nearby properties will be considered. As a minimum, to meet permit needs, it is expected that:

- property owners abutting the right-of-way where the sign kiosk is proposed to be located have been informed of the proposal and have provided written approval for the proposed sign kiosk at the time of application.
- property owners whose property is laterally adjacent to where a sign kiosk is proposed will be informed of the proposal so that the effect on the use of their property can be considered.

Maintenance Plan. To ensure needed upkeep is provided for the sign kiosk structures, a maintenance plan is required for the Street Use permit. This includes maintenance of the physical kiosk structure as well as maintenance of the sign kiosk's posting area. While not necessary at the time of initial permit review, this is required before approval of the permit. Information needed in a Maintenance Plan includes:

- the name of the community organization, person, or business supporting the long-term maintenance of the piece, with the name and phone number of a person in the organization that SeaTran can contact and work with, should maintenance issues with the sign kiosk arise. This includes issues with use and maintaining the sign kiosk's posting area.
- a workable plan for the kiosk's short-term, day-to-day upkeep.
- a workable plan for repair for the sign kiosk in case the sign kiosk is damaged or needs replacement.

Provision of Liability Coverage. For approval, sign kiosk projects need to meet the liability coverage requirements presented in SeaTran's Street Use Permit Counter Publication Number 626 – "Certificate of Public Liability, Property Damage Insurance."

Sign Permit. When a sign kiosk is in the public right of way, the Street Use Permit issued by SeaTran is also the sign permit required under SMC 23.55.015. Submittals for sign kiosks must comply with the requirements of SMC 23.55.015. This includes that the design for sign kiosks include a permanently attached set of posting rules for their posting areas.

Posted on the sign kiosk, with the posting rules, the permit holder shall provide the name and phone number of a community contact person that community members can contact for information about posting on the sign kiosk.

Sign kiosks shall be designed so that their non-commercial posting areas and general posting areas are obviously separated.

Reviews and Approvals from Other Related Departments

Depending upon location and design, sign kiosks may require review and approval from departments in addition to SeaTran. These may include:

- the Department of Neighborhoods' Historic Preservation Office, for historic preservation districts.
- the Department of Parks and Recreation, for locations next to parks.
- the Seattle Design Commission, to promote kiosk design that is attractive and compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Attached is a set of Community Sign Kiosk Design Principles. These are presented as guidelines for sign kiosk projects that they can be successfully integrated with their surrounding neighborhoods. These principles must be complied with or the applicant has to have review and approval for their project by the Seattle Design Commission.

Prior to SeaTran approval for the Street Use Permit, which would allow sign kiosk placement in the right-of-way, the reviews by other departments need to be completed and their approvals need to be provided to SeaTran.

Review of sign kiosks proposed in locations not in the right-of-way is led by the Department of Design, Construction, and Land Use.

Where to Obtain and Submit Proposals for Street Use Permits

Applications for Street Use Permits are obtained from and submitted to SeaTran's Street Use Office permit counter.

Elements of SeaTran Review for Sign Kiosks

The following standards are used by SeaTran for review of sign kiosks. In some instances, they may change as safety, flow, and access needs require. These standards are presented to clarify SeaTran design expectations for sign kiosks.

Location Standards for Safety, Traffic Flow, and Access. Proposed changes must be reasonably and safely placed. For this purpose, SeaTran takes into a number of elements. This includes reviewing proposed changes in the right-of-way so that they:

- will not interfere with needed line-of-sight between intersection users. Intersection users include drivers, pedestrians, wheelchair users, cyclists, etc.
- will not, by their appearance or location, distract from City signing designed and installed to control traffic and will comply with SMC 11.50.500 to .560.
- are located at least three feet away from the roadway.
- will not interfere with pedestrian flow in sidewalk areas. As a minimum, this means maintaining *at least* a 5-foot wide continuous and clear path along a sidewalk. In principal pedestrian streets in pedestrian designated zones as set out in SMC 23.34.086, and .088 and SMC 23.47.040, a wider path to maintain smooth, continuous pedestrian flow may be required.
- are not located in the blind-path/corridor of space next to buildings. Pedestrians with limited sight tend to use sidewalk in a path next to buildings. Sign kiosks should be placed outside of this path.
- do not block access to curb ramps provided for wheelchair users. This means that improvements should be located at least one foot away from the sides of wheelchair ramps and five feet from the landing areas at the backs of ramps wheelchair users need to maneuver on and off of the ramps.
- do not interfere with access to the abutting properties and to laterally adjacent properties.
- do not conflict with access to other uses in the right-of-way, including manholes and utility access, access to bus stops, bus shelters, and transit stations. To maintain access up wood power poles, proposed sign kiosks in the sidewalk should be located at least three feet from these poles.

