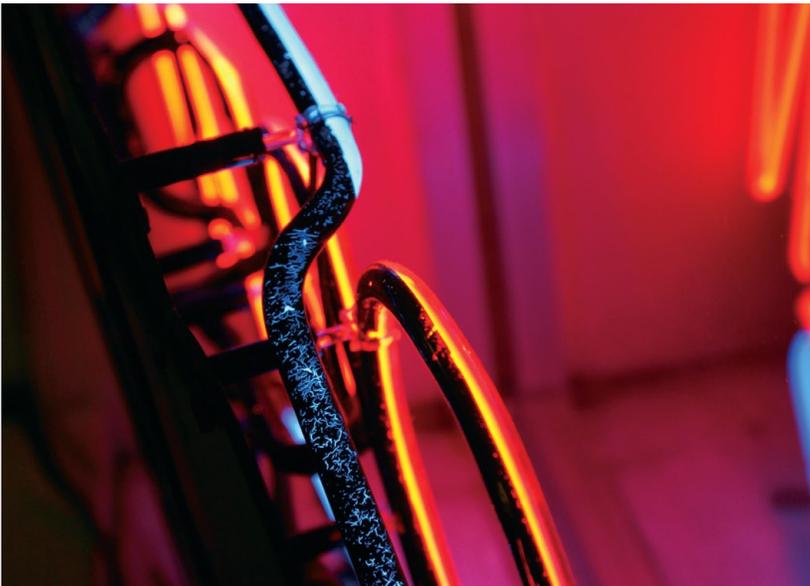




Oro Valley Commercial Sign Survey



February 2010

Background

Efforts to examine the Town's current sign ordinances began more than a year ago, but were further inspired in the summer with several outreach meetings with the business community who came to the Town to request considerations due to the poor economic conditions. After reviewing the matter, Town Council decided that, rather than consider changes to certain sections of the sign ordinance, it would be prudent to review the entire commercial sign code—which was developed more than 10 years ago—to see if there were opportunities to bring the code up to date with Oro Valley's business climate today.

In November 2009, the Council approved a scope of work that will involve the formation of a Task Force of residents, business representatives, staff and our local Chamber to review the current sign code and make recommendations for possible changes and updates.

To begin that review, staff wanted to garner some baseline information regarding public and business attitudes with regard to commercial signage in Oro Valley. Town staff developed an informal community survey measuring use of signs by both segments; attitudes regarding certain types of signage; and overall experience in meeting the Town's sign code.

Methodology

Staff developed two online surveys, one for the resident population and one for the business community. The surveys were available on the Town's website, on the Planning & Zoning page. There was a link from the Town's home page. The program used to administer the survey as a module provided by the Town's Content Management System (CMS).

Both surveys used a mix of multiple choice, ratings and true/false questions. The surveys also provided ample opportunity for open comments. An honor system directed which survey was completed by each target group, and demographic information was requested.

The **Resident Survey** questions:

- Focused on how residents identified businesses and how they responded to business signage
- Looked at banner and A-frame sign opinions on use
- Gathered general demographic information

The **Business Survey** questions

- Focused on how businesses promoted themselves
- Opinions on current sign code, restrictions
- Experience with the Town overall (Sign review, DRB, etc.)
- Demographics—type of business, how long in Oro Valley, etc.

We launched the surveys through the local media and the Northern Pima County Chamber of Commerce a week prior to its going live, and it ran from October 19 – November 6, 2009. Although there were fears of “stuffing the ballot box,” with an estimated 350 responses to the general public survey and 80 responses to the business survey, we did not find this to be the case.

Summary of Findings

A copy of the questions that were included in both surveys may be found in Appendix 1.

General Public Survey

Questions targeting respondents from the general public:

- Focused on how residents identified businesses and how they responded to business signage
- Looked at banner and A-frame sign opinions on use
- Gathered general demographic information

Overall, use of signs to locate a business ranked in the top three by respondents, with online/internet searching number one. This suggests that respondents may use the internet to find a local business that provides the product or service they are looking for, but they rely on signage to help when they are physically going to the location. Follow up questions reinforced this as a large percentage (69%) said the size and readability of signs and familiar names (74%) were important to them. Furthermore, less than 50% of respondents said they often remember a business or service later after seeing a sign at night, again further suggesting that for at least this series of questions, respondents are generally using signage to locate a business once they have made the decision to go there.

In looking at illumination hours for signs, there was overwhelming support for either turning off the signs at the close of business, or by 10 p.m. Closely following the 10 p.m. preference was support for all-night illumination.

Regarding the use of A-frame signs, the respondents overwhelmingly stated they did not like the use of A-frame/sandwich boards (54%). This suggests that, while A-frames may want to remain in the discussion, other factors clearly play a part in the public’s identification of businesses.

General Public Survey Demographics

- Oro Valley resident: 91%
- Age group: 75% were aged 50 years or older
- Gender: The majority were male (55%)

Business Survey Questions

- Focused on how businesses promoted themselves
- Opinions on current sign code, restrictions
- Experience with the Town overall (Sign review, DRB, etc.)
- Demographics—type of business, how long in OV, etc.

Similar to the General Public survey, businesses were asked to identify from a list all of the tools they use to promote their business. Signage received the highest responses, followed closely by the internet, with advertising and the phonebook virtually tied for third place. This is virtually exactly the same answer from the general public, suggesting that the reliance on both sides for business signage is an important component of the community conversation moving forward. Similar correlations were found when we asked for more detail on the types of signs used, with building signage/lettering and illuminated signs receiving the highest response from businesses.

Several questions arise when we look at the responses to the size of signs. **There is a virtually no difference between those businesses who are satisfied with their sign and those who feel it is too small (46 & 45% respectively).** While this indicates there may be room for negotiation and change here, it is also important to dig further to determine if these are PAD standards in play, and what percentage of businesses who responded are in a master sign program, for example. That there is no clear majority one way or the other does indicate that further discussion is warranted.

With respect to use of banner signs, an overwhelming number of businesses said they would like to use banners to promote their business and that the current sign code for banner use is too restrictive. This indicates there may be some opportunity to discuss how the Town can support businesses by working to allow banners to have a greater impact with the use of banners.

Illuminated signs saw similar results that were seen from the General Public respondents that the same options were in the top three for preferences: illuminated signs on all night (44%); turned off by 10 p.m. (24%); and turned off by midnight (21%), which was not seen in the other responses. This indicates there is much room for compromise in that both groups felt that turning signs off by 10 p.m. would be acceptable.

With respect to A-frames, businesses were in direct opposition to the general public's views on the use of A-frames. This reflects a gap in businesses supporting the argument that A-frames increase business traffic, as the majority of consumers who responded to the survey do not reflect that. This can be an area for further study by the task group.

A series of questions examined the service levels by the Town in several areas, including business experience with:

- Review and approval timing
- DRB Review (where applicable)
- Staff response time

In all three areas, there was a high “No Response” rate. This can be due to the fact that many businesses engage consultants and other vendors to handle their sign design and review processes, and so the business owners simply do not have direct experience with the process.

With that in mind, **Review and Approval received an overall satisfactory or greater rating of 35%, with more than half (52%) indicating they thought the timing was either “poor” or “very poor.”** Although there was an opportunity for respondents to add additional comments, few indicated anything other than the process “took too long” or “was cumbersome.” The details of what caused this perception were not included. It is recommended that the task force examine timing considerations of the sign approval process as part of the focus group process.

Only 25% indicated they were happy with the DRB Review, with 43% giving no response here. Of those indicating they did have to go through the DRB, 32% found the experience “poor” or “very poor,” indicating that it took too long.

Finally, staff response time received the highest rating of “satisfactory” or “excellent” at more than 51%, with 18% not responding and 31% ranking their experience as “poor” or “very poor.”

This section indicates there are several customer focus areas that can be improved, which can include both the time the process takes, and staff education and communication with the business community to help set expectations.

Business Demographics

Types of business (may not add up to 100% as not all businesses answered)

- Health/Beauty
- Nonprofit
- General office/service
- Banking/Financial
- Medical office
- Restaurant
- Retail

Years in business

- Less than 1 – 5 years: 51%
- 6 – 20 years: 44%

No. of employees

- Less than 10: 36%
- 1-25: 40%
- 26-50: 10%
- More than 50: 10%

For a review of all responses, please refer to Appendix A. For a complete listing of all respondents open-ended comments, please refer to Appendix B.

Conclusions

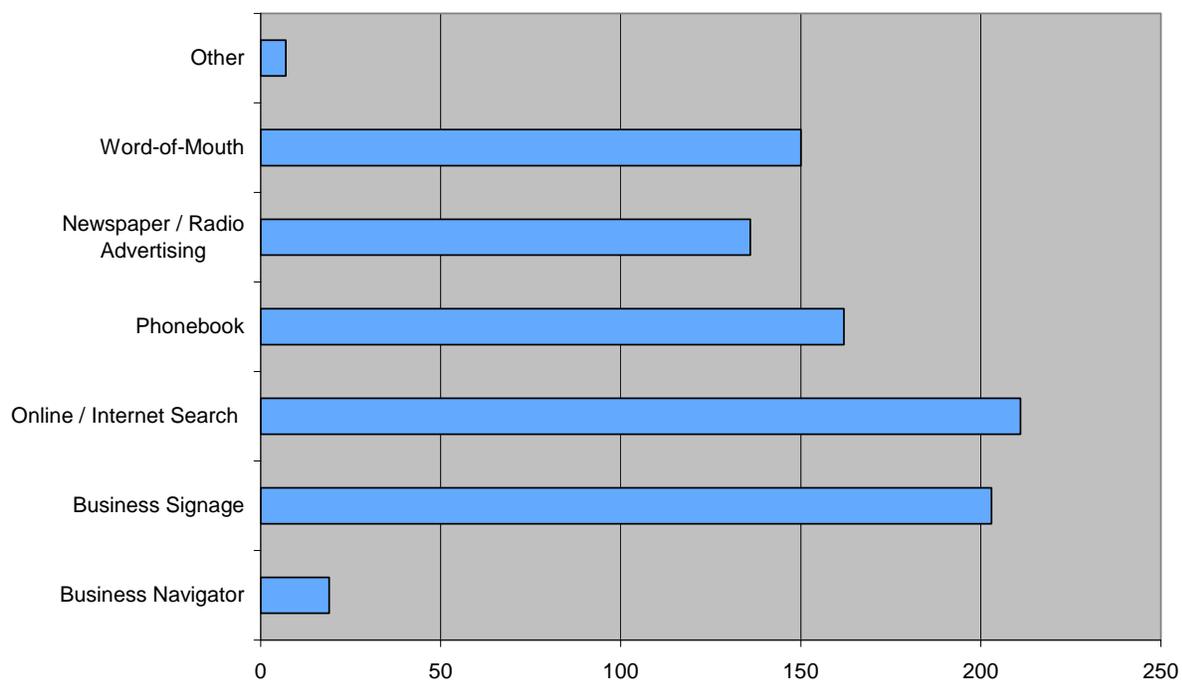
As a first-time effort for online surveys, the sign survey provided opportunities to explore several key areas with respect to the sign code review. This complex project will have many facets and it will be important to consider all concerns as the Town moves forward. The survey looked at several key areas that, according to the November 18, 2009 Council Communication, will play a large role in the task force review and recommendations. With that in mind, the following conclusions should be considered as the task force moves forward:

- There is universal agreement from both groups that signage is important to them, both to identify a business and for a business' marketing plan. This is important as it demonstrates there is strong support for signs—and thus, room for community conversation.
- There is opportunity for compromise on the hours of illumination for commercial signs as indicated in both groups' willingness to consider a 10 p.m. cut off.
- Although residents stated that signage was very important in locating a business, they did not support A-frame signs and rely more on size and lettering of signs. Business respondents, however, feel that A-frames are strong in driving customers. Focus groups to understand the divide on this matter should be part of the task force public participation process.
- The business community indicated that there are several areas for improvement needed in both the process and service levels by Town staff and the DRB. This should be another area for focus groups to examine to assess the specific areas that can be improved.

