



Agenda Report

File #: 20-0617

**PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

DATE: 8/10/2020

TO: Honorable Chair and Commissioners

FROM: Community Development Department

APPLICATION REQUEST:

ZTA2020-0002: Zone text amendment to Title 17 of the Corona Municipal Code, amending Section 17.74.070(H) to refine the conditions for the relocation of outdoor advertising signs (Billboards). (Applicant: City of Corona, 400 S. Vicentia Avenue, Corona, CA, 92882)

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

That the Planning and Housing Commission recommend APPROVAL of ZTA2020-0002 to the City Council, based on the findings contained in the staff report.

BACKGROUND

Zone Text Amendment (ZTA) 2020-0002 is an application by the city to amend the city's billboard regulations in Section 17.74.070 (H) of the Corona Municipal Code (CMC). The construction of new billboards are prohibited in the city; however, CMC Section 17.74.070 (H) makes provisions for new billboards to be constructed as part of a billboard relocation agreement requested by the city and entered into between the city and billboard operator or property owner. Billboards can include static boards, electronic message centers, electronic message boards, and changeable message boards. The municipal code further states the replacement of a static billboard face with any of the electronic messaging described above is considered a relocated billboard and therefore subject to a billboard relocation agreement.

Billboard relocation agreements are approved by the City Council. Therefore, the City Council has the sole and absolute discretion of the terms in the billboard relocation agreement and absolute discretion on the approval.

The current language in the Sign Ordinance does not describe minimum conditions that should be applied to billboard relocation agreements. The amendment proposes to add conditions to CMC Section 17.74.070(H) that would at a minimum be applied when the city considers a billboard

relocation agreement. The conditions being proposed for billboard relocation agreements include: a) a removal to replacement ratio, b) conditions for allowing billboards on parcels with a surface street frontage to be relocated to parcels that have freeway frontage, c) conditions for allowing billboards on parcels with a surface street frontage to be relocated to another parcel on a surface street, d) conditions for allowing billboards on parcels with freeway frontage to be relocated to another parcel with freeway frontage, e) prohibiting billboards on parcels with freeway frontage from being relocated to a parcel with a surface street frontage, and f) the size of relocated billboards.

The billboards within the city are mostly located along the freeway facing State Route 91 and Interstate 15. Staff completed an inventory of surface street billboards erected within the city on February 21, 2020. Four surface street billboards remain in the city. The surface street locations are described in the following table. The amendment would establish conditions that would result in the reduction of surface street billboards should there be a request to relocate surface street billboards to a parcel that provides frontage on a freeway.

Table 1
Surface Street Billboards Inventory

No.	General Location	Panels	Panel SF	Billboard ID#
1	SEC Magnolia Avenue & Downs Way (near Corona Animal Shelter)	Double-Sided	Unknown	2844
2	1410 E. 6 th Street (SEC 6 th Street & El Camino)	Single-sided	Unknown	2811
3	912 E. 6 th Street	Single-sided	Unknown	005265
4	1320 W. 6 th Street	Double-sided	Unknown	2804 & 2847

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

The changes proposed to Section 17.74.070(H) of the CMC are shown below. Text to be deleted is shown in ~~strikeout~~ and text to be added is shown underlined.

“(H) Except as provided in § 17.74.220 (regarding flags, banners, and pennants on city-owned light poles) and in § 17.74.120 (regarding kiosk signs), flags, banners, pennants, festoons, off-premises and outdoor advertising signs (~~Billboards~~billboards). However, notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, and consistent with the California Business & Professions Code Outdoor Advertising provisions, new ~~offpremisess~~offpremisess advertising ~~displays,signs~~ (billboards), including electronic message centers, electronic message boards, and changeable message boards, may be considered and constructed as part of a relocation agreement requested by the city ~~or redevelopment agency~~ and entered into between the city ~~or redevelopment agency~~ and a billboard and/or property owner. The replacement of a static billboard face with an electronic message center, electronic message board, or changeable message board pursuant to a billboard relocation agreement shall be considered a relocation for purposes of this section. ~~Such agreements may be approved by the City Council upon terms that are agreeable to the city and/or redevelopment agency in their sole and~~

absolute discretion. The execution of a relocation agreement shall not operate to change the status of any billboard as a nonconforming use for purposes of this code. Such billboard relocation agreements may be approved by the City Council within its sole and absolute discretion and upon terms that are acceptable in its sole and absolute discretion; provided, however, that at a minimum the following conditions shall apply:

(1) A billboard may be relocated from a parcel with surface street frontage to a parcel with freeway frontage only if the following occur as part of such relocation: (A) at least three (3) billboards are removed in exchange for the one (1) relocated billboard; and (B) the total combined square footage of the relocated billboard is less than the total combined square footage of the three (3) removed billboards, with each panel or billboard face being counted towards the total square footage.