Underground Utilities. Design of sign kiosks shall recognize the locations of underground utilities and that the need to access these may arise some day. As with all uses in the right-of-way, SeaTran reserves the right to remove or relocate them to enable access to utilities. SeaTran also retains this right where removal or relocation is needed for safety or maintenance reasons. If this need is not immediate, SeaTran will work to inform the community contact for the sign kiosk. This will be done to try to identify a way to reduce the impact of this work to the sign kiosk.

One way to reduce this impact in advance is with design. This includes:

- designing/locating sign kiosks away from underground utilities and
- selecting design that allows sign kiosks to be easily relocated or replaced, should there be the need.

Structural Review. SeaTran will review sign kiosks for their structural integrity. This is to promote use of sign kiosks that are sturdy enough to be placed in the street and sidewalk areas without presenting a hazard from falling, being blown over, etc.

Depending upon the design presented, this review may include asking the proponent for engineering analysis. Where the proposal design is complex enough – or could have enough of an impact on the street or sidewalk design and operations – a requirement can be made that plans for the proposal be developed and signed-off by a licensed engineer.

Maintenance. SeaTran will review the submitted maintenance plan and ensure there is a community organization, person, or business that will take maintenance responsibility for proposed sign kiosks. It will ensure that there is a community contact person whom SeaTran can contact and work with, should maintenance issues with the sign kiosk arise.

Liability Coverage. SeaTran will ensure the applicant is providing or has arranged liability coverage (per SeaTran's Street Use Permit Counter Publication Number 626 – "Certificate of Public Liability, Property Damage Insurance") for their proposed sign kiosk.

Sign Permit. SeaTran will review the application for compliance with the requirements of the Land Use Code, including SMC 23.55.015. This includes ensuring the sign kiosk design includes posting rules.

There are locations presented in the Land Use Code where off-premise signing, including that on sign kiosks, is not permitted. These include:

- locations zoned single-family, except abutting a park or a publicly-owned community center (SMC 23.55.015).
- locations zoned multi-family (SMC 23.55.015).
- along certain major regional roadways and scenic routes (SMC 23.55.042).
- within 500 feet of a school (SMC 23.55.014.H).

In addition, SeaTran will check to ensure that the permit holder shall provide the name and phone number of a community contact person that community members can contact for information about posting on the sign kiosk.

Steps and Timing for Street Use Permit Review

The steps and timing of Street Use Permit reviews will vary, depending upon the ideas presented – their size, design, and location.

For kiosks with tested and straightforward design, located away from utilities and heavily-used sidewalk, this review, in some cases, has been completed within one month of their formal submittal to SeaTran.

Proposals that are larger, are of new or untried design, are proposed in heavily-used sidewalk locations or near utilities tend to have longer, more complex review processes. The steps for the review of these processes often iterate between the proponent and SeaTran. In this case, the length of the review depends a large part on how responsively changes are made to SeaTran reviews. In some cases like this, review processes have taken years.

Suggestion for Getting Started on the Sign Kiosk Permit Process.

While not required, one step that sign kiosk applicants can take to save time in development of their project is to arrange for a preliminary review of the project by SeaTran. Benefits of this kind of meeting and informal review are that it can be used to:

- confirm/identify more specifically what information SeaTran will require for the proposal's formal review and approval.
- confirm the steps, timing, and fee required for the permit.
- identify, early-on, potentially large problems/issues with the concept that might keep the concept from working.
- obtain a sense of potential challenges that may be associated with pursuing the project idea.
- find out if other departments or agencies should be involved in the review.

Informal reviews like these can be used as tools, as well, to obtain information about how others may have successfully done similar projects. To set up this kind of meeting and preliminary project review, an applicant can contact SeaTran's Neighborhood Transportation Services Division or Street Use Office permit counter.