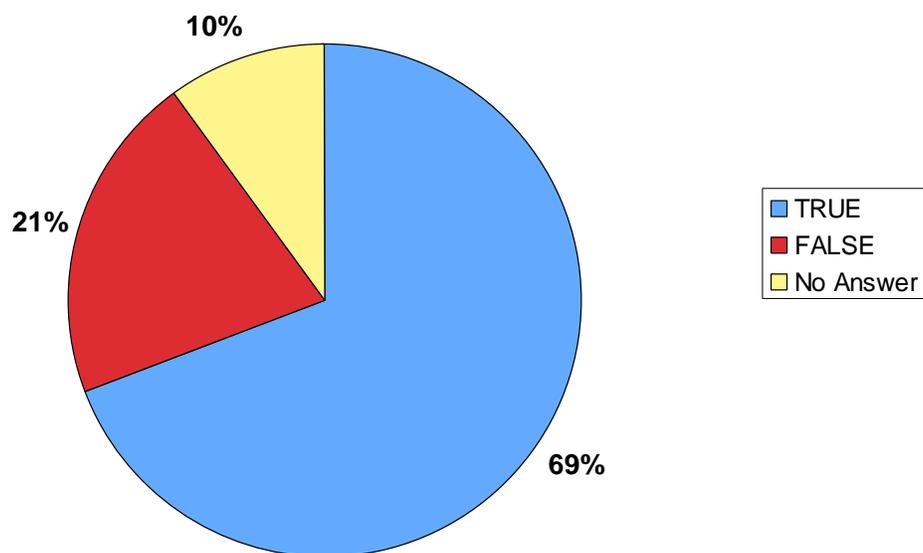
Appendix A

General Public Survey Results

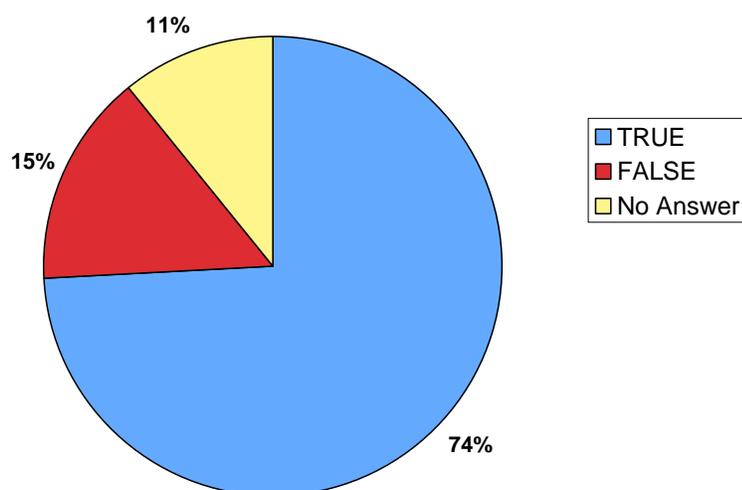
What resources do you rely on to help locate a business or service in Oro Valley? Select all that apply



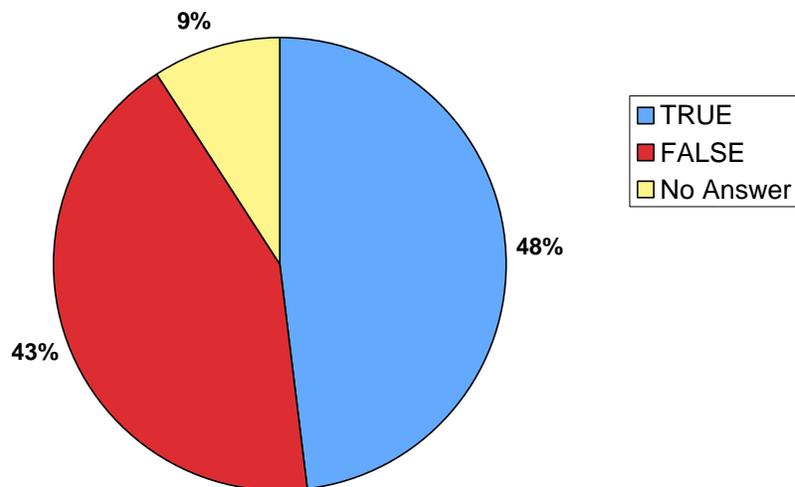
If you use "Business Signage," the size and readability of a sign is important to you.



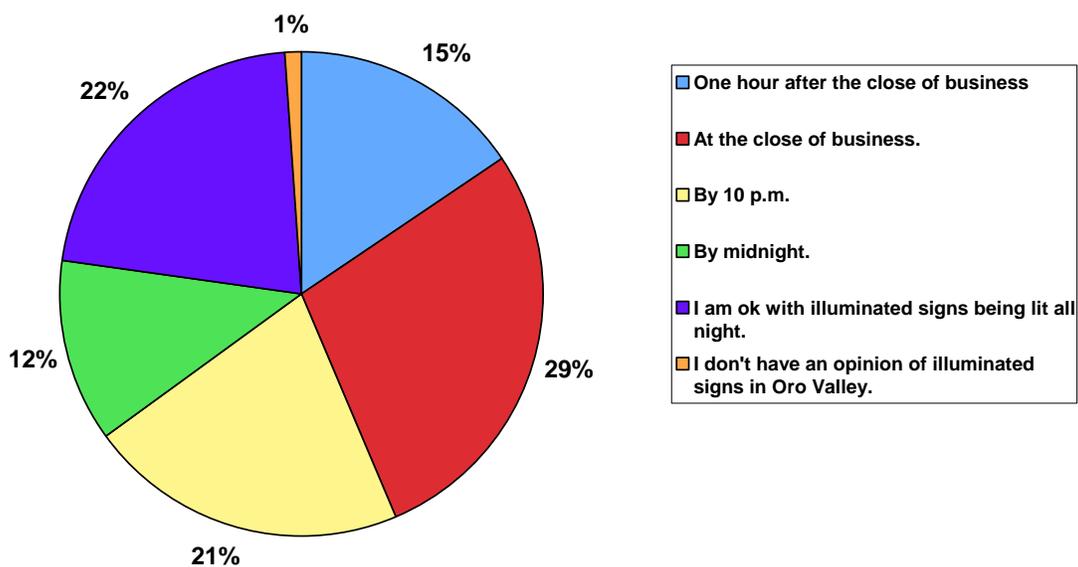
If you use "Business Signage," you look for familiar logos or company names.



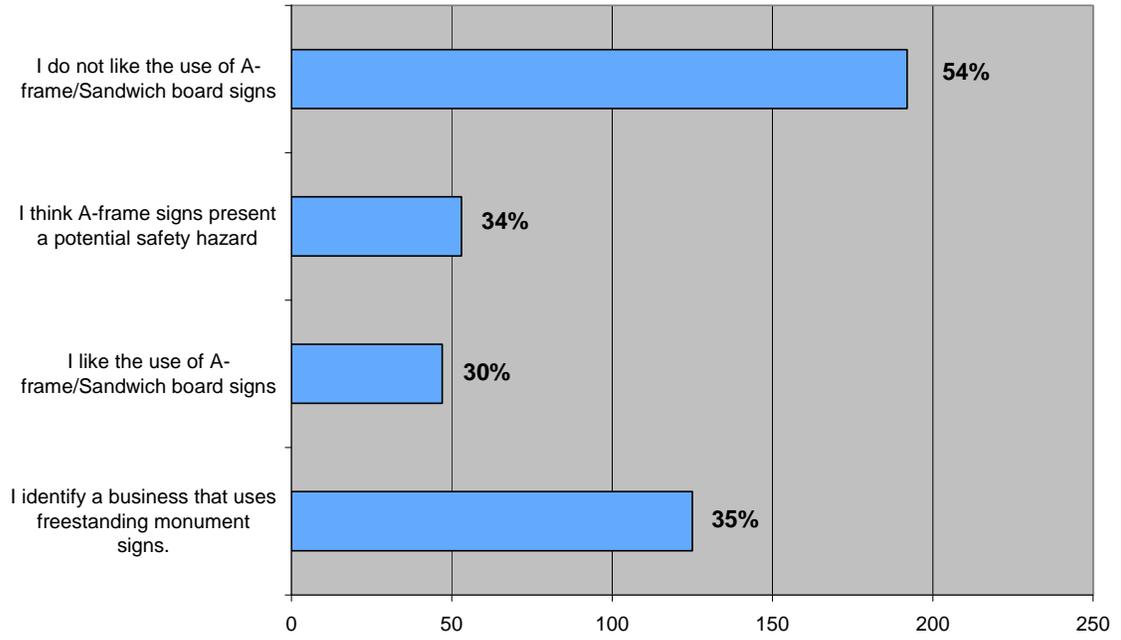
If you use "Business Signage," you often remember a business or service later after having seen an illuminated sign when driving by a business at night.



