

**ARAPAHOE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**PUBLIC HEARING**  
August 6, 2024  
6:30 P.M.

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**SUBJECT: LDC24-002 LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE SIGN REGULATIONS  
AMENDMENT**

**KAT HAMMER, SENIOR PLANNER**

**JUNE 26, 2024**

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**PURPOSE AND REQUEST**

This county-initiated project proposes amending the Land Development Code (LDC), specifically, Section 4-1-.5, Signs, Section 5-4.4, Planned Sign Program, and Chapter 7, Definitions. Staff is requesting a recommendation of approval from the Planning Commission on the draft regulations.

**BACKGROUND**

Planning staff proposes amendments to the LDC when and as appropriate and necessary to reflect current practices or otherwise in response to new or changing needs. Staff worked with Clarion Associates to produce proposed revisions to the LDC to match more common practices and simplify the sign regulations and process. The proposed revisions allow for increased freestanding signage depending on the adjacent street frontage and the size of the parcel(s) and are intended to simplify the permitted number and size of fascia signs, remove special sign allowances for specific uses, update and include definitions for certain types of signs, and revise the process and clarify the regulations of the Planned Sign Program.

Staff brought this proposal to the Planning Commission for a study session on March 12, 2024. At this meeting staff did not have the definition for Agricultural Entry Feature established, and staff is proposing that this type of sign be defined as, “ A structure made up of vertical supports located on either side of the primary vehicle entrance driveway to a property zoned A-1 or A-E and a horizontal element joining the tops of the two vertical supports, and in which the surface of the vertical supports and horizontal element has a width of at least two feet when viewed from the public or private street from which the entry driveway departs.” These types of signs would be subject to the underlying zone district maximum height, which is 50 feet for A-1 and A-E zone districts.

Staff brought this proposal to the Board of County Commissioner (BoCC) for a study session on April 12, 2024. The BoCC raised concerns about the definition of a vehicle sign and a pole sign (pole signs are prohibited in the LDC). The BoCC was concerned that signage on vehicles for businesses is what the LDC was regulating. Staff revised the definition of a vehicle sign to clarify that a vehicle sign is an advertisement painted or affixed to a car, truck, trailer, or other similar motorized or non-motorized vehicle that is parked and visible from the public right-of-way and used primarily as a sign and not as a vehicle. Staff also revised the definition of pole sign, to clarify that a pole sign is mounted on a freestanding pole or other support so that the bottom edge of the sign face is at least three feet or more above grade, which distinguishes pole sign from a permanent freestanding sign, which is permitted per the LDC.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

The proposed regulations (Attachment 3) were posted on the County website for public comment from May 21, 2024, to June 20, 2024. An email including the proposed regulations was sent to more than 60 sign contractors that the county had on file from previous sign permit applications on May 22, 2024. No comments were received during the public comment period.

**DISCUSSION AND PROPOSED CHANGES**

Staff is proposing the following changes to the LDC:

Increased Freestanding Signage:

The BoCC approved a LDC amendment on January 5, 2021, revising the sign regulations to prohibit billboards and conversions of existing billboards to electronic message centers. The approved amendment defines a billboard as any permanent freestanding sign that exceeds forty-eight square feet per sign face or six feet in height. Since this amendment, staff has received inquiries for freestanding signs larger than six feet in height and forty-eight square feet per sign face along higher volume roadways and/or higher speed roadways. Staff is recommending an amendment to the LDC to include Table 4-1.5.2: Permitted Freestanding Signs, allowing for increased signage for parcels that can meet certain criteria.

<b>TABLE 4-1.5.2: PERMITTED FREESTANDING SIGNS</b>				
Size of Contiguous Lot(s) or Parcels(s)	Abutting Street Frontage	Maximum Number of Signs per Right-of-Way Access Points	Maximum Sign Height	Maximum Sign Area
Less than 10 acres	Local < 400 ft.	1	6 ft.	48 sq. ft.
	Local ≥ 400 ft.	1	6 ft.	64 sq. ft.
	Collector < 400 ft.	1	8 ft.	56 sq. ft.
	Collector ≥ 400 ft.	1	8 ft.	72 sq. ft.
	Arterial/Freeway < 400 ft.	1	10 ft.	64 sq. ft.
	Arterial/Freeway ≥ 400 ft.	1	10 ft.	80 sq. ft.
10 to 100 acres	Local	2	6 ft.	64 sq. ft.
	Collector	2	8 ft.	72 sq. ft.
	Arterial/Freeway	2	10 ft.	80 sq. ft.
More than 100 acres containing primary civic or institutional use <sup>390</sup>	Collector or Arterial/Freeway	2	25 ft.	100 sq. ft.

