



**Community Development Department
Planning and Development Services**

Date: September 23, 2024
TO: Planning and Zoning Commission
FROM: Wesley Welch, Senior Planner
Through: Michelle McNulty, Planning Director
Alexandra Pucciarelli, Current Planning Manager
RE: Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session

1. **Request:**

Case No. PZ-23-00134: Request for a work session with the Planning and Zoning Commission to discuss the City's proposed amendment to the Zoning Code to modify the existing Sign Standards (Division 10-50.100).

2. **Purpose of the Work Session:**

The work session with the Planning and Zoning Commission is required as a "Citizen Review Session" in compliance with Section 10-20.50.040 (Procedures) of the Zoning Code and applicable state law. The purpose of the work session is for staff to present an overview of the proposed amendment, to allow interested residents to provide their ideas, suggestions, and concerns, and for the Commission to ask questions, seek clarification, and discuss the amendment, as well as offer alternate suggestions and ideas. The Commission will take no action at this work session. After the work session, staff will revise the proposed amendment. The amendment will then be presented to the Commission at a public hearing for consideration and action. Once a recommendation is received, a public hearing will be scheduled with the City Council. The anticipated timeline for the amendments is as follows:

- October 9, 2024 – City Council Work Session
- October 23, 2024 – Planning and Zoning Commission Public Hearing
- November 19, 2024 – City Council Public Hearing

3. **Planning and Zoning Commission Questions:**

For your reference, below is the question that staff is seeking the Planning and Zoning Commission's comments and direction.

- Does the Planning and Zoning Commission have any recommended modifications or considerations on the proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment?

4. **Overview of Proposed Amendment:**

The proposed amendment (Attachment 1) includes multiple changes to the Zoning Code. New provisions are being added, some sections have been reorganized, and several existing regulations are being deleted or modified. The most significant of the modifications include:

- Clarifying the Design Handbook for Downtown is not meant as a regulatory document, any specific regulations from that handbook have been placed into code;
- Significantly reducing the amount of minor stipulations required for specific sign types;
- Correcting a typo that was allowing for extra signage for businesses with secondary frontage;
- A general clean-up of repetitive language and simplification of standards.

The proposed amendment includes:

Purpose (Section 10-50.100.010):

- Condensed repetitive and/or unnecessary language into one paragraph.

Compliance with the Zoning Code and Permit Requirements (Section 10-50.100.020):

- Created new section to align with Outdoor Lighting Standards section organization.
- Combined information from old Applicability and Sign Permit sections of the code and placed near the top of the Division.

Applicability (10-50.100.030):

- Condensed language and removed a table which had a summary of incentives that are found in other areas of code or that were removed entirely.

General Restrictions and Requirements for All Signs (10-50.100.040):

- Condensed "Location Restrictions" and made language more concise and removed unnecessary restrictions.
- "100-50.100.040.B.5" identifies a prohibition on commercial signage placed on vehicles and parked on site operating as a sign. This was moved from a later section of the code.
- Condensed "Display Restrictions" to be more concise.
- "Sign Measurement Criteria" was updated with more concise language throughout and the removal of unnecessary items and/or items that are difficult to quantify.
- Any graphic with a large black "X" on top is to be removed in the updated draft. The language is intended to be written in a way that does not require supplementary graphics.
- "Sign Maintenance" was moved to Section 10-50.100.020.

Permanent Signs (10-50.100.050)

- Removed unnecessary introductory language.
- Substantive Changes made to Table 10-50.100.050.A
 - Footnote 1 was removed as it was redundant based on column heading.
 - Footnote 5 was removed for a similar reason as Footnote 1
 - Multifamily Development Building Mounted Signage was updated to a maximum height of 25 feet and a maximum area of 16 square feet. The previous allowances, 4 feet and 2 square feet, made signage for these buildings effectively impossible. The intent is not to allow large signage for multi-family development but it seemed reasonable to allow for a slightly larger sign in line with the freestanding sign standards.
 - Footnotes have been changed to account for changes in deleted footnotes.
 - Master Planned Communities, Subdivisions, and Manufactured Home Parks have been grouped together.