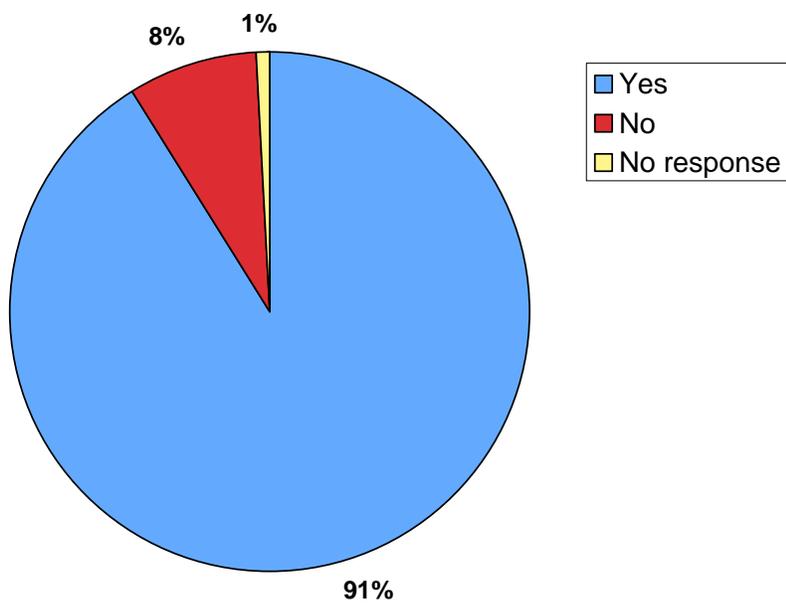
With respect to the use of illuminated signs, signs should be turned off:



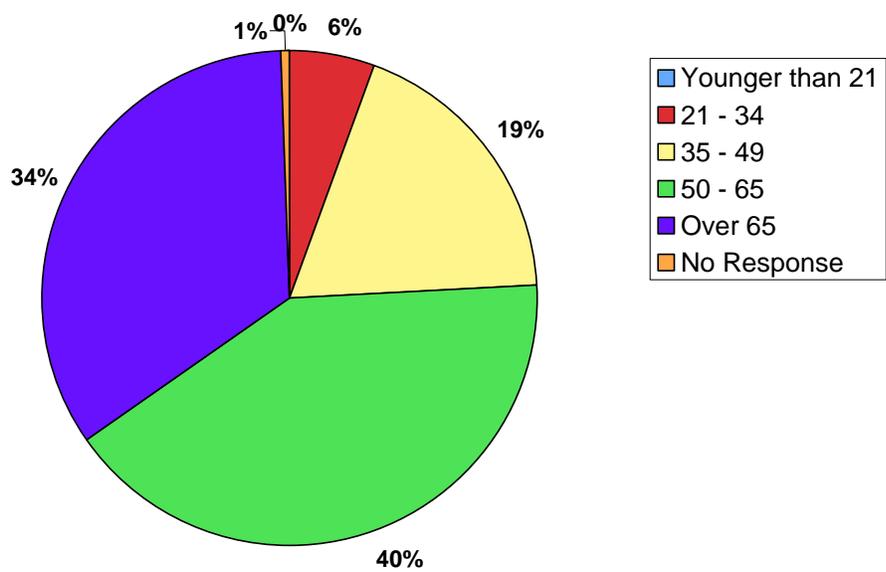
With respect to business identification, please select the following answers that best fit your opinion. Select all that apply.



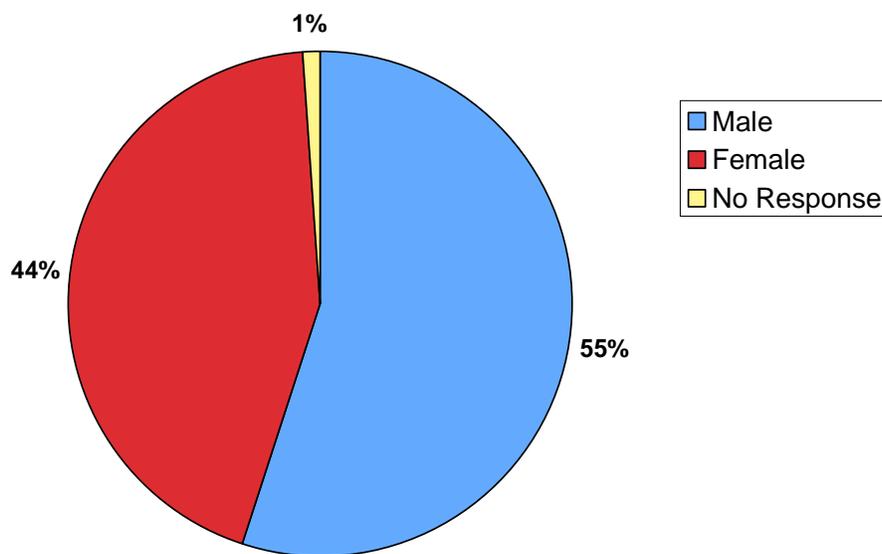
Are you an Oro Valley resident?



Age Group

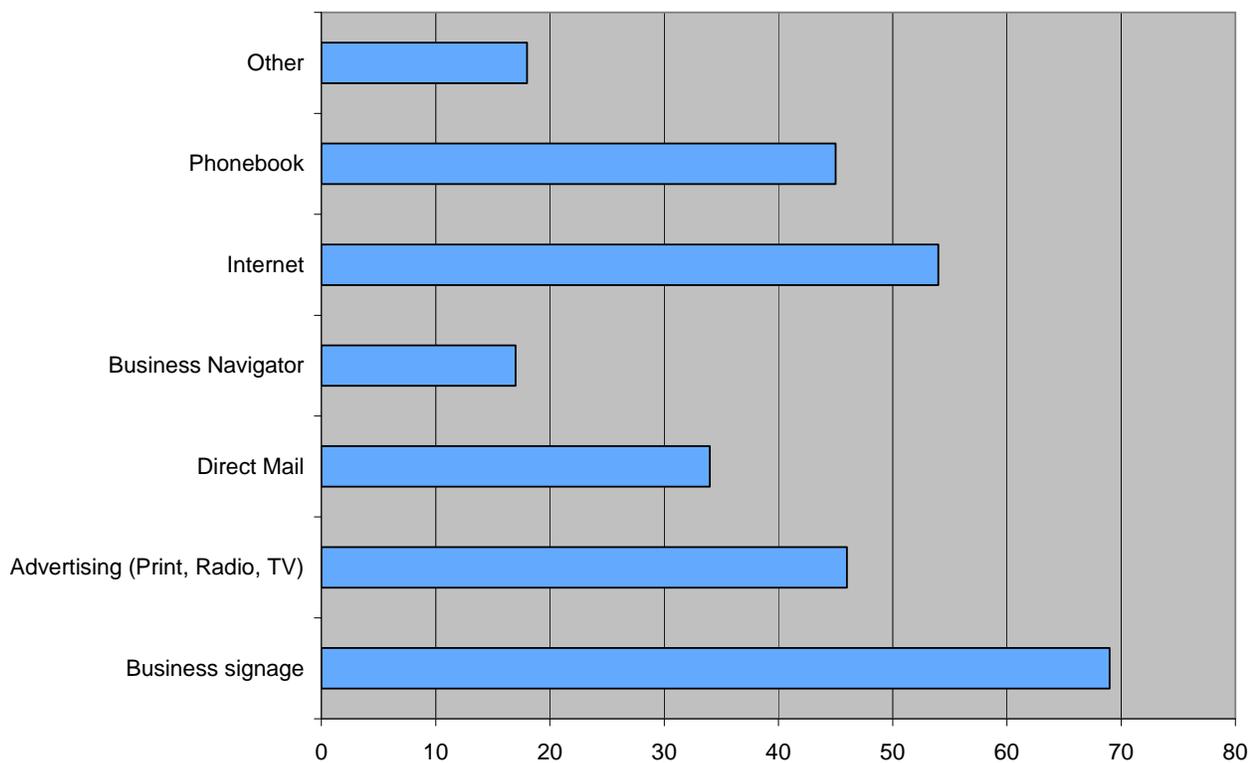


Gender

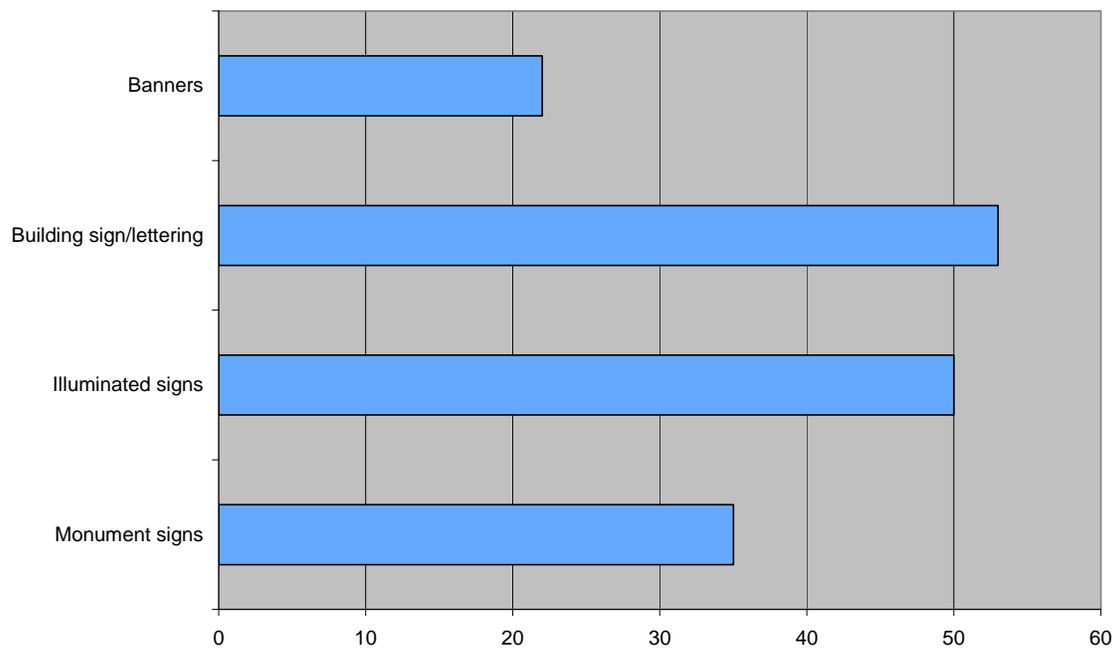


Business Survey Results

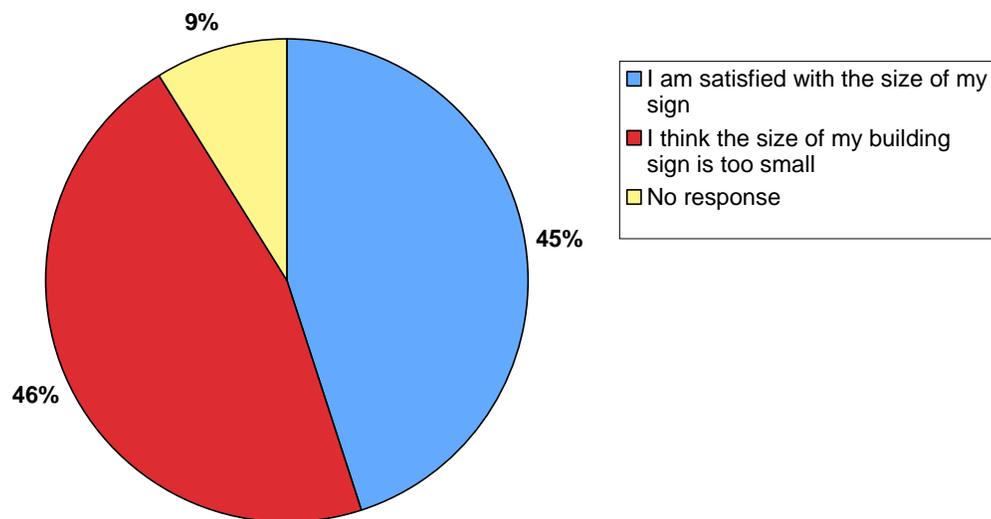
How do you promote your business location? Select all that apply



