



City of Dallas

Digital Billboards: Ordinance Amendment

**Public Meeting
July 9, 2024**

Jason Pool, Development Services Administrator
Oscar Aguilera, Senior Planner
Scott Roper, Plan Review & Inspection Supervisor
Planning & Development Department
City of Dallas

Purpose



- Brief the on the proposed city-authorized hearing to amend (1) the relocation of certain detached non-premise signs provisions in 51 A-7.307, (2) the digital detached non-premise sign provisions in Section 51 A-7.308, and (3) the non-conformance and enforcement procedures in Division 51 A-7.700 of the Dallas City Code.
- Request suggestions, feedback, and improvements from stakeholders on the amendment.



Background: Hierarchy of Provisions



- Detached non-premise (billboard) sign hierarchy:
 - Federal Regulations: (Not subject to amendment)
 - Highway Beautification Act (HBA)
 - Federal State Agreement (FSA)
 - State Regulations: (Not subject to amendment)
 - TAC 43.21.1 (Certified City Program)
 - City of Dallas Provisions: (Subject to amendment)
 - Ch. 51A of the Dallas Development Code (Art. VII)
 - Ch. 52 Administrative Procedures for Const. Codes



Background: Federal/State Regulations



- Top-Level Regulations Summary *
- Industrial & Commercial zones (≤ 660 ft of highway)
- Max. 1200 sf; 85 ft tall (25 ft max. height or 60 ft max. width)
- Minimum 500 ft spacing:
 - Between signs on same side of roadway
 - From certain public & designated areas
- No flashing, movement, or glare
 - Message displayed min. 8 sec., auto-adjust, etc.

* These are the maximum allowances that can't be exceeded by local code.



Background: Local Regulations



- Dallas Development Code - Sec. [51A-7.102](#)
Definitions. (subject to amendment)
 - (13) Expressway means:
 - DNT, IH20, IH30, IH35E, IH45, IH635, US67, US75, US80 (east of IH30), US175, SH114, SH183, Spur 408, Walton Walker (from Spur 408 north, & IH35E south), & Woodall Rogers.
 - (13.1) Expressway Sign means a sign wholly within 100 ft of expressway ROW whose message is visible from the main traveled way



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



- Sec. 51A-7.306 & Sec. 51A-7.307 – Non-Premise Expressway & HBA signs. (subject to amendment)
 - In general, detached non-premise signs are prohibited & are considered a nonconforming use.
 - Signs may be relocated when on or overhanging land acquired by a governmental entity.
 - In general, relocated signs can't be more non-conforming than the original sign.



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



- Relocation to the remainder is preferred; however, signs in railroad right-of-way must be relocated within the same railroad right-of-way.
- Relocations may be combined for larger or multi-faced signs provided the city's total sign count is reduced.
- Relocations are prohibited within 1,000 ft of or if visible from a new expressway.
- Prohibited within 2,000 ft of the Trinity River (w/o SUP).



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



- Prohibited within 500 ft of a historic district, public park, city-owned lake, escarpment zone or geologically similar areas (w/o SUP).
- Prohibited within 300 ft of a non-business or residential zoning district (w/o SUP).
- Prohibited within 200 ft of any intersection involving arterials, expressway frontage & arterials, or expressway travel lanes or ramps.
- No new properties (ie. electrical, mechanical, lighting).



