

Proposed Citywide Sign Ordinance and Digital Billboard Options

Briefing to
PLUM

Department of City Planning

June 24, 2014



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Ordinance Background

- City banned off-site signs in 2002
- City was sued; spent years in court
- Courts ruled that City can only make limited exceptions to ban
- Needed revisions have taken more than 5 years and 15 hearings



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Why is this ordinance needed now?

- To comply with court rulings
 - Limited, objective criteria for exceptions
 - Address aesthetics and traffic safety
 - Content neutrality
- To preclude further lawsuits and legal costs
- To modernize, streamline and refine the city's sign regulations



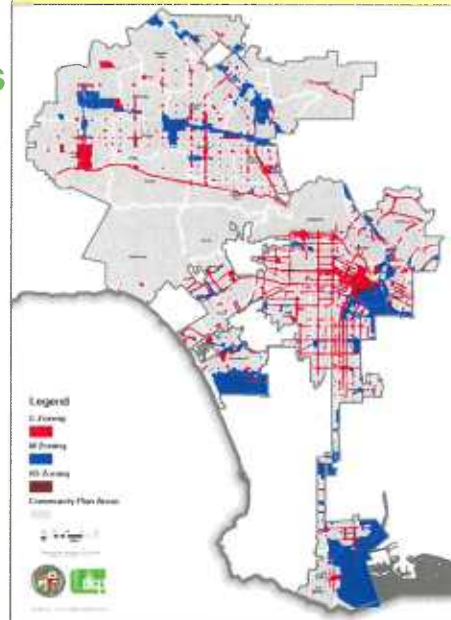
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Sign Districts: Currently Eligible Areas

- Every commercial or industrial property
- R5 properties downtown

Off-site signs also allowed through Specific Plans anywhere in the city

Areas Eligible for Sign Districts (current)



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Sign Districts: Proposed Eligible Areas

- Regional centers, LAX, Port of LA, greater downtown area, stadiums, LA zoo
- Prohibited near single family zones, LA River, state/national parks, ecological preserves
- 90% reduction in eligible areas

Areas Eligible for Sign Districts (proposed)

Legend

- City of Los Angeles
- City of Inglewood
- City of Long Beach
- City of Torrance
- City of Watts
- City of Compton
- City of Harbor City
- City of Gardena
- City of Lawton
- City of Lynwood
- City of Bell
- City of Bellflower
- City of Buena Vista
- City of Cerritos
- City of Covington
- City of East Los Angeles
- City of East Rancho Dominguez
- City of East Whittier
- City of El Monte
- City of Fullerton
- City of Industry
- City of La Brea
- City of La Habra
- City of La Habra-Northshore
- City of La Puente
- City of Norwalk
- City of Orange
- City of Orangeburg
- City of Pico Rivera
- City of Rosemead
- City of San Gabriel
- City of San Marino
- City of San Dimas
- City of San Juan Capistrano
- City of San Jose
- City of San Juan del Rio
- City of San Leandro
- City of San Mateo
- City of San Rafael
- City of Santa Ana
- City of Santa Clara
- City of Santa Fe Springs
- City of Santa Monica
- City of Signal Hill
- City of South Gate
- City of South Pasadena
- City of South Whittier
- City of Tustin
- City of Van Nuys
- City of West Athens
- City of West Covina
- City of Westmont
- City of Westminster
- City of Westwood
- City of Woodland Hills
- City of Woodland
- City of Woodbury
- City of Yorba Linda
- City of Yucaipa

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Sign Reduction Ratio

- Proposed ratio: greater than 1 for 1
- Half of this may be met by community benefits related to traffic or aesthetics
- Other cities have higher ratios

Off-Site Signs in the City of Los Angeles

COUNCIL DISTRICT	SIGNETS	STAMPS
01 Central	1	479
02 Downtown	2	459
03 Hollywood	3	270
04 Hollywood	4	301
05 Hollywood	5	488
06 Hollywood	6	321
07 Hollywood	7	278
08 Hollywood	8	301
09 Hollywood	9	341
10 Hollywood	10	412
11 Hollywood	11	302
12 Hollywood	12	188
13 Hollywood	13	481
14 Hollywood	14	318
15 Hollywood	15	304
TOTAL		3874

Questions

The City of Los Angeles is a large and diverse city with many different communities and neighborhoods. The City of Los Angeles is a large and diverse city with many different communities and neighborhoods. The City of Los Angeles is a large and diverse city with many different communities and neighborhoods. The City of Los Angeles is a large and diverse city with many different communities and neighborhoods.

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Digital Displays

- New brightness limits: 7,500 candelas (day), 450 candelas (night)
- Sensors for automatic dimming



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Administrative Civil Penalties: Background

- Enforcement fees currently only a few hundred dollars
- Value of off-site signs up to hundreds of thousands
- City has struggled with flagrant violations
- The NYC example:
 - Over 10,000 citations issued
 - Removed 3,000 illegal billboards



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Administrative Civil Penalties: Recommendation

- Penalties proportionate to off-site sign values
- 15-day grace period
- Penalties waived if sign copy removed
- Appeal process with expedited option
- Penalties will only go into effect 90 days after the effective date of the ordinance



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“Rebuttable Presumption” Signs: Background

- State law requires proof of illegality to enforce off-site sign regulations
- Proof requires evidence
- Two categories of signs – those with a permit, and those without
- For signs with no permit, there is likely no evidence



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“Rebuttable Presumption” Signs: Recommendations

Signs with no permit:

- No permit likely means no evidence of illegality
- Allow as legal nonconforming

Signs not in compliance with permit:

- Permit can be used as evidence of noncompliance
- Subject to citation and enforcement



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Should digital billboards be allowed outside of Sign Districts?



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Background & Summary

Visioning Group met 3 times

- Option 1: No digital off-site signs outside of Sign Districts.
- Option 2: "**Public Option**". Digital billboards on public (city-owned) property only.
- Option 3: "**Public/Private Option**". Digital billboards on public and private properties.



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Santa Clarita

- 62 billboards removed
- 3 digital billboards constructed on public property near freeways
- 65% of revenue to City (after deductions)
- Sign consultant helped negotiate terms



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Sacramento

- 17 existing, legal, non-conforming billboards must be removed
- Up to 4 digital billboards facing freeways allowed
- The city will receive an initial payment of 330K then 720K over 5 years



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Chicago

- Up to 60 digital billboards constructed on public property near freeways
- 1 out of 8 messages must be a PSA
- City gets 15 million then 155 million over 20 years
- City gets revenue share between 30-50% (projected to be 276 million or 42%)
- City pays back 41.8 million for construction costs



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Recommendations

- Approve proposed sign ordinance
- Select a digital signs option for further study
- Support creation & continued funding of Sign Unit



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