

City of Sacramento

Legislation Text

File #: 2019-00280, **Version:** 1

Title:

(Pass for Publication) Ordinance Amending City Code Chapter 15.148 to Allow On-site Digital Signs at Regional Shopping Centers (M18-013)

File ID: 2019-00280

Location: Citywide

Recommendation:

1) Review an ordinance adding section 15.148.925 to chapter 15.148 of the City Code, relating to signs; and 2) pass for publication the ordinance title under City Charter section 32(c), for consideration on April 23, 2019.

Contact: Evan Compton, Principal Planner, 808-5260, Community Development Department

Presenter: None

Attachments:

- 1-Description/Analysis
- 2-Background
- 3-Ordinance

Description/Analysis

Issue Detail: The proposed ordinance adds section 15.148.925 to City Code chapter 15.148 (Signs) to authorize on-site signs with digital displays-i.e., digital signs-for regional shopping centers. Chapter 15.148 currently does not allow regional shopping centers to have such signs. With brick-and-mortar retail stores challenged by online shopping, it is in the City's best interest to let large regional shopping centers attract customers by having digital signs on their properties.

The proposed ordinance allows up to two digital signs for each "regional shopping center," defined as "a permanent building or group of permanent buildings that is located on at least 50 contiguous acres, has at least 450,000 square feet of retail space, has shared on-site parking, and is managed as a single property." This definition will allow digital signs only for the largest shopping centers within

the City and will prevent the proliferation of digital signs. The background section of this report lists the shopping centers that could potentially qualify.

In drafting recommendations for this ordinance, staff reviewed the signage allowances in the General Commercial (C-2) and Shopping Center (SC) zones, which are the typical locations for shopping centers. These allowances underlie the following initial recommendations for size, height, number, and sign-spacing requirements:

- A maximum of two digital signs would be allowed for each regional shopping center, and the signs would need to be spaced at least 300 feet apart. The total number of such signs at each center would have to comply with the rest of chapter 15.148, which may require that some existing signs to be removed before new digital signs are constructed.
- The maximum size of each digital display on a digital sign would be 300 square feet, and the distance between a digital sign's ground elevation and its top could be no more than 35 feet.
- The ordinance would allow the digital signs to display advertising for businesses and products at the regional shopping center but not general advertising for hire.
- Detached digital signs that are oriented perpendicularly to streets with two-way traffic could have two sides, with a digital display on each side, for visibility to the motoring public.
- The requirements for brightness, hours of operation, and transition would be the same as for digital signs in large entertainment venues (see City Code section 15.148.920).
- All signage other than the digital signs for the regional shopping center would need to comply with the current requirements of chapter 15.148.

Policy Considerations: Sign regulations are used to preserve and improve the appearance of the City as a desirable place in which to live; to safeguard and enhance property values; to protect public and private investment in buildings and open spaces; and to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare. The restriction of digital signs to regional shopping centers would prevent the uncontrolled proliferation of digital signs throughout the City while also promoting new technology to increase economic vitality for businesses.

The proposed ordinance would also further the following goals in the City's 2035 General Plan:

- *Business Climate.* Maintain a supportive business climate that increases the City's ability to retain and expand existing businesses and attract business. (Goal ED 1.1)
- *City Image.* The City shall continue to promote Sacramento among its citizens and the wider

business community as a livable community and an excellent place to do business. (ED 1.1.2)

Economic Impacts: By allowing a limited number of digital signs for regional shopping centers, the City will retain and attract retail businesses and maintain the health of large tax generators within the city limits.

Environmental Considerations: The proposed ordinance would allow on-site digital signs in regional shopping centers. The approval, installation, and operation of these signs is categorically exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15311(a) [accessory structures; on-premise signs]). Signs installed under the proposed ordinance would not have any significant environmental effects. The ordinance regulates the brightness of digital displays, ensuring that the signs will not result in nuisance or glare (City Code § 15.148.925, D.5 & D.7). No cumulative effects would result, and no unusually circumstances are present that could result in a significant environmental effect.

Sustainability: No sustainability considerations apply to the proposed ordinance.

Commission/Committee Action: The Law and Legislation Committee heard and forwarded a draft Ordinance on March 5, 2019, to allow on-site digital signs at regional shopping centers.

Rationale for Recommendation: Regional shopping centers have more-intense signage needs because of their size and the number of their tenants. Chapter 15.148 does not currently allow regional shopping centers to adequately compete in the evolving retail environment. The proposed ordinance authorizes digital signs that will enable regional shopping centers to be more recognizable and successful.

Financial Considerations: Not applicable.

Local Business Enterprise (LBE): Not applicable.