

**ITEM III-A:** **PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM MODIFICATION – 200 NORTH SUNRISE AVENUE – INFILL PCL 189 – ROSEVILLE AUTOMALL ELECTRONIC READER BOARD REPLACEMENT – PL16-0050**

**REQUEST**

The applicant requests approval to replace an existing electronic reader board sign located adjacent to Interstate 80 with a new 43 foot tall, 480 square foot light emitting diode (LED) reader board.

Applicant: Damon Eberhart, Roseville Automall Association  
Property Owner: Andrew Pfeiffer, R&A Roseville

**SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning Department recommends that the Design Committee:

- A. Adopt the Negative Declaration;
- B. Adopt the three findings of fact for the Planned Sign Permit Modification; and,
- C. Approve the Planned Sign Permit Modification with twenty-one (21) conditions of approval.

**SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES**

There are no outstanding issues associated with this request. The applicant has reviewed and is in agreement with all recommended conditions of approval.

**BACKGROUND**

The Roseville Automall currently owns and operates a 586 square foot electronic reader board sign at the southwest corner of the subject parcel, approximately 500 feet south of Lead Hill Boulevard, 30 feet east of the Interstate 80 (I-80) freeway and ±560 feet west of N. Sunrise Avenue (see Figure 2 & Exhibit B). This sign is located within an existing 420 square foot sign easement.



Figure 1 – Existing Sign – Looking East

The existing sign replaced a 400 square foot electronic reader board sign and was approved by the City's Planning Commission on February 24, 2005 (CUPMOD 04-12). Based on information provided by the applicant, the reader board component of the sign is nearing the end of its designed life expectancy. The Roseville Automall Association is seeking City approval to replace the entire sign with a new 480 square foot light emitting diode (LED) reader board. The reader board portion of the existing sign is 586 square feet.

The property on which the sign is located is approximately six acres in size. On June 19, 2003, the City's Design Committee approved a Design Review Permit (DRP 03-21) on the property for the construction of a 21,891 square foot Hyundai automobile dealership with associated lighting, customer parking and inventory parking, and landscaping. The project was designed to incorporate the existing reader board and the associated 420 square foot sign easement. The site is now fully developed with the automobile dealership which was completed in November 2005.

The applicant indicates that the Roseville Automall is experiencing increasing competition from other regional auto malls such as Elk Grove and Folsom and that freeway signage utilizing up-to-date digital technology is necessary to maintain a competitive advantage. The existing sign has been in place for more than 11 years and is nearing the end of its designed life expectancy.

**Figure 2: Vicinity Map**



**ENTITLEMENT HISTORY**

The Project Review Commission (PRC) approved the original Automall Master Use Permit (MUP) on March 16, 1989. As a part of the MUP, a Planned Sign Permit Program (PSPP) and Sign Variance for two off-site directional signs along Interstate-80 were approved. On February 19, 1992, the City Council granted final approvals for the Master Use Permit amendment and the Planned Sign Permit Program, and introduced the Sign Ordinance Amendment for first reading to allow for freeway visible promotional and directional signage.

On March 12, 1998, the Planning Commission approved a text change to the Automall Master Use Permit to specifically allow an electronic reader board. The text change also identified the Planning Commission as the approving authority for the design and details of Automall off-site freeway visible signs. At the March 12<sup>th</sup> hearing, the Planning Commission also approved a Conditional Use Permit Modification (File #CUPMOD 98-01) to allow the existing electronic reader board sign with a maximum height of 25 feet.

In February 2005, the Planning Commission approved the sign that is currently in place (CUPMOD 04-12); a 1,082 square foot sign cabinet, including a 586 square foot light emitting diode (LED) reader board. As stated above, the existing sign is 29.5 feet tall by 40.3 feet wide.

In July 2009, as part of the Automall Wall Renovation Project, the Planning Commission approved various text modifications to the Automall Master Use Permit (2009PL-012). These modifications provided additional discretion as to the approving entity for modifications to Automall off-site freeway signage construction and/or modifications. The revised language states that construction details for changes to the Automall's freeway-visible signs must be approved by the City, rather than restricting review and approval to a specific Commission or Committee.

