

Case # ZO-34-23 Memo

To: Bloomington Plan Commission

From: Jackie Scanlan, AICP Development Services Manager

Date: September 11, 2023

RE: Text Amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance Amendments Related to Sign Standards

The Planning and Transportation Department is proposing a text amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Title 20 of the Bloomington Municipal Code (BMC), related to eliminating certain existing signs and affirmatively requiring their removal no later than January 1, 2031.

The Planning and Transportation Department has prepared a proposed text amendment to the UDO to effectuate the change through the addition of a new subsection to the UDO's sign regulations, which are codified at BMC § 20.04.100.

The Petition is as follows:

1. ZO-34-23 | UDO Chapter 4, Development Standards & Incentives 20.04.100(g)

ZO-34-23 UDO Chapter 4, Development Standards & Incentives: 20.04.100(g)

The Department, in conjunction with the Legal Department, has prepared a text amendment that will require the removal of certain off-site and on-site freestanding signs over a three year period beginning in five years. The Planning and Transportation Department previously did annual surveys of all existing 'billboards' in Bloomington. The last survey was completed in 2014 and documented 47 billboard locations, with many containing more than one sign face. Some of those billboards have since been removed, but the majority remain.

The Department has been tracking these lawful nonconforming signs since at least 1987, and the proposed amendment sets a path for the removal of lawful nonconforming signs in order to further meet the intent of the sign standards in the UDO. Those standards include avoidance of the unnecessary proliferation of signs; providing developments with appropriate identification; creating a consistent streetscape; maintaining and enhancing the aesthetic environment of the city; eliminating potential hazards to motorists and pedestrians resulting from sign clutter; and generally promoting the health, safety, and welfare of the residents of the City of Bloomington.

No change to wall signage allowance is proposed. No change to lawful conforming freestanding signage allowance is proposed.

The proposed amendment appears below. Additional necessary directives for the codifier are indicated in parentheses below the proposed amendment.

(g) Amortization of Certain Freestanding and Certain Off-premise Signs

(1) Applicability.

This subsection 20.04.100(g) shall not apply to public signs or multi-tenant signs.

(2) Freestanding Signs

All freestanding signs exceeding 100 square feet per side, including any such signs which have heretofore been authorized by a variance or similar special exception, shall be removed or brought into compliance per the following schedule:

(A) January 1, 2029: Those located within the R1, R2, R3, R4, RM, RMH, and MD zoning districts;

(B) January 1, 2030: Those located within the RH, MS, MN, MM, MH, MI, EM, and PO zoning districts;

(C) January 1, 2031: Those located within the MC, ME, and PUD zoning districts.

(3) Off-premise Signs

All off-premise signs exceeding 35 square feet per side, including any such signs which have heretofore been authorized by a variance or similar special exception, shall be removed or brought into compliance per the following schedule:

(A) January 1, 2029: Those located within the R1, R2, R3, R4, RM, RMH, and MD zoning districts;

(B) January 1, 2030: Those located within the RH, MS, MN, MM, MH, MI, EM, and PO zoning districts;

(C) January 1, 2031: Those located within the MC, ME, and PUD zoning districts.

(The codifier is directed as follows: (1) existing subsections of 20.04.100 (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), and (l), shall be modified so that they appear one sequential letter further in the alphabet (e.g. (g) becomes (h), (h) becomes (i), and so on), and (2) the table of contents shall be modified so as to correspond with the new titles in subsections 20.04.100(g) through 20.04.100(m). In all other respects existing subsections 20.04.100(g) through 20.04.100(l) shall remain unmodified.)