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



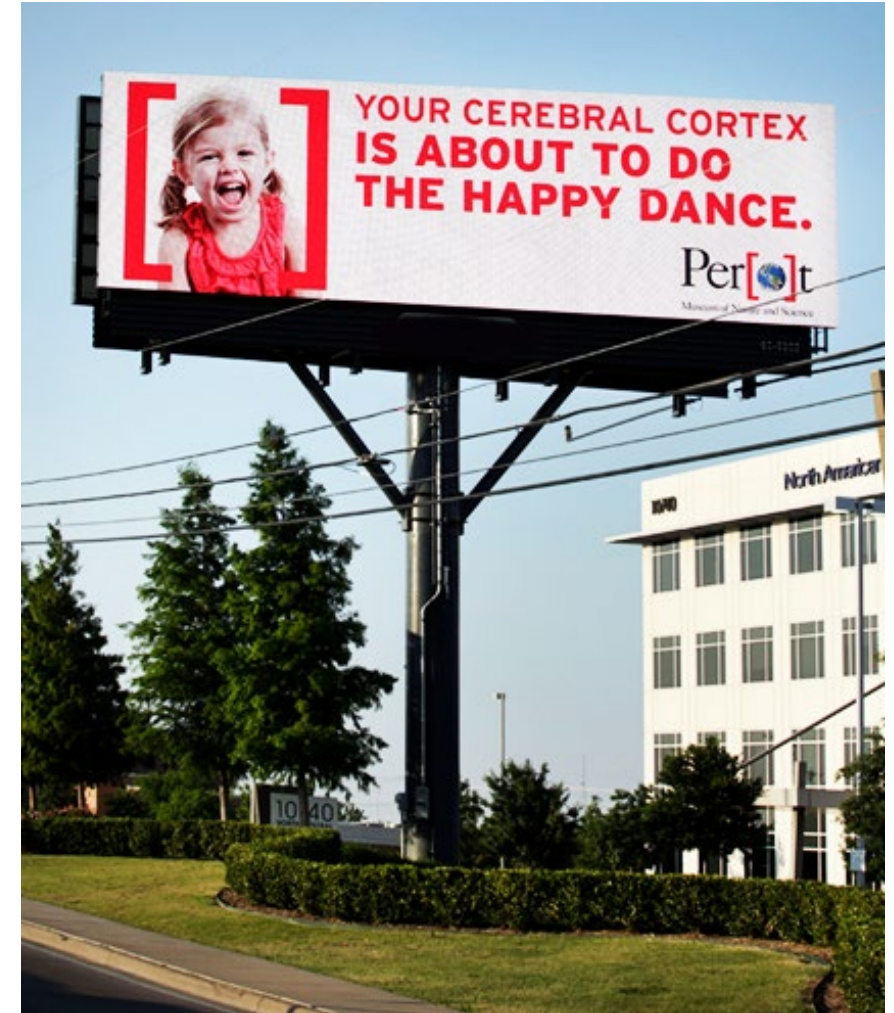
- Maximum 672 sf w/ maximum height of 50 ft or 42.5 ft above nearest travel surface (whichever is greater), can't exceed 80 ft at base of sign.
- Minimum setback of 40 ft from nearest expressway lane & 5 ft from nearest public row.
- Council may grant an SUP for an HBA sign to be relocated in an LO(A), MO(A), or GO(A) (non-business zoning districts) district.



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



- On June 8, 2011, Chapter 51A of the Development Code and Chapter 52 of the Administrative Procedures were amended to provide conditions for the use of digital displays on existing detached non-premise expressway signs.



Digital Billboards: Current Overview



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



- Section 51A-7.308 was added to the Development Code. (subject to amendment)
 - Required a 3:1 static to digital face exchange with the elimination of exchanged structures
 - Limited digital sign locations to 50 structures; all digital signs must be expressway signs.
 - Minimum spacing for displays: 1500 ft for s/f displays facing the same direction; 2000 ft for d/f displays.



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



- No digital non-premise signs within:
 - 300 ft of residential districts
 - 500 ft of historic districts or escarpment zones
 - 2,000 ft of the center line of the Trinity River
- Sign support structures may not exceed 50 ft in height or 42.5 ft above nearest point on travel surface, whichever is higher, except no digital display sign may be higher than the conventional sign it replaced.



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



- Provides operational requirements for displays
 - Automatic adjustment to 0.3 footcandles over ambient from 250 ft of sign & password protected.
 - Operator response within one hour of notification of malfunction & corrected within 12 hours.
 - Allowance for emergency information display by City.
- Included sunset of August 1, 2014 (extended to 8/31/2016 to allow time additional time for 50 structures)



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



- Subparagraph 303.5.5.4 was added to the Administrative Procedures for Construction Codes. (Fees updated May 1, 2024 - \$15 technology fee may apply)
 - Provides annual registration fee of \$2,000 per digital sign face for a detached non-premise digital display sign. Updated May 1, 2024, to \$2,817 per face.
 - Per 303.10, fees for annual registration of static non-premise signs remain at \$65 per sign structure. Updated May 1, 2024, to \$116 per structure.



Background: Local Regulations (cont.)



- The amendment was requested by Clear Channel Outdoor.
- Resulted in:
 - Installation of 49 digital structures
 - Removal of 461 sign structures (majority of removals were of smaller sign on local arterials)
 - Registration of 877 non-premise signs.
- Was re-examined in 2014, 2015, & extended to August 2016 with no change.



Current Conditions



- The current TxDot Annual Certified City detached non-premise sign inventory consists of:
 - 811 registered signs
 - 772 signs are current on annual registration
 - 49 Digital Sign Structures (79 Digital Faces)
 - Clear Channel: 63 Faces; OutFront: 6 Faces; Lamar: 3 Faces; Ralston: 3 Faces; McCutchin: 1 Face; Southwest Outdoor: 1 Face; Albert Outdoor: 1 Face; Cooper: 1 Face



Public Concern – 311 Complaints



- In general, areas of public concern trend around:
 - Clutter/Location (2)
 - Brightness (2)
 - Poor maintenance (10) (static)
 - Message content (5)

- 311 Reports since 2018



Public Concerns - Brightness



- The Federal Highway Administration has released several reports on lighting.
 - 2001 - Research Review on Potential Safety Effects of Electronic Billboards on Driver Attention & Distraction
 - 2009 – The Effects of Commercial Electronic Variable Message Signs (CEVMS) on Driver Attention & Distraction
 - 2011 - Driver Visual Behavior in the Presence of Commercial Electronic Variable Message Signs (CEVMS)



Operational Concerns



- 2012 CEVMS & Driver Visual Behavior Study - Peer reviewed report to 2011 study.
 - These reports contain the results of various studies on the impact of digital signs on drivers.
 - The results of these studies are open to interpretation but lead to digital sign impact on drivers doesn't substantially exceed that of static signs.
- Currently, federal and state regulations do not contain a specific limit on light intensity, only that signs adjust light intensity according to ambient light conditions and that they do not cause glare.