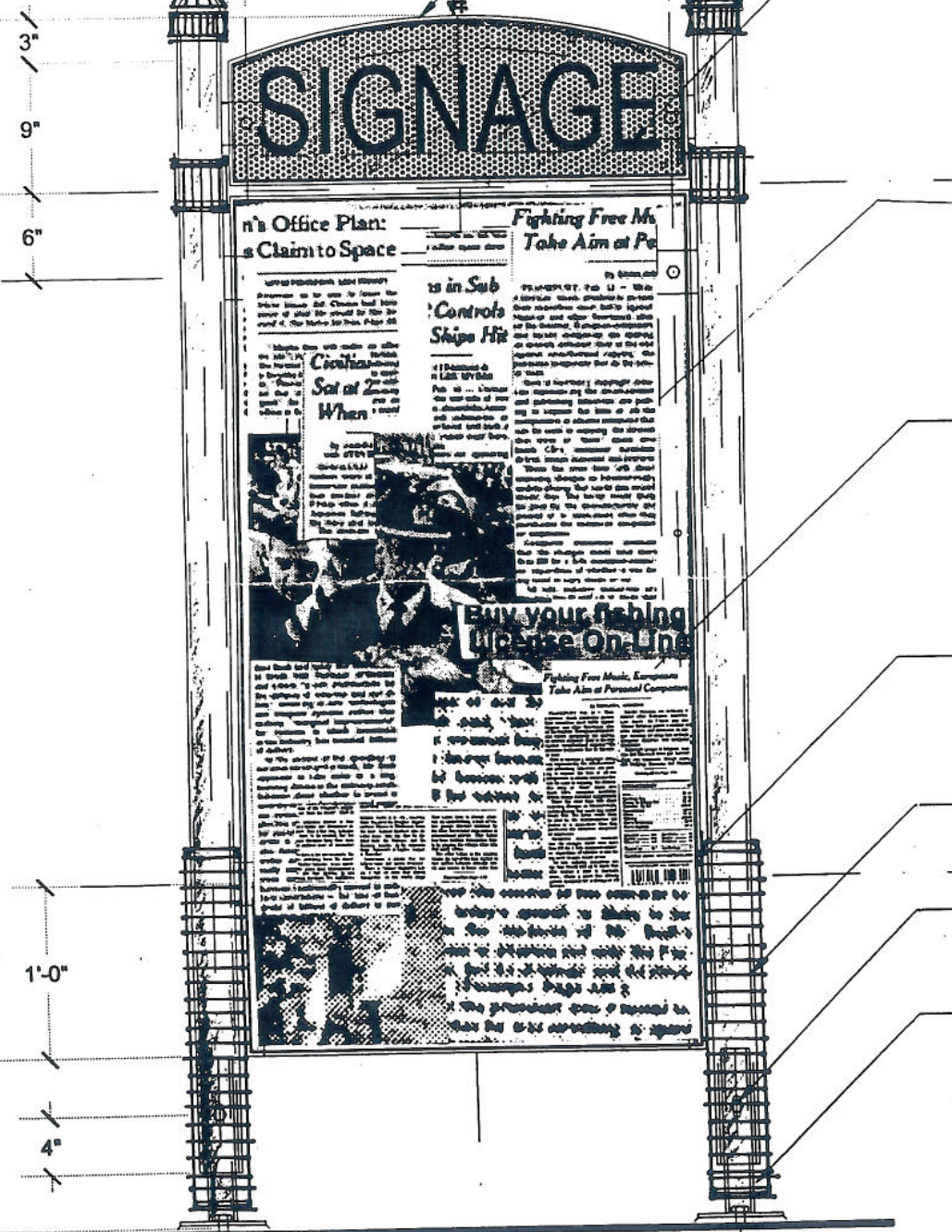
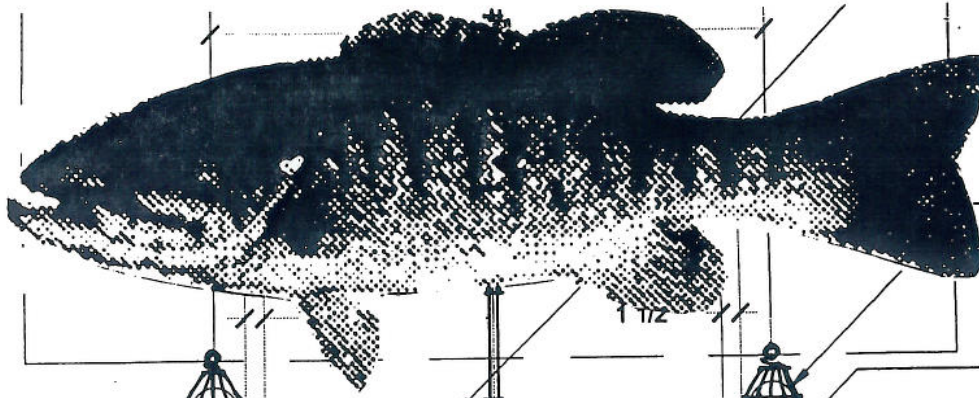
ATTACHMENT

