

**To: City of Tucson City Council**

**From: Metropolitan Pima Alliance, Tucson Metro Chamber, Southern Arizona Homebuilders Association, Commercial and Residential Development**

**Re: Industry Recommendations to City of Tucson Sign Code – Staff Draft dated 8/18/17**

**Date: November 29, 2017**

Metropolitan Pima Alliance, Tucson Metro Chamber, Southern Arizona Homebuilders Association, Tucson Association of Realtors and other membership-based organizations— along with other leaders and stakeholders in the business community, have been active participants in the Sign Code Revision Project since it began over a year ago.

We thank the Mayor, Councilmembers and City of Tucson staff for their time and dedication to this important matter. We are pleased with the discussion that occurred during the October 10 Study Session. The Sign Code is an important tool in attracting business and employers to the City, generating transaction privilege taxes for the City’s General Fund, supporting local small businesses and staying competitive with other U.S. cities. In this digital age, physical on-site signage is more important than ever and the number, amount and height of signage is a key component for major retailers in determining where to locate. By addressing the concerns of business owners, the City is demonstrating your willingness to make economic development a priority.

Again, we appreciate Staff’s work to understand and incorporate several of the changes requested by the residential and commercial industry representatives. There are a few changes that the industry has requested during the zoning code text amendment process that have not yet been incorporated into this final draft. As Mayor and Council consider the adoption of this ordinance, **we request that the following changes be incorporated prior to adoption.** These changes are consistent with Mayor and Council’s directive to staff, have a pragmatic rationale and are supportive of the City’s culture, values and economic priorities. ***We do not support postponing consideration of these few key changes until the next review at the end of 18-months.***

Below are the section references in the draft Sign Code Ordinance and a brief summary of the request. Various wording options for suggested ordinance text has previously been submitted to City Staff and a copy of the specific verbiage is included as Attachment A.

#### **7.A.6.9. STREET AND BULDING FRONTAGES**

##### **C. Multiple Frontage Lots, D. Intersection Corner Sign, & E. Signs per Street Frontage**

In the current draft, for corner lots, or lots with more than one street frontage, the allowable number and square footage of signs is not transferable in whole or part from one street frontage to another. And a single corner sign is deducted twice from each street frontage. **REQUEST: A process which provides the applicant the ability to transfer from one street frontage to another, and for a corner sign to be deducted from the allowed signage once.**

##### **7A.7.1. F. MASTER SIGN PROGRAM Best Practice Option**

In the current draft, an applicant can request a variation from the design standards by showing a best practice alternative. In the current draft, there is a geographic option, which is limited to other signage examples within the incorporated City of Tucson. **REQUEST: Expand the geographic range to be the Tucson MSA, Pima County/PAG Region, or Arizona.**

##### **7A.7.1. G. MASTER SIGN PROGRAM Findings**

In the current draft it can easily be interpreted that all nine Findings criteria must be met. Additionally the current draft includes Finding i. regarding best practices in dark sky preservation which is potentially inconsistent with the current City Outdoor Lighting Code and it is unclear how compliance with this Finding will be determined. **REQUEST: Clarify that only the applicable Findings must be met and not all Findings listed and delete or revise Finding i.**

#### **11.4.7 DEFINITIONS-F**

In the current proposed ordinance, the definition of freeway is defined as Freeways designated on the Major Streets and Routes Plan. **REQUEST: For consistency, modify this definition to correspond with the Major Streets and Routes Map and clarify that it includes extensions and proposed new state Highways such as Aerospace Parkway and Sonoran Corridor.**

#### **11.4.20 DEFINITIONS-S**

In the current proposed ordinance, there is an underlying 2-tier system of roadways; freeways and all other local neighborhood streets and arterial roadways. **REQUEST: Create a 3-tier system. Add a definition for State Routes: to include State Routes and selected Regional Arterials to correspond to the City of Tucson approved PAG Regionally Significant Corridors Study**

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**CITY OF TUCSON SIGN CODE**  
**REQUESTED CHANGES, ADDITIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS**  
**TO STAFF DRAFT 8-18-17**