Activation of the electronic reader board in 1999 generated a significant number of complaints regarding the sign and its intensity. However, staff is not aware of complaints received since the reader board was replaced in 2005.

## **EVALUATION**

### **CONSISTENCY WITH SIGN ORDINANCE AND APPLICABLE PLANS**

It is City policy, as stated in the Sign Ordinance, to prohibit off-site signage in order to discourage a proliferation of off-site signage. However, with the previous approvals for the Automall off-site signs, it was acknowledged that the Roseville Automall was a unique project that required special signage. This special signage included off-site freeway-visible signs, including the use of an electronic reader board.

#### ***Sign Ordinance Consistency***

The Sign Ordinance specifically permits off-site signage for the Automall as follows:

*“Notwithstanding the provisions of this Title, each automall may erect and maintain two off-site freestanding, freeway visible signs. One may contain a reader board, the other shall be solely directional.”*

While the Ordinance permits the off-site signage, it does not contain specific design standards to evaluate against. Rather, the signs are to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. In this case, because of the high visibility of the sign, combined with the proposed height increase, the request is being referred to the Design Committee for review and approval.

#### ***Roseville Automall Master Use Permit***

The Automall Master Use Permit (MUP) also has no specific standards for the design, location, or size of off-site freeway visible signage. The MUP (as amended in 2009) states that “construction details for changes to the Automall's existing freeway visible signs, including any changes in their exact location, must be approved by the City prior to such changes or relocation.”

Since there are no prescriptive standards to evaluate the proposed sign against, staff has used the existing Automall sign as a baseline for comparison. The existing sign has been operating for more than 11 years, which has allowed the City to observe its operating characteristics over time.

**Location** - The new sign will occupy the same location as the existing sign. It is situated within a 420 square foot sign easement area within the six-acre Hyundai automobile dealership parcel. The sign is located approximately 30 feet east of Interstate 80, and approximately 500 feet south of Lead Hill Boulevard. The Hyundai dealership parcel is bound on the east by North Sunrise Avenue and on the south by the Fry's

Electronics retail store. The sign is located at the southwest corner of the lot and is setback approximately 40 feet from I-80, and 10 feet from the adjacent lot to the south.

The sign cannot be located any closer to the I-80 right-of-way due to an existing 21" water transmission main and 60kV overhead power lines that traverses the property parallel to the property line. The City's Environmental Utilities Department and Roseville Electric have visited the site and reviewed the project submittal to evaluate any potential conflicts that the sign's location/design may have with City utilities. Condition 3 has been included which limits the sign's maximum height to 43 feet and Condition 9 requires a minimum 15-foot clearance from the 60kv lines. Condition 20 has also been included which requires the sign and its foundation to remain outside the existing water easement.

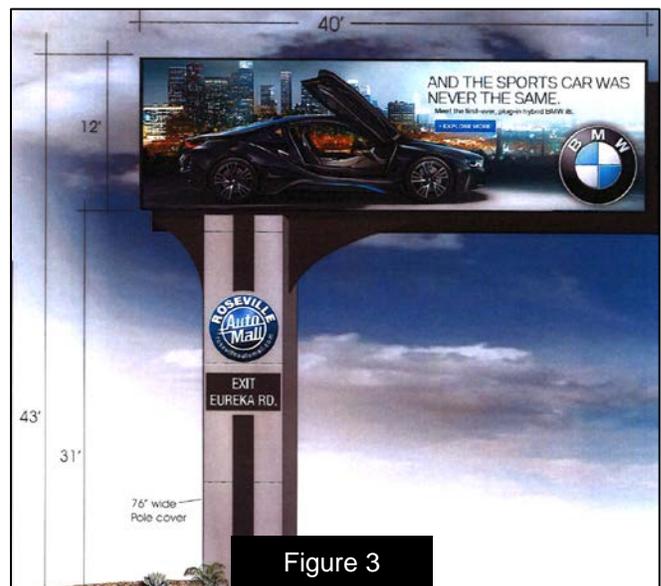
The digital display will be oriented towards freeway traffic, and would be visually unobtrusive to adjacent properties.

