

Billboard Regulations Amendment

City of Tacoma

Planning and Development Services

City Council Public Hearing
November 17, 2015



Overview

- ❖ Continuation of process to resolve billboard regulatory issues and litigation
 - 2011 Code amendment (3 faces comply, amortization)
 - Standstill Agreement
 - Community Working Group (March 2015 report)
- ❖ Planning Commission
 - Task Force, Recommendation to Council
- ❖ Staff Alternative
 - Based on CWG framework, Standstill Agreement, Planning Commission recommendations, and meetings with billboard owners

Community Goals

- ❖ Reduce the number of billboards
- ❖ Protect sensitive areas
- ❖ Avoid continuing legal disagreements



Standstill Agreement

- ❖ Dismiss existing lawsuit
- ❖ City stays enforcement, including amortization
- ❖ Agree to meet and confer to determine if a permanent solution can be found
 - Focus on consolidation program to remove specified signs from designated areas in exchange for bulletin-sized static billboards
- ❖ Clear Channel relinquished “banked” sign permits
 - To be credited as part of an exchange program
- ❖ Clear Channel removes 31 billboard faces
- ❖ Clear Channel performs maintenance on 14 other billboard structures
- ❖ If fail to reach agreement, either may resume lawsuit

Community Working Group

Recommendations

- ❖ **New Zones** (DCC, DMU, WR, UCX, CCX, CIX, PDB) added to old zones (C-2, M-1, M-2, PMI)
 - No consensus on C-1, T and NCX
- ❖ **Size** – Allow 672 sq. ft. in Industrial zones
- ❖ **Height** – No recommendation
 - Mix of 30 ft., raise to 35 ft., or greater than 35ft.
- ❖ **Buffers** – Reduce buffers (100-300 feet range)
- ❖ **Dispersal** – Reduce dispersal (100-300 feet range)
- ❖ **Design** – Eliminate most design and development standards
- ❖ **Illumination** – No digital
- ❖ **Landscaping/Maintenance** – Retain existing requirements

Planning Commission

Recommendations

- ❖ **New Zones** - (DCC, DMU, WR, UCX, CCX, CIX, *NCX, PDB) for walls only added to old zones (C-2, M-1, M-2, PMI) which would allow freestanding and wall-mounted
- ❖ **Exchange Program** - New signs allowed though use of “credits” generated by removals – incentivizes wall-mounted
- ❖ **Size** – No change to size allowance (300 sq. ft.), with exceptions for walls
- ❖ **Height** – Modifications to height allowances
- ❖ **Buffering** – Reduce from 500 ft. to 250 ft. (downtown exceptions)
- ❖ **Dispersion** – Reduce from 500 ft. to 300 ft.
- ❖ **Design Standards** – Reduces most standards
- ❖ **Amortization** – Retain with additional grace period

Potential Alternative

- ❖ Opportunity for separate agreement to ensure progress
- ❖ Must meet overall Plan intent and important community priorities
 - Based on CWG framework, Standstill Agreement, Planning Commission recommendations, and meetings with billboard owners
- ❖ Principles
 - Signification reduction
 - Protection of sensitive areas
 - Avoid continuing legal disagreements

Staff Alternative

❖ Special Compliance Agreement

- Commitment to significant removals
- Specific timelines for removals
- Removals focused on sensitive areas and certain negative characteristics
 - Sensitive zones
 - Over-concentration and significantly over-height
 - Over-cantilevered, over or on roof, etc.
- Additional flexibilities:
 - Alternative to amortization
 - Allowances for pole-mounted billboards in new zones
 - Limited allowances for increased size, height, reduced buffers, and design standards

Staff Alternative

❖ Removals

○ Overall Total

- 40% overall reduction in nonconforming signs in 5 years
- 20% reduction of the maximum cap on number of freestanding billboard faces
- Cap total billboard square footage to existing amount
- **Within 90 days** – 35 faces (all junior posters and all faces in residential, CONS, RCX, and shoreline districts)
- **Further reductions within 1, 3 and 5 years**

❖ Amortization eliminated

❖ Exchange Program

❖ Open some areas for new freestanding billboards

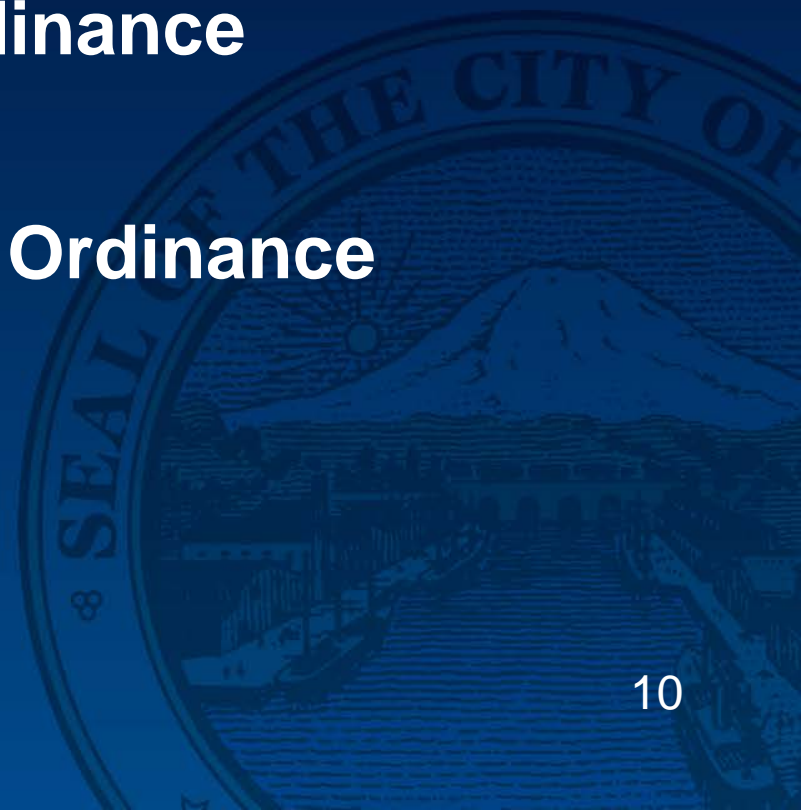
- Only through exchange program
- Includes limited allowances for bulletin billboards

Next Steps

Dec 1: Study Session

Dec 8: 1st Reading of Ordinance

Dec 15: Final Reading of Ordinance



Billboard Regulations Amendment

City of Tacoma

Planning and Development Services

City Council Public Hearing
November 17, 2015