Department of Neighborhoods **Community Sign Kiosk Design Principles**

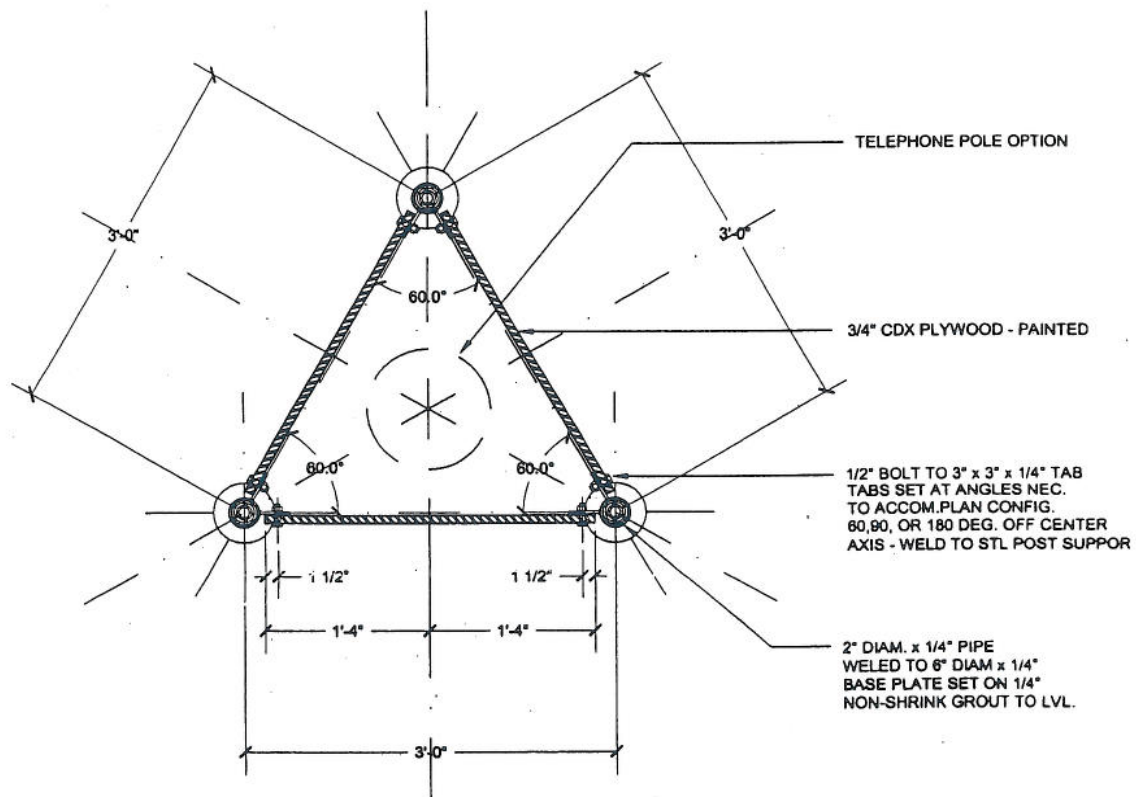
These principles are conceived as tools for use by citizens, City staff and designers who are involved in the development of Community Sign Kiosks. The principles are intended to guide and focus choices about community sign kiosk design, and to ensure programmatic consistency while retaining creative flexibility.

