



Staff Report

File #: 24-0089

REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

DATE: 02/07/2024

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Planning & Development Department

SUBJECT:

ZONE TEXT AMENDMENT 2023-0006 TO TITLE 17 OF THE CORONA MUNICIPAL CODE, SECTION 17.74.040 (A), TO ESTABLISH REGULATIONS FOR DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE FOR PROPERTIES AFFECTED BY PUBLIC IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS INITIATED BY THE CITY (APPLICANT: CARLOS PADILLA, CPI PROPERTIES, LP)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This staff report asks the City Council to approve an ordinance that would amend the City's Sign Ordinance in [Chapter 17.74](#) of the Corona Municipal Code (CMC) to establish criteria for directional signage that would support properties that have been physically and visually altered by a public improvement project initiated by the City.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the City Council:

- a. Approve ZTA2023-0006, as recommended by the Planning and Housing Commission.
- b. Introduce, by title only, and waive full reading of consideration of Ordinance No. 3387, first reading of an ordinance amending [Section 17.74.040\(A\)](#) of Title 17 (Zoning) of the Corona Municipal Code to permit directional signage for properties affected by public improvement projects initiated by the City (ZTA2023-0006).

BACKGROUND & HISTORY:

CPI Properties ("applicant") owns the property located at the northeast corner of McKinley Street and Sampson Avenue. The property is 5.3 acres and is developed as a commercial center (Los Arcos Plaza) that consists of commercial services and restaurants. The original condition of the applicant's property had frontage on McKinley Street and unobstructed visibility. A portion of the property owned by the applicant, which is being bifurcated from the rest of the property, is being acquired by the City through eminent domain proceedings to support the new roadway alignment on McKinley

Street. The grade separation that will be constructed over the railroad tracks located just south of the applicant's property will result in an elevated bridge with a solid concrete support wall extending in front of the applicant's property on McKinley Street. When completed, the grade separation will obstruct the visibility of the applicant's property from McKinley Street.

Because of the extent of public improvements to support the McKinley Grade Separation project, which will change the size, access to, and visibility of the applicant's property from its original condition, the applicant is requesting that directional signage for properties affected by public improvement projects have regulations for directional signage that is different from the current regulations prescribed by [Section 17.74.040\(A\)](#) of the city's Sign Ordinance ([Chapter 17.74 of the Corona Municipal Code](#)).

Prior to processing the ZTA, the applicant submitted a request to the Planning and Housing Commission pursuant to [CMC Section 17.106.020\(A\)](#) requesting that the Sign Ordinance be amended to make accommodations for directional signs that would serve properties affected by public improvement projects. The Planning and Housing Commission at its meeting on August 21, 2023, discussed the proposed request and recommended that staff proceed with the processing of an amendment to the Sign Ordinance and schedule a public hearing for its review.

The Planning and Housing Commission granted the applicant a variance (V2022-0001) to have a 77-square-foot directional sign instead of a six-square-foot directional sign as currently allowed under the code. The 77-square-foot sign area includes a 32-square-foot Los Arcos Plaza name sign panel and a 45-square-foot sign panel that provides direction to the Los Arcos Plaza. There is no advertisement of tenants or businesses on the sign associated with the variance. As proposed by the applicant, the zone text amendment would allow a maximum of one directional sign per parcel with the identification of at least two tenants on the sign. If the zone text amendment is approved, the applicant would have the choice of constructing the one directional sign, or the sign approved by V2022-0001, but not both.

The applicant submitted an official application for a zone text amendment in October 2023. The Planning and Housing Commission at its meeting on January 22, 2024, recommended that the City Council approve ZTA2023-0006.

ANALYSIS:

ZTA2023-0006 would amend [CMC Section 17.74.040\(A\)](#) regarding directional signage. The proposed language is shown in an underlined format.

17.74.040 Exemptions.

Except as expressly provided for in this Section, the provisions and regulations of this chapter and title shall not apply to the following signs, nor shall the area of such signs be counted toward the maximum allowable sign area for any premises or use.

*(A) **Directional sign.** The city has a compelling interest in permitting directional signs to promote traffic safety. Directional signs shall be permitted on-site in addition to the other signs listed in this section.*

(1) A directional sign used to give directions to traffic or pedestrians or to give instructions as to special conditions shall not exceed a total of six square feet in area per sign and shall be permitted on-site in addition to the other signs listed in this section.

(2) A parcel of land which meets all of the following criteria may have one directional sign up to a maximum area of one hundred (100) square feet and a maximum height of forty (40) feet is permitted if all of the following criteria are met:

(a) The parcel of land to which the directional sign pertains is bifurcated as a direct result of an eminent domain proceeding in connection with a public improvement project initiated by the City.

(b) The visibility of the parcel of land to which the directional sign pertains is directly and significantly affected by the public improvement project initiated by the City.

(c) The directional sign is located on land which had been a part of the parcel of land that was bifurcated as a direct result of the public improvement project initiated by the City.

(d) The directional sign is located within 175 feet of the closest edge of the parcel of land to which the directional sign pertains and gives directions only to the parcel.

(e) The directional sign identifies no more than 2 nonresidential tenants or businesses operating on the parcel to which the directional sign pertains.

(f) A maximum of one directional sign shall be permitted per parcel to which the directional sign pertains.

(g) No part of the parcel of land to which the directional sign pertains is zoned or used for residential purposes.

(h) A sign permit has been issued for the directional sign pursuant to Section 17.74.050

The amendment provides a clear understanding of the minimum conditions to be met when considering directional signage. The criteria established by the amendment narrow the type of directional signs that can be granted pursuant to very detailed standards, specifically to a parcel of land to which the directional sign pertains is bifurcated as a direct result of an eminent domain proceeding in connection with a public improvement project initiated by the City.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The applicant paid the application processing fees of \$5,760.28 to cover the cost of the Zone Text Amendment.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

This action is exempt pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the Guidelines for the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the common sense exemption that CEQA applies only to projects that have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment. Where it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity in question may have a significant effect on the environment, the activity is not subject to CEQA. This action solely involves text revisions to the City's Zoning Ordinance in the Corona Municipal Code and there is no possibility that approving this project will have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, no environmental analysis is required.

PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION ACTION:

At its meeting on January 22, 2024, the Planning and Housing Commission considered the subject matter and took the following action:

Motion was made, seconded (Siqueland/Longwell) and carried unanimously that the Planning and Housing Commission recommend approval of ZTA2023-0006 to the City Council, based on the findings and conditions contained in the Staff Report. The minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting are included as Exhibit 4.

PREPARED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Attachments:

1. Exhibit 1 - City Ordinance No. 3387 - (Clean Version)
2. Exhibit 2 - City Ordinance No. 3387 - (Redline Version)
3. Exhibit 3 - Planning and Housing Commission Staff Report
4. Exhibit 4 - Draft Minutes of the Planning and Housing Commission meeting of January 22, 2024