

CITY OF SEATTLE
ORDINANCE 126365
COUNCIL BILL 120051

AN ORDINANCE relating to public assets, land use, and zoning; establishing regulations for the Center Campus Subarea within the sign overlay district for the Seattle Center; amending Section 23.55.054 of, and adding a new Section 23.55.062 to, the Seattle Municipal Code.

WHEREAS, on July 22, 2019, the Seattle City Council adopted Ordinance 125869, establishing a sign overlay district, overlay district subareas, and sign regulations for the Seattle Center, including regulations for subareas containing the Seattle Center Arena, recently named Climate Pledge Arena, and the Bressi Garage block; and

WHEREAS, Ordinance 125869 created a sign overlay district that encompasses the entire Seattle Center campus, but regulations have not yet been adopted for the Center Campus Subarea created by that ordinance; and

WHEREAS, Seattle Center is a large civic cultural center that is home to a variety of cultural and entertainment venues and hosts numerous events year-round; and

WHEREAS, such events, attractions, and amenities draw over 12 million visitors a year to the Seattle Center campus; and

WHEREAS, the Director of the Seattle Center Department is authorized to adopt, promulgate, amend and rescind rules and regulations as are consistent with and necessary to carry out the duties of the Director of the Seattle Center Department, which duties include advertising events, publicizing, and otherwise promoting the use of Seattle Center facilities; and

WHEREAS, while in keeping with both the World's Fair's spirit of progress, and the Seattle Center campus's past sign practices, an upgraded signage program that addresses both

1 sustainability and operational issues and is consistent in design and function will align the
2 Seattle Center campus with the arena site and benefit Seattle Center, its resident
3 organizations, and the visiting public; and

4 WHEREAS, Seattle Center’s design and operations are intended to integrate with and enhance
5 connections to Uptown and adjoining neighborhoods and align with the Urban Design
6 Framework, and the community surrounding Seattle Center has asked for these goals to
7 be supported with better signage and wayfinding; and

8 WHEREAS, one purpose of the sign district overlay is to regulate signage to promote the health
9 and safety of the general public and the Seattle Center as a vibrant and valuable
10 community resource for arts, entertainment, sports, and civic events; and

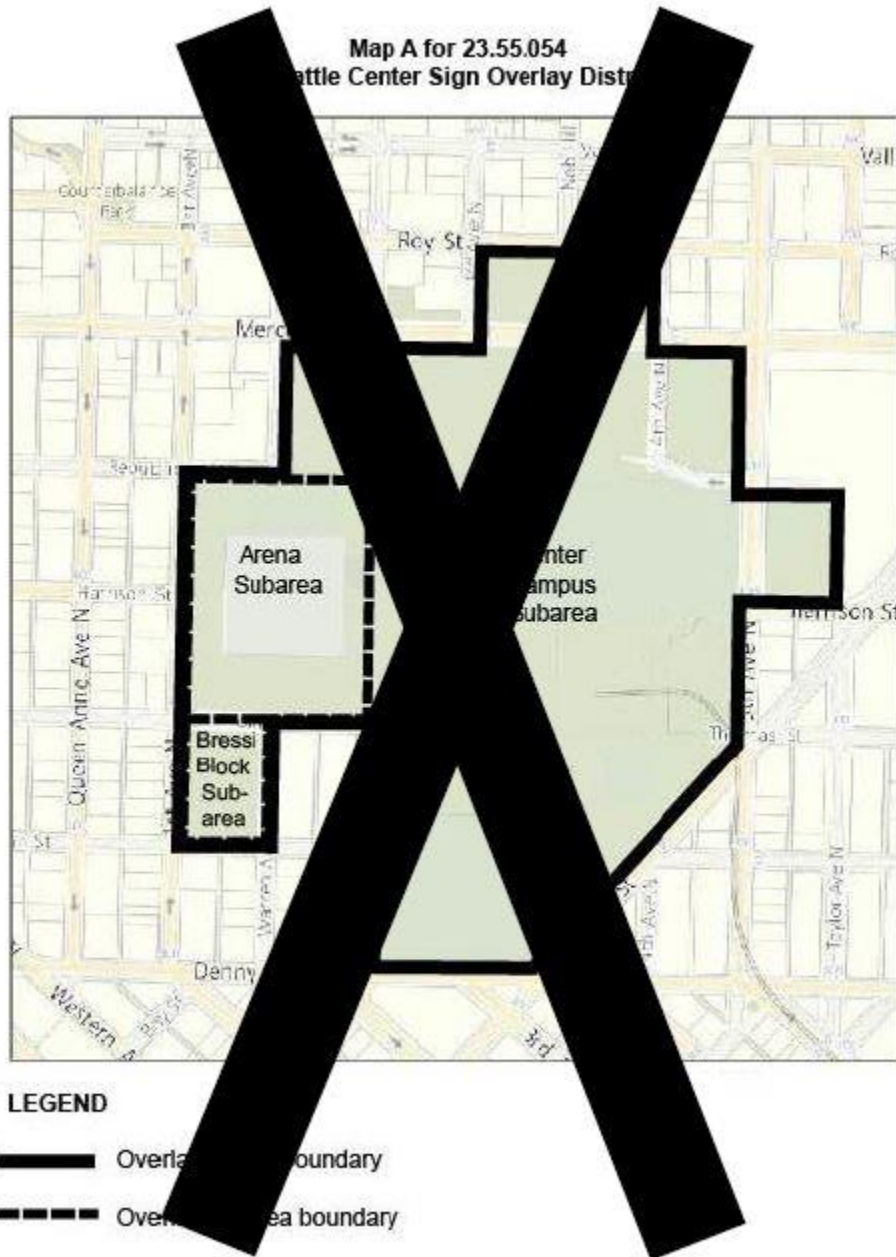
11 WHEREAS, The City of Seattle (City)’s current sign code provisions do not address the signage
12 needs of a modernized Seattle Center and its cultural and entertainment venues and
13 events; and

