



MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission Codes and Ordinances Subcommittee

FROM: Jessica Kingpetcharat-Bittner, Principal Planner
WPDRD Residential Review

DATE: February 19, 2008

SUBJECT: Summary of Sign/Billboard Stakeholder Meetings

On November 8, 2007, the Austin City Council passed Resolution 20071108-128 directing the City Manager's Office to initiate amendments to Chapter 25-10 of the Land Development Code regarding Sign Regulations. The Resolution also directed the City Manager to work with a group of stakeholders to identify corridors within the scenic roadways to become eligible for installation of relocated off-premise signs.

Stakeholders included:

- Girard Kinney, Scenic Austin
- Kate Meehan, Scenic Austin
- Billy Reagan, Reagan Advertising
- Chris Stokes, Lamar Advertising
- John Anderson, Anderson Mobile Advertising
- Marc Maggard, Gorilla Mobile Marketing
- Edward Kargbo, Yellow Cab
- Tina Bui, Capital Metro

Attachment A includes a copy of the working draft ordinance incorporating the City Council's initiated amendments.

Summary of Decisions

Sign Regulation stakeholders met three times and recognized that their responsibility was a difficult one. In some cases, the task assigned to them conflicted with their individual missions or purpose. The stakeholders did, however, pass a resolution recommending that the proposed amendments be considered separately in the following categories:

- Billboard Issues
- Mobile Billboard Issues
- Taxicab Requirements

In response to the City Council's direction to identify commercial corridors within the scenic roadway sign districts that could be eligible for the relocation of off-premise signs, billboard advertising companies met with representatives of Scenic Austin. Of the scenic routes currently listed in Chapter 25-10, Scenic Austin believes that the following roadways would be least objectionable for the relocation of billboards:

- Loop 1, also known as MoPac, north of US Hwy 183 N.
- State Hwy 71 east of IH 35, from Riverside Drive, along Ben White, to the IH 35 intersection.
- Parmer Lane
- Slaughter Lane

However, Scenic Austin further stated that if billboards are allowed to be located on these routes, Scenic Austin recommends that these routes should be removed from the list of scenic routes.

Additionally, the following scenic road ways and portions of scenic roadways, while not recommended by Scenic Austin, are among those desired by billboard advertising companies to be eligible for relocation of off-premise signs:

- Barton Springs at Riverside
- FM 620, north of 2222 to Anderson Mill Road
- Riverside Drive at the intersection of Barton Springs

Additional Comments by Stakeholders

The majority of stakeholders agreed that the amendments to the Sign Regulations were vast and different. Scenic Austin, Regan Outdoor Advertising, Anderson Mobile Advertising, and Yellow Cab Taxi each submitted additional comments regarding the proposed amendments ("Attachment B").

Billboard Issues Summary

- If billboards are allowed to be relocated onto roads designated as "scenic," the routes should be removed from the list of scenic roadways. (*Scenic Austin*)
- Allowing signs to be relocated without regard to size of the sign should be removed from consideration (*Scenic Austin*)
- Portions of 25-10-152(6) need additional clarification (*Reagan National Advertising*)
- Allowing replacement of a billboard creates potential problems. (*Reagan National Advertising and Scenic Austin*)

Mobile Billboard Issues Summary

- There are other ways to regulate mobile billboards other than an outright ban, including:
 - Regulating times on the road or locations permitted
 - Limiting size, weight and class of the vehicles (*Anderson Mobile Advertising*)
- The ordinance is not clear with regard to what constitutes “primarily business” or “third-party” advertisements which could allow other forms of mobile advertising to evade regulation. (*Anderson Mobile Advertising*)
- The exclusion of pedi-cab or bicycle-pulled advertising may be a mistake. The City should consider prohibiting all mobile billboards in Austin and the ETJ. (*Scenic Austin*)

Taxi Cab Requirements Summary

- The fee being assessed to the taxi cab companies should be equitable with the fee for billboards. (*Yellow Cab*)
- The ordinance is not being equally applied. There are other transportation vehicles such as pedicabs, limos, carriages, and charter vehicles that use third party advertisement but do not have to pay the registration fee. (*Yellow Cab*)
- The City should consider expanding the registration requirements to all businesses regulated by the transportation code, including charter bus and pedi-cab services. (*Scenic Austin*)