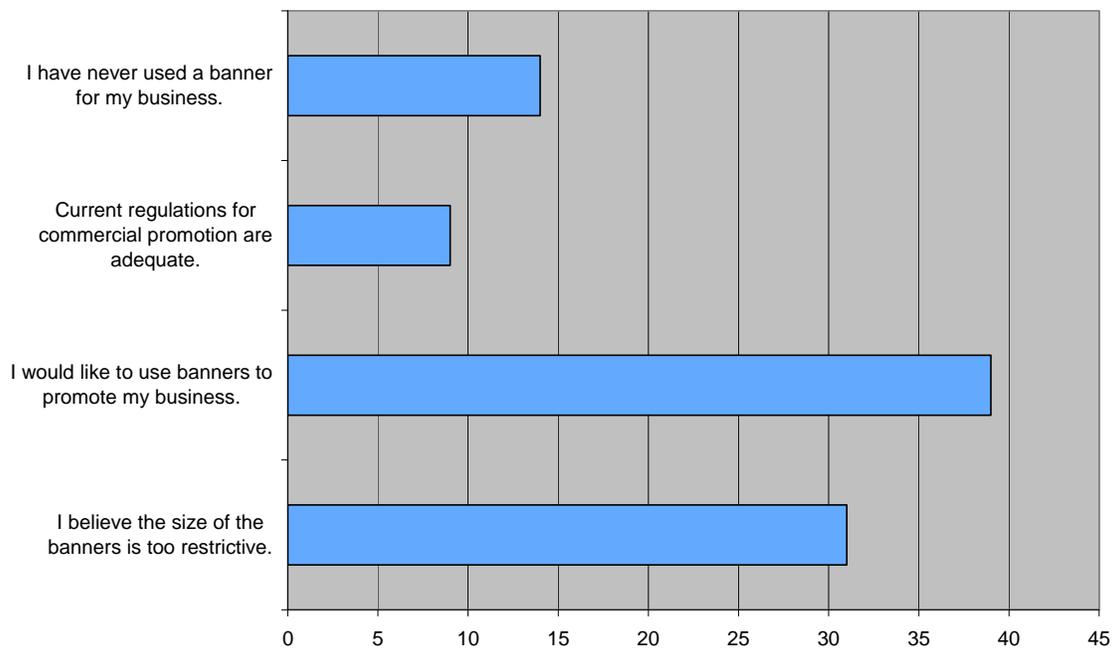
**Please describe the type of signs you use to promote your business.
Select all that apply.**



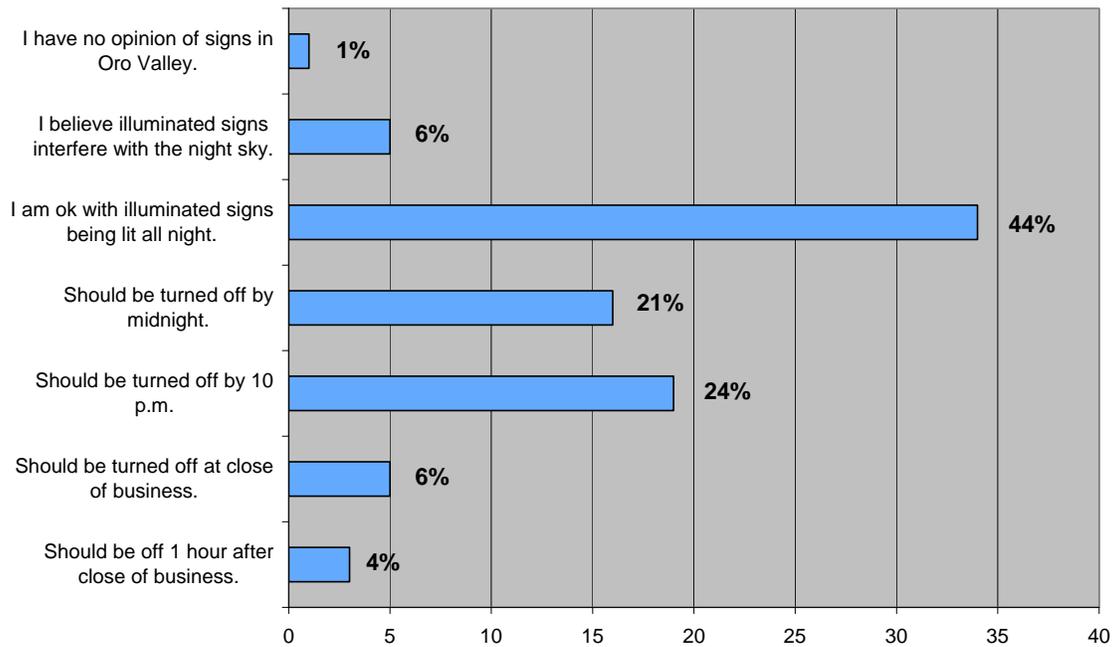
Size of my sign...



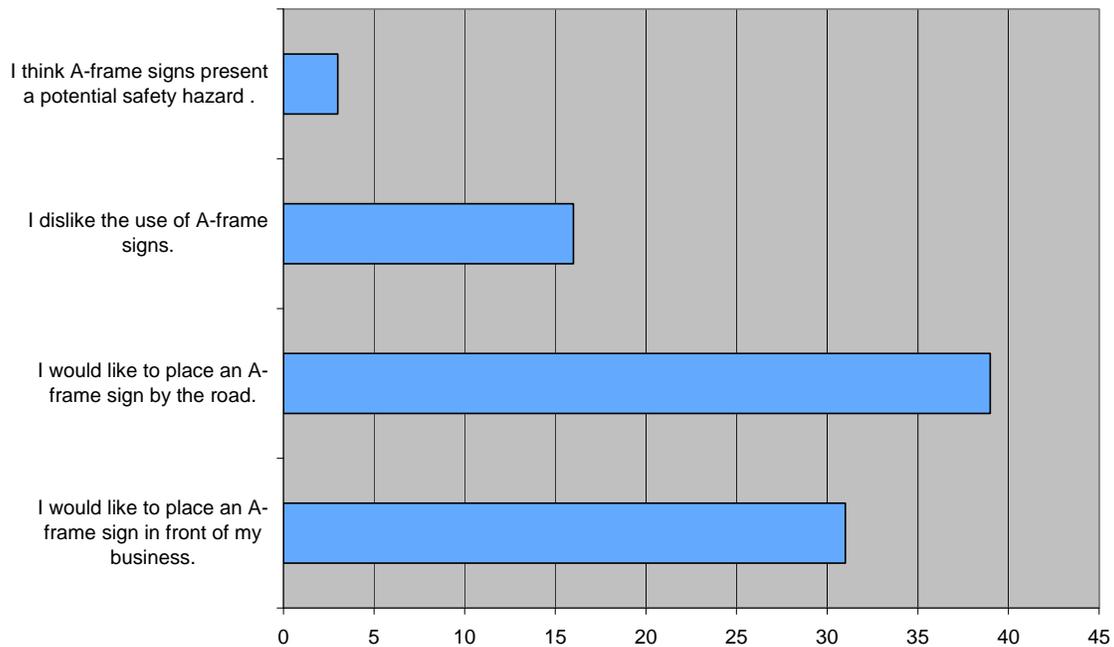
With respect to banner signs, please select the following answers that best fit your opinion. Select all that apply.



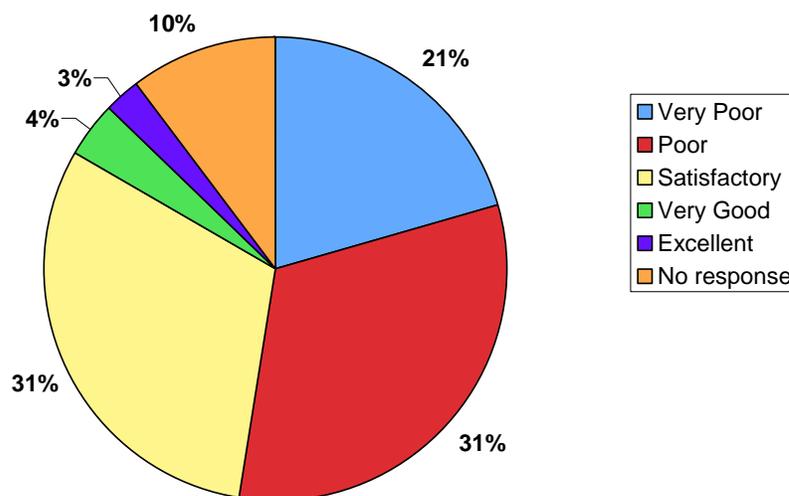
With respect to mounted illumination signs, please select the following answers that best fit your opinion. Select all that apply.

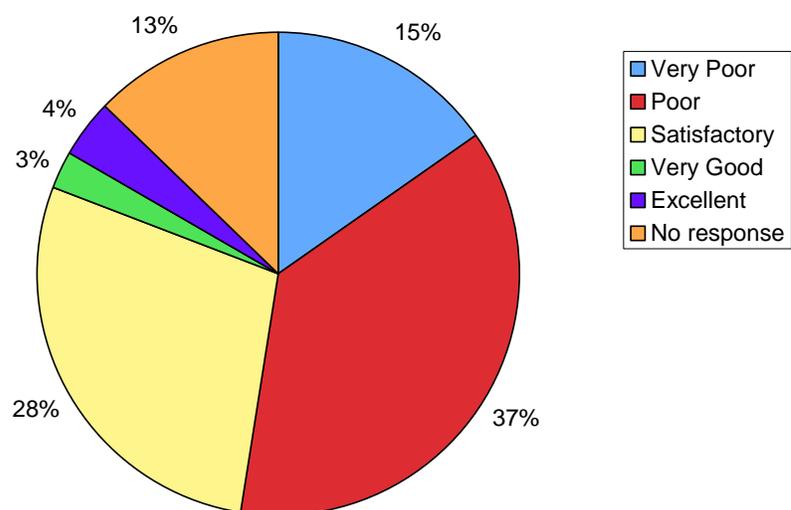


With respect to A-frame/Sandwich Board signs, please select the following answers that best fit your opinion. Select all that apply.