**Height** – The top of the new digital billboard will be approximately 43 feet above grade, which is 14 feet taller than the existing sign's height of 29.5 feet (see Figure 3). The Fry's retail store building is the nearest structure to the sign. The building's northwest corner tower element (closest structure to the proposed reader board) is approximately 50 feet in height. Additionally, an electronic reader board sign, 45 feet in height, is located adjacent to the I-80 freeway approximately eight tenths (0.8) of a mile northeast of the proposed sign. Therefore; from a visual perspective, the height of the reader board is similar in height to nearby structures.

**Area** – The overall area of the proposed reader board sign is 480 square feet (40' x 12') (see Exhibit D). The existing sign is 1,082 square feet, with 586 square feet dedicated to the electronic reader board. The entire 480 square foot area of the proposed sign functions as the electronic reader board. This represents an 18% decrease in size over the existing reader board.

**Architecture, Colors and Materials** – The proposed electronic reader board sign will be mounted on a 48" diameter steel column. The column will be enclosed with a 76" x 54" rectangular cover with a brushed aluminum painted finish. A 66" blue and white Roseville Automall logo will be placed on the east and west elevation of the pole enclosure. A vertical accent stripe will run up the center of the enclosure on both the east and west elevations, with a break in the stripe where the round logo is placed. Dark grey "Fin" accents will be placed at the top of the pole cover (see Figure 3 & Exhibit C).

A 35" x 70" directional sign will be placed below the logo. The sign's background will be dark gray in color with white copy of "Exit Eureka Road." Staff does not have any concerns related to the sign's design, and believes it to be an improvement over the existing sign design.



### **SIGN INTENSITY AND AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS**

At the time the original Automall sign was energized in 1999, concern was expressed regarding the sign's appearance, intensity, and the potential hazard it creates for motorists driving on I-80; however, the number of complaints/concerns has been minimal since the original sign was replaced in 2005. The Sign Ordinance

does not contain a standard with which to regulate sign intensity. In other situations involving signs, the City has relied on the Community Design Guidelines, which generally prohibits off-site glare.

### ***Outdoor Advertising Act and Permit Requirements***

Signs located within 660 feet of a state highway are required to comply with the Outdoor Advertising Act (Business & Professions Code Section 5400 et seq.). The Outdoor Advertising Act contains specific standards related to freeway visible signage, including maximum area, maximum height, and brightness. The Outdoor Advertising Act is enforced by the California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) and is administered by CalTrans through a Department of Transportation Outdoor Advertising Permit. However, the Act does not prohibit local jurisdictions from adopting more stringent standards to regulate the operating characteristics (such as lighting or brightness) of advertising displays.

Similar to the existing reader board sign, the proposed sign will require a permit from CalTrans and must meet the minimum requirements contained in the Outdoor Advertising Act. Specifically, the sign will be required by CalTrans to comply with the brightness requirements outlined in the Act in that “the illumination thereon shall not be of such brilliance or so positioned as to blind or dazzle the vision of travelers on adjacent highways (Business and Professions Code Section 5403).”

The standard used by CalTrans for enforcing sign brightness reads as follows:

*“The brightness reading of an objectionable light source shall be measured with a 1 ½ - degree photoelectric brightness meter placed at the driver's point of view. The maximum measured brightness of the light source within 10 degrees from the driver's normal line of sight shall not be more than 1,000 times the minimum measured brightness in the driver's field of view, except that when the minimum measured brightness in the field of view is 10 foot-lamberts or less, the measured brightness of the light source in foot-lambert shall not exceed 500 plus 100 times the angle, in degrees, between the driver's line of sight and the light source” (CVC 21466.5).*

It should be noted that the existing sign has been determined by CalTrans to meet the standard contained in Vehicle Code Section 21466.5. The proposed reader board will have approximately 18 percent less surface area, which could result in a decrease in sign intensity.

### ***Site-Specific Lighting Levels***

LED signs are highly directional, which is an advantage in an urban setting, since the light can be directed more precisely to the intended audience. Luminance measurements have been used to specify LED signs by the industry. Foot-candle measurements are made at a defined distance from the sign and the magnitude depends on the physical size of the sign.

The Outdoor Advertising Association of America (OAAA) and the International Sign Association (ISA) publish recommendations for brightness standards for outdoor LED signs. The guidelines are established to; 1) ensure appropriate brightness settings; 2) promote energy conservation; 3) ensure community goodwill, and; 3) extend the effective life expectancy of the display.

