

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

Date: June 13, 2014

To: Honorable Members of the Economic Development Committee: Mayor Pro Tem Tennell Atkins (Chair), Rick Callahan (Vice Chair), Jerry R. Allen, Scott Griggs, Lee Kleinman and Adam Medrano

Subject: Digital Billboard Review

On Monday, June 16, you will be briefed on the City Plan Commission recommendation to extend the current digital billboard provisions to August 31, 2016. The Committee was previously briefed on April 21st on the status of the digital billboard ordinance passed by City Council on June 8, 2011. At that time the committee directed staff to process a code amendment so that an extension of the current sunset date of August 1st 2014 could be considered. A copy of the briefing is attached. Please contact David Cossum at 670-4127 should you have any questions or need additional information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Theresa O'Donnell'.

Theresa O'Donnell
Interim Assistant City Manager

cc: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
A.C. Gonzalez, City Manager
Warren M.S. Ernst, City Attorney
Rosa A. Rios, City Secretary
Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor
Judge Daniel F. Solis, Administrative Judge
Ryan S. Evans, Interim First Assistant City Manager
Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager
Forest E. Turner, Assistant City Manager
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
Charles M. Cato, Interim Assistant City Manager
Jeanne Chipperfield, Chief Financial Officer
Shawn Williams, Interim Public Information Officer
David Cossum, Interim Director Sustainable Development and Construction
Rick Galceran, Director, Public Works
Elsa Cantu, Assistant to the City Manager – Mayor and Council

Digital Billboard Review

**City Council Economic
Development Committee
June 16, 2014**



Background

- On June 8, 2011, City Council approved a code amendment to allow certain billboards on freeways to convert to digital technology.
- The code amendment included a provision that the regulations allowing digital conversion would expire on August 1, 2014.
- On April 21, 2014, staff briefed the Economic Development Committee on the sunset provision of the ordinance and current status of the 50 location permits allowed under the ordinance. The Committee instructed staff to proceed with consideration of extending the current provisions.
- On May 13, 2014, the Special Sign District Advisory Committee recommended no change to the sunset provision.
- On May 22, 2014, the City Plan Commission recommended extending the sunset date to August 31, 2016

Background

- Ordinance Provisions:
 - for every 1 square foot of billboard converted to digital technology 3 square feet of static billboard had to be removed elsewhere.
 - capped the number of locations that could include a digital sign at 50 locations (if a two-sided sign existed at a location, both signs may be able to be converted to digital and count as one location)
 - Displays must automatically adjust sign brightness dependent upon ambient light conditions
 - Messages must be displayed for a minimum of 8 seconds and the message change must be accomplished in 2 seconds
 - Change of message must occur simultaneously on the entire sign face
 - No flashing, dimming or brightening of message is permitted except to accommodate the change of message
 - City may require emergency information to be displayed

Background

- Other ordinance provisions related to location included:
 - Digital display signs must be located on an expressway
 - Signs can not be located within 300 feet of a lot in a residential zoning district
 - Signs can not be located within 500 feet of an historic district
 - Signs can not be located within 2000 feet of the Trinity River or within 500 feet of the escarpment zone.
 - Digital display signs must be located a minimum of 1500 feet from another digital display sign oriented to the same traffic direction (2000 feet if the location has back to back digital displays)

Background

- Permit status to date:
 - All 50 location permits have been issued
 - 44 locations have been converted to include digital faces
 - 451 sign structures have been removed with 859 sign faces
 - The majority of sign faces removed were smaller signs on local arterials

Issues

- If the digital provisions sunset and are not renewed, existing digital signs will remain as non-conforming signs.
- Non-conforming signs are signs that were legally erected pursuant to a valid permit and may remain and be maintained at their current location.
- Non-conforming signs may not be repaired if the cost of repair is more than 60 percent of the cost of erecting a new sign of the same type at the same location.

Issues

- Most of the concerns expressed to the department to date have been related to the brightness of LED signs, both premise signs and digital billboards.
- Some concerns have also been received relative to the message change and how that brings attention to a digital display to a greater degree than a static message had previously.

Issues

- Staff has received several letters in opposition to the extension of the current provisions.

Proposal

- Proceed with an amendment to the existing ordinance to extend the existing regulations for another 2 years with no increase in the number of locations permitted by the ordinance
- Continue to discuss appropriate digital sign brightness requirements for both premise and non-premise digital sign displays.

Next Steps

Schedule City Council consideration of the proposal to extend sunset provision on the June 25, 2014 City Council agenda.

Appendix

Digital Billboard Maps