Operational Issues



- Industry concerns:
 - No option for new operators or new signs.
 - Difficulty relocating, specifically for signs in railroad rights-of-way.
 - Restrictions in [51A-7.702](#) contribute to issues w/ display replacement and unsafe signs.



Display Comparison



- Benefits of digital over static signs:
 - No waste created by face change outs.
 - Remote capability w/ increased display function.
 - Faces less susceptible to fading or damage.

- Benefits of static over digital signs:
 - Can never be too bright/have software problem.
 - More exposure time of message.
 - Signs use less power.



Technology Advancements



- Notable advances in digital technology:
 - Increase efficiency/power consumption
 - Increased affordability
 - Increased display resolution capabilities
 - Reduced display weight (up to 1/4 since 2011 in some cases)
 - Advances in computers & cell technology
 - Sign contain an internal computer w/ data connection providing capabilities limited only by the computer & internet connection



Ordinance Summary & Consideration Chart



[Comparison Chart For Shareholder Meeting.xlsx](#)
[\(sharepoint.com\)](#)



Industry Proposal Summary



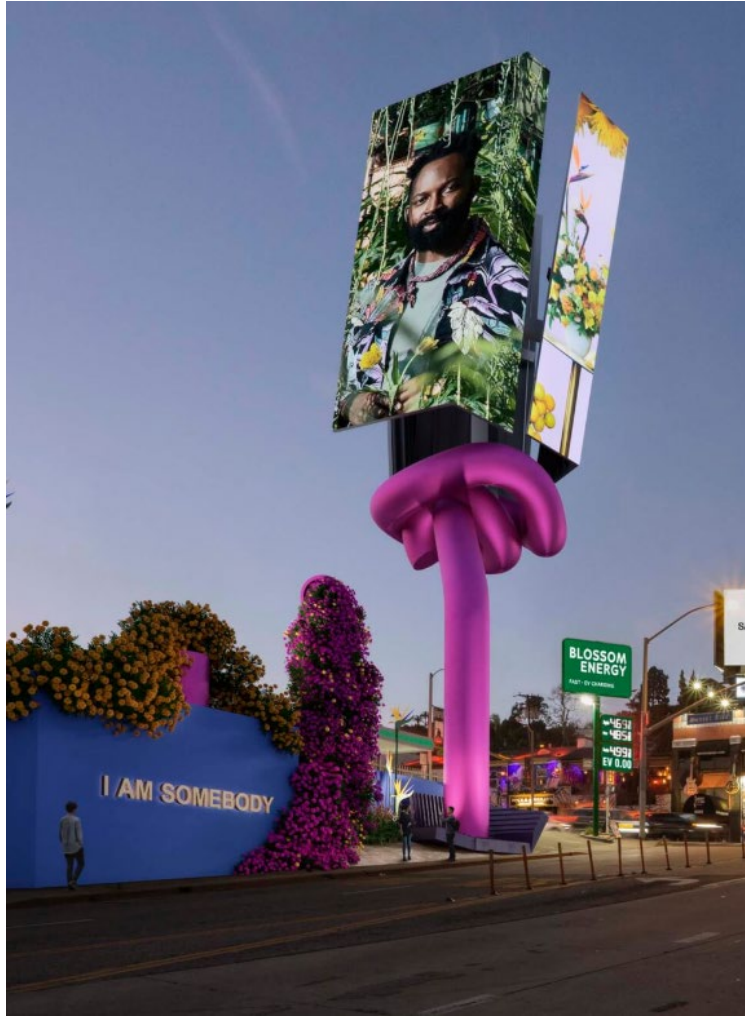
- Staff Proposed potential “Structural Beautification” concepts:



Industry Proposal Summary



Industry Proposal Summary



Digital Billboards: Current Overview



Industry Proposal Summary



- Would not recommend for “Structural Beautification”



Next Steps



- Draft proposed conditions
 - Public Dialog
- Schedule for the Special Sign District Advisory Committee (SSDAC)
- Schedule for the City Plan Commission (CPC)
- Schedule for City Council





- Website
 - <https://bit.ly/Dallas-Digital>
 - Live Survey
 - Ordinance Summary & Consideration Chart
 - Updates, announcements, & meeting videos
- For Questions:
 - Oscar.Aguilera@dallas.gov
 - **214-671-5099**





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