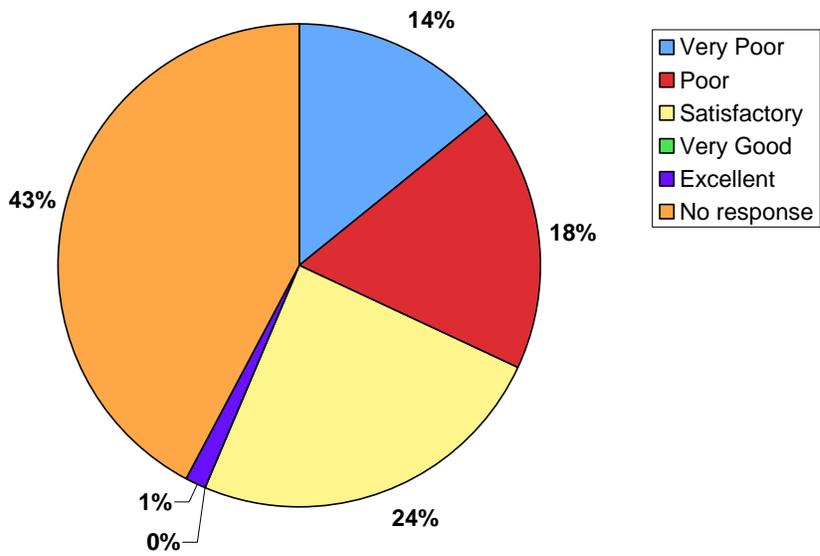


In meeting the Town's sign ordinances, please describe your experience with the following processes

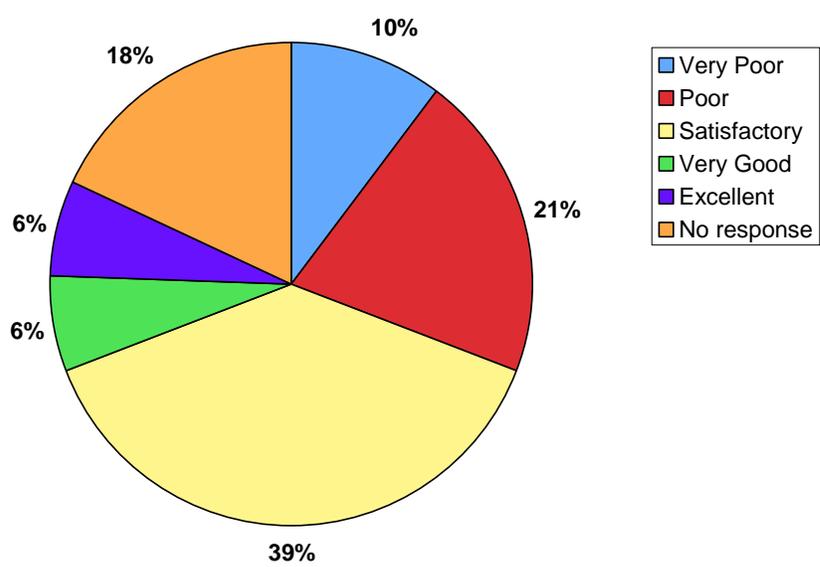


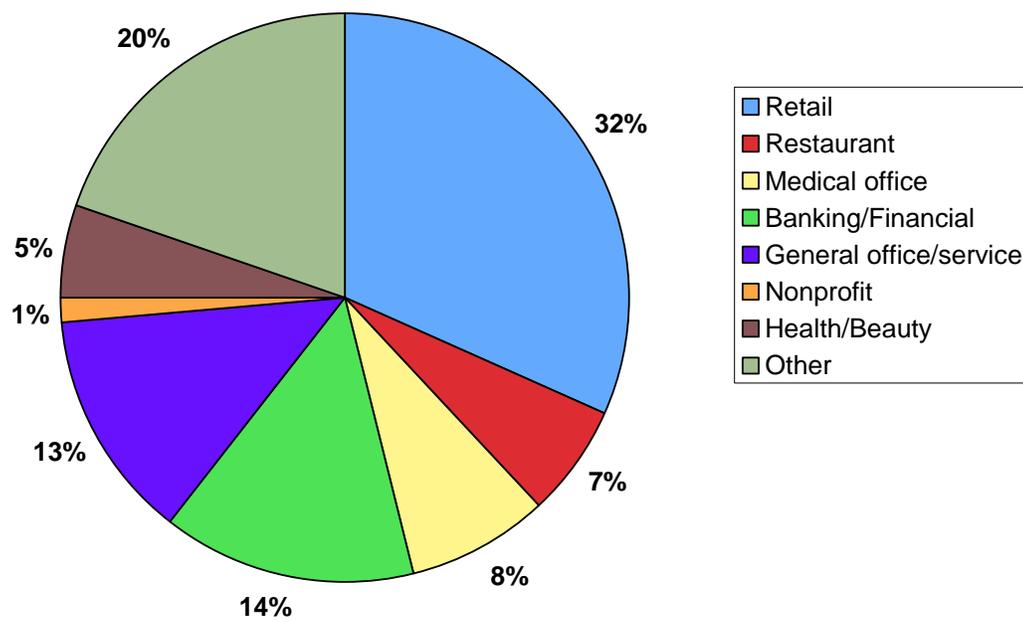
Review & approval timing:

DRB Review (where applicable):

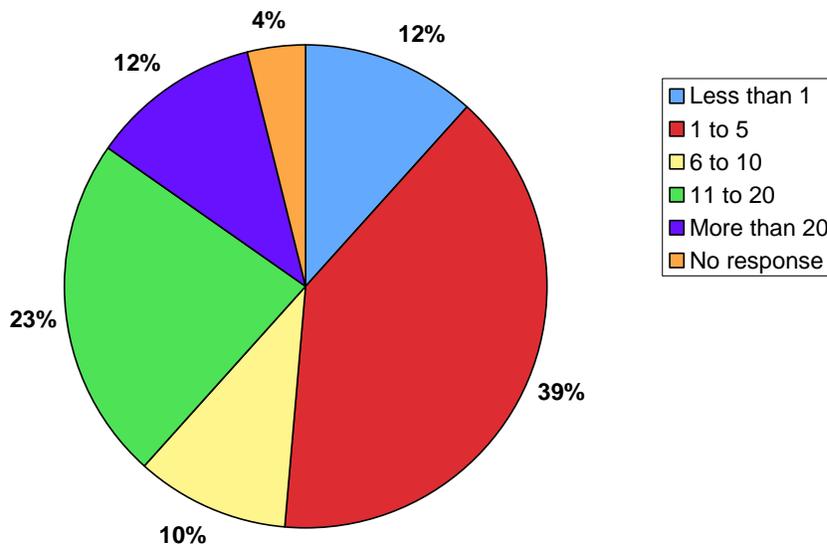


Staff Response Time

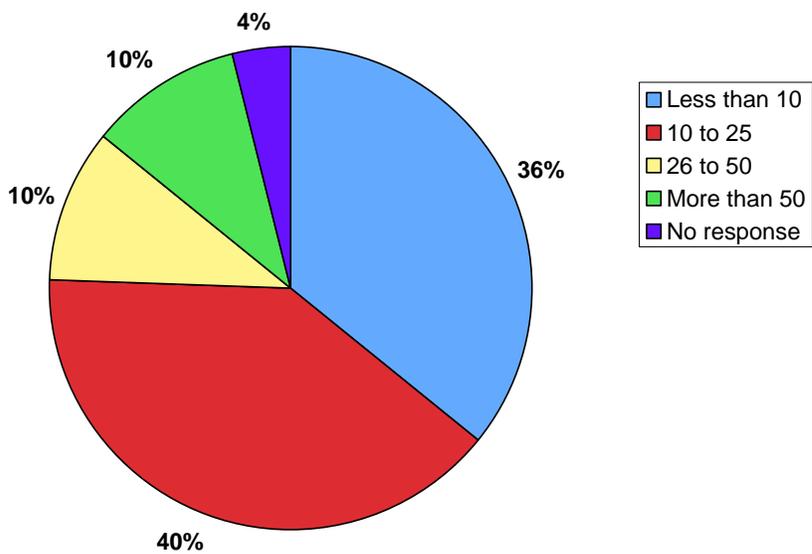


Type of Business

Years in business in Oro Valley



Number of employees:



Appendix B

Business Sign Survey Residential Open Ended Comments

Please feel free to add any additional comments regarding Oro Valley's sign codes.

I believe that the only lighting needed after dark should be for safety and security purposes. Billboards should not be illuminated when the store is closed.

A-frame sandwich board advertisements look tacky. I am leery of any business that relies on them.

Another issue that bothers me is the use of outdoor music in the Oro Valley Marketplace parking lots. I believe there should be no music of any kind in a parking lot--it's just an annoyance.

The dark sky in Oro Valley is so important and beautiful. Having recently viewed the night sky at Kitt Peak, I see how our dark sky has changed with more lights over the last 8 years.

The current sign codes are reasonable.

I liked the business signs much better when they were the copper patina finish or green. I thought Oro Valley had a nice clean look. I have considered not shopping at the stores that are changing their sign colors from the classy copper patina or green.

Important factors to me are the night sky and energy use. Generally, if everyone is using smaller signage it is easy to read and identify a business. Bright, large signs are not necessary to identify a business. In general, fewer signs are better.

Bad enough this community permitted the construction of the Oro Valley Marketplace right opposite a State Park, are we now going to permit such commercial interests to light it up like Times Square in New York? Besides, their arguments for justifying such lighting needs are transparently (*sic*) spurious.

The low light pollution (dark sky) portion of the sign & light ordinance should be strengthened. There is no reason why sign & parking lot lights should be directed anywhere but down. The park district lights light up miles of otherwise dark areas and a few sign lights make no impact on dark skies. Think about shielding these VERY bright, nightly park district lights so that the light emitted is aimed DOWN! At present they are NOT.

The baseball field lights (Oro Valley Park Dist.) actually light up the face of the Pusch Ridge they are so bright. I don't worry about a few store lights, especially when they are in a brightly lit shopping center.

The sign code is just fine the way it is. The sky is already to bright from all the parks and schools in the area. Do not add more light by all night signs. If some businesses had their way they would have rotating beacons and strobe lights.

No, it's fine the way it is leave it alone.

Moved here because of the dark skies.

I don't want a Town Property tax. Help business make money and use the 2% sales tax to run the Town

There are too many lights in our beautiful valley. Turn them off!! I would like to stricter rules from the Town for business lighting signs. Most of the businesses in the Marketplace don't even face Oracle, our main throughfare (*sic*).

I see no good reason for any business to illuminate its signs after closing.

We are amatuer astronmers (*sic*). One of the factors that drew us to this area was the low light density which makes it possible to observe the marvelous (*sic*) night skies.

Keep the lights low in Oro Valley!

Why in the world would the town of Oro Valley want business not to have their sign lit up all night ????????

I'm sure some business owners would take advantage of 100 foot tall signs if they were allowed. However they aren't because we (the city in general) have decided that they are not appropriate. The fact that businesses now want to leave their signs on all night does not have any bearing on weather they should be allowed to.

Two reasons I would like the illuminated signs to be turned off at the close of business are to signal they are closed for business for the day and no need to stop and unnecessary light pollution for viewing the stars and planets at night which is why we don't live closer to downtown.

Signs should conform to surrounding area fixtures.

Modest size, comfortable colors

I find oro valley's current sign illumination regulations to be petty and ridiculous. once again, oro valley is head over heels consumed in nonsense, while practicality and reasonability are not addressed. case in point - the obtrusive, ugly, and unnecessary wall along oracle road; the unsightly side entrance to the new wingate inn (the entrance should have been located on the length of the building for a much better curb appeal image), WALMART, etc.

Not a very good survey. Lots of questions truly can not convey a useful answer

Lights on after closing are a waste of energy and do not uphold our dark skies support. If lights are on, one would assume the business is open. If lights are on and the

business is closed, it would encourage me NOT to do business with someone that wastes resources so lightly.

