

ITEM III-B: SIGN ORDINANCE AMENDMENT – FILE 2008PL-112 (PROJECT OA-000019)

REQUEST

Planning Department staff is proposing revisions to the Sign Ordinance to allow programmable electronic signs on hotel monument signs in-lieu of manual marquees. The Design Committee is requested to consider the proposed amendment and make a recommendation to the City Council.

Applicant – City of Roseville, Planning & Redevelopment Department

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Redevelopment Department recommends that the Design Committee take the following action:

- a) Recommend that the City Council approve the Sign Ordinance Amendment to allow programmable electronic signs for hotels.

OUTSTANDING ISSUES

There are no outstanding issues associated with this request.

BACKGROUND

The current proposal stems from requests received from the hotel industry to allow use of programmable electronic signs on hotel monument signs. The current code allows individual letters to be changed on a manual marquee sign similar to the Tower Theater, but does not permit changing message signs for any use except theaters, fuel price signs, and the Auto Mall.

Currently, hotels with changeable message signs must have their employee(s) change the message by hand. Manual marquees are often subject to vandalism, switching letters to form offensive words, and loss of letters due to wind and weather conditions. Hotel operators have indicated that the use of programmable electronic signs would help them promote their business and events, while avoiding these issues.

Figure 1



Figure 1, above, shows an existing manual marquee sign at Orchid Suites and a rendering of what a programmable electronic sign would look like in its place.

The following evaluation identifies the sections of the Sign Ordinance that require modification to implement the proposed amendment. The proposed revisions are indicated in ~~strikeout~~ / double underline format in Exhibit A and are further explained below.

EVALUATION

Chapter 17.04 - Definitions

➤ Proposed Text Revisions

17.04.355 - Hotel. Hotel means an establishment that provides lodging and usually meals and other services for travelers and other paying guests.

➤ Objective of Revisions

- 1) To incorporate a definition of hotel into the Sign Ordinance to clearly identify where a programmable electronic sign is permitted.

Chapter 17.06.190 – Programmable electronic signs for individual uses

➤ Proposed Text Revisions

A. The following shall apply to programmable electronic signs:

1. Programmable electronic signs shall only be permitted for auto malls and theaters, and hotels as defined in Sections 17.04.050, 17.04.355, 17.04.730, and 17.06.215
2. Programmable electronic signs shall comply with the provisions for monument signs and wall signs as provided by Section 17.06.120 17.06.130, and 17.06.215.
3. Location.
 - a. Theaters.
 1. Displays shall be located within ten (10) feet of a box office, ticket window, or building entrance; and
 2. Signs shall be pedestrian oriented and shall not be located for the purpose of being readable from the street.
 - b. Hotels.
 1. Programmable electronic signs may be incorporated into the monument sign, no wall-mounted programmable electronic signs shall be permitted; and
 3. Sign displays shall remain static and may not change more than once in one (1) twelve hour period.
4. Number.
 - a. Theaters. A maximum of one (1) programmable electronic sign is permitted per building elevation.
 - b. Hotels. Only one (1) programmable electronic sign is permitted per individual use or business complex. The permitted programmable electronic sign may be double faced, consistent with the design of the monument sign. Only one face shall be used to calculate maximum allowable area.

5. Area. Programmable electronic signs shall be limited to one-third (1/3) the area of the monument sign to which it is permitted to be attached, up to a maximum of thirty (30) square feet each, and shall be included in the cumulative total of sign area permitted by Section 17.06.120 and 17.06.130.

➤ Objective of Revisions

- 1) Identify the parameters under which programmable electronic signs are permitted for hotels. In this case, staff proposes that programmable electronic signs be limited to one-third of a hotel's total allowed monument sign area up to a maximum of 30 square feet. The 30 square-foot maximum is already identified in the Sign Ordinance for theaters; staff believes this provision should remain applicable to all programmable electronic signs.
- 2) Each individual use (i.e., hotels not in a building complex) is permitted one programmable electronic sign (double-faced). In situations where multiple hotels are located within the same building complex, only one programmable electronic sign would be permitted for each building complex. This provision is intended to prevent the proliferation and over-concentration of electronic signs. In the building complex scenario with multiple hotels, each hotel would need to coordinate sign time and message content with the property management or other entity responsible for sign maintenance.
- 3) The "one-third rule" will ensure that the electronic display remains in proportion to the overall monument sign. Since monument sign area is calculated by the amount of street frontage of an individual use, it is possible that a monument sign could be 30 square feet or less (i.e., if the frontage was only 30 feet wide). In that scenario, the monument sign could potentially consist of an all electronic media. The "one-third" rule would prevent that scenario.
- 4) The 12-hour static display provision mirrors the existing provision for downtown theaters (i.e., Magic Circle and Tower), and is intended to prevent flashing and moving video displays, which are distracting and detract from the visual appearance of the community.

CONCLUSION

The changes proposed herein will improve the appearance of many hotels where manual marquee signs are used, but have become run down or vandalized over time. Staff believes that the proposed standards provide sufficient safeguards to ensure the electronic marquees will appear attractive and present a positive image of the City. No other changes to the Ordinance are proposed. Staff therefore recommends that the Design Committee recommend approval of the revisions to the City Council.

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION

This project consists of an update to the existing City of Roseville Sign Ordinance. No significant changes that could effect the environment are being proposed as part of this update. The amendment does not increase the amount of signage permitted for uses, but expands the display medium. This project is therefore not subject to the environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3) ("The General Rule") pertaining to projects that do not have the possibility to have a significant effect on the environment.

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Redevelopment Department recommends that the Design Committee take the following action:

- a) Recommend that the City Council approve the Sign Ordinance Amendment to allow programmable electronic signs for hotels.

EXHIBITS

- A. Sign Ordinance Text Amendments (redline/strikeout)