

# PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT



Meeting Date: November 13, 2019  
General Plan Element: *Character and Design*  
General Plan Goal: *Use community goals, character and context to determine development appropriateness.*

## **ACTION**

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### **Sign Ordinance Update – Freeway, Permanent & Temporary Signs 779-PA-2019**

#### **Request to consider the following:**

1. Initiate a text amendment to the City of Scottsdale Zoning Ordinance (Ordinance No. 455) for the purposes of amending and updating the building sign, freestanding sign, and temporary sign regulations and related provisions for developments adjacent to the Loop 101 Freeway, and to refine and correct requirements and related provisions for permanent and temporary signs.

#### **Goal/Purpose of Request**

This is a request by the City of Scottsdale for a text amendment pertaining to the sign regulations for permanent signs, temporary signs, and related provisions for developments adjacent to the Loop 101 Freeway that are not currently addressed in the current Sign Ordinance. This request is also for minor corrections and refinements to sign requirements and related provisions for permanent and temporary signs that were not fully addressed in the previous Sign Ordinance updates that occurred in 2017. The goal is to establish more user-friendly and contemporary sign regulations while continuing to maintain strong sign controls as required by the General Plan and desired by the community.

## **OWNER**

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City of Scottsdale  
480-312-7828

## **APPLICANT CONTACT**

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## **LOCATION**

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City-wide

## **BACKGROUND**

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On May 23, 2017, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 4300, updating the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to temporary sign regulations to accommodate recent federal court decisions. On July 5, 2017, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 4315, updating the Zoning Ordinance pertaining to permanent sign regulations and to adopt a more user-friendly and equitable sign code, removing land-use specific sign regulations and introduced zoning-based sign regulations. During the past several years, there has been an increase in planned developments along the Loop 101 Freeway, with new vertical mixed-use developments and employment centers either planned or under construction, which the current sign code does not adequately address since historically, the sign code was written to accommodate signage for local streets and slower speeds, and freeways did not arrive in Scottsdale until the early 2000s.

### **Key Items for Consideration**

- Consistency with the General Plan, as amended.
- Introduction of new sign types and sign regulations for developments along the freeway.
- Minor updates and refinements pertaining to permanent sign and temporary sign regulations; corrections to code formatting errors, and additional refinements to accommodate recent federal court decisions.

## **APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL**

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There has been a recent increase in mixed-use and office developments along the Loop 101 Freeway between Scottsdale Road and Hayden Road. Included with these planned developments are major employment centers. The increase in freeway development has garnered an interest by the business community to request the City to update the sign requirements of the Zoning Ordinance to allow taller and larger freestanding signs along the freeway and allow higher signage on buildings adjacent to the freeway for large mixed-use developments.

In 2017, the City Council adopted two updates to the sign requirements of the Zoning Ordinance due to recent federal court decisions (i.e. Reed v. Gilbert) by removing content-based sign regulations, to create a more user-friendly and stronger sign code, and introduced zoning-based sign regulations. After two years of applying and practicing the updated code, there is a need to refine the existing code and conduct minor corrections to provisions and regulations related to permanent and temporary signs, and to correct formatting errors. The last code update did not completely eliminate content-based sign regulations to accommodate recent federal court decisions. Therefore, additional refinements are needed so that the code is less dependent on content-based sign regulations and completely embrace time, place and manner regulations to achieve a more equitable sign code. This proposed text amendment excludes any updates to the scenic corridor sign requirements.

The modifications that will be proposed with this text amendment should enhance and maintain the City's character and aesthetics and be more reliable and useable for businesses and employers relocating to Scottsdale. The goal is to maintain the General Plan and community's desire for strong sign control, an aesthetically attractive community to live and do business in, and to establish a more user-friendly and contemporary Zoning Ordinance. With the implementation of the proposed

text amendment, all properties throughout the City would be subject to the updated sign requirements.

### **Proposed Next Steps**

- Development of draft sign ordinance text
- Hold at least two community open house meetings
- Planning Commission Non-Action Meeting
- Planning Commission Hearing
- City Council Hearing

Staff estimates that the entire text amendment process will be completed in approximately five to seven months.

## **IMPACT ANALYSIS**

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### **Community Involvement**

This project will include standard community involvement consisting of public notice in the newspaper, online, postcard mailing to interested parties, and community outreach meetings. Residents, stakeholders, community organizations and individuals that participated in the last two sign code text amendments will be invited to participate in this text amendment.

### **Community Impact**

This project is intended to update and reorganize regulations pertaining to permanent and temporary signs and introduce new sign types along freeways to better address the City's and business needs.

## **OPTIONS & STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

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### **Recommended Approach:**

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission initiate the text amendment.

## **RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT(S)**

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*Planning, Neighborhood and Transportation*  
Current Planning Services

## **STAFF CONTACTS**

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**APPROVED BY**

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Andrew Chi, Planner, Report Author

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Date

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Tim Curtis, AICP, Current Planning Director  
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Date

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Randy Grant, Administrator  
Planning and Development Services  
480-312-2664, rgrant@scottsdaleaz.gov

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Date

**APPROVED BY**

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Andrew Chi, Planner, Report Author

10/24/19

Date



Tim Curtis, AICP, Current Planning Director  
480-312-4210, tcurtis@scottsdaleaz.gov

11/4/2019

Date

 FOR

Randy Grant, Administrator  
Planning and Development Services  
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11/6/2019

Date