We do not need now should we allow large numbers of garish sinage (*sic*) that destroys the character of our community and environment. The town should control the size, color, and hours sinage (*sic*) is allowed. Please do not relax he existing regulations.

I like a neat and clean community with quality signs at a minimum level.

I think the night skies are very important to Tucson and its observatories. We really don't need to be blasted with lights from all angles.

Keep the lights low please. No more light pollution.

I am concerned abot (*sic*) safety at night if the lights are dimmed - vagrants, young people, drug peddling and so on.

I think the sinage (*sic*) is not the only problem that you might address. Exterier (*sic*) lighting can be excessive like the Holiday Express as an example.

There is a distinction to be made between being aware of a business, and trying to find it while driving. I often have to go past the place I'm looking for because there isn't enough warning.

Oro Valley's restrictive business sinage (*sic*) law hurts small business locating in our city. The new ACE hardware at 1st Ave. and Tangerine. is significantly handicapped by being forbidden to place a sign on either bordering street. Despite having been here for several months, many customers walk in today saying "I didn't know you were here" We should have policy's that encourage and support small business. The repressive sinage (*sic*) law has the opposite effect. Is this law in place to beautify our streets and thereby limit tax revenues and discourage businesses from locating here?

Please limit the placement and size of signs to the smallest reasonable size. It is wasteful, unnecessary and offensive to have lighted signs after dark if the business is closed.

I do not believe a business needs a gigantic sign to identify their business. I feel a limit on size is needed but should not be too small to catch your eye while driving by.

I just feel that any illumination after the business is closed is not in the best interest of the business or the customers. Anyway, I don't shop by signs.

Help business, I do not want a property tax

I feel sorry for all of us because I see more and more businesses going out and that means less shopping resources available for residents of the area - and less city revenue from sales tax. This could result in a less safe city for everyone. We need our local businesses and the stricter the city is with them the harder it will be to keep them here.

The current sign code and outdoor lighting code are adequate as currently written.

Illuminated signs being on all night reminds us of where this particular business is. A location being dark casts a gloomy atmosphere.

Leaving the lights on after closing is a bad idea. I would not patronize a business that did so. Also, signs should be subdued to minimize light pollution. Many businesses have an infatuated concept of themselves as reflected in garish signs that are inconsiderate of the interests of the larger community. Target comes immediately to mind.

I am very concerned about light pollution. One of the reasons I live in this area is the ability to see the night sky.

I am tired of the Town of Oro Valley dictating policies that don't benefit the residents who live there. You all seem to have your own agenda's . . . whether it's dogs barking (inside a house), business signage, or our youth skate boarding . . . it's ridiculous. If the housing market were different, I would move out of this "Stepford" town immediately!!!

I don't think A-frame signs would be needed if businesses were allowed to have monument signs that were larger and more visible

When it comes to the monument signs I know that some people might not like the large tall signs, so why don't you mandate that all signs must be no taller than 6ft. This way everything is the same height (*sic*) and you don't have large signs all over the place.

I think illuminated signs should match a uniform code that require low-voltage backlit signs like what the businesses at Vistoso Office Park use. These signs are tasteful and subtle.

I don't very often need to look at signs at night because I don't often go to unfamiliar locations at night.

Oro Valley (*sic*) has been (*sic*) over bearing with codes and controls. Both in the laws of zoning and an inability to make allowances for one time events or once a year events. Requiring signage to conform to one color is insane. A logo is the most important symbol of a business. it's time for the town to back and allow some creativeness in to the air.

Signage lighting after 10pm is unreasonable! The current OV code should be enforced now.

I identify by the signage on the business itself or in the case of a strip mall situation, the sign by the street listing the businesses in that complex.

Oro Valley has already compromised being distinctive by allowing too many colors, styles and logos of business signage. We were promised a classy town and it has become just another strip city with not even a scenic corridor. No more compromises!!!

when signs are illuminated that indicates the business is open

We moved to Oro Valley because of the scenery, the people, and the fact that a new community MIGHT make a significant difference to the environment. We admire the fact

that Tucson keeps its lights low to enable Kitts Peak to do scientific research. We would be MOST unhappy to be a part of a community which does not value these things.

There is no reason to have illuminated business signs lit after 10PM unless they are a 24hr. business. I think stargazing is an integral part of Arizona's appeal and quality of life.

Stop putting so many artificial restrictions and onerous regulations and taxes on businesses.

You are now seeing unintended consequences of the anti-business, anti-growth mentality exercised by the DRB, Zoning, Development Services and some Town Council members over the past few years.

Signs for me pollute the environment.

What is a "monument sign?"

I like a few dim lights on at night, but only for a short time. The rest of the night should be lit by star and moonlight only.

They should not be left on all night. Dark skies is why I moved to Oro Valley. Lighted signs at night are an eye sore and a pollutant to the beautiful Arizona evening skies.

Please don't burn lights all night. The observatories don't want any more light at night.

I'm an Astronomy buff and enjoy dark skies. With the growth of Oro Valley, our dark skies are slowing going. As in Tucson, I think we should restrain late night outdoor lighting especially after close of business hours.

I think you should try to promote businesses in Oro Valley and not put barriers in the way for the business owners.

Keep the night sky dark so we can enjoy its beauty (*sic*).

Oro Valley seems to live up to its reputation of being a difficult place to do business. It's time the Town hired an independent firm to assess the areas where the Town can be more business friendly (signage, lighting, building codes come to mind).

I appreciate signs that do not pollute the view. i.e., I consider road signs that tell who is caring for a particular strip of road to be pollution in almost the same way as is garbage.

I do not like signs that 'shout and scream' with their bright colors and size.

I firmly believe that OV must recognize/promote substantial limits in total outdoor lighting in an effort to reduce light pollution of the night skies. There are at least two reasons for doing so:

1. The dark skies economically impact this area for astrological study by U of A Kitt Peak etc.
2. Night time skies are one of nature's most beautiful gifts - a sight long lost in most

urban areas. And a constant reminder of the vast universe surrounding us. I have lived in northern wilderness where the only night sky light interference comes from the Aurora Borealis. I am an astronomer, but we are appreciative of nature whether on the earth or above us. Will OV work to protect or to allow further erosion of people's ability to observe the beauty of a clear night sky?

I do not believe Oro Valley has been a business friendly town in the past. Certainly requiring the businesses now to turn off their signage lighting by a certain time is not how to keep or attract more!

I prefer to see uniform, size regulated signs. Towns that have them look uncluttered and one business isn't having to outdo the other in signage.

Leaving your sign lit up all night when you are closed is not the best way to generate business. Having convenient hours will bring people in and having air-conditioning will keep them there. Too many businesses are closed Saturday-Sunday, the only time that working people have to get anything done. Others close early on Friday-Saturday, not giving their customers enough time to get there. Some never turn their A/C on. I've walked out of many establishments due to this problem. My sense is that they want to run their businesses for the least hours possible and save money by not running the A/C and then complain that they're not doing enough business. Then they want to solve the problem by leaving their signs illuminated all night instead of addressing the REAL problems of inconvenient hours and/or no air-conditioning.

I often leave early in the morning to catch a 6 a.m. flight out of TIA, so I have an opportunity to drive through Oro Valley in the dark. There is virtually no traffic at this time of the morning, so there is no traffic or people to see illuminated signs if the signs are on all night. Likewise, the Oro Valley population being largely retirees and families (*sic*) w/ children are not the categories (*sic*) of people that are out and about late at night, like areas of Tucson that have nightlife/concert venues. To keep business signs on all night is not necessary, is a waste of energy, is a disturbance to nearby homes and IMO does nothing to promote a business purpose. I think lit signage until midnight is sufficient.

Oro Valley's lighting codes should be strengthened to preserve the beauty of the night sky. I would not patronize businesses that cause light pollution. (*sic*)

I have lived in Oro Valley 7 years and drive downtown to work...normally down Oracle or La Canada...Soon I will be leaving while it is dark and returning when it is dark...to not have the ability to identify new businesses that open or find retail establishments that I now need but have not been recognized because I did have a need for that retail offering...is a negative for me and I would assume much more of a negative for new comers who filled our area after I moved here. If we are not in a position to support our businesses by allowing them to market their products and services we will continue to perpetuate the lack of support in Oro Valley and will result in an area that does not have the necessary retail establishments to satisfy potential new residents...as well as current residents. I truly enjoy the atmosphere of Oro Valley...however, we are not Santa Barbara, nor will we achieve that level of totally controlled environment...can we find a compromise that keeps our area growing...or worse case...stable.

Signs being on after a business closes just makes me think they are open and I see no reason for them to be on once a business closes.

Keep lighting low, for clear skies (*sic*)

I think the existing sign code needs to be revised to be more supportive of businesses. We need businesses in our community and should work to attract (*sic*) them and reduce possible obstacles.

Signs lit up at night do not attract more business. Residents are already aware of local businesses. We drive by every day and see them. We do not need to see them at night as well.

Additionally, lights on and off are a great indication of business hours.

"least intrusive" is still the proper description for signs in Oro Valley.

Signage appears to be overly restrictive. I moved to Oro Valley 2+ years ago and occasionally still "discover" a business that I previously was unaware of due to not only very small freestanding signage, but also existing landscaping blocking signage. Why not allow larger freestanding and building signage rather than desperate business owners having to put up the A-Frame signs like you see by the poor guy that has the car wash behind the Target. He has a sign, but the colors blend together and its not noticeable. The OV Marketplace should be allowed signage on the back of buildings. How are commuters supposed to notice the stores, surely not the small signs at the entrance. Other examples are the tiny new gas signs at the Giant on Oracle/Pusch View, and the Loop Taste of Chicago has an ugly banner up with no freestanding sign. I'm all for more visible (*sic*) signage as long as the signage is designed to match the buildings and primarily desert colors. We don't want to end up like the shopping center at the SEC of Thornydale and Cortaro that always has multiple banners attached to a steel railing near the intersection. That demonstrates that the businesses are hurting, most likely partly from the economy but poor signage obviously can't help their situation. Thank you.

Signs are OK for a business until 10 PM. After that, night skies are more important. Comparatively few residents need to find businesses after 10PM.

Encourage animated neon in business areas. It creates a sense of movement, aliveness.

One of the many pleasant features of residing in Oro Valley is not being bombarded by signage. I am not in favor of relaxing the current code.

I have previously lived in Boca Raton which had strict guidelines (*sic*) for signs. I think businesses should have the ability to have illuminated signs but I like the idea of having restrictions on size and height and please do restrict billboards to the Interstate as they are unsightly in a city.

This town seems to do what it can to hamper businesses. I've never seen a town operate like this one.

I think businesses shouldn't be restricted when it comes to promoting their business. The more business done equals more income for Oro Valley.

Oro Valley needs to become more lenient when it comes to their signage rules. As an Oro Valley resident, I feel that signs not only illuminate our small town, but also help promote business, which is very important in this tough economy.

Controlling light pollution in Oro Valley is important. Reaching a compromise situation where lighted signage is illuminated during business hours is a very reasonable approach.