The proposed electronic reader board sign will be calibrated to not exceed the national daytime brightness standard as established by the OAAA. In terms of brightness levels, the sign will never be brighter than ambient light during the day (the sun). The sign utilizes light trap designed louvers that allow the sign to have readability during the day and not get washed out by the sun.

The proposed sign incorporates a sunrise/sunset calculation algorithm that uses the sign's latitude and longitude coordinates to correctly dim the sign at dusk and brighten it at dawn in several steps. A hardware photocell will enable the sign to adjust brightness for the periodic change of outdoor ambient light. As the

amount of outdoor light changes, the brightness of the sign changes. During periods of low ambient light, the sign brightness will be low. Throughout phases of high ambient light, sign brightness will be higher. The sign’s software enables the brightness to change gradually, and not instantaneous. This is particularly

important during periods of brief cloud cover; meaning the sign will not instantly dim as soon as a cloud passes overhead.

The manufacturer has confirmed that the proposed electronic reader board conforms to the standards established by OAAA and ISA.

The manufacturer conducted a sign lighting study for the proposed sign as shown in Figures 4, 5A and 5B below. The study is based on a 12’ x 40’ digital billboard. Light measurements are completed in foot-candles. A foot-candle is the amount of light produced by a single candle when measured one (1) foot away. For reference, a 100 watt light bulb produces 137 foot-candles at 1 foot away; 0.0548 foot-candles at 50 feet, and 0.0137 foot-candles at 100 feet.

The following table and figures represent the total increase in ambient light produced by the proposed sign under normal or typical operation at night. The ambient light increases will actually be less than shown in the chart, as the figures do not consider any objects that may block the line of sight to the sign. In addition to obstructions, any existing light source within the viewing cone will further diminish any light increase.

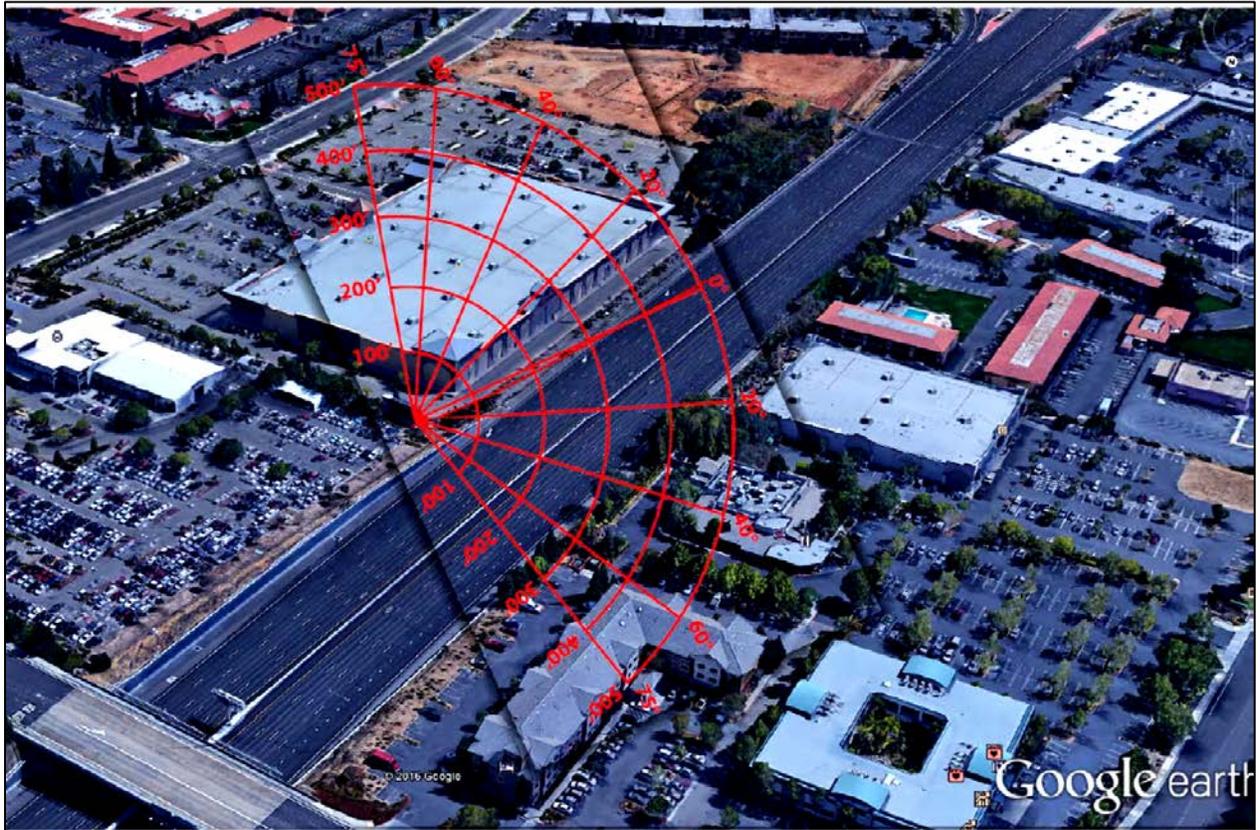
**Table 1: Light Values - Foot-Candles at Night Under Typical Operation**