Community Sign Kiosks shall:

- be made of durable, high quality, low maintenance materials
- adhere to the size, shape and style of the attached Community Sign Kiosk prototype while allowing for creative, playful interpretations
- demonstrate contextual fit and appropriateness, which may include references to natural and/or built surroundings
- be reflective in their design of the character of their community or neighborhood, which may include history and heritage
- provide an attractive means for communicating information of interest to the community
- create a focal point in public places and/or increase opportunities for people to linger
- provide an essential amenity that enlivens the public space or streetscape and enhances the pedestrian experience
- be sited in a way that demonstrates concern for congestion of adjacent sidewalk furnishings, pedestrian flow and traffic safety.



ATTACHMENT: PROTOTYPE DESIGN FOR COMMUNITY SIGN KIOSKS

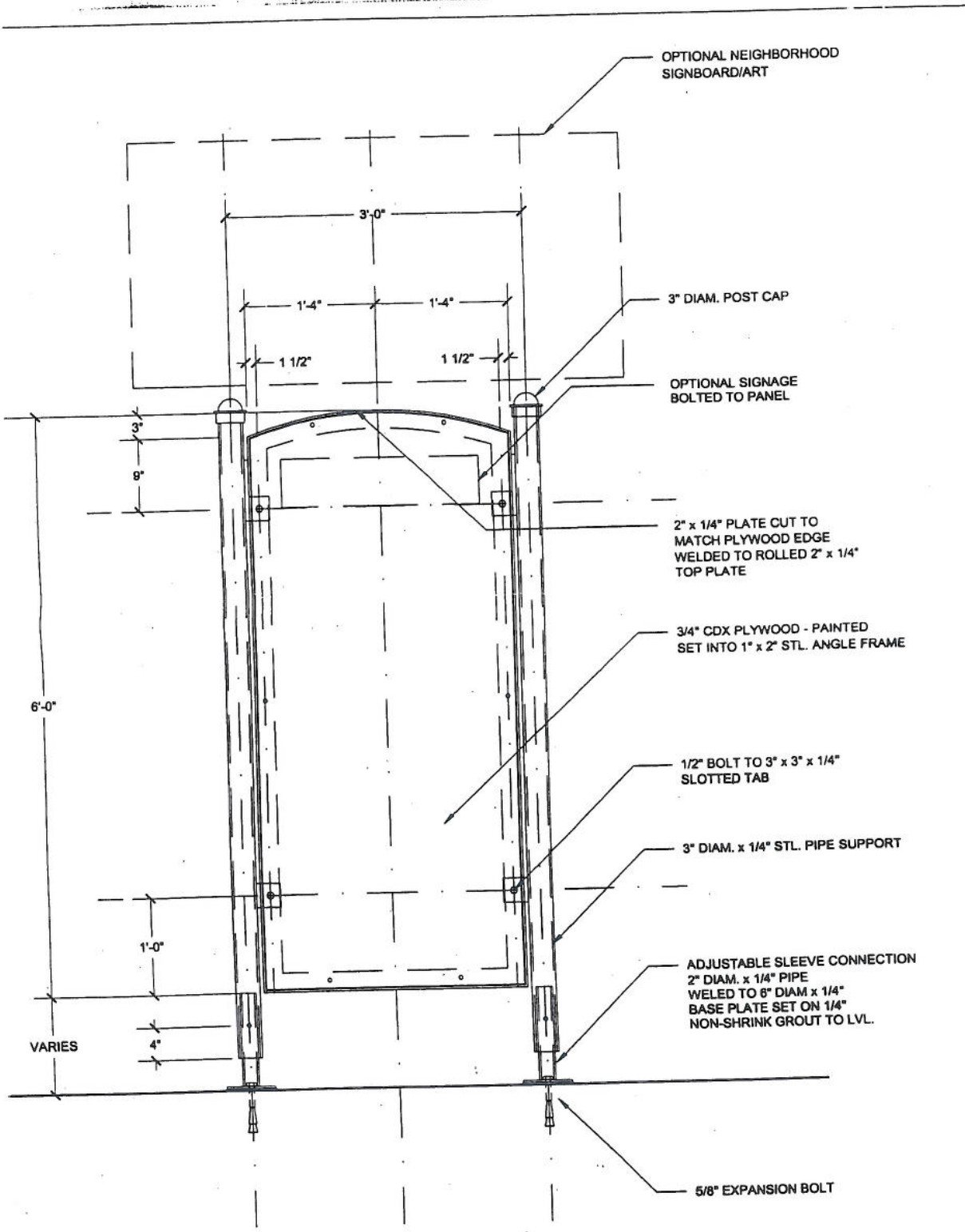


NOTE: ALL STL. TO BE HOT-DIPPED GALVANIZED PRIOR TO FABRICATION.