I moved back to Oro Valley (from Kansas) in part because of the beautiful night sky. I have five sons, and we use our telescopes often. I do NOT think signs should be left on after hours as it increases light pollution (*sic*)! Thank you for taking this survey into account.

The sign code needs to be realistic and permit plenty of advertising opportunity, especially in this economy, but even in better times. Advertising and the convenience and efficiency provided by good signage allow the economy to function smoothly, which is what provides jobs, job growth, and tax revenue for the town.

In reference to business lit signs if they are on the highway we don't care if they are on all night... but residential neighborhoods they should be out by midnight

Sometimes when driving through an existing strip mall or business area it is difficult to locate a business because of the signage only being on the front of a building. It would be easier to see something jutting out of the building stating the name of the business. Perhaps not so much an A-frame, but something more stable. Thanks.

They should be made to be business friendly based on the input from Northern Pima Chamber members suggestions

I support the sign guidelines (*sic*) per the Outdoor Lighting Code. I frequent the Oro Valley area. (**non resident**)

Re Lights: As long as the lights are not shining in the windows of my house or lighting up my property at night, I don't care if the signs are lit all night. With today's economy, I realize that the companies are using the a-frame signs to attract customers...it's a difficult world for these businesses. While I don't care for them, I respect that these businesses need to use them to help stay in business.

I feel leaving the lights on beyond business hours is a waste of our valuable energy and is a pollution to the sky.

Signs at the large shopping center on Oracle would be nice to see who is in there while driving past

It seems to me the code that requires that the sign be turned off one hour after closing isn't business friendly nor friendly (*sic*) to their clients. Much of what I see in Oro Valley is a controlled image that really wouldn't be offensive if left on until 10pm or later. The only reason to go past mid-night is if the business happens to be open beyond that hour such as a hospital or emergency care. It is easier to relate to signage than address numerals when looking for a destination (*sic*).

I would like to see the signs conform to a prescribed size and color -enough to identify the business, but still in good taste and quiet.

The on-premise signs are too small. I can't see the signs well from the road. The business (sic) signs should also be lit at night in order for the public to see the signs.

I feel midnight is a reasonable time for the illuminated signs to go off, unless the business is still open, then it should be one hour after closing.

A-frame signs are ok at the store entrance, but not at the edge of the street. Business is really tough right now. The city should do everything it can to help these businesses get through these trying times. If that means having a sign on all night, then they should be allowed (sic) to do it. It also adds a safety factor to an otherwise dark area.

I think your sign code ordinance (sic) is archaic and nonsensical. I also think that billboards should be allowed on main roads. If done right they don't hurt the beauty of an area. I want to know when Oro Valley is going to start acting like a real city(town) and stop living in the past like. Its almost 2010 for God's sake and the last I heard you need all the revenue/tax base you can get!

Signage is important and needs to be obvious enough to be seen, without being overpowering or obnoxious.

I am **not a resident** of Oro Valley but do spend significant amount of time transacting business within the Oro Valley city limits

I think the illumination of signs at night is a waste of electricity and money for businesses. Production of electricity uses precious natural resources which are being wasted by illuminated signs of closed businesses. By turning off unused lights at home or work (or in this case signs) we can reduce the use of our natural resources. Also, it helps cut down on light pollution which cuts down on light pollution and allows another Arizona industry, Astronomy to thrive.

Illuminated signs of closed businesses do nothing to attract people to the stores. People that live in the area know where the businesses are and people not familiar with Oro Valley and are just passing through/visiting will not benefit from illuminated signs of CLOSED businesses, because they will not be able to purchase items or services from them. The A-frame signage is okay immediately in front of a business (if sidewalk width permits) but not 500 yards away on the side of the road.

Businesses need signage to attract new customers, charge them make some revenue, allow them to have the signage they feel necessary to get customers within reason.....

We must maintain a dark sky policy, especially now as the town grows. I feel businesses for the most part think they are above it all. They will do just fine without all of the lighting, all night long.

The present code should stand and be enforced.

I love the requirement for copper patina signs. Much better than gaudy multicolored signs (Shame on Target for breaking this rule!!!)

I am LESS likely to patronize a business that creates an eyesore.

I believe the excessive signage restrictions discourage many MUCH NEEDED prospective "quality" businesses (both large and small) from establishing their operation in our community.

Maybe use the Pima County code so that all businesses in the county have a level playing field in how they can identify and advertise their businesses.

I have always found it very difficult to find a business (*sic*) in Oro Valley. Signage is very poor, hard to locate a business even when I have an address. Businesses should be allowed to advertise their business perhaps a standard on signage but large enough to be seen.

Churches should also be forced to turn off their signs. All business should turn off/down their parking lot lights past a certain hour.

The strength of Oro Valley is the beautiful view of the mountains and the great efforts made to support outdoor recreation. Do not make Oracle Road in Oro Valley as ugly as Oracle Road near Tucson Mall.

What prompted this sign change in the first place? It was not bothersome for me to drive down La Canada or Oracle at night and see the lit up shopping centers. This seems a big waste of everyone's time - why try to fix something that was not broken?

With respect to signs, I believe an organization would benefit (*sic*) from turning off signs after 10 p.m. (as long they are not still open) in that money spent and carbon footprint generated would both be reduced.

If you look at signs where the light emanates (*sic*) from behind a non-lit front, they do not produce light pollution like neon signs and are more effective. I am thinking of church in town, either on La Canada, or Thornydale where the cross is not lit, but there are light behind it that throw light directly on to the building. It is not obtrusive but very appealing and effective.

Thanks

Get off the backs of the businesses and let them prosper.

I would be strongly against extending the time signs can be lit.

A frames are fine, but only during business open hours and only in front of the business. The signs should be of a standard size so as not to block any traffic or sidewalks.

what happened to uniformity? and the discrete sign color too many exceptions to the rule, especially to conglomerates with well paid legal team

the lighting issue mainly involves all the parking lights left on, sign lighting is less invasive

I am happy to see Oro Valley accepting input regarding their sign code. I believe Oro Valley has not been business friendly and personally know several businesses that have either tried to open in Oro Valley or have heard the horror stories associated with opening a business in Oro Valley and chose not to. Relaxing the sign code would be a step in the right direction. Businesses need advertising and signage plays a very important role. Thank you.

I have been following this big hoopla and I think it's absurd (*sic*), how can a business drum up business if you can't see what a store is? Signs have to be illuminated in order for people to know the business is there. Oro Valley is a very dark town at night ! Stores are going under left and right and they need all the help they can get !

I think "dark skies" are very important to Arizona. I am proud to be a part of and supporter (*sic*) of our Astronomy industry/organizations. I just returned from the east coast and was amazed (*sic*) at the limited view of the stars.

I think Oro Valley has cut their throat on this issue and the throat of the business owners. Why do we have a theater with no marquee or sign showing it is a theater till you are right up front. If we are going to have these places they should be able to excel. You tell me...if you were to drive by the wal-mart center on Tangerine or Oracle not knowing what was there would you be able to tell without driving into the center. We wanted that center and then tie their hands. I drive by every day and it would be nice to know what is playing at the theater if it is going to be there. But for how long?

Business signs illuminated (*sic*) past 9 pm is too late, unless the business is open. I would prefer all off by 8 pm unless the business is still open, then off 1/2 hour past closing. 10 pm is entirely unacceptable. When my family and I drive at night, we are not out sightseeing (*sic*); in fact, we would prefer that there be fewer distracting lights off the sides of the road.

Regarding A-frame signs, they should only be allowed for special events, limited to 5 days per month per business/entity.

I REALLY prefer a uniform, unobtrusive set of signs for the businesses in Oro Valley. I feel this is what gives Oro Valley it's unique look and feel, compared to the rest of Tucson (or most other Arizona towns, for that matter).

Oro Valley, as a town, needs to realize that business owners need to have signs that will draw in customers. Leaving a sign lit up a night is not a problem and will only help the business.

Yard Sale signs on weekends are the only free standing I use and I like that they come down after that day.

I love the signage at the shopping plaza at 1st and Oracle. Please don't let Oro Valley become like Tucson with lots of gaudy ugly signs...

No illuminated signs please. We enjoy dark skies in Oro Valley for Astronomy (*sic*) purposes.

I am very much for the idea of restricting sign size and turning illuminated signs off if the business is closed. The size of a sign not actually on the building of the business itself should correspond to how far that sign sits off the roadway for a "reasonable" person to see and identify where that business is. As far as a sign on a building itself, I believe it should be proportionate to the size of actual business. A small 800 sq. ft. shop should not be allowed to have the same size sign as say a large grocery store chain, etc. As I said before, I also am an advocate of reducing light pollution thus forcing businesses to turn off their lights after they close. Not only is this good energy saving practice, (I credit myself with convincing AMC to shut the billboard and other bright lights off at their Catalina Theater at Campbell and Grant in Tucson, which they had left on all hours of the night even after it was shuttered for good) but it also lets citizens enjoy the "peace" and tranquility of looking at the stars, etc. and provides preservation to the reason many move to Oro Valley (for the "darkness" in the first place.) Obviously, safety and security need to be addressed and some leeway allowed such as street and security lights, but this is another issue. Lights should be on to allow customers to see where the business is located. Lights should not be for solely for advertising at all hours of darkness. If a business is closed, then the light should be off. If anything, this also saves a potential customers time by showing them that if the light is off, the business is closed and there is no need to try and drive into the plaza or otherwise make an attempt at trying to go into that business. If the light is on all the time, but the business is actually closed at a certain time, such as at a fast food restaurant that IS NOT open all night, then many potential patrons may approach the restaurant even though it is closed and waste their time. Thanks for reading my input.

We are losing the night sky. Please keep the lights down. Once we give up the darkness, it is hard to get it back. Our clear night skies are a treasure. Please help preserve them.

All businesses in our community need to be in compliance with our lighting ordinance (*sic*) as it pertains to the light pollution (*sic*) and our long standing astronomy interests. This has been good for our tourism businesses too. I feel there is a happy medium for business to have the proper lighting for safety and continued advertising without being over powering. There is a wonderful local/international organization in town called International Dark Sky Assn that works on this issue and they should be consulted!

We need additional businesses in our community and businesses must be able to identify themselves and be found.

I don't really understand the monument-A-frame question. I want signs that are clear and easy to read, if they are illuminated I assume the business is open. A- frames are okay for shops that are tucked away, but should only be out when business is open. Signs should be tasteful, in keeping with an upscale community. I don't want tons of neon/illuminated signs that spoil views and hinder viewing the night sky. Logos are okay because of immediate identification. No Vegas-like strips, please!!!

Please preserve our Arizona dark sky.

AZ House Bill Title 49 (See Chapter 7)

<http://www.darksky.org>

Why would you need a sign if the business is closed.

We do not need any further distraction at night when driving. I only want to know where a business is during opening hours.

Our town is famous for being "dark" lets keep it that way.

All business signs should be off by 9pm unless the business is still open.

