



TO: Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Chris Bacha, Chief Deputy City Attorney *CB*
COPY: City Council and City Clerk
SUBJECT: Ordinance Amending Billboard Regulations – December 5, 2017
DATE: November 30, 2017

SUMMARY:

The proposed ordinance would amend the City Sign Code provisions specific to billboards and establish a billboard face exchange program.

STRATEGIC POLICY PRIORITY:

- Encourage and promote an efficient and effective government, which is fiscally sustainable and guided by engaged residents.

BACKGROUND:

The proposal would amend the Tacoma Municipal Code sign code section specific to billboards, to:

- Create an exchange program whereby installation of a conforming billboard would require demolition of a billboard or billboards comprising the same or greater amount of sign area
- Create an incentive to replace side-by-side billboards with one larger face
- Provide for a cap-and-replace in certain zones (NCX, DR, WR, T) where installation of a billboard in that zone requires removal of an equal sized or larger billboard in the same zone
- Open the following new zones to billboards: DCC, DMU, WR, PDB, UCX, CCX, CIX, and NCX. In some zones freestanding billboards are replacement only; new wall billboards are allowed in all zones.
- Remove amortization provisions
- Reduce buffer distance from no-billboard zones and sensitive uses (such as schools, parks, historic properties) depending on location of billboard
- Increase the height limit for freestanding billboards to 32 feet everywhere, with higher billboards allowed if the billboard is sufficiently removed from buffered uses
- Reduce a number of existing design and development standards, but retains the prohibition on freestanding billboards that extend over buildings and have more than one face per side
- Require efficient lighting and illumination to be turned off between midnight and 5 am

ISSUE:

The amendments to the sign code have been proposed by Lamar Advertising, LLC (Lamar). Lamar owns the majority of the billboard signs in Tacoma and has requested that the City Council consider these amendments in conjunction with a proposed agreement by Lamar that would result in Lamar's removal of 111 billboard faces.

ALTERNATIVES:

The City Council could decline to adopt the ordinance.

RECOMMENDATION:

There is no staff recommendation.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact