

TRRG

Tucson Residents for Responsive Government

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<http://tucsontrrg.org>

To: Joint Subcommittee of the Planning Commission and Citizen Sign Code Review Committee

From: Tucson Residents for Responsive Government (TRRG)

Re: Removal of Sections 7A.7 Sign Design Options and 2.2.12 Sign Design Review Committee from the Sign Code Revision Draft

Date: March 6, 2017

Tucson Residents for Responsive Government (TRRG) requests that two sections, **7A.7 Sign Design Options** and **2.2.12 Sign Design Review Committee**, be removed from the current draft revision of the Tucson Sign Code now under review. Neither is directly related to the original need to make the code compliant with the Reed Supreme Court decision. Both appear to be topics added to address long-term staff and special interest concerns now that the court has provided the opening to alter content in the code. Since both would significantly change current City policy, both require significant public scrutiny of their own merits and impact.

TRRG asks that the City on-going review focus on the important primary question: ***Are the proposed changes to the present Sign Code the best solutions to make Tucson's code compliant with the legal mandate?***

After that question is answered would be the appropriate time to address Sign Design Options and its related Sign Design Review Committee. First and foremost, the community needs an open discussion of the need for these proposed changes. *Do the benefits of sign design options which by-pass code standards out-weigh the benefits of certainty and City protections that the present code affords in all situations? Is repurposing/replacing the decades-old Citizen Sign Code Committee with a Sign Design Review Committee in the best interest of representative government?* As of this time, TRRG is not aware of any public discussion of these basic, fundamental questions. Details of implementing these policy changes have, unfortunately, diverted time and attention from the initial purpose of the review.

Staff's inclusive of these two sections in the draft has given these additions to the code an un-examined legitimacy; they are now seen as "givens" open for refinement (just as the Reed adjustments are), not the totally new proposals which they are. Utilizing this strategy to initiate change in City government is sure to create backlash and distrust. TRRG asks that City of Tucson separate the review of legal compliance in the present code from any initiation of new policy. Doing so will lessen any suspicion that the City process is not ethical, inclusive and transparent.

...seeking positive change in City of Tucson government