Plan - Triangle Option

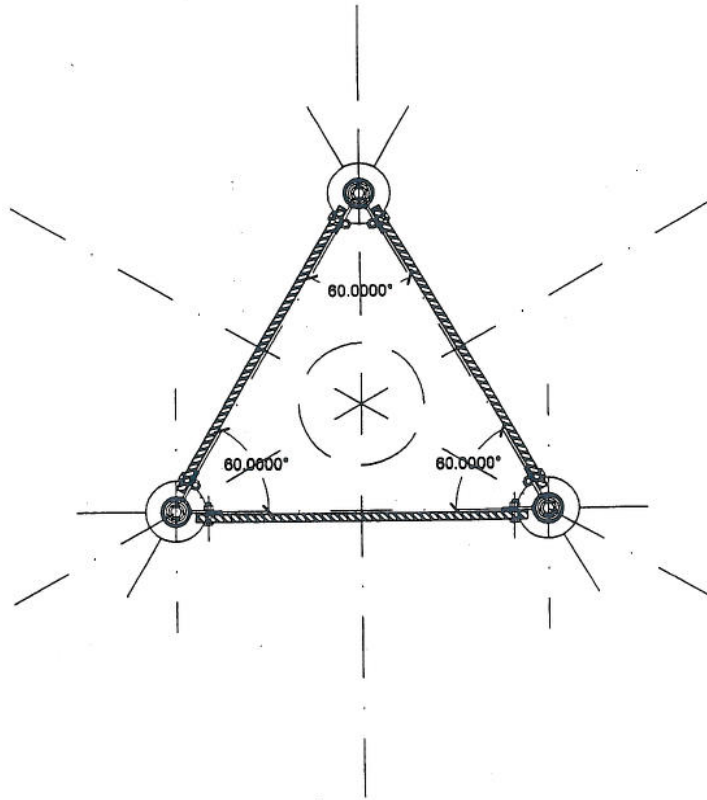
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1" = 1'-0"



Elevation - Typ. Panel

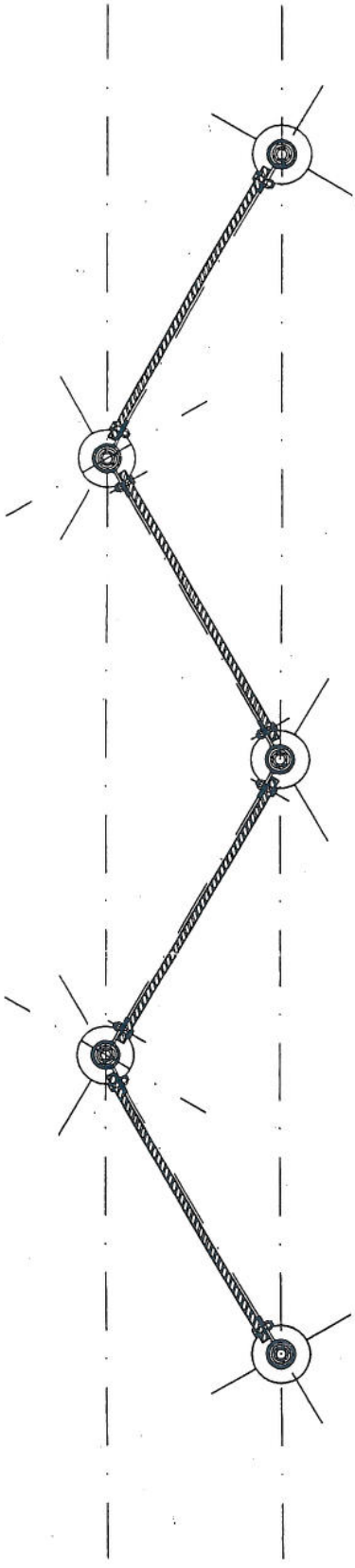
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Plan - Optional Co

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1" = 1'-0"



Configurations

