



MEMORANDUM

Date: August 7, 2018

To: The Honorable Chairman and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: C.H. Huckelberry
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "CHH", is written over the printed name "C.H. Huckelberry".

Re: **Initiation of Major Revision to the Pima County Code of Ordinances, Title 18 – Zoning, Chapter 18.79 - Sign Standards**

Attached please find a July 31, 2018 memorandum from Development Services Staff regarding their initiation of a process to implement changes in the Pima County sign code standards to conform to existing law based on a 2015 Supreme Court Ruling.

The last major change to Pima County sign code standards occurred in 1985. It is likely the sign code will be completely revised, the number of signs listed in the code will be reduced and the standards simplified. Other jurisdictions have already amended their sign code standards. Pima County will begin the process to amend our sign code standards and conform to the Supreme Court Ruling. Staff will initiate this action at a Planning and Zoning Commission meeting this fall.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact Deputy County Administrator for Public Works Carmine DeBonis, Development Services Director Carla Blackwell, Development Services Deputy Director Chris Poirier, or Chief Zoning Inspector Tom Drzazgowski.

CHH/lab

Attachment

c: Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Carla Blackwell, Director, Development Services
Chris Poirier, Deputy Director and Planning Director, Development Services
Tom Drzazgowski, Chief Zoning Inspector, Development Services



MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 31, 2018

TO: Chuck Huckelberry, County Administrator

FROM: Carla Blackwell, Director *CB*
Tom Drzazgowski, Chief Zoning Inspector *TD*

SUBJECT: Sign Code Revision

The Town of Marana recently released their draft changes to their sign code. The town expects this to be approved by the Town Council in October. If approved this will be the third municipality in the metropolitan area that will have adopted a revised sign code in the last couple of years. Counties, cities and towns throughout Arizona and the country are in the process of amending their codes based on a 2015 United States Supreme Court ruling from the Town of Gilbert (Reed v Gilbert). One of the points of the ruling involved signage and the content of signs. The Supreme Court ruled that governments can't regulate signs based on content.

Since this ruling the City of Tucson and the Town of Sahuarita have both amended their zoning codes to align with the court ruling. With regional examples to pull from, we believe that now is an appropriate time to begin the amendment process.

Sign code changes have traditionally surfaced concerns from numerous stakeholders in the region that have an interest in changes to the zoning code. For the sign code amendment, we would expect to work with major sign companies such as Addisigns and Fluoresco. Neighborhood groups, dark sky advocates, and organizations would also be involved. Customers of Development Services such as SAHBA, home builders, commercial real estate firms and shopping center owners would be consulted. Organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, MPA and Sun Corridor could also be involved. Lastly, we would work closely with area astronomy observatories and Davis Monthan Air Force Base.

The objectives of the sign code amendments will be as follows:

- The sign standards will be content neutral rather than the current code that regulates commercial signs, real estate signs and political signs by content.
- Sign standards will still contain limits for size, height, color and number on a

property.

- Where possible, try to adopt similar standards as neighboring jurisdictions
- Signs will still be regulated for lighting, moveable copy and type of lighting
- Change and modernize how sign area is calculated and align Pima County's code with current national standards.
- Possibly adopt an "exceptional design" standard. This could allow for increases in size or square footage based on aesthetic criteria such as uniform copy, backlighting, and using items such as brick, simulated stone, unfinished metal or other similar materials in the sign.

This overview is to assist you in providing information to the Board of Supervisors. The current sign standards can be found in Section 18.79 of the Pima County Zoning Code. Since the last major changes to the sign standards were in 1985, we believe this section of the code will be almost completely revised. It can be expected that the number of signs listed in the code will be greatly reduced and standards simplified. We would plan to initiate this action at a Planning and Zoning Commission this fall.

C: Carmine DeBonis, Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Chris Poirier, Deputy Director of Development Services