	<i>0 degrees</i>	<i>20 degrees</i>	<i>40 degrees</i>	<i>60 degrees</i>	<i>90 degrees</i>
<i>100'</i>	0.3588	0.2960	0.1999	0.0904	0.0179
<i>200'</i>	0.0897	0.0740	0.0500	0.0226	0.0045
<i>300'</i>	0.0399	0.0329	0.0222	0.0100	0.0020
<i>400'</i>	0.0224	0.0185	0.0125	0.0057	0.0011
<i>500'</i>	0.0144	0.0118	0.0080	0.0036	0.0007

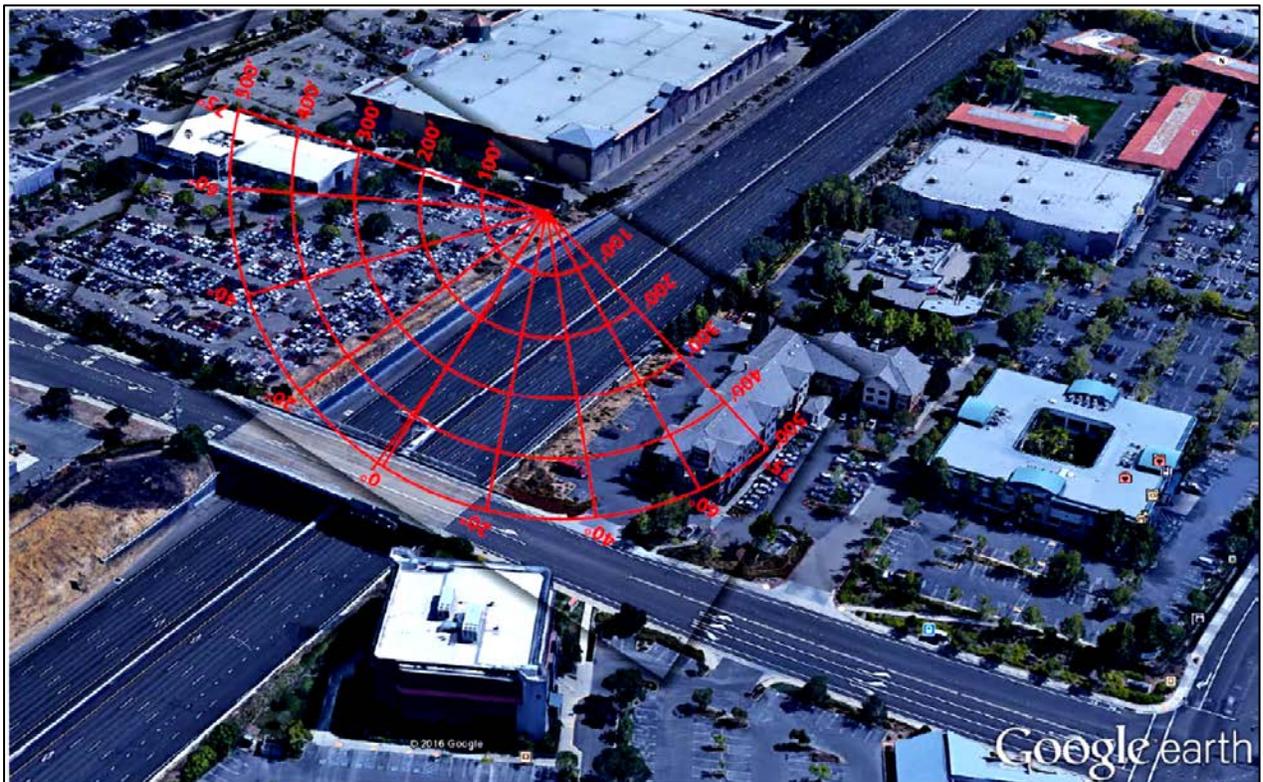
Given the above comparisons and measurements, the adjacent commercial area and freeway will see an almost undetectable difference in ambient light after installation of the new electronic reader board. Ambient light levels in the vicinity are more currently impacted by existing urban lighting, such as street lights, commercial parking lot lighting, building wall lighting, vehicle headlights and illuminated commercial signage.