14 WHEREAS, the City desires to now establish the sign regulations for the Center Campus
15 Subarea of the Seattle Center Sign Overlay District and to amend the boundary of the
16 Center Campus Subarea to include the City-owned and City-managed area north of the
17 Climate Pledge Arena occupied by the Fountain Pavilion, KEXP, VERA, and SIFF,
18 referred to as the Northwest Rooms; and the adjacent Northwest and Alki Courtyards,
19 the Seattle Center Monorail system, City-owned green space fronting Mercer Street, and
20 the Seattle Center Skate Plaza; NOW, THEREFORE,

21 **BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:**

22 Section 1. Map A for Section 23.55.054 of the Seattle Municipal Code, which section
23 was enacted by Ordinance 125869, is amended as follows:

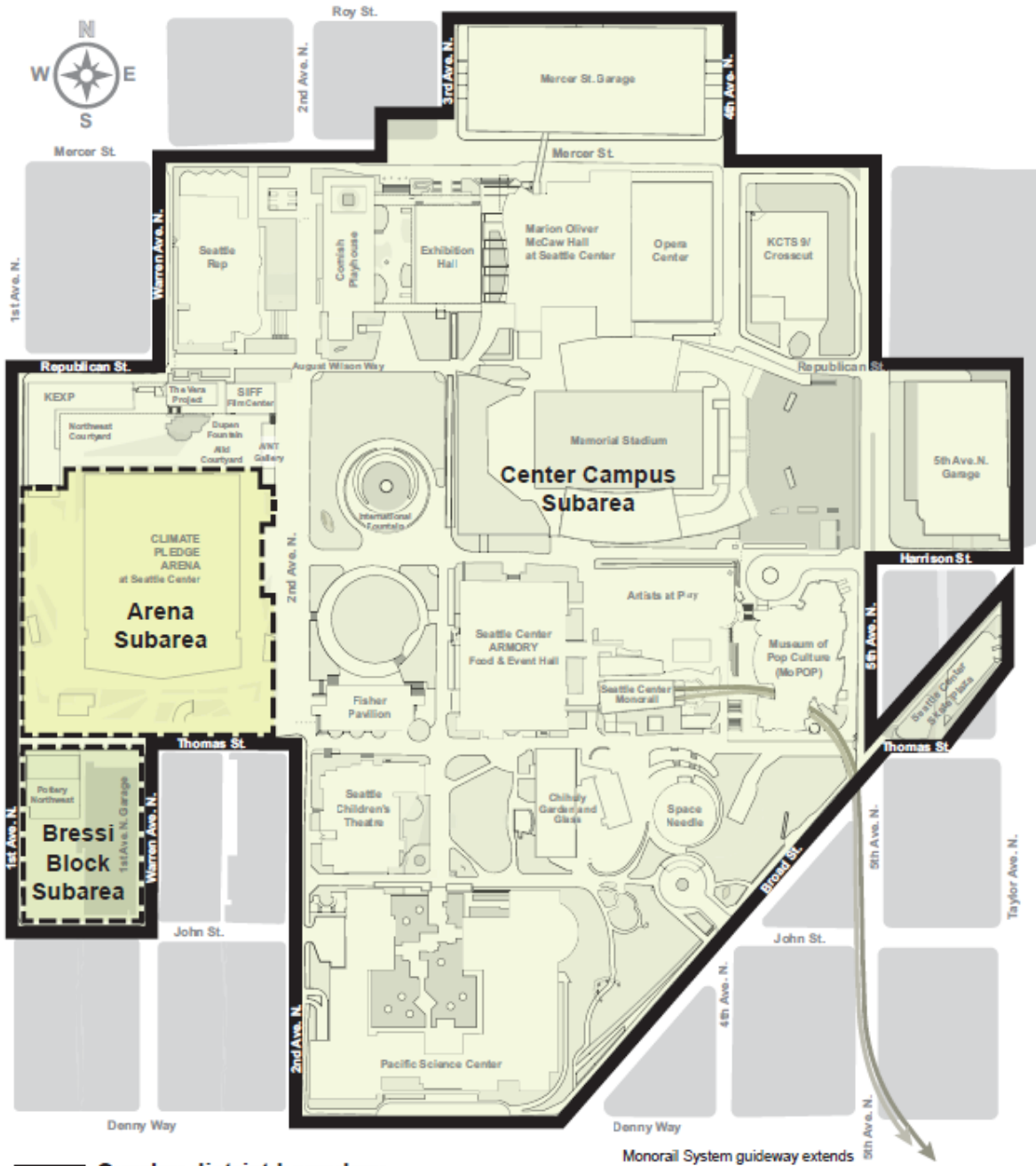
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Map A for 23.55.054
Seattle Center Sign Overlay District



