

Additionally, in the Design Option of the draft, the Sign Design Review Committee can only continue a case one time, while the applicant may ask for any number of continuances. In the case of a scheduled hearing, if the committee is not yet formed or does not have a quorum, the PDSD Director can appoint the Design Professional to hear the case and make a recommendation, thus moving the application along without further delay to the applicant.

Change of Copy

- **Comment:** There were a handful of questions related to the change of copy and needed clarification on when a sign permit is needed.
- **Answer:** In the existing sign code, for change of copy, there are two criteria: (1) if it is under 10 square feet (typical size of a sign panel), PDSD does not require a permit, (2) minor electrical changes may occur but staff also checks if any change to the electrical components of the sign triggers a new electrical or structural permit. In consulting with Mayor and Council, it appears there may be support to increase the 10 square feet threshold for requiring a permit. Administratively, PDSD will allow change of copy up to 50 square feet based on discussions with Mayor and Council, no code revision would be required.

Freeway Signs / State Routes

- **Comment:** There was significant discussion with the Mayor and Council Members of the proposal by Metropolitan Pima Alliance (MPA), Tucson Metro Chamber (TMC), and Southern Arizona Homebuilders Association (SAHBA) to redefine Freeway Signs in the new 7A Sign Standards. The proposed changes to the definition of Freeway, and the addition of the definition of State Routes, would allow for a significant increase in signage throughout the City.
- **Answer:** This proposal would allow in the 7A Sign Standards General Standards for freestanding signs, regardless of lot size, that are 48 feet tall and 360 square feet in areas along Miracle Mile, Oracle Road, Ajo Way and Barraza Aviation Parkway, and would remove the requirement to adhere to scenic corridor regulations.

Additionally, it would create a new category named State Routes that would allow in the 7A General Standards for freestanding signs, regardless of lot size, that are 24 feet tall and 180 square feet in area along River Road, Grant Road, Kino Parkway/Campbell Road, Alvernon Way, Old Nogales Highway, Wilmot Road, Kolb Road, Silverbell Road, Houghton Road, Valencia Road, and Golf Links Road, and would also remove the requirement to adhere to scenic corridor regulations. These are all areas where the current sign standard allows for a sign that is 12 feet tall and 72 square feet in area.

These proposed changes provide for significant concerns for the following reasons:

- This proposal was considered and rejected by both the Citizens' Sign Code Committee and the Planning Commission. The Mayor and Council's original direction was to comply with the Reed decision and make practical improvements. This change would have a major impact on the visual environment of Tucson's streets with very little public input.
- This is in conflict with the direction provided by a previous lawsuit regarding billboards.
- This change would likely have a significant impact on dark skies. As stated previously, currently the Outdoor Lighting Code (OLC) does not regulate freestanding signs, and has an assumption built into

its model that is based on present sign height and area allowances. Should there be an increase allowed to freestanding sign height and area, this may cause significant light pollution.

The method to achieve a sign that is larger in size due to site considerations is through the Master Sign Program. In the current proposed sign standards, the Master Sign Program provides a process that allows for additional sign height, area, and flexibility. This process will provide a method for businesses to receive the necessary signage in order to properly advertise and direct customers to their establishments. This can be done without creating a general standard that would be open to anyone along one of these corridors. Proposals from the Master Sign Program may also provide data to inform future changes to the General Standards. For instance, if there are several successful projects along Oracle Road, the standards used for those could potentially be utilized to create a new general standard that could be applied to State Routes.

During the 18-months prior to the 7A Sign Standards sunset date, there could be a review of approved Master Sign Program applications to gather information on whether sign height and sign area standards should be increased or kept as is.

Feather Banners

- **Comment:** In the discussions with Mayor and Council there was considerable discussion related to Feather Banners. While currently prohibited in the proposed 7A Sign Standards, there was some interest to allow feather banners. Additionally, there was some conversation related to the difference between a banner and a feather banner.
- **Answer:** In July 2017, the joint Planning Commission / Citizen Sign Code Committee recommended that feather banners be prohibited. In the current draft, feather banners are prohibited. Staff has provided an additional option for language that would allow for the use of feather banners, yet organize them in a way that improves the visual environment. This option is listed in Attachment B of the Mayor and Council Public Hearing materials.

Regarding the difference between and Feather Banner and a Banner, Feather banners are defined in the draft as, "A sign typically made of a flexible fabric attached vertically to a freestanding pole in the general shape of a feather, teardrop, or similar shape." A banner is a more general term defined as, "A type of portable sign that is constructed of a piece of fabric or similar material attached to the ground or to a wall by one or more edges to a pole, rod or cord."

Signs on the Corner

- **Comment:** In our discussions with Mayor and Council there was concern about double counting signage placed on the corner of an intersection of two roads.
- **Answer:** Regarding the corner sign, this issue has been reviewed and staff believes the language at issue is located in Section 7A.6.9.D.2, is intended to ensure proper spacing of signs along frontages. However, language may be changed to 7A.6.9.D.3 so that sign area is only deducted from one of the street frontages and is not counted twice. Optional language has been provided in Attachment B to Mayor and Council in the Public Hearing materials to codify this interpretation.

Building Frontages

- **Comment:** In our meetings with Mayor and Council, there was discussion about allowing for the transfer of signage from one street frontage to another street frontage by the Zoning Administrator.
- **Answer:** The current proposed 7A Sign Standards Singular Sign Design Option, provides a process in which signage can be transferred from one street frontage to another after review by the Sign Design Review Committee.

This process will allow for reasonable review and transfer of signage that should prevent unwanted light trespass issues or an abrupt commercial intrusion into a residential area. There may be other unintended consequences that could occur with other transfer requests. If a general standards' signage transfer is allowed, a modification of the MPA et al recommended language is suggested, whereby the Zoning Administrator has the option to send the request to the Sign Design Review Committee for a review and recommendation. Optional language has been provided in Attachment B to Mayor and Council in the Public Hearing materials to codify this interpretation.