(2) A billboard may be relocated from a parcel with surface street frontage to another parcel with surface street frontage only if the following occur as part of such relocation: (A) the surface street on which the relocated billboard is located must be the same surface street on which the removed billboard had been located; and (B) the total combined square footage of the relocated billboard is less than the total combined square footage of the removed billboard, with each panel or billboard face being counted towards the total square footage.

(3) A billboard may be relocated from a parcel with freeway frontage to another parcel with freeway frontage only if the total combined square footage of the relocated billboard is less than the total combined square footage of the removed billboard, with each panel or billboard face being counted towards the total square footage.

(4) A billboard located on a parcel with freeway frontage may not be relocated to a parcel with surface street frontage.

(5) For all billboard relocations, the total square footage of the relocated billboard must be less than the total combined square footage of the removed billboard, with each panel or billboard face being counted towards the total square footage.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:

Per Section 15061(b)(3) of the State Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the general rule 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. ZTA2020-0002 is solely a Zoning Code text revision to refine the criteria for relocating outdoor advertising signs (billboards) and narrow the types of outdoor advertising signs (billboards) that can be relocated pursuant to a relocation agreement, which will potentially result in a reduction in the overall number of outdoor advertising signs (billboards) in the City, and there is no possibility that adopting this Ordinance will have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, a Notice of Exemption was prepared.

FISCAL IMPACT

ZTA2020-0002 is an application by the city. Therefore, no application fees were paid for the processing of this application.

PUBLIC NOTICE

A 10-day public notice was advertised in the Sentinel Weekly News.

STAFF ANALYSIS

The proposed amendment to the CMC provides a clear understanding on the minimum conditions to be met when considering billboard relocation agreements. The criteria for billboards established by the amendment narrow the types of billboards that can be relocated pursuant to a relocation agreement and perhaps reduces the overall number of billboards in the city. The billboard size of the relocated billboard is also required to be smaller than the size of the current billboard. Therefore, the billboard relocation criteria being established by this amendment is consistent with General Plan Goal CD-7 to maintain, establish, develop, and protect the city's highways and corridors for scenic purposes.

FINDINGS FOR APPROVAL OF ZTA2020-0002

1. Per Section 15061(b)(3) of the State Guidelines for Implementing the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which states that a project is exempt from CEQA if the activity is covered by the general rule 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. ZTA2020-0002 is solely a Zoning Code text revision to refine the criteria for relocating outdoor advertising signs (billboards) and narrow the types of outdoor advertising signs (billboards) that can be relocated pursuant to a relocation agreement, which will potentially result in a reduction in the overall number of outdoor advertising signs (billboards) in the City, and there is no possibility that adopting this Ordinance will have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, a Notice of Exemption was prepared.
2. The proposed amendment in accordance with CMC Section 17.106.030 is consistent with the General Plan for the following reasons:
 - a. *The Zoning Amendment will facilitate and promote the reduction in the overall number of outdoor advertising signs (billboards) in the City, which is consistent with General Plan Goal CD-7 to maintain, establish, develop, and protect the City's highways and corridors for scenic purposes.*
 - b. *The Zoning Amendment will preserve the existing prohibition on the installation or expansion of billboards and will foster the phasing out of signage that may impair scenic views on the City's scenic highways and corridors.*

c. The Zoning Amendment is consistent with the Corona General Plan because the General Plan establishes a baseline for development in the City, and the Zoning Amendment does not interfere or conflict with the elements, goals, and policies established in the General Plan.

3. The proposed amendment in accordance with CMC Section 17.106.030 is consistent with intent of Title 17 of the Corona Municipal Code for the following reason:

a. Title 17 of the Corona Municipal Code regulates land use, development standards and performance standards within the City and the amendment refines the criteria for relocating outdoor advertising signs (billboards) and narrows the types of outdoor advertising signs (billboards) that can be relocated pursuant to a relocation agreement, which will potentially result in a reduction in the overall number of outdoor advertising signs (billboards) in the City, thereby maintaining an attractive community and quality of life for the residents of the City.

4. The proposed amendment will provide for the public health, safety, and welfare for the following reason:

a. The amendment refines the criteria for relocating outdoor advertising signs (billboards) under CMC Section 17.74.070(H), thereby narrowing the types of outdoor advertising signs (billboards) that can be relocated pursuant to a relocation agreement and perhaps reducing the overall number of outdoor advertising signs (billboards) in the City.

PREPARED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED BY: JOANNE COLETTA, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

EXHIBITS

1. Exhibit A - Proposed Amendment to CMC Section 17.74.070(H) (redline version)
2. Exhibit B - Environmental documentation

Case Planner: Joanne Coletta (951) 736-2262