— Overlay district boundary
- - - Overlay subarea boundary

Note: Overlay boundary lines include sidewalk/planting strips, exclude roadway.

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1 Section 2. A new Section 23.55.062 is added to the Seattle Municipal Code as follows:

2 **23.55.062 Center Campus Subarea—Overlay District sign standards**

3 A. Except for technical code approval required by the Seattle Building Code, Seattle
4 Electrical Code, or other applicable technical code, and except for landmark regulation under
5 Chapter 25.12, the Seattle Center Director is authorized to install, operate, maintain, administer,
6 manage, and control campus signs so long as the Seattle Center Director determines such signs
7 are consistent with this Chapter 23.55, the Seattle Center Sign Guidelines as updated and
8 approved by the Seattle Center Advisory Commission, and any applicable rules and regulations
9 adopted pursuant to Section 17.04.040. The Seattle Center Director may directly perform the
10 installation, operation, or maintenance of campus signs, or delegate such performance.

11 B. For purposes of this Part 4 of Chapter 23.55, the following definitions apply:

12 “Campus signs” means signs owned or managed by the Seattle Center
13 Department on City-owned or City-managed property within the Center Campus Subarea, as
14 well as temporary event signs located within the Subarea.

15 “Scrolling” has the same meaning as the term is defined in subsection
16 23.55.058.H.8.

17 “Seattle Center Director” means the Director of the Seattle Center Department.

18 C. Except for technical code approval and landmark regulation under Chapter 25.12 as
19 provided in subsection 23.55.062.A, campus signs within the Center Campus Subarea are
20 regulated only by the standards of this Section 23.55.062.

21 D. On-premises and sponsorship signs are permitted on City-owned or City-managed
22 property within the Center Campus Subarea. For purposes of this Part 4 of Chapter 23.55, all
23 property located within the Seattle Center Sign Overlay District comprises the premises. Off-

1 premises signs within the Center Campus Subarea owned or managed by the City on City-owned
2 or City-managed property are prohibited.

3 E. The number, type, maximum area, maximum height, illumination, display methods,
4 and standards of campus signs within the Center Campus Subarea shall be determined by the
5 Seattle Center Director, in accordance with the following standards, any applicable Seattle
6 Center Guidelines as updated and approved by the Seattle Center Advisory Commission, and any
7 applicable rules and regulations adopted pursuant to Section 17.04.040:

8 1. Illumination and light and glare

9 a. The light source for externally illuminated signs shall be shielded and
10 directed away from adjacent properties.

11 b. Signs may be electric, externally illuminated, or non-illuminated, or
12 may use any combination of these features. Signs may use illuminated video display methods if
13 the sign meets the development standards in this subsection 23.55.062.E.1 and subsection
14 23.55.062.E.4.

