



# Briefing for Planning Commission

**Planning Division**  
**Community & Economic Development Department**

**To:** Planning Commission Members  
**From:** Doug Dansie, Senior Planner  
**Date:** May 18, 2011  
**Re:** Billboard Ordinance Work Session

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At the May 25<sup>th</sup> meeting we will have a general discussion regarding billboards.

The petitions are to bring City law into consistency with State law and to create standards for electronic billboards.

Staff will provide a PowerPoint presentation based upon the attached outline.

After the presentation staff would like some general basic direction regarding fundamental categories of decisions:

- 1) Should billboards be allowed to move with state law being the default, or should the City still have some receiving zone beyond state law? If the City has a receiving zone, where should it generally be located (industrial areas, neighborhood areas, etc.)?
- 2) Should electronic conversions be allowed? If so where?
- 3) Should conversion be based upon one to one square footage ratio or based upon a higher ratio; or a combination of the two, depending on what boards are being converted?
- 4) Should boards that are non-conforming for specific reasons (spacing, residential location, etc.) be allowed to convert?
- 5) Should Gateway provisions be preserved as is or should they be modified to more effectively encourage the removal of certain boards (such as those on 500 and 600 South)? Should movement and/or conversion be targeted or at least be "like for like"?
- 6) Should urban design and/or removal of impediment to development be used as an incentive to the conversion process (require to be part of building architecture, etc.)?
- 7) Direction regarding electronic signage in general (interactive, timing, size, location, etc.)

With general direction, staff will work with the attorneys to create a draft ordinance for the Planning Commission and the Community to specifically respond to.

## Power point outline

- 1) Existing policy
  - a) Move billboards out of residential, neighborhood commercial, historical, downtown and gateway areas
  - b) Create receiving zones for billboards in industrial and heavy commercial areas
  - c) Enhance “curb appeal” of the City by cleaning up gateways
  - d) Allow limited movement on some streets
  - e) Facilitate an overall reduction in the number of boards over time
- 2) Changes in state law since adoption of 1993 law
  - a) Allows movement of freeway billboards within one mile
  - b) Allows movement of other boards within variable distance
  - c) Requires consistency between on and off-premise illumination standards
  - d) Changes purpose of state law from protection of Utah’s scenic beauty to protection of billboards
- 3) New petition
  - a) Bring ordinance inconsistencies to be consistent with state law
    - i) Petition was not for major policy changes
  - b) Create criteria for electronic billboards
    - i) Ordinance is now silent, but has limited on-premise requirements
- 4) Conflicting ideologies
  - a) City wants boards out of neighborhoods – industry wants distribution throughout the City
  - b) City wants to enhance curb appeal from gateways – industry wants to be on busiest streets
  - c) City wants to maximize development – industry needs only enough development to pay taxes on the site, otherwise it discourages development when it conflicts with billboards
  - d) City wants tax revenue – industry wants to minimize taxes paid
  - e) City may be open to “Time Square” area- industry responds to vehicle counts, not pedestrian counts
  - f) City concerned about increased impact, enforcement and cost of electronic billboards – industry wants ability to convert to increase revenue and decrease labor costs
- 5) Criticism of existing law
  - a) Industry claims that the current receiving area is too small
  - b) Creates a monopoly for existing billboard providers
- 6) Policy questions
  - a) Does City still want to keep billboards out of neighborhoods?
    - i) Industry has movement capacity according to state law – would opening neighborhood simply result in moving low performing boards from other areas into neighborhoods?
    - ii) Petition did not request a change to policy
    - iii) Size limitations of on-premise signs and typical billboards are considerably different
    - iv) On-premise signs generally change with the business; off-premise are independent of the business and encumber the land
  - b) Does City still wish to keep gateways clean?
    - i) Industry has movement capacity according to state law – would opening gateways simply result in moving low performing boards from other areas onto gateway streets?
    - ii) New Billboards have been prohibited on freeways for 18 years. There are NO billboards on I-215 or Bangerter highway. There are only three billboards on I-80 (one of which is on residentially zoned land)

- iii) The petition did not request a change to policy
- iv) The greatest concentration of gateway boards is on 500/600 South ramps
  - (1) 500 /600 South are also non-conforming due to spacing and being on ramps
  - (2) Policy is to clean up gateways. Is the policy still valid?
  - (3) Are there methods of cleaning up 500 and 600 South and 600 North
    - (a) Should boards now located on ramps be allowed to move to areas conforming with State and federal law
- v) Banning of billboard on freeways has been accompanied by:
  - (1) requiring freeway landscaping for adjacent uses
  - (2) limiting on-premise signage on double front businesses (freeway on-premise limited to 75% of zoning size),
  - (3) investment in shortening viaducts (redevelopment on 500/600 has been hampered by billboards)
  - (4) upgrading freeway architecture i.e. lighting, fencing
- vi) Do freeway gateways and other gateways deserve differing treatment
  - (1) Pole signs may be appropriate on freeways but should boards be integrated into architecture when on other streets such as 400 South?
- c) Does City wish to still prohibit boards in Downtown or Mixed use areas
  - i) Is a Time Square feasible
    - (1) Would require modifications to spacing requirements
    - (2) Is electronic conversion appropriate
      - (a) Should it be one to one or at a reduction rate
    - (3) Is there conflicts with residential in mixed-use?
      - (a) Dimming at night
      - (b) Limitations on changeable copy – overall or based upon time of day
  - ii) Are pole signs appropriate or should they be integrated into architecture?
- d) Does City still wish to reduce overall numbers?
  - i) Because of the monopoly situation, do the remaining have more value
- e) Are the regulations for non-electronic boards adequate
  - i) Should there be a limited to changing of text
  - ii) Should there be limitation on lighting
    - (1) Should lighting limitation be based upon zone?
- f) Should conversion to electronic be allowed?
  - i) What areas are appropriate?
    - (1) Billboards are generally allowed now in limited manufacturing and general commercial
      - (a) Should that be expanded to all manufacturing and general commercial are (excluding gateways or areas proposed for rezoning by gateway master plan))
      - (b) Should it expand to other zoning districts?
      - (c) Should there be a distance requirement from residential areas or uses
      - (d) Should freeway oriented billboards be allowed to covert
        - (i) Should it be limited to conforming boards?
        - (ii) Should conversion be prohibited on ramps – specifically 500 and 600 South and 600 north
          - (iii)Should there be spacing requirement?
          - (iv)Should there be a reduction requirement?
  - ii) Should conversion be one to one or at a greater rate
    - (1) Electronic billboards are sold more often for the same space – enhancing their revenue, permanence and purchase cost while decreasing labor costs
    - (2) An 8 second interval allows over 7 differing messages per minute.
- iii) What are the appropriate timing issues for electronic?
  - (1) 8 seconds is an industry standard

(a) Should it vary by location or traffic speed

1. Less often on slower roads

- g) What are appropriate regulations for either on-or off-premise electronic signs
- i) Are interactive signs appropriate? (technologies to individualize signage according to reader)
  - ii) Are serial signs appropriate (signs that require several passes to read entire message i.e. Burma Shave)
  - iii) Is the use of audio or olfactory senses acceptable as part of an electronic sign?
  - iv) Should there be a minimum size of lettering to be readable from the road?
  - v) Should there be a limitation to the percentage of a sign that may be electronic based upon its location (i.e. only 40% of a sign be allowed to be electronic)
  - vi) Should electronic signs be required to NOT allow live action or animation as part of the construction technology (placing restriction within the mechanics of the sign to make it impossible to animate – thereby minimizing future enforcement issues)
  - vii) Should a minimum number of public service announcements be a requirement for conversion to electronic?
  - viii) Should non-conforming signs (on or off-premise) be allowed to convert?