I find that inadequate sized/no numbers on businesses are the biggest frustration I have in locating a business especially the office buildings. I feel that brightly lighted as well as large signage is offensive and a threat to our dark skies. I have previously called the city offices to complain about the bright lights on the signs at the storage center on North Oracle. Lights on at night will never have an influence as to whether I would patronize it during the day.

I think that it is a great idea to take this survey. Thank you

While traveling in the northeast, I was pleasantly surprised at the lack of signage along highways, such as billboards. It was VERY pleasing to the eye. We MUST not cave in to business interests and allow signage to run rampant. I think the argument is very poor that business owners rely on drive-by business and therefore need signs (*sic*) to be big, and illuminated all night. We have WAY too many signs along the road.

Talk about a need for inclusion in a distraction while driving law: is it worse to talk on a cell phone while driving, or to read all of the signage along a roadway?

We must do a better job of using (*sic*) less electricity

The lighted signs at night are a waste of energy and a distraction. Turn them off when the business is closed. Also, Fry's (new) RED sign on Oracle Road is ugly too!

I live north of Oro Valley and drive through Oro Valley every day. I do a lot of shopping in Oro Valley, especially along the Oracle corridor near First Avenue and in Oro Valley Marketplace. The signage that has been allowed, per the Town's signage code, is limited and tasteful, so I see no reason to force businesses to turn off their lights at night if they don't want to. (**nonresident**)

I feel that signs should either be turned off 1 hour after a business closes or by 10pm. Keeping signs on all night is a waste of energy and light pollution for our night skies. Also, if I see a sign on, it leads me to believe that the business is open.

Oro Valley should really get rid of the green signs only rule! It is very difficult to distinguish and see different businesses. Shopping centers look bland and boring with all green signs everywhere too.

Business need to be able to keep their signs on as they see fit.

If the Town imposes a time deadline for businesses, why not tell homeowners to turn their outside lights off, too? This is a bad idea. Let businesses keep thier (*sic*) lights on all night. They are paying for it.

The above-"business signage" questions appear to "fish" for an answer to support an agenda. Wouldn't it have been more neutral to have those questions multiple choice like the others?

I believe the lights should be off after a business closes, for the courtesy of surrounding (*sic*) residents and for the observatorys (*sic*) and the natural beauty of the stars.

I do not understand why it's necessary to have the lights on after 10 pm. In this economy isn't it better to save on the electricity?

Sandwich boards are ok if they are professionally done and kept in good condition. Do not like hand painted, messy signs or ones that look like they've been through many seasons without being cleaned up.

I do not like bright lights - they are very distracting while driving and they ruin the beautiful night skies that we have. Please continue to limit the amount of light that we are projecting into our skies.

no signs extending out from a building, no neon lights, no flags other than AZ and US and those should be limited in size and height

Keep them small. Size does NOT matter. They just show you where to park and what door to go into. Being able to see the stars at night is a real showoff blessing for OV residents to our visitors. When its gone its gone forever.

The unobtrusiveness of signs is a "quality of life" feature of Oro Valley that should be maintained. Moreover, our "dark sky" should be maintained.

The current signage code is fine. In keeping with the need for dark skies in this part of AZ, it is important to minimize light usage after sunset.

It's pretty simple to me. The businesses came to Town knowing what the sign code was (or should have). They should comply.

I moved to Oro Valley because Oracle (and La Canada and Rho V Blvd) is not like Speedway and in my humble opinion it should remain that way.

If a business is counting on someone driving by at 2am seeing a sign and returning at some later date for customers....maybe they should reconsider their business model.

p.s. - I happen to live fairly close to Oracle and drive through the Rooney Ranch/Steam Pump area all the time. I think the low key (compared to south Oracle Rd) look they have is definitely preferential.

Do not use signage except to locate the specific location of a business after I have made a decision to use their services / never see a sign and decide spur of the moment to visit the business.

Would prefer 1 hour after closing or midnight, whichever is the earliest time

Size of sign and design must be regulated. Lighted sign illumination (*sic*) output must be controlled (*sic*). OV does not need light pollution

All Business signage should be backlit. A great example is Home Depot, Fry's, Target, and Office Max on Oracle and First Ave.

The business signage at Tangerine Crossing should have never been allowed to fully illuminate their signs.

I want to continue enjoying the Dark night skys (*sic*) and the stars.

Oro Valley in my opinion is very business unfriendly. The cry is support the local business but the Town is so restrictive concerning business needs, I would understand why businesses wish not to open in OV.

I do not believe anyone who is out driving after 10pm is looking at business signs saying oh now I know where they are, let me drive in and check business (*sic*) hours. do not believe lighting except for security purposes is needed after 10pm.

As bad as the economy is currently, the Government should NOT stifle anything a business can do to bring patrons into their shops. I enjoy seeing business signs at night. When I am out to dinner or visiting friends, these signs stand out more and help me to locate business locations in the daylight. The entrepreneur spirit, that these businesses project, is comforting in these troubled economic times. As an Oro Valley Resident, I want new businesses to feel welcome to set up shop here and bring their profitable / taxable wares to our community.

In these difficult times, I think the rules should be relaxed to make the businesses survive. It's tough enough without overregulation to make it.

I like the idea that Oro Valley complies with the dark sky program.

My only concern would be interference with star gazing. Could these lights be low level or covered on top to prevent a lite sky? I don't want this to be a burden to the business community-I use lite (*sic*) signs and like them

They should be off after business hours. Why waste electricity, and why lighten up our beautiful, starry skies.

All signs should meet the codes that all previous businesses had to meet.

I think the current code is sufficient and allowing any larger signs will pollute the night sky.

Oro Valley is scaring businesses from establishing here. It is absurd to keep restricting signage when the residences are far away from the areas where businesses are established.

I like to support small business in Oro Valley and when I think about how I shop and identify shopping locations, I will often see a sign when I'm going to a restaurant at night and say to myself "oh, next time I need a postal store, here is one close to me".

All signs should be off unless the business is still open.

A-frame signs should not be used for daily signage; but instead limited to special occasions.

If Signs are only limited to a height then they need to be visible (*sic*) from the streets with no obstruction. Or if there are multiple business at a location like a plaza then all the names can be posted on 1 taller sign.

Signs - - THE SPEECH OF THE STREET

WE MUST BECOME MORE OF A BUSINESS FRIENDLY COMMUNITY. PEOPLE SEEM TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT PROPERTY TAXES. IF OUR BUSINESSES DO NOT SUCCEED (*sic*), WE WILL BE FACED WITH THE TAX SITUATION MUCH EARLIER.

1. Need to limit illumination level when it can be seen from residences.
2. Need to make an exception to allow rotating Barber Poles
3. Subdivisions should be allowed to have signage at ALL entrances.

Over use of too many signs would not be my suggestion.

Signs should be illuminated during business hours even if that exceeds the time of midnight. I think it is important for our city's economy, that the businesses are properly advertised with their signs at night because very often, a person is driving at night when it is dark, notices a sign for a business they were unaware was located there, and will end up going there another day.

Why have a code if it's being enforced?

We have enough economic headaches without depriving business of advertising their businesses with signs the Town required them to spend a bundle on in the first place. Let's get real!

Oro Valley has established sign codes and we are in favor of enforcing them. We don't see a reason to change or relax a code every time somebody has an objection.

Ok, to relax for a temporary time frame if the need is urgent or in an emergency.

Business Sign Survey

Business Open Ended Comments

Comments regarding types of signs used

- We do not use signs of any sort
- Monument signage is entirely too small to be effective
- The sign is small, the amount of light generated is small
- We share a lighted monument sign with other tenants. We NEED the illuminated sign over our door on the side of the building so our clients can find our office in the evening. We also use a "for sale" in front of each of our properties for sale.
- I have independent contractors and set hours so am confused as to not having any set time to have my signs shut off. Almost afraid to have my ten thousand dollars signs burning at all.
- I have put a table in front of my center to promote foot-traffic from nearby businesses and provide info to potential families
- Color and size are too restrictive
- open house /model open signs
- Temporary A Frame Signs
- None. Signs are an eye sore.
- My proposal is to set a time of 2 am. This will allow those leaving bars or other late night venues to have signs and should cover all bases
- Our signs are real estate marketing signs

Comments regarding size of signs

- Oro Valley is entirely too restrictive on size of signs - its like you want to put us out of business (*sic*) which will result in lower city revenue!
- We are in the back row of the shopping center, our sign is hardly visible. We need walk-in business, as it is part of our business model---but we aren't allowed to use banners or A-frames, all we have is a tiny sign
- Used to not having any set time to have my signs shut off
- The color of my sign is NOT the branding color of Huntington Learning Center, I was told that I was NOT allowed to use the branding color.
- I think the size limitations are too small and installation of signage should not be encumbered with a design review board process
- Lack of Monument availability (*sic*) is hurting traffic
- It would be nice for people to see me easily from the road and not be confused when trying to find a business
- Signage is another form of free speech! (*sic*) Business pay for or lease a building, they should be able to use any size sign they need or want. No one stops others in making the biggest burger, or cookie or whatever.

Comments regarding banner signage

- We do special promotions, and cannot advertise them to people who drive by
- The limitations to the number of times per year is too restrictive
- I think banner signs should require approval for size, color and duration of being posted
- Business should be allowed to use banners without restrictions to promote their business and products
- We typically only use banners during construction to indicate

Comments regarding application and fees

- We applied to update our signage and should have been given information on the new code before we completed the application. We were never given the information other than when we build the bldg 4 years ago. Codes have changed
- Do not use Signs for our business
- Difficult to navigate the system--at this time I would not recommend Oro Valley as a site to another business owner
- Process takes much too long
- Back in 2000 it was a very trying experience
- Too much money for zero input
- The fees seem expensive compared to other cities.
- \$1000 annual A Frame Sign Permit is criminal
- Overly stringent on specific materials that are very costly
- We find that our costs of doing business in OV the most costly of any of the cities we work in
- I am not the one that submits the applications so I am unaware how they compare

Comments regarding review and approval

- Process takes much too long
- Anything can be done if "extra" fees are paid to push it through the system
- Very cumbersome
- Not sure how it is possible but it actually takes more time in OV than in the City of Tucson which is hard to believe because they are not very quick.
- I am not the one that submits the applications so i am unaware how they compare

Comments regarding DRB Review

- Process takes much too long
- They very seldom like anything the first time
- The process takes too long and staff does not do a very good job of advising people both how long the process is going to take and the steps needed to get there
- Attitude that they don't want business to succeed-no help
- I am not the one that submits the applications so i am unaware how they compare
- Our biggest issue with Oro Valley is the requirements pertaining to color and materials. Our business depends on our Identity and recognition by our clients Signage can be controlled and done tastefully while maintaining identity

Comments regarding staff response time to businesses regarding signage

- The overall philosophy in Oro Valley is obstructionist rather than promoting businesses that provide both the employment and revenue stream that underpin the economic stability of the Town
- Too bad they are not in charge
- They can sometimes be slow
- I have left 3 messages and have yet to receive a call back regarding A-Frames
- It depends on the day and project but overall it is cumbersome
- I am not the one that submits the applications so I am unaware how they compare