15 c. Between dusk and dawn, video displays shall be limited in brightness to
16 no more than 500 nits (candela per square meter), measured as described in subsection
17 23.55.005.A.10.

18 2. The standards for temporary signage in subsection 23.55.058.F.1 through F.5
19 shall apply to the Center Campus Subarea. For purposes of this Section 23.55.062, temporary
20 screens used primarily to show movies, live stream events, or other similar event purposes are
21 not signs. Temporary signage within the Center Campus Subarea may also include video display.

22 3. Non-rigid event-related banners of up to 180 square feet per banner may be
23 hung or temporarily affixed on the Seattle Center skybridge over Mercer Street and the Director

1 of the Seattle Department of Transportation authorizes the Seattle Center Director to permit such
2 banners as authorized in subsection 15.04.015.E.

3 4. Video displays

4 a. The total duration of multiple video display messages together may not
5 constitute more than 20 seconds of every two minutes.

6 b. Video displays are prohibited between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. except that
7 video displays are permitted within an hour after an event in the Seattle Center Sign Overlay
8 District ends.

9 c. A video display message shall have a minimum duration of two seconds
10 and a maximum duration of ten seconds. Calculation of the duration does not include the number
11 of frames per second used in a video display.

12 d. There shall be ten seconds of still image or blank display following
13 every message using a video display method.

14 e. All video displays, except those described in subsection 23.55.062.E.4.f,
15 and except those regulated by subsection 23.55.062.E.5, shall be set back a minimum of 20 feet
16 from the street curb of the nearest unvacated right-of-way.

17 f. A video display using only scrolling alphanumeric characters is
18 permitted and may be located adjacent to a right-of-way with no minimum setback, provided that
19 such a sign may not exceed 42 feet in length and 18 inches in height. No more than 21 feet of
20 any such sign face may be directed at the same right-of-way. Any such sign must be at least 8
21 feet above grade. A video display consistent with this subsection 23.55.062.E.4.f is not subject to
22 the standards in subsections 23.55.062.E.4.a through 23.55.062.E.4.d.

1 5. Signs that are within 20 feet from the street curb of the nearest unvacated
2 roadway and oriented so as to be visible from such unvacated roadway, and signs within the
3 Center Campus Subarea that are not campus signs, shall be regulated by the general sign
4 standards in Part 1 of Chapter 23.55, subsection 23.55.062.D, and subsection 23.55.062.E.4.f.

5 6. Campus signs may also include the following:

6 a. Portable signs including readily detachable signs having a fixed base or
7 mounting for the placement and intermittent use of such signs;

8 b. Banners, streamers, strings of pennants, fabric signs, festoons of lights,
9 clusters of flags, wind animated objects, balloons, searchlights, and similar devices;

10 c. Signs attached to or located on event related or sponsored stationary
11 motor vehicles, equipment, trailers, and similar devices;

12 d. Changing-image and changing-color signs, including video display;

13 e. Memorial signs or tablets, or signs stating the name of a building or date
14 of construction;

15 f. Signs warning of danger or providing safety information; and

16 g. National, state, and other flags.

17 7. Signs projecting over a public right-of-way must comply with Section
18 23.55.004.

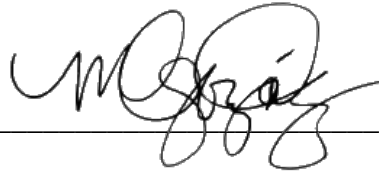
19 8. Signs within 20 feet from public right-of-way intersections or
20 driveways must comply with Section 23.55.008.

21 9. Sign kiosks are permitted on City-owned or City-managed property
22 within the Center Campus Subarea.

- 1 10. Permanent signs that are flashing or that rotate or have a rotating or moving
- 2 part or parts that revolve at a speed in excess of seven revolutions per minute are prohibited
- 3 within the Center Campus Subarea.

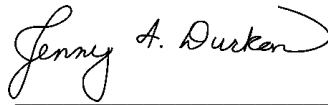
1 Section 3. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force 30 days after its approval by
2 the Mayor, but if not approved and returned by the Mayor within ten days after presentation, it
3 shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code Section 1.04.020.

4 Passed by the City Council the 14th day of June, 2021,
5 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this 14th day of
6 June, 2021.

7 

8 President _____ of the City Council

9 Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this 18th day of June, 2021.

10 

11 Jenny A. Durkan, Mayor

12 Filed by me this 18th day of June, 2021.

13 

14 Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

15 (Seal)