- Maximum area for “Nonresidential use in a Commercial or Industrial Zone” was corrected for a typo that was allowing double the square footage for secondary frontages when the intention was to allow half a square foot per linear foot.
- Multi-tenant freestanding signs in a commercial zone was upped in order to provide slightly more signage for a multi-tenant site.
- A Mixed-Use Development section was added to the table to break up signage between the residential and commercial components of these developments.
- Standards for Specific Sign Types
 - This is one of the biggest changes from the previous code. Originally, each sign type had its own table and set of standards. There is now one table which groups standards that apply to all sign types. That table is followed by a few specific regulations that are specific to the sign type.
 - Awning and Canopy Signs were initially two separate sets of standards, those standards have now been combined.
 - Width of building mounted sign types was initially 60% the width of the building element on which they are placed, this has been changed to 80%.
 - Service Island Canopy Signs are now identified as part of Building Mounted Sign standards as opposed to having their own set of standards.
 - Quite a few tedious standards for building mounted signs have been removed entirely.
 - Standards for Changeable Copy, Driveway, and Directory Signs have been reduced into one or two standards for each sign type.
 - Quite a few freestanding sign standards have either been moved to Table 10-50.100.050.A or removed entirely as they were unnecessary, redundant, or difficult to enforce.
 - Sign base width requirements have been removed.
 - Landscaping requirements for freestanding signs have been removed. Landscaping for all new developments is required so most new development freestanding signs will have landscaping. New regulation has been added which is that the area around the freestanding sign must be clear of weeds and debris.
 - Standards for Interpretive Signs have been removed as that sign type is usually located at parks, trails, or other natural/historical features which are not readable from the right of way and therefore not governed by the sign code.
 - Standards for landscape wall signs have been removed as that sign type will now be governed by freestanding sign regulations.
 - Projecting and Suspended signs have been grouped into the same set of regulations.
 - Roof-mounted sign standards have been reduced to be more concise and allow for more of the roof area to be covered (previously the height of the sign could only be on the lower 1/3 of the roof and the new regulations stipulate that it cannot project above the roof peak).
 - Window signage regulations have been significantly reduced. They have always been included in the total allowed building mounted signage allowance which regulates window signs to a high degree as most businesses use their building mounted signage allowance in their other signage.

Comprehensive Sign Programs (10-50.100.060)

- Removed language that required Comprehensive Sign Programs for all multi-family and nonresidential uses, which has not been followed for any developments in town.
- Removed unnecessary language to make the section more concise.

- Changed language which allows minor modifications to approved Comprehensive Sign Plans without having to pay the Comprehensive Sign Plan fee and instead can be handled through a sign permit fee (difference of approximately \$1,800 vs. \$90).
- Removed a reference to “findings” in the submittal requirements as there have never been any findings for a sign plan.

Sign Design Incentives (10-50.100.070)

- Condensed language to make it more concise.
- All incentives remain, however incentives that apply directly to freestanding signs no longer give bonuses to building mounted signs on the site.
- Cumulative Adjustments table removed as it provided no new information.

Portable and/or Temporary Signs (10-50.100.080)

- Added language to include temporary construction signs (banners on the fence for sites in development) as those have not been regulated by current code.
- As earlier in the code, standards for all temporary sign types have been placed into one table to aid in comprehension.
- The rest of the code changes are to clean up various numbers, letters, and references.

Sign Districts of Special Designation (10-50.100.090):

- Flagstaff Central Sign District findings were very subjective so any item that referenced “exceptional design” has been removed. New standards are more objective which should allow for uniformity in how it is administered.
- Standards for each sign type have been condensed into one table with a few standards for each sign type following the table, as in other parts of the updated code. Since this is another level of review beyond the earlier regulations in the sign code, any regulations that have not changed for the Flagstaff Central Sign District are governed by the earlier sections of code.
- Downtown Overlay Zone
 - There were various iterations of this zone name, it has now just been cleared up and is only referred to as the Downtown Overlay Zone.
 - Initially, this section referenced an document from the 90s called the Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff. Applicable standards have been included directly into the text of the sign code and a reference to the document has been removed. It is now made clear that the Design Handbook for Downtown Flagstaff is used for clarification purposes only.
- Flagstaff Auto Park District, Mall, and West University Entrance Drive
 - These sections remain unchanged except for changing some table and image number references to keep everything in sequential order based on changes earlier in the code.

Definitions “S” (10-80.20.190):

- Sign definition has been modified.
- Every single sign type had its own definition, most of these were removed as they are dictionary definitions and have no specific relation to the sign code.

5. **Findings:**

At the October 23, 2024, Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, the Commission will be requested to make a recommendation to the City Council on the proposed amendments based on the required findings specified in the Zoning Code. For your reference and discussion purposes, the required findings are specified below:

1. The proposed amendment is consistent with and conforms to the objectives and policies of the General Plan and any applicable specific plan;
2. The proposed amendment will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, convenience, or welfare of the City; and
3. The proposed amendment is internally consistent with other applicable provisions of this Zoning Code.

6. **Community Involvement**

In accordance with Arizona Revised Statutes and the Zoning Code, the work session before the Planning and Zoning Commission was advertised in the Arizona Daily Sun on Saturday September 21, 2024, which is 19 days before the scheduled meeting date.

As of the date of this memorandum, staff has only received no public comments regarding this amendment.

Conclusion:

As indicated above, the purpose of the work session is for staff to present an overview of the Zoning Code's proposed amendment and allow interested individuals, residents, and business owners to provide comments. The work session also allows the Commission to ask questions, seek clarification, have discussions, and offer comments on the proposed amendment. No formal recommendation or action by the Commission to the City Council is to occur at the work session. Additional opportunities for discussion, public comment, and action by the Commission will occur at a future public hearing.

Attachments:

1. Case No. PZ-23-00134: Sign Standards