

**Sign Ordinance
Proposed Amending Motion
March 26, 2009**

Amendments to Proposed Ordinance (Appendix C)

1. **Roof Signs.** Amend Section 14.4.13:
 - Only permit roof signs through a comprehensive sign program or a sign district.
 - Do not allow any solid panel area.
 - Limit the hours of illumination of lighted roof signs from 7 am to 12 midnight.

2. **Comprehensive Sign Programs.** Amend Section 14.4.22:
 - Require a public hearing.
 - Expand required notification of the public hearing to include property owners and occupants within a 500 foot radius of the subject property.
 - Require that development sites include a minimum of 5 acres, in addition to 100,000 square feet of nonresidential floor area.
 - Add a new finding: *“The size, illumination, height, projection, location and street orientation of proposed signs within 500 feet of a residentially zoned lot are compatible with residential uses.”*

3. **Administrative Civil Penalties.** Amend Section 14.4.24:
 - Require 24 days advance notice of the public hearing.
 - Expand required notification of the public hearing to include property owners and occupants within a 500 foot radius of the subject property.

4. **Right of Private Action.** Amend Section 14.4.25:
 - Limit the right to pursue a civil action to the owners or occupants of real property within a 500 foot radius of the illegal sign.

5. **Sign Districts.**
Amend Section 13.11, Sign Districts:
 - Require mandatory sign reduction for every new digital or off-site sign allowed in a sign district.
 - The minimum required sign reduction must be greater than 1:1 – for every one square foot of new sign area that goes up, more than one square foot of existing sign area must come down.
 - Only the demolition of existing, lawfully permitted off-site signs count toward the mandatory sign reduction requirement.

- Sign reduction within an adjacent “sign impact area” may count toward the sign reduction requirement. The ordinance establishing the sign district must define the boundaries of the sign impact area.
- Eliminate the community beautification program finding.
- Limit relief from the sign district regulations to no more than a 20% deviation, consistent with the sign modification procedure for the baseline sign ordinance.
- Add a new finding: *“The proposed special sign regulations will further the applicable goals, objectives and policies of the urban form and neighborhood design chapter of the Framework Element of the General Plan.”*

Guidelines. The City Planning Commission intends to adopt guidelines to review proposed sign districts. The Commission therefore directs staff to prepare draft guidelines for the Commission’s consideration, within 6 months of the date the new sign ordinance is adopted.

“Grandfathering”. Only proposed sign districts approved by the City Planning Commission as of March 26, 2009, shall be subject to the Code’s existing sign district provisions. All other proposed sign districts will be subject to the new ordinance.

Recommendation to City Council

If the City Attorney so advises, the City Planning Commission recommends that the City Council include in the new sign ordinance a provision allowing the City to revoke the business licenses of sign companies that repeatedly violate the sign regulations or do not pay their assessed civil penalties.

One-Year Review

Within one year after the new sign ordinance goes into effect, the Director of Planning should convene a balanced task force representing diverse points of view. The purpose of the task force is to:

- **Ordinance Impact.** Review the impact of the new ordinance, and determine if there have been any unintended consequences.
- **Needed Amendments.** Proposed necessary amendments to the sign ordinance.
- **Digital On-Site Signs.** Study the feasibility of regulating digital on-site signs through operational limitations, size of structure, brightness levels, static messaging, transitional hold times, dimming sensors and zoning (allowing only in non-residential zones).
- **Billboard Registration.** Study the feasibility of requiring billboard registration with the Department of Building & Safety, so that the public is informed about each billboard’s permit status and the identity of its owner.