The following renderings graphically illustrate site-specific locations relating to the distances, lighting angles and light levels for the proposed electronic read board, as reflected in Table 1 above.

**Figure 4A: Light Angle/Distance Map – west facing reader board**



**Figure 4B: Light Angle/Distance Map – east facing reader board**



### **Regional Sign Comparison**

Several electronic reader boards have been approved/constructed within the greater Sacramento region, including the Cities of Sacramento and Elk Grove, as summarized following.

**City of Sacramento** – In May 2010, the Sacramento City Council approved digital (LED) billboards for four locations as follows:

**Billboard #1** – north side of Interstate 80 near Northgate Boulevard – two-sided digital display (14' x 48') with an overall height of 90 feet, including a 5-foot long decorative cap – total display area of 1,344 square feet.

**Billboard #2** – Business 80 and Fulton Avenue – two-sided digital display (14' x 48') with an overall height of 65 feet – total display area of 1,344 square feet (see Figure 5).

**Billboard #3** – west side of Highway 99 – two-sided digital display (14' x 48') with an overall height of 50 feet, including a 5-foot long decorative cap – total display area of 1,344 square feet.

**Billboard #4** – west of Interstate 5 and Richards Boulevard – two-sided digital display (14' x 48') with an overall height of 70 feet, including a 5-foot long decorative cap – total display area of 1,344 square feet.



Figure 5

**Elk Grove Automall** - In February 2016, the Elk Grove City Council approved plans for an 80-foot electronic reader board sign for the Elk Grove Automall to replace the existing sign that had been in place for approximately 10 years. The actual sign is 68 feet in height, while the remaining 12 feet consists of a pylon extension, designed as an architectural feature (see Figure 6 – rendering of approved Elk Grove Automall sign).

### **Static Directional Information on Sign**

Since the Roseville Automall was constructed, additional automalls (Folsom, Elk Grove, Fairfield) have commenced operation in the area that serve as competition to the Roseville Automall. The applicants indicate that the Roseville Automall is at a disadvantage because it is not directly visible from the freeway, as are other automalls in the area. Therefore, the off-site signage is necessary to direct people to take the Eureka Road exit to access the Automall. The initial intent of allowing off-site signage for the Automall was to raise awareness of and direct motorists to the Automall's location. As discussed above, the proposed sign includes a directional sign indicating the Eureka Road exit for the Automall.

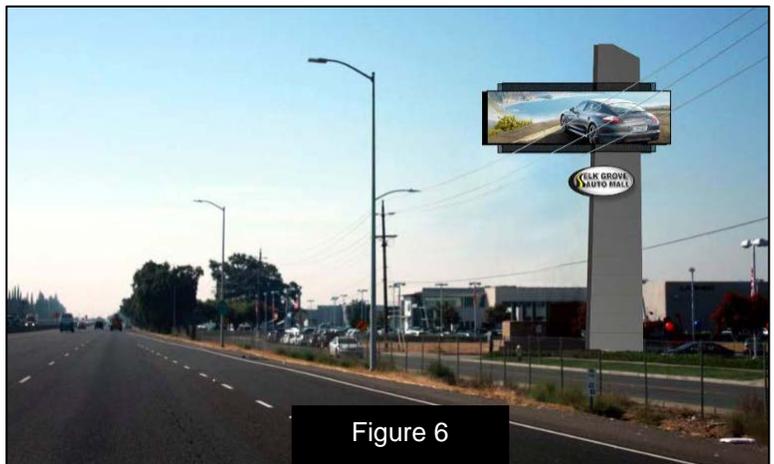


Figure 6

## **Planned Sign Permit Modification Conclusion**

The Roseville Automall is an important economic contributor to the fiscal health of the City. The Automall continues to be a significant source of sales tax generation, which provides a large percentage of discretionary funds that are allocated to programs such as youth services and recreation programs. The Automall has proven to be a successful public/private venture that has benefited the residents of Roseville through taxes and fees collected through its operation.

The Automall is operating in a highly competitive environment, and as previously mentioned, the Roseville Automall does not enjoy direct freeway visibility. Therefore, special signage is necessary to alert consumers of its presence. Additionally, the reader board component of the existing sign is utilizing 10 year old technology, and is nearing the end of its designed life expectancy.

As discussed above, the Automall Master Use Permit includes provisions and standards for Automall signage. In recognition of the factors discussed above, the City Council previously granted approvals within the Automall's Master Use Permit and Planned Sign Permit Program (February 1992) to allow for freeway visible promotional and directional signs. In addition, the Sign Ordinance was amended to allow for freeway visible promotional and directional signs for the Automall with those same approvals. In March 1998, the Planning Commission approved a text change to the Automall Master Use Permit to specifically allow an off-site, freeway visible electronic reader board. These previous actions have established the provisions for offsite electronic reader board sign opportunities for the Automall.

The City's Sign Ordinance, at Chapter 17.08.225, requires three findings of fact be made in order to approve a Planned Sign Permit Program or Modification. Based on the analysis contained in this staff report and with the project conditions, the required findings for approval can be made for the proposed Planned Sign Permit Program Modification (PSPPMOD) to allow construction of the proposed electronic reader board sign. The three findings for approval of the PSPPMOD are contained in the Recommendation section of this report.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION**

This project is categorically exempt from the environmental review requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15332 (Infill Development Projects) and pursuant to Section 305 of the City of Roseville CEQA Implementing Procedures.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning Division recommends that the Design Committee take the following actions:

- A. Adopt the Negative Declaration;
- B. Adopt the three (3) findings of fact as shown below for the **PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM MODIFICATION – 200 NORTH SUNRISE AVENUE – INFILL PCL 189 – ROSEVILLE AUTOMALL ELECTRONIC READER BOARD REPLACEMENT – PL16-0050**:
  - 1. *The proposed Modification is consistent with the Roseville Sign Ordinance.*
  - 2. *As conditioned, the new sign is in harmony with and visually related to the buildings and uses in the surrounding developments.*
  - 3. *The proposed Modification is consistent with the objectives of the Roseville Automall Master Use Permit Signage Design Guidelines to provide an integrated system of on-site*

*and off-site signs that combine high marketing effectiveness with integrated, tasteful design compatible with the City's signage guidelines.*

- C. Approve the **PLANNED SIGN PERMIT PROGRAM MODIFICATION – 200 NORTH SUNRISE AVENUE – INFILL PCL 189 – ROSEVILLE AUTOMALL ELECTRONIC READER BOARD REPLACEMENT – PL16-0050** subject to twenty-one (21) conditions of approval.

**CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL FOR PL16-0050**

1. The project is approved as shown in Exhibits A – D, except as conditioned or modified below. (Planning)
2. This permit shall be valid for a period of two (2) years from this date and shall expire on **September 15, 2018** if a sign permit is not issued. Prior to said expiration date, the applicant may apply for an extension of time, provided, however, that this approval shall be extended for no more than one year from **September 15, 2018**. (Planning)
3. The overall height of the sign shall not exceed 43 feet, and the area of the electronic reader board shall not exceed 480 square feet. (Planning, Electric)
4. The sign shall include static text mounted on the face of the sign cabinet which states “Exit Eureka Road” or similar text to the satisfaction of the Planning Division. (Planning)
5. No signage shall be erected prior to the submittal and approval of a Standard Sign Permit application. (Planning)
6. All necessary permits/approvals must be obtained from Caltrans prior to Planning Department approval of the Sign Permit. A copy of the applicable Caltrans permit shall be submitted with the City Sign Permit application. (Planning)
7. The sign shall not be highlighted or illuminated with additional direct or indirect lighting, (e.g., floodlighting). (Planning)
8. The applicant shall utilize a graffiti-resistant paint or other suitable finish on the sign cabinet and mounting column enclosure. (Planning, Police)
9. The outside edge of the sign is to maintain a minimum of 15’ clearance from the nearest 60kV transmission line, including sag and sway. The developer/applicant shall submit documentation to Roseville Electric that the required clearances will be maintained.
10. Any modification or relocation of existing electrical service shall be at the developer’s expense and approved by Roseville Electric prior to issuance of Building permit. (Electric)
11. Per CalOsha requirements all construction activities must maintain a minimum of 11’ from all energized overhead facilities. In the event this requirement cannot be met and overhead transmission and distribution lines need to be de-energized the following requirements apply:
  - a. Working hours will be from 12:00AM to 6:00AM.
  - b. Applicant must contact Roseville Electric in writing two weeks prior to requested de-energization.
  - c. Applicant is responsible for all Labor/Materials cost associated with the de-energizing 60kV transmission and 12kV distribution system.
  - d. Roseville Electric reserves the right to deny the request to de-energize overhead facilities.

12. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that all existing electric facilities remain free and clear of any obstruction during construction and when the project is complete. (Electric)
13. The project is subject to the noise standards established in the City's Noise Ordinance. In accordance with the City's Noise Ordinance project construction is exempt between the hours of seven a.m. and seven p.m. Monday through Friday, and between the hours of eight a.m. and eight p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Provided, however, that all construction equipment shall be fitted with factory installed muffling devices and that all construction equipment shall be maintained in good working order. (Building)
14. A building permit is required prior to commencement of any construction activity. (Building)
15. Building permit plans shall comply with all applicable code requirements (Uniform Building Code - UBC, Uniform Mechanical Code - UMC, Uniform Plumbing Code - UPC, Uniform Fire Codes - UFC and National Electrical Code - NEC), California Title 24 and the American with Disabilities Act - ADA requirements, and all State and Federally mandated requirements in effect at the time of submittal for building permits (contact the Building Department for applicable Code editions). (Building)
16. Sealed/Signed engineered design documents submitted for Building Permit shall demonstrate compliance with: the structural requirements of the California Building Code; the electrical requirements of the California Electrical Code; and the electrical power and outdoor sign lighting energy requirements of the California Energy Code. (Building)
17. Existing public facilities damaged during the course of construction shall be repaired by the applicant, at the applicant's expense, to the satisfaction of the City. (Engineering, Environmental Utilities, Electric)
18. Applicant shall apply for and obtain an encroachment permit from the Engineering Department prior to any work conducted within the City right-of-way. (Engineering)
19. If the existing electrical service to the sign needs to be upgraded, any costs associated with upgrading the service to meet the new loads will be at the developer's expense. (Electric)
20. The new electronic reader board sign shall not be placed any closer to the existing water main than the existing sign. (Environmental Utilities)
21. Advertisements that display moving images, flashing or intermittent light are prohibited in accordance with the Roseville Sign Ordinance and Business and Professions Code. (Planning)

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Vicinity Map
2. Caltrans Standards for Off-Premise signs (B&P Code Section 5408.a & b)
3. Existing Sign Elevation
4. Photo Simulations of New Sign

## **EXHIBITS**

- A. Initial Study / Negative Declaration
- B. Sign Easement/Location Exhibit
- C. New Sign Elevation
- D. New Sign Details

**Note to Applicant and/or Developer:** Please contact the Planning Division staff at (916) 774-5276 prior to the Commission meeting if you have any questions on any of the recommended conditions for your project. If you challenge the decision of the Commission in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues which you or someone else raised at the public hearing held for this project, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning Manager at, or prior to, the public hearing.