Fascia Signs:

The current sign regulations determine the amount of maximum wall-mounted/fascia signage by measuring the distance between the nearest adjacent public right-of-way and the location of the fascia upon which the sign is to be placed, to determine the maximum letter height of a wall-mounted/fascia message. The permitted maximum height is then multiplied by two-thirds the length of the fascia or building elevation upon which the sign is placed, to determine the maximum sign area per wall-mounted/fascia sign. Staff is recommending revisions to the allowable wall-mounted/fascia signage outlined in Table 4-1.5.2.

TABLE 4-1.5.2: PERMITTED FASCIA SIGNS			
Type of Fascia Sign	Zoning District	Maximum Number of Fascia Signs	Maximum Sign Area
Primary	B-1, B-3	1 per street facing façade of primary building	0.5 sq. ft. per linear foot of primary building façade width, Max 65 sq. ft.
	B-4	1 per street facing façade of primary building, plus 1 if street facing lot frontage < 200 ft.	0.5 sq. ft. per linear foot of primary building façade width, Max 100 sq. ft.
	B-5		
	I-1, I-2	1 per street facing frontage of primary building, plus 1 if street facing lot frontage < 400 ft.	0.5 sq. ft. per linear foot of primary building façade width, Max 200 sq. ft.
	O	1 per street facing façade of primary building	0.25 sq. ft. per linear foot of primary building façade width, Max 65 sq. ft.
	PUD	Allowance for base district with most similar permitted uses and development intensities, as determined by Zoning Administrator, applies	
Accessory	B-1, B-2, B-4, B-5, I-1, I-2	1 per primary building pedestrian entrance	35 sq. ft.
	O	None	None
	PUD	Allowance for base district with most similar permitted uses and development intensities, as determined by Zoning Administrator applies	

**Removal of Special Sign Allowances for Specific Uses:**

The LDC currently includes specific sign regulations based on uses, specifically: Office, Industrial, Hotel/Motel, Hospital, and single-tenant Retail uses. Staff is recommending an amendment to remove special fascia sign allowances for specified use to match more common practice.

**Update Definitions:**

Staff is recommending revising, removing, and including definitions related to signage. The proposed changes are intended to provide consistency and clarify specific types of signs or sign characteristics.

Revise: Sign, Projecting, Sign Height, and Sign, Logo.

New Definitions: Agricultural Entry Feature, Mural, Sign, Pole, Sign, Three-Dimensional and Sign, Vehicle.

Remove Definitions: Sign, Political signs, Sign, Directional, Signs, Directory, Sign, Identification, Sign, Project Identification sign, Sign Special Area/Theme, and Sign, Off-Premise.

**REVISIONS TO THE PLANNED SIGN PROGRAM:**

Staff is proposing revisions to the Planned Sign Program to clarify that certain regulations in the sign regulations can or cannot be altered and to what extent. The revisions also remove the requirement for BoCC approval and propose administrative approval to allow for faster processing and avoid potential claims of impermissible prior restraints.

**STAFF FINDINGS**

The proposed changes would match more common practices and simplify the sign regulations and process. The proposed changes provide additional clarity for LDC users and Staff.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Considering the findings and other information provided herein, Staff recommends approval of Case No. LDC24-002, Sign Regulations, subject to the following stipulation:

1. Staff, with the approval of the County Attorney, may correct typographical errors and make such revisions to the Code amendment as are necessary to incorporate the approved amendment into the Land Development Code for publication.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Proposed LDC Amendments, Section 5-4.1, Signs – CLEAN
2. Proposed LDC Amendments, Section 5-4.4, Planned Sign Program – CLEAN
3. Proposed LDC Amendments, Section 7-2 Definitions - CLEAN
4. Proposed LDC Amendments with changes highlighted.