**7A.6.9. STREET AND BUILDING FRONTAGES (PAGE 11)**

**C. Multiple Frontage Lots**

On corner lots and other lots with more than one street frontage, the maximum allowable number and square footage of on-site signs are permitted for each street frontage. The maximum allowances, however, **are not transferable either in whole or in part from one street frontage to another.**

**D. Intersection Corner Sign**

1. When a sign is erected at the street intersection corner of the lot and is placed in such a manner so as to be readable from both streets or both frontages, the sign shall not exceed the maximum area allowed for the longest street frontage;
2. The sign **shall count as one sign for each street frontage**; and,
3. The area of the sign **shall be deducted from the allowable sign area for each street frontage.**

**E. Signs per Street Frontage**

General rule: For a premise having more than one street frontage, the maximum sign area and number of permitted on-site permanent signs are permitted for each street frontage and **are not transferable from one street frontage to another.** In the case of a freestanding sign, **the more restrictive standard of the zone category shall apply.**

**Proposed Recommendations (in red):**

**C. Multiple Frontage Lots**

On corner lots and other lots with more than one street frontage, the maximum allowable number and square footage of on-site signs are permitted for each street frontage. The maximum allowances, however, are not transferable either in whole or in part from one street frontage to another, **unless approved by the zoning administrator.**

**D. Intersection Corner Sign**

1. When a sign is erected at the street intersection corner of the lot and is placed in such a manner so as to be readable from both streets or both frontages, the sign shall not exceed the maximum area allowed for the longest street frontage;
2. The sign shall count as one sign **in total**; and,
3. The area of the sign shall be deducted from the allowable sign area for one street frontage.

### **E. Signs per Street Frontage**

General rule: For a premise having more than one street frontage, the maximum sign area and number of permitted on-site permanent signs are permitted for each street frontage and are not transferable from one street frontage to another, **unless otherwise approved by the zoning administrator**. In the case of a freestanding sign, the more restrictive standard of the zone category shall apply.

### **7A.7.1. MASTER SIGN PROGRAM - PERMANENT SIGNS (Page 15)**

#### **F. Best Practice Option**

1. A variation from the design standards must show a best practice is being used as an alternative. A best practice may be based on one of the following sources:

- a. An already approved permanent sign, master sign program **within the City;**

#### **Proposed Recommendations (in red):**

#### **F. Best Practice Option**

1. A variation from the design standards must show a best practice is being used as an alternative. A best practice may be based on one of the following sources:

- a. An already approved permanent sign, master sign program within the City, **Tucson MSA or comparable region;**

### **7A.7.1. MASTER SIGN PROGRAM - PERMANENT SIGNS (Page 16)**

#### **G. Findings**

1. **The decision shall show the sign program's compliance with the following applicable findings:**

- i. **Represents a best practice of the design of dark sky sign illumination.**

#### **Proposed Recommendations (in red):**

#### **G. Findings**

1. **The decision should show how the sign program addresses site specific standards as may be applicable, below:**

- i. **[DELETE "i."] or Complies with the Outdoor Lighting Code (OLC)**

**Definitions (Page 61):**

**Existing Code Per Sign Standards Draft dated 8/18/17:**

**11.4.7. Freeway (7A)**

A roadway designated as a freeway in the Major Streets and Routes Plan.

**Proposed Recommendations (in red):**

**11.4.7. Freeway (7A)**

**A roadway designated as a Federal or Interstate Route as shown on the City of Tucson Major Streets and Routes Plan (I-10, I-19, SR77, SR86, 210 Barraza Aviation Parkway), including any proposed extensions. Freeways are not subject to 7A.11.**

**11.4.20 State Route (7A)**

**ADOT designated State Routes within the City of Tucson which are also designated as Regionally Significant Corridors by Pima Association of Governments (Tangerine Rd, Ina Rd, Sunrise Rd, Ruthrauff Rd, River Rd, Grant Rd, SR 810 Golf Links Rd, SR 910 Valencia Rd, Old Vail Connection, Pima Mine Rd, Silverbell Rd, River Rd, La Cholla Rd, SR 589 Campbell Rd, SR 489 Alvernon Way, Old Nogales Highway, Wilmot Rd, SR 110 Kolb Rd, SR 983 Houghton Rd), including any proposed extensions. State Routes are not subject to 7A.11 and